

# Further clarification: electoral division boundaries in the Wootton Bassett area of Wiltshire

This paper has been sent to:

- Wiltshire County Council
- North Wiltshire District Council
- Relevant parish and town councils affected by the proposed electoral arrangements (Wootton Bassett Town Council, Lydiard Tregoz Parish Council, Lydiard Millicent Parish Council, Broad Town Parish Council, Lyneham Parish Council, Tockenham Parish Council, Clyffe Pypard Parish Council).
- Local MPs and MEPs
- Any local residents who have made submissions to us with respect to the Wootton Bassett area

Copies of this paper can also be downloaded from our website at [www.boundarycommittee.org.uk](http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk)

## What is the Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by the UK Parliament. Its main role is to conduct electoral reviews of local authorities in England with the aim of ensuring the number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same. Other duties include reviewing local authority boundaries and advising the Government on local authority bids for unitary status.

## Background

### Electoral review in Wiltshire

The Boundary Committee for England is currently conducting an electoral review of the new Wiltshire unitary authority. The review began on 26 February 2008 with the changes to electoral divisions intended to be implemented in time for elections in May 2009. The first consultation stage ended on 21 April 2008 and the Boundary Committee published its Draft Recommendations on 1 June 2008. In response the Committee received approximately 110 representations during the second stage of consultation, which finished on 25 August 2008.

The representations referred to in this paper, together with the Boundary Committee's draft recommendations are available for viewing on our website at [www.boundarycommittee.org.uk](http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk). A leaflet is enclosed explaining what we have to consider when making our recommendations.

## Areas on which we would like views

In response to the Committee's draft recommendations, we received a significant number of objections, supported by good evidence, to the proposed arrangements for the Wootton Bassett area. A number of alternative arrangements were proposed. As the alternatives have not been formally consulted upon and to help us put forward the most appropriate recommendations for this area, the Committee would like to hear views from local stakeholders on the proposals for the Wootton Bassett area detailed below. Please tell us which option you prefer, taking care to explain your reasons.

## Our consideration of submissions received and the need for further views

In the draft recommendations, the Committee proposed three single member divisions to cover the town of Wootton Bassett and neighbouring parishes of Lydiard Tregoz and Lydiard Millicent. This pattern of divisions was based on Wiltshire County Council submission of 22 April 2008, as supported by Wootton Bassett Town Council.

Unfortunately, the Committee had not taken account of an updated submission from Wiltshire County Council on 01 May 2008 when forming its draft recommendations. This updated County Council scheme was forwarded to all local stakeholders by the Committee on 10 July 2008 to ensure that the second stage of public consultation would continue on a transparent and effective basis.

Wiltshire County Council proposed two predominantly urban divisions of Wootton Bassett Central and Wootton Bassett North. They also proposed a Wootton Bassett South & The Lydiards division, which would combine the south of Wootton Bassett Town (mainly the area south of the railway line) and the two Lydiard parishes. This proposal did not contain any specific evidence of shared community identities or interests in the Wootton Bassett area.

In response to the draft recommendations we received a number of submissions objecting to our proposals, as well as opposing the updated proposals of the County Council and the Town Council. These objections came from Cllr. Mollie Groom (Wiltshire County Councillor for Wootton Bassett North and North Wiltshire District Councillor for Lydiards & Broad Town), and were supported by Lydiard Tregoz PC, Lydiard Millicent PC, Broad Town PC, and a local resident. Cllr. Groom provided details of an alternative pattern of divisions along with evidence of shared community identities and interests between Broad Town PC and the two Lydiard parish councils, along with the town of Wootton Bassett.

## Proposals on which we would like views

### Option one: Wiltshire County Council proposal of 1 May 2008 (please see attached Map A)

The updated County Council of 1 May 2008 envisaged two predominantly urban divisions in Wootton Bassett Central and Wootton Bassett North. They also proposed a Wootton Bassett South & The Lydiards division, which would combine the south of Wootton Bassett Town (mainly the area south of the railway line) and the two Lydiard parishes. The County Council proposed placing the parish of Broad Town within a 'Lyneham' division to the south (also comprised of Lyneham PC, Tockenham PC and Clyffe Pypard PC).

<b>Division Name</b>	<b>Number of Electors 2012</b>	<b>Variance from the average 2012 (%)</b>
Wootton Bassett North	3,720	0
Wootton Bassett Central	3,824	3
Wootton Bassett South & The Lydiards	3,774	2
Lyneham (inc. Broad Town PC)	4,064	10

### Option two: Cllr Mollie Groom proposal of 19 August 2008 (please see attached Map B)

Cllr Groom has provided details of an alternative pattern of divisions. She envisaged two urban Wootton Bassett divisions (Wootton Bassett North with similar boundaries to that proposed by the County Council, along with a Wootton Bassett South, covering most of the remainder of the parish). This would leave a section of the east of the town attached to the Lydiards and Broad Town. As a consequence, the proposed Lyneham division would be reduced in size.

<b>Division Name</b>	<b>Number of Electors 2012</b>	<b>Variance from the average 2012 (%)</b>
Wootton Bassett North	3,870	5
Wootton Bassett East (including the Lydiards & Broad Town PCs)	3,921	6
Wootton Bassett South	4,039	9
Lyneham (exc. Broad Town PC)	3,546	-4

## Town Council arrangements

A consequence of both proposals would be a change in the electoral arrangements of Wootton Bassett Town Council. Under Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 we are obliged, in as far as is practicable, to create parish wards if a parish lies in more than one division. Under either proposal three parish wards would be created within Wootton Bassett and would follow the boundaries of the relevant unitary divisions within Wootton Bassett.

## Making a representation

Please send submissions to the Boundary Committee for England by **24 October 2008**. We are unable to consider responses received after this date. Tell us clearly:

- Which area you are writing about
- Which option you prefer
- Why this option is better than the other options

Please feel free to refer to evidence you may already have provided to us. However, additional evidence and further comments would strengthen the case for your chosen option. We welcome responses in writing by post, email or fax. Please send your response to the questions raised in this consultation to:

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## Feedback form

The deadline for responses to this consultation is **24 October 2008**. We will be unable to consider responses received after this date.

**Name** .....

**Organisation** .....

Please tick the option you prefer and would like to see implemented.

### Option one

**Wiltshire County Council proposal** based on a Wootton Bassett North, Wootton Bassett Central, Wootton Bassett South & The Lydiards. Broad Town PC would be placed in the Lyneham division.

### Option two

**Cllr. Mollie Groom proposal**, as supported by Lydiard Tregoz PC, Lydiard Millicent PC and Broad Town PC. This proposal would create a Wootton Bassett North and Wootton Bassett South, along with a Wootton Bassett East (including the Lydiards and Broad Town). Broad Town PC would be removed from the Lyneham division.


Please attach further evidence or additional information to this form.

**Please send this form and any additional information to:**

The Review Manager  
Wiltshire Electoral Review  
The Electoral Commission  
Trevelyan House  
30 Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW

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