

INTRODUCTION

The early history of local government in the Harrow area is rather complicated. The Harrow Local Board of Health, set up in 1850, administered a district of 1,047 acres, comprising the whole of the Hill, most of Greenhill and Old Roxeth, and North Sudbury. Other bodies that administered the surrounding area included the Hendon Union Board of Guardians (established 1835), the Edgware Highways Board (1863-79) and the Hendon Rural Sanitary Authority (1872-94). Under the Local Government Act of 1894 and Local Government Board Order no. 31,845, in December 1894 Harrow-on-the-Hill Urban District was formed, with identical boundaries, from the Board of Health District. The new parish of Holy Trinity (Wealdstone), having irregular and scattered boundaries — “varying in length from four to five miles between three long arms” — became Wealdstone Urban District (2,072 acres). Hendon Rural District was formed from those parishes in Hendon Rural Sanitary Authority that had not been converted into urban districts — Pinner (3,791 acres), Great Stanmore (1,484 acres), Little Stanmore (1,591 acres), Edgware (2,089 acres) — to which was added the new parish of Harrow Weald (2,384 acres); see Maps 1 and 2.

On 1 October 1895, as a result of Local Government Board Order no. 33,399, a small part of Harrow-on-the-Hill UD (north of the centre of Hindes Road) was transferred to Wealdstone; a much larger area of Wealdstone UD (including portions of Greenhill south of the centre of Hindes Road, as well as the UD’s south-western ‘arm’ towards Dabs Hill, Roxeth) was transferred to Harrow-on-the-Hill, leaving the latter district administering an area of 2,197 acres.

Between 1895 and 1914 Wealdstone developed rapidly and frequently sought a re-alignment of boundaries. A minor adjustment (Local Government Board Order no. 44,414) in the Hindes Road area on 24 September 1902 left Harrow-on-the-Hill with 2,028 acres, Wealdstone with 1,061 acres, Pinner with 3,782 acres and Harrow Weald with 2,373 acres. In 1912 a petition from Wealdstone for an extra 2,795 acres, mostly from Harrow Weald, was accepted by Middlesex County Council but was not sanctioned by the Local Government Board. Various schemes for more land were unsuccessfully presented in 1926.

Meanwhile, in June 1898 Harrow-on-the-Hill UD failed to regularise its boundaries, presenting a memorial to the Middlesex County Council to annex an area including Roxeth Recreation Ground and properties in Mount Park Road/South Hill Avenue (see Map 5). This was strongly opposed by Northolt Parish Council and Uxbridge RDC. Similarly, in March 1900 Harrow-on-the-Hill presented a memorial to incorporate from Wembley UD three parcels of land (in total an area of 3.7 acres, with one parcel being detached from Wembley) that were east and west of the Greenford Road, adjacent to the boundary with Greenford UD (Map 6). The application was “strenuously opposed” by Wembley UDC.

Before Uxbridge Rural District was abolished in 1929, the Middlesex (Harrow-on-the-Hill Urban District) Confirmation Order no. 72,899 transferred 101 acres of Northolt Parish to Harrow-on-the-Hill UD on 1 October 1928. (The remainder of the parish transferred to Ealing.) Therefore South Harrow Recreation Ground and those portions of Mount Park Road and South Hill Avenue in Uxbridge RD finally moved into Harrow-on-the-Hill UD. The transfer also included land that would soon contain new homes on Westwood Avenue and Wood End Avenue. This subject, as well as the boundary in the Cavendish Avenue/Wood End Road area, forms part of Appendix Z.

A final boundary change, brought about by the Hendon UD Council Act 1929, occurred on 1 April 1931 when Edgware parish was transferred to Hendon Urban District. The present-day Borough of Harrow has its origins in the Middlesex Review Order 1934 that created, *inter alia*, Harrow Urban District by amalgamating the Urban Districts of Harrow-on-the-Hill and Wealdstone with the then four parishes (Pinner, Harrow Weald, Great Stanmore and Little Stanmore) of Hendon RD.

Turning to Kingsbury UD, one can do little better than to quote extensively (with minor corrections and editing) from volume 5 of *The Victoria History of the County of Middlesex*:

Poor and backward, Kingsbury parish was not welcomed by any of its neighbours when Urban Districts were formed in 1894, especially since sewerage had already caused friction with Hendon. After Kingsbury became a ward of Wembley UD, Wembley’s nine councillors resented paying for

sewerage schemes for Kingsbury, while Kingsbury's three councillors were frustrated through being in a permanent minority. Personal jealousies exacerbated the situation, money was wasted in litigation, and in 1899 the Inquirer from Middlesex County Council considered Wembley UDC "an object lesson in misgovernment."

In 1900 Kingsbury became a separate Urban District with six councillors. After more turbulence, however, another Inquiry was held in 1906, when the district council was described as having furnished an example of maladministration. The trouble was partly inherent in Kingsbury's situation. As a sparsely populated district the rateable value was insufficient to provide essential services except by high rates, which discouraged people from settling there. More important, however, was the struggle among the councillors, the Reds and Blues, for control of the chair. The two most notorious councillors were Dr. Arthur Calcutta White of Kenton Grove Farm and José Diaz, a Spaniard who lived at Fern Dene. White, who had been largely responsible for the trouble with Wembley, owned Gore Farm and caused offence with his piggeries and rubbish dumps in Honeypot Lane. Attempted improvements by the Medical Officer of Health or the Inspector of Nuisances were blocked by White, who responded to a summons by dismissing the Clerk. Diaz, after his enforced resignation from the chair as an alien in [1905], continued to instruct his faction from the [public gallery]. Government collapsed altogether in 1906, when minutes were rescinded, a rate was cancelled, and bills were left unpaid. Ratepayers petitioned for an Inquiry, as a result of which the number of councillors was increased to nine. Diaz, now naturalised, was elected Chairman in 1907, however, and in 1909 White began to interrupt meetings, which became so stormy that the Police were called. Two councillors, opponents of both Diaz and White, ceased to attend in [1909] and Diaz retained control until his death in 1915.

Diaz's death coincided with the building of factories and the beginning of Kingsbury's long-awaited development, which increased the rateable value eight-fold between 1922 and 1933.

On 1 April 1934 Kingsbury UD ceased to exist and the area was once again combined with Wembley UD, sending 10 councillors to the Town Hall from four wards from its former area: Chalkhill (two seats), Fryent (two seats), The Hyde (four seats) and Roe Green (two seats).

This volume of election results deals with each of the four District authorities — Harrow-on-the-Hill UD, Wealdstone UD, Kingsbury UD and Hendon RD — in turn. Elections for the Urban Districts were either held annually (for one-third of the seats on the Council) or triennially (for all the seats). Elections for Hendon Rural District were held triennially for all the seats on the Council. In all cases every elector had as many votes as there were vacancies.

In addition, results for the Parish Councils — Pinner, Harrow Weald, Great Stanmore, Little Stanmore and Edgware — are presented. Parish elections for all the seats on the Councils took place annually (until 1899) and triennially (from 1901). The procedure for electing parish councils are described in Appendix P.

Following the outbreak of the Great War, the elections of 1915 were the last to be held until 1919. The Elections and Registrations Act 1915 postponed the statutory election of district councillors due in 1916 for a year, and the Parliament and Local Elections Acts of 1916, 1917 and 1918 continued the process while hostilities lasted. When casual vacancies occurred on councils they were filled by co-option, the choice of new councillor being made by the remaining members of the Council.

The following paragraphs note special aspects for the Harrow Urban, Wealdstone Urban, Kingsbury Urban and Hendon Rural District Councils as well as the latter's individual Parish Councils.

Harrow-on-the-Hill Urban District Council met for the first time on 3 January 1895 and for the final time on 26 March 1934. From 1895 until the election in 1904 the Council consisted of nine members, but in that year three additional seats were created, and the Council comprised 12 members until abolition in 1934. Elections were held annually for one-third of the seats.

As far as can be ascertained, before 1919 almost all candidates sought election as independents and without party 'labels'. However, from the 1919 election onwards candidates were routinely nominated by the Labour Party. Therefore, from that date the party affiliations of candidates are recorded in the tables of results. After two Labour nominees were elected unopposed in 1922 it is clear that the "anti-

Socialist" elements in the area coalesced around the banner of the Harrow Chamber of Trade with the organisation nominating full slates of candidates from 1924.

Wealdstone Urban District Council, consisting of 12 members, met for the first time on 31 December 1894 at the Boys School, Wealdstone and for the last time on 15 March 1934 at the Council Offices in Peel Road. After the first election, whole Council elections took place every three years until the outbreak of the First World War. After the 1919 election, electoral arrangements were altered so that elections were held annually for one-third of the seats.

Although Wealdstone Independent Labour Party occasionally nominated candidates in the period before the First World War, a concerted effort to gain significant representation was not made until 1919 when five out of seven Labour nominees were elected. Eventually the Wealdstone Ratepayers' Association organised candidates to oppose Labour and a full slate of Association candidates appeared at the 1925 and subsequent elections. The 1919 election has again been used as the starting point for recording party affiliations of candidates.

Kingsbury Urban District Council, covering an area of 1,829 acres, held its first meeting on 16 April 1900 at the Board School, Kingsbury Lane, and its final meeting on 26 March 1934 at the Council's offices, Kingsbury Green. Initially there were six members of the Council but this was increased to nine at the election of 1907. From 1901 elections were held triennially for all the members, this changed after 1925 when annual elections were introduced for one-third of the seats. Due to the factional nature of Kingsbury's elections, party affiliations are included for the pre-war set of election results.

Hendon Rural District Council assembled for the first time at the Red Hill Workhouse, Edgware, on 8 January 1895, and for the final time on 22 March 1934 at the Council Offices, Uxbridge Road, Harrow Weald. On many documents until July 1901 the Council referred to itself as the Rural District of Hendon Union. This was no doubt because the terms of the Local Government Act 1894 meant that rural district councillors also exercised the office of Guardians.

Initially the Council consisted of eight members, the parishes being assigned district councillors as follows: Pinner (three seats), Harrow Weald (one seat), Great Stanmore (two seats), Little Stanmore (one seat) and Edgware (one seat). At the 1904 election the growth of population in some parishes was recognised and the total membership of the Council was increased to 10 by assigning an extra seat each to Pinner and Harrow Weald. In 1914 the representation of Pinner was further increased (to five) which made total Council membership 11. Due to the size of Pinner, the parish was split for electoral purposes into three wards at the 1925 election (see Appendix Q). The wards were: Pinner (Village), Pinner (Hatch End) and Pinner (Headstone), and they were allotted two, one and two councillors, respectively. In 1931 Edgware parish was transferred to Hendon Urban District; the size of Hendon Rural District Council returned to 10 councillors as a result.

The results tables for Hendon list the parishes geographically from west to east. Party affiliations are shown from 1919.

Pinner Parish Council consisted of nine members and met for the first time on 3 January 1895 at the 'Cocoa Tree' temperance tavern, High Street, Pinner, and for the last time on 28 March 1934. When the parish was divided into wards in 1925, the nine seats were assigned as follows: Village (four seats), Hatch End (one seat) and Headstone (four seats). In the main, candidates stood on the basis of their reputation as individuals or their importance as businessmen, publicans, shopkeepers etc. in the locality. At the 1922 election (three years before the introduction of wards) there were candidate slates based on geography with 'Headstone' and 'Village' factions jostling for success. Party politics were absent from Pinner Parish Council elections until after the Great War when the Labour Party occasionally intervened, particularly in the more 'urban' ward of Headstone.

Harrow Weald Parish Council consisted of nine members and met for the first time on 2 January 1895 at the Old Schools, Harrow Weald, and for the last time at the Memorial Hall on 26 March 1934. Candidates usually stood for election on an individual basis, although from time to time 'tickets' of candidates came forward, either because they were of like minds or perhaps because of a wish to share electioneering expenses.

Great Stanmore Parish Council also consisted of nine members and held its first meeting on 2 January 1895 at the National Schools. The Council's final meeting took place at the Institute, Church Road, on 28 March 1934. Initial interest in this new Parish Council — the first two elections were keenly fought and proceeded to a poll — later subsided and no further elections were contested until after the First World War. Like Harrow Weald, all candidates appear to have stood without overt party political support and on the basis of their standing or reputation in the local community. Some important records for Great Stanmore have not yet been found, so the compilation of a fully comprehensive electoral record is restricted to the period 1894-1918. The 1919-33 section suffers from a number of unknowns and it has been necessary to make several assumptions: where this has happened a footnote records the circumstances.

Little Stanmore and Edgware Parish Council areas were both, in terms of population, smaller than the other parishes, so each Council consisted of six members. The parishes shared a long, straight, common boundary which was part of Watling Street, an ancient trackway that was paved by the Romans. **Little Stanmore Parish Council** held its first meeting on 3 January 1895 and its final meeting in March 1934. Elections to the Council (which convened at the Whitchurch Institute) were more competitive than those in Edgware: in the final two contests the Little Stanmore Ratepayers' Association promoted candidates, while the local Conservative Association was represented in 1928 and the Labour Party in 1931. Compiling the results was helped by an almost full set of Council Minutes being available; unfortunately, the whereabouts of the final volume, covering the years 1930-34, is unknown.

To the north-east of the Watling Street boundary was the area administered by **Edgware Parish Council**. Holding its sessions in the Girls' School Room, the Council's inaugural meeting took place on 18 December 1894 and its final gathering on 24 March 1931. On 1 April 1931 the parish was transferred to Hendon Urban District, the other parishes of Hendon Rural District continuing in existence for a further three years. During the lifetime of Edgware Parish Council there appears to have been only one election of councillors that proceeded to a poll. Being a small parish, there was a tendency on the part of the parishioners to try and avoid the expense of a poll: even in 1928, a keenly contested election at a well-attended Parish Meeting did not result in a demand for a poll. Elections were not fought on party lines although by 1928 the Edgware and District Residents' Association was beginning to wield some influence: all councillors elected on that occasion belonged to the association. The records for Edgware Parish Council are mostly complete, but for reasons explained in the 'Note on the Sources' there is no precise record of the elections held in 1896, 1897 and 1898.