

Oxfordshire County Council statement December 2023

Item 13 Electoral Review: Local Government Boundary Commission for England Draft Recommendations

I represent the Wantage and Grove Campaign Group

Thank you for letting me address this meeting.

In the draft recommendations for the Local Government Boundary changes, your report states that in the Vale of White Horse – there are minor changes around the parishes outside of Grove.

But the changes proposed by the Commission take a significant area (Charlton and the associated Kingsgrove development) out of Wantage and place it in a geographically diverse division which would extend from within Wantage to a point beyond the eastern edge of Didcot. We believe therefore that the proposed changes fail the test of having strong, easily identifiable boundaries.

Wantage Town Council have submitted a detailed response to the commission which in summary includes:

- Placing Charlton, Kingsgrove and the villages of Lockinge, Ardington and the Hendreds in one division with the Wantage 3 Polling district and Chilton.
- Moving Upton and Blewbury into the same division as Harwell and Valley Park as all of these villages are more linked to Didcot than Wantage.
- Enlarging the remaining Wantage division by adding the villages of East and West Challow and Letcombe Regis and the Grove Brook Polling district.
- Moving East and West Hanney, Goosy and Denchworth into the Grove Division.
- Adding Milton Village to Drayton, Sutton Courtney and Steventon.

This proposal makes the six divisions in the southern part of the Vale of the White Horse more balanced and meet the statutory criteria set for the Boundary Commission better than the original proposal.

We therefore ask that you amend the recommendation on the agenda today to include these changes proposed for the Southern Vale.

Thank you for listening, Julie Mabblerley.