



# New electoral arrangements for Lewisham Council Final Recommendations

June 2020

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### **A note on our mapping:**

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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# Introduction

## Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.<sup>1</sup> We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

## What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Why Lewisham?

7 We are conducting a review of Lewisham Council ('the Council') as the value of each vote in borough elections varies depending on where you live in Lewisham. Some councillors currently represent many more or fewer voters than others. This is 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where votes are as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Lewisham are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

## Our proposals for Lewisham

9 Lewisham should be represented by 54 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Lewisham should have 19 wards, one more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of two wards (Forest Hill and Telegraph Hill) will stay the same; all others will change.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Lewisham.

## How will the recommendations affect you?

13 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

## Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Lewisham. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
18 June 2019	Number of councillors decided
25 June 2019	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
16 September 2019	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
17 December 2019	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
2 March 2020	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
30 June 2020	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation<sup>2</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>3</sup> there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

19 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2019	2025
Electorate of Lewisham	197,076	206,577
Number of councillors	54	54
Average number of electors per councillor	3,650	3,826

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Lewisham will have good electoral equality by 2025.

## Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2020. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 5% by 2025.

23 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

<sup>3</sup> Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

## Number of councillors

24 Lewisham Council currently has 54 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 54 councillors – for example, 54 one-councillor wards, 18 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

26 We received five submissions which made reference to the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. Three respondents either requested or supported an increase while the other two expressed a desire to see a reduction in the number of councillors. None of these submissions proposed a specific number of councillors, nor did they provide any evidence to support their proposals. We therefore based our draft recommendations on there being 54 councillors.

27 We received one submission in response to our draft recommendations where the respondent asked if the current number of councillors was enough. The submission did not suggest any alternative number nor did it provide any evidence to support any increase in the number of councillors. We have therefore maintained 54 councillors for our final recommendations.

## Ward boundaries consultation

28 We received 287 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included three borough-wide proposals from the Council, the Lewisham Conservatives ('the Conservatives') and Councillor Gibbons. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

29 The Council's scheme provided a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. The Council explained that its scheme used existing long-established communities and ward patterns as a starting point.

30 The Conservatives' scheme proposed a mixed pattern of two- and three-councillor wards for Lewisham and highlighted the railway lines which can divide places into distinct areas.

31 Councillor Gibbons' scheme also provided a mixed pattern of two- and three-councillor wards but did not provide any detailed community evidence to support the boundaries. In light of the good electoral equality and generally good community identity evidence received in support of the Council's and Conservatives' schemes, we did not base our proposals on Councillor Gibbons' proposals.

32 We also received a submission from The Populist Party, which suggested the creation of 27 two-councillor wards that mirrored pre-1998 wards as closely as possible. We did not receive any evidence that pre-1998 wards reflect communities as they exist today and we did not base our draft recommendations on this proposal.

33 Our draft recommendations took into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

34 We visited the area in order to look at the various proposals on the ground. This tour of Lewisham helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

35 Our draft recommendations were for 16 three-councillor wards and three two-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

## Draft recommendations consultation

36 We received 160 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included responses from the Council, the Lewisham Liberal Democrats ('Liberal Democrats'), Councillor Gibbons and Councillor John Paschoud covering the entire borough.

37 The Council suggested a number of amendments to our draft recommendations, notably to bring Tanners Hill Estate into a single ward (Brockley) and as a direct consequence to place a number of streets south of Foxberry Road in Ladywell ward. The Council also proposed swapping Sangley Road between Catford South and Rushey Green wards, along with a number of minor modifications.

38 The Liberal Democrats expressed support for our draft recommendations, particularly the mix of two- and three-councillor wards. Councillor John Paschoud wrote in support of the Council's response and also expressed the desirability to retain a uniform pattern of 18 three-councillor wards.

39 Councillor Gibbons submitted a new warding scheme based on a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. While this submission included some reasons for the creation of some of the wards, there was insufficient community evidence to support the proposed boundaries and make these wholesale changes.

40 The majority of the other submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in Bellingham, Brockley, Catford, Downham, Forest Hill, Grove Park, Ladywell, New Cross and Sydenham.

41 We also received a submission from the People Before Profit party. While acknowledging that the draft recommendations showed that care had been taken to keep communities together as much as possible, this submission advocated for the creation of five-, six- or seven-councillor wards. This, it stated, will help deal with changes when proportional representation is introduced in England. We were not persuaded to create wards of this size.

42 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with modifications to wards in Brockley, the Deptford area, Hither Green and Ladywell. We have united Tanners Hill Estate in a single ward. Our final recommendations also place electors on both sides of Tyrwhitt Road in Brockley ward.

43 We have included electors on both sides of a small section of the A205 (between St Fillans Road and Torridon Road) within Hither Green ward. We have also placed the middle section of Ladywell Fields within Ladywell ward, in response to representations from the Ladywell Fields User Group and others.

44 We have made a number of minor and consequential modifications to the boundaries of Catford South, Downham, Grove Park, Lee Green, Lewisham Central, Perry Vale and Rushey Green wards.

45 Based on evidence received during consultation, we have changed the name of our proposed New Cross ward to Deptford to better reflect community identity.

## Final recommendations

46 Our final recommendations are for 16 three-councillor wards and three two-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

47 The tables and maps on pages 10–28 detail our final recommendations for each area of Lewisham. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>4</sup> criteria of:

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

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<sup>4</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

48 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 35 and on the large map accompanying this report.

## Deptford, Evelyn, New Cross Gate and Telegraph Hill



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Deptford	3	7%
Evelyn	3	-1%
New Cross Gate	2	-7%
Telegraph Hill	3	2%

### *Deptford*

49 We received nine submissions for this area in addition to the borough-wide comments. These were from Deptford Neighbourhood Action, Tanners Hill Tenants' and Residents' Association ('Tanners Hill TRA'), the Parish of St Paul with St Mark and six residents. The submissions raised two issues: the boundary between our New Cross and Brockley wards, and the name of our New Cross ward.

50 The Council, Tanners Hill TRA and two residents pointed out that our draft recommendations split Tanners Hill Estate between Brockley and New Cross wards. Respondents stressed the need to keep the entire estate in a single ward for effective governance purposes and to keep together a strong community with similar issues. The submissions cited common issues facing the estate, including repairs, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. The Council therefore proposed including the estate in Brockley ward by running the boundary along the A2 (Deptford Broadway to New Cross Road), which also placed additional properties close to Tanners Hill Estate in Brockley ward.

51 We are persuaded that our draft recommendations split the residents of Tanners Hill Estate between two wards and that the identity of communities in the area would be better reflected by a warding arrangement that keeps the estate together in a single ward. We note that no preference was expressed by the community for the estate to remain in Brockley ward. In fact, one resident stated that 'we are really in Deptford but have a New Cross postcode... The Tanners Hill Estate should as a whole be in either Brockley or New Cross wards not split'.

52 Our final recommendations therefore unite the entire Tanners Hill Estate within New Cross ward. We believe that this provides for the best balance of our statutory criteria and also facilitates the boundaries of a neighbouring Brockley ward based on the evidence presented to us (paragraphs 71–75). According to the Tanners Hill TRA website, Tanners Hill Estate includes properties between Florence Road, Heald Road, Deloraine Street and the railway line. It also includes No 2–16 Heald Road and No 34–84 (even numbers) Tanners Hill. The boundary between Brockley and Deptford wards will therefore run from the railway line along the east of the allotment gardens on Deloraine Street. It also places residents on both sides of Tanners Hill, north of the railway line, in the same ward.

53 The Parish of St Paul with St Mark and Deptford Neighbourhood Action supported the boundaries of our proposed New Cross ward. However, together with the Council and four residents, they argued that the ward should be renamed to reflect the fact that the area was largely recognised as Deptford. Most respondents proposed that the ward be named Deptford, although the Parish of St Paul with St Mark also gave the option of naming it New Cross & Deptford. Based on the evidence received, we have changed the name of our proposed New Cross ward to

Deptford ward. We consider that this will better reflect the community that resides within it.

54 Our final Deptford ward will have a variance of 7% more electors than the borough average by 2025 and will be represented by three councillors.

#### *Evelyn and New Cross Gate*

55 In addition to the borough-wide comments, we received two submissions that referred to our proposed Evelyn and New Cross Gate wards.

56 The Council supported our draft recommendations for this area. Councillor Gibbons proposed extending New Cross Gate eastwards to create a three-councillor ward but did not provide any supporting evidence. He also suggested renaming Evelyn ward as Deptford North or Deptford Riverside ward, arguing that the name Evelyn comes from an era when some wards in the borough were named after famous residents. We note that the boundaries of the councillor's proposed Deptford North ward would be different from our Evelyn ward. As we are not adopting these boundaries as part of our final recommendations, we have not been persuaded to rename it as suggested.

57 Deptford Neighbourhood Action suggested renaming New Cross Gate ward as New Cross ward but did not provide any evidence in support of this suggestion. Finally, a resident suggested that we split Lewisham Central among a number of wards and redeploy its allocated councillors to other wards, including New Cross Gate. There was no accompanying evidence to support this suggestion.

58 We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Evelyn and New Cross Gate wards as final. Our three-councillor Evelyn ward will have 1% fewer electors than the borough average, while our two-councillor New Cross Gate ward is forecast to have 7% fewer electors than the borough average, both by 2025.

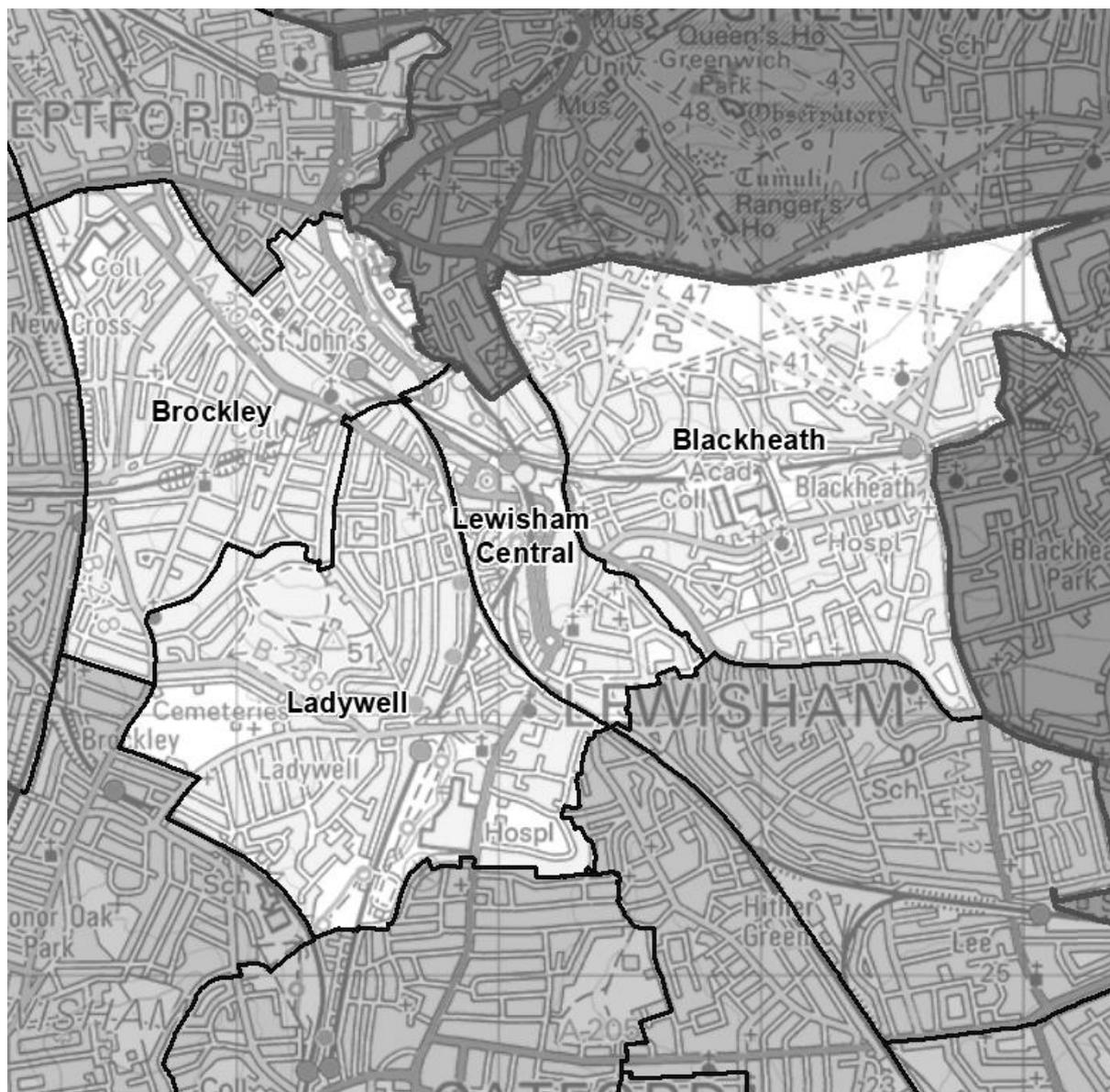
#### *Telegraph Hill*

59 In addition to the borough-wide comments, we received five submissions for Telegraph Hill. These were from the Telegraph Hill ward councillors, the Telegraph Hill branch of the Labour Party, the Telegraph Hill Centre and two residents.

60 All submissions supported our draft recommendations for this ward. Among other things, respondents cited the railway line and borough boundary as two borders that define the ward and its neighbourhoods. They also pointed to 'a strong shared sense of community interest' which had been built up over many years.

61 Therefore, in consideration of all the evidence received in relation to this ward, we confirm our draft recommendation for Telegraph Hill ward as final. This ward will have 2% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

## Blackheath, Brockley, Ladywell and Lewisham Central



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Blackheath	3	-5%
Brockley	3	7%
Ladywell	3	-10%
Lewisham Central	2	3%

### *Blackheath and Lewisham Central*

62 We received seven submissions for this area in addition to the borough-wide comments. In its submission, the Council expressed broad support for our wards but proposed a couple of modifications to our proposed Lewisham Central ward.

63 The first proposed modification involved moving the boundary between Lewisham Central and Blackheath wards from the Quaggy River onto Lee High Road, between Lewis Grove and Clarendon Rise. The Council stated that this is ‘for effective governance reasons as these properties are in a different ward along a busy stretch of road’. For the same reason, it also suggested moving three properties along Morley Road into Lewisham Central from Lee Green ward. The Lewisham East Labour Party supported our draft recommendations for Blackheath ward but supported the Council’s proposed modification of Lewisham Central ward along Morley Road.

64 With regards to the proposed change on Lee High Road, we note that this entire area on the border of Blackheath and Lewisham Central wards is a busy shopping area. The Council’s amendment would place electors in No 2–18 Lee High Road in Lewisham Central while the rest of this equally busy stretch of road remains in Blackheath ward. The boundary we proposed in our draft recommendations would keep the entirety of this road in a single ward. In particular, we do not understand the justification for putting residents in No 18 in a different ward from their neighbours residing in the adjacent No 20. In this instance, we are of the view that we have not received persuasive evidence to support the proposed modification and are therefore not adopting this as part of our final recommendations.

65 With respect to the properties on Morley Road, we note that the suggested modification places all properties on this road in the same ward and we are content to make this change.

66 Four residents argued that Lewisham Central should be a three-councillor ward. One stated that it was unfair to have wards with fewer councillors than others. Others pointed out that a two-councillor ward reduced representation and cover, especially if one councillor was indisposed. Another resident proposed that the area between Lee High Road and Saxton Close should be moved from Blackheath back into Lewisham Central ward.

67 For authorities that do not elect by thirds, there is no statutory presumption to have a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards. This affords us the opportunity to create wards which on balance better reflect communities, without being bound by the constraint of making sure that every ward had equal number of councillors. Therefore, based on the evidence we received over the course of the two consultation periods, we are content to create a two-councillor Lewisham Central ward as part of our final recommendations. Furthermore, at 3% forecast variance, the councillor-electors ratio is well within 10% of the average for the borough.

68 As mentioned in paragraph 57, one resident suggested that we split Lewisham Central ward and redeploy its councillors to other wards. However, there was no evidence to support this proposal.

69 Two residents suggested a number of alternative names for Lewisham Central ward. These included Gateway ward (the name of the major development in the area), Confluence ward (acknowledging that the Quaggy and Ravensbourne rivers meet in that area), Central Lewisham and Lewisham Centre. The submissions did not include any evidence that the communities within this ward identified with any of these names. Therefore, we have not renamed this ward within our final recommendations.

70 We are confirming our draft recommendations for three-councillor Blackheath ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025. Our Lewisham Central ward is based on our draft recommendations with a modification to include an additional three properties on Morley Road. The forecast variance for this ward remains at 3% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

### *Brockley*

71 In addition to the borough-wide comments, we received 10 submissions directly relating to Brockley. As discussed in paragraph 50, the Council proposed that we unite Tanners Hill Estate within Brockley ward. To make this possible on electoral equality grounds, it proposed that we move properties in a number of roads south of Foxberry Road into Ladywell ward.

72 Councillor Handley also supported the Council's suggested amendments, including the moving of properties south of Foxberry Road into Ladywell ward for electoral equality reasons only. Brockley Society supported the Council's suggested amendments. In addition, they argued that the long-standing boundary between Brockley and Ladywell wards along Tyrwhitt Road should be moved behind the properties on the eastern side of the road. This would unite electors on this road within the same ward.

73 Four residents supported our draft recommendations for Brockley ward with three of them specifically in favour of the roads south of Foxberry Road being kept in Brockley ward. One resident categorically opposed moving these roads back into Ladywell ward on community identity grounds, explaining that 'no one west of Brockley Road would consider themselves part of Ladywell'. A resident responding about Ladywell ward also stated that these roads 'have a much stronger Brockley identity'. This supports evidence we received during our first consultation.

74 Having carefully considered the evidence received, we have been persuaded to include both sides of Tyrwhitt Road within Brockley ward on the grounds of community identity and effective and convenient local government. For the same reasons, we are also retaining the roads south of Foxberry Road within Brockley ward as part of our final recommendations. As a result of our decision relating to the

Tanners Hill Estate (paragraphs 50–52), we are able to recommend this warding arrangement while retaining good levels of electoral equality across all wards in the area.

75 Our final Brockley ward is therefore based on the draft recommendations with modifications to exclude the Tanners Hill Estate and include both sides of Tyrwhitt Road. It has three councillors and is forecast to have a variance of 7% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

### *Ladywell*

76 We received 91 submissions relating to Ladywell in addition to the borough-wide comments. Our draft recommendation for this ward received overwhelming support from respondents, including the Ladywell Labour Party, Ladywell Society, Save Ladywell Campaign and the vast majority of residents. Respondents described the draft recommendations as a reflection of the community and those who use Ladywell station and the shops and cafes in Ladywell Village.

77 The Council also gave broad support to this ward. Its only proposed modification was moving some roads from Brockley into Ladywell ward for electoral equality purposes, as detailed in paragraph 71.

78 Lewisham East Labour Party argued that Campshill Road, Monument Gardens and Canada Gardens should be moved into Ladywell ward because they had ‘a strong shared identity with the areas around Lewisham Park’. It argued that this would produce a strong and cohesive district east of Lewisham High Street in the new Ladywell ward. Campshill Road was included in our draft proposal for Ladywell ward. We have received no other supporting evidence to confirm the community identity or the desirability of using the northern stretch of Hither Green Lane as a boundary, as suggested as part of this proposal. We were therefore not persuaded to make any changes in this area.

79 We received some submissions from residents which expressed dissatisfaction with elements of the draft recommendations. One resident stated that the Loampit Vale end of Algernon Road felt more like Lewisham Central and another considered Lewisham High Street part of Lewisham Central ward. Another resident argued that the boundaries of this ward distorted the centre of the ward.

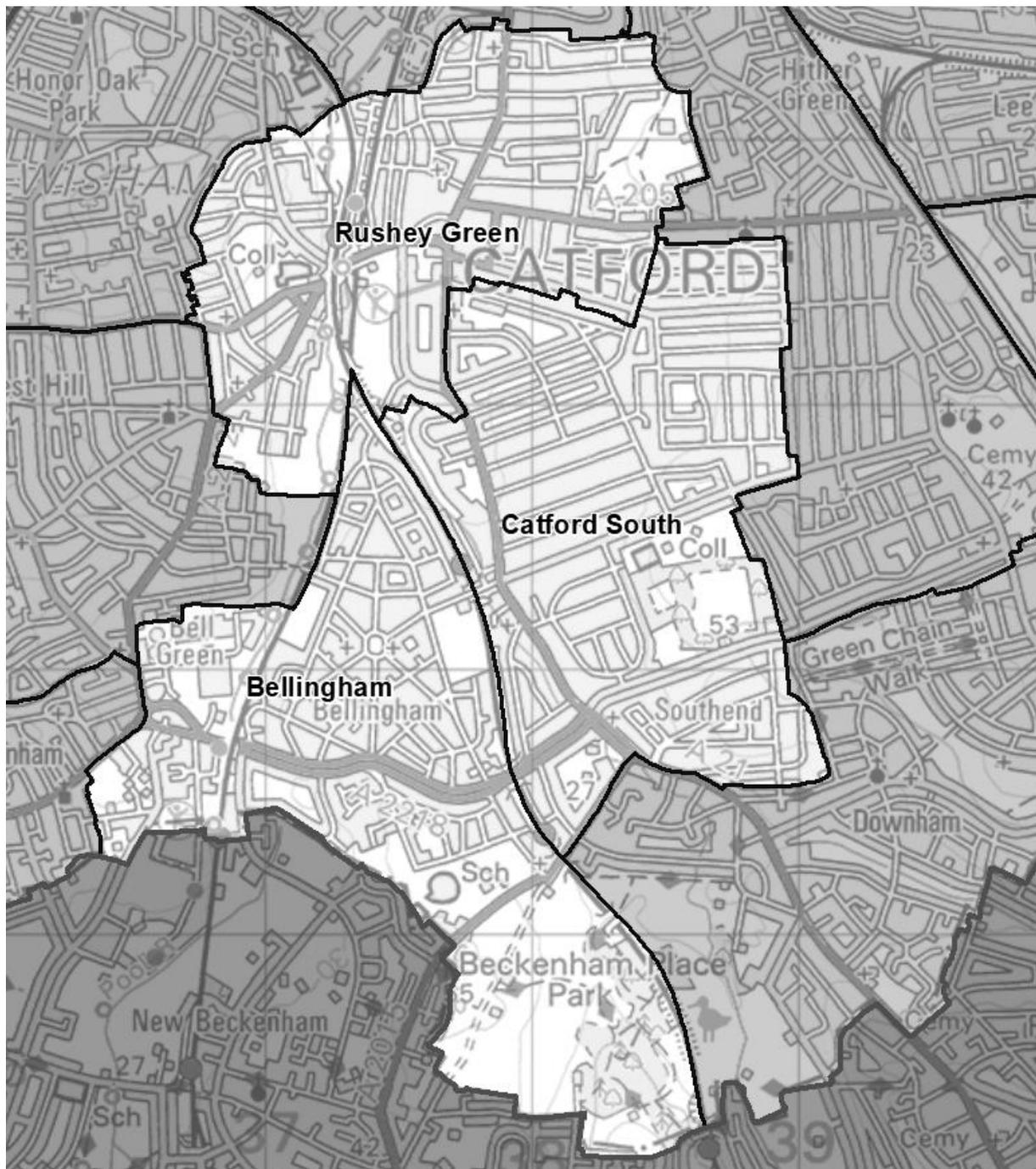
80 The Ladywell Fields User Group and 13 residents were concerned that Ladywell Fields would still be split unsatisfactorily across wards. The User Group and some residents proposed that the boundary be drawn north of Albacore Crescent and Silvermere Road, thus ‘including the whole of Ladywell Fields east of the Hayes Line railway... the whole of the “middle field” of Ladywell Fields north of the Catford Green development and the Blackfriars to Catford line’ in Ladywell ward. We agree that having brought the northern section of the park into Ladywell ward, it

is desirable to unite this additional area of Ladywell Fields a single ward. This proposal does not involve any electors and we have modified the boundary accordingly as part of our final recommendations.

81 Seven of the 13 residents also proposed the inclusion of streets north of Medusa Road within Ladywell ward. Having considered this proposal, we are of the view that the area immediately north and south of Medusa Road appears to be a single community and we have received no evidence to the contrary. While we note that some residents have an affinity with Ladywell, we are concerned that the proposed amendment would split the community in the area and have therefore not adopted it as part of our final recommendations.

82 In light of the overwhelming support for this ward, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Ladywell as final, with two minor modifications along Tyrwhitt Road (paragraph 74) and along Albacore Crescent (paragraph 80). The latter modification moves the Lewisham Hospital car park on Albacore Crescent into Ladywell ward where the rest of the hospital sits. Ladywell ward is a three-councillor ward with a forecast variance of 10% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025. We are content that this provides for a good balance of our statutory criteria.

## Bellingham, Catford South and Rushey Green



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Bellingham	2	-5%
Catford South	3	3%
Rushey Green	3	6%

### *Bellingham*

83 We received 10 submissions relating to Bellingham in addition to the borough-wide comments. The Council and Lewisham West & Penge Conservative

Association supported our draft recommendations for this ward. However, the Bellingham Branch Labour Party, Bellingham Interagency, Phoenix Community Housing and Councillor Jacqueline Paschoud proposed expanding Bellingham eastwards to the A21 Bromley Road. They also argued for a three-member ward.

84 Some of the above respondents explained that following community representations, Transport for London changed the destination of local buses to Bellingham-Catford Bus Garage in recognition that this area was considered part of Bellingham. Bellingham Interagency also said that planning permission had been granted to erect a statue of a famous local resident, Sir Henry Cooper, at the junction of Randlesdown Road and Bromley Road. We carefully considered a warding arrangement which included the area west of Bromley Road as within Bellingham, as suggested. However, this would create a two-councillor ward with 20% more electors than the borough average by 2025, or a three-councillor ward with 20% fewer electors. We considered moving a smaller area (i.e. north of Randlesdown Road and west of Bromley Road) into Bellingham ward. However, we note that this would cut off residents north of Aitken Road from any of their close neighbours and places them in a different ward.

85 There were suggestions that we should move the Home Park Estate (an area west of Bell Green Lane) into Sydenham ward to compensate for this proposed change. However, we did not receive any community evidence to support this amendment. We also note that this alteration would produce a 16% variance for Bellingham ward, which in our view is not justified by the evidence provided.

86 A resident pointed out that our portal map did not include two recent developments in the Bell Green area. Although the portal map does not show Orchard Court and Pear Tree Court, we can confirm that these developments were included in our draft recommendations. As part of an electoral review, the local authority provides us with an anonymised electoral register, which includes the location of electors. For mapping, we use updated Ordnance Survey maps. The portal is a tool to help respondents submit their proposals and we have recently updated it to improve the customer experience.

87 A number of submissions made reference to an area east of Perry Hill around Datchet and Burford Roads. As part of our draft recommendations, we placed a number of streets in this area in Perry Vale ward. This was in response to evidence we received during our first consultation period that indicated that this area was cut off from Bellingham. In response to the draft recommendations, local organisations and a resident pointed out that there was a footbridge that connected this area to the east of the railway line. However, we also received responses from other residents which supported our draft recommendations, reiterating that this area was indeed isolated from most of Bellingham ward and that they identified with Perry Vale ward.

88 We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations as final for Bellingham ward. This ward is forecast to have 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

#### *Catford South and Rushey Green*

89 In addition to the borough-wide comments, we received four submissions regarding this area. The Council expressed broad support for our draft recommendations. It proposed four modifications. The first modification would move electors on Sangley Road from Rushey Green ward into Catford South ward. The second modification would place electors on both sides of a section of the A205 South Circular Road within Hither Green ward. The third modification would move a small section of the boundary between Rushey Green and Hither Green wards to run all the way around Mountsfield Park. Finally, the Council proposed moving electors on Fordyce Road and Littlewood into Hither Green ward. The Council argued that these changes were proposed to facilitate improved community reflection and governance.

90 The Lewisham East Labour Party supported the Council's suggested modification along Sangley Road. They stated that the shops at the east end of Sangley Road and those in the adjacent Sandhurst Road should not be split between wards. However, moving the boundary as suggested would split electors and businesses at the west end of Sangley Road. It would also mean that electors at the west end of Sangley Road have to leave the ward to access other parts of their ward. Furthermore, we are of the view that Sangley Road looks north towards the rest of Rushey Green. We are therefore retaining Sangley Road within Rushey Green as part of our final recommendations.

91 With regards to the other modifications, we are persuaded that they reflect community identity and create identifiable boundaries, in particular along the boundary of Mountsfield Park.

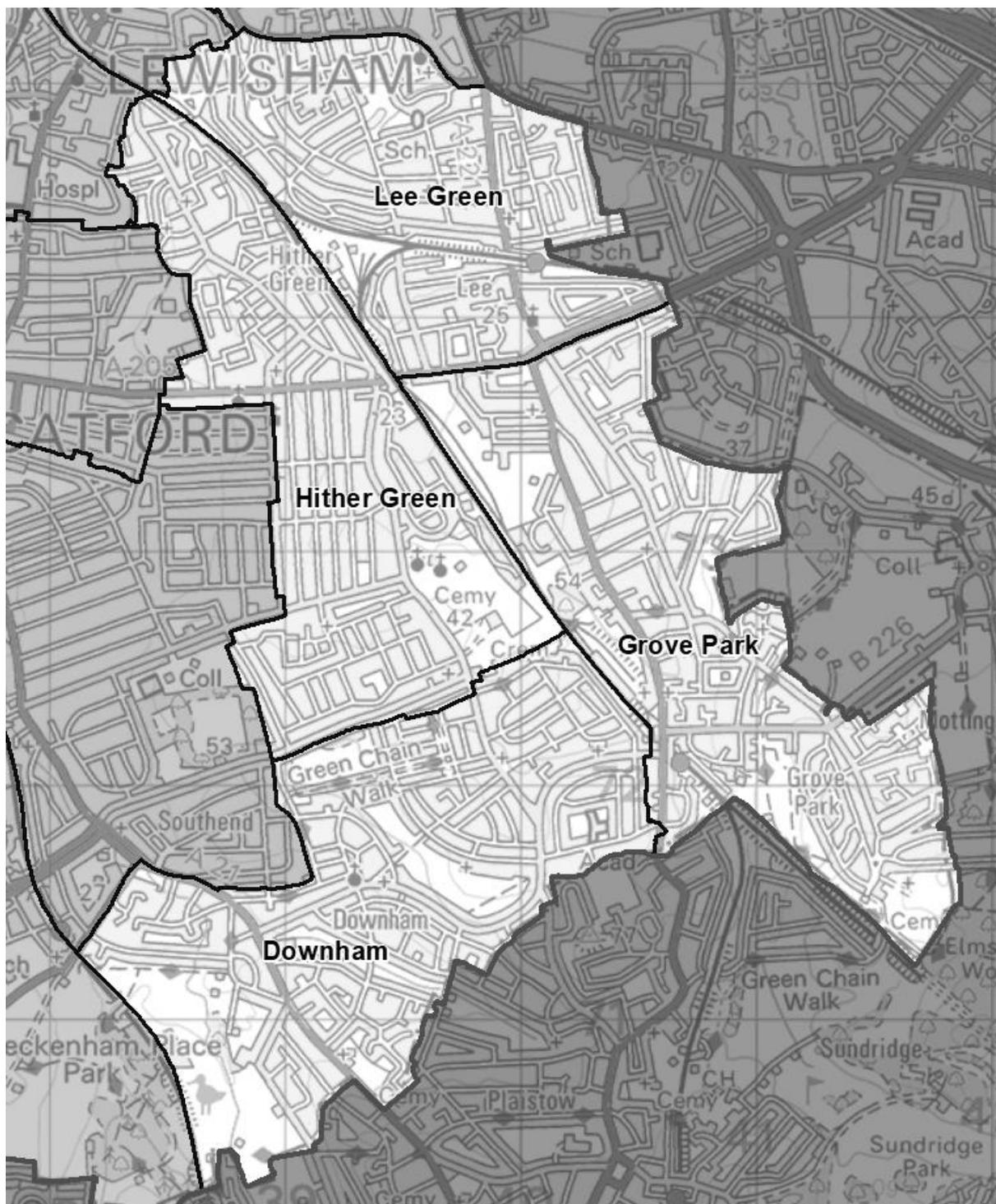
92 A resident argued that the A205 South Circular Road ought to be a hard boundary between Hither Green and Catford South ward and two residents commented on the ward name, one questioning why it was named Catford South when no other ward has Catford as part of its name. We note that the South Circular Road is a single carriageway in this area, and we have received some evidence that the community extends across both sides of the road. In addition, no alternative boundaries were proposed. Therefore, we have adopted the Council's amendments as part of our final recommendations.

93 The Lewisham East Labour Party expressed concern about the clarity of the boundary between Rushey Green and Crofton Park wards along Blythe Hill Lane. Their understanding was that all properties on Blythe Hill Lane were meant to be included in Rushey Green ward. We can confirm that properties on both sides of

Blythe Hill Lane, south of Blythe Hill, have been included in Rushey Green ward. Those north of Blythe Hill have been placed in Crofton Park ward. Moving them into Rushey Green ward would cut off residents of Montacute and Bankhurst Roads from the rest of their ward. We have not received any evidence to support moving these two roads into Rushey Green ward. We are therefore not adopting these arrangements as part of our final recommendations.

94 Subject to the modifications along the A205, Mountsfield Park, the Fordyce Road area and the moving of the Lewisham Hospital car park on Albacore Crescent into the same ward as the hospital (paragraph 82), we confirm Catford South and Rushey Green wards as part of our final recommendations. Both are three-councillor wards and forecast to have variances of 3% and 6% more electors than the borough average by 2025, respectively.

## Downham, Grove Park, Hither Green and Lee Green



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Downham	3	5%
Grove Park	3	-9%
Hither Green	3	5%
Lee Green	3	-7%

### *Downham, Grove Park and Lee Green*

95 We received seven submissions for this area in addition to the borough-wide comments. The Council and Lewisham East Labour Party expressed broad support for Downham and Grove Park wards.

96 Councillor Howard proposed that a number of electors be moved into Grove Park ward. She argued that Downham ward produces considerable casework which was only going to grow as a result of the increase in the number of electors per councillor. She pointed out that it was appropriate to relocate some electors from Downham to the neighbouring Grove Park ward as the latter ward had fewer than the average number of electors per councillor for the borough. She suggested that part of an area already designated as the Grove Park Neighbourhood area by the Council should be moved from Downham ward. A resident also drew attention to the difference between the electoral variances of the two wards.

97 While we aim to achieve good electoral equality across our proposed wards, it is almost impossible to create wards with exactly the same number of electors per councillor while reflecting communities in the area. While we note that Grove Park ward is forecast to have 9% fewer electors than the average for the local authority area by 2025, this is within our usual tolerance range of 10%. We also note that Councillor Howard's proposed boundary would still split the Council's Neighbourhood area for Grove Park across two wards, just as it does under existing arrangements as well as under our draft recommendations. Furthermore, we have not received evidence that residents of the roads the Councillor proposed moved into Grove Park ward are not part of the same community as those to their immediate west. Therefore, we are not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

98 Three residents expressed disappointment that some areas to the north in Grove Park were not included in Lee Green ward. This is an area on the boundary between the two wards. We note that including the area north of Ronver Road and west of Baring Road within Lee Green ward, in line with one suggestion, would produce an electoral variance of -17% for Grove Park ward by 2025. We are of the view that we have not received sufficiently persuasive evidence to create a ward with so few electors when compared with the average for the borough.

99 The Council proposed a modification to include Baring Hall Hotel within Grove Park ward, on community identity grounds. We agree that all of Baring Road should be in Grove Park ward and have made a minor modification to include the hotel as part of our final recommendations.

100 We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Downham and Grove Park wards as final, subject to this minor modification. These wards are forecast to have electoral variances of 5% more and 9% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025, respectively.

101 We also confirm our draft recommendations for Lee Green ward subject to the minor modification detailed in paragraph 70. This ward is forecast to have 7% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

### *Hither Green*

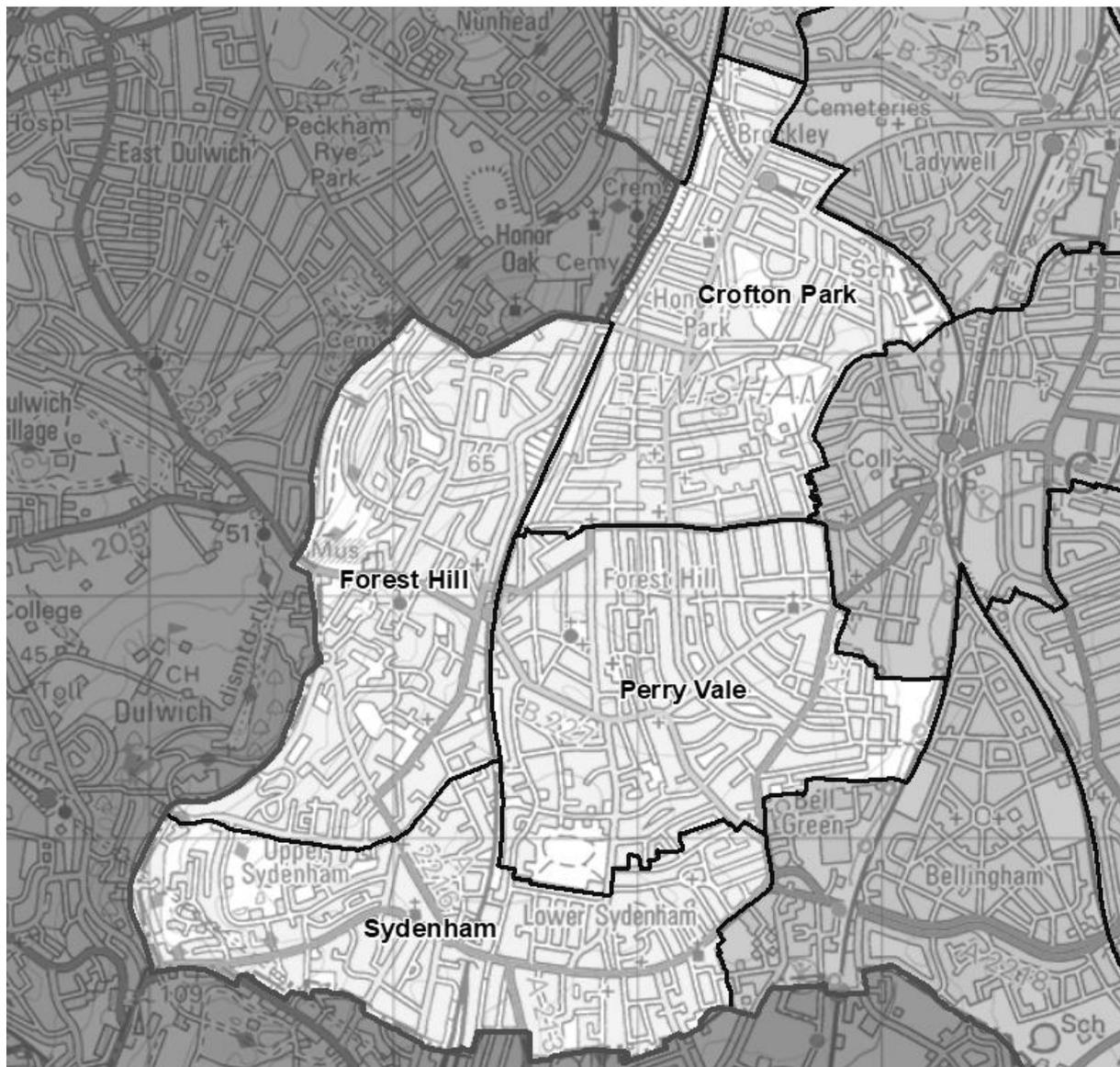
102 We received 11 additional submissions directly relating to Hither Green ward. The Council broadly supported the ward but proposed modifications as described in paragraph 89, which we have accepted. The Lewisham East Labour Party argued that some properties should be moved from Hither Green into Ladywell ward, the details of which are given in paragraph 78. As previously noted, we are not adopting this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

103 Seven residents supported the draft recommendations for Hither Green. The respondents argued that the new ward reflected the fact that Hither Green had a different identity from Catford South. Some said they felt more affinity with the issues in Hither Green than the existing Catford South ward and that the new ward was 'sensible with regards to our local community makeup, geography and history'.

104 One resident argued that the ward should extend further west to include most of George Lane in Rushey Green ward. However, they did not provide any community evidence to support this. Two residents did not support our proposed ward. One argued that most of Hither Green was in Lee Green ward and our proposal split the Hither Green community into two. The other respondent said that it would disrupt the Whitefoot neighbourhood.

105 Given the overall support for our Hither Green ward, we are not proposing any further modifications. Hither Green ward is forecast to have a variance of 5% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

## Crofton Park, Forest Hill, Perry Vale and Sydenham



Ward	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Crofton Park	3	-5%
Forest Hill	3	-6%
Perry Vale	3	10%
Sydenham	3	2%

### *Crofton Park*

106 In addition to comments about the entire local authority area, we received two submissions for Crofton Park. The Council supported our draft recommendations for this ward.

107 Paragraph 93 includes details of the Lewisham East Labour Party proposal with regards to properties along Blythe Hill Lane, north of Blythe Hill. As previously

discussed, we are not adopting these proposals as part of the final recommendations.

108 The other submission for this ward requested that it be renamed as Crofton Park & Honor Oak ward due to the proximity of part of the ward to Honor Oak station. However, we note that Honor Oak station is also close to Forest Hill and we received a suggestion that Honor Oak be included in the name of Forest Hill ward. We note that the station is also on the borough border with Southwark. Given the likelihood that the area known as Honor Oak is therefore spread across two wards, as well as Southwark, and the limited evidence provided to support this proposal, we have not adopted it as part of our final recommendations.

109 However, in order to provide for good electoral equality for Perry Vale ward (see paragraph 121), we have made a minor modification by placing electors on both sides of a section of Stanstead Road in Crofton Park ward. We note that this section is single carriageway and largely residential.

110 Aside from this modification, we confirm our Crofton Park ward as final. It is forecast to have 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2025.

#### *Forest Hill and Sydenham*

111 We received five submissions in relation to our Forest Hill and Sydenham wards, in addition to support from the Council.

112 The Lewisham West & Penge Conservative Association proposed swapping two areas between these wards. They argued that residents on the north side of Sydenham Park and Sydenham Park Road identify more with Sydenham than Forest Hill ward. They proposed moving our proposed boundary from Sydenham Park to run behind the properties on the east side of Dartmouth Road. This would move residents on Albion Villas Road, Longfield Crescent, Shrublands Close and some residents on Kirkdale into Sydenham ward. At the same time, the Association proposed moving a number of roads south of Wells Park Road into Forest Hill ward and running the boundary along Taylor's Lane to Longton Avenue, Longton Grove and Jews Walk. Two residents wrote in support of these proposals. One noted that while our draft recommendations were an improvement on the existing wards, these proposals were better.

113 We have carefully considered them together with the accompanying evidence. While there appears to be some evidence to suggest that Sydenham Park and Sydenham Park Road could be included in Sydenham ward, we have not received persuasive evidence for the area proposed to move into Forest Hill ward, in particular, properties along part of Longton Avenue, the northern side of Longton Grove and the north-eastern side of Jews Walk. We are not persuaded that this will not split communities. We are therefore content to retain the well-established

boundary along Wells Park Road and Sydenham Park Road, for which we have received support.

114 The Lewisham West & Penge Conservative Association also suggested that Forest Hill ward be renamed Forest Hill & Honor Oak ward. In spite of a specific request for views on this as part of the consultation on our draft recommendations, this was the only submission to suggest this. As mentioned in paragraph 108, a resident also suggested that Crofton Park ward be renamed to include Honor Oak in its name. Therefore, we are not persuaded to rename Forest Hill ward.

115 We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for Forest Hill and Sydenham wards as final, with one minor modification to Sydenham ward. As detailed in paragraph 121, we have united residents of Adamsrill Road in this ward. Forest Hill ward is forecast to have 6% fewer while Sydenham ward will have 2% more electors than the borough average by 2025, respectively.

### *Perry Vale*

116 The Council and the Lewisham West & Penge Conservative Association supported this ward, although the latter proposed a name change.

117 Of the seven additional submissions we received, three residents supported the ward, specifically the moving of an area west of the railway line around Datchet and Burford Roads into Perry Vale from Bellingham ward. They argued that this more accurately reflected the character of the area and that the railway line acted as a barrier and prevented residents of this area from benefiting from Bellingham's strong local character. One respondent stated that this area 'is far less isolated as part of Perry Vale'.

118 Another resident acknowledged that the area in question was somewhat separate from Bellingham but suggested that this area be included with some additional parts of Perry Vale and Sydenham wards to create a new Lower Sydenham ward. We note that there was no detailed community identity evidence in support of this proposal and that this would necessitate consequential changes on other wards for which there was no evidence.

119 Comments from the other respondents argued in support of retaining this area in Bellingham ward, as discussed in paragraph 87. We also note that the Lewisham West & Penge Conservative Association suggest renaming this ward as Forest Hill East or Forest Hill East & Perry Vale ward. In light of this being the only request to do so, we are not persuaded to rename this ward.

120 As a result of the decisions we have made regarding Bellingham ward, as well as the support we received for this ward, we do not propose making changes to the area around Datchet and Burford Roads.

121 However, in the preparation of our final recommendations, our analysis showed that electors in a polling district that had been correctly split across three wards, including Perry Vale, had not been factored into our calculations for electoral equality at draft recommendation stage. To provide for good electoral equality for Perry Vale, we have therefore united electors on Adamsrill Road in Sydenham ward. We have also united a section of Stanstead Road in Crofton Park ward. Subject to these modifications we confirm our Perry Vale ward as final. This ward is forecast to have 10% more electors than the borough average by 2025.

## Conclusions

38 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Lewisham, referencing the 2019 and 2025 electorate figures. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

### Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2019	2025
Number of councillors	54	54
Number of electoral wards	19	19
Average number of electors per councillor	3,650	3,826
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	6	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	1	0

#### Final recommendations

Lewisham Council should be made up of 54 councillors serving 19 wards representing 16 three-councillor wards and three two-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

#### Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Lewisham Council. You can also view our final recommendations for Lewisham on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)



## What happens next?

44 We have now completed our review of Lewisham Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2022.



## Equalities

45 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.



# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Final recommendations for Lewisham Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Bellingham	2	7,254	3,627	-1%	7,280	3,640	-5%
2	Blackheath	3	10,911	3,637	0%	10,960	3,653	-5%
3	Brockley	3	12,120	4,040	11%	12,323	4,108	7%
4	Catford South	3	11,873	3,958	8%	11,784	3,928	3%
5	Crofton Park	3	10,819	3,606	-1%	10,956	3,652	-5%
6	Deptford	3	10,302	3,434	-6%	12,234	4,078	7%
7	Downham	3	11,877	3,959	8%	12098	4,033	5%
8	Evelyn	3	8,757	2,919	-20%	11,411	3,804	-1%
9	Forest Hill	3	10,595	3,532	-3%	10,820	3,607	-6%
10	Grove Park	3	10,562	3,521	-4%	10,488	3,496	-9%
11	Hither Green	3	12,961	4,320	18%	12,075	4,025	5%
12	Ladywell	3	10,505	3,502	-4%	10,379	3,460	-10%

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Lee Green	3	10,239	3,413	-6%	10,668	3,556	-7%
14 Lewisham Central	2	4,937	2,469	-32%	7,881	3,941	3%
15 New Cross Gate	2	6,346	3,173	-13%	7,084	3,542	-7%
16 Perry Vale	3	12,689	4,230	16%	12,669	4,223	10%
17 Rushey Green	3	11,374	3,791	4%	12,124	4,041	6%
18 Sydenham	3	11,680	3,893	7%	11,686	3,895	2%
19 Telegraph Hill	3	11,275	3,758	3%	11,657	3,886	2%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>197,076</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>206,577</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,826</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward 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.

## Appendix B

### Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: [www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/lewisham](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/lewisham)

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

[www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/lewisham](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/greater-london/greater-london/lewisham)

#### *Local Authority*

- Lewisham Council

#### *Political Groups*

- Bellingham Branch Labour Party
- Ladywell Labour Party
- Lewisham East Labour Party
- Lewisham Liberal Democrats
- Lewisham People Before Profit
- Lewisham West & Penge Conservative Association
- Telegraph Hill Branch Labour Party

#### *Councillors*

- Council P. Bell (Lewisham Council) – joint with Councillor J. Millbank and Councillor L. Sorba
- Councillor L. Gibbons (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor C. Handley (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor C. Howard (Lewisham Council) – two submissions
- Councillor Jacqueline Paschoud (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor John Paschoud (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor J. Millbank (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor L. Sorba (Lewisham Council)

#### *Local Organisations*

- Bellingham Interagency
- Brockley Society
- Deptford Neighbourhood Action
- Ladywell Fields User Group
- Ladywell Society
- Phoenix Community Housing
- Save Ladywell Campaign
- Tanners Hill Tenants' & Residents' Association

- Telegraph Hill Centre
- The Parish of St Paul with St Mark

*Local Residents*

- 135 local residents

## Appendix D

### Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at <a href="http://www.nalc.gov.uk">www.nalc.gov.uk</a>
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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