

Mr Gordon Mitchell
Oxford City Council
Town Hall
St Aldate's
Oxford
OX1 1BX

6 November 2018

Dear Mr Mitchell,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF OXFORD: FURTHER LIMITED CONSULTATION FOR SOUTH EAST OXFORD

Following our consultation on the draft recommendations for Oxford, I am writing to inform you of the Commission's decision to hold a period of further limited consultation prior to publication of its final recommendations. This will involve our proposals for wards in the southern part of east Oxford. The Commission believes it has received sufficient evidence in relation to the rest of the city. Therefore, this period of further limited consultation focuses on south east Oxford.

During consultation, we received more than 150 representations, which included alternative proposals for this part of the city. None of the submissions supported our draft recommendations. Many respondents provided a great deal of evidence describing their community to substantiate their opposition to our proposals. Below is a summary of our revised proposals.

Cowley, Donnington & Iffley, Littlemore, Rose Hill, St Clement's, St Mary's and Temple Cowley

We received 63 submissions that referred to one of these wards. These included alternative proposals for the whole area from Oxford East Green Party ('the Greens') and Oxford Conservative Association and Oxford West & Abingdon Conservative Association ('the Conservatives'). The Greens' proposal was supported by Oxford City Council Liberal Democrat Group and the Oxford City Branch of Oxford West & Abingdon Liberal Democrats ('the Liberal Democrats'). However, the Conservatives' proposal was supported by relatively little evidence and, when we analysed it, contained two wards with poor electoral equality. The Council and Oxford & District Labour Party ('the Labour Party') made similar submissions that proposed minor amendments to Cowley, Donnington, St Clement's and Temple Cowley wards.

A significant number of submissions related to three issues: our proposals for Bartlemas, Donnington and St Clement's wards; the proposed boundary in the Florence Park area

between Cowley and Temple Cowley wards; and the Council and the Labour Party's proposal to rename our St Clement's ward 'Bannister'.

Firstly, all four political parties, the Council, several local organisations and approximately ten residents objected to our proposals in the Florence Park area. They argued that the Clive Road area of Florence Park, which had been placed in Temple Cowley ward, had little connection with the rest of Temple Cowley. Our boundary on Rymers Lane was not a natural one, whereas the current ward boundary to the east on Oxford Road was a natural divide between communities.

We consider that strong community evidence has been provided to place the boundary on Oxford Road and also note that this is supported by the Council and all four political parties. We propose to amend our draft recommendations accordingly.

There were approximately 25 objections to the draft recommendations for Bartlemas, Donnington and St Clement's wards. The objectors argued that the proposals split streets or groups of streets, such as Charles Street, Howard Street and Percy Street, that are part of the same community. The proposals also used illogical or confusing boundaries that were hard for residents to understand. The Greens argued that the draft recommendations split between wards the areas covered by five residents' associations, two neighbourhood watch areas and four controlled parking zones.

There was some support for the draft recommendations from the Labour Party, which pointed out that Cowley Road is the centre of a succession of communities and our proposals reflected this. They also expressed concern at the size and number of communities contained in the Greens' Donnington & Iffley ward.

Having visited the area twice and considered all the submissions, our conclusion is that the Greens' submission best reflects the evidence that we have received. In particular, their St Clement's and Bannister wards use boundaries that appear logical on the ground and are supported by residents' submissions. While the Donnington & Iffley ward does contain several communities, we did receive some evidence of links between Donnington and Iffley Village.

We note that the Greens proposed to name one of their wards 'Bannister'. Our approach is that ward names generally should, as accurately and succinctly as possible, describe the area concerned. The ward's name should also be recognisable to as many residents in the ward as possible. While we appreciate the desire to honour the likes of Sir Roger Bannister, the primary purpose of a ward name is to describe the communities living in the ward.

We are not persuaded that this was achieved by the alternative name put forward. Instead, we have named this ward 'St Mary's' as it is reasonably similar to the current ward of the same name. However, we would welcome alternative ward names supported by evidence as part of this consultation.

A summary of the wards we propose in south east Oxford is shown in the table below:

Ward Name	No. of Councillors	Electorate 2017	Variance 2017	Electorate 2023	Variance 2023
Cowley	2	4,671	3%	4,941	2%
Donnington & Iffley	2	4,561	1%	4,561	-6%
Littlemore	2	3,952	-13%	4,690	-3%
Rose Hill	2	5,028	11%	5,201	8%
St Clement's	2	4,465	-1%	4,465	-8%
St Mary's	2	5,042	11%	5,042	4%
Temple Cowley	2	4,827	7%	5,037	4%

Although the Commission supports these revised wards, the proposed pattern is markedly different from that proposed in our draft recommendations. Accordingly, the Commission has decided there should be a period of further limited consultation to seek the views of residents and local groups as to whether we should adopt the alternative warding pattern instead of the draft recommendations.

Our revised recommendations can be seen on the Commission's website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/oxfordshire/oxford>

This period of further limited consultation commences today, **6 November 2018**, and closes on **4 December 2018**. During this period, the Commission welcomes comments and supporting evidence on its revised recommendations for south east Oxford.

The Commission's final recommendations for Oxford will now be published on **5 February 2019**.

The Commission would like to hear whether people support its proposed changes and the reasons for their views. We therefore encourage those who have a view on these revised proposals to write to us, whether they agree with them or not.

All representations received during the consultation period will be taken into account and the Commission will then consider the evidence received prior to the publication of its final recommendations.

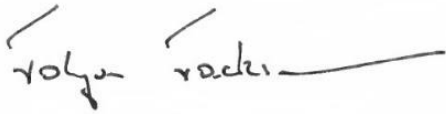
Representations should be made in writing to reviews@lgbce.org.uk or:

Review Officer (Oxford)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0TL

Following the conclusion of this further consultation, the Commission will consider any further evidence received and prepare its final recommendations for Oxford.

If you have any queries, please contact reviews@lgbce.org.uk or 0330 500 1525.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jolyon Jackson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jolyon Jackson CBE
Chief Executive
reviews@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1525