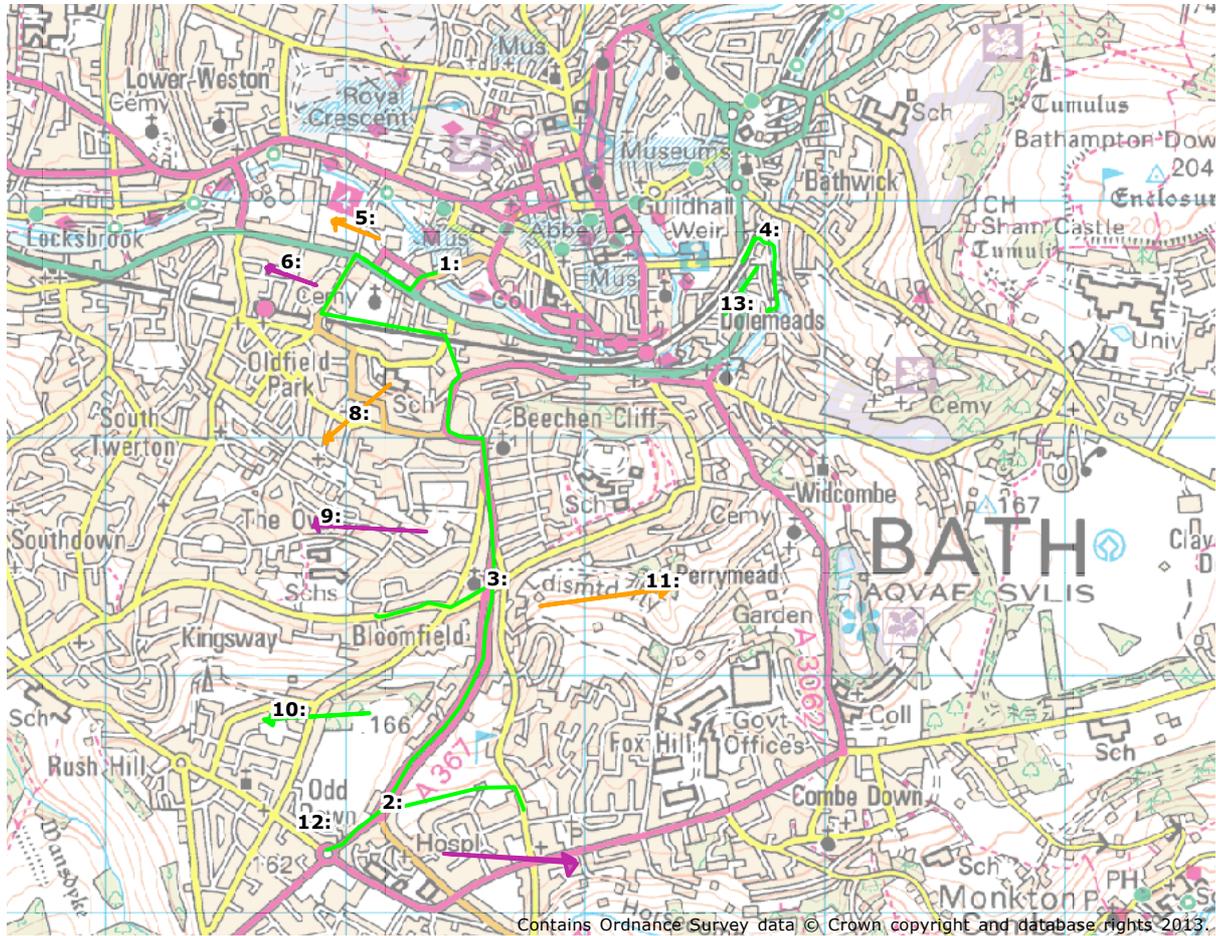


Bath and North East Somerset**Personal Details:**

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Organisation Name: Widcombe Association

Feature Annotations**Map Features:**

- Annotation 1:
- Annotation 2:
- Annotation 3:
- Annotation 4:
- Annotation 5:
- Annotation 6:
- Annotation 8:
- Annotation 9:
- Annotation 10:
- Annotation 11:
- Annotation 12:
- Annotation 13:

Comment text:

The Widcombe Association (WA) is the largest community association in Bath, including residents, businesses, public institutions and charities. A non-political organisation, we have been actively in existence for many decades, with a clear constitution, elected committee and a minimum of two general meetings of members each year. We welcome this opportunity to comment on the review of ward boundaries for Bath and North East Somerset (BathNES). Widcombe Ward

currently has two member representation. This works well and we see no basis for either an increase or decrease. We do, however, wish to safeguard Widcombe's established strong historic identity, reflecting one of the former Somerset Hundreds. The locality retains a strong community identity with a thriving local shopping centre (recently relieved of heavy traffic following community pressure), local societies, community centres, places of worship and much else. Subject to that, we have studied and fully agree with the aims and criteria set out in the Commission's published guidance, and are aware that the total number of councillors is to reduce from 65 to 59. From the published data the total BathNES 2023 electorate is forecast as 139,679 and that for Widcombe Ward as 3,609, implying a significant variance below an average representation of 4,735 for a two member ward. From local knowledge and having regard to our previous points about community identity we suggest as follows. Lyncombe Ward (immediately west of Widcombe Ward) probably has one of the least evident community identities. As the map illustrates, its western side includes the localities of Bloomfield, Odd Down and St Martin's Hospital (none known as Lyncombe) which in reality relate strongly respectively with Oldfield, Odd Down and Combe Down Wards, all of which will as things stand be below average in terms of electoral equality. [Arrows 9, 10 and unnumbered refer] For similar reasons we suggest that the Lower Oldfield Road locality, south of the railway, should be relocated from Widcombe Ward to Oldfield Ward, and west of Brougham Hayes to Westmoreland Ward, retaining the area north of the railway which has strong historic and functional links with Widcombe. For example, St James's Cemetery and also pedestrian and vehicular routes to and from Bath city centre. [Arrows 8 and 6 refer] Conversely the eastern side of Lyncombe Ward relates quite well with Widcombe Ward, with shared interests in Alexandra Park and Beechen Cliff School while further south the Entry Hill area similarly shares more interests with Widcombe than a concept of somewhere known as Lyncombe. [Arrow 11] Our main suggestion, therefore, reflecting the agreed reduction in the number of Councillors, is that Lyncombe Ward should cease as an electoral locality and its components re-warded as indicated on the above map. As well as better balancing representation numerically this change would provide a strong and identifiable boundary along the heavily trafficked major A367 (Wellsway). We also make two minor tidying up suggestions: i) that the north-westernmost corner of the existing Widcombe Ward (Pinesway Business Park) relates much better to Westmoreland Ward and should be so relocated, and ii) that the small sliver of residential development between the railway and canal in the Dolemeads locality should logically become part of Widcombe Ward to which its residents closely relate while being isolated from their existing Bathwick Ward. Both these suggestions are also shown on the map.[Arrows 5 and 13 refer] We have not consulted beyond our own committee on this submission but in the event that it is progressed by the Commission we favourably acknowledge that others will have an opportunity to comment. In the event that our main submission, to expand Widcombe Ward westward, is not accepted, we have also pondered the possibility of expansion east and/or northeast to absorb some of the existing Bathwick Ward. Although not our preferred option we would not necessarily oppose this in the alternative. We hope that these submissions are helpful and would welcome the opportunity to discuss them further with you or to answer any questions. Alan Langton Secretary Widcombe Association

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded