

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
RICHMOND UPON  
THAMES

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

*July 1999*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Richmond upon Thames.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Professor Michael Clarke (Deputy Chairman)

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Kru Desai

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# CONTENTS

	page
LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE	<i>v</i>
SUMMARY	<i>vii</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>3</i>
3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>7</i>
4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION	<i>9</i>
5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>11</i>
6 NEXT STEPS	<i>23</i>

A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Richmond borough is inserted in the back cover of the report.





## Local Government Commission for England

27 July 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 4 August 1998 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Richmond upon Thames under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in March 1999 and undertook an eight-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have confirmed our draft recommendations in full, subject to changes to two ward names (see paragraphs 110-111) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Richmond upon Thames.

We recommend that Richmond upon Thames Borough Council should be served by 54 councillors representing 18 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 Richmond upon Thames on 4 August 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 2 March 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 Richmond upon Thames:

- **in five of the 19 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **by 2003 electoral equality shows no overall improvement, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in six wards, and by more than 20 per cent in one ward, East Twickenham.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 110-111) are that:

- **Richmond upon Thames Borough Council should be served by 54 councillors, compared to 52 at present;**
- **there should be 18 wards, one fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all 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 of the 18 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 7 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 4 per cent from the average for the borough in 2003.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 7 September 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 Barnes	3	Barnes ward (part)
2 East Sheen	3	East Sheen ward (part); Ham & Petersham ward (part); Palewell ward (part)
3 Fulwell & Hampton Hill	3	Hampton Hill ward (part); South Twickenham ward (part); Teddington ward (part)
4 Ham, Petersham & Richmond Riverside	3	Ham & Petersham ward (part); Richmond Hill ward (part)
5 Hampton	3	Hampton ward (part); Hampton Hill ward (part); Hampton Wick ward (part)
6 Hampton North	3	Hampton Hill ward (part); Hampton Nursery ward
7 Hampton Wick	3	Hampton Wick ward (part)
8 Heathfield	3	Heathfield ward (part); Whitton ward (part)
9 Kew	3	Kew ward (part)
10 Mortlake & Barnes Common	3	Barnes ward (part); Mortlake ward (part); Palewell ward (part)
11 North Richmond	3	East Sheen ward (part); Kew ward (part); Mortlake ward (part); Palewell ward (part); Richmond Town ward (part)
12 St Margarets & North Twickenham	3	Central Twickenham ward (part); East Twickenham ward (part)
13 South Richmond	3	East Sheen ward (part); Richmond Hill ward (part); Richmond Town ward (part)
14 South Twickenham	3	Central Twickenham ward (part); South Twickenham ward (part); Teddington ward (part); West Twickenham ward (part)
15 Teddington	3	Hampton ward (part); Hampton Hill ward (part); Hampton Wick ward (part); Teddington ward (part)
16 Twickenham Riverside	3	Central Twickenham ward (part); East Twickenham ward (part); South Twickenham ward (part)
17 West Twickenham	3	Hampton Hill ward (part); Heathfield ward (part); South Twickenham ward (part); West Twickenham ward (part)
18 Whitton	3	Whitton ward (part)

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

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Richmond upon Thames

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 Barnes	3	6,521	2,174	-6	7,257	2,419	2
2 East Sheen	3	6,910	2,303	-1	6,999	2,333	-2
3 Fulwell & Hampton Hill	3	6,845	2,282	-2	6,947	2,316	-2
4 Ham, Petersham & Richmond Riverside	3	7,088	2,363	2	7,039	2,346	-1
5 Hampton	3	6,881	2,294	-1	7,121	2,374	0
6 Hampton North	3	6,755	2,252	-3	7,001	2,334	-2
7 Hampton Wick	3	6,688	2,229	-4	7,121	2,374	0
8 Heathfield	3	6,853	2,284	-1	6,983	2,328	-2
9 Kew	3	6,986	2,329	0	7,244	2,415	2
10 Mortlake & Barnes Common	3	7,274	2,425	5	7,294	2,431	2
11 North Richmond	3	7,117	2,372	2	7,153	2,384	1
12 St Margarets & North Twickenham	3	7,345	2,448	6	7,391	2,464	4
13 South Richmond	3	7,419	2,473	7	7,269	2,423	2
14 South Twickenham	3	6,972	2,324	0	6,995	2,332	-2
15 Teddington	3	6,836	2,279	-2	7,162	2,387	1
16 Twickenham Riverside	3	6,737	2,246	-3	6,988	2,329	-2
17 West Twickenham	3	7,160	2,387	3	7,189	2,396	1
18 Whitton	3	6,766	2,255	-3	6,943	2,314	-2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>125,153</b>	—	—	<b>128,096</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,318</b>	—	—	<b>2,372</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Richmond upon Thames Borough Council's 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.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

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

2 In broad terms, the objective of this periodic electoral review of Richmond upon Thames 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 these first reviews by the present Commission of the London boroughs. 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, Richmond upon Thames was in the second 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 Richmond upon Thames**

14 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements for Richmond upon Thames. 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. 212).

15 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 4 August 1998, when we wrote to Richmond upon Thames 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 9 November 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

16 Stage Three began on 2 March 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Richmond upon Thames*, and ended on 26 April 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 Richmond upon Thames has a population of 160,732 and covers 5,905 hectares. The borough is bisected by the River Thames, the only London borough where this occurs. The borough is predominantly residential and contains the settlements of Barnes, Kew, Richmond, Twickenham, Hampton and Teddington. A large proportion of the borough is covered by green space such as Richmond Park, Kew Gardens, Bushy Park and Hampton Court Park.

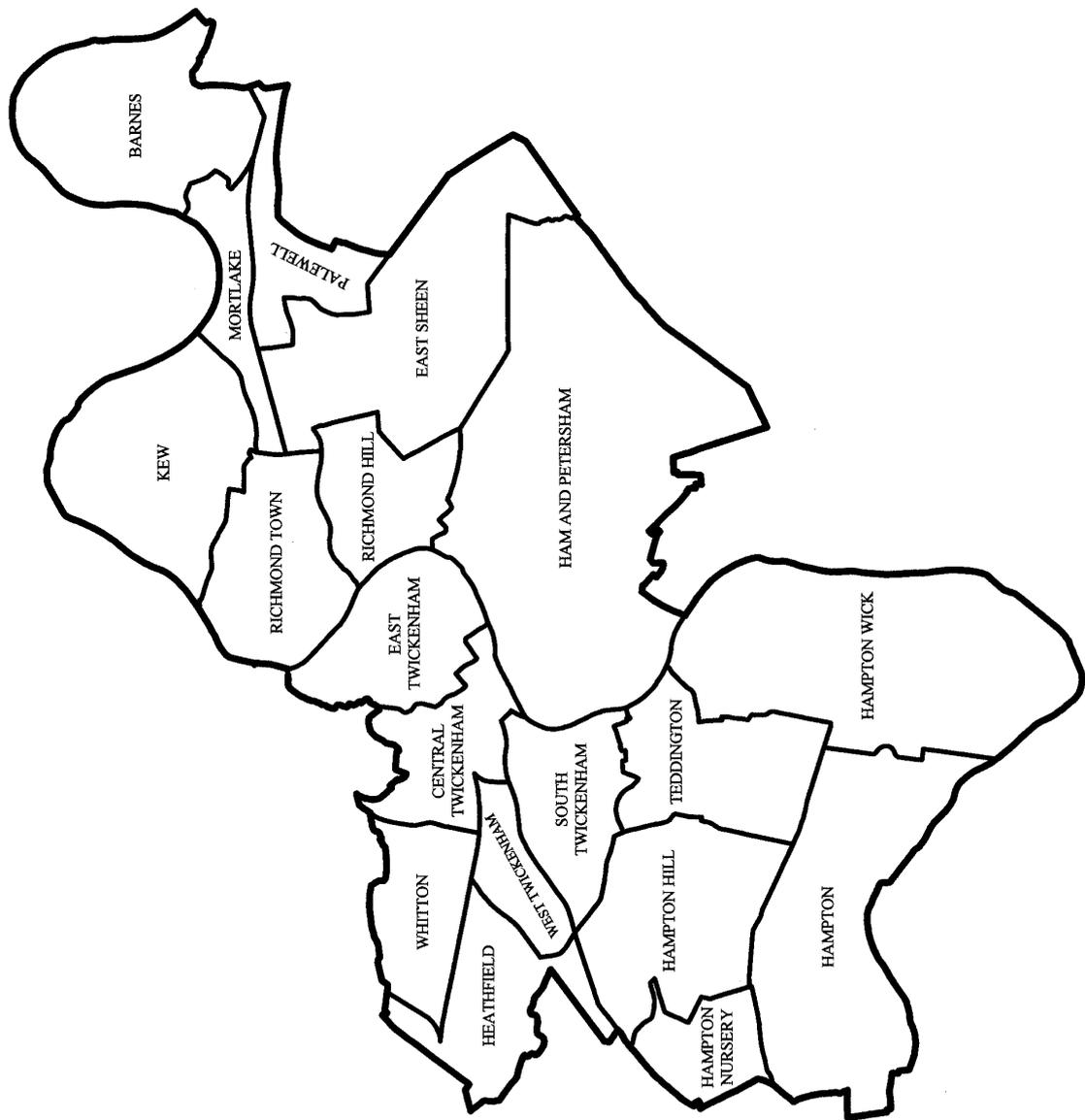
<sup>18</sup> To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the borough average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described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

<sup>19</sup> The electorate of the borough (February 1998) is 125,153. The Council currently has 52 councillors who are elected from 19 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). Fourteen wards are each represented by three councillors and five wards elect two councillors each. As in all London boroughs, the whole council is elected together every four years.

<sup>20</sup> Since the last electoral review, there has been a small increase in electorate in the borough, with around 1 per cent more electors than two decades ago.

<sup>21</sup> At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,407 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 2,463 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 five of the 19 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. The worst imbalance is in East Twickenham ward where each of the three councillors represents on average 23 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1:  
*Existing Wards in Richmond upon Thames*



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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 Barnes	3	7,093	2,364	-2	7,841	2,614	6
2 Central Twickenham	2	5,678	2,839	18	5,754	2,877	17
3 East Sheen	2	4,833	2,417	0	4,998	2,499	1
4 East Twickenham	3	8,857	2,952	23	9,081	3,027	23
5 Ham & Petersham	3	6,003	2,001	-17	5,979	1,993	-19
6 Hampton	3	6,801	2,267	-6	7,041	2,347	-5
7 Hampton Hill	3	6,867	2,289	-5	6,968	2,323	-6
8 Hampton Nursery	2	5,085	2,543	6	5,319	2,660	8
9 Hampton Wick	3	7,714	2,571	7	8,141	2,714	10
10 Heathfield	3	7,563	2,521	5	7,697	2,566	4
11 Kew	3	7,554	2,518	5	7,816	2,605	6
12 Mortlake	3	6,050	2,017	-16	6,030	2,010	-18
13 Palewell	3	6,396	2,132	-11	6,418	2,139	-13
14 Richmond Hill	3	6,615	2,205	-8	6,464	2,155	-13
15 Richmond Town	2	4,771	2,386	-1	4,709	2,355	-4
16 South Twickenham	3	7,563	2,521	5	7,589	2,530	3
17 Teddington	3	7,691	2,564	7	8,037	2,679	9
18 West Twickenham	2	4,837	2,419	0	4,844	2,422	-2
19 Whitton	3	7,182	2,394	-1	7,370	2,457	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>125,153</b>	—	—	<b>128,096</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>2,407</b>	—	—	<b>2,463</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Richmond upon Thames Borough Council's 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 Ham & Petersham ward were relatively over-represented by 17 per cent, while electors in East Twickenham ward were relatively under-represented by 23 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

<sup>22</sup> During Stage One we received three representations, from the Borough Council, the Conservative Group on the Council and the Labour Group on the Council, all of whom submitted borough-wide schemes. 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 Richmond upon Thames*.

<sup>23</sup> Our draft recommendations were based entirely 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. We concluded that any further improvements may have been at the expense of the statutory criteria, namely the need to reflect community identities and interests and to secure effective and convenient local government. We proposed that:

- (a) Richmond upon Thames Borough Council should be served by 54 councillors;
- (b) there should be 18 wards, involving changes to the boundaries of all existing wards.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Richmond upon Thames Borough Council should comprise 54 councillors serving 18 wards.

<sup>24</sup> Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in all of the 18 wards varying by no more than 7 per cent from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with all wards expected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the borough average in 2003.





32 A further 16 representations were received from residents of Richmond Hill objecting to our draft recommendation to include Richmond Hill in Ham & Petersham ward on community identity grounds.

33 Five representations were received from residents of the current Kew ward, including one containing 24 signatures, objecting to our draft recommendation to include part of this ward in the proposed North Richmond ward on community identity grounds.

34 A resident of South Twickenham ward objected to the inclusion of Appleby Close, together with the adjacent roads, in West Twickenham ward stating that the area should remain in South Twickenham ward together with the Strawberry Hill area on community grounds. A resident of East Sheen objected to the abolition of Palewell ward and the transfer of part of the ward into East Sheen ward, preferring the retention of these two wards, together with the inclusion of part of Barnes or Mortlake ward with Palewell ward.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

35 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Richmond upon Thames 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”.

36 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.

37 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.

38 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

39 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 2 per cent from 125,153 to 128,096 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003, spread evenly across the borough. 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.

40 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.

41 We received no comments on the Council's electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates presently available.

### Council Size

42 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.

43 Richmond upon Thames Borough Council currently has 52 members. Over the past 20 years the borough has experienced a 1 per cent growth in electorate, which is forecast to continue growing over the next five years. The Borough Council, the

Conservative Group and the Labour Group on the Council all proposed an increase in council size from 52 to 54 to fit a pattern of three-member wards throughout the borough.

44 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

have received objections, we do not consider that there is sufficient new evidence or that strong enough arguments have been put forward in support of the alternative warding arrangements to persuade us to move away from our draft recommendations. Furthermore, having visited the areas concerned, we do not consider that these alternatives would provide for a more appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

<sup>56</sup> In our judgement, we consider that our proposed ward boundaries should be confirmed without substantive modification. The following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

(a) Surrey side

- Ham & Petersham, Richmond Hill and Richmond Town wards;
- Barnes, East Sheen, Kew, Mortlake and Palewell wards.

(b) Middlesex side

- Central Twickenham, East Twickenham, South Twickenham and West Twickenham;
- Heathfield and Whitton wards;
- Hampton Hill, Hampton Nursery and Hampton wards;
- Hampton Wick and Teddington wards.

<sup>57</sup> 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.

## **Surrey wards**

<sup>58</sup> There are currently eight wards on the Surrey side of the River Thames, represented by a mix of two- and three-members, and covering the communities of Barnes, Mortlake, Sheen, Kew, Richmond, Ham and Petersham. At Stage One each of the schemes proposed seven three-member wards for this area. We noted that there were similarities between the schemes for the majority of the wards. However, the Borough Council proposed retaining two wards for Richmond town and abolishing Palewell ward, while the two other proposals would retain a ward covering much of the current Palewell ward, with one ward covering Richmond town. We adopted the Borough Council's proposals as part of our draft recommendations. At Stage Three, while the Borough Council supported the draft recommendations, both the Conservative and the



While we acknowledge the concerns of those local residents who have made comments during Stage Three, we do not consider that the increase in electoral inequality is outweighed by the community arguments expressed. Moreover, having visited the area, we note that the delineation of communities surrounding Richmond is not clear and, together with the lack of consensus locally on the precise boundaries of such communities, do not consider there is enough evidence to move away from our draft recommendations. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for North Richmond and South Richmond wards as final.

### **Barnes, East Sheen, Kew, Mortlake and Palewell wards**

70 The two-member East Sheen ward currently has good electoral equality with the number of electors per councillor equal to the borough average (1 per cent above in 2003). In the three-member Barnes, Kew, Mortlake and Palewell wards the number of electors per councillor is 2 per cent below, 5 per cent above, 16 per cent below and 11 per cent below the borough average respectively (6 per cent above, 6 per cent above, 18 per cent below and 13 per cent below in 2003).

71 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that Palewell ward should be abolished with part of the area being included in an expanded East Sheen ward and part included in a new Mortlake & Barnes Common ward (together with a small part in North Richmond ward). It stated that "Palewell is not a community as such, and the ward name was taken from Palewell Common". In proposing a modified East Sheen ward, it further stated that "the opportunity has been taken to amalgamate the two halves of East Sheen, which are currently split between East Sheen and Palewell wards" and that the proposed arrangements would unite, as far as possible, the East Sheen community in one ward. The number of electors per councillor in East Sheen ward would be 1 per cent below the average (2 per cent below in 2003).

72 As a consequence of its proposal for East Sheen ward, the Borough Council proposed including the remainder of Palewell ward, that is the area between Upper Richmond Road and the railway line, in a new Mortlake & Barnes Common ward. It also proposed that, due to anticipated growth in Barnes, the southern part of Barnes ward, around Barnes Common, should also be included in Mortlake & Barnes Common ward to achieve

electoral equality throughout the area. Additionally, the Council proposed that part of Mortlake ward should be included in the proposed North Richmond ward, as detailed earlier. Under its scheme, the number of electors per councillor in Mortlake & Barnes Common ward would be 5 per cent above the borough average (2 per cent in 2003).

73 At Stage One, the Conservative Group proposed a new Green ward which would cover most of the existing Palewell ward. The Labour Group proposed a modified Palewell ward renamed Sheen Common. The Group also proposed modifying Mortlake ward. In the east it proposed that part of Barnes ward be included in Mortlake ward. To the west, it proposed extending the boundary to include Chilton Road and part of Mortlake Road, currently in Kew ward. Additionally, it proposed that Raleigh Road be included in Kew ward.

74 We noted that each scheme proposed an enlarged ward covering the Mortlake area, although on different boundaries, but did not consider that the statutory criteria would best be met by expanding the boundary to include parts of Kew ward in Mortlake ward, as proposed by both the Conservative and Labour groups. We also considered that the Conservative Group's proposals would split an integral part of Kew and include it in a ward with which it has no community interest.

75 In the east, given that Mortlake ward currently extends beyond the railway line and includes Barnes Bridge station, we considered that each of the proposals put forward, particularly those from the Borough Council and the Conservative Group which include Barnes Common with Mortlake, reflect the statutory criteria. However, given the proposal for the continuation of two wards covering the Richmond Town area and the changes proposed to the wards in the East Sheen area, we concluded the Borough Council's proposals provided the most appropriate pattern of representation in the remainder of the area. We therefore adopted the Borough Council's proposals for Barnes, Mortlake & Barnes Common and Kew wards as part of our draft recommendations.

76 We noted the arguments for the different proposed configurations of wards in the remainder of this area, all of which achieve good levels of electoral equality, and considered that the Borough Council's proposal to include the whole of the East Sheen settlement in one ward, together with the

proposals for the surrounding wards, best reflects the statutory criteria. We therefore adopted the Borough Council's proposal for East Sheen ward as part of our draft recommendations.

77 At Stage Three, the Council supported the draft recommendations. Both the Conservative and the Labour groups opposed our draft recommendations for these wards. The Conservative Group, supported by a local resident, specifically objected to the abolition of a ward covering the Palewell area, reiterating its Stage One proposal for a Green ward covering the area, which should be renamed Beverley. As described earlier, the Group also objected to the transfer of part of Kew ward to North Richmond ward, supported by five local residents and a petition of 24 signatures, reiterating its Stage One proposal for a Mortlake Riverside ward, arguing that the area north of Mortlake Road in the current Kew ward, which it proposed should be transferred, is not an integral part of that ward as we stated in our draft recommendations.

78 The Labour Group also objected to the draft recommendations for Kew ward, supporting the Conservative Group's alternative boundary. As stated earlier, the Group, attaching a supporting petition containing 33 signatures, also objected to our proposed division of the current Mortlake ward.

79 Having carefully considered the representations received, we continue to note that there is no consensus on the exact alignment of local boundaries in this area. While we acknowledge that the linear configuration of the settlements in the area leads to wards which do not exactly match communities if reasonable levels of electoral equality are to be maintained, we do not consider that there is enough new evidence to persuade us to move away from our draft recommendations. We therefore remain of the view that the Council's proposals for the area would achieve the best level of electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Barnes, East Sheen, Kew and Mortlake & Barnes Common wards as final.

### **Middlesex wards**

80 There are currently 11 wards on the Middlesex side of the River Thames, represented by a mix of two and three members, covering the communities of Twickenham, Hampton, Whitton and Teddington. At Stage One, each of the three schemes proposed 11 three-member wards for this

area. The majority of the wards, particularly those situated in the west and south of the area, would retain roughly similar boundaries to the current wards. Additionally, each scheme proposed wards which would, in our opinion, continue to cover broad community areas. At Stage Three, the Borough Council supported our draft recommendations, but there was some disagreement from the two minority parties over the boundaries in the Twickenham area, together with proposals for new ward names in the Hampton area.

### **Central Twickenham, East Twickenham, South Twickenham and West Twickenham wards**

81 In the two-member Central Twickenham and West Twickenham wards, the number of electors per councillor is 18 per cent above and equal to the average respectively (17 per cent above and 2 per cent below in 2003). In the three-member East Twickenham and South Twickenham wards the number of electors per councillor is 23 per cent above and 5 per cent above the average respectively (23 per cent above and 3 per cent above in 2003).

82 Each of the three schemes received at Stage One retained much of the current external boundary for the area covered by these four wards, and reflected the general community area of Twickenham. Both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group proposed an alternative configuration for the area covered by the current Central Twickenham and East Twickenham wards, although with slightly different boundaries. Both proposed a new St Margarets & North Twickenham ward, lying to the north of the railway line, and a new Twickenham Riverside ward to the south. Both schemes used the railway line as the boundary between the wards except in the St Margarets area, centred around St Margarets station, where it was considered that the whole of the community which straddles the railway line should be included in a single ward.

83 Under the Borough Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in St Margarets & North Twickenham and Twickenham Riverside wards would be 6 per cent above and 3 per cent below the borough average respectively (4 per cent above and 2 per cent below in 2003).

84 The Labour Group proposed the continuation of Central Twickenham and East Twickenham wards, but proposed transferring part of East Twickenham ward to Central Twickenham ward, with the boundary following St Margarets Road

and Sandycombe Road.

85 In considering the proposals for the area covered by Central Twickenham and East Twickenham wards, we noted the degree of consensus between the schemes advanced at Stage One and the fact that each significantly improved electoral equality in a uniform pattern of three-member wards. Specifically, the proposals take account of the St Margarets community, based around the station, by crossing the railway line at this point. At this stage we considered that the Borough Council's proposals for St Margarets & North Twickenham and Twickenham Riverside wards provided the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

86 The Borough Council proposed significant changes to the boundary of South Twickenham ward, extending the boundary northwards to include the properties between The Green/Heath Road and the railway line in South Twickenham ward, while transferring the area bounded by Hampton Road, Sixth Cross Road and Staines Road from South Twickenham ward to a modified West Twickenham ward. It proposed transferring part of Cross Deep from South Twickenham ward to Twickenham Riverside ward. It proposed that the southern boundary of South Twickenham ward should follow the centre of Waldegrave Park, stating that this would include an area of student accommodation in the same ward as St Mary's University College. The Borough Council also proposed transferring part of Heathfield ward, bounded by Great Chertsey Road, Hospital Bridge Road and Staines Road, to a modified West Twickenham ward. It further considered that Fulwell Park, together with the Twickenham and Fulwell golf courses, should be included in West Twickenham ward. Under its proposals for South Twickenham and West Twickenham wards, the number of electors per councillor would be equal to and 3 per cent above the borough average respectively (2 per cent below and 1 per cent above in 2003).

87 The Conservative Group's Stage One submission also proposed retaining much of the current boundary of South Twickenham ward, but with a minor boundary realignment around Twickenham Green, transferring First Cross Road, Chestnut Road, Second Cross Road, Third Cross Road and Elmsleigh Green to West Twickenham

ward. It also proposed renaming the ward Strawberry Hill which, it stated "would give it a recognisable identity for a majority of electors". Under this scheme, West Twickenham ward would also include parts of the current Central Twickenham and Hampton wards.

88 The Labour Group's Stage One proposals for these wards were similar to those put forward by the Conservative Group. However, it proposed including the whole of Waldegrave Park, together with Fieldend, in South Twickenham ward. It also proposed a similar boundary realignment around Twickenham Green to that proposed by the Conservative Group.

89 We noted that each of the three proposals addressed the current imbalances while providing a pattern of three-member wards in the area. The Borough Council's proposals provided for the continuation of clear boundaries, particularly for West Twickenham ward where the inclusion of the Fulwell Park area affects only a few electors. In South Twickenham ward, the Borough Council's scheme provided the highest level of electoral equality while utilising identifiable boundaries. In particular, its proposed boundary along Waldegrave Park reflects the community identity of the student residents, including them in a ward with their college. Moreover, our adoption of the Borough Council's proposals for neighbouring wards preclude alternative boundary alignments as this would have a consequential effect on the wards throughout the Twickenham area. We therefore adopted the Borough Council's proposals for West Twickenham and South Twickenham wards as part of our draft recommendations.

90 In response to consultation, the Borough Council supported our draft recommendations, together with the alternative name of Strawberry Hill for South Twickenham ward and a minor boundary realignment to include Bridge Close in Teddington ward rather than South Twickenham ward. The Conservative Group supported the majority of the draft recommendations for the ward boundaries in Twickenham but objected to the transfer of the area north of Twickenham Green, currently in Twickenham West ward, to Twickenham South ward on community identity grounds, stating that the Green provides a natural boundary between the areas. These views were supported by the Lincoln Avenue Estates Association and a local resident. The Conservative

Group also continued to support the name Strawberry Hill for South Twickenham ward. The Labour Group stated that it was “broadly prepared to accept the proposed Twickenham Riverside ward”, but objected to our draft recommendation to transfer parts of West Twickenham and Central Twickenham wards to South Twickenham ward on community identity grounds, supporting either its own Stage One proposals or those from the Conservative Group which it considered “meets the need of keeping a community together entirely”. Additionally a local resident objected to the transfer of the area around Appleby Close from South Twickenham ward to West Twickenham ward.

91 Given the general support for our draft recommendations for Twickenham Riverside and St Margarets & North Twickenham wards, we propose endorsing our draft recommendations for these two wards as final. We note the community identity arguments from the Conservative and Labour groups, together with the other respondents, against the inclusion of part of West Twickenham ward in South Twickenham ward, but the alternative boundary alignments would worsen electoral equality without consequential boundary adjustments elsewhere in Twickenham. Furthermore, we do not consider that there is enough evidence to show that the area to the north of Twickenham Green has a markedly different identity from the areas to the south. Additionally, given that the proposed ward would not solely cover Strawberry Hill, we do not consider that the proposed ward name of Strawberry Hill would reflect all of the area covered by the ward and therefore propose retaining the current ward name, South Twickenham. We are therefore endorsing our draft recommendations for West Twickenham and South Twickenham wards as final, together with the minor amendments to provide clearer boundaries, not affecting any electors, which have been identified.

### **Heathfield and Whitton wards**

92 The three-member Heathfield and Whitton wards currently have reasonable levels of electoral equality with the number of electors per councillor being 5 per cent above and 1 per cent below the borough average respectively (4 per cent above and equal to the average in 2003).

93 At Stage One, each of the three schemes

proposed the continuation of both Heathfield and Whitton wards with only minor amendments to the current boundaries. Both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group proposed retaining the eastern and southern boundaries of Whitton ward, but proposed a minor change in the west, including Whitton Way and Argyle Avenue in Heathfield ward (although the Conservative Group also proposed an alternative which would continue to align the boundary along the railway line). The Labour Group proposed transferring the area bounded by the railway line, Nelson Road and Hospital Bridge Road to Heathfield ward. It also proposed amending the eastern boundary of Whitton ward, including the area between the Duke of Northumberland’s River, Rugby Road and Chertsey Road from Central Twickenham ward. Each of the three schemes proposed that Chertsey Road should be retained as the southern boundary of Heathfield ward and that the boundary should continue to follow this road until it joins the borough boundary, thereby transferring the area to the south of Chertsey Road and west of Hospital Bridge Road from Heathfield ward to West Twickenham ward.

94 Under each of the proposals for Heathfield ward the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 2 per cent from the average in both 1998 and 2003, while in Whitton ward this figure would vary by no more than 3 per cent (2 per cent in 2003). Given the good levels of electoral equality achieved through minimum change to these wards, the similarity of the areas which would be transferred and the agreement between two of the three submissions, we adopted the Borough Council’s proposals for Heathfield and Whitton wards as part of our draft recommendations.

95 At Stage Three, we did not receive any objections to our draft recommendations for Heathfield and Whitton wards and therefore confirm them as final.

### **Hampton Hill, Hampton Nursery and Hampton wards**

96 In the two-member Hampton Nursery ward, the number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent above the borough average (8 per cent above in 2003). In the three-member Hampton and

Hampton Hill wards the number of electors per councillor is 6 per cent below and 5 per cent below the average respectively (5 per cent below and 6 per cent below in 2003).

97 At Stage One, all three schemes proposed significant changes to Hampton Nursery and Hampton Hill wards. The Borough Council proposed transferring the area up to and including Uxbridge Road, together with Arundel Close, The Garth and Jeff's Close, from Hampton Hill ward to Hampton Nursery ward. The remainder of Hampton Hill ward, together with part of Teddington ward, bounded by Hampton Road, Stanley Road, Somerset Road, Church Road, Latimer Road and the rear of Railway Terrace, would form a new Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward. The Borough Council stated that this boundary is "possibly the best that can be achieved in an area comprising a large number of closely packed residential streets". The Borough Council also proposed that the southern boundary of Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward be slightly amended to follow recognisable ground features. Additionally, Fulwell Park and the golf courses would be transferred to West Twickenham ward. The number of electors per councillor in Hampton Nursery and Fulwell & Hampton Hill wards would be 3 per cent below and 2 per cent below the borough average respectively (both 2 per cent below in 2003).

98 The Conservative Group proposed a modified Hampton ward, transferring the area bounded by the Longford River, Park Road and the railway line from Hampton Hill ward to Hampton ward. It also proposed a new Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward which would combine the remainder of Hampton Hill ward with part of Teddington ward, aligning the boundary between Fulwell & Hampton Hill and Teddington wards along the railway line, the rear of properties in Sydney Road, Walpole Road and Broad Street.

99 The Labour Group considered that the area bounded by the Uxbridge Road, St James Road and Hamworth Road should be transferred from Hampton Hill ward to Hampton Nursery ward, together with combining the remainder of Hampton Hill ward with part of Teddington ward, proposing the same boundary as the Borough Council.

100 We considered that the three proposals in this area were similar, acknowledging the need to expand Hampton Nursery ward further east, beyond Uxbridge Road, in order to improve

electoral equality in a pattern of three-member wards. However, the Borough Council's proposal would transfer less of the current Hampton Hill ward, aligning the boundary along the eastern side of Uxbridge Road and then the river. We considered that the Borough Council's proposed boundary between these wards provided the most appropriate balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and therefore adopted its proposal for Hampton Nursery ward as part of our draft recommendations. Given the similarities between the proposed transfers from Teddington to Fulwell & Hampton Hill and the clear boundary proposed by the Borough Council in an area of dense settlement, we adopted its proposal for Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward as part of our draft recommendations.

101 Both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group proposed only minor changes to the boundary of Hampton ward, mainly in the Bushy Park and Hampton Court areas, which would not affect any electors. The Labour Group proposed no change to the ward. Under each of the schemes, the number of electors per councillor would be no more than 2 per cent from the borough average in both 1998 and 2003. In view of the good electoral equality and the overall agreement on the pattern of wards in the area, we adopted the Borough Council's proposal for Hampton ward which would also provide a clearer boundary in the south of the ward.

102 At Stage Three, the Borough Council and the Labour Group supported our draft recommendations for Hampton, Hampton Nursery and Fulwell & Hampton Hill wards. The Borough Council, however, proposed that Hampton Nursery ward should be called Hampton North to better reflect the area covered. The Borough Council also proposed a minor boundary amendment so that all of Blandford Road would be included in Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward, to reflect its Stage One proposal.

103 The Conservative Group broadly accepted the wards of Hampton and Hampton Nursery but objected to the proposed boundary between Fulwell & Hampton Hill and Teddington wards, stating that it is "somewhat arbitrary" and supporting instead the Labour Group's Stage One proposals, stating that the boundary should be realigned along Uxbridge Road which would provide a boundary "consistent with similar

through roads such as Broad Lane". Additionally, the Conservative Group considered that there should be changes to the three ward names proposed in the draft recommendations stating that Hampton, Hampton Nursery and Fulwell & Hampton Hill wards should be renamed Hampton Village, Hampton and Hampton Hill & Fulwell respectively, considering that these names would better reflect the communities covered.

104 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we maintain the view that our draft recommendations provide good electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria. With regard to the boundary between Fulwell & Hampton Hill and Teddington wards, we note that there continues to be no consensus as to the alignment of this boundary or any additional evidence to persuade us to modify our draft recommendation. Given the agreement of the Borough Council and the Labour Group with our draft recommendation, we are confirming our draft recommendations for these three wards as final, together with the adoption of the Borough Council's ward name of Hampton North for Hampton Nursery ward, where there was agreement between the Borough Council and the Conservative Group that Hampton Nursery did not adequately reflect the area covered. In the remaining two wards we do not consider that there is enough agreement or supporting evidence with regard to the areas which they cover to justify a change to our draft recommendations for ward names, and confirm them as final.

### **Hampton Wick and Teddington wards**

105 In both of the three-member Hampton Wick and Teddington wards, the number of electors per councillor is 7 per cent above the borough average (10 per cent above and 9 per cent above the average respectively in 2003).

106 At Stage One, in addition to the modifications proposed to Teddington ward described above, both the Borough Council and the Conservative Group proposed a minor amendment to the eastern boundary of this ward to include both sides of the High Street, Ferry Road and the area around Teddington Lock in Teddington ward. Additionally, both the Council and the Conservative Group proposed transferring Harrowdene Gardens, Schaeff Way and part of Sandy Lane, together with part of Bushy Park from

Hampton Wick ward to Teddington ward. Under the Borough Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Teddington ward would be 2 per cent below and 5 per cent below the average respectively (1 per cent above and 2 per cent below in 2003). Under both proposals the number of electors per councillor in Hampton Wick ward would be 4 per cent below the average (equal to the average in 2003).

107 The Labour Group proposed a similar boundary for Teddington ward, including part of Hampton Wick ward, aligning the eastern boundary along Cromwell Road and Kingston Lane, but retaining the current boundary around Teddington Lock.

108 In the light of the agreement between two of the three proposals for Teddington ward, the significant improvement in electoral equality achieved, together with the fact that the community identity around the High Street and Teddington Lock is, in our opinion, reflected, we adopted the Borough Council's proposal as part of our draft recommendations. In view of the good level of electoral equality achieved, and as a consequence of the proposals for Teddington ward, we also adopted the Borough Council's proposal for Hampton Wick ward as part of our draft recommendations.

109 At Stage Three, we did not receive any objections from the Borough Council, the Conservative or Labour groups to our draft recommendations for these two wards. However, the Borough Council identified a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that our recommendations would accurately reflect its proposals at Stage One, stating that Bridge Close should be included in Teddington ward, all of Langham Road should be included in Hampton Wick ward and all of Blandford Road should be included in Fulwell & Hampton Hill ward. Given the general agreement with our draft recommendations for these wards, and our final recommendations for the Hampton wards described above, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Hampton Wick and Teddington wards as final, subject to the minor boundary realignments put forward by the Borough Council.

## Conclusions

110 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) four minor boundary changes between the proposed North Richmond and South Richmond wards; between South Twickenham and West Twickenham wards; and between Teddington ward and South Twickenham and Hampton Wick wards;
- (b) to rename Ham & Petersham and Hampton Nursery wards as Ham, Petersham & Richmond Riverside and Hampton North wards respectively.

111 We conclude that, in Richmond upon Thames:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 52 to 54;
- (b) there should be 18 wards, one fewer than at present, which would involve changes to the boundaries of all of the existing wards.

112 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.

113 As shown in Figure 4, our final recommendations for Richmond upon Thames 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 five to zero. This improved balance of representation is expected to improve further with all wards expected to vary by less than 10 per cent in 2003. 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.

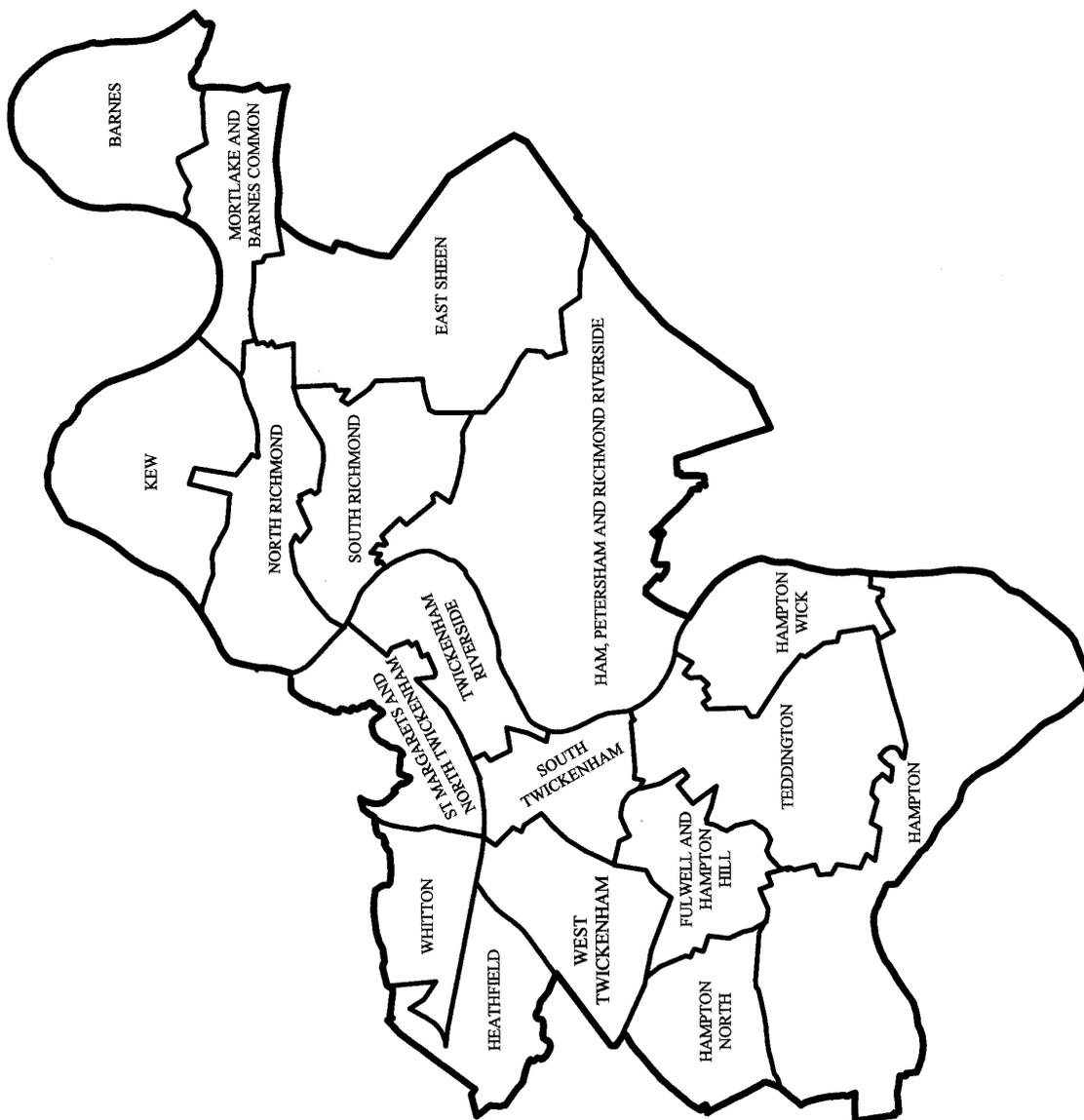
### Final Recommendation

Richmond upon Thames Borough Council should comprise 54 councillors serving 18 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	52	54	52	54
Number of wards	19	18	19	18
Average number of electors per councillor	2,407	2,318	2,463	2,372
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	5	0	6	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	1	0	1	0

Map 2:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Richmond upon Thames*



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## 6. NEXT STEPS

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

115 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.

116 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





