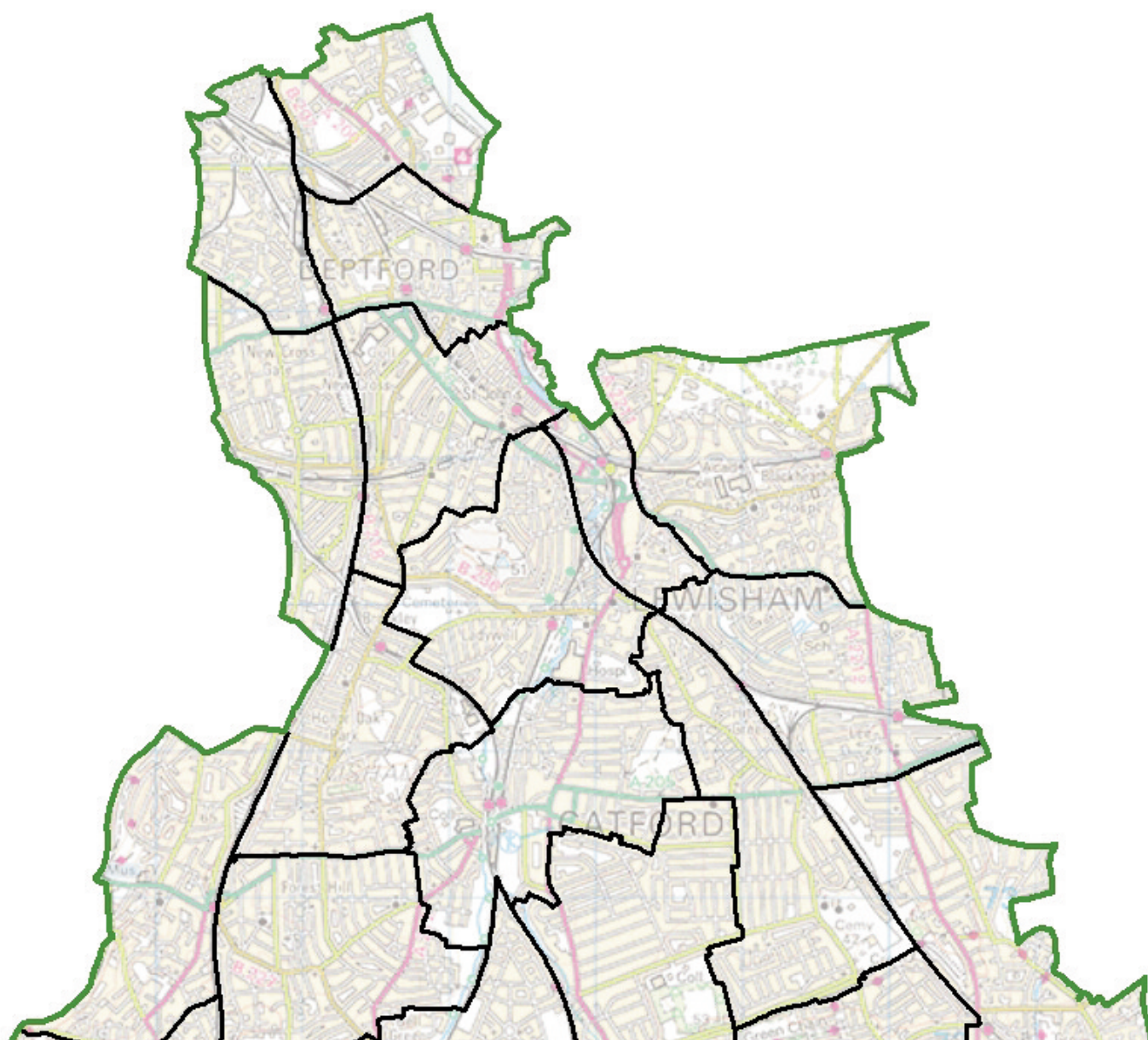


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for
Lewisham Council

Draft recommendations

December 2019

Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Lewisham Council

Electoral review

December 2019

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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.¹ 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) | • Amanda Nobbs OBE |
| • Andrew Scallan CBE
(Deputy Chair) | • Steve Robinson |
| • Susan Johnson OBE | • Jolyon Jackson CBE
(Chief Executive) |
| • Peter Maddison QPM | |

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.

¹ 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

Why Lewisham?

7 We are conducting a review of Lewisham Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 1999 and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.² In addition, 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 four wards (Crofton Park, Forest Hill, Lee Green and Telegraph Hill) will stay the same: all the others will change.

How will the recommendations affect you?

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

13 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 consider any representations which are based on these issues.

² Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for an 11-week period, from 17 December 2019 to 2 March 2020. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 2 March 2020 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 27 for how to send us your response.

Review timetable

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

18 The review is being 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 begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
17 December 2019	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
2 March 2020	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
30 June 2020	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ 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.

20 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.

21 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

22 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

23 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed at our offices by appointment, or on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

24 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.

25 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 draft recommendations.

³ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

⁴ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

26 We received two submissions which queried the Council's forecast. We believe that one resident mistook the Greater London Assembly's (GLA) population projections for electors. Those projections include residents who are not of voting age and those who are not on the electoral register. After accounting for this we are content with the Council's figures.

27 The second query related to figures for (part of) a polling district which the Council in its proposal had split between wards. We believe that the respondent mistook the figures for a particular part of the polling district for the total figure for that polling district.

Number of councillors

28 Lewisham Council currently has 54 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that retaining 54 councillors will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

29 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.

30 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 have therefore based our draft recommendations on there being 54 councillors.

Ward boundaries consultation

31 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 ward arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

32 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.

33 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.

34 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 have not based our proposals on Councillor Gibbons' proposals.

35 We also received a submission from The Populist Party, which suggested the creation of 27 two-councillor wards that mirror 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 have not based our draft recommendations on this proposal.

36 Our draft recommendations take 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.

37 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.

Draft recommendations

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

39 Our draft recommendations are based primarily on the Conservatives' proposals to the north of the A2 and, with the exception of Bellingham, the Council's proposals south of Ladywell. However, in a number of places our draft recommendations follow boundaries proposed by other respondents. Notably, we have moved away from the Council's proposals for Brockley, Ladywell and the area around the Lewisham shopping centre. We were persuaded by strong community evidence that a Ladywell ward should be adopted which has different boundaries from the one proposed by either the Council or the Conservatives. Our decision to propose this Ladywell ward means that we have recommended neighbouring wards that have not been wholly locally proposed and we therefore welcome further evidence during this period of consultation.

40 The tables and maps on pages 9–24 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Lewisham. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

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

41 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 33 and on the large map accompanying this report.

42 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Evelyn, New Cross, New Cross Gate and Telegraph Hill



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Evelyn	3	-1%
New Cross	3	4%
New Cross Gate	2	-7%
Telegraph Hill	3	2%

Evelyn, New Cross and New Cross Gate

43 In addition to the borough-wide submissions, we received around 16 additional submissions for this area. These were from political parties, councillors, community groups and residents.

44 The Council proposed three wards in this area – Deptford Evelyn, Deptford St John and New Cross Gate. Its Deptford St John ward brought together the community of St John’s south of the A2 into a ward with around half of Deptford.

45 The Conservatives’ scheme mainly followed the railway lines and the A2 (New Cross Road) in this area. Councillor Gibbons’ proposed New Cross Gate ward differed from the Conservative scheme only along its eastern boundary. His other two wards shared some similar boundaries with the Council’s wards and he also proposed a Deptford St John ward.

46 The Lewisham Liberal Democrats (‘the Liberal Democrats’) maintained that the Council’s proposed Deptford St John and Deptford Evelyn wards split the natural centre of the community along Deptford High Street. We received evidence from the DeptfordFolk (the Deptford Park & Folkestone Gardens User Group) that suggested that Deptford Park and Folkestone Gardens should remain in the same ward. We also received submissions, including from Evelyn Branch Labour Party about the importance of Deptford Park to Evelyn residents.

47 We note that a number of submissions describe the shared amenities and social interests of St John’s with Brockley. We were persuaded to include these two communities in the same ward.

48 We have based our proposals in this area on the Conservatives’ scheme as we were persuaded to keep Deptford Park in Evelyn ward and to keep St John’s with Brockley. However, their proposed Evelyn ward is forecast to have a variance of 12%. In seeking to improve the electoral variance we were mindful of evidence received about properties closest to Deptford Park having similar issues. We have therefore adjusted the boundary between the proposed Evelyn ward and New Cross ward to run along Rolt Street and Evelyn Street. This keeps all the properties west of Rolt Street in the same ward. Our three-councillor Evelyn ward is forecast to have a variance of -1%.

49 Having decided to keep St John’s and Brockley communities together we needed to adjust the Conservatives’ proposed boundary between our New Cross and Brockley wards to improve the forecast variance of our proposed Brockley ward (see paragraph 66). On visiting the area, we decided that it would be appropriate to keep the shops and some properties on both sides of New Cross Road and Deptford Broadway in the same ward, especially around the southern end of Deptford High

Street. We therefore adjusted the boundary accordingly and our three-councillor New Cross ward is forecast to have an electoral variance of 4%.

50 We have adopted the Conservatives' New Cross Gate ward as we consider that it has strong and identifiable boundaries and good electoral equality.

51 We have included the residents of Silwood Estate in our New Cross Gate ward as proposed by all the borough-wide schemes. We note that this is an area which does not have immediate road connections with other parts of the borough. Some residents suggested that the electors in this estate would be better served by being part of neighbouring Southwark. Adjusting borough boundaries is, however, outside the scope of this review.

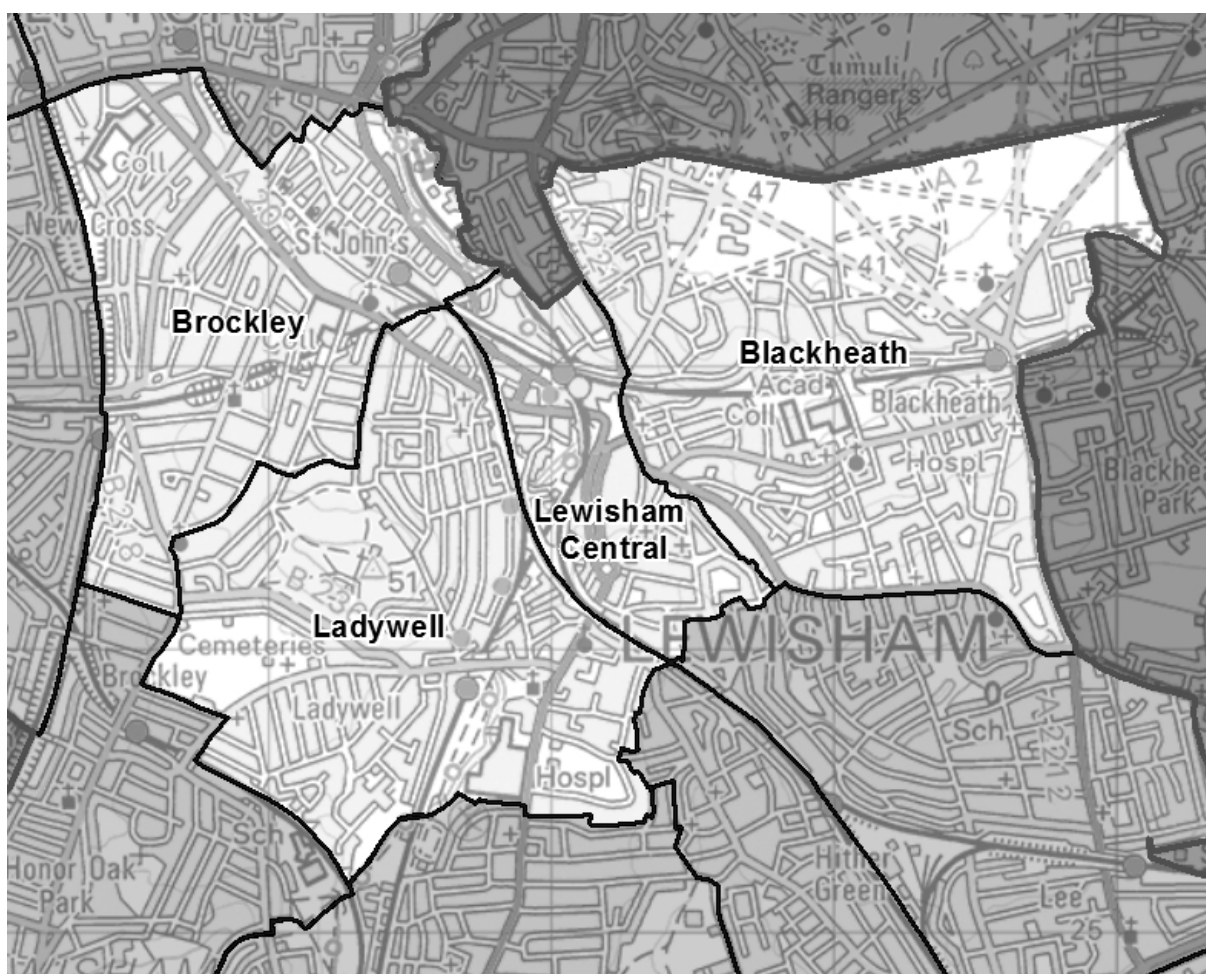
52 Our two-councillor New Cross Gate ward is forecast to have a variance of -7%.

53 We welcome comments on the names of our wards, for example with regards to our New Cross ward, which we note includes areas that some residents consider to be Deptford.

Telegraph Hill

54 We received four submissions for Telegraph Hill: the borough-wide schemes and one from the Telegraph Hill Society. The Council and the Conservatives both proposed retaining the boundaries of the existing Telegraph Hill ward. The Telegraph Hill Society proposed including the Hatcham Park conservation area in a ward with the area they referred to as the historic community area of Telegraph Hill. We note that this would lead to a forecast electoral variance of around -37% for our New Cross Gate ward. Our draft recommendations for Telegraph Hill ward are therefore based on the proposals from the Council and Conservatives and is a three-councillor Telegraph Hill ward with a forecast variance of 2%.

Blackheath, Brockley, Ladywell and Lewisham Central



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Blackheath	3	-5%
Brockley	3	8%
Ladywell	3	-7%
Lewisham Central	2	3%

Blackheath

55 We received seven submissions for Blackheath. Both the Council's and the Conservatives' proposals were based on the existing boundaries of Blackheath ward. Both schemes proposed moving the area around Mercator Road into Blackheath ward and we note there is some community support for this.

56 The Council's proposed boundary runs along Lewisham Road while the Conservatives propose using a section of Ravensbourne River as a boundary. They explain that residents around Conington Road are cut off from the rest of the existing Lewisham Central ward by the railway line. Their scheme also moves the area around Station Road into a Blackheath ward.

57 We note the proximity of Conington Road to Lewisham station and that Lewisham Road is a strong boundary. There are transport links between the area in question and Lewisham station and Lewisham High Street.

58 From visiting the area, we consider that for residents in the new development around Station Road, it is likely that their community will emerge in common with those living in new developments immediately west of it on Loampit Vale.

59 We have therefore used the Council's suggested boundary and our draft recommendations do not include Station Road and Conington Road in our Blackheath ward.

60 Our Blackheath ward is a three-councillor ward with a forecast variance of -5%.

Brockley, Ladywell and Lewisham Central

61 We received around 213 submissions about this area, over 200 of which related to Ladywell. In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received submissions from Vicky Foxcroft MP, the current Ladywell councillors, Ladywell Labour, the Liberal Democrats, community groups and residents. A number of respondents referred to a draft of the Council's proposal which was not submitted to us.

62 The Council proposed a Ladywell Brockley ward which included both Ladywell and Brockley communities. Its scheme moved the area north-east of Hilly Fields park into its Lewisham Central ward. The current Ladywell councillors proposed a variation of the Council's Ladywell Brockley ward and also suggested amendments to the proposed neighbouring wards of Crofton Park, Lewisham Central and Rushey Green.

63 In contrast, Councillor Gibbons, the Brockley Society, the Ladywell Society, Ladywell Labour, the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats, the Save Ladywell campaign and residents all emphasised the need for separate Brockley and Ladywell wards. We received six different alternative schemes for Ladywell. When considered together with local evidence with regards to keeping St John's and Brockley communities together, we were persuaded to include separate Brockley and Ladywell wards. This also facilitates a warding pattern in the north of the borough. We consider that this approach reflects our statutory criteria and is also a better reflection of community identity for Ladywell.

64 The Brockley Society proposed including St John's in its Brockley ward but also extended the boundaries to include the roads around Chalsey Road, Hilly Fields Crescent, Hilly Fields park and Brockley and Ladywell cemeteries. This was supported by some residents who also proposed moving a number of streets north

(and north-east) of Hilly Fields park into Brockley ward. However, to move them would have resulted in poor electoral variances for our Brockley and Ladywell wards – 19% and -19% respectively.

65 The Brockley Society's proposal also excluded an area south and to the immediate east of Goldsmiths University (along New Cross Road) from its Brockley ward. This would mean including this area in our New Cross ward. Doing this would produce an unacceptably high variance of around 26%. Therefore, we did not accept this proposal.

66 Our three-councillor Brockley ward is based on the existing boundaries with the addition of a number of roads north of Comerford Road to reflect local evidence provided in some of the submissions, including from the Brockley Society and other organisations, that these streets belonged in a Brockley ward. We have also moved an area south-west of Deptford High Street into our New Cross ward to improve the electoral equality of our Brockley ward and to keep shops on both sides of that stretch of New Cross Road in the same ward. It is forecast to have an electoral variance of 8%.

67 Local evidence from the Ladywell Labour Party, the Liberal Democrats, Ladywell community groups and residents suggested that Ladywell ward should be extended eastwards to Lewisham High Street. Some respondents, including the Brockley Society, Ladywell Society and Save Ladywell campaign, recommended it extend beyond the High Street.

68 On our tour of the area, we noted that the railway line around Ladywell station that forms the existing boundary does not constitute a barrier and note that the community evidence suggested that Ladywell extends beyond it. We were therefore persuaded to extend the Ladywell ward eastwards.

69 Our three-councillor Ladywell ward is based on the boundaries proposed by a number of organisations. In the west of the ward, the Save Ladywell campaign proposed the same largely well-established boundaries as Ladywell Labour Party and Ladywell Society. These boundaries facilitated our Brockley ward which lies to the north and west of this ward. In the east, the proposed boundaries placed St Mary's Primary School and its associated church on the opposite side of Lewisham High Street in the same ward. It also supported local evidence by including Ladywell Place in its proposed Ladywell ward.

70 We consider that this ward will reflect our statutory criteria. We consider that it will reflect the Ladywell community and we also consider it facilitates a warding pattern in the surrounding area with strong boundaries which also reflect our criteria. We have put the area north of Loampit Hill in Ladywell ward and the area around Molesworth Street in our Lewisham Central ward in line with boundaries proposed by

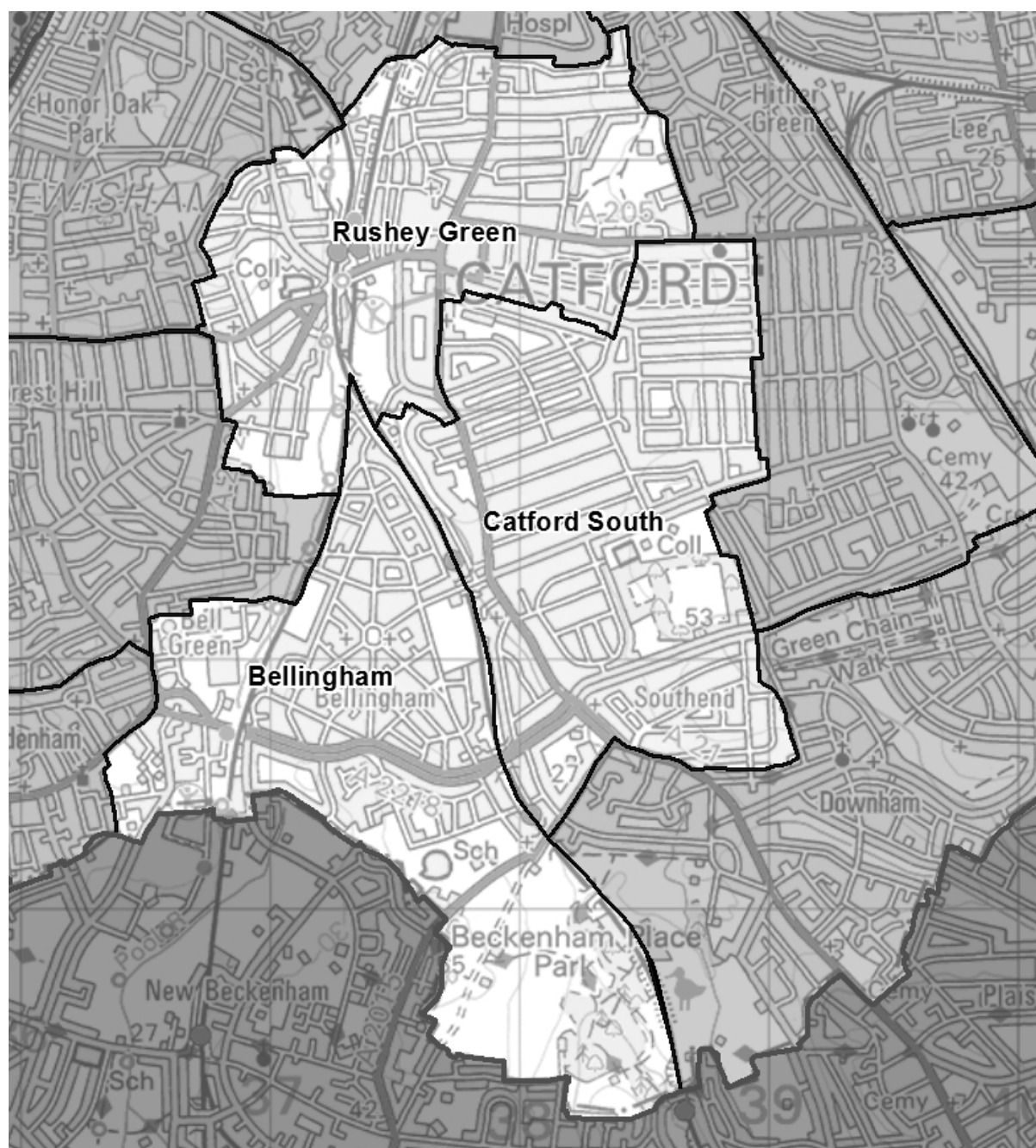
the Ladywell Society as this produces better electoral equality while maintaining a strong boundary. Our Ladywell ward is forecast to have a -7% variance by 2025.

71 The local evidence we received regarding Lewisham Central suggested that the ward should be centred around the shopping area and the new developments in that vicinity. A Hither Green resident explained that such a ward should not extend to the Hither Green area because of the very different issues they face.

72 Our two-councillor Lewisham Central ward is centred around Lewisham station and the Shopping Centre. It is located between Blackheath and Ladywell wards with Brockley ward and the borough boundary to the north. Its southern boundary is based on proposals from both the Council and the Conservatives. It is forecast to have good electoral equality (3%) by 2025 and we consider it to reflect the community in this area and to have strong boundaries.

73 We note that a couple of residents queried the name of this ward. We therefore welcome comments on the ward name in addition to comments on its boundaries.

Bellingham, Catford South and Rushey Green



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Bellingham	2	-1%
Catford South	3	3%
Rushey Green	3	8%

Bellingham

74 In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received four other submissions for this area. A number of respondents expressed a desire to keep all of Bellingham within a single parliamentary constituency. This is something that we do not consider

when determining ward boundaries and note parliamentary constituencies are formed using wards boundaries as the building blocks.

75 The Council scheme uses the railway line, Ravensbourne River and then Bromley Road for most of its eastern boundary. The western boundary of its Bellingham ward runs along the A212.

76 The Conservatives propose using the railway line as its eastern boundary. They describe a ward which is well connected via a network of roads to the A2218/Southend Lane and the Bell Green area towards the south of the ward. They suggest moving the areas around Datchet Road and Catford Hill into different wards because they are less connected to the area recognised as Bellingham. A resident also proposed that we move the area around Datchet Road into Perry Vale ward to the west suggesting that this would also allow these 'local residents to benefit from a more cohesive and intuitive sense of local character'.

77 We were persuaded by this proposal and have based our proposed Bellingham ward on the Conservatives' submission with one amendment – we have made Bell Green/Sydenham Road a boundary, in line with the Council scheme. The road is four lanes wide in this area and forms a strong boundary and so we have moved residents on the west side into our Sydenham ward. We welcome comments on our boundary in this area.

78 Our Bellingham ward will have two councillors and is forecast to have a variance of -1% by 2025.

Catford South and Rushey Green

79 We received eight submissions for this area. The three borough-wide submissions proposed different boundaries. The Council proposed a Catford South and a Rushey Green ward. Councillor Gibbons proposed a Catford North and a Catford South ward. The southern boundary of his proposed Catford South ward was further north, along Whitefoot Lane, than the Council's scheme. The Conservatives' scheme creates three wards extending beyond this area.

80 Councillor Walsh expressed his support for the boundaries and name of the Council's Rushey Green ward. He made a case for the northern end of the existing ward to remain part of a Rushey Green ward.

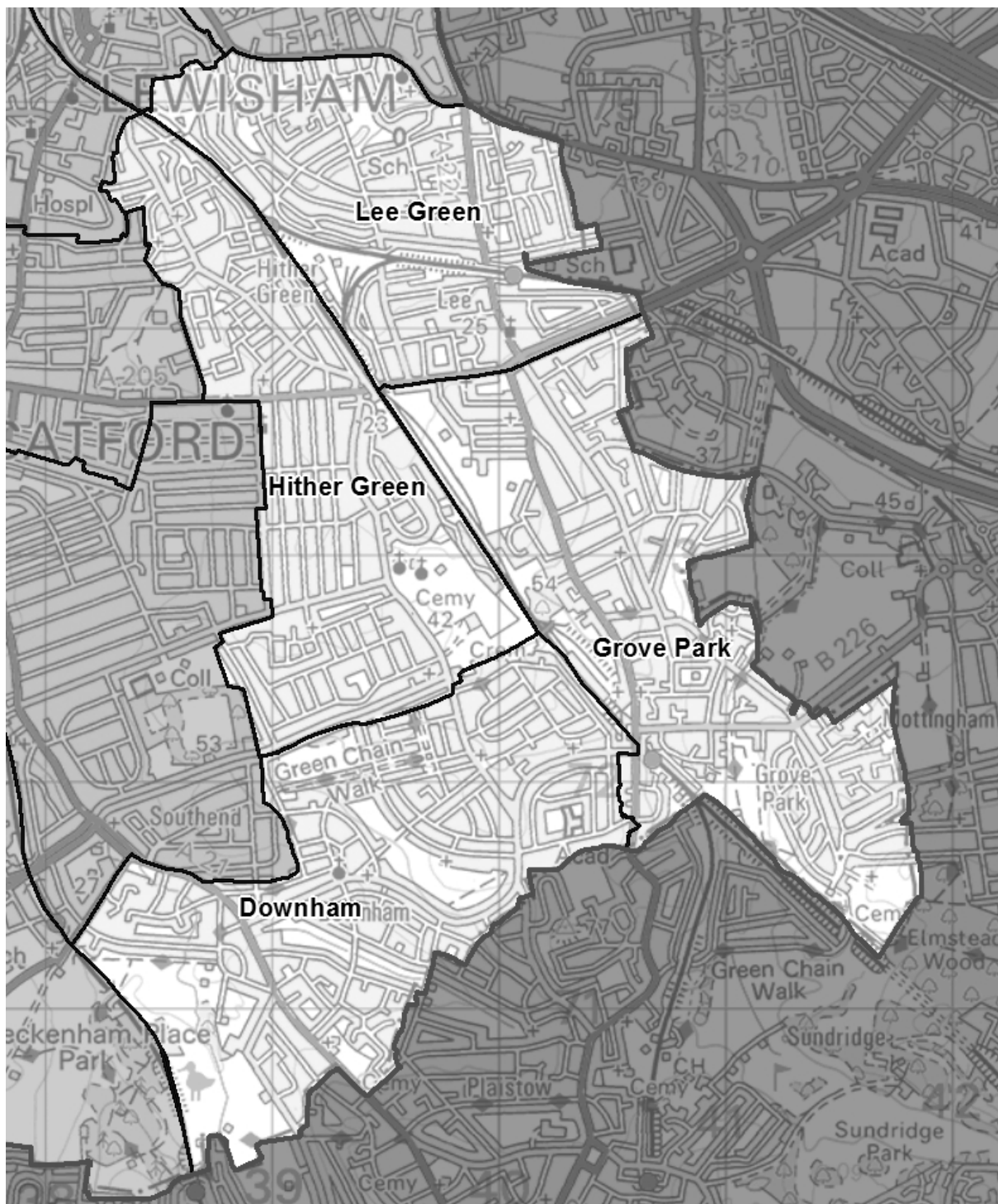
81 We have based our draft recommendations on the Council's proposal for this area, partly because of our earlier decisions regarding Brockley and Ladywell wards which affect wards to the east of our Rushey Green ward. On our tour of the area, we noted that the railway stations (Catford and Catford Bridge) and the Catford Centre will most likely be a focus for residents on both sides of the railway lines, in line with the Council's proposal for Rushey Green ward.

82 However, having adopted the Conservatives' scheme for our Bellingham ward, some of the boundaries have had to be adjusted accordingly. We have included the area west of Bromley Road in our Catford South ward. We have also included both sides of Catford Hill in our Rushey Green ward. The northern boundary of our Rushey Green ward borders our Ladywell ward.

83 In creating boundaries for these wards, we had consideration for the evidence we received about Hither Green to the south.

84 Our draft recommendations for this area are for a Catford South ward and a Rushey Green ward with forecast variances of 3% and 8% respectively.

Downham, Grove Park, Hither Green and Lee Green



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Downham	3	6%
Grove Park	3	-9%
Hither Green	3	1%
Lee Green	3	-7%

Downham and Grove Park

85 In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received nine submissions for this area.

86 We have based our Downham and Grove Park wards on the Council's scheme, with a couple of amendments (see paragraph 88). The Conservatives proposed two very different wards, namely Southend & Downham and East Downham & Grove Park. The former includes a significant part of our Catford South ward. Creating a ward based on the residual area identified to the south of our Catford South ward would have resulted in very poor electoral variances of -16% for a two-councillor ward. We were therefore unable to adopt this proposal.

87 Furthermore, we received some local evidence that referred to local organisations active across the Downham area. Other submissions either supported retaining the boundaries of the existing ward or expressed support for the Council's proposal.

88 We considered including properties on Baring Road south of Grove Park station in our Downham ward, using the railway line as a boundary. However, although it would have been a strong boundary, this produced a forecast variance of -13% for our Grove Park ward. The Council's scheme, which placed residents on one side of Baring Road in Grove Park ward, produced a forecast variance of -10% for the ward. We sought to improve this and have included residents on both sides of that part of Baring Road in our Grove Park ward.

89 Our draft recommendations are for a three-councillor Downham ward and a three-councillor Grove Park ward with forecast electoral variances of 6% and -9% respectively.

Hither Green and Lee Green

90 In addition to the borough-wide schemes, we received nine submissions for this area. Having decided to adopt our Downham ward (see paragraphs 86–9 above), we have based our Hither Green and Lee Green wards on the Council's proposals. We have made some amendments to the boundary of its proposed Hither Green ward, including one on Torridon Road where we place houses on both sides of the road in the same ward. We have also included residents around the northern section of Hither Green Lane in Hither Green ward, instead of Lewisham Central.

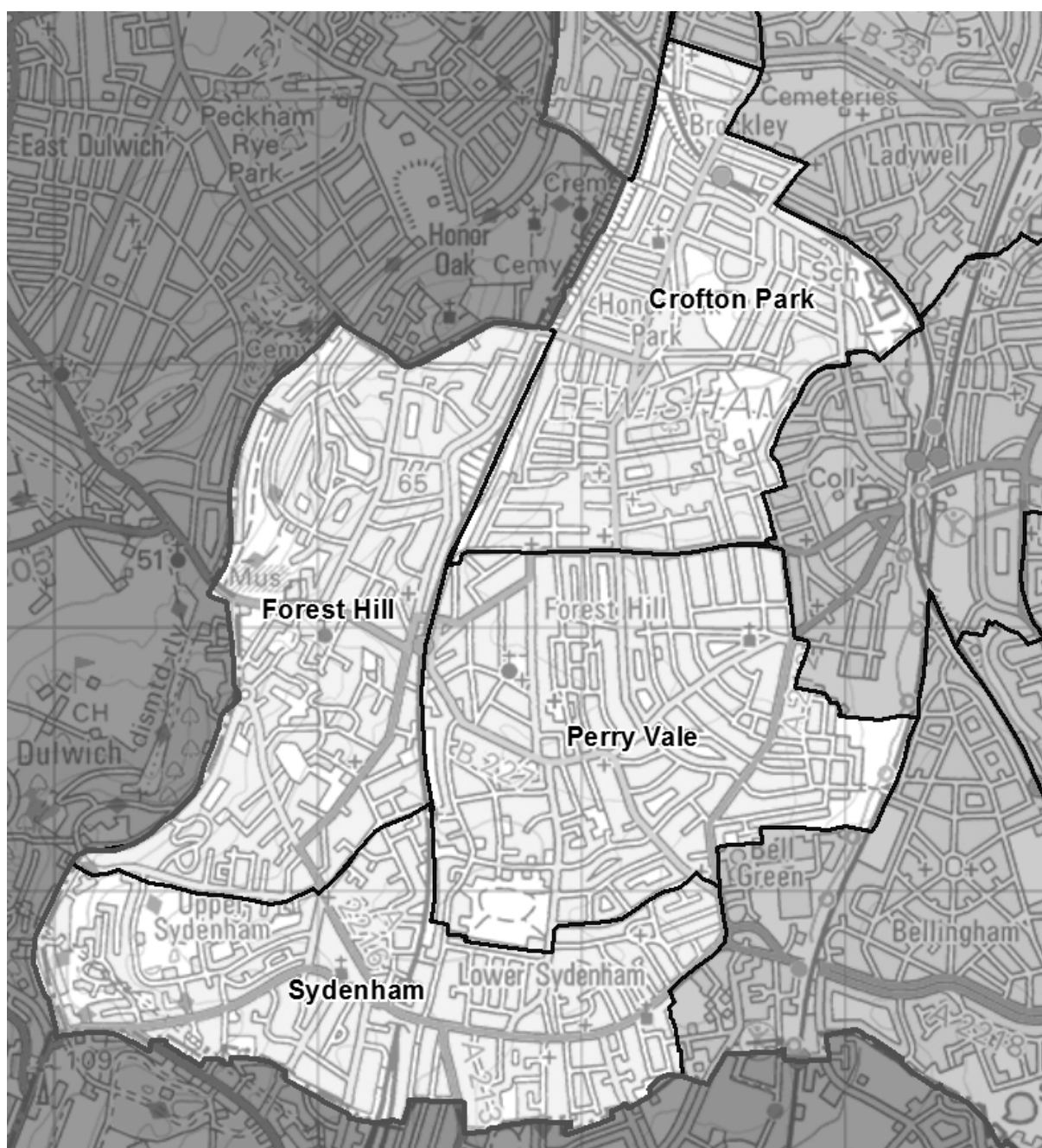
91 Some Hither Green residents indicated that they shared issues with the neighbouring Lee Green ward. Including the area north of the A205/Brownhill Road to the immediate west of Hither Green station in Lee Green ward as suggested would produce a forecast variance of around 30%. We are not persuaded to create wards with such poor variances.

92 Other evidence indicated that an area south of the A205 is also considered part of Hither Green, in line with the Council's submission. We note that our draft recommendations include roads which extend across the A205 in the same ward. In this area, the A205 is a single carriageway. We consider it has satisfactory crossing points and we are not persuaded that it has to be used as a boundary between wards. We also note that in addition to Hither Green Station, Hither Green Baptist Church and Hither Green Cemetery fall within the boundaries of our proposed Hither Green ward.

93 The Conservatives submitted a proposal for a Lee Green and a St Mildred's ward, centred around Lee Green station and St Mildred's Road respectively. Both had good forecast electoral equality. These wards were supported by some residents. However, it produced very poor forecast variance (-44%) for the residual Grove Park ward, and we have therefore not been persuaded to adopt it.

94 Our draft recommendations are for two three-councillor wards; Hither Green ward and Lee Green ward are forecast to have variances of 1% and -7% respectively.

Crofton Park, Forest Hill, Perry Vale and Sydenham



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Crofton Park	3	-5%
Forest Hill	3	-6%
Perry Vale	3	9%
Sydenham	3	1%

Crofton Park and Perry Vale

95 We received three submissions for this area, in addition to the borough-wide schemes. The Council scheme is based on the existing wards in this area. The

Conservatives proposed a new Honor Oak ward to the east of Honor Oak Park station. Their proposals also included a more northerly Perry Vale and a Brockley South ward which encompassed the area around Crofton Park station and an area to the north of the station. However, we note that both these wards have boundaries that fall within other wards forming part of our draft recommendations which we believe reflect community identities. In particular, having created our Brockley and Ladywell wards, the residual Brockley South ward would have fewer than 3,000 electors by 2025.

96 A resident suggested extending the boundary of Crofton Park ward to include the area around Ravensbourne Park. Doing this would produce forecast variances of 15% and -12% for Crofton Park and Rushey Green wards respectively. We are not persuaded to create wards with such poor electoral variances.

97 We have based our draft recommendations on the Council's proposals and have adopted a Crofton Park ward and a Perry Vale ward. In addition to comments on the boundaries of our draft recommendations, we welcome views on the name of our Crofton Park ward, for example whether to include Honor Oak in the name of the ward to reflect its constituent communities.

Forest Hill and Sydenham

98 We received two submissions for this area, in addition to the borough-wide schemes. The Council based its proposals on the current boundaries. The Conservatives' proposal included a Sydenham East and a Sydenham West ward. They included Dartmouth Road and an area to the west as well as some streets north of Wells Park Road into their Sydenham West ward.

99 On our tour of the area we noted that while the southern end of Dartmouth Road could be considered part of Sydenham, it was not clear where the boundary was. We were not persuaded to include the northern end of Dartmouth Road, an area immediately south-west of Forest Hill station, in a Sydenham ward. To do so would mean including Forest Hill Library and Pools in a Sydenham ward. We were also not persuaded by the evidence for the south-eastern boundary of the Conservatives' proposed Forest Hill ward.

100 We have based our draft recommendations on the current wards in this area – with the addition of the area between Champion Road and Bell Green to Sydenham ward – in line with the Council proposal. This creates a stronger and more identifiable boundary than the one proposed by the Conservatives in that part of Sydenham ward. We also consider that the boundaries for Forest Hill are strong and identifiable.

101 A resident suggested transferring properties at the end of Panmure Road, Kelvin Grove and Fransfield Grove into Sydenham ward and at the same time

moving the area north of Peak Hill into Forest Hill ward. He argued that the community in this area is closer to amenities in the existing Forest Hill ward and Perry Vale ward. We have not adopted this proposal because we consider that the Council's proposed Forest Hill ward has stronger boundaries. However, we welcome comments and additional evidence on the resident's proposal.

102 The resident also advocated extending the boundaries of Forest Hill ward as far eastwards as Brockley Rise up to Honor Oak Park. Doing this produces a Crofton Park ward with at least 20% fewer electors per councillor than the average for Lewisham. The resulting Forest Hill ward would have a variance of more than 10%. We note that there is no railway crossing between Waldram Crescent and Honor Oak Park and the railway line forms a strong and identifiable boundary in this area. We are therefore not persuaded to adopt this proposal.

103 We note that the northern part of Forest Hill ward is adjacent to Honor Oak Park station. We invite comments on whether our Forest Hill ward includes a part of Honor Oak within its boundaries which should therefore be reflected in the name of the ward.

104 Our draft recommendations are for a three-councillor Forest Hill ward and a three-councillor Sydenham ward with forecast variances of -6% and 1% respectively.

Conclusions

105 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft 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

	Draft recommendations	
	2019	2025
Number of councillors	54	54
Number of electoral wards	18	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

Draft recommendations

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

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Lewisham Council. You can also view our draft recommendations for Lewisham on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Have your say

106 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole borough or just a part of it.

107 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Lewisham, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

108 Our website has a special consultation area where you can explore the maps and draw your own proposed boundaries. You can find it at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

109 Submissions can also be made by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to:

Review Officer (Lewisham)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL

110 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Lewisham Council which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters.
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

111 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of voters.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

112 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in Lewisham?

113 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

114 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

115 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

116 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

117 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

118 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Lewisham Council in 2022.

Equalities

119 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

Draft 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	7,576	3,788	4%	7,592	3,796	-1%
2	Blackheath	3	10,911	3,637	0%	10,960	3,653	-5%
3	Brockley	3	12,200	4,067	11%	12,412	4,137	8%
4	Catford South	3	11,936	3,979	9%	11,848	3,949	3%
5	Crofton Park	3	10,744	3,581	-2%	10,881	3,627	-5%
6	Downham	3	11,962	3,987	9%	12,181	4,060	6%
7	Evelyn	3	8,757	2,919	-20%	11,415	3,805	-1%
8	Forest Hill	3	10,595	3,532	-3%	10,820	3,607	-6%
9	Grove Park	3	10,560	3,520	-4%	10,486	3,495	-9%
10	Hither Green	3	12,505	4,168	14%	11,629	3,876	1%
11	Ladywell	3	10,750	3,583	-2%	10,636	3,545	-7%

	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 %
12	Lee Green	3	10,255	3418	-6%	10,685	3,562	-7%
13	Lewisham Central	2	4,921	2,461	-33%	7,864	3,932	3%
14	New Cross	3	9,977	3,326	-9%	11,901	3,967	4%
15	New Cross Gate	2	6,346	3,173	-13%	7,084	3,542	-7%
16	Perry Vale	3	12,567	4,189	15%	12,556	4,185	9%
17	Rushey Green	3	11,684	3,895	7%	12,408	4,136	8%
18	Sydenham	3	11,555	3,852	6%	11,562	3,854	1%
19	Telegraph Hill	3	11,275	3,758	3%	11,657	3,886	2%
Totals		54	197,076	–	–	206,577	–	–
Averages		–	–	3,650	–	–	3,826	–

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/current-reviews/greater-london/lewisham

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:
www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/greater-london/lewisham

Local Authority

- Lewisham Council

Political Groups

- Evelyn Branch Labour Party
- Ladywell Labour Party
- Lewisham Conservatives
- Lewisham Labour Group
- Lewisham Liberal Democrats
- The Populist Party

Councillors

- Councillor B. Brown, Councillor C. Handley and Councillor L. Johnston-Franklin (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor L. Johnston-Franklin (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor L. Gibbons (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor C. Howard (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor C. Kalu (Lewisham Council)
- Councillor J. Walsh (Lewisham Council)

Member of Parliament

- Vicky Foxcroft MP (Lewisham Deptford)

Local Organisations

- Brockley Society
- DeptfordFolk
- Friends of Hilly Fields
- Future of Women International
- Ladywell Society
- Lee Manor Society
- Rushey Green Community Group

- Save Ladywell
- Save Ladywell Campaign
- Telegraph Hill Society
- The Parish of St Paul with St Mark

Local Residents

- 262 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 www.nalc.gov.uk
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

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.

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street, London
SW1H 0TL

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Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk
Online: www.lgbce.org.uk or
www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk
Twitter: @LGBCE