

Rt Hon Steve Reed MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government,
Alison McGovern MP
Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness

BY E-MAIL

5th February 2026

Dear Secretary of State and Minister,

Local Government Reorganization: Oxfordshire

We are writing as representatives of Parish Councils and Meetings that would be incorporated into the Greater Oxford unitary authority proposed by Oxford City, as part of a 3-authority scheme for the County.

This letter is also strongly supported by the Campaign to Protect Rural England, Oxfordshire.

We strongly object to this proposal, in the first place because it does not meet your criteria.

1. At a population of only 240,000 it is less than half your proposed population size of 500,000+, to offer value for money and economic resilience.
2. The 3-Council option is the most expensive of the three for Oxfordshire. It will have the highest service set-up and on-going costs due to the small population.
3. It increases unnecessary fragmentation of services by splitting them into three for the County with tripled overheads.
4. Currently the County Council provides 80% of local-government services and it is questionable whether the current Oxford City Council has the expertise, skills and competence to take over social care, highways, transport infrastructure, education, and fire and rescue.
5. It does not use current district council boundaries as building blocks, instead it cuts up all the boundaries of the district councils surrounding Oxford.
6. It makes the other two unitary authorities it proposes for the County unviable, possibly causing lengthy delays in a Boundary Commission inquiry.
7. It does not represent a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs. The Local Plans already provide housing greatly above local needs. It will create urban sprawl, significantly exacerbating access problems for commuters, journey times and traffic congestion and pollution.

We also object to the proposal because it will damage rural communities that currently do not see themselves as in any way part of Oxford City.

8. It creates an undue advantage for the urban City and disadvantage for the rural parishes. Oxford City's urban population of 165,200, will dominate and subsume the 48 rural Green Belt parishes with only 31% of the population.
9. We will receive no significant benefits in exchange.

Yours sincerely,

Ginette Camps-Walsh, Chairman, Beckley & Stowood Parish Council
Jane Cranston, Chair, Besselsleigh Parish Meeting
Christopher Luke, Chair, Cuddesdon & Denton Parish Council
Jenny Welham, Clerk, Dorchester Parish Council
James Plunket, Chair, Elsfield Parish Meeting
Andrew Waite Brown, Chairman, Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council
Chris Wright, Chair, Garsington Parish Council
Jacqueline Wren, Clerk, Great Milton Parish Council
Sonja Barter, Clerk, Holton Parish Council
Beverley Oakley, Chair, Horspath Parish Council
David Slingo, Chair, Horton-cum-Studley Parish Council
Lawrence Wootten, Clerk, Kennington Parish Council
Sarah Kearney, Clerk, Kidlington Parish Council
Peter Addyman, Chair, Sandford on Thames Parish Council
Nigel Simpson, Chair, Shipton-On-Cherwell & Thrupp Parish Council
Neil Fitzgerald, Chairman, Stadhampton Parish Council
Andrew T. Clark, Chair, Stanton St. John Parish Council
Karen Laister, Chair, Sunningwell Parish Council
Dawn McGiveron, Chair, The Baldons Parish Council
Andy White, Clerk, Warborough Parish Council
Susan Parker, Chair, Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council
Rob Arthur, Chairman, Waterstock Parish Meeting
Diane Bohm, Chair, Weston on the Green Parish Council
Peter Hore, Chair, Woodeaton Parish Meeting
Laurence Brockliss, Chair, Wootton (Abingdon) Parish Council
David Thornhill, Clerk, Yarnton Parish Council
and
Lisa Warne, Director, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Oxfordshire