

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
BARNET

*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 Barnet.

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 Barnet 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 Barnet 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 paragraph 117) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Barnet.

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

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

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Barnet 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 Barnet:

- **in three of the 20 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and by more than 20 per cent in one ward;**
- **this level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in five wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 117 and 118) are that:

- **Barnet Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors, three more than at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, one more than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but two 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 all but one of the 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is forecast to improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in all 21 wards expected to vary by no more than 3 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*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas (existing wards)</b>
1 Brunswick Park	3	Brunswick Park (part)
2 Burnt Oak	3	Burnt Oak (part); Colindale ward (part)
3 Childs Hill	3	Childs Hill ward; Golders Green ward (part)
4 Colindale	3	Colindale ward (part)
5 Coppetts	3	Friern Barnet ward (part); Woodhouse ward (part)
6 East Finchley	3	East Finchley ward (part)
7 East Barnet	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
8 Edgware	3	Edgware ward (part)
9 Finchley Church End	3	Finchley ward (part); Hendon ward (part); Mill Hill ward (part)
10 Garden Suburb	3	Garden Suburb ward; Golders Green ward (part); Hendon ward (part)
11 Golders Green	3	Golders Green ward (part); Hendon ward (part)
12 Hale	3	Burnt Oak ward (part); Edgware ward (part); Hale ward (part)
13 Hendon	3	Hendon ward (part); Mill Hill ward (part)
14 High Barnet	3	Arkley ward (part); Hadley ward (part)
15 Mill Hill	3	Finchley ward (part); Hale ward (part); Mill Hill ward (part); Totteridge ward (part)
16 Oakleigh	3	Brunswick Park ward (part); Friern Barnet ward (part); Hadley ward (part); Totteridge ward (part)
17 Totteridge	3	Friern Barnet ward (part); Totteridge ward (part)
18 Underhill	3	Arkley ward (part); Edgware ward (part); Hale ward (part)
19 West Finchley	3	East Finchley ward (part); Finchley ward (part); St Paul's ward (part)
20 West Hendon	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
21 Woodhouse	3	East Finchley ward (part); St Paul's ward (part); Totteridge ward (part); Woodhouse ward (part)

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

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Barnet

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 Brunswick Park	3	10,893	3,631	1	11,077	3,692	-1
2 Burnt Oak	3	9,627	3,209	-11	11,256	3,752	1
3 Childs Hill	3	11,050	3,683	2	10,846	3,615	-3
4 Colindale	3	10,446	3,482	-4	11,378	3,793	2
5 Coppetts	3	10,165	3,388	-6	11,321	3,774	2
6 East Barnet	3	11,423	3,808	5	11,424	3,808	2
7 East Finchley	3	10,556	3,519	-3	10,763	3,588	-3
8 Edgware	3	11,061	3,687	2	11,332	3,777	3
9 Finchley Church End	3	10,713	3,571	-1	11,105	3,702	0
10 Garden Suburb	3	10,746	3,582	-1	10,828	3,609	-3
11 Golders Green	3	10,366	3,455	-4	10,922	3,641	-2
12 Hale	3	11,209	3,736	3	11,446	3,815	3
13 Hendon	3	11,271	3,757	4	11,298	3,766	1
14 High Barnet	3	11,348	3,783	5	11,418	3,806	2
15 Mill Hill	3	11,243	3,748	4	11,506	3,835	3
16 Oakleigh	3	11,238	3,746	4	11,000	3,667	-1
17 Totteridge	3	10,705	3,568	-1	11,053	3,684	-1
18 Underhill	3	11,351	3,784	5	11,294	3,765	1
19 West Finchley	3	10,441	3,480	-4	11,071	3,690	-1
20 West Hendon	3	10,771	3,590	-1	10,914	3,638	-2
21 Woodhouse	3	10,852	3,617	0	10,893	3,631	-2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>227,475</b>	—	—	<b>234,145</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>3,611</b>	—	—	<b>3,717</b>	—

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

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



# 1. INTRODUCTION

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

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review (PER) of Barnet 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 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, Barnet 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 Barnet

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Barnet. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1977 (Report No. 248).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 23 June 1998, when we wrote to Barnet 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 Barnet*, 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 Barnet lies at the north-western edge of London and is bounded by the London boroughs of Enfield to the east, Brent and Harrow to the west, Camden and Haringey to the south and the county of Hertfordshire to the north. It covers some 9,000 hectares, and has the largest population of all the London boroughs. It is largely suburban in character, but also includes several areas of green belt. Barnet is located at the southern end of several major routes between London and the north, including the A1 and the A41, while the M1 starts at its junction with the North Circular Road in the south of the borough. The two northern branches of the Northern Line and two major rail routes pass through the borough.

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 227,425. The Council currently has 60 councillors who are elected from 20 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). All 20 wards are represented by three councillors. 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 increase in electorate in the borough, with around 1 per cent more electors than in 1977, largely as a result of new housing developments in central and eastern areas of the borough.

21 At present, each councillor represents an average of 3,790 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 3,902 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 three of the 20 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the

borough average, and one by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Hadley ward, in which each of the three councillors represents 26 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Barnet



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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 Arkley	3	12,189	4,063	7	12,134	4,045	4
2 Brunswick Park	3	10,941	3,647	-4	11,145	3,715	-5
3 Burnt Oak	3	9,763	3,254	-14	11,234	3,745	-4
4 Childs Hill	3	9,757	3,252	-14	9,533	3,178	-19
5 Colindale	3	12,171	4,057	7	13,188	4,396	13
6 East Barnet	3	11,513	3,838	1	11,512	3,837	-2
7 East Finchley	3	11,762	3,921	3	12,028	4,009	3
8 Edgware	3	11,786	3,929	4	12,074	4,025	3
9 Finchley	3	10,641	3,547	-6	11,220	3,740	-4
10 Friern Barnet	3	11,328	3,776	0	11,305	3,768	-3
11 Garden Suburb	3	10,350	3,450	-9	10,461	3,487	-11
12 Golders Green	3	10,872	3,624	-4	11,544	3,848	-1
13 Hadley	3	14,314	4,771	26	14,042	4,681	20
14 Hale	3	10,580	3,527	-7	10,855	3,618	-7
15 Hendon	3	12,362	4,121	9	12,313	4,104	5
16 Mill Hill	3	11,622	3,874	2	11,887	3,962	2
17 St Pauls	3	10,799	3,600	-5	11,282	3,761	-4
18 Totteridge	3	11,704	3,901	3	12,120	4,040	4
19 West Hendon	3	10,771	3,590	-5	10,914	3,638	-7
20 Woodhouse	3	12,200	4,067	7	13,354	4,451	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>227,425</b>	—	—	<b>234,145</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>3,790</b>	—	—	<b>3,902</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Barnet 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 Burnt Oak ward are relatively over-represented by 14 per cent, while electors in Hadley ward are relatively under-represented by 26 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

22 During Stage One we received representations from the Borough Council, Barnet Borough Council Conservative Group (‘the Conservative Group’), Barnet Labour Party Local Government Committee (‘the Labour Party’), London Borough of Barnet Liberal Democrats (‘the Liberal Democrats’), 39 residents, 4 political groups, and 16 local councillors. In addition, we also received three petitions, totalling 155, 59 and 30 signatures respectively, and some 73 proforma letters. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Barnet*.

23 Our draft recommendations were largely based on the Borough Council’s scheme, although we also reflected each of the borough-wide schemes received during Stage One, together with some further modifications. We considered that our draft recommendations achieved the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, provided good boundaries and proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. We proposed that:

- (a) Barnet Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors;
- (b) there should be 21 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of 18 existing wards, while two wards should retain their existing boundaries.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Barnet Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards.

24 As already indicated, we based our draft recommendations on the Borough Council’s proposals, although we proposed departing from them in the following areas:

- (a) Burnt Oak, Colindale, Edgware, Hale and West Hendon wards in the west of the borough;
- (b) Childs Hill and Golders Green wards in the south of the borough;

- (c) Hendon, Finchley and Mill Hill wards in centre of the borough, and Underhill ward in the north of the borough.

25 Our proposals resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all of the 21 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve over the next five years, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 6 per cent from the borough average in 2003.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

<sup>26</sup> During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, we received representations from the Borough Council, Barnet Borough Conservatives, Barnet Labour Party Local Government Committee ('Barnet Labour Party'), Barnet Liberal Democrats, Sir Sydney Chapman MP, Hendon Liberal Democrats and Colindale Labour Party. Representations were also received from 15 resident associations, three local businesses, nine local councillors and some 340 residents. In addition, we also received some 190 proforma letters and a significant number of petitions, totalling some 900 signatures. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Borough Council and the Commission.

### **Barnet Borough Council**

<sup>27</sup> The Borough Council "noted" our draft recommendations. It proposed minor boundary changes between the proposed Mill Hill and Finchley Church End wards, West Finchley and Woodhouse wards and Edgware and Hale wards.

### **Barnet Borough Conservatives**

<sup>28</sup> Barnet Conservatives (comprising Barnet Conservative Group, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, Finchley & Golders Green Conservative Association, Hendon Conservative Association and Sir Sydney Chapman MP) expressed concern in relation to electorate forecasts for 2003. They argued that the borough's electorate has been increasing over the last five years, but that the 1999/2000 register of electors has shown a fall in the number of electors by some 10,000. As a consequence, they contended that the Borough Council should revisit its initial electorate forecasts.

<sup>29</sup> However, Barnet Conservatives supported the draft recommendations for the proposed wards of Cricklewood & Childs Hill, East Barnet, East Finchley, Edgware, Finchley Church End, Garden

Suburb, Golders Green, Oakleigh, West Finchley and Woodhouse, but put forward alternative warding arrangements for the proposed wards of Brunswick Park, Burnt Oak, Colindale, Coppetts, Hale, Hendon, Mill Hill and West Hendon. In addition, they argued that the proposed High Barnet ward should be named Hadley ward, that the proposed Underhill ward should be named High Barnet ward and that the proposed Woodside Park ward should be named Totteridge ward.

### **Barnet Labour Party Local Government Committee**

<sup>30</sup> Barnet Labour Party supported the proposed increase in the number of councillors to 63 serving 21 wards, and the continuation of three-member wards throughout the borough. It supported the draft recommendations for the proposed wards of West Hendon, Garden Suburb, East Finchley, Coppetts, Brunswick Park, East Barnet, High Barnet, Hendon, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Oakleigh and Underhill, and noted the draft recommendations for the proposed wards of Golders Green, Cricklewood & Childs Hill and Mill Hill. Alternative warding arrangements were proposed in the wards of Edgware, Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hale, Woodhouse, which it proposed be named North Finchley ward, and Woodside Park.

### **Barnet Liberal Democrats**

<sup>31</sup> Barnet Liberal Democrats (comprising the three Liberal Democrat constituency parties in Barnet) opposed our draft recommendations for ward boundary changes to the existing Childs Hill and Golders Green wards on the grounds that the proposed boundary between the proposed Cricklewood & Childs Hill and Golders Green wards would "cut the historic and long-established Childs Hill community in two along a totally arbitrary line". They also proposed minor boundary modifications between the proposed Mill Hill and Hale wards to better reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area.

## Members of Parliament

<sup>32</sup> Sir Sydney Chapman MP “fully supported” the views of the Chipping Barnet Conservative Association. In particular, he agreed that the proposed wards of Underhill, High Barnet, and Woodside Park should be named High Barnet, Hadley and Totteridge respectively.

## Other Representations

<sup>33</sup> Hendon Liberal Democrats supported the proposals put forward by Barnet Liberal Democrats, including our draft recommendations for the proposed wards of Burnt Oak, Colindale, Edgware, Hendon and West Hendon. In particular, they supported the proposed Hendon ward. However, they considered that the proposed warding arrangements for Mill Hill and Hale wards could be improved by transferring a small area from Mill Hill to Hale wards, along similar lines to those proposed by Barnet Liberal Democrats. The proposal to modify the boundary between Mill Hill and Hale wards was supported by three residents.

<sup>34</sup> Colindale Labour Party expressed “satisfaction” with the southern boundary of Colindale ward, although it argued that the revised northern boundary was “unsatisfactory”. In particular, concern was expressed about including Pasteur Close, Angus Gardens and Braemar Gardens in Burnt Oak ward, with the boundary following the centre of Booth Road. In addition, while it accepted proposals to transfer the estate to the north-east of Lanacre Avenue to Burnt Oak ward, it proposed transferring a small estate to the north of Field Mead and to the west of Grahame Park to Hale ward.

<sup>35</sup> The majority of other representations commented on the proposed warding arrangements in the Childs Hill and Golders Green area in the south of the borough and the proposed loss of Totteridge as a ward name. Two councillors, three local businesses, two local groups and some 88 residents opposed our draft recommendations to establish a new Cricklewood & Childs Hill ward, and supported the Borough Council’s initial Stage One proposals which, it was argued, better reflected the Childs Hill community. This view was endorsed by a significant number of petitions, totalling some 800 signatures. In addition, Dunstan Residents’ Association opposed splitting Dunstan Road between two separate wards, arguing that Dunstan Residents Association has been established for more

than 30 years and works closely with all residents. Its views were endorsed by 20 residents who wrote in using a proforma letter. Golders Green South Neighbourhood Watch also opposed the boundary following the line of the centre of Dunstan Road on the grounds that this would divide its neighbourhood watch area. A proforma letter organised by Golders Green South Neighbourhood Watch was returned by some 124 residents. The Cricklewood Community Forum and three residents supported our draft recommendations in this area.

<sup>36</sup> Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, Totteridge Manor Association, Totteridge Residents Association, the Horticultural Society, the Missionaries of Africa and the Parish Church of St Andrew, Totteridge, two councillors and some 235 residents objected to the loss of Totteridge as a ward name. Of these residents, three argued that the proposed High Barnet ward should be named Arkley ward while six residents argued that the proposed High Barnet ward should be named Hadley ward. In addition, 20 residents and Totteridge Women’s Institute objected to the proposed combination of Totteridge, Woodside Park and part of Whetstone on the grounds that Totteridge is a “self-contained rural area” which is distinct from adjoining areas.

<sup>37</sup> Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, a local councillor and a resident proposed that the new Underhill ward should be named High Barnet ward and that the proposed High Barnet ward should be named Hadley ward. These views were endorsed by 45 residents who wrote in using a proforma letter. In addition, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association supported the proposed split of Childs Hill and Golders Green wards, with the A41 forming the new boundary, but objected to splitting Watling Estate between Hale ward and Burnt Oak ward, arguing that this area looks towards Mill Hill, and has little in common with Hale ward. It further proposed that the boundary between Mill Hill and Hale wards should be the A41 and the A1 (Barnet bypass) as this would return Mill Hill Broadway to Hale ward. It also agreed with the Borough Council’s initial proposal to include Shirehall estate within Hendon ward as it would be separated from the rest of West Hendon ward by the busy A41 dual carriageway and Brent Cross Shopping Centre.

<sup>38</sup> The Whetstone Society proposed that the boundary between the proposed Oakleigh and Woodside Park wards should be modified to follow

the Northern Line as the western boundary between County Gate and Alum Way (Totteridge Lane), rather than Whetstone High Road which would divide the Whetstone Shopping Centre. We also received a petition totalling 87 signatures of residents from Woodside Lane, Britannia Road, Derwent Crescent, Coniston Close, High Road, Avenue Road and Woodside Park Road, arguing that they have little affinity with either Totteridge or Woodside, and would prefer to form part of a new North Finchley ward. One resident supported our draft recommendations.

39 Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents' Association and one resident suggested that the proposed Coppetts ward should be named Friern Barnet ward. A local councillor supported the proposed boundaries for Brunswick Park and, in particular, the continued use of the railway line as a clear and established boundary between the new Southgate part of Brunswick Park and the area of Friern Barnet to the west.

40 Four residents supported our draft recommendations retaining the existing Garden Suburb ward. One resident expressed concern that the proposed boundary between Edgware and Hale wards would split Penhurst Gardens, which is a cul-de-sac. One resident was "disappointed" that his initial submission to reduce the number of wards to 18 had not been accepted. One resident expressed concern about the extent to which natural communities were being satisfactorily reflected as part of the current review and, in particular, the division of Cricklewood town centre between wards.



## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

41 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Barnet 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”.

42 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.

43 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.

44 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**

45 The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 3 per cent from 227,425 to 234,145 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to the unitary development plan for the borough, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

46 During Stage Three, we received a representation from Barnet Conservatives who expressed concern in relation to the 2003 electorate forecasts. They argued that the borough's electorate has been increasing for the last five years, but that the 1999/2000 register of electors has shown a decrease of some 10,000 electors. As a consequence, they contended that the Borough Council should revisit its initial electorate forecasts, although they did not put forward alternative projections. In the light of this, we sought further advice from the Borough Council. Having reconsidered the electorate projections, in the light of representations made at Stage Three and following further advice from the Borough Council, we remain satisfied that the electorate projections used in our draft recommendations report provide the best estimates presently available.

### **Council Size**

47 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.



56 Fourth, we noted the arguments put to us about the interests and identities of communities in the borough. We tried to reflect such considerations in our draft recommendations where it would be consistent with our objective of electoral equality, although we noted that there was no consensus locally as to the precise boundaries of such communities.

57 Fifth, all four borough-wide schemes would provide improved electoral equality, although to varying degrees. Under the Borough Council's and Barnet Labour Party's proposals, the number of electors per councillor would only vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in one ward; under the Conservative Group's proposals, two wards would vary by more than 10 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor for the borough while, under the Liberal Democrats' proposals, the number of electors per councillor in all wards would vary by less than 10 per cent from the borough average. By 2003, all wards in each of the four schemes would vary by less than 10 per cent from the borough average.

58 In our draft recommendations report, we sought to build on these proposals in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve further improvements in electoral equality, while also seeking to reflect the statutory criteria. Where it existed, we sought to reflect the consensus among representations for warding arrangements in particular parts of the borough. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all of the respondents in our draft recommendations. Our proposals therefore reflected, in part, each of the borough-wide schemes, together with some further modifications.

59 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three, and note that while the number of representations has been much higher than we would normally expect, our draft recommendations were broadly supported, with only few issues of note emerging. Having carefully considered all the representations received, we judge that modifications should be made to a number of our proposed ward boundaries and one ward name. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon wards;
- (b) Burnt Oak, Edgware and Hale wards;

- (c) Childs Hill and Golders Green wards;
- (d) East Finchley and Garden Suburb wards;
- (e) Finchley, Mill Hill and St Paul's wards;
- (f) Friern Barnet, Totteridge and Woodhouse wards;
- (g) Brunswick Park and East Barnet wards;
- (h) Arkley and Hadley wards.

60 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.

### **Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon wards**

61 Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon wards are situated at the western edge of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, Colindale and Hendon wards have 7 per cent and 9 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively, while West Hendon ward has 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average.

62 At Stage One, we received proposed warding arrangements in this area from the Borough Council, which was supported by the Conservative Group and Barnet Labour Party, and from the Liberal Democrats, both of which involved relatively limited modifications to the existing warding arrangements. In our draft recommendations report, we concluded that the Liberal Democrats' proposals offered the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and substantially endorsed them, subject to minor boundary modifications relating to Finchley Church End and Mill Hill wards. While both schemes adopted major roads in the area as boundaries, the Liberal Democrats' proposals secured a better level of electoral equality. Furthermore, we were not persuaded that the Borough Council's proposals to transfer the area of the existing Colindale ward to the south of Colindeep Lane to West Hendon ward would satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area, given that this area is separated from West Hendon ward by Edgware Road, the M1, the Bedford to St Pancras railway line and the Connaught Industrial Estate.

63 At Stage Three, Hendon Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations for the three wards. Barnet Conservatives proposed that the

existing northern boundary of the Watling estate be retained between Burnt Oak and Colindale wards, that the boundary between Colindale and West Hendon wards be modified to follow Colindeep Lane and Sheaveshill Avenue, that the Shirehall estate to the east of the A41 (the area covered by polling district ND) be included in Hendon ward and that the area in the north of the proposed Hendon ward (the area covered by polling district RD) remain in Mill Hill ward. Barnet Labour Party supported our draft recommendations in the proposed Hendon and West Hendon wards, although it proposed an alternative boundary between Colindale and Burnt Oak wards. Under its proposals, the boundary would follow the line of the Adastral estate, south along Lanacre Avenue, south of North Acre, Kenley Avenue, Swan Drive, along Booth Road, south of Aeroville, along the Northern line and behind the Montrose Playing fields. Barnet Labour Party also proposed that Pasteur Close should remain in Colindale ward. Colindale Labour Party supported the proposed new southern boundary of Colindale ward, although it objected to the proposed boundary between Colindale and Burnt Oak wards. While it accepted the proposal transferring the recently constructed estate to the north-east of Lanacre Avenue to Burnt Oak ward, it opposed the transfer of Pasteur Close to Burnt Oak ward and the drawing of the boundary down the centre of Booth Road. It also objected to the proposal transferring Angus Gardens and Braemar Gardens into Burnt Oak ward on the grounds that the housing in these two roads is virtually identical to the majority of housing in Booth Road. Instead, it proposed that the small recently constructed estate to the north of Field Mead and to the west of Grahame Park Way should be transferred to Hale ward.

<sup>64</sup> Having carefully considered all representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations in Hendon and West Hendon wards as final which have achieved broad support at Stage Three, with Barnet Labour Party, Barnet Liberal Democrats and Hendon Liberal Democrats supporting our proposals. We note that Barnet Conservatives have continued to argue that part of Colindale ward to the south of Colindeep Lane and Sheaveshill Avenue should be included within West Hendon ward, and that part of the Shirehall estate to the east of the A41 should be included in Hendon ward, with the area in the north of Hendon ward remaining in Mill Hill ward. However, we have not been persuaded that this proposal would offer a better balance between

electoral equality and the statutory criteria in this area. We remain persuaded that the current boundary between Colindale and West Hendon wards best reflects communities in this area, and that the area which the Conservatives propose should form part of West Hendon ward is separated from it by Edgware Road, the M1, the Bedford to St Pancras railway line and the Connaught Industrial Estate.

<sup>65</sup> We also remain persuaded that the A1 forms a logical boundary between Hendon and Mill Hill wards, and that the area to the south of the A1 appears to have little affinity with Mill Hill ward given that it is separated by the A1, the A41 the open spaces of Hendon Golf Course and the Cophall Sports Centre. In addition, we have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposal to adopt the A41 for the entire length of the boundary between Hendon and West Hendon. While we accept that this boundary would have merit, we have reservations about the resultant equality of representation, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Hendon and West Hendon wards varying by 9 per cent and 11 per cent respectively (7 per cent and 9 per cent by 2003).

<sup>66</sup> In our draft recommendations report, we indicated that the proposed boundary between Colindale and Burnt Oak wards would be "indistinct", and invited further comments in relation to a better boundary in the area. Barnet Liberal Democrats and Hendon Liberal Democrats supported the proposed boundary, although alternative ward boundaries were put forward by Barnet Labour Party, Barnet Conservatives and Colindale Labour Party. We have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposal to retain the existing ward boundary between the two wards. However, this would require endorsing their proposed warding arrangements in Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon and Mill Hill wards and, as discussed already, we have not been persuaded by their proposals in this area. Of the other two proposals, we consider that Barnet Labour Party's proposals would appear to have the greater merit. In particular, we have reservations about the extent to which Colindale Labour Party's proposals to transfer the area to the north of Field Mead would satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area, given that it would appear to be isolated from the remainder of Hale ward. Nevertheless, in adopting Barnet Labour Party's proposals, we note that a number of Colindale Labour Party's concerns,

including that Pasteur Close should remain in Colindale ward and that the boundary should not follow the centre of Booth Road, would be reflected. Accordingly, we propose endorsing Barnet Labour Party's proposed boundary between Colindale and Burnt Oak wards.

67 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon wards varying from the borough average by 4 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality would improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 2 per cent, 1 per cent and 2 per cent respectively.

### **Burnt Oak, Edgware and Hale wards**

68 Burnt Oak, Edgware and Hale wards lie in the north-western corner of the borough, abutting the boundary with the London Borough of Harrow and the county of Hertfordshire. Under current arrangements, Burnt Oak and Hale wards have 14 per cent and 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, while Edgware ward has 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average.

69 At Stage One, we received proposals in this area from the Borough Council, which was supported by the Conservative Group and Barnet Labour Party, and from the Liberal Democrats. In our draft recommendations report, we decided that the Liberal Democrats' proposals represented the better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and substantially endorsed them, subject to minor boundary modifications between Burnt Oak and Hale ward and Hale and Mill Hill wards. While both schemes had merit, we considered that the existing wards in the area satisfactorily reflected established communities, and noted that the Liberal Democrats' proposals involved minimal change to existing ward boundaries.

70 At Stage Three, the Borough Council argued that the boundary between the proposed Hale and Edgware wards should be modified in order that Penhurst Gardens be wholly contained within Edgware ward. Barnet Conservatives supported our draft recommendations for Edgware ward, although they expressed concern that the Burnt Oak (Watling) estate would be split between two wards and, as a consequence, argued that Burnt

Oak should retain its existing warding arrangements. They also proposed modifying the proposed boundary between Hale and Mill Hill wards, with the Marsh Lane and Worcester Crescent area (the whole of the current polling district SC) being retained within Mill Hill ward, and the area to the east of the M1 (the whole of the current polling district SD) being retained within Hale ward.

71 Barnet Labour Party recognised that there was "logic" to our draft recommendations in this area, although it proposed boundary modifications between Edgware and Hale wards, Burnt Oak and Hale wards and, as already discussed, Burnt Oak and Colindale wards. It argued that Priory Field Drive, Highview Avenue and Highview Gardens and the whole of Penhurst Gardens should be retained within Edgware ward, with Wyre Grove, Marlborough Avenue and Warwick Avenue being transferred from Hale ward to Edgware ward and Bushfield Crescent, Meadfield, Springwood Crescent, Knightswood Close and Burrell Close being transferred from Edgware ward to Hale ward. It argued that these modifications would result in residents of Aldridge Avenue not being required to leave their road via Hale ward in order to get into Edgware ward. It also proposed that the boundary between Burnt Oak and Hale wards should follow the length of Deansbrook road.

72 Hendon Liberal Democrats supported our draft recommendations in Burnt Oak ward, but proposed modifying the boundary between Hale and Mill Hill wards, with Marsh Lane, Marsh Close, Abbey View and Austell Gardens being transferred from Mill Hill ward to Hale ward on the grounds that this would better reflect local interests and communities. This proposal was supported by three residents, who further proposed that Glendon Gardens, Scouts Way and Northway Crescent should form part of Hale ward.

73 As already indicated, Colindale Labour Party proposed modifying the boundary between Colindale and Hale wards, with the small estate to the north of Field Mead and to the west of Grahame Park being transferred to Hale ward. One local resident argued that Penhurst Gardens, which would be divided between Edgware and Hale wards under our draft recommendations, should be wholly contained in Edgware ward.

74 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations in this area have not engendered

significant local opposition at Stage Three and, on balance, are content to substantially endorse them, subject to a number of minor boundary modifications to reflect representations received at Stage Three. As already indicated, we have been persuaded to modify our proposed boundary between Burnt Oak and Colindale wards. As a consequence, we proposed adopting the entire length of Deansbrook Road as the boundary between Burnt Oak and Hale wards. This is a clear boundary and would obviate the need to split The Meads between Burnt Oak and Hale wards. While we have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposal to retain the existing warding arrangements in Burnt Oak ward, as already indicated, this would be dependent upon endorsing their proposed warding arrangements in Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon and Mill Hill wards and we have not been persuaded by their proposals in this area.

75 We have not been persuaded to substantially depart from our proposed boundary between Edgware and Hale wards, which would appear to have been broadly welcomed at Stage Three, with only Barnet Labour Party proposing substantive modifications to this boundary. However, in order to reflect the views of the Borough Council, Barnet Labour Party and a local resident, we propose modifying the boundary in order that Penhurst Gardens is wholly contained within Edgware ward. We note that the only access to this road is via Edgware ward, and agree that it should not be divided between Edgware and Hale wards. We have also noted the concerns raised by Barnet Labour Party that Aldridge Avenue would be contained within Edgware ward but only accessible via Hale ward, and propose including this road in Hale ward.

76 We are not proposing boundary modifications elsewhere. While we have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposals to modify the boundary between Hale and Mill Hill wards, we have not been persuaded that their proposals would achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations. In particular, we consider that the area to the south of Apex Corner and to the east of the M1 motorway should be included in Mill Hill ward rather than Hale ward given that this area has a clear sense of affinity with the Mill Hill community, with which it shares many ties, and would recognise the physical boundary of the M1 motorway. Similarly, while we have considered the

proposals to transfer a number of streets from Mill Hill to Hale ward, as a result of our proposed boundary modifications between Edgware and Hale wards, we note that these proposals would result in the level of electoral equality in the proposed Hale ward significantly deteriorating.

77 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Edgware and Hale wards varying from the borough average by 2 per cent and 3 per cent respectively. While the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Burnt Oak ward would initially vary by 11 per cent, electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years as a result of projected future growth, with the number of electors per councillor expected to vary by 1 per cent from the average.

### **Childs Hill and Golders Green wards**

78 Childs Hill and Golders Green wards are located in the south-west corner of the borough, and under current arrangements vary by 14 per cent and 4 per cent respectively from the average number of electors per councillor for the borough.

79 At Stage One, we received proposals from the Borough Council, which were supported by the Liberal Democrats, while the Conservative Group and Barnet Labour Party proposed alternative warding arrangements. In our draft recommendations report, while we noted that both warding arrangements would secure improved electoral equality, we concluded that the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group and Barnet Labour Party would represent the better balance between electoral and the statutory criteria. In particular, we noted that these warding arrangements would recognise the Cricklewood community and result in the majority of the Golders Green community being contained within Golders Green ward. While we noted that the Borough Council's warding arrangements proposed only minor boundary modifications to existing wards and achieved a degree of local support, we were not persuaded that they satisfactorily reflected the interests and identities of communities in this area, particularly in relation to the communities of Cricklewood and Golders Green.

80 At Stage Three, Barnet Conservatives, Chipping Barnet Conservatives, the Cricklewood Community

Forum, and three residents supported our draft recommendations, while Barnet Labour Party “noted” them. Barnet Conservatives argued that the natural boundary in the area is the A41, and that Cricklewood & Childs Hill forms a community. They also argued that the Clitterhouse estate is part of Cricklewood & Childs Hill and could not be described as being part of Golders Green. Barnet Liberal Democrats opposed our draft recommendations, and argued that the local community was opposed to this level of change in the area. Dunstan Residents’ Association, Golders Green South Neighbourhood Watch, Wendover & Moreland Court Residents’ Association, two councillors, two solicitor firms, John Lewis Agencies and some 93 residents also opposed our draft recommendations in this area. In addition, opposition was expressed by 20 residents, who submitted a Dunstan Residents’ Association proforma letter, and 124 residents, who submitted a Golders Green South Neighbourhood Watch proforma letter. We also received some 800 signatories on petitions.

81 In the majority of cases, respondents expressed support for the Borough Council’s Stage One proposals which, it was argued, would better reflect the interests and identities of the Childs Hill community. In particular, it was argued that the A41 is not a significant boundary, and that residents from the Hocroft Estate (comprising Hocroft Road, Hocroft Avenue, Ranulf Road, Lyndale, Farm Avenue) regard themselves as part of the Golders Green community rather than Cricklewood, while the Golders Green estate (Pennine Drive, Cumbrian Gardens, Clevedon Gardens, Purbeck Drive, Cheviot Gardens) owes its tradition to Golders Green rather than Cricklewood. Furthermore, it was argued that residents of the Hocroft and Golders Green estates, particularly Jewish residents, have a direct connection with the east side of the A41, and walk from these estates to synagogues in Dunstan Road, Helenslea Avenue and the Ridgeway in the existing Childs Hill ward.

82 Opposition was also expressed in relation to dividing Dunstan Road between two separate wards on the grounds that there is a strong sense of cohesion between Dunstan Road, Hodford Road, Wycombe Gardens and the western side of Finchley Road, and that our draft recommendations would damage the strong sense of community in this area.

83 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note the strong

opposition to our draft recommendations, and recognise the concerns of respondents in relation to dividing the existing Childs Hill community. On balance, and in the light of the overwhelming response received at Stage Three against our draft recommendations, we have been persuaded that retaining Childs Hill ward, as proposed by the Borough Council and Barnet Liberal Democrats at Stage One, would represent a better balance of electoral equality and the statutory criteria. First, we have been persuaded that Childs Hill has a strong sense of community, with a long-standing settled population, and that retaining the present Childs Hill ward would reflect the direct links between residents of the Hocroft and Golders Green estates to the west of the A41 and the main body of the Jewish community on the Golders Green side of the A41. In particular, in the light of the evidence received, we consider that there are few community ties between the Clitterhouse and Golders Green estates and Cricklewood. Second, we have been persuaded that there is merit in retaining Dunstan Road within the existing ward on the grounds of reflecting the strong community ties between Dunstan Road, Hodford Road, Wycombe Gardens and the western side of Finchley Road.

83 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Childs Hill and Golders Green wards varying from the borough average by 2 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to remain constant over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in the two wards expected to vary by 3 per cent and 2 per cent over the next five years.

### **East Finchley and Garden Suburb wards**

84 East Finchley and Garden Suburb wards are both adjacent to the south-eastern boundary with the neighbouring boroughs of Camden and Haringey. Under current arrangements, East Finchley has 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, while Garden Suburb has 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average.

85 In our draft recommendations report, we endorsed the Borough Council’s proposals in this area, which proposed minimal change to both wards, and had the support all three political groups, the Finchley & Golders Green Constituency Labour

Party and two councillors. These proposals resulted in the area to the north of the North Circular Road being transferred from East Finchley ward on the grounds that this area is “similar to ... adjacent residential areas”, and would recognise the physical barrier provided by the North Circular Road. In addition, these proposals modified the western boundary of Garden Suburb to include properties on the western side of Finchley Road which, it was argued, are similar in style and character to the Hampstead Garden Suburb conservation area, with which they shared community ties.

86 At Stage Three, our draft recommendations were supported by Barnet Conservatives, Barnet Labour Party and four residents. No other representations were received. Accordingly, in the light of the absence of opposing views expressed at Stage Three, we remain satisfied that our draft recommendations represent the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and have decided to endorse them as final.

87 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed East Finchley and Garden Suburb wards varying from the borough average by 3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to remain relatively constant over the next five years.

### **Finchley, Mill Hill and St Pauls wards**

88 Under current arrangements, Finchley and St Paul’s wards, both of which are situated towards the centre of the borough, are over-represented, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 6 per cent and 5 per cent from the borough average. Mill Hill ward, which is also situated towards the centre of the borough, is currently under-represented, with 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average.

89 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed boundary changes to all three wards. Its proposals were supported by Barnet Labour Party, the Finchley & Golders Green Constituency Labour Party and a councillor, while the Conservative Group supported these proposals, subject to two modifications to the proposed West Finchley ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed no change to the existing Finchley and Mill Hill wards, although they proposed minor boundary modifications to St Pauls ward. In our draft recommendations report,

we noted that there was broad consensus that there should only be minimal change to the warding arrangements in this area, and concurred with this view. However, we had reservations as to the extent to which the existing arrangements in Mill Hill ward satisfactorily reflected the interests and identities of communities in the area, and proposed modifying Mill Hill ward’s existing boundary with Hendon and Hale wards, as already indicated, and with the proposed Finchley Church End ward. Furthermore, as a consequence of our draft recommendations in Finchley Church End and Mill Hill wards, we judged that the Borough Council’s proposal for a new West Finchley ward would offer the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. Also, in the light of representations received, we proposed that Finchley ward be named West Finchley ward and that St Pauls ward be named Finchley Church End ward.

90 At Stage Three, the Borough Council proposed a minor boundary modification between Mill Hill and Finchley Church End wards on the grounds that 1 to 21 Paragon Court and 1 to 12 Oakdale Lodge have been located in Mill Hill ward, but that access to these properties is from Finchley Church End ward. Barnet Conservatives and Barnet Labour Party supported our draft recommendations for Finchley Church End and West Finchley wards. However, while Barnet Labour Party noted our draft recommendation in Mill Hill ward, Barnet Conservatives proposed modifying the boundary between the wards of Mill Hill, Hale and Hendon, as already discussed. Barnet Liberal Democrats, Hendon Liberal Democrats and three residents proposed modifying the boundary between Mill Hill and Hale ward, as already discussed.

91 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that our draft recommendations have been broadly supported, with Barnet Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats proposing only minor boundary modifications to the proposed wards. On balance, in the absence of opposing views in this area, we are content to endorse our draft recommendations in this area as final. As already indicated, while we considered the alternative ward boundaries in relation to Mill Hill ward and its boundary with Hale and Hendon wards, we have not been persuaded that these alternative proposals would represent a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. First, we remain persuaded that the A1 forms a logical boundary between Hendon and Mill Hill wards, and that the

area to the south of the A1 (currently in Mill Hill ward) would appear to have little affinity with Mill Hill. Second, we consider that the area to the south of Apex Corner and to the east of the M1 should be included in Mill Hill ward rather than Hale ward, given that this area has a clear sense of affinity with the Mill Hill community, with which it shares many ties, and that the physical boundary of the M1 would be recognised. Also, as a result of our proposed boundary modifications between Edgware and Hale wards, any further transfer of areas into Hale ward would result in the level of electoral equality in the proposed Hale ward significantly deteriorating.

92 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Mill Hill, Oakleigh and West Finchley wards varying by 4 per cent in all three cases. However, this level of electoral equality is projected to marginally improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Mill Hill ward varying by 3 per cent and 1 per cent from average in Oakleigh and West Finchley wards.

### **Friern Barnet, Totteridge and Woodhouse wards**

93 Totteridge ward covers the Totteridge, Whetstone and Woodside Park communities, together with a significant area of green belt land. It lies towards the centre of the borough, and currently has 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average. Friern Barnet ward covers an area adjacent to the East Coast Main Line railway and currently has approximately equal to the average number of electors per councillor for the borough, while Woodhouse ward (which lies in the south-eastern corner of the borough) currently has 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average.

94 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed a new Oakleigh ward, comprising the area of the existing Hadley ward to the south of Station Road and most of the northern part of the existing Friern Barnet ward, and a new Coppetts ward, comprising the southern section of Friern Barnet ward and the eastern half of the existing Woodhouse ward. The revised Woodhouse ward would cover the western half of the existing ward, together with parts of the existing East Finchley, St Paul's and Totteridge wards, while the revised Totteridge ward (which the Council proposed

should be renamed Woodside Park ward) would be enlarged by including part of Friern Barnet ward.

95 As already indicated, the Conservative Group proposed several modifications to the Borough Council's scheme in this area. The Liberal Democrats proposed an alternative configuration of wards, with a new Colney Hatch ward comprising most of the area covered by the existing Woodhouse ward, a revised Friern Barnet ward covering the northern part of the existing Woodhouse ward and the southern part of the existing Friern Barnet ward, a new Lyonsdown ward comprising the remainder of the existing Friern Barnet ward, together with areas from the existing Arkley and Hadley wards, and the transfer of a small area from Totteridge ward to the revised Friern Barnet ward. Councillor McGuirk supported the Borough Council's proposals for the boundaries of the revised Woodhouse ward, although she supported Barnet Labour Party's proposal to name the ward North Finchley, as did Councillors Rawlings and Cross. Both of these respondents supported the Council's proposals for Coppetts ward, but opposed the inclusion of several streets to the east of the East Coast Main Line railway in the new Coppetts ward, as proposed by the Conservative Group.

96 In our draft recommendations report, we noted that there was a divergence of views as to the most appropriate warding arrangement in this area. Nevertheless, we considered that the Borough Council's proposals offered the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. In particular, we noted that the Conservatives Groups' proposals would result in poor electoral equality in the proposed Coppetts ward, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 13 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor, and that the Liberal Democrats' proposals did not appear to satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in the area.

97 At Stage Three, Barnet Labour Party supported our draft recommendations in Coppetts ward, and argued that while our draft recommendations in Woodhouse and Woodside Park wards have merit, they could be improved by transferring a small area of housing around the High Road from Woodside Park ward to Woodhouse ward. It argued that this incorporates housing which relates more closely to the North Finchley shopping street and is part of the community based around the

High Road. In addition, it argued that Woodhouse ward should be named North Finchley ward as the ward would include the North Finchley community and North Finchley High Road. Barnet Labour Party also supported using 'Woodside Park' as the proposed ward name because it includes the Woodside Park community, Woodside Park Station and several roads with Woodside in their name. It considered that the area of Woodside Park provides the main urban centre of the ward and that, while Totteridge is an historical name, Woodside Park is more representative of the totality of the community. Furthermore, it supported using 'Coppetts' as a proposed ward name which, it argued, all local residents would be able to identify with as it is a neutral name, reflecting the local Coppetts Wood.

98 Barnet Conservatives continued to argue that the area to the west of Oakleigh Park South should be transferred as this area has "more in common with New Southgate and Coppetts ward than Brunswick Park." In addition, they opposed the loss of Totteridge and Friern Barnet as ward names. First, they argued that Totteridge is a well-established community, with a strong sense of history and a distinct character and identity, and that the proposed ward would include Totteridge Lane, Totteridge Common and Totteridge Green, all of which act as focal points within the ward. Second, they argued that Coppetts Wood is known by very few people, even locally, that the proposed ward would contain Friern Barnet Town Hall and that some 95 per cent of the proposed ward would lie within the old Friern Barnet Urban District Council area.

99 Further submissions objecting to the loss of Totteridge as a ward name were received from Sydney Chapman MP, Barnet Residents Association, Chipping Barnet Conservative Association, Totteridge Manor Association, Totteridge Residents Association, the Horticultural Society, the Missionaries of Africa, the Parish Church of St Andrew, Totteridge, a local councillor and some 235 residents. In addition, some 45 proforma letters were received opposing the loss of Totteridge as a ward name. We also received submissions from Totteridge Women's Institute and some 20 residents objecting to the proposed combination of Totteridge, Woodside Park and part of Whetstone on the grounds that Totteridge is a "self-contained rural area" which is distinct from adjoining areas. Friern Barnet & Whetstone Residents Association, a councillor and one

resident objected to the loss of Friern Barnet as a ward name. The Whetstone Society proposed to modify the boundary between the proposed Oakleigh and Woodside Park wards to follow the Northern Line as the western boundary between County gate and Alum Way (Totteridge Lane). One resident expressed support for our draft recommendations in this area.

100 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for the proposed Coppetts ward. While we have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposals to modify the boundary between the proposed Coppetts and Brunswick Park wards, we have not been persuaded that including properties to the east of the East Coast Main railway line would better reflect the interests and identities of those residents and, in particular, note that this proposed boundary modification would result in worse electoral equality. Furthermore, while we have considered using the name Friern Barnet ward, we note that this ward would comprise several communities and, on balance, remain satisfied that there is merit in adopting a neutral name that all residents would be able to identify with. In addition, we have not been persuaded that North Finchley would offer a better ward name than Woodhouse for similar reasons.

101 However, we note there has been significant local opposition to the loss of Totteridge as a ward name, with the majority of respondents expressing concern that a name change would adversely impact on the Totteridge community, postal addresses and house prices. Conversely, there was little support for naming this ward as Woodside Park. Accordingly, in the light of the evidence received during Stage Three, we have decided to modify our draft recommendation and retain Totteridge as the ward name. However, we should point out that changes to ward names or ward boundaries would not impact on postal addresses and, therefore, are unlikely to affect house prices in the area.

102 We also note the concerns of respondents who opposed combining Totteridge, Woodside Park and part of Whetstone wards. However, while we have sympathy with this view, we note that alternative warding arrangements have not been put forward. Accordingly, in the absence of a viable alternative in this area, we are content to endorse our draft recommendations, although we propose transferring a small area of housing around the High Road from Woodside Park ward to

Woodhouse ward, as proposed by Barnet Labour Party. This proposed boundary modification would provide improved electoral equality between the two wards and partly reflect the views of a petition containing 90 signatures which argued that this area better relates to properties in Woodhouse ward. We have also considered the proposed boundary modification put forward by the Whetstone Society, but we have not been persuaded that this proposal would represent a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our draft recommendation.

103 Our final recommendations would result in much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Totteridge ward varying by 1 per cent from the borough average and equal to the average in the proposed Woodhouse ward (1 per cent and 2 per cent respectively by 2003). However, while there would initially be 6 per cent fewer electors per councillor in the proposed Coppetts ward, electoral equality would improve over the next five years as a result of projected future growth, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 2 per cent from the average by 2003.

### **Brunswick Park and East Barnet wards**

104 Brunswick Park and East Barnet wards lie at the eastern edge of the borough, abutting the boundary with the borough of Enfield. Under the existing arrangements, Brunswick Park ward varies by 4 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor for the borough, while East Barnet ward varies by 1 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor.

105 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed no change to East Barnet ward, although it proposed a minor adjustment to the boundary between Brunswick Park and the new Oakleigh ward to follow the East Coast Main Line railway. These proposals were supported by Barnet Labour Party. The Conservative Group also supported these proposals, subject to proposing that the area to the east of Oakleigh Road South (currently in Brunswick Park ward) should be included in the proposed Coppetts ward, as already indicated. Two councillors supported the Borough Council's proposals for East Barnet ward.

106 In our draft recommendations report, we adopted the Borough Council's proposals as our draft recommendations, which we considered achieved the best balance between electoral equality

and the statutory criteria. While we noted that the Liberal Democrats' proposals would provide a marginally better level of electoral equality, we were not persuaded that its proposals would better reflect the interests and identities of communities in the area. In addition, we were not persuaded by the Conservatives' proposal to transfer part of Brunswick Park ward to the new Coppetts ward, as we considered that the East Coast Main Line railway to Kings Cross is a major boundary and noted that the Conservatives' proposal resulted in worse electoral equality.

107 At Stage Three, Barnet Labour Party supported our draft recommendations in this area, while Barnet Conservatives, as already indicated, continued to argue that the area to the west of Oakleigh Park South should be transferred to the proposed Coppetts ward, as this area has "more in common with New Southgate and Coppetts ward than Brunswick Park." No other representations were received.

108 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we remain satisfied that our draft recommendations represent the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and have decided to endorse them as final. As already indicated, while we have considered Barnet Conservatives' proposals to modify the boundary between the proposed Brunswick Park and Coppetts wards, we note that this proposal would result in worse electoral equality, and we have not been persuaded that it would better reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area.

109 Under our final recommendations there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Brunswick Park and East Barnet wards varying by 1 per cent and 5 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would further improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 1 per cent and 2 per cent from the average.

### **Arkley and Hadley wards**

110 Arkley and Hadley wards lie at the northern edge of the borough. Under existing arrangements, Hadley ward has the largest electoral imbalance in the borough, with 26 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillor in Arkley ward varies by 7 per cent from the average.

111 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed modifications to both wards and, as a consequence, proposed renaming Hadley ward as High Barnet ward and Arkley ward as Underhill ward. The Borough Council's proposals were supported by Barnet Labour Party and two councillors. However, the Conservative Group proposed transferring an area to the west of the Great North Road from the proposed Oakleigh ward to Underhill ward. It also supported retaining the existing Hadley ward name and proposed that the proposed Underhill ward should be named High Barnet ward. The Liberal Democrats proposed alternative ward boundaries to those of the Borough Council. They also supported retaining the existing ward names in the area.

112 In our draft recommendations report, we substantially endorsed the Borough Council's proposals, which we considered achieved the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. However, we proposed departing from this proposal by including the northernmost parts of the existing Edgware and Hale wards in the new Underhill ward as we considered that these areas are separated from the built-up areas of Edgware and Hale wards by open space, and would appear to share some community ties with the remainder of Underhill ward along Barnet Road. In addition, we noted that this proposed boundary modification would improve the level of electoral equality achieved in the proposed Hale ward.

113 At Stage Three, Barnet Conservatives Sydney Chapman MP, Chipping Barnet Residents Association and Barnet Residents' Association argued that High Barnet ward should be renamed Hadley ward and that Underhill ward should be renamed High Barnet ward. They argued the name Hadley has been in existence for the last hundred years, that there are a significant number of place names, roads and local companies which used 'Hadley' in their names and that very little of the area known as High Barnet is contained within this ward. In relation to the proposed Underhill ward, they argued that Underhill is just a small settlement of some eight hundred electors grouped around the football club, while 95 per cent of the area within the ward is known as High Barnet. These proposals were supported by one councillor and 46 residents who wrote in using a proforma letter.

114 Barnet Labour Party supported our draft recommendations in this area, including the names of wards. It argued that the proposed High Barnet ward would include the High Barnet community,

and is easily identifiable by the majority of residents. Furthermore, it did not consider that either Arkley or Hadley would be representative of the entirety of this ward, with both Hadley and Arkley comprising small areas within the ward. Similarly, it supported using the name Underhill as a ward name, arguing that the proposed ward would contain the Underhill Community and the grounds of Barnet Football Club, named Underhill, a well known landmark. It opposed naming the ward High Barnet on the grounds that this would not reflect the community in this area but the community to its north.

115 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations in this area. While we have considered alternative proposals in relation to the naming of wards in this area, we have not been persuaded that any of the proposals put forward would better reflect the constituent communities in these wards. We note that Hadley would only comprise a small part of the ward and, on balance, remain satisfied that High Barnet provides a better ward name as it would be a neutral and more identifiable name. As a consequence of this proposal, we have not been persuaded to propose an alternative ward name for the proposed Underhill, given that the only alternative put forward is High Barnet ward.

116 Our final recommendations would provide much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed High Barnet and Underhill wards each varying by 5 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would further improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 2 per cent and 1 per cent from the average.

## Conclusions

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

- (a) Woodside Park ward should be renamed Totteridge ward, with the boundary between Totteridge and Woodhouse wards being modified, to incorporate housing to the north of Woodside Lane and to the west of High Road, Derwent Crescent, Coniston Close and Britannia

Road (to the east) bounded by North Middlesex Golf course within Woodhouse ward;

- (b) Childs Hill and Golders Green wards should largely follow the existing ward boundaries, subject to the boundary modifications proposed by the Borough Council and Barnet Liberal Democrats during our initial consultation stage, and reiterated by Barnet Liberal Democrats during Stage Three;
- (c) the boundary between Burnt Oak and Colindale wards and Burnt Oak and Hale wards should be modified to reflect Barnet Labour Party's proposals;
- (d) the boundary between Edgware and Hale wards should be modified, with Aldridge Avenue being included in Hale ward, as suggested by Barnet Labour Party, and with the whole of Penhurst Gardens being included in Edgware ward, as proposed by the Borough Council and Barnet Labour Party;
- (e) minor boundary modifications between Mill Hill and Finchley Church End wards and Woodhouse and West Finchley ward, as proposed by the Borough Council.

118 We conclude that, in Barnet:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 60 to 63;

- (b) there should be 21 wards, one more than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all but two of the existing wards.

119 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.

120 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Barnet 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 three to one. This improved balance of representation is expected to improve further with all wards expected to vary by less than 10 per cent in 2003, with the highest variation being 3 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

Barnet 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	60	63	60	63
Number of wards	20	21	20	21
Average number of electors per councillor	3,790	3,611	3,902	3,717
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	3	1	5	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	0	0

Map 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Barnet



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## 6. NEXT STEPS

<sup>121</sup> Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Barnet and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

<sup>122</sup> It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

<sup>123</sup> All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

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



# APPENDIX A

## Draft Recommendations for Barnet

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of a number of wards where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other change from draft to final recommendations, which is not included in Figure A1, is that we propose to rename Woodside Park ward as Totteridge.

*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 %
1 Brunswick Park	3	10,893	3,631	1	11,077	3,692	-1
2 Burnt Oak	3	9,717	3,239	-10	11,308	3,769	1
3 Colindale	3	10,920	3,640	1	11,868	3,956	6
4 Coppetts	3	10,165	3,388	-6	11,321	3,774	2
5 Cricklewood & Childs Hill	3	10,791	3,597	0	10,880	3,627	-2
6 East Barnet	3	11,423	3,808	5	11,424	3,808	2
7 East Finchley	3	10,556	3,519	-3	10,763	3,588	-3
8 Edgware	3	11,085	3,695	2	11,356	3,785	0
9 Finchley Church End	3	10,665	3,555	-2	11,057	3,686	-1
10 Garden Suburb	3	10,746	3,582	-1	10,828	3,609	-3
11 Golders Green	3	10,625	3,542	-2	10,888	3,629	-2
12 Hale	3	10,621	3,540	-2	10,880	3,627	-2
13 Hendon	3	11,271	3,757	4	11,298	3,766	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 %
14 High Barnet	3	11,348	3,783	5	11,418	3,806	2
15 Mill Hill	3	11,291	3,764	4	11,554	3,851	4
16 Oakleigh	3	11,238	3,746	4	11,000	3,667	-1
17 Underhill	3	11,351	3,784	5	11,294	3,765	1
18 West Finchley	3	10,410	3,470	-4	11,038	3,679	-1
19 West Hendon	3	10,771	3,590	-1	10,914	3,638	-2
20 Woodhouse	3	10,543	3,514	-3	10,655	3,552	-4
21 Woodside Park	3	10,995	3,665	2	11,324	3,775	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>227,425</b>	—	—	<b>234,145</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>3,610</b>	—	—	<b>3,717</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Barnet 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.