

**From:** [Debby Hallett](#)  
**To:** [Reviews@](#)  
**Cc:** [Dudley Hoddinott](#); [Janet Godden](#); [Judy Roberts](#); [Bob Johnston](#); [JOHN WOODFORD](#); [Richard Webber](#); [Tony De Vere](#)  
**Subject:** Northeast Area of the Vale re-warding (Hinkseys and Sunningwell etc)  
**Date:** 07 January 2013 17:26:13

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I'm writing to submit my comments regarding the proposed re-warding of the north east area of the Vale of White Horse. I live in North Hinksey parish. I am also a Vale district councillor for Wytham and North Hinksey.

I'm disappointed at the Commission's proposal for our area. The proposed boundaries are different to anything thus far mooted. They're proposing something other than:

1. what the North Hinksey Parish Council recommended
2. what the Vale council actually recommended
3. what I and my Vale colleagues recommended as an alternative to the Vale's proposal

The BC's proposals differ from what anyone asked for, and without rationale or explanation as to why. I don't understand it.

The paper I submitted last summer was backed by research and consultation with people who live here. My comments there still stand, and I don't need to re-state them here. (You can see it on your website.) But I have a few new things to mention.

There were three principles underlying the new boundaries (as declared in the commission's materials):

1. the need to secure equality of representation;
2. the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities;  
and
3. the need to secure effective and convenient local government

Taken point by point:

1. Equality of representation. This seems to be the overriding concern of the commission, based on the lack of consideration of the other two principles. I agree this is important, but I also think the other two principles should carry at least equal weight.

2. Identities and interests of local communities. You have had representation on this from various community leaders, the North Hinksey Parish Council, and the Vale council itself. For example, Dean Court meshes with North Hinksey parish, and that wasn't considered. People in North Hinksey look to Oxford for services. Most people don't know where Radley is. Advice and wishes of the community seem to have been roundly ignored.

- There is no such place as Botley, which is the name you have chosen for one of the wards. (There is a small part of the parish called Old Botley, which has a handful of residents.) The residents in North Hinksey and Wytham parishes find this nomenclature confusing.
- The section of North Hinksey parish you propose to split off and combine with far-distant Kennington and Radley has two halves to it, east and west of the A34. There are no roads directly linking these two halves; you cannot

travel in a car from one half to the other without leaving either the ward or the parish. It seems a wrong place to divide a parish.

- You propose naming the split-off part of North Hinksey, 'South Hinksey'. The parish to the south is South Hinksey, so this is both horribly confusing and demonstrates a lack of familiarity with local communities here.
- Major development is planned in North Hinksey parish for the Harcourt Hill and Lime Road areas, and local people have concerns about the impact on local services and infrastructure. Your proposal splits this area off into a ward with distant Radley. No one here goes to Radley or Kennington for anything, and it's hard to see why this seems like a good idea. How would members from Radley represent the interests of those living in North Hinksey parish?

3. Effective and convenient local government. Single member wards are preferable to two-member wards. Three member wards should be a last resort and for extenuating circumstances (and I can't think of any circumstances where it would be a good idea in a rural area). Multiple member wards are not preferred for 3 reasons:

1. When members don't cooperate, there is too much work for each member in casework, attending parish meetings and communicating outward to residents. We have examples of that now, where local members are from different political parties and do not cooperate or indeed, even work against each other. Making a three-member ward running from the heart of North Hinksey parish all the way to Radley would be a massive mistake. Are there 6 or more parish council meetings to attend each month and an electorate of over 7000? How will each member keep up with all the planning applications in their ward and give enough attention to the people who expect it?
2. Residents are confused about who is their local councillor.
3. In wards that cover a large geographic area, some or all of the members may live a long distance away and not be familiar with local issues.

I think we should strive to have single-member wards. I understand Radley and Kennington are happy for their parishes to be combined into a two-member ward, which should be their privilege.

For the rest of our area, I'd prefer to see two single member wards, but I don't have enough accurate voting data to work out a fair boundary for Wytham, North Hinksey, South Hinksey and Sunningwell. My original proposal was for all of this to be a two-member ward, but I can see the merit in two single-member wards. I am not against the warding of North Hinksey parish, but the proposed boundary is hard to support.

Please re-visit what has been said by the people who live in the north east area of the Vale. To make a decision that no one has suggested and no one wants certainly raises serious concerns about the political impartiality of this re-warding.

Regards.

Debby Hallett, [REDACTED]