

## Electoral Forecast for Parish Review of Wiswell Parish, June 2012

The statutory guidance on Parish Reviews says the following about electoral forecasts:

“When considering the electoral arrangements for a parish, whether it is warded or not, the principal council must also consider any change in the number or distribution of the electors which is likely to occur in the period of five years beginning with the day when the review starts. The most recent electoral register should be used to gain an accurate figure for the existing electorate. Planning assumptions and likely growth within the area, based on planning permissions granted, local plans or, where they are in place, local development frameworks should be used to project an accurate five-year electorate forecast. This ensures that the review does not simply reflect a single moment but takes account of expected population movements in the short- to medium-term.

Electorate forecasts should be made available to all interested parties as early as possible in the review process, ideally before the formal commencement of the review so that they are available to all who may wish to make representations.”

A document available from on the Electoral Commission’s website by Dr Ludi Simpson of the University of Manchester entitled “*Making local population statistics: a guide for practitioners. Estimating with confidence*,”<sup>1</sup> (“the Guidance”) offers advice on how to carry out such a review. He recommends a five-step approach. This doesn’t fit well with the level of data available for Wiswell. I have, however, used this as the framework for this analysis.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the “LGBCE”) published *Electoral Forecasts- A guide for Practitioners*, in October 2011. This also provides guidance on electoral reviews, although it focuses on reviews carried out by the LGBCE.

### Key statistics

Using the above approach, and the limited data sets available to me, I have carried out a basic electoral forecast. Key statistics for 2012 and statistics/estimates for 2017<sup>2</sup> (five years’ hence), without considering the impact of housing data, are set out in the tables below.

The initial tables show the formula calculations with the key statistics, D1, D2, W1, W2 and W3 (as calculated) shown.

<b>Ribble Valley Borough</b>				
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2012 (with division of Wiswell)</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2017 (with division of Wiswell)</b>
<b>D1:</b> the total electorate for the Ribble Valley	<b>46,035</b>	<b>46,035</b>	<b>46,800</b>	<b>46,800</b>
<b>D2:</b> the electoral ratio <sup>3</sup>	<b>185<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>184<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>188</b>	<b>187</b>

<sup>1</sup> See link on the LGBCE website: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/about-us/about-electoral-reviews>.  
[http://www.lgbce.org.uk/\\_documents/lgbce/guidance-policy-and-publications/guidance/makinglocalpopulationstatistics-aguideforpractioners\\_23006-17186\\_e\\_.pdf](http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_documents/lgbce/guidance-policy-and-publications/guidance/makinglocalpopulationstatistics-aguideforpractioners_23006-17186_e_.pdf)  
 LARIA/estimating with confidence.

<sup>2</sup> This review was commenced in 2012 and data is based on a 5 year projection from this point. Given the visible trends, it is highly improbable that updated statistics would show a markedly different trend for 2018.

Wiswell (as at 1 December 2011)			
	Wiswell ward (CS)	Barrow ward (CT1)	Combined
<b>W1:</b> the electorate	256	595	851
<b>W2:</b> the electoral ratio <sup>6</sup>	64	148	106
<b>W3:</b> percentage difference between the electoral ratio for the ward and for the local authority: $100*(W2-D2)/D2$	-65 ( $100*(64-185)/185$ )	-20 ( $100*(148-185)/185$ )	-42 ( $100*(106-185)/185$ )

The Guidance comments that the “tolerance for inequality between ward electoral ratios are not set exactly” but that “it is expected that no new ward should be forecast to be more than 10% different than the local authority average”. However, the Ribble Valley covers a large area with dense pockets of population in some areas, and sparse population in others.

In an annex to this report I have included a comparative table of other parishes in the borough, and the number of parish councillors in these. A W3-style calculation for Hothersall, using these figures, would give a W3 figure of –90 and the same calculation for Clitheroe would give 548. Given this, the figures for Wiswell combined, and for each of the wards separately do not seem problematic.

## Step 1: Ribble Valley review

A: Adult population forecast for five years beyond the review

B: The ratio electors/adult population for current and past years.

### A.

Source for Local Authority population forecast.

**2012** The ONS website at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/regional-trends/region-and-country-profiles/population-and-migration/population-and-migration---north-west.html> Gives population estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, Mid-2010. Released 30 June 2011. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pop-estimate/population-estimates-for-uk--england-and-wales--scotland-and-northern-ireland/mid-2010-population-estimates/index.html><sup>7</sup>

This gives an estimated figure of 58,000 for the Ribble Valley for mid-2010.

In terms of years beyond this, the ONS website contains information on national population projections. The Regional Profile for the North West is available at:

<sup>3</sup> The five-step guidance explains that this is the number of electors divided by the number of councillors. As the forecast in this case is for a parish review, I have used figures for the number of Parish councillors in the area as a whole (248). Some areas are not parished within Ribble Valley so the data must be considered against this background. There are 40 Ribble Valley Borough councillors, so ratios using borough councillors as the number of councillors would be: 1151 and 1222 for 2009 and 2014 respectively. I have also carried out a comparison of ratios in other parishes in the borough for comparative purposes. This is included below.

<sup>4</sup> 46 035/248. Wiswell as one parish with the same number of councillors

<sup>5</sup> Wiswell and Barrow with 10 parish councillors (five each: five being the minimum): 46 035/250.

<sup>6</sup> There are currently 4 parish councillors for each ward (8 for the Parish as a whole).

<sup>7</sup> Table 10, Local Authority. The Office for National Statistics explains of this data set that: “Mid 2010 population estimates are available at national level by single year of age and sex and subnationally (local authority/health area) by five year age group and sex. These include additional selected age groups and broad components of population change. The Population Estimates reflect the local authority administrative boundaries that were in place on 30 June of the reference year of the tables.”

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/regional-trends/region-and-country-profiles/population-and-migration/population-and-migration---north-west.html>

This explains: “the population of the North West is projected to continue to grow more slowly than any other region in England.”

The sub-national population projections (Office for National Statistics)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Sub-national+Population+Projections> provides 2010-based sub-national population projections for the Ribble Valley.

For all ages, the figures are for the Ribble Valley (in thousands to 1 decimal place):

2010: 58

2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014: 59

2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018: 60

2019, 2020 and 2021: 61

It is difficult to calculate how many of these are of electoral age (18+) because despite the tables being divided by age-group, the figures are only to one decimal point (and the totals of each age group do not equate to the totals of all age groups).

The “by sex and five year age-group” and the “by broad age group” tables give figures of 46,000 for 2012 and 49,000 for 2017 (ages 20 plus).

47,000 for 2012 and 47,000 for 2017 (ages 16 and over).

Neither of these figures is accurate but using a figure somewhere between each should provide a fair estimate. By this methodology, I estimate the electorate size for the Ribble Valley Borough Council to be:

46,500 for 2012 and 48,000 for 2017.

The Register of Electors as at 1 December 2011 gives the total electors to be 46,035 and total attainers to be 641 (46,676 in total, although when the attainers reach 18 will, of course, vary throughout 2012).

## B

Using UK electoral statistics from ONS for the Ribble Valley local government area,<sup>8</sup> (as opposed to a Parliamentary constituency):

	1 December 2002	1 December 2003	1 December 2004	1 December 2005	1 December 2006
<b>All LG electors</b>	43,753	44,237	44,563	44,706	44,644
<b>Attainers</b>	604	588	571	616	564

<sup>8</sup> Tables show the number of local government electors for each local government authority. The total number of local government electors includes residential qualifiers and attainers, Peers and European Union citizens. Local government areas are unitary authorities, London boroughs and district councils in England; unitary authorities in Wales; council areas in Scotland and Northern

Ireland [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Elections+\(Local%2C+National+and+European\)](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Elections+(Local%2C+National+and+European)).

The 2011 data is from:

[http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Elections+\(Local%2C+National+and+European\)](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/taxonomy/index.html?nscl=Elections+(Local%2C+National+and+European))

	1 December 2007	1 December 2008	1 December 2009	1 December 2010	1 December 2011
<b>All LG electors</b>	44,644	45,762	46,041	46,251	46,035
Attainers	564	1095	1108	659	642

The ratio of electors to adult population for 2010 and 2011 can therefore be calculated using these figures.

2010:  $46,251/58,000 = 0.79$

2011:  $46,035/59,000 = 0.78$

In 2009 when I carried out a similar estimate, I used the 2009 ONS population estimate and the elector figures for the Ribble Valley<sup>9</sup> to get the 2009 ratio:

2009:  $46,024/60,000 = 0.77$ .

Taking 0.78 as the average of these 3 ratios, electors in 2017 for the Ribble Valley as a whole (D1) would be:  $60,000 \times 0.78 = 46,800$ . (i.e. lower than my 48,000 estimate above).

## Step 2: compile and review data for Wiswell

In the current review, we are interested in two wards within the parish of Wiswell: Wiswell and Barrow. Unfortunately data is not available on a ward basis for such a small area: the smallest data sets we have available are either for the whole parish or for the parish together with a neighbouring parish.

### Data: Electorate information

The Electorate figures recommended in the plan should be “the total electorate in each ward as submitted in Form RPF29”. However, the Council’s ERO does not keep historical figures for the RPF29.

#### ONS’s experimental data

The ONS has some experimental data on ward estimates. I have used these figures in the tables below. Wards which were small were merged in this data to avoid confidentiality risks of releasing data for small areas. The electorate data in this table is therefore for Wiswell (which includes Barrow) and Pendleton.<sup>10</sup> This is the smallest data set available.

Estimate for 2008 or 2009 wards, <sup>11</sup> mid-year	2001	2002	2003	2006	2007	2009
<b>Electorate</b>	1293	1308	1321	1321	1309	1325
<b>Change from previous</b>		101	100	100	99	101

This suggests that there is no recognisable change of the electorate in the two parishes amalgamated together: the size of the electorate has remained relatively constant. A five-year comparison of the data from 2007 and 2002 also shows that the electorate size changed very little.

#### Historic data from our files

Some data is also available from our historic files on the proposed division (which has been ongoing for some years) and from the previous electoral forecast I carried out.

<sup>9</sup> Figure is actually as at 1 Feb 2010.

<sup>10</sup> 2010 data is available at: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcM%3A77-230924>.

<sup>11</sup> I tried to use the most similar and relevant data sets, i.e. 2009 wards or 2008 wards in each case.

	1/12/2003	1/12/2005	1/12/2007	1/12/ <sup>12</sup> 2009	1/02/2010	1/12/2011	June 2012
<b>Wiswell (CS)</b>	262	252	249	264	264	256	253
<b>Change from previous i.e. current/previous</b>		96	99	106	100	97	99
<b>Barrow (CT1)</b>	581	559	569	564	566	595	598
<b>Change from previous i.e. current/previous</b>		96	102	99	100	105	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>851</b>
<b>Change from previous</b>		96	101	101	100	103	100

This again suggests that the size of the electorate has remained relatively constant.

A six-year comparison of the data from 2003 and 2009 also demonstrates that the electorate size in each ward, and in the parish as a whole, has changed very little (101% of what it was in 2003 in 2009 for Wiswell; 97% of what it was in 2003 in 2009 for Barrow; and 98% of what it was in 2003 in 2009 for the parish as a whole). Similar comparators for 2007 and 2012 (five year period), show:

Wiswell (CS):  $253/249 = 102$

Barrow (CT1):  $598/569 = 105$

Overall:  $851/818 = 104$

I have used these figures to provide **W1**, **W2** and **W3**.

### **Steps Three onwards: consider impact of other factors, e.g. housing**

The above data illustrates that the population in both wards has remained relatively static. Given the nature of the area, the most likely cause of a change in population would be the impact of any new housing developments.

Previous planning policies, restricting the number of new build houses in the borough, are no longer in place and one might therefore expect an increase in new build. However, since this change in policy, the UK has entered a recession.

Whether new houses are built, and where and when they might be built, cannot be answered with any degree of certainty. Moreover, it is possible that new builds might be filled with people from the same ward, rather than by an influx of people from different areas.

The Guidance suggests that the option at Step 3 is whether to use the past trend in the electorate together with housing development, or whether to rely solely on the location of new housing development. As the figures above illustrate, the past trend has shown only a slight variation in the electorate in each ward, with the numbers both increasing and decreasing. Given this, I have used the latter approach: determining solely from the location of new housing development.

#### **Data: Housing**

The housing figures recommended in the plan should be the net number of housing units completed (including conversions and demolitions) in each ward; also those expected in the five years following the review date.

<sup>12</sup> The qualifying date for each register is 15 October of that year.

The Guidance on housing and population movement also notes that:

- it is reasonable to include only major sites;
- for future housing it is reasonable to include all sites with outline planning permission;
- inclusion of land released for house-building but without planning permission is likely to lead to over-estimates;
- forecasts that are determined by housing plans tend to over-estimate;
- dwellings vary in the number of adults they are likely to house. Two per dwelling may be assumed except where it is known that the sites are of flats for elderly people, when 1 elector per dwelling can be assumed. Other assumptions may be justified.

*Historic data from Council Tax on the number of properties*

The Council's council tax department has provided data on the number of properties in the years 2005-2009 and 2011.<sup>13</sup>

Year	Total properties in the Ribble Valley	Wiswell/Barrow	SPD <sup>14</sup>	Unoccupied/exempt/other
June 2012		484	132	18
2011	24,833	456	125	19
2009	24,680	446	132	15
2008	24,565	447	134	13
2007	24,512	446	124	16
2006	24,409	446	125	16
2005	24,291	446	117	13
2004	24,146	449	117	20
2003	23,817	449	112	16
2002	23,510	449	118	19
2001	23,285	448	125	12
2000	23,092	449	114	19

This suggests that, apart from a slight decrease, the number of properties in Wiswell/Barrow changed very little in the years up to 2009. It also shows a slight increase in the number of single person households until 2009.

Since 2009, the number of properties has increased.

A six-year comparison of the data from 2003 and 2009 (the comparison period used for electorate change in the parish, above) showed that the number of properties was 99% of what it was in 2003 in 2009 for the parish as a whole.

In June 2012 the number of households was 107% of that in October 2006.

I anticipate that this is due to recent housing developments in the Barrow ward.

When I previously carried out this forecast, in 2010, a new application had been received for 64 dwellings and associated infrastructure in respect of land at Barrow Brook on 5 July 2010.<sup>15</sup>

*Data from Planning on the number of properties*

The planning department have created reports showing applications for the past 5 years for housing in 2010. They have produced further reports showing housing planning applications and change of use applications in Wiswell Parish.

<sup>13</sup> Current figures are not set out for legal reasons.

<sup>14</sup> Single person discounts in Wiswell/Barrow.

<sup>15</sup> Application 3/2010/0568.

As the Guidance explains: “Forecasts that are determined by housing plans tend to over-estimate the population or electorate, partly because some plans do not come to fruition within the expected time-scale and partly because they are partly filled by existing residents”.

Multiple planning applications may also be made in respect of the same site (even though only one could practically be carried out). The data is therefore of limited value.

<b>2010 5-year review (data produced in 2010, as part of the previous forecast)</b>	
	<b>Approximate number of new dwellings based on applications<sup>16</sup> 01/01/2005 to 01/03/2010</b>
<b>Ribble Valley estimates</b>	380
<b>Wiswell (i.e. Wiswell and Barrow) estimate</b>	0

This suggested that there would be little change in electorate size in Wiswell/Barrow. However, as I explained at the time, a new application had just been received for 64 dwellings and associated infrastructure in respect of land at Barrow Brook. This was approved.

The Council tax data suggested that some of this development had now been completed. I have discussed this with the Council’s Building Regulation department who confirmed that most of this development has been completed. They also advised that the same developer has received permission for 37 dwellings on an adjacent site at Barrow. This is confirmed by the 2012 planning data below.

<b>2012 5-year review</b>	<b>Approximate number of new dwellings based on applications<sup>17</sup> 01/06/2007 to 27/06/2012</b>	<b>Wiswell or Barrow ward</b>
<b>3/2009/0791</b>	80 (10 of which are live/work units)	B
<b>3/2010/0568</b>	64	B
<b>3/2011/0307</b>	37	B
<b>3/2009/0035</b>	1	B
<b>3/2011/0355</b>	2	W
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>182 B and 2 W</b>

### *The SHLAA*

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) looks at potential new housing sites within the Ribble Valley and forms a vital part of the evidence base that will inform the new

<sup>16</sup> I have tried to count all “new” dwelling (excluding replacements and cases where the same site has come up on more than one application. There is a certain amount of guess work involved, as the descriptions in the planning report are brief. However, this gives a reasonable indication of the number of possible new houses (not all of the applications will, of course, result in houses actually being built).

<sup>17</sup> The reports cover Wiswell and Pendleton, but I have counted only those that I know to be in Wiswell Parish (i.e. Wiswell or Barrow). They cover applications for housing and for change of use. Where the development proposed is a replacement dwelling, I have not counted this as an increase.

development plan for the Ribble Valley, the Local Development Framework (LDF). Although not allocation sites, the SHLAA highlights sites with the potential for housing development and indicates at what stage in the future these may become available.

The Council's adopted SHLAA report showed Barrow ward to have more potential for residential development than Wiswell ward.

## **Conclusions**

Limited data is available on Wiswell Parish, and even less on the Parish wards of Wiswell and Barrow.

However, the vast majority of the data that is available suggests that:

- changes are likely to take place to the ward of Barrow; and
- it is probable that Barrow will continue to increase in size as new developments are completed.

Recent planning applications and the SHLAA suggest that this is a real possibility. The fact that houses have been built since the last review in 2010 supports this conclusion.

If the number of houses proposed in the recent planning applications were all built, this would represent a marked increase in the size of Barrow.

Using the 2007 electoral register number (569) as a baseline (the start of the planning report), and optimistically assuming that all applications granted come to fruition (182 dwellings), then, using the assumption of 2 electorates per dwelling (364), this would mean an increase of approx 64% (164) to Barrow ward. The increase to Wiswell (4) ward is, in comparison, negligible.

If the increase to Barrow ward occurred (and it has already begun), it will inevitably have an effect on Barrow and may well further exacerbate the "identity" divide raised by the Wiswell Parish Council between the parish wards of Barrow and Wiswell.

This forecast does not therefore suggest that it would be inappropriate to divide the current Parish of Wiswell, along current parish ward lines, into two separate parishes of Wiswell and Barrow.

If anything it suggests that any changes in electorate size that may occur would result in the Barrow ward further increasing (substantially) in size as a result of new developments.

### **ANNEX: Rough approximations of electoral ratios for other parishes in the borough**

The number of parish councillors in each parish varies widely across the borough, as illustrated in the table below. In more rural areas, where populations are more widely dispersed, the ratio is low. In the built-up areas in the towns of Clitheroe and Longridge, it is comparatively high. Wiswell and Barrow, being near to Whalley and Clitheroe, but villages in their own right, fall somewhere between these two extremes.

Name of Parish	Number of parish councillors	Electorate as at 1 December 2010 in polling districts <sup>18</sup>	Approximate electoral ratio <sup>19</sup>
Aighton, Bailey and Chaigley (Chaigley & Hurst Green Wards)	8	818	102
Balderstone	7	348	50
Bashall Eaves and Mitton (Bashall Eaves, Great Mitton and Litton Mitton Wards)	7	311	44
Billington and Langho (Billington & Old Langho and Langho Wards)	9	4,189	465
Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley (Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley Wards)	11	833	76
Bowland Forest (Higher division)	5	113	23
Bowland Forest (Lower division)	5	136	27
Bowland-with-Leagram (Bowland and Leagram Wards)	6	119	20
Chatburn	8	932	123
Chipping	6	872	145
Clayton-le-dale	5	1012	202
Clitheroe (Edisford and Low Moor, Littlemoor, Primrose, St Mary's & Salthill Wards)	10	11,985	1,199
Dutton	7	183	26
Gisburn	5	428	86
Grindleton	7	674	96
Hothersall	7	125	18
Longridge (Alston, Derby & Dilworth Wards)	12	6,145	512
Mellor	10	1,896	190

<sup>18</sup> We do not have electorate figures on a parish-by-parish basis. These figures are the electorates for **polling districts**. These do not necessarily correlate to parish boundaries: the table therefore gives only a rough approximate of electoral ratios for parish councillors in each area. This figures date from 2010: the last electoral forecast I carried out.

<sup>19</sup> See footnote above. I have rounded the ratios to the nearest full number.

<b>Name of Parish</b>	<b>Number of parish councillors</b>	<b>Electorate as at 1 December 2010 in polling districts<sup>18</sup></b>	<b>Approximate electoral ratio<sup>19</sup></b>
Newton-in-Bowland	5	248	50
Osbaldeston	5	139	28
Pendleton	5	184	37
Ramsgreave	5	658	132
Read	8	1,135	142
Ribchester	7	1,346	192
Rimington & Middop (Rimington and Middop Wards)	7	392	56
Sabden	9	1,120	124
Salesbury	5	314	63
Simonstone	8	995	124
Slaidburn and Easington (Slaidburn & Easington Wards)	7	289	41
Thornley-with-Wheatley	5	279	56
Waddington	7	894	128
West Bradford	5	698	140
Whalley	9	2,743	305
Wilpshire	8	2,109	264
Wiswell (Barrow and Wiswell Wards)	8	828	104

The above table is inexact but it does give an indication of the wide disparity between the electoral ratios (1199 in the most densely populated areas to 18 in rural areas).