

### **Report of the Ward Boundary Review Working Group to CEB – 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

#### **Criteria Used**

This submission uses the following principles as criteria for the proposed scheme, in addition to the legally required criteria for equality of electorates:

- the river Cherwell and the river Thames south of the confluence with the Cherwell should be used as boundaries between wards
- that wards should be based on clearly identifiable communities or collections of communities
- as far as possible to use arterial roads as the centre of wards rather than boundaries between them
- where possible – in several parts of the city it is not - current wards should be the starting point for the new scheme

#### **Number of Councillors**

In line with the submission from the Council that has been accepted by the Commission, the scheme is for 48 councillors.

#### **Number of Wards**

Oxford currently has a scheme of 24 two member wards, which has been in place since 2002. This approach replaced the previous system of 17 larger wards, and was supported by the Council and the Commission because a larger number of smaller wards had the following advantages:

- smaller wards offer better community identity with the political boundaries
- in multi-member wards all electors rightly expect that each councillor is equally representative of them, and a two-member ward scheme means that each councillor represents 33% fewer electors than a three-member ward scheme, enabling them to be more responsive to the needs of their electors
- wards make it easier for electors to identify with their councillors
- the communities that make up Oxford better suit 24 two-member wards than they do any other scheme

The experience of the current two member ward system has amply demonstrated these advantages; therefore a 24 ward scheme should be retained.

#### **Electoral Equality**

The proposed scheme achieves variations of less than 10% from the mean for the electorate of each ward (4,834), in line with guidance from the Commission.

## **Community Identity**

Oxford is made up of many communities of different sizes. These range from the villages and hamlets that have been absorbed into Oxford over the years, such as Iffley, Headington and Littlemore, to the communities that have built up within the city, like Jericho, St Clement's and Rose Hill. These communities form the core of a ward in the proposed scheme.

A community is an area that can be defined by social, historical, architectural and geographical separateness to the areas around it. The scheme has taken into account areas defined by community and residents associations, areas that are centred round shops or other facilities as well as areas that are identified by name.

In one case, the Blackbird Leys/Greater Leys estate, a community is larger than a single ward, but is exactly equal to two wards. This instance, and others such as Barton and Rose Hill which are contained within a single ward, illustrate the advantages of the 24 ward approach. Each ward in the scheme is therefore made up of two or more of the smaller communities. No community that is clearly identifiable is split between two wards.

## **Boundaries**

Where practical the scheme tries to use geographical features as boundaries. Where there is a boundary through a residential area the preference is to use property boundaries rather than the middle of roads, except where the need for electoral equality requires it.

## **Electoral Frequency**

The scheme proposes no change to the current biennial election cycle.

## **Ward Names**

The scheme makes tentative suggestions for ward names which reflect the community or communities to be represented.

## **Summary**

The scheme proposes 24 wards, each with two councillors, making a total Council membership of 48. Each ward is within the target for electoral equality set by the Commission.

As well as achieving the required standard for electoral equality, the scheme equally complies with the requirements for community identity. Each ward is made up of one or more clearly identifiable communities. Moreover on the only occasion when a community is split over two wards the community is divided to form the whole of two wards.

## **Ward 1**

*Area: Upper and Lower Wolvercote, streets west of Banbury Road between the Banbury Road and the Oxford to Bicester railway line.*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the north and west, Oxford-Bicester railway line between the city boundary and the Wolvercote Roundabout, Sunderland Avenue, Banbury Road, South Parade, geographic features to Hooper's Meadow.*

*Electors: 4762 (1.50% variation from mean)*

*Proposed name: Wolvercote*

This proposed ward keeps together the two parts of Wolvercote village, and links them with the new proposed residential developments at Northern Gateway. It is particularly important that these new developments are integrated into existing communities, and the hard boundary of the railway line means that the obvious link is to Wolvercote to the south.

The three different roadways along Sunderland Avenue are a clear boundary between different communities to the north and south of the road. Banbury Road at this point in its length is a dividing line rather than a centre of a community, while South Parade marks the division between the retail area of Summertown to the south and the residential area to the north. The boundary on Port Meadow reflects a traditional boundary between the city and Wolvercote village.

Each community in this ward is relatively self-contained, although clearly there are links between Upper and Lower Wolvercote and as noted above links between the Northern Gateway development and Wolvercote village are essential. The area between Woodstock and Banbury Roads has little community identity as a whole, but rather within roads. This is why the boundary tries to avoid dividing roads between two wards.

## **Ward 2**

*Area: Sunnymead, Cutteslowe, Templars Road, Five Mile Drive/Lakeside*

*Boundaries: City boundary from Oxford-Bicester railway line to River Cherwell, River Cherwell to southern edge of Lonsdale Road, southern edge of Lonsdale Road gardens to Banbury Road, Banbury Road to Cutteslowe Roundabout, Sunderland Avenue.*

*Electors: 4947 (2.33%)*

*Proposed name: Cutteslowe*

This ward brings together a series of connected communities - Sunnymead, Cutteslowe, Templars Road, Five Mile Drive – into a single ward. Each of these communities is distinct, but has links with its neighbours. Both Cutteslowe Park and Cutteslowe Primary School act as shared facilities for communities across this proposed ward, linked by the well-used and popular foot and cycle bridge across Elsfield Way that sits at the heart of the area.

The southern boundary of the ward reflects the shift from residential areas to the north and the retail and employment area of Summertown to the south. The remaining boundaries are either clear geographic features such as the river or railway, or are roads that divide rather unite communities.

### **Ward 3**

*Area: Summertown and the historic North Oxford suburb, including Norham Manor*

*Boundaries: South Parade and the southern edge of Lonsdale Road to the north, River Cherwell to the east, University Parks, Banbury Road between Norham Gardens and the southern edge of St Margaret's Road, Kingston Road to Aristotle Lane, Port Meadow to the west,*

*Electors: 4925 (1.88%)*

*Proposed name: Summertown*

The clearly identifiable district centre at Summertown forms the northern part of this ward, then the historic North Oxford suburb and the associated community of Norham Manor. These areas are recognised by the City Council and by national conservation bodies because of their historic architectural significance, and combining them into a single ward makes for a coherent approach.

The boundaries of the ward are clear and legible, and separate Norham Manor from the neighbouring but very different community of Walton Manor to the west.

## **Ward 4**

*Area: Walton Manor, Waterside*

*Boundaries: Railway line to the west from the southern end of William Lucy Way to Aristotle Lane, Kingston Road to St Margaret's Road, Banbury Road then Parks Road to Keble Road, Little Clarendon Street, Walton Street to Walton Well Road to the Canal towpath to the southern end of William Lucy Way.*

*Electors: 4621 (4.41%)*

*Proposed name: Walton Manor*

This ward brings together the two distinct but increasingly linked communities of Walton Manor and Waterside.

Walton Manor, centred around the two main north-south axes of Kingston Road and Southmoor Road is a long-established Victorian suburb clearly different to the communities of Jericho to the south and Norham Manor to the east. Waterside is a relatively new development between Walton Well Road and Aristotle Lane on the west side of the canal, but increasingly integrated with Walton Manor.

Walton Manor and Waterside clearly have more in common with one another than either of them has with Jericho to the south. Jericho is physically separated from both by the former Lucy's factory and St Sepulchre's cemetery, and has a distinctly different historical and social background.

The inclusion of all of William Lucy Way in this ward corrects an anomaly in the current boundaries which split the road along a no-longer extant ditch.

## **Ward 5**

*Area: Jericho, St John Street, St Giles, Broad Street colleges.*

*Boundaries: Parks Road, High Street, Queen Street, New Road, Oxford Canal to southern end of William Lucy Way, northern edge of Juxon Street, Walton Street to Little Clarendon Street, Keble Road*

*Electors: 5062 (4.71%)*

*Proposed name: Jericho*

This ward links the historic communities of Jericho with the neighbouring St John Street area, St Giles' and the University of Oxford Colleges on Broad Street, and the small but growing number of residential areas in the city centre.

Jericho is the oldest surviving of Oxford's suburbs, and is the closest to the city centre. Residents regard the city centre shops and markets as local, and while the Jericho community is clearly separate, it is the Oxford community with the best links to the historic core of the city. St John's Street and Gloucester Green, with their active residents association, help to reinforce the link from Jericho to the City Centre.

It is not possible to keep all the city centre colleges in one ward and this proposal aims to divide the city centre student population between three different wards, with some permanent residents in each to give continuity.

The boundary between this ward and Holywell to the east is clear and easy to define. It also successfully recognises some of the distinctions between different areas of colleges, for instance by keeping the Turl Street colleges together in this ward and the Merton Street colleges together in Holywell ward. While these distinctions are as much ones of architecture and tradition as they are of any differences in the communities of people, it is important for the boundaries to reflect them where possible.

## **Ward 6**

*Area: St Thomas's, St Ebbe's, Osney Island, Botley Road, Rewley Road*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the west and south, Port Meadow to the north, Oxford Canal, New Road, Queen Street, St Aldate's to Thames Street, Castle Mill Stream to River Thames, Oxford to London railway line.*

*Electors: 5078 (5.04%)*

*Proposed name: Osney and St Thomas*

St Ebbe's and St Thomas's are two of the oldest suburbs of Oxford, but were severely damaged by redevelopment schemes in the late 1960s, leaving only remnants of once thriving communities. In recent years however these two areas have begun to re-establish communities, and the proposed major development of the Oxpens site that sits between the two areas will further enhance the links between them.

With a major expansion of population will come new community facilities, both on the Oxpens site and on the Osney Mead development area (soon to be linked to Oxpens by a new bridge for cyclists and pedestrians) where a new school for the area is being considered. This emerging link from Osney Mead to Oxpens, plus the existing links from Osney Mead to Osney and the Botley Road, make it very important for these communities to be covered by a single electoral ward. The ability to express shared preferences through their elected councillors is vital at this critical stage of the development process.

The boundaries of Oxford make it inevitable that Botley Road and Osney, though somewhat different communities, will be in the same ward, along with the hamlet of Binsey which is only accessible from the Botley Road. The Rewley Road area is a small and distinct community, but which has clear geographic and social links to both St Thomas's and the Botley Road/Osney area.

## **Ward 7**

*Area: City centre colleges*

*Boundaries: Rivers Thames and Cherwell, University Parks, Parks Road, Broad Street, High Street, St Ebbe's*

*Electors: 4546 (5.96%)*

*Proposed name: Holywell*

Holywell ward is unchanged from the current boundaries. It is a predominantly student ward, which is unavoidable in central Oxford. However it does still adhere to the principles of clearly identifiable communities.

The different groups of colleges do have some separate identity, although it is as much historical and architectural as social. This ward keeps those groups together. For instance Parks Road is good boundary between the St Giles'/Broad Street colleges and those clustered round Parks Road, Holywell Street and Mansfield Road. Similarly using the High Street as a boundary helps to keep the colleges in Merton Street and Oriel Square as a group.

There are a small number of permanent residents concentrated in the Manor Road area. As they are well away from any other residential area, any proposals that linked them artificially with other residential areas would fail to reflect communities on the ground and fail to comply with the requirement for boundaries that given good government.

## **Ward 8**

*Area: Grandpont and New Hinksey, St Ebbe's south of Thames Street*

*Boundaries: City boundary and River Thames, Thames Street*

*Electors: 4441 (8.14%)*

*Proposed name: Hinksey Park*

This ward is unchanged from the current boundaries. Given the geography of the area and the use of the natural boundary of the river Thames this ward largely draws itself. It is not possible to link it with other areas and continue to comply with the requirements of equality of size.

That being said the ward clearly complies with the requirements of marking community boundaries, bringing together as it does the two communities of Grandpont and New Hinksey (often referred to collectively as the Abingdon Road).

At the northern end of the proposed ward Thames Street forms a clear boundary between the residential area around Trinity Street and the offices and shops of the more commercial area immediately to the north.

## **Ward 9**

*Area: Old Marston, New Marston, Edgeway Road,*

*Boundaries: River Cherwell, Northern Bypass, boundary between Northway Estate and Court Place Farm sports ground, Marsh Lane, Marston Road, William Street.*

*Electors: 4728 (2.2%)*

*Proposed name: Marston*

This ward is unchanged from the current boundaries. It contains the whole of the Old Marston Parish, New Marston and the area to the south around Edgeway Road. While these areas are somewhat distinct the boundaries between them are blurred, while the boundaries to the separate communities of Northway and Headington Hill to the east are much clearer.

## **Ward 10**

*Area: Northway, Headington Hill, John Radcliffe Hospital site.*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the north, edge of Northway estate to Marsh Lane, Marston Road, Headington Hill to the rear of Headley Way, Franklin Road, rear of Sandfield Road, the grounds of the John Radcliffe Hospital, Dunstan Park, Northern Bypass*

*Electors: 4646 (3.89%)*

*Proposed name: Headington Hill and Northway*

This ward is almost identical to the current boundaries, adding the grounds – and thus the staff accommodation – of the John Radcliffe hospital.

The ward combines one distinct community, the Northway Estate, with the geographically distinct area of Headington Hill. This latter is a mixture of student accommodation and small and somewhat scattered areas of private housing, and the small community around Crotch Crescent off the Marston Road. While there is no overriding community reason to keep Headington Hill in one ward, its importance as a conservation area makes retaining it as a single entity important.

The addition of the hospital to this ward is the change with the least impact required to ensure that the proposed Headington ward remains with the boundaries for electoral equality. As the staff accommodation at the hospital has not particular community links with any surrounding area, this proposed change does not have any negative consequences for community identify in this or the neighbouring ward.

## **Ward 11**

*Area: Old Headington, New Headington, Headley Way area, Bury Knowle.*

*Boundaries: Northern bypass, middle of Barton Road, London Road to rear of Windmill Road, rear of St Leonard's Road, rear of Wharton Road, York Road, Old Road, rear of Bickerton Road, Brookside, Franklin Road, rear of Sandfield Road, grounds of John Radcliffe Hospital, Dunstan Park.*

*Electors: 5230 (8.19%)*

*Proposed name: Headington*

This ward retains the bulk of the existing Headington ward, with one small additional and one small subtraction in order to remain within the required quota for electoral equality.

This proposed ward retains a single ward that brings together the communities of Old and New Headington, and adds to them the area of Headington between Barton Road and Bury Knowle Park which is currently in the Barton and Sandhills ward. This area, whose polling station for elections is actually in the current Headington ward, is much more clearly part of Headington than it is part of Barton or Quarry.

In order to ensure that the number of electors stayed within the quota the residential flats on the John Radcliffe Hospital site have been removed from this ward. These flats tend to be occupied on short lets by hospital staff, and there is no loss of community identity as a result of this move, whereas the addition of the Bury Knowle area is a net benefit for community integration and identity.

## **Ward 12**

*Area: Barton, Sandhills*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the north, A40 to the south.*

*Electors: 5018 (3.80%)*

*Proposed name: Barton*

This ward is identical to the current ward, other than the removal of the VA polling district around Bury Knowle Park and Barton Road to the south of the A40. This change is the result of the building of the new Barton Park estate, a substantial urban extension to Oxford that will increase the population of the ward significantly.

Barton has a very strong community identity, and the new Barton Park development is being designed to integrate wholly with the existing estate. It is therefore essential that these two areas which are planned to form a single community sit within the same electoral ward.

The smaller community of Sandhills to the east could either be linked with Barton to the west or with Risinghurst to the south when forming wards, but only continuing the current link with Barton ensures that other communities elsewhere are not split. The physical division between Risinghurst and Sandhills is also emphasised by the A40 dual carriageway, whereas new development in recent years at Green Ridges bridged what used to be the gap between Sandhills and Barton.

The increased electorate in Barton as a result of the new development results in the removal of the Barton Road area from this ward, which increases the community identification of this ward, with no negative consequences elsewhere.

## **Ward 13**

*Area: Risinghurst, Headington Quarry village, Quarry Road area*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the east, Old Road, eastern edge of properties on York Road, western boundary of Wharton Road to St Leonard's Road, western boundary of Holyoake Road, London Road to Barton Road, Northern Bypass, A40.*

*Electors: 5255 (8.70%)*

*Proposed name: Quarry and Risinghurst*

The ward brings together two clearly defined communities in Risinghurst and Headington Quarry, along with residential areas to the west which are part of the expansion of New Headington from its original area around New High Street.

This ward is largely unchanged from the current boundaries, other than the addition of streets to the north of London Road between Barton Road and the bypass. These streets form a small community around the playing field, local shops, bus stops and crossing of the London Road, and link to Toot Hill Butts and Coleman's Hill on the southern side of London Road. While their inclusion in this ward is to ensure electoral balance, the clear community links between the two sides of London Road at this point means that there is no loss of community integrity.

While the boundaries around Risinghurst and Headington Quarry are very clear, and Old Road makes a clear division between the communities to the north and to the south, the boundary to the west is less clear. These proposals make a small adjustment to move all of the currently divided York Road into a single ward, improving community identity.

The alternative to linking the communities of Risinghurst and Quarry in one ward would be to put Risinghurst together with Sandhills. This however makes achieving equality of size impossible without splitting the much larger community of Barton over two wards, which would be severely damaging in terms of community integrity. The links between Risinghurst and Quarry are at least as strong if not stronger than those between Risinghurst and Sandhills, and this proposal reflects that.

## **Ward 14**

*Area: Oxford Brookes University at Gypsy Lane, Gipsy Lane estate, Little Oxford, Town Furze estate, Wood Farm estate*

*Boundaries: Headington Hill to Brookside, west of Brookside to Old Road, Old Road, City Boundary, south of Mascall Avenue, the Slade, Lye Valley nature reserve, Boundary Brook stream, Warneford hospital grounds, South Park southern edge*

*Electors: 4990 (3.22%)*

*Proposed name: Churchill*

This ward, which contains a number of smaller but separate communities in the Headington area, is unchanged from the current boundaries other than some minor adjustments on the Old Road between Windwill Road and the city boundary. Each area has its own identity, and they are linked together geographically by Old Road.

At the western end of the proposed ward the Brookes University residential blocks at Cheney Lane are linked to the residential areas of Little Oxford and the Gypsy Lane estate. Both these areas have significant student populations either in purpose-built blocks or in rented accommodation in ordinary houses.

The other half of the ward is made up of the linked areas of the Wood Farm and Town Furze estates. The two areas of a similar age and have a similar social mix. The alternative of including the Bulan Road/Dene Road area in this ward instead of Wood Farm would not be satisfactory in terms of similarity of communities or of sensible boundaries as it would not be possible to achieve equality of numbers without creating an artificial split in the Wood Farm estate.

## **Ward 15**

*Area: Bulan Road and Dene Road area (Lye Valley estate), new developments at Cowley Barracks, Horspath Road area*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the east, Horspath Road, Eastern Bypass to rear of Oliver Road, rear of White Road to Hollow Way, Barracks Lane, Boundary Brook, Lye Valley nature reserve, The Slade, Mascall Avenue*

*Electors: 4718 (2.41%)*

*Proposed name: Lye Valley*

This ward is largely identical to the current ward, but with some areas subtracted on the southern edge in order to achieve electoral equality after the approval of a substantial new development on a former industrial site on Hollow Way.

The proposed ward retains the distinct communities of Lye Valley and Horspath Road, and the new community that is emerging on sites that used to be the Cowley Barracks.

The Lye Valley estate is a clear and distinct community, with easily identifiable boundaries that separate it from the Wood Farm and Town Furze areas to the east and north. Similarly the area around Horspath Road and Normandy Crescent is a separate and distinct community, which is kept together by this proposal.

Recent developments between Lye Valley and Cowley have created a more or less continuous residential development along The Slade and Hollow Way. This new development has had little time to develop its own community, but as it is predominantly owner-occupied and privately rented it has more in common with the two areas in this proposed ward than, for instance, with the Wood Farm estate to the north.

## **Ward 16**

*Area: St Clement's, northern end of Cowley Road*

*Boundaries: River Cherwell, Marston Road, Headington Hill, edges of South Park, western edge of Divinity Road, Cowley Road, Magdalen Road, both sides of Hurst Street, both sides of Bullingdon Road, Jackdaw Lane to Thames/Cherwell confluence*

*Electors: 4638 (4.06%)*

*Proposed name: St Clement's*

This new ward covers the heart of the St Clements area, and the streets on the northern end of the Cowley Road area. The shortfall in electors in the current St Mary's ward, and the impacts of changes in the current Lye Valley and Littlemore wards, mean that new wards need to be drawn up to cover this part of East Oxford.

Cowley Road, with its shops, cafes and restaurants, forms the centre of this community along with buildings like the East Oxford Community Centre, East Oxford health centre and the Oxford Central mosque. At the northern end of the ward St Hilda's College and the University Sports Ground emphasise the link between this part of Oxford and Oxford University immediately to the north-west over Magdalen Bridge.

## **Ward 17**

*Area: Donnington, Boundary Brook estate, Iffley Fields*

*Boundaries: River Thames to confluence with the Cherwell, Jackdaw Lane, rear of Bullingdon Road, rear of Hurst Street, both sides of Catherine Street, footpath to Iffley Road, northern boundary of Cavell Road to river*

*Electors: 4538 (6.13%)*

*Proposed name: Donnington*

This new ward includes the distinct communities of Donnington and Iffley Fields, and the areas to the east of the Iffley Road including the Boundary Brook estate. As noted above, the shortfall in electors in the current St Mary's ward, and the impacts of changes in the current Lye Valley and Littlemore wards, mean that new wards need to be drawn up to cover this part of East Oxford.

Donnington, and the associated estate at Boundary Brook, are very clearly identifiable communities, separate from Iffley and Florence Park to the south by geographic as well as community identity boundaries.

To the east the area between this ward and the proposed Bartlemas ward is a zone of gradual transition rather than a clear-cut division, but using Catherine Street and Hurst Street means that this ward is centred around the shops and facilities on the Iffley Road, while Bartlemas is centred around the Cowley Road.

To the north Jackdaw Lane and Bullingdon Road make a convenient and legible boundary with the proposed new St Clements ward, again within an area of transition rather than a hard and fast community division.

## **Ward 18**

*Area: White City, Cricket Road/Ridgefield Road area, streets between Cowley Road and Barracks Lane, Divinity Road and Southfield Park, Bartlemas*

*Boundaries: Rear of Catherine Street, Magdalen Road to Cowley Road, northern edge of Divinity Road, Hill Top Road, edge of golf course, Boundary Brook, Barracks Lane, southern edge of Glanville Road, Cowley Road to Marsh Road footpath, cycle track to Catherine Street*

*Electors: 5100 (5.50%)*

*Proposed name: Bartlemas*

This new ward, whose proposed name comes from one of Oxford's oldest and smallest communities, is based around the core East Oxford and Divinity Road communities.

This part of Oxford is densely developed, with different small areas centred around shops and facilities such as places of worship and community centres which blur and overlap. As such drawing boundaries that delineate clearly separate communities is very difficult. However these proposals put the core of communities at the centre of wards, creating rational and legible boundaries.

The use of Catherine Street, roughly equidistant between the Cowley and Iffley Roads, as a boundary separates this ward centred on the Cowley Road from the proposed Donnington ward centred on the Iffley Road. Similarly the use of Magdalen Road divides this mid-section of the Cowley Road area, the heart of East Oxford, from the St Clements area to the north.

## **Ward 19**

*Area: Rose Hill and Iffley Village*

*Boundaries: River Thames to city boundary at southern bypass, bypass to Littlemore roundabout, Oxford Road to southern boundary of Westbury Crescent, Beauchamp Lane, southern boundary of Church Cowley Road, Henley Avenue, northern boundary of Cavell Road to river*

*Electors: 4879 (0.92%)*

*Proposed name: Rose Hill*

This ward is unchanged from the current boundaries. It contains the two distinct communities of Iffley Village and the much larger Rose Hill.

The remaining part of the ward on the eastern side of Rose Hill Road is included in part to ensure equality of electorates. It is however the part of the Cowley area that is most closely linked with Rose Hill, as Westbury Crescent is the only entrance to Rose Hill Road opposite the Rose Hill estate.

To achieve equality of electorates by adding any other area, such as part of Littlemore, part of Florence Park or part of Donnington would create a split in each of those communities, thus making achieving the aim of community identity impossible; where these two principles come into conflict community identity should take priority.

## **Ward 20**

*Area: Florence Park, Cowley*

*Boundaries: Eastern bypass, Garsington Road/Oxford Road, Between Towns Road, western edge of Maidcroft Road, Marsh Road footpath to Iffley Road, rear of Rose Hill Road, Church Cowley Road, southern edge of Westbury Crescent, east of Cowley Road (Littlemore), northern edge of Long Lane.*

*Electors: 5074 (4.96%)*

*Proposed name: Cowley*

This ward is broadly the same as the current Cowley ward, with an addition at Bodley Road/Herschel Crescent and a subtraction at Maidcroft Road for reasons of electoral equality.

The core of the ward is made up of two communities: Florence Park to the north is a clear community of its own, as is the Cowley area to the south. At the heart of the ward, linking the two areas together, is the Cowley Centre.

The Florence Park area is separated from neighbouring areas by clearly identifiable geographic features in all directions except the east, where the transition to the Oxford Road and Temple Cowley beyond is gradual rather than clear-cut.

South of Between Towns Road lies the old village of Cowley, now almost totally superseded by subsequent development such as the Cowley Centre. However the Cowley Centre now acts both as a focal point for the whole of the south-east of Oxford and as a dividing point between communities.

The boundary between communities to the south is a gradual transition rather than a firm line, meaning that the adjustments required for electoral equality for the Littlemore ward do not divide communities unnecessarily.

## **Ward 21**

*Area: Old Temple Cowley, Fern Hill Road*

*Boundaries: Barracks Lane, southern edge of Glanville Road, Cowley Road/Oxford Road, Marsh Road footpath, western edge of Maidcroft Road, Between Towns Road, Oxford Road/Garsington Road, Eastern Bypass, northern edge of Oliver Road/Marshall Road, Hollow Way.*

*Electors: 4105 (-5.387%)*

*Proposed name: Temple Cowley*

This is in effect a new ward, required because of significant increases in population in the neighbouring Lye Valley ward and the knock on impacts of increases in the population of Littlemore ward.

The heart of the ward is the old village of Temple Cowley, a clearly identifiable community formed around Temple Road and Crescent Road. The boundary to the west, with Cowley ward, is not distinct, and the boundary line is drawn for the best fit of electoral equality with no detriment to community identity.

To the north Barracks lane and the golf course form a clear boundary to the west of Hollow Way, and to the east the proposed boundary forms the best fit for electorally equality with the least division of communities.

## **Ward 22**

*Area: Littlemore*

*Boundaries: City boundary to the south and west, bypass, Oxford Road, northern boundary of Kelburne Road, rear of Cowley Road, rear of Long Lane, bypass to Littlemore village, track to Minchery Farm*

*Electors: 4967 (2.75%)*

This ward is very largely identical to the current boundaries, with a small subtraction in the north-east to take account of an increased electorate stemming from development within the ward.

The Van Dieman's Lane/Herschel Crescent area of the current ward closely adjoins Cowley, and has better community links to that area than it does to the village centre of Littlemore to the south of the bypass. While it is regrettable that a small area of the Littlemore Parish has to be separated in this way, moving these roads seem to have the least net negative impact in terms of community identity

## **Ward 23**

*Area: Blackbird Leys west including Kestrel Road and Knights Road, Greater Leys/Fry's Hill*

*Boundaries: City boundary, path to Minchery Farm from bypass, Eastern bypass, rar of Blackbird Leys Road, Windale Avenue, Northfield Brook*

*Electors: 4729 (2.17%)*

*Proposed name: Northfield Brook*

This ward, and the neighbouring Blackbird Leys ward, are almost unchanged from the current boundaries.

The only small change, to ensure electoral equality, is to move the district centre shops and the associated homes on Blackbird Leys Road from this ward to the Blackbird Leys ward.

While there are three communities within the overall Blackbird Leys area – old Blackbird Leys, Greater Leys and Green Hill – the links between them are more significant than any divisions between them. Taken together they make up two wards, and any other scheme than the current one would create artificial divisions in the middle of these communities.

## **Ward 24**

*Area: Blackbird Leys eastern part, Green Hill*

*Boundaries: Horspath Road, Eastern Bypass, rear of Blackbird Leys Road/Windale Avenue, Northfield Brook, City boundary*

*Electors: 4552 (5.83%)*

*Proposed name: Blackbird Leys*

This ward, and the neighbouring Northfield Brook ward, are almost unchanged from the current boundaries.

The only small change to ensure electoral equality is to move the district centre shops and the associated homes on Blackbird Leys Road from Northfield Brook to the Blackbird Leys ward.

While there are three communities within the overall Blackbird Leys area – old Blackbird Leys, Greater Leys and Green Hill – the links between them are more significant than any divisions between them. Taken together they make up two wards, and any other scheme than the current one would create artificial divisions in the middle of these communities.

An additional change, which has no impact on the electorate of the ward, is to include the BMW factory in the Blackbird Leys ward. This reflects the estate's historic association with the factory, for which it was largely built.