

# Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Westminster City Council

Electoral review

October 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.<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 Westminster?

7 We are conducting a review of Westminster City 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'.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the value of each vote in council elections varies depending on where you live in Westminster. 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 Westminster 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 city.

## Our proposals for Westminster

9 Westminster should be represented by 54 councillors, six fewer than there are now.

10 Westminster should have 18 wards, two fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of one ward will stay the same, the rest should 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, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the authority 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.

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

## Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 1 October 2019 to 9 December 2019. 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 1 December 2019 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 29 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 Westminster. We then held a period of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the authority. The submissions received during consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
19 March 2019	Number of councillors decided
26 March 2019	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
3 June 2019	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
1 October 2019	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
9 December 2019	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
3 March 2020	Publication of final recommendations



## Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation<sup>3</sup> states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors<sup>4</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.

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 Westminster	136,270	149,733
Number of councillors	54	54
Average number of electors per councillor	2,524	2,773

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 Westminster 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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk)

## Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2025, a period five years on from the original scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2019. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 10% by 2024. The growth is spread across the authority, with a number of significant housing developments due to take place.

25 The Council has used the 'housing pipeline' (which contains all significant residential developments which have planning permission and for which net housing

<sup>3</sup> Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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

growth is created), to locate areas where there are likely to be a significant increase in electors. This was then reconciled against GLA projections.

26 During the development of our draft recommendations, we noted that the authority-wide proposals we received had used slightly different elector forecast numbers to those agreed at the beginning of the review. We carefully considered the information provided by the Council and decided we needed more time to consider these changes before agreeing our draft recommendations. This means that the review will now conclude in early 2020, rather than in 2019. We are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time and can be regarded as a reasonable projection of electors for 2025 as well as 2024. We have therefore used these figures to produce our draft recommendations.

## Number of councillors

27 Westminster City Council currently has 60 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that decreasing this number by six will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 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.

29 We received one submission about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. The submission did not present compelling evidence to move away from 54 councillors. We have therefore based our draft recommendations on a 54-councillor council.

## Ward boundaries consultation

30 We received 40 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included three city-wide proposals from the Council, the Labour Group and a local resident. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for wards arrangements in particular areas of the city.

31 The Council's scheme was developed by the majority party on the Council and formally endorsed by the Council's General Purposes Committee. It provided a uniform pattern of three-councillor wards for Westminster. The Labour Group's scheme provided for a mixed pattern of two- and three-councillor wards. The local resident's scheme did not specify how many councillors should represent each ward or provide community-based evidence relating to the proposals. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards from the Council and Labour Group resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable

boundaries. However, on the basis of the evidence received and our observations when we visited the authority, a majority of our recommendations are based on the Council's proposals although we have had regard to the Labour Group's proposals in some areas.

32 Our draft recommendations also 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.

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

## Draft recommendations

34 Our draft recommendations are for 18 three-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.

35 The tables and maps on pages 8–26 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Westminster. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory<sup>5</sup> criteria of:

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

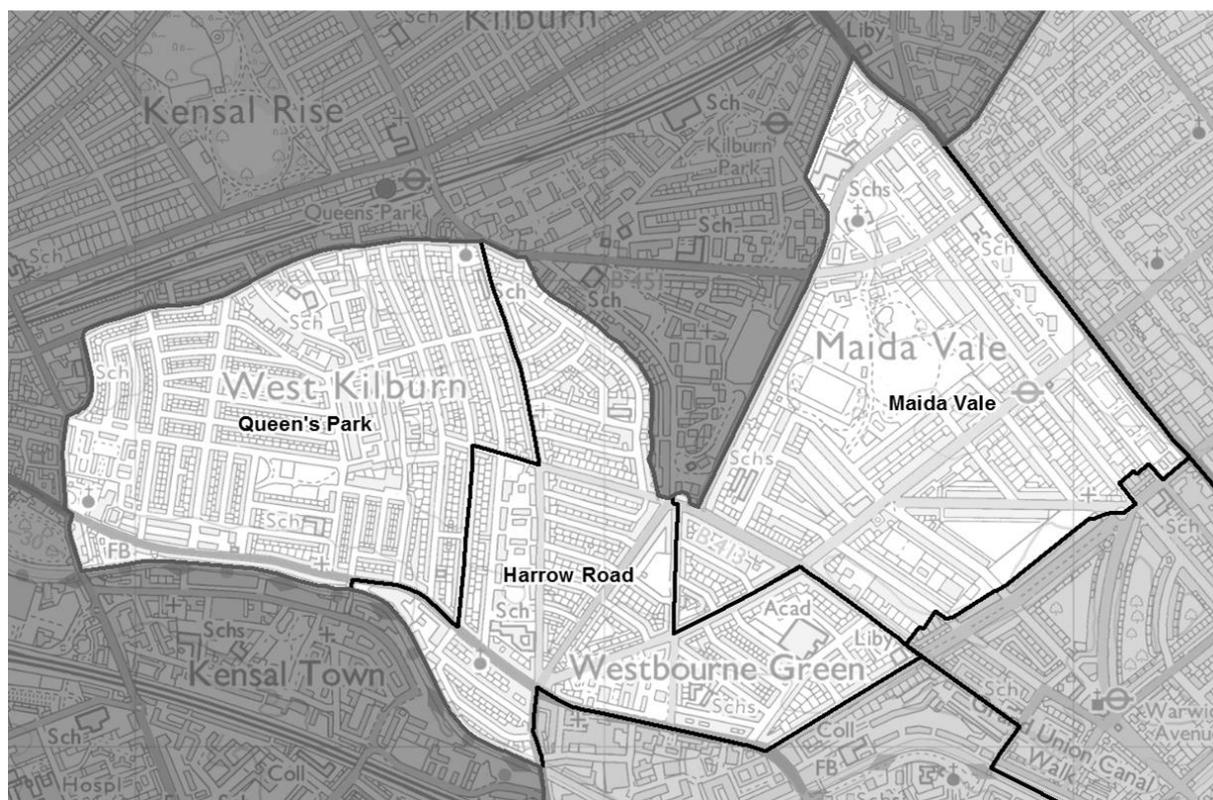
36 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 35 and on the large map accompanying this report.

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

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<sup>5</sup> Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## North-west Westminster



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Harrow Road	3	-1%
Maida Vale	3	-2%
Queen's Park	3	4%

### *Queen's Park*

38 We received two full warding schemes for this area. The Council argued that the existing ward boundary should be maintained, whilst the Labour Group argued for a change to the boundary. Both schemes agreed that the ward be represented by three councillors.

39 The Labour Group proposed moving the boundary, so that it runs down Portnall Road entirely. It provided little evidence for this change, other than stating that it would improve the overall shape of the ward. On visiting the area, we noted that the entry road into Russell's Wharf lies on Harrow Road. In our view, the boundary suggested by the Labour Group would separate these electors from those around them, with whom they share a community identity.

40 The proposal would also have an impact on the Queen's Park Community Council, as the ward boundary would not be coterminous with that of the Community

Council. Implementing this suggestion would result in the Community Council being split between two wards.

41 On visiting the area, we did not feel that the suggested boundary along Portnall Road was any clearer or more identifiable than the existing ward and Community Council boundary. While we did not receive a submission from Queen's Park Community Council itself, we were not persuaded that dividing the area between more than one ward would reflect community identities or interests. However, we would welcome any local feedback in relation to this proposal during the current consultation. Our draft recommendations for Queen's Park ward are therefore based on the existing ward boundaries as proposed by the Council. This reflects the Community Council boundary and will ensure good electoral equality in Queen's Park ward by 2025.

#### *Harrow Road and Maida Vale*

42 We received two full warding schemes for this area from the Council and Labour Group. Both agreed that there should be three councillors elected for each ward, but proposed different changes to the current ward boundaries.

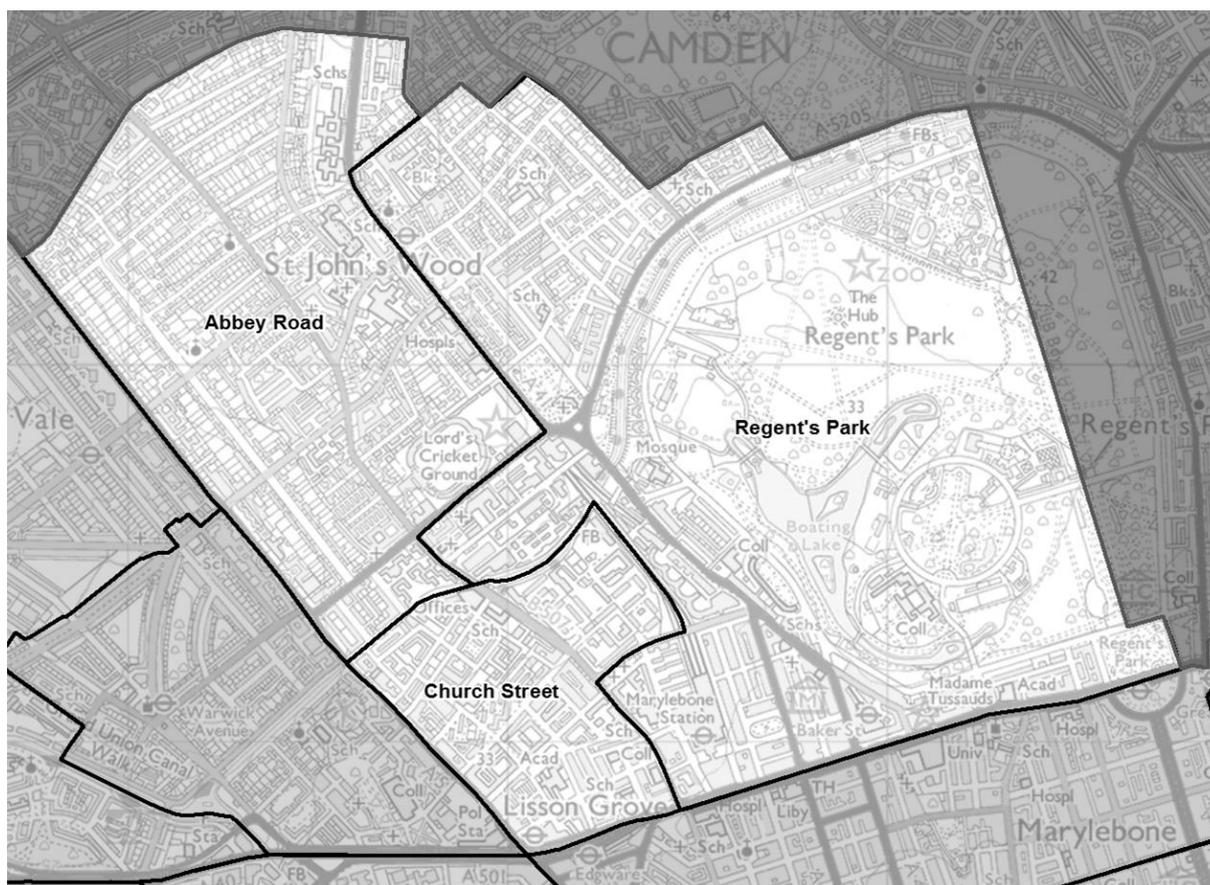
43 The Council proposed moving the boundary from Shirland Road to include a triangle-shaped area between Elgin Avenue and Chippenham Road in Maida Vale ward. The Labour Group suggested using Lanhill Road as a ward boundary, due to the location of a polling station. Both agreed that the area just north of Shirland Road should move into Maida Vale ward. On visiting the area, we noted that Elgin Avenue and Chippenham Road are both prominent roads and would form a clearer and more identifiable ward boundary than Lanhill Road. Overall, we consider that the Council's submission reflects a better balance of our statutory criteria than the Labour Group's proposal.

44 We are recommending that the boundary of Harrow Road ward moves east to include Sevington Street, Surrendale Place and electors on the western side of Sutherland Avenue. We consider this will reflect community identities and ensure a clearer and more identifiable ward boundary. Furthermore, moving these electors into Harrow Road ward will improve electoral equality in both wards.

45 As part of its submission, the Labour Group suggested changing the ward name of Harrow Road to 'Fernhead and Maida Hill'. The Labour Group stated that this would combine the name of the central arterial road in the ward with the postal name of the general area. We have received no other submissions suggesting this name and are not persuaded to adopt it as part of our draft recommendations. However, we would welcome any feedback in relation to this proposed name during the current consultation.

46 Both schemes for Maida Vale ward were based predominantly on the existing ward boundaries. Given the above, our draft recommendations for Maida Vale are broadly based on the existing ward boundaries, with some minor modifications along the Maida Vale and Harrow Road ward boundary, as suggested by the Council. Based on these recommendations, Harrow Road and Maida Vale wards will both have good electoral equality by 2025.

## North-east Westminster



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Abbey Road	3	-1%
Church Street	3	1%
Regent's Park	3	-1%

### *Abbey Road and Regent's Park*

47 Abbey Road ward and Regent's Park ward are forecast to have relatively high electoral variances by 2025 (-17% and -14% respectively). The warding proposals from the Council and Labour Group for Abbey Road proposed retaining the existing western ward boundary of Abbey Road along the A5 (Maida Vale). However, their proposals for the boundary between Abbey Road and Regent's Park wards were significantly different.

48 The Council proposed to run the boundary along Aberdeen Place, before turning north along Lisson Grove, continuing on to Grove End Road and turning east along Acacia Road to meet the authority boundary. The Labour Group also proposed to use Aberdeen Place and Lisson Grove as the boundary, before turning east along St John's Wood Road then north along Wellington Road before meeting the authority boundary along Queen's Grove.

49 While both proposals offered good electoral equality for Abbey Road and Regent's Park wards, on balance we consider that the Labour Group's proposal offers a stronger and more clearly defined boundary between the two wards. Our draft recommendations are therefore based on the Labour Group's proposed boundary between Abbey Road and Regent's Park wards.

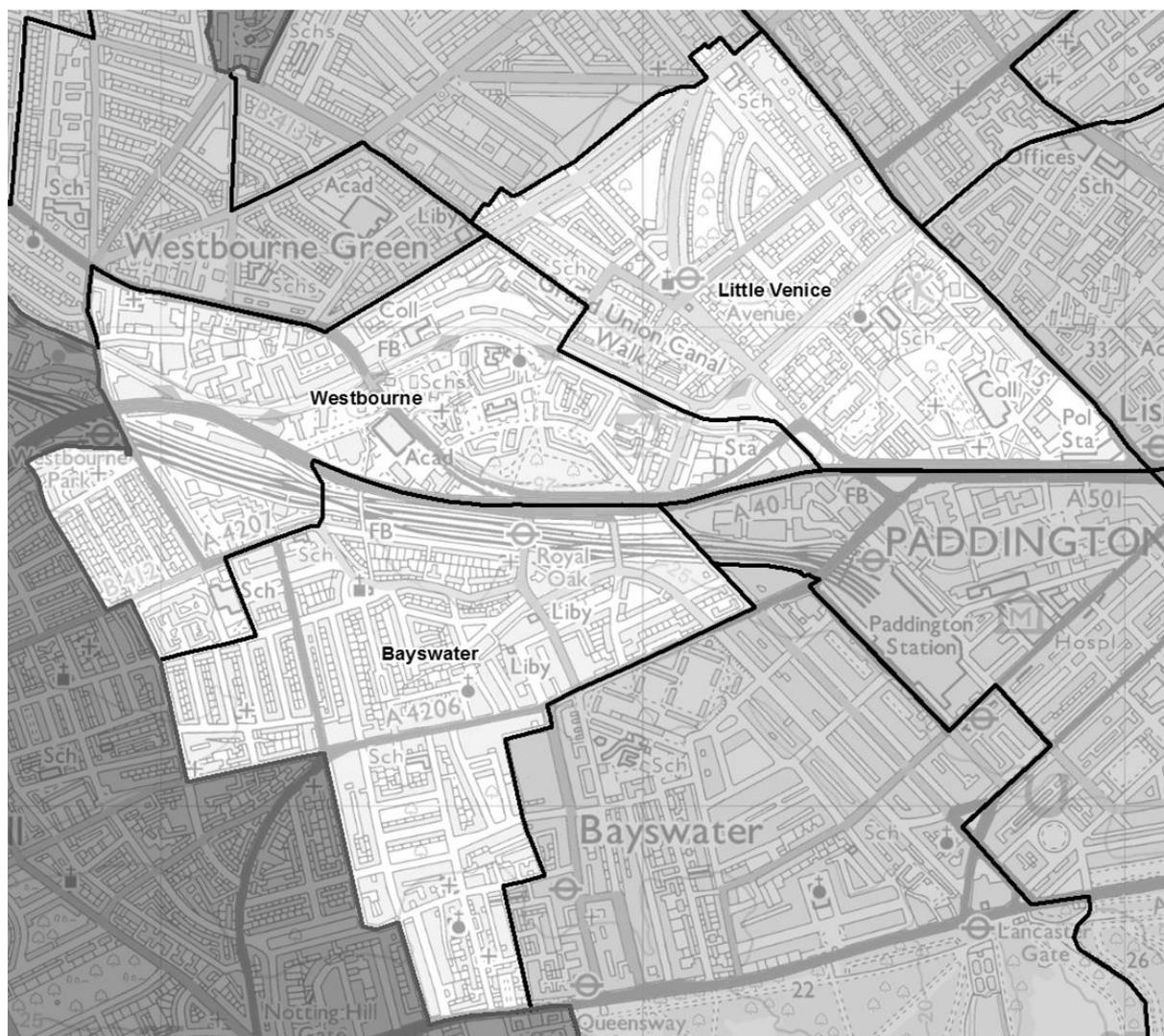
50 The southern boundary of our Regent's Park ward is based on the Council's proposal to use Marylebone Road, as discussed in paragraph 67. Electors to the north of Marylebone Road, up to the existing ward boundary with Church Street, will move into Regent's Park ward.

51 Under our draft recommendations, Abbey Road and Regent's Park wards will have good electoral equality by 2025.

#### *Church Street*

52 We have based our Church Street ward on the current ward boundaries. This was supported by the Council and the Labour Group. Under our draft recommendations, Church Street ward will have good electoral equality by 2025.

## Bayswater, Little Venice and Westbourne



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Bayswater	3	3%
Little Venice	3	-4%
Westbourne	3	-1%

### *Little Venice*

53 We received two proposals for Little Venice ward from the Council and the Labour Group.

54 The Labour Group's proposal was based predominantly on the existing ward boundaries with modifications to the western and southern boundaries. In the west, the boundary would run along the centre of Warwick Avenue, continuing to Harrow Road and then follow the external perimeter of Paddington station until it meets the proposed southern boundary, which follows the centre of Praed Street. This

proposed Little Venice ward would have reasonable electoral equality at 8% more electors per councillor than the authority average by 2025.

55 The Council proposed to retain the existing ward boundaries, the western boundary following Shirland Road, before turning along Formosa Street and meeting the Paddington Branch of the Grand Union Canal. The southern boundary would remain along the Westway (Marylebone Flyover). This proposal would result in a Little Venice ward with an electoral variance of -4%.

56 We visited Little Venice on our visit to Westminster and considered both proposals at length. We felt that both proposals for the western boundary of Little Venice could work in practice. However, we noted that running the boundary along the centre of Warwick Avenue could split an existing community with similar architecture on either side of the road. On balance, we considered that the existing ward boundary in the west, along Shirland Road and the canal, represented a stronger boundary.

57 We considered both proposals for the southern boundary of Little Venice ward. While Praed Street could work as a boundary, we considered that the Westway represents a clear break between the communities on either side. We considered it unlikely that electors in Paddington Basin would use amenities on the other side of the Westway and would likely consider themselves a community separate to electors north of the Westway. We are therefore recommending the Council's proposed ward boundaries. Little Venice will have good electoral equality by 2025 under our draft recommendations.

### *Bayswater and Westbourne*

58 As well as the Council and Labour Group proposals, we received six submissions from local residents regarding the ward boundaries of Bayswater and Westbourne wards.

59 The Council proposed to retain the existing ward boundaries of Westbourne, with a small modification to the boundary with Harrow Road, discussed in paragraphs 42–6, to improve electoral equality.

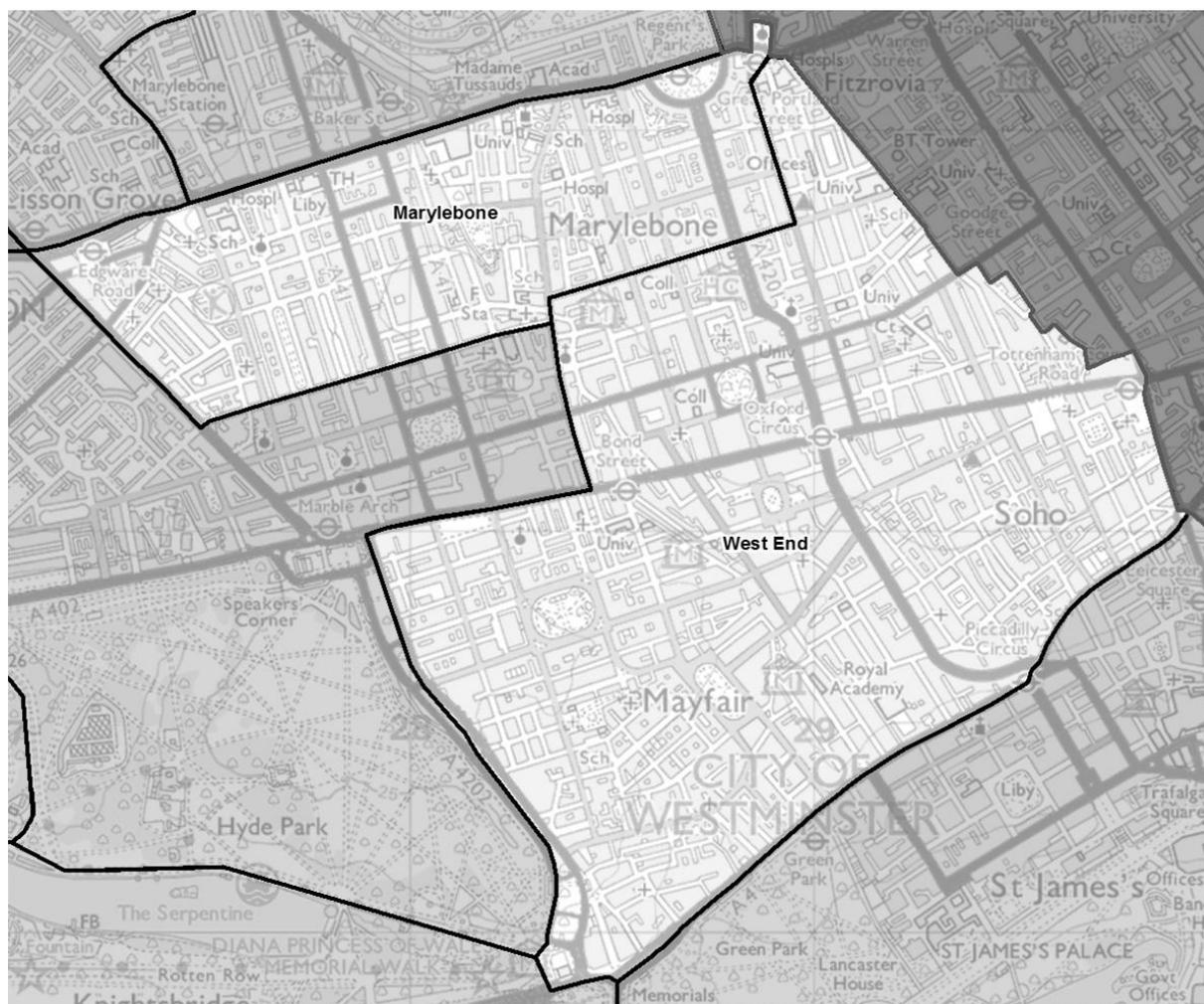
60 The Labour Group proposed to create a ward named Grand Union. The southern boundary of the ward would run from the authority boundary on Great Western Road and follow the railway line until it reached Paddington station at Bishop's Bridge Road. The boundary would then run north along Warwick Avenue before turning west to meet Shirland Road. From here the boundary would run behind the properties on Marylands Road and Maryland Road, before turning north along Harrow Road and finally meeting the authority boundary on Great Western Road.

61 The six submissions that we received from local residents supported using the railway line as the southern boundary for Westbourne ward, arguing that electors here have more in common with Bayswater than Westbourne. We visited this area on our visit to Westminster and agreed that the railway line could be considered a strong boundary. We did, however, note that there was relatively easy access across the railway line via Great Western Avenue, where Westbourne Park Underground station is located.

62 As discussed in paragraphs 53–7, we are recommending the Council's proposed boundaries in the north and east of Westbourne ward. Given this, and the close proximity of this area to the authority's boundary, including electors south of the railway line and north of Talbot Road and Westbourne Park Road in Bayswater ward would lead to poor electoral equality. In a three-councillor Bayswater ward, this would be 33%, and in a three-councillor Westbourne ward, the electoral variance would be -32%. We are therefore not adopting this proposal and our draft recommendations for Westbourne and Bayswater wards are therefore based on the Council's scheme.

63 We considered the possibility of recommending a one-councillor Great Western ward comprising electors south of the railway line and north of Talbot Road and Westbourne Park Road. Such a ward would have reasonable electoral equality at -9%. Westbourne ward would become a two-councillor ward with an electoral variance of 2% and Bayswater would remain a three-councillor ward with a variance of 3%. However, we noted the preference from both full warding schemes for multi-councillor wards. While we are not precluded from recommending single-member wards, we have decided not to put forward this proposal as part of our draft recommendations. However, we would be particularly interested in feedback from local residents and local organisations during this consultation regarding whether they feel a one-councillor ward could work in this area.

## Marylebone and West End



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Marylebone	3	-3%
West End	3	2%

### *Marylebone*

64 The existing ward of Marylebone High Street has a forecast variance of -24% by 2025, therefore we need to increase the number of electors in this ward to achieve good electoral equality in the area.

65 We received two different ward boundary proposals from the Council and the Labour Group. The Labour Group proposed to modify the existing ward boundaries of Bryanston & Dorset Square to create a Baker Street & Bryanston ward. The existing eastern ward boundary would move from Gloucester Place to Baker Street and electors north of Marylebone Road in York Terrace West, Allsop Place, Cornwall Terrace Mews and Station Approach would move from Regent's Park ward to Baker Street & Bryanston. It was argued that this ward would unify upper and lower Baker

Street and include the historic Portman estate within one ward. The submission suggested that Baker Street be included in the name of the ward to reflect Baker Street Underground station. The Labour Group also proposed to modify the existing Marylebone High Street ward to create a two-councillor Marylebone Village ward based predominantly on the existing ward boundaries, with the eastern boundary moving to Great Portland Street, continuing along Portland Place and then turning west along Oxford Street to meet the boundary with Baker Street & Bryanston ward. The Labour Group argued that this would bring together the institutional area of Marylebone. The proposed Baker Street & Bryanston and Marylebone Village wards would both have electoral variances of -4% by 2025.

66 The Council proposed to create a Marylebone ward, using Marylebone Road as the boundary in the north and the authority boundary in the east. The southern boundary would follow New Cavendish Street before continuing on to George Street, turning north along Shouldham Street and then west along Harrowby Street before meeting the existing ward boundary at Edgware Road. Marylebone would have good electoral equality at 3% by 2025.

67 We visited this area on our tour of Westminster and carefully considered the two schemes, which we felt could both work in practice. On balance, we were persuaded that Marylebone Road offered a more clearly identifiable boundary than Baker Street, with a more distinct separation between communities either side of the road. In addition, the A501 is a clear and consistent boundary across almost the entire authority. Our draft recommendations are therefore based on the Council's proposal for Marylebone, with two modifications detailed in paragraphs 68 and 74.

68 We have modified the Council's proposal to use the meeting point of George Street and Edgware Road as the boundary in the south-west of the ward. Electors in Nutford Place, Castlereagh Street and Forset Street will be included in Marylebone ward. We consider this represents a clearer boundary as well as improving electoral equality between Marylebone and the neighbouring ward of Hyde Park.

69 We would be interested to receive feedback from local residents and organisations regarding whether Marylebone or Marylebone Village is a more appropriate name for this ward.

70 Under our draft recommendations, Marylebone ward will have good electoral equality by 2025.

### *West End*

71 We received 16 submissions regarding West End from the Council, the Labour Group, one Camden ward councillor, four local organisations and nine local residents.

72 One of the local organisations argued in favour of retaining the existing ward boundaries in West End on the basis that it covers the heart of the traditional West End area and electors here face issues unique to the area. Retaining the existing ward boundaries would lead to poor electoral equality with a variance of -16% by 2025. We therefore need to increase the number of electors in West End ward.

73 One of the local residents argued that this ward should be split into three single-councillor wards of Covent Garden, Fitzrovia and Soho, but did not propose any ward boundaries. The Council and Labour Group both proposed that a ward covering this area should have three councillors. The Council argued in its submission that multi-councillor wards offer better representation for electors. On this basis, we are not proposing three single-councillor wards to cover this area.

74 The Camden councillor, two local organisations and six of the local residents provided evidence in support of unifying Fitzrovia in one Westminster ward. Having carefully considered the submissions received, we have decided to amend the boundary between Marylebone and West End wards. We propose including electors west of Great Portland Street, east of the authority boundary and north of New Cavendish Street in West End ward. The proposed ward would include the remainder of the area of Fitzrovia that is within Westminster.

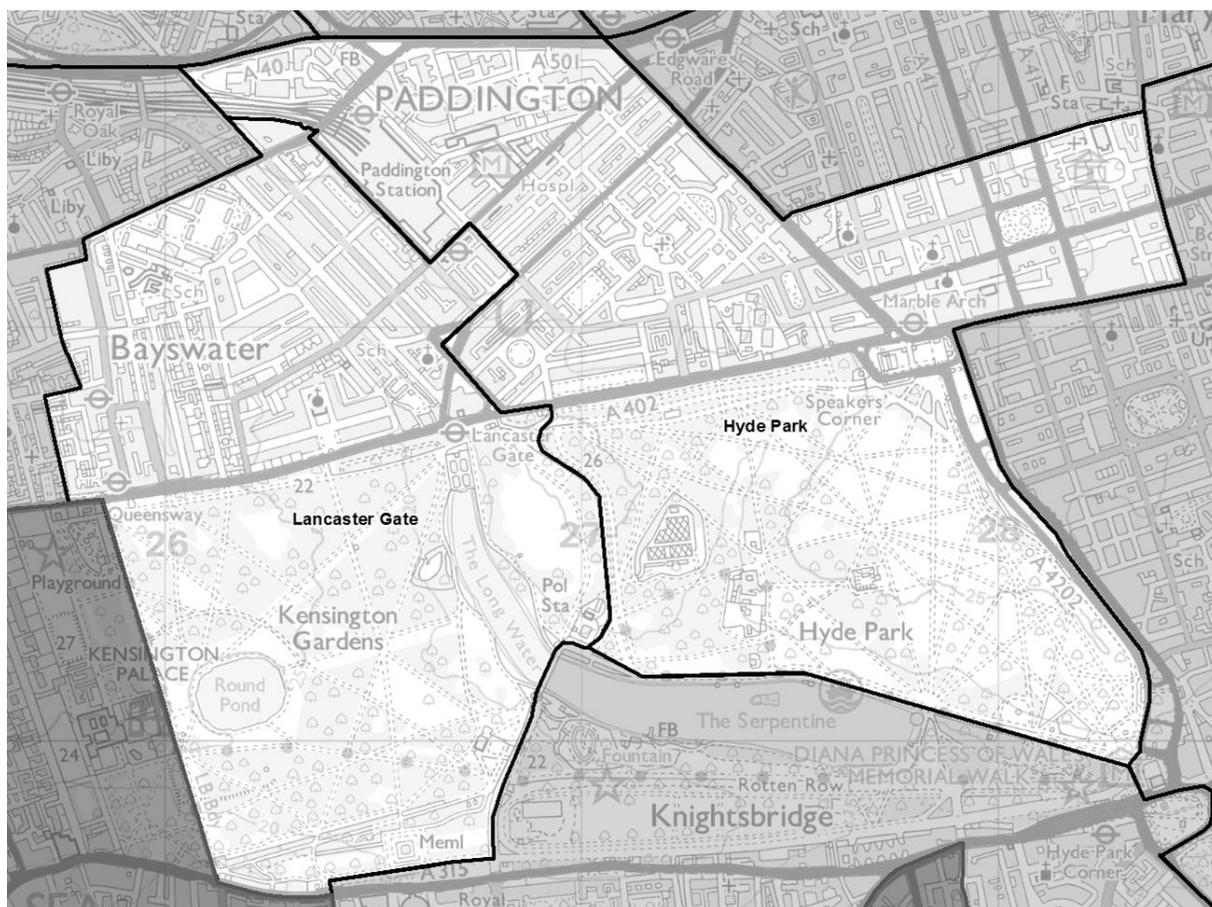
75 The Labour Group proposed significant changes to the boundary of West End ward, to include the Mayfair area in a ward with Knightsbridge. We are not recommending adopting this proposal as we do not consider it represents the best balance of our statutory criteria across West End and Knightsbridge & Belgravia. This is discussed in detail in paragraphs 88–95.

76 In the south-west of the ward, we are adopting the Council's proposal to run the boundary along Coventry Street, continuing to Lisle Street and then on to Little Newport Street. The boundary would then turn north along Charing Cross Road, before meeting Shaftesbury Avenue. This was proposed on the basis that Chinatown should be included in West End ward. We would be interested to hear from electors living in this area about whether they feel better placed in West End ward and whether Shaftesbury Avenue could be considered a stronger boundary here.

77 Our draft recommendations for West End ward are based on the Council's proposal, with one further, minor modification. In the north-west of the ward, the boundary will follow Thayer Street as opposed to Gloucester Place, to improve electoral equality between West End and Hyde Park wards.

78 West End will have good electoral equality with an electoral variance of 4% by 2025.

## Hyde Park and Lancaster Gate



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Hyde Park	3	-1%
Lancaster Gate	3	-3%

### *Lancaster Gate*

79 We received three submissions regarding Lancaster Gate, from the Council, the Labour Group and a local resident.

80 The Labour Group proposed the ward should be renamed Bayswater, based on the existing ward boundaries of Lancaster Gate ward but with two small modifications. In the east of the ward, electors at 70–106 Westbourne Terrace and 90–132 Gloucester Terrace would be included in Bayswater ward. In addition, the northern boundary would run along the centre of Westbourne Grove until it meets the authority boundary.

81 As discussed in paragraphs 58–63, we have based our draft recommendations on the Council’s proposals in Westbourne and Bayswater. Accepting the Council’s proposed boundaries here means the remainder of the Labour Group’s proposed

Bayswater ward would have poor electoral equality at -22% by 2025. We are therefore not adopting this proposal.

82 Our proposed Lancaster Gate ward is predominantly based on the Council's proposal. This was supported by a local resident who argued that part of Hyde Park should be incorporated into Lancaster Gate ward on the basis that it is an important local amenity for electors here.

83 We have made a small modification to the boundary north of Bishop's Bridge Road to follow the railway line, which we consider provides a stronger boundary than the road. Electors in Brewers Court, 4–18 Bishop's Bridge Road and 155–69 Westbourne Terrace will be included in Lancaster Gate ward. Lancaster Gate will have good electoral equality by 2025.

### *Hyde Park*

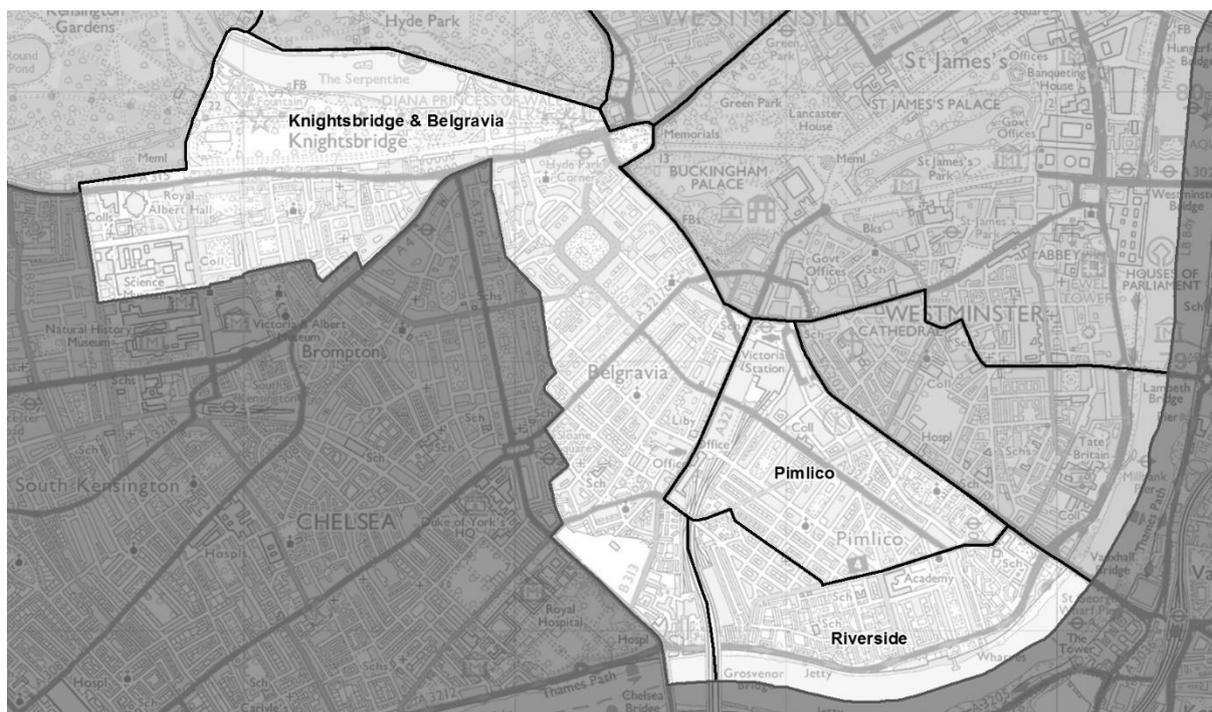
84 We received two submissions regarding Hyde Park ward, from the Council and Labour Group.

85 The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor Hyde Park ward using Bayswater Road as the southern boundary, before turning north along Edgware Road and then west along Praed Street. The boundary then followed the perimeter of Paddington station up to Bishop's Bridge Road and then followed the railway line to Westbourne Bridge. The boundary would then run south along Westbourne Terrace, before turning east on Cleveland Square and then south along Gloucester Terrace. A Hyde Park ward based on these boundaries would have reasonable electoral equality with a variance of 9% by 2025.

86 As discussed in paragraph 57, we are recommending using the Westway as the ward boundary between Little Venice and Hyde Park wards. This has a negative impact on the electoral equality for the Labour Group's proposals for Little Venice and Hyde Park wards with resulting variances of -17% and 46%, respectively. We are therefore not adopting the Labour Group's proposed Hyde Park ward as part of our draft recommendations.

87 Our draft recommendations for Hyde Park ward are based on the Council's proposals, aside from the small modifications discussed in paragraphs 77 and 83. Hyde Park will have good electoral equality by 2025.

## South Westminster



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
Knightsbridge & Belgravia	3	6%
Pimlico	3	-1%
Riverside	3	-1%

### *Knightsbridge & Belgravia*

88 As well as the authority-wide schemes, we received five submissions regarding this area from four local organisations and one local resident.

89 The authority-wide schemes that we received for the area proposed significantly different boundaries for the Knightsbridge, Belgravia and Pimlico areas.

90 The Labour Group proposed a three-councillor Knightsbridge & Mayfair ward. The northern boundary would run from the authority boundary along Bayswater Road, continuing on to Oxford Street, before turning south along the centre of Regent Street. The boundary would then run west along Piccadilly before turning south at Hyde Park corner along Grosvenor Place before turning south-west along Chester Street and Eaton Place. This proposed ward would have good electoral equality with an 8% variance by 2025.

91 The Council proposed a Knightsbridge & Belgravia ward based predominantly on the existing ward boundaries, with a change to the southern boundary so that it follows Buckingham Palace Road, before meeting Pimlico Road and then following the railway line down to the River Thames. Additionally, the northern boundary would

move south from Bayswater Road to Serpentine Road. The Council's proposal would have good electoral equality with a 6% variance by 2025.

92 We visited this area on our tour of Westminster and carefully considered the two proposals.

93 We considered that the Council's proposed boundary of Buckingham Palace Road was stronger and more clearly identifiable than Eaton Place, as proposed by the Labour Group. In addition, we considered that this acted as a distinct break in the continuity of the housing and community on one side of the road, compared to the other. This view was supported by submissions we received from the Belgravia Society and Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum who argued that Buckingham Palace Road was the natural boundary here.

94 We received two submissions from local residents arguing that the Ebury Bridge area should not be included in a Belgravia & Pimlico ward. The local residents felt that electors living east of Ebury Bridge Road and west of the railway line should be included in a ward with electors living the other side of the railway line (our draft Riverside ward, as discussed below). It was argued that these areas have similar social and demographic ties, and few links with Knightsbridge & Belgravia. Moving electors in this area out of Knightsbridge & Belgravia ward and into the neighbouring ward of Riverside would lead to poor electoral equality in both wards (Knightsbridge & Belgravia, -20%, and Riverside, 24%). This area as a stand alone single-councillor ward would also have poor electoral equality at -23%. We are not persuaded to recommend draft ward boundaries with such poor electoral equality. In addition, we believe the railway line, while crossable by vehicles and by foot, acts as an identifiable boundary between Knightsbridge & Belgravia and Riverside.

95 Our draft recommendations for Knightsbridge & Belgravia will ensure good electoral equality by 2025.

#### *Pimlico and Riverside*

96 The Council and Labour Group proposed different boundaries for Pimlico and Riverside wards.

97 The Labour Group proposed a Belgravia & Pimlico ward which contained the area broadly to the south of Eaton Place and Victoria Street, south-east of Vauxhall Bridge Road, north of Lupus Street and west of the authority boundary. This proposed Belgravia & Pimlico ward would have good electoral equality at 4% by 2025.

98 The Labour Group also proposed a Churchill ward bordered by the above-mentioned Belgravia and Pimlico boundary in the north, the authority boundary in the west and south, with the eastern boundary running along the centre of Claverton

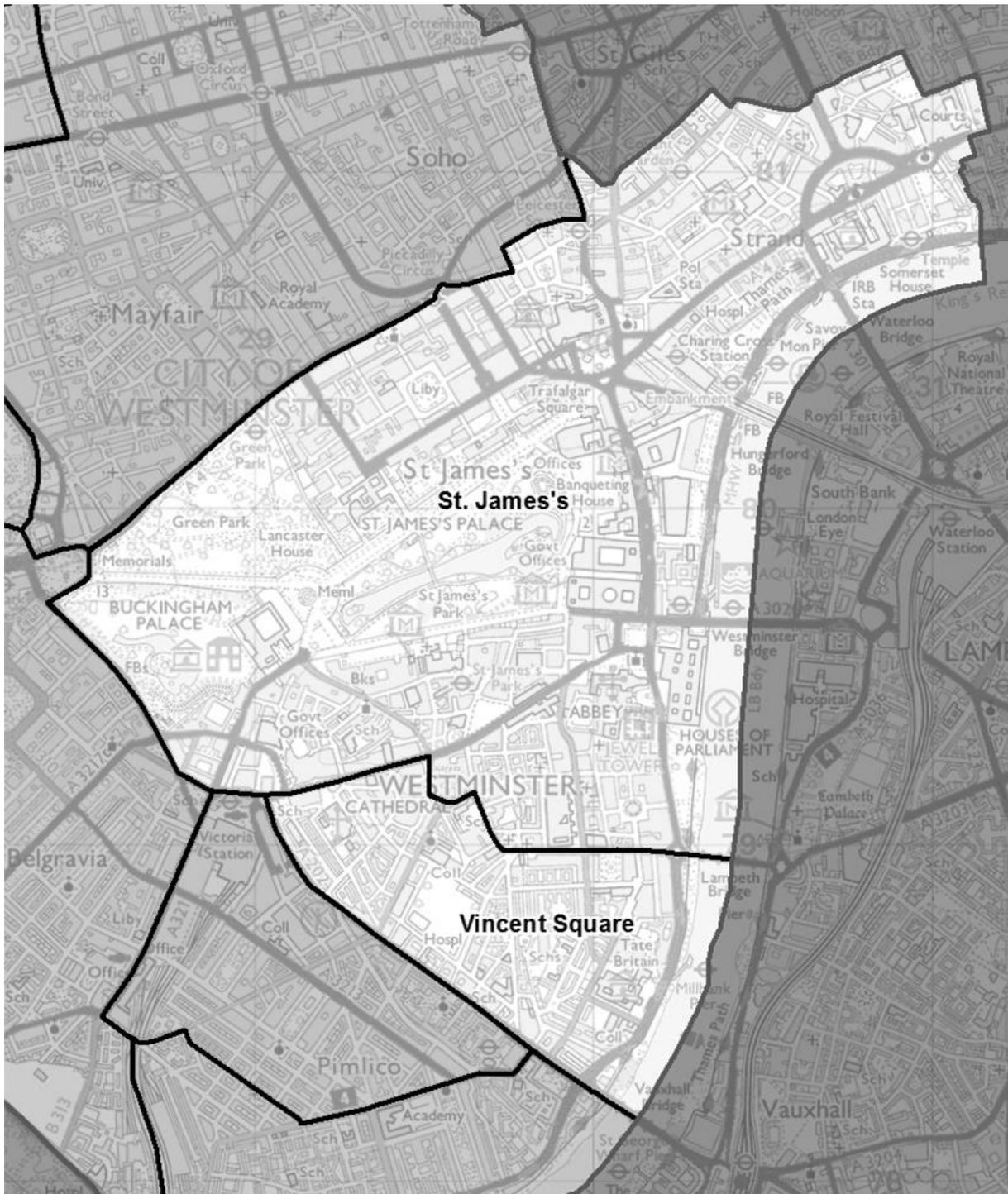
Street. This proposed Churchill ward would have good electoral equality at -4% by 2025.

99 As discussed in paragraph 93, we considered that the Council's proposal to use Buckingham Palace Road provided a much stronger and clearly identifiable boundary than the Labour Group's proposals. In addition, we did not consider that splitting Belgravia across multiple wards and grouping part of it with Pimlico was a reflection of a strong and unified community, based on the submissions received and our observations when we visited the area. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

100 In accepting the Council's proposed boundaries for Pimlico, the consequential knock-on effect on the Labour Group's proposed Churchill ward is poor electoral equality with a forecast electoral variance of -46%.

101 Our draft recommendations for Pimlico and Riverside are therefore based on the Council's proposals, which we felt offered a better balance of our statutory criteria. Pimlico and Riverside will both have good electoral equality by 2025.

## St. James's and Vincent Square



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2025
St. James's	3	3%
Vincent Square	3	2%

### *Vincent Square*

102 We received four submissions regarding St. James's and Vincent Square wards, from the Council, the Labour Group and two local residents.

103 The Labour Group's proposal for Vincent Square followed the authority boundary in the east and Vauxhall Bridge Road in the south. The boundary would turn north along Rochester Row, west along Greycoat Place and north along the centre of Strutton Ground. The boundary would then run east along Victoria Street, before turning south along Great Smith Street and continuing on to Marsham Street. The boundary would then turn east along Page Street and south along Thorney Street, before turning north along Millbank and meeting the authority boundary at Lambeth Bridge. This proposed ward would have good electoral equality at -5% by 2025 and was supported by a submission from a local resident.

104 We considered the Labour Group's proposed boundaries for Vincent Square on our visit to Westminster and did not consider they were sufficiently strong or identifiable. In addition, accepting our draft recommendations for St. James's, discussed in paragraphs 106–10, the remainder of the Labour Group's Vincent Square ward would have poor electoral equality at -32%.

105 Our draft recommendations for Vincent Square ward are therefore based on the Council's proposal. We consider the proposed ward uses clearly defined ward boundaries and reflects the community identities and interests of the area. However, we propose a small modification in order that the ward boundary follows Horseferry Road between Vincent Square and St. James's wards, rather than following Elverton Street and Greycoat Street. Vincent Square will have good electoral equality by 2025.

### *St. James's*

106 We received different proposals from the Council and Labour Group regarding St. James's ward.

107 The Labour Group proposed a two-councillor St. James's ward bordering their proposed Knightsbridge & Mayfair, Belgravia & Pimlico and Vincent Square wards (as discussed earlier in this report). The north-eastern boundary would follow Haymarket, continuing on to Cockspur Street and Northumberland Avenue, before meeting the authority boundary. In addition, they proposed a three-councillor Fitzrovia, Soho & Covent Garden ward that would follow the authority boundary in the east and Great Portland Street, Regent Street, Haymarket, Cockspur Street and Northumberland Avenue in the west and south.

108 As part of the Labour Group's wider scheme, the proposed St. James's and Fitzrovia, Soho & Covent Garden wards would have good electoral equality. However, in light of our draft recommendations in Vincent Square, the remainder of

the Labour Group's proposed St. James's ward would have poor electoral equality at -15%. Furthermore, given our draft recommendations for West End ward, the proposed Fitzrovia, Soho & Covent Garden ward would have poor electoral equality as a three-councillor ward at -49% and as a two-councillor ward at -24%. We are therefore not adopting this proposal as part of our draft recommendations. Overall, we consider that the Council's proposals for this and the wider adjoining area follow more clearly identifiable ward boundaries and reflect local community ties and identities.

109 The Council proposed a St. James's ward based predominantly on the existing ward boundaries, aside from the modification detailed in paragraph 76.

110 Our draft recommendations for St. James's ward are therefore broadly based on the existing ward boundaries, with a small modification to use Horseferry Road as the boundary with Vincent Square ward. St. James's ward will have good electoral equality by 2025.

## Conclusions

111 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Westminster, 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	18
Average number of electors per councillor	136,270	149,733
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	3	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

#### Draft recommendations

Westminster City Council should be made up of 54 councillors serving 18 three-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 the Westminster City Council. You can also view our draft recommendations for Westminster City Council on our interactive maps at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)



## Have your say

112 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 city or just a part of it.

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

114 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](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

115 Submissions can also be made by emailing [reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk) or by writing to:

**Review Officer (Westminster)**  
**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Windsor House**  
**50 Victoria Street**  
**London SW1H 0TL**

116 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Westminster City 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.

117 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.

118 Electoral equality:

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

119 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, 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?

120 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?

121 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](http://www.lgbce.org.uk). A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

122 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.

123 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.

124 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 Westminster City Council in 2022.



## Equalities

125 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 Westminster City 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	Abbey Road	3	8,078	2,693	7%	8,273	2,758	-1%
2	Bayswater	3	8,065	2,688	7%	8,554	2,851	3%
3	Church Street	3	7,395	2,465	-2%	8,403	2,801	1%
4	Harrow Road	3	7,937	2,646	5%	8,208	2,736	-1%
5	Hyde Park	3	6,435	2,145	-15%	8,198	2,733	-1%
6	Knightsbridge & Belgravia	3	7,138	2,379	-6%	8,777	2,926	6%
7	Lancaster Gate	3	7,434	2,478	-2%	8,033	2,678	-3%
8	Little Venice	3	6,827	2,276	-10%	8,003	2,668	-4%
9	Maida Vale	3	7,698	2,566	2%	8,115	2,705	-2%
10	Marylebone	3	7,576	2,525	0%	8,056	2,685	-3%
11	Pimlico	3	8,610	2,870	14%	8,275	2,758	-1%
12	Queen's Park	3	8,370	2,790	11%	8,672	2,891	4%

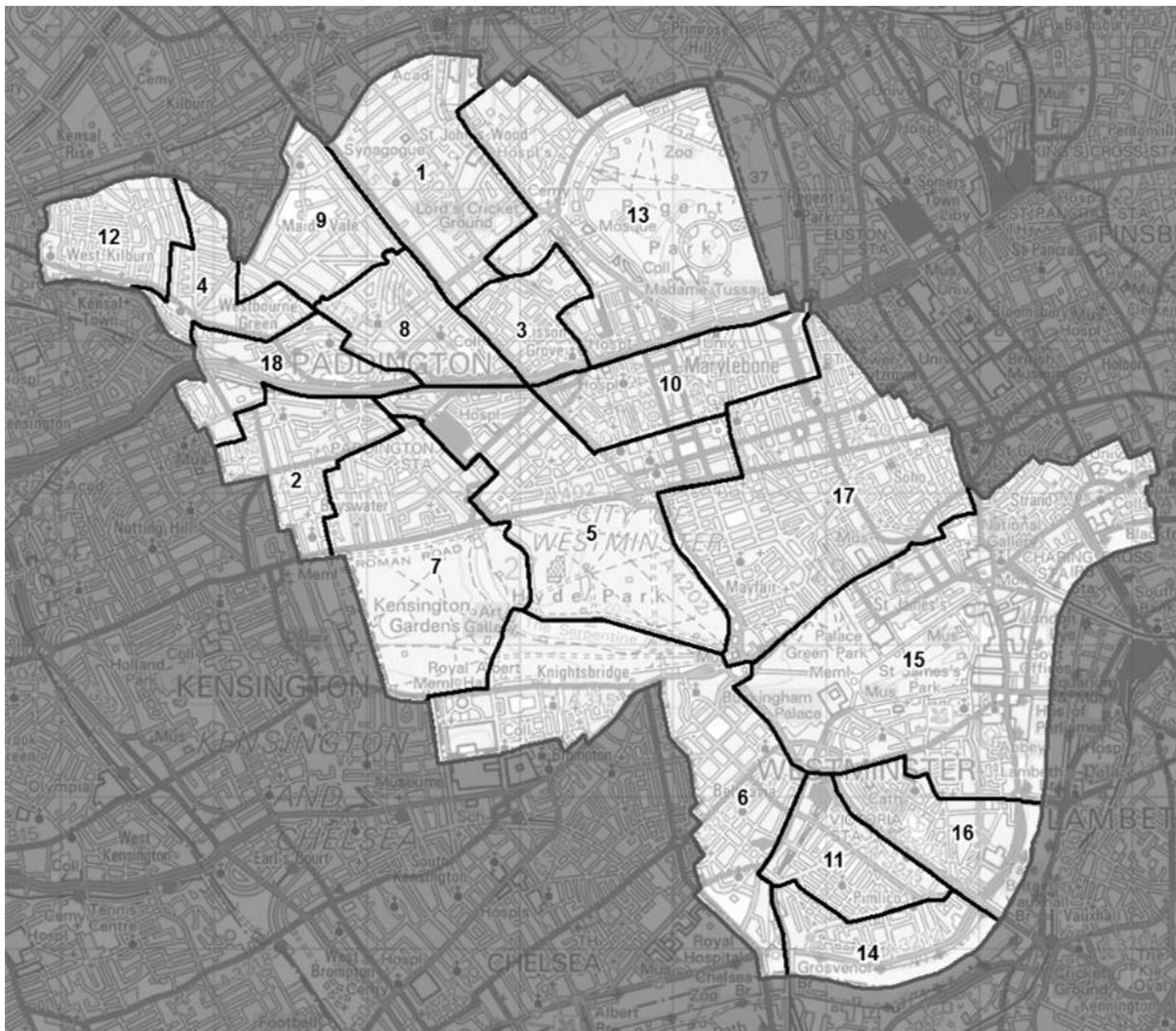
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2025)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Regent's Park	3	7,678	2,559	1%	8,228	2,743	-1%
14 Riverside	3	7,362	2,454	-3%	8,274	2,758	-1%
15 St James's	3	6,807	2,269	-10%	8,551	2,850	3%
16 Vincent Square	3	7,776	2,592	3%	8,457	2,819	2%
17 West End	3	7,467	2,489	-1%	8,457	2,819	2%
18 Westbourne	3	7,617	2,539	1%	8,199	2,733	-1%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>136,270</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>149,733</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,524</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,733</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Westminster City 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 city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Appendix B

### Outline map



Number	Ward name
1	Abbey Road
2	Bayswater
3	Church Street
4	Harrow Road
5	Hyde Park
6	Knightsbridge & Belgravia
7	Lancaster Gate
8	Little Venice
9	Maida Vale
10	Marylebone
11	Pimlico
12	Queen's Park
13	Regent's Park

14	Riverside
15	St. James's
16	Vincent Square
17	West End
18	Westbourne

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

## Appendix C

### Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:  
[www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/greater-london/westminster](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/greater-london/westminster)

#### *Local Authority*

- Westminster City Council

#### *Political Groups*

- Westminster City Council Labour Group

#### *Councillors*

- Councillor A. Harrison (Camden Council)

#### *Local Organisations*

- The Belgravia Society
- FitzWest Neighbourhood Forum
- Grosvenor Britain & Ireland
- Kemp House Residents' Association
- Knightsbridge Association
- Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum
- Soho Neighbourhood Forum
- Victoria, Victoria Westminster, Northbank Business Improvement Districts

#### *Local Residents*

- 29 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