

### **3) Electoral areas in the parliamentary boroughs in Surrey**

#### **Before 1832**

The sending of representatives to Parliament was seen in the Middle Ages as a cause of expense and towns might well seek to avoid being issued with writs to elect members. It may, therefore, be as an act of royal favour that an incorporated borough as important as Kingston escaped the burden of representation after the fourteenth century. Kingston returned members to four fourteenth-century parliaments and Farnham returned members in 1311 and 1460. Bletchingley, Guildford, Reigate and Southwark regularly returned members from the reign of Edward I onwards, Gatton became a parliamentary borough in 1450, and Haslemere in 1584. The boundaries of the parliamentary boroughs were tightly-drawn around the original urban core of each of these towns.

#### **1832-1867**

Bletchingley, Gatton and Haslemere were disfranchised under the Reform Act, 1832, and Reigate's representation was reduced to one MP. Lambeth became a parliamentary borough, returning two MPs. The boundaries of the boroughs are roughly as follows:

- (a) Lambeth: Newington and the northern parts of the parishes of Lambeth and Camberwell
- (b) Reigate: the parish
- (c) Southwark: Southwark, Rotherhithe and Bermondsey.
- (d) Guildford: the town and environs

#### **1867-1885**

Reigate was disfranchised and Guildford lost one of its two members under the Representation of the People Act, 1867. Under the Boundaries Act, 1868 (31 and 32 Vic c46) the boundaries of Guildford were extended.

#### **1885-1919**

Under the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, Guildford was disfranchised. Seven parliamentary boroughs were continued or created and these were divided into sixteen single-member constituencies:

- (a) Southwark, (area as before): three divisions, west, Rotherhithe, and Bermondsey
- (b) Lambeth (the parish): four divisions, north, Kennington, Brixton, and Norwood
- (c) Battersea and Clapham (the two parishes): two divisions, Battersea and Clapham
- (d) Camberwell (Camberwell parish and the hamlet of Penge): three divisions, north, Peckham, and Dulwich.
- (e) Croydon (the borough): one division
- (f) Newington (the parish): two divisions, west and Walworth
- (g) Wandsworth (the parishes of Wandsworth, Tooting Graveney, Streatham and Putney, including Roehampton): one division

The areas covered by six of the seven parliamentary boroughs listed above became part of the County of London in 1889 (although Penge was then transferred out of London into Kent in 1900) and the seventh, Croydon, became a county borough in 1889. The Local Government Act, 1888, which effected these changes, did not affect parliamentary constituencies.

### **1919-1944**

The Representation of the People Act, 1918, created three parliamentary borough constituencies in Surrey:

(a) Kingston-upon-Thames: Kingston-upon-Thames municipal borough, Surbiton urban district, Malden and Coombe urban district.

(b) Richmond: Richmond municipal borough, Barnes urban district, Ham urban district

(c) Wimbledon: Wimbledon municipal borough, Merton and Morden urban district.

Later changes in the areas and status of the local authorities (for example, the abolition of Ham urban district) did not affect the constituency boundaries.

### **1944-1948**

The division of the two most populous Surrey county constituencies under the 1944 Act created four new constituencies, two of which were borough constituencies:

(a) Mitcham: the municipal boroughs of Mitcham and Beddington and Wallington

(b) Sutton and Cheam: the municipal borough of Sutton and Cheam

### **1948 to the present day**

The Act of 1948 created a new borough constituency of Merton and Morden and revised the areas of existing ones. The review of 1955 again altered the boundaries of the borough constituencies, creating a new constituency, Surbiton. In 1965 the areas covered by the existing borough constituencies all passed into Greater London. The review of 1970 created five new borough constituencies within the 'new' Surrey: Spelthorne, Chertsey and Walton, Esher, Epsom and Ewell, and Reigate. The review of 1983 again created five borough constituencies, identical, except for minor boundary alterations, with those of 1970.