

Redrawing the Boundaries: the Politics and Outcomes of the County Review Process in Surrey 1929–1933

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I. Introduction

Local government boundaries have long been a source of conflict. Many people have an acute sense of place. Thus, any perceived threat to existing boundaries, real or imagined, has often aroused considerable hostility. Moreover, local authorities tend to see themselves as the guardians of their territorial integrity and resist any attempt to alter their boundaries. There is also an element of self-interest in that their power and prestige is to some extent bound up with the size of the area for which they are responsible.¹

Many authorities living in the shadow of larger neighbours with expansionist aspirations have fought long and hard to maintain their separate identity in what has sometimes been portrayed as an epic struggle. Surrey has been no exception in this respect as the following extract from a history of the County Council, published to celebrate its centenary in 1989, illustrates:

Immediately after the [Second World] War there was a challenge to Surrey's western boundary when Aldershot proposed to incorporate Farnham, Frimley and Camberley and the western part of Guildford rural district (Ash and Tongham) to reach the 100,000 population which would give it county borough status. This was defeated but a new and greater threat came with the setting up of the Royal Commission on Greater London Government in 1957. Already in 1923 Surrey had fought off an attempt to extend the London County Council boundaries to cover the whole Metropolitan Police area. As in 1923, the County Council co-ordinated an impressive array of near-unanimity amongst county districts opposed to transfer into London . . . Nevertheless, the Commission recommended the transfer into Greater London of an area

extending as far as Weybridge, Epsom and Caterham. Surrey would have lost 22.4% of its area, 62.6% of its population . . . and 66.1% of its rateable value. The County Council fought the proposals and eventually retained Esher, Banstead, Walton and Weybridge, Epsom and Ewell and Caterham and Warlingham . . . [However] although the county lost only 7.4% of its area it lost 37.2% of its population and 40.8% of its rateable value. Not all of the residents in the transferred boroughs have even now reconciled themselves to no longer living in Surrey.²

In this account, Surrey County Council is clearly portrayed as a doughty fighter against the aspirations of Aldershot and the encroachments of London.³

During the inter-war period, Surrey County Council itself was required to play a key role in redrawing local authority boundaries throughout the county. In the late 1920s, the Baldwin Government attempted to systematise what had previously been a somewhat piecemeal and haphazard approach to changes in the local government map. In Surrey, for example, there were no fewer than seven separate boundary alterations involving transfers of territory of 350 acres or more and of populations of at least 450 during the 1920s.⁴ As Pearce observes, such an uncoordinated approach 'was not designed to meet the needs of a widespread and coherent attack upon the structural shortcomings of the [local government] system'.⁵ One particularly pressing shortcoming was the existence of some very small county districts at a time when legislation was placing increasingly burdensome responsibilities on them with respect to services such as public health, housing and highways. These, it was felt, 'demanded fewer and stronger authorities'.⁶

The Government's response was the introduction of a procedure known as county review, which followed the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Local Government that was sitting at the time.⁷ Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1929, county councils were charged with the significant and sensitive task of reviewing the boundaries of all non-county boroughs, urban districts, rural districts and parishes in their area. Between 1929 and 1932, twenty-one counties, including Surrey, conducted such a review thereby securing a degree of rationalisation in the boundaries of their second and third tier local authorities. At the time it was intended that these reviews should be repeated at intervals of not less than ten years. However, events conspired to prevent this happening. These included the war and the post-war moves towards a more comprehensive reorganisation of local government that ultimately culminated in the changes in the Greater London area in 1965⁸ and the rest of England in 1974.⁹ Thus, the county reviews of the

late 1920s and 1930s are the only examples of this approach, which saw county councils as the 'engine[s] of reform' with respect to the redrawing of local authority boundaries.¹⁰

In this paper it is intended to focus on the county review process in Surrey, with a view to assessing how it operated, the politics surrounding the decisions taken and the extent to which the changes made reflected those elsewhere. Although essentially a case study, it does provide some more general insights into the politics of place.

II. Process

The formal procedure for the rearrangement of county districts, as prescribed by Section 46 of the Local Government Act 1929, was relatively straightforward. In the interests of ensuring that all the councils with a stake in the process had the opportunity of expressing their views, counties were required to hold conferences with their representatives. At these conferences any of the following types of change could be considered: alterations to the boundaries of any district or parish; mergers of districts or parishes; transfers of parts of districts or parishes to other districts or parishes; the conversion of rural into urban districts; the de-urbanisation of urban districts with their incorporation as parishes into a rural district; and finally, the formation of new districts or parishes could be formed.

There were, however, limitations with respect to the changes that could be made to non-county boroughs. Territory could be transferred from one borough to another and boroughs could be extended to incorporate part or the whole of adjacent district(s). What could not be proposed was their abolition or merger, since boroughs owed their original incorporation to a royal charter rather than general legislation.¹¹ That said, by enabling territory to be transferred between parishes and county districts these reviews were, to some extent, more flexible and pragmatic than those that came later.

The Ministry of Health – responsible for local government at this time – provided further guidance. However, Pearce makes the point that guidance was not very specific and/or particularly clear and it was left to 'each county council to interpret as best they could some exhortations of baffling imprecision'.¹² In considering changes to boundaries, county councils were required to take account of such factors as 'community of interest' and 'financial strength', but the guidance failed to specify what this meant in practice or what was considered to be an appropriate minimum population or penny rate product for an urban authority. County Councils had to exercise their own judgement in these respects. While the lack of precise criteria might be frustrating, in mitigation it could be

said that it was in keeping with the principle of local autonomy and the recognition that 'one size does not fit all'.

Once proposals for change had been agreed by the County Council they had to be submitted to the Minister of Health before 1 April 1932 or an agreed later date. Again, in order to provide every opportunity for views to be expressed, following their submission to the Minister counties had to send copies of the proposals to the districts affected by them. In addition, they had to publish a notice in local newspapers indicating that the proposals had been made and where a copy could be inspected. Any representations from local authorities or local government electors affected by them had to be made to the Minister within six weeks of the publication of the notice. In deciding whether to accept, reject or modify the proposals the Minister had to take account of such representations. Moreover, where an objection was made by one or more of the affected authorities he was obliged to hold a local inquiry. Once these procedures had been completed satisfactorily he then sought confirmation of agreed changes by submitting them to Parliament in the form of a Provisional Order. In cases where the Minister felt that, after consultations with interested authorities, there was a *prima face* case for making boundary changes and the County Council had failed to act, he could initiate and oversee the review process.

One postscript to the review process, the sensitivity of which can easily be overlooked, was the requirement that once the changes had been approved, counties were required to review their electoral divisions.¹³ Unhappiness over alterations to the boundaries of county districts could easily be compounded by consequent adjustments to the area basis of representation on the County Council.

III. Politics

While on paper the county review process looked reasonable, benign even, in practice it often generated a considerable amount of controversy and strife as the example of Surrey demonstrates. In other words, it illustrates the potency of territorial politics.

In carrying out its review Surrey had to deal with thirty-nine county districts, comprising six non-county boroughs, twenty-five urban districts and eight rural districts, and eighty-nine parishes. As the data in Table 1 indicate most of the districts had populations of over twenty thousand. Nonetheless the range of populations was considerable, with the smallest authority, Ham urban district, having a population of only 2206 (in 1931) and the largest, Wimbledon non-county borough, a population of 59,524 (in 1931).

Table 1: Distribution of pre-review county districts by population

Type of district	Population less than 10000	Population between 10001 and 20000	Population more than 20000
Non-county boroughs	0	1	5
Urban districts	6	8	11
Rural districts	0	3	5
Total	6	12	21

Notes

This is based on populations at the time of the 1931 census.

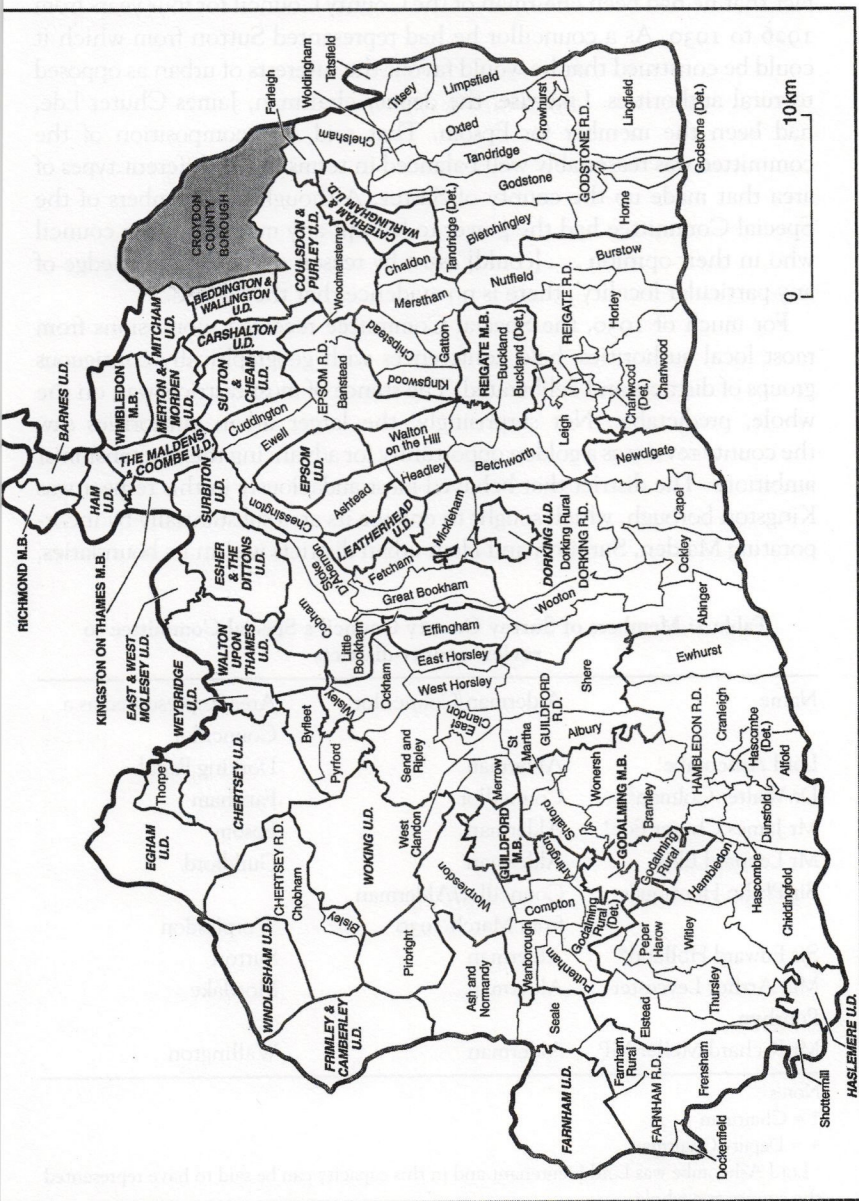
The geographical pattern of Surrey county districts at the time of the review is shown in Map 1.

In that part of the county immediately adjacent to London, and which was destined to become part of Great London in 1965, there was a belt of non-county boroughs and urban districts. Elsewhere, Surrey was essentially a county of urban centres and suburbs surrounded by their rural hinterlands, which formed separate entities for local government purposes. Thus, in any redrawing of boundaries there were essentially three broad interests: metropolitan, non-metropolitan urban/suburban, and rural.

Initially, the County Council's General Purposes Committee was charged with the task of overseeing the county review. Its principal contribution to the process was the convening of a preliminary conference to which all district councils were invited to send representatives. This was held on 7 November 1929. It was made clear, however, that the purpose of the conference was simply to deal with questions of procedure and protocol. It was not to consider matters of substance. The most significant decision of this conference was that local authorities should all make suggestions rather than the county council put forward proposals and seek a response. Thus, as far as the county districts and parishes were concerned, the approach adopted in the early stages was proactive rather than a reactive. This was to change once a comprehensive set of proposals had been drafted.

Having agreed the procedure, in early 1930, the County Council decided to establish a Special Committee to undertake what was described, at the time, as 'the first general review' of county districts, in the expectation that others would follow. In setting up an *ad hoc* committee, it was mirroring a practice adopted in many other counties and adhering to ministerial advice.¹⁴

In view of the magnitude and politically sensitive nature of the review process, it is not surprising that the Special Committee comprised a number of 'big hitters'. Some details of the members are provided in Table 2. As these indicate most of them were aldermen and the person appointed



County of Surrey: Pre 1933 boundaries

to chair the committee was a senior and longstanding member of the council, Alderman Sir Edward Holland. His status was evidenced by the fact that he had been chairman of the County Council for four years from 1926 to 1930. As a councillor he had represented Sutton from which it could be construed that he would favour the interests of urban as opposed to rural authorities. Likewise, the deputy chairman, James Chuter Ede, had been the member for Epsom. That said, the composition of the committee was reasonably well balanced in terms of the different types of area that made up the county of Surrey. Although the members of the Special Committee had the power to 'co-opt any member of the council who in their opinion . . . [could] assist by reason of special knowledge of any particular locality', there is no evidence that they did so.¹⁵

For much of 1930, the Special Committee received submissions from most local authorities; held conferences with geographically contiguous groups of districts and deliberated. The stance of most districts was, on the whole, predictable. Not surprisingly, the larger urban authorities saw the county review as a golden opportunity for advancing their expansionist ambitions. The district that behaved most audaciously in this respect was Kingston borough, which sought to enlarge its area substantially by incorporating Malden, Surbiton and Ham urban districts within its boundaries,

Table 2: Members of Surrey County Council's Special Committee to review county districts

Name	Alderman/Councillor	Area Represented as a Councillor
Lord Ashcombe ¹	Alderman	Dorking Rural
Dr Walter Colman ²	Councillor	Farnham
Mr James Chuter Ede ⁺	Alderman	Epsom
Mr Leonard Ellis	Alderman	Guildford
Sir Philip Henriques	Councillor/Alderman from March 1930	Worplesdon
Sir Edward Holland*	Alderman	Sutton
Maj Arthur Leycester-Penrhyn	Alderman	Mortlake
Mr Richard Meller MP	Alderman	Wallington

Notes

* = Chairman

+ = Deputy Chairman

¹ Lord Ashcombe was Lord Lieutenant and in this capacity can be said to have represented the county as a whole.

² Dr Coleman was not a regular attendee at committee meetings. He resigned from the council in June 1931 and his place on the Committee was not filled.

perhaps with the intention of making a bid for county borough status. Although this proposal was unsuccessful, it did foreshadow what was to happen thirty years later with the establishment of the London Borough of Kingston.¹⁶

The stance of the smaller urban authorities and the parishes, particularly those whose boundaries were contiguous with the larger urban authorities or which had become effectively urban or, more accurately, suburban, was to argue for the maintenance of the status quo and oppose any proposal which would lead to them losing their separate identity. The most vulnerable districts in this respect were the seven urban districts with populations of less than ten thousand or thereabouts.¹⁷ Apart from Ham these were in ascending order Haslemere (4339); Windlesham (5257); Leatherhead (6916); Weybridge (7364); East and West Molesey (8464); and Dorking (10,111). Vulnerable parishes included most of those that comprised Epsom Rural District and elsewhere, Merrow (under threat from Guildford), Dorking Rural (from Dorking), Godalming Rural (from Godalming), Woldingham and Chaldon (from Caterham and Warlingham) and Gatton and Merstham (from Reigate).

In late 1930 the Special Committee produced its 'tentative proposals', which were essentially an attempt to strike an acceptable balance between the demands of urban expansion and the countervailing forces of rural and, in places, suburban resistance.

Details of the proposed composition of the post-reorganisation authorities are summarised in Table 3.

As the information in Table 3 indicates, in deciding what to do about the smaller districts, the Special Committee chose one of four options. These were amalgamation with a larger neighbour, as in the case of East and West Molesey (with Esher) and Weybridge (with Walton-on-Thames);¹⁸ de-urbanisation and incorporation in a rural district, in the case of Haslemere (Hambleton) and Windlesham (Bagshot); division between larger neighbours, in the case of Ham (Kingston and Richmond); and enlargement through the addition of neighbouring parishes, in the case of Leatherhead and Dorking. The varying fate of these authorities was primarily dependent on their location rather than their size. Thus, although Weybridge and East and West Molesey were larger than Leatherhead, their proximity to convenient districts with which they could be easily amalgamated meant that they would lose their separate identity unlike Leatherhead.

Inevitably, like any compromise, there was a considerable amount of dissatisfaction with the 'tentative proposals'. In general, however, rural interests tended to be far more dissatisfied with the outcome than urban. Indeed, in late 1930, a pressure group the Rural Surrey Defence

Table 3: Summary of the tentative proposals

Boroughs (6)	Additions (whole parishes)	Additions (parts of areas)	Area ¹	Pop ²
Godalming		Godalming Rural	1454	11300
Guildford		Artington, Compton, Merrrow, Worplesdon, Shalford, St Martha	6879	32078
Kingston-on-Thames		Ham UD	2813	40744
Reigate	Gatton	Chaldon, Merstham, Nutfield, Bletchingley	9420	31841
Richmond		Ham UD	2786	36474
Wimbledon	No change		—	—
Urban Districts (20)	Additions (whole parishes/ districts)	Additions (parts of parishes)	Area	Pop
Banstead ³	Banstead, Kingswood, Walton on the Hill	Woodmansterne, Chipstead	11939	13833
Barnes	No change		—	—
Beddington and Wallington	No change		—	—
Carshalton		Woodmansterne	3762	24033
Caterham and Warlingham	Chelsham, Woldingham	Godstone, Limsfield, Oxted, Tandridge, Tatsfield, Titsey, Chaldon	13193	22135
Chertsey and Egham	Thorpe		19048	31318
Coulsdon and Purley	Farleigh	Woodmansterne, Chipstead, Merstham	12040	35100
Dorking	Dorking Rural, Mickleham	Effingham, Great Bookham, Little Bookham, Betchworth	15718	15841
Epsom	Ewell	Banstead, Chessington, Cuddington, Walton on the Hill	8357	33892
Esher and the Dittons	East and West Molesey UD, Cobham, Stoke D'Abernon		14894	29715
Farnham	Dockenfield, Farnham Rural, Frensham	Ash and Normandy, Seale and Tongham	24933	26856
Frimley and Camberley	No change		—	—
Leatherhead	Ashted, Fetcham, Headley	Effingham, Great Bookham, Little Bookham	15681	24452
Merton and Morden	No change		—	—
Mitcham	No change		—	—
Surbiton		Chessington	4181	24011
Sutton and Cheam		Cuddington	4674	38545

The Maldens and Coombe	No change		
Walton and Weybridge	Weybridge UD	Byfleet	9269 24783
Woking	Pyrford	Chertsey, Byfleet	15822 34116
Rural Districts (5)	Urban Districts	Parishes	Area Pop
Bagshot ³	Windlesham	Bisley, Chobham (from Chertsey RD)	16192 12143
Dorking and Horley ³		Abinger, Capel, Newdigate, Ockley, Wotton (from Dorking RD), Buckland Charlwood, Horley and Leigh and parts of Betchworth and Burstow (from Reigate RD)	49619 18219
Godstone		Existing RD less Chelsham, Farleigh and Woldingham and parts of Bletchingley, Godstone, Limsfield, Oxted, Tandridge, Tatsfield and Titsey	44785 20645
Guildford		Existing RD less parts of Godalming Rural, Albury, Artington, Compton, Merrrow, Shere and Worplesdon, plus parts of Ash and Normandy and Seale (from Farnham RD) and parts of Elstead, Peper Harrow, Shalford, St Martha and Witley (from Hambleton RD)	55770 22242
Hambleton	Haslemere	Existing RD less Shalford, St Martha, parts of Elstead, Peper Harrow, Witley, plus Shottermill (from Farnham RD) and parts of albury, Godalming Rural and Shere (from Guildford RD)	60822 25667

Key

UD = Urban district

¹ Area of enlarged district

RD = Rural district

² Mid-1929 estimated population of enlarged district³ Entirely new authorities

Notes

These proposals also involved the abolition of Chertsey, Dorking, Epsom, Farnham and Reigate Rural Districts.

Association was set up with the specific aim of resisting any change that would, in members' eyes, adversely affect rural interests. Its sense of outrage at the proposals was reflected in a letter from the Association's Chairman, Sir John Lloyd, to Sir Edward Holland:

These proposals were so widespread, and in a number of cases affecting rural parishes and districts, so drastic that they aroused consternation in various parts of the county. They constituted not merely a review, but a *revolution*.¹⁹

Even allowing for a touch of hyperbole, there was a strong feeling that the proposals were biased towards urban interests and were a real threat to the traditional way of life in the rural parts of Surrey. There was also concern that a move from a rural to an urban administration would result in higher rates.

The proposals were debated by the County Council at an exceptionally long – namely five-hour – meeting on 27 January 1931. During the debate the rural/urban divide was much in evidence, with Alderman Herbert Powell, who had represented Worplesdon when he was a councillor, acting as the leading spokesman for the rural faction. He

pointed out that under the proposals thirty parish councils and three parish meetings would be annihilated . . . [and] asserted that the great asset of Surrey was its rural charm . . . [but] under the proposals very large areas were no longer to be considered rural, but were to be labelled urban or suburban.

However, his efforts to get those proposals which related to rural areas 'put on ice' were unsuccessful.²⁰

In effect, the urban perspective prevailed. This was articulated by, amongst others, Alderman James Chuter Ede, the deputy chairman of the Special Committee, in the following terms:

the Committee had kept in mind the rural picture of Surrey, but they were concerned with human populations, not with flora and fauna, and four-fifths of Surrey's population was living under urban conditions.

Apart from the broader issues, many councillors used the debate to raise concerns over the proposals that affected their area. Not surprisingly, councillors tended to speak out against changes that were perceived as adversely affecting the areas they represented. For example, Christian Neilson, Molesey's county councillor, made it clear that his district 'did not want to amalgamate with anyone', a sentiment which echoed the feelings of a number of other councillors.²¹

The debate highlighted some of the most controversial of the specific proposals and ones where there would be a concerted effort to have them reversed. From the evidence of the debate, coupled with the benefit of hindsight, these were: the substantial expansion of Farnham urban district; the de-urbanisation of Haslemere urban district; the incorporation of the parish of Merrow into the borough of Guildford; the division of Ham urban district between Kingston and Richmond boroughs; the amalgamation of Chertsey and Egham urban districts; the alleged 'Balkanisation' of Epsom rural district; the extension of Esher and the Dittons to include East and West Molesey; the expansion of Reigate borough; the dissolution of Dorking and Reigate rural districts; and – finally – the expansion of Caterham and Warlingham. Other changes, which were mostly relatively minor ones, especially in the metropolitan parts of the county, were far less contentious. Yet, all councillors whether or not their areas were affected were able to participate in the decisions made and the 'tentative proposals', in their entirety, were approved.

Over the next few months, members of the Special Committee engaged in very lengthy discussions and negotiations with the affected authorities, with the ultimate aim of agreeing final proposals. In seeking to secure a reversal or modification of what was proposed, opponents adopted a variety of strategies. One was the mobilisation of the local electorate. In Ham, for instance, out of a total electorate of 960, 875 – over ninety per cent – signed a petition indicating that they 'viewed with grave misgiving the possibility of being merged in Kingston or Richmond', while in East and West Molesey a postcard campaign was organised.²²

A similar approach was to pass critical resolutions at annual parish meetings, typified by that at Walton-on-Hill in March 1931, where there was almost universal opposition to the incorporation of the parish into the proposed Banstead urban district. The local paper reported that

Unanimously and with great enthusiasm, nearly 300 Walton parishioners, at the annual parish meeting on Monday evening, passed a resolution expressing strong opposition to the tentative proposal of the Surrey County Council to include the parish within the urban district and expressing also the desire to remain in a rural district.

Another strategy was to use the conferences organised by the Special Committee to present a reasoned case and alternative proposals. This approach was used most successfully by Haslemere in its campaign to retain its urban status and secure a substantial increase in its area and population.²³ However, some representatives of affected authorities and county councillors felt that 'the Special Committee's pledge to endeavour by

consultation or discussion to reach a substantial measure of agreement had not . . . applied' at a number of conferences.²⁴

Securing the support of the county councillor(s) for the areas concerned was also an important strand in the strategy of interests opposed to proposed changes. In the set piece debates, many of these councillors did attempt to obtain a decision that was favourable to the area they represented even though the odds were stacked against them.

During this period of negotiation, county elections were held in March. Although the available evidence suggests that issues to which county review gave rise did not feature greatly, they were not entirely absent particularly in areas where boundary changes were probable. Of the nine contests – out of a potential seventy²⁵ – four were in divisions significantly affected by proposals – Addlestone, Egham, Leatherhead and Caterham.²⁶ It is significant, perhaps, that Mrs Louisa de Worms the successful candidate in the Egham division received support from the Englefield Green and Egham Ratepayers' Associations, both of which are likely to have opposed the proposed merger with Chertsey. Although it is not clear why, the unsuccessful candidate in the Leatherhead contest, Sir John Seymour-Lloyd, felt the need to make clear his position on the boundary issue. For him a key principle was that the County Council 'should try and secure that the wishes of the inhabitants of the parishes concerned should be respected'. This contest was described as being 'vigorously conducted', unlike most of the others which were very 'low key' affairs.²⁷

Electoral apathy notwithstanding, representations from local authorities, ratepayers associations and other interested parties, did lead to the Special Committee making a number of changes to their 'tentative proposals'. The most significant were: a substantial reduction in the size of the expanded Farnham urban district from 24,933 to 11,390 acres, by no longer including Docketfield parish, much of Frensham and parts of Ash and Normandy and Seale and Tongham parishes;²⁸ the continuation of Haslemere as an urban district but expanded to include Shottermill parish and parts of Frensham, Thursley and Witley parishes; the exclusion of the parish of Headley from the expanded Leatherhead urban district, and its inclusion in Dorking and Horley rural district; a reduction in the size of the expanded Dorking urban district from 15,718 to 11,015 acres, by the exclusion of the southern part of Dorking Rural parish; and – finally – a substantial reduction in the size of the expanded Caterham and Warlingham urban district from 13,193 to 7527 acres, by no longer including Chelsham parish together with parts of Limpsfield, Oxted, Tatsfield and Titsey parishes.

In total eight parishes were reprieved, in the sense that they were to retain their identity within rural districts with respect to all or part of

their area.²⁹ However, one parish, Shottermill was added to the list of those that would now be subject to urban administration.

When the Special Committee's final proposals were brought to the full council at its meeting on 26 May 1931, it was clear that the modifications had gone some way towards placating the rural lobby. In the words of Alderman Herbert Powell, 'the committee had moved in the direction . . . of safeguarding the rural status of certain rural parishes and districts . . . [which] would be extremely gratified at the re-consideration that the committee had given to the proposals'.³⁰ Whether the Special Committee had deliberately sought to 'divide and rule' is unclear. The effect, however, was still to weaken the opposition, so much so that this debate proved decisive.

Nevertheless, during the debate – which lasted for between four and five hours – every effort was made to have the remaining contentious proposals referred back for further consideration through the proposing of amendments. Because of the order in which the proposals were set out, an issue that came up very early in the debate was the treatment of the parish of Merrow. Councillor Samuel Boorman, whose division included Merrow,³¹ was particularly outspoken in his attempt to reverse the decision to merge the whole parish with Guildford borough. He pointed out that it was:

a village of great antiquity . . . [and] possessed all the institutions and activities of a well developed village parish . . . To destroy this rural character, to sacrifice it to the ambitions of a neighbouring borough, would be very unjustifiable.³²

His oratory, however, was to no avail and the amendment to have the case of Merrow reconsidered was defeated on a show of hands by forty votes to 28. Following a request from the requisite number of members, the names of those voting for and against the amendment were recorded. This time there were fifty-one against and 29 for.

Analysis of the vote yields some interesting and surprising findings. Out of a total membership of seventy councillors and 23 aldermen, 49 councillors and 22 aldermen were present, and all but one – none other than the spokesman for the rural lobby Alderman Herbert Powell – voted. Amongst those voting for the amendment there were seven aldermen and ten of the seventeen councillors representing rural divisions. The remaining fifteen votes were those of six councillors representing metropolitan divisions and nine representing non-metropolitan urban/suburban divisions.³³ Not surprisingly, four of these nine represented divisions that were unhappy with what was proposed for them, namely Addlestone, Chertsey, Egham and Molesey. Presumably, they were motivated, at least in part, by the need

to seek allies in their own struggles. Of greater surprise was the fact that councillors representing the rural divisions of Chobham, Cranleigh, Shere, Oxted, Dorking Rural and Horley did not feel the need to show solidarity with their colleagues and voted against the amendment. The representative for Godstone, the remaining rural division, was absent. Thus, the rural interests failed to act in a co-ordinated manner. This suggests that they were motivated not by any real issue of principle, such as the preservation of rural interests and identities, but by purely parochial concerns.

One thing that was clear from the result of this vote was the size of the hurdle that anyone seeking to amend a proposal or have it referred back for further consideration faced. In other words, the treatment of Merrow was emblematic of the plight of smaller authorities seeking to fend off the advances of larger urban neighbours. This, however, did not prevent further attempts being made.

In the case of Ham urban district, Robert Carr Dodds, the councillor for the Maldens and Coombe division which included Ham, supported by Robertson Ferguson, the councillor for Surbiton No 2 division, proposed: 'That Kingston and Richmond Borough and the Ham Urban District do remain as at present constituted', and when it was lost, the councillors for Richmond Central and Barnes, moved 'That the whole of Ham Urban District be included in the Borough of Richmond'. Even though the amendment only attracted nine votes, it showed that Richmond could be every bit as predatory as Kingston, as far as Ham was concerned.

In arguing for the recommendation relating to the enlargement of Reigate to be referred back, Councillor Scott Henderson,³⁴ whose division included Gatton, Buckland, Merstham and Nutfield, pointed out that although 'the problem was in the nature of a jig-saw puzzle . . . the Committee had not been successful in finding the right pieces for their puzzle in this area'. In the case of Gatton, for example, he thought that the small population of 150 was opposed 'to a man and a woman' to the extension, while all that the population of Merstham wanted from Reigate 'was to be left alone'. Once again the rhetoric failed to move sufficient members to get the proposal reconsidered.³⁵

However, this did not deter Councillor Scott Henderson from trying to get the proposal relating to Banstead referred back. He opposed the inclusion of Kingswood, Walton and Chipstead in the proposed new urban district on the grounds that

much of the . . . [area] was common land, and not in any sense of the word homogeneous and without any community of interest. Walton people did not go to Banstead to shop, nor did Chipstead inhabitants go to Walton for their entertainment.

Despite receiving support from a number of fellow councillors, including Alderman G Edwardes Jones, the composition of the proposed Banstead urban district was approved.³⁶

With respect to Caterham and Warlingham, Aldermen Sir Arthur Spurgeon and Arthur Daniell, proposed and seconded the motion that the parish of Woldingham and part of the parish of Godstone be omitted. In speaking for the motion, Sir Arthur described Woldingham in almost lyrical terms as

a very modest little village on the North Downs, some 600 acres in extent, with about 200 houses, whose population did not want their Arcadian peace disturbed. They were 800 feet above sea level, shut away from the main tracks, and quite content to remain an item in the Rural District of Godstone.

Such appeals, however, had little effect on the majority of members whose outlook was essentially urban, indeed metropolitan.³⁷

Mrs Louisa de Worms, the newly elected councillor for Egham, led the resistance to the proposed merger of Chertsey and Egham. She argued vociferously, against the proposal, by drawing attention to the fact that

The townships were divided by five or six miles of open country, with inconvenient means of travel, and it was obvious that in the event of amalgamation it would present difficulties to the ratepayers and councillors . . . [Moreover] the committee's proposals were clearly against the wishes of the inhabitants of Egham, and, she thought, against the wishes of the inhabitants of Chertsey.

Despite receiving support from the councillors for Chertsey and Addlestone, as well as a number of other members, the amendment was defeated by seventeen votes to thirty. In arguing the case against the expansion of Dorking, Councillor Caleb Knight the representative for Dorking Rural pointed out that: 'Much of the area referred to was rural, and must remain so as it was land that could never be built upon, but was dedicated to the nation for all time'. He went on to suggest the de-urbanisation of Dorking. The amendment, however, was still rejected. Similar efforts in support of East and West Molesey's resistance to inclusion in Esher, and the Dittons' urban district, were also unsuccessful. According to Christian Nielson, 'Their Council was administered in a very able manner, their officials were most capable, they were in a very good financial state and would like to be left alone'. Such arguments, however, fell on mainly deaf ears since, in deciding what should be done, geography took precedence over the efficiency of existing administrative arrangements and local sentiment.³⁸

Lastly, the establishment of Dorking and Horley Rural District was opposed by Councillor Caleb Knight on the grounds that the Special Committee

had made a large and practically unworkable district from Abinger in the west to Horley in the east. It would take anyone from Abinger without a car half a day to get to Horley, where it was suggested meetings should be held.³⁹

This and other arguments, however, failed to get the decision referred back to the committee. Since none of the amendments was successful, it was the Special Committee's final proposals, with a few minor adjustments,⁴⁰ that were forwarded to the Ministry of Health. At this stage, however, if the County Council thought that the remainder of the procedure was to be a mere formality it was sadly mistaken. A number of the frustrated authorities now turned their attention to the Minister of Health. While they might have lost a battle, there was still a chance of winning the war through an endgame comprised lobbying the ministry.

Those in the forefront of attempts to persuade the Minister to intervene were Chertsey and Egham urban districts, in the hope of avoiding their impending 'shot gun' marriage; Dorking and Reigate rural districts, both of which felt aggrieved at their intended demise; and Ham urban district as part of its ongoing campaign to avoid being divided in two. Collectively, they had three main bones of contention. The first was that there had been insufficient opportunities to present their case at conferences and that the County Council had not given their views due consideration. A second was its failure to give reasons for its proposals. Lastly, the County Council had not approved an addendum to the proposals. After a seventeen-day local inquiry, the Minister dismissed the first two objections but upheld the third. In practice, this made very little difference to the final outcome.

Of greater significance was the Minister's review of the substance of the proposals. Having considered the evidence he reversed one of major consequence, namely that relating to Chertsey and Egham. As explained, in a letter to the County Council,

In only one instance has the Minister found himself unable to confirm the main proposal of the County Council. He appreciates the reasons for amalgamating the two Urban Districts, but, having regard to the comparative absence of community of interest between the two areas, the fact that each area makes a workable Urban District and the strong opposition of both District Councils he has come to the conclusion that there is not sufficient reason for uniting the districts at the present time.⁴¹

Thus, the persistence of Chertsey and Egham in fighting the merger paid off, and it was not until 1974 that they were eventually united.⁴²

One other reversal which related to Farnham, and although relatively minor is worthy of a brief note. The Minister took the 'view that the greater part of the Tilford area of Farnham Rural should be excluded from the new Farnham Urban District', thereby resulting in a further reduction of the substantial expansion that had originally been proposed.⁴³

Elsewhere, the issue of how to divide Ham between Kingston and Richmond remained unresolved and was subject to further negotiations and inquiry during the second half of 1931 and first half of 1932. Significantly, as the discussions and investigations continued, the percentage of Ham's area that it was proposed to add to Richmond increased at the expense of Kingston. Eventually, much to Kingston's disgust, Richmond ended up with the 'lion's share'. Under the 'tentative proposals' of January 1931, of Ham's 1869 acres, approximately 1575 (84.2 per cent) were allocated to Kingston and 294 (16.8 per cent) to Richmond. The eventual split was almost the reverse, 251 acres (13.4 per cent) to Kingston and 1618 acres (86.6 per cent) to Richmond. What accounted for this dramatic turnaround? First, there seems to have been a growing recognition that the residents of Ham identified themselves far more with Richmond than Kingston. Second, once it became clear that Ham could no longer survive as a separate and distinctive area, lobbying increased for union with Richmond, and foreshadowed in the debate of January 1931. Last, perhaps there was a feeling in certain quarters that Kingston should be punished for its supposed greed in seeking to incorporate Surbiton and Malden, as well as Ham, within its boundaries.

Not surprisingly, it was generally those authorities that perceived themselves as being under greatest threat that fought hardest to maintain, as far as possible, the status quo. In so doing, their fortunes were mixed. The winners were undoubtedly Haslemere urban district and Chertsey and Egham urban districts. The principal losers were Ham urban district, East and West Molesey urban district and Dorking and Reigate rural districts.⁴⁴ One consequence of the extended negotiations was a postponement of the date when the changes would take effect from 1 April 1932 until 1 April 1933.

Once the new pattern of county districts and parishes had been eventually finalised, the County Council's General Purposes Committee turned its attention to the task of adjusting the county's electoral divisions. In so doing, it endeavoured to apply three main principles. These were, first, to keep the total number of divisions at seventy. A second related to target populations, with fifteen thousand being set for urban divisions and twelve for rural. Last, wherever possible, the boundaries of divisions were to respect those of county districts. In the event, it was unable to adhere fully to these principles and its initial proposals included an increase in the total number of divisions from seventy to seventy-four

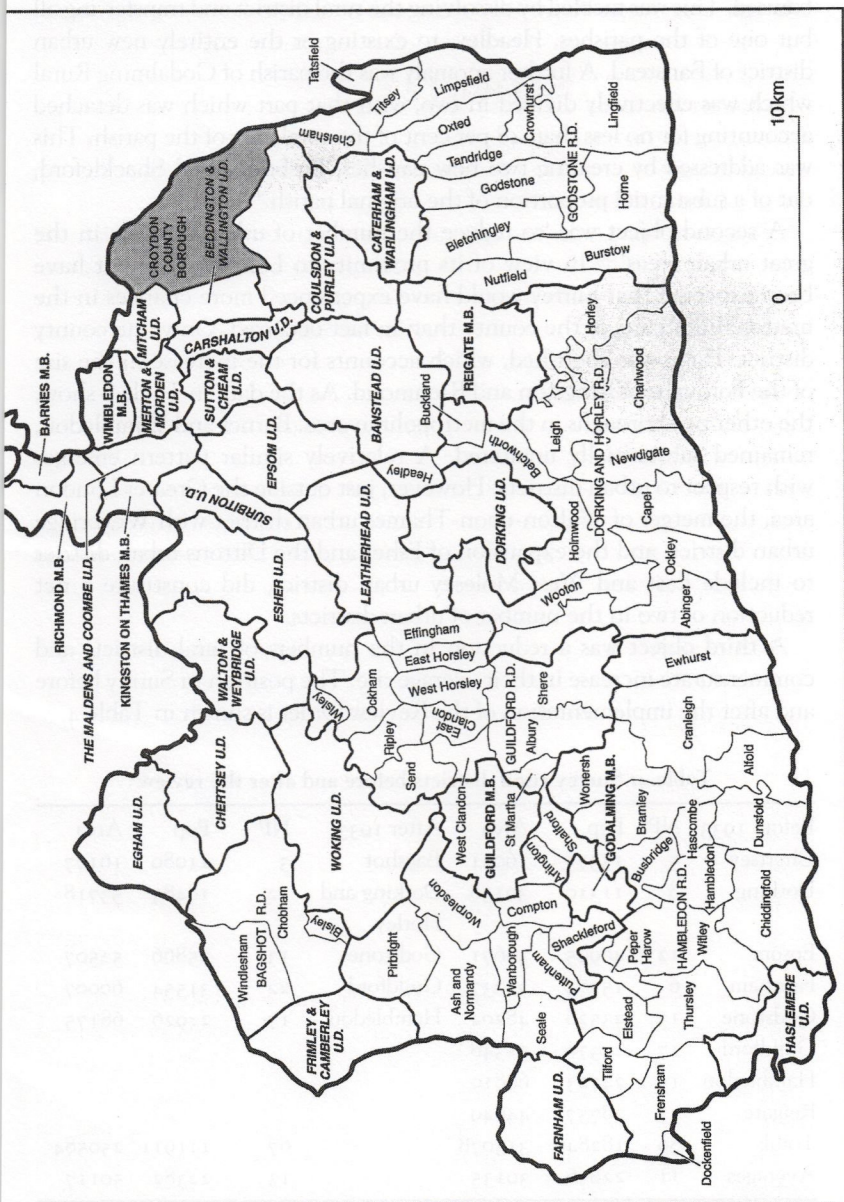
and a fairly large number that crossed district boundaries. Nonetheless, they were relatively well received. That said, two districts, Sutton and Cheam, and Carshalton, both successfully argued for an additional division, even though this meant a further increase in the total number of divisions from 74 to 76.

Another area of contention proved to be less easy to resolve. Although Chertsey and Egham had avoided being merged, for the purposes of determining divisions it was proposed to combine them, throw in Woking for good measure, and allocate five divisions to the combined districts. The suggested divisions included a number that crossed district boundaries, including one, Byfleet, which comprised one ward from Egham (Virginia Water), one from Chertsey (Outer), and three from Woking – North Horsell, Pyrford, and Byfleet. The districts argued for six divisions on population grounds. If agreed, this would also reduce the number that crossed district boundaries. Despite intensive lobbying the County Council would not budge and once again the matter was taken to a higher authority, in this case the Home Office. A local inquiry into this issue and a number of other minor adjustments to divisional boundaries was held in October 1933.⁴⁵ Predictably, perhaps, the Secretary of State decided in favour of the objectors, with the result that Chertsey, Egham and Woking acquired their six divisions, three of which were allocated solely to Woking. Thus, as far as the County Council was concerned, the process of county review ended on yet another rather sour note.

IV. Outcomes

Having looked at the politics of county review, consideration is now given to the extent to which the outcomes, as reflected in the revised configuration of local authority areas in Surrey (see Map 2), mirrored those in other counties. To do this, recourse is made to Lipman's seminal work on local government areas between 1834 and 1945, in which he suggests that from his analysis of all the changes resulting from the county reviews five major objects can be identified.⁴⁶

The first object, according to Lipman, was the 'removal of anomalies', which he saw as the smoothing out and adjusting 'the obvious awkwardness of so many boundaries'.⁴⁷ In Surrey, the most serious anomalies were in the north-west of the county. As Alan Crosby points out, after 1907 Chertsey rural district comprised 'five parishes in three portions and was an administrative nonsense'.⁴⁸ This anomaly was addressed by creating a new rural district, Bagshot, de-urbanising Windlesham, and making adjustments to the boundaries of parishes and urban districts. The administrative and territorial neatness would have been even greater if the proposed merger of Chertsey and Egham had not been reversed. After north-west



Country of Surrey: Post 1933 boundaries

Surrey, another anomaly, in the eyes of many, was not so much the boundaries of Epsom rural district as the fact that much of it was now suburbanised. This was tackled by dissolving the rural district and transferring all but one of the parishes, Headley, to existing or the entirely new urban district of Banstead. A further anomaly was the parish of Godalming Rural which was effectively divided in two, with that part which was detached accounting for no less than 48 per cent of the total area of the parish. This was addressed by creating two new parishes, Busbridge and Shackleford, out of a substantial proportion of the original parish.⁴⁹

A second object was 'to reduce the number of urban districts in the great urban areas'.⁵⁰ In view of its proximity to London, it might have been expected that Surrey would have experienced more changes in the metropolitan parts of the county than in fact occurred. Only one county district, Ham, was abolished, which accounts for the increase in the size of the boroughs of Kingston and Richmond. As the data in Table 6 show, the other two boroughs in the metropolitan area, Barnes and Wimbledon, remained substantially unaltered. A relatively similar pattern emerges with respect to urban districts. However, just outside the Greater London area, the merger of Walton-upon-Thames urban district with Weybridge urban district, and the expansion of Esher and the Dittons urban district to include East and West Molesey urban district, did constitute a net reduction of two in the number of urban districts.

A third object was a reduction in the numbers of rural districts and commensurate increase in their average size. The position in Surrey before and after the implementation of the Review Order is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Surrey rural districts before and after the review

Before 1933	NP	Pop	Area	After 1933	NP	Pop	Area
Chertsey	5	13375	16021	Bagshot	3	11080	16177
Dorking	8	11310	39138	Dorking and Horley	12	18485	53718
Epsom	12	40995	30671	Godstone	13	25866	52507
Farnham	6	15784	21237	Guildford	22	31554	60007
Godstone	13	23526	48204	Hambledon	17	24926	68175
Guildford	17	24376	52348				
Hambledon	15	24723	60810				
Reigate	13	28757	44649				
Totals	89	182846	313078		67	111911	250584
Averages	11	22856	39135		13	22382	50117

Key

NP = number of parishes

Source: 1931 Census Reports, Surrey Part II

Table 5: Parishes transferred to urban authorities

Parish ¹	Area	Pre 1933 Rural District	Post 1933 Urban District/ Municipal Borough (% of area) ²
Ashted^W	2651	Epsom	Leatherhead
Banstead ^W	5557	Epsom	Banstead
Byfleet ^W	2075	Chertsey	Woking (68%); Walton and Weybridge (32%)
Chaldon	1643	Reigate	Caterham and Warlingham (59%); Coulsdon and Purley (16%)
Chessington^W	1702	Epsom	Surbiton
Chipstead ^W	2420	Reigate	Banstead (89%); Coulsdon and Purley (11%)
Cobham^W	5332	Epsom	Esher
Cuddington ^W	1860	Epsom	Epsom (70%); Sutton and Cheam (30%)
Ewell ^W	2437	Epsom	Epsom (95%)
Farleigh^W	1051	Godstone	Coulsdon and Purley
Fetcham ^W	1839	Epsom	Leatherhead (98%)
Gatton^W	1232	Reigate	Reigate
Great Bookham	3294	Epsom	Leatherhead (73%)
Kingswood^W	1820	Reigate	Banstead
Little Bookham	929	Epsom	Leatherhead (80%)
Merrow	1629	Guildford	Guildford (84%)
Merstham ^W	2663	Reigate	Reigate (67%); Coulsdon and Purley (33%)
Mickleham ^W	2846	Dorking	Dorking (98%)
Pyrford	1881	Chertsey	Woking (97%)
Shottermill^W	1152	Farnham	Haslemere
Stoke D'Abernon^W	2038	Epsom	Esher
Thorpe^W	1564	Chertsey	Egham
Walton on the Hill ^W	2608	Reigate	Banstead (88%); Epsom (12%)
Woldingham^W	684	Godstone	Caterham and Warlingham
Woodmansterne ^W	1392	Epsom	Banstead (64%); Carshalton (36%)

Notes

¹ In the case of parishes marked with a ^W the whole area was brought under urban administration. Those in bold were transferred in their entirety to the district shown. Others were divided between two or more districts. In cases where the shares were substantial details have been provided. Parishes not marked with a ^W had part of their area transferred to one or more neighbouring parishes, which meant that it remained under rural administration. Details of these transfers have not been provided. On the whole they were relatively minor.

² Where parishes were divided between more than one urban district, only the district(s) acquiring the largest share(s) are shown in this column.

Source: 1931 Census Reports, Surrey Part II

Table 6: Population and area of non-county boroughs before and after the review

Name	Pop B	Pop A	Diff %	Area B	Area A	Diff %
metropolitan Surrey						
Barnes ¹	42440	42440	0.0	2519	2519	0.0
Kingston on Thames	39055	39825	2.0	1131	1408	24.5
Richmond	37797	39276	3.9	2491	4109	65.0
Wimbledon	59524	59515	-0.0	3221	3212	-0.3
average	44704	45264	1.3	1711	2812	64.3
non-metropolitan Surrey						
Godalming	10401	10940	5.2	1332	2393	79.7
Guildford	30754	34237	11.3	3189	7184	125.3
Reigate	30825	34547	12.1	5995	10255	71.1
average	23993	26575	10.8	3505	6611	88.6

Notes

For the purpose of this table and Table 7, metropolitan is defined as that part of Surrey, which was incorporated into Greater London for local government purposes in 1965.

¹ Barnes was created a municipal borough, by charter of incorporation, on 9 Nov. 1932

Source: 1931 Census Reports, Surrey Part II

As can be seen, although the number of rural districts was reduced from eight to five resulting in a significant increase in the average size of their areas there was in fact a slight decrease in the average size of their populations. Thus, Lipman's assessment was only partly correct in the case of Surrey. This was mainly due to the fact that a number of parishes – some with very large populations – either became the basis of an urban district in its own right, as in the case of Banstead, or were added, in whole or in part, to existing urban districts. Table 5 lists the 25 parishes, which lost their separate identity by being transferred, in whole or in part, from a rural to an urban administration.

A fourth object was 'the extension of the boundaries of boroughs and urban districts'.⁵¹ In Surrey most of the non-county boroughs secured boundary extensions.

As the data in table 6 indicate, those boroughs in that part of Surrey, which was not adjacent to London – namely Godalming, Guildford and Reigate – experienced the largest increases. For those within the metropolitan part of Surrey, there was little room for them to expand except through the abolition of a neighbouring authority, as happened in the case of Ham.

For urban districts, the pattern that emerged from the review was fairly similar, as Table 7 illustrates. Once again there was a marked contrast between the districts in metropolitan and non-metropolitan Surrey.

Table 7: Population and area of post review urban districts before and after the review

Name	Pop B	Pop A	Diff %	Area B	Area A	Diff %
metropolitan Surrey						
Beddington and Wallington	26251	26328	0.3	3042	3045	0.1
Carshalton	28763	28586	-0.6	2924	3346	14.4
Coulsdon and Purley	37702	39795	5.6	8631	11182	29.6
Merton and Morden	41227	41227	0.0	3237	3237	0.0
Mitcham	56859	56872	0.0	2935	2932	-0.1
Surbiton	29401	30178	2.6	3049	4709	54.4
Sutton and Cheam	46500	48363	4.0	3744	4338	15.9
The Maldens and Coombe	23405	23350	0.2	3221	3164	-1.8
average	36264	36837	1.6	3848	4494	+16.8
non-Metropolitan Surrey						
Caterham and Warlingham	19512	21774	11.6	4082	8233	101.7
Chertsey	17133	16988	-0.8	10776	9983	-7.4
Dorking	10111	15204	50.4	1726	9511	451.0
Egham	13725	17196	25.3	7786	9350	20.1
Epsom	27089	35231	30.1	4423	8427	90.5
Esher (and the Dittons)	17076	32407	89.8	5979	14847	148.3
Farnham	18297	19005	3.9	8126	9039	11.2
Frimley and Camberley	16532	16532	0.0	7674	7674	0.0
Haslemere	4339	9168	111.3	2263	5751	154.1
Leatherhead	6916	16483	138.3	3508	11187	218.9
Walton and Weybridge	17953	25671	43.0	6860	9070	32.2
Woking	29931	35987	20.2	11826	15690	32.7
average	16551	21804	31.7	6252	9897	+58.3

Notes

This table does not include the newly created urban district of Banstead, which was located in non-metropolitan Surrey. Its creation involved the transfer of 18,734 people (1931 Census) and 12821 acres from rural to urban administration.

Source: 1931 Census Reports, Surrey Part II

For urban districts in metropolitan Surrey adjustments in population were of minor consequence, likewise in area for half of the districts. By contrast, the average increases in population and area for urban districts in non-metropolitan Surrey were substantial.

The fifth object was that of incorporating small urban districts in surrounding rural districts. Although Surrey only provides one example, Windlesham, which was incorporated in Bagshot rural district, it would have been two if the proposal to de-urbanise Haslemere had not been reversed. Thus, in terms of Lipman's schema, the outcomes of the county

review in Surrey did have something in common with those in other counties. This is not really surprising given that every county, despite having some autonomy, was working within a similar framework. Any differences were due, in the main, to Surrey's proximity to London.

V. Conclusion

The impact of the county review on the local government boundaries within Surrey was considerable, particularly in the non-metropolitan parts of the county. As intended, the smallest authorities tended to be the principal casualties of the reviews. Small may be beautiful, but in the context of county review it also signified vulnerability. Thus, in Surrey, the four smallest urban authorities in terms of population prior to the review, Ham, Windlesham, Weybridge and East and West Molesey all lost their separate identity. Arguably, of the four it was Ham that suffered the most. Thus, it is fitting perhaps that some final words in praise of small authorities should be taken from the speech made – somewhat testily – by the Clerk of Ham Urban District Council at its last meeting:

Here in Ham you [the councillors] all knew the whole of the districtAnd you knew the people whose rights you had to protect, and to whose welfare you had to attend. You protected those rights and looked after that welfare well and thoroughly, and with an economy unknown to many larger bodies. In the name of progress that is all to be done away with. Progress is not always synonymous with happiness and prosperity I am satisfied that neither Kingston nor Richmond can administer Ham as Ham Council administered it. Ham is a little community on its own, and it has been banded together for a number of years by common interests; interests that have often conflicted with those of Kingston and Richmond. And now, by the stroke of the pen, that community is to be split in two.⁵²

Undoubtedly, the sentiments expressed in this quotation would have resonated with all those who felt a sense of loss at the passing of these authorities.

At the time, those smaller authorities and parishes which retained their separate identity, although relieved, might well have anticipated the next review, due within ten years, with a certain amount of trepidation. If, as intended, regular reviews had become a permanent feature of county politics, it is interesting to speculate on how de-stabilising and divisive this might have been. One consequence is that it might well have encouraged short-termism at the expense of longer-term planning.

This can be seen, at least in part, in the metropolitan parts of Surrey where a feature of the years immediately following the county review was the rush to secure borough status. No fewer than 'six new boroughs were created in the thirties: Mitcham and Sutton-Cheam in 1934; Surbiton and Malden-Coombe in 1936; Beddington and Wallington and Epsom-Ewell in 1937'.⁵³ It seems probable that one motivation for this was the desire to have another weapon in their armoury for resisting the advances of predatory neighbours, particularly when the next review was carried out. At the time, this was expected in the 1940s. Although this did not occur, the behaviour of the districts concerned only confirms the status and reverence attached to local government boundaries.

Notes

I should like to thank Bob Smith of the University of Southampton's Cartographic Unit for preparing the two maps which appear in this paper. They illustrate, with considerable clarity, the changes made to Surrey's local authority boundaries in the early 1930s. I am also grateful for the help I have received from the staff of the Surrey History Centre, and the Richmond-upon-Thames Local History and Special Collections Service.

1. See R Ottewill, 'The changing character of municipal elections 1835-1974', *The Local Historian*, 34, 3 (2004), p.161.
2. D Robinson, *Surrey Through the Century 1889-1989* (1989), p.41.
3. At least Surrey was spared the fate of some counties, which had a number of avaricious county boroughs within their boundaries. On the whole, relations with its one county borough, Croydon, which was located in the north east-corner of the county, were generally good.
4. These involved transfers from Guildford rural district to Guildford municipal borough in 1922; Farnham rural district to Farnham urban district in 1924; Epsom rural district to Sutton (renamed Sutton and Cheam) urban district in 1928; Godstone rural district to Croydon county borough in 1928; Dorking rural district to Dorking urban district in 1928; Guildford and Hambledon rural districts to Godalming municipal borough in 1928; and Godstone rural district to Caterham (renamed Caterham and Warlingham) urban district in 1929.
5. C Pearce, *The Machinery of Change in Local Government 1888-1974* (1980), p.51.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Second Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government (Local Authorities - their constitution, relations, areas and functions), Cmd 3213, which was issued in 1928.
8. Under the provisions of the London Government Act 1963.
9. Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.
10. This was the phrase used in a speech by C T Richie, the President of the Local Government Board, in the House of Commons on 7 June 1888 during the passage of the Bill which established county councils. *Hansard 3rd Series*, Vol. 326, (1888), Col. 1481.

11. Pearce, *op.cit.*, p.52.
12. *Ibid.*, p.53.
13. For the purposes of choosing councillors, counties were divided into electoral divisions. There was one councillor per division. Prior to the county review Surrey was divided into seventy divisions.
14. See Pearce, *op.cit.*, p.55.
15. Surrey County Council signed *Minute Book*, 14 January 1930, S[surrey] H[istory] C[entre], CC767/1/1/15.
16. Under the provisions of the London Government Act 1963.
17. At the time of the 1931 census.
18. There was in fact a subtle difference between the treatment of East and West Molesey and Weybridge. The language used to describe the proposal for East and West Molesey implied a takeover by Esher and the Dittons, whereas the union of Weybridge with Walton-on-Thames was seen as genuine merger between equals, despite their differences in size.
19. My emphasis. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 3 January 1931.
20. *Surrey Comet*, 24 January 1931.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 10 January and 30 May 1931.
23. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 13 March, and *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 25 April 1931.
24. Councillor Scott Henderson arguing against the proposals for Banstead urban district at the meeting of the full county council on Tuesday 25 May; *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 29 May 1931.
25. This number of contests was not untypical for the period; in 1925 there had been eleven and in 1928, only eight.
26. The others were in Barnes and Mortlake, Carshalton, Kingston East, Merton No 2 and Mitcham No 3.
27. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 21 and 28 February 1931.
28. This was an anomalous proposal in the first place since the density of population, for an urban district, would have been exceptionally low.
29. These were, in alphabetical order, Ash and Normandy, Chelsham, Dockenfield, Dorking Rural, Effingham, Frensham, Headley and Seale and Tongham parishes.
30. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 30 May 1931.
31. It also included the parishes of Ripley and Send.
32. *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 30 May 1931.
33. For the purposes of this analysis, the seventy electoral divisions have been categorised as i) seventeen, predominantly rural in character; ii) 23 urban/suburban divisions in non-metropolitan Surrey; iii) thirty metropolitan divisions covering that part of the county which was incorporated into Greater London in 1965.
34. He was also Chairman of Reigate Rural District Council, one of the authorities which was likely to be abolished.
35. *Surrey Mirror and County Post*, 29 May 1931.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.* *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 30 May 1931.
39. *Ibid.*
40. To the parishes of Artington, Betchworth, Chelsham and Chipstead.

41. Letter from Minister of Health to Surrey County Council, 6 May 1932, reproduced in Report of the Special Committee and known as the "Yellow Book", pp.856-70, SHC.
42. Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972. It is interesting to note that since county boundaries were generally treated as sacrosanct, possible mergers, such as that between Egham - in Surrey - with Staines in Middlesex, were never contemplated.
43. Letter from Minister of Health to Surrey County Council, 6 May 1932, *op.cit.*
44. As required, the outcomes were confirmed in a number of Provisional Orders. These were the Surrey Review Order 1933 (Ministry of Health, Order 76890) and Surrey (Riverside Areas) Order 1933 (Ministry of Health, Order 76974).
45. The parishes of Betchworth and Buckland sought to be transferred from the Banstead South division, to Dorking and Horley West; Worplesdon parish wanted to be moved from Ripley to Ash, while Caterham and Warlingham wanted a different boundary between its Eastern and Western divisions.
46. V Lipman, *Local Government Areas 1834-1945* (1948).
47. *Ibid*, p.201.
48. A Crosby, *A History of Woking* (2003), p.120.
49. Out of an original area of 5734 acres, Busbridge comprised 2447 acres and Shackleford, 1993 acres. The balance - 948 acres - was added to Godalming borough, along with Hascombe parish, 343 acres; and Artington parish, three acres. Busbridge was allocated to Hambledon rural district and Shackleford to Guildford rural district.
50. Lipman, *op.cit.*, p.201.
51. *Ibid*, p.203.
52. *The Richmond and Twickenham Times*, 25 March 1933.
53. T Freeman, *The Conurbations of Great Britain* (1959), p.64.