

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
SALISBURY IN  
WILTSHIRE

*Report to the Secretary of State for the  
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

*March 1999*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Salisbury in Wiltshire.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Professor Michael Clarke

Pamela Gordon

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Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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# CONTENTS

	page
LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE	<i>v</i>
SUMMARY	<i>vii</i>
1 INTRODUCTION	<i>1</i>
2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS	<i>3</i>
3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>9</i>
4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION	<i>11</i>
5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>13</i>
6 NEXT STEPS	<i>29</i>
APPENDICES	
A Final Recommendations for Salisbury: Detailed Mapping	<i>31</i>
B Draft Recommendations for Salisbury (September 1998)	<i>35</i>





## Local Government Commission for England

2 March 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 24 February 1998, the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Salisbury under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in September 1998 and undertook a 12-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 89) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Salisbury.

We recommend that Salisbury District Council should be served by 55 councillors representing 28 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that the Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

We note that you have now set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the District Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Salisbury on 24 February 1998. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements in September 1998, after which we undertook a 12-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Salisbury because:

- **in 24 of the 36 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and 15 wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **this level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 25 wards, and by more than 20 per cent in 22 wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 89 and 90) are that:

- **Salisbury District Council should be served by 55 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 28 wards, eight fewer than at present;**
- **the boundaries of 33 of the existing 36 wards should be modified, while three wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections for the whole council should continue to take place every four years.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each district councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 20 of the 28 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is forecast to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in all but four wards, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent by 2003.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 13 April 1999:

**The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Review  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU**

*Figure 1:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Alderbury & Whiteparish	3	Alderbury ward (part – the parishes of Alderbury and Grimstead); Redlynch ward (part – Nomansland parish ward (as proposed) of Redlynch parish); Whiteparish ward (the parishes of Landford and Whiteparish)
2 Amesbury East	3	Amesbury ward (part)
3 Amesbury West	1	Amesbury ward (part)
4 Bemerton (in Salisbury)	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
5 Bishopdown (in Salisbury)	2	Bishopdown ward, Laverstock ward (part – Bishopdown North parish ward (as proposed) of Laverstock parish)
6 Bulford	2	<i>Unchanged</i>
7 Chalke Valley	1	Chalke Valley ward (part – the parishes of Bowerchalke, Broad Chalke, Bishopstone, Ebbesbourne Wake and Stratford Toney)
8 Donhead	1	Chalke Valley ward (part – Alvediston parish); Donhead ward (the parishes of Berwick St John, Donhead St Mary, Donhead St Andrew and Tollard Royal)
9 Downton & Redlynch	3	Downton ward (the parishes of Charlton and Downton); Redlynch ward (part – Redlynch parish ward (as proposed) of Redlynch parish)
10 Durrington	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
11 Ebbles	1	Ebbles ward (the parishes of Britford, Coombe Bissett and Odstock); Wilton ward (part – Netherhampton parish)
12 Fisherton & Bemerton Village (in Salisbury)	2	Fisherton & Bemerton Village ward; St Paul ward (part)
13 Fonthill & Nadder	1	Fonthill ward (part – the parishes of Berwick St Leonard, Fonthill Bishop and Chilmark); Nadder ward (part – the parishes of Teffont, Dinton, Barford St Martin and Compton Chamberlayne)
14 Harnham East (in Salisbury)	2	Harnham ward (part)
15 Harnham West (in Salisbury)	2	Harnham ward (part)
16 Knoyle	1	Fonthill ward (part – the parishes of Chicklade, Hindon and Fonthill Gifford); Knoyle ward (the parishes of East Knoyle, West Knoyle and Sedgemoor & Semley)

Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
17	Laverstock & Clarendon Park	2	Alderbury ward (part – Clarendon Park parish); Laverstock ward (part – Laverstock parish ward (as proposed) of Laverstock parish)
18	St Edmund & Milford (in Salisbury)	2	Milford ward (part); St Edmund ward
19	St Mark & Stratford (in Salisbury)	3	St Mark ward; Stratford ward
20	St Martin & part Milford (in Salisbury)	2	Milford ward (part); St Martin ward
21	St Paul (in Salisbury)	2	St Paul ward (part)
22	Till Valley & Wylve	2	Till Valley ward (the parishes of Orchestron, Shrewton and Tilshead); Wylve ward (part – the parishes of Berwick St James, Stapleford, Steeple Langford, Winterbourne Stoke and Wylve)
23	Tisbury & Fovant	2	Fovant ward (the parishes of Ansty, Fovant, Sutton Mandeville and Swallowcliffe); Tisbury ward (the parishes of Tisbury and West Tisbury)
24	Upper Bourne, Idmiston & Winterbourne	2	Idmiston ward (Idmiston parish); Upper Bourne ward (the parishes of Cholderton, Newton Tony and Allington); Winterbourne ward (part – Winterbourne parish)
25	Western & Mere	2	Mere ward (Mere parish); Western ward (the parishes of Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Kilmington, Stourton with Gasper and Zeals)
26	Wilton	2	Nadder ward (part – Burcombe Without parish); Wilton ward (part – the parishes of Wilton and Quidhampton)
27	Winterslow	2	Alderbury ward (part – West Dean parish); Winterslow ward (the parishes of Winterslow and Pitton & Farley); Winterbourne ward (part – Firsdow parish)
28	Woodford Valley	1	Woodford Valley ward (the parishes of Durnford, Woodford and Wilsford Cum Lake); Wylve ward (part – the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton)

Notes: 1 The district is entirely parished except for the City of Salisbury.

2 Map 2, the maps at Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report illustrates the proposed wards outlined above.

Figure 2:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Salisbury

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Alderbury & Whiteparish	3	4,587	1,529	-1	4,645	1,548	-3
2 Amesbury East	3	4,083	1,361	-11	5,134	1,711	8
3 Amesbury West	1	1,701	1,701	11	1,701	1,701	7
4 Bemerton	3	4,391	1,464	-5	4,586	1,529	-4
5 Bishopdown	2	2,697	1,349	-12	3,340	1,670	5
6 Bulford	2	3,142	1,571	2	3,142	1,571	-1
7 Chalke Valley	1	1,515	1,515	-1	1,515	1,515	-5
8 Donhead	1	1,506	1,506	-2	1,506	1,506	-5
9 Downton & Redlynch	3	4,599	1,533	0	4,623	1,541	-3
10 Durrington	3	4,694	1,565	2	4,694	1,565	-1
11 Ebble	1	1,489	1,489	-3	1,489	1,489	-6
12 Fisherton & Bemerton	2	3,180	1,590	3	3,179	1,590	0
13 Fonthill & Nadder	1	1,680	1,680	9	1,680	1,680	6
14 Harnham East	2	2,579	1,290	-16	2,821	1,411	-11
15 Harnham West	2	2,640	1,320	-14	2,888	1,444	-9
16 Knoyle	1	1,721	1,721	12	1,721	1,721	8
17 Laverstock & Clarendon Park	2	2,786	1,393	-9	2,817	1,409	-11
18 St Edmund & Milford	2	3,356	1,678	9	3,356	1,678	6
19 St Mark & Stratford	3	4,947	1,649	7	4,971	1,657	4
20 St Martin & Part Milford	2	3,520	1,760	15	3,520	1,760	11
21 St Paul	2	2,980	1,490	-3	2,980	1,490	-6
22 Till Valley & Wylde	2	3,142	1,571	2	3,142	1,571	-1
23 Tisbury & Fovant	2	3,038	1,519	-1	3,038	1,519	-4

Figure 2 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Salisbury

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
24	Upper Bourne, Idmiston & Winterbourne	2	3,575	1,788	16	3,575	1,788	13
25	Western & Mere	2	3,176	1,588	3	3,468	1,734	9
26	Wilton	2	3,301	1,651	7	3,318	1,659	4
27	Winterslow	2	2,868	1,434	-7	2,868	1,434	-10
28	Woodford Valley	1	1,644	1,644	7	1,644	1,644	4
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>84,537</b>	—	—	<b>87,361</b>	—	—
	<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,537</b>	—	—	<b>1,588</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Salisbury District Council's submission.

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



# 1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the district of Salisbury in Wiltshire. We have now reviewed all the districts in Wiltshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews of all principal local authority areas in England.

2 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992;
- the Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996, supplemented in September 1996 and updated in March 1998), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 24 February 1998, when we wrote to Salisbury District Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. Our letter was copied to Wiltshire County Council, Wiltshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the district, the Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published notices in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 8 June 1998. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

5 Stage Three, which was extended by four weeks to enable all local authorities in Wiltshire to take into account the implications of the Government's White Paper *'Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People'*, began on 1 September 1998 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Salisbury in Wiltshire*, and ended on 23 November 1998. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.



## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

<sup>6</sup> The district of Salisbury is situated in the south-east corner of Wiltshire, and abuts the Hampshire border to the east and Dorset and Somerset to the west. The focus of the district is the historic city of Salisbury, with a population of 39,400. The second largest settlement is Amesbury, which lies in the north of the district. Together these settlements account for about 43 per cent of the district's population. The remainder of the district is largely rural and covers parts of the New Forest in the south-east, and the sparsely populated areas of Salisbury plain in the north. The district includes many important conservation and archaeological sites, of which the most famous is Stonehenge.

<sup>7</sup> To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the district average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

<sup>8</sup> The electorate of the district (February 1998) is 84,537. The Council currently has 58 councillors who are elected from 36 wards (Map 1 and Figure 3). There are currently 20 single-member wards, 10 two-member wards and 6 three-member wards. The Council holds whole-council elections every four years.

<sup>9</sup> Since the last electoral review, which took place in 1975, there has been a relatively high increase in the electorate of the district, with around 16 per cent more electors per councillor than two decades ago. At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,458 electors, which the District Council forecasts would increase to 1,506 by the year 2003 if the present number of councillors is maintained. The number of electors per councillor in 24 of the 36 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, and in 15 wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Alderbury ward, in which the number of electors per councillor is 67 per cent above the district average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Salisbury



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Key to Wards

1 Alderbury	10 Ebble	19 Milford	28 Tisbury
2 Amesbury	11 Fisherton and Bemerton Village	20 Nadder	29 Upper Bourne
3 Bemerton	12 Fonthill	21 Redlynch	30 Western
4 Bishopdown	13 Fovant	22 St Edmund	31 Whiteparish
5 Bulford	14 Harnham	23 St Mark	32 Wilton
6 Chalke Valley	15 Idmiston	24 St Martin	33 Winterbourne
7 Donhead	16 Knoyle	25 St Paul	34 Winterslow
8 Downton	17 Laverstock	26 Stratford	35 Woodford Valley
9 Durrington	18 Mere	27 Till Valley	36 Wylde

Map 1 (continued):  
Existing Wards in Salisbury



KEY	
EXISTING WARD BOUNDARY	—————
EXISTING PARISH BOUNDARY	- - - - -

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Figure 3:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Alderbury	1	2,431	2,431	67	2,489	2,489	65
2 Amesbury	3	5,781	1,927	32	6,834	2,278	51
3 Bemerton	3	4,391	1,464	0	4,610	1,537	2
4 Bishopdown	1	2,219	2,219	52	2,219	2,219	47
5 Bulford	2	3,142	1,571	8	3,142	1,571	4
6 Chalke Valley	1	1,587	1,587	9	1,587	1,587	5
7 Donhead	1	1,434	1,434	-2	1,434	1,434	-5
8 Downton	2	2,357	1,179	-19	2,374	1,187	-21
9 Durrington	3	4,694	1,565	7	4,694	1,565	4
10 Ebble	1	1,368	1,368	-6	1,368	1,368	-9
11 Fisherton & Bemerton Village	2	2,835	1,418	-3	2,835	1,418	-6
12 Fonthill	1	1,010	1,010	-31	1,010	1,010	-33
13 Fovant	1	997	997	-32	997	997	-34
14 Harnham	3	5,221	1,740	19	5,710	1,903	26
15 Idmiston	1	1,716	1,716	18	1,716	1,716	14
16 Knoyle	1	1,160	1,160	-20	1,160	1,160	-23
17 Laverstock	2	3,085	1,543	6	3,759	1,880	25
18 Mere	1	1,928	1,928	32	2,220	2,220	47
19 Milford	2	2,378	1,189	-18	2,380	1,190	-21
20 Nadder	1	1,346	1,346	-8	1,346	1,346	-11
21 Redlynch	2	2,701	1,351	-7	2,701	1,351	-10
22 St Edmund	2	2,122	1,061	-27	2,124	1,062	-29
23 St Mark	3	3,520	1,173	-19	3,519	1,173	-22
24 St Martin	2	2,369	1,185	-19	2,371	1,186	-21

Figure 3 (continued):  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
25 St Paul	3	3,303	1,101	-24	3,303	1,101	-27
26 Stratford	1	1,430	1,430	-2	1,430	1,430	-5
27 Till Valley	1	1,888	1,888	30	1,888	1,888	25
28 Tisbury	1	2,041	2,041	40	2,041	2,041	36
29 Upper Bourne	1	857	857	-41	857	857	-43
30 Western	1	1,248	1,248	-14	1,248	1,248	-17
31 Whiteparish	1	2,069	2,069	42	2,069	2,069	37
32 Wilton	2	3,307	1,654	13	3,324	1,662	10
33 Winterbourne	1	1,507	1,507	3	1,507	1,507	0
34 Winterslow	1	2,197	2,197	51	2,197	2,197	46
35 Woodford Valley	1	771	771	-47	771	771	-49
36 Wylde	2	2,127	1,064	-27	2,127	1,064	-29
<b>Totals</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>84,537</b>	—	—	<b>87,361</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,458</b>	—	—	<b>1,506</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures based on Salisbury District Council's submission.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, electors in the Woodford Valley ward are relatively over-represented by 47 per cent, while electors in Alderbury ward are relatively under-represented by 67 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

<sup>10</sup> During Stage One, we received representations from Salisbury District Council, Salisbury Green Party, 16 parish and town councils and four local groups and residents. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Salisbury in Wiltshire*.

<sup>11</sup> Our draft recommendations were based on the District Council's Option 1 scheme which, we considered, achieved the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, provided good boundaries and maintained the present mix of single and multi-member wards. However, we moved away from the District Council's scheme in eight areas, affecting 16 wards. In the rural areas, we proposed that Alvediston parish be transferred from Chalke Valley ward to Donhead ward, that Netherhampton parish be transferred from Wilton ward to Ebble ward, that Nomansland parish ward (as proposed) be transferred from Redlynch ward to Alderbury & Whiteparish ward and that West Dean parish be transferred from Alderbury ward to Winterslow ward. We also proposed that Woodford Valley ward be combined with the parishes of Stapleford and South Newton (from Wylve ward), and that the remainder of the existing Wylve ward be linked with Till Valley ward. In relation to Amesbury, we proposed boundary modifications between the proposed Amesbury East and West Amesbury wards. In the city of Salisbury, we recommended that the proposed wards of Bishopdown North and Bishopdown South be combined to form a new two-member ward. We also proposed a boundary modification between St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village wards to improve electoral equality. Overall we proposed that:

- (a) Salisbury District Council should be served by 55 councillors representing 27 wards;
- (b) the boundaries of 33 of the existing wards should be modified, while three wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- (c) elections of the whole council should continue to take place every four years.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Salisbury District Council should comprise 55 councillors, serving 27 wards. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

<sup>12</sup> Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 22 of the 27 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the district average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve, with the number of electors per councillor in 25 of the 27 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average by 2003.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

13 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 56 representations were received. In addition we received a petition containing 179 signatures objecting to our proposal to combine part of Harnham ward with St Martin ward. A list of all respondents is available on request from the Commission. All representations may be inspected at the offices of Salisbury District Council and the Commission.

### **Salisbury District Council**

14 The District Council agreed with our draft recommendations for the proposed wards of Bishopdown, Bulford, Durrington, Fonthill & Nadder, Knoyle, Tisbury & Fovant, Upper Bourne, Idmiston & Winterbourne, Western & Mere and Winterslow. It expressed concern about the proposal to combine Western and Mere wards, and drew attention to the “strength of feeling” regarding this recommendation. However, it accepted that this proposed combination was the only way of meeting the Commission’s requirement for electoral equality.

15 It proposed that there should be an increase in council size to 56 to facilitate revised warding arrangements for the Amesbury and Woodford Valley area. It proposed the creation of a new Boscombe Down ward, based on the eastern part of the existing Amesbury ward, with modifications to the boundary between the proposed Amesbury East and West Amesbury wards. It also proposed that the new West Amesbury ward be combined with the existing Woodford Valley ward, and that the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton (from the existing Wylde ward) should form part of Wilton ward. As a consequence, it proposed that Netherhampton parish should remain in Wilton ward, rather than be transferred to Ebble ward and that Charlton parish ward of Downton parish should be transferred from Downton ward to Ebble ward. It also proposed that Alvediston parish should remain within Chalke Valley ward, rather than be transferred to Donhead ward, and that Clarendon Park parish be included in Alderbury & Whiteparish ward, rather than be combined with Laverstock parish.

16 In Salisbury City, the District Council proposed the formation of two two-member wards in place of the existing three-member Harnham ward. As a consequence, changes were proposed to St Martin and St Edmund & Milford wards. The Council opposed our draft recommendation for a boundary modification between St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village wards, and considered that Pullman Drive should be included in Bemerton ward, rather than Fisherton & Bemerton Village ward, and that Grange Gardens should be included in St Mark & Stratford ward, rather than St Edmund & Milford ward.

17 Under its proposals, the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10 per cent from the district average in 12 wards. This level of electoral equality would improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor varying by more than 10 per cent in five wards in 2003.

### **Salisbury District Council Labour Group**

18 The Labour Group generally supported the amendments to the draft recommendations put forward by the District Council. However it proposed that if the Harnham area was to be divided into two two-member wards, then a city centre ward should be created, based on parts of the existing St Edmund ward and St Martin ward. Under this proposal, the number of electors per councillor in St Martin and St Edmund & Milford wards would vary from the district average by 3 per cent and 10 per cent now, and 6 per cent and 13 per cent in five years time (assuming a council size of 57).

### **Salisbury Green Party**

19 Salisbury Green Party expressed concern about the increased number of multi-member wards under the draft recommendations, and reiterated the view that single-member wards provided “better representation”. While it accepted that the requirement for electoral equality might require an increase in the number of multi-member wards, it

proposed that this should be countered by the introduction of elections by thirds which, it argued, would provide a “greater degree of contact between voters and their potential and actual representatives”.

## David Faber MP

20 David Faber MP expressed concern over the proposed combination of Western and Mere wards. He highlighted the fact that the parish councils in the area opposed the proposal, and hoped that the Commission would look “sympathetically” at their concerns.

## Parish and Town Councils

21 Kilmington, Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Mere, Stourton with Gasper and Zeals parish councils all opposed the proposed combination of Mere and Western wards, and argued that the status quo should be retained. Hindon parish council also endorsed this view, although it expressed support for the proposed electoral arrangements for Knoyle ward. Amesbury Town Council accepted the Commission’s proposal to divide the town into two wards, and opposed the District Council’s proposal to create a new ward of Boscombe Down. Durnford and Woodford parish councils opposed being combined with parishes from the Wylde valley, and supported either the status quo or the District Council’s original proposal of a merger with part of Amesbury. Great Wishford, South Newton, Stapleford, Steeple Langford and Wylde parish councils all opposed the Commission’s draft recommendation to combine the parishes of South Newton and Stapleford in a new Woodford Valley ward. They argued that the status quo or the District Council’s proposal to transfer the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton to Wilton ward would offer a better warding arrangement.

22 Alvediston Parish Meeting opposed the proposal to transfer Alvediston parish from Chalke Valley to Donhead ward. This view was supported by Bowerchalke and Ebbesbourne Wake parish councils. Downton Parish Council supported the retention of its existing electoral arrangements, and opposed the proposal to combine the existing wards of Downton and Redlynch. Idmiston and Winterbourne parish councils “reluctantly” accepted the proposal to combine the wards of Idmiston, Upper Bourne and Winterbourne, while

Allington parish council objected to this combination. Netherhampton Parish Council and Wilton Town Council both proposed that Netherhampton parish should remain in Wilton ward. Fovant Parish Council wished to remain within a large single-member ward, rather than being combined with Tisbury in a two-member ward, while Swallowcliffe Parish Council supported the combination of Tisbury and Fovant. Alderbury Parish Council advocated the retention of the existing Alderbury ward.

## Other Representations

23 Harnham Liberal Democrats, Harnham Conservative Association, Harnham Neighbourhood council, a local councillor and 13 local residents opposed the proposal to combine part of Harnham with St Martin ward. While the Conservatives recommended that Harnham should be represented by four councillors, the majority of other respondents supported the District Council’s proposal to create two two-member wards in Harnham. In addition, we received a petition containing 179 signatures, opposing the proposed combination with St Martin ward.

24 A local councillor put forward alternative boundaries for St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village wards, while another councillor opposed the draft recommendation to combine Stapleford and South Newton with Woodford Valley ward. A local resident opposed the proposed transfer of Alvediston parish from Chalke Valley to Donhead ward, while another resident argued that Downton should remain a separate ward rather than be combined with Redlynch ward.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

25 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Salisbury is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

26 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

27 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

28 Our *Guidance* states that, while we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such an objective should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of absolute electoral equality and only then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of change in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in,

or retain, an imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

### Electorate Forecasts

29 At Stage One, Salisbury District Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2003, projecting an increase in the electorate of 3 per cent from 84,537 to 87,361 over the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. The Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. In our draft recommendations report, we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

30 During Stage Three, we received representations from Downton Parish Council and a local resident, who queried the Council’s projected electorates for Downton. In the light of this, we sought further advice from the District Council. Having reconsidered the electorate projections, in the light of the representations made at Stage Three, and following this further advice from the District Council, we remain satisfied that the electorate projections used in our draft recommendations report provide the best estimates presently available.

### Council Size

31 Our *Guidance* indicates that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

32 Salisbury District Council is at present served by 58 councillors. At Stage One, the District Council put forward two schemes resulting in a council size of either 55 or 50 members. In our

draft recommendations report, we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council of 55 members.

33 At Stage Three, the District Council suggested an increase in council size to 56 to provide an extra councillor for the Amesbury area, while Salisbury Labour Party proposed that there should be an extra councillor in Salisbury City, resulting in a council size of 57. Having carefully considered the representations received, we have not been persuaded that an increase in council size is necessary, and we are therefore content to confirm our draft recommendation for a council size of 55.

## Electoral Arrangements

34 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the District Council's scheme. From these representations, some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations.

35 First, there was agreement that there should be a decrease in council size. Both of the District Council's Stage One schemes involved a reduction in council size to either 55 or 50 members. In our draft recommendations report, we proposed a council of 55 members, which was supported by the majority of respondents and provided for better electoral equality than the proposal for 50 councillors.

36 Second, both schemes involved a continuation of single- and multi-member wards. On balance, we concluded that there was a clear overall local preference for the continuation of this practice with single-member wards being strongly preferred in the rural parts of the district. We proposed that there should be eight three-member wards, 12 two-member wards and seven single-member wards.

37 Third, respondents asked the Commission to take into account established communities. We sought to achieve this while also seeking electoral equality across the district, taking into account the development which is expected, especially in the Amesbury area. Generally, in this review, we have

sought to achieve electoral equality by the year 2003 where there appears to be some confidence about future increases in electorate. This would inevitably result in some electoral imbalance in the short term.

38 Finally, we noted that both district wide proposals put to us at Stage One secured some improvements in electoral equality, while also reflecting the statutory criteria. For example, the number of wards in which the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10 per cent from the district average would reduce from 24 to eight wards under the District Council's first proposal, and from 24 to nine wards under its second proposal.

39 In our draft recommendations report, we sought to build on these proposals in order to put forward electoral arrangements which would achieve yet further improvements in electoral equality, while also seeking to reflect the statutory criteria. Where it existed, we sought to reflect the consensus among representations for warding arrangements in particular parts of the district. Inevitably, we could not reflect the preferences of all respondents in our draft recommendations.

40 We concluded that we should base our draft recommendations on the District Council's Option One scheme. The scheme would provide better electoral equality than under the current arrangements; it would maintain the present mix of single- and multi-member wards, as preferred by the majority of respondents; and it would provide good boundaries, having regard to the statutory criteria. However, to improve electoral equality further and to better reflect the statutory criteria, we departed from the Council's scheme in the wards of Chalke Valley, Donhead, Redlynch, Alderbury, Bishopdown, Fisherton & Bemerton Village, St Paul, Ebble, Wilton, Amesbury, Woodford Valley, Till Valley and Wylve.

41 Having considered all representations received during Stages One and Three of the review, we

- (a) Mere and Western wards;
- (b) Fonthill, Knoyle and Nadder wards;
- (c) Chalke Valley, Donhead, Fovant and Tisbury wards;
- (d) Amesbury, Till Valley, Woodford Valley and Wylde wards;
- (e) Ebbles and Wilton wards;
- (f) Alderbury, Downton, Redlynch, Whiteparish and Winterslow wards;
- (g) Bulford, Durrington, Idmiston, Upper Bourne and Winterbourne wards;
- (h) Laverstock ward;
- (i) the ten City wards.

Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, the maps at Appendix A, and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

### **Mere and Western wards**

<sup>42</sup> Currently, Western ward comprises the parishes of Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Kilmington, Stourton with Gasper and Zeals, and is represented by a single councillor. Mere ward comprises Mere parish, and is also represented by a single councillor. Both wards are subject to significant electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 32 per cent and 14 per cent from the district average in Mere and Western wards respectively. While this level of electoral imbalance is not projected to change significantly in Western ward over the next five years, it is projected that there will be 47 per cent more electors per councillor than the average in Mere ward by 2003.

<sup>43</sup> At Stage One, the District Council proposed that these wards should be combined in a new two-member ward. While it expressed concern that the majority of residents would come from Mere ward, it considered that it was necessary to combine the wards in order to meet the Commission's criteria. We also received submissions from Mere, Kilmington and Stourton with Gasper parish councils, all of whom expressed opposition to the proposed combination of the wards. In our draft recommendations report, we acknowledged that the proposal to combine the two wards would prove contentious. Nevertheless, we considered that the current level of electoral inequality in the

two wards should be addressed. We considered the possibility of alternative warding arrangements in the area, but noted that the two wards are located at the western end of the district, bounded by the districts of West Wiltshire, Mendip, South Somerset and North Dorset, and this restricted the number of available options. Accordingly, in the absence of a viable alternative, we endorsed the District Council's proposal.

<sup>44</sup> At Stage Three, the District Council accepted the need to combine the two wards in order to meet the Commission's criteria, but stressed the "high level of local concern" over the issue. We also received representations from Kilmington, Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Mere, Stourton with Gasper and Zeals parish councils, all of whom strongly opposed our draft recommendation. It continued to be argued that the two wards had different needs and identities, and should therefore continue to be separately represented as single-member wards. These concerns were shared by David Faber MP and Hindon Parish Council in separate submissions.

<sup>45</sup> Having carefully considered the representations received, we note the strong opposition to our draft recommendation, and recognise the concerns of respondents over the future representation of smaller communities within a combined Western & Mere ward. While we have sympathy with these views, we remain persuaded that the current level of electoral inequality in the existing wards must be addressed. No alternative warding arrangements have been put forward at Stage Three, with the majority of respondents favouring the retention of the existing electoral arrangements. However, we do not consider that this proposal would achieve a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. In particular, we note that the number of electors per councillor in a single member Mere ward would be 25 per cent above the district average, while the number of electors per councillor in a single member Western ward would be 19 per cent below the district average (assuming a council size of 55). Accordingly, in the absence of a viable alternative in this area, we confirm our draft recommendation as final. Under our final recommendations, there would be much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in the new Western & Mere ward varying from the district average by 3 per cent currently and 9 per cent in five years time.

## **Fonthill, Knoyle and Nadder wards**

46 At present, Knoyle ward comprises the parishes of East Knoyle, Sedgemoor & Semley and West Knoyle; Fonthill ward comprises the parishes of Berwick St Leonard, Chicklade, Chilmark, Fonthill Bishop, Fonthill Gifford and Hindon; and Nadder ward comprises the parishes of Barford St Martin, Burcombe Without, Compton Chamberlayne, Dinton and Teffont. All three wards are each represented by a single councillor. While Nadder ward currently has reasonable electoral equality, with 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, the number of electors per councillor in Knoyle and Fonthill wards varies by 20 per cent and 31 per cent respectively.

47 At Stage One, we adopted the District Council's Option 1 proposal. We proposed that Knoyle ward should remain a single-member ward and be combined with the parishes of Chicklade, Hindon and Fonthill Gifford, from the existing Fonthill ward. The remainder of Fonthill ward would be combined with Nadder ward, to be represented by a single councillor, while Burcombe Without parish would be transferred from Nadder ward to Wilton ward. Under our draft recommendations, there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 12 per cent in Knoyle ward and by 9 per cent in the combined Fonthill & Nadder ward. In five years time, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average by 8 per cent in Knoyle ward and by 6 per cent in Fonthill & Nadder ward.

48 At Stage Three, the District Council accepted our draft recommendation in this area. Chilmark parish council also supported the draft recommendation, while Hindon parish council expressed its preference for the status quo, but was content to endorse our draft recommendation as a second choice. Having considered the representations received, we consider that our draft recommendations for Fonthill, Knoyle and Nadder wards represent the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria and are content to confirm them as final.

## **Chalke Valley, Donhead, Fovant and Tisbury wards**

49 At present, Tisbury ward comprises the parishes of Tisbury and West Tisbury; Fovant ward comprises the parishes of Ansty, Sutton Mandeville and Swallowcliffe; Donhead ward comprises the

parishes of Berwick St John, Donhead St Mary, Donhead St Andrew and Tollard Royal and Chalke Valley ward comprises the parishes within the Chalke Valley. All four wards are each represented by a single councillor. Currently, while Chalke Valley and Donhead wards enjoy reasonable electoral equality, the level of electoral equality in Tisbury and Fovant wards is poor, with the number of electors per councillor in the two wards varying from the district average by 40 per cent and 32 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to improve over the next five years.

50 At Stage One, we adopted the District Council's Option 1 proposals for these wards as the basis for our draft recommendation, and proposed that the wards of Tisbury and Fovant should be combined in a two-member ward. However, while the District Council proposed retaining the existing arrangements in Chalke Valley and Donhead wards, we proposed that Alvediston parish should be transferred from Chalke Valley ward to Donhead ward in the interests of electoral equality. Our draft recommendations resulted in the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by no more than 2 per cent in the proposed Chalke Valley and Donhead wards.

51 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our draft recommendation to combine Tisbury and Fovant wards. However, it proposed that Alvediston parish should remain in Chalke Valley ward on the grounds that it had strong "social and historical ties" with other parishes within the Chalke Valley. This view was supported by Alvediston Parish Meeting, Bowerchalke and Ebbesbourne Wake parish councils and a local resident. It was argued that Alvediston and Ebbesbourne Wake share a village hall and organise various social activities in common, and that these ties would be affected if the two parishes were in different wards. Fovant Parish Council accepted the need for an increase in the size of Fovant ward, but argued that a single-member ward would be more appropriate for a rural area. Swallowcliffe Parish Council supported the proposal to combine Tisbury and Fovant wards, but opposed any change to the boundaries of Chalke Valley and Donhead wards.

52 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendation to combine the existing wards of Tisbury and Fovant into a single ward, to be represented by two councillors. While we note that Fovant Parish Council would prefer to remain

within a single-member ward, we have not received any proposals at Stage Three that would enable this to be achieved. We note the opposition to our proposal to transfer Alvediston parish from Chalke Valley ward to Donhead ward. However, if Alvediston parish were to remain in Chalke Valley ward, this would result in the number of electors per councillor in Donhead ward varying from the district average by 7 per cent now and 10 per cent in five years time. We have carefully considered the arguments put to us regarding the community interest between Alvediston and other parishes in the Chalke Valley, but have not been persuaded that these arguments justify the deterioration in electoral equality. While the Commission acknowledges that Alvediston has a stronger sense of affinity with parishes in the Chalke Valley, we do not consider that the proposal to transfer Alvediston parish from Chalke Valley ward to Donhead ward would adversely affect the interests and identities of communities in the area, nor disrupt existing relationships. Under our final recommendations, Alvediston parish would remain within a single-member ward rural ward. It would also retain separate parish council status, and would therefore be able to continue to work together with other parishes in the Chalke Valley. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Chalke Valley and Donhead wards as final.

### **Amesbury, Till Valley, Woodford Valley and Wylde wards**

<sup>53</sup> Under current arrangements, Amesbury, Woodford Valley, Till Valley and Wylde wards have a poor level of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 32 per cent, 47 per cent, 30 per cent and 27 per cent respectively. While this level of electoral equality is expected to remain constant in Woodford Valley, Till Valley and Wylde wards, it is projected that there would be 51 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average in Amesbury by 2003.

<sup>54</sup> At Stage One, under Option 1, the District Council proposed that Amesbury should be split into two wards, and that the western part should be combined with the existing Woodford Valley ward. It also proposed that Till Valley and Wylde wards should be combined in a three-member ward. However, in our draft recommendations report, we did not consider that this represented the best balance between the need for electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We noted that the proposal was opposed by the parishes in Woodford Valley

ward and by Amesbury Town Council, and that it would provide for relatively poor electoral equality, with the proposed Amesbury East ward having an electoral variance of 23 per cent in five years time. Accordingly, in our draft recommendations report, while we agreed that Amesbury should be split into two wards, we proposed a modified boundary between the two, with Amesbury East ward being represented by three councillors, and West Amesbury ward by one councillor. We accepted that Till Valley and Wylde wards should be combined, but proposed that the parishes of Stapleford and South Newton (from the existing Wylde ward) should be combined with Woodford Valley ward. Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average by 11 per cent in the proposed Amesbury East and West Amesbury wards, and by 5 per cent and 2 per cent in the proposed Till Valley & Wylde and Woodford Valley wards. In five years time the figures would be 8 per cent, 7 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent respectively.

<sup>55</sup> At Stage Three, the District Council opposed our draft recommendations on the basis that the parishes in Wylde ward have few connections with parishes in Woodford Valley ward. It argued that Woodford Valley should be combined with the western part of Amesbury, and that Stapleford ward should remain within a combined Till Valley & Wylde ward. In order to accommodate this, it proposed that Amesbury should be split into three wards, with a new ward of Boscombe Down being created in the east of Amesbury, to be represented by two members. It further proposed that the wards of Great Wishford and South Newton should be transferred from the existing Wylde ward to Wilton ward. Its proposals in this area would result in an overall increase in council size from 55 to 56. Under the District Council's proposals, the number of electors per councillor in Amesbury East, Amesbury West and Boscombe Down wards would vary from the district average by 19 per cent, 2 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. In five years time, these figures would improve to 5 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. Till Valley & Wylde ward would have an electoral variance of 4 per cent now and 1 per cent in five years time.

<sup>56</sup> We also received representations from Durnford, Great Wishford, South Newton, Stapleford, Steeple Langford, Woodford and Wylde parish councils, all of whom opposed our draft recommendation. While the majority supported

the status quo as their first choice, the District Council's alternative proposal gained support as a second choice. It was argued that our draft recommendation would affect the close links between Great Wishford and South Newton parishes, and combine areas that do not have shared interests. However, Amesbury Town Council strongly opposed the proposal to divide the town into three wards with the western part of Amesbury being combined with parishes in the Woodford Valley.

57 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we recognise that our draft recommendations in this area have elicited a degree of local opposition, and note the objections raised regarding the lack of common interests between the parishes of South Newton and Stapleford and parishes in Woodford Valley ward. In particular, we are sympathetic to the view that the parishes of Durnford and South Newton have only limited communication links, and note the strong links between South Newton and Great Wishford parishes.

58 We have reconsidered our draft recommendation in the light of these responses and the alternative proposals put forward by the District Council. We note that the District Council's proposal has the support of five parish councils in the area and that, although electoral equality would be relatively poor at present, it is projected to improve over the next five years. However, we have also had regard to the objections of Amesbury Town Council to the proposal to divide the town into three wards, and note that the District Council's alternative proposal is dependent on this split of Amesbury. While we consider that dividing Amesbury into east and west wards may be justified on community grounds, we are not persuaded that a three way split would satisfactorily reflect communities in Amesbury. We also understand that the District Council's proposal is opposed by Downton Parish Council, which has expressed concern that part of its parish (Charlton parish ward) would be represented in a separate ward. We further note that the District Council's proposals would increase the council size to 56, with a consequential effect on electoral equality throughout the district.

59 On balance, we have not been persuaded that the District Council's proposal would represent a better balance between electoral equality and the need to reflect the interests and identities of

communities in the area. Nevertheless, we accept that our draft recommendations in this area have achieved only limited support, and we have sought to reflect the views of respondents. On balance, we consider that better warding arrangements would be achieved by retaining Stapleford parish in the proposed Till Valley and Wylde ward, with the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton being combined within the proposed Woodford Valley ward. While this will not address the concerns relating to the limited communication links between South Newton and Durnford, it would partly reflect the views of the parish councils of South Newton and Great Wishford, which wish to be linked for warding purposes, and Stapleford Parish Council, which wishes to continue to be represented with other parishes in Till Valley & Wylde ward. We further propose modifying the boundary between Amesbury East and West wards, to partly reflect representations received at Stage Three and, to reflect the views of Amesbury Town Council, propose that West Amesbury ward should be renamed Amesbury West ward. In our judgement, we consider that these proposals would provide for the least disruption in the area, particularly in Amesbury town, and enable Woodford Valley ward to remain linked with areas of a similar, predominantly rural nature, rather than the more urban Amesbury town.

60 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would initially vary by more than 11 per cent from the district average in the proposed Amesbury East and Amesbury West wards, and by 2 per cent and 7 per cent in Till Valley & Wylde and Woodford Valley wards. In five years time, the number of electors per councillor would vary from the district average by 8 per cent and 7 per cent in Amesbury East and Amesbury West wards, and by 1 per cent and 4 per cent in the proposed Till Valley & Wylde and Woodford Valley wards. Details of our final recommendation can be found on Map A3 at Appendix A.

### **Ebble and Wilton wards**

61 At present, Ebble ward comprises the parishes of Britford, Coombe Bissett and Odstock, and is represented by a single councillor. Wilton ward comprises the parishes of Wilton, Netherhampton and Quidhampton, and is represented by two councillors. Under current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor in Ebble and Wilton wards varies by 6 per cent and 13 per cent

from the district average respectively. In five years time the figures are projected to be 9 per cent and 10 per cent respectively.

<sup>62</sup> In our draft recommendations report, we supported the District Council's proposal that Burcombe Without parish should be transferred from Nadder ward to Wilton ward, and that Wilton ward should remain a two-member ward. However, we further proposed that Netherhampton parish should be transferred from Wilton ward to Ebble ward in order to improve electoral equality. Under our draft recommendations, Ebble ward would have 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, and Wilton ward 7 per cent more. This level of electoral equality will remain constant over the next five years.

<sup>63</sup> At Stage Three, the District Council proposed alternative warding arrangements in this area. As a consequence of its proposals for the Amesbury and Woodford Valley area, it proposed that the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton should be transferred from the existing Wylde ward and be combined with Wilton ward, to be represented by three members. It argued that community links between Ebble ward and Netherhampton parish were "tenuous", and that because a large part of Netherhampton is contained within the Wilton estate Netherhampton parish should remain within Wilton ward. The District Council further proposed that Charlton parish ward of Downton parish should be transferred from Downton ward to Ebble ward in order to improve electoral equality. We also received representations from Netherhampton Parish Council and Wilton Town Council, both of whom argued that Netherhampton parish should remain in Wilton ward.

<sup>64</sup> Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that the District Council's proposals would provide for good electoral equality, and would appear to have the support of parish councils in the area. However, as indicated earlier, its proposals here are dependent on the endorsement of its proposals in Amesbury and the Woodford Valley area. As discussed above, we have not been persuaded by the District Council's proposals for Amesbury. While we recognise the concerns of Netherhampton Parish Council and Wilton Town Council over the transfer of Netherhampton parish to Wilton ward, we consider that this is necessary to improve

electoral equality. The retention of the status quo (assuming a council size of 55) would result in the number of electors per councillor in Ebble ward varying from the district average by more than 10 per cent both now and in 2003. Furthermore, we have not been persuaded that the alternative proposal to transfer Charlton parish ward of Downton parish from Downton ward to Ebble ward would necessarily provide a better balance between the need for electoral equality and reflecting communities in the area. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for these wards as final.

### **Alderbury, Downton, Redlynch, Whiteparish and Winterslow wards**

<sup>65</sup> At present, while the wards of Alderbury, Whiteparish and Winterslow are each represented by a single councillor, Downton and Redlynch wards are each represented by two councillors. Alderbury ward comprises the parishes of Alderbury, Clarendon Park, Grimstead and West Dean; Whiteparish ward the parishes of Landford and Whiteparish; Winterslow ward the parishes of Pitton, Farley and Winterslow, and the wards of Downton and Redlynch are coterminous with their parish boundaries. This area is subject to a high degree of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor in the wards of Alderbury, Downton, Whiteparish and Winterslow varying from the district average by 67 per cent, 19 per cent, 42 per cent and 51 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to improve significantly over the next five years.

<sup>66</sup> In our draft recommendations report, we adopted the District Council's proposals to combine the wards of Downton and Redlynch in a two-member ward, and to combine Winterslow ward with Firsdon parish (currently in Winterbourne ward), to be represented by two councillors. We proposed combining the parishes of Alderbury and Grimstead with the existing Whiteparish ward, to be represented by three councillors, but to further improve electoral equality, we proposed including West Dean parish with Winterslow ward, and to include Nomansland parish ward (as proposed) in the new Alderbury & Whiteparish ward.

67 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our draft recommendation for Winterslow ward. In relation to the proposed Alderbury & Whiteparish ward, it recommended that Clarendon Park parish (which under our proposals would be combined with Laverstock ward) should be included in this ward. The District Council also supported the proposal to combine the wards of Downton and Redlynch in a three-member ward but, as discussed earlier, proposed that Charlton parish ward of Downton parish should be transferred from Downton ward to Ebble ward. Alderbury and Downton parish councils both advocated the retention of the status quo for their ward, while Downton Parish Council also queried the District Council's projected development figures for the Downton area. These projections were also queried by a local resident.

68 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendation for Winterslow ward, which appears to have achieved a measure of local support. We have had regard to the concerns over the electorate projections for Downton. However, following discussions with the District Council, we are satisfied that its electorate projections do provide the best estimate of future development in this area, and are content to use them as the basis for our proposals. We note that both Downton and Alderbury parish councils would prefer the retention of the status quo in their area. However, this would result in poor electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by more than 20 per cent in Downton ward, and by more than 50 per cent in Alderbury ward (assuming a council size of 55). We consider that this level of electoral inequality cannot be justified.

69 In relation to the District Council's proposal to transfer Clarendon Park parish from Laverstock ward to Alderbury ward, we recognise the concerns over community interest in this area. However, we note that the alternative of combining Clarendon Park parish with Alderbury ward would result in a high level of electoral inequality in the proposed Laverstock ward. We are not persuaded that the case for this level of electoral imbalance has been made. We have also considered the District Council's proposal to transfer Charlton parish ward of Downton parish to Ebble ward but, as discussed earlier, have not been persuaded that this would provide a satisfactory balance between electoral equality and reflecting the interests and identities of communities in the area. We therefore propose

confirming our draft recommendation for these wards. Under our final recommendations, there would be much improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by no more than 10 per cent in all three proposed wards, both now and in five years time.

### **Bulford, Durrington, Idmiston, Upper Bourne and Winterbourne wards**

70 At present, Bulford ward comprises the parishes of Bulford, Figheldean and Milston, Upper Bourne ward comprises the parishes of Cholderton and Newton Toney, Winterbourne ward comprises the parishes of Winterbourne and Firsdawn, and the wards of Durrington and Idmiston follow the boundaries of their respective parishes. Under current arrangements, while the wards of Bulford, Durrington and Winterbourne enjoy reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 8 per cent, 7 per cent and 3 per cent respectively, the number of electors per councillor in Idmiston and Upper Bourne wards varies from the average by 18 per cent and 41 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to improve significantly over the next five years.

71 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that there should be no change to the existing boundaries of Bulford and Durrington wards, and that the wards of Idmiston and Upper Bourne should be combined with Winterbourne parish to be represented by two councillors. We noted that these parishes had a common connection, lying along the River Bourne and that, while electoral equality would remain relatively high, this still represented a considerable improvement on the current situation.

72 In its response to our draft recommendations, the District Council supported our proposals for these wards. We also received representations from Idmiston and Winterbourne parish councils, both of whom expressed concern that their proposed new ward would only be represented by two councillors, but accepted that the proposals recognised the identity of the existing communities in the Upper Bourne valley. Allington Parish Council objected to any move that reduced their representation on Salisbury District Council.

73 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations as final. While we recognise the

concerns expressed by parish councils in the Bourne Valley over any reduction in their district level representation, no alternative warding arrangements have been put forward to address this, and we note that two of the parish councils are nevertheless prepared to support our draft recommendations. Under our final recommendation, the number of electors per councillor in Bulford, Durrington and Upper Bourne, Idmiston & Winterbourne wards would vary from the district average by 2 per cent, 2 per cent and 16 per cent respectively.

### **Laverstock ward**

74 Currently, Laverstock ward comprises Laverstock parish, and is represented by two councillors. It enjoys reasonable electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 6 per cent from the district average. However, as a result of the development of the Hampton Park Estate, this level of electoral equality is expected to deteriorate over the next five years, and would result in the number of electors per councillor varying by 25 per cent from the district average by 2003.

75 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that Laverstock parish should be warded in order to allow separate representation for that part of the Hampton Park estate contained within the parish. We proposed that this area should be combined with the existing Bishopdown ward, to be represented by two councillors, with the remainder of Laverstock parish being combined with Clarendon Park parish from the current Alderbury ward.

76 At Stage Three, the District Council supported our proposal to ward that part of the Hampton Park estate within Laverstock parish, and combine it with Bishopdown ward. However, it argued that Clarendon Park parish should remain within Alderbury ward. It contended that there are few community links between Clarendon Park and Laverstock, and that the only road between the two is to be closed. We understand that this view was supported by Laverstock and Ford Parish Council. We also received a submission from the Bishopdown Farm Residents Association advocating the creation of two single-member wards to cover the Bishopdown area. The Residents' Association conducted a survey among local residents, and argued that this demonstrated a clear majority in favour of two single-member wards for the Bishopdown area.

77 Having considered the representations received at Stage Three, we note that there is consensus that that part of the Hampton Park estate within Laverstock parish should be warded in order that it may be separately represented from the remainder of Laverstock parish at district level. We have once more considered the arguments for establishing two single-member wards to cover this area and the existing Bishopdown ward. However, as noted in our draft recommendations report, the Bishopdown ward would not appear to be easily divisible, and any boundary would represent a somewhat arbitrary split of a residential area. We also note that the level of electoral equality in two single-member wards would be relatively high for a predominantly urban area. We therefore propose confirming our draft recommendation for a two-member Bishopdown ward. In relation to the remainder of the existing Laverstock ward, as discussed above, we have sympathy with the view that Clarendon Park parish has little in common with Laverstock parish. However, we remain persuaded that such a merger is necessary to address the poor electoral equality that would exist in the Laverstock ward should this combination not take place. We have not been persuaded that any alternative warding arrangement would represent a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations as final. Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would vary initially from the district average by 9 per cent in Laverstock ward and 12 per cent in Bishopdown ward. In five years time, the number of electors per councillor is projected to vary from the district average by 11 per cent and 5 per cent respectively.

### **The City Wards**

78 Under current arrangements, Salisbury city is divided into 10 wards, and is represented by 22 councillors. Of these, four wards are each represented by three councillors, four wards each elect two councillors, while the remaining two are each represented by a single councillor. The city is subject to a high degree of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor in seven wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the district average, three of which vary by more than 20 per cent. This level of electoral inequality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years with seven wards expected to have electoral variances greater than 20 per cent in 2003.

79 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that Salisbury city should be represented by 20 councillors, with changes to all but one of the existing wards. The most significant changes were that the existing wards of St Edmund and Milford and Stratford and St Mark should be combined to form two new three-member wards, and that part of Harnham ward should be combined with St Martin ward. We also proposed a boundary modification between the proposed St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village wards to improve electoral equality and, as discussed earlier, we proposed the creation of a two-member Bishopdown ward.

80 At Stage Three, the District Council accepted our draft recommendations in relation to the wards of Bemerton and Bishopdown, and proposed a minor boundary change between St Mark and Stratford wards. It opposed the proposed boundary modification between St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village wards, and suggested alternative warding arrangements for Harnham ward, resulting in the creation of two two-member wards in Harnham. As a result of this, consequential changes were proposed to St Martin, St Edmund and Milford wards. We also received representations from the Harnham Liberal Democrats, the Harnham Branch of the Salisbury Conservatives, Harnham Neighbourhood Council, a local councillor and 13 local residents, all of whom opposed our draft recommendation to combine part of Harnham with St Martin ward. It was argued that Harnham is historically distinct from the rest of the city, that there are no connections between the eastern part of Harnham and St Martin ward, and that the River Avon and the Salisbury ring road provide a strong and well-defined boundary for the existing Harnham area. While the majority of respondents supported the Council's proposal to divide Harnham into two two-member wards, the Conservatives argued that Harnham should be represented by four councillors. In addition, we received a petition containing 179 signatures opposing our draft recommendation, and advocating the Council's alternative proposals.

81 Salisbury Labour Party proposed that should the Commission support the objections relating to the Harnham area, it should also consider establishing a city centre ward by combining parts of St Edmund and St Martin wards, resulting in an increase of one in the number of councillors for the city centre wards. We also received a submission

from a local councillor, who put forward alternative proposals for the wards of Fisherton & Bemerton Village and St Paul. He argued that these proposals would result in more "compact ward structures", and would better reflect community identities as represented by local schools, churches and the make up of the residential areas.

82 Having carefully considered all the representations received in relation to the wards within Salisbury city, we are content to confirm our draft recommendations for the existing wards of Bemerton and Bishopdown, which appear to have achieved a measure of local support. We also propose, subject to the minor boundary modification suggested by the District Council, confirming our draft recommendation to combine St Mark and Stratford wards. In relation to the wards of St Paul and Fisherton & Bemerton Village, we have considered the alternative warding arrangements put forward by a local councillor. However, on balance, we have not been persuaded that these would necessarily represent a better reflection of communities in the area. We also note that this proposed boundary modification is not supported by the District Council. Accordingly, we remain of the view that our draft recommendations would provide the best balance between electoral equality and reflecting the interests and identities of communities in these parts of the City, and therefore confirm them as final.

83 However, we note that our draft recommendation to combine part of Harnham ward with St Martin ward has attracted opposition at Stage Three, and acknowledge that there are a lack of community ties between Harnham and St Martin ward, and that the River Avon and the Salisbury ring road forms a strong barrier between the two communities. In the light of evidence received at Stage Three, we have therefore considered the possibility of alternative warding arrangements to enable Harnham to be separately represented from other city centre wards. The Conservatives proposed that Harnham be represented by four councillors but, as indicated in our *Guidance*, we consider that "the number of electors per councillor to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances". We have looked at the arguments very carefully, but have not been persuaded that the case for a four-member Harnham ward has been made.

84 We have also considered the arguments in favour of Harnham being represented by two two-member wards, and note that this proposal has achieved a degree of support during Stage Three. This proposal would result in the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Harnham East and Harnham West wards varying by 16 per cent and 14 per cent from the district average respectively. However, as a result of housing development over the next five years, electoral equality is expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Harnham East and Harnham West wards projected to vary by 11 per cent and 9 per cent respectively in 2003. While this proposal would result in a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance in the area, we consider that the evidence in favour of retaining separate representation for the Harnham community is sufficiently persuasive to warrant this degree of electoral inequality, particularly given the improvement over the next five years. We therefore propose modifying our draft recommendations, and recommend that Harnham should be represented by two wards, each returning two members.

85 As a result of our final recommendations for Harnham, consequential changes will be required to the existing wards of Milford, St Martin and St Edmund. Salisbury Labour Party proposed that a city centre ward should be established by combining parts of the wards of St Edmund and St Martin, resulting in an overall increase of council size to 56. Under this proposal, while the number of electors per councillor in the proposed St Martin ward would vary by 5 per cent from the district average, there would be a relatively high level of electoral inequality in the proposed St Edmund & Milford ward, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the district average by 12 per cent. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor expected to vary by 8 per cent and 15 per cent from the district average respectively. We have carefully considered the arguments in favour of this proposal but, on the evidence received, have not been persuaded that these proposals would represent the best solution in this area.

86 The District Council proposed that part of Milford ward should be combined with St Martin ward, with the remainder of Milford ward being combined with St Edmund ward, as set out in our draft recommendations report. The proposed

wards would each be represented by two councillors. Under these proposals, the number of electors per councillor in St Edmund & Milford ward would vary by 9 per cent from the district average, and in St Martin & Part Milford ward by 15 per cent. However, electoral equality would improve by 2003, with the proposed St Edmund & Milford ward having an electoral variance of 6 per cent, and St Martin & Part Milford ward having an electoral variance of 11 per cent. On balance, given our recommendation to retain the River Avon as the northern boundary for Harnham, we are persuaded that the District Council's proposals for these wards would provide the best balance between electoral equality and reflecting the identities and interests of communities in the area.

87 Overall, our final recommendations would provide for improved electoral equality in the city area, although the number of electors per councillor would continue to vary by more than 10 per cent in the proposed wards of Bishopdown, Harnham East, Harnham West and St Martin & Part Milford. However, this level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor only varying by more than 10 per cent from the average in the proposed Harnham East and St Martin & Part Milford wards. Details of the proposed changes to ward boundaries in the City are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

## **Electoral Cycle**

88 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that the present system of whole-council elections every four years in Salisbury be retained. At Stage Three, Salisbury Green Party argued that the introduction of elections by thirds would provide a greater degree of contact between voters and their representatives. However, no other representations were received, and we do not consider that sufficient evidence has been provided to justify a move away from our draft recommendations. Accordingly, we confirm our draft recommendation for whole-council elections every four years as final.

## **Conclusions**

89 Having carefully considered all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided

substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) in Amesbury, we propose a minor boundary modification between the two proposed wards to better reflect the interests and identities of communities. We also propose that the two wards should be known as Amesbury West ward and Amesbury East ward;
- (b) we propose that the Woodford Valley ward should be combined with the parishes of Great Wishford and South Newton (rather than Stapleford and South Newton), with Stapleford parish continuing to be represented in Till Valley and Wylve ward;
- (c) in Salisbury city, we propose the establishment of two two-member wards in Harnham, with consequential changes to the existing wards of Milford, St Edmund and St Martin. We also propose a minor boundary modification between St Edmund & Milford ward and St Mark & Stratford ward to include Grange Gardens in St Mark & Stratford ward.

90 We conclude that, in Salisbury:

- (a) the number of councillors should be reduced from 58 to 55;
- (b) there should be 28 wards, rather than 36 as at present;

- (c) the boundaries of 33 of the existing 36 wards should be modified;
- (d) whole-council elections should continue to be held every four years.

91 Figure 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1998 and 2003 electorate figures.

92 As Figure 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 24 to eight, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent above the district average. This level of electoral equality would improve by 2003. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

### Final Recommendation

Salisbury District Council should comprise 55 councillors serving 28 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, the maps at Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report. The whole Council should continue to be elected together every four years.

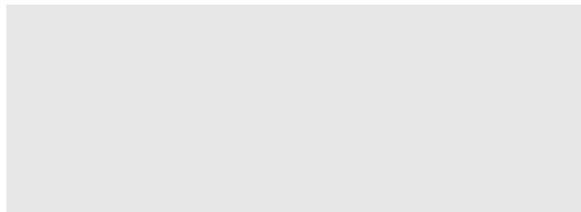
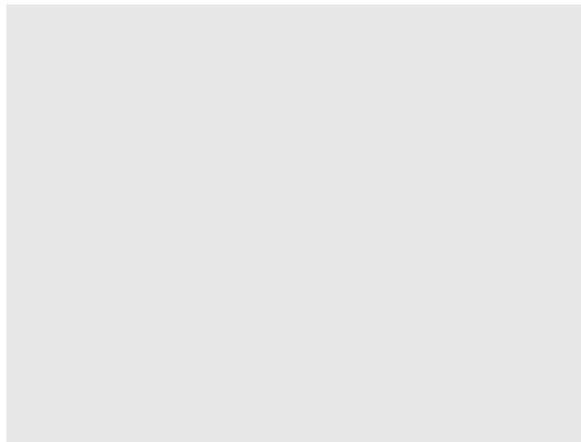
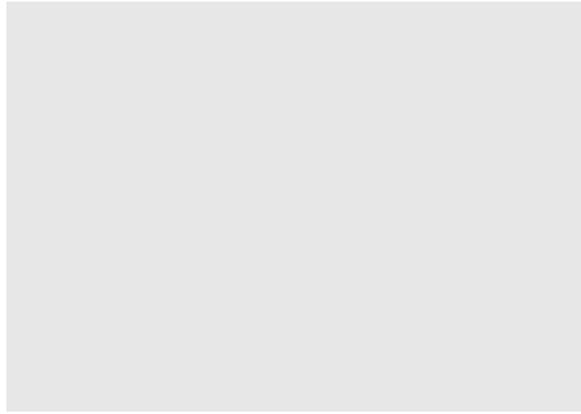
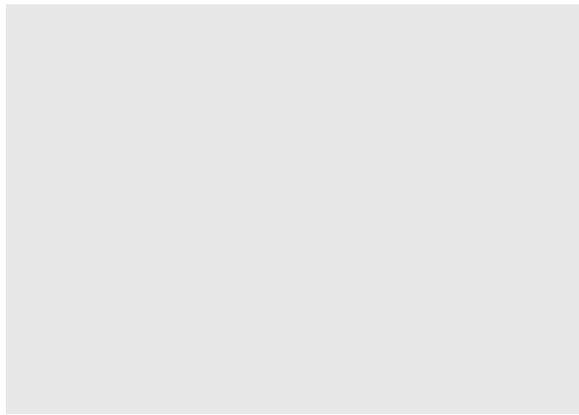
*Figure 4 :  
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	1998 electorate		2003 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	58	55	58	55
Number of wards	36	28	36	28
Average number of electors per councillor	1,458	1,537	1,506	1,588
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	24	8	25	4
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	15	0	22	0

## Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

93 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for Amesbury Town Council, Laverstock Parish Council and Redlynch Parish Council.

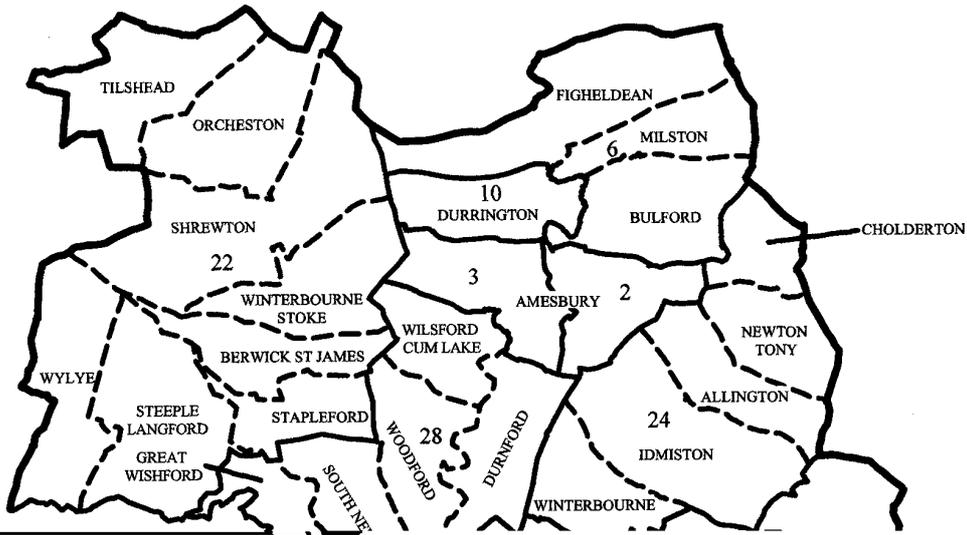
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Map 2:  
*The Commission's Final Recommendations for Salisbury*



Map 2 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Salisbury





## 6. NEXT STEPS

98 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Salisbury and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

99 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

100 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Review  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU



# APPENDIX A

## Final Recommendations for Salisbury: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Salisbury area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on Maps A2, A3 and the large map inserted at the back of the report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed parish ward boundaries for Nomansland.

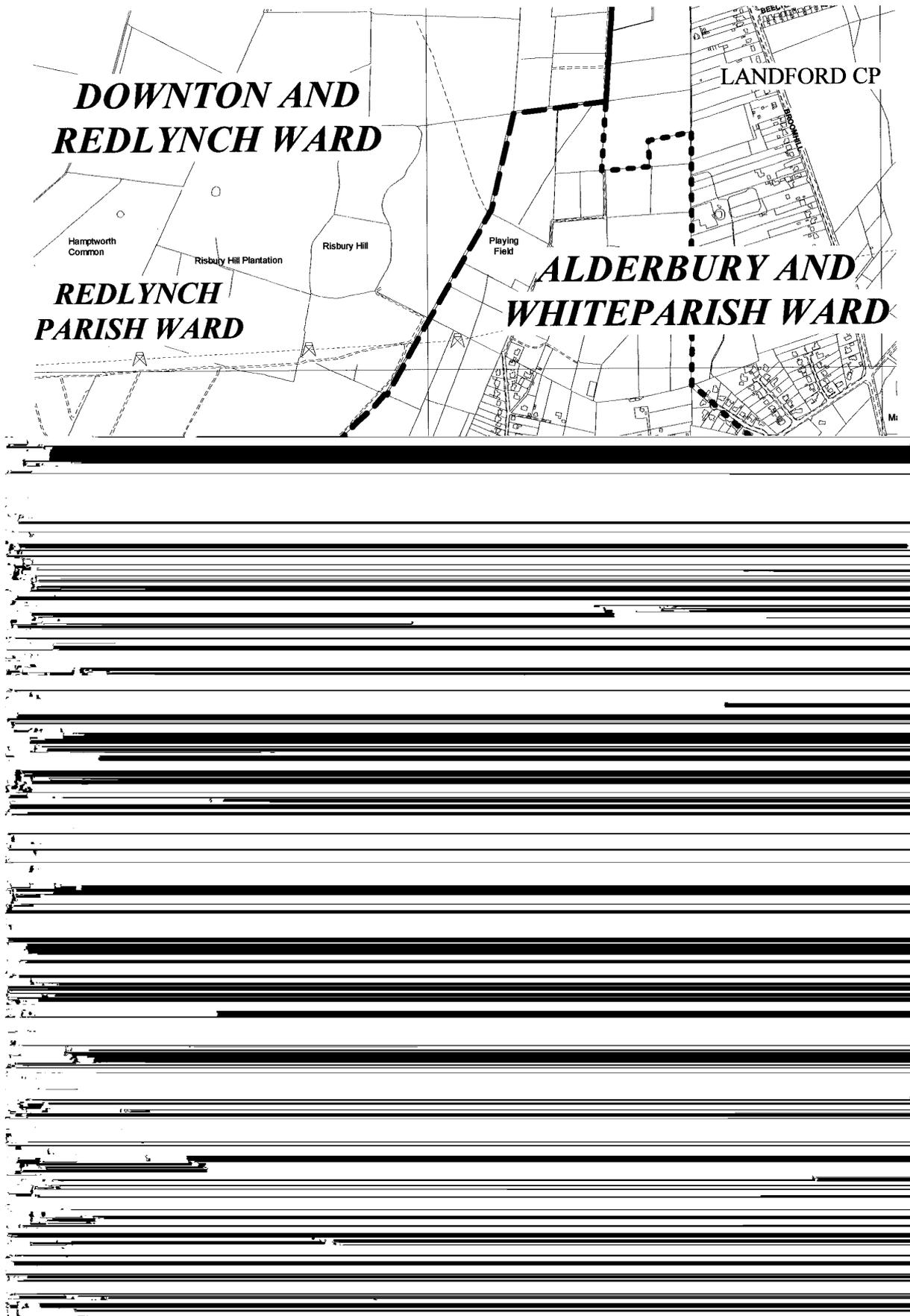
**Map A3** illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for Amesbury Town.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the Commission's proposed warding arrangements for the city of Salisbury.

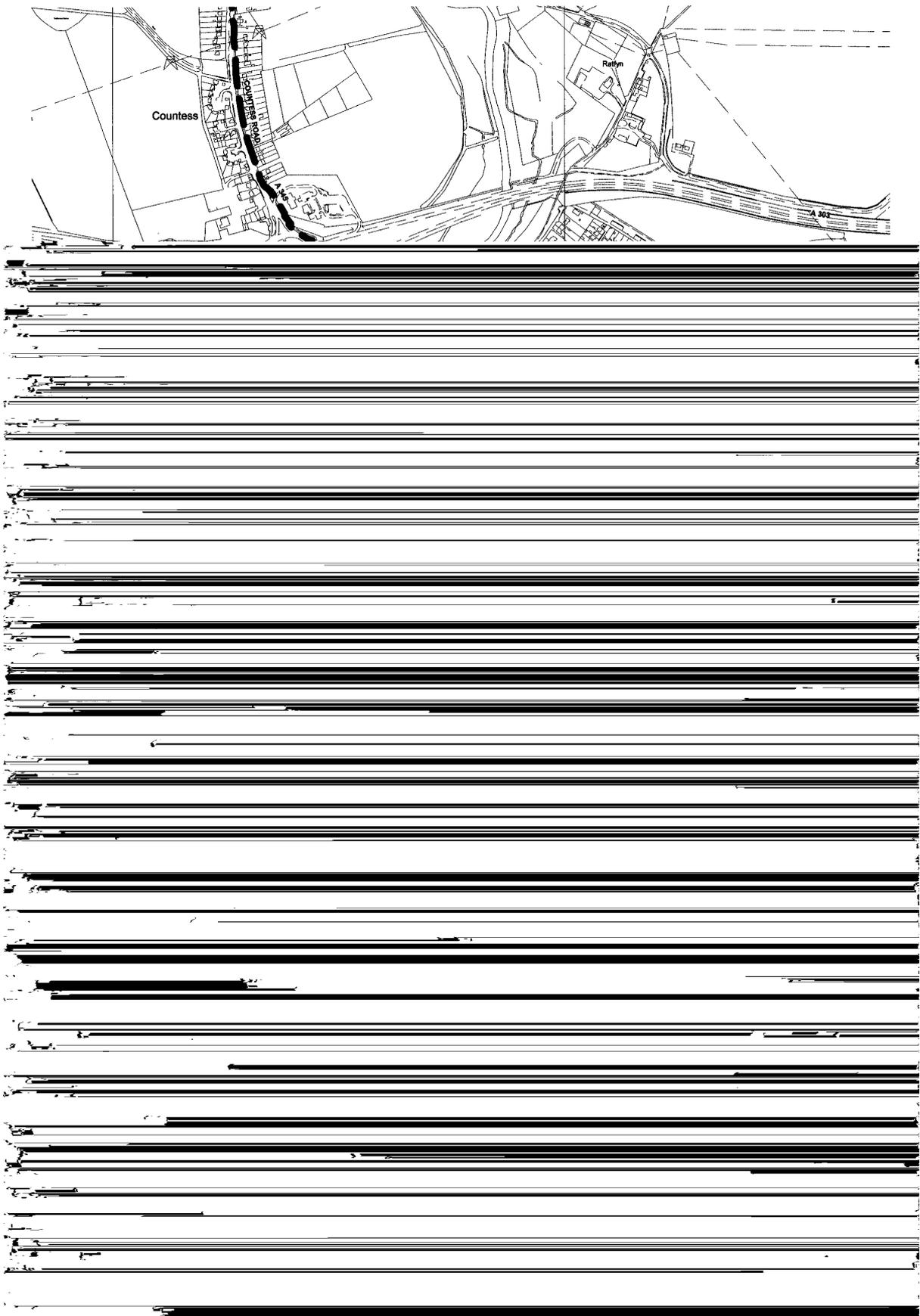
Map A1:  
Final Recommendations for Salisbury: Key Map



Map A2:  
Proposed Parish Ward Boundaries for Nomansland



Map A3:  
*Proposed Warding Arrangements for Amesbury Town*



# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Salisbury

*Figure B1:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Alderbury & Whiteparish	3	Whiteparish ward (the parishes of Landford and Whiteparish); Alderbury ward (part – the parishes of Alderbury and Grimstead); Redlynch ward (part – Nomansland parish ward (as proposed) of Redlynch parish)
2 Amesbury East	3	Amesbury ward (part)
3 Bemerton (in Salisbury)	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
4 Bishopdown (in Salisbury)	2	Bishopdown ward, Laverstock ward (part – Bishopdown North parish ward (as proposed) of Laverstock parish)
5 Bulford	2	<i>Unchanged</i>
6 Chalke Valley	1	Chalke Valley ward (part – the parishes of Bowerchalke, Broad Chalke, Bishopstone, Ebbesbourne Wake and Stratford Toney)
7 Donhead	1	Donhead ward (the parishes of Berwick St John, Donhead St Mary and Donhead St Andrew ); Chalke Valley ward (part – Alvediston parish)
8 Downton & Redlynch	3	Downton ward (the parishes of Charlton and Downton); Redlynch ward (part – Redlynch parish ward (as proposed) of Redlynch parish)
9 Durrington	3	<i>Unchanged</i>
10 Ebble	1	Ebble ward (the parishes of Britford, Coombe Bissett and Odstock); Wilton ward (part – Netherhampton parish)
11 Fisherton & Bemerton Village (in Salisbury)	2	Fisherton & Bemerton Village ward (part); St Paul ward (part)
12 Fonthill & Nadder	1	Fonthill ward (part – the parishes of Berwick St Leonard, Fonthill Bishop and Chilmark); Nadder ward (part – the parishes of Teffont, Dinton, Barford St Martin and Compton Chamberlayne)

*continued overleaf*

*Figure B1 (continued):  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
13	Harnham (in Salisbury)	3	Harnham ward (part)
14	Knoyle	1	Knoyle ward (the parishes of East Knoyle, West Knoyle and Sedgemoor & Semley); Fonthill ward (part – the parishes of Chicklade, Hindon and Fonthill Gifford)
15	Laverstock & Clarendon Park	2	Laverstock ward (part – Laverstock parish ward (as proposed) of Laverstock parish); Alderbury ward (part – Clarendon Park parish)
16	St Edmund & Milford (in Salisbury)	3	Milford ward; St Edmund ward
17	St Mark & Stratford (in Salisbury)	3	St Mark ward; Stratford ward
18	St Martin & part Harnham (in Salisbury)	2	St Martin ward; Harnham ward (part)
19	St Paul (in Salisbury)	2	St Paul ward (part)
20	Till Valley & Wylde	2	Till Valley ward (the parishes of Orcheston, Shrewton and Tilshead); Wylde ward (part – the parishes of Berwick St James, Great Wishford, Steeple Langford, Winterbourne Stoke and Wylde)
21	Tisbury & Fovant	2	Tisbury ward (the parishes of Tisbury and West Tisbury); Fovant ward (the parishes of Ansty, Fovant, Sutton Mandeville and Swallowcliffe)
22	Upper Bourne, Idmiston & Winterbourne	2	Upper Bourne ward (the parishes of Cholderton, Newton Tony and Allington); Idmiston ward (Idmiston parish); Winterbourne ward (part – Winterbourne parish)
23	West Amesbury	1	Amesbury ward (part)
24	Western & Mere	2	Western ward (the parishes of Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield, Kilmington, Stourton with Gasper and Zeals); Mere ward (Mere parish)
25	Wilton	2	Wilton ward (part – the parishes of Wilton and Quidhampton); Nadder ward (part – Burcombe Without parish)
26	Winterslow	2	Winterslow ward (the parishes of Winterslow and Pitton & Farley); Winterbourne ward (part - Firsdon parish); Alderbury ward (part – West Dean parish)
27	Woodford Valley	1	Woodford Valley ward (the parishes of Durnford, Woodford and Wilsford Cum Lake); Wylde ward (part – the parishes of South Newton and Stapleford)

Figure B2:

The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Alderbury & Whiteparish	3	4,587	1,529	-1	4,645	1,548	-3
2 Amesbury East	3	4,083	1,361	-11	5,134	1,711	8
3 Bemerton	3	4,391	1,464	-5	4,586	1,529	-4
4 Bishopdown	2	2,697	1,349	-12	3,340	1,670	5
5 Bulford	2	3,142	1,571	2	3,142	1,571	-1
6 Chalke Valley	1	1,515	1,515	-1	1,515	1,515	-5
7 Donhead	1	1,506	1,506	-2	1,506	1,506	-5
8 Downton & Redlynch	3	4,599	1,533	0	4,623	1,541	-3
9 Durrington	3	4,694	1,565	2	4,694	1,565	-1
10 Ebble	1	1,489	1,489	-3	1,489	1,489	-6
11 Fisherton & Bemerton Villate	2	3,180	1,590	3	3,179	1,590	0
12 Fonthill & Nadder	1	1,680	1,680	9	1,680	1,680	6
13 Harnham	3	4,482	1,494	-3	4,972	1,657	4
14 Knoyle	1	1,721	1,721	12	1,721	1,721	8
15 Laverstock & Clarendon Park	2	2,786	1,393	-9	2,817	1,409	-11
16 St Edmund & Milford	3	4,504	1,501	-2	4,504	1,501	-5
17 St Martin & Part Harnham	2	3,109	1,555	1	3,109	1,555	-2
18 St Mark & Stratford	3	4,947	1,649	7	4,971	1,657	4
19 St Paul	2	2,980	1,490	-3	2,980	1,490	-6
20 Till Valley & Wylde	2	3,221	1,611	5	3,221	1,611	1
21 Tisbury & Fovant	2	3,038	1,519	-1	3,038	1,519	-4
22 Upper Bourne, Idmiston and Winterbourne	2	3,575	1,788	16	3,575	1,788	13

*continued overleaf*

Figure B2 (continued):

*The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward*

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2003)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23 West Amesbury	1	1,701	1,701	11	1,701	1,701	7
24 Western & Mere	2	3,176	1,588	3	3,468	1,734	9
25 Wilton	2	3,301	1,651	7	3,318	1,659	4
26 Winterslow	2	2,868	1,434	-7	2,868	1,434	-10
27 Woodford Valley	1	1,565	1,565	2	1,565	1,565	-1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>84,537</b>	—	—	<b>87,361</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,537</b>	—	—	<b>1,588</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Salisbury District Council's submission.

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



