

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

Midlothian Council Area

Proposals for wards



March 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

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Chairman:	Mr Ronnie Hinds
Deputy Chairman:	Mr William Magee
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Secretary to the Commission:	Dr Hugh Buchanan (to October 2014)
	Ms Isabel Drummond-Murray (from October 2014)

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Introduction

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland is an independent, non-political body whose purpose is to make recommendations for local government administrative and electoral boundaries in Scotland.
2. We are tasked by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to undertake reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland. These reviews are our fifth periodic reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland since we were first established in 1973. We intend to submit a report containing our recommendations for electoral arrangements for each council area in Scotland to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016, in time for implementation for the next local government elections in May 2017.
3. This booklet contains a summary of our proposals for Scotland as a whole and our proposals for wards in Midlothian council area, and information on how to participate in our consultation with councils from 19 March to 19 May 2015.

The reviews

4. In 2011 we consulted the public on our methodology for determining councillor numbers. The results of that consultation can be found on our website www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk
5. We formally began the current reviews on 21 February 2014. We consulted councils and the public on our proposals for councillor numbers for each council between February 2014 and August 2014. We have now considered all the submissions received during these consultations. We have reached a decision on councillor numbers and the associated ward designs and are now presenting our proposals for wards for further consultation. The meeting papers that informed our deliberations and the minutes of our meetings are referenced on page 4. Details of how to participate in the consultation are given below.
6. For each electoral ward, we make recommendations about its boundary, its name and the number of councillors to represent the ward (legislation restricts this to either 3 or 4 councillors).
7. When reviewing electoral arrangements the legislation requires us to take account of the following factors:
 - the interests of effective and convenient local government;
 - within each council, that each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as may be;
 - local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and
 - special geographical considerations.
8. For further information on the policies and procedures we have adopted to underpin these reviews and the legal requirements for ward design, please refer to our *Guidance Booklet*, which is available on our website http://www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/reviews/5th_electoral/resources.asp or on request.

Our proposals for wards in Scotland

9. We developed our proposals using electorate data from 1 September 2013. The number of electors registered in each council electoral ward on that date can be found on our website. In developing our proposals for wards, we have had regard to the likely changes in the number of electors by considering forecast electorate counts in 2019. The methodology we have used to forecast electorates can be found on our website. Whilst the dataset does not include 16 and 17 year olds, we have considered the impact their inclusion on the electoral register would have and are content that this would not affect our proposals.
10. Our proposals use population size to set councillor numbers. In keeping with past reviews we have created categories of similar councils to set ratios of councillors to electors. In doing so, we have used population distribution and levels of deprivation to group councils together. Population size, however, remains the biggest determinant of councillor numbers and the design of wards.
11. We consulted on proposals for councillor numbers in 2014. In 5 council areas, we have changed the number of councillors proposed for the area from our original proposals for councillor numbers because it allows us to take better account of the factors in the legislation during ward design. Overall, our proposals provide for 1,217 councillors representing 351 wards in Scotland: a decrease of 6 councillors and 2 wards from existing electoral arrangements.
12. Our proposals for wards include unchanged electoral arrangements in 2 council areas and minor changes in 2 other council areas.
13. Nationally, over 96% of proposed wards are forecast to be within 10% of parity for the council area. At present 17% of existing wards are 10% or more from parity. Only 2 proposed wards are forecast to be more than 15% from parity, compared to 19 existing wards.
14. Our proposals improve parity between councillors in terms of the number of electors they represent (the forecast average variation from a council area's parity per councillor improves from 6.0% for existing wards to 4.6% for proposed wards).
15. In general we have sought to construct wards from complete local sub-geographies such as community council areas. In our proposals for wards almost 80% of community council areas are wholly within wards. In a few council areas, we have adopted ward designs that recognise other locally-significant boundaries such as community planning areas, neighbourhoods or natural communities.

Consultation on our proposals for wards

16. The legislation provides that we must first of all consult on our proposals with councils. This consultation on our proposals for wards runs from 19 March 2015 until 19 May 2015. After consideration of responses to this consultation with councils, we intend to conduct a 12-week public consultation on our proposals for wards between July and October 2015. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, we may further develop and consult on our proposals later in 2015. We expect to submit our reports containing our final recommendations to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016.
17. Further copies of this booklet are available on request.

18. We welcome all comments on our proposals to help inform our deliberations.
Comments can be made in the following ways:

in writing to:	Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Thistle House 91 Haymarket Terrace Edinburgh EH12 5HD
by email to:	comments@scottishboundaries.gov.uk

19. All comments we receive in response to this consultation will be available to view on our website in due course. For further information, please visit our website.
20. Where comments contain objections to our proposals, it would be helpful if they could be accompanied by alternative proposals that take account of statutory requirements and consider the consequences on the council area as a whole.

Proposals for wards in Midlothian council area

21. The maps on the following pages illustrate our proposals for wards in Midlothian council area which retain an electoral arrangement for 18 councillors representing 6 3-member wards.

22. Our proposals for the council area:

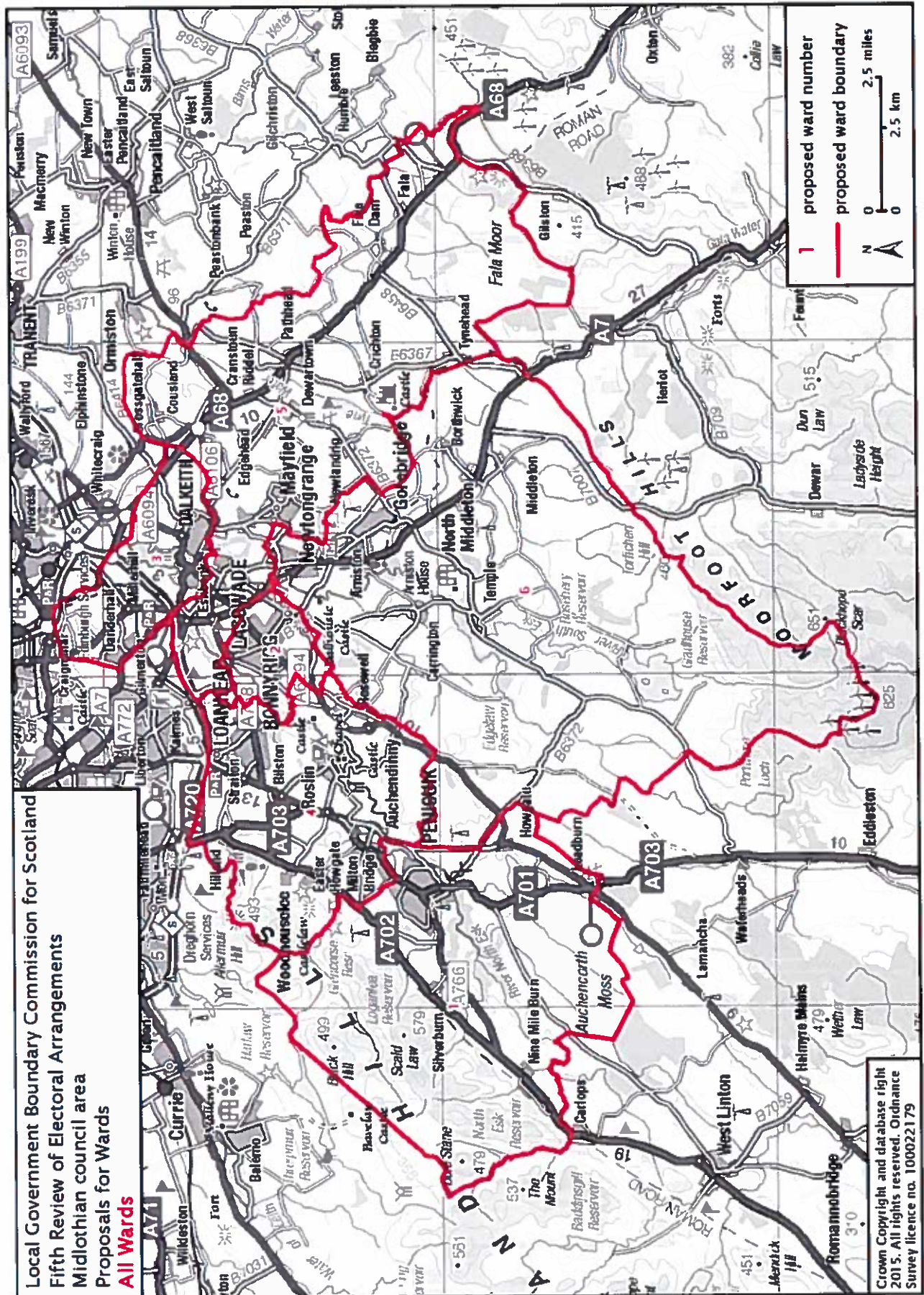
- improve overall forecast parity;
- make changes to ward boundaries by Gladstone Gait, Bonnyrigg;
- make no changes to ward 1 (Penicuik), ward 3 (Dalkeith), ward 4 (Midlothian West) and ward 6 (Midlothian South);
- make no changes to the number of councillors in each ward; and
- make no changes to ward names.

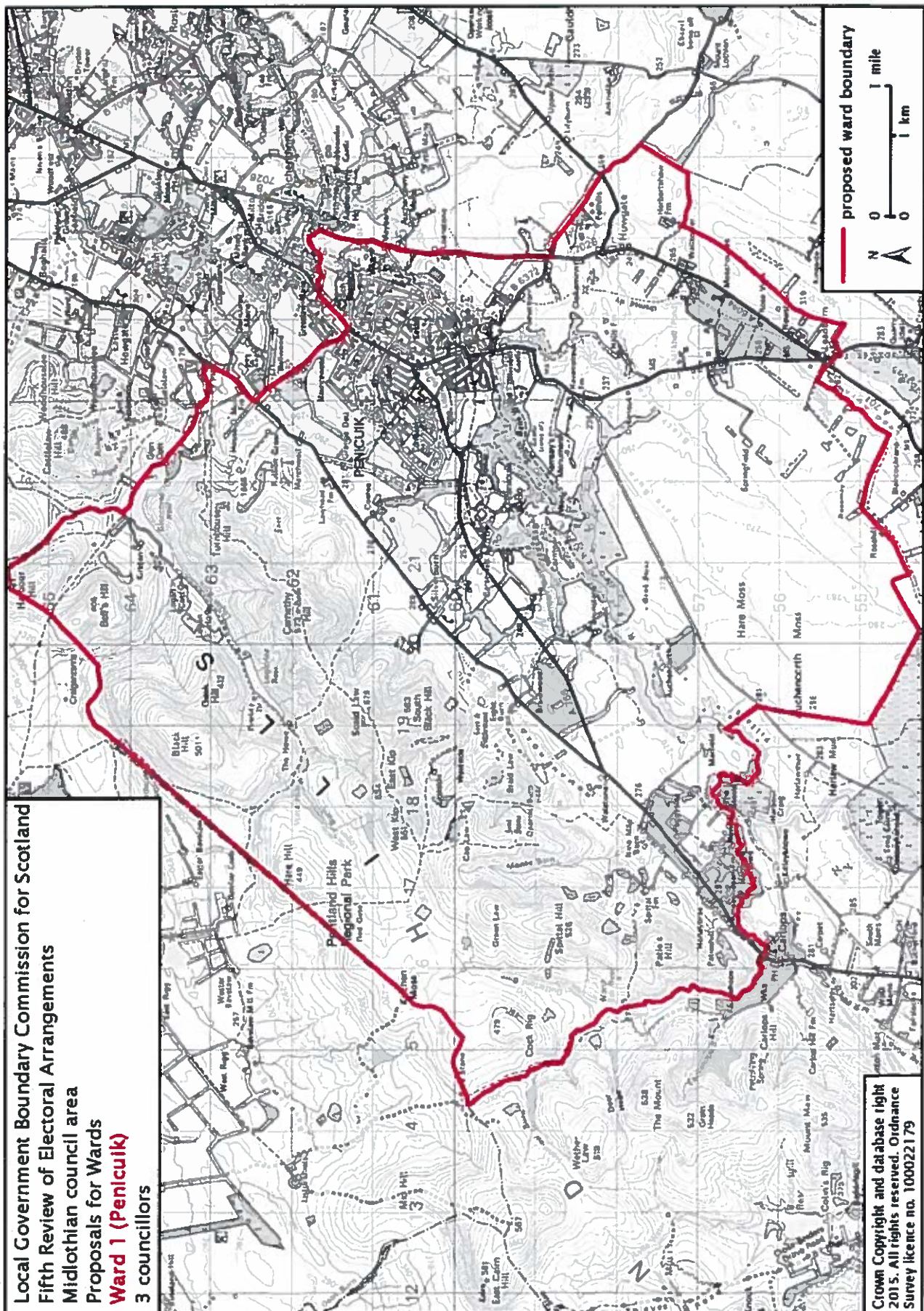
23. We discussed the proposals for Midlothian council area at our meeting of 10 September 2014, (see LGBCS Paper 2230/14). We decided on our proposals at our meetings of 3 February 2015 and 3 March 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2276/15).

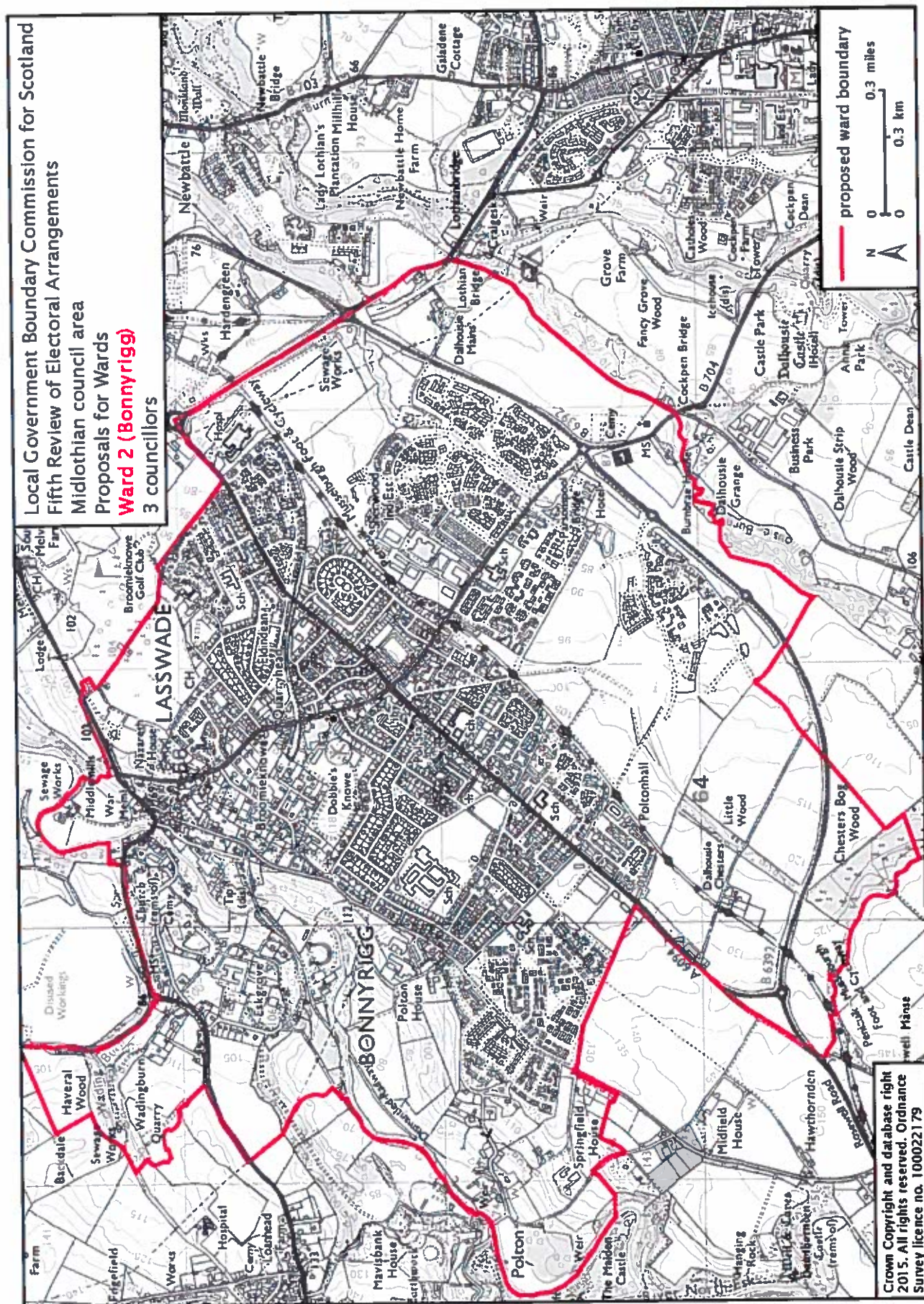
24. Table 1 below details the electorates with actual and forecast variation from parity of the proposed wards.

ward no.	ward name	cllrs	electorate Sept 13	actual variation from parity	forecast electorate 2019	forecast variation from parity
1	Penicuik	3	10,932	1%	10,481	-6%
2	Bonnyrigg	3	12,770	18%	12,355	11%
3	Dalkeith	3	9,246	-14%	10,274	-8%
4	Midlothian West	3	11,041	2%	11,847	7%
5	Midlothian East	3	10,785	0%	10,710	-4%
6	Midlothian South	3	9,954	-8%	11,008	-1%
Totals		18	64,728	7%	66,675	6%

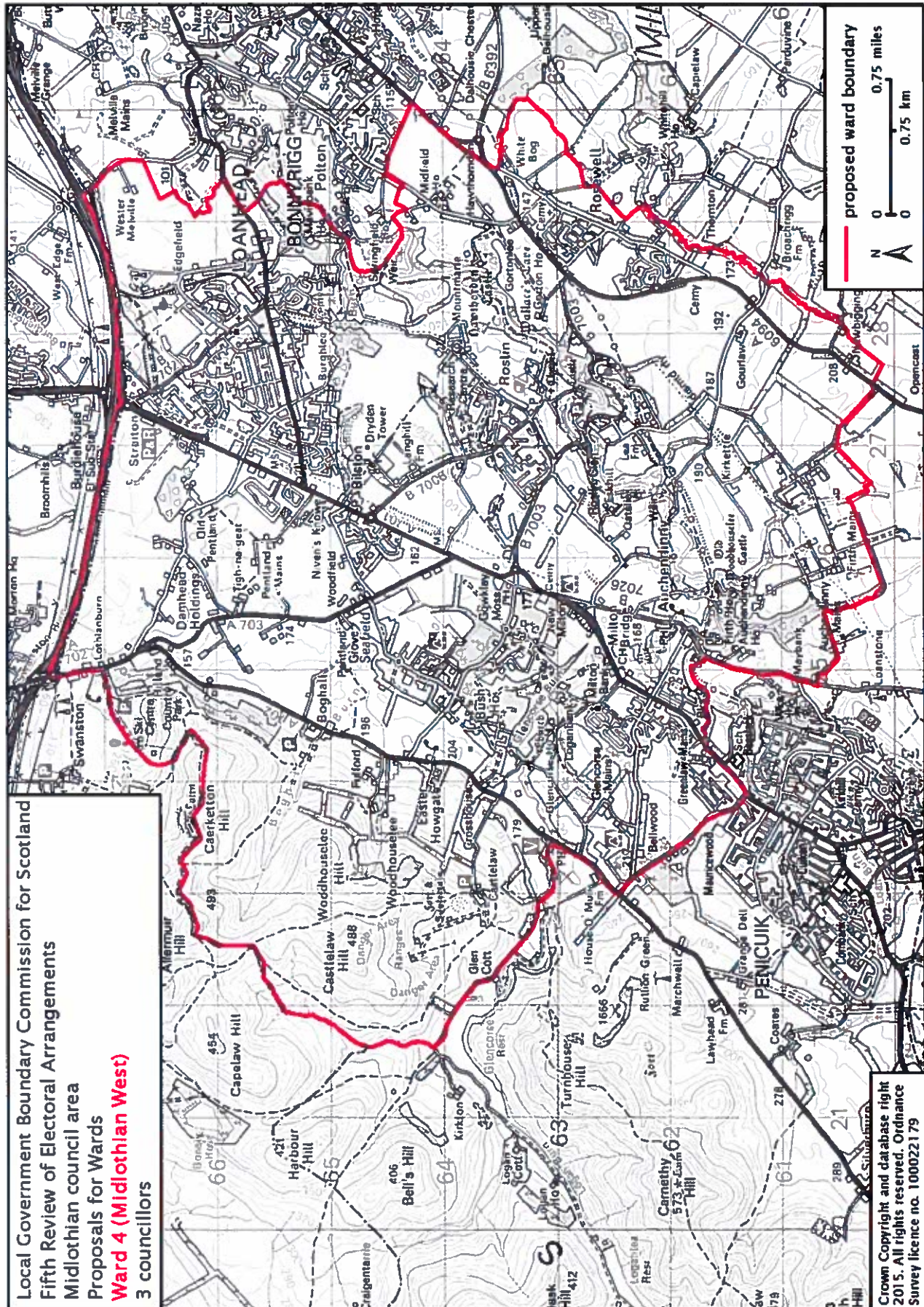
Table 1 - proposed wards' electorate counts.

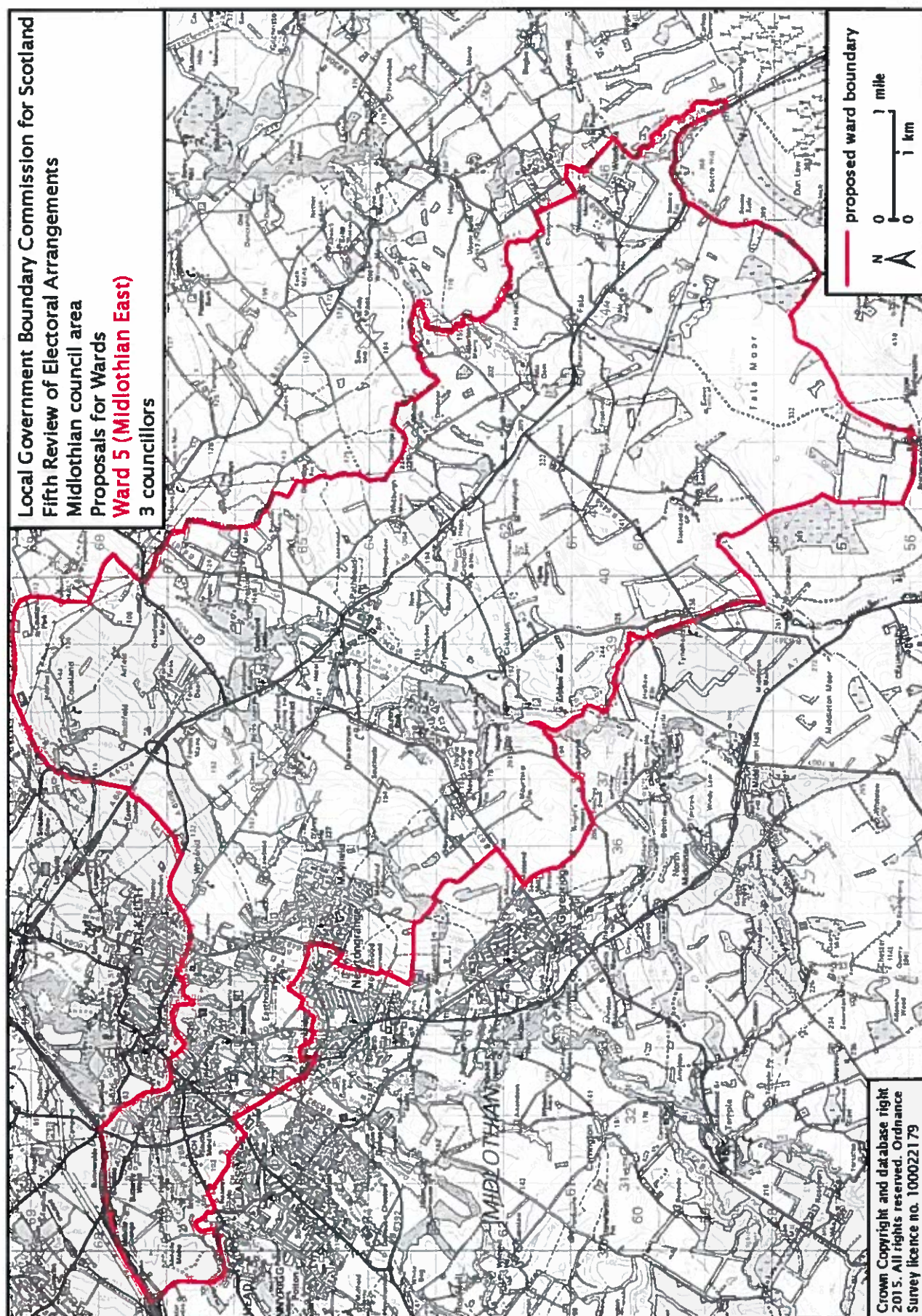












Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
Midlothian council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 6 (Midlothian South)
3 councillors

