

# Public Document Pack

## Elections Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Monday, 7 November 2011 at 6.30pm.

Barry Quirk, Chief Executive  
Date October 27 2011

Councillor Liam Curran	
Councillor Sam Owolabi-Oluyole	
Councillor Alan Hall	
Councillor John Paschoud	
Councillor Philip Peake	
Councillor Sven Griesenbeck	



# Elections Committee Agenda

Monday, 7 November 2011

**6.30 pm**, Civic Suite, Lewisham Town Hall, London SE6 4RU

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Kevin Flaherty (Tel: 0208 314 9678)

## Part 1

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# Agenda Item 1

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	ELECTION OF CHAIR	
<b>Key Decision</b>		Item No. 1
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 NOVEMBER 2011

## Recommendation

To appoint a Chair of the Committee for of the municipal year 2011/12.

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR	
<b>Key Decision</b>		Item No. 1
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 NOVEMBER 2011

## Recommendation

To appoint a Vice-Chair of the Committee for of the municipal year 2011/12.

# Agenda Item 2

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Declarations of Interests	
<b>Key Decision</b>		Item No.
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## **Declaration of interests**

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

## **Personal interests**

There are two types of personal interest :-

- (a) an interest which you must enter in the Register of Members' Interests\*
- (b) an interest where the wellbeing or financial position of you, (or a "relevant person") is likely to be affected by a matter more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward or electoral division affected by the decision.

\*Full details of registerable interests appear on the Council's website.

("Relevant" person includes you, a member of your family, a close associate, and their employer, a firm in which they are a partner, a company where they are a director, any body in which they have securities with a nominal value of £25,000 and (i) any body of which they are a member, or in a position of general control or management to which they were appointed or nominated by the Council, and (ii) any body exercising functions of a public nature, or directed to charitable purposes or one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy, including any trade union or political party) where they hold a position of general management or control,

If you have a personal interest you must declare the nature and extent of it before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent, except in limited circumstances. Even if the interest is in the Register of Interests, you must declare it in meetings where matters relating to it are under discussion, unless an exemption applies.

## **Exemptions to the need to declare personal interest to the meeting**

You do not need to declare a personal interest where it arises solely from membership of, or position of control or management on:

- (a) any other body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) any other body exercising functions of a public nature.

In these exceptional cases, unless your interest is also prejudicial, you only need to declare your interest if and when you speak on the matter .

### **Sensitive information**

If the entry of a personal interest in the Register of Interests would lead to the disclosure of information whose availability for inspection creates or is likely to create a serious risk of violence to you or a person living with you, the interest need not be entered in the Register of Interests, provided the Monitoring Officer accepts that the information is sensitive. Where this is the case, if such an interest arises at a meeting, it must be declared but you need not disclose the sensitive information.

### **Prejudicial interests**

Your personal interest will also be prejudicial if all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) it does not fall into an exempt category (see below)
- (b) the matter affects either your financial interests or relates to regulatory matters - the determining of any consent, approval, licence, permission or registration
- (c) a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think your personal interest so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

### **Categories exempt from being prejudicial interest**

- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
- (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor;
- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception)

### **Effect of having a prejudicial interest**

If your personal interest is also prejudicial, you must not speak on the matter. Subject to the exception below, you must leave the room when it is being discussed and not seek to influence the decision improperly in any way.

### **Exception**

The exception to this general rule applies to allow a member to act as a community advocate notwithstanding the existence of a prejudicial interest. It only applies where members of the public also have a right to attend to make representation, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. Where this is the case, the member with a prejudicial interest may also attend the meeting for that purpose. However the member must still declare the prejudicial interest, and must leave the room once they have finished making representations, or when the meeting decides they have finished, if that is earlier. The member cannot vote on the matter, nor remain in the public gallery to observe the vote.

## **Prejudicial interests and overview and scrutiny**

In addition, members also have a prejudicial interest in any matter before an Overview and Scrutiny body where the business relates to a decision by the Executive or by a committee or sub committee of the Council if at the time the decision was made the member was on the Executive/Council committee or sub-committee and was present when the decision was taken. In short, members are not allowed to scrutinise decisions to which they were party.

# Agenda Item 3

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE			
<b>Report Title</b>	Minutes		
<b>Key Decision</b>			Item No.
<b>Ward</b>			
<b>Contributors</b>	CHIEF EXECUTIVE		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011	

## Recommendation

To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee, which was open to the press and public, held on February 3 2011 ( please see attached).

# MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday, 3 February 2011 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Oluyole, Bowen, Curran, Hall, Paschoud and Peake

Kath Nicholson                      Head of Law  
Malcolm Constable                The Electoral Services Manager

Apologies for absence was received from the Chief Executive, Barry Quirk

## 1. Minutes

The 18 October 2010 minutes were agreed as an accurate account, subject to the following changes:

- Councillor Curran stated that many polling stations such as St Bartholomew are flat with boundary walls and fencing, and so easily obstruct polling signage. Councillor Curran proposed that as a general guidance to presiding officers, polling signage be positioned at a right angle to the boundary of polling stations.
- Councillor Hall made a point of information. He highlighted that one of the main motivation in requesting that a referral be sent to Mayor and Cabinet was to ensure that there was sufficient budget, however He felt that the reference did not mention resources. However, the Head of Law clarified that there are no proposals to reduce the election budget.

## 2. Declaration of Interest

Councillor Curran declared that he works for the public affairs company

## 3. Follow up to Election Committee meeting 18 October 2010

The Chair invited the Electoral Services Manager to present the updated report.

## 4. THE ELECTORAL AGENDA: THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

As requested by the Elections committee a copy of the above report was sent to the Mayor and Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011 where its contents were noted and agreement given that the Elections Committee be consulted on all matters related to electoral changes, especially on boundary changes.

With regards to 4.7.5, Councillor Curran inquired when verification of the poll for the referendum has to be completed by. The Head of Law replied that verification has to be done by 1pm and then there has to be a 3 hours gap, but the counting cannot begin before 4pm on the same day, however we are estimating that we will be finished by 6pm.

Councillor Curran asked how long before the referendum information is sent out, and whether only one set of information will be sent out, or whether an opportunity will be taken to send out other information at the same time. The Electoral Services manager confirmed that the electoral commission will be mailing information to all house holds between 4-14 April 2011.

The Chair raised concern regarding the over prescription of the Electoral Commission as no consultations were held. He asked what the Committee could do to raise these concerns. The Head of Law replied that there is very little the committee can do in the way of changing the actions of the Electoral Commission as they are now responsible for all activities during this time.

With regards to 4.9.5, the Chair asked whether there was any future for the electoral services. The Electoral Services Manager replied that there is a short term and long term issue. The short term is that if it goes right the Electoral Commission will deem this as their success and suggest that they should take over the Electoral Services nationally, and if it goes wrong the local service will be blamed. There is a longer term discussion about the future of Electoral Service and who runs it, as there is a view outside of the Metropolitan Boroughs who have restricted resources that there could be some performance failures.

Regarding the electoral boundary, Councillor Pachoud asked when the committee can feed into the debate. The Electoral Services Manager stated that at some stage there may be consultation and this could provide an opportunity for the committee to feed into it. However, at present they are testing whether data matching is going to work, so a number of pilots are being tried, before going onto the next stage.

Councillor Pachoud asked officers to explain the wider debate about the use of credit agencies. The Electoral Services Manager replied that there was a consultation about the edited register and whether this should be continued to be compiled. The professional view is that the register should be used for electoral purpose; it is not prove of residency, but a self declaration. However t is a concern that we had to have sell the register at a prescribe rate whilst Experian is making a lot of money out of its use, but we are not sure whether it is being used probably. Many Lewisham electors have reported the difficulty of removing themselves from edited registers. There are a lot of concern about the use of these registers.

## **5. CANVAS 2010**

The Head of Law commended the Elections team for increasing the canvas by 3%, to 95%.

With reference to paragraph 5.11, The Head of Law explained the reason for the big drop between December 02 and December 03. She stated that there has been a process of clearing the register at this point, i.e. when details of those who have not responded are taken off the register so that the integrity of the registry was kept. From December 03 the overall number increases; that the parliamentary goes down whilst the European goes up so its about the nature of our population, and not that people are leaving the borough.

Councillor Hall asked whether non UK citizen are counted in the calculation of British population so that the borough is financed adequately. The Head of Law replied it is usually the local government electorate that its taken into account for working out the formula for RSG. This counts is very important as its the basis for boundary field.

## **6 REVIEW OF THE PARLIAMENTARY, MAYORAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS IN MAY 2010**

The Chair asked at what stage can the committee have a say in the boundary electoral review debate. The Manager replied that at present when the bill gets passed into law, at which point the parliamentary boundary review commission will have to look at how they will implement it, and at that stage there may be some consultation. But the timetable is unclear not clear and how much room will be given to changes.

RESOLVED that

- i. the committee will require a further report on the parliamentary boundary review; and
- ii. a report on any implication of the PVSC when it becomes law and information on any guidance or consultation when it becomes available.

Finished 8:05pm

# Agenda Item 4

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Polling district and polling place review 2011	
<b>Key Decision</b>	n/a	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	n/a	
<b>Contributors</b>	Malcolm Constable, Electoral Services Manager	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## 1. Purpose

To review the Council's arrangements for polling districts and places

## 2. Recommendation

To recommend to Council that the polling districts and places set out in Appendix A, which includes amendments in paragraph 6 of this report, be adopted and the changes be included in the Electoral Register published on 1 December 2011 and that they be effective at subsequent elections.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Section 18C(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA1983) places a duty on all local authorities to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every four years.
- 3.2. The Council keeps its polling districts and places under continuous review both prior and subsequent to elections. However the Electoral Administration Act 2006 imposed a statutory duty to review Polling Districts and Places every four years. The first such review was completed in November 2007 and the changes detailed therein were recommended to the Committee for endorsement on the 20 November 2007 for subsequent approval by the Council at its meeting on the 28 November 2007.
- 3.3. Inevitably changes are forced on us by the unavailability of some polling stations prior to elections for example through school rebuilding or privately owned stations either being pre-booked, refurbished or being used for other purposes e.g. day nurseries. We also get feedback on a continuous basis from Presiding Officers and Visiting Officers on the suitability of accommodation during an election. Whilst the Council is asked to approve the polling districts and polling places of UK Parliamentary constituencies within the authority boundary, the Acting Returning Officer (ARO) is ultimately responsible for running Parliamentary

elections and must take all necessary steps to ensure the effective running of elections, including the provision of polling stations.

- 3.4. When conducting such reviews particular emphasis is placed on access and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

#### **4. The Review process**

- 4.1. Section 18 of the RPA1983 introduced a number of changes in respect of the way in which the review of polling districts and polling places must be undertaken. Polling Districts and Polling Places are defined as follows:

Polling District	Geographical area created by the division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
Polling Place	The building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the ARO.
Polling Station	The room or building chosen by the ARO where the voting takes place for each election.

It should be noted that the review focuses on the polling districts and places within the current authority, ward and parliamentary boundaries. These boundaries are not part of this review. There is currently a Boundary Commission for England (BCE) Review of Parliamentary Boundaries under way –see separate report “Parliamentary Boundary Review” submitted concurrently with this report. The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) has confirmed that there are no plans to review ward boundaries in Lewisham in the foreseeable future.

- 4.2. The Electoral Commission has no role in the conduct of the review but is responsible for reviewing representations submitted in accordance with Section 18 RPA 1983 after publication of the review. However it has, issued practical guidance as to the conduct of the review which we are following. A copy of the guidance is attached as Appendix B.
- 4.3. In accordance with Section 18 of the RPA1983 a notice (Appendix C) was published on 27 June 2011 inviting representations from any elector in the area or persons with particular expertise in relation to access and facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. The consultation period ran from the date of publication of the notice with representations to be received no later than Friday 5 August 2011.
- 4.4. Along with publication of the notice we also provided lists of polling districts, stations and electorate together with ward maps on our website giving the ARO’s provisional recommendations

Letters explaining the purpose of the review and inviting representations were sent to the Mayor, MP's, MEP's, the GLA Constituency Member, ward councillors, party agents, Lewisham Disability Coalition, Lewisham Association of People with Disabilities, the RNIB, Action on hearing Loss (RNID) and Scope.

## **5. Representations**

### **5.1. Representations have been received from**

Councillor Stella Jeffrey - proposing changes to the Polling Districts and polling station arrangements in Lewisham Central Ward.

Scope - who amongst other things emphasise the importance of ensuring that Trinity Church Hall and St John the Baptist Church are "fully accessible following the review"

The Lewisham Green Party - proposing that the number of polling districts /stations should be reduced from 6 per ward to 4 per ward in order to reduce costs , optimise use of staff and reduce reliance on portakabins or other unsatisfactory accommodation

Frankie Sulke - Executive Director for Children and Young people who would like us to consider removing all schools from the list other than those which can at least stay partially open.

Councillor Vincent Davis proposing changes polling districts in Ladywell Ward

- 5.2. The full representations have to be published, along with any correspondence relating to them at the conclusion of the review. Recommendations from Councillors Jeffrey and Davis have been incorporated in the recommendations in paragraph 5 below and the ARO's final recommendations (Appendix A).
- 5.3. The Lewisham Green Party's proposals are not specific. Furthermore we comply with the Electoral Commissions capacity and staffing guidelines for polling stations which indicate a maximum of 2,500 voters in person per polling station. It is difficult to see how this would be achieved if the Lewisham Green Party's proposals were adopted. It is also unlikely that the cost savings referred to could therefore be achieved.
- 5.4. We visited the two polling stations mentioned by Scope and could not identify any issues and wrote to Scope accordingly, who acknowledged they were satisfied with our response.
- 5.5. As the Committee is aware, we use 39 schools as polling stations. The ARO is entitled to use such schools and any other publicly funded building

as polling stations. We make strenuous efforts to minimise the impact on schools by only using primary schools and then try to work with them to keep them open. For example, an appropriate segregated area such as the nursery part of the school can be used if it that satisfies both the school's and the ARO's risk assessments. Schools are frequently the only suitable places in the polling district that meet the accessibility criteria and meet the Electoral Commission's performance standards for ARO's in ensuring "that all voters have a good experience."

## **6. ARO's Recommendations**

Having considered all the representations received and feedback from inspection of polling places and districts by the Electoral Services team, the ARO makes the following recommendations

### **6.1. Brockley Ward**

6.1.1. Confirm the use of St John with Holy Trinity Church, St Johns Vale as the polling station for polling district DBR1 which has been used in place of the portakabin on the slip road at opposite Lloyd Villas and the corner of Breakspears Building since the May 2010 elections

6.1.2. In the polling district DBR6 designate Ashmead Primary School as the polling place and split the station into two. Ashmead Primary school will replace St Stephens Church of England Primary School in Albyn Road. The electorate exceeds the voters in person capacity set by the Electoral Commissions guidelines of 2,500 and St Stephens is too small to accommodate two polling stations.

Consideration was given to the possibility of using both sites in the polling district as polling station but this would have meant closing both schools.

### **6.2. Evelyn Ward**

6.2.1. In polling district DEV5 change the polling station to the Lewington Centre which is almost directly opposite the current polling station at St Katherine's and St Bartholomew's Church Hall. Access, lighting and general upkeep of the property are superior to the existing station.

### **6.3. Ladywell Ward**

6.3.1. In response to a representation made by Councillor Davis, move 203 properties and 372 electors in polling district DLA1 to DLA6. The polling station for these electors will change to Crofton Park Baptist Church, which has temporarily replaced Gordonbrock Primary School whilst it is being rebuilt, from John Evelyn Education Centre. The Baptist Church is much more convenient to them. This means that electors in the following streets:

Huxbear Street

Abbotswell Road  
Elsiemaud Road  
Chudleigh Road  
Brockley Road

would in future vote at Crofton Park Baptist Church, and not at John Evelyn Education Centre/Gordonbrock School as previously.

- 6.3.2. Designate the Link Line Building (Roseview), 122 Marsala Road as the polling place for polling District DLA2 which will enable the use of either the Roseview lounge in the building or continued use of a portakabin. There is a minor access issue to resolve with the use of the lounge in the building.
- 6.3.3. Designate Crofton Park Baptist Church in polling district DLA6, used in the May 2011 Referendum, as the polling station whilst Gordonbrock School is being rebuilt.
- 6.4. Lewisham Central Ward
  - 6.4.1. In response to representations received from Councillor Jeffrey, for the polling district DLC3, locate a portakabin in Cornmill Gardens. The portakabin is more central to voters in the polling district than Lewisham Methodist Church which is outside the polling district and involves crossing a major road, Molesworth Street, and walking through the shopping centre.
  - 6.4.2. Move 53 properties and 55 electors in Hither Green Lane from DLC5 to DLC1. This means that they would vote at Brindishe Green Primary School, rather than the Saville Centre.
- 6.5. New Cross Ward
  - 6.5.1. Designate All Saints Community Centre in polling district DNE5 as the polling station. The originally designated polling station at Hatcham Temple Grove School has not been used since its closure in 2008.
- 6.6. Telegraph Hill Ward
  - 6.6.1. In polling district DTE3, keep the polling place unchanged as St James Hatcham Church of England School but move the polling station to the Family Learning Centre on the opposite side of the Road (used for the Referendum in May 2011) to enable the main school to remain open.
  - 6.6.2. In polling district DTE4, change the polling place to Hatcham Oak Children's Centre in Wallbutton Road (used for the Referendum in May 2011 ) from Haberdasher Aske's Hatcham College in Pepys Road as building works now make this inaccessible.
- 6.7. Whitefoot Ward

- 6.7.1. Designate portakabin at Hafton Road, in polling district EWH2, as the polling station which has been used since the European Elections in 2009, instead of Meridian Court.
- 6.8. Bellingham Ward
  - 6.8.1. In polling district WBE2, designate Blackheath Hockey & Catford Cyphers Cricket Club, Rubens Street, used in the Referendum May 2011, as the polling station instead of the portakabin at Rutland Walk Sports and Social Club.
- 6.9. Downham Ward
  - 6.9.1. The polling station in polling district EDO1 would revert to Meadows Community Centre which was approved as the polling station for the district in the 2007 Polling District and Polling Place Review. Meadows Community Centre was temporarily replaced by Catford Wanderers Sports Club, but has been refurbished following its flooding prior to the European Parliamentary Election in 2010.
- 6.10. Forest Hill Ward
  - 6.10.1. In polling district WFO4, designate Horniman Primary School used in the Referendum in May 2011 as the polling station instead of the portakabin in the car park at Horniman Primary School.
- 6.11. Sydenham Ward
  - 6.11.1. In polling district WSY7, designate Our Lady and St Phillip Neri School used in the Referendum in May 2011 as the polling station instead of Sydenham Catholic Club

## **7. Financial implications**

There are no specific financial implications arising.

## **8. Legal implications**

Each polling district must have sufficient and suitable designated polling places that provide 'such reasonable facilities for voting that are practicable in the circumstances' including accessibility for electors with disabilities. The Council is under a duty to promote equality for those with a disability and the recommendations in this report are drafted with this duty in mind.

## **9. Crime and disorder implications**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

## **10. Equalities implications**

All recommended polling places are accessible for people with disabilities and efforts have been made to ensure that polling places are conveniently accessible for all abilities and ages

**11. Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising.

**Background documents and originator**

Malcolm Constable 020 8314 6907

DEPTFORD								
Ward	Polling District	Total Polling Station Electorate (excludes postal voters)	Total Eligible Electors	Designated Polling Place	Polling Place Used for Elections 2011	Returning Officer's Provisional Observations	Returning Officer's Provisional Recommendations	Returning Officer's Final Recommendations
Brockley	DBR1	1,351	1,530	Portakabin on service road opposite Lloyd Villas, corner of Breakears Road, London, SE4 4JT	St John with Holy Trinity Church, St Johns Vale, London, SE8 4EA	Previous location of portakabin, not ideal. New location off polling district, no other venue found within polling district.	Change: Designate St John with Holy Trinity Church, St Johns Vale, London, SE8 4EA	Change: Designate St John with Holy Trinity Church, St Johns Vale, London, SE8 4EA
	DBR2	1,770	1,950	Myatt Garden Primary School, Rokeby Road, London, SE4 1DF	Myatt Garden Primary School, Rokeby Road, London, SE4 1DF		No change	No change
	DBR3	1,561	1,752	St Peter's Church, Wickham Road, London, SE4 1LT	St Peter's Church, Wickham Road, London, SE4 1LT		No change	No change
	DBR4	1,843	1,996	Little Gem's Day Nursery, Entrance in St Donnatts Road, London, SE14 6PX	Little Gem's Day Nursery, Entrance in St Donnatts Road, London, SE14 6PX	Not ideal in terms of delivery and tidy up afterwards	Review	No Change. The Polling station is in the baby sleep area. Will request that area is cleared for day of poll
	DBR5	1,530	1,668	New Cross Road Baptist Church Hall, 466 New Cross Road, London, SE14 6TZ	New Cross Road Baptist Church Hall, 466 New Cross Road, London, SE14 6TZ		No change	No change
	DBR6	2,603	2,696	St Stephen's C of E Primary School, Albyn Road, London, SE8 4ED	St Stephen's C of E Primary School, Albyn Road, London, SE8 4ED	Visited. Large electorate polling station, may need to be split to comply with Electoral Commission guidance. St Stephen's is too small to split. Possible alternative Ashmead Primary School	Review	Change: Designate Ashmead Primary School as polling station. More central in polling district and easily divisible into two polling stations
Crofton Park	DCR1	1,601	1,799	Stillness Junior School, Brockley Rise, London, SE23 1NH	Stillness Junior School, Brockley Rise, London, SE23 1NH	Visited. Room changed in 2011 to year 6 block to allow school to stay open for SATS	No change, keep under review. Revert back to main hall as Year 6 Block not suitable for larger elections.	No Change
	DCR2	1,639	1,806	City Learning Centre, Manwood Road, London, SE4 1SA	City Learning Centre, Manwood Road, London, SE4 1SA	Visited. Centre now closed- still used as owned by Prendergast Ladywell Fields College, school has to remain open, so harris fencing and security guards required at large expense- alternatives sought, but not found	No change	No change
	DCR3	1,473	1,606	Brockley Primary School, Brockley Road, London, SE4 2BT	Brockley Primary School, Brockley Road, London, SE4 2BT	Visited. School being refurbished. Currently using 'Rainbow Room', there may be a more suitable room once refurbishments are completed	No change, keep under review	No Change
	DCR4	1,696	1,852	The Undercroft, St Hilda's Church, Entrance in Brockley Road, London, SE4 2DH	The Undercroft, St Hilda's Church, Entrance in Brockley Road, London, SE4 2DH	Visited. Review additional signage in view of location on Street Corner.	No change	No change
	DCR5	1,594	1,794	St Saviour's Church Hall, 69 Brockley Rise, London, SE23 1JN	St Saviour's Church Hall, 69 Brockley Rise, London, SE23 1JN		No change	No change
	DCR6	1,424	1,607	Community Education Lewisham, Brockley Rise Centre, Entrance in Brockley Park, London, SE23 1PR	Community Education Lewisham, Brockley Rise Centre, Entrance in Brockley Park, London, SE23 1PR	Visited. Ensure use of Hut 1, no refreshments allowed in room and parking for staff is a problem.	No change	No change
Evelyn	DEV1	1,751	1,969	Clyde Early Childhood Centre, Etta Street, London, SE8 4NH	Clyde Early Childhood Centre, Etta Street, London, SE8 4NH		No change	No change
	DEV2	1,676	1,764	Grinling Gibbons School, Clyde Street, London, SE8 5LW	Grinling Gibbons School, Clyde Street, London, SE8 5LW		No change	No change
	DEV3	2,150	2,419	Riverside Youth Club, Grove Street, London, SE8 3QQ	Riverside Youth Club, Grove Street, London, SE8 3QQ		No change	No change
	DEV4	1,773	1,954	Deptford Park Primary School, Entrance Oxestalls Road, London, SE8 5RJ	Deptford Park Primary School, Entrance Oxestalls Road, London, SE8 5RJ		No Change	No change
	DEV5	735	818	St Katherine's and St Bartholemew's Church Hall, 92 Eugenia Road, London, SE16 2RA	St Katherine's and St Bartholemew's Church Hall, 92 Eugenia Road, London, SE16 2RA	2007 Review, compare with Lewington Centre, Eugenia Road (may have better access).	Review	Change: Access at Lewington Centre and facilities for voters and staff are far better

	DEV6		1,173	1,326	St Francis Drake Primary School, Scawen Road, London, SE8 5AE	St Francis Drake Primary School, Scawen Road, London, SE8 5AE		No change	No change
Ladywell	DLA1		1,346	1,523	John Evelyn Education Centre, Dressington Avenue, London, SE4 1JQ	John Evelyn Education Centre, Dressington Avenue, London, SE4 1JQ		No change	No change to polling station. Following representations made by Cllr Davis recommended 203 properties and 372 electors will move from DLA1 to DLA6 as Crofton park Baptist Church is more accessible to them
	DLA2		1,786	2,022	Portakabin in carpark, R/O 122 Marsala Road, London, SE13 7AF	Portakabin in car park, R/O 122 Marsala Road, London, SE13 7AF	Check use of 122 Marsala Road building instead of Portakabin. Alternative could be Roseview Lounge in building - contact Michelle Oliver or Tony Clarke.	Review	Change: designate 122 Marsala Road as the polling station. It is intended to use Roseview Lounge, but there is minor access issue, therefore may revert to portakabin
	DLA3		1,373	1,533	Lewisham Bridge Primary School, (Bungalow Building), entrance in Vian Street, London, SE13 7BN Used for Parliamentary election 2010.	St John's Medical Centre, 56-60 Loampit Hill, London, SE13 7SX Used for European election 2009.	Lewisham Bridge Primary School in process of being rebuilt. St John's Medical Centre only suitable venue, however polling station on 2nd Floor (lift available). Alternative sought.	Change: Designate St John's Medical Centre with Lewisham Bridge as alternative. Review in conjunction with Loampit development.	Change: Designate St John's Medical Centre for GLA Elections in 2012. Review as Loampit development comes on stream and revert to Lewisham Bridge School. Avoid splitting polling stations between wards
	DLA4		933	1,030	Portakabin on Entrance to Hilly Fields, Hilly Fields Crescent, London, SE4 1QA	Portakabin on Entrance to Hilly Fields, Hilly Fields Crescent, London, SE4 1QA	No suitable alternatives in polling district.	No change	No change
	DLA5		1,805	1,950	St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Brockley Road, London, SE4 2SA	St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Brockley Road, London, SE4 2SA		No change	No change
	DLA6		1,235	1,376	Gordonbrock Primary School, Gordonbrock Road, London, SE4 1JB	Crofton Park Baptist Church, Huxbear Street, London, SE4 1EA	Gordonbrock School currently being demolished (to be rebuilt). Crofton Park Baptist Church on edge of polling district - no other buildings in area suitable.	Change: Designate Crofton Park Baptist Church, with Gordonbrock School as the alternative.	Change: Designate Crofton Park Baptist Church for GLA Elections in 2012. Following representations made by Cllr Davis recommended 203 properties and 372 electors will move from DLA1 to DLA6 as Crofton park Baptist Church is more accessible to them
Lewisham Central	DLC1		2,322	2,653	Brindishe Green Primary School (Formerly Hither Green Primary School), Beacon Road, London, SE13 6EH	Brindishe Green Primary School (Formerly Hither Green Primary School), Beacon Road, London, SE13 6EH	Visited. Large hall must be used.	No change. Polling station may need to be split. Large hall is big enough to be split.	No change. Will need to be split if voters in person exceed 2,500
	DLC2		1,712	1,935	College Park Baptist Chapel, Clarendon Rise, London, SE13 6FS	College Park Baptist Chapel, Clarendon Rise, London, SE13 6ES		No change	No change
	DLC3		1,301	1,465	Portakabin on Junction Approach Lewisham Railway Station, Station Road, London, SE13	Lewisham Methodist Church, Albion Way, London, SE13 6BT	Portakabin cannot be sited in Lewisham Railway Station due to renewal of railway station. Methodist Church outside polling district. Alternative sought, extra consideration needs to be given to suitable premises due development in Loampit.	Review with consideration to the Loampit Hill development.	Change: Following representations received from Cllr. Jeffries approve use of portakabin at Cornhill Gardens which is in the polling district, more accessible to the majority of voters who do not then have to cross Molesworth Street
	DLC4		1,728	2,000	St Mary's C of E Primary School, 329 Lewisham High Street, London, SE13 6NY	St Mary's C of E Primary School, 329 Lewisham High Street, London, SE13 6NX	Difficulty parking, school not keen on giving any parking at all.	No change	No change
	DLC5		1,459	1,685	The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street, London	The Saville Centre, 436 Lewisham High Street, London, SE13 6LJ		No change	No change
	DLC6		1,456	1,683	St Christopher Christian Fellowship Church Hall, 31A Torrildon Road, London, SE6 1AQ	St Christopher Christian Fellowship Church Hall, 31A Torrildon Road, London, SE6 1AQ		No change	No change
New Cross	DNE1		1,481	1,616	Woodpecker Community Centre, Woodpecker Estate, 100 Woodpecker Road, London, SE14 6EU	Woodpecker Community Centre, Woodpecker Estate, 100 Woodpecker Road, London, SE14 6EU		No change	No change

	DNE2		1,619	1,806	Tidemill Primary School, Frankham Street, London, SE8 4RN	Tidemill Primary School, Frankham Street, London, SE8 4RU	School being incorporated into development at Wavelenghts. Original building to be demolished. May need alternative in future. Albion Theatre and Christian Centre possible	Review	No change: Indications are that school will be available for GLA Elections in 2012
	DNE3		1,258	1,416	Community Education Lewisham, Mornington Centre, Stanley Street, London, SE8 4BL	Mulberry Centre, 15 Amersham Vale, London, SE14 6LE	Concerns raised in 2011 re Mulberry Centre premises open and large noisy groups may put off voters. Changed from Mornington Centre in 2007 as building was being used as a decant site	Review	No Change: Centre provides additional security.
	DNE4		1,150	1,267	Chilideric Primary School, Chilideric Road, London, SE14 6DG	Chilideric Primary School, Chilideric Road, London, SE14 6DG		No Change	No Change
	DNE5		2,079	2,323	Hatcham Temple Grove School (formerly Monson Primary School), entrance in Camplin Street, London, SE14 5RD Portakabin at Ekrlington Gardens was used in European election 2009.	All Saints Community Centre, Monson Road, London, SE14 5DJ	Visited. Compliant Hatcham Temple Grove School building currently closed - decanted to HAHC. Change of room at All Saints Community Centre from Nursery to Sports Hall due to room availability.	Change: Designate All Saints Community Centre. Polling station may need to be split large hall in centre would be suitable.	No change: Will split if voters in person exceed 2,500
	DNE6		1,720	1,882	Scotney Hall, Winslade Estate, 17 Sharratt Street, London, SE15 1NR	Scotney Hall, Winslade Estate, 17 Sharratt Street, London, SE15 1NR		No change	No change
Telegraph Hill	DTE1		1,976	2,159	Edmund Waller Primary School, Waller Road, London, SE14 6LY	Edmund Waller Primary School, Waller Road, London, SE14 6LY	Now using Old Dining Hall so School can be kept open	No change	No change
	DTE2		1,861	2,090	Kender Primary School, Briant Street, London, SE14 5JA	Kender Primary School, Kender Street, London, SE14 5JA	Address has been amended to reflect Royal Mail address.	No change-note address change	No change
	DTE3		1,433	1,685	St James Hatcham C of E School, St James's, London, SE14 6AD	St James Hatcham C of E School (Family Learning Centre), St James', London, SE14 6AD	Family Learning Centre on opposite side of road, used to enable school to remain open.	Change: Designate Family Learning Centre.	Change: Designate Family Learning Centre.
	DTE4		1,445	1,638	Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College, 135 Pepys Road, London, SE14 5SF	Hatcham Oak Children's Centre, Wallbuton Road, London, SE4 2NX	Visited. HAHC has another Primary School decanted on-site. Original building not suitable - access problems. Hatcham Oak Children's Centre in middle of Polling District and is more suitable for all voters, although problems with opening and outside lighting in 2011.	Change: Designate Hatcham Oak Children's Centre, Wallbuton Road, London, SE4 2NX	Change: Designate Hatcham Oak Children's Centre, Wallbuton Road, London, SE4 2NX
	DTE5		1,571	1,756	Meadowgate Primary School, Revelon Road, London, SE4 2PR	Meadowgate Primary School, Revelon Road, London, SE4 2PR		No change	No change
	DTE6		1,450	1,611	Turnham Primary GM School, Turnham Road, London, SE4 2HH	Turnham Primary GM School, Turnham Road, London, SE4 2HH		No change	No change

EAST								
Ward	Polling District	Total Polling Station Electorate (excludes postal voters)	Total Eligible Electors	Designated Polling Place	Polling Place Used for Elections 2011	Returning Officer's Provisional Observations	Returning Officer's Provisional Recommendations	Returning Officer's Final Recommendations
Blackheath	EBL1	1,317	1,532	Lethbridge Senior Citizens Club Room, 58 Lethbridge Close, London, SE13 7QH	Lethbridge Senior Citizens Club Room, 58 Lethbridge Close, London, SE13 7QN	Due to be demolished as part of redevelopment. Alternatives sought. Heathside and Lethbridge possibility.	No change. Keep under review	No change
	EBL2	1,112	1,298	John Ball Nursery School, Hurren Close, London, SE3 0TP	John Ball Nursery School, Hurren Close, London, SE3 0TP	Early Years Centre used to enable school to remain open.	No change	No change
	EBL3	1,531	1,815	Blackheath Village Library, 3-4 Blackheath Grove, London, SE3 0DD	Blackheath Village Library, 3-4 Blackheath Grove, London, SE3 0DD	To be reviewed once decision on future of Library has taken place or other use of building has been decided	No change. Keep under review.	No change
	EBL4	1,932	2,279	St Margaret's Lee C of E School, Lee Church Street, London, SE13 5SG	St Margaret's Lee C of E School, Lee Church Street, London, SE13 5SG		No change	No change
	EBL5	1,082	1,220	St Stephen and St Mark Church Hall, St Stephen's Grove, London, SE13 5JA	St Stephen and St Mark Church Hall, St Stephen's Grove, London, SE13 5JA		No change	No change
	EBL6	1,489	1,689	Granville Park Centre, Granville Park, London, SE13 7DX	Granville Park Centre, Granville Park, London, SE13 7DX	Visited. Ensure use of room G3. Problems with parking, 1 space available for PO only, Pay and Display on surrounding streets. Staff able to take refreshments in the classroom but not able to make them in the classroom.	No change	No change
Catford South	ECA1	1,279	1,475	St Laurence Centre, 37 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2TS	St Laurence Centre, 37 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2TS		No change	No change
	ECA2	1,805	2,010	Catford and Bromley Synagogue Youth Club, 6 Crantock Road, London, SE6 2PT	Catford and Bromley Synagogue Youth Club, 6 Crantock Road, London, SE6 2PT	Look at alternatives. Limited to choice of PO. Problems if they are unavailable.	Review	No change
	ECA3	1,470	1,675	The Pavilion, Abbotshall Playing Fields, Abbotshall Road, London, SE6 1SQ	The Pavilion, Abbotshall Playing Fields, Abbotshall Road, London, SE6 1SQ	Comments about condition of room	No change	No change
	ECA4	1,665	1,830	Torridon Junior School, entrance in Hazelbank Road, London, SE6 1TG	Torridon Junior School, entrance in Hazelbank Road, London, SE6 1TG	Headteacher unhappy about continued use, ensured that alternatives would be looked at Polling District Review. Visited, changed entrance to keep year 6 classes open.	No change	No change
	ECA5	1,352	1,525	Sandhurst Infants School, Minard Road, London, SE6 1NW	Sandhurst Infants School, Minard Road, London, SE6 1NW	Head teacher unhappy about continued use	No change	No change
	ECA6	1,590	1,856	Brownhill Road Baptist Church Hall, 292 Brownhill Road, London, SE6 1AU	Brownhill Road Baptist Church Hall, 292 Brownhill Road, London, SE6 1AU	No parking on-site, PO has to park in neighbouring street.	No change	No change
Downham	EDO1	1,450	1,732	Meadows Community Hall, Chestnut Close, London, SE6 3NS	Catford Wanderers Sports Club (Homebase Entrance), Beckenham Hill Road, London, SE6 2NU Used since European election in 2009.	Meadows Community Hall flooded and major refurbishments due to take place (to be checked). Catford Wanderers not in ideal location, lots of signage required, but electors now used to building and Club active in community	Review	Change: Revert to Meadows Community Hall approved as polling place in the 2007 review
	EDO2	1,079	1,219	Downham Community Centre, Wesley Halls, 2 Shroffold Road, Bromley, BR1 6PE	Downham Community Centre, Wesley Halls, 2 Shroffold Road, Bromley, BR1 6PE		No change	No change
	EDO3	1,311	1,489	Kings Church (Formerly Downham Way Family Church), 20 The Green, Bromley, BR1 6LS	Kings Church (Formerly Downham Way Family Church), 20 The Green, Bromley, BR1 6LS		No change	No change
	EDO4	1,719	1,989	Good Shepherd Primary School, Moorside Road, Bromley, BR1 6EP	Good Shepherd Primary School, Moorside Road, Bromley, BR1 6EP	Head teacher unhappy about continued use, Room changed by Head teacher without permission in 2011 (not suitable for large elections)	No change	No change

	ED05	2,104	2,420	Rangefield Primary School, Glenbow Road, Bromley, BR1 4RP	Rangefield Primary School, Glenbow Road, BR1 4RP		No change	No change
	ED06	943	1,097	Milwall FC Training Ground, Calmont Road, Bromley, BR1 4BZ	Ten Em Bee Sports Development Centre, 120A Old Bromley Road, Bromley, BR1 4JY	Milwall unavailable during football season, Ten Em Bee not ideal (has access problems - long way from road) - complaints in 2011	Review	No change
Grove Park	EGR1	1,525	1,668	Marvels Lane Primary School, Riddons Road, London, SE12 9RA	Marvels Lane Primary School, Riddons Road, London, SE12 9RA	Children's Centre is used so the school can remain open.	No change	No change
	EGR2	1,266	1,484	Grove Park Youth Club, Marvels Lane, London, SE12 9PR	Grove Park Youth Club, Marvels Lane, London, SE12 9PR	Visited. Gym used as disabled access is better.	No change	No change
	EGR3	1,606	1,867	St Augustine's Church Hall, 336 Baring Road, London, SE12 0DU	St Augustine's Church Hall, 336 Baring Road, London, SE12 0DU		No change	No change
	EGR4	1,997	2,260	Baring Road Primary School, Linchmere Road, London, SE12 0NB	Baring Road Primary School, Linchmere Road, London, SE12 0NB	Visited - Compliant. Building work in the undercroft. Works will not be scheduled for polling days.	No change	No change
	EGR5	1,169	1,295	Ringway Centre, Baring Road, London, SE12 0DS	Ringway Centre, Baring Road, London, SE12 0DS		No change	No change
	EGR6	1,520	1,694	Burnt Ash Methodist Church Hall, Burnt Ash Hill, London, SE12 0QD	Burnt Ash Methodist Church Hall, Burnt Ash Hill, London, SE12 0QD	Concerns raised about disabled access in 2011 from voters and PO. Church itself is possible alternative	Review	No change
Lee Green	ELG1	1,652	1,821	Lochaber Hall, Manor Lane Terrace, London, SE13 5QL	Lochaber Hall, Manor Lane Terrace, London, SE13 5QL		No change	No change
	ELG2	1,756	2,003	St Winifred's Infants School, Entrance in Manor Lane, London, SE12 8NS	St Winifred's Infants School, Entrance in Manor Lane, London, SE12 8NS		No change	No change
	ELG3	1,680	1,981	Lee Green United Reformed Church, 111/113 Burnt Ash Road, London, SE12 8RA	Lee Green United Reformed Church, 111/113 Burnt Ash Road, London, SE12 8RA		No change	No change
	ELG4	1,672	1,847	St Winifred's Junior School, Newstead Road, London, SE12 0SJ	St Winifred's Junior School, Newstead Road, London, SE12 0SJ		No change	No change
	ELG5	1,212	1,350	The Church of the Good Shepherd Lee, Handen Road, London, SE12 8NR	The Church of the Good Shepherd Lee, Handen Road, London, SE12 8NR		No change	No change
	ELG6	1,076	1,212	Portakabin on approach to Hither Green Railway Station, Staplehurst Road, London, SE13 8NB	Portakabin on approach to Hither Green Railway Station, Staplehurst Road, London, SE13 8NB	Compliant. Need to ensure parking restrictions in place in advance of election day. Concerns from electors as to site of portakabin on very edge of polling district	No change	No change
Rushey Green	ERU1	1,767	1,999	Civic Suite, Lewisham Town Hall, Catford Road, London, SE6 4RU	Civic Suite, Lewisham Town Hall, Catford Road, London, SE6 4RU	Extra consideration needs to be given to suitable premises due development at old greyhound stadium.	No change. Keep under review.	No change
	ERU2	1,584	1,767	Trinity Church Hall, Faversham Road, London, SE6 4XE	Trinity Church Hall, Faversham Road, London, SE6 4XE	Concerns raised about disabled access in 2011 from voters and PO, need to look at ramp and alternatives	Review	No change
	ERU3	1,695	1,910	Holy Cross RC School, Culverley Road, London, SE6 2LD	Holy Cross RC School, Culverley Road, London, SE6 2LD		No change	No change
	ERU4	1,934	2,154	Calabash Centre, 24/26 George Lane, London, SE13 6HH	Calabash Centre, 24/26 George Lane, London, SE13 6HH	Concerns re outside lighting at night in 2011	No change	No change
	ERU5	1,502	1,629	Holbeach School, Doggett Road, London, SE6 4QB	Holbeach School, Doggett Road, London, SE6 4QB	Parking unavailable for poll staff at school, extra consideration needs to be given to suitable premises due development at old greyhound stadium	No change. Keep under review.	No change
Whitefoot	EW11	2,090	2,373	Goldsmith's Community Centre, Castillon Road, London, SE6 1QD	Goldsmith's Community Centre, Castillon Road, London, SE6 1QD		No change	No change

	EWH2	916	1,113	Portakabin in car park between Meridian Court, Cumberland Place	Portakabin adjacent to allotments on Hafton Road. Used since European election 2009.	Meridian Court is privately owned and residents are not in favour of siting a portakabin at Cumberland Place. Hafton road outside polling district, no other sites available.	Change: Designate Portakabin at Hafton Road	Change: Designate Portakabin at Hafton Road
	EWH3	1,105	1,253	Knights Temple Grove Primary School (Formerly Merfin Primary School), Ballamore Road, Bromley, BR1 5LW	Knights Temple Grove Primary School (Formerly Merfin Primary School), Ballamore Road, Bromley, BR1 5LW	Visited. Compliant. Change of room to first classroom in Nursery Building. May need small ramp to access classroom.	No change	No change
	EWH4	1,091	1,214	Whitefoot Lane Christian Centre, 480 Whitefoot Lane, Bromley, BR1 5SF	Whitefoot Lane Christian Centre, 480 Whitefoot Lane, Bromley, BR1 5SF		No change	No change
	EWH5	1,449	1,522	St John the Baptist Church, 353 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2RP	St John the Baptist Church, 353 Bromley Road, London, SE6 2RP	Concerns raised about outside lighting and disabled access in 2011 from voters and PO, need to look at ramp and alternative locations.	No change	No change
	EWH6	1,645	1,930	EUM Pentecostal Church and Community Centre, Afferford Road, London, SE6 3DE	EUM Pentecostal Church and Community Centre, Afferford Road, London, SE6 3DE		No change	No change

West (& Penge)								
Ward	Polling District	Total Polling Station Electorate (excludes postal voters)	Total Eligible Electors	Designated Polling Place	Polling Place Used for Elections 2011	Returning Officer's Provisional Observations	Returning Officer's Provisional Recommendations	Returning Officer's Final Recommendations
Bellingham	WBE1	1,464	1,710	Haseltine Primary School, Haseltine Road, London, SE26 5AD	Haseltine Primary School, Haseltine Road, London, SE26 5AD	Extra consideration needs to be given to suitable premises due development at Bell Green.	No change.Keep under review in relation to developments.	No change
	WBE2	1,883	2,118	Portakabin, Rutland Walk Sports and Social Club, Rutland Walk, London, SE6 4RG	Bellingham by Election: Portakabin, Rutland Walk Sports and Social Club, Rutland Walk, London, SE6 4RG. Referendum: Blackheath Hockey & Catford Cyphers Cricket Club, (The Pavilion), Rubens Street, London, SE6 4DH	Visited area. Portakabin not ideal, cricket club is available and in polling district. Will require a ramp.	Change: Designate Blackheath Hockey & Catford Cyphers Cricket Club, (The Pavilion), Rubens Street, London, SE6 4DH.	Change: Designate Blackheath Hockey & Catford Cyphers Cricket Club, (The Pavilion), Rubens Street, London, SE6 4DH.
	WBE3	1,362	1,517	Athelney Primary School, Athelney Street, London, SE6 3LD	Athelney Primary School, Athelney Street, London, SE6 3LD	School gym used to enable school to remain open.	No change	No change
	WBE4	1,335	1,623	Bellingham North Community Centre, 15 Bellingham Green, London, SE6 3JB	Bellingham North Community Centre, 15 Bellingham Green, London, SE6 3JB		No change	No change
	WBE5	1,078	1,217	Elfrida Nursery School, Entrance in Playgreen Way, London SE6 3EN	Elfrida Nursery School, Entrance in Playgreen Way, London SE6 3EN	Community Centre used to enable school to remain open.	No change	No change
	WBE6	1,621	1,705	Sedgehill Community Centre, 69-85 Sedgehill Road, London, SE6 3QN	Sedgehill Community Centre, 69-85 Sedgehill Road, London, SE6 3QN		No change	No change
Forest Hill	WFO1	1,954	2,161	Kelvin Grove Primary School, Kelvin Grove, London, SE26 6BB	Kelvin Grove Primary School, Kelvin Grove, London, SE26 6BB		No change	No change
	WFO2	1,264	1,421	Forest Hill Library (Children's Room), Entrance in Thorpewood Avenue, London, SE23 3HZ	Forest Hill Library (Children's Room), Entrance in Thorpewood Avenue, London, SE23 3HZ		Review- re closures etc.	No change
	WFO3	1,691	1,903	Christian Fellowship Centre, 39 Honor Oak Road, London, SE23 3SH	Christian Fellowship Centre, 39 Honor Oak Road, London, SE23 3SH		No change	No change
	WFO4	1,182	1,375	Portakabin, front car park Horniman Primary School, Horniman Drive, London, SE23 3BB	Horniman Primary School, Horniman Drive, London, SE23 3PB	Use community room to enable school to remain open.	Change: Designate school as polling place.	Change: Designate school as polling place.
	WFO5	1,460	1,639	The Church (Worldwide) Inc, R/O 49 Devonshire Road, London, SE23 3EN	The Church (Worldwide) Inc, R/O 49 Devonshire Road, London, SE23 3EN	Not ideal access - far from road.	Review	No change
	WFO6	592	707	Elliott Bank Primary School, Thorpewood Avenue, London, SE26 4BU	Elliott Bank Primary School, Thorpewood Avenue, London, SE26 4BU	Children's Centre used.	No change	No change
	WFO7	866	1,022	Portakabin outside 141-181 Elliott Bank, London, SE23 3XB	Portakabin outside 141-181 Elliott Bank, London, SE23 3XB	Not ideal, no other suitable sites found	Review	No change
Perry Vale	WPE1	1,835	2,018	Perrymount Primary School, Sunderland Road, London, SE23 2PX	Perrymount Primary School, Sunderland Road, London, SE23 2PX		No change	No change
	WPE2	1,611	1,846	Christ Church C of E Primary School, Perry Vale, London, SE23 2NE	Christ Church C of E Primary School, Perry Vale, London, SE23 2NE		No change	No change
	WPE3	1,301	1,497	Our Lady and St Phillip Neril Primary School, Mayow Road, London, SE23 2XG	Our Lady and St Phillip Neril Primary School, Mayow Road, London, SE23 2XG		No change	No change
	WPE4	1,481	1,672	Perry Rise Baptist Church, Perry Rise, London, SE23 2QL	Perry Rise Baptist Church, Perry Rise, London, SE23 2QL		No change	No change

	WPE5	1,412	1,570	Kilmore Primary School, Kilmore Road, London, SE23 2SP	Kilmore Primary School, Kilmore Road, London, SE23 2SP	Children's Centre on the school site used to enable School to remain open	No change	No change
	WPE6	1,771	1,964	Perry Hill St George Christ Church, St Paul Church Hall, Vancouver Road, London, SE23 2AR	Perry Hill St George Christ Church, St Paul Church Hall, Vancouver Road, London, SE23 2AG		No change	No change
Sydenham	WSY1	1,259	1,442	St Bartholomew's Church, Westwood Hill, London, SE26 6QJ	St Bartholomew's Church, Westwood Hill, London, SE26 6QL		No change	No change
	WSY2	1,476	1,656	The Grove Centre, 2 Jews Walk, London, SE26 6PL	The Grove Centre, 2 Jews Walk, London, SE26 6PL	Visited - site is compliant.	No change	No change
	WSY3	1,118	1,277	Hillcrest Tenants' Association, Club Room, High Level Drive, London, SE26 6XP	Hillcrest Tenants' Association, Club Room, High Level Drive, London, SE26 6XP		No change	No change
	WSY4	1,252	1,378	St Bartholomew's C of E School, The Peak, London, SE26 4LJ	St Bartholomew's C of E School, The Peak, London, SE26 4LJ		No change	No change
	WSY5	1,680	1,859	Silverdale Hall, 8 Silverdale, London, SE26 4SZ	Silverdale Hall, 8 Silverdale, London, SE26 4SZ	Problems with delivery/collecting equipment.	No change	No change
	WSY6	1,460	1,653	St Michael's Church Hall, Champion Crescent, London, SE26 4HH	St Michael's Church Hall, Champion Crescent, London, SE26 4HH		No change	No change
	WSY7	1,445	1,639	All Saints Church Hall, Trewsbury Road, London, SE26 5DP. Sydenham Catholic club used for European election 2009.	Our Lady and St Philip Neri Primary School, Sydenham Road, London, SE26 5SE	All Saints has permanent nursery in building, school available and compliant. Its sister site is used in WPE3 and Head Teacher prefers to close both sites at same time	Change: Designate school as polling place.	Change: Designate school as polling place.

Priority	Medium
Event specific	No
Action required	Yes
Area	Great Britain
Retain	Until replaced
Circular reference	EC19(2010)

## Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

30 July 2010

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this circular is to provide local authorities and (Acting) Returning Officers in England, Scotland and Wales with guidance in relation to carrying out a review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places.
2. Reviews of parliamentary polling districts must be undertaken at least once every four years. However, in the Commission's interim report on the problems experienced at some polling stations at the close of poll at the 6 May 2010 elections, we recommended that all local authorities take steps immediately to begin the process of conducting reviews of polling districts and polling places, reflecting on the problems identified in some areas at the May 2010 elections.
3. This guidance builds upon that issued in 2007 on the commencement of the relevant provisions introduced by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.
4. This circular replaces circular EC28/2007.

### Background

5. Section 18C(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983<sup>1</sup> places a duty on all local authorities to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every four years.
6. As part of this review process, (Acting) Returning Officers are required to make representations to the local authority on the existing polling stations and

<sup>1</sup> As inserted by Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

the polling stations that would likely be used based on the proposed arrangements for polling places.

7. Other persons, including electors, community groups and other bodies with particular expertise in access to premises for disabled people, may submit proposals to the local authority during the review process.
8. Polling districts and polling places for local government elections are not automatically part of the review<sup>2</sup>. However, given that in practice polling districts and polling places for local government elections are based on UK Parliamentary polling arrangements, it is recommended that the local government Returning Officer become involved in the UK Parliamentary review, and that a review of local government polling arrangements is conducted simultaneously.

## The review process

9. The main guidance document in Appendix A sets out a staged approach for conducting the review in line with the relevant legislation.
10. Appendix B includes templates that can be used to assess the suitability of polling places and polling stations.
11. Appendix C covers the step-by-step process for changing the name of an electoral area in England and Wales.

## Contact

12. Your Electoral Commission contact points for any further information are:

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<sup>2</sup> Local government polling districts and polling places are covered separately in Section 31, Representation of the People Act 1983.

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This circular is for the attention of:

**The Acting Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in England and Wales

**The Returning Officer**

Parliamentary constituencies in Scotland

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

Unitary authorities in England and Wales

This circular is for the information of:

**The Electoral Registration Officer**

District, metropolitan borough and London borough authorities in England

Unitary authorities in England and Wales

Unitary authorities and joint boards in Scotland

**The Chief Electoral Officer**

Northern Ireland

This circular was approved by Andrew Scallan, Director of Electoral Administration.

## Circular EC19/2010 – Appendix A

### Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

#### 1 Introduction

##### Legislation

1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places at least once every four years.<sup>1</sup> The first such review had to be completed by the end of 2007.<sup>2</sup>

1.2 Polling districts and places for local government elections, including mayoral elections and elections to the Greater London Authority, are not automatically part of this review as they are provided for separately in Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983). However, reviews of local government polling arrangements should nevertheless be conducted simultaneously with a review of UK Parliamentary arrangements. Local authorities, the (Acting) Returning Officer and the local government Returning Officer should, therefore, liaise closely with each other throughout the review process.

1.3 However, it is the (Acting) Returning Officer who will retain the responsibility for any actions arising from the UK Parliamentary review.

1.4 The polling districts and places for European Parliamentary and Welsh Assembly elections are to be the same as those used for UK Parliamentary elections.<sup>3</sup> However, different arrangements may be used at these elections if there are special circumstances.

1.5 The polling districts and places for Scottish Parliamentary elections are those used at the previous Scottish Parliamentary election.<sup>4</sup>

1.6 This guidance provides a staged approach to conducting the review according to the relevant legislative requirements. It expands on guidance issued by the Commission in 2007, and has benefited from the experiences of people carrying out their initial reviews following the commencement of the relevant provisions of the EAA 2006.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 18C(4), RPA 1983.

<sup>2</sup> Section 18C(1), RPA 1983, as inserted by Section 16, EAA 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Regulation 8, European Parliamentary Elections Regulations 2004; Article 6, National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Article 6, Scottish Parliament (Elections etc.) Order 2007.

## Definition of terms

### UK Parliamentary constituencies

1.7 The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 states:<sup>5</sup>

‘There shall for the purpose of parliamentary elections be the county and borough constituencies (or in Scotland the county and burgh constituencies), each returning a single member, which are described in Orders in Council made under this Act’

‘In this Act and, except where the context otherwise requires, in any Act passed after the Representation of the People Act 1948, “constituency” means an area having separate representation in the House of Commons.’

1.8 UK Parliamentary constituency boundaries cannot be changed by the review.

### Polling district

1.9 A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts.

1.10 In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district and, in Wales, each community should be a separate polling district unless there are special circumstances.<sup>6</sup> This means that a parish or community must not be in a polling district which has a part of either a different parish or community within it, or any unparished part of the local authority area within it.

1.11 In Scotland, each electoral ward<sup>7</sup> must be divided into two or more polling districts unless there are special circumstances.<sup>8</sup> However, given the size of wards in Scotland, it is difficult to envisage what those specific circumstances might be.

1.12 When a parish or community is not a separate polling district or a Scottish electoral ward is not split into two or more polling districts, the special circumstances and the recommendation resulting from these should be clearly set in the review document for the council to consider.

1.13 The Commission is aware that some authorities designate the entire polling district as the polling place. However, Section 18B(4)(e) of the RPA 1983 states that ‘the polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station’.<sup>9</sup> The Commission therefore recommends that polling places always be defined.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 1, Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986.

<sup>6</sup> Section 18A(3), RPA 1983.

<sup>7</sup> Within the meaning of Section 1, Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Section 18A, RPA 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Note, however, that Section 18B(5) states that if the polling place is not designated, it will by default be taken to be the polling district.

## Polling place

1.14 A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer.

## Polling stations

1.15 A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the (Acting) Returning Officer for the election.

## Roles and responsibilities

### The local authority

1.16 Every relevant local authority in Great Britain is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections for so much of any constituency as is situated in its area, and for reviewing the polling districts and polling places at least once every four years.<sup>10</sup> A relevant local authority is, in England, the council of a district or London borough, in Scotland, a local authority, and, in Wales, the council of a county or county borough.<sup>11</sup>

1.17 Depending on the structure of the council, it may be the full council or the executive who will make the decisions on any changes to polling districts or polling places. Some local authorities may have decided to delegate that function to a committee, in which case the decision on polling districts and polling places becomes the responsibility of that committee.

### The Electoral Registration Officer

1.18 Where a local authority makes any alterations to the polling districts within its area, the Electoral Registration Officer must amend the register of electors accordingly. The changes to the register take effect on the date that the Electoral Registration Officer publishes a notice stating that the alterations have been made.<sup>12</sup>

### The (Acting) Returning Officer

1.19 The (Acting) Returning Officer must comment during any review of polling districts and polling places on both existing polling stations and the polling stations that would probably be used if any new proposal for polling places were accepted.<sup>13</sup> The election rules require the (Acting) Returning Officer to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as he or she thinks most convenient.<sup>14</sup> The location, size and layout of any polling place/polling station must be a key consideration when deciding on the number of electors to be allocated to a polling station.

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<sup>10</sup> Section 18A(2), RPA 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Section 18E(3), RPA 1983.

<sup>12</sup> Section 18A(5), RPA 1983.

<sup>13</sup> Paragraph 3, Schedule A1, RPA 1983.

<sup>14</sup> Rule 25, Schedule 1, RPA 1983.

## The Electoral Commission

1.20 While legislation provides no role for the Commission in the review process, it does provide a role for the Commission after the conclusion of the review.

1.21 Once the local authority has published the results of its review, specified interested parties – including any group of 30 or more electors – may make representations to the Commission to reconsider any polling districts and polling places.

1.22 If, on receipt of such representations, the Commission finds that a local authority's review did not:

- meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency, or a body of them, or
- take sufficient account of the accessibility for disabled persons of polling stations within a designated polling place<sup>15</sup>

then it may direct the authority to make any alterations to the polling places that the Commission thinks necessary and, if the alterations are not made within two months, may make the alterations itself.<sup>16</sup>

## 2 The requirements of the review

2.1 Local authorities are required to divide every constituency into polling districts for the purposes of UK Parliamentary elections, to designate a polling place for each polling district, and to review these at least once every four years.<sup>17</sup> Polling places should be within the polling district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area outside the district.

2.2 In conducting the statutory review, local authorities must follow the rules set out in legislation, which are:<sup>18</sup>

- The authority must publish notice of the holding of a review
- The authority must consult the (Acting) Returning Officer in a constituency which is wholly or partly in its area
- The (Acting) Returning Officer must make representations to the authority which must include information as to the location of polling stations (existing or proposed) within polling places (existing or proposed)
- The local authority must publish the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations within 30 calendar days of receipt, in such manner as is prescribed
- The authority must seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons

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<sup>15</sup> Section 18D(2), RPA 1983.

<sup>16</sup> Section 18D(4), RPA 1983 and Regulation 4, Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Unless the size or other circumstances of a polling district are such that the situation of the polling stations does not materially affect the convenience of electors, in which case there is no requirement to designate a polling place (Section 18B(2), RPA 1983).

<sup>18</sup> Section 18C and Schedule A1, RPA 1983 and Regulation 3, Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

who have different forms of disability. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the returning officer's representations

- Any elector in a constituency situated in whole or in part in the authority's area may make representations
- Representations made by any person in connection with a review of polling places may include proposals for specified alternative polling places
- On completion of a review, the authority must give reasons for its decisions in the review and publish such other information as is prescribed

2.3 As part of the review process, local authorities must:<sup>19</sup>

- Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable the polling places are accessible to those who are disabled, and
- When considering or reviewing the designation of a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

### 3 Preparation and scoping for the review

3.1 The local authority will need to identify who will lead and support the review, drawing personnel not just from electoral services but also from other parts of the authority who may have expertise to assist.

3.2 Prior to commencing the review, the local authority will also need to set out the terms of reference and the criteria for assessing the suitability of the current/proposed arrangements. The following statistics and information will assist with this process:

- Electorate figures, broken down to street level within wards and existing polling districts.
- Any local authority or national statistics that estimate population change within the area.
- A report from the authority's planning section detailing any proposed areas of new development and the approximate number of dwellings and expected population numbers for the areas.
- Detailed up-to-date maps of a scale that will assist in the designation of polling district boundaries.
- Details of current polling places and an indication as to their overall suitability for purpose (including, for example, any surveys, diagrams or photographs completed with assistance of Presiding Officers or polling station inspectors or as part of a previous review).
- Any comments or complaints regarding the current arrangements from the public, elected members or other bodies.
- Up-to-date information gained from the existing and possible future polling station venue managers as to continued availability (highlighting, for example, planned renovation work or other future plans).

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<sup>19</sup> Section 18B, RPA 1983.

- Details of potential alternative buildings (public, private or temporary type constructions) that might appear suitable.
- Advice and guidance from local disability groups and disability organisations (such as, for example, Scope or Capability Scotland), and any expert help from officers within the council who are responsible for equality schemes.

3.3 The systems, data, maps and other support documentation should be identified as early as possible so that they can be made available to those carrying out the review.

### Timing of the review

3.4 As part of the planning process, it is important to factor into the timetable the most likely scheduled date of the council/ executive/committee meeting where the detailed review proposals would be formally considered and approved. The review officers should work closely with the lead officer in charge of these meetings to ensure that the deadline is factored into the review timescale.

3.5 Sufficient time should be allowed to deal with all of the necessary site visits and completion of templates in Appendix B.

3.6 The time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable all stakeholders to absorb the proposals, gather comments from their own groups, and respond with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.

## 4 The review process

### Stage 1 – Notification of the review

4.1 The formal commencement of the review requires the local authority to give notice of the holding of a review.<sup>20</sup> The notice must be published using the following methods:

- notice to be displayed at the council's office and in at least one conspicuous place within the authority
- on the council website

4.2 Additionally, the authority could publish the notice in a council newsletter and display copies in other public buildings.

4.3 It is recommended that the notice should state:

- that the local authority is conducting a review of polling districts and polling places
- that the (Acting) Returning Officer will make a comment on proposed polling stations
- that electors within the authority or within a UK Parliamentary constituency which has any part in the authority may make a representation
- that the authority would welcome any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability to make a representation or to comment

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<sup>20</sup> Schedule A1, RPA 1983.

on the authority's proposals, the (Acting) Returning Officer's representation or any other matter

- that persons or bodies making representations should, if possible, give alternative places that may be used as polling places
- the postal address, e-mail address and website address at which documents can be inspected and representations made
- an indication of the timetable of the review and a deadline for representations

4.4 The authority should also send a copy of the notice to interested parties such as councillors, disability groups and other stakeholders. Additionally, the authority could include details of the review in any council newsletter and issue a press release drawing attention to the review and the process. The council's website is also a useful source for disseminating information.

## Stage 2 – Administering the review

4.5 The local authority should undertake a preliminary review of the current polling districts and polling places with a view to establishing their suitability. There is no requirement to change any of these districts and polling places but any 'no change' decision must be fully justified as part of the overall proposals.

4.6 The review process should be structured, and must be conducted formally with supporting documentation. This will ensure that there is a complete audit trail for all decisions taken and will contribute to the transparency of the process.

4.7 Close liaison with other departments of the council will help to increase the efficiency of the overall review process.

4.8 The local authority planning and property services departments, for example, will be able to provide guidance on the availability of locations and premises and details of any residential developments that might have an impact on future electorate figures.

4.9 Modelling possible options where changes are deemed necessary can be achieved by using mapping and planning tools available within the local authority, particularly as most authorities will now have access to GIS mapping services which can pull data from a variety of sources.

4.10 Local authorities should determine the most appropriate method of involving relevant council staff and other interested groups as appropriate. Regular meetings may be appropriate to enable consideration of all aspects of the review prior to the submission of the final recommendations. In adopting this approach, stakeholders can be involved in the process in a timely and efficient way which may help to deliver the proper scrutiny of and confidence in the proposals.

4.11 The legislation suggests an approach starting with polling districts, followed by choosing polling places and then considering polling stations. In practice, however, it is important that good quality polling places are identified first, which can then be used as part of the process of defining suitable polling district arrangements that comply with the requirements set out in the legislation. Appendix B provides template checklists to assist with the evaluation of current/proposed polling places and stations.

who have different forms of disability. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the returning officer's representations

- Any elector in a constituency situated in whole or in part in the authority's area may make representations
- Representations made by any person in connection with a review of polling places may include proposals for specified alternative polling places
- On completion of a review, the authority must give reasons for its decisions in the review and publish such other information as is prescribed

2.3 As part of the review process, local authorities must:<sup>19</sup>

- Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable the polling places are accessible to those who are disabled, and
- When considering or reviewing the designation of a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

### 3 Preparation and scoping for the review

3.1 The local authority will need to identify who will lead and support the review, drawing personnel not just from electoral services but also from other parts of the authority who may have expertise to assist.

3.2 Prior to commencing the review, the local authority will also need to set out the terms of reference and the criteria for assessing the suitability of the current/proposed arrangements. The following statistics and information will assist with this process:

- Electorate figures, broken down to street level within wards and existing polling districts.
- Any local authority or national statistics that estimate population change within the area.
- A report from the authority's planning section detailing any proposed areas of new development and the approximate number of dwellings and expected population numbers for the areas.
- Detailed up-to-date maps of a scale that will assist in the designation of polling district boundaries.
- Details of current polling places and an indication as to their overall suitability for purpose (including, for example, any surveys, diagrams or photographs completed with assistance of Presiding Officers or polling station inspectors or as part of a previous review).
- Any comments or complaints regarding the current arrangements from the public, elected members or other bodies.
- Up-to-date information gained from the existing and possible future polling station venue managers as to continued availability (highlighting, for example, planned renovation work or other future plans).

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<sup>19</sup> Section 18B, RPA 1983.

## Assessing the current arrangements and proposals for change

4.12 The following should be considered as part of the assessment of the suitability of polling district boundaries:

- **Boundaries:** Are they well defined? For example, do they follow the natural boundaries of the area? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
- **Location:** Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the district that are most highly populated? Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g., steep hills, impassable major roads, railway lines, rivers?

4.13 There are a number of factors that must be considered when reviewing existing polling places or when assessing new polling places, including:

- **The location:** Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.? Are there any convenient transport links?
- **Size:** Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required? If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place ample enough to accommodate all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?
- **Suitability:** Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development? Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?

4.14 Appendix B contains templates to evaluate the suitability of buildings as polling places/polling stations based on these key factors, which can be completed as part of the review process.

4.15 Ideally, there would be the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for electors in the area within which to establish polling stations. In practice, however, the choice of polling places will often be a balance between the quality of a building (access, facilities, etc.) and the proximity of the building to the electors. When making a decision, all factors will need to be considered and the authority will need to be able to demonstrate their reasoning behind the decision.

4.16 Where, because of local circumstances, a polling place has been selected that is not fully accessible, then reasonable adjustments must be undertaken to provide access for all electors. Alternatively, the local authority should consider whether it would be appropriate to designate a polling place that falls wholly or partly outside the polling district.

4.17 It should be noted that for the purpose of taking the poll in England and Wales, the (Acting) Returning Officer is entitled to use free of charge schools maintained or assisted by a local authority as well as those schools that receive grants made out of moneys provided by Parliament. In Scotland, the rooms in schools that can be used free of charge for the taking of the poll are those in schools that are not independent schools within the meaning of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

4.18 Part of the decision-making process involves assessing if the polling place is capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment, particularly in circumstances where the number of electors allocated to a polling place is high. For example, in instances where there may be a higher turnout, such as at a UK Parliamentary election, (Acting) Returning Officers may wish to set up multiple polling stations within the polling place. Consideration will need to be given to whether the area or building can accommodate such arrangements.

4.19 When assessing the suitability of a room or area for use as a polling station, the (Acting) Returning Officer should consider how the size and layout would allow for the most effective throughput of voters, including in those instances where there is a high number of electors in the polling station at any one time on polling day. Each polling station should be designed to provide suitable conditions for the elector to vote in private, for staff to conduct elections in an efficient and effective manner and for those entitled to observe the voting process to do so without compromising the secrecy of the ballot.

### Stage 3 – Consultation

4.20 The consultation stage is for representations and comments on the existing and proposed arrangements for polling districts and places. There are two parts to this stage:

- A compulsory submission from the (Acting) Returning Officer of the UK Parliamentary constituency, which must then be published by the local authority.
- Any submissions from electors and other persons and bodies, including those with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people.

4.21 The (Acting) Returning Officer's submission must comment on both the existing polling stations and the polling stations that would likely be used based on any proposed polling places. The (Acting) Returning Officer's report must also contain information as to the location of polling stations within polling places. The completion of the templates at Appendix B may help to form a basis for this report.

4.22 The local authority must publish the (Acting) Returning Officer's comments within 30 calendar days of receipt.<sup>21</sup> The comments should be published at the local authority offices and in at least one conspicuous place within each UK Parliamentary constituency. They should also be published on the council website. Additionally, the (Acting) Returning Officer's response could be copied and bound or joined into a booklet for ease of reading and made available in council offices, libraries, community centres or other places where residents may visit.

4.23 The authority should consult widely on the review and should seek out the views of interested groups or bodies including electors, candidates and agents, political parties and members of the council. Consultees should be asked for comment both in general and, if appropriate, about particular buildings or areas within the authority.

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<sup>21</sup> Regulation 3, Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

4.24 It will be particularly important to consult with those who have specific experience of assessing access for persons with different disabilities. These could include disability sections or occupational health departments within the council, as well as local and national disability groups. The authority should give consideration to the different types of disability which may make voting in person more difficult, and should also consider the council's own policy on disabled access.

4.25 Any persons involved in the consultation have the right to comment on the recommendations proposed by the (Acting) Returning Officer, and should be invited to consider the implications of these.

4.26 Any elector for a UK Parliamentary constituency either wholly within or partly within the local authority area may comment on any of the recommendations within the whole local authority area.

4.27 Any person or body that makes a comment should be invited to suggest alternative polling districts/polling places and should be encouraged to give a reason for the alternative proposal so that it may be given appropriate consideration. As mentioned above, the notice published by the local authority should provide a deadline for the submission of comments.

#### Stage 4 – Concluding the review

4.28 After considering all of the representations, the local authority must decide on the most appropriate polling districts and polling places. Depending on the council structure, this may be a matter for full council, the executive or a committee to which the review function has been delegated.

4.29 If the review results in the alteration of polling districts, the Electoral Registration Officer must make the necessary alterations to the electoral register. Any alteration is effective on the date on which the Electoral Registration Officer publishes a notice stating that the alterations have been made.<sup>22</sup> If the review is concluded before publication of the annual revised register, the changes can be incorporated in the revised register to be published by 1 December. Otherwise, alterations can be made by the publication of another revised register or on a notice of alteration.

4.30 Where the Electoral Registration Officer has decided to republish to incorporate the changes, they will need to publish a notice fourteen calendar days before the publication of the revised version of the register in a local newspaper, at his or her office and at some other conspicuous place or places in the area.<sup>23</sup>

## 5 Publishing the conclusions of the review

5.1 Once the local authority has agreed on the proposals, details of the new polling districts and polling places must be made available to the public. These should be made available at the local authority offices, in at least one conspicuous place in the constituency, and on the council's website. The reasons for choosing a particular polling district and polling place must be given.

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<sup>22</sup> Section 18A(5), RPA 1983.

<sup>23</sup> Section 13(3), RPA 1983 and Regulation 36(1), Representation of the People Regulations 2001.

5.2 Along with the reasons for the final decision of the review, the following must also be published:<sup>24</sup>

- all correspondence sent to the (Acting) Returning Officer in connection with the review
- all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority contacted because they had particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people
- all representations made by any person in connection with the review
- the minutes of any meeting held by the authority to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review
- details of the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review
- details of the places where the results of the review have been published

## 6 The appeals process

6.1 Following the conclusion of the local authority's review, certain persons have a right to make representations to the Commission.

### Who is entitled to make representation to the Electoral Commission?

6.2 Section 18D(1) of the RPA 1983 sets out who may make representations to the Electoral Commission, namely:

- in England, any parish council which is wholly or partly situated within the constituency, or parish meeting where there is no such council
- in Wales, any community council which is wholly or partly situated within the constituency
- not less than thirty registered electors in the constituency (although electors registered anonymously cannot make a representation)<sup>25</sup>
- a person (except the (Acting) Returning Officer) who made representations to the authority when the review was being undertaken
- any person who is not an elector in a constituency in the authority's area but who the Commission thinks has sufficient interest in the accessibility of disabled persons to polling places in the area or has particular expertise in relation to the access to premises or facilities of disabled persons

6.3 In addition, the (Acting) Returning Officer may make observations on any representations made to the Commission.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Regulation 4, Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Section 18D(7), RPA 1983.

<sup>26</sup> Section 18D(3), RPA 1983.

## Format for all representations

6.4 All representations made to the Commission must be in writing, either by post, e-mail or fax. The representation must be as specific as possible. The representation should clearly state the manner in which it is alleged that the local authority has failed to properly conduct the review. There are only two grounds on which a representation may state that a local authority has failed to conduct a proper review. These are:

- the local authority has failed to meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency
- the local authority has failed to take sufficient account of accessibility to disabled persons of the polling stations within a polling place.

6.5 Representations based on any other premise will not be considered.

6.6 The representation should include the location and any other relevant information regarding the polling place at issue, stating specifically why it is inaccessible or does not meet the reasonable requirements of the electors.

6.7 A representation may also include for consideration specific proposals for alterations to the polling place.

## The decision-making process of the Commission

6.8 Upon receipt of a representation, the Commission will request all relevant documentation from the local authority and will show the authority the representation.

6.9 The (Acting) Returning Officer is entitled to make observations on the representation submitted to the Commission and should give a report on the probable polling stations which would be used should the representation be successful.

6.10 The documentation from the local authority, the observations of the (Acting) Returning Officer and any other relevant information will be taken into consideration, in conjunction with the representation.

6.11 The Commission may seek advice from persons with expertise on accessibility issues when making its decision.

6.12 The Commission will set out in writing its conclusions and the reasons for its decision. The Commission's decision will be issued to the person(s) who made the representation, the local authority and the (Acting) Returning Officer. The decision and related documents will also be published on the Commission's website. Local authorities are advised to publish the outcome of the appeal in the same way as the results of the review are published.

6.13 The Commission may direct the local authority to consider any alterations to the polling places that the Commission deems necessary under the review.<sup>27</sup> After two

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<sup>27</sup> Part 1, Section 18D(4), RPA 1983.

months, if the local authority has failed to make the alterations, the Commission can itself make the alterations as if the local authority had implemented them.

6.14 Representations should be sent to:

Legal Counsel  
The Electoral Commission  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW

Tel: 020 7271 0500

Fax 020 7271 0505

Email: [appeals@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:appeals@electoralcommission.org.uk)

## 7 Making amendments to polling places outside of the formal review

7.1 If a polling station becomes unavailable, the (Acting) Returning Officer should consider whether another polling station could be designated within the polling place. Changing the polling station within the polling place would not require a review.

7.2 If a building becomes unavailable before an election, the polling place can be changed by the local authority and council agreement will be required. If delegation procedures are in place, these should be followed as set out in the council's constitution and the person or persons who are entitled to make changes to polling places should be contacted.

7.3 Between formal reviews, all polling places and stations used should be kept under consideration, and an evaluation of their suitability carried out after each election. If any changes are identified as being desirable, the same principles behind conducting the formal review should be applied. Should any changes to polling places be required, then they could be implemented as described above.

## 8 Making changes to the names of electoral areas in England and Wales

8.1 Local authorities in England and Wales can change the name of an electoral area e.g. a ward by resolution. The process involved is attached as Appendix C. Local authorities in Scotland would need to ask the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland to begin a review of a ward name.

Circular EC19/2010 – Appendix B

Review of polling districts, polling places and  
polling stations

The following templates have been designed for use in evaluating the suitability of buildings as polling places/polling stations.

**Part A** – to be completed by the local authority with the details of the current polling places.

**Part B** – to be completed by the local authority to evaluate external access and facilities both outside the perimeter of the building and within the boundary of the building itself.

**Part C** – to be completed by the local authority to assess internal access to the polling station, but excluding the polling station itself (ie. covering the corridors leading to the polling station accommodation and facilities available, but not the area in which polling will be carried out). Should the proposed building, room or area to be used as the polling station have direct access to the road/pavement or external parts, Part C can be excluded from this assessment.

**Part D** – to be completed by the (Acting) Returning Officer with the details of the area that is, or is likely to be, used as the polling station(s).

*(If local authorities already have up-to-date detailed information to assist with the completion of Parts B, C and D, this can be inserted into the individual templates together with any diagrams and/or photographs to enable the building to be re-assessed on a site visit. The information should be verified as part of the visit.)*

**Part E** – to be completed by the local authority and should be used to add any comments or complaints received from stakeholders as part of the consultation exercise. Completion can provide evidence that the review considered the submissions as part of the formal evaluation process.

Any alternative proposals or suggestions put forward for new polling places/stations should be evaluated using the templates, and the results should be collated to provide appropriate feedback.

Date reviewed	Officer initials

## Polling place – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details		
Polling place identifier		
Polling place name		
Polling place address		
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)		
Building availability for future elections/referendums		
Polling place review		
Check	√	Comment
• Are there suitable transport links?		
• Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc?		
• Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment? If so, could it accommodate all voters going in and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?		
• Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? • Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?		

**Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events**

Date reviewed	Officer initials

Part B – External areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are there good public transport links to the polling place?		
• Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?		
• Is the building clearly identifiable?		
• Is additional signage required between street and entrance?		
• Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?		
• Are there parking facilities for disabled people?		
• Are there parking facilities for polling staff?		
• Does the approach to the building have external lighting?		
• Does the building have level access? Yes/No.		
If no -		
• Has a purpose built ramp been installed?		
• If so, does it have a handrail?		
• Does the ramp have a gentle slope?		
• Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled route?		
• Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?		
• Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?		
• Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?		
• Are there any external security concerns?		
• Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?		

***Please complete template B1 showing external layout, street names, car parking, ramps, steps, lighting and appropriate places for signage.***

## External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

***Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.***



Date reviewed	Officer initials

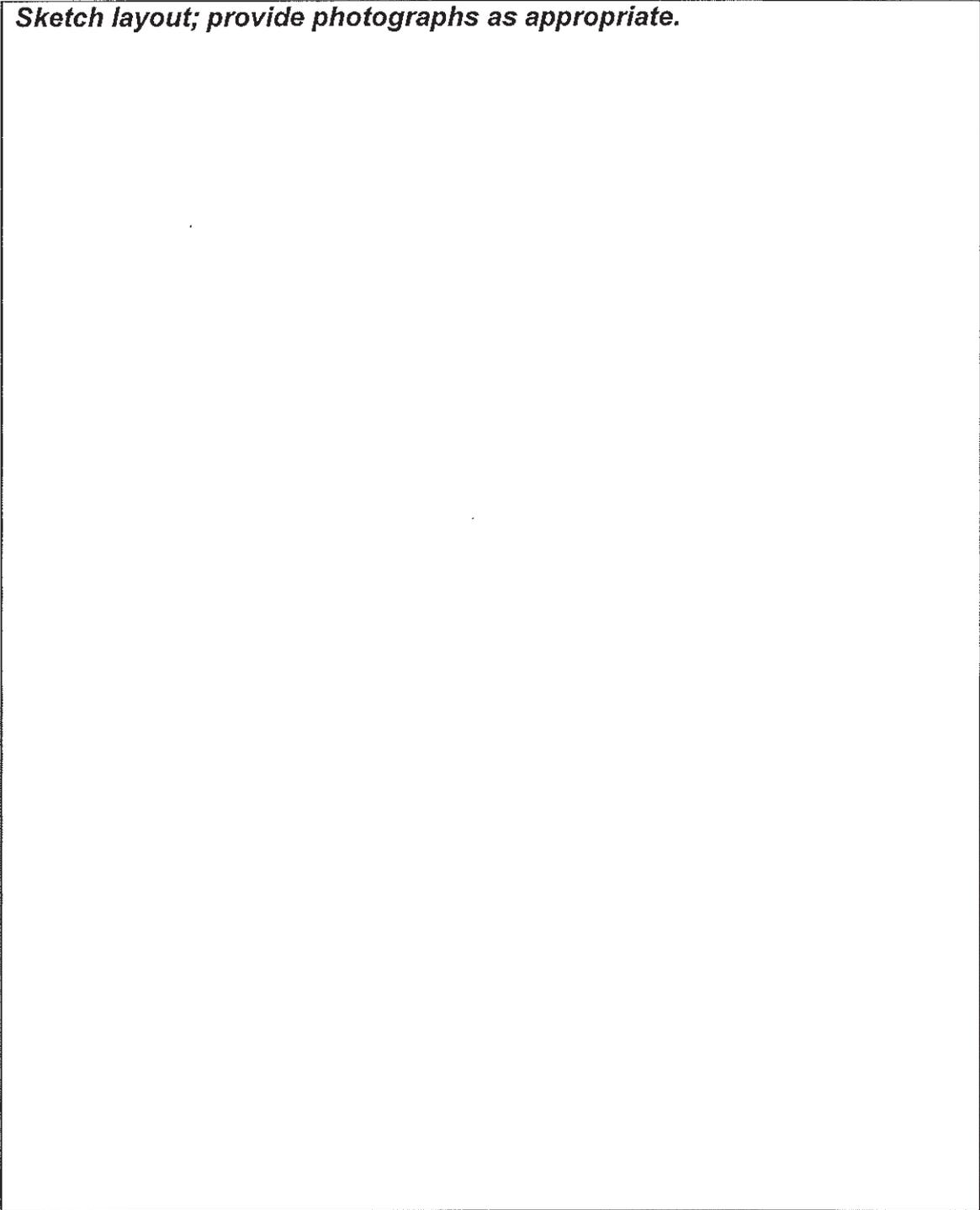
Part C – Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?		
• Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?		
• Are any doormats level with the floor?		
• Is the floor covering non-slip (especially in wet weather)?		
• Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?		
• Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?		
• Are there toilet facilities?		
• Is there a kitchen that staff can use?		
• Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?		
• Is there adequate space for signage?		
• How many polling stations can the building accommodate?		
• Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?		

***Please complete template C1 below showing internal areas including corridors, internal doors, kitchen, toilets and highlighting any possible signage requirements and potential hazards in relation to access to the polling station itself.***

## Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen, toilets and highlighting any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate any areas of poor lighting, door swing direction and ease of opening, and areas of uneven floor, etc.

***Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.***



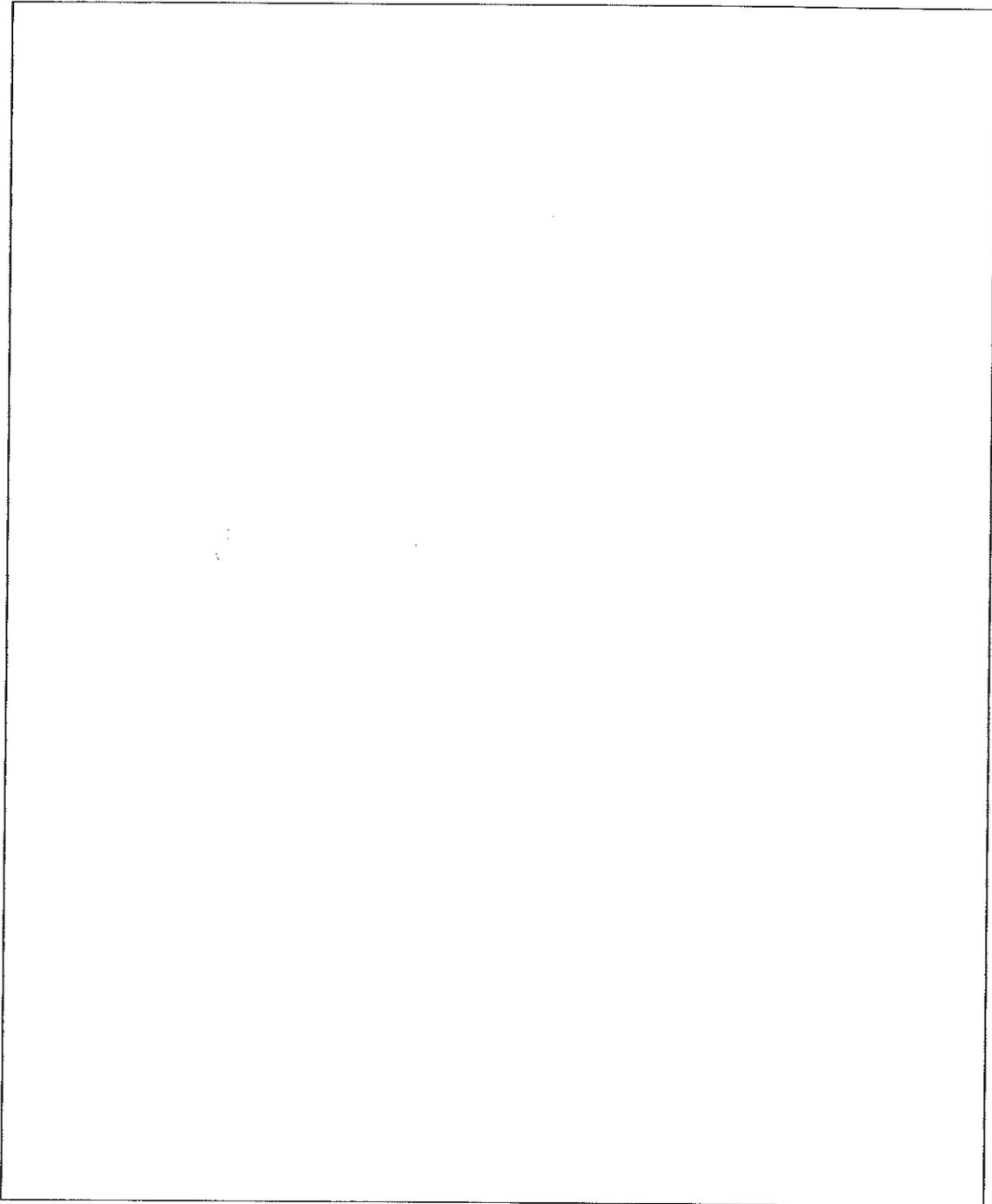
Date reviewed	Officer initials

Part D – The polling station(s)		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?		
• Is there sufficient space for administering all types of elections, including combined elections?		
• If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?		
• In case of high turnout, is there sufficient space for managing the flow and accommodating a high volume of electors? If yes, could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot?		
• Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?		
• Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and those voters who may need to rest?		
• Can the official notices be clearly displayed, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s)?		

***Please complete template D1 indicating how the polling station should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.***

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the space and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to ensure the effective administration of and best possible access to the voting process.



Date reviewed	Officer initials

**Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation**

Comment	Name/organisation

*Comment from (A)RO*

## **LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM**

### **REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACTS 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006)**

#### **Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places**

In accordance with the requirements of section 18C (1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 I hereby give notice that the London Borough of Lewisham is about to conduct a review of polling districts and polling places as required by the above regulations.

Comments and representations are invited from persons in the register of electors, persons with particular expertise in relation to access and facilities for persons who have different forms of disability, elected representatives including Members of the European Parliament, Members of Parliament, GLA Constituency and Assembly members, local councillors and political parties. Any comments should include alternative places that may be used as polling stations if relevant.

Existing details of polling districts and places are available for inspection at [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk) and at the Electoral Services Office between the hours of 10 am to 4 pm.

The consultation period will commence on Monday 27 June 2011. Representations must be received no later than Friday 5 August 2011 and must be directed to:

Malcolm Constable, Electoral Services, Town Hall, Catford, SE6 4RU  
Telephone: 020 8314 6086  
Email: [electoral.services@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:electoral.services@lewisham.gov.uk)

Representations will be sought from the Acting Returning Officer for the constituencies of Lewisham Deptford, Lewisham East and Lewisham West and Penge. These representations will be available for inspection at [www.lewisham.gov.uk](http://www.lewisham.gov.uk) and at the Electoral Services Office between the hours of 10 am to 4 pm by 22 August 2011.

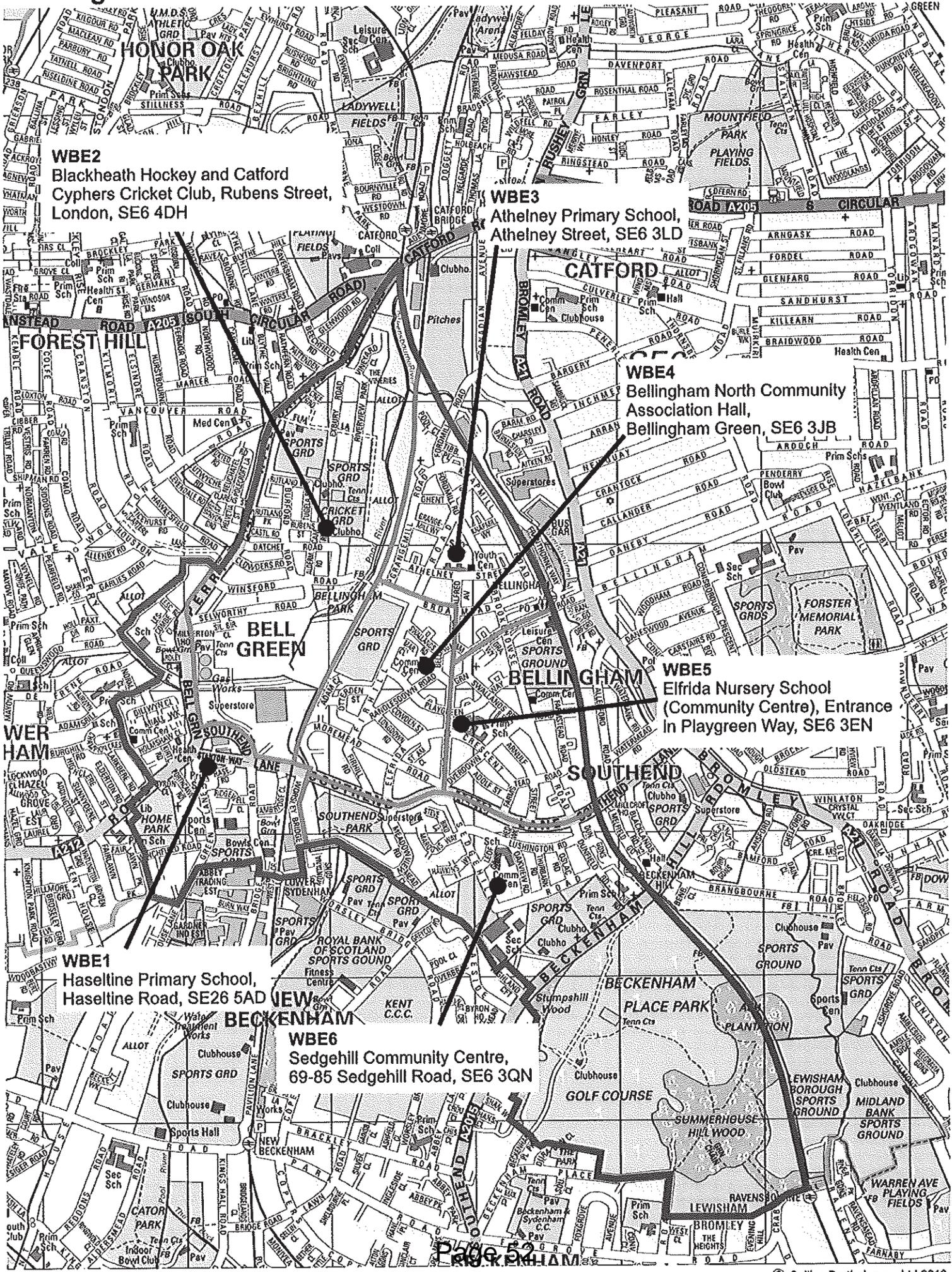
The closing date for comments on any proposals regarding the Acting Returning Officers' recommendations is 19 September 2011

Following completion of the review process, recommendations will be submitted to full Council. It is anticipated that the Council will publish its final proposals during December 2011.

Barry Quirk  
Chief Executive  
27 June 2011



# Bellingham Ward



**WBE2**  
 Blackheath Hockey and Catford  
 Cyphers Cricket Club, Rubens Street,  
 London, SE6 4DH

**WBE3**  
 Athelney Primary School,  
 Athelney Street, SE6 3LD

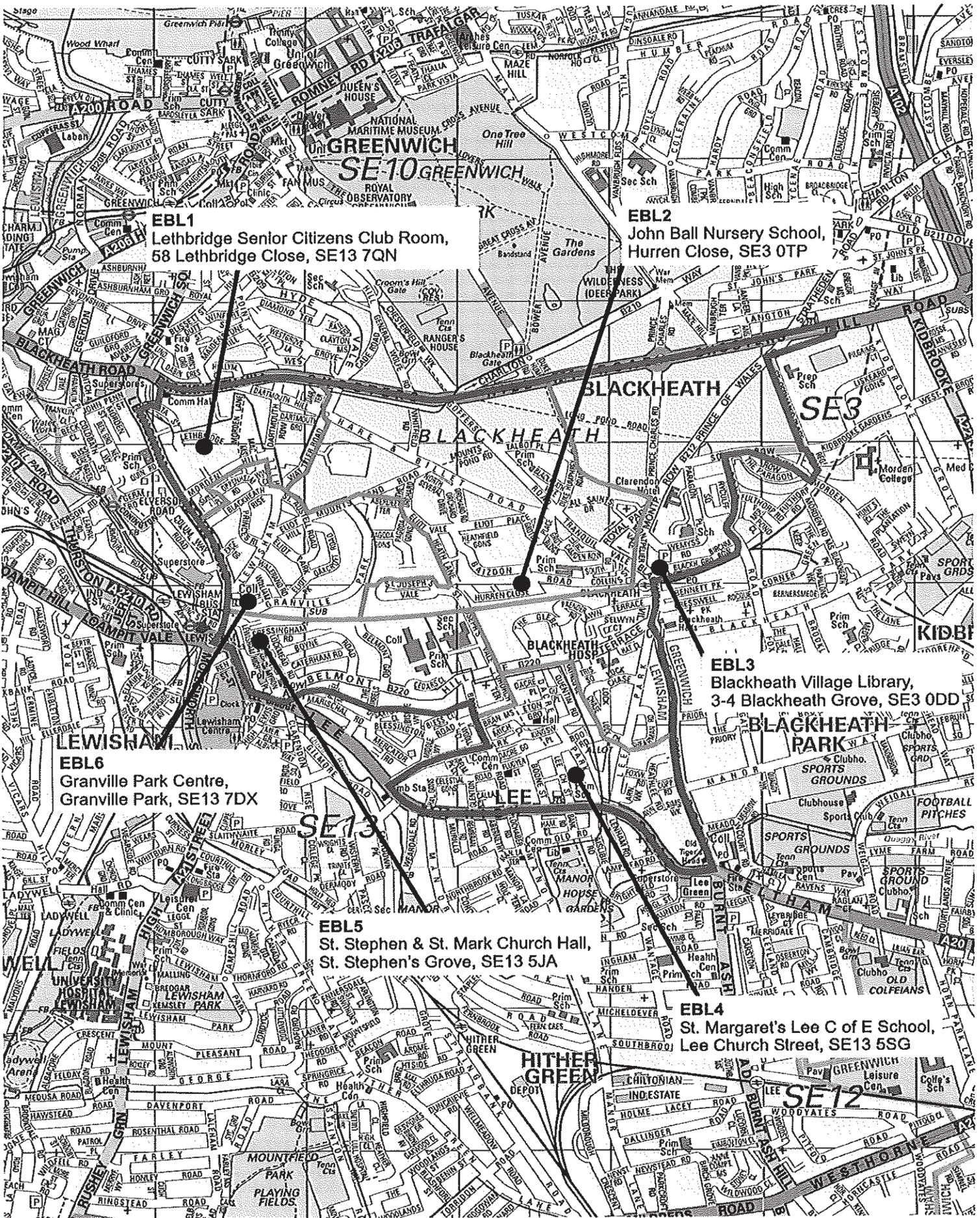
**WBE4**  
 Bellingham North Community  
 Association Hall,  
 Bellingham Green, SE6 3JB

**WBE5**  
 Elfrida Nursery School  
 (Community Centre), Entrance  
 in Playgreen Way, SE6 3EN

**WBE1**  
 Haseltine Primary School,  
 Haseltine Road, SE26 5AD

**WBE6**  
 Sedgehill Community Centre,  
 69-85 Sedgehill Road, SE6 3QN

# Blackheath Ward



**EBL1**  
Lethbridge Senior Citizens Club Room,  
58 Lethbridge Close, SE13 7QN

**EBL2**  
John Ball Nursery School,  
Hurren Close, SE3 0TP

**EBL3**  
Blackheath Village Library,  
3-4 Blackheath Grove, SE3 0DD

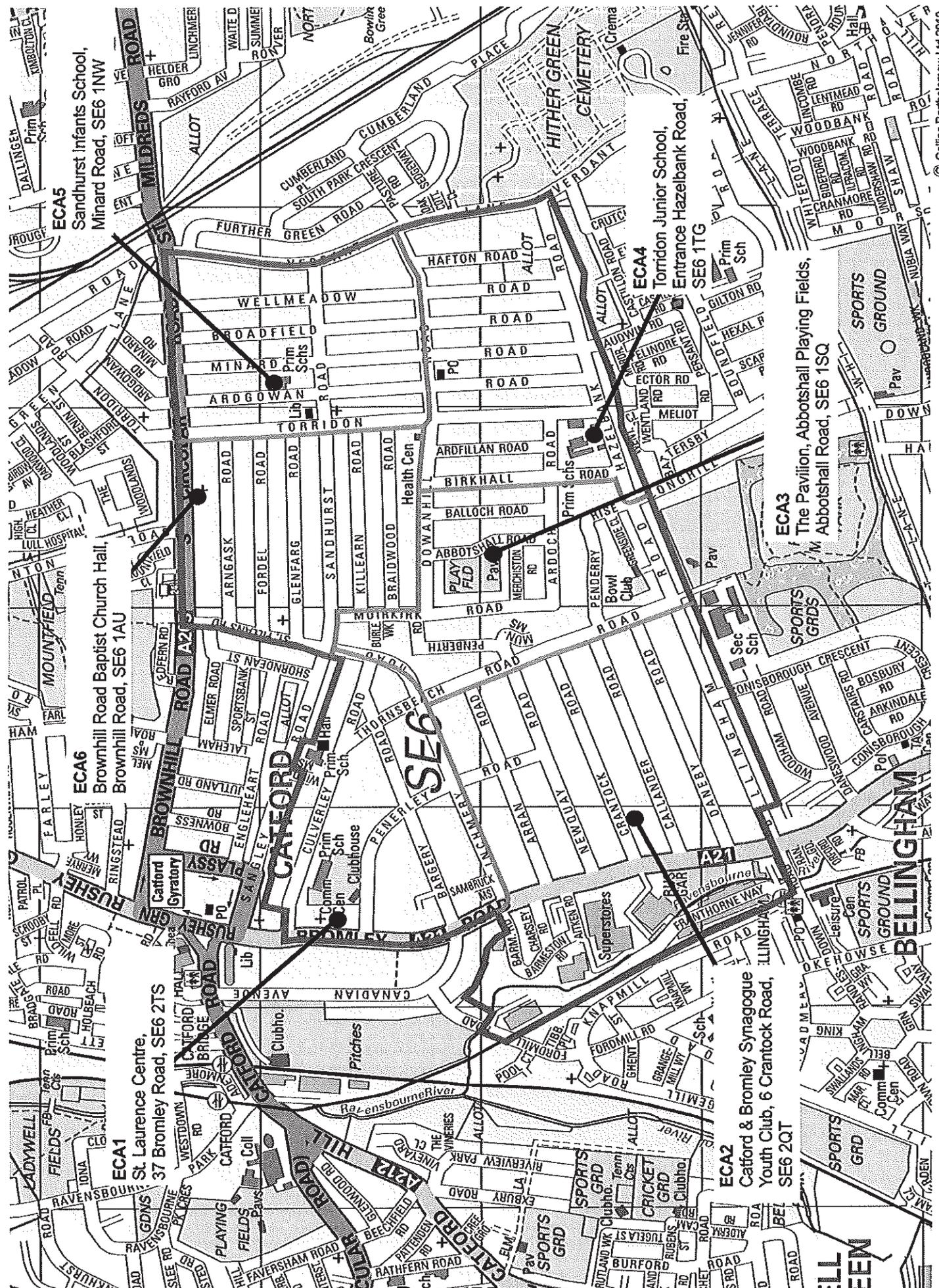
**EBL6**  
Granville Park Centre,  
Granville Park, SE13 7DX

**EBL5**  
St. Stephen & St. Mark Church Hall,  
St. Stephen's Grove, SE13 5JA

**EBL4**  
St. Margaret's Lee C of E School,  
Lee Church Street, SE13 5SG



# Cafford South Ward



**ECA5**  
Sandhurst Infants School,  
Minard Road, SE6 1NW

**ECA6**  
Brownhill Road Baptist Church Hall,  
Brownhill Road, SE6 1AU

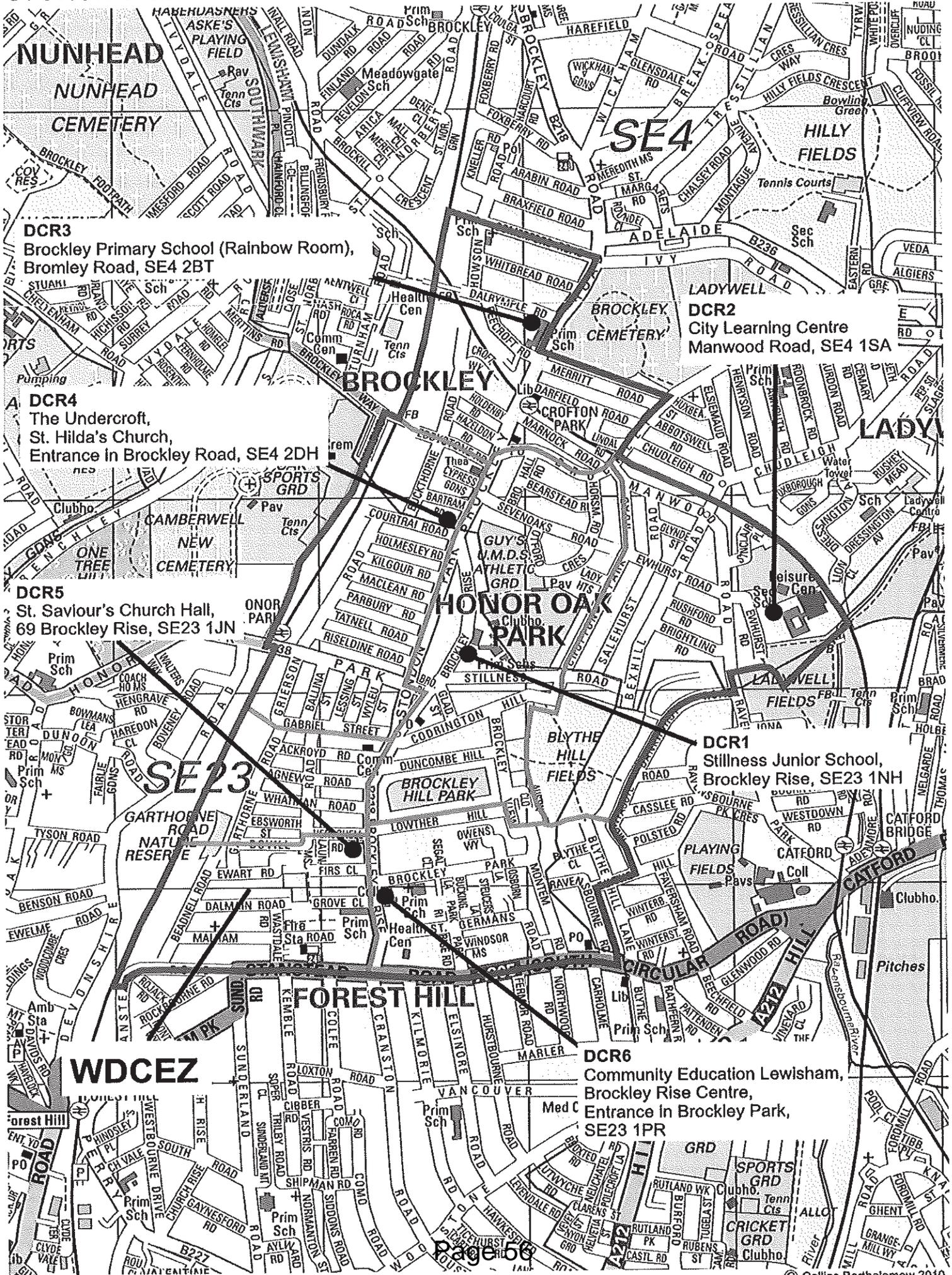
**ECA1**  
St Laurence Centre,  
37 Bromley Road, SE6 2TS

**ECA4**  
Torridon Junior School,  
Entrance Hazelbank Road,  
SE6 1TG

**ECA3**  
The Pavilion, Abbotshall Playing Fields,  
Abbotshall Road, SE6 1SQ

**ECA2**  
Cafford & Bromley Synagogue  
Youth Club, 6 Crantock Road, BELLINGHAM  
SE6 2QT

# Crofton Park Ward



**NUNHEAD**  
NUNHEAD  
CEMETERY

**SE4**

**DCR3**  
Brockley Primary School (Rainbow Room),  
Bromley Road, SE4 2BT

**DCR2**  
City Learning Centre  
Manwood Road, SE4 1SA

**DCR4**  
The Undercroft,  
St. Hilda's Church,  
Entrance in Brockley Road, SE4 2DH

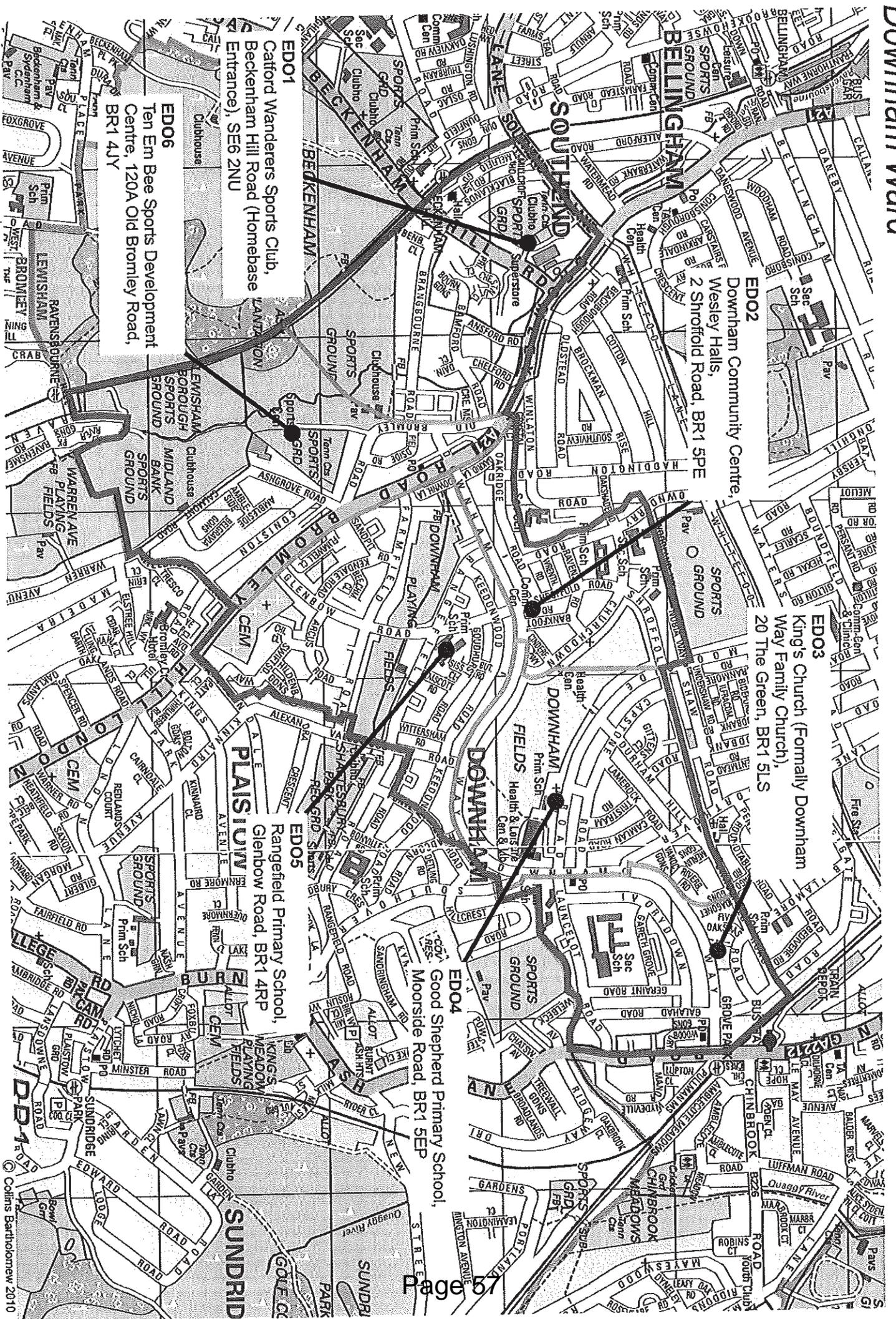
**DCR5**  
St. Saviour's Church Hall,  
69 Brockley Rise, SE23 1JN

**DCR1**  
Stillness Junior School,  
Brockley Rise, SE23 1NH

**DCR6**  
Community Education Lewisham,  
Brockley Rise Centre,  
Entrance in Brockley Park,  
SE23 1PR

**WDCEZ**

# Downham Ward



**EDO1**  
 Catford Wanderers Sports Club,  
 Beckenham Hill Road (Homebase  
 Entrance), SE6 2NU

**EDO6**  
 Ten Em Bee Sports Development  
 Centre, 120A Old Bromley Road,  
 BR1 4JY

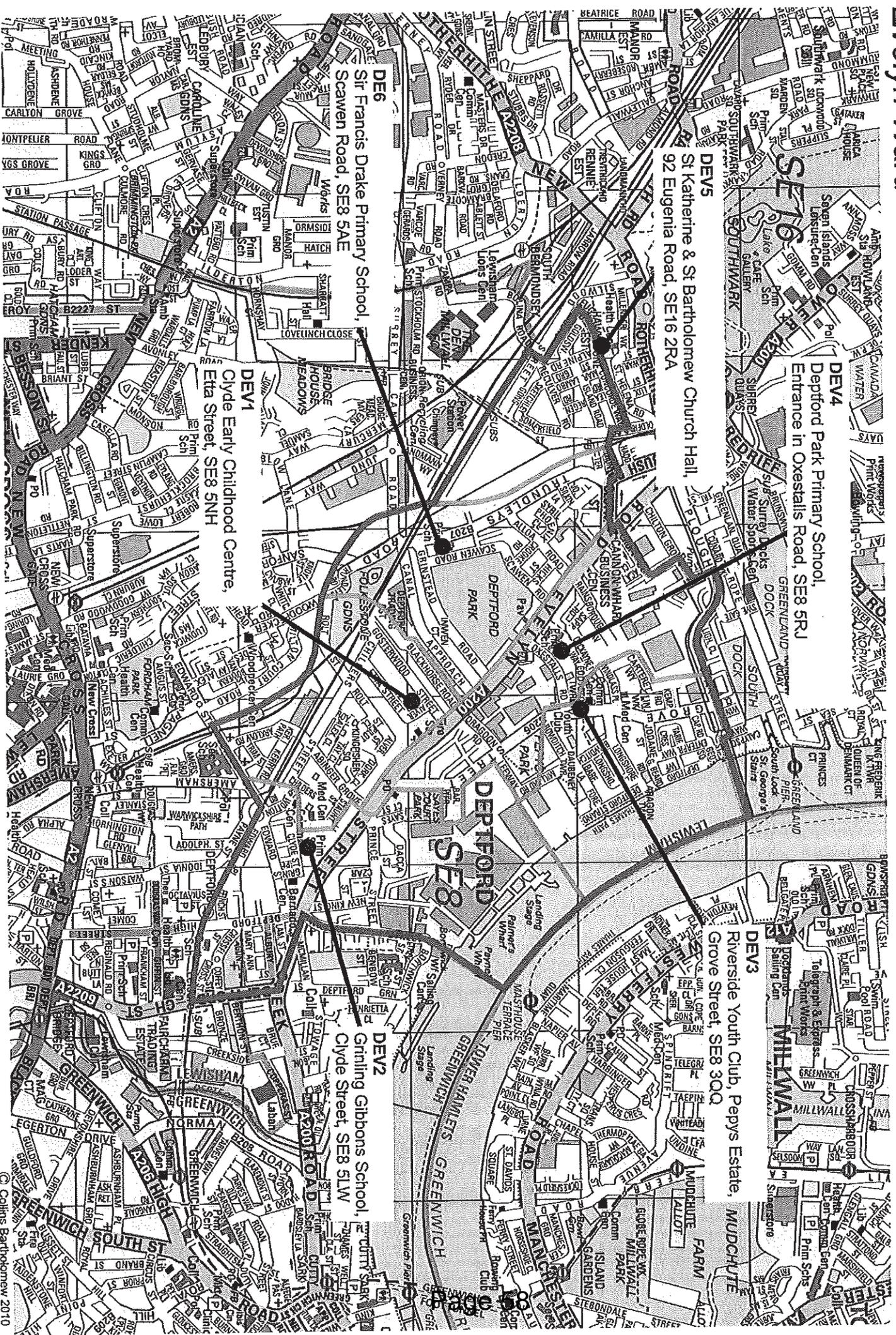
**EDO2**  
 Downham Community Centre,  
 Wesley Halls,  
 2 Shrofford Road, BR1 5PE

**EDO3**  
 King's Church (Formally Downham  
 Way Family Church),  
 20 The Green, BR1 5LS

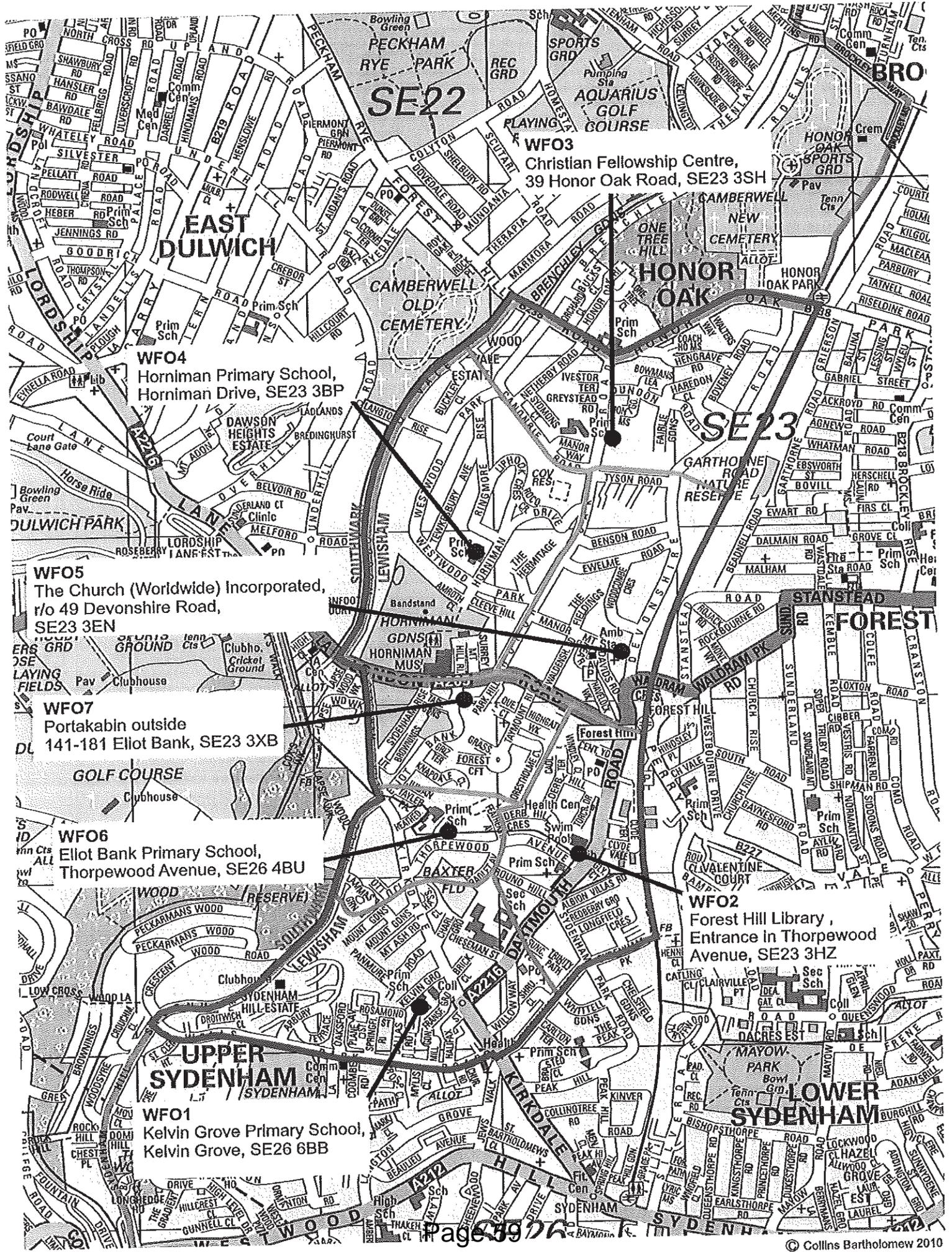
**EDO4**  
 Good Shepherd Primary School,  
 Moorside Road, BR1 5EP

**EDO5**  
 Rangefield Primary School,  
 Glenbow Road, BR1 4RP

# Evenlyn Ward



# Forest Hill Ward



**SE22**

**WFO3**  
 Christian Fellowship Centre,  
 39 Honor Oak Road, SE23 3SH

**EAST DULWICH**

**WFO4**  
 Horniman Primary School,  
 Horniman Drive, SE23 3BP

**SE23**

**WFO5**  
 The Church (Worldwide) Incorporated,  
 r/o 49 Devonshire Road,  
 SE23 3EN

**WFO7**  
 Portakabin outside  
 141-181 Eliot Bank, SE23 3XB

**WFO6**  
 Elliot Bank Primary School,  
 Thorpewood Avenue, SE26 4BU

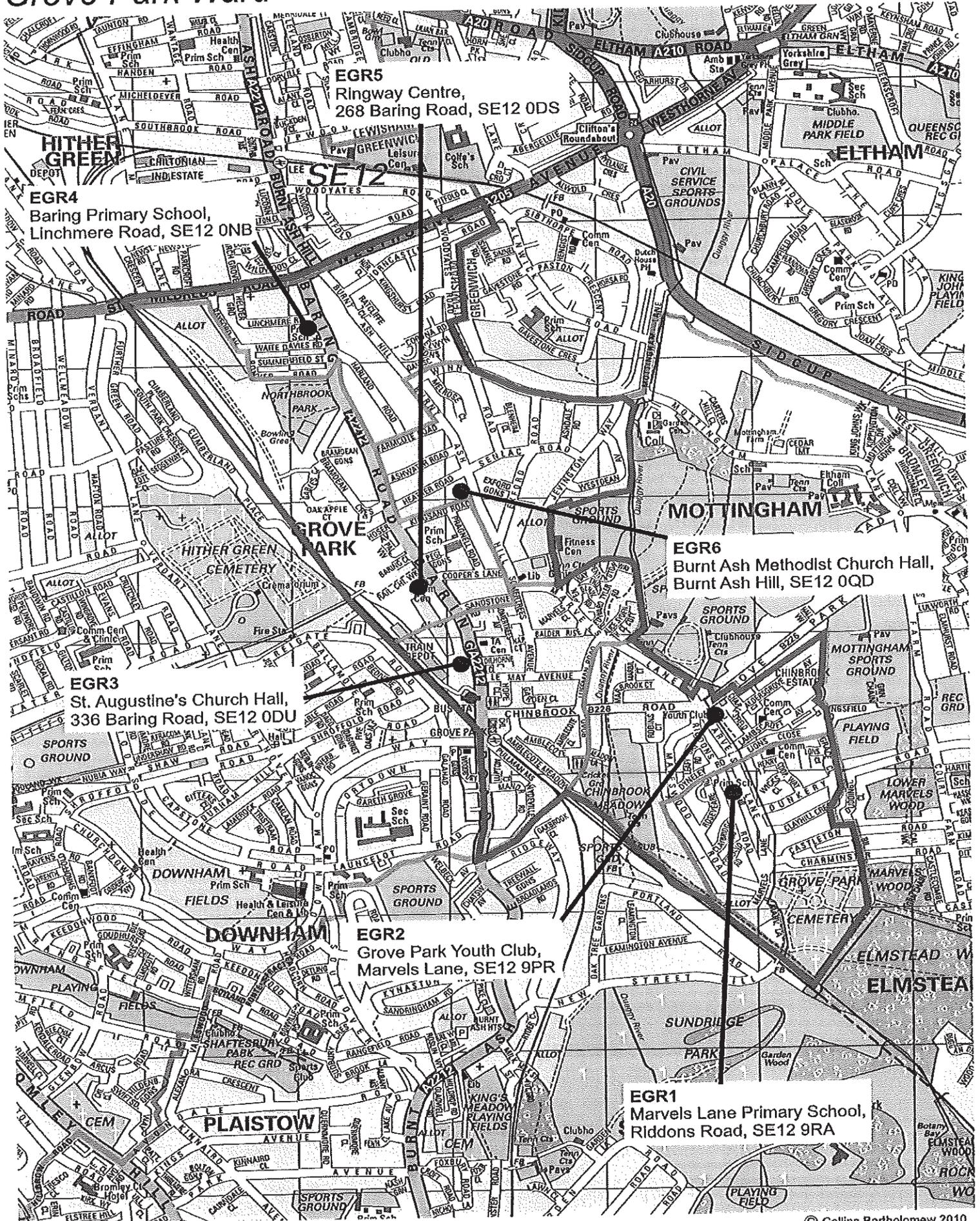
**WFO2**  
 Forest Hill Library,  
 Entrance in Thorpewood  
 Avenue, SE23 3HZ

**UPPER SYDENHAM**

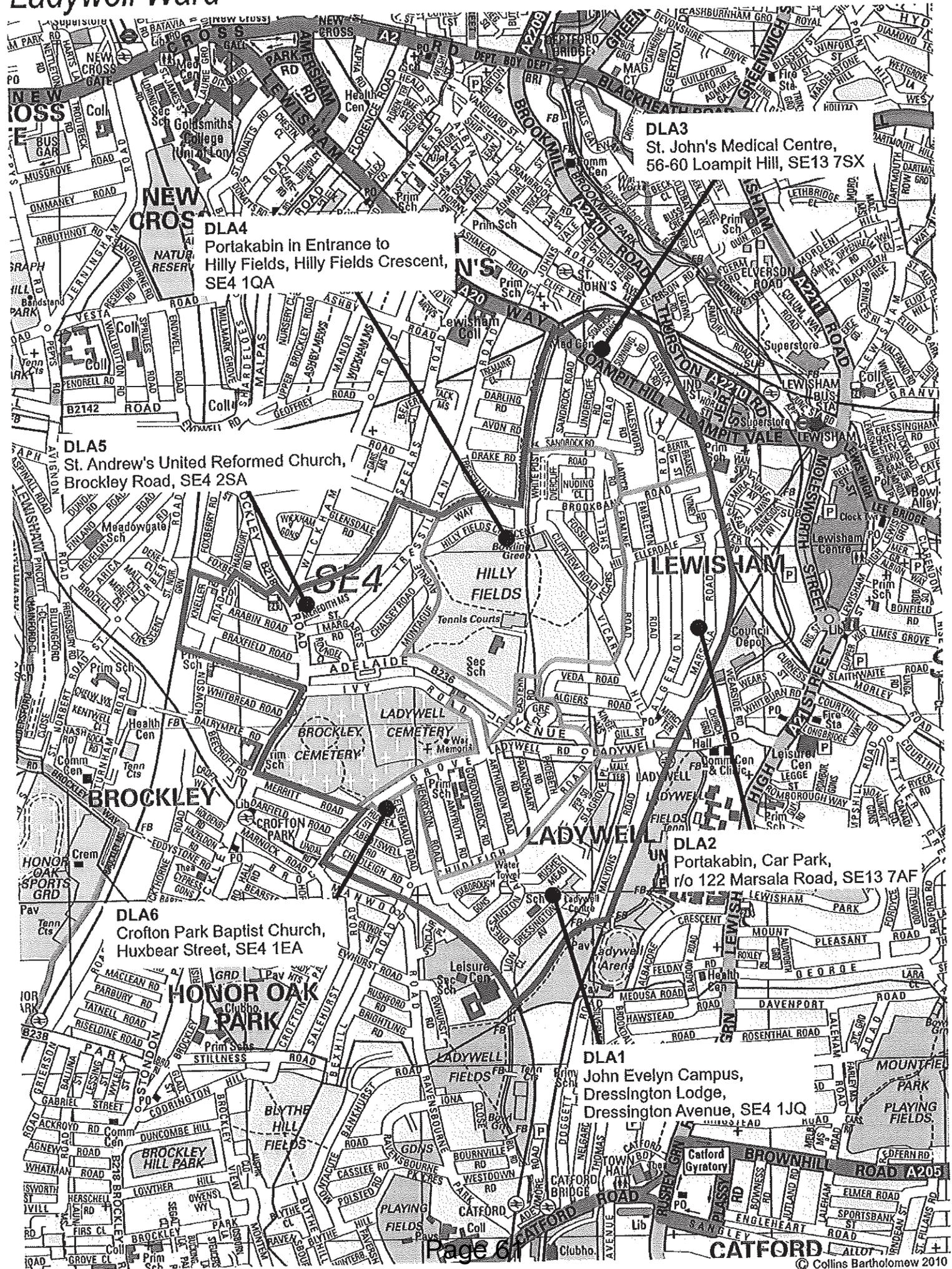
**WFO1**  
 Kelvin Grove Primary School,  
 Kelvin Grove, SE26 6BB

**LOWER SYDENHAM**

# Grove Park Ward



# Ladywell Ward



**DLA3**  
St. John's Medical Centre,  
56-60 Loampit Hill, SE13 7SX

**DLA4**  
Portakabin in Entrance to  
Hilly Fields, Hilly Fields Crescent,  
SE4 1QA

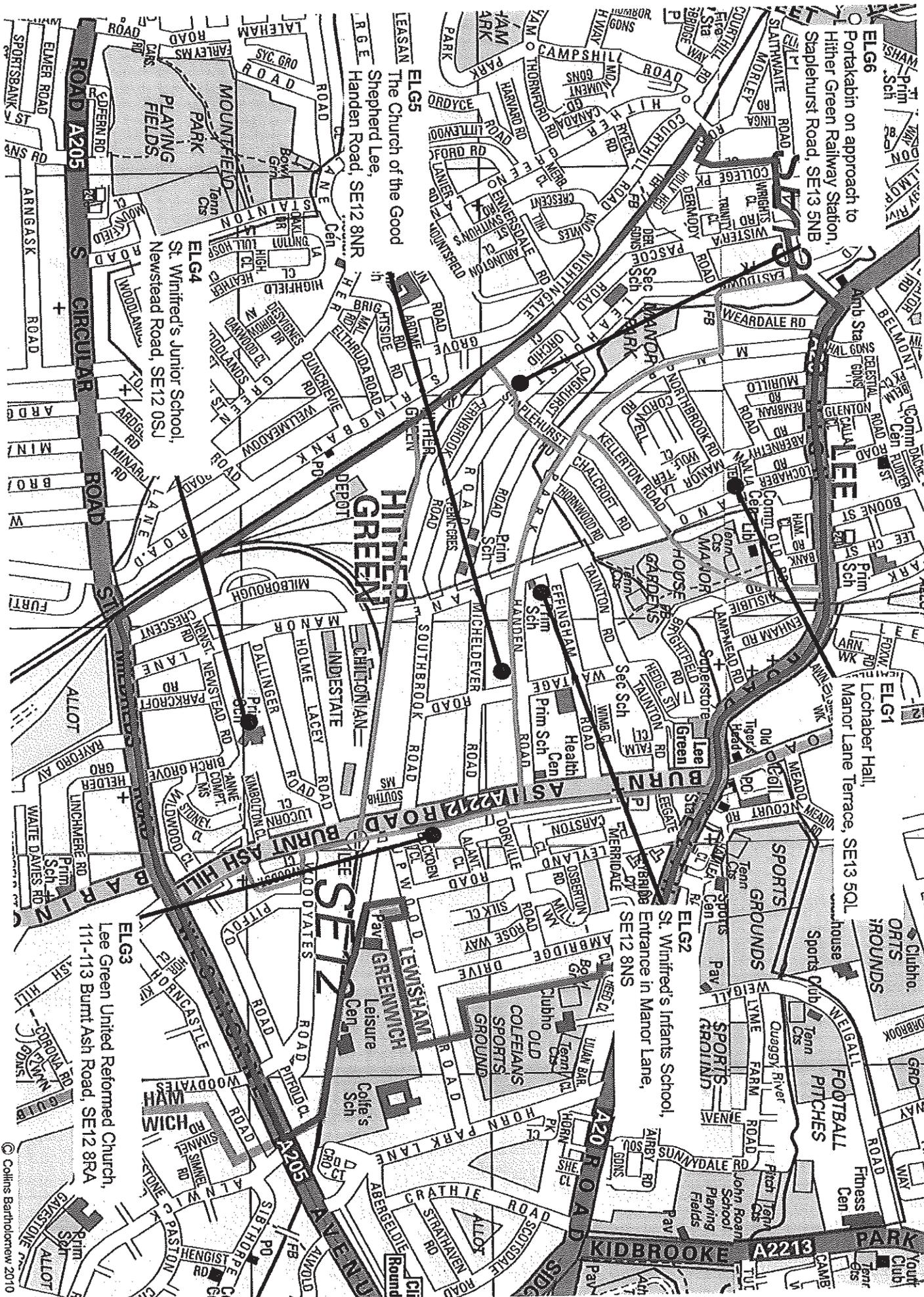
**DLA5**  
St. Andrew's United Reformed Church,  
Brockley Road, SE4 2SA

**DLA6**  
Crofton Park Baptist Church,  
Huxbear Street, SE4 1EA

**DLA2**  
Portakabin, Car Park,  
r/o 122 Marsala Road, SE13 7AF

**DLA1**  
John Evelyn Campus,  
Dressington Lodge,  
Dressington Avenue, SE4 1JQ

# Lee Green Ward



ELG6  
Portakabin on approach to  
Hither Green Railway Station,  
Staplehurst Road, SE13 5NB

ELG1  
Lochaber Hall,  
Manor Lane Terrace, SE13 5QL

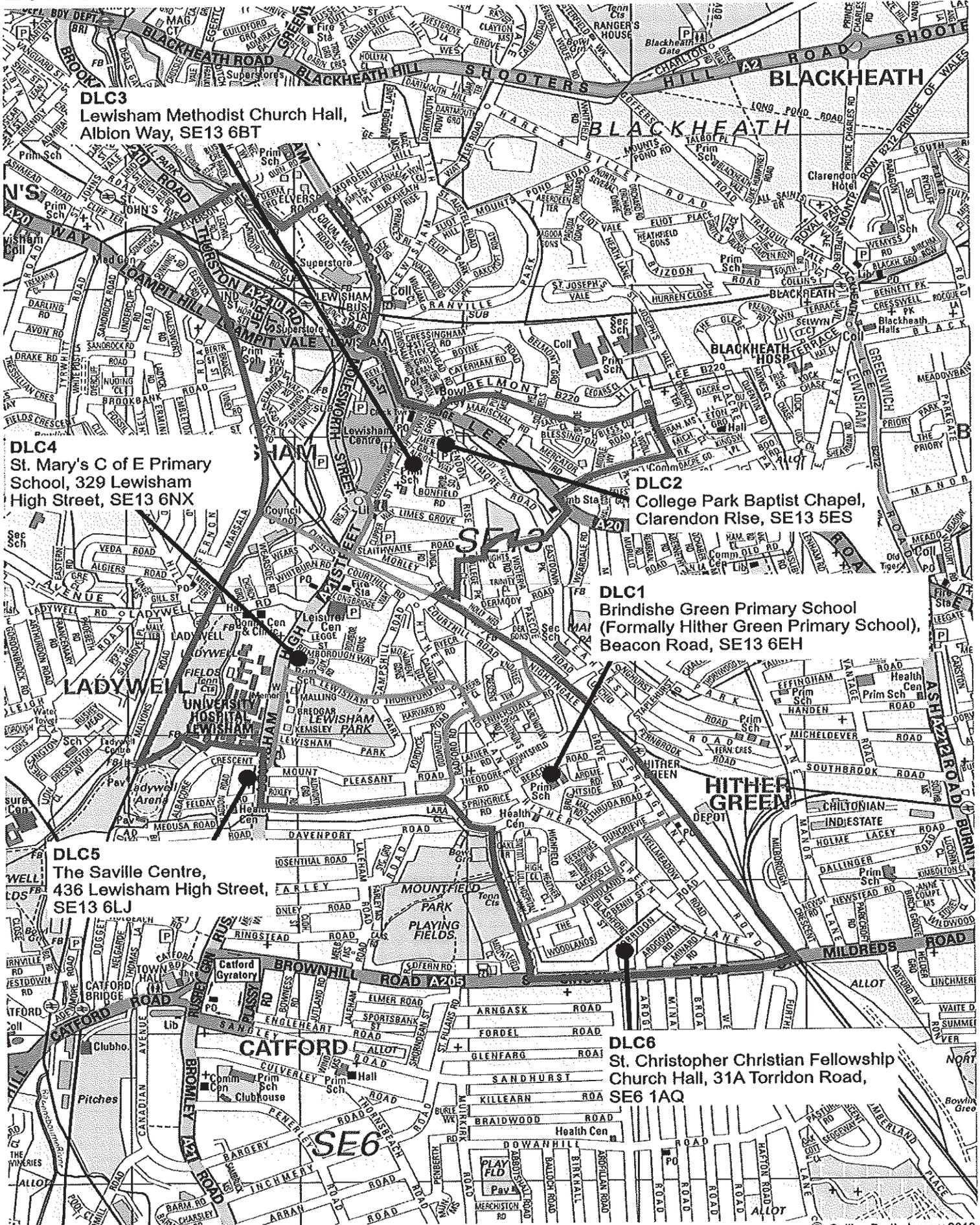
ELG2  
St. Winifred's Infants School,  
Entrance in Manor Lane,  
SE12 8NS

ELG3  
Lee Green United Reformed Church,  
111-113 Burnt Ash Road, SE12 8RA

HITHER  
GREEN

SEIZ

# Lewisham Central Ward



**DLC3**  
Lewisham Methodist Church Hall,  
Albion Way, SE13 6BT

**DLC4**  
St. Mary's C of E Primary  
School, 329 Lewisham  
High Street, SE13 6NX

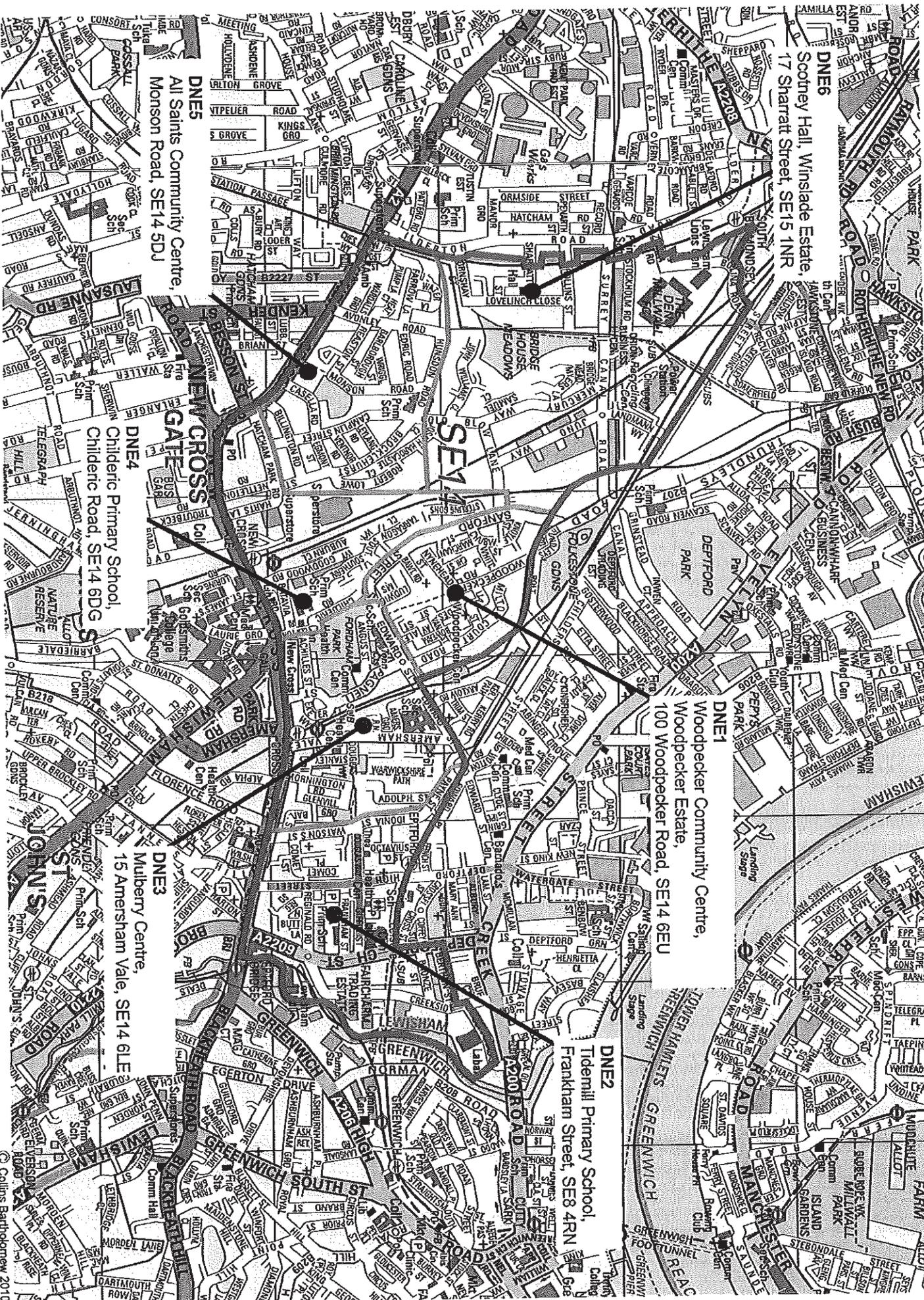
**DLC2**  
College Park Baptist Chapel,  
Clarendon Rise, SE13 5ES

**DLC1**  
Brindishe Green Primary School  
(Formerly Hither Green Primary School),  
Beacon Road, SE13 6EH

**DLC5**  
The Saville Centre,  
436 Lewisham High Street,  
SE13 6LJ

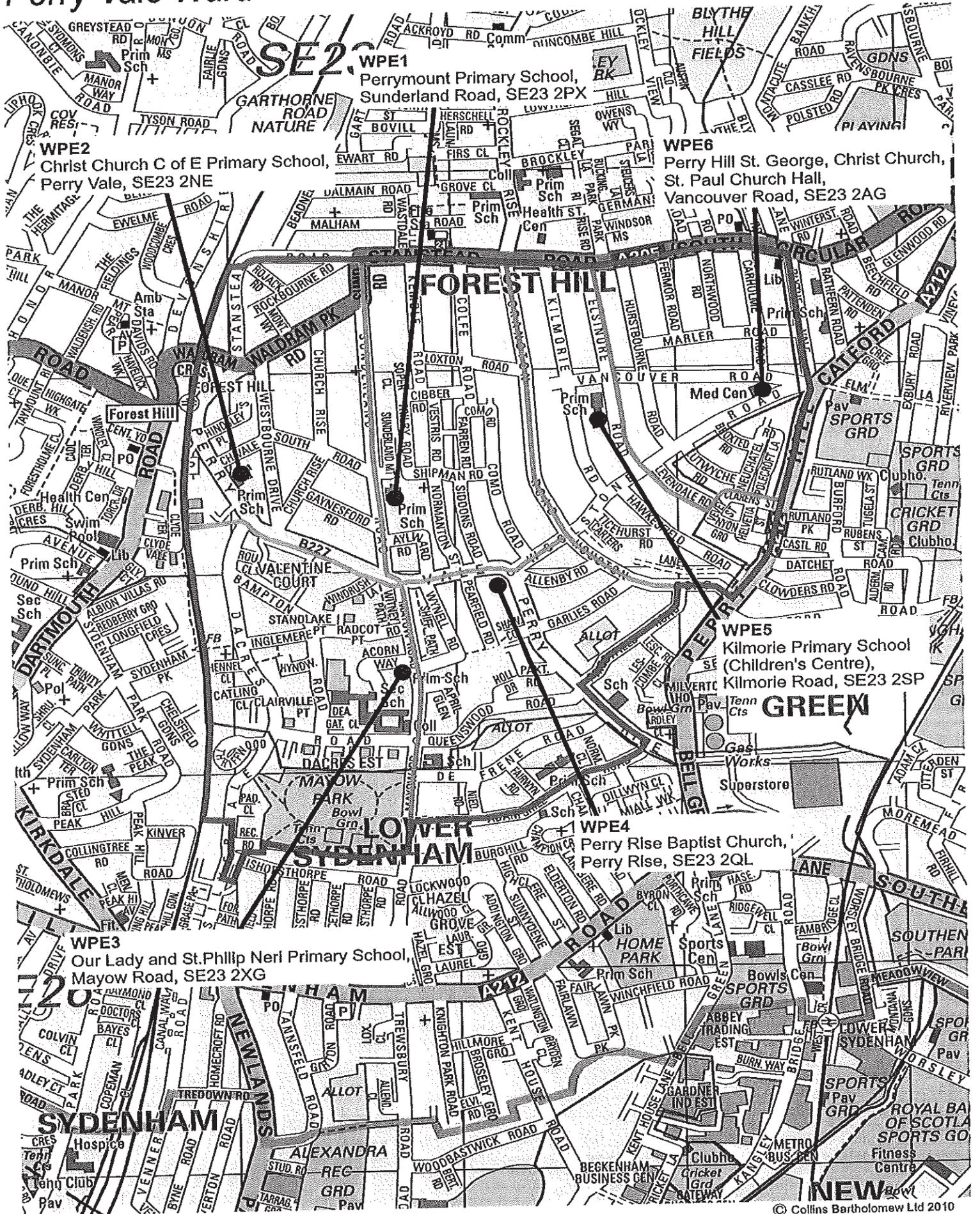
**DLC6**  
St. Christopher Christian Fellowship  
Church Hall, 31A Torridon Road,  
SE6 1AQ

# New Cross Ward

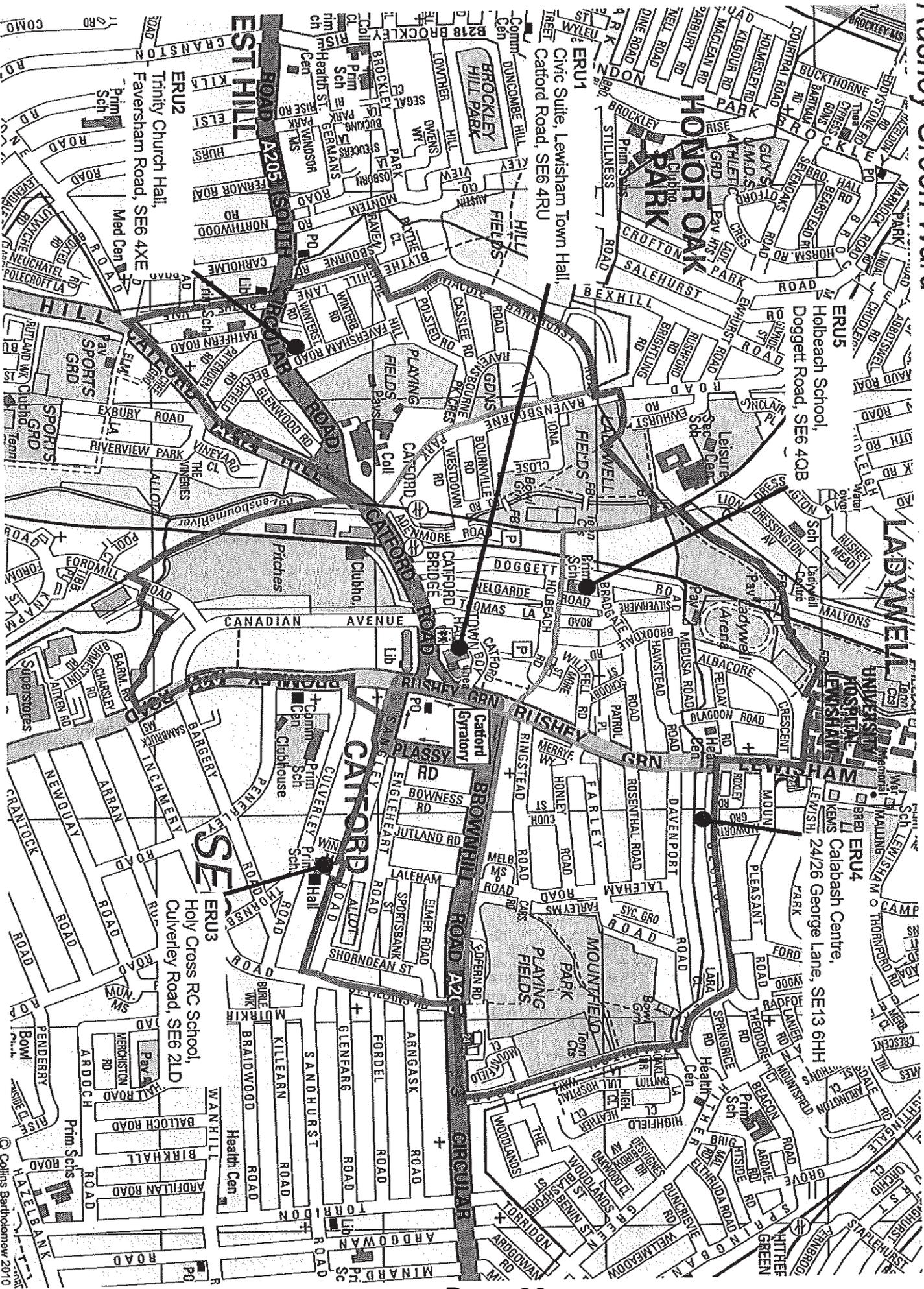


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# Perry Vale Ward

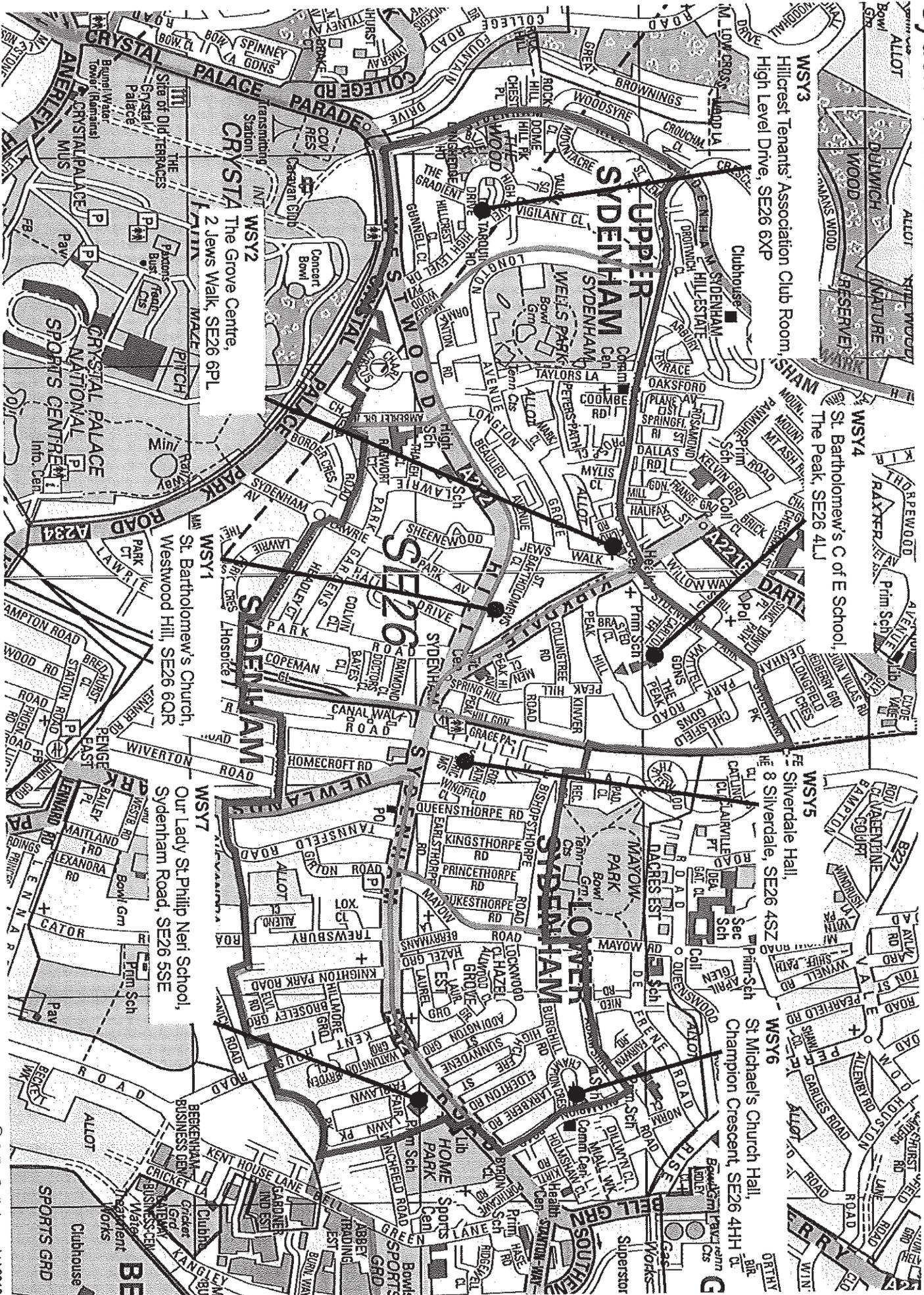


# Rushy Green Ward

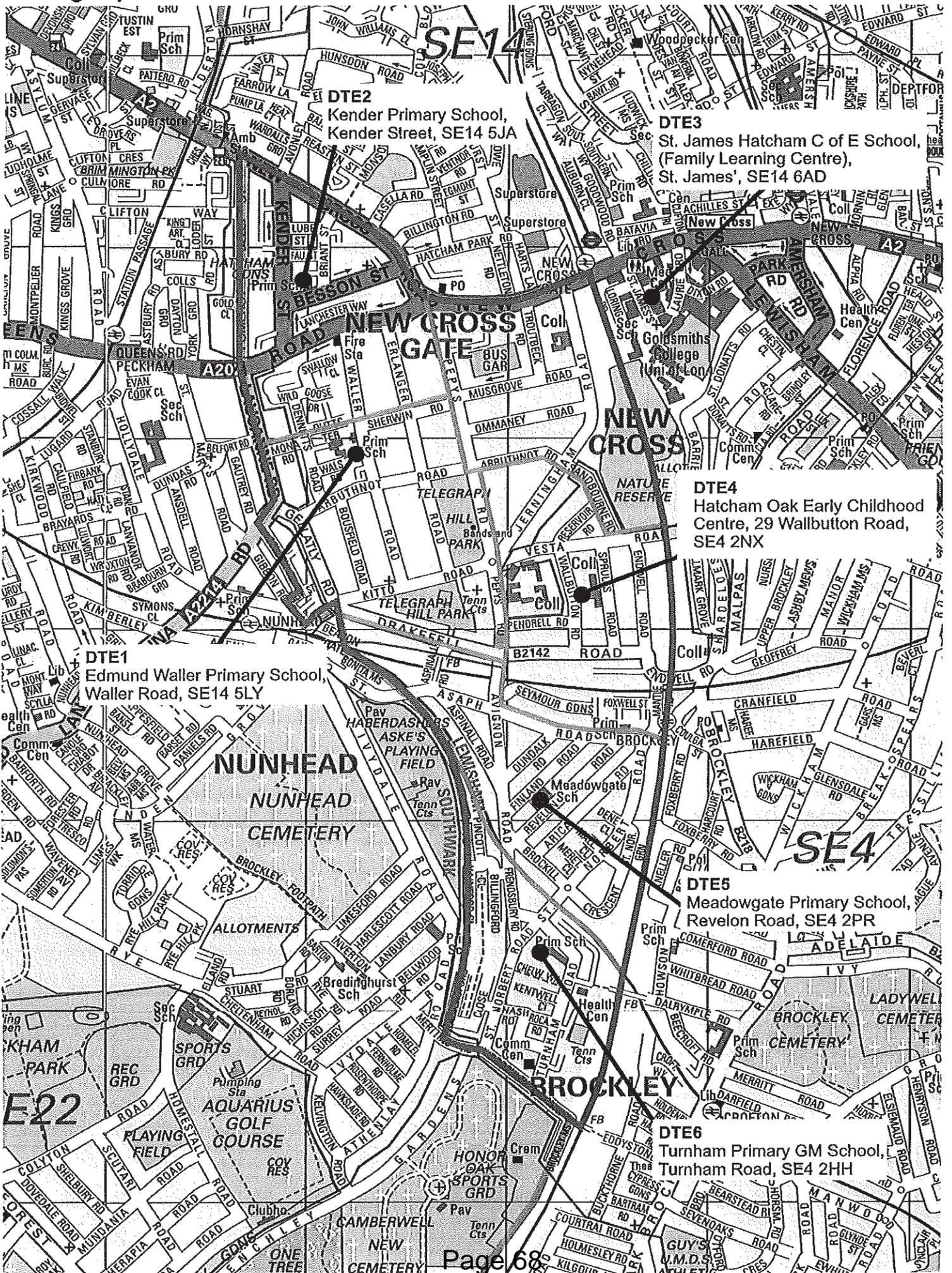


© Collins Bartholomew 2010

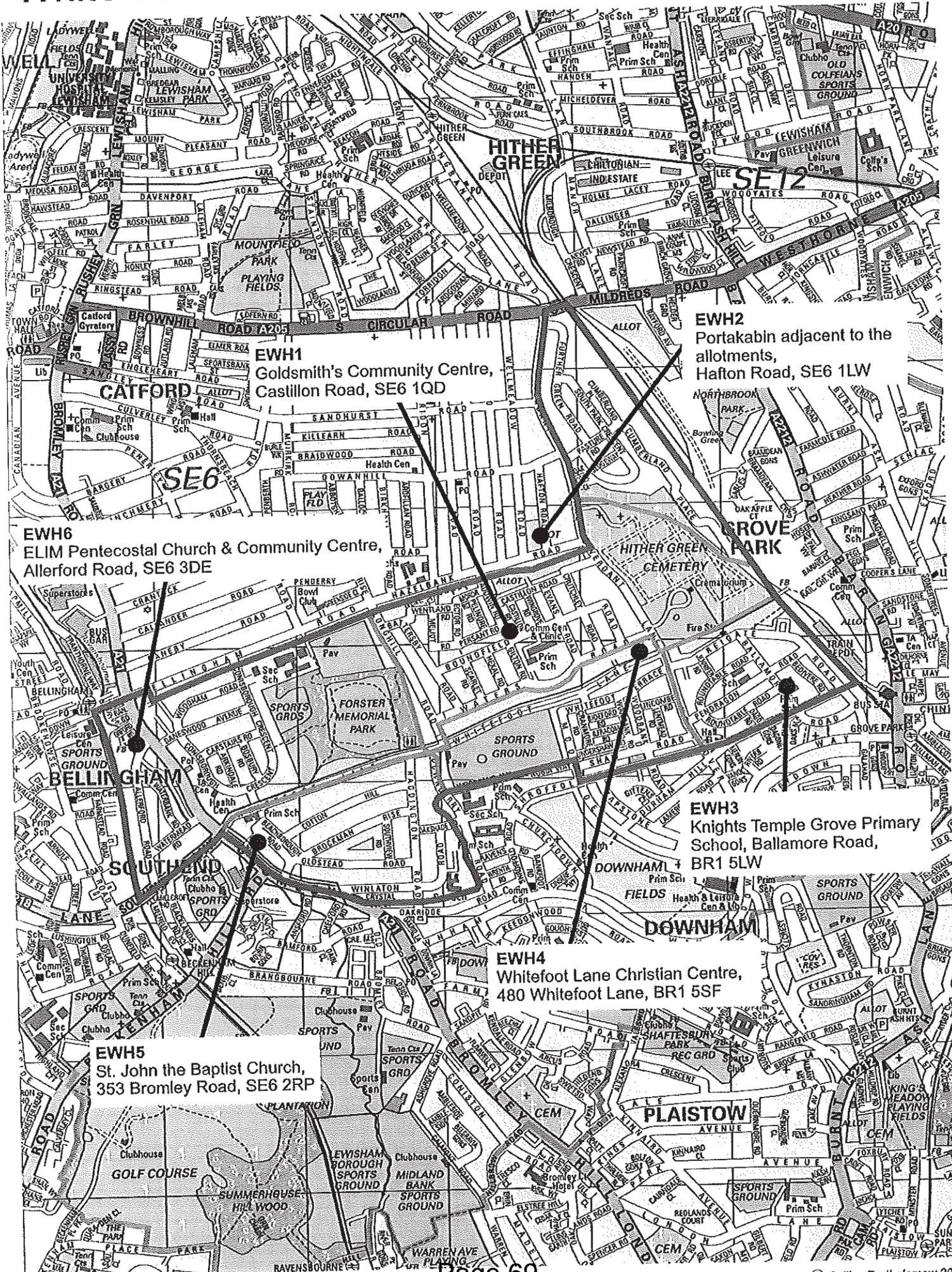
# Sydenham Ward



# Telegraph Hill Ward



# Whitefoot Ward



**EWH1**  
Goldsmith's Community Centre,  
Castillon Road, SE6 1QD

**EWH2**  
Portakabin adjacent to the  
allotments,  
Hafton Road, SE6 1LW

**EWH6**  
ELIM Pentecostal Church & Community Centre,  
Allerford Road, SE6 3DE

**EWH3**  
Knights Temple Grove Primary  
School, Ballamore Road,  
BR1 5LW

**EWH4**  
Whitefoot Lane Christian Centre,  
480 Whitefoot Lane, BR1 5SF

**EWH5**  
St. John the Baptist Church,  
353 Bromley Road, SE6 2RP

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Referendum on the alternative voting system 5 May 2011- review	
<b>Key Decision</b>	n/a	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	n/a	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Resources (Malcolm Constable, Hélène Pugh)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## 1. Purpose

This report reviews the arrangements for the Referendum on the alternative voting system which took place on 5 May 2011

## 2. Recommendation

That the Committee note this report.

## 3. Introduction

3.1 The referendum in the London Borough of Lewisham (LBL), as in most of London, was a relatively straightforward affair with no particular issues being identified at a local level. However issues were identified outside of London where there were various combinations of elections which mirrored the complexity LBL and other London authorities saw in the May 2010 parliamentary, mayoral and council elections.

3.2 The Electoral Commission, who had legislative responsibility for the conduct and delivery of the election published “Referendum on the voting system for UK parliamentary elections –Report on the May 2011 referendum in October.”

[http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/141328/Final-PVS-report.pdf](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/141328/Final-PVS-report.pdf)

3.3 The Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) published its report “The administration of the referendums and elections across the UK in 2011” in July.

[http://www.aea-elections.co.uk/downloads/reports/aea\\_election\\_referendum\\_report\\_2011.pdf](http://www.aea-elections.co.uk/downloads/reports/aea_election_referendum_report_2011.pdf)

3.4 Both summarised the referendum on the 5 May as being remembered for the political outcome, not with any issues connected with the

administration of the polls that took place that day. Outside of London the referendum was held at the same time as national elections in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as local government elections in England and Northern Ireland. In Wales there was a referendum on the law making powers of the National Assembly for Wales on 3 March ahead of the 3 May referendum.

3.5 The main recommendations coming out of these reports reflect national issues more than any local issues for LBL and London and were similar to those resulting from the May 2010 elections in LBL and London as a whole. The key recommendations are:-

- Bring forward legislation to require that electoral law, including any directions issued by those empowered to give such directions which have the force of law, cannot be applied to any referendum or election within six months of the new provisions coming into force. This recommendation was originally contained in “Independent Review of Scottish Parliamentary and Local Government Elections” published in 2007 by Ron Gould more commonly known as the Gould report.

The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act (PVSCA) did not become law until it received Royal Assent on the 16 February 2011 and until then there was speculation that a clause added in the House of Lords would enable the referendum to take place up any day up to the 31 October, might succeed in being added to the Act.

- Timely publication of the Fees and Charges Order. Whilst an indication of likely funding had been received early in the process, the Order only came into effect on the 5 April 2011, and only then were detailed guidelines published.
- Support the proposed Law Commission review and simplification of electoral law.
- Thoroughly examine and change, where necessary, the rules relating to combination of polls and absent voting, for polls being held on the same day
- Review the Code of Conduct for political parties, candidates, canvasses and campaigners with regard to absent voting and prescribe a postal voting application form.
- Review the current absolute requirement to count the unused ballot papers as part of the verification process so that the requirement would only be carried out in certain prescribed circumstances.

#### **4 Permitted participants**

At a referendum there are no candidates. However there were four permitted participants who campaigned in accordance with their views. They were: Conservative and Unionist Party; Labour No to AV; No Campaign Limited and Yes in May 2011 Ltd. The DCO at LBL held a meeting for permitted participants as directed by the EC but which only one group attended.

#### **5. Turnout and result**

5.1 The franchise for the election was the eligible parliamentary electorate which excluded citizens of the EU ( those marked with a G or K ) in the register of electors. In the LBL counting area there were 172,573 eligible voters, of which 21,410 were postal voters and 174 were proxy voters.

5.2 The turnout for the referendum in LBL was 33.2%, 44,030 votes were cast in polling stations and 13,264 votes were cast by post, the total votes cast being 57,294. The turnout for London as a whole was 35%. London had a lower turnout than many other places across the UK largely due to the fact that the referendum was not combined with any other elections as in other regions. The national turnout was 42.2%, with the result being 13,013,123 (67.9%) people voting "no" and 6,152,607 voting "yes" (32.1%). In LBL the result was 28,929 (50.7%) voting "no" and 28,184 (49.3%) voting yes.

#### **6. Postal votes**

6.1 The postal vote issue was outsourced to the printers Financial Data Management Limited (FDML). The DCO had piloted the outsourcing of postal votes at both Ladywell and Bellingham by elections in 2010 and was satisfied with their security and quality assurance testing. The DCO and ESM also visited FDML's premises prior to mailing to conduct random sample checks and inspect the process.

6.2 In accordance with EC instructions 100% of personal identifiers on returned postal votes were checked. Whilst the statutory requirement is to check 20% LBL has always conducted 100% check, even though financing assumptions by the Cabinet Office assume only 20%.

#### **7. Yes to Fairer Votes Postal vote campaign**

7.1 One issue that surfaced very late in the day was that the campaign group Yes to Fairer Votes (Y2FV) produced and mailed its own postal vote application form. This was communicated to Electoral Registration Officers (EROS) at the end of March 2011. In London it was calculated that 1,258,133 postal vote application forms were sent to 22% of the electorate. In LBL we were told that the form had been sent to 56,000 voters, 33% of the eligible electorate.

- 7.2 If there had been a significant response to this campaign it would have put pressure on the registration team shortly before the postal voting cut off time. Whilst we build contingency into the process, the scale of this operation was unprecedented and not planned for.
- 7.3 We had a number of complaints from voters who already had postal votes in place that the ERO was supporting the Y2FV campaign as the return address was the ERO's office. It also meant that postal voting stationary requirements had to be revised upwards at very short notice. In some cases Y2FV had obtained the business response mailing codes of local authorities or their free post address. This did not happen in LBL but we had a significant number of forms returned where no stamp was affixed and we had to bear the cost. The advice received from the EC was that we should not refuse them but we could not claim the cost.
- 7.4 The application form provided by Y2FV did not conform to our standards and our software providers had to provide an emergency fix so that we could scan the barcodes and capture the signatures and dates of birth on these forms. The application was for the referendum only which caused administrators outside London problems where there were combined elections.
- 7.5 Y2FV had approached the EC who confirmed to them that their form met the relevant legal requirements. However the EC stated that they do not as a matter of principle formally approve forms. They also said they could not share this type of campaign information with EROs as it was confidential.
- 7.6 The Y2FV postal vote campaign is driving the recommendations for a prescribed postal voting form and the issue of practical guidelines to campaign groups to ensure that any future such mailings are targeted effectively, do not duplicate existing arrangements and the costs are paid for by the campaign group in question.

## 8. **Polling Places**

- 8.1 109 Polling places were used at this election. Of these five were Portakabins. There were no reports of any incidents at polling stations nor were there any complaints about accessibility or facilities in general at any of our polling places by members of the public, presiding officers (POs) and visiting officers (VOs).
- 8.2 We do have robust contingency arrangements in place to cover the opening or failure to gain access to a polling station. It should be noted that we had to use our standby locksmiths to gain access to Downham Community Centre following a call from the PO at 06.00am on the day of poll that the caretaker had not arrived to open the premises.

8.3 There was also a problem at the new polling station at Hatcham Oak Children's Centre in Walbutton Road in Telegraph Hill Ward, which replaced Haberdasher Aske's Hatcham College in Pepys Road, where the security firm did not arrive until just before the opening of poll at 07.00 to open the premises. We mobilised our mobile polling station, the Sure Start bus which we equip as a polling station. The bus arrived at the polling station at the same time as the security firm who had been separately contacted by us. Fortunately we did not have to use the bus but it demonstrated the contingency plan worked.

8.4 Our POs and VOs are trained to commence issuing ballot papers at 7am if necessary using the boot of their car until such time as help arrives.

## 9. **Polling Station Staffing**

9.1 The polling stations were staffed in accordance with the Electoral Commission directions: one Presiding Officer and one poll clerk for polling stations with up to 1000 electors; one additional poll clerk for polling stations with up to 1750 electors and one further poll clerk must be appointed for up to the maximum of 2,500 electors. The number of poll clerks employed at the referendum, 231, contrasts with 188 used at the European election in 2009 and 330 used at the May 2010 elections.

9.2 We appointed 18 new POs for the referendum, following a review of staffing after the May 2010 elections. Each of the new POs was interviewed by the Electoral Services Manager (ESM) to assess their suitability. Training was given by the DCO to all POs and VOs as required by EC direction. LBL have a policy of compulsory attendance at training sessions before confirming appointments - no training no job.

9.3 We used 18 VOs, one per ward. Their role was to inspect the set up of polling stations and provide feedback on their suitability, carry emergency equipment, provide advice to staff and collect postal votes handed in at polling stations during the day and be available to provide assistance in emergencies. The EC direction was for VOs to visit polling stations twice – our VOs were instructed to visit three times to minimise the impact of having to deal with postal votes at the close of poll.

## 10. **The Count**

10.1 As mentioned above we used Forest Hill School as the count centre which proved to be an acceptable venue, with sufficient access and space for counters and the observers attending. Prior to the count taking place successful tests had been carried out by the ESM with the RCO's regional count centre at the GLA to test transmission and results collation systems.

- 10.2 The EC directed that all unused ballot papers returned from polling stations had to be counted and reconciled with ballot paper accounts. This process commenced at Forest Hill on the 5 May at 22.00 hrs, concluding at 01.30 on the 6 May when postal votes handed in at polling stations, which had been checked at the Town Hall, arrived at the Count venue.
- 10.3 The EC directed that verification of the votes cast for the referendum had to be completed by 13.00hrs on the 6 May. The counting of the votes could not then commence before 16.00 hours on the 6 May. The CCO made this decision based on the fact that there were combinations of elections running outside London and did not want the count of the referendum to delay the announcement of Local Council elections results. For London and LBL this meant that we did have a gap in the middle of the day. As we were offsite we had to ensure that counters remained in situ throughout the period and pay them accordingly.
- 10.4 The verification and count were concluded well within the times directed by the CCO with LBL reporting its verification result at 11.49 and its final result at 18.20. Five London Boroughs missed the verification deadline. The DCO's count objective was to achieve an accurate result. The DCO for the LBL counting area reported a final result with a variance of only +1 over the verification total. We therefore met the EC deadlines and provided an accurate result.

## 11. **Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The Charges Order for the referendum allocated £338,992 to LBL. We have subsequently submitted a claim to the Elections Claims Unit (ECU) for £321,964. This awaits approval.
- 11.2 Our claim included items that supported a robust contingency plan for the count which was required by the EC and a further direction by the EC to complete verification by 13.00hrs and recommence the count at 16.00 hours. The ECU is part of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), but comes under direction from the Cabinet Office. The latter have taken over from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) the whole process of electoral reform and the running of national elections and national referendum. The ECU, we believe under the direction of the Cabinet Office, refuses to pay any cost associated with standby/contingency arrangements. As we were using Forest Hill School as the count centre, where they do not have any emergency back up power supplies, the DCO decided to adopt our normal practice of hiring a generator and providing emergency lighting. Whilst the sums in question are not large, £757, it highlights a disconnect between what is required as good practice, and in this case a direction which if not complied with could lead to a breach of statutory duty, and what can be claimed as "necessary expenditure".

## 12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 The legal basis for the referendum and the voting system are set out in the PVSCA 2011. Its late passage into law created the problems outlined above.
- 12.2 The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000) provides the legal framework for referendums. It appoints the Chair of the EC or someone appointed by the Chair as the Chief Counting Officer (CCO). Jenny Watson, Chair of the EC, thus became the CCO.
- 12.3 The role of the CCO is to certify the number of ballot papers counted (verification) and the total number of votes cast in favour of each answer in the referendum at a national level. The CCO has powers of direction which have the force of law. Counting Officers are appointed at a local level to fulfil the same function as the CCO but at the authority level.
- 12.4 The CCO created the role of Regional Counting Officer (RCO), the regions being the European parliamentary regions, so LBL came within the remit of the RCO for London and the CCO nationally. The RCO was also given powers of direction. The CCO appointed Barry Quirk as the RCO for London. The RCO in turn enlisted the support of the experienced London Elects team at the GLA to assist him in his regional responsibilities. The RCO is funded separately to those funds provided to the CO to run the referendum at a local level. Given that Barry Quirk was appointed RCO, Kath Nicholson was appointed Deputy CO to run LBL's counting area.
- 12.5 Section 63 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA1983) makes the CCO, RCO, CO or any deputies appointed by them subject to the offence of breach of statutory duty, This applies to failure to comply with directions given by the CCO and/or the RCO as much as it does to any act of parliament or statutory instrument applicable to the referendum.
- 12.6 In all the CCO issued 208 directions. Whilst some of them were known about in December 2010 the vast majority were not finally codified until the end of January 2011 before the PVSCA became law.
- 12.7 Many of the directions merely replicated what was required in legislation where duties of the CO were prescribed. Some had the impact of reducing local flexibility. For instance the legislation requires poll cards to be sent out as soon as practicable after the Notice of Referendum is published, or postal votes to be sent out as soon as practicable after 5pm 11 working days before poll. LBL adopt these practices as a matter of course but the EC prescribed the exact dates

on which mailing should take place with the unintended consequence that printers and the post office were deluged on certain dates. The belief is that the legislation was framed in such a way to give some local discretion to avoid these issues.

- 12.8 The sheer volume of directions and guidance, coupled with the EC requirement to provide real time performance monitoring often meant that Electoral Administrators were having to provide reports at times when they should have been focussing on practical and operational issues relating to the referendum.

13. **Crime & Disorder Implications**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

14. **Equalities**

There are no equality implications arising.

15. **Environmental Implications**

There are no environmental implications arising

16. **Background Documents and Originator**

Malcolm Constable 020 8314 6907

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Parliamentary Boundary Review	
<b>Key Decision</b>	n/a	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	n/a	
<b>Contributors</b>	Malcolm Constable, Electoral Services Manager	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## 1. Purpose

This report provides the committee with the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) initial proposals for revised Parliamentary Constituency boundaries in England and in particular Lewisham and its neighbouring boroughs

## 2. Recommendation

That the Committee note this report.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 (PVSCA) not only introduced a Referendum on the Voting system but also included legislation that all four Boundary Commissions covering the UK must conduct a review of Parliamentary Constituency boundaries and make recommendations to the Government by October 2013.
- 3.2 The passing of the Fixed Term Parliaments Bill into law on the 15 September fixed the date of the next General Election in 2015 and every five years thereafter. The recommendations of the Boundary Committee will, if accepted, come into effect for the General Election in 2015.
- 3.3 The PVSCA reduced the number of constituencies in the UK from 650 to 600 which meant that the number of constituencies in England reduced from 533 to 502. The PVSCA also imposed some strict parameters on the BCE, perhaps the overriding parameter being a strict electoral ratio with every constituency having to be within +/-5% of the electoral quota of 76641 Parliamentary voters. The quota was based on the Registers of Electors published as at 1 December 2010 and wards as they existed as at May 2010.
- 3.4 The other parameters which the BCE have to adhere are detailed in "A guide to the 2013 review" which is on the BCE's website at <http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/>

#### **4 Distribution of the Proposals**

The proposals were published on the BCE's website on the 13 September 2011 and 1500 copies and full size maps of the European Regional areas the BCE used for the review were distributed to all Members of Parliament and local authorities in England for display at sites within each constituency. In addition the Head of Law, Kath Nicholson, circulated the maps of the three proposed new constituencies impacting Lewisham's 18 wards to all 54 councillors

#### **5 Summary of the proposals**

5.1 The full proposals can be found at the BCE's website above however a brief summary is given below

5.1.1 London Region has been allocated 68 seats, a reduction of five.

5.1.2 The BCE divided London into three sub regions.

- The North East Region to have 19 seats (down from 20).
- The North West and Central Region to have 24 seats (down from 26-with the creation of a constituency that crosses the river Thames between Richmond and Twickenham).
- The South Region of 11 boroughs (Bexley, Croydon, Greenwich, Kingston upon Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Southwark, Sutton, and Wandsworth) to consist of 25 seats down from 27.

5.2 Lewisham's 18 wards have been divided into three new constituencies as follows

PROPOSED	NEW PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES						
				Electorate as at 01/12/10	Local Authority	Old Constituency	
<b>Deptford and Greenwich</b>	<b>Wards</b>						
	Blackheath Westcombe			9135	Greenwich	Greenwich and Woolwich	
	Greenwich West			9992	Greenwich	Greenwich and Woolwich	
	Blackheath			9235	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Brockley			10555	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	Evelyn			9193	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	Ladywell			8778	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	New Cross			9236	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	Telegraph Hill			9862	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
				75986			
				variance from electoral quota %	-0.85		
<b>Dulwich and Sydenham</b>							
	Crofton Park			9744	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	Forest Hill			9462	Lewisham	Lewisham West and Penge	
	Perry Vale			9858	Lewisham	Lewisham West and Penge	
	Sydenham			10188	Lewisham	Lewisham West and Penge	
	College			8119	Southwark	Dulwich and West Norwood	
	East Dulwich			8492	Southwark	Dulwich and West Norwood	
	Peckham Rye			8854	Southwark	Camberwell and Peckham	
	Village			8435	Southwark	Dulwich and West Norwood	
				73152			
				variance from electoral quota %	-4.55		
<b>Lewisham and Catford</b>							
	Bellingham			9262	Lewisham	Lewisham West and Penge	
	Catford South			9858	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Downham			9507	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Grove Park			9761	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Lee Green			9559	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Lewisham Central			10222	Lewisham	Lewisham Deptford	
	Rushey Green			8530	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
	Whitefoot			9058	Lewisham	Lewisham East	
				75757			
				variance from electoral quota %	-1.15		

5.3 The following table shows the wards within the existing constituency boundaries and the new constituency it is proposed moving them to

EXISTING PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES				Local Authority	New Constituency
<b>Lewisham Deptford</b>	Brockley			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
	Crofton Park			Lewisham	Dulwich and Sydenham
	Evelyn			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
	Ladywell			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
	Lewisham Central			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	New Cross			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
	Telegraph Hill			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
<b>Lewisham East</b>	Blackheath			Lewisham	Deptford and Greenwich
	Catford South			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Downham			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Grove park			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Lee Green			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Rushey Green			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Whitefoot			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
<b>Lewisham West and Penge</b>	Bellingham			Lewisham	Lewisham and Catford
	Forest Hill			Lewisham	Dulwich and Sydenham
	Perry Vale			Lewisham	Dulwich and Sydenham
	Sydenham			Lewisham	Dulwich and Sydenham
	Clock House			Bromley	Beckenham
	Crystal Palace			Bromley	Beckenham
	Penge and Cator			Bromley	Beckenham

5.4 Consultation Period and timetable for the Review

5.4.1 The BCE is consulting for a 12 week period from the 13 September to the 5 December. They will accept written representations which includes e-mail and are conducting hearings across London. Hearings were held at Lewisham Town Hall, Civic Suite on Monday 24 and Tuesday 25 October. The BCE stress that while any one is welcome to submit views they are looking for views structured around four specific questions outlined in their “London –Initial proposals” document which can be found on the BCE’s website.

5.4.2 Once the initial consultation period closes the BCE will publish all the representations it receives “likely to be in Spring 2012” during which anyone can make further written representations with regard to the representations the BCE have received and published.

5.4.3 “Towards the end of 2012”, if the evidence is sufficient to change their proposals, the BCE will consult on any changes to their initial proposals for eight weeks but there is no provision for further hearings. The BCE has to submit its final recommendation to the Government by 1 October 2013.

5.5 Reaction to proposals to date

5.5.1 Reaction from the public seems muted. The press has focused on high profile Members of Parliament who might lose seats and forecasting what it means for the election in 2015. From an administrative point of

view Electoral Service Managers in London and some Acting Returning Officers (ARO) have expressed concern about the increase in the number of constituencies that do not fall wholly within Borough boundaries. Whilst the BCE has stated that no constituency in London comprises more than two local authorities the corollary is that there are only two authorities with constituencies wholly contained within local authority boundaries, with seven authorities having to work with 3 and 4 other authorities. This adds a high degree of risk in ensuring the proper delivery of an election. Lewisham would go from sharing a constituency with Bromley to sharing two constituencies, one with Southwark and the other with Greenwich for which the ARO in Lewisham will be responsible.

## **6 Financial implications**

There are no specific financial implications arising.

## **7 Legal implications**

These are dealt with in the body of the report.

## **8 Crime and disorder implications**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

## **9 Equalities implications**

There are no equality implications arising.

## **10 Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising.

## **Background documents and originator**

Malcolm Constable 020 8314 6907

# Agenda Item 7

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	GLA Elections 2012	
<b>Key Decision</b>	n/a	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	n/a	
<b>Contributors</b>	Malcolm Constable, Electoral Services Manager	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## 1. Purpose

This report provides the committee with the current status of preparations for The GLA Elections in 2012

## 2. Recommendation

That the Committee note this report.

## 3. Background

3.1 Elections for the Mayor of London and GLA Assembly Members will take place on 3 May 2012. Planning by the London Elects team at the GLA and London Boroughs is well advanced.

3.2 There will be three elections for:

- Mayor of London
- 14 Constituency Members who represent different areas in London
- 11 London Wide Assembly Members

## 4. Franchise

Voters eligible to vote in this election will be Local Government Electors which include European Union citizens. As at 1 September 2011 LBL's electorate total was 186429 including 21021 postal voters.

## 5. Voting and counting Methodology

Voters will receive three ballot papers, one for each election

### 5.1 Voting For Mayor

5.1.1 If there are only two mayoral candidates the first past the post system is used. The candidate with the most votes wins.

- 5.1.2 If there are three or more candidates the Supplementary Voting System is used. Voters are asked to vote for their first and second choice candidates. Voters do not have to cast a second choice vote. If a candidate receives more than 50% of the first choice votes they are elected.
- 5.1.3 If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes cast the top two candidates with the most first choice votes go through to a second round. All other candidates are eliminated, but their second choice votes are looked at and if the second choice votes are for either of the top two candidates they are added to their totals.
- 5.1.4 The candidate with the highest total of first and second choice votes wins.

## **5.2 Voting for London Assembly Members**

- 5.2.1 The Additional Member System is used to elect London Assembly Members. The First Past the Post System is used to elect Constituency Members and a form of proportional representation called the Modified D'Hondt Formula is used to elect the London Wide Assembly Members.
- 5.2.2 Voters in LBL will be voting for a GLA Constituency member for the Greenwich and Lewisham Constituency, one of 14 Constituency Assembly members.

## **6. The Count**

- 6.1 The count will be electronic. The GLA calculated that a manual count across London would take 4 days compared to an electronic count. The count contract has been awarded to IntElect a joint venture between DRS Data Services Limited and Electoral Reform Services Limited
- 6.2 The votes will be counted at three centres across London – the Excel Centre , Alexandra Palace and Olympia. The Greenwich and Lewisham votes will be counted along with four other London Constituencies at Excel. The four other constituencies at Excel are:
- City & East (Newham, Tower Hamlets, Barking and Dagenham, City of London)
  - Bexley & Bromley
  - Havering and Redbridge
  - Lambeth & Southwark
- 6.3 LBL's ESM is due to attend a full user acceptance test (UAT) of the system in Milton Keynes at the end of November. London Elects has indicated that Greenwich and Lewisham will probably need a team of 70 plus people at Excel fulfilling various roles. Staffing will probably be split 70/30 between Greenwich and Lewisham.
- 6.4 Having learned from previous experience the GLRO has indicated that boroughs will provide their own scanner operators and there is a

comprehensive schedule of training arranged for scanner operators and everybody else involved in the count.

- 6.5 In the interests of transparency the GLRO has also directed that one postal vote ballot box and one polling station ballot box per borough will have to be verified manually at the count.

## **7. Results**

Constituency Member results will be announced at the various count venues by the relevant Constituency Returning Officer (CRO). The Mayoral and London Wide Assembly member results will be announced at City Hall by the Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO).

## **8. Organisation**

As in the 2008 GLA elections, the London Elects team at the GLA will be taking the lead in organising and providing training for the count and publicising the elections. The GLRO is Leo Boland, Chief Executive of the GLA. The Deputy GLRO is John Bennett. The CRO for the Greenwich and Lewisham Constituency is Barry Quirk who will be assisted by the Borough Returning Officer (BRO) for Greenwich – Mary Ney

## **9. Nominations**

- 9.1 Nominations for Mayor must be signed by 330 subscribers, 10 from each London Borough and 10 from the City of London. Candidates must pay a deposit of £10,000 which is returned if they poll more than 5% of the votes cast. Mayoral nominations will be dealt with by the GLRO.
- 9.2 Mayoral candidates can also be asked to contribute to the cost of printing and publishing the Mayoral Booklet which is sent to all voters, in 2008 this was £10,000.
- 9.3 Nominations for London Wide Assembly Members may be submitted using party lists whereby registered political parties can submit up to 25 Candidates. A deposit of £5000 is required regardless of the number of candidates on the list. Individual candidates may stand but will need to provide a deposit of £5000. Nominations for London Wide Assembly Members will be dealt with by the GLRO. Nominations for constituency members will be dealt with by the relevant CRO. Candidates must pay a deposit of £5000

## **10. Timetable**

- 10.1 The timetable (Appendix A) was changed for the 2008 GLA elections from 25 to 30 working days to allow for distribution of the Mayoral Address Booklet, which has to be sent to all voters, ahead of the issue of postal votes.

- 10.2 The statutory timetable starts with publication of the Notice of Elections on Tuesday 20 March 2012. Nominations will be accepted from that date up until noon on Wednesday 28 March 2012.
- 10.3 The cut off time for registrations and new and amended postal votes and amended proxy votes is Wednesday 18 April 2012.
- 10.4 Poll cards will be mailed out immediately following the publication of the Notice of Election. The first issue of postal votes will take place the day after close of registration on the 19 April 2012

## **11. Directions from the GLRO**

- 11.1 Following the Directions and Guidance issued by the Electoral Commission in running the Referendum last May the GLRO has proposed, in consultation with the General Purposes Working Group, a body consisting of Electoral Service Managers across London, a set of Directions. Directions from the GLRO have the full force of law, however unlike the Electoral Commission the GLRO is proposing a lighter touch. An example is that where there is a need to comply with legislation this does not need to be reinforced with a direction.
- 11.2 The proposed directions are mainly concerned with the possibility of higher than normal voter turnout ahead of the London Olympics and the potential clash of two high profile Mayoral candidates. In summary the directions are as follows:
- The GLRO requires the CRO to prepare project plans and risk registers for submission by the end of December and mail out postal votes and poll cards by predetermined dates. LBL fulfils these requirements as a matter of course.
  - No more than 2500 electors in person are to be allocated to any one polling station. This means that we have had to move the polling station at St Stephens C of E Primary School in polling district DBR 6, which is too small to split, to Ashmead Primary School which has a larger hall and which is easily divisible. Approval for this is recommended in the Polling District review agenda item submitted concurrently with this report.
  - Polling station inspectors (PSIs) must visit polling stations at least twice between specified hours and receive the same training as Presiding Officers so that they can be deployed flexibly if required. LBL's polling station inspectors are required to visit three times and get the same training as POs and specific training relating to their PSI role.
  - An assessment is to be made of the likely pattern of voting throughout the day in order to mitigate against risk of queues building at polling stations

- Check 100% of postal vote identifiers. Again LBL does this as a matter of routine

## **12. Risk issues**

- 12.1 Issues identified at the last GLA elections regarding the quality of the ballot boxes and seals have been noted by the GLRO. In view of the anticipated high turnout it is hoped that the GLA arrange with their contractors to print 100% of ballot paper requirements, however we understand that this may be 80%.
- 12.2 Queues at polling stations, given anticipated high turnout and security of ballot boxes being transferred to Excel for the count remain the biggest concerns. We will ensure that there are robust contingency plans in place in respect of the former whilst we will liaise with the police on the latter.
- 12.3 The remaining issue is finance. Like all local authorities the GLA is under cost reduction pressure and this is likely to manifest itself in the funding for these elections. No charges order has been seen yet but when amounts are allocated by the GLA the CRO will have to submit a draft budget outlining how it is planned to spend their allocation

## **13. Financial implications**

At present these are not clear as no charges orders or amounts have been provided by the GLA. When the amounts are known they must be reviewed to ensure that the elections can be run in accordance with the statutory guidelines and any directions from the GLRO. Any additional burdens on LBL will be strongly resisted.

## **14. Legal implications**

There are no legal implications arising.

## **15. Crime and disorder implications**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

## **16. Equalities implications**

There are no equality implications arising.

## **17. Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising.

## **18. Background documents and originator**

Malcolm Constable 020 8314 6907

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Electoral Legislation	
<b>Key Decision</b>	n/a	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>	n/a	
<b>Contributors</b>	Malcolm Constable, Electoral Services Manager	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 7 November 2011

## 1. Purpose

This report is intended to provide the committee with an update on current and proposed legislation impacting elections and electoral registration

## 2. Recommendation

That the Committee note this report.

## 3. Background

As the committee is aware the Coalition Government introduced a raft of proposed legislation which will result in the transformation of electoral registration and potentially the delivery of elections. The Parliamentary Boundary Review and Polling District review are both under way and are the subject of separate reports submitted concurrently.

## 4. Absent Voter identifier refresh

4.1 Under the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) must, by 31 January each year, send every person who remains an absent voter and whose signature held on the personal identifiers record is more than 5 years old, a notice requiring them to provide a fresh signature. There are provisions for reminders but the deadline for a response is by the beginning of March each year. If they do not respond by then the elector must be removed from the register, informed of the cancellation and should be given a new absent voting application form.

4.2 Lewisham will conduct its first Absent Voter identifier refresh in January 2013 as it collected personal identifiers after January 31 2007. Our estimate is that just over 11,000 out of a total of 21,021 currently registered postal voters will be requested to provide a new signature. Strenuous efforts will be made to secure a good response and thereby minimise any effect on the number of absent voters on the register.

## 5. Individual Elector Registration (IER)

5.1 The Government published a White Paper in June 2011 putting forward its proposals for the introduction of IER which included draft legislation. There has been little change to the voter registration system since the early twentieth century except for the introduction of rolling registration in 2001 and the provisions in the Electoral Administration Act 2006 to enable electors to register up until 11 working days before an election.

5.2 IER, as currently proposed, will certainly transform the way electoral registration will be delivered. Coupled with the Parliamentary Boundary review it could have significant impact on the electoral landscape after the proposed fixed term Parliamentary elections in May 2015.

5.3 The original provisions for IER were published in the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009 and proposed IER on a voluntary basis before a decision was made on whether to introduce it on a compulsory basis. The Coalition Government have speeded up its introduction by proposing to make it compulsory from 2014. The government's stated objectives are to tackle fraud and to maintain accuracy and to ensure completeness of the register.

5.4 The proposals are

- IER should replace the annual canvass which takes place between 1 September and 1 December annually whereby one person completes a single registration form on behalf of everyone at their address.
- To be registered under IER, applicants for registration will have to provide a date of birth (DOB) and National Insurance Number (NINO). These will have to be checked against an underlying data base through a continuing data matching process. Once verified the NINO will have to be deleted from the ERO's records. Note that there is no provision to provide a signature and it is not mandatory to register. The no signature requirement will make it easier to introduce multi channel registration.
- The Electoral Registration Data Schemes Order 2011 (The Order) approved 22 data matching pilots specifying the areas (local authorities), the authorities (government departments) and data to be matched. The results of the pilots are to be evaluated by the Cabinet Office and Electoral Commission. The data matching schemes involve comparing electoral registers with data from public authorities including the Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Transport, Department for Education, HM Revenue and Customs.

- It is to be a new criminal offence to disclose any information provided for verification purposes.
- There are provisions for the ERO to accept other forms of evidence of identity should individuals be unable or unwilling to provide the specified identifying information but there may be a requirement to attend the Registration Office.
- Once registered there is no compulsion to re-register. EROs will be required to maintain the accuracy of the register by carrying out periodic data matching exercises and sending out a Household Enquiry Form. This will ask the householder if the details on the form are correct. If the householder identifies new occupants, individual registration forms will then have to be sent to these individuals.

5.5 Transitional arrangements will be key to the success of IER. The first IER canvass will begin on the 1 July 2014 and conclude when a revised register is published on the 1 December 2014. From July 2014 the ERO will send a personally addressed IER application to every elector on the register. Where there is no currently registered elector at an address or where the ERO believes that the entry is no longer correct, a Household Enquiry Form will be sent to the household to identify eligible electors. The ERO's duties under section 9A of the RPA 1983 to take all necessary steps to comply with the general duty of maintaining the register will continue to apply. That involves sending the Household Enquiry Form more than once, making house to house enquiries and inspecting records the ERO is permitted to inspect.

- Personally addressed IER forms will then be sent to electors identified by responses to the Household Enquiry Form or data matching exercises. Persons can respond to an invitation to register by indicating that they do not wish to be chased. There is no compulsion to register but there is a requirement to respond to the Household Enquiry Form.
- Electors who fail to respond to the 2013 canvass will be removed if they fail to respond in 2014 under existing provisions to delete two year non responders. Otherwise, electors who fail to respond to the first IER canvass in 2014 will remain on the electoral register and be carried forward, as will those who fail to complete the IER forms properly..
- During the canvass of 2015 the ERO will send an IER application form to anyone who failed to respond or failed to complete an IER application successfully in 2014. If they fail to respond they will be removed from the register when it is published in 2015.

- Postal voters who fail to register under IER in 2014 will lose the right to use this method of voting but will be able to vote at a polling station
- From the 1 July 2015 the annual canvass will request data on all persons resident in every household. The first step in the annual canvass in 2015 to all properties will be for the ERO to send a Household Enquiry Form, the timing for dispatch of which under current proposals will be a matter for the ERO.
- There will be no requirement in 2015 for electors who have successfully registered under IER to repeat the process . They will remain registered unless they notify the ERO that they have moved, the annual canvass suggests they are no longer resident, or information from other data matching sources prompts the ERO to make additional enquiries.
- The likely impact of IER on numbers on the electoral roll is likely to be significant. When introduced in Northern Ireland by the Electoral Fraud (Northern Ireland) Act 2002, numbers fell on the electoral roll by an average of 10.5%. Given the transient nature of the population in parts of the Borough, the fall in the electoral roll here may be higher, particularly amongst those who cannot, or are not prepared to disclose such personal details as the identifiers require. By definition it is likely to be a much more difficult task to gain responses from all members of a household in the absence of an element of compulsion.

#### 5.6 The Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011

This Act passed into law on the 15 September 2011. In summary it

- Fixes the date of the next General Election as the 7 May 2015 and every 5 years thereafter
- Provides for General Elections to be held earlier if either two-thirds of all MPs vote in favour of dissolution or there has been a vote of no confidence in the Government and a Government has failed to gain the confidence of the House of Commons within 14 days

#### 5.7 The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

This Act also passed into law on 15 September 2011. It replaces Police Authorities with directly elected Police and Crime Commissioners. It does not effect London Boroughs, where the Mayor of London is the Police Commissioner. However it is worth noting that it uses the single transferable voting system (STV).

STV is a form of proportional representation for multi member seats whereby voters rank their preferences on a ballot paper. Candidates

do not need a majority to win, just a known quota or share of the votes determined by the size of the electorate and the number of available seats.

Elections will take place in 41 Police authorities in November 2012.

#### 5.8 Draft House of Lords Reform Bill

In May 2011 the Government published proposals for a reformed House of Lords. The proposals contained the draft House of Lords Reform Bill and a White Paper setting out detailed options for a reformed House of Lords. In summary the proposals include

- A House consisting of 300 members each eligible for a term of three Parliaments. The draft bill proposes that membership would be 80% elected and 20% appointed, although the White Paper leaves the way open for 100% elected House.
- It is proposed that elections will use the STV system. The White Paper does not rule out the possibility of using a list based system.
- Multimember electoral districts are based on national and county boundaries.
- A third of members will be elected at each election with the first elections taking place on 7 May 2015, the scheduled date for the next General Election.
- Elections would normally take place on the same day as a General Election

#### 5.9 Draft legislation for pre legislative scrutiny

The Government has also published draft legislation on a number of electoral administration provisions for pre legislative scrutiny by the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee of the House of Commons. They are

- To extend the parliamentary timetable from 17 to 25 working days
- To make changes to the polling places and district reviews to bring them into line with the set Parliamentary terms of 5 years. Under draft provisions a local authority must carry out and complete a review of all the polling stations places and districts for UK Parliamentary elections in its area within the period of 16 months beginning the 1 October 2013 and then within the period beginning 16 months beginning with 1 October every fifth year after that.
- To address the issue preventing joint party candidates from using party emblems on ballot papers.

On the 14 September the Government published a Command Paper putting forward additional reforms for pre legislative scrutiny. They are:

- Removal of the automatic postponement of parish and community elections when they fall on the same day as local government elections and either a European or Parliamentary elections thus making combination of elections easier.
- Mandating 100% postal vote checking. Currently legislation provides for a minimum 20% check but LBL in common with most authorities routinely check 100%.
- Extend emergency proxy voting facilities to those called away on business or military service

#### 5.10 Recall of MPs

The Cabinet office are working up proposals to introduce a power of recall allowing voters to force a by election where an MP is found to have “engaged in serious wrong doing” and having had a petition calling for a by election signed by 10% of constituents.

#### 5.11 Law Commission

The Law Commission is about to commence a review of electoral law which hopefully will consolidate what has been referred to as “byzantine” legislation. This will probably result in the publication of a White Paper in 2017 with a view to being made law in time for scheduled Parliamentary elections in May 2020.

#### 5.12 Localism Bill

Proposals in the Localism Bill contain many opportunities for local referenda. Though it seems unlikely that referenda on ‘local matters’ set out in Part 4 of the Bill will make it onto the statute book (following Government acceptance of a Lords amendment), the provisions relating to Council Tax referenda, neighbourhood planning referenda and referenda on governance arrangements remain in place.

#### 5.13 Local Referendums Bill

This is a private members bill sponsored by Zac Goldsmith. It is due to have its second reading in the House of Commons in January 2012. It proposes that referendum results on local issues will be binding on local authorities. Referenda may be called by 10% of Local Government electors in an authority at the time a petition is presented. Given the likely amendments to the Localism Bill, it is doubtful whether this will proceed.

## 6. **Financial implications**

The annual postal vote refresh can be absorbed within the Electoral registration budget, However the funding and resource requirement for the introduction of IER needs to be carefully assessed and negotiated with Government.

With regard to funding for elections we are becoming increasingly aware of the Cabinet Office's attempts to drive election costs down. This is manifesting itself in the number of queries authorities are receiving in respect of their claims for the Referendum in May 2011 and Parliamentary elections in 2010. There may ultimately be conflict between cost restrictions and the commitment of this Authority to ensure that these are run well.

**7. Legal implications**

These are dealt with in the body of the report.

**8. Crime and disorder implications**

There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

**9. Equalities implications**

There are no equality implications arising.

**10. Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising.

**11. Background documents and originator**

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