

# **Community Governance Review 2021/22**

## **Draft Recommendations of the Electoral Review Committee**

**March 2022**

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## **Links**

[Terms of Reference of the Electoral Review Committee](#)

[Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review 2021/22](#)

[Guidance on Community Governance Reviews](#)

[Information Pack \(46mb\) on projected electorates, submitted schemes, parish responses, public engagement and survey responses](#)

[Online Draft Recommendations Survey](#)

All documents can also be accessed from links available at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-cgr>

Contact [CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk) or CGR, Democratic Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN for questions or other details.

### **What is a Community Governance Review?**

1. A Community Governance Review is a process which allows for the review of town and Parish Council governance arrangements and appropriate changes to be made. This ensures that they continue to be reflective of the identity and interests of local communities, and that they are as efficient and effective in their governance as possible.

### **What can a Community Governance Review change?**

2. A Community Governance Review can make a number of changes to parish governance when there is clear evidence to do so, including:
  - Parish areas: such as changes to boundaries between parishes, mergers of two or more parishes, creating a new parish out of part of one or more existing parishes;
  - Electoral arrangements within parish areas: such as changes to the number of Parish Councillors, introducing or changing parish warding arrangements;
  - The name of a parish;
  - The grouping together of parishes under a common Parish Council;
  - Other governance arrangements.
3. A Community Governance Review cannot change the Electoral Divisions of Wiltshire Council. However, it can request those Divisions be amended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England ("The LGBCE"), who are responsible for such decisions, to align to any changed parish boundaries.

### **The Electoral Review Committee**

4. Wiltshire Council has established the Electoral Review Committee ("The Committee") to oversee any Community Governance Review process.
5. This is a politically proportionate committee of ten elected Wiltshire Councillors to oversee the process and prepare recommendations relating to any review to a meeting of Full Council, who make the decision.
6. The members of the Committee at the time of the Committee meeting setting these recommendations are as follows:

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling (Chairman)  
Cllr Allison Bucknell  
Cllr Jacqui Lay  
Cllr Ashley O'Neill  
Cllr Ian Thorn

Cllr Gavin Grant (Vice-Chairman)  
Cllr Ernie Clark  
Cllr Ian McLennan  
Cllr Antonio Piazza  
Cllr Stuart Wheeler

7. For the avoidance of doubt Cllr Thorn did not vote on any proposals affecting Calne Town, where he is a Town Councillor, and Cllr Grant did not vote on any proposals affecting Malmesbury, where he is a Town Councillor. Both made statements or answered factual questions in their capacity as members of those respective councils, though not necessarily on their behalf, but did not vote.

**On what grounds will a Community Governance Review be decided?**

8. Any decision relating to parish arrangements must ensure that those arrangements:
  - Reflect the identity and interests of local communities;
  - Ensure effective and convenient local governance.
9. In conducting a review and making recommendations, the Committee follows guidance issued by the relevant Secretary of State and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
10. Factors that are not relevant to the statutory and guidance criteria, such as council tax precept levels, should not be considered.

**Background to the 2021/22 Review**

11. From 2017-2019 the LGBCE undertook an Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council. While this retained the number of divisions at 98, the changes as now approved by Parliament have made consequential changes to many town and parish governance arrangements.
12. Combined with development growth across existing town and parish boundaries, or creation of new communities with their own identity within an existing parish, Wiltshire Council determined that reviews were necessary in some areas to ensure the community governance arrangements were still reflective of local identity and interests, and were effective and convenient.
13. All parishes in Wiltshire were contacted in the summer of 2019 to see if there were any changes to governance arrangements they wished the Council to consider, and a number of requests were received. Due to resourcing, these would be considered when the council, through the Committee, determined it was practicable to do so.
14. On 22 September 2021, Wiltshire Council published terms of reference for a Community Governance Review for the following parish areas:
  - Beechingstoke;
  - Woodborough;
  - North Newnton;
  - Wilsford;
  - Marden;
  - Patney;
  - Stanton St Bernard;
  - Malmesbury;
  - Calne;
  - Calne Without;
  - Bremhill;
  - Hilmarton;
  - Compton Bassett;
  - Cherhill;
  - Heddington;
  - St Paul Malmesbury Without.
15. The terms of reference also specified that parishes 'surrounding those listed' were also included. This was to enable complete consideration of any options which might emerge during information gathering.
16. The terms of reference were updated in in December 2021 and February 2022 to

adjust the timescales for the review.

17. For the avoidance of doubt, the Committee is able to recommend, and the Council to approve, governance changes which were not suggested by parishes or individuals, if it considers it appropriate to do so. Any such proposal would be subject to consultation before approval.

### **Pre-consultation**

18. During the first stage of the review the Committee received additional proposals relating to the review areas. During the second stage the Committee undertook pre-consultation information gathering, including:
- Sessions between representatives of the Committee and affected unitary councillors and Parish Councils;
  - Online public events for the three areas: Beechingstoke (and surrounding areas), Calne Without (and surrounding areas), and Malmesbury/St Paul Malmesbury Without;
  - Online surveys for those areas potentially impacted by a change of parish in proposals as submitted to the Council.

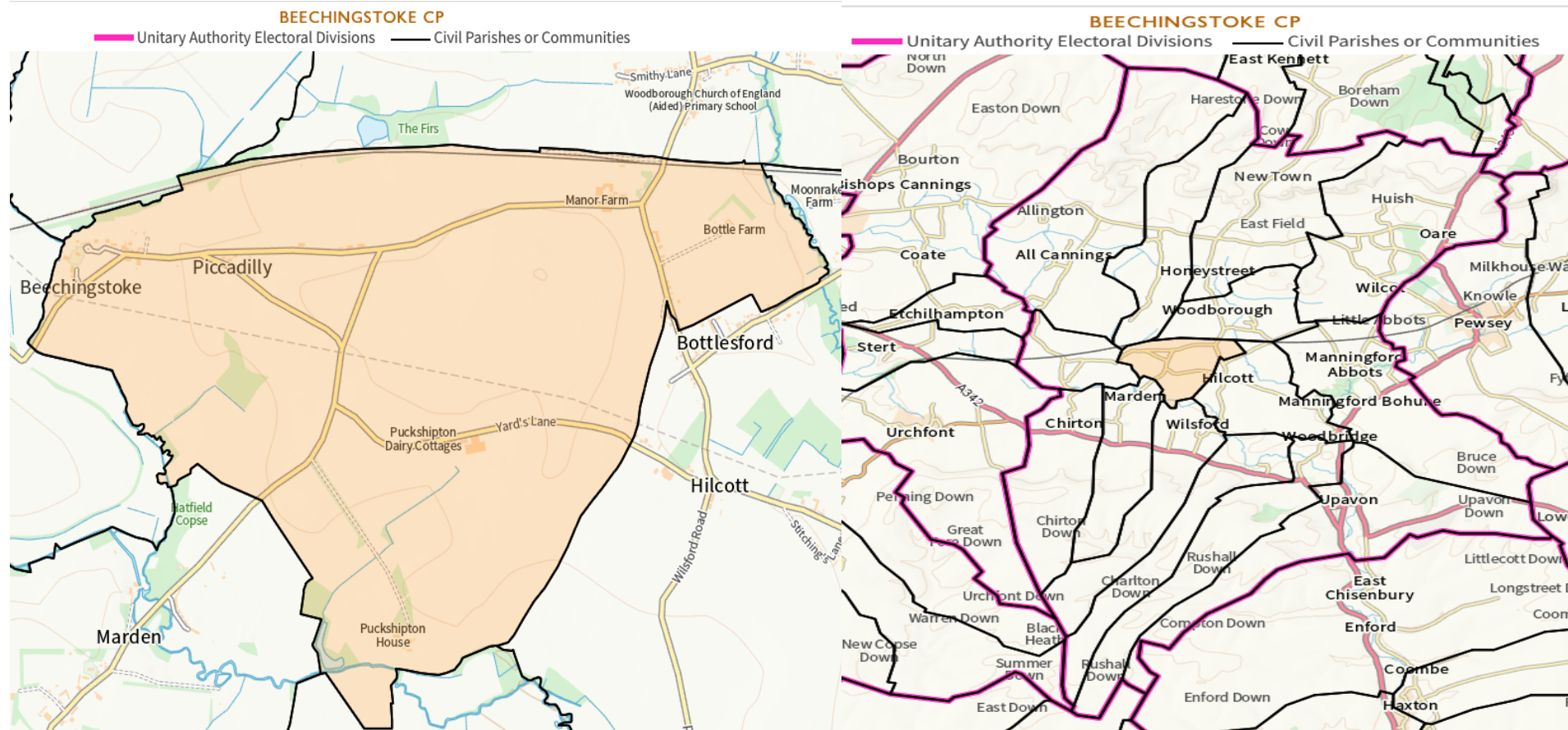
### **Draft recommendations process**

19. At its meeting on 8 February 2022 the Committee considered an information pack compiling all relevant materials including meeting session notes, proposal details, electoral projections, Parish Council responses, and public representations received by email, post or online survey.
20. The Committee agreed draft recommendations for each area and delegated preparation and approval of a detailed draft recommendations document for consultation to the Director of Legal and Governance. This would follow discussions with the Chairman of the Committee.
21. This document forms those draft recommendations. In some cases, recommendations will require consent of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to proceed, as parish boundaries will need to be amended which were subject to consequential changes in the 2017-19 Electoral Review, formally made by Parliament in March 2020.
22. It was also agreed by the Committee that those residing in an area where they might potentially be moved between parishes would be written to with details of the draft recommendations to seek their views. An online survey would also be prepared.
23. The Committee is required to undertake appropriate consultation on any draft recommendations. The consultation on these draft recommendations has been scheduled to run from 18 March to 5 May 2022.
24. Following consideration of any responses and other relevant information, the Committee will prepare Final Recommendations for consideration of Full Council. Currently this is intended to be in July 2022.

## **DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

### Beechingstoke and surrounding area

1. The Parish of Beechingstoke is located within the Pewsey Vale West Electoral Division. It is surrounded by the parishes of Stanton St Bernard, Woodborough, North Newton, Wilsford, Marden and Patney. In August 2021 it had a total electorate of 127.



Maps from <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/>

2. The parish is able to constitute a Parish Council of up to five members. At the local elections in May 2017 no candidates were nominated to serve on the Parish Council. Two attempted re-runs of the elections were held, but again no candidates were nominated. Local elections were subsequently scheduled in May 2021. Once more no candidates were nominated in the initial election, nor in two attempted re-runs. Consequently, the parish has been without a Parish Council for at least two election cycles.

3. As a result of the failure to constitute a Parish Council for this period, and the resulting lack of any effective parish governance, the Electoral Review Committee (“The Committee”) resolved to review the governance arrangements for Beechingstoke to determine whether a more effective or convenient arrangement would be appropriate, which might better reflect the interests and identity of the local community.
4. In order to consider as wide a variety of options as might be appropriate, the Committee included within the review all those parishes bordering Beechingstoke: Stanton St Bernard, Woodborough, North Newton, Wilsford, Marden and Patney.
5. In considering potential options, the Committee noted that the status of the parish could be changed to a Parish Meeting, which would abolish the Parish Council and limit governance to the ability of any elector to call a parish meeting to consider proposals on limited matters. There are over 20 parishes in Wiltshire without Parish Councils and only have Parish Meetings.
6. Other options included potentially merging Beechingstoke with another parish, or grouping it with another parish. In the former, there would be no separate councillors for Beechingstoke, but a single Parish Council for a new parish which included the existing Beechingstoke area. In the case of grouping, councillors could be elected specifically for Beechingstoke, but any councillors would sit on a joint Parish Council of Beechingstoke and another parish.
7. As there was no Parish Council to engage with, the Committee sought to engage with representatives of the surrounding parishes as listed in paragraph 4. Some parishes expressed potential willingness to assume governance over Beechingstoke in some form of arrangement, if necessary, though none suggested this as a preferred option. Other Parish Councils expressed that the community links with Beechingstoke were not significant enough to justify any such arrangement, notwithstanding the lack of appropriate governance within the parish at present.
8. As part of the review, North Newton Parish Council did suggest that the community around Bottlesford was currently divided between a number of different parishes, including the eastern edge of Beechingstoke. One option proposed was that an area of Beechingstoke be transferred to North Newton in order to unify the Bottlesford area.
9. The Committee wrote to all households of Beechingstoke to inform them of the review and invite them to an online meeting on 13 December 2022. At that meeting some residents raised queries regarding the election process in the area and potential lack of local notification given the absence of a Parish Council clerk. Strong views were expressed that having been made aware of the lack of a Parish Council the local community was now more engaged and interested in a council being reformed.
10. The survey to residents received 43 responses, 32 of which came from residents of Beechingstoke itself. Although not every

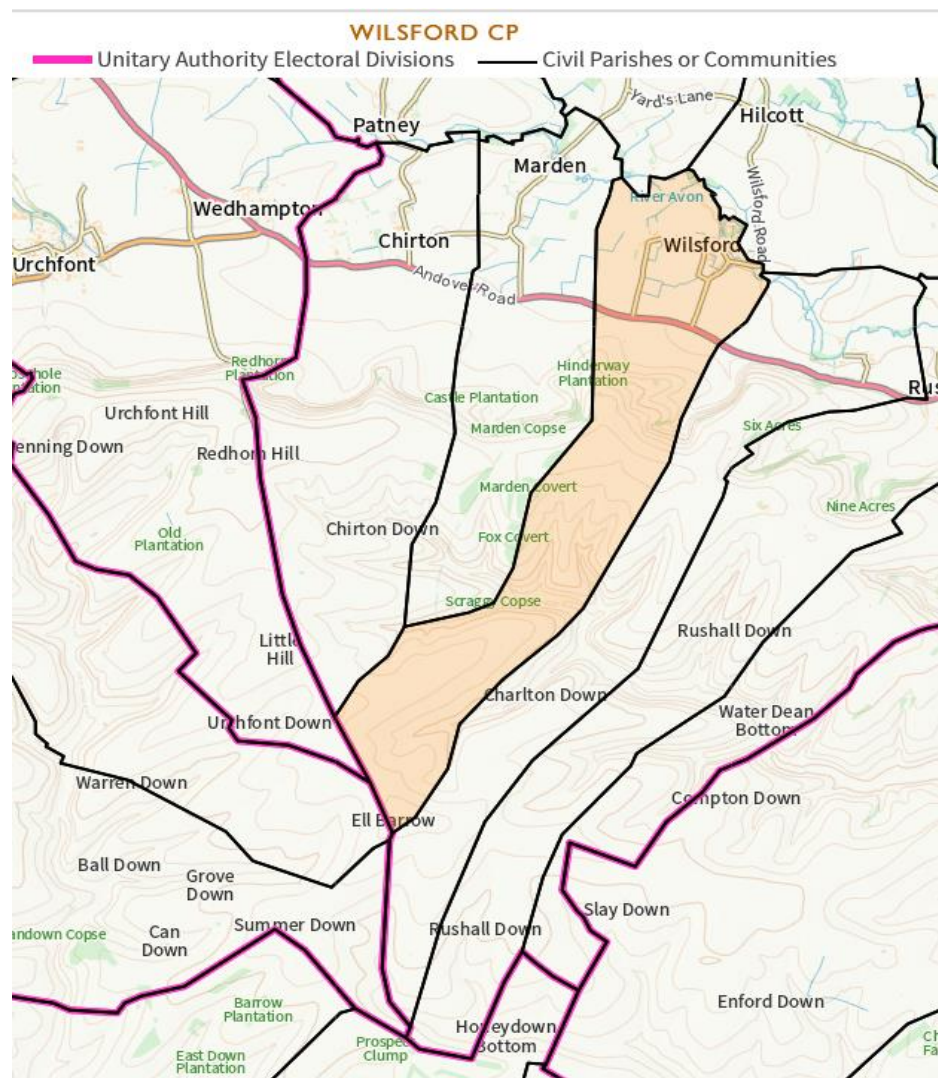
respondent might be on the electoral register, this nevertheless indicated a response rate of approximately one quarter of the total electors for the parish, far higher than in any other survey undertaken by the Committee in previous reviews. This demonstrated a very high level of engagement from the local community.

11. Those responding were able to support multiple options for future governance arrangements for the parish. 11 supported changing the status of the parish to a Parish Meeting, 7 the grouping of Beechingstoke with another parish, 6 the merger of Beechingstoke with another parish, and 28 supported retaining the current arrangements, that is the retention of a Parish Council for Beechingstoke. Those supporting grouping or merger were divided on which parish(es) it would be most appropriate to merge or group with
12. In respect of the proposal to transfer part of the area around Bottlesford to North Newnton, 10 responses agreed with the proposal, 29 disagreed, and 3 gave no opinion. 1 response indicated an amended proposal was supported, though the detail of the response was in disagreement.
13. At its meeting on 8 February 2022 the Committee considered all the gathered information, noting the significant level of responses from residents, the rural and sparsely populated nature of the parish, and the history of recent elections and lack of any effective governance. It was informed that separate to any recommendation it might choose to make, Wiltshire Council had, in response to the level of interest received, begun exploring options to appoint temporary Parish Councillors to the Parish Council. This was with the support of the local unitary councillor Cllr Paul Oatway QPM, with the intention of holding fresh elections as soon as practicable.
14. The Committee was encouraged by the level of interest provoked by the review among residents, itself a sign of the strong community feeling referenced by many respondents, including through the local parochial church council and other local events. Whilst the Committee remained concerned that the Parish Council had become defunct and concerned with the lack of any governance for a number of years, it considered that the residents should be given the opportunity to reform their Parish Council as many had requested.
15. The Committee also did not consider that evidence had been received which suggested it would be appropriate to alter the boundaries of the parish, such as around Bottlesford.
16. Accordingly, the Committee resolved to make no recommendation for any changes for Beechingstoke at the present time.
17. The Committee did note, however, that the lack of a Parish Council for such an extended period was very relevant in considering if the current arrangements were effective and convenient. Should the fresh attempts to appoint a Parish Council and, when appropriate, fresh elections not succeed, it considered that a further review could be held. This evidence could lead to an alternate view regarding the merging or grouping of Beechingstoke with another parish.



### Charlton and Wilsford

18. The Parish of Wilsford was included within the review as it borders Beechingstoke. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of only 66. The parish, highlighted below, is served by a Parish Council also covering the parish of Charlton, which is adjacent to the east and contains approximately 136 electors.



Map from <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/election-maps/gb/>

19. During the first phase of the review, the Committee established the existence of an anomaly in the electoral arrangements for Charlton and Wilsford. As legally separate parishes, the two would need to be formally grouped together under a joint Parish Council in order to be represented together. This was what the Parish Council believed to be the case and how it is referred to by others.
20. However, where two or more parishes are grouped together, they should elect councillors separately for each parish to sit on a joint Parish Council. Instead, for an extended period Charlton and Wilsford have been treated electorally as if they were a single parish and therefore had elected councillors to a single parish.
21. The Parish Council requested the anomaly be corrected to confirm the arrangement that had been thought to be in place. Additionally, Charlton was more commonly referred to in the community and the Parish Council as Charlton St Peter. It was requested this also be formally confirmed.
22. 8 responses were received to the online survey, all supportive of correcting the anomaly.
23. The Committee at its meeting on 8 February 2022 accepted that for reasons of effective and convenient governance the two parishes should be formally confirmed under a joint Parish Council. The current situation was a legal anomaly and the two communities as currently represented were content to remain distinct parishes under a single council.
24. It also agreed for reasons of community and identity the name of Charlton should be amended. This could be progressed immediately under a separate process under S75 of the Local Government Act 1972, but also listed as part of any Reorganisation Order confirming the joint Parish Council status. It would also avoid any potential confusion with another parish in Wiltshire named Charlton, near Malmesbury.
25. As the current Parish Council has seven members, it was agreed following the meeting that Wilsford contain two councillors and Charlton St Peter five councillors.

### **Recommendation 1**

- 1.1 That the parishes of Charlton St Peter (as to be renamed under S75 of the Local Government Act 1972) and Wilsford be grouped under a Joint Parish Council named Charlton St Peter and Wilsford Joint Parish Council.**
- 1.2 The Parish of Wilsford to contain two Parish Councillors.**
- 1.3 The Parish of Charlton St Peter to contain five Parish Councillors.**

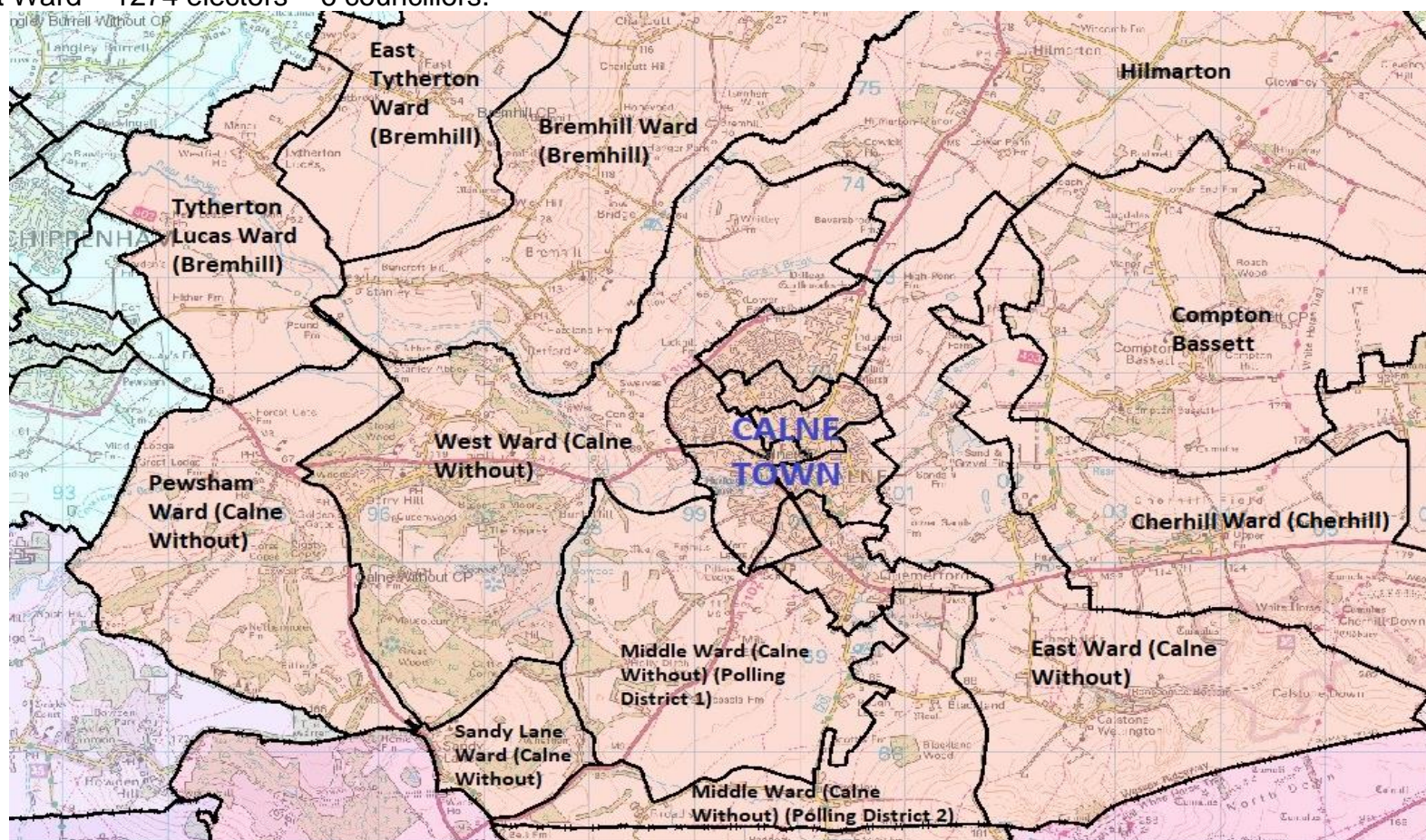
*Reasons: Paragraphs 73 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*



Calne, Bremhill, Hilmarton, Compton Bassett, Cherhill, Heddington, Calne Without,

26. The Parish of Calne Without is a large parish that surrounds most of the town of Calne. It includes a number of different settlements, including Derry Hill, Lower Compton and Stockley among other small communities. As of August 2021, the total electorate was around 2600. The Parish Council comprises five wards totalling 15 councillors:

- East Ward – 640 electors – 3 councillors;
- Middle Ward – 526 electors – 4 councillors;
- Pewsham Ward – 159 electors – 1 councillor;
- Sandy Lane Ward – 75 electors – 1 councillor;
- West Ward – 1274 electors – 6 councillors.



### Background

27. On 24 September 2019 the Electoral Review Committee (“The Committee”) received a petition from electors of the parish of Calne Without requesting that a new parish be formed around the area of Derry Hill and Studley. The petition contained 673 signatures, with further signatures later submitted, from the proposed area of the new parish. It was proposed that the new parish would contain nine councillors, without wards, and comprise the area currently sitting within the area of the West and Pewsham wards of Calne Without. Following the Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, the area of the West Ward was amended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“The LGBCE”) to cover a slightly larger area.
28. The request along with further information submitted by the petitioners argued that Derry Hill and Studley made up a viable, identifiable community and that the large, disparate parish of Calne Without did not reflect its community interests or identity. It was stated that over time significant development growth around Derry Hill had changed the character of the area from that of the rest of the parish, and that effective governance would be improved for the area if it had its own Parish Council. The request was opposed by Calne Without Parish Council who considered that the area would not be better served by a separate council, and that there would be a detriment to the remainder of Calne Without should Derry Hill and Studley form their own parish.
29. In response to the petition, a review of Calne Without was held in 2019/20, including meetings with the Parish Council, lead petitioners and the public. In its final recommendations the Committee considered that a strong case had been made but recommended that, other than resolving some minor warding issues, a further review take place. The new review would encompass all surrounding parishes in order to be able to consider the entire area, and all potential options for effective and convenient governance that might be appropriate for the communities in the area. As stated in the Final Recommendations, whose recommendations were approved by Full Council in September 2020:
- 85. In forming its Recommendations, the Committee noted that in terms of electorate there would be viable numbers for sizable parishes for both Derry Hill and Studley and the remainder of Calne Without, with over 1000 electors in each, should a new parish be formed. It noted the significant representations made in the form of the petition in support of a new parish and in representations that had been received. It considered that compelling evidence had been provided that a new parish would be viable and sustainable, as well as supported by a significant number of the existing parish and particularly those within the proposed area of the new parish, with strong reasoning provided in relation to both governance and community identity and interests.*
- 86. The Committee also noted, however, that the impacts on the remainder of Calne Without would be severe. It had been said that there would be no community facilities remaining in the parish, with an impact on provision of some local services, and it was noted that additional requests had been received from Calne Town Council for other elements of Calne Without to be transferred to the town, potentially reducing the scale of the parish still further. Comments received at various stages had raised concerns to the Committee*

*about the viability of the parish should a new one be created, notwithstanding the electorate numbers, with some suggestions that the disparate nature of its communities meant that it might be appropriate for them to be combined with other parishes in the area such as Heddington or Bremhill, should Derry Hill and Studley form a new, separate parish.*

*87. Despite the strong case made for a new parish, the Committee therefore resolved not to recommend its creation in response to the petition at the present time. This was because of the need to further consider the potential impacts on the remainder of Calne Without, and whether it would be appropriate in the event of creation of a new parish for the remainder of Calne Without to be combined in some fashion with other neighbouring parishes, which it felt needed to be determined at the same time as creation of any new parish. As those parishes were not included in the terms of reference for the 2019/20 review, it was not possible to consider and make recommendations regarding those aspects. The Committee did not consider it appropriate to secure effective and convenient governance nor reflect community interests and identity by creating a new parish until a wider review could be undertaken.*

*88. It was noted that whilst a request for a review of an area already reviewed within the last two years could be refused, the Committee could voluntarily decide to hold another review sooner if it considered it appropriate to do so. Therefore, it determined to recommend holding a further review including Calne Without, Calne and surrounding parishes when it was practicable to do so*

30. Accordingly, for the 2021/22 review, the parishes of Calne Town, Bremhill, Hilmarton, Compton Bassett, Cherhill, and Heddington were included. The review would also be able to encompass any parishes surrounding those listed such as Langley Burrell Without, Christian Malford and Bromham, should any requests be received, or options recommended, which impacted them.
31. When meeting with parishes and gathering information from surveys, the Committee included those requests which had been received for the beginning of the review. These were:
- The proposal for a new parish at Derry Hill and Studley, and either the remainder of Calne Without remaining a parish, or some or all elements of it being transferred to other parishes;
  - Proposals from Calne Town Council to transfer areas of Calne Without to the town;
  - A proposal from Compton Bassett Parish Council to transfer areas from Calne Without and Cherhill to Compton Bassett;
32. The initial review and thus this subsequent review were prompted by the submission of the petition for a new parish. This remained a significant piece of evidence of community identity via a major consultative exercise although it was now a few years old, and as such remained a major factor to consider. However, the Committee was mindful of the purpose of a review to examine all aspects of electoral and governance arrangements in the areas listed, and the need to consider every area in respect of the statutory criteria. This would mean that, irrespective of any view on the initial new parish proposal and other submitted proposals, for which further information was sought through an online survey, every area would be considered in turn with an open mind. Recommendations would be made as appropriate taking account of the criteria, guidance, evidence gathered, and arguments received.

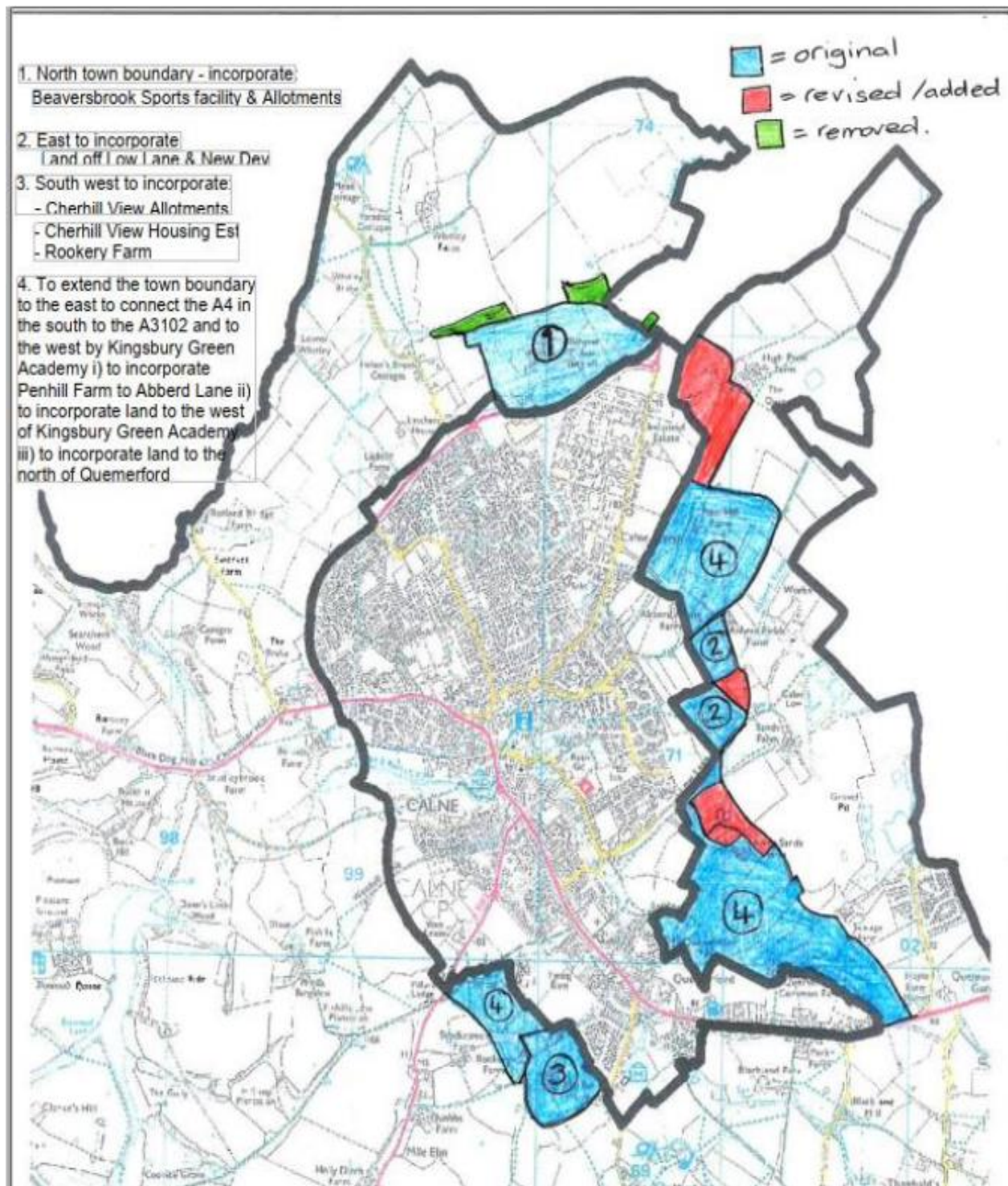


## Calne Town

33. Calne Town comprises 19 councillors across four wards. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 14175. Three of its wards were coterminous with a unitary Electoral Division of the same name. The final ward, Calne South, was included within the Calne South unitary division, which also included the Middle and Sandy Lane wards of Calne Without, and the parish of Heddington.



34. Prior to the 2021/22 review Calne Town had requested the transfer of a number of areas from the parish of Calne Without into the town. The requests included incorporating, as described by the Town Council: i) the Beversbrook Sport Facility and Allotments, which were on a long term lease to the Town Council; ii) the new development off Low Lane to the east of the town; iii) Cherhill View allotments, Cherhill View housing estate, and Rookery Farm, which included recent urban development which it was felt were part of a community with the town and several areas of land; and iv) land at Penhill Farm to Abberd Lane, land to the west of Kingsbury Green Academy, and land to the north of Quemerford. The detailed reasons for the requests were included within the information packs.
35. Following the beginning of the review Calne Town clarified its requests to include further sections of land to the east of the town. Wiltshire Council officers prepared a hybrid map to detail the various requests as shown overleaf.



36. Paragraph 170 of the statutory guidance on community governance reviews requires that the Committee consider both the current position and that within a period of five years from the start of the review. This includes consideration of incoming housing development which would have an impact on the character and interests of the area. It also states: *'This ensures that the review does not simply reflect a single moment but takes account of expected population movements in the short- to medium-term'*.



37. Accordingly, even if it were the case that further urban-focused housing was expected by some parties in a number of the areas shown, the Committee could only take account of existing housing, or that predicted to occur within the next five years. The Committee consulted the Spatial Information team at Wiltshire Council for information on allocated housing areas and granted or submitted planning permission for housing of more than 10 dwellings in the Calne area. Furthermore, the character, identity and interests of that new housing area was relevant.
38. Meeting with representatives of the town and Parish Councils, discussion with Calne Without included views that where urban development extended over the current town boundary this could reasonably be included within the town, and as such supported elements of the Town Council proposal where there was definitive development taking place or which had already taken place. The Town Council reiterated its reasons for requesting the areas listed, including areas looked after by the Town Council, the incorporation of developed areas, and the additional areas. It was confirmed several of the areas included no housing or imminent projected development.
39. Each of the four initial proposals from the Town Council had been surveyed. 40 responses commented on each proposal in turn, with between 21-29 in agreement, and between 5-9 in disagreement, with others expressing no opinion. Responses made referred to land being under the control of the Town Council and therefore suggested that it should belong within the town.
40. The Committee considered all of the information gathered and views submitted. It noted that the estate around Rookery Farm/Marden Farm was already developed and was accessed from within Calne Town. The density and extent of the development, and its character, was overwhelmingly urban in nature. The character, identity and interests of the area was strongly felt to align with the town.
41. The lower portion of land proposed by the Town Council off Low Lane was currently being developed. It too was of a significant scale and urban in character and interests and had no community connection or governance reason to align with the more rural parish of Calne Without.
42. Notably, the Committee considered that both areas should have been identified during the Electoral Review as areas to be included within urban based Electoral Divisions, in keeping with its recommendations, accepted by the LGBCE, for other major settlements such as Trowbridge, Melksham, Chippenham and Salisbury.
43. However, the other areas requested by the Town Council did not contain new areas of housing, nor were they projected to include such areas within the next five years. Whilst the Committee could recommend the transfer of areas without significant electorates, it did not consider the evidence supported that this would lead to improved governance, or that it was reflective of the communities involved or

their identity or interests. Calne Town was a large, dense and highly urban parish without any rural hinterland. Whilst many responses saw the areas as the natural focus for future development that might take place, this was speculative and could not be taken into account at this stage as it would not be appropriate under the criteria to transfer those areas.

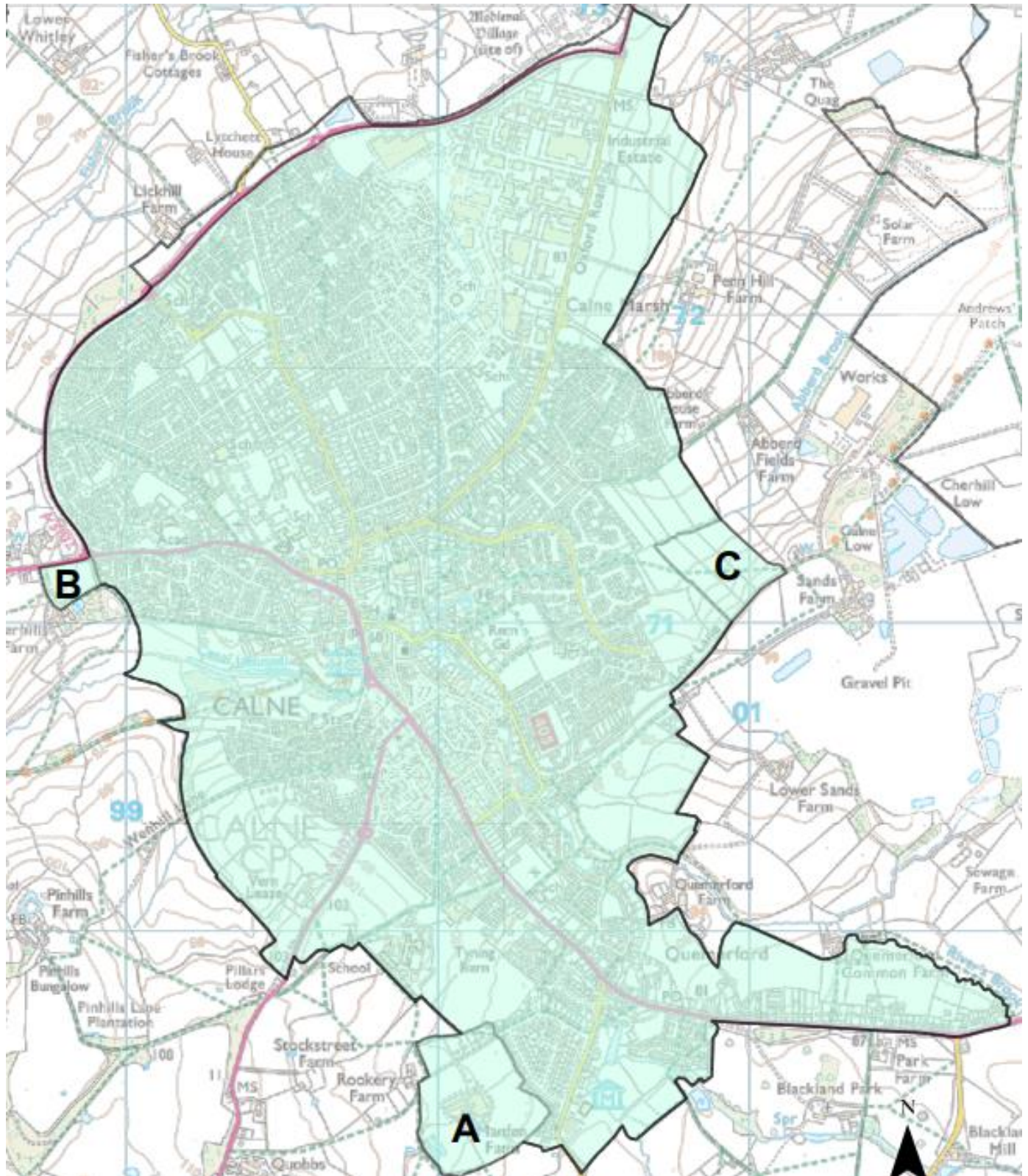
44. Of the areas the Committee did consider should be transferred, whilst the Low Lane area was of a scale that it could conceivably be a ward of the Town Council and remain within the Calne Rural Electoral Division, this was not considered to be an effective or convenient arrangement. An additional ward with possibly a single councillor outside a town-based Division would not improve governance effectiveness. Accordingly, the Committee recommended that the LGBCE be requested to amend the Calne Central Division to be coterminous with the Calne Central Ward, and both to include the Low Lane area.
45. The Rookery/Marden Farm area was within the Calne South Division which also included Heddington. Calne South therefore already existed as a division which was part urban and part rural and could remain so with an increased Calne South town ward incorporating the area of development. The Committee noted the revised town ward electorate would still be smaller than the other town wards, and as such should remain at four councillors rather than the five of the other town wards.
46. A final area was identified to the west of the town by the Committee. This was an area which had been granted planning permission for a sizable new development following a planning appeal. As this area would also be of urban character and identity, the Committee likewise recommended it be included as part of the Calne Central Ward, and within an amended Calne Central Division which would likewise require LGBCE consent.
47. Therefore, the Committee proposed:

### **Recommendation 2**

- 2.1 That the area marked as A be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne South Town Ward. Calne South Ward to continue to have four councillors.**
- 2.2 That the areas marked as B and C be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne Central Town Ward. Calne Central Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 2.3 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne Central and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Town and Calne Without.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 73, 80, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

## Calne Town



Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey line existing parish line.  
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### Bremhill

48. The parish of Bremhill lies to the north of Derry Hill and Studley in Calne Without, north-west of Calne Town. As of August 2021, it has an electorate of 801. The Parish Council comprises four wards and 15 councillors.
49. As in the 2019/20 review, Calne Without Parish Council by majority continued to oppose any new parish proposal for Derry Hill, with the current parish in its view able to pool resources and act efficiently. If there were concerns about the underrepresentation of Derry Hill it was suggested by some of the Parish Council that altered warding could address those concerns. In the event of a new parish being created, there were differing views expressed on the viability or effectiveness of what should occur with the remainder of the parish. In respect of the part of West Ward (including Ratford and Fisher's Brook) not included in the petition's new parish proposal, where subsequently it had been suggested transferring it to Bremhill, some argued the area did not have strong community connections to Bremhill, which comprised a number of different villages with their own identities separate to the rural area in question.
50. The Committee also met representatives of Bremhill Parish Council to discuss proposals that had been submitted as detailed within the information pack. Opportunity was also provided for the Parish Council to submit any new proposals. Bremhill Parish Council submitted a detailed proposal for the transfer of a number of areas of Calne Without, including some elements within the initial Derry Hill and Studley new parish proposal. They argued the area of Rose Cottage, Stanley Abbey Farm and remains of Stanley Abbey were linked with Bremhill, with community, heritage and historical cohesion improved if they were transferred. It also included areas to the north of Calne Town, to better align to main roads as a more natural and identifiable boundary. They stated the areas requested amounted to approximately 28 properties.
51. A number of other suggestions sought to align boundaries with identifiable elements on the ground, or to correct perceived anomalies such as properties in Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without which, it was argued, had addresses referencing Bremill and looked to Bremhill for amenities and services, or where all other properties along the same road were within Bremhill and there was no community or governance reason for them to be separated from their neighbours as at present. They did suggest a small field boundary be amended and moved into Langley Burrell Without, to be a more appropriate boundary taking account of local farming operations.
52. The Committee considered that Bremhill had submitted a coherent and persuasive argument that the areas of Calne Without, Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without would appropriately sit within Bremhill parish. The areas were similar in nature, limited in scale, and looked to and aligned with Bremhill and so would form an appropriate transfer under the statutory criteria. The areas would become part of the appropriate wards of Bremhill. Langley Burrell Without would remain unwarded. The views of the affected parishes

would be directly sought as part of the consultation on the Draft Recommendations.

53. The precise line and number of properties impacted would need to be considered carefully, to ensure no more urban properties around Derry Hill or Calne itself were moved into the rural focused parish of Bremhill. The Committee at its meeting discussed slightly amending the boundary with Hilmarton and Calne Without along the A3102 to avoid splitting a number of structures between three parishes. Other such very minor amendments to correct anomalies for example to align to river boundaries could also form part of any changes.
54. Given the limited scale of the proposals, no changes to other governance arrangements for Bremhill were considered necessary or appropriate under the statutory criteria. As there were consequential changes made to Calne Without, Calne Town and Langley Burrell Without during the 2017-19 Electoral Review, any changes to those parishes would require the consent of the LGBCE.
55. The changes relating to Christian Malford and Langley Burrell Without involved the Electoral Division of Kington. As the areas proposed to be transferred could not be warded separately, if the changes were approved this would require the LGBCE to agree to amend the Electoral Division boundaries of Kington and Calne Rural to match the proposed parish boundaries. Similarly, a small section of the area to be transferred from Calne Town, which included no electors, would require the amendment of the Calne North Electoral Division.
56. Therefore, the Committee agreed the following:

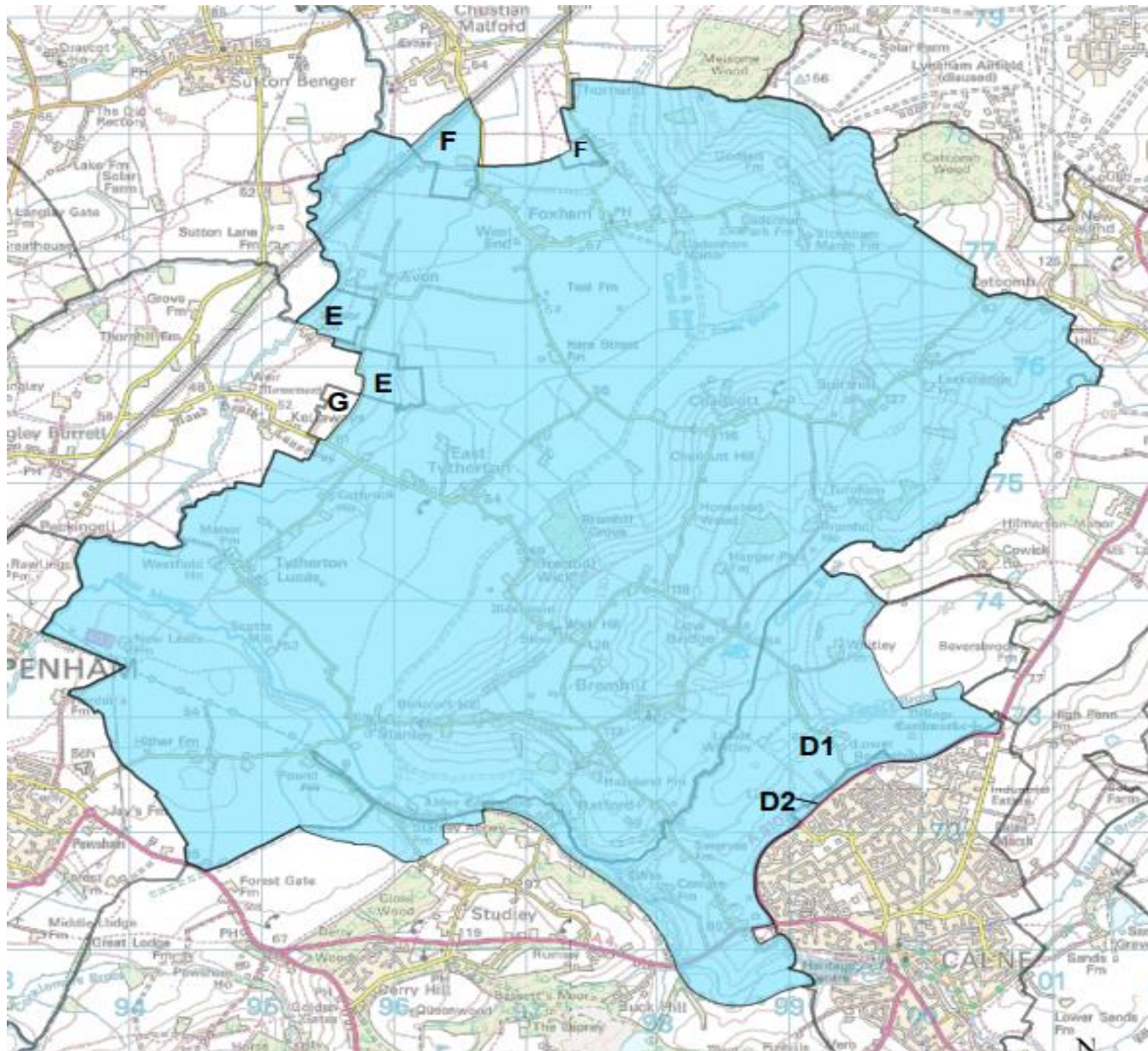
### **Recommendation 3**

- 3.1 That the area marked as D1 and D2 be transferred from Calne Without and Calne Town respectively to Bremhill as part of the Bremhill Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Bremhill Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.2 That the area marked as E be transferred from Langley Burrell Without to Bremhill as part of the East Tytherton Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. East Tytherton Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.3 That the area marked as F be transferred from Christian Malford to Bremhill as part of the Foxham Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Foxham Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.4 That the area marked as G be transferred from Bremhill to Langley Burrell Without. Langley Burrell Without to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.5 To request that the LGBCE amend the Kington, Calne North and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Without, Christian Malford, Bremhill, Langley Burrell Without and Calne Town.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*



## Bremhill



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**Hilmarton and Compton Bassett**

57. Hilmarton is a moderately-sized rural parish to the north of Calne Town. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 586. The parish is unwarded and the Parish Council has up to eleven councillors. Compton Bassett is a small rural parish to the east of Calne Town and south of Hilmarton. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 199. The parish is unwarded and has up to seven councillors.
58. The Committee met representatives of both councils to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without within the information pack. The Parish Councils were also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals. Both submitted proposals for the transfer of parts of Calne Without immediately adjacent to the east side of Calne Town. Both proposals included the area of High Penn cottages and Penn Wood nature reserve. As such, if a transfer from Calne Without were to be considered appropriate under the criteria, only one of the parishes could be the recipient, or an amended proposal would be required.
59. Hilmarton also proposed extending their boundary slightly into what was described as Bremhill, but which is currently (subject to recommendation 3.1) part of Calne Without West Ward. This was a small area around Beversbrook Farm where business/agricultural buildings, but no dwellings, were divided by the current parish boundaries.
60. Compton Bassett's proposal included a larger section of Calne Without and also a section of the parish of Cherhill. As well as the High Penn area the proposal extended south to include the areas around Sands Farm and other Hills Group quarry and extraction sites. It was stated that due to the alignment of the parishes and rights of way access, Compton Bassett was more impacted by the Hills activity and was most active in responding to planning applications and other matters affecting the area, which was geographically distant from and without much direct access to any settlements of Calne Without. The area of Cherhill that would need to be transferred to allow the area from Calne Without to be transferred to Compton Bassett contained few or no electors. Cherhill Parish Council supported the proposal from Compton Bassett Parish Council.
61. The proposal from Compton Bassett was received during the first stage of the review and was included as part of the public surveying. There were 26 responses, 14 in agreement, 8 in disagreement and 4 expressing no opinion. Comments in favour included that the proposal was logical and would be a more effective governance arrangement. Comments in disagreement included that the area was suitably served by the existing council and there was no compelling reason to make a change or that the area would be more appropriately included within Hilmarton or Calne Town.
62. The Committee considered that the area was physically remote from any other communities of Calne Without and, although the Parish Council was an effective entity, the extended eastern part of the parish was not representative of the communities that existed, and therefore was not an effective governance arrangement. On balance, it considered the closest major community connections for most of

the area were with Compton Bassett. It was felt that the rights of way, geography and industrial activity would be more effectively governed as part of an extended Compton Bassett. It was significant that Cherhill had supported the arguments of Compton Bassett as well, strengthening the argument for that proposal. The area of High Penn itself is accessed from within Calne Town, but is still rural in nature. It would not be appropriate to transfer it to the town, which had not in any case requested this. Compton Bassett, given its rural nature and links, would be appropriate for High Penn to be transferred to given the proposed transfer of the wider area. It was noted this would not prevent any other parishes from commenting on relevant planning matters in the area.

63. It was felt the second Hilmarton proposal could make the boundary clearer, and so it was agreed to transfer a small section of fields from Calne Without to improve governance around the area.

64. Therefore, the Committee agreed the following:

**Recommendation 4**

**4.1 That the area marked as H1 be transferred from Cherhill to Compton Bassett.**

**4.2 That the area marked as H2 be transferred from Calne Without to Compton Bassett.**

**4.3 That the area marked as I be transferred from Calne Without to Hilmarton**

**4.4 That Compton Bassett continue to have seven councillors.**

**4.5 That Hilmarton continue to have eleven councillors.**

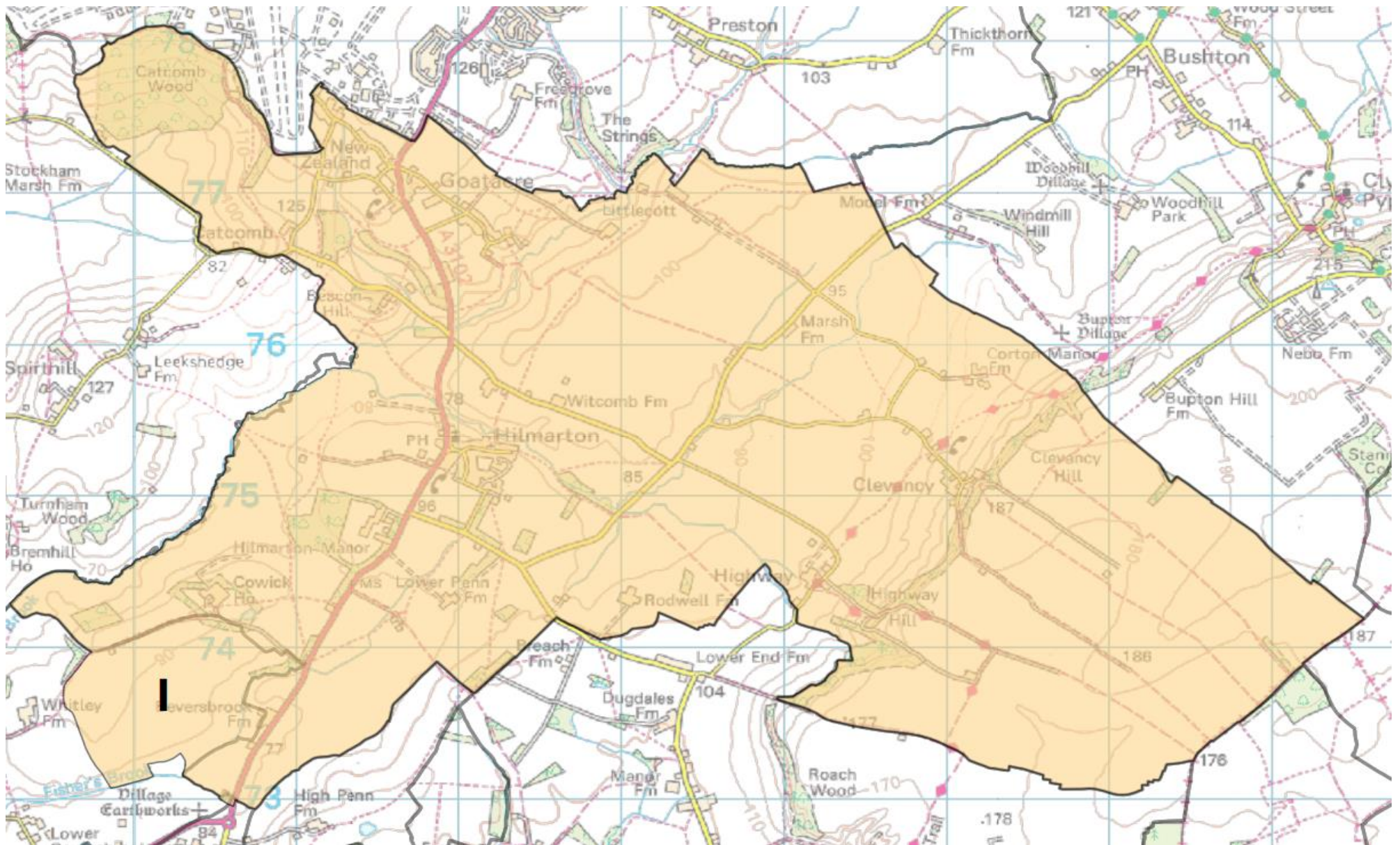
*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*







## Hilmarton



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**Cherhill**

65. Cherhill is a moderately sized rural parish to east of Calne Town and Calne Without. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 610. The parish has two wards: Cherhill, with five councillors, and Yatesbury, with two councillors.
66. The Committee met representatives of the Parish Council to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without as detailed within the information pack. The Parish Council was also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals.
67. The Parish Council supported the proposal of Compton Bassett Parish Council to transfer part of Cherhill to Compton Bassett as detailed under Recommendation 4.
68. The Parish Council also confirmed its support for a potential transfer of the settlement of Lower Compton to Cherhill. Lower Compton is a settlement within the East Ward of Calne Without north of the A4 lying approximately halfway between Cherhill village and Calne Town. The Parish Council argued that many of the residents looked to Cherhill for community and services, including access to the local school. As a small but dense settlement within a rural area, its character and identity fitted more closely with Cherhill than with the disparate and more distant communities of Calne Without. Lower Compton was also separated from the principal settlement of Calne Without, Derry Hill, by the town of Calne itself.
69. The Committee was persuaded by the arguments submitted by Cherhill Parish Council. Lower Compton was physically close to Cherhill village with many community connections, was of a similar scale, and was closer in character than the town or the large semi urban area of Derry Hill. In terms of community and effective governance it was considered that a combination with Cherhill provided a more appropriate community connection and would permit an improved governance arrangement as a result.
70. The Committee therefore considered other nearby communities within what remained of the East Ward of Calne Without, which had an eastern border running south along the road toward Bishops Cannings. This included the small settlements of Calstone Wellington and Theobald's Green. This was a highly rural area, with direct connection north to the A4 close to Lower Compton and the road to Cherhill. Given existing connections with Lower Compton, it was considered these two should be transferred to the rural focused parish of Cherhill.
71. The inclusion of Lower Compton, Calstone Wellington and the rest of East Ward from Calne Without would increase the electorate of Cherhill by a significant amount. Accordingly, it was considered that the area should be transferred as its own ward, Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington, with four councillors, in recognition of its significance within the expanded parish.
72. Therefore, the Committee agreed the following:

**Recommendation 5**

**5.1 That the area marked as J be transferred from Calne Without to Cherhill.**

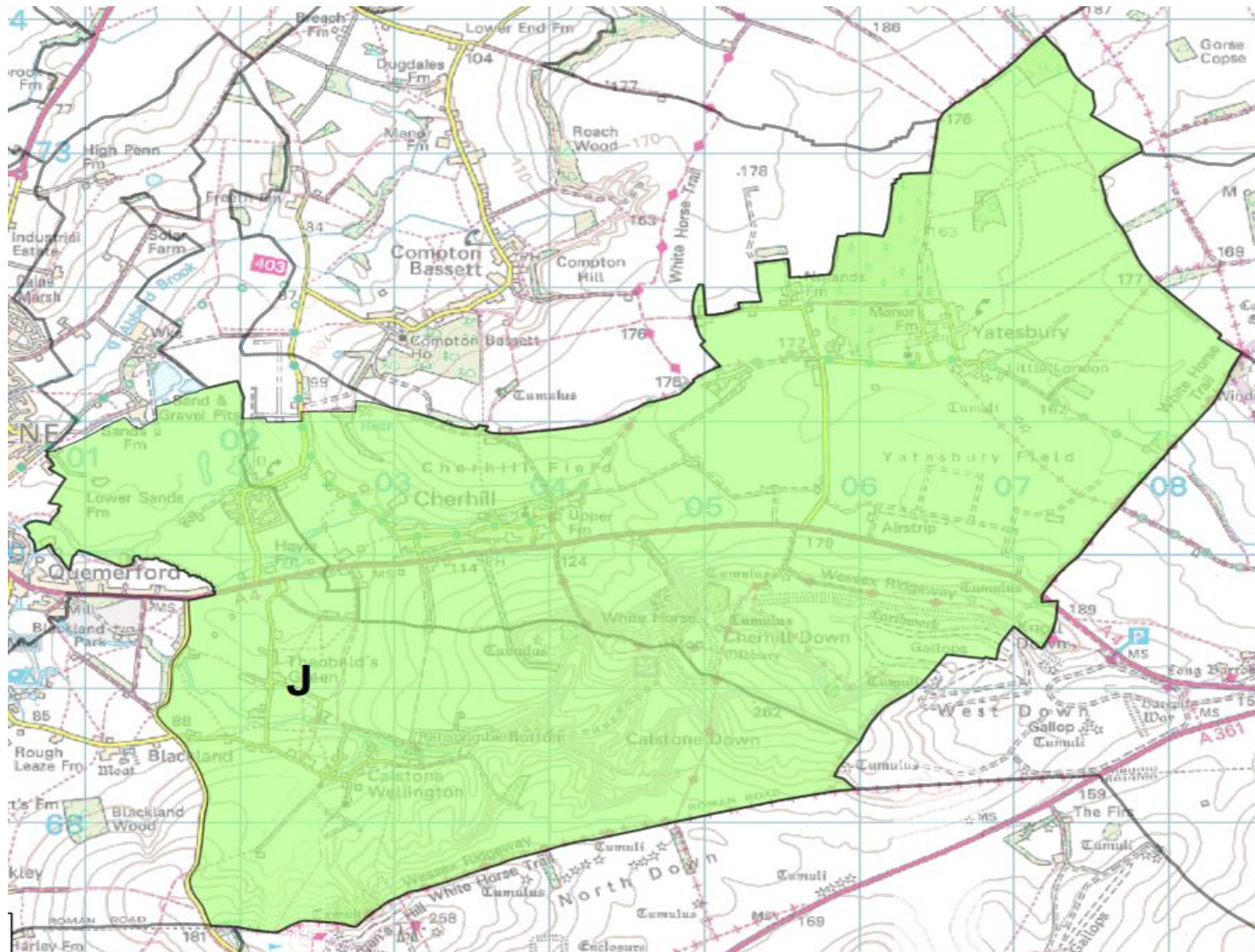
**5.2 That the area marked as J be named Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington Ward, and to contain four councillors.**

**5.3 That Cherhill Parish Council comprise three wards (Cherhill, Yatesbury, Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington), and a total of Eleven councillors. Cherhill Ward would continue to contain five councillors. Yatesbury would continue to contain two councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*



## Cherhill



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Heddington

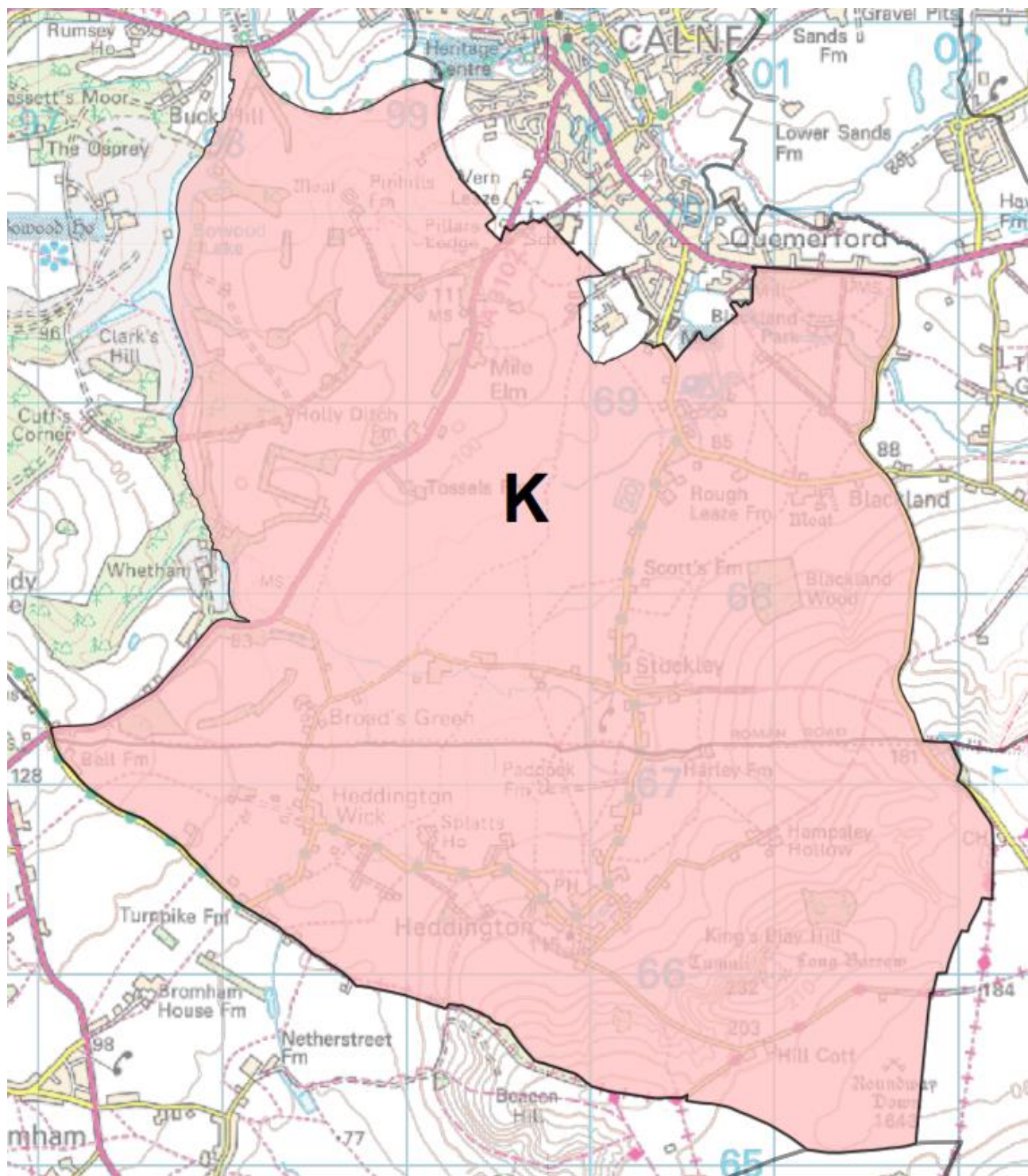
73. Heddington is a small rural parish directly south of Calne Town and Calne Without. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of 599. The parish is unwarded and has up to seven Parish Councillors.
74. The Committee met representatives of the Parish Council to discuss proposals that had been submitted in relation to Calne Without as detailed within the information pack. The Parish Council was also given the opportunity to submit any new proposals.
75. The Parish Council stated it did not want the parish to 'end up' with bits and pieces that were not wanted by other parishes. If the Committee were to recommend transferring other areas to Heddington it was suggested Stockley, Broads Green and Mile Elm were adjacent to the parish and had some community connections. It was strongly considered the Sandy Lane area, which was included with Heddington and the Middle Ward of Calne Without in the Calne South Electoral Division, was very rural and did not have any strong connections with the community at Heddington despite that inclusion.
76. The Committee considered the area, mindful of its previous recommendations relating to Calne Without. At present the Middle Ward had an electorate larger than Heddington, but to a large extent this was due to the urban extension at Rookery/Marden Farm, which was proposed under Recommendation 2, to transfer into the town. Without that estate, the remainder of Middle Ward was a large area, but sparsely populated and rural, and therefore similar in character and identity to Heddington.
77. The Committee noted the close proximity of the community at Stockley to Heddington rather than the primary settlement or other settlements of Calne Without. The road links were direct, and the two areas shared many connections, including the annual Heddington and Stockley Steam Rally and County Fair.
78. Therefore, when considering the community connections, shared identity, and the reduced electorate of the rural area south of Calne Town, the Committee determined to recommend that the remaining area of the Middle Ward of Calne Without be transferred to the parish of Heddington. It considered that this was not a case of the area "ending up" with Heddington, but that this was an arrangement which was a better reflection of the character and connections of the area.
79. Due to the increase in electorate, it considered that a further two parish councillors should be added to the Parish Council of Heddington, for a total of nine. The Committee did not determine that a name change was required in the event the recommendations at this time. Following initial feedback from Heddington, should the proposal be eventually confirmed, it was suggested the transferred area form its own ward.
80. Therefore, the Committee agreed the following:



### **Recommendation 6**

- 6.1 That the area marked as K in the Draft Recommendation be transferred from Calne Without to Heddington as a new 'Heddington Without' Ward of Heddington Parish Council. The ward to have two parish councillors.**
- 6.2 The remaining part of the parish would be called 'Heddington Ward', with seven parish councillors. That the parish of Heddington therefore be increased to a total of nine councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*



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Calne Without (Derry Hill and Studley)

81. The details of the parish of Calne Without and the background of the 2019/20 review are as set out under paragraphs 27-32. In summary, a petition with over 700 signatures had been received in 2019 requesting a new parish be created for Derry Hill and Studley, which remained a significant factor to consider. The Parish Council for Calne Without opposed that proposal. After an initial review, on recommendation of the Electoral Review Committee ("The Committee") Full Council determined not to proceed with creation of a new parish at that time, but requested a further review take place encompassing all surrounding parishes.
82. For the 2021/22 review the Committee therefore surveyed opinion on the option of creating a new parish, and the possibility of retaining the remaining area as the continuing Calne Without Parish Council. It also surveyed on the option of abolishing the parish and transferring elements elsewhere, both being options that had been received as part of the 2019/20 review in response to the petition.
83. The Parish Council, by majority, continued to oppose the creation of a new parish at Derry Hill and Studley for the reasons that had also been set out during the previous review. These included that the disparate communities of Calne Without worked more efficiently as a group and the communities would not be better served by dividing their governance arrangements. A major part of the Committee's and Council's decision to undertake a further review had been concern about the impact on the remainder of Calne Without were a new parish created. Some members suggested that if it were felt that Derry Hill was not sufficiently represented by the current arrangements, the warding arrangements could be rebalanced.
84. Those representing the former petition continued to stress the high level of response from that petition in support of a new parish, which the Committee had noted as part of its view that a strong case had been made of the community identity and interests of local residents. The areas of West and Pewsham as initially requested included the major settlement of the parish where the bulk of facilities and services were located. It was considered that other areas might be more effectively represented if not combined with the large semi-urban settlement at Derry Hill.
85. During the online survey, 85 responses were received: 63 in support of a new parish proposal, 19 against, 1 giving no opinion. 2 responses suggested amended proposals, with one suggesting the same boundaries for a new parish but with warding, and the other incorrectly stating the proposal left Pewsham within Calne Without. Of those in support of a new parish proposal, there was division on what should occur to the remainder of Calne Without, with 33 suggesting retention of the current Parish Council and 39 suggesting it should be dissolved.



Committee Discussion

86. It is important to note that for the 2021/22 review the Committee surveyed opinion on the option of creating a new parish, and the possibility of retaining the remaining area as the continuing Calne Without Parish Council, or of abolishing the parish and transferring elements elsewhere, because these were options that had been received as part of the 2019/20 review in response to the petition. It was considered important to undertake information gathering on the already submitted proposals. However, the Committee was not obligated to consider only those proposals, and in fact was required to consider all potential options if the evidence and information suggested alternatives would better reflect community identity and interests or provide more effective and convenient local governance.
87. During discussion with parish representatives and the public, it became apparent that the area around Derry Hill and Studley was considered by many as the centre or heart of the existing parish. It was the core community, comprising over half of the population and where most of the services, assets and amenities were located. As a result of development in recent decades it had a distinctive character from much of the rest of the parish, made up of smaller, more rural based communities physically distant from the semi-urban Derry Hill and Studley. This did not prevent the possibility of effective community and governance between those communities, as the Committee had seen in its review of Melksham Without. However, in contrast to that review, other communities in Calne Without did not share a similar level of community development distinct from the dominant population centre, such as village halls or other amenity provisions.
88. Given the strong sense of identity expressed and evidence of community for Derry Hill and Studley through the petition, and to a degree also shown by the balance of responses received during the online survey, which was in favour, the Committee considered first whether other sections of the parish shared a community connection as strong with each other and with Derry Hill, or if those areas in fact aligned more appropriately to other areas.
89. The Committee's examination of surrounding parishes and their alignment to or connection with communities within what is currently Calne Without have been set out in the preceding recommendations. In the case of Bremhill, changes proposed were minor or for largely rural tracks of land where it was felt there was no particular community connection with the core of Calne Without parish. For Compton Bassett, the eastern part of Calne Without proposed to be transferred was both remote from and distinct in character from the core of Calne Without parish, or any other part, and it was not considered that it shared any particular connection stronger than that with geographically closer and more rurally focused parishes such as Compton Bassett. For Cherhill, strong arguments had been presented regarding the community at Lower Compton aligning more closely with Cherhill than with any other part of Calne Without, with the smaller communities such as Calstone Wellington not sharing character, identity or interests with the large semi-urban elements to the west. The proposals at Heddington were not as strong, but the close connections with some of the communities such as Stockley, and

the sparsely populated rural nature of the remainder argued against any continued inclusion with the core of Calne Without for any reason of community or identity.

90. However, although of a rural character, representations had made clear that the small community at Sandy Lane did align more to Derry Hill and Studley than other areas. Like Pewsham they were of rural character and their closeness to the core settlement, absent for other areas such as Calstone Wellington or Mile Elm, ensured effective governance could take place and a sense of shared community remained possible.
91. The community at Sandy Lane also included a small number of properties within the parish of Bromham, which were artificially divided by the parish line, running between a number of properties. It was proposed that this be transferred to the same area as the rest of Calne Without.
92. Furthermore, as previously noted, within Calne Without as it currently stands, Derry Hill, Studley and Pewsham comprised over 50% of the parish electorate, with 1433 electors out of a total of 2733 as of August 2021. A sizable amount of the electorate within Middle Ward was contained at Rookery/Marden Farm, and a sizable amount of the electorate of East Ward was in the land off Low Lane, both of which was accepted by nearly all parties contacted as urban extensions of Calne Town which should be transferred into it. As a result, Derry Hill, Studley and Pewsham would comprise an even larger percentage of the parish even without any other changes. To a large degree, Calne Without was Derry Hill and its closely associated communities, and some other parts of the parish would not be considered for inclusion as part of the same community when considering the area were a parish being formed afresh.
93. However, the Committee noted it was not necessary or appropriate to abolish any parish as part of the review. Abolishment of a parish was a rare occurrence, particularly when a parish and its council were shown and known to be viable and effective. Whilst the Committee did not believe the evidence demonstrated parish boundaries or arrangements of Calne Without were the most appropriate under the statutory criteria, and a more efficient and effective arrangement would be possible, there was no question that the Parish Council was a viable entity.
94. Taking into consideration the principal settlement status of Derry Hill and Studley within the parish even before any other transfers besides Calne Town were considered, it could be argued that the parish could have been appropriately named Derry Hill and Studley even without any changes. Many parishes in Wiltshire were named for their largest settlement, even as they contained other, often much smaller, settlements. Cherhill was a local example, also including the small community at Yatesbury.
95. Given the Committee's recommendations for transfers from Calne Without to parishes at Calne, Bremhill, Hilmarton, Compton Bassett,

Cherhill and Heddington, the remaining part of Calne Without therefore comprised the bulk of West Ward, Pewsham Ward and Sandy Lane Ward. As noted, this would be a parish of over 1400 electors, concentrated on a major settlement which had demonstrated a strong sense of individual identity.

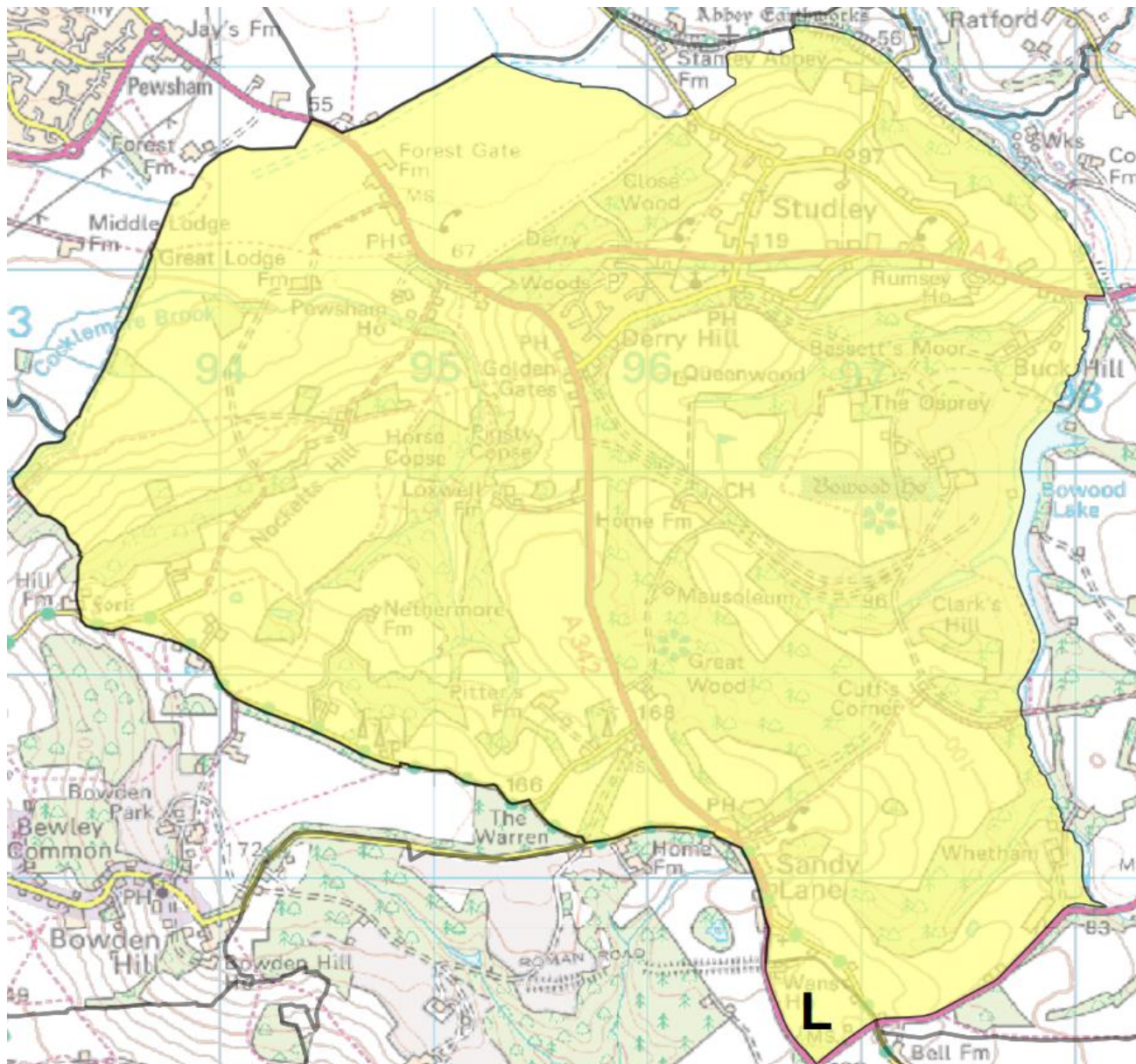
96. Accordingly, subject to recommendations 2-6, the Committee supported the renaming of Calne Without to Derry Hill and Studley, and to remove its warding arrangements, leaving a single ward of nine councillors. As Sandy Lane was currently within the Calne South Electoral Division, whilst this could remain as a ward separate from the rest of the renamed parish, the Committee supported requesting the LGBCE amend the boundaries of the Calne South and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to align to the amended parish boundaries, as a more effective and convenient arrangement. With the intention to move part of the parish of Bromham into the renamed parish as well, this would require requesting a further adjustment to Electoral Division of Bromham, Rowde and Roundway.
97. In conclusion, from its extensive multiple reviews of Calne Without, the Committee believed the evidence demonstrated that whilst the existing Parish Council was not ineffective, the current parish arrangement did not appropriately reflect the nature of the communities across the area. As a result, the scale and siting of those communities meant that the governance arrangements were not as effective or efficient as they could be. Given it considered transferring several areas to other parishes to be appropriate under the criteria, it was appropriate to rename Calne Without and adjust its warding and governance arrangements accordingly.
98. Therefore, the Committee proposed:

### **Recommendation 7**

- 7.1 That subject to Recommendations 2-6, that the area shown in the map below, being the remaining part of Calne Without parish, be renamed from Calne Without to Derry Hill and Studley.**
- 7.2 That the area marked as L be transferred from the parish of Bromham to the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley.**
- 7.3 That the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley be unwarded with nine councillors.**
- 7.4 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne South, Bromham, Rowde and Roundway and Calne Rural Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised boundaries of the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 58, 59, 63, 73, 74, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

### Derry Hill and Studley (Calne Without)

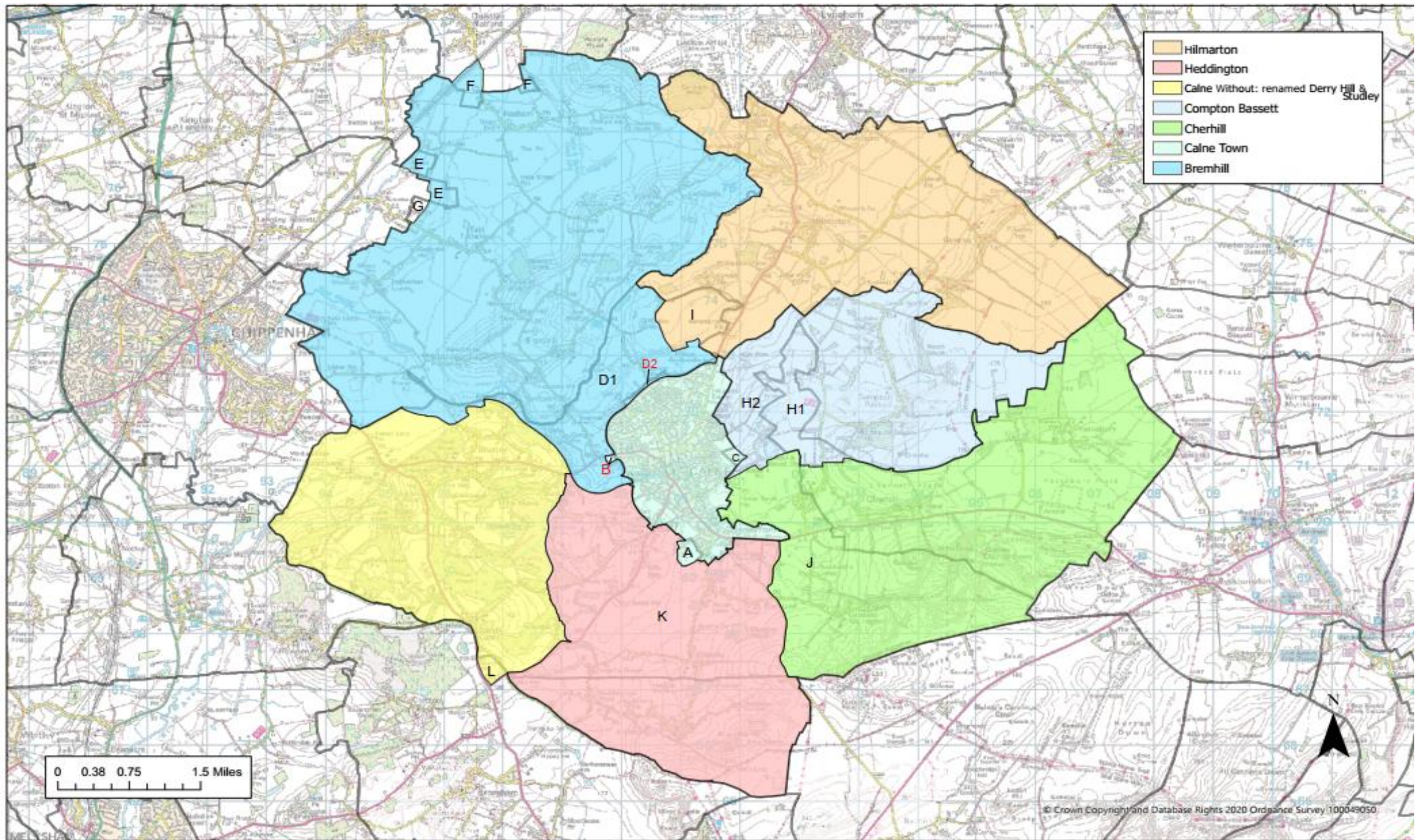


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## Calne Area



Malmesbury and St Paul Malmesbury Without

99. Malmesbury is a historic small town in the north of Wiltshire. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 4473. The parish has two wards: Backbridge ward with one councillor, and a Malmesbury ward of 15 councillors. Backbridge ward is part of the Sherston Unitary Electoral Division, with Malmesbury ward within Malmesbury Unitary Election Division. St Paul Malmesbury Without is a large parish located north, east and south of Malmesbury Town. As of August 2021, it had an electorate of approximately 1818. The Parish Council has two wards, with Westport Ward having two councillors and St Paul ward with ten councillors.
100. Malmesbury Town Council had requested the transfer of a number of large areas of St Paul Malmesbury Without to the town. This would include increasing the total number of councillors and breaking up the current Malmesbury Ward into a number of smaller wards. It was said that this took into account recognised historic boundaries and the identity of the area and would improve community governance for the town and the parish.
101. The Town was warded as a consequential change following the 2017-2019 Electoral Review of Wiltshire Council, as it was too large to be a single Unitary Division. The Backbridge Ward was created to sit within the Sherston Division and was an area of employment land and land allocated for future development.
102. St Paul Malmesbury Without in response to the request from the Town Council had requested the Backbridge Ward be transferred into the parish, arguing that this was a more effective governance arrangement given its location within the Sherston Division. They had also requested that the two wards of the parish be combined and the parish to become unwarded. The Parish Council opposed the proposed transfers requested by the Town Council.
103. The Committee met representatives of both parishes separately and held an online public meeting attended by a number of local residents as well as representatives.
104. There were 171 responses to the online survey. In response to the Town Council proposal 44 were in agreement, 124 against, 2 with no opinion and 1 proposing an alternative option. Arguments in favour included that the Milbourne, Foxley Road and Burton Hill areas requested were closely related to the town, some as urban extensions of it, and not distinct from it as opposed to other communities in the parish such as Corston. It was argued it was more cohesive of an arrangement and the residents in the areas benefited from the services provided by the town. Arguments in opposition included that the Parish Council was effective and appropriately represented and supported the residents in those areas, and that changing the parish's multiple rural based communities provided no improvement in governance or identity.
105. In response to the Parish Council proposal 72 were in favour, 60 opposed, 34 gave no opinion and 5 responses were blank. Arguments

in favour included that it would be a more efficient governance arrangement to remove the Backbridge Ward from Malmesbury given it was within the Sherston Division. Arguments in opposition included that it would make the boundary between the town and parish less distinct and that it was being developed as an urban area. Some of the responses received highlighted a misunderstanding about Backbridge Ward already being part of the parish, which was not the case.

106. Malmesbury Town Council and St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council held discussions regarding possible compromise proposals during the course of the review. It was reported that the Town Council had withdrawn its requests for most of the area to the north of the town apart from a small strip north of Filands and some employment land to the northeast, for the village of Milbourne to the east of the town, and for the Foxley/Common Road area to the south-west. In response it was reported that the Parish Council had withdrawn its request in relation to the Backbridge Ward.
107. The final area of discussion was therefore the built up area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge. It was reported that limited agreement had been reached on a small section appropriately aligning with the town, but there remained disagreement on a wider area being incorporated within the town. The Parish Council considered the majority of the area did not wish to be transferred and did not accept the arguments of the Town Council. The Town Council argued that the entire area was urban in character on a main route into the town near to the high street, but offered an option of a transfer without Cowbridge to enable the parish to retain a land link with Milbourne should some of Burton Hill be moved into the town.

#### Committee Discussion

108. The Committee noted the updated responses from the Town Council and the Parish Council, as well as the public responses. It was noted that there were a number of communities around Malmesbury which had their own characters and identities. Some were larger than others, or closer to the town, and as the updated responses from the councils involved demonstrated, the most appropriate governance solution for one might not be appropriate for the others. If no better option could be found, no change could be recommended.
109. In respect of the St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council proposal, irrespective of whether it was withdrawn as a request, the Committee did not consider efficiency of combining Sherston Division based wards with the Parish Council was sufficient to overcome the substantial community reasons for it to remain within the town. The area was projected to include significant urban development and would not share character or interests with the rest of the parish.
110. As noted, St Paul Malmesbury Without included a number of different communities and covered a large geographic area. The large village of Corston lay to the south of the parish, with some more developed areas closer to the town at Foxley/Common Road in the south-west. The area north of the town was mostly fields with few residents, and the moderately sized village at Milbourne lay to the east



of the town with a small amount of rural land between. There were no direct road links from Milbourne to the rest of the parish communities, which were accessed through the town of Malmesbury itself.

111. The Committee was in agreement with much of the updated representations from the local councils and did not consider that the areas above shared character, identity or interests with Malmesbury Town, a rapidly growing, densely urban area.
112. As the Committee had seen in its review of Melksham Without in particular, it was possible for a large and disparate parish to be effectively and appropriately arranged without direct connections between some of its communities. However, it was still necessary for a parish to be contiguous, that is joined together, under the law.
113. This was of particular relevance as the Committee considered the area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge. The Parish Council, for most of that area, and the residents who had responded to the survey from that area, had opposed the request of the Town Council. Nevertheless, the Committee in reviewing the character of the area considered it was of a built up and urban nature, in close proximity not just with the town but with the high street of the town, and along the major commuting route to and from the town. Those entering into the town would see little to no change in the character of the area as they moved through Burton Hill and Cowbridge and into the town itself as currently existing. The Committee therefore considered that the identity and interests of the area aligned more closely with the town than any community of the parish, having its own character distinct from the more rural focused areas.
114. The Committee therefore had to consider what arrangement would provide more effective and convenient local governance. Due to the shape of St Paul Malmesbury Without, the Burton Hill and Cowbridge area effectively formed a block between the Milbourne and rural areas to the north, and the communities around Corston and to the south-west. If the area were transferred in its entirety into the town of Malmesbury, this would mean Milbourne and the northern parts could not remain part of St Paul Malmesbury Without.
115. The Committee considered the option presented wherein Cowbridge would remain part of the parish, allowing a small land link to be retained, whilst Burton Hill was transferred into the town. However, it considered this suggestion was arbitrary and illogical and could not be recommended. There was no natural division within the community at Burton Hill and Cowbridge, and such an artificial separation would not align to either of the statutory criteria.
116. Ultimately, the Committee considered that the preponderance of the evidence was that, notwithstanding the resident views expressed which had been taken into account, the character of the area at Burton Hill and Cowbridge was overwhelmingly aligned with the town of Malmesbury. It was urban in extent, nature and proximity, and although this would lead to required changes elsewhere, no other option explored more appropriately reflected the identity and interests of the area. Nor did the Committee believe retaining the current arrangement met the statutory criteria as it did not consider the current arrangement appropriately reflected its identity and interests.



117. Accordingly, it was proposed that the Burton Hill and Cowbridge area, along with the area at Daniel's Well as also reported to the Committee and discussed by the affected councils, be transferred into the town of Malmesbury. As the unitary division of Malmesbury was already at the upper extent of variance from the average, the area would have to be separately warded and remain within the Sherston Division. Any change to the parish boundaries of Malmesbury would require the consent of the LGBCE. The Committee recommended putting in place further warding within the town for a more appropriate division of Parish Councillors, including noting the projected increases in electorate for Backbridge.
118. In the northern part of the town the Committee did not consider a case had been made necessitating any changes to bring in properties north of the B4104. Areas projected to be developed or as result of appeals lay to the south, already within the town, and there were no governance reasons to further amend the boundary. The exception, it was agreed, was some business/industrial areas to the east of the town, which predominantly impacted residents of the town. As these included no electors the change would require the LGBCE to consent to change the unitary division boundaries, with no effect on the variance of the divisions.
119. The remaining issue was therefore the village of Milbourne and remaining northern part of St Paul Malmesbury Without, which would be separated from the rest of the parish if the recommendations were approved. The Committee considered if the area could form its own parish or be combined in some form with nearby parishes. It was reported that the parish of Charlton to the north might be interested in joining with the community at Milbourne, which lay within or alongside the Charlton Park estate and had decent road connections. The parish would remain unwarded with an increase of two to eleven parish councillors.
120. The Committee determined that it would recommend a transfer of the Milbourne area to Charlton. Although large enough to form its own ward, with the main part of Charlton within the Brinkworth Division, the Committee noted the LGBCE had, through lack of alternative acceptable options, permitted the Sherston Division to 'doughnut' the Division of Malmesbury. If Milbourne were transferred to Charlton, and the Brinkworth Division were to be likewise amended to align to the revised parishes, this would end that arrangement which the LGBCE regarded as unsatisfactory, and so provide a more effective and efficient governance arrangement.
121. A small change in respect of a farm accessed from Brokenborough which would align better with that community was also agreed to be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without.
122. Therefore, the Committee agreed the following:

### **Recommendation 8**

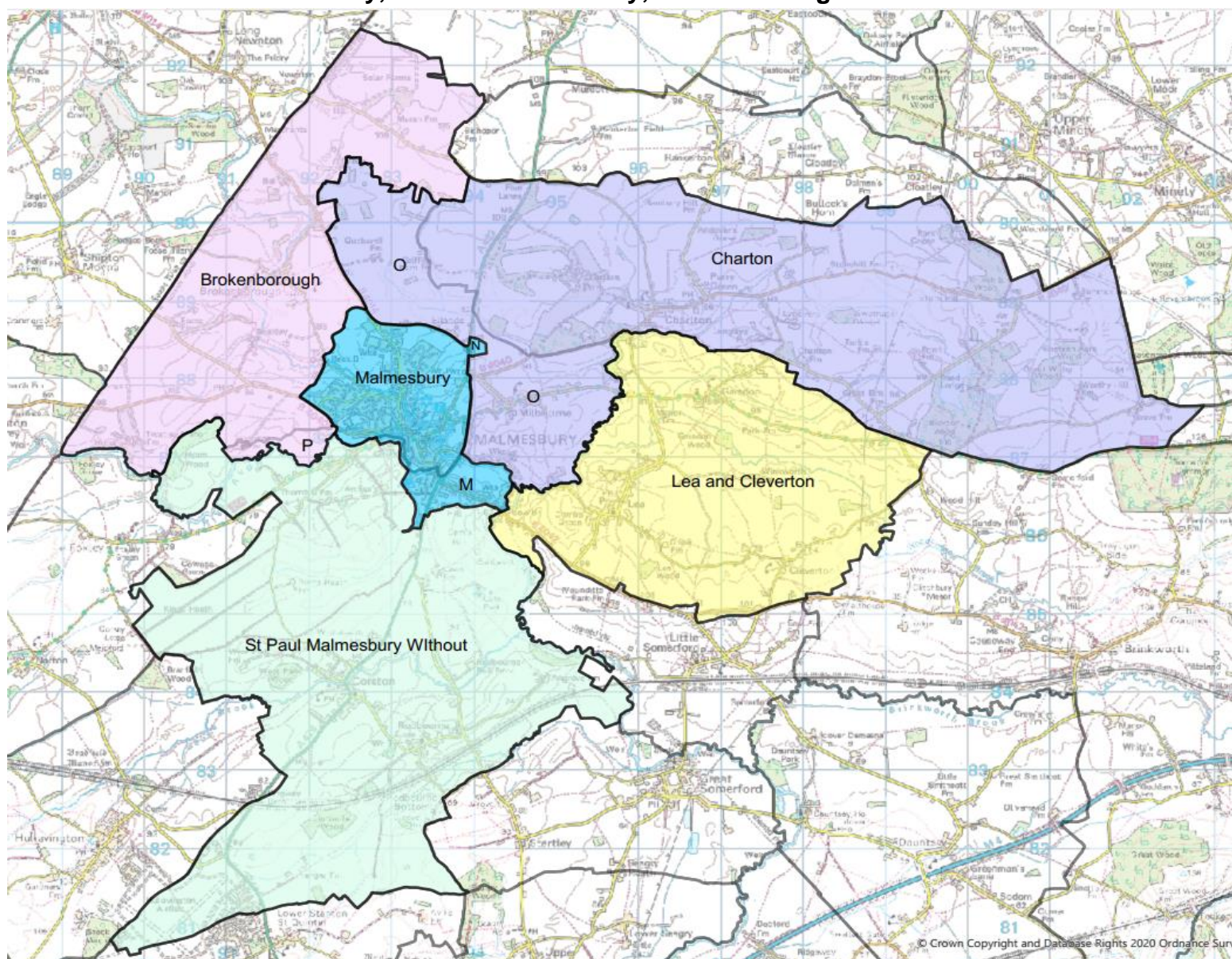
**8.1 That the area marked as M be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without to Malmesbury Town. This would be named the**

**Burton Hill and Cowbridge Ward and contain 2 councillors.**

- 8.2 That the area marked as N be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without to Malmesbury Town as part of the Malmesbury North Ward (see 8.3)**
- 8.3 That Malmesbury Town Council contain a total of 19 councillors in the following wards as shown in the map below: Backbridge Ward (two councillors), Malmesbury North Ward (six councillors), Malmesbury South (two councillors), Malmesbury West (seven councillors), Burton Hill and Cowbridge (two councillors).**
- 8.4 That the area marked as O be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury to the parish of Charlton. Charlton to be increased to Eleven Parish Councillors.**
- 8.5 That the area marked as P be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury to the parish of Brokenborough.**
- 8.6 The parish of St Paul Malmesbury Without to be unwarded, with Twelve Councillors.**
- 8.7 To request that the LGBCE amend the Malmesbury, Sherston and Brinkworth Divisions as shown in the map below. *(To move N and O into Brinkworth)***

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

## Malmesbury, St Paul Malmesbury, Brokenborough and Charlton

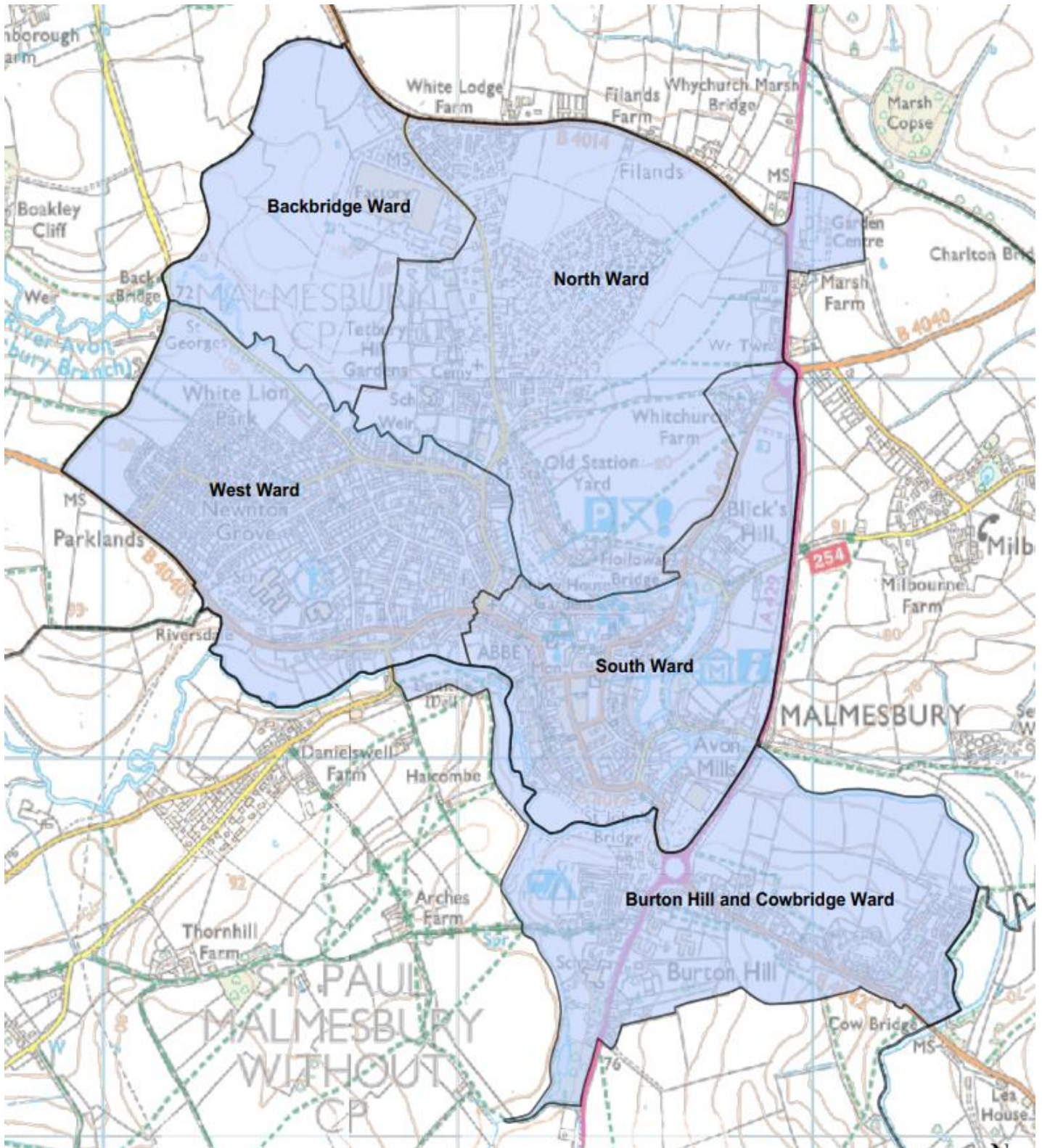


Shaded area is proposed new parish boundary, Dark grey/blue line existing parish line.

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## Malmesbury Town Ward Map



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### **Summary of Recommendations**

#### **Recommendation 1**

- 1.1 That the parishes of Charlton St Peter (as to be renamed under S75 of the Local Government Act 1972) and Wilsford be grouped under a Joint Parish Council named Charlton St Peter and Wilsford Joint Parish Council.**
- 1.2 The Parish of Wilsford to contain two parish councillors.**
- 1.3 The Parish of Charlton St Peter to contain five parish councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 2**

- 2.1 That the area marked as A be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne South Town Ward. Calne South Ward to continue to have four councillors.**
- 2.2 That the areas marked as B and C be transferred from Calne Without to Calne Town as part of the Calne Central Town Ward. Calne Central Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 2.3 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne Central and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Town and Calne Without.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 73, 80, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 3**

- 3.1 That the area marked as D1 and D2 be transferred from Calne Without and Calne Town respectively to Bremhill as part of the Bremhill Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Bremhill Ward to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.2 That the area marked as E be transferred from Langley Burrell Without to Bremhill as part of the East Tytherton Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. East Tytherton Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.3 That the area marked as F be transferred from Christian Malford to Bremhill as part of the Foxham Ward of Bremhill Parish Council. Foxham Ward to continue to have three councillors.**
- 3.4 That the area marked as G be transferred from Bremhill to Langley Burrell Without. Langley Burrell Without to continue to have five councillors.**
- 3.5 To request that the LGBCE amend the Kington, Calne North and Calne Rural Electoral Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised parish boundaries of Calne Without, Christian Malford, Bremhill, Langley Burrell Without and Calne Town.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 4**

- 4.1 That the area marked as H1 be transferred from Cherhill to Compton Bassett.**
- 4.2 That the area marked as H2 be transferred from Calne Without to Compton Bassett.**



- 4.3 That the area marked as I be transferred from Calne Without to Hilmarton.**
- 4.4 That Compton Bassett continue to have seven councillors.**
- 4.5 That Hilmarton continue to have eleven councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 5**

- 5.1 That the area marked as J be transferred from Calne Without to Cherhill.**
- 5.2 That the area marked as J be named Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington Ward, and to contain four councillors.**
- 5.3 That Cherhill Parish Council comprise three wards (Cherhill, Yatesbury, Lower Compton and Calstone Wellington), and a total of Eleven councillors. Cherhill Ward would continue to contain five councillors. Yatesbury would continue to contain two councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 6**

- 6.1 That the area marked as K be transferred from Calne Without to Heddington as a new 'Heddington Without' Ward of Heddington Parish Council. The ward to have two parish councillors.**
- 6.2 The remaining part of the parish would be called 'Heddington Ward', with seven parish councillors. That the parish of Heddington therefore be increased to a total of nine councillors.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, 84 and 85 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 7**

- 7.1 That subject to Recommendations 2-6, that the area shown in the map below, being the remaining part of Calne Without parish, be renamed from Calne Without to Derry Hill and Studley.**
- 7.2 That the area marked as L be transferred from the parish of Bromham to the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley.**
- 7.3 That the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley be unwarded with nine councillors.**
- 7.4 To request that the LGBCE amend the Calne South and Calne Rural Divisions to be coterminous with the proposed revised boundaries of the renamed parish of Derry Hill and Studley.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 54, 58, 59, 63, 73, 74, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*

#### **Recommendation 8**

- 8.1 That the area marked as M be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without to Malmesbury Town. This would be named the Burton Hill and Cowbridge Ward and contain 2 councillors.**
- 8.2 That the area marked as N be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury Without to Malmesbury Town as part of the Malmesbury North Ward (see 8.3).**

- 8.3 That Malmesbury Town Council contain a total of 19 councillors in the following wards as shown in the map below: Backbridge Ward (two councillors), Malmesbury North Ward (six councillors), Malmesbury South (two councillors), Malmesbury West (seven councillors), Burton Hill and Cowbridge (two councillors).**
- 8.4 That the area marked as O be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury to the parish of Charlton. Charlton to be increased to Eleven parish councillors.**
- 8.5 That the area marked as P be transferred from St Paul Malmesbury to the parish of Brokenborough.**
- 8.6 The parish of St Paul Malmesbury Without to be unwarded, with Twelve Councillors.**
- 8.7 To request that the LGBCE amend the Malmesbury, Sherston and Brinkworth Divisions as shown in the map included.**

*Reasons: Paragraphs 73, 74, 80, 83, 84, 85 and 170 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*