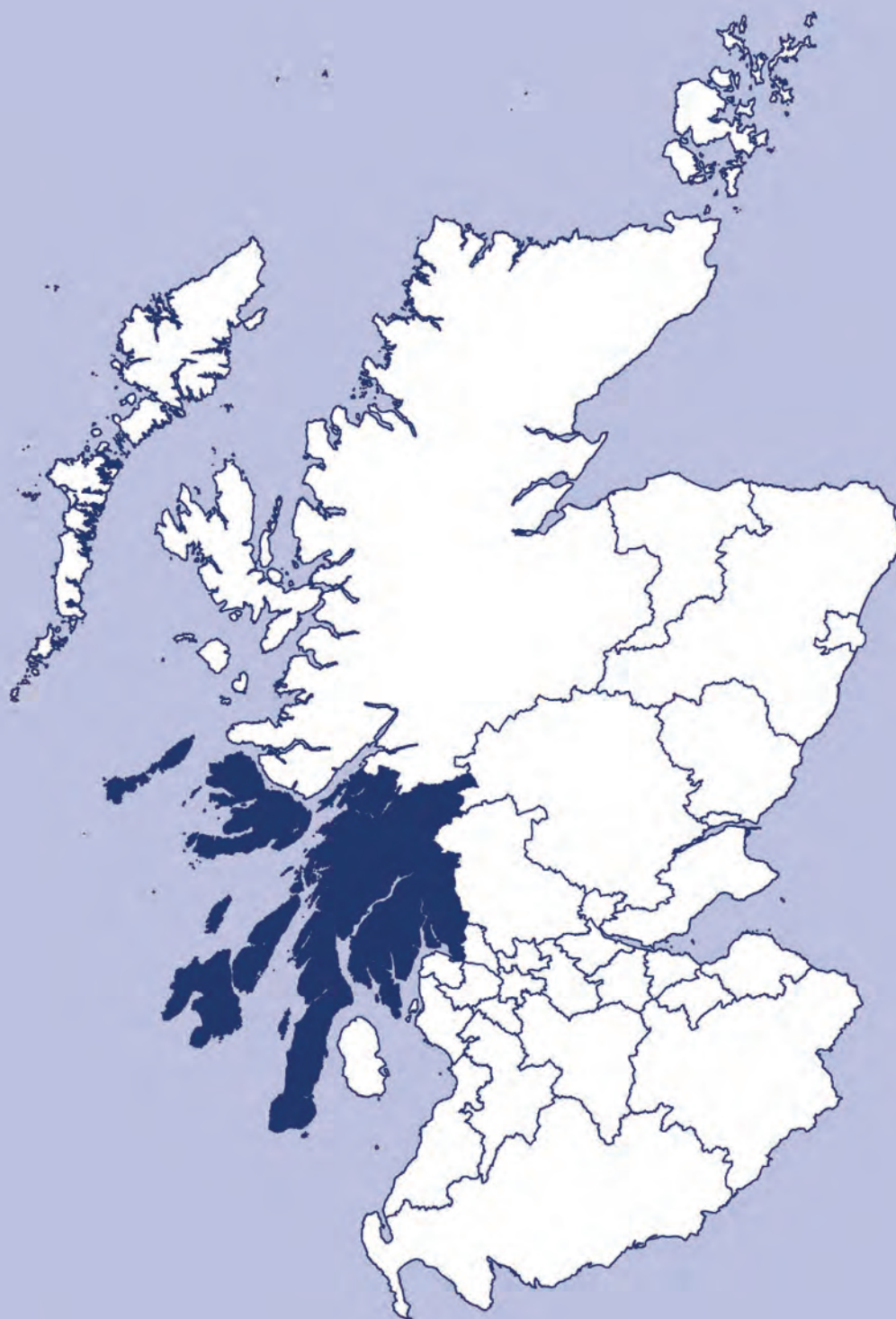


Fifth Statutory Review of Electoral Arrangements Final Recommendations



Argyll and Bute Council Area

Report to Scottish Ministers

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Fifth Statutory Review of Electoral Arrangements Final Recommendations Argyll and Bute Council Area

Membership of the Commission

Chair:	Ronnie Hinds
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Commissioners:	Roland Bean
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Report Number E16004

May 2016


Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Scottish Ministers

We, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, present our recommendations for Argyll and Bute Council area resulting from our Fifth Statutory Review of Electoral Arrangements.

In accordance with the provisions of section 18(3) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, copies of our report, together with illustrative maps, are being sent to Argyll and Bute Council with a request that the report and maps should be made available for public inspection at its offices.

Notice is also being given in newspapers circulating in the council area of the fact that the report has been made so that interested persons may inspect the report and maps at the council's offices. The report is also available on our website and is being publicised on social media.



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Part 1 Background

Argyll and Bute Council area

1. Argyll and Bute Council area is located on the west coast of Scotland encompassing both a large section of the Scottish mainland as well as a number of inhabited islands. It is bordered by Highland, Stirling and West Dunbartonshire Council areas. Argyll and Bute Council area covers 7,164 square kilometres making it the second largest council area by size in Scotland. The council's headquarters are based in Lochgilphead.
2. Just over half of the population (52.3%) of Argyll and Bute Council area live outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people. It is therefore one of Scotland's most rural council areas.
3. Based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2012, the percentage of Argyll and Bute Council area's population in Scotland's 15% most-deprived datazones is 7%. Argyll and Bute Council area contains 10 datazones within the 15% most-deprived datazones in Scotland; these are located in Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Oban and Rothesay. This is a below-average level of deprivation compared to other council areas in Scotland.
4. The National Records of Scotland's (NRS) 2010 population projection (published in 2012) states that Argyll and Bute Council area's population is projected to decrease from 85,947 in 2014 to 83,915 by 2019.
5. At the beginning of the review Argyll and Bute Council area's electorate was 67,846 (at September 2013). The number of dwellings in the area was 47,105 (based on NRS 2012 data).
6. The existing electoral arrangements consist of 36 councillors representing 3 4-member wards and 8 3-member wards (see Appendix A: Existing and Recommended Wards).

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

7. The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland was established under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as an independent body with responsibility for keeping under review local government arrangements in Scotland.
8. We are required to conduct electoral reviews of each council area at intervals of 8 to 12 years, as specified in Section 16 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. We last completed such reviews in 2006. Those reviews introduced multi-member wards but councillor numbers were not amended. Our Third Review, concluded in 1997, was the last time councillor numbers throughout Scotland were amended.

Legislative requirements

9. The legislation which sets out the rules for electoral reviews is Part II of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. When making our recommendations, we must consider the criteria set out in Section 13 and Schedule 6 of that Act.
10. Section 13 sets out that we should conduct our reviews with an overall aim of acting in the interests of effective and convenient local government. Schedule 6 sets out more specific requirements.
11. The full text of Schedule 6 is in Appendix B, and its requirements are:
 - the number of electors per councillor in each ward shall be, as nearly as may be, the same;
 - subject to this, we shall have regard to:
 - local ties that would be broken by fixing a particular boundary; and
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable with the first of these taking precedence over the second;
 - we may depart from the strict application of electoral parity to reflect special geographical considerations.
12. Each ward must elect 3 or 4 councillors.
13. When recommending ward boundaries, we take into account the likely change in the number of electors in a council area within the 5 years immediately following our consideration.
14. There were no Ministerial directions in place when we conducted our reviews, but Scottish Ministers informed us at the start of the reviews that they would find it difficult to justify an increase in councillor numbers at that time. Our recommendations maintain overall councillor numbers in Scotland at a similar level as at present.

Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

15. This review is one of 32 being conducted across Scotland to make recommendations for the number of councillors on each council, the number of councillors in each ward, the boundaries of each ward and the recommended ward name.
16. Overall the recommendations provide for 1,219 councillors in 351 wards: a decrease of 4 councillors and 2 wards relative to existing arrangements.
17. Across Scotland as a whole, 94% of electors will be in wards where variation from parity is within 10% of the average for their council area, compared to less than 84% of electors under existing arrangements.
18. Across Scotland, the variation from parity between councillors will reduce from 6% currently to 5%. This means that representation of the electorate within council areas will be more evenly shared between councillors.

Issues considered

Effective and convenient local government

19. There is no statutory definition of effective and convenient local government. It is, however, the fundamental consideration for recommendations arising from any of our reviews.

20. Our approach recognised that effective and convenient local government has to balance effectiveness and convenience for a council, councillors and residents. For example:

- councils need to manage and deliver diverse services across their council areas;
- councillors need to be able to carry out their functions including representing the residents in their areas; and
- residents seek effectiveness and convenience when they use local services and participate in local democracy.

Determining councillor numbers in council areas

21. Our previous methodology for determining councillor numbers was based on population. Given the diversity found across the council areas in Scotland we categorised each council into one of 7 categories, and applied the same ratio of electors per councillor to all councils in a single category. This means we had different ratios of electors to councillors in, for example, Glasgow City and Na h-Eileanan an Iar.

22. Prior to the formal commencement of the Fifth Reviews of electoral arrangements, we conducted a public consultation in 2011 on how to determine councillor numbers for the Fifth Reviews. We consulted with the public, councils, MSPs, COSLA, political parties and other interested stakeholders. The responses to that consultation suggested that we should continue to take a consistent, objective and transparent approach to setting councillor numbers.

23. The responses generally indicated:

- no widespread support for a significant increase or decrease in councillor numbers;
- support for the continued categorisation of councils so that a common ratio of electors to councillors applies to all councils with broadly similar characteristics;
- support for a reduction in the number of categories from the 7 used previously;
- suggestions of various factors, including deprivation and rurality, to be used in a transparent methodology for categorising councils which share common characteristics; and
- support for minimum and maximum councillor numbers in a council area.

24. The methodology we adopted for the Fifth Reviews:

- used measures of population size as the key determinant of councillor numbers;

- used a categorisation which relied on population distribution and a composite measure capturing the socio-economic conditions in the council area;
- employed measures aligned with common indicators used by the Scottish Government;
- led to the creation of 5 categories of council area;
- introduced a more equal range of elector to councillor ratios from 800 to 3,800. Most councils range between 2,800 to 3,800 electors per councillor;
- maintained the minimum number of 18 councillors per council area and raised the maximum to 85; and
- set a cap on change of councillor numbers in any council area of 10%. This was designed to minimise disruption for a council's governance.

25. Overall, population size remained the key factor in determining councillor numbers. We considered that population dispersal is an important factor in determining councillor numbers but we also considered that socio-economic characteristics, and in particular the composite measure gathered by SIMD data, provide a reasonable indicator for a range of factors that impact on the work of councils and councillors.

26. We used settlements and population data from NRS and SIMD data for Argyll and Bute Council area. SIMD is determined independently by government statisticians in conjunction with the ScotStat Measuring Deprivation Advisory Group. SIMD combines weighted scores based on seven different dimensions of deprivation: employment, income, geographic access, crime, housing, health and education. We have used the 2012 SIMD dataset, the most recent available at the time we commenced work on categorisation. These datasets are calculated and published every 3 years by the Scottish Government.

27. For these reviews we maintained the minimum number of councillors at 18, as we considered this to be the minimum number of councillors to allow a council to operate effectively. However, we have extended the upper limit of councillors from 80 to 85 to increase the flexibility available to us and enable the ratios of electors to councillors to be more equal across Scotland in respect of the Fifth Reviews.

28. We were aware that a large change in councillor numbers in a council area could be disruptive to a council's governance, so we incorporated a 10% limit on change. This means that, as a rule, we have not proposed, as a result of our methodology for determining councillor numbers, to increase or decrease the total number of councillors in a council area by more than 10%.

29. We used cluster analysis to support our development of categories and placed each council area into 1 of 5 categories. We agreed on 5 categories to reflect Scotland's diverse demography, including levels of population dispersal and deprivation within council areas. The ratio of electors to councillors for each category, and the council areas we have placed in each, is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Ratio of electors to councillors

Category	Criteria used to classify councils	Ratio	Council area
1	Less than 30% of the population living outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people AND 30% or more of the population living in the 15% most deprived datazones	2,800	Glasgow City Inverclyde
2	Less than 30% of the population living outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people AND 15% or more and less than 30% of the population living in the 15% most deprived datazones	3,000	Clackmannanshire Dundee City East Ayrshire North Ayrshire North Lanarkshire Renfrewshire West Dunbartonshire
3	Less than 30% of the population living outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people AND less than 15% of the population living in the 15% most deprived datazones	3,800	Aberdeen City Angus City of Edinburgh East Dunbartonshire East Lothian East Renfrewshire Falkirk Fife Midlothian South Ayrshire South Lanarkshire West Lothian
4	Between 30% and 59% of the population living outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people AND less than 15% of the population living in the 15% most deprived datazones	2,800	Aberdeenshire Argyll and Bute Dumfries and Galloway Highland Moray Perth and Kinross Scottish Borders Stirling
5	60% or more of the population living outwith settlements of 3,000 or more people AND less than 15% of the population living in the 15% most deprived datazones	800	Na h-Eileanan an Iar Orkney Islands Shetland Islands

30. The overall effect of our methodology is to retain core existing elements of the previous methodology but also introduce changes that would make the ratios of electors to councillors more equal across Scotland. The methodology also now draws on factors frequently used by the Scottish Government (such as the current measures for population distribution and the use of SIMD data that are used as policy tools) to categorise the council areas. This had the added benefit of not measuring the same factor twice, as was the case when using both population density and population distribution.

31. Our methodology placed Argyll and Bute Council area within category 4 (see Appendix C: Categorising Councils Matrix), as one of the most rural council

areas with below average deprivation, with a ratio of electors per councillor of 2,800.

Electorate data

32. At the start of the review, we obtained the electoral register as at 1 September 2013 from the Electoral Registration Officer for Argyll and Bute Council area. This dataset included postcodes, which allowed us to calculate the electorate for each postcode in the area under consideration, and hence for each proposed ward.
33. We used September 2013 electorate data because that was the most-recent dataset available when we began work on the review. We used the local government electorate, that is those on the electoral register who are aged 18 and over and registered to vote in local government elections. The local government electorate at September 2013 was 67,846 in Argyll and Bute Council area.
34. In line with the rules governing reviews, when considering electoral parity we had regard to the likely change in the number and distribution of the local government electorate over a 5-year period immediately following our consideration of the electoral arrangements.
35. To assist us we asked Argyll and Bute Council to provide us with forecasts of new house building, residential property demolitions and institutional development (such as students' halls of residence) that are likely to be occupied within the next 5 years. Argyll and Bute Council provided us with data based on its 2013 Housing Land Audit, which documented expected new residential and institutional development, as well as demolition within its area, over the 5-year period.
36. From these datasets, combined with data on the average number of electors per dwelling in the area, we calculated a forecast electorate. We also used population projections from NRS. Using these, we scaled the forecast electorate to reflect the projected population change 5 years hence.
37. Fluctuations in population not incorporated into our forecasts will be taken into consideration in subsequent electoral reviews. The next electoral reviews are our interim reviews scheduled for 2021.

Ward design

38. The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 specifies that each ward will return either 3 or 4 councillors. The choice of the number of councillors for each ward has been determined by the overall pattern of wards we considered to be appropriate for the area to deliver effective and convenient local government and to achieve good electoral parity.

Electoral parity

39. One of the principal aims of a review is to make recommendations that provide for a good level of electoral parity. Electoral parity means having the same number of electors per councillor in all wards in a council area.
40. Subject to effective and convenient local government, the legislation gives priority to electoral parity over other factors in ward design, except where special geographical circumstances apply.
41. We worked out the theoretical number of electors each councillor should represent by dividing the total number of electors in the council area in September 2013 by the proposed number of councillors. This produced a ratio of electors per councillor for each council area. The ratio allowed us to apply the requirement in the legislation that the number of electors per councillor is 'as nearly as may be' the same. A 3-member ward and 4-member ward would have 3 and 4 times this number of electors respectively.
42. Once we had calculated the number of electors per councillor, we measured how far the electorate in each ward deviated from that number. When formulating our recommendations, we sought to achieve ratios that were acceptable in every ward. We aimed to recommend wards that had a forecast electorate within a maximum 10% variation from parity, as suggested by the Venice Commission's 'Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters'. We did not apply this measure as a strict numerical limit but instead this appeared to us to provide a reasonable degree of flexibility in most circumstances. In designing wards, we considered local circumstances as permitted by the legislation.

Local ties

43. When designing wards, we aimed to avoid breaking local ties, as far as permitted by the legislation.
44. Local ties can be defined by the location of public facilities such as doctors' surgeries, hospitals, libraries or schools. An area's history and tradition may be the basis of local ties. However, communities are constantly evolving and historical considerations may not have such importance in areas which have been subject to recent development or population dispersal. Major roads could be seen to be the focus of an area if they are the location of shops or community facilities which people visit regularly. Alternatively, major roads, rivers or railway lines could be seen as physical barriers between different communities.
45. In some areas, we have combined two or more distinct and separate communities within a single ward.
46. We also had regard to other recognised boundaries which may reflect local communities or local ties in designing ward boundaries. These boundaries could include those of community council areas, polling districts and primary school catchment areas.

Easily-identifiable boundaries

47. The legislation requires us to take into account the desirability of fixing boundaries that are and will remain easily-identifiable, but electoral parity and local ties take precedence.
48. In some areas, a case can be made to define ward boundaries along roads since they are likely to remain clearly identifiable, and are unlikely to be straddled by new dwellings. As an alternative, drawing a boundary along the rear fences between houses will result in neighbours across a street being in the same ward which may appropriately reflect local ties.
49. In some areas, natural features such as watercourses and edges of woodland may be appropriate. In upland areas, a watershed may be an appropriate ward boundary feature, particularly along narrow, well-defined ridges.
50. Ward boundaries have also been standardised where appropriate to follow road centrelines and river/waterway centrelines in order to create more easily-identifiable ward boundaries.

Special geographical considerations

51. We can depart from strict adherence to electoral parity for a ward where there are special geographical considerations that make it desirable to do so. These considerations can apply to socio-economic factors as well as to physical geography. Such considerations could include any areas where transport and communication links are slow, infrequent or subject to interference by the weather and seasons. Examples would be islands, sparsely populated areas and remote areas.

Other factors

52. It is important to note that our reviews are concerned only with electoral matters. Issues such as addresses, postcodes, community council boundaries and school catchment areas are all decided by other bodies and do not change as a direct consequence of ward boundary changes.

Consultation

53. Our approach to conducting the Fifth Reviews was one of engagement and openness. We publicised the reviews widely, and asked that councils do the same. Legislation governing the conduct of reviews is at Appendix D. At the start of the reviews we met all 32 councils individually to discuss our proposals for councillor numbers.
54. The legislation requires us to consult with councils for a 2-month period and to take into consideration their views prior to consulting publicly on proposals. We conducted a two-stage consultation, firstly for councillor numbers, and secondly for our ward proposals.

55. When publicising the consultations we issued news releases, placed public notices in the local press and supplied materials for councils to make available at council-nominated display points. We also used Facebook, Twitter and our website for publicity and asked councils to publicise the reviews on their websites.
56. The local press used in Argyll and Bute Council area were the 'Oban Times', the 'Campbeltown Courier', the 'Argyllshire Advertiser', the 'Dunoon Observer', 'The Buteman' and the 'Helensburgh Advertiser'.
57. The display points agreed with Argyll and Bute Council were located in: Argyll and Bute Council headquarters, Kilmory Castle, Lochgilphead; Rothesay Service Point, Eaglesham House, Rothesay; Lochgilphead Service Point, Dalriada House, Lochgilphead; Campbeltown Servicepoint, Burnet Building, Campbeltown; Oban Service Point, Municipal Building, Oban; Dunoon Service Point, 22 Hill Street, Dunoon; Islay Service Point, Jamieson Street, Bowmore; Mull Service Point, Breadalbane Street, Tobermory; Tiree Service Point, the Business Centre, Crossapol; and Helensburgh Service Point, Scotcourt House, Helensburgh.
58. We also wrote to a wide range of interested parties including MSPs, MPs, political parties, community councils, COSLA and other representative bodies to inform them of the consultations.
59. Our public consultation portal allowed users to view maps and background information and to submit responses, including alternative suggestions during the public consultation phases of the reviews.
60. All responses to the consultations were fully considered by us and the papers and minutes recording our deliberations and decisions are published on our website: www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk.

Part 2 Conducting the Review

Councillor numbers

61. Our methodology placed Argyll and Bute Council area within category 4, as one of the most rural council areas with below-average deprivation, with a ratio of electors per councillor of 2,800. Using the ratio of 2,800 resulted in councillor numbers of 24 for Argyll and Bute Council area. As there were 36 councillors in Argyll and Bute Council area under existing arrangements we applied a 10% cap on change, as set out in our methodology, and so initially proposed 33 councillors for Argyll and Bute Council area, 3 fewer than at present.

Consultation with Argyll and Bute Council

62. We wrote to Argyll and Bute Council on 21 February 2014 announcing the start of the Fifth Reviews, providing background information and setting out our proposals for councillor numbers. The letter set out that we were consulting with the council on these proposals for a period of 2 months ending on 23 April 2014.

63. On 18 March 2014, we met the council to explain the review process, the methodology for the determination of councillor numbers and the proposed number of councillors for Argyll and Bute Council area.

64. In its response to the consultation on councillor numbers, Argyll and Bute Council stressed the special geographical considerations that should apply and the difficulty in servicing island communities and dispersed or remote communities. The council highlighted the travel required by councillors in fulfilling their duties and the public expectations of local representation. It pointed out the deprivation in the council area, and noted the number of community councils in the council area and the number of community councils in each ward. The council considered that island communities are not treated equally or consistently across Scotland.

65. We considered the council's response at our meeting of 1 May 2014 (see LGBCS Paper 2217/14 and minute of meeting M355). We decided to consult with the public on the same proposals for councillor numbers.

Consultation with the public

66. We consulted with the public on our proposals for councillor numbers between 29 May and 21 August 2014.

67. There were 3 responses to the public consultation for Argyll and Bute Council area, 1 of which supported a reduction in councillor numbers, while 2 opposed a reduction in councillor numbers.

68. We received 2 responses for all council areas in Scotland and these are available on our website.

69. We considered the views expressed by respondents to the public consultation in Argyll and Bute Council area. We also considered the views expressed by other councils, COSLA and other interested parties across Scotland concerning our proposed methodology. Argyll and Bute Council did not give us a further response.

70. Our response to the consultation on councillor numbers is summarised in our statement on councillor numbers published in October 2014 (available on our website), which:

- explained our methodology;
- set out our view that the previously-used categorisation based on population distribution and population density was an incomplete model of the demands on councillors;
- noted a lack of evidence supporting the sole use of population distribution and population density to determine the ratio of councillors to electors; and
- stated our case that using deprivation and population distribution appears to remain a reasonable model for us to adopt in discharging our statutory responsibility to make recommendations in the interests of effective and convenient local government.

71. For these reasons we were content to confirm our use of the methodology at our meeting of 10 September 2014 (see LGBCS Paper 2228/14 and minute of meeting M358).

Ward design

72. We discussed our ward proposals for Argyll and Bute Council area at our meetings of 25 November 2014 and 18 December 2014 (see LGBCS Paper 2262/14 and minutes of meetings M361 and M362) and decided on our proposals at our meetings of 3 February 2015 and 3 March 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2276/15 and minutes of meetings M364 and M365).

73. Our proposals for Argyll and Bute Council area presented an electoral arrangement for 33 councillors representing 7 3-member wards and 3 4-member wards, reducing the number of wards in the area by 1 and councillor numbers by 3. Our proposals:

- improved overall forecast parity;
- addressed forecast disparities in ward 8 (Isle of Bute);
- decreased councillor numbers by one in Lorn, Cowal and Lomond;
- made changes to ward boundaries in Kintyre, Argyll, Cowal and Lomond;
- made no changes to ward 4 (Oban South and the Isles);
- renamed Isle of Bute ward to Bute but made no changes to other ward names; and
- placed the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area that overlies the council area within a single ward.

Consultation with Argyll and Bute Council

74. We consulted Argyll and Bute Council on our ward proposals between 19 March and 19 May 2015.

75. The council responded to the consultation on 27 May 2015 setting out that it considered that the proposals did not adequately address representation in the islands, or the rurality and sparsity issues faced by Argyll and Bute. The reasons for its opposition to the proposed ward boundaries were given as: its concern at the impact on existing communities of the proposals; its concern that it would be more difficult for communities to be represented due to the problems of travel on and off the islands, lack of public transport access and difficulty in attending community council meetings; the substantial distances to be travelled within a number of wards; and that the proposals would increase the challenge of representing communities and making sure that each has a parity of access to councillors.

76. We reviewed our ward proposals for Argyll and Bute Council area at our meeting of 7 July 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2321/15 and minute of meeting M368). We noted that Argyll and Bute Council remained opposed in principle to our proposed ward structure, and that the council had made a technical submission, which reflected the proposed number of councillors, 33, with some changes to proposed boundaries. We accepted the council's view that these would be more administratively convenient, and noted that the council's submission would have been informed by local knowledge, and would be unlikely to be detrimental to community ties, and that the changes were acceptable in terms of electoral parity.

77. We agreed to accept the council's suggestions, with the exception of part of the council's suggested boundary between the proposed ward 3 (mid-Argyll) and the proposed ward 8 (Lomond North). We agreed that this boundary should follow our proposed boundary north of the point where it meets Cairndow community council area boundary, at the Allt Beinn an Lochain watercourse, to the west of the Rest and Be Thankful. This amendment to the council's suggestion allowed all of Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park to lie within a single ward.

Consultation with the public

78. We wrote to Argyll and Bute Council to inform it that the consultation with the public on proposals for wards would begin on 30 July and run until 22 October 2015. The council was invited to submit a further response during the public consultation.

79. On 30 July 2015 we announced a 12-week period of consultation with the public on our ward proposals for Argyll and Bute Council area which:

- adopted suggestions from Argyll and Bute Council to improve polling district boundary alignment and provide a more administratively convenient set of arrangements;
- improved overall forecast parity;
- addressed forecast disparities in ward 8 (Isle of Bute);
- decreased councillor numbers in Lorn, Cowal and Lomond;
- made changes to ward boundaries in Kintyre, Argyll, Cowal and Lomond;

- made no changes to ward 4 (Oban South and the Isles);
- renamed Isle of Bute ward to Bute but made no changes to other ward names; and
- placed the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area that overlies the council area within a single ward.

80. On 22 October 2015 the consultation period with the public ended. In total, 292 responses, including 4 petitions containing over 500 signatures, relating to Argyll and Bute Council area were received during the public consultation, which can be found on our website. The main themes to emerge were:

- the existing electoral arrangements should be preserved;
- the existing ward boundary between Cowal and Lomond North should be preserved;
- the division of Cowal between wards largely containing areas outwith the peninsula should be avoided;
- Bute should remain a ward in its own right;
- communities north of Loch Melfort and those along the A85 corridor have links with Oban, not Lochgilphead; and
- 'Cowal' should be kept in a ward name.

81. During the public consultation, Argyll and Bute Council informed us that it remained opposed to the proposals for the council area. It considered that they did not adequately address natural community links, representation on the islands or the rurality or sparsity issues faced by the council, but maintained that our earlier proposals were worse. The council considered that special geographical considerations warranted greater flexibility in terms of numbers of electors per councillor. It pointed out the problems of travel on and off the islands, the lack of regular transport links across many wards and the difficulty of attending evening meetings. The council considered it important that parity of access to councillors is achieved but that the proposals did not provide that. It suggested that existing arrangements be preserved.

82. We received 3 responses for all council areas in Scotland.

Development of our final recommendations

83. On 8 December 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2360/15 and minute of meeting M372) we considered all responses received during the public consultation, including from Argyll and Bute Council.

84. We discussed further options for Argyll and Bute Council area at our meetings of 8 December 2015 and 12 January 2016 (see LGBCS Papers 2360/15 and 2383/16 and minutes of meetings M372 and M373).

85. We considered 6 suggestions for wards and 3 options for electoral arrangements in Argyll and Bute Council area. We noted the level of opposition to the proposals within the council area, in particular the opposition to the division of Cowal and the proposed changes to the boundary between ward 3 (Mid-Argyll)

and ward 5 (Oban North and Lorn). We noted that many respondents considered that these changes would break local ties and have an adverse impact on local service delivery and access to local councillors due to transport difficulties. We noted that many respondents considered the Rest and Be Thankful to be an important barrier between parts of the council area.

86. We considered suggestion 2, by the Scottish National Party's Lomond North branch, which largely retained the existing Lomond North ward and created a Bute and Cowal ward. We noted that this suggestion may have addressed many of the concerns raised by the respondents to the consultation regarding transportation and local ties, whilst retaining the number of councillors suggested by our methodology for determining councillor numbers and ensuring an acceptable level of electoral parity. We noted that this suggestion would retain the name 'Cowal' in a ward. We noted, however, that this suggestion did not address the concerns expressed by respondents in areas which would be affected by the proposed change in the boundary of ward 3 (Mid-Argyll) and ward 5 (Oban North and Lorn). We asked our Secretariat to prepare an option which would incorporate the changes in suggestion 2 and address the concerns of respondents to the consultation in regard to the area affected by the proposed changes between ward 3 and ward 5.
87. We considered that suggestion 5, which placed the uninhabited islands of Scarba, Lunga and the Garvellachs in the same ward as nearby residents on the mainland, would assist effective and convenient local government without adversely affecting electoral parity or breaking local ties.
88. We considered Option 3, which placed Cowal and Bute together in a 4-member ward, and made changes to proposed wards 2 (Kintyre and the Islands), 3 (Mid-Argyll) and 5 (Oban North and Lorn), to have the advantages that it avoided combining part of Cowal with Lomond in a ward, avoided the division of Cowal between wards, and Cowal appeared in a ward name. We noted that while the option contained a ward that included both Bute and Cowal, the proportion of electors for each area was more evenly matched than in our earlier proposals. Option 3 offered an electoral arrangement for 33 councillors as proposed by our methodology, and enabled Dalmally, Orchy and the A85 corridor to remain in a ward with Oban. We also noted that all wards remained within 10% of electoral parity.
89. We decided to make changes to our proposed boundaries:
- between ward 2 (Kintyre and the Islands) and ward 3 (Mid-Argyll) to keep the Crinan Canal within a single ward and to place Scarba, Lunga and the Garvellachs in ward 3;
 - between ward 3 (Mid-Argyll) and ward 5 (Oban North and Lorn) to reinstate Dalmally and Orchy in a ward with Oban;
 - between ward 3 (Mid-Argyll) and ward 8 (Lomond North) to reinstate the existing boundary between ward 3 (Mid-Argyll) and ward 6 (Cowal) to reflect local ties near the head of Loch Fyne;

- between ward 7 (Bute) and ward 8 (Lomond North) to acknowledge the physical barrier presented by the Rest and Be Thankful (A83) and to avoid the division of local ties in Cowal; and
- between ward 8 (Lomond North) and ward 9 (Helensburgh Central) and between ward 9 (Helensburgh Central) and ward 10 (Helensburgh and Lomond South), to avoid Cowal and Lomond being in the same ward.

90. We also decided to name ward 7 'Bute and Cowal'.

91. We considered that the information we had available was sufficient to reach a decision for Argyll and Bute Council area that would provide for effective and convenient local government and that there was not a need for further consultation or a local inquiry.

92. On 19 April 2016 (see LGBCS Paper 2395/16 and minute of meeting M377) we confirmed our Final Recommendations for Argyll and Bute Council area as set out in Part 3.

93. All papers and minutes of meetings relating to our consideration of Argyll and Bute Council area are available on our website: www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk.

94. The timetable for the Fifth Reviews of electoral arrangements is set out at Appendix E. An index of our meetings, papers and minutes concerning Argyll and Bute Council area is at Appendix F.

Part 3 Final Recommendation for Argyll and Bute Council area

95. We recommend that in the interests of effective and convenient local government the future electoral arrangements for Argyll and Bute Council area should provide for a council of 33 councillors in 10 wards, comprising 3 wards each returning 4 members and 7 wards each returning 3 members as follows:

Ward no.	Ward name	Councillors	Electorate Sept 13	Actual variation from parity	Forecast electorate	Forecast variation from parity
1	South Kintyre	3	6,075	-2%	5,914	-2%
2	Kintyre and the Islands	3	6,207	1%	6,129	1%
3	Mid-Argyll	3	5,549	-10%	5,544	-8%
4	Oban South and the Isles	4	7,923	-4%	7,737	-4%
5	Oban North and Lorn	3	6,310	2%	6,363	5%
6	Dunoon	4	8,560	4%	8,215	2%
7	Bute and Cowal	4	8,195	0%	7,845	-3%
8	Lomond North	3	6,209	1%	6,000	-1%
9	Helensburgh Central	3	6,573	7%	6,300	4%
10	Helensburgh and Lomond South	3	6,245	1%	6,539	8%
	Totals	33	67,846	3%	66,586	4%

96. A digitised description of the ward boundaries in the form of GIS shapefiles has been securely stored on magnetic media at the date of publication of our report.

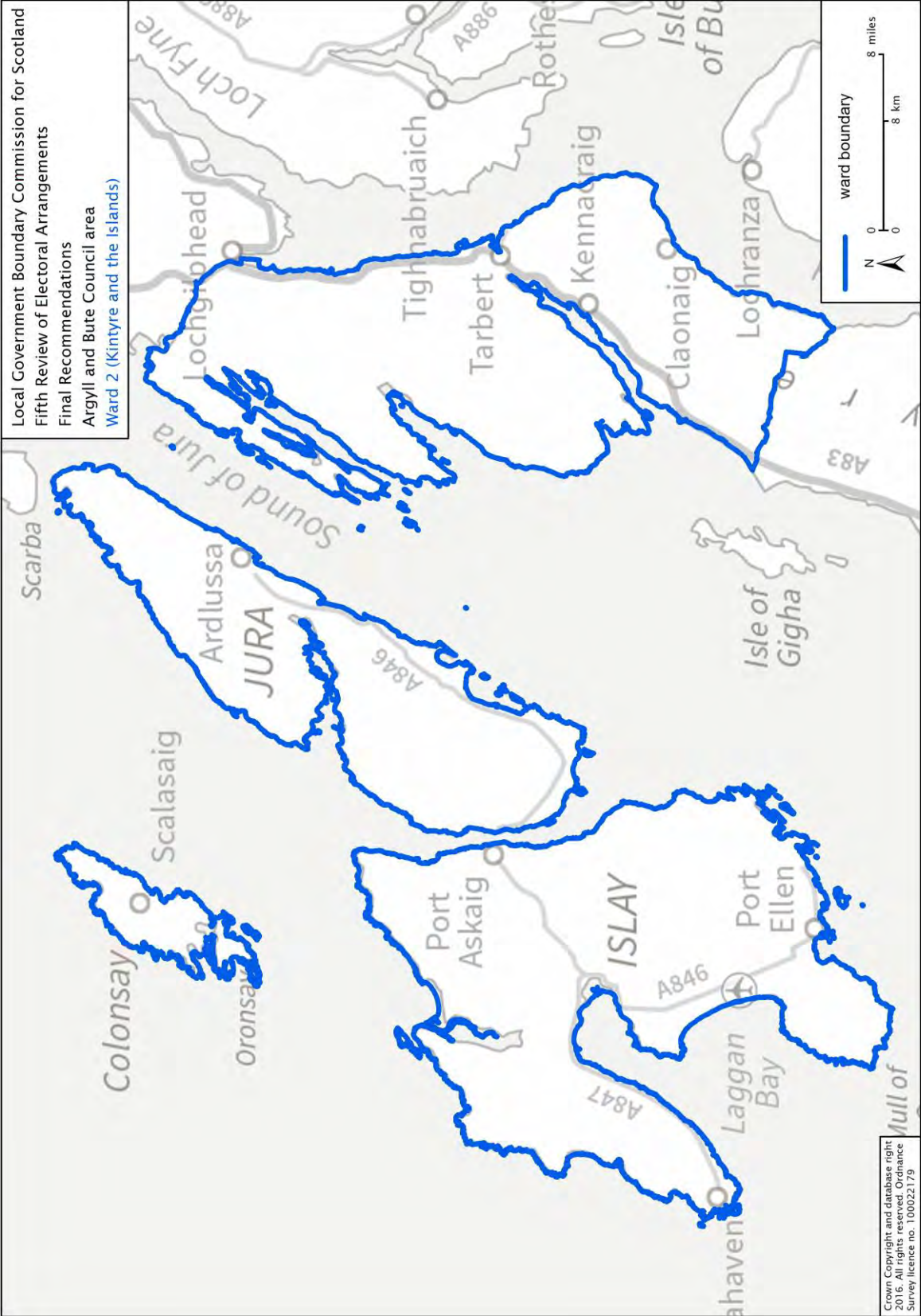
97. Our report has also been deposited for public inspection at offices designated by the council and a news release announcing the publication of our report has also been issued.

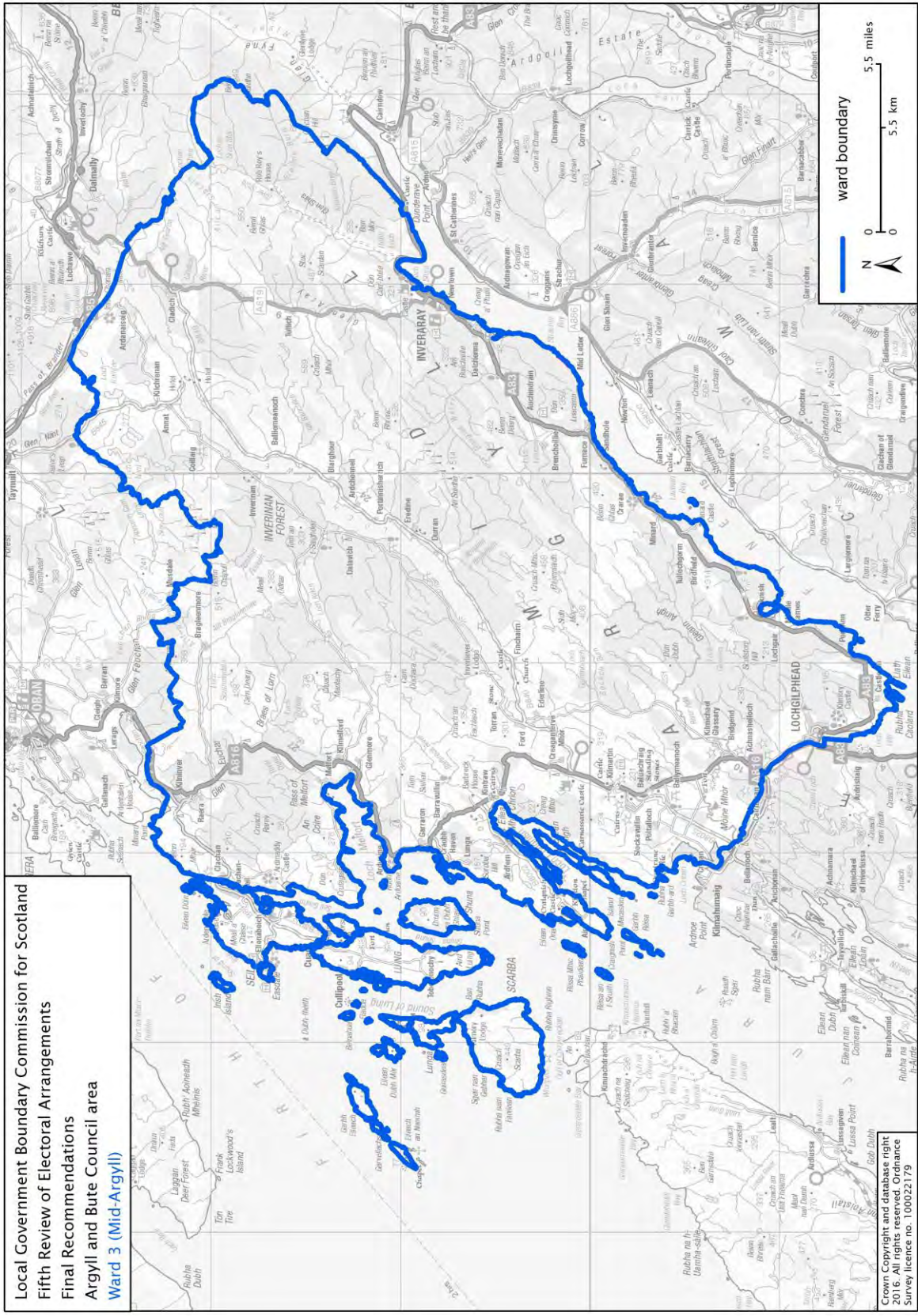
98. Our report is available on our website at www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk.

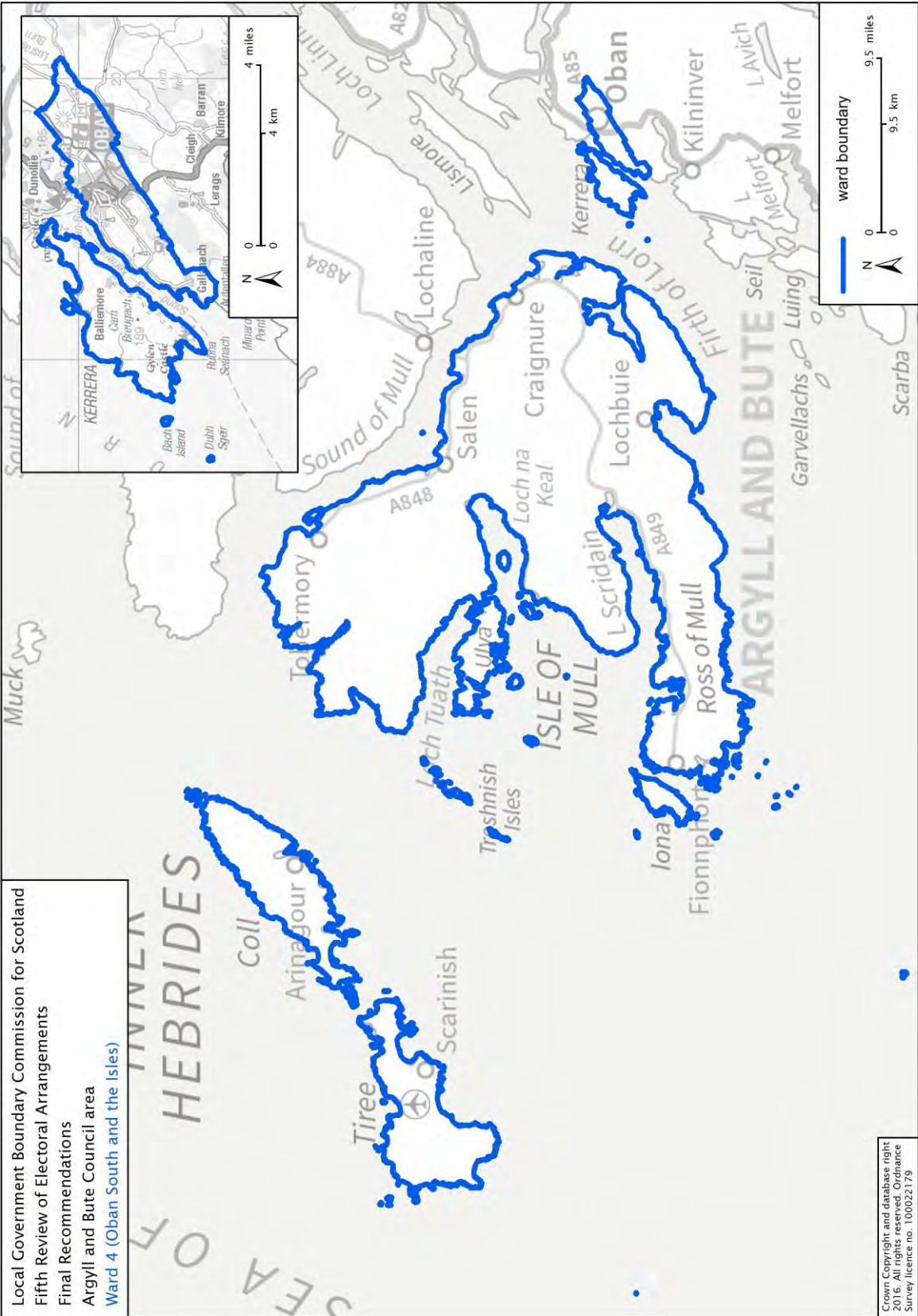
Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 1 (South Kintyre)



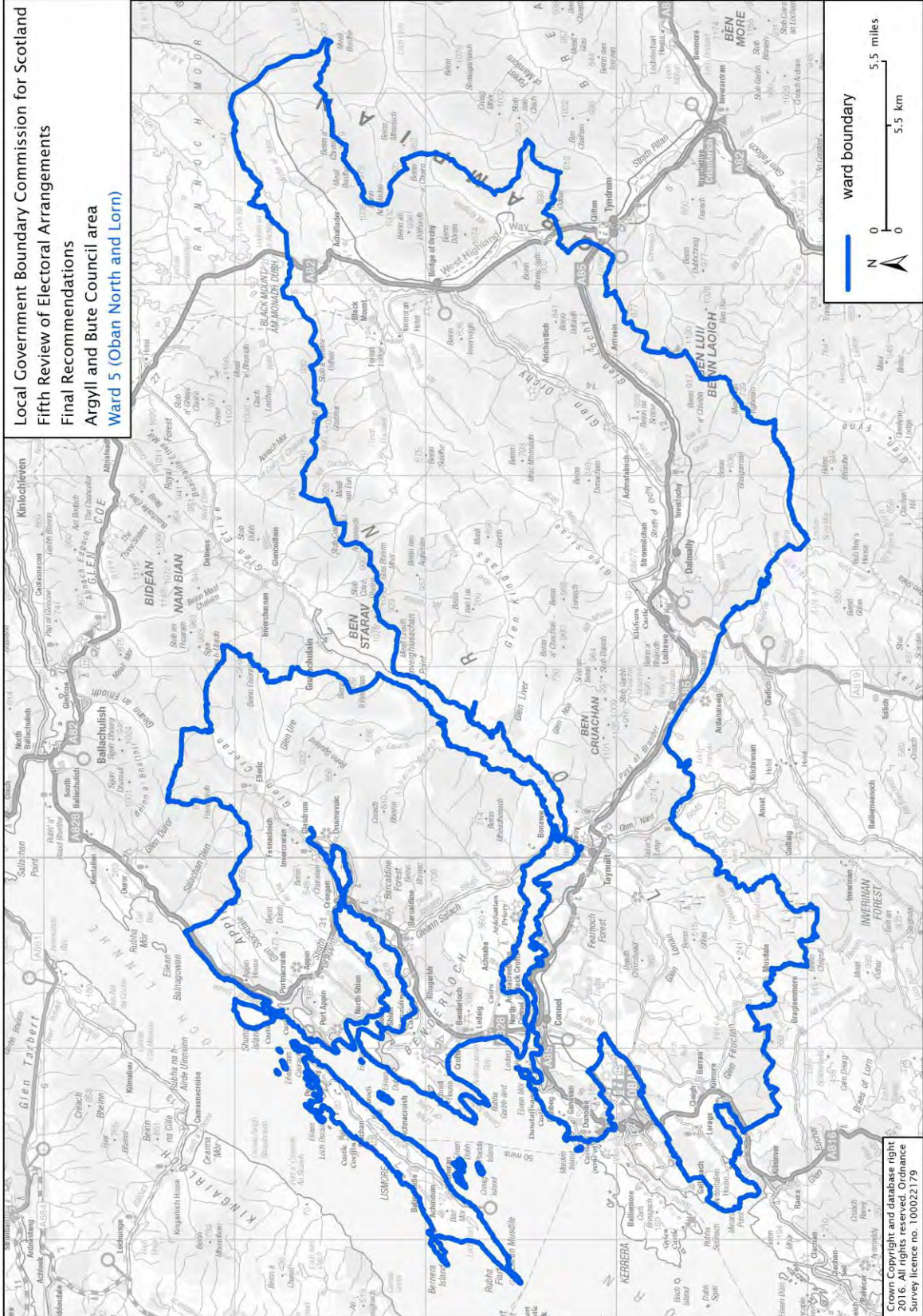
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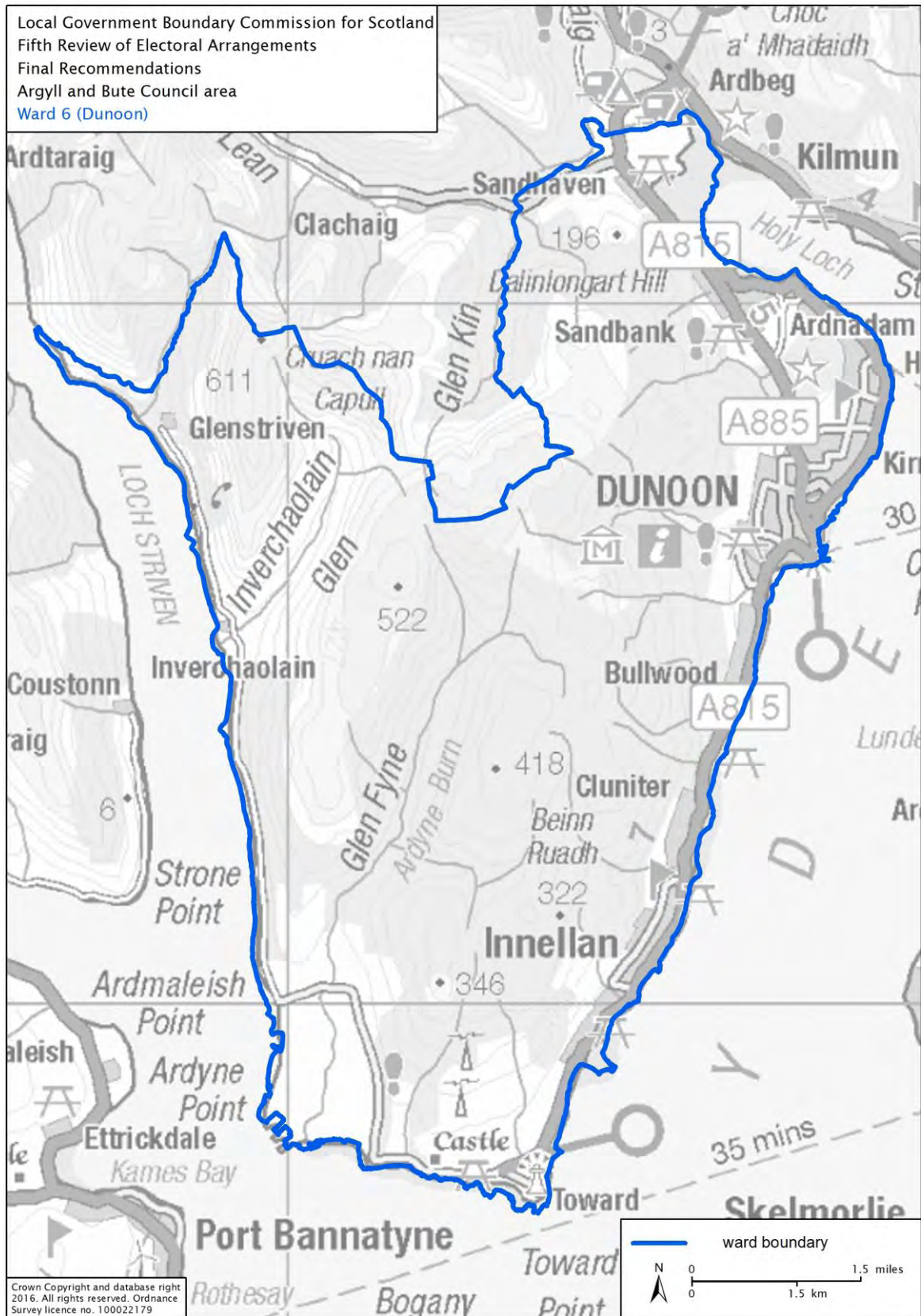


Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 5 (Oban North and Lorn)

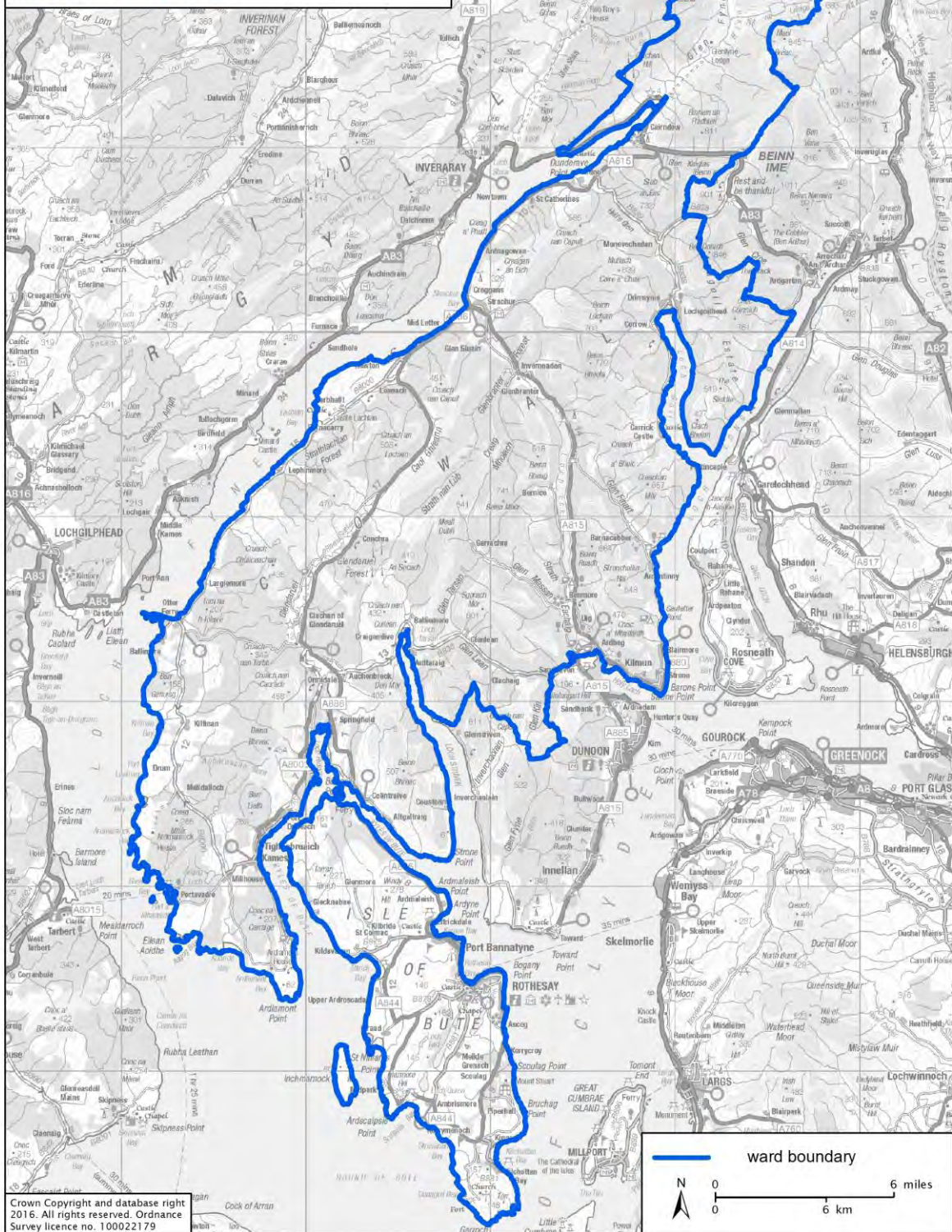


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 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 6 (Dunoon)

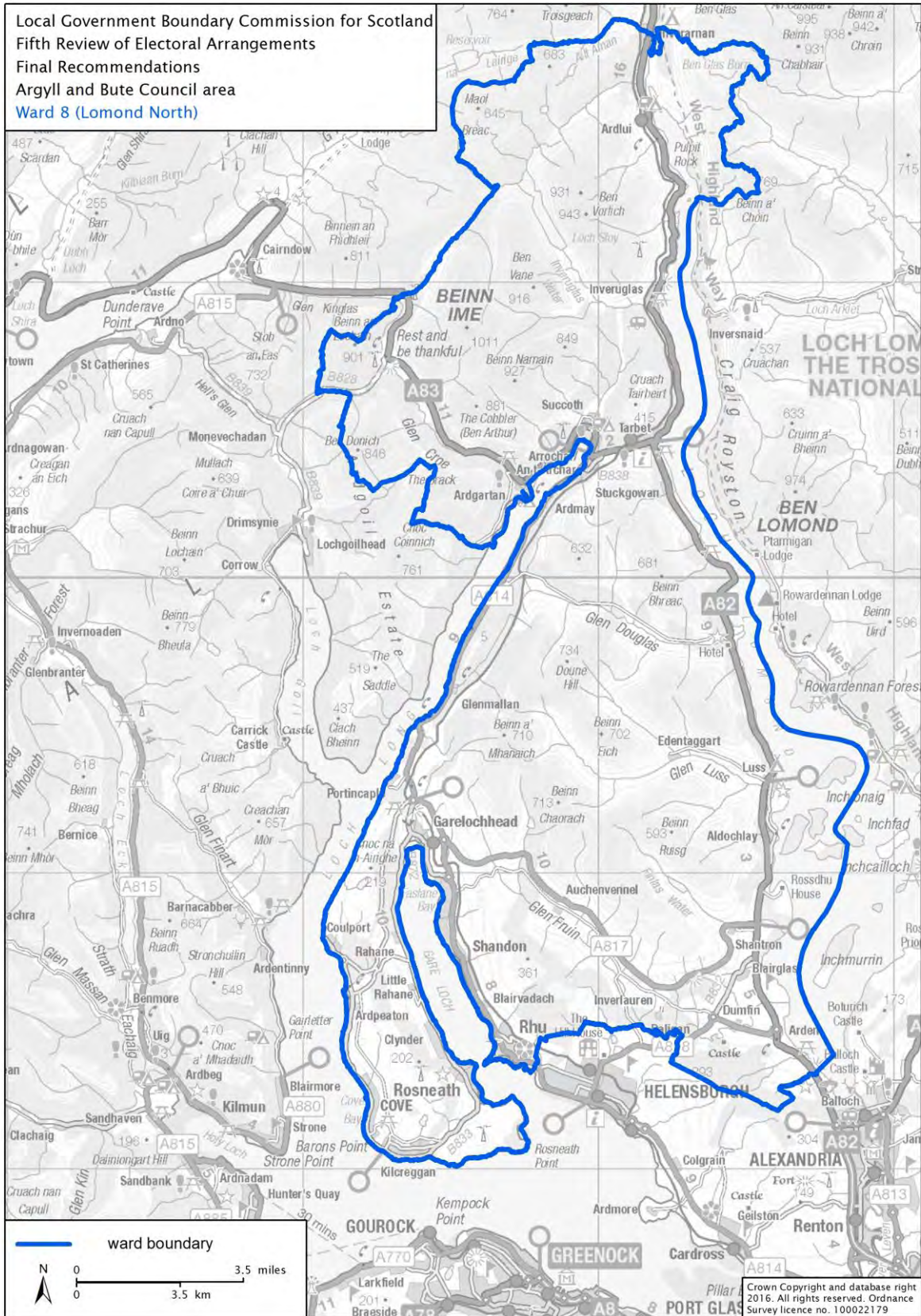


Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 7 (Bute and Cowal)

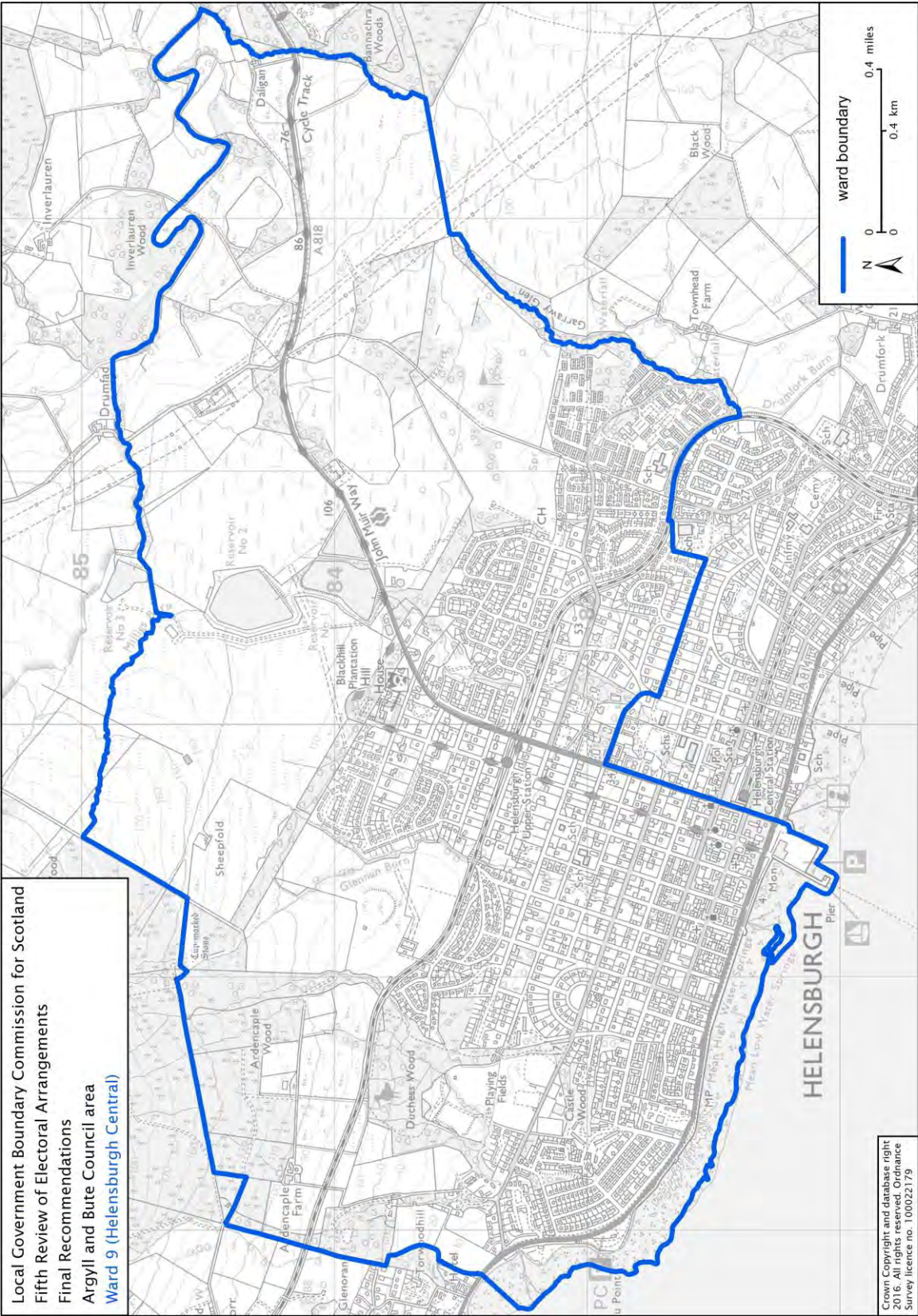


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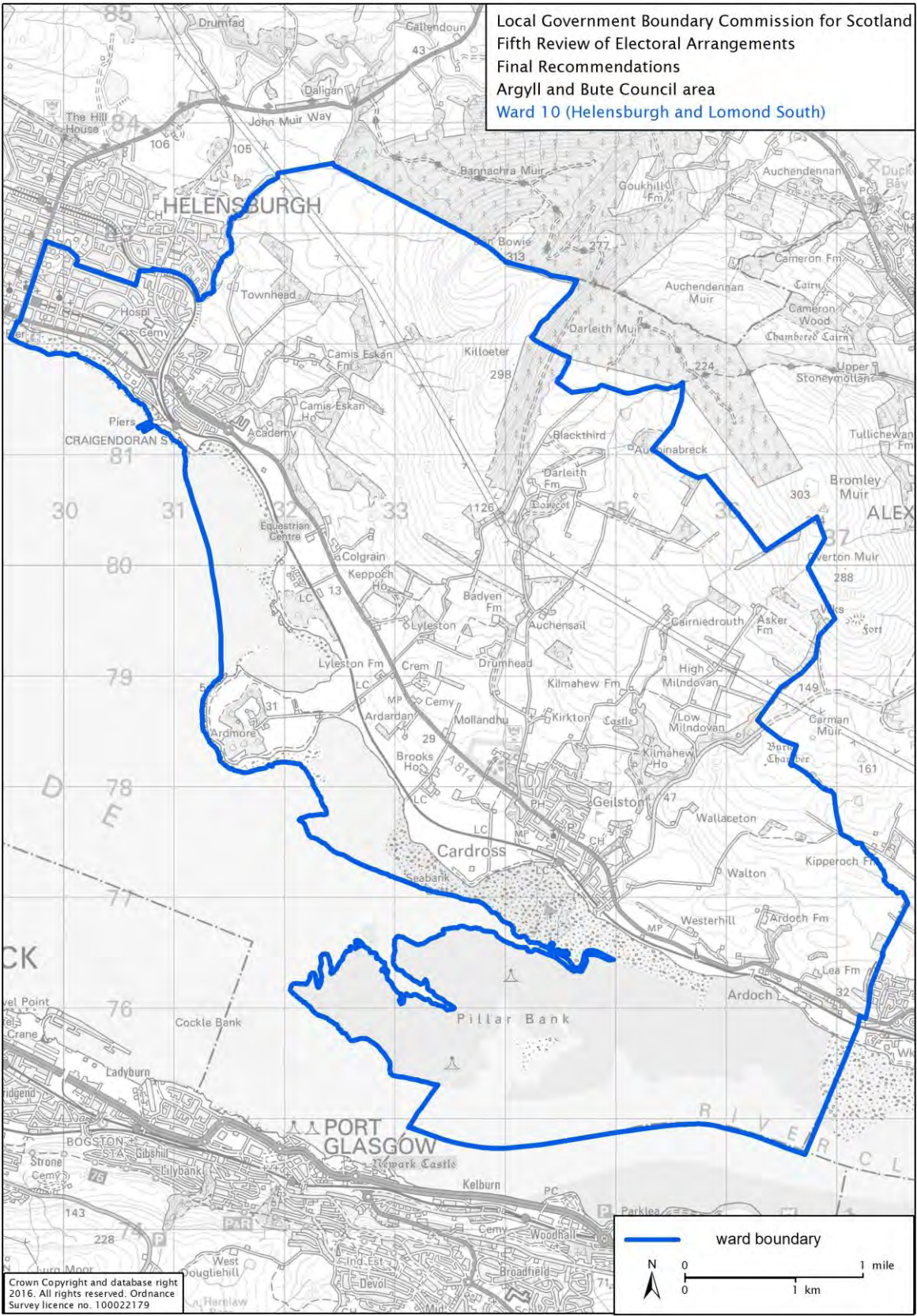
Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 8 (Lomond North)



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Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
 Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
 Final Recommendations
 Argyll and Bute Council area
 Ward 10 (Helensburgh and Lomond South)



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Appendices

Appendix A Existing and Recommended Wards for Argyll and Bute Council area

Appendix B Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended:
Schedule 6 – Rules to be observed in considering electoral arrangements

Appendix C Categorising Councils Matrix

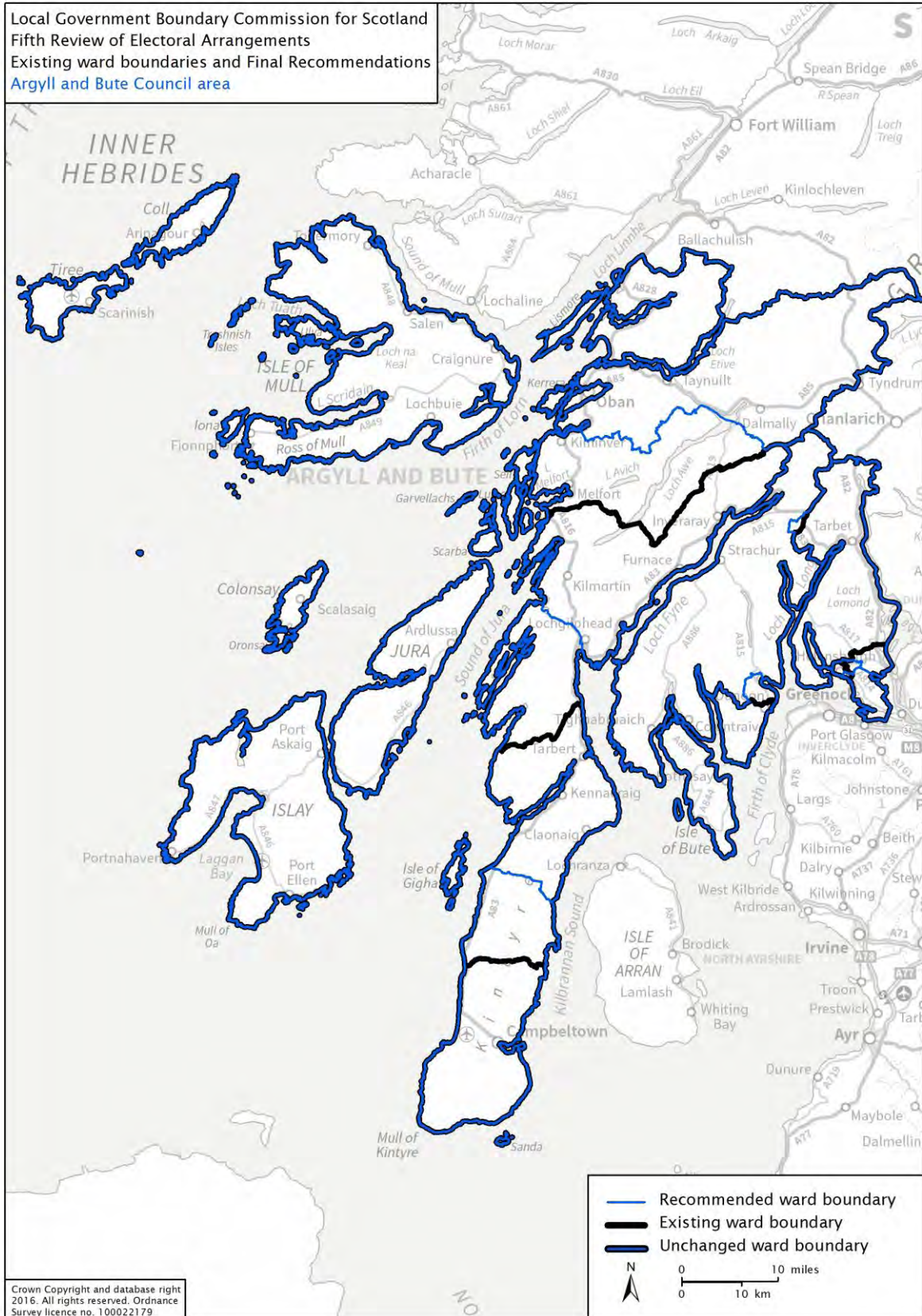
Appendix D Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973: Conduct of Reviews

Appendix E Timetable for the Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

Appendix F Index of Commission Meetings, Papers and Minutes of Meetings –
Argyll and Bute Council area

Appendix A

Existing and Recommended Wards for Argyll and Bute Council area



Appendix B

Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended:

Schedule 6 – Rules to be observed in considering electoral arrangements

1 (1) This schedule applies to the consideration by Scottish Ministers or the Boundary Commission of electoral arrangements for election of councillors of local government areas.

(2) Having regard to any change in the number or distribution of electors of a local government area likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration, the number calculated by dividing the number of local government electors in each electoral ward of that local government area by the number of councillors to be returned in that ward shall be, as nearly as may be, the same.

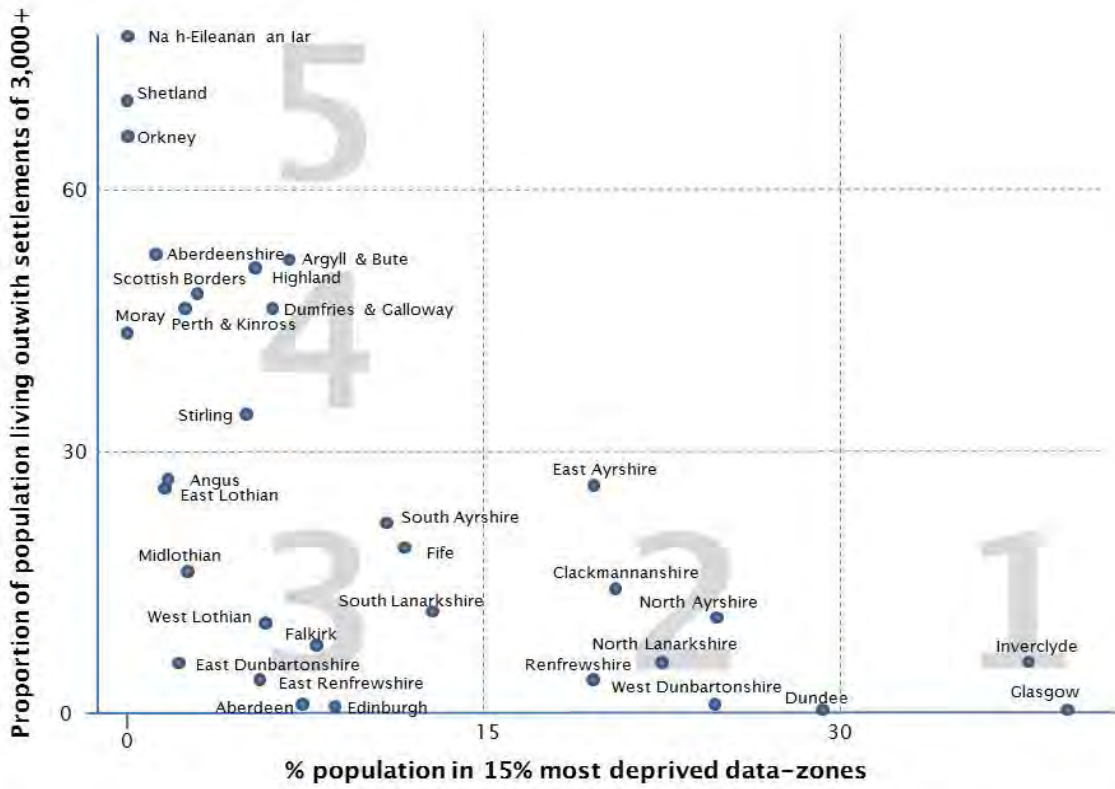
(3) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) above, in considering the electoral arrangements referred to in sub-paragraph (1) above regard shall be had to–

- (a) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable;
- (b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary

but if, in any case, there is a conflict between those criteria, greater weight shall be given to the latter.

2. The strict application of the rule stated in paragraph 1(2) above may be departed from in any area where special geographical conditions appear to render a departure desirable.

Appendix C Categorising Councils Matrix



Appendix D

Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973: Conduct of Reviews

Extract from Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (as amended)

Conduct of Reviews

18 *Procedure for reviews*

(1) Where the Boundary Commission propose to conduct a review under the foregoing provisions of this Part of this Act, they shall take such steps as they think fit to secure that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of the proposal to conduct it and of any directions of the Secretary of State which are relevant to it.

(2) In conducting any such review, the Boundary Commission shall —

(a) consult —

(i) the council of any local government area affected by the review, and such other local authorities, community councils and public bodies as appear to them to be concerned;

(ii) any bodies representative of staff employed by local authorities who have asked the Boundary Commission to consult them; and

(iii) such other persons as they think fit;

(aa) at least two months before taking any steps under paragraph (b) below to inform other persons of any draft proposals or any interim decision not to make proposals, inform the council of any local government area affected by the review of those proposals or that decision;

(ab) before taking any such steps, take into consideration any representation made to them by such a council during the period of two months beginning on the day on which the council is informed under paragraph (aa);¹

(b) take such steps as they think fit for seeing that persons who may be interested in the review are informed of any draft proposals or any interim decision not to make proposals, and of the place or places where those proposals or that decision can be inspected;

(c) in particular, deposit copies of those proposals or that decision at the offices of the council of any local government area which may be affected thereby and require any such council to keep the copies available for inspection at their offices for a period specified in the requirement; and

¹ Sub-section 18(2)(aa) and 18(2)(ab) inserted by Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004

(d) take into consideration any representation made to them within that period.

(2A) The Scottish Ministers may give directions to —

- (a) the Boundary Commission,
- (b) the council of any local government area affected by a review,

in relation to consultation under subsection (2)(a) above.

(2B) Such directions may be given generally or in relation to particular reviews or particular aspects of reviews.²

(3) Where the Boundary Commission make a report under this Part of this Act they shall —

(a) take such steps as they think fit for securing that persons who may be interested in the report are informed of it and of the place or places where it can be inspected;

(b) in particular, deposit copies of the report at the offices of the council of any local government area which may be affected thereby and require any such council to keep the copies available for inspection at their offices until the expiration of six months after the making of an order giving effect, with or without modifications, to any proposals contained in the report, or after a notification by the Commission that they have no proposals to put forward or, as the case may be, by the Secretary of State that he does not propose to give effect to the proposals of the Commission.

(4) Subject to the foregoing provisions of this section, the procedure of the Boundary Commission in conducting any review under this Part of this Act shall be such as they may determine.

19 *Local inquiries*

(1) The Boundary Commission may cause a local inquiry to be held with respect to any review carried out by them under this Part of this Act.

² Sub-section 18(2A) and 18(2B) inserted by Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004

Appendix E

Timetable for the Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

Description	Start	Finish
Reviews commenced	21 February 2014	
Commission met separately with all 32 councils to provide a background to the reviews	25 February 2014	2 April 2014
2-month statutory consultation period with councils on councillor numbers	21 February 2014	23 April 2014
Commission considered councils' responses	April 2014	May 2014
12-week public consultation period on councillor numbers	29 May 2014	21 August 2014
Commission considered responses and agreed councillor numbers	September 2014	January 2015
Commission developed proposals for wards	September 2014	January 2015
2-month statutory consultation period with councils on proposals for wards	19 March 2015	19 May 2015
Commission considered councils' responses	June 2015	July 2015
12-week public consultation on proposals for wards	30 July 2015	22 October 2015
Commission considered all representations and developed its final recommendations	November 2015	April 2016
Commission submitted its reports to Scottish Ministers	May 2016	

Appendix F

Index of Commission Meetings, Papers and Minutes – Argyll and Bute Council area

Meeting Date	Paper Number	Minutes ref
09.10.2013	Paper 2193/13	M349
12.11.2013	Paper 2198/13	M350
18.12.2013	Paper 2203/13	M351
15.01.2014	Paper 2206/14	M352
01.05.2014	Paper 2217/14	M355
10.09.2014	Paper 2228/14	M358
25.11.2014	Paper 2262/14	M361
18.12.2014	-	M362
03.02.2015	Paper 2276/15	M364
03.03.2015	Paper 2276/15	M365
07.07.2015	Paper 2321/15	M368
08.12.2015	Paper 2360/15	M372
12.01.2016	Paper 2383/16	M373
19.04.2016	Paper 2395/16	M377

