

Waverley Borough Council Warding Pattern Submission

The following submission, based on a council size of 50, was prepared initially by a cross party Member Working Group and agreed by Council on 6th July 2021 with the following resolution:

RESOLVED that a submission on future warding patterns be made to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England comprising Option 2 on Annexe 1 and illustrated in Annexe 2; plus the qualitative comments on warding issues as set out in Annexe 3 of the report.

The attached map (referred to in the resolution as Annexe 2) graphically represents the warding pattern and the table below sets out the elector numbers. The qualitative comments on warding issues by councillors (referred to as Annexe 3 in the resolution) are set out below.

The Council's submission deliberately does not attempt to re-align the ward boundaries for Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere Town Councils and Cranleigh Parish Council areas as the time and resources needed to do this task effectively were not available. Given the foreshortened timescale due to Covid-19 and the period of elections during this consultation period it has not been possible to deliver the level of detail in our response that we would have preferred. We intend to give a more detailed response at the next stage of the consultation.

The Council feels strongly that single member wards do not meet the Commission's criteria of 'promoting effective and convenient local government' as there is a lack of resilience in terms of constituency support for residents should a councillor fall ill or die in office. The submission is based on a premise of creating three councillor wards wherever possible. The rural villages of the borough have been brought together into coherent groupings that make geographic sense whilst maintaining the correct councillor/elector ratio.

Waverley is fully parished and has eight parishes with parish wards. These are: Cranleigh, Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere, Frensham, Ewhurst and Ellens Green, Womersley and Witley. Currently there are parishes which are divided between different Borough wards. The Working Group used parishes and parishes wards as their building blocks for the proposed warding pattern.

The following table sets out the Council's preferred warding pattern (referred to as Option 2 in the Council resolution.)

Proposed Ward Pattern		Parish and Parish Wards included	Polling District	Electorate Number
Cranleigh, Ewhurst and Ellens Green 6 Councillors up to 3 wards	Electorate 13394	Cranleigh - Elmbridge	ACEB	362
		Cranleigh - Rural	ACEC	91
	Cllr/elector ratio 2232	Cranleigh East	CEA	3683
		Cranleigh East	CEB	2485
		Cranleigh North	SGCB	575
		Cranleigh West	CWA	4165
		Ewhurst	EWA	1798
		Ellens Green	ACED	233

Eastern Villages: Blackheath, Wonersh, Shamley Green, Bramley, Busbridge, Hascome, Hambleton 3 Councillors - 1 ward	Electorate 6881 Cllr/elector ratio 2294	Blackheath	BWA	242
		Wonersh	BWB	1319
		Shamley Green	SGCA	902
		Bramley	BBHA	2686
		Busbridge	BBHB	840
		Hascombe	BBHC	254
		Hambleton	WHB	637
Alfold, Dunsfold and Chiddingfold 3 Councillors - 1 ward	Electorate 6141 Cllr/elector ratio 2047	Alfold	ACEA	2934
		Chiddingfold	CDA	2336
		Dunsfold	CDB	870
Milford and Witley 3 Councillors - 1 ward	Electorate 6557 Cllr/elector ratio 2186	Milford	MIA	3631
		Witley East	WHA	2537
		Witley West	ETD	389
Western Villages: Elstead, Peper Harow, Thursley, Frensham, Dockenfield, Churt and Tilford 3 Councillors - 1 ward	Electorate 6114 Cllr/elector ratio 2038	Elstead	ETA	2093
		Peper Harow	ETB	178
		Thursley	ETC	551
		Churt	FDTA	1007
		Dockenfield	FDTB	374
		Frensham	FDTC	810
		Rushmoor	FDTD	554
		Tilford	FDTE	547
Haslemere 7 Councillors - up to 3 wards	Electorate 13860 Cllr/elector ratio 1980	Critchmere	HCSA	2380
		Shottermill	HCSB	2645
		Haslemere North & Grayswood	HEGA	1761
		Haslemere North & Grayswood	HEGB	563
		Haslemere South	HEGC	3065
		Hindhead	HIA	3447
Farnham 16 Councillors - up to 8 wards	Electorate 33955 Cllr/elector ratio 2122	Bourne	FBA	1136
		Bourne	FBB	2238
		Castle	FCA	3099
		Castle	FCB	1131
		Firgrove	FFA	1305
		Firgrove	FFB	2105
		Hale & Heath End	FHHA	1915
		Hale & Heath End	FHHB	1601
		Moor Park	FMPA	3509
		Moor Park	FMPB	1245
		Shortheath & Boundstone	FSBA	1188
		Shortheath & Boundstone	FSBB	2219
		Upper Hale	FUHA	3501
		Weybourne & Badshot Lea	FWBA	2405
		Weybourne & Badshot Lea	FWBB	1726
		Wrecclesham & Rowledge	FWRA	2252

		Wrecclesham & Rowledge	FWRB	1379
Godalming 9 Councillors - up to 4 wards	Electorate 18380 Cllr/elector ratio 2042	Binscombe	GBA	3215
		Central	GCOA	2204
		Ockford	GCOB	2357
		Charterhouse	GCA	3179
		Farncombe & Catteshall	GFCA	2584
		Farncombe & Catteshall	GFCE	1348
		Holloway	GHA	3493
		Total Electorate		105281

Cranleigh, Ewhurst and Ellens Green

Currently Cranleigh Parish is split between 4 Waverley wards. We feel it would be better to have 6 councillors representing the whole of the Cranleigh Parish area together with the whole of Ewhurst and Ellens Green Parish which lies to the east of Cranleigh and has close links in terms of facilities and shopping.

Alfold, Dunsfold and Chiddingfold

We recommend one ward with 3 councillors to cover these villages. Alfold and Dunsfold are closely aligned and were a ward before the 1998 changes.

Eastern Villages

Currently the existing wards of Blackheath & Womersley, Shamley Green and Cranleigh North and Witley and Hambledon have large negative forecast variances. Bramley, Busbridge and Hascombe which is in the centre of these wards has a +2% forecast. Combining these villages makes sense geographically and having three councillors will greatly improve resilience over one member wards which would need to exist otherwise.

The name 'Eastern Villages' is the same as the County Council electoral ward and would need to be changed should this be accepted.

Western Villages

The current wards in this proposed grouping are the parishes of Thursley, Elstead, Frensham, Dockenfield, Tilford and Churt. The communication links make sense and although they are discrete rural villages there is a coherency about this grouping. The name 'Western Villages' is the same as the County Council electoral ward and would need to be changed should this be accepted.

Milford and Witley

This proposed ward with three councillors would make a much more coherent community grouping than the current wards which split the parish of Witley into three borough wards.

Haslemere, Farnham and Godalming

Using the target councillor/elector ratio of 2,106, an indication has been given as to the recommended number of councillors for each town and an upper limit for wards.

All wards are within the +/-10% tolerance.

As part of its consideration, the Working Group invited all councillors to comment on any significant issues or anomalies with their current ward that they would wish to have addressed through the current exercise. A number of comments have been received which add valuable local intelligence from ward councillors, and these are set out below.

Comments from ward councillors to be passed to the Boundary Commission

1. Cllr Maxine Gale, Ward Member for Witley & Hambledon

Witley Parish is currently split across three wards (Witley & Hambledon, Milford, and Elstead & Thursley) which means that it is represented on Waverly Borough Councillors by six borough ward councillors. The proposed warding pattern of a new three-Member ward for the Witley Parish area would address this inefficiency in local government representation.

2. Cllr Joan Heagin, Ward Member for Godalming Holloway

The majority of Holloway ward lies within the ecclesiastical parish of Busbridge, and most residents of Holloway ward would describe themselves as living in Busbridge. Busbridge church, Busbridge village hall, Busbridge infant and Busbridge junior schools are all within Holloway ward. It does cause confusion, including Holloway ward residents contacting Bramley, Busbridge and Hascombe (BBH) ward councillors. The ecclesiastical parish map shows that it is really only parts of Bargate Wood that are in Holloway, but not also in the Busbridge ecclesiastical parish
- <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/search/?lat=51.1762324&lon=-0.6008393&place=Old+Rectory+Gardens%2C+Godalming+GU7+1XB%2C+UK&text=>

Some review of Godalming wards is clearly going to be needed, and as part of that maybe some consideration could be given to a new Busbridge & Holloway ward. There are also some properties within Holloway ward currently that would more logically fit within Ockford & Central. These are:

- bottom of Holloway Hill; Rock Place, Firgrove cottages, Troy House and Holt House
- Harvest Hill
- Hazelwood Cottages
- Bonnybrae and Merryhills in Croft Rd
- random properties at the bottom of Brighton Road; everything north of Latimer Road should be Ockford & Central
- top 3 houses in Grove Road
- Busbridge Sidings (which is up a track off Portsmouth Rd)

3. Cllr Carole Cockburn, Ward Member for Farnham Bourne

Farnham was divided up artificially last time, leading to nine wards that bore little relation to the natural pattern of community.

Part of the Bourne parish was transferred to Firgrove, a concocted ward with no rationale other than size of population. Moor Park was created and had streets north of the bypass added to make up the numbers.

As Farnham is fully parished with strong communities, it makes more sense to start with parishes and look for natural divisions and then to sort out the required number of councillors per ward (possibly 3-councillor wards again in places).

This really came to the fore in the production of local planning documents: nobody spoke up for parts of Farnham, as they didn't realise they lived there!!

Waverley warding pattern **submission**

Ward boundaries in black
Parish boundaries in red

