

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
REDBRIDGE

*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 Redbridge.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Pamela Gordon

Robin Gray

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Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Redbridge 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 Redbridge 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 95 and 96) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Redbridge.

We recommend that Redbridge 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 Redbridge 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 Redbridge:

- **in eight of the 21 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and one ward varies by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2003, electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in eight wards, and by more than 20 per cent in four wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 95 and 96) are that:

- **Redbridge Borough Council should be served by 63 councillors, compared to 62 at present;**
- **there should be 21 wards, the same as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 20 of the existing 21 wards should be modified, with one ward retaining its existing boundary.**

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 of the 21 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 8 per cent from the borough average.**
- **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 5 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 Aldborough	3	Aldborough ward (part); Barkingside ward (part)
2 Barkingside	3	Barkingside ward (part); Clayhall ward (part)
3 Bridge	3	Bridge ward (part)
4 Chadwell	3	Chadwell ward (part)
5 Church End	3	Church End ward (part); Snaresbrook ward (part)
6 Clayhall	3	Clayhall ward (part)
7 Clementswood	3	Clementswood ward (part); Loxford ward (part)
8 Cranbrook	3	<i>Unchanged</i> Cranbrook ward
9 Fairlop	3	Aldborough ward (part); Fairlop ward (part); Hainault ward (part)
10 Fullwell	3	Fairlop ward (part); Fullwell ward; Roding ward (part)
11 Goodmayes	3	Clementswood ward (part); Goodmayes ward; Mayfield ward (part)
12 Hainault	3	Aldborough ward (part); Fairlop ward (part); Hainault ward (part)
13 Loxford	3	Clementswood ward (part); Loxford ward (part)
14 Mayfield	3	Clementswood ward (part); Mayfield ward (part)
15 Monkams	3	Church End ward (part); Monkams ward
16 Newbury	3	Newbury ward (part); Seven Kings ward (part); Valentines ward (part)
17 Roding	3	Bridge ward (part); Roding ward (part)
18 Seven Kings	3	Chadwell ward (part); Seven Kings ward (part)
19 Snaresbrook	3	Roding ward (part); Snaresbrook ward (part)
20 Valentines	3	Newbury ward (part); Valentines ward (part)
21 Wanstead	3	Roding ward (part); Snaresbrook ward (part); Wanstead ward

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

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Redbridge

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 Aldborough	3	8,417	2,806	1	8,367	2,789	-1
2 Barkingside	3	8,382	2,794	0	8,330	2,777	-2
3 Bridge	3	8,590	2,863	3	8,706	2,902	3
4 Chadwell	3	8,233	2,744	-1	8,880	2,960	5
5 Church End	3	8,062	2,687	-3	8,204	2,735	-3
6 Clayhall	3	8,865	2,955	6	8,778	2,926	3
7 Clementswood	3	7,692	2,564	-8	8,131	2,710	-4
8 Cranbrook	3	8,288	2,763	-1	8,414	2,805	-1
9 Fairlop	3	7,750	2,583	-7	8,609	2,870	1
10 Fullwell	3	8,795	2,932	5	8,798	2,933	4
11 Goodmayes	3	7,916	2,639	-5	8,077	2,692	-5
12 Hainault	3	8,791	2,930	5	8,520	2,840	0
13 Loxford	3	7,659	2,553	-8	8,348	2,783	-2
14 Mayfield	3	8,401	2,800	1	8,314	2,771	-2
15 Monkhamms	3	8,299	2,766	-1	8,283	2,761	-2
16 Newbury	3	8,558	2,853	3	8,831	2,944	4
17 Roding	3	8,037	2,679	-4	8,187	2,729	-4
18 Seven Kings	3	8,569	2,856	3	8,728	2,909	3
19 Snaresbrook	3	8,666	2,889	4	8,400	2,800	-1
20 Valentines	3	8,562	2,854	3	8,692	2,897	2
21 Wanstead	3	8,792	2,931	5	8,603	2,868	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>175,324</b>	—	—	<b>178,200</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,783</b>	—	—	<b>2,829</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Redbridge 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 Redbridge.

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review (PER) of Redbridge 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 configurations 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, Redbridge 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 have 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 Redbridge**

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Redbridge. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in May 1977 (Report No. 213).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 23 June 1998, when we wrote to Redbridge 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 Redbridge*, 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

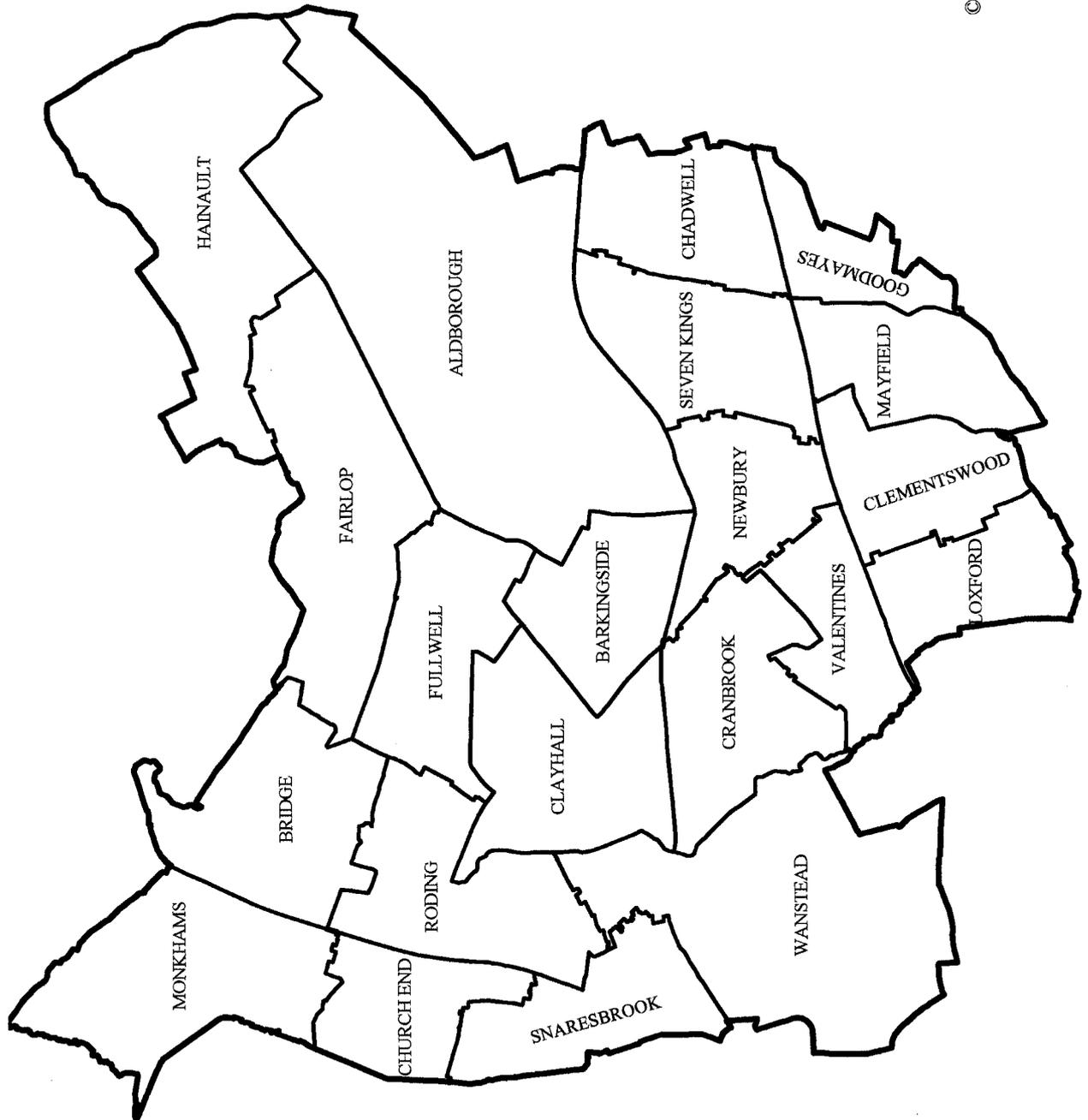
<sup>17</sup> The borough of Redbridge covers an area of 5,632 hectares in northeast London and has a population of around 226,000. It is bounded by the boroughs of Newham and Barking & Dagenham to the south, Epping Forest to the north, Havering to the east, and Waltham Forest to the west. The borough is largely residential although it contains some light industry, and the north-east of the borough contains areas of farmland. The Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line and the London Underground Central line connect Redbridge to central London, while the M11, A12 and North Circular roads traverse the borough.

<sup>18</sup> 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'.

<sup>19</sup> The electorate of the borough (July 1998) is 175,324. The Council currently has 62 councillors who are elected from 21 wards. Of these wards, 20 are represented by three councillors, while the remaining ward is represented by two councillors. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

<sup>20</sup> At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,828 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,874 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 eight of the 21 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 Goodmayes ward where each of the two councillors represents an average of 30 per cent fewer electors than the borough average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Redbridge



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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 Aldborough	3	6,769	2,256	-20	6,719	2,240	-22
2 Barkingside	3	9,914	3,305	17	9,862	3,287	14
3 Bridge	3	9,465	3,155	12	9,581	3,194	11
4 Chadwell	3	9,773	3,258	15	10,420	3,473	21
5 Church End	3	8,038	2,679	-5	8,180	2,727	-5
6 Clayhall	3	10,155	3,385	20	10,068	3,356	17
7 Clementswood	3	8,732	2,911	3	9,171	3,057	6
8 Cranbrook	3	8,288	2,763	-2	8,414	2,805	-2
9 Fairlop	3	8,353	2,784	-2	9,212	3,071	7
10 Fullwell	3	8,738	2,913	3	8,741	2,914	1
11 Goodmayes	2	3,972	1,986	-30	4,133	2,067	-28
12 Hainault	3	7,050	2,350	-17	6,779	2,260	-21
13 Loxford	3	9,631	3,210	14	10,320	3,440	20
14 Mayfield	3	9,333	3,111	10	9,246	3,082	7
15 Monkams	3	8,293	2,764	-2	8,277	2,759	-4
16 Newbury	3	8,620	2,873	2	8,893	2,964	3
17 Roding	3	8,761	2,920	3	8,911	2,970	3
18 Seven Kings	3	7,906	2,635	-7	8,065	2,688	-6
19 Snaresbrook	3	7,980	2,660	-6	7,723	2,574	-10
20 Valentines	3	7,623	2,541	-10	7,753	2,584	-10
21 Wanstead	3	7,930	2,643	-7	7,732	2,577	-10
<b>Totals</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>175,324</b>	—	—	<b>178,200</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,828</b>	—	—	<b>2,874</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Redbridge 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 Goodmayes ward were relatively over-represented by 30 per cent, while electors in Clayhall ward were relatively under-represented by 20 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

<sup>21</sup> During Stage One we received four representations from the Borough Council, Redbridge Conservatives and Redbridge Borough Council Liberal Democrat Group, who all submitted borough-wide schemes, and from Ilford North Constituency Labour Party who proposed changes to the north of the A12. 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 Redbridge*.

<sup>22</sup> Our draft recommendations were largely based on the Borough Council's scheme, which achieved improved electoral equality, provided good boundaries while having regard to the statutory criteria and proposed a pattern of entirely three-member wards. However, we moved away from the Borough Council's scheme in three areas, affecting five wards. We proposed that:

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

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Redbridge Borough Council should comprise 63 councillors serving 21 wards.

<sup>23</sup> Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all 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 5 per cent from the borough average in 2003.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

<sup>24</sup> During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 10 representations were received. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Redbridge Borough Council and the Commission by appointment.

### **Redbridge Conservative Associations**

<sup>25</sup> We received submissions from three Conservative Associations in the borough. For the nine wards to the south of the A12, Ilford South Conservative Association expressed full support for our draft recommendations. At Stage One its submission differed from our draft recommendations regarding the boundary between Loxford and Clementswood wards, where it agreed with the Borough Council's proposal to run the boundary along Woodlands Road and Ilford Lane. However, in its Stage Three submission it stated that it "accept[s] the logic of the draft recommendations that ensures that the whole of the town centre is in one ward and better reflects community ties in the area".

<sup>26</sup> Ilford North Conservative Association expressed support for our draft recommendations for Aldborough, Barkingside, Bridge, Clayhall, Fairlop, Fullwell, Hainault and Roding wards, stating that our proposals provide a high level of electoral equality and reflect community ties in the area. However, it expressed concern for our recommended boundary between Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards. It proposed that the area to the west of Colvin Gardens should form part of Snaresbrook ward, while Colvin Gardens and part of Elmcroft Avenue should form part of Wanstead ward. This, it argued, would solve the isolation of Deynecourt Gardens and Lorne Gardens from the remainder of Wanstead ward as access to these roads is from Elmcroft Avenue.

<sup>27</sup> Leyton & Wanstead Conservative Association proposed three amendments to our draft recommendations. It proposed that Church End ward retain Tavistock Road and the whole of Avon Way as the majority of this area is currently in

Church End ward. It proposed that Snaresbrook ward retain Grove Park, The Avenue and Kendon Close in order to unify the residential area which looks to the High Street "as the spine of the local community". It also proposed that Wanstead ward gain Colvin Gardens, Elmcroft Avenue to the east of Colvin Gardens/Limes Avenue and the roads leading from that section of Elmcroft Avenue as they are cut off from the rest of Wanstead ward, with residents having to travel through Snaresbrook ward to reach any other part of Wanstead ward.

### **Ilford North Constituency Labour Party**

<sup>28</sup> Ilford North Constituency Labour Party responded to our proposals for the area lying to the north of Eastern Avenue and to the west of the River Roding. It supported our proposals for three wards: Aldborough, Church End and Monkams. It proposed transferring the Wickets estate from Fairlop ward to Hainault ward, in order to improve the shape of each ward. It proposed creating a new Claybury ward encompassing the Claybury Hospital site and parts of the Barkingside, Bridge, Clayhall and Fullwell wards, which it justified in terms of the new housing development forecast over the next few years in the grounds of the hospital. The creation of this new ward would result in modifications to the surrounding wards in order to achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality. Its scheme also proposed retaining the Orchard Estate in Bridge ward, and that Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards should remain relatively unchanged, with only minor boundary amendments to "create a simpler and more understandable set of boundaries between the three wards and a much better shape for Snaresbrook ward".

### **Other Representations**

<sup>29</sup> Submissions were also received from three borough councillors. Councillor Bond stated that "the Commission's draft arrangements represent as satisfactory a balance as is likely to be possible between the requirement for electoral parity and

the local, geographical and community issues". He welcomed our draft recommendations for all wards other than Goodmayes and Seven Kings wards which he proposed should be divided north to south rather than east to west, as in our draft recommendations in order to improve community identity and ward shapes, and slight boundary amendments between Church End and Monkams wards to include Avon Way and Tavistock Road in Church End ward. He sympathised with Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposals, which would alter the boundary between Clayhall and Barkingside wards, and stated that our draft recommendations for Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards were "better than either the existing alignment or the proposal put forward by Redbridge Council". These proposals were supported by Councillor Cleaver who stated that the views expressed reflect those of the Liberal Democrat group on Redbridge Council. He commended the work that has been carried out on the review, but emphasised his dissatisfaction with the proposed southern boundary of Church End ward, requesting that we leave Tavistock Road and the entirety of Avon Way in Church End ward.

<sup>30</sup> We received a further proposal from Councillor Maravala with a petition signed by nearly 700 residents requesting that the boundary between Loxford and Clementswood wards be the same as Redbridge Borough Council's original proposal. He considered that the petition illustrated that local feeling is in favour of the Council's original proposals rather than the Commission's draft recommendations.

<sup>31</sup> We received representations from three residents. One resident proposed that the whole of Roding Lane North, including the estates at the southern end, should form part of a revised Bridge ward and that part of the present Bridge ward between Snakes Lane and Broadmead Road should be transferred to Roding ward reflecting the "strong sense of solidarity of people at the northern end of Roding Lane North with ... the southern (Hill Farm) end". The remaining two residents both expressed concern over the southern boundary of Church End ward, proposing that Avon Way and Tavistock Road form part of Church End ward, that Snaresbrook ward retain the southwest area (including The Grove, The Avenue and Kendon Close), and that the whole of Elmcroft Road be included in Wanstead ward.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

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

33 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.

34 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.

35 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

36 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of nearly 2 per cent from 175,324 to 178,200 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. It forecast a notable decline in electorate in Barkingside, Hainault, Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards, and most of the growth to be in Chadwell, Clementswood, Fairlop and Loxford wards. 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. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries was obtained.

37 In our draft recommendations report we accepted that forecasting electorate 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.

38 We received only one comment on the Council's electorate forecasts during Stage Three, from Councillor Maravala who considered that “every available piece of building land in Loxford has been accounted for” and that a more reasonable figure of 300 should be chosen rather than the increase in electorate of 689 as calculated by the Borough Council at the start of the review. Our projected 2003 electorate figures are based on those provided by the Borough Council, which are based on the Local Plan, estimated rates of

development over the five years and assumed occupancy rates. We have contacted the Borough Council who confirmed its projected figures, stating that the electorate is projected to increase primarily due to the younger than average age structure in the ward (increasing the number of over 18s). It also noted that the number of electors registered for Loxford ward had shown an increase of 327 between 1998 and 1999. We therefore remain satisfied that the electorate forecasts proposed by the Borough Council represent the best estimates currently available, and are content to base our recommendations on these figures.

## Council Size

39 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.

40 Redbridge Borough Council currently has 62 members. At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a council of 63 members, an increase of one, stating that the increase in council size would enable a pattern of three-member wards to be introduced throughout the borough, restoring the position that existed prior to recent boundary changes.

41 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.

42 At Stage Three, we received no comments regarding a council size of 63 as proposed in our draft recommendations, and are therefore content to put this council size forward as our final recommendation.

## Electoral Arrangements

43 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered the representations received at Stage One from the Borough Council, Redbridge Conservatives, the Liberal Democrat

Group on the Council and Ilford North Constituency Labour Party. We expressed gratitude for the positive approach taken by respondents who had each submitted detailed borough-wide proposals for change to the present electoral arrangements. From these representations some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

44 First, there was a consensus on a small increase in council size to 63 members in order to facilitate a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough. All groups submitted proposals for future electoral arrangements based on a pattern of 21 three-member wards.

45 Second, there was a broad consensus that where possible the major natural boundaries in the borough such as the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line, the London Underground Central Line, the Roding Valley, the M11 and Eastern Avenue (A12), should be used as the basis for ward boundaries.

46 Third, we noted the arguments put to us about community identities 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 a lack of consensus locally on the precise boundary of such communities.

47 Finally, we noted that all three borough-wide schemes would provide improved electoral equality. Under the Borough Council's and the Liberal Democrats' proposals the number of wards where the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough would reduce from eight to none. This level of electoral equality is forecast to remain constant over the next five years. Under Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposals, one ward would have an electoral variance in excess of 10 per cent both now and in five years time.

48 In our draft recommendations we sought to build on the Borough Council's proposals in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve reasonable electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. However, we proposed some modifications in order to further improve electoral arrangements and sought further evidence in relation to others.

49 We received a positive response to our draft recommendations. Most comments received were generally supportive of our proposals, although we received suggestions for further amendments, particularly in relation to the boundaries between Church End and Monkams wards and Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards.

50 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three, and judge that minor modifications should be made to a number of our proposed boundaries to improve community identity and create more easily identifiable boundaries. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Clementswood, Goodmayes, Loxford and Mayfield wards;
- (b) Chadwell, Cranbrook, Newbury, Seven Kings and Valentines wards;
- (c) Aldborough, Barkingside, Clayhall and Fullwell wards;
- (d) Bridge and Roding wards;
- (e) Fairlop and Hainault wards;
- (f) Church End, Monkams, Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards.

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

### **Clementswood, Goodmayes, Loxford and Mayfield wards**

52 The existing wards of Loxford, Clementswood, Mayfield and Goodmayes lie to the south of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line. At present, while Clementswood ward enjoys a reasonable level of electoral equality with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 3 per cent, the number of electors per councillor in Loxford, Mayfield and Goodmayes wards vary from the borough average by 14 per cent, 10 per cent and 30 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to improve significantly over the next five years.

53 At Stage One, the Council proposed substantial changes to these wards in order to address the poor level of electoral equality in Goodmayes ward. It

proposed that Goodmayes ward be represented by three councillors rather than two as at present, and that the areas to the north of Breamore Road (currently in Mayfield ward) and east of Highbury Gardens (in Clementswood ward) be transferred to the ward. It also proposed that the boundary between Loxford and Clementswood wards should be amended to run along Woodlands Road and Ilford Lane, while the boundary between Clementswood and Mayfield wards would run to the east of Park Road and the middle of Gordon Road. These proposals were supported by Redbridge Conservatives and Ilford North Constituency Labour Party.

54 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed alternative warding arrangements to those put forward by the Borough Council for Loxford, Clementswood and Goodmayes wards. They argued that the boundary between Clementswood and Loxford wards should run along Ilford Lane, and between Windsor Road and Kingston Road, retaining Ilford town centre within a single ward. In relation to Goodmayes ward, they proposed creating a ward surrounding the Goodmayes Road and incorporating part of Chadwell ward. This would involve crossing the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line, which they considered was justified, arguing that those electors to the north of the railway line look to Goodmayes ward for amenities and services.

55 In our draft recommendations, we adopted the Borough Council's proposals for Mayfield ward, as it had received a broad level of agreement at Stage One, and for Goodmayes ward where we considered that its scheme offered a better warding arrangement, given the significance of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line as a boundary. We adopted the Liberal Democrats' proposals for Loxford and Clementswood wards, as we considered that they provided a better reflection of community ties, ensuring that Ilford town centre would remain within Clementswood ward and the Loxford Park area would remain within Loxford ward.

56 At Stage Three we received three representations regarding these wards. Councillor Bond welcomed our proposals for Clementswood and Loxford wards, arguing that it gives "coherence of representation to those residents living in or near [the] commercial centre" and "keeps the Loxford Park area wholly within Loxford [ward]". Ilford

South Conservative Association also accepted our draft recommendations for these two wards, even though they differed from its proposals at Stage One. It stated that it “now accept[s] the logic ... that ensures that the whole of the town centre is in one ward and better reflects community ties in the area”. We received one submission opposing our recommendations for this ward, from Councillor Maravala. He supported the Borough Council’s Stage One submission to align the ward boundary along Woodlands Road and Ilford Lane “to retain the historic identity of Loxford and the strong links that have been established over generations” and enclosed a petition of some 700 names in support of this proposal.

57 Ilford South Conservative Association supported our draft recommendations for Mayfield and Goodmayes wards as it considered that the railway line provides a natural boundary. Councillor Bond, however, opposed our proposals for Goodmayes and Seven Kings wards, arguing that they create an unusual shape for Goodmayes ward, and “include areas in Goodmayes [ward] where residents would consider they lived in Seven Kings [ward] and areas in Seven Kings [ward] where residents would consider they lived in Goodmayes [ward]”. He expressed a preference for the Liberal Democrats’ Stage One proposal, in which both wards traversed the railway line as “in outer London ... residential communities ... tend to focus around transport nodes, such as tube and railway stations”.

58 We recognise that any changes to ward boundaries can be disruptive to local communities, but consider that on balance we should confirm our draft recommendations for Loxford and Clementswood wards as final. As put forward under the Borough Council’s initial proposal, we consider that the areas abutting Loxford Park and Loxford Lane would be relatively isolated from the remainder of Clementswood ward, which centres on Sunnyside Road and Richmond Road. We consider that the Borough Council’s proposed Clementswood ward would have little coherence, stretching from Highbury Gardens in the northeast to the Loxford Lane area in the southwest. We also note that, at Stage Three, our draft recommendation was supported by Ilford South Conservative Association and Councillor Bond.

59 Similarly, we have noted the views expressed to us regarding Goodmayes and Mayfield wards. While we consider that the proposal put forward

by Councillor Bond has some merit, we remain persuaded that the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line is a significant boundary that should not be breached if possible. We are therefore content to put forward our draft recommendations for these four wards as final resulting in no ward varying by more than 8 per cent from the borough average now (5 per cent in 2003).

### **Chadwell, Cranbrook, Newbury, Seven Kings and Valentines wards**

60 The existing wards of Cranbrook, Valentines, Newbury, Seven Kings and Chadwell all lie between the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line and the A12 Eastern Avenue, a major trunk road through the borough. At present, while Cranbrook, Newbury and Seven Kings wards enjoy reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by no more than 7 per cent from the average, electoral equality in Valentines and Chadwell wards is poor, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 10 per cent and 15 per cent respectively.

61 At Stage One, the Borough Council argued that the railway line, borough boundary and Eastern Avenue limit the number of options for these wards. To reduce the level of under-representation in Chadwell ward, it proposed transferring the area to the south of Langham Drive and west of Grove Road to Seven Kings ward. It proposed transferring the area to the north of Seven Kings Park from Seven Kings ward, together with Carriage Mews from Valentines ward, to Newbury ward. Under the Borough Council’s scheme the area to the west of Perth Road and north of Wellesley Road, currently in Newbury ward would form part of Valentines ward, while Cranbrook ward would remain unchanged. The Borough Council’s scheme was supported by Redbridge Conservatives and Ilford North Constituency Labour Party.

62 The Liberal Democrats supported the Borough Council’s proposals for Chadwell, Cranbrook, Newbury and Valentines wards, but proposed alternative warding arrangements for Seven Kings ward, as discussed earlier. This alternative arrangement would transfer the area of Chadwell ward to the west of Grove Road to Goodmayes ward, rather than Seven Kings ward as proposed in the Borough Council’s warding arrangement.

Seven Kings ward would then be extended southwards to incorporate the area bounded by Elmstead Road, Green Lane and Highbury Gardens.

63 Our draft recommendations fully endorsed the Borough Council's proposals as we considered that they provided a reasonable level of electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. As outlined earlier, we did not consider that the Liberal Democrats' proposal to combine electors either side of the Liverpool Street to Shenfield railway line would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria and electoral equality. Under our draft recommendations no ward resulted in the number of electors per councillor being more than 4 per cent from the average.

64 At Stage Three we received support for our draft recommendations from Ilford South Conservative Association. Councillor Bond accepted our draft recommendations with the exception of Seven Kings ward where he reiterated his preference for the Liberal Democrats' initial proposal. We are content to largely endorse our draft recommendations for these five wards as we consider that they achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality and reflect the statutory criteria well. We are, however, proposing two minor boundary amendments. First we propose that the boundary between Newbury and Seven Kings wards be amended to incorporate Lombard Avenue within Newbury ward, as access to this road is only available from Aldborough Road, which forms part of Newbury ward. Second we also propose that the boundary between Chadwell and Seven Kings wards is amended so that all of Barleyfields Close be retained in Chadwell ward, resulting in a more easily identifiable boundary.

65 These minor amendments would result in no ward having an electoral variance of more than 5 per cent now or in 2003, and we consider that the slight worsening in electoral equality is justified in terms of clearer boundaries. These proposals are illustrated on the map at the back of the report.

### **Aldborough, Barkingside, Clayhall and Fullwell wards**

66 The existing wards of Aldborough, Barkingside, Clayhall and Fullwell all lie to the north of Eastern Avenue and east of the Roding Valley and the M11 motorway. Fullwell ward currently enjoys

reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 3 per cent. However, electoral equality in Aldborough, Barkingside and Clayhall wards is poor, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 20 per cent, 17 per cent and 20 per cent from the borough average respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to improve significantly over the next five years.

67 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed transferring the area to the east of Inglewood Gardens and south of Redbridge Lane East from Clayhall ward to Barkingside ward, the area to the east of Ashurst Drive from Barkingside ward to Aldborough ward and the area to the north of Tanners Lane and Station Road and west of the London Underground Central Line from Aldborough ward to Fairlop ward, in order to improve electoral equality in these wards. Two minor boundary amendments were also proposed to Fullwell ward, so that it incorporated Carrick Drive in its entirety and the whole of Marston Road. It proposed transferring the area to the east of Marks Gate Road in Aldborough ward to Hainault ward, offsetting the effects of the 1994 transfer of Padnall Estate from Aldborough ward to the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham. There was support for the Borough Council's scheme from the Redbridge Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, although the Liberal Democrats proposed that Barkingside ward be renamed Gants Hill ward.

68 Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposed alternative warding arrangements, transferring the Claybury Hospital site from Fairlop ward to Fullwell ward, and changing the name of Fullwell ward to Claybury ward. Its scheme involved transferring the area to the east of Roding Lane North and Chigwell Road from Bridge ward to Clayhall ward and dividing the area to the east of Abbotswood Gardens and Chadacre Avenue between Barkingside ward and the new Claybury ward. It proposed retaining the existing boundary between Barkingside and Clayhall wards, and supported the Borough Council's proposals for the boundaries between Aldborough and Barkingside wards and Aldborough and Fairlop wards.

69 Our draft recommendations reflected the proposals put forward by the Borough Council, which we noted were supported by the Liberal Democrats and the Redbridge Conservatives, and

provided reasonable levels of electoral equality and minimised disruption to the existing ward boundaries. While we considered Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposals, we were not persuaded that they would better reflect community ties and noted that they would provide a poorer level of electoral equality. In particular, we considered that Claybury Hospital should remain part of Fairlop ward, as access to the new development on the site would be from the east rather than the south. We recognised that in relation to the boundary between Barkingside and Clayhall wards, either the northern or western boundary of the ward could be modified, but put forward the Borough Council's proposals on the basis that it would provide better electoral equality.

70 At Stage Three we received representations regarding these four wards from Ilford North Constituency Labour Party, Ilford North Conservative Association and Councillor Bond. Ilford North Conservative Association "agreed to fully support the recommendations for ... Aldborough, Barkingside, Clayhall and Fullwell ... wards as set out in [our draft] report", and opposed any change to ward names. Councillor Bond welcomed the draft recommendations, especially retaining the Claybury Hospital site within Fairlop ward as there would be no access to the development from the Fullwell area to the south, the development is separated from the rest of Fullwell ward by parkland and woodland, and our draft proposal would minimise disruption to existing ward boundaries.

71 Ilford North Constituency Labour Party supported our draft recommendation for Aldborough ward but reiterated its Stage One proposal to create a new Claybury ward encompassing the Claybury Hospital site, and the part of Bridge ward to the east of Roding Lane North and south of Manor Road and the majority of Fullwell ward. It argued that there would be vehicular access to the new development on the hospital site from Manor Road in the north as well as Tomswood Hill to the east, in addition to pedestrian access to the north, south, east and west. The creation of this new ward would necessitate changes to the surrounding wards. It proposed that Barkingside ward should expand to the north rather than to the southwest of Woodford Avenue, encompassing an area to the north of Longwood Gardens east of Abbotswood

Gardens, to the rear of the properties in Rushden Gardens to Clayhall Avenue, and from there eastwards along the centre of Clayhall Avenue to meet the boundary of Fairlop ward. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party opposed the Liberal Democrats' proposal to change the name of Barkingside ward to Gants Hill as the Gants Hill community is divided between Clayhall, Cranbrook and Newbury wards.

72 Councillor Bond had considered that there was some merit in Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposals for boundary changes between Clayhall and Barkingside wards, arguing that it was a reasonable alternative. However, he stated that our draft recommendation had the advantage of reducing the number of wards that would intersect at Gants Hill thereby providing a clearer focus for the ward.

73 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we remain of the view that the Claybury Hospital site should be retained within a revised Fairlop ward. Our draft proposal was based on the Borough Council's proposal, and received the support of both the Ilford North Conservative Association and Councillor Bond at Stage Three. We have not been persuaded to modify our draft recommendations. Given that there is a significant area of parkland isolating this site with no vehicular access from Fullwell ward, and that the resulting level of electoral equality would be no better, we do not consider that Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposal provides a more viable alternative. We considered alternative warding arrangements for Barkingside ward, using the existing ward boundary to the west along Woodford Avenue and redrawing the boundary to the north of the ward. However, we consider that running the boundary along Inglehurst Gardens and Redbridge Lane East provides a clear, identifiable boundary and there appears to be little support to move away from this boundary. We also have not been persuaded that there is sufficient evidence to support changing the ward name of Barkingside to Gants Hill.

74 We are therefore content to put forward our draft recommendations for Barkingside and Fullwell wards as final. Similarly, we are content to put forward our draft proposals for Clayhall and Aldborough wards as final, given that we are not

using the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's scheme elsewhere in this area, and the levels of support that we received at Stage Three for our draft recommendations. Our final recommendations result in the number of electors per councillor for each of these four wards varying by no more than 6 per cent now and 5 per cent in 2003.

### **Bridge and Roding wards**

75 The existing wards of Bridge and Roding are situated in the north west of the borough. Currently Roding ward has 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average, while Bridge ward has 12 per cent more than the average.

76 At Stage One the Borough Council argued that the isolated nature of Bridge ward restricted the available options for addressing electoral equality. With the borough boundary to the north and London Underground Central line to the west, it argued that the most appropriate option for amendment was the boundary between Bridge ward and Roding ward. The Borough Council proposed that the whole of the Orchard Estate be transferred to Roding ward, with a slight boundary amendment between Bridge and Fullwell wards, in order to unite the whole of Marston Road within Fullwell ward. It also proposed transferring the area to the south of and including Cranbourne Avenue from Roding ward to Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards. This scheme received the support of the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrat Group. However, the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposed alternative arrangements which would retain the Orchard Estate within Roding ward, transferring the area to the east of Roding Lane North and Chigwell Road to its new Claybury ward, transferring part of Roding ward to Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards, and running the southern boundary of Roding ward along Charnwood Drive rather than Cranbourne Avenue.

77 In our draft recommendations we put forward the Borough Council's proposals as we considered that they provided the best balance between electoral equality and community identity and interests. We were not persuaded that the proposals put forward by the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party were preferable, given the resulting levels of electoral inequality in surrounding wards.

78 At Stage Three responses were received from Ilford North Conservative Association, Ilford North Constituency Labour Party, Councillor Bond and a resident of Woodford Green. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposed retaining the Orchard estate within Bridge ward by removing the Gwynne Park area to its new Claybury ward, which it considered would better reflect community ties. Its proposed Roding ward would then remain largely unchanged, with only the southern boundary being altered to run along Elmcroft Avenue and Nightingale Lane. Ilford North Conservative Association supported our draft recommendations for these two wards arguing that they "provide a high degree of electoral equality and reflect community ties in the area". Councillor Bond also supported our proposals, arguing that the proposals put forward by Ilford North Constituency Labour Party would "unnecessarily divide areas lying closer to South Woodford's centre around George Lane". A resident of Woodford Green proposed that the whole of Roding Lane North, the Hill Farm Estate and the Lechmeres be incorporated in Bridge ward, rather than Roding ward as proposed in our draft recommendations, due to the "strong sense of solidarity of people at the northern end of Roding Lane North with ... the southern end". To balance electoral equality between the wards, he proposed that part of the present Bridge ward be transferred to Roding ward.

79 We have considered carefully the views expressed to us during the consultation stage, and do not consider that the alternative warding proposals put forward by the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party would provide as clear and identifiable boundaries or comparable levels of electoral equality between the two wards as our draft recommendations. As discussed earlier, we are also not convinced that the division of Bridge ward is justified in terms of the statutory criteria.

80 While we have some sympathy for the proposal put forward by the resident of Woodford Green, which would involve combining the northern and southern areas of Roding Lane in Bridge ward, we consider that the southern area, encompassing the Hill Farm Estate and the Lechmeres, is too isolated from the rest of Bridge ward for this scheme to provide convenient and effective local government, and that it has closer links with Roding ward.

81 We are endorsing our draft recommendations as final. We are, however, proposing one minor boundary amendment between Roding ward and Fullwell ward, to incorporate the whole of Coburg Gardens in Fullwell ward. Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor in Barkingside and Roding wards would be equal to and 4 per cent below the borough average respectively (2 per cent and 4 per cent below in 2003).

### **Fairlop and Hainault wards**

82 The existing wards of Fairlop and Hainault both lie in the north-east of the borough. At present, while Fairlop ward enjoys reasonable electoral equality with 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average, Hainault ward has 17 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average.

83 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed realigning the boundary between these two wards so that it runs along Dryden Close and New North Road until its junction with the London Underground Central line, in order to address the electoral inequality in Hainault ward. It also proposed transferring the area bounded by Tanners Lane, Station Road and the London Underground Central line from Aldborough ward to Fairlop ward, in order to improve electoral equality. It put forward minor boundary amendments between Hainault ward and Aldborough ward in the east, and proposed transferring Carrick Drive in its entirety from Fairlop ward to Fullwell ward, so rationalising the ward boundaries. This proposal was supported by the Redbridge Conservatives and the Liberal Democrat Group. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposed that the Claybury hospital site be transferred from Fairlop ward to Fullwell ward, as discussed earlier. In relation to Hainault and Fairlop wards, it argued that the boundary should follow Elmbridge Road rather than Dryden Close.

84 We considered that the Borough Council's scheme for these two wards provided the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and put this proposal forward in our draft recommendations report. We were not persuaded that the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposals would better reflect community ties.

85 At Stage Three we received three representations regarding our draft proposals for these two wards. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party supported our draft recommendations for Hainault ward with the exception that it proposed that the Wickets estate be incorporated into the ward in order to "improve the shape of both wards". It therefore proposed that Fairlop ward be amended by transferring the Wickets estate to Hainault ward, the Claybury Hospital site to Claybury ward (as discussed earlier), incorporating the area to the east of Mossford Lane and north of Mossford Green, to create "a more natural and squat shape for the ward". Ilford North Conservative Association and Councillor Bond supported our draft recommendations for these two wards in their entirety. Ilford North Conservative Association considered that they would reflect community ties in the area and provide a high degree of electoral equality.

86 Having carefully considered the alternative warding pattern proposed by the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party, we have not been persuaded to move away from our draft recommendations, given the reasonable level of electoral equality achieved in our proposed Fairlop and Hainault wards, our proposals for surrounding wards and the support of other respondents. Since the scheme put forward by the Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposes a different warding configuration for the whole northern area, we are unable to adopt its proposals for these two wards in isolation without causing unwarranted levels of electoral inequality in the surrounding wards. We are therefore adopting our draft recommendations in their entirety as final for these two wards. Our final recommendations for Fairlop and Hainault wards would result in electoral variances of 7 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (1 per cent and equal to the average in 2003).

### **Church End, Monkams, Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards**

87 The existing wards of Church End, Monkams, Wanstead and Snaresbrook are located in the west of the borough, and to the west of the Roding Valley and the M11 motorway. The Epping Branch of the London Underground Central Line, which runs on the surface at this point, forms the eastern boundary for Church End and Monkams ward and as a result there are few crossing points

between these wards and the neighbouring Roding ward. The wards of Church End and Monkams currently enjoy reasonable electoral equality with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 5 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards also have a reasonable level of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average by 6 per cent and 7 per cent respectively. However, the level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, resulting in both wards having 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average by 2003.

88 The Borough Council proposed only one minor change to Monkams and Church End wards. It proposed transferring Swancrest Court from Church End ward to Monkams ward in order to encompass the entirety of Horn Lane within one ward. It also proposed modifying the boundary between Roding ward and Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards in order to improve electoral equality, transferring Rodney Road and Elmcroft Avenue to Wanstead ward, and Osprey Close, Wanstead Hospital and part of Cranbourne Avenue to Snaresbrook ward. Its proposal was supported by Redbridge Conservatives.

89 The Liberal Democrats supported the Borough Council's proposals for Church End and Monkams wards, and put forward two options for warding patterns regarding Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards. Their preference was to transfer the area to the north of Nutter Lane to Snaresbrook ward, while the area to the south of New Wanstead Road, Wanstead Place and Grosvenor Road and the area around George Green would transfer to Wanstead ward. They considered that this arrangement would better reflect community ties and provide a better shaped ward. However, in recognition that their scheme would cause a relatively high level of disruption to the current arrangements, they put forward the Borough Council's scheme as their second option. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party proposed no change to the existing Monkams and Church End wards. Its proposals for Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards were similar to the Borough Council's proposals, retaining the current boundary between the wards, but transferring a slightly different area from Roding ward.

90 Our draft recommendations sought to combine elements of each of the three submissions. We

reflected Ilford North Constituency Labour Party's proposal, largely retaining the existing boundary between Church End and Monkams wards as we noted that there was support locally for this suggestion. However, we proposed one minor change which placed all of Horn Lane within Monkams ward, as proposed by the Borough Council. We considered that the whole of Avon Way should be contained within a single ward rather than split between Church End and Snaresbrook wards as it is under the current arrangements, and therefore proposed transferring Avon Way and Tavistock Road to Snaresbrook ward, and incorporating the whole of Grove End within Church End ward. We were not persuaded to transfer the area between New Wanstead and Cambridge Park to Wanstead ward, as proposed by the Liberal Democrats. However, we were persuaded that there was a case for transferring the area of Snaresbrook ward around George Green (Gardner Close, Grove Park, The Avenue and Kender Close) to Wanstead ward on the basis that it provides the main crossing point of the M11 motorway extension. As a result, we proposed retaining Wanstead ward's northern boundary, and transferring the southern part of Roding ward to Snaresbrook ward. In order to improve electoral equality, we also proposed that the boundary between Snaresbrook and Roding wards run behind the houses on Osprey Close, to the north of Cranbourne Avenue, south of Ashbourne Avenue and around Snaresbrook Primary School.

91 At Stage Three, we received submissions from seven respondents regarding this area. Leyton & Wanstead Conservative Association, Councillor Cleaver, Councillor Bond and two residents opposed our draft recommendations transferring Avon Way and Tavistock Road from Church End ward to Snaresbrook ward, stating that it would be more appropriate to retain this area within Church End ward. Councillor Bond welcomed our draft proposals for Snaresbrook and Wanstead wards as better than either the existing alignment or Redbridge Borough Council's scheme. However, he proposed that our draft recommendations might be improved further by transferring the Counties Estate, Lorne Gardens and Deynecourt Gardens to Snaresbrook ward, which would be balanced by transferring the Grosvenor Road/Nightingale Lane area to Wanstead ward. Ilford North Conservative Association, Leyton & Wanstead Conservative Association and a resident, however, opposed our draft recommendation. They argued that the Elmcroft Avenue and Colvin Gardens areas should

form part of Wanstead ward, and proposed transferring a different part of Roding ward to solve the isolation of Deynecourt Gardens and Lorne Gardens and unite the whole of Elmcroft Avenue within a single ward. Ilford North Constituency Labour Party, Leyton & Wanstead Conservative Association and two residents proposed that Grove Park, The Avenue and Kendon Close should remain in Snaresbrook ward, arguing that they share a common identity with the other roads around the High Street.

92 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we have decided to move away from our draft recommendations in three areas around Snaresbrook ward. Given that Tavistock Road and most of Avon Way currently lie within Church End ward we have been convinced that it would be less disruptive were we to retain Tavistock Road and unite the whole of Avon Way within Church End ward rather than transferring them to Snaresbrook ward, as proposed in our draft recommendations. We propose amending the boundary between these two wards slightly to incorporate all the properties on Grove End within Church End ward.

93 In view of the representations received, we have also been persuaded that the boundary between Wanstead and Snaresbrook wards should be modified. While we consider that there is some merit in transferring the area around Wanstead Green to Wanstead ward, in order to achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality, such a proposal would retain the boundary of Elmcroft Avenue in the north-east. We recognise that, as a result, Elmcroft Avenue would be divided between wards and Deynecourt Gardens and Lorne Gardens would be isolated from the remainder of Wanstead ward. We therefore propose that the boundary run to the rear of the properties on Elmcroft Avenue and Elmcroft Close, incorporating Nightingale Primary School and all the properties in Colvin Gardens in Wanstead ward, before rejoining the existing boundary. We remain of the view that Rodney Road and the whole of Cranbourne Avenue should form part of Snaresbrook ward. As a result, we propose retaining Grove Park, The Avenue and Kendon Close within Snaresbrook ward, so retaining the community identity of the roads around the High Street. We are confirming our draft recommendations for Gardner Close to form part of a revised Wanstead ward, as we consider this road to be isolated from the remainder of Snaresbrook ward.

We are content to endorse our draft recommendations for Monkams ward as final.

94 Under our final recommendations the number of electors per councillor for the wards of Church End, Monkams, Snaresbrook and Wanstead would vary from the borough average by 3 per cent, 1 per cent, 4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively (3 per cent, 2 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent in 2003). We therefore confirm these arrangements as our final recommendations.

## Conclusions

95 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 amendments:

- (a) uniting Tavistock Road and the entirety of Avon Way within Church End ward;
- (b) retaining Grove Park, The Avenue and Kendon Close in Snaresbrook ward;
- (c) placing the entirety of Elmcroft Avenue and adjoining roads to the north in Wanstead ward;
- (d) five minor ward boundary amendments in order to unite whole roads within single wards.

96 We conclude that, in Redbridge:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 62 to 63;
- (b) there should be 21 wards, the same as at present, with changes to all but one of the existing ward boundaries.

97 Figure 4 (overleaf) shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures.

98 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Redbridge 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 eight to none. This improved balance of representation is expected to continue over the next five years. 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.

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	62	63	62	63
Number of wards	21	21	21	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,828	2,783	2,874	2,829
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	0	8	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	4	0

### **Final Recommendation**

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

Map 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Redbridge

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## 6. NEXT STEPS

<sup>99</sup> Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Redbridge and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

<sup>100</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>101</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 Redbridge

Our final recommendations, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of six wards where our draft proposals are set out 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 %
Church End	3	7,902	2,634	-5	8,044	2,681	-5
Monkhams	3	8,299	2,766	-1	8,283	2,761	-2
Newbury	3	8,482	2,827	2	8,755	2,918	3
Seven Kings	3	8,671	2,890	4	8,830	2,943	4
Snaresbrook	3	9,039	3,013	8	8,782	2,927	3
Wanstead	3	8,579	2,860	3	8,381	2,794	-1

*Source: Electorate figures are based on Redbridge 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.*

