



**SAVE THESE  
OXFORDSHIRE  
PARISHES!**

What is **SEERA?**

Why you should

take action to **STOP!** its plans for  
the future of this area.

▶ **WHY WORRY ABOUT SEERA?**

To the great disappointment of Oxfordshire local authorities, the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) has included six South Oxon parishes in its Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley strategy area. These parishes are Binfield Heath, Eye & Dunsden, Harpsden, Kidmore End, Mapledurham and Shiplake. These mainly rural areas have been in Reading's sights for years and their inclusion in the Western Corridor would make their long-term annexation much easier. This could alter the character and identity of our Oxfordshire villages.

▶ **HAVE WE BEEN CONSULTED?**

No. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) set up SEERA, which then defined its own sub-regional boundaries. Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council objected to the inclusion of our parishes in the Western Corridor but were ignored. The only consultation you have received (if it reached you) was a leaflet asking about preferred housing levels.

▶ **CAN WE DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT?**

Hopefully, yes. It is the view of your Parish Council, along with the other parishes similarly affected, that this change is not in our long-term interest. There is a further consultation period between April and June this year and this is why the councils have got together to fight for the transfer of all six parishes out of the Western Corridor and into the rest of Oxfordshire.

▶ **HOW WILL WE DO IT?**

By using one of the oldest forms of local democracy, available only to parishes – a Parish Poll. First, the residents of each of the parishes will be invited to their own Parish Meeting, held specially for the purpose of debating a motion and requesting a poll. Your own Parish Council will tell you your meeting date. Assuming a poll is requested at this meeting, it will then be announced for Thursday April 27th. This will be a formal consultation of registered voters, organised in each parish on the same day by SODC's Returning Officer, Steven Lake.

▶ **WHAT WILL HAPPEN THEN?**

We are hoping for a clear YES vote from residents for our parishes to come out of the Western Corridor. If we get that mandate we can lobby SEERA in the consultation period with concrete evidence that the people of our parishes do not want to be included in the Western Corridor. Our MP, Boris Johnson will take our case to the Deputy Prime Minister.

▶ **WHATEVER YOUR VIEW...**

*Please take part in this rare exercise in local democracy. Your Parish Council is giving you the chance to have your say in shaping the future of the village you have chosen to live in. Don't waste it – make sure you vote in the Poll.*

[www.s-t-o-p.org.uk](http://www.s-t-o-p.org.uk)



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The aims of the STOP! campaign have the full support of the Parish Councils of Binfield Heath, Eye & Dunsden, Harpsden, Kidmore End, Mapledurham and Shiplake together with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. Issued by M Leonard at 7 Badgers Walk, Shiplake, Henley on Thames.



South Oxfordshire parishes in SEERA's Western Corridor sub-region.

## ▶ WHAT'S HAPPENING TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Several years ago the Government divided England into nine regions with assemblies to plan their long-term development. This area is covered by the South East England Regional Assembly, known as SEERA, whose head office is in Guildford. This region includes over 8m people and stretches from Kent, through Sussex to Hampshire and Berkshire and north to Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. London is not part of it. Members of the Regional Assembly are appointed, not elected.

Sitting below the Regional Assemblies are democratically elected County, District and Parish Councils. The Government's new planning rules have significantly reduced the County Council's role in strategic planning, as power shifts from Oxford to Guildford and, ultimately, the Deputy Prime Minister's office in London.

## ▶ HOW WILL THIS WORK?

These very large regions have been subdivided into strategy areas according to their perceived needs for development – housing, transport and economy. Some areas have been selected for special development and one of these, called the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region, includes Reading. This sub-region is largely made up of parts of the old Berkshire county, but stretches from Basingstoke (Hants) in the south to High Wycombe (Bucks) in the north and includes Slough in the east.

It is a large and economically important area, one of the wealthiest in the South East. More expansion is planned for the area and Reading itself wishes to grow north of its current boundaries – into South Oxfordshire.

## ▶ WHERE CAN WE FIND OUT MORE?

Ask your parish council. Look on SEERA's website at [www.southeast-ra.gov.uk](http://www.southeast-ra.gov.uk) or see

[www.s-t-o-p.org.uk](http://www.s-t-o-p.org.uk)



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Can we **STOP!**

Reading spreading?

**Vote YES on Thursday 27 April:  
Parish Poll Day.**

▶ **THE ANSWER IS YES!**

*Use your vote on Thursday April 27 to say YES to removing your parish from the new Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley sub-region.*

Your Parish Council, along with South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, is backing the action to keep Oxfordshire together. Now it's your turn to have your say. Electors in all six parishes are voting on the same question on the same day.

As the result of a request at your recent Parish Meeting, we are organising a special Parish Poll for you to say what you think – this is a rare use of a long-established democratic process. Voting takes place on Thursday April 27 between 4pm and 9pm in the places listed right. All voters registered on the electoral roll may take part but there are no postal or proxy votes.

If you cannot get to the polling station without help please contact your own Parish Council as a lift may be available.

*Don't miss this special chance to exercise your democratic rights! You will be asked if you agree: "That the Parish Council seek the removal of the parish from the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley Sub-Region". Simply vote YES or NO.*

▶ **SAVE THESE OXFORDSHIRE PARISHES!**

Polling stations are open only between 4pm and 9pm. The locations and Clerks' contact details are:

**Binfield Heath Parish: Dunsden Village Hall**  
Clerk Beverly Dobson: 0118 972 3266

**Eye & Dunsden Parish: Dunsden Village Hall**  
Clerk Beverly Dobson: 0118 972 3266

**Harpsden Parish: Harpsden Village Hall**  
Clerk Mrs J De Souza: 01491 572104

**Kidmore End Parish: Kidmore End Parish Hall**  
Clerk Roger Penfold: 0118 947 3130

**Mapledurham Parish: Mapledurham Village Hall**  
Clerk Roger Penfold: 0118 947 3130

**Shiplake Parish: Shiplake Memorial Hall**  
Clerk Duncan Ritchie: 01189 40 2081

▶ **PROTECT YOUR PARISH: MAKE SURE YOU USE YOUR VOTE!**

*Remember: there are no postal votes and we need the highest possible turn-out. You **must** vote in person on Thursday 27 April.*

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