Dear Sirs,


Frilsham Parish Council is very unhappy about the impact the draft proposal of ward arrangements in West Berkshire would have on the parish.

The proposal to include Frilsham in the excessively large ward of Aldermaston and Bucklebury would have a detrimental impact on the electorate. Fourteen rural parishes with sparse populations would be represented by 3 District Councillors; how can each of those District Councillors have the local knowledge to represent all the electorate from each of those parishes? Each of the District Councillors cannot be expected to attend parish council meetings in each of fourteen parishes (if they meet monthly, that would be 168 parish council meetings a year plus 14 Annual Parish Meetings). In reality, District Councillors would split the ward up and each would take on certain parishes, so surely it is more practical to have smaller wards each with a smaller number of parishes.

Whilst the parishes which the proposal includes in the Aldermaston and Bucklebury ward all appear to be similar (in that they are rural with sparse populations) there are some significant differences. Many of the parishes do not contain any land within the North Wessex Downs AONB (e.g. Sulhampstead) whereas Frilsham is wholly in the AONB. A number of the parishes are situated on major transport links (like Aldermaston) which can be accessed (A4 and the railway); Frilsham doesn’t contain and isn’t bounded by any ‘A’ roads let alone the railway.

Frilsham Parish Council feels that the parish of Frilsham should be in a ward which also includes Yattendon. This is based on the strong ties between the inhabitants of the two parishes. The people of Frilsham share many groups with the people of Yattendon including Yattendon and Frilsham Sports and Social Trust, Yattendon and Frilsham Social Club, Yattendon and Frilsham Cricket Club, and Yattendon and Frilsham Tennis Club to name but a few. The people of Frilsham use the services provided by Yattendon

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Village Stores (there is no shop in Frilsham). Yattendon and Frilsham are in the same ecclesiastical parish. Frilsham falls within the catchment of Yattendon Primary School (unlike any of the other parishes in the proposed Aldermaston and Bucklebury ward). A significant part of the land within Frilsham is owned and managed by Yattendon Estates who also own a lot of Yattendon parish.

The Parish Council urge the Boundary Commission to reconsider the proposal of the large ward of Aldermaston and Bucklebury and instead consider making smaller wards in which Frilsham and Yattendon could be in a ward together.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Pratt (Mrs)

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