

11. Test Valley

11.1 About Test Valley

The Borough of Test Valley forms the western flank of Hampshire. It is an extremely 'tall' district, nearly 30 miles from top to bottom. The district touches the New Forest National Park in the south and the North Wessex Downs AONB in the north. Test Valley has a long border with Wiltshire and strong connections to Salisbury and Salisbury Plain, making it the point at which the South East starts to become the West Country.

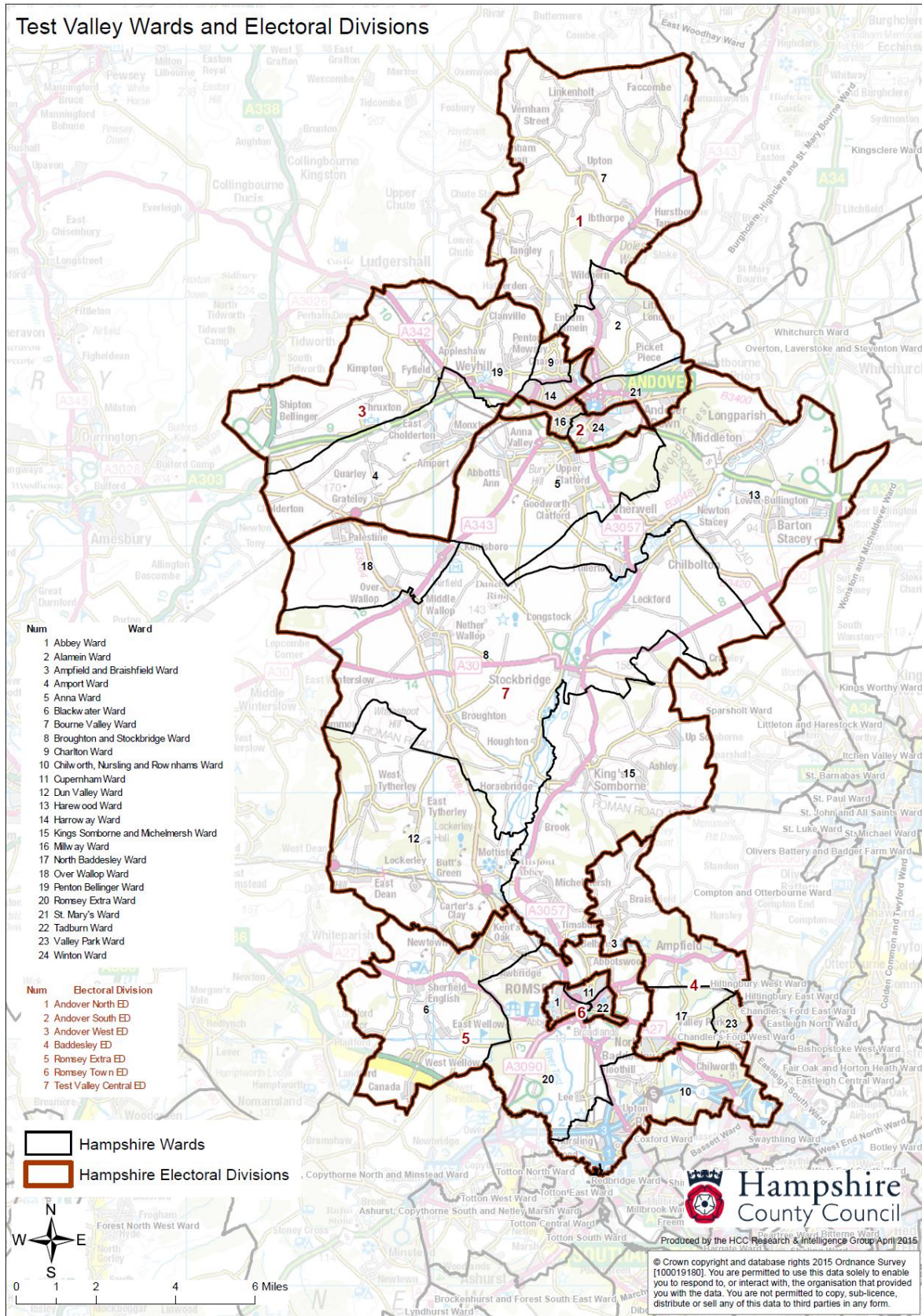
Test Valley has a population in 2015 of just over 120,000. The district is overwhelmingly rural, with only two large urban areas: Andover and Romsey. These towns are at opposite ends of the district and, reflecting their history as separate districts prior to 1974, the connections between the two are not very strong. The Borough Council, for example, has separate Planning Committees for North and South, which complicates the task of representing the central Test Valley area as a County Councillor. The centre of the district is very sparsely populated with a single main settlement at Stockbridge, a much-valued local service centre but relatively small in population terms and linked as much to Winchester as Romsey or Andover.

Both towns are located on strategic travel corridors. Andover is a key station on the West of England main line and (with Grateley) home to many London commuters, while the 'Andover Bypass' was one of the first stretches of the A303 to be built, linking London and the South West. In housing terms Andover grew significantly after the Second World War and is still growing today. It has also attracted significant employment on the former Andover Airfield site, including the Land Army Headquarters, a reflection of the town's strong military heritage and connection to Salisbury Plain.

Romsey is situated on the Salisbury-Southampton corridor and has close links with both cities as well as Winchester. However, Romsey is a true market town and an economic centre in its own right. The Test flood plain has constrained development on the west side of the town but it has grown to the east and has a large development currently taking place in Abbotswood. South of Romsey lie the M27 and settlements connecting Test Valley to urban south Hampshire including Valley Park and Chilworth.

Outside the towns the settlement pattern in the district is characterised by typical Hampshire villages and hamlets, many of them located along the world-famous River Test, which flows south to Southampton Water, and its tributaries. The Test is a chalk stream renowned in particular for trout, and it attracts fly fishermen from around the world.

Map of Existing County Council Divisions in Test Valley



11.2 County Council Divisions in Test Valley

There are currently seven County Councillors from Test Valley, each representing one division, and the County Council's proposal is that this should remain the case.

Existing divisions – registered and forecast electorate

Division name	Members	2014 Electorate	2014 Variance	2021 Electorate Forecast	2021 Variance
Andover North	1	15,395	+17.7%	19,875	+43.5%
Andover South	1	12,151	-7.1%	11,950	-13.7%
Andover West	1	12,958	-0.9%	12,952	-6.5%
Baddesley	1	13,159	+0.6%	12,793	-7.6%
Romsey Extra	1	12,771	-2.4%	14,493	+4.7%
Romsey Town	1	11,871	-9.2%	12,131	-12.4%
Test Valley Central	1	14,617	+11.8%	14,638	+5.7%
Total	7	92,922		98,832	

Across Test Valley there are three divisions (Romsey Extra, Test Valley Central, and most of all, Andover North) that will see new development up to 2021 and therefore an increased electorate. Other divisions are forecast to have a lower than average electorate. This has meant that there is a need to alter the boundaries of all the divisions a little, re-distributing some wards and polling districts to balance the total electorate, but the proposals do not change the balance and nature of the divisions greatly.

In formulating new proposals for Test Valley the County Council's priorities were:

- To retain seven divisions;
- To endeavour to meet the requirements of the Commission in full and to respect the parliamentary boundaries on community grounds, if possible;
- If appropriate, to allow urban divisions to have larger electorates than the rural divisions given that they are more physically compact;
- To give serious consideration to existing community arrangements.

Reflecting the proposed new boundaries for the current Romsey Extra and Romsey Town divisions, it is proposed that they be renamed Romsey Rural and Romsey respectively. No other changes to division names are proposed.

The proposals for Test Valley were co-ordinated by Councillor Andrew Gibson, the Member for Test Valley Central, and were discussed with and agreed by all current Test Valley County Councillors, except in the case of Baddesley division (see below).

11.3 Andover North

2021 Electorate Forecast: 19,875 (+43.5% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers the western part of Andover town and all the area north of Andover. It is a varied division, including the town centre, residential areas and industrial estates in the south and, at its northern end bordering Wiltshire, some of the most sparsely-populated rural areas in Hampshire. The A343 Andover-Newbury road is the principal travel corridor. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Alamein
- Bourne Valley
- St. Mary's

Following significant new housing development Andover North is growing very fast – in fact the division has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is further above the Hampshire average than any other in the county. It is therefore essential to reduce its geographical extent to achieve greater electoral equality. This can only be done at the southern end where Andover North meets three other divisions. It is proposed that one polling district be moved to each of the other three in a way that links them with their most logical neighbouring community. This brings Andover North's variance down from +44% to under +5%.

Proposal for Andover North

- Transfer UP-St Mary 1 to Andover South (-1,706)
- Transfer SF-Alamein 3 to Andover West (-2,053)
- Transfer VO-St Mary 7 to Test Valley Central (-1,606)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 14,510 (+4.8% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.4 Andover South

2021 Electorate Forecast: 11,950 (-13.7% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers the southern part of Andover town and some small outlying areas between the town and the A303. Andover South is primarily

residential but it also includes the recent commercial development area at Andover Airfield. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Millway
- Winton

Andover South has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is well below the Hampshire average and it is therefore necessary to increase its area to achieve greater electoral equality. As seen above, the proposal is that this is achieved by enlarging the division at its eastern end with the addition of an urban polling district from Andover North, bringing the forecast Andover South electorate up to just under the Hampshire average.

Proposal for Andover South

- Add UP-St Marys 1 (+1,706)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 13,656 (-1.4% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.5 **Andover West**

2021 Electorate Forecast: 12,952 (-6.5% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers the north-western part of Andover town and all of the area west of the town, which borders Salisbury Plain. The defining feature of this division is the dual-carriageway A303 trunk road, which runs through the centre and is a nationally significant route between London and the West Country. Grateley is a major rural commuter station, with fast journey times to Salisbury, Basingstoke, Woking and London. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Amport
- Charlton
- Harroway
- Penton Bellinger

Andover West has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is below the Hampshire average but within the -10% threshold, so it is not strictly necessary to take action to achieve greater electoral equality. As seen above however, pressure arising from Andover North means that it is proposed that an urban polling district be added where the two divisions meet north of Andover town.

Proposal for Andover South

- Add SF-Alamein 3 (+2,053)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 15,005 (+8.4% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.6 **Baddesley**

2021 Electorate Forecast: 12,793 (-7.6% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers the south-eastern part of Test Valley and borders Winchester and Eastleigh districts. It is largely rural in nature but has two significant settlements: North Baddesley and Valley Park, which adjoins Chandler's Ford. The division therefore connects the urban south of Hampshire with the rural centre of Test Valley. The busy A3090 Romsey-Winchester road passes through Baddesley. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Ampfield & Braishfield
- North Baddesley
- Valley Park

Baddesley has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is below the Hampshire average but within the -10% threshold, so it is not strictly necessary to take action to achieve greater electoral equality. However, pressure arising from Romsey Extra and Test Valley Central means that some realignment in this part of Test Valley is necessary. It is proposed that the adjacent polling district SS-Chilworth be moved from Romsey Extra into this division. The A27 from North Baddesley continues into Chilworth, which also includes the junction of the M3 and M27. The proposal brings Baddesley's forecast electorate almost exactly to the Hampshire average.

This proposal met with the support of the majority of Test Valley Members but Councillor Alan Dowden, the Member for Baddesley, indicated his preference for the division's boundaries to remain unchanged.

Proposal for Baddesley

- Add SS-Chilworth (+1,077)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 13,870 (+0.2% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.7 **Romsey Extra**

2021 Electorate Forecast: 14,493 (+4.7% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers a large primarily rural area around the town of Romsey, comprising numerous villages and a new development area north of the

town called Abbotswood. It extends east to the borders of Eastleigh and Southampton, and west to Wiltshire. A number of major roads criss-cross this division including the M27, the north-south A3057 and the A27/A36 to Salisbury. The River Test and the Salisbury-Southampton railway run north-south through Romsey Extra. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Blackwater
- Chilworth, Nursling & Rownhams
- Romsey Extra

Romsey Extra has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is above the Hampshire average but within the +10% threshold, so it would not normally be necessary to take action to achieve greater electoral equality. However, the below-average electorate forecast for Romsey Town requires the expansion of that division and this can only be done by extending into Romsey Extra. It is therefore proposed that UI-Romsey Extra 1 be moved into the Romsey Town division. Similarly, as seen above it is proposed that SS-Chilworth be moved to Baddesley to bring that division closer to the average.

To offset these changes, it is proposed that the whole of Dun Valley Ward, which looks to Romsey in terms of travel and is part of the Romsey-based parliamentary constituency, and TT-Michelmersh, which reaches within a mile of Romsey at its southern end, be added to this division.

The proposed changes mean that the Romsey Extra division is no longer coterminous with Romsey Extra parish. As a result, it is proposed that this division be renamed Romsey Rural.

Proposal for Romsey Rural

- Transfer SS-Chilworth to Baddesley (-1,077)
- Transfer UI-Romsey Extra 1 to Romsey Town (-2,354)
- Add Dun Valley (+1,708)
- Add TT-Michelmersh (+698)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 13,468 (-2.7% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.8 Romsey Town

2021 Electorate Forecast: 12,131 (-12.4% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division covers only the town of Romsey and is currently surrounded by Romsey Extra. The town has strong links to Southampton and Salisbury, to which it is linked by train, and also to Winchester. Romsey is smaller than

many other market towns but has a strong and separate identity. The River Test, the town's canals and Romsey Abbey are defining features of Romsey. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Abbey
- Cupernham
- Tadburn

Most new development in the Romsey area is taking place outside the division boundaries, meaning that Romsey Town is forecast to have an electorate in 2021 that is well below the Hampshire average. It is therefore necessary to take action to achieve greater electoral equality. As seen above, it is proposed that the division's extent be increased by adding UI-Romsey Extra 1 from the current Romsey Extra division. This expands Romsey Town outside the historic town area and into Romsey Extra parish, and it is therefore proposed to remove the 'Town' reference and rename this division Romsey.

Proposal for Romsey

- Add UI-Romsey Extra 1 (+2,354)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 14,485 (+4.6% against forecast Hampshire average)

11.9 **Test Valley Central**

2021 Electorate Forecast: 14,638 (+5.7% against forecast Hampshire average)

This division is by some way the largest in Hampshire and covers the entire central area of the district, an area of over 120 square miles. Test Valley Central has a long border with Wiltshire, stretches east almost as far as Basingstoke & Deane district, and connects the outskirts of Romsey with those of Andover. The division is wholly rural and includes some 23 parishes. In the middle lies the local service centre of Stockbridge, which has a long trading history due to its location at the intersection of the River Test and the Salisbury-Winchester road. The division currently includes the following wards:

- Anna
- Broughton & Stockbridge
- Dun Valley
- Harewood
- Kings Somborne & Michelmersh
- Over Wallop

Test Valley Central has a forecast electorate in 2021 that is above the Hampshire average but within the +10% threshold, so it is not strictly necessary to take action to achieve greater electoral equality. However, pressure arising from Andover North means that this division needs to expand in the north and shrink in the south. This will orient the division more towards Andover and reduce its geographical extent, making for more practical arrangements. As seen above, it is proposed that VO-St Marys 7 in the north be added and Dun Valley and TT-Michelmersh be transferred to Romsey Rural, bringing Test Valley Central to almost exactly the Hampshire average.

Proposal for Test Valley Central

- Add VO-St Marys 7 (+1,606)
- Transfer Dun Valley to Romsey Rural (-1,708)
- Transfer TT-Michelmersh to Romsey Rural (-698)

Proposed 2021 Electorate: 13,838 (-0.1% against forecast Hampshire average)

Proposals for Test Valley

Division name	Members	2021 Electorate (Existing Forecast)	2021 Variance (Existing Forecast)	2021 Electorate (Proposed)	2021 Variance (Proposed)
Andover North	1	19,875	+43.5%	14,510	+4.8%
Andover South	1	11,950	-13.7%	13,656	-1.4%
Andover West	1	12,952	-6.5%	15,005	+8.4%
Baddesley	1	12,793	-7.6%	13,870	+0.2%
Romsey Rural	1	14,493	+4.7%	13,468	-2.7%
Romsey	1	12,131	-12.4%	14,485	+4.6%
Test Valley Central	1	14,638	+5.7%	13,838	-0.1%
Total	7	98,832		98,832	

Map of Proposed County Council Divisions in Test Valley

