

Swindon

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Comment text:

Dear Sir/Madam

I am emailing you regarding your Ward Boundary Proposals for Swindon. We note that on Page 31 of the LGBCE's proposals (attached) includes changes to South Swindon Parish Council's Ward Boundaries and it's these proposals that we would particularly like to comment on.

The Parish Council would like the Boundary Commission to match the Parish Ward boundaries with your proposed Borough Wards. The one exception to this is Badbury Park which is proposed to be in a borough ward with the communities of Eldene and Liden which is in a separate Parish Council area. For simplicity and in order to comply with LGBCE's rules, it's proposed Badbury Park becomes a one-member Parish Ward. See attached the proposed Parish Ward Boundaries and Councillor representation for these Wards. We believe this proposal will be simpler for residents to understand as their Parish Wards will be the same as their Borough Wards and avoids one and two member wards which can lead to areas being under-represented if councillors have to take a leave of absence for sickness, holidays or personal reasons.

The Council would also like to tweak the LGBCE's Ward boundary proposals in the Central Swindon area. We believe this change would be small enough that it shouldn't effect councillor representation. Specifically, we would like:

- The Broadgreen and East Walcot Ward Boundary to be extended to Wellington Street as these roads have greater affinity with the Broadgreen area than the Queen's Park Ward.
- That the Railway Village be included within the same ward rather than split across Kingshill & Okus Ward and Queen's Park Ward. We consider the Railway Village area to be from GWR Park to the west, Faringdon Road to the South and Wellington Street to the East. The Railway Village is

a very recognised historic community in Swindon and should be kept together.

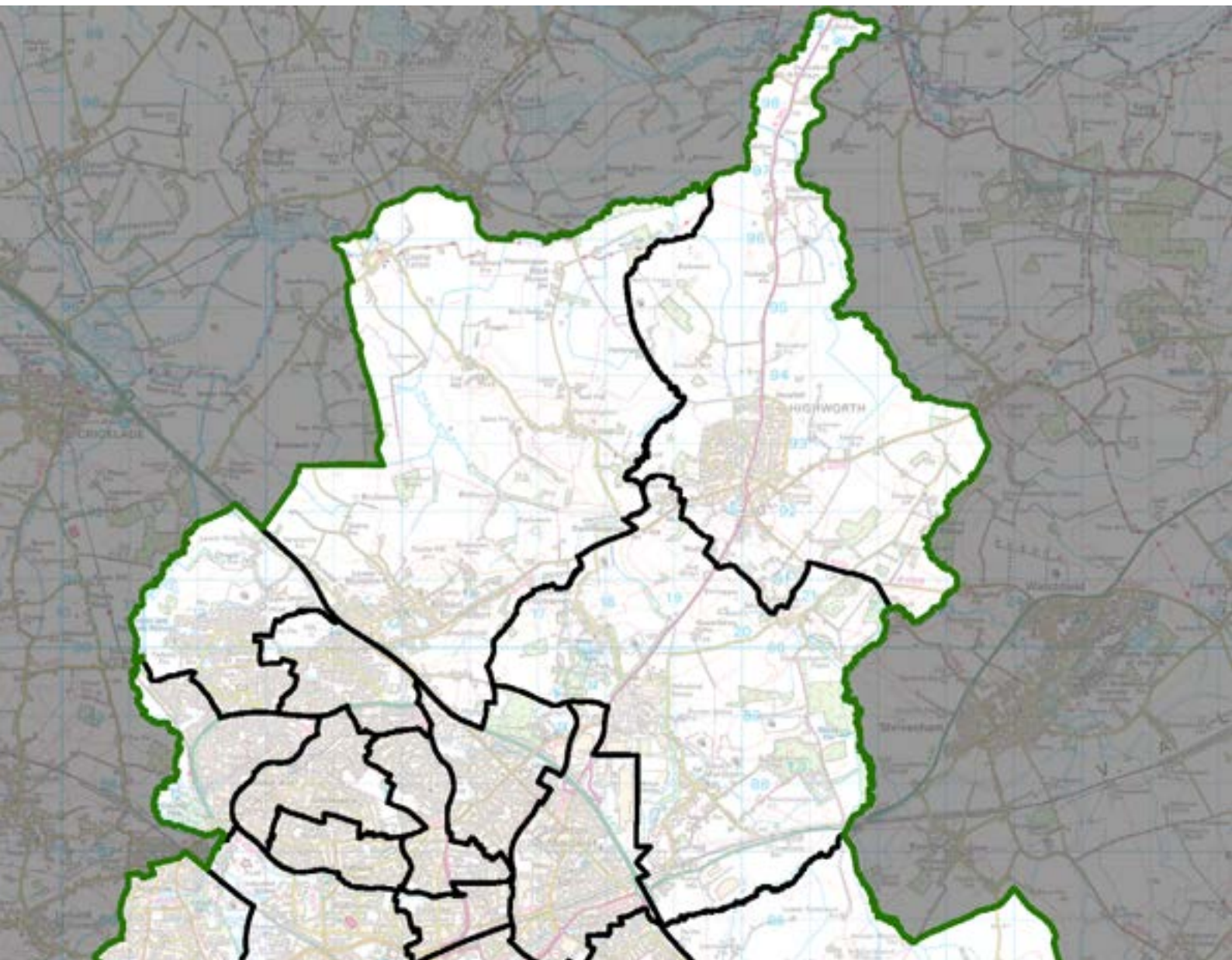
We would be most grateful if these comments can be taken into account in the next stage of your review.

Best Wishes

Attached Documents:

- 8.-swindon_draft_recommendations_report.pdf
- new-parish-ward-proposals---inc.-borough-wards.xlsx

Proposed Parish Wards	PDs	Alterations	2029 Voters		Councillors	Average voters per councillor	Over or under 1964 target voters per councillor
Badbury Park	CLB,RWE		1944		1	1944	99.0%
Broadgreen	CEC,CED	minus Corporation to Wellington 444 voters	6297		3	2099	106.9%
Croft & Wichel East	OTB,OTD		3586		2	1793	91.3%
East Walcot	WPB,WPC		3547		2	1774	90.3%
Kingshill	CEA,ETA,ETE	Plus some of CEB 477 voters and some of ETC 186	5552		3	1851	94.2%
Lawn	CLA,CLD		2667		1	2667	135.8%
Okus	OTA,OTC		4647		2	2324	118.3%
Park North	WPD		3325		2	1663	84.6%
Park South	LEA, LEB		3498		2	1749	89.1%
Queen's Park	ETB, ETC, ETD	Most of CEB 1722 voters and some of CEC 444 voters minus some ETC 186	7694		4	1924	97.9%
West Walcot	WPA		2413		1	2413	122.9%
			45170		23	1964	100.0%
Using Proposed Borough Wards							
Broadgreen & East Walcot			9844	5.01	5	1969	100.2%
Croft & Lawn			8666	4.41	4	2167	110.3%
Kingshill & Okus			10199	5.19	5	2040	103.9%
Parks			6823	3.47	4	1706	86.9%
Queen's Park			7694	3.92	4	1924	97.9%
Badbury Park		Part of a ward including Liden and Eldene from NEL parish	1944	0.99	1	1944	99.0%
			45170	23.00	23	1964	100.0%



New electoral arrangements for Swindon Borough Council Draft Recommendations

July 2024

Translations and other formats:

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Tel: 0330 500 1525

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

Contents

Introduction	1
Who we are and what we do	1
What is an electoral review?	1
Why Swindon?	2
Our proposals for Swindon	2
How will the recommendations affect you?	2
Have your say	3
Review timetable	3
Analysis and draft recommendations	5
Submissions received	5
Electorate figures	5
Number of councillors	6
Ward boundaries consultation	6
Draft recommendations	7
Central Swindon North	8
South Swindon	11
East Swindon	15
West Swindon	19
Haydon Wick	21
St. Andrews	23
Rural North	25
Rural South	27
Conclusions	29
Summary of electoral arrangements	29
Parish electoral arrangements	29
Have your say	33
Equalities	37
Appendices	39
Appendix A	39
Draft recommendations for Swindon Borough Council	39
Appendix B	42
Outline map	42
Appendix C	44

Submissions received	44
Appendix D	45
Glossary and abbreviations	45

Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| • Professor Colin Mellors OBE
(Chair) | • Steve Robinson |
| • Andrew Scallan CBE
(Deputy Chair) | • Wallace Sampson OBE |
| • Amanda Nobbs OBE | • Liz Treacy |
| | • Ailsa Irvine (Chief Executive) |

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail on the powers that we have, as well as further guidance and information about electoral reviews and the review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Swindon?

7 We are conducting a review of Swindon Borough Council ('the Council') as some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Swindon are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

Our proposals for Swindon

9 Swindon should be represented by 57 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Swindon should have 24 wards, four more than there are now.

11 The boundaries of 23 wards should change; one will stay the same.

How will the recommendations affect you?

12 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your ward name may also change.

13 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices or car and house insurance premiums, and we are not able to consider any representations which are based on these issues.

Have your say

14 We will consult on the draft recommendations for a 10-week period, from 9 July 2024 to 16 September 2024. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to comment on these proposed wards as the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be in making our final recommendations.

15 We ask everyone wishing to contribute ideas for the new wards to first read this report and look at the accompanying map before responding to us.

16 You have until 16 September 2024 to have your say on the draft recommendations. See page 33 for information on how to send us your response.

Review timetable

17 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Swindon. We then held a period of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during this consultation have informed our draft recommendations.

18 The review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
12 December 2023	Number of councillors decided
9 January 2024	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
18 March 2024	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
9 July 2024	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
16 September 2024	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
February 2025	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and draft recommendations

19 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

20 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

21 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2023	2029
Electorate of Swindon	166,559	177,234
Number of councillors	57	57
Average number of electors per councillor	2,922	3,119

22 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All of our proposed wards for Swindon are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2029.

Submissions received

23 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

24 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2029, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2024. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 6% by 2029.

25 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our draft recommendations.

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

26 Our mapping tool uses geocoded electoral registers supplied by the Council to locate electors, by associating addresses with specific geographic coordinates. It considers each elector's location to produce precise elector counts for each ward. There can be very slight differences between the electorate figures published on our website at the beginning of the review and the electorate figures published in this report. However, these are very minor and do not impact on our recommendations.

Number of councillors

27 Swindon Borough Council currently has 57 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

28 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 57 councillors. For example: 57 one-councillor wards, 19 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

29 We received three submissions from members of the public about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on ward patterns. These submissions advocated for a reduction in the number of borough councillors, noting that new parish councils were established by the Council to cover previously unparished areas. They argued that some responsibility in delivering local services which had previously been under the remit of borough councillors was now assumed by parish councillors, and that the number of borough councillors could decrease to account for this shift in responsibilities. Although we note these arguments, we are more persuaded by the council size submission from Swindon Borough Council, which gave detailed evidence of how maintaining the existing council size would enable effective governance and continue to best represent constituents. We therefore based our draft recommendations on a 57-councillor council, the same as present.

Ward boundaries consultation

30 We received 65 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two borough-wide proposals: a joint submission from the Swindon Conservative Federation, the Swindon Conservative Council Group, the East Wiltshire Conservative Association, Robert Buckland MP, Danny Kruger MP, and Justin Tomlinson MP ('the Conservative Group'); and one from the Swindon Borough Council Labour Group ('the Labour Group'). The Labour submission was broadly supported by a local resident who submitted a similar scheme which varied in only a few areas. We additionally received two partial schemes from parish councillors – Councillor John Firmin and Councillor Patrick Herring – who were both responding in an individual capacity separately from South Swindon parish. The

remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

31 The two borough-wide schemes and three partial borough-wide schemes provided a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor wards for Swindon. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

32 Our draft recommendations in Central Swindon North are principally based on the resident's scheme, while elsewhere in the north and in the south of the borough our draft recommendations are broadly based on the Conservative Group's scheme.

33 They also take into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

34 We visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of Swindon helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed, or to suggest boundaries that we identified.

Draft recommendations

35 Our draft recommendations are for 12 three-councillor wards, nine two-councillor wards and three one-councillor wards. We consider that our draft recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

36 The tables and maps on pages 8–28 detail our draft recommendations for each area of Swindon. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

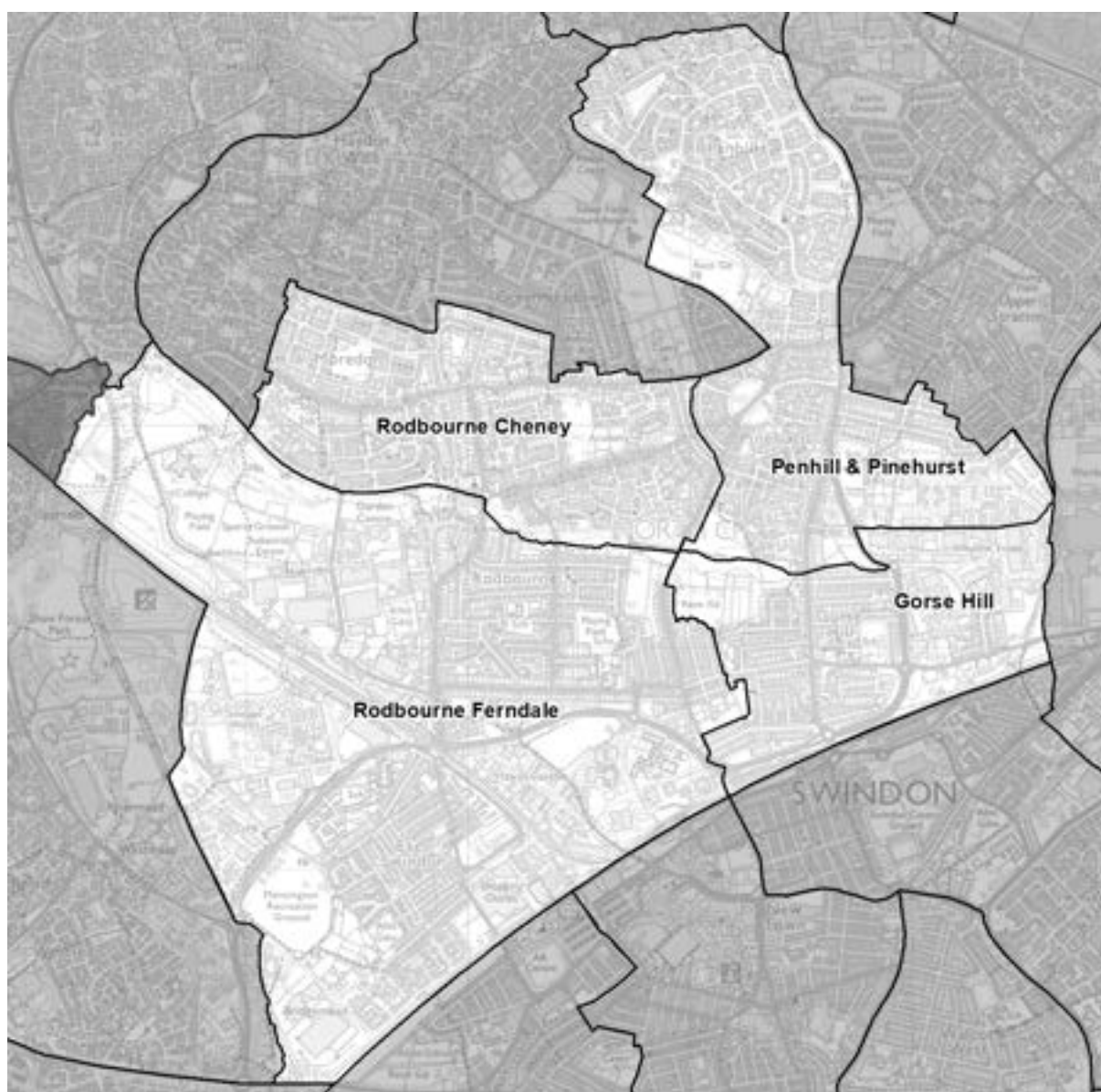
- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

37 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 39 and on the large map accompanying this report.

38 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly on the location of the ward boundaries, and the names of our proposed wards.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Central Swindon North



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Gorse Hill	1	5%
Penhill & Pinehurst	2	10%
Rodbourne Cheney	2	-3%
Rodbourne Ferndale	3	-2%

39 We received several schemes covering Central Swindon North, a parish created in 2017 (along with three others) to partly cover the previously unparished area of Swindon north of the Great Western Railway Main Line. Not all of the schemes we received proposed ward boundaries coterminous with this parish boundary; however, we are proposing wards that follow the parish boundaries in this area as part of our draft recommendations.

Gorse Hill and Penhill & Pinehurst

40 All the schemes we received for this area suggested dividing the existing Penhill & Upper Stratton ward along the parish boundary between Central Swindon North and Stratton St. Margaret (or, in one case, a slightly altered boundary).

41 The Labour Group proposed a single-member Penhill ward, noting that Penhill is a well-established community corresponding to an estate separate to surrounding areas which would be best represented by one councillor. However, it suggested including a small area (comprising Cricklade Road, Rockdown Court, Somerford Close, Trowbridge Close and part of Penhill Drive) at the southern end of Penhill parish ward in its proposed Rodbourne Cheney ward in order to achieve a forecast variance below 10%; to include the entirety of Penhill parish ward in a single-member borough ward would result in a forecast variance of 19%. We visited this area on our tour of Swindon and, while we agree with the Labour Group's assessment that Penhill is an identifiable standalone community, we do not agree that it is appropriate to remove a handful of roads at the southern end of the community in order to achieve a forecast variance below 10%. The submission additionally proposed a Gorse Hill & Pinehurst ward similar to the existing ward.

42 The Conservative Group proposed a two-member Penhill & Pinehurst North ward and a two-member Gorse Hill & Pinehurst South ward. Although this pattern preserves the Penhill community undivided, it does divide the Pinehurst community.

43 The scheme from a local resident suggested a three-member Gorse Hill & Pinehurst ward which included the entirety of Penhill. Although we consider that this proposal seeks to preserve whole communities, we note that it does not align to parish boundaries and results in unviable parish wards in multiple areas. Nonetheless, we were most persuaded that an amended version of this ward would better meet our criteria than the other proposals.

44 We received a submission from a resident of Penhill who suggested that the existing warding pattern where it is paired with Upper Stratton is unsatisfactory. They argued that, given the change to all-out elections in Swindon, Penhill should be represented by a single councillor or, if that is not possible, that it be included in a ward together with Pinehurst, with which it shares similar concerns. Another resident expressed dissatisfaction with Penhill's inclusion in Central Swindon North parish; however, parish boundaries are not considered by this review.

45 On our tour, we noted a difference in character between the Gorse Hill and Pinehurst communities such that we did not think the two areas would be best represented in one ward. We therefore consider that the most appropriate pattern of wards in this area is a two-member Penhill & Pinehurst ward and a single-member Gorse Hill ward. Our proposed Gorse Hill ward does not follow the existing Gorse Hill parish ward; instead, we propose a ward boundary behind Tydeman Street, which

we consider better reflects community ties and results in improved forecast variances in both wards. Although we consider that Penhill and Pinehurst are distinct from one another, we believe they are better represented in a two-member ward than divided between wards as suggested by the Conservative and Labour groups.

46 We propose a two-member Penhill & Pinehurst ward comprising the parish ward of Penhill, the area from Linden Avenue east in Pinehurst parish ward, and the area north of Tydeman Street and Kembrey Street in Gorse Hill parish ward. We note that this reflects the comments received from a local resident. We propose a single-member Gorse Hill ward comprising the remainder of Gorse Hill parish ward except for roads west of Kitchener Street (above St. Marks Recreation Ground).

Rodbourne Cheney and Rodbourne Ferndale

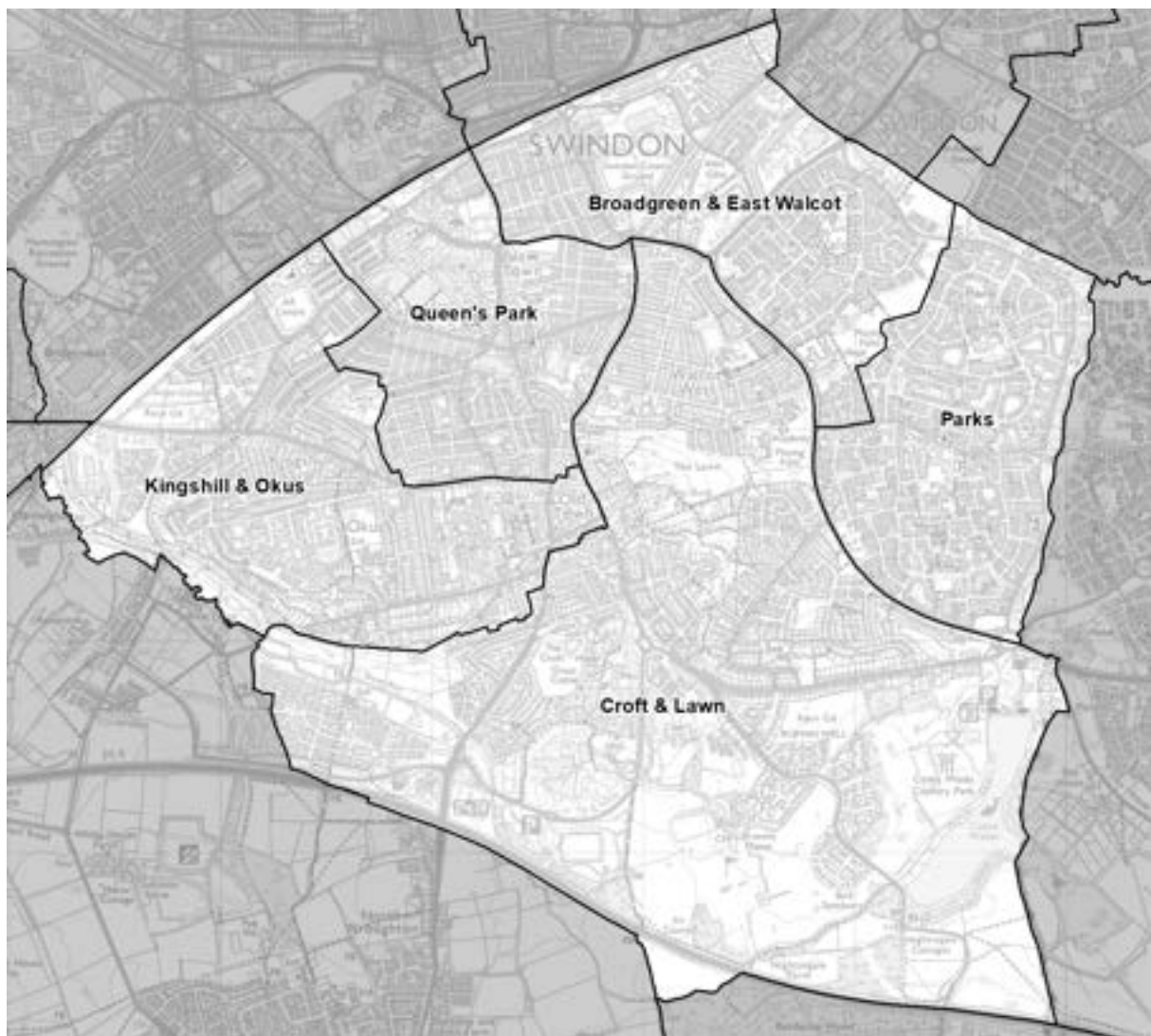
47 The Conservative Group proposed a two-member Western ward straddling Central Swindon North and South Swindon parishes, and therefore also including neighbourhoods on both sides of the Great Western Railway (GWR) Main Line. It suggested using the GWR Golden Valley line as the boundary between Western ward and its proposed three-member Rodbourne Cheney ward.

48 The Labour Group, and the resident, proposed a Ferndale Rodbourne ward extending across the Golden Valley line. Although slightly different between the two schemes, this ward is based on combining the parish wards of Even Swindon and Ferndale. They then each proposed a Rodbourne Cheney ward, again with differences about the southern and eastern extents of the ward.

49 We visited this area on our tour of Swindon and are not persuaded that the Conservative Group's proposal of a ward including elements of both Central Swindon parishes is the best reflection of communities. We consider that, while both rail lines in this area can act as boundaries, the GWR Main Line is a more significant boundary (as well as a parish boundary) while the Golden Valley line is easier to cross for communities on either side. We are therefore more persuaded by the other schemes in this area, particularly that of the resident, as we consider the residential roads south of Beech Avenue are more suitable to be included in Rodbourne Cheney as they have better access to neighbourhoods to the north than to the Ferndale area to the south.

50 As part of our draft recommendations, we therefore propose a Rodbourne Cheney ward consisting of the areas east of The Street around Cheney Manor Road and Moredon Road, and south of Whitworth Road and north of the River Ray. We propose a Rodbourne Ferndale ward comprising the Even Swindon neighbourhood and areas north of the Golden Valley line along Rodbourne Road and Vicarage Road and as far east as St. Marks Recreation Ground.

South Swindon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Broadgreen & East Walcot	3	-1%
Croft & Lawn	3	3%
Kingshill & Okus	3	-7%
Parks	2	10%
Queen's Park	3	-7%

51 We received a greater number of schemes covering South Swindon, another new parish set up in 2017 (and previously named Central Swindon South). The Labour Group and resident proposals are the same in this area, but we received two additional schemes from parish councillors of Swindon South who responded separately from the parish council.

52 Unlike in Central Swindon North, we have not proposed a set of wards completely coterminous with South Swindon's parish boundaries. Only the Labour scheme preserves this coterminosity, by including Badbury Park with other areas in South Swindon parish. Badbury Park will be discussed in the East Swindon section of the report, as all other schemes include it with parishes in that area.

53 We received a submission from South Swindon Parish Council, which was exclusively concerned with tidying up some of the boundaries between the parish and neighbouring parishes. These parish boundary changes cannot be considered by our borough ward review, and must be addressed by a Community Governance Review, led by Swindon Borough Council.

Broadgreen & East Walcot and Croft & Lawn

54 The Labour Group proposed a two-member Broad Green ward and a three-member Walcot ward. The proposed Broad Green ward is centred around Manchester Road and the surrounding residential roads south and southeast of Swindon train station. East of County Road, it proposed a Walcot ward including both East Walcot and West Walcot estates together in one ward on either side of the A4259 (Queen's Drive).

55 The Conservative Group proposed a three-member Broadgreen & East Walcot ward and a three-member Croft & Lawn ward. Its Broadgreen & East Walcot ward uses the A4259 as a southern boundary while linking communities on both sides of County Road together in the ward; the area immediately south of Swindon train station is included in a separate Queen's Park ward. West Walcot is included as the northern extent of a large Croft & Lawn ward which extends south across The Lawns green space into the Croft and Wichelstowe neighbourhoods, and uses the M4 as its southern boundary.

56 Both parish councillor schemes proposed a Central ward including the Broadgreen area along with the built-up area to the south and southwest of Swindon train station. They additionally suggested a Walcot (or Walcot & Queen's Park) ward including both East Walcot and West Walcot, straddling the A4259, and the residential roads north of Queen's Park around Groundwell Road.

57 We received a submission from a resident who advocated for including Old Walcot, west of the Queen's Drive boundary, with Croft & Lawn. Two other residents similarly advocated for using the A4259 as the boundary between East Walcot and West Walcot, which they described as disparate areas.

58 We visited this area on our tour of Swindon and consider that the A4259 is a significant boundary between East Walcot and West Walcot, which we consider are distinct from one another. We consider the links between Broadgreen & East Walcot areas allow for more convenient and effective local government than between East

Walcot and West Walcot. We are also persuaded by the Conservative Group's suggested Croft & Lawn ward, noting that its composite communities (namely Croft, Lawn, West Walcot and Wichelstowe) do not easily fit with any other adjacent wards, while also being too small to suit a single-member warding pattern; we consider they are best represented in one larger ward.

59 We therefore recommend Broadgreen & East Walcot and Croft & Lawn wards largely corresponding to the Conservative Group's submission.

Kingshill & Okus and Queen's Park

60 As mentioned previously (paragraph 46), the Conservative Group proposed a two-member Western ward including the western elements of the Central parish ward around Westcott Place in Kingshill. It also proposed: a two-member Kingshill & Okus ward consisting of the Okus and Old Town areas, as well as some of the southern elements of Kingshill; and a three-member Queen's Park ward consisting of the core of the town centre and the majority of Eastcott parish ward east of the Radnor Street Cemetery, including Queen's Park, and with an eastern boundary at the B4006.

61 The Labour Group proposed a three-member Town Centre ward including the area south of Fleming Way, as well as all of Kingshill and the northern elements of Eastcott. Its proposed three-member Old Town ward consists of Okus, the Old Town area around Bath Road and largely west of Devizes Road, Croft and Wichelstowe.

62 The two parish councillors proposed a similar three-member Eastcott & Kingshill ward which included the majority of Eastcott parish ward, as well as the residential area around Okus Road in Old Town parish ward. Councillor John Firmin proposed a three-member Old Town, Lawn & East Wichel ward comprising those three communities with The Lawns as its northern extent. Councillor Patrick Herring proposed a three-member Wichelstowe & Croft ward, which was unique among schemes received in that both East Wichel and West Wichel are united together in one ward, along with Croft, Rushey Platt and parts of the Old Town.

63 We received a submission from a member of the public who suggested that the current Old Town ward works well and should not be split. Another resident said that some areas of Eastcott shared a common heritage with the centre of Swindon.

64 We visited this area on our tour of Swindon and consider that, despite their proximity and the existing warding pattern, there is little shared community identity between the new development at Wichelstowe and Swindon's Old Town. We consider that there is a more similar community identity between the Kingshill & Okus neighbourhoods, with the former Midland & South Western Junction Railway line (now a modern-day walking trail) forming a discernible boundary to the south of most of the Old Town area, with limited access between the new and old areas.

65 As mentioned previously (paragraph 48), we are not persuaded by the Conservative Group's proposal to include part of Kingshill in a ward mostly north of the GWR Main Line. We consider that our proposed Kingshill & Okus ward better reflects an undivided Kingshill community within one ward, and that it has stronger internal access than the proposed Old Town ward from the Labour submission or the Old Town, Lawn & East Wichel ward from Councillor John Firmin's submission.

66 We received six comments from residents of Wichelstowe arguing in favour of a warding pattern which could unite the two elements of East and West Wichel in one ward, as they are split in the current configuration.

67 We understand the comments in favour of a united Wichelstowe ward, but after careful consideration, we consider that there is not a suitable warding pattern which can achieve this and have an acceptable forecast electorate variance without splitting other communities. We are not persuaded by Councillor Herring's scheme, as we consider that including the Rushey Platt neighbourhood near Wootton Bassett Road, as well as some of the Old Town area along Westlecoat Road, would result in splitting other communities in order to achieve a united Wichels ward with good electoral equality. We also note this scheme includes a Parks & Lawn ward pairing which we consider unsatisfactory (as discussed in detail below at paragraphs 68–9).

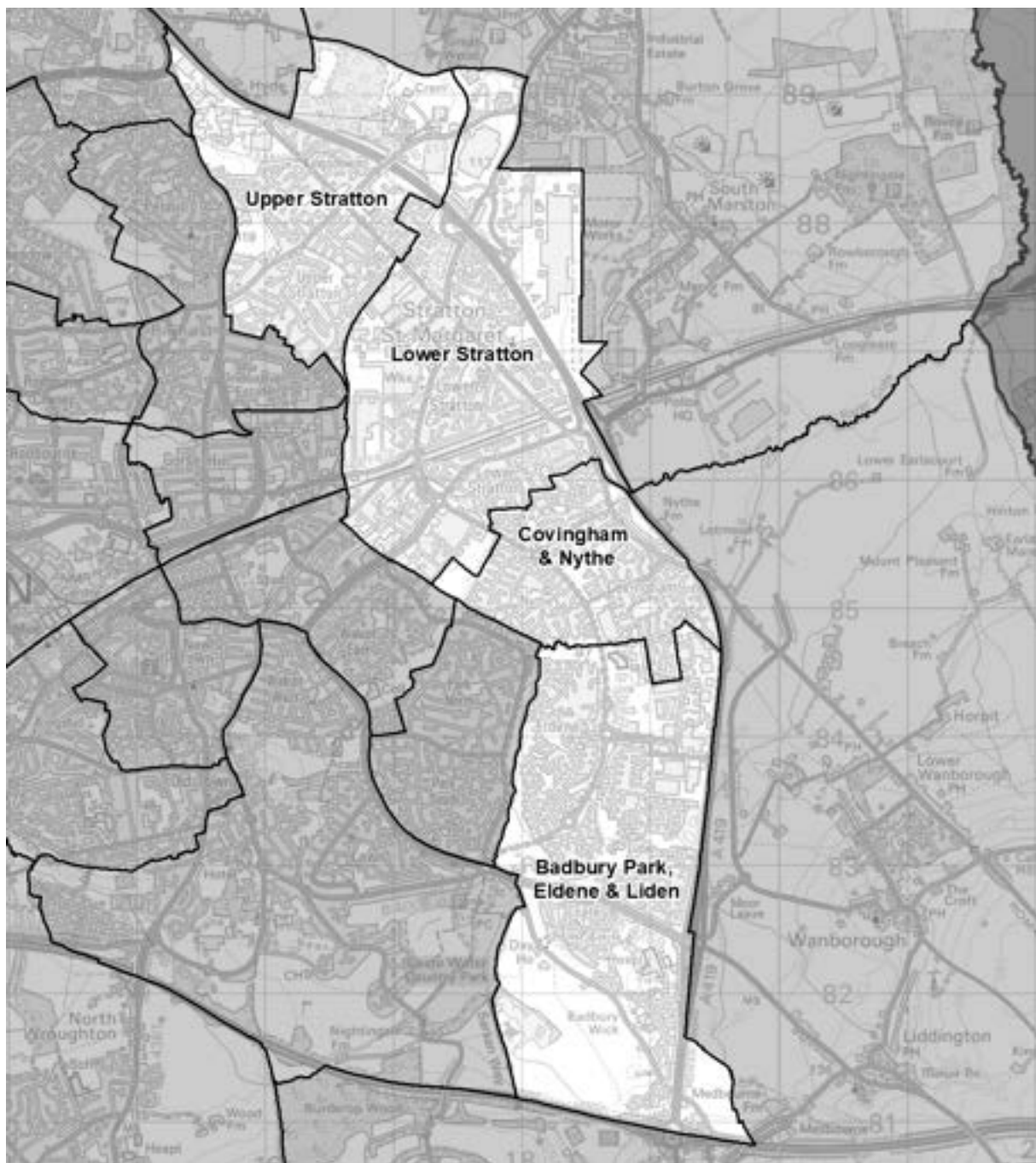
68 As part of our draft recommendations we propose a Queen's Park ward similar to that proposed by the Conservative Group submission, with an altered boundary around Emlyn Square to achieve better electoral equality, and a Kingshill & Okus ward including all of Kingshill (and Rushey Platt) as well as Okus and Old Town largely north of the former railway line.

Parks

69 Three of the four submissions for South Swindon suggested a nearly identical two-member Parks ward; Councillor Patrick Herring proposed a three-member Parks & Lawn ward crossing the A4259. His submission refers to Lawn's lack of connections to Badbury Park (to the east) or Chiseldon (with which it is currently paired, to the south) as evidence for including it with the Parks area; however, the other schemes we received proposed wards where Lawn is linked to areas where it has greater access, including the Croft & Lawn arrangement suggested by the Conservative Group which forms the basis of our draft recommendations.

70 As mentioned previously, we consider the A4259 a strong boundary; we therefore consider that a Parks & Lawn ward pairing would have poor internal access. We are persuaded that a compact Parks ward uniting a single community (which is divided by the current warding pattern) is worth adopting. As part of our draft recommendations, we propose a two-member Parks ward based upon the similar submissions of the Conservative Group, Labour Group and Councillor Firmin.

East Swindon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden	3	-9%
Covingham & Nythe	2	5%
Lower Stratton	3	-4%
Upper Stratton	2	5%

71 For the purposes of this report, we have designated an East Swindon area comprising the parishes of Covingham, Nythe, Eldene & Liden and Stratton St.

Margaret, as well as small parts of Blunsdon, Liddington and Swindon South. This area generally comprises the eastern extent of the built-up area of Swindon Town, almost entirely west of the town's natural boundary of the A419. We note that Nythe parish was extended to include the Eldene & Liden neighbourhoods as part of the parish restructuring which resulted in other new parishes across the borough in 2017.

Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden and Covingham & Nythe

72 As mentioned previously, the Labour Group submitted the only scheme which proposed ward boundaries coterminous with South Swindon parish. This included a two-member Lawn & Badbury Park ward south of the A4259, with the two population centres separated by the Coate Water Country Park. The group also proposed a three-member Nythe, Eldene & Liden ward comprising the parish of the same name and also including an area of Liddington parish west of the A419 consisting of the Great Western Hospital and an adjacent residential area; it also suggested a single-member Covingham ward coterminous with Covingham parish.

73 The Conservative Group and both parish councillors proposed a two-member Covingham & Nythe ward almost identical to the existing ward there, and a three-member Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden ward with Dorcan Stream as its northern and western boundary (except for the residential area of Covingham parish around Bullfinch Close), with the M4 as its southern boundary and the A419 as its eastern boundary; Councillor Patrick Herring's submission named the ward Dorcan.

74 We received three submissions from local residents regarding the warding pattern here. One resident advocated for a return to what they considered to be a more geographically sensible arrangement where people can more easily understand local boundaries, pointing to the previous Dorcan ward (which consisted of the Dorcan, Eldene and Liden areas) as a logical example. A respondent in Nythe proposed that the Covingham & Nythe area should not include any of Liden, instead extending north to the railway line, and that Nythe should be included in the ward name; however, they did not include supporting evidence for this arrangement. Another respondent of Covingham argued that there should be greater coterminosity between parishes and borough wards.

75 We consider the ward proposals of the Conservative Group, Councillor Firmin, and Councillor Herring better meet our criteria in this area. Although there was one comment in favour of the Labour Group's greater alignment to parish boundaries in its proposals, we consider Dorcan Stream a sufficiently strong boundary between Nythe and Eldene & Liden to act as a ward boundary there. We note the comments of the resident who favoured the geographic logic of the previous Dorcan ward (which used this stream as a boundary), and the resident who suggested retaining the existing links between Covingham and Nythe communities.

76 We note that extending Covingham & Nythe further north, as requested by the resident's submission, would result in a ward with 50% more electors per councillor than average in 2029; however, we consider that a minor adjustment to the existing boundary around Gayton Way, Harleston Road and Kilsby Drive better reflects internal access there and allows for more convenient and effective local government.

77 We are not persuaded by the Labour Group's Lawn & Badbury Park ward, noting that by following the parish boundary near the Great Western Hospital it divides a residential neighbourhood above Homington Avenue.

78 There is one element of the Labour scheme we are persuaded to adopt: the small residential road of Meadow Way, east of the A419, falls within the boundaries of South Swindon parish and therefore cannot be included in another borough ward without resulting in a very small parish ward. We therefore propose including it in our Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden ward along with the Badbury Wick residential area.

79 As part of our draft recommendations, we propose a three-member Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden ward and a two-member Covingham & Nythe ward largely in line with the proposals of the Conservative Group and parish councillors, with the small amendments to each described above.

Lower Stratton and Upper Stratton

80 The Conservative Group's proposed Stratton St. Margaret (three-member) and Stratton St. Philip (two-member) wards and the Labour Group's proposed Lower Stratton (three-member) and Upper Stratton (two-member) wards follow a similar pattern. The Labour Group's proposals are coterminous with Stratton St. Margaret parish, with a boundary between the two which mostly matches the existing ward boundary, except for an adjustment to include the area around Fitzwarren Court and Barnes Road in Upper Stratton. The Conservative Group's proposal has slight changes from parish boundaries at both the north and south of its proposed wards: it suggested using the existing ward boundaries at both the north of the parish, where part of Blunsdon parish is included in Stratton St. Philip, and the south, where the southern extent of the parish is included in Covingham & Nythe.

81 We received a submission from a local resident who emphasised that any warding arrangements around Upper Stratton should not split the community.

82 We received five submissions from residents of Merton parish ward, which is part of Stratton St. Margaret parish but is included in the current Gorse Hill & Pinehurst borough ward. They all suggested that this area, which includes several residential roads around Dores Road and Headlands Grove, would be better represented in an Upper Stratton ward. The schemes we received here include this area with its parish in Upper Stratton (or Stratton St. Philip, as named by the Conservative Group).

83 As discussed above, we were persuaded by the Covingham & Nythe warding arrangement (with slight amendments) put forward by the Conservative Group and the two parish councillors. In the north of this area, we consider the residential roads of Bramwell Close, Loveridge Close and Pearce Close share a continuous identity as part of the Kingsdown community, with which they have stronger internal access. In the absence of any submissions received from residents around Fitzwarren Court and Barnes Road, we consider maintaining the existing boundary between wards here is appropriate.

84 As part of our draft recommendations, we propose wards which align with the boundaries described in the Conservative Group's submission, except to account for the small adjustment at Gayton Way described previously; however, we are persuaded that the names of these wards as suggested by the Labour Group better reflect how local residents understand their areas. Our proposed wards here are therefore named Lower Stratton and Upper Stratton. We welcome further submissions on the appropriateness of these names, and whether the Conservative Group's suggested names (or indeed any other suggestions) are more suitable.

West Swindon



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill	3	5%
Shaw & Westlea	3	2%

85 West Swindon is another new parish council set up by Swindon Borough Council in 2017, covering the previously unparished area at the west of the local authority area north of the GWR Main Line. It is entitled to six councillors according to forecast electorate, and can therefore be represented in isolation.

Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill and Shaw & Westlea

86 The Conservative Group and the Labour Group both submitted warding patterns with two three-member wards for West Swindon, coterminous with the parish area, and along identical boundaries. This results in a southern ward

comprised of the Freshbrook, Grange Park and Toothill areas and a northern ward comprised of the Ramleaze, Roughmoor, Shaw and Westlea neighbourhoods. The boundary between these wards follows the B4533 (Tewkesbury Way) which reflects part of the existing boundary between the Lydiard & Freshbrook and Shaw wards.

87 The only differences between the two schemes received here are regarding names: the Conservative Group suggested Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill and Shaw & Westlea while the Labour Group suggested Lydiard Park and Mead Way, for the southern and northern wards, respectively.

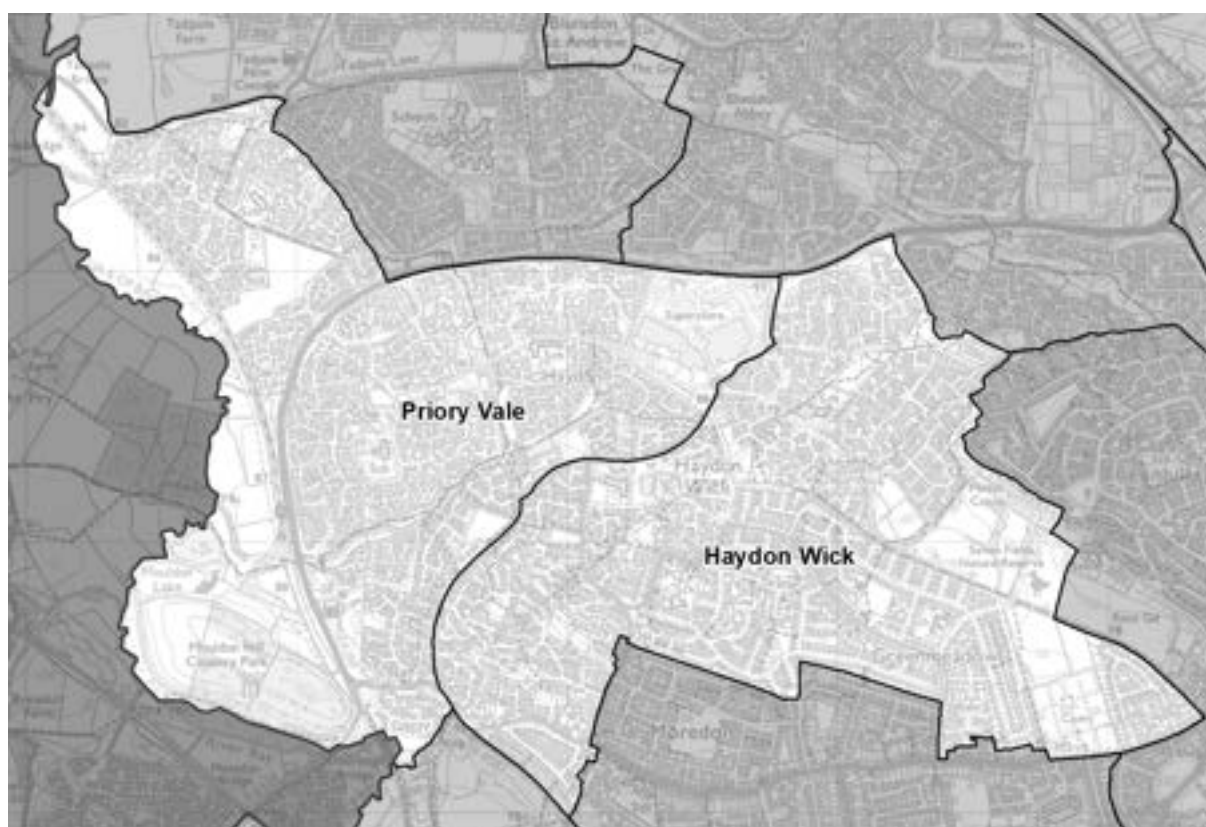
88 We received several submissions from local residents in this area. Two of these respondents reflected that the existing arrangement works well for West Swindon. Another respondent suggested that Westlea should be included in a West Swindon borough ward, to better align with parish boundaries. One respondent from Shaw was not in favour of any pattern in which Shaw was included in the same ward as Westlea. One respondent highlighted the differences between the current component areas of Mannington & Western ward, suggesting that ward boundaries here should reflect parish boundaries.

89 One respondent provided a more detailed submission. They noted that the West Swindon parish area is well understood as a distinct neighbourhood by locals and that it is 'divided down the middle by Tewkesbury Way', with community interests oriented depending on which side of that boundary locals reside in. It goes on to describe how the parish is well-suited to two three-member wards separated by Tewkesbury Way, or with three single-member wards on either side of that boundary.

90 Noting the comments of the local residents here, and the identical boundaries which reflect the local community orientation identified by the detailed resident response, we consider that the two three-member wards suggested here are strong. We are slightly more persuaded by the names suggested by the Conservative Group, noting that it adds one area to each of the existing ward names, reflecting the extensions of both wards to include new areas (Toothill and Westlea).

91 As part of our draft recommendations we therefore propose a three-member Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill ward and a three-member Shaw & Westlea ward, as described above.

Haydon Wick



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Haydon Wick	3	-2%
Priory Vale	3	-8%

92 Haydon Wick parish can be considered largely in isolation from surrounding areas due to a straightforward entitlement to six councillors.

Haydon Wick and Priory Vale

93 We received three schemes for Haydon Wick parish, one from the Conservative Group, which was identical to one from Haydon Wick parish council, and one from the Labour Group (which was also adopted by the resident).

94 The Conservative Group proposed two three-member wards mostly aligning to the existing three-member wards of Haydon Wick and Priory Vale. It made slight alterations to align these wards with the parish's full boundaries, namely by including a residential area comprising Eastville Road, Haydon View Road, Mendip Close, Orchid Close and Sunningdale Road at the eastern end of Haydon Wick and including a small number of properties at Tadpole Lane in Priory Vale.

95 The Labour Group proposed three two-member wards for this area: Haydon Wick, which consists of the southern neighbourhoods of the parish at Greenmeadow

and Haydon Wick; Mouldon Hill, covering the western neighbourhoods around Queen Elizabeth Drive and Oakhurst on either side of Thamesdown Drive; and Orbital, encompassing the northern neighbourhoods around the Orbital shopping centre. This scheme also includes the Tadpole Lane properties, but not the parished residential area around Haydon View Road.

96 We received a submission from Haydon Wick Parish Council in support of two three-member wards for the parish area, with suggested boundaries corresponding to the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group.

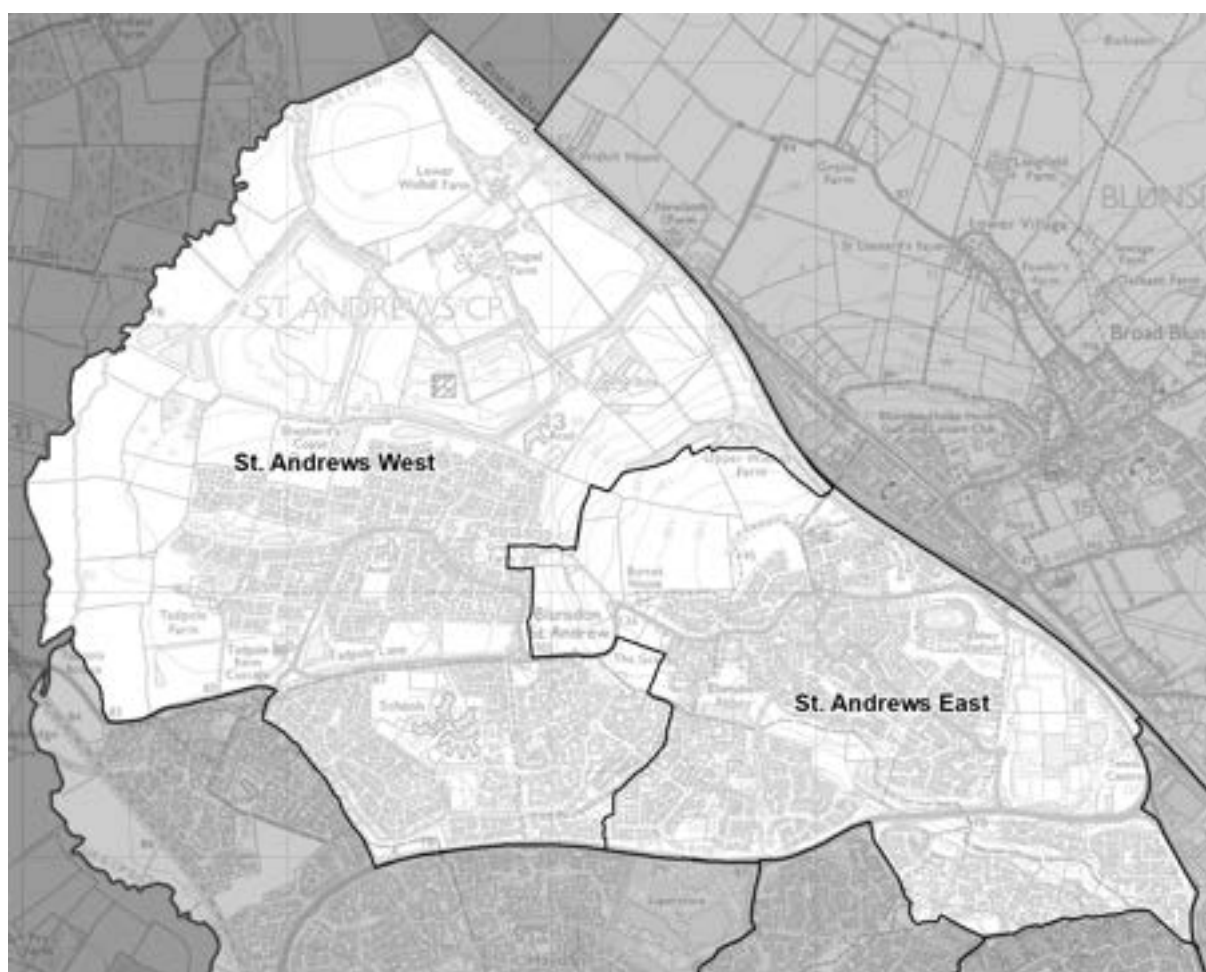
97 We received a submission from a resident who suggested that some areas of Purton parish, which is immediately adjacent to Swindon, would be better included within the borough and specifically within Haydon Wick parish. We note that this review is solely concerned with internal ward boundaries, and not with the external boundaries of the local authority itself.

98 We received a submission from a resident of Central Swindon North parish who suggested that some areas east of Penhill Park should be included in Haydon Wick parish; as noted previously, we cannot change parish boundaries as part of this review.

99 We visited this area on our tour of Swindon and we consider that the B4534, which serves as the existing boundary between Haydon Wick and Priory Vale, is a major road which represents a strong barrier between the two three-member wards proposed here by the Conservative Group, with limited crossing points across the road. We note the comments from the parish council, and agree that a warding pattern entirely coterminous with the parish area better satisfies our criteria.

100 As part of our draft recommendations, we therefore propose a three-member Haydon Wick ward and a three-member Priory Vale ward aligning to proposals of the Conservative Group and Haydon Wick Parish Council.

St. Andrews



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
St. Andrews East	2	-2%
St. Andrews West	2	9%

101 St. Andrews is another new parish established by Swindon Borough Council, covering areas previously in Blunsdon parish largely north of the A4198 (Thamesdown Drive) and east of the A419 around Blunsdon St. Andrew and Tadpole Farm. It is entitled to four councillors according to forecast electorates.

St. Andrews East and St. Andrews West

102 We received two different schemes from the Conservative Group and Labour Group, both of which are coterminous with parish boundaries. The Conservative Group suggested a two-member St. Andrews East ward and a two-member St. Andrews West ward, with a boundary hooking around Britten Road and Elgar Close (included in the west) and Dowland Close and Hebden Close (included in the east). The Labour Group suggested a three-member St. Andrews ward and a single-member Tadpole Farm ward, with a boundary along Tadpole Lane.

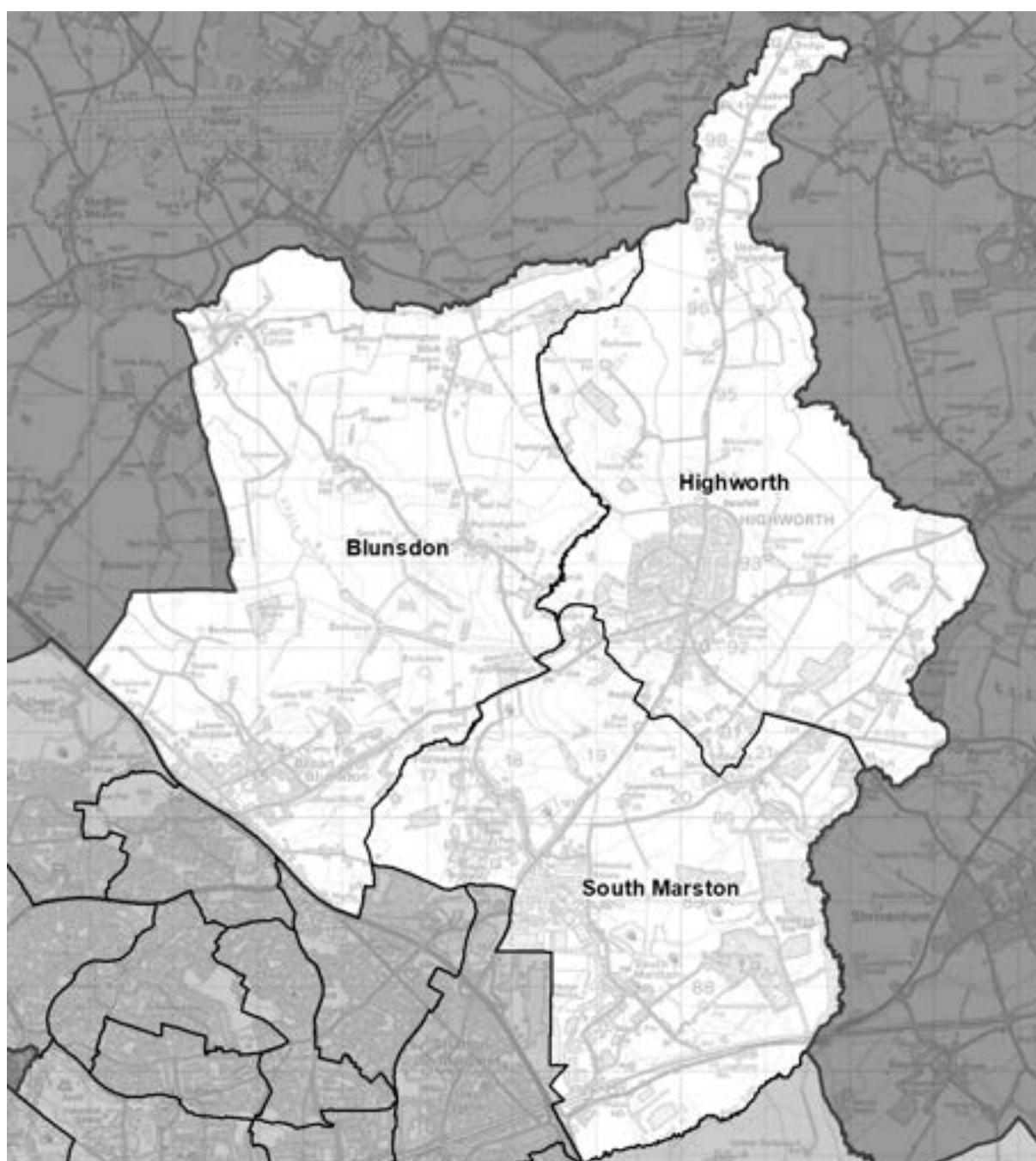
103 We received a submission from St. Andrews Parish Council, which noted that 'after extensive consultation with [its] residents' it supported a scheme in which the existing St. Andrews ward (a three-member ward which is largely coterminous with the parish) is split down the middle. It also expressed a preference for these wards to be named St. Andrews East and St. Andrews West.

104 We received a submission from a local resident who suggested dividing St. Andrews into two two-councillor wards to balance the local increase in electorate.

105 Although we consider the warding arrangement and boundary suggested by the Labour Group sensible in this area, we are persuaded by St. Andrews Parish Council's submission and the comments of the local resident. We particularly consider the reference to the parish council's consultation of residents on how to best divide the parish area into borough wards as compelling evidence. We do not believe that the hooked shape of the boundary suggested by the Conservative Group allows for convenient and effective local government, and have proposed a simpler boundary along the drain extending north from the Blunsdon St Andrew Play Park. We have additionally amended the boundary north of Tadpole Lane to include Grove Farm in St. Andrews East as it appears to be accessible along roads in that ward.

106 As part of our draft recommendations, we propose a two-member St. Andrews East ward and a two-member St. Andrews West ward, with a boundary running south of Upper Windmill Farm, west of Grove Farm, and then along the drain east of Britten Close and Elgar Close.

Rural North



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Blunsdon	1	-1%
Highworth	2	10%
South Marston	1	1%

Blunsdon, Highworth and South Marston

107 We received two different schemes for this area. The Conservative Group proposed a two-member Highworth ward comprising most of the Highworth Town Council area along with Inglesham parish, and a two-member Blunsdon & the Villages ward with the southern elements of Highworth's parished area along with the remaining northern villages. The Labour Group proposed a single-member Blunsdon ward comprising Blunsdon, Castle Eaton and Hannington and a three-member Highworth & South Marston ward with the remaining northern parishes.

108 We received a submission from a resident who suggested a three-member Highworth ward including Hannington and Stanton Fitzwarren parishes, including the Blunsdon and Castle Eaton parishes with St. Andrews across the A419.

109 We received a submission from South Marston Parish Council, which detailed the council's thoughts on planned new housing developments which are expected to fall within its parished area by the time of the forecast electorate estimates in 2029.

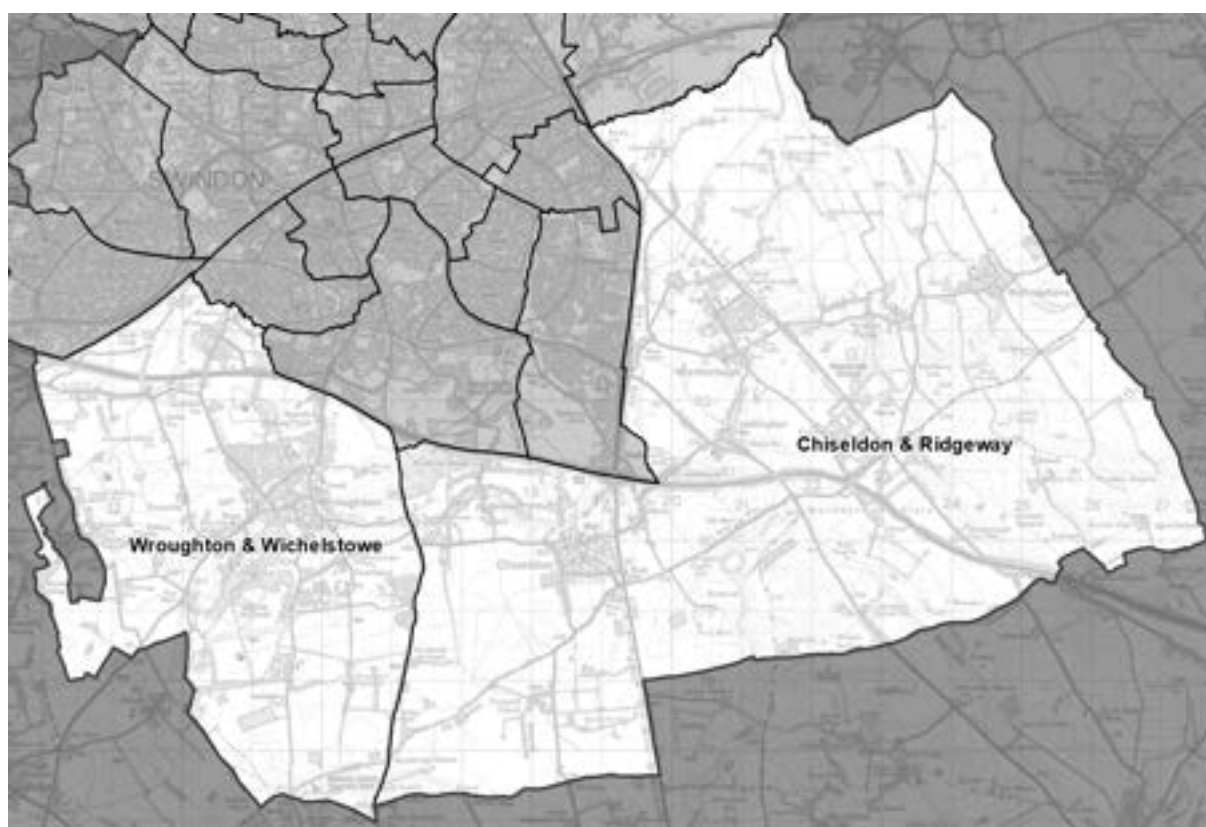
110 We are persuaded that a two-member Highworth ward centred around the core of Highworth town, and including Inglesham village, as proposed by the Conservative Group, is a good reflection of community identity. We note that Highworth is large settlement and we received limited evidence that it shared a strong community identity with neighbouring rural areas.

111 We are also persuaded by the Labour Group's proposed Blunsdon ward, as we consider that the parishes of Blunsdon, Castle Eaton and Hannington share a similar community identity and that a single-member arrangement would allow for convenient and effective local government in this area. As noted previously in the East Swindon section, we do consider that Kingsdown parish ward south of the A4311 is better situated with Upper Stratton despite being part of Blunsdon parish.

112 We consider that a smaller South Marston ward, comprising the parishes of South Marston and Stanton Fitzwarren, along with the southern elements of Highworth town council area (including Hampton Turn and Sevenhampton), is best represented by a single-councillor arrangement. We note the comments of the parish council, and consider that a single-member pattern here would allow for more convenient and effective local government concerning the incoming Swindon New Eastern Villages developments within South Marston parish.

113 As part of our draft recommendations, we propose a single-member Blunsdon ward, a two-member Highworth ward and a single-member South Marston ward, all corresponding to the boundaries described above.

Rural South



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2029
Chiseldon & Ridgeway	2	10%
Wroughton & Wichelstowe	3	-6%

114 For the purposes of this report, we have designated an area of southern rural villages and parishes which is largely south of the M4 motorway and east of the A419. It includes the parishes of Bishopstone, Chiseldon, Liddington (except for the small area west of the A419 at the Great Western Hospital), Wanborough and Wroughton.

Chiseldon & Ridgeway and Wroughton & Wichelstowe

115 We received four schemes for the southern parishes, including three similar submissions from the Conservative Group, the Labour Group and Councillor John Firmin. These proposals feature a three-member Wroughton & Wichelstowe ward; the Conservative and Labour groups each proposed including a small area of Chiseldon parish in the ward, around Burderop Farm and Burderop Park, while Councillor Firmin proposed a ward coterminous with Wroughton parish. Councillor Patrick Herring proposed a two-member Wroughton ward with the M4 as its northern boundary. All four submissions suggested similar two-member Chiseldon & Ridgeway wards comprising Chiseldon parish (or the vast majority of the parish minus Burderop) and the existing Ridgeway ward parishes of Bishopstone,

Liddington and Wanborough. All four schemes transfer the Great Western Hospital area of Liddington parish to core Swindon town wards, and all but the Labour Group include the Meadow Way element of South Swindon parish in the larger rural ward.

116 As noted previously, we received six submissions from residents of Wichelstowe which noted that the community is currently divided by the parish and ward boundary which separates East Wichel (in South Swindon parish) from West Wichel (in Wroughton parish). These respondents requested a warding arrangement which united all of Wichelstowe in one borough ward, north of the M4.

117 We received two submissions, including one from Wroughton Parish Council, which suggested that the existing warding arrangements result in well-served areas. The parish council suggested that there could be future to consider parish boundary changes, but this would fall under a future Community Governance Review.

118 We received three submissions from residents of the existing Chiseldon & Lawn ward who all suggested that the two areas do not fit together, and that the M4 should be used as a boundary here.

119 We received a submission from a councillor from Chiseldon Parish Council who suggested that Chiseldon should be in the same ward as Wroughton; however, we note that such a ward would result in a variance of about 15% above the average.

120 We received a submission from a member of the public who suggested that the inclusion of these parishes in an East Wiltshire parliamentary constituency means that they should be reflected in wards separate from Swindon town. We are not obliged to consider parliamentary boundaries when considering local ward boundaries.

121 As mentioned previously, we do not believe that there is a warding pattern which can facilitate a united Wichelstowe ward which meets our criteria of cohesive wards across the borough. We note that including any of Burderop Farm or Burderop Park in Wroughton & Wichelstowe would result in a very small parish ward, and as previously discussed we note that failing to include Meadow Way in a South Swindon borough ward would also result in a very small parish ward that would not be compatible with effective and convenient local government.

122 As part of our draft recommendations we recommend an unchanged three-member Wroughton & Wichelstowe ward coterminous with Wroughton parish, and a two-member Chiseldon & Ridgeway ward comprising all of Chiseldon parish along with the parishes of Bishopstone and Wanborough, and all of Liddington parish east of the A419.

Conclusions

123 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality in Swindon, referencing the 2023 and 2029 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2023	2029
Number of councillors	57	57
Number of electoral wards	24	24
Average number of electors per councillor	2,922	3,119
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	11	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0

Draft recommendations

Swindon Borough Council should be made up of 57 councillors serving 24 wards: three single-councillor wards, nine two-councillor wards and 12 three-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Swindon Borough Council. You can also view our draft recommendations for Swindon on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

124 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

125 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Swindon Borough Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

126 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Central Swindon North, Haydon Wick, Highworth, Liddington, St. Andrews, South Swindon and Stratton St. Margaret.

127 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Central Swindon North parish.

Draft recommendations

Central Swindon North Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Even Swindon	3
Gorse Hill	2
Penhill	2
Pinehurst	2
Rodbourne Cheney	4
Rodbourne Ferndale	3

128 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Haydon Wick parish.

Draft recommendations

Haydon Wick Parish Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Haydon Wick	9
Priory Vale	9

129 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Highworth parish.

Draft recommendations

Highworth Town Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
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Highworth	14
Sevenhampton	1

130 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Liddington parish.

Draft recommendations

Liddington Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Badbury Wick	3
Liddington	4

131 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for St. Andrews parish.

Draft recommendations

St. Andrews Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
St. Andrews East	5
St. Andrews West	6

132 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for South Swindon parish.

Draft recommendations

South Swindon Parish Council should comprise 23 councillors, as at present, representing 11 wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Badbury Park	1
Broadgreen	3
Croft & Wichel East	2
East Walcot	2
Kingshill	3
Lawn	1
Okus	2
Park North	2
Park South	2
Queen's Park	4
West Walcot	1

133 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Stratton St. Margaret parish.

Draft recommendations

Stratton St. Margaret Parish Council should comprise 19 councillors, as at present, representing four wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Coleview	3
Lower Coleview	2
Lower Stratton	7
Upper Stratton	7

Have your say

134 The Commission has an open mind about its draft recommendations. Every representation we receive will be considered, regardless of who it is from or whether it relates to the whole borough or just a part of it.

135 If you agree with our recommendations, please let us know. If you don't think our recommendations are right for Swindon, we want to hear alternative proposals for a different pattern of wards.

136 Our website is the best way to keep up to date with progress on the review and to have your say www.lgbce.org.uk

137 Each review has its own page with details of the timetable for the review, information about its different stages and interactive mapping.

138 Submissions can also be made by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to:

Review Officer (Swindon)
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
PO Box 133
Blyth
NE24 9FE

139 The Commission aims to propose a pattern of wards for Swindon Borough Council which delivers:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of electors.
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities.
- Effective and convenient local government: helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.

140 A good pattern of wards should:

- Provide good electoral equality, with each councillor representing, as closely as possible, the same number of electors.
- Reflect community interests and identities and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, easily identifiable boundaries.
- Help the council deliver effective and convenient local government.

141 Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of electors as elsewhere in Swindon?

142 Community identity:

- Community groups: is there a parish council, residents' association or other group that represents the area?
- Interests: what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- Identifiable boundaries: are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

143 Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?
- Are there good links across your proposed wards? Is there any form of public transport?

144 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all representations will be placed on deposit at our offices and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

145 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers. This includes your name, postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

146 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

147 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft

Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the all-out elections for Swindon Borough Council in 2026.

Equalities

148 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Swindon Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden	3	8,246	2,749	-6%	8,457	2,819	-9%
2	Blunsdon	1	2,350	2,350	-20%	3,064	3,064	-1%
3	Broadgreen & East Walcot	3	8,753	2,918	0%	9,239	3,080	-1%
4	Chiseldon & Ridgeway	2	4,298	2,149	-26%	6,817	3,409	10%
5	Covingham & Nythe	2	6,510	3,255	11%	6,542	3,271	5%
6	Croft & Lawn	3	9,528	3,176	9%	9,610	3,203	3%
7	Gorse Hill	1	3,139	3,139	7%	3,251	3,251	5%
8	Haydon Wick	3	9,094	3,031	4%	9,118	3,039	-2%
9	Highworth	2	6,401	3,201	10%	6,814	3,407	10%
10	Kingshill & Okus	3	8,574	2,858	-2%	8,638	2,879	-7%

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
11	Lower Stratton	3	8,586	2,862	-2%	8,919	2,973	-4%
12	Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill	3	9,826	3,275	12%	9,827	3,276	5%
13	Parks	2	6,699	3,350	15%	6,823	3,412	10%
14	Penhill & Pinehurst	2	6,730	3,365	15%	6,835	3,418	10%
15	Priory Vale	3	8,605	2,868	-2%	8,611	2,870	-8%
16	Queen's Park	3	7,688	2,563	-12%	8,688	2,896	-7%
17	Rodbourne Cheney	2	5,989	2,995	2%	6,001	3,001	-3%
18	Rodbourne Ferndale	3	9,091	3,030	4%	9,145	3,048	-2%
19	Shaw & Westlea	3	9,488	3,163	8%	9,529	3,176	2%
20	South Marston	1	1,087	1,087	-63%	3,142	3,142	1%
21	St. Andrews East	2	5,909	2,955	1%	6,090	3,045	-2%
22	St. Andrews West	2	6,793	3,397	16%	6,794	3,397	9%

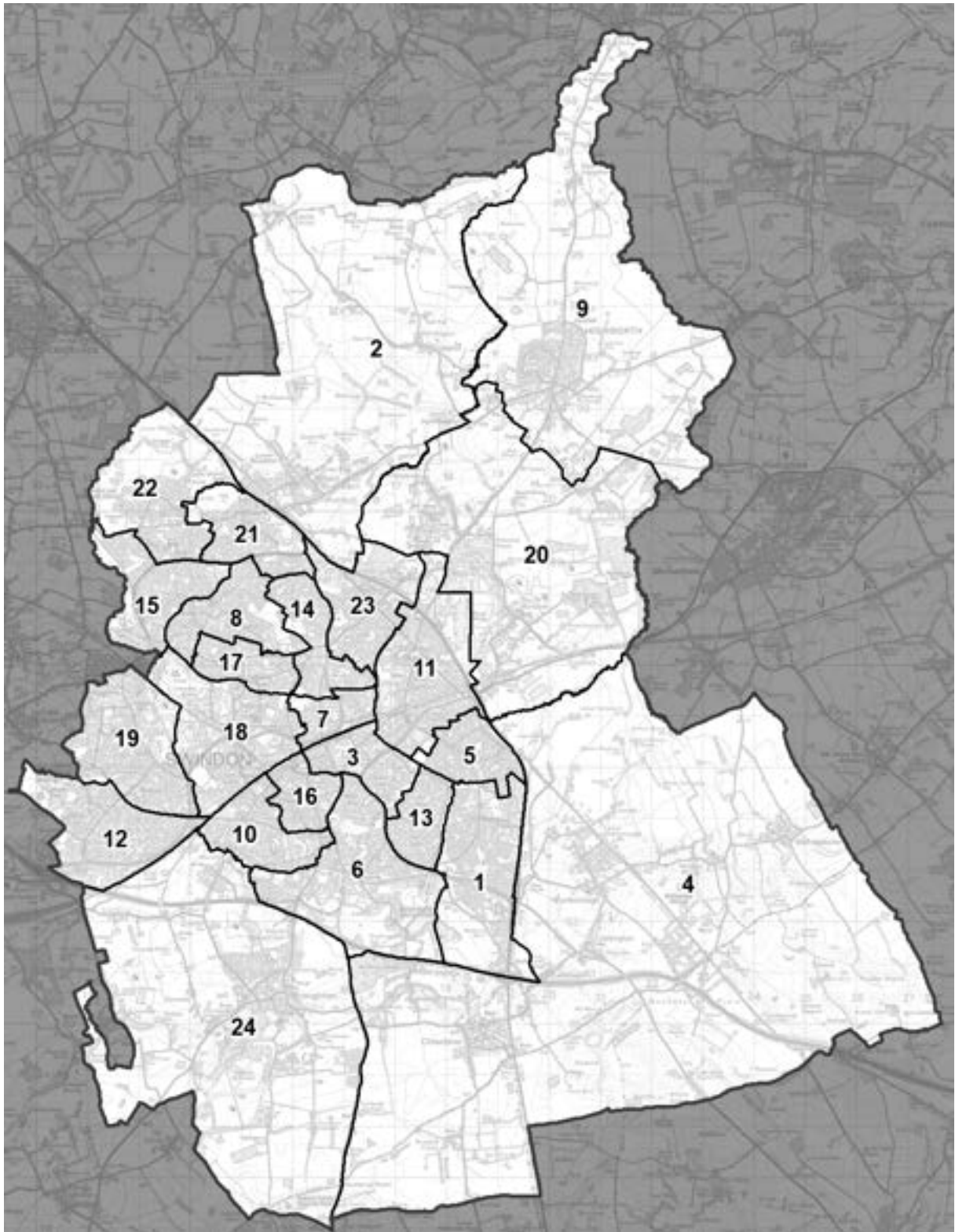
	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2023)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2029)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23	Upper Stratton	2	6,492	3,246	11%	6,539	3,270	5%
24	Wroughton & Wichelstowe	3	6,683	2,228	-24%	8,741	2,914	-6%
Totals		57	166,559	–	–	177,234	–	–
Averages		–	–	2,922	–	–	3,119	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Swindon Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Number	Ward name
1	Badbury Park, Eldene & Liden
2	Blunsdon
3	Broadgreen & East Walcot
4	Chiseldon & Ridgeway
5	Covingham & Nythe
6	Croft & Lawn
7	Gorse Hill
8	Haydon Wick
9	Highworth
10	Kingshill & Okus
11	Lower Stratton
12	Lydiard, Freshbrook & Toothill
13	Parks
14	Penhill & Pinehurst
15	Priory Vale
16	Queen's Park
17	Rodbourne Cheney
18	Rodbourne Ferndale
19	Shaw & Westlea
20	South Marston
21	St. Andrews East
22	St. Andrews West
23	Upper Stratton
24	Wroughton & Wichelstowe

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/swindon

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/swindon

Political Groups

- Swindon Conservative Federation, Swindon Conservative Council Group, East Wiltshire Conservative Association, Robert Buckland MP, Danny Kruger MP, Justin Tomlinson MP (joint)
- Swindon Borough Council Labour Group

Councillors

- Councillor J. Firmin (South Swindon Parish Council)
- Councillor P. Herring (South Swindon Parish Council)
- Councillor C. Rawlings (Chiseldon Parish Council)

Parish and Town Councils

- Chiseldon Parish Council
- Haydon Wick Parish Council
- South Marston Parish Council
- South Swindon Parish Council
- St. Andrews Parish Council
- Wroughton Parish Council

Local Residents

- 54 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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