

### **Why Should Kidlington become a Town?**

A. Here is a summary of the main arguments that have been put forward in the last few months. .

- 1) How is this different from 1987 (the last time we became a town)?
  - a) Kidlington and our local area has continued to develop
    - i) Minimum 4400 houses across the PR sites
    - ii) Likely delivery over 5000 houses
    - iii) Will bring 12,000-15,000 new residents to the area
    - iv) The great majority will be outside Kidlington proper, but Kidlington will be the service centre for what is, effectively, a conurbation of well over 30,000 inhabitants
  - b) The challenges we are facing in the future
    - i) Local Government Re-organization
      - Greater Oxford threat: in their proposal for Local Government Reorganisation, Oxford City want to absorb their surrounding villages
    - ii) The Green Belt Threat
      - Threat of further loss of the Green Belt and proposed 40000 homes
      - Land Behind the Moors, Frieze Farm
      - We can expect further applications for our Green Belt Land which as a village has little protection under the NPPF 2025
- 2) What becoming a town doesn't in itself change
  - a) Our boundaries
  - b) The status of our surrounding villages
  - c) How your Council Tax is calculated
  - d) The Services we (KPC) provide for our residents
  - e) The number of councillors on the council
  - f) The name on our signs
  - g) No Mayor
- 3) Why are we Proposing Becoming a Town?
  - a) Kidlington is larger than a great many towns in Oxfordshire
    - i) 2021 Population Census Classification in Oxford : 8th in size Kidlington 13,719 followed by five towns: Wantage 13,106, Thame 12, 951, Henley-on-Thames 11,782, Faringdon 8,620, Wallingford 8,455
    - ii) A population range of 5,000-19,000 is classified as a Small Town
  - b) Towns and Cities have a stronger identity and voice
    - i) There is a reason this constituency is Bicester and Woodstock
  - c) The 2025 Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee emphasises towns and town centres as a focus.
    - i) We are currently policed as a village with a lower ration than towns are required to have Greater Priority for Policing Greater Opportunities to secure funding and investment

- d) Greater Opportunities to secure funding and investment
  - i) There is currently a national agenda to support development of towns Examples of current funding streams include: National Lottery Heritage Fund – Future Parks Initiative, Pride in Place Initiative, UK Shared Prosperity Fund
  - ii) 2024 Investor Survey (Lambert Smith Hampton & Revo) found that 72% of investors plan to focus regeneration efforts on Town Centres
- e) Green Belt protection.
  - i) The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF 2025) focuses on protecting Town Green Belt against urban sprawl in towns and protects the space between towns and cities
  - ii) Protection of Greenbelt in villages was downgraded
- f) Local Government Reorganisation
  - i) major opportunity for more control over services to residents
  - ii) risk of losing our voice in a larger unit is offset if as a town we have more control
  - iii) We are the Designated Local Service Centre (another name for a town) for the parishes of Kidlington, Gosford and Water Eaton, Yarnton, Begbroke, Shipton on Cherwell and Thrupp
  - iv) Within the next few years, the combined population will increase to around 35,000-40,000.
  - v) We need to fight for the resources to serve that population Being fit to serve our surrounding population
- g) Greater Oxford proposal: KPC has agreed to strongly oppose it.
  - i) More difficult for Oxford to absorb us if we are a town: the current proposal only involves surrounding villages.
- h) Pride of place
  - i) Preserving our identity as Kidlington is important
  - ii) We want to have a sense of pride in our location
  - iii) We need to fight for better infrastructure and services

B. Engagement exercises in July 2025: views have been expressed on both sides

- 1) Discussion stands at Gala day and at Market
- 2) Open Poll on paper and online Aug-Oct 2025
- 3) Leaflet hand delivered to all residents in Kidlington Parish
- 4) Online Survey for residents from QR on leaflet only Oct 2025
- 5) In person drop-in clinics held at Exeter Hall for residents to ask questions Dec 2025
- 6) Residents Meeting: none of the residents attending argued against becoming a town.

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