# North Somerset

## Personal Details:

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## Comment text:

The stated aim is to improve electoral equality by balancing the number of electors represented by each councillor. However, a detailed reading of the report suggests that residents of Elms may be disadvantaged by the proposed changes.
The report forecasts that the Nailsea ward will experience a 6% increase in electors by 2031, while the Long Ashton ward is projected to be 8% below the average. If Elms remains within Long Ashton ward, residents would effectively have fewer electors competing for each councillor's representation, potentially resulting in more effective representation per councillor than if they were transferred to Nailsea ward.
Given these projections, it is unclear how moving Elms into Nailsea would better serve residents in terms of electoral equality and representation.

By placing The Elms within an urban Nailsea ward, the proposal would run contrary to the clearly expressed wishes of many local residents. I would therefore ask the LGBCE to give further consideration to the findings of the Community Governance Review, which demonstrated the desire of The Elms community to remain part of Wraxall & Failand Parish and, consequently, within the Long Ashton ward.

The Elms is already well integrated into the life of Wraxall & Failand. Residents actively participate in parish activities and community organisations, including parish council initiatives, All Saints Church, and local groups such as Wraxall WI. These established connections reflect a strong sense of community identity and shared interests with the wider parish.

The report suggests that The Elms is more urban in character than rural and should therefore be included within a Nailsea ward. However, community identity cannot be determined solely by the style or density of housing. A parish that contains a diverse mix of housing types and communities is not weakened by that diversity; rather, it is strengthened by it. The inclusion of The Elms within Wraxall & Failand contributes to a

balanced and vibrant parish community while maintaining the social, cultural and civic links that residents have chosen to develop and sustain.

For these reasons, I believe that retaining The Elms within Wraxall & Failand Parish and hence Long Ashton ward would better reflect both community identity and the wishes of local residents.

I would also argue that the proposed arrangements for Wraxall & Failand Parish would not promote effective and convenient local government and may instead create unnecessary complexity and confusion for residents.

The current arrangements are well established and appear to function effectively. Residents of The Elms are represented through Wraxall & Failand Parish Council while also being part of the Long Ashton ward. This structure is understood by residents and enables local issues to be addressed through established community and governance networks.

The proposed changes would separate The Elms from the ward with which it has longstanding links while leaving it within the parish. This risks creating confusion over representation and weakening the alignment between parish and unitary council representation. It would also place additional administrative and communication burdens on Wraxall & Failand Parish Council, whose councillors serve the community on a voluntary basis.

Where existing arrangements are operating successfully, there should be a clear and compelling justification for change. In this case, I am not persuaded that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the disruption it would cause to established community relationships and local governance structures. Retaining The Elms within the Long Ashton ward would better support effective and convenient local government while preserving the strong community identity that already exists within Wraxall & Failand Parish.

## Attached Documents:

*None attached*