

# Vale of White Horse

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## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Harwell Parish

Please see the attached file for my submission

## Attached Documents:

- m-ricketts-submission-for-lgbce.pdf

**Submission to Vale WHDC for the LG BCE review – M Ricketts, Harwell.**

**Summary:** This proposal eliminates the large anomaly predicted to occur in the ‘Blewbury & Harwell’ ward by 2029 by transferring a seat from Abingdon town, which would otherwise be over-represented by a whole seat.

It proposes that the parishes of Harwell and Western Valley become a Vale ward with 2 seats and Blewbury, Chilton and Upton form a ward with 1 seat.

**Proposal in detail:**

This submission is based on the data in the Vale document with predicted electorates for 2029 -

[https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/c\\_-\\_electoral\\_forecasting\\_proforma\\_-\\_vale\\_of\\_white\\_horse\\_v2\\_updated\\_19jan\\_0.xlsx](https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/c_-_electoral_forecasting_proforma_-_vale_of_white_horse_v2_updated_19jan_0.xlsx).

**Note:** The word Variance is used below under sufferance as it has a technical meaning for statisticians and all that is meant in this spread-sheet is simply differences between a predicted electorate for a ward and the average over the Vale as a percentage. It is only used for clarity.

It is noted that Blewbury and Harwell ward (B&H) is highlighted in red as it is predicted to have one of the 2 extreme ‘variances’, the other being Kingston Bagpuize, a single-seat ward so less extreme in under-representation:

| Name of ward                     | Number of cllrs / ward | Electorate 2023 | Variance 2023 | Electorate 2029 | Variance 2029 |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| <u>Abingdon Abbey Northcourt</u> | 2                      | 4,752           | -15%          | 5,168           | -19%          |
| <u>Abingdon Caldecott</u>        | 2                      | 5,542           | -1%           | 6,054           | -5%           |
| <u>Abingdon Dunmore</u>          | 2                      | 4,744           | -15%          | 6,029           | -6%           |
| <u>Abingdon Fitzharris</u>       | 2                      | 4,771           | -14%          | 5,167           | -19%          |
| <u>Abingdon Peachcroft</u>       | 2                      | 5,185           | -7%           | 6,230           | -2%           |
| <u>Blewbury &amp; Harwell</u>    | 2                      | 6,733           | 21%           | 9,188           | 44%           |
| <u>Botley &amp; Sunningwell</u>  | 2                      | 5,136           | -8%           | 5,683           | -11%          |
| <u>Cumnor</u>                    | 2                      | 5,063           | -9%           | 5,507           | -14%          |
| <u>Drayton</u>                   | 1                      | 2,825           | 1%            | 3,140           | -2%           |
| <u>Faringdon</u>                 | 2                      | 6,577           | 18%           | 7,123           | 12%           |
| <u>Grove North</u>               | 2                      | 5,175           | -7%           | 6,329           | -1%           |
| <u>Hendreds</u>                  | 1                      | 2,693           | -3%           | 3,292           | 3%            |

Under-representation by 44% of 2 seats obviously means nearly a whole seat (seat being used as a shorter word than Councillor). So the aim of this proposal is to reduce this anomaly by adjusting the allocation of parishes and parish wards to B&H and as few other seats as possible.

Note that if the ‘variance’ had been given in terms of %age of a single seat then the 2 most extreme Abingdon wards would show a greater anomaly than Kingston Bagpuize as the former have 2 seats and the latter only one.

The section of the table shown above has negative ‘variances’ for all the Abingdon wards, totalling about 50% of 2 seats (all wards have 2 seats) so the town is over-represented by 1 Councillor. More precisely, the total predicted electorate for the 5 Abingdon wards is 28,648. The average electorate per seat is predicted to be 3,194 and dividing the Abingdon electorate total by this gives 8.97. Thus a much better number of seats for Abingdon would be 9. Since these wards are contiguous it should be possible to re-arrange their boundaries so that there are 9 seats for the town, but without data on the Town Council wards (presumably) an arrangement for this cannot be suggested.

Looking at the numbers for Blewbury & Harwell:

| Parish etc     | Ward    |                    | 2023 | 2029 Pred. |
|----------------|---------|--------------------|------|------------|
| Blewbury       |         | Blewbury & Harwell | 1362 | 1473       |
| Chilton        |         | Blewbury & Harwell | 546  | 581        |
| Chilton        |         | Blewbury & Harwell | 661  | 724        |
| Western Valley |         | Blewbury & Harwell | 1445 | 3530       |
| Harwell        | Harwell | Blewbury & Harwell | 2349 | 2494       |
| Upton          |         | Blewbury & Harwell | 370  | 386        |

The total predicted for Blewbury, the Chiltons (presumably east and west of the A34) and Upton is 3164, very close to the predicted average of 3194 so it would make sense to combine these to a single-seat Vale ward, on the basis of making the democracy as local as possible.

This leaves Harwell and Western Valley with a total of 6024; for 2 seats this has a 'variance' of -6% (rounded to whole %s).

The Hendred seat has a small excess of electors compared to the average. As the Harwell Campus ward was moved into Hendreds a few years ago on the basis that there was going to be a large number of additional houses on the Campus, a prospect that has disappeared, it makes sense to recombine the Campus ward with Harwell village and Western Valley. The predicted electorate for Harwell and WV becomes 6157 and the 'variance' -4% while the Hendred electorate becomes closer to the average at 3159, and the absolute value of its 'variance' is reduced from 3% to 1%.

So the revised wards for the Vale seats would look like:

| Parish etc                          | Parish ward | Vale ward          | 2023 | 2029 Pred. | Diff %age |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Harwell &amp; Western Valley</b> |             |                    |      |            |           |
| Western Valley                      |             | Harwell & WV       | 1445 | 3530       |           |
| Harwell                             | Harwell     | Harwell & WV       | 2349 | 2494       |           |
| Harwell                             | Campus      | Harwell & WV       | 125  | 133        |           |
| total pred. 2 seats                 |             |                    |      | 6157       | -4%       |
| <b>Blewbury &amp; Chilton</b>       |             |                    |      |            |           |
| Blewbury                            |             | Blewbury & Chilton | 1362 | 1473       |           |
| Chilton                             |             | Blewbury & Chilton | 546  | 581        |           |
| Chilton                             |             | Blewbury & Chilton | 661  | 724        |           |
| Upton                               |             | Blewbury & Chilton | 370  | 386        |           |
| total pred. 1 seat                  |             |                    |      | 3164       | -1%       |
| <b>Hendreds</b>                     |             |                    |      |            |           |
| East Hendred                        |             | Hendreds           | 1110 | 1240       |           |
| Lockinge                            | Ard         | Hendreds           | 156  | 176        |           |
| Milton                              | Heights     | Hendreds           | 760  | 1163       |           |
| West Hendred                        |             | Hendreds           | 284  | 311        |           |
| Ardington                           | Loc'nge     | Hendreds           | 258  | 269        |           |
| total pred for 1 seat               |             |                    |      | 3159       | -1%       |