

**Local Government
Boundary Commission
For England
Report No. 681**

Review of Electoral Arrangements

COUNTY OF
WILTSHIRE

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT
BOUNDARY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND
REPORT NUMBER 681**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

CHAIRMAN MR K F J ENNALS CB

MEMBERS MR G R PRENTICE

MRS H R V SARKANY

MR C W SMITH

PROFESSOR K YOUNG

**THE RT HON KENNETH CLARKE QC MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT**

**PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE TO THE ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COUNTY
OF WILTSHIRE**

INTRODUCTION

1. The present electoral arrangements for the County of Wiltshire date from May 1981 when the County of Wiltshire (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1981 came into force. It provided for 75 electoral divisions.

2. In 1983 Wiltshire County Council and Thamesdown Borough Council drew our attention to a number of electoral imbalances between county divisions. We concluded that because of major changes to the size and distribution of the electorate which had either taken place, or were expected to take place, a further review of the County's electoral arrangements would be appropriate.

3. Initially, we decided to conduct a two-stage review in order to deal firstly with the Toothill area of Swindon and, secondly, with the rest of the County. We reported our proposals for Toothill on 2 November 1984 in our Report No 486 and our proposals were implemented by an Order, which came into effect on 2 May 1985. However, when we came to the second stage of the review, the County Council drew our attention to the continued growth of the electorate in the Toothill area and requested a full review of the County. We therefore reconsidered our earlier decision and decided to conduct a full review of the County's electoral arrangements.

4. We announced the start of the review in a letter dated 3 September 1987 and invited the County Council or any other interested party, having regard to the requirements of Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972, to submit to us a draft scheme for revised electoral arrangements for the County. Copies of the letter were sent to the County's five District Councils; to all the parish and town councils and parish meetings in the

County; to local Members of Parliament; to the headquarters of the main political parties; to local newspapers, radio and television stations; and to the local government press. The start of the review was also announced by press and public notice.

FORMULATION OF OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS

(i) The County Council's Draft Scheme

5. On 17 February 1988, the County Council submitted a scheme based upon the 1987 electorate and the forecast electorate for 1992, which recommended an increase in the size of the Council from 75 to 76 members. It proposed an increase in the number of divisions in the Borough of Thamesdown by one with the number of divisions in the other four districts remaining unchanged. The scheme offered an improved standard of electoral representation by 1992 when 31 divisions would have ratios of electors to councillors varying 10% or less from the County average (compared to 16 under existing arrangements), and 20 divisions would vary from the average by more than 20% (against 27 under existing arrangements). However, we were concerned that the County Council's draft scheme still left too many divisions varying significantly from the County average. Furthermore, we were concerned that the ratio of electors per councillor would deteriorate significantly between 1987 and 1992 in the districts of North Wiltshire and West Wiltshire.

(ii) Comments on the County Council's Draft Scheme

6. We received 42 comments in response to the County Council's scheme, of which 13 were forwarded to us by the County Council. The comments included two alternative schemes for the whole county and one solely affecting the district of West Wiltshire. These are discussed below.

(iii) Alternative Schemes

7. Alternative schemes for the whole County were submitted by Thamesdown Borough Council and the South-West Regional Office of the Labour Party. West Wiltshire Conservative Association submitted a scheme which provided alternative arrangements in West Wiltshire but otherwise was identical to the County Council's scheme.

(iv) Our Conclusion

8. We considered that Thamesdown's scheme did not provide any significant improvement to the County Council's electoral arrangements in terms of electoral equality. West Wiltshire Conservative Association's scheme marginally improved the standard of representation in West Wiltshire, but it failed to address electoral imbalances in the rest of the County. We concluded that neither scheme offered any advantage over the County Council's scheme.

9. We considered, however, that proposals submitted by the South-West Regional Office of the Labour Party for a 68-member Council offered not only a better overall standard of representation than the County Council's scheme, but also enhanced the extent of coterminosity between county and district councillors. We therefore decided to make this scheme the basis of our draft proposals.

PUBLICATION OF OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS

10. Our draft proposals were issued on 12 January 1990. Copies were sent to the County Council, the five District Councils in Wiltshire and all those who had either received our consultation letter of 3 September 1987 or had made representations to us. Notices were also placed in local newspapers, announcing that the draft proposals had been published and could be inspected at the offices of the County or District Councils. Comments were invited by 9 March 1990.

11. Following a request by the County Council, we agreed to extend the deadline for receipt of comments by two months. A letter announcing this, and rectifying a small error in our draft proposals, was issued on 9 March 1990 and sent to all those who had received our draft proposals. We also asked the County Council to advertise notice of the extension in press and public notices.

RESPONSE TO OUR DRAFT PROPOSALS

12. We received representations from Wiltshire County Council, the District Councils of Kennet, North Wiltshire, Salisbury, Thamesdown and West Wiltshire, 30 parish councils, two county councillors, one district councillor, the North Wiltshire Conservative Association, the North Wiltshire Liberal Democrats, the Labour Party branches for Salisbury, Bemerton, Thamesdown District, Swindon Constituency, Lower Stratton, Wiltshire and Devizes Constituency, the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils and its Thamesdown Area Committee, the Governors of Wilton Church of England Middle School and three members of the public. In addition, Purton Parish Council forwarded a petition signed by 55 local residents opposing our draft proposals. Thirteen of these representations supported our draft proposals, while 42 opposed them. Sixteen representations commented on our proposals for Salisbury, twelve apiece on our proposals for North Wiltshire and Thamesdown, eight on our proposals for Kennet and three on our proposals for West Wiltshire. The remaining four comments related to our proposals for the County as a whole.

(i) Wiltshire County Council's Revised Scheme

13. The County Council responded with a revised scheme for a 69 member council (an increase of one member over our draft proposals). The most noticeable difference between Wiltshire's new scheme and our proposals was the creation of a fourteenth division in North Wiltshire, to be known as Dauntsey Vale. However, although the number of divisions in the other four districts was to be unchanged, Wiltshire proposed a few further

amendments. In Kennet, it proposed that the parishes of Chute and Chute Forest should be in Collingbourne division rather than Bedwyn and Pewsey division and that Devizes South division should be re-named "Devizes South and Bromham", in both cases to reflect local ties. In North Wiltshire, in addition to the new Dauntsey Vale division, it proposed that minor amendments should be made to Chippenham Park and Town divisions, including their re-naming as North and South respectively, and that Box division should be re-named "Pickwick with Box". In Salisbury, it proposed modifications to the divisions of Amesbury, Downton, Salisbury Bemerton, Salisbury Harnham, Tisbury, and Wilton and Wylde, in order to reflect local ties. The County Council also loosely suggested creating a fourteenth division in West Wiltshire (which would further increase the council size to 70) but made no specific recommendation for the area the division would represent.

(ii) Alternative suggestions for change

14. A number of suggestions for partial revision of our proposals were received concerning North Wiltshire, Salisbury and West Wiltshire. These are discussed in the following paragraphs on a district-by-district basis.

(a) North Wiltshire

15. Four alternative suggestions were received. North Wiltshire District Council, like the County Council, recommended a fourteenth division for the district but, instead of creating a new division (as under the County Council's proposals), the District Council recommended the splitting of Cricklade and Purton into two separate divisions. Chippenham Town Council suggested creating four divisions for Chippenham instead of the three suggested in our draft proposals. This would also increase the number of divisions in North Wiltshire by one. North Wiltshire Liberal Democrats suggested adopting the County Council's proposals for North Wiltshire, except for Box and Corsham divisions, where it suggested that the District Council's proposals, providing for a Box division comprising the parishes

of Box and Lacock and the Gastard and Neston town wards of Corsham, and a Corsham division comprising its town wards of Corsham and Pickwick, should be adopted. Finally, Lydiard Millicent Parish Council requested inclusion in Cricklade and Purton division rather than Wootton Bassett North division.

(b) Salisbury

16. Two alternative suggestions were received. Salisbury District Council (supported by Idmiston Parish Council and Councillor Mrs J Hitchings) suggested the retention of fifteen divisions in the district, the transfer of the parishes of Firsdow and Landford to Alderbury and Downton divisions respectively and the transfer of Stratford district ward to Salisbury St Mark's division. Bowerchalke Parish Council and Councillors Mr R J Baddeley and Mrs J Hitchings suggested the transfer of the parishes of Bishopstone, Bowerchalke, Broad Chalke and Stratford Toney from Downton division to Tisbury division on grounds of community ties.

(c) West Wiltshire

17. A local resident in Westbury suggested the retention of the parish of West Ashton in Whorwellsdown division and the transfer of the parish of Westwood to Holt division. West Wiltshire District Council suggested creating two extra divisions for Trowbridge and one for Westbury which would have required the District Council to conduct parish warding reviews of these areas first, in order to comply with Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972. However, the District Council has since advised us that new parish warding arrangements for Trowbridge and Westbury will not be ready until 1995; therefore we were unable to consider the District Council's suggestions for extra divisions in its district further.

(iii) Other Comments

18. The main arguments put forward in opposition to our draft proposals were that they would reduce the number of county

councillors in each district; that the standard of representation in rural areas would deteriorate; that the size of divisions in rural areas would be too large; and that they would not reflect local community ties. Several correspondents expressed a preference for existing arrangements, particularly in the case of the Cricklade and Purton area in North Wiltshire and Bradford-upon-Avon in West Wiltshire.

OUR CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL PROPOSALS

19. We recognised that the County Council's alternative scheme offered a slightly more equal standard of representation than our draft proposals, particularly in the case of Bedwyn and Pewsey division, Wootton Bassett South division and Salisbury Harnham and St Mark's divisions. Likewise, we acknowledged that the Westbury resident's suggestions for Holt, Southwick and Whorwellsdown divisions offered an improvement over our draft proposals. However, in our judgement, adoption of either scheme would offer only a slight improvement over our draft proposals at the expense of delaying the review beyond a date which would enable implementation of the proposals in time for the May 1993 county council elections.

20. The Council's existing arrangements are very poor in terms of electoral equality and our draft proposals offer a considerable improvement. We have concluded that it is preferable to put forward final proposals to you now rather than opt for and consult on the further small improvement offered by the schemes submitted by the County Council and the Westbury resident. Such further consultation would cause further delay and leave Wiltshire with poor electoral arrangements for four more years. We have therefore confirmed our draft proposals as final, subject to minor amendments to re-name Devizes South and Box divisions as "Devizes South and Bromham" and "Pickwick with Box" respectively to accord with local ties, and commend them to you as final proposals

21. Details of our final proposals are set out in Annexes A-F to this report, along with small scale maps showing the proposed electoral division boundaries.

PUBLICATION

22. In accordance with Section 60(5)(b) of the 1972 Act, copies of this report, together with maps suitable for display, are being sent to Wiltshire County Council and the District Councils of Kennet, North Wiltshire County Council, Salisbury, Thamesdown and West Wiltshire. These will be available for inspection at the Councils' main offices. Copies of this report are also being sent to all those persons or bodies who received our consultation letters, or have expressed an interest in the review at any subsequent stage.

Signed:

K F J ENNALS (Chairman)

G R PRENTICE

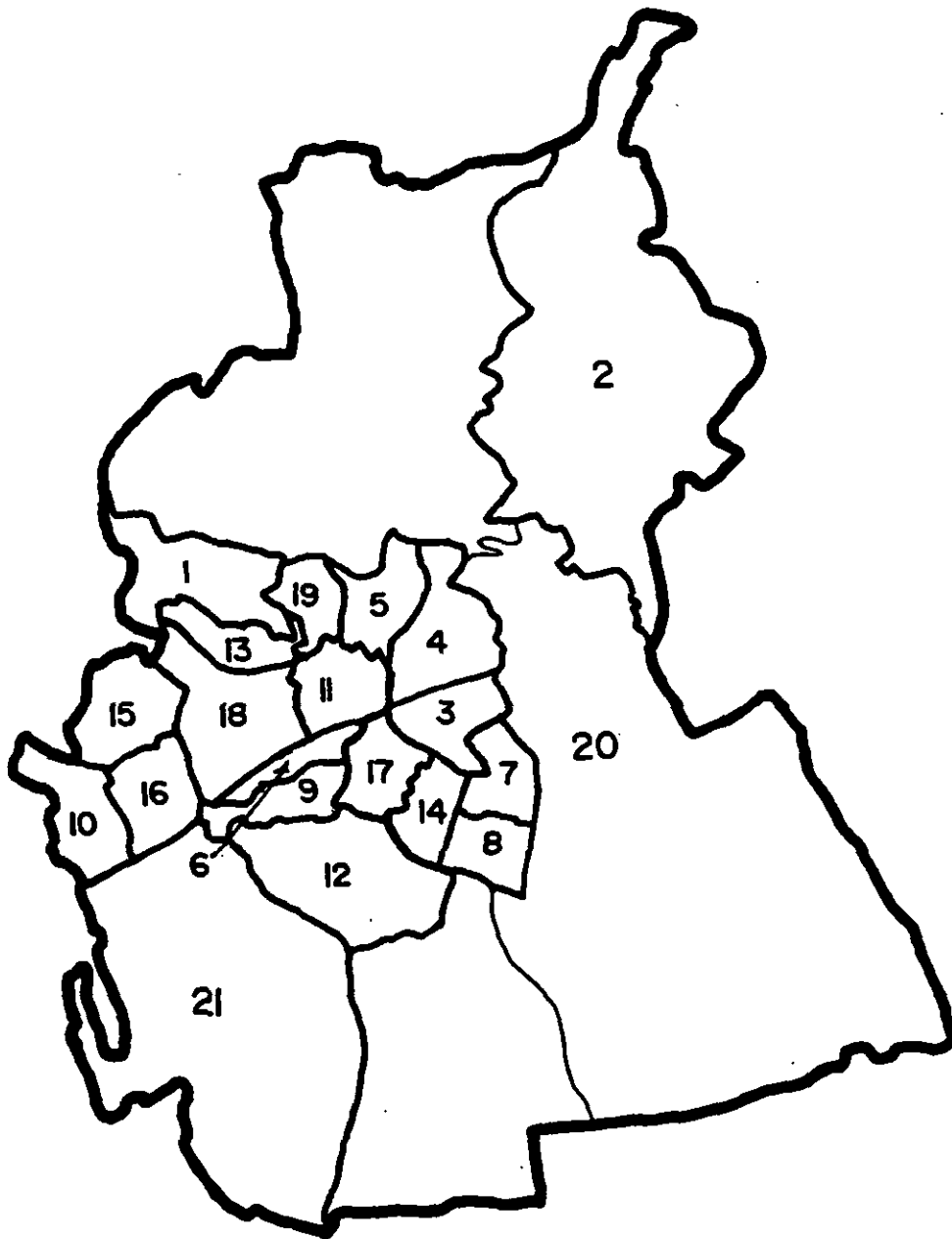
HELEN SARKANY



C W SMITH

R YOUNG

**R D COMPTON
Commission Secretary
16 July 1992**

WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
INDEX MAP
BOROUGH OF THAMESDOWN

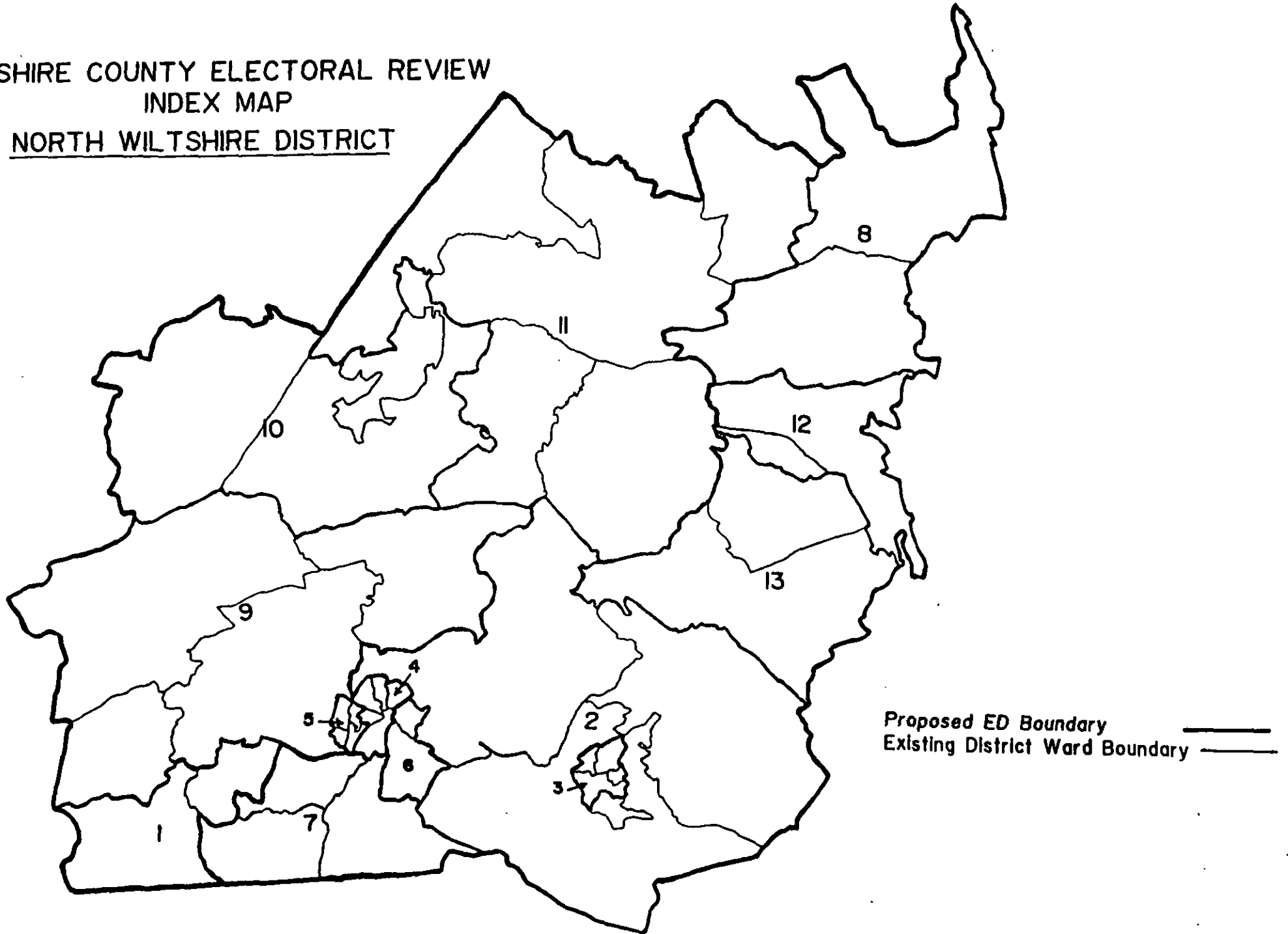


Proposed ED Boundary 
Existing Borough Ward Boundary 

**WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS
BOROUGH OF THAMESDOWN**

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 HAYDON WICK ED
Haydon Wick Ward | 14 SWINDON PARKS ED
Park Ward |
| 2 HIGHWORTH ED
Highworth Ward | 15 SWINDON ROUGHMOOR ED
The northern part of Toothill Ward |
| 3 STRATTON ST MARGARET, COLEVIEW AND NYTHE ED
The Coleview and Nythe Ward of the
parish of Stratton St Margaret | 16 SWINDON TOOTHILL ED
The southern part of Toothill Ward |
| 4 STRATTON ST MARGARET, ST MARGARET ED
The St Margaret Ward of the
parish of Stratton St Margaret | 17 SWINDON WALCOT ED
Walcot Ward |
| 5 STRATTON ST MARGARET, ST PHILIP ED
St Phillip Ward | 18 SWINDON WESTERN ED
Western Ward |
| 6 SWINDON CENTRAL ED
Central Ward | 19 SWINDON WHITWORTH ED
Whitworth Ward |
| 7 SWINDON COVINGHAM ED
Covingham Ward
and part of Dorcan Ward | 20 WANBOROUGH ED
Blunsdon Ward
Chiseldon Ward
Ridgeway Ward |
| 8 SWINDON DORCAN SOUTH ED
The remainder of Dorcan Ward | 21 WROUGHTON ED
Wroughton Ward |
| 9 SWINDON EASTCOTT ED
Eastcott Ward | |
| 10 SWINDON FRESHBROOK ED
Freshbrook Ward | |
| 11 SWINDON GORSE HILL ED
Gorse Hill Ward | |
| 12 SWINDON LAWNS ED
Lawns Ward | |
| 13 SWINDON MOREDON ED
Moredon Ward | |

WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
INDEX MAP
NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT



**WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS
NORTH WILTSHIRE DISTRICT**

1 PICKWICK WITH BOX ED

Box Ward
Pickwick Ward

2 BREMHILL AND CALNE WITHOUT ED

Bremhill Ward
Calne Without Ward
Calne South Ward
Hilmarton Ward

3 CALNE ED

Calne North Ward
Calne North East Ward
Calne Abberd Ward
Calne Central Ward

4 CHIPPENHAM PARK ED

Avon Ward
Audley Ward
Hill Rise
Malmesbury Road Ward
Park Ward

5 CHIPPENHAM SHELDON ED

Allington Ward
Redland Ward
Queen's Ward
Westcroft Ward

6 CHIPPENHAM TOWN ED

Monkton Park Ward
Town Ward

7 CORSHAM ED

Corsham Ward
Lacock Ward
Neston and Gastard Ward

8 CRICKLADE AND PURTON ED

Cricklade Ward
Purton Ward

9 KINGTON ED

Colerne Ward
Kington Langley Ward
Kington St Michael Ward
Nettleton Ward

10 MALMESBURY ED

Malmesbury Ward
St Paul Malmesbury Without Ward
Sherston Ward

11 MINETY ED

Ashton Keynes Ward
Brinkworth Ward
Crudwell Ward
Minety Ward
Somersford Ward

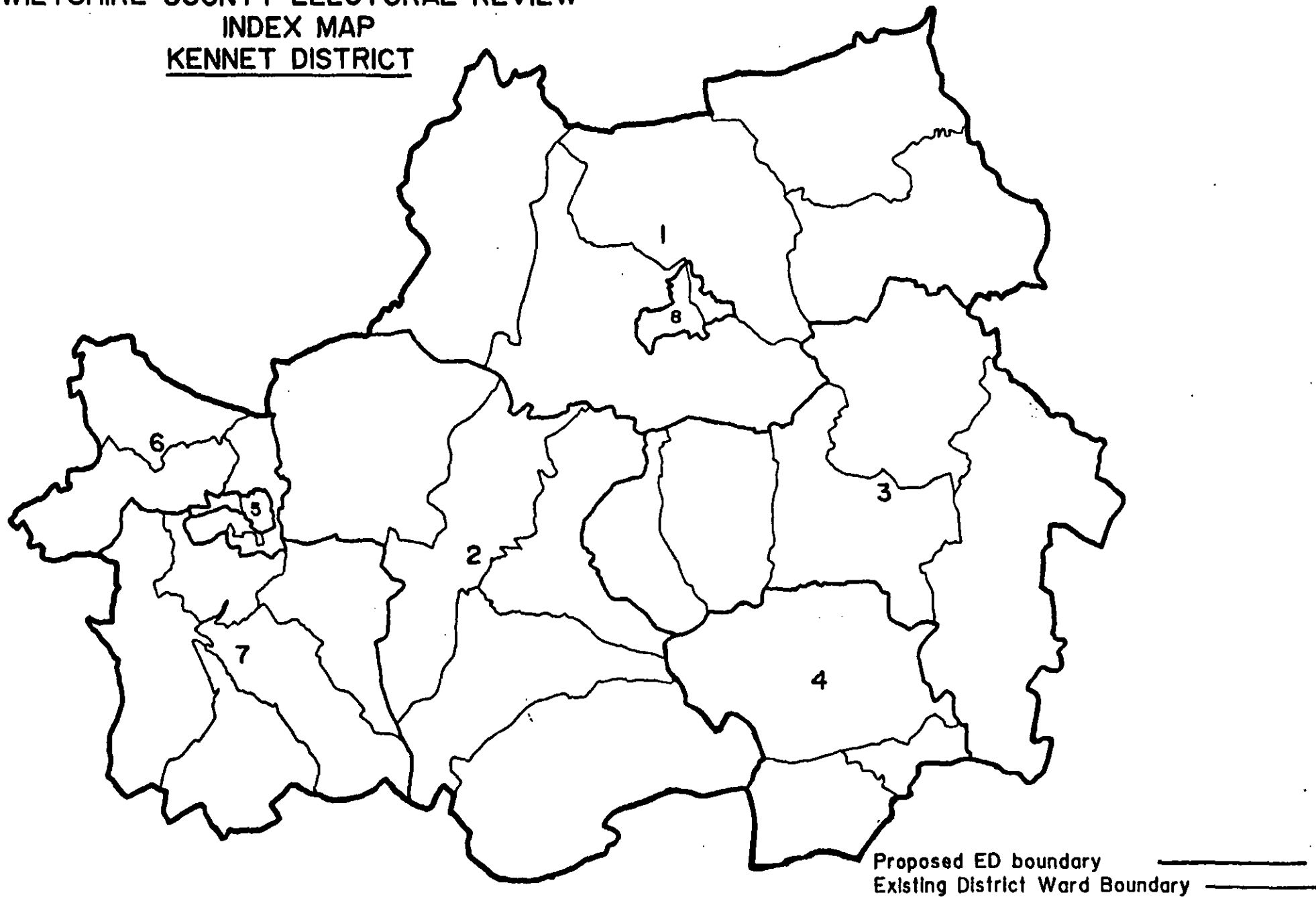
12 WOOTTON BASSETT NORTH ED

Wootton Bassett North Ward
The Lydlards Ward

13 WOOTTON BASSETT SOUTH ED

Lyneham Ward
Wootton Bassett South Ward

WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
INDEX MAP
KENNET DISTRICT



WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS
KENNET DISTRICT

1 ALDBOURNE AND RAMSBURY ED

Aldbourne Ward
Ogbourne Ward
Ramsbury Ward
West Overton Ward
West Selkley Ward

2 AVON AND CANNINGS ED

Cannings Ward
Netheravon Ward
Upavon Ward
Wilcot Ward
Woodborough Ward

3 BEDWYN AND PEWSEY ED

Bedwyn Ward
Burbage Ward
Milton Lilbourne Ward
Pewsey Ward
Shalbourne Ward

4 COLLINGBOURNE ED

Collingbourne Ward
Ludgershall Ward
North Tidworth Ward

5 DEVIZES ED

Devizes East Ward
Devizes North Ward

6 DEVIZES SOUTH AND BROMHAM ED

Bromham Ward
Devizes South Ward
Roundway Ward
Seend Ward

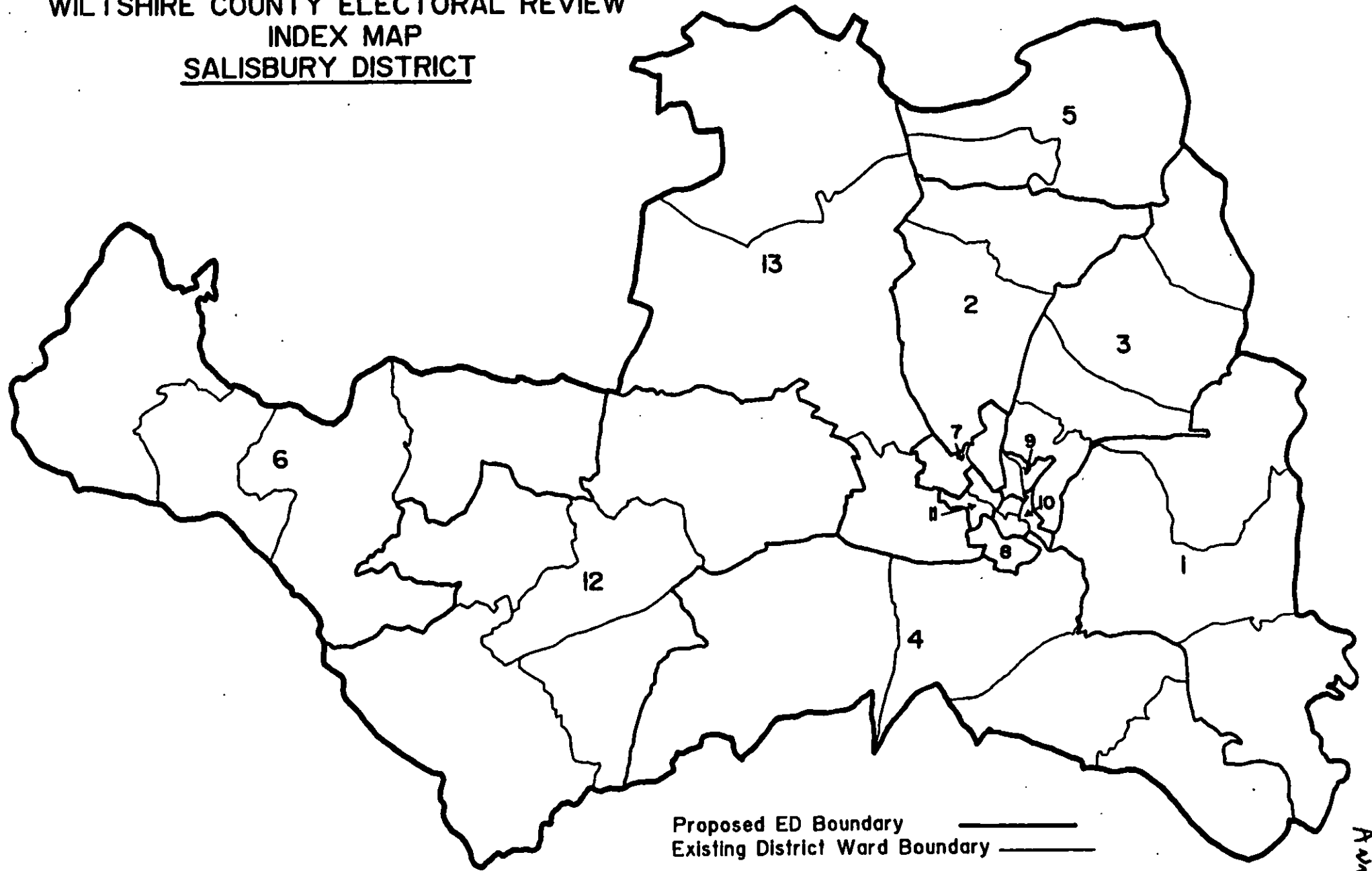
7 LAVINGTON ED

Cheverell Ward
Market Lavington Ward
Potterne Ward
West Lavington Ward
Urchfont Ward

8 MARLBOROUGH ED

Marlborough West Ward
Marlborough East Ward

WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
INDEX MAP
SALISBURY DISTRICT



**WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS
SALISBURY DISTRICT**

1 ALDERBURY ED

Alderbury Ward
Whiteparish Ward
Winterslow Ward

2 AMESBURY ED

Amesbury Ward
Woodford Valley Ward

3 BOURNE VALLEY ED

Idmiston Ward
Laverstock Ward
Upper Bourne Ward
Winterbourne Ward

4 DOWNTON ED

Downton Ward
Ebble Ward
Redlynch Ward
and the parishes of:-
Bower Chalke
Broad Chalke
Bishopstone
Stratford Toney

5 DURRINGTON ED

Bulford Ward
Durrington Ward

6 MERE ED

Fonthill Ward
Knoye Ward
Mere Ward
Western Ward

7 SALISBURY BEMERTON ED.

Bemerton Ward
Stratford Ward

8 SALISBURY HARNHAM ED

Harnham Ward

9 SALISBURY ST MARK ED

Bishopdown Ward
St Mark Ward

10 SALISBURY ST MARTIN ED

Milford Ward
St Edmund Ward
St Martin Ward

11 ST PAUL ED

Fisherton and Bemerton Village Ward
St Paul Ward

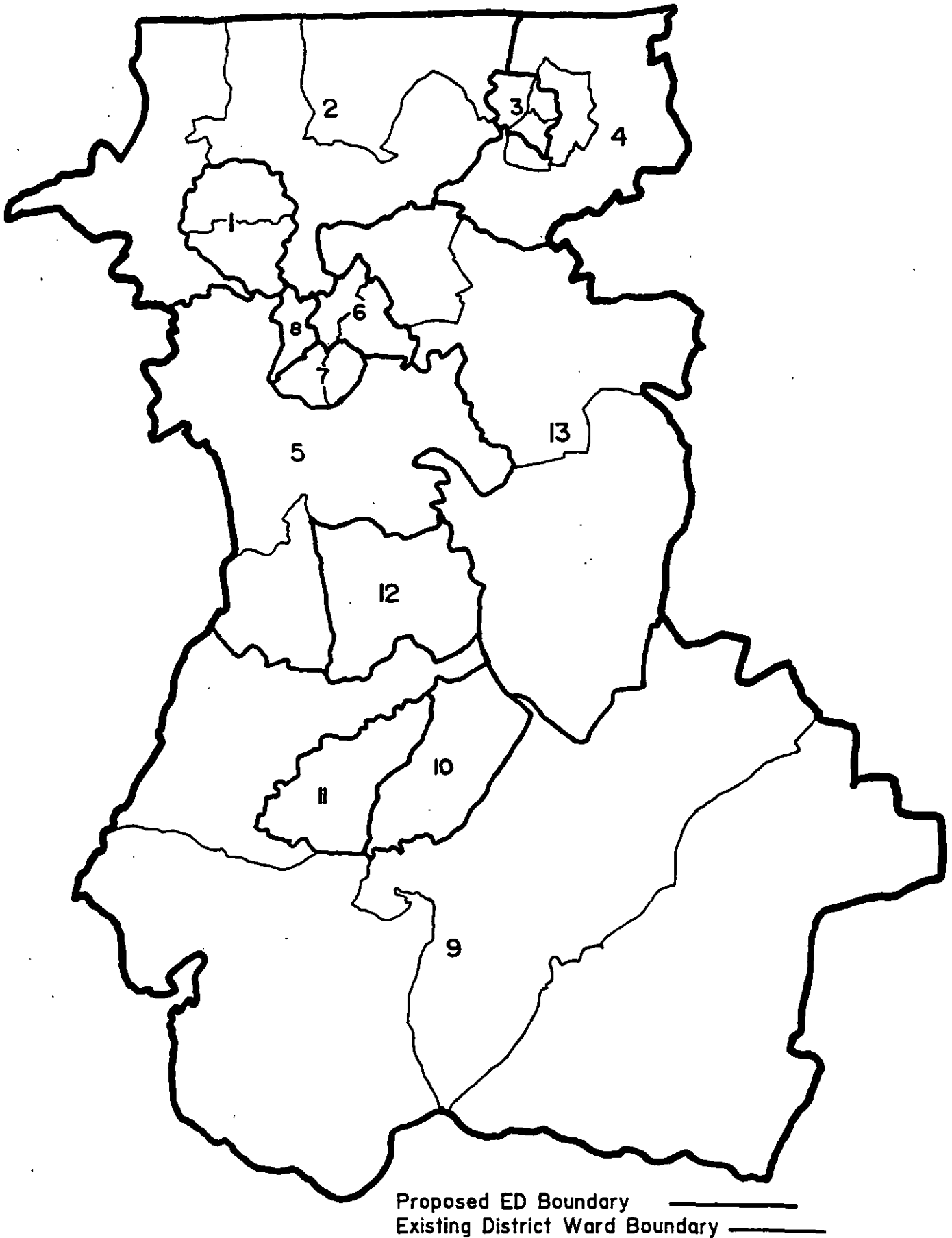
12 TISBURY ED

Donhead Ward
Fovant Ward
Nadder Ward
Tisbury Ward
and the parishes of:-
Alvediston
Ebbesbourne Wake

13 WILTON AND WYLYE ED

Till Valley Ward
Wilton Ward
Wylve Ward

WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
INDEX MAP
WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT



**WILTSHIRE COUNTY ELECTORAL REVIEW
PROPOSED ELECTORAL DIVISIONS
WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT**

1 BRADFORD-ON-AVON ED
Bradford-on-Avon North Ward
Bradford-on-Avon South Ward

2 HOLT ED
Holt Ward
Manor Vale Ward
Westbrook Ward

3 MELKSHAM ED
Melksham Roundpond Ward
Melksham Forest Ward
Melksham Lambourne Ward

4 MELKSHAM WITHOUT ED
Blackmore Forest Ward
Melksham Town Ward
Melksham Woodrow Ward

5 SOUTHWICK ED
Dilton Marsh Ward
Weavers Ward

6 TROWBRIDGE EAST ED
Adcroft Ward
Part of Park Ward

7 TROWBRIDGE SOUTH ED
College Ward
Drynham Ward

8 TROWBRIDGE WEST ED
John O' Gaunt Ward

9 UPPER WYLYE VALLEY ED
Corsley Ward
Mid Wylze Valley Ward
Shearwater Ward
Wylze Valley Ward

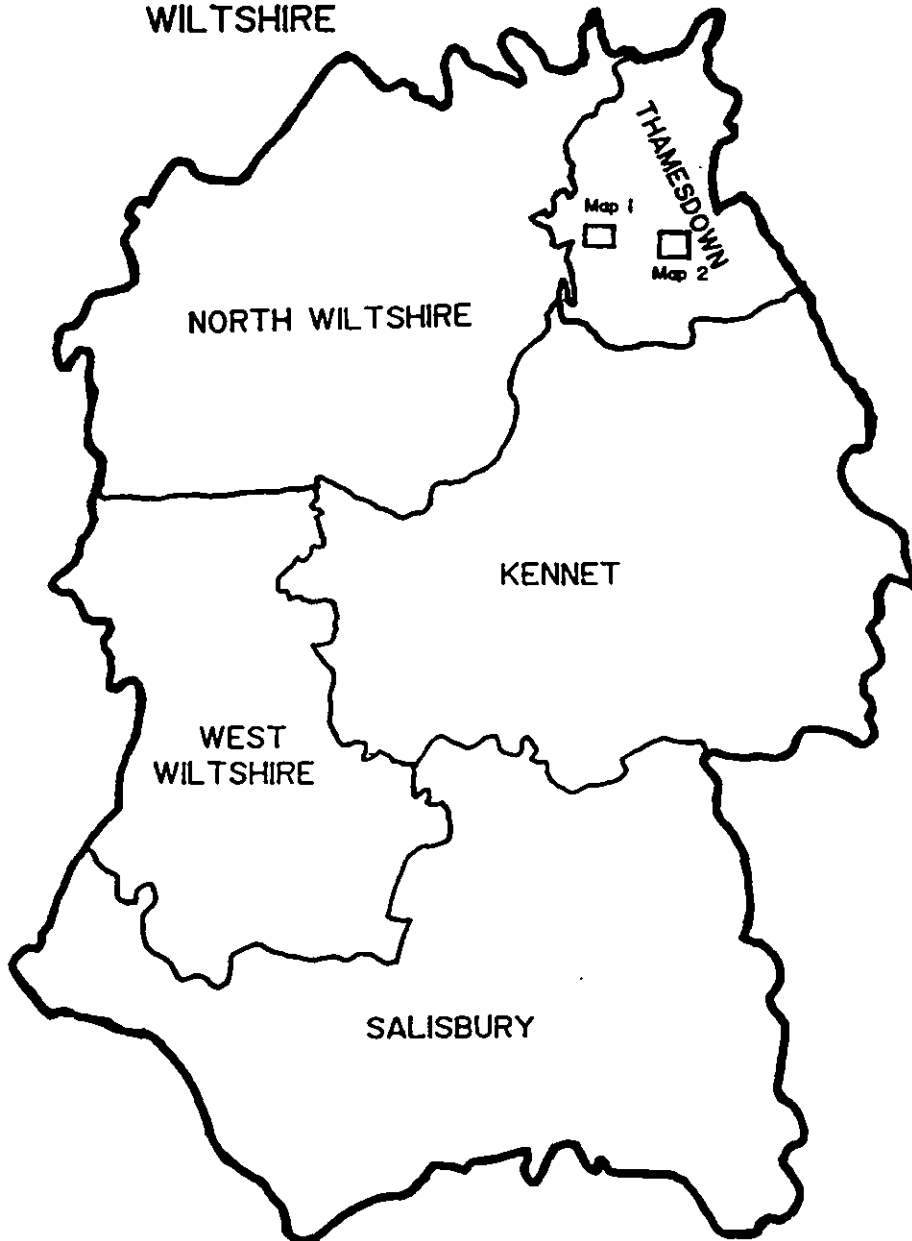
10 WARMINSTER EAST ED
Warminster East Ward

11 WARMINSTER WEST ED
Warminster West Ward

12 WESTBURY ED
Westbury with Storrldge Ward

13 WHORWELLSDOWN ED
Ethandune Ward
Paxcroft Ward
Summerham Ward

INDEX MAP OF
WILTSHIRE



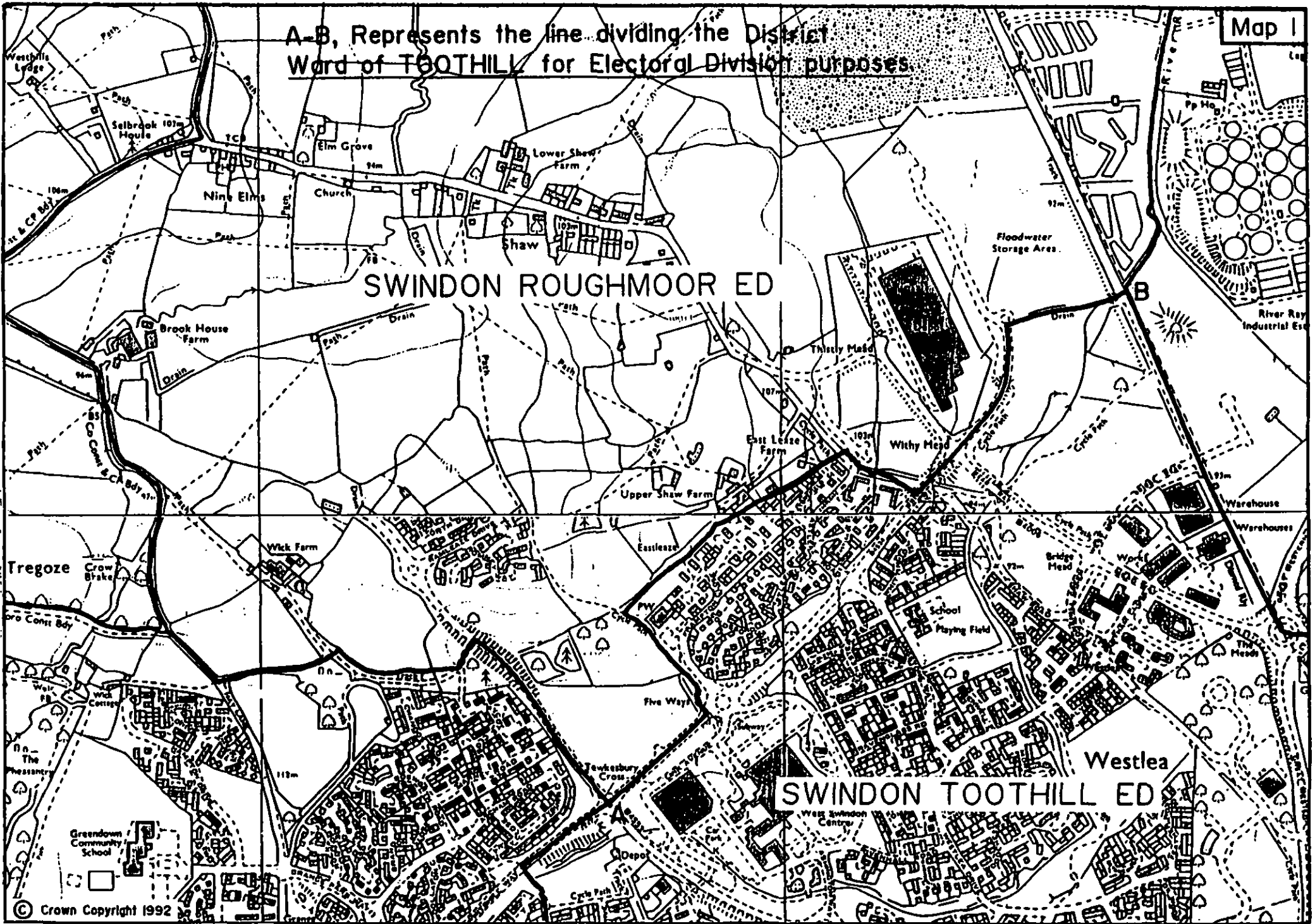
Maps 1 & 2 show in detail those areas where the proposed Electoral Division Boundary does not follow existing Borough Ward boundaries.

A-B, Represents the line dividing the District
Ward of TOOTHILL for Electoral Division purposes.

Map 1

SWINDON ROUGHMOOR ED

SWINDON TOOTHILL ED



A-B, Represents the line dividing the District
Ward of DORCAN for Electoral Division purposes.

SWINDON COVINGHAM ED

Dorcan

SWINDON DORCAN SOUTH ED

