

ID: 435

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Name: Lynda Atkins

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Area your submission refers to: Oxfordshire

Organisation you belong to: other (please specify in your submission)

Feedback: As the current county councillor for Wallingford and Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, I have given much consideration to the best configuration of a County Council division based on Wallingford, both getting the right size of division and making sure it is effective to manage. On a numerical basis, the submission from OCC is the best of the 3 options obviously available. Wallingford would need to be combined with other parish(es) in order to create the population base needed. Of the 3 immediate possibilities, the combination with Brightwell-cum-Sotwell is a better fit than either Crowmarsh (too small) or Cholsey (too big, and going to get bigger with planned housing growth). The addition of the Wittenhams produces a division of almost exactly the right size, which is reasonably sensible in terms of consistent types of community and social links. The additional growth planned for the Wallingford area would take the division size to slightly above average, but would be extremely unlikely to make enough of a difference to become a problem in this context. I would, however, propose the addition of a new 'Winterbrook' Ward, in the area of Cholsey Parish between Bradford's Brook (the current division boundary to the south) and the bypass around the town. As any map shows, Winterbrook is directly adjacent to the town, and on the ground the boundary would be indistinguishable if the town and parish signs were not there. Residents of Winterbrook use the schools, roads, buses, hospital, GPs and other facilities which are provided in and around Wallingford and not those in Cholsey village. They are very much part of the settlement of Wallingford - and included in the distribution of the Window for Wallingford, the town magazine. This means that the issues which need county councillor representation are frequently exactly the same as those in Wallingford, whether it be access to St John's School, frequency of buses going along Reading Road, potential minerals extraction in the local area or the provision of libraries. I have been asked for (and have given) help to Winterbrook residents in a number of these areas. It would, in my opinion, make much more sense for the residents in this area to be represented by the same county councillor as the rest of the Wallingford settlement, given the substantial overlap of issues. That does not, in any way, prejudice any future discussion about parish boundaries, but does acknowledge the pragmatic need for consistent county councillor representation when dealing with very local matters. It would not make a significant difference to population numbers, as there are around 107 homes in Winterbrook - at least that's the number of Windows for Wallingford delivered there!