

Community Governance Review - St Albans City and District Council
Electorate forecast and methodology

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Introduction

To ensure that the Community Governance Review (CGR) takes account of expected population changes in the short- to medium-term, electorate forecasts have been calculated for the period of five years from the expected start date of the review (as recommended in guidance published by central governmentⁱ).

The forecasting guidance published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)ⁱⁱ has been used to calculate a predicted electorate per polling district for 2030/2031.

Various datasets were used to produce the electorate forecast including historic electorates, Office for National Statistics (ONS) data, and housing trajectory data compiled by the council's Planning Departmentⁱⁱⁱ.

Throughout this forecast, "electorate" refers to local government electorate (excluding overseas electors).

Reliability of data sets / electorate forecasts

ONS data

At the time of calculating our electorate forecasts, the latest set of ONS subnational population projections (based on data from 2022) had not been published. Therefore, we used the ONS population projections released in March 2020 (based on data from 2018).

Due to the age of the ONS data that is currently available, the population projections used in our forecasts may be lower than actual population rises.

When comparing local government electorates with population figures, it is expected that electorate figures are lower than population figures. This is because not all adults are eligible to be included on the electoral register.

However, the ONS 2018 data population projections for adults (18 years of age and older) in the St Albans City and District Council area for 2024 and 2025 are lower than the actual electorate in those years:

- 2024
 - ONS population projection (based on 2018 data) = 111,899
 - Actual electorate = 112,269
- 2025
 - ONS population projection (based on 2018 data) = 112,204
 - Actual electorate = 113,450

The latest ONS population estimate for mid-2023 (published in 2024) estimates the population of the St Albans City and District Council area to be 112,542. Comparing this estimate with the ONS 2018 data population projections for 2023 (111,535) suggests that the 2018 data population projections are lower than actual population growth.

Planning data

The Local Plan for St Albans City and District is currently going through Local Plan Examination. If the Local Plan is adopted in 2026 as intended, the actual amount of housing delivery is likely to be significantly higher than outlined in the housing trajectory data used in our calculations.

Forecast for overall local authority area

ONS projections and LGBCE guidance were used to calculate an estimated figure for the potential future electorate of the whole local authority area.

Adult population to electorate ratio

As not all adults are eligible to vote, ONS population projections^{iv} were compared with historic electorates to calculate the adult population to electorate ratio.

Figures from the previous five years were used with the aim of reducing the impact on the final ratio of any particularly effective/ineffective registration activity, and of electorate change relating to national polls.

The table below compares historic electorates to the corresponding ONS population figures:

Year	Local government electorate (1 April)	ONS population estimates (18 y/o and over)	Electorate as percentage of ONS population (2pd)
2025	113,450	112,204	101.11%
2024	112,269	111,899	100.33%
2023	110,637	111,535	99.19%
2022	109,943	111,290	98.79%
2021	110,725	110,968	99.78%
Average (mean) percentage (2dp):			99.84%

The **adult population to electorate ratio** is therefore estimated to be **1:0.9984**.

Local authority electorate forecast for 2030

The adult population forecast is based on the ONS projection for St Albans for 2030. Currently, this is 113,989.27 (2dp) for the population aged 18 and over.

The relevant LGBCE formula was used to calculate an estimated electorate figure for the St Albans City and District Council area in 2030 (five years after the start of the CGR):

$$\text{Electors in a future year} = \text{adult population forecast} \times \text{adult population to electorate ratio}$$

Electorate forecast for 2030 = $113,989.27 \times 0.9984$ = **113,807**
(to nearest whole number)

Analysis of small area (polling district data)

Current electorate

The 1 April 2025 local government electorate (excluding overseas electors) has been used in our calculations (Appendix A).

Housing occupancy

We have calculated the current average number of electors per property per polling district and used these figures to estimate the likely occupancy levels for new properties within each polling district.

The “electorate per dwelling factor” used in our electorate forecasting is equal to the average (mean) number of electors per property (Appendix B).

Vacancy rates

We have used the current number of empty properties per polling district to calculate likely future vacancy rates.

The “factor for vacant dwellings” used in our forecasting was calculated by ascertaining the percentage of vacant dwellings in each polling district (Appendix C).

Identifying future housing development

To identify potential future housing development within the authority, we have used the council’s housing trajectory for the period until 2040/41. The housing trajectory used was the most up-to-date available to us, with a base date of 1 April 2024.

Properties expected to be completed between 2025/26 and 2030/31 have been included in our forecast.

Due to their relatively small impact on electorate, we have disregarded sites that are expected to comprise of less than five dwellings.

We do expect an amount of windfall sites to become available for housing during the next five years. However, following advice contained within the LGBCE guidance, we have not included any assumptions about windfall sites in our calculations.

Polling district level forecasts

When producing electorate forecasts for a previous LGBCE review of district wards (2018-2020) and a Community Governance Review (2021-2023), we found that historically there were no significant trends in electorate change at ward level which were not related to housing development. Therefore, to calculate the polling district level forecasts we have followed the LGBCE formula for wards which show a strong relationship between electorate change and housing development:

$$\text{Area forecast} = \text{current electorate} + (\text{electorate per dwelling factor} \times \text{factor for vacant dwellings} \times \text{new housing forecast})$$

The calculations for each polling district are provided in Appendix D.

Constraining the total electorate

LGBCE guidance suggests that local authorities “constrain” their forecast to ONS projections to limit the impact of any miscalculations of population / house-building at a polling district level.

Therefore, the method outlined in the LGBCE’s guidance was used to constrain the polling district electorate forecasts to ONS projections:

$$\text{Constraining factor} = \frac{\text{the overall local authority electorate forecast}}{\text{the sum of the local authority's polling district forecasts}}$$

Constraining factor = 113,807 / 115,784 = 0.9829

The constrained polling district forecasts are provided in Appendix E.

Appendix A: Current electorate (local government electorate on 1 April 2025)

Polling district	Local government electorate (1 April 2025)
BHA	3970
BHB	2008
BWA	935
BWB	1922
BWC	1496
BWD	1279
BWE	162
CHA	1312
CHB	699
CHC	162
CHD	20
CLA	2628
CLB	1182
CLC	2460
CNA	1437
CNB	4355
HEA	1612
HEB	2346
HEC	1840
HED	91
HLA	169
HLB	3046
HLC	716
HLD	1819
HNA	343
HNB	3956
HNC	1795
HSA	1370
HSB	4089
HSC	211
HWA	1440
HWB	2517
HWC	2385
LCA	428
LCB	828
LCC	2166
LCD	94
LCE	1180

LCF	64
LCG	623
LCH	583
MEA	2332
MEB	3537
MEC	191
MWA	1198
MWB	674
MWC	1941
MWD	150
PSA	1077
PSB	1385
PSC	384
PSD	829
PSE	3002
RBA	1797
RBB	2407
RBC	157
SLA	2039
SLB	1678
SLC	1834
SPA	1232
SPB	1318
SPC	3633
SSA	84
SSB	2668
SSC	4075
SWA	4884
SWB	1350
VRA	2212
VRB	1953
VRC	1528
VRD	163
Total	113450

Appendix B: housing occupancy rates per polling district

Electorate per dwelling factor = Average elector count per property

Polling district	Average (mean) elector count per property (April 2025)	Electorate per dwelling factor
BHA	2.0886	2.0886
BHB	1.7146	1.7146
BWA	1.9472	1.9472
BWB	2.2046	2.2046
BWC	2.0770	2.0770
BWD	1.8368	1.8368
BWE	1.9875	1.9875
CHA	2.0549	2.0549
CHB	2.1257	2.1257
CHC	1.7742	1.7742
CHD	2.2222	2.2222
CLA	2.1277	2.1277
CLB	2.0743	2.0743
CLC	1.9133	1.9133
CNA	1.8936	1.8936
CNB	1.9275	1.9275
HEA	1.9430	1.9430
HEB	2.1806	2.1806
HEC	2.0281	2.0281
HED	1.3636	1.3636
HLA	2.4028	2.4028
HLB	2.1769	2.1769
HLC	2.1029	2.1029
HLD	2.1259	2.1259
HNA	2.2209	2.2209
HNB	2.2111	2.2111
HNC	1.9776	1.9776
HSA	2.3697	2.3697
HSB	1.9881	1.9881
HSC	2.5294	2.5294
HWA	1.7199	1.7199
HWB	2.1394	2.1394
HWC	1.9688	1.9688
LCA	2.1221	2.1221
LCB	2.1552	2.1552
LCC	1.8814	1.8814
LCD	2.0833	2.0833
LCE	1.8018	1.8018

LCF	1.7632	1.7632
LCG	1.9145	1.9145
LCH	2.2622	2.2622
MEA	1.8718	1.8718
MEB	2.0105	2.0105
MEC	1.7909	1.7909
MWA	2.3372	2.3372
MWB	2.4982	2.4982
MWC	2.0474	2.0474
MWD	2.2879	2.2879
PSA	1.9252	1.9252
PSB	2.0891	2.0891
PSC	1.9043	1.9043
PSD	1.7841	1.7841
PSE	2.0518	2.0518
RBA	2.0580	2.0580
RBB	1.9042	1.9042
RBC	2.3571	2.3571
SLA	1.7883	1.7883
SLB	2.0721	2.0721
SLC	2.0201	2.0201
SPA	1.6798	1.6798
SPB	1.7839	1.7839
SPC	1.5867	1.5867
SSA	2.2368	2.2368
SSB	2.1248	2.1248
SSC	2.0450	2.0450
SWA	1.9897	1.9897
SWB	1.9609	1.9609
VRA	1.8534	1.8534
VRB	2.0232	2.0232
VRC	2.0597	2.0597
VRD	2.1000	2.1000

Appendix C: Current vacancy rates per polling district

Factor for vacant dwellings = 1 – percentage of properties empty

Polling district	Total number of properties (April 2025)	Number of empty properties (April 2025)	Percentage of properties which are empty (%)	Factor for vacant dwellings
BHA	2087	134	6.42%	0.9358
BHB	1378	155	11.25%	0.8875
BWA	544	52	9.56%	0.9044
BWB	941	37	3.93%	0.9607
BWC	788	48	6.09%	0.9391
BWD	783	72	9.20%	0.9080
BWE	85	5	5.88%	0.9412
CHA	720	64	8.89%	0.9111
CHB	373	31	8.31%	0.9169
CHC	102	9	8.82%	0.9118
CHD	9	0	0.00%	1.0000
CLA	1365	104	7.62%	0.9238
CLB	608	29	4.77%	0.9523
CLC	1436	109	7.59%	0.9241
CNA	852	72	8.45%	0.9155
CNB	2546	200	7.86%	0.9214
HEA	920	61	6.63%	0.9337
HEB	1174	50	4.26%	0.9574
HEC	985	59	5.99%	0.9401
HED	79	13	16.46%	0.8354
HLA	73	1	1.37%	0.9863
HLB	1480	50	3.38%	0.9662
HLC	376	26	6.91%	0.9309
HLD	943	69	7.32%	0.9268
HNA	172	9	5.23%	0.9477
HNB	1941	103	5.31%	0.9469
HNC	989	53	5.36%	0.9464
HSA	623	36	5.78%	0.9422
HSB	2186	86	3.93%	0.9607
HSC	87	2	2.30%	0.9770
HWA	1027	156	15.19%	0.8481
HWB	1275	63	4.94%	0.9506
HWC	1338	88	6.58%	0.9342
LCA	242	29	11.98%	0.8802
LCB	419	26	6.21%	0.9379
LCC	1285	96	7.47%	0.9253
LCD	59	11	18.64%	0.8136

LCE	744	68	9.14%	0.9086
LCF	46	8	17.39%	0.8261
LCG	362	23	6.35%	0.9365
LCH	285	18	6.32%	0.9368
MEA	1370	106	7.74%	0.9226
MEB	1932	121	6.26%	0.9374
MEC	121	11	9.09%	0.9091
MWA	537	18	3.35%	0.9665
MWB	288	13	4.51%	0.9549
MWC	1014	43	4.24%	0.9576
MWD	69	3	4.35%	0.9565
PSA	612	37	6.05%	0.9395
PSB	726	41	5.65%	0.9435
PSC	241	32	13.28%	0.8672
PSD	532	55	10.34%	0.8966
PSE	1596	91	5.70%	0.9430
RBA	953	56	5.88%	0.9412
RBB	1384	79	5.71%	0.9429
RBC	80	10	12.50%	0.8750
SLA	1270	89	7.01%	0.9299
SLB	922	76	8.24%	0.9176
SLC	1039	94	9.05%	0.9095
SPA	865	106	12.25%	0.8775
SPB	855	96	11.23%	0.8877
SPC	2987	553	18.51%	0.8149
SSA	41	3	7.32%	0.9268
SSB	1343	53	3.95%	0.9605
SSC	2217	151	6.81%	0.9319
SWA	2651	135	5.09%	0.9491
SWB	764	48	6.28%	0.9372
VRA	1347	119	8.83%	0.9117
VRB	1041	50	4.80%	0.9520
VRC	799	45	5.63%	0.9437
VRD	88	8	9.09%	0.9091

Appendix D: Area forecast calculations per polling district

Polling district	A: Current electorate (April 2025)	B: Electorate per dwelling factor	C: Factor for vacant dwellings	D: New housing forecast	Polling district forecast (A+ (BxCxD))
BHA	3970	2.09	0.94	150	4263.17
BHB	2008	1.71	0.89	0	2008.00
BWA	935	1.95	0.90	0	935.00
BWB	1922	2.20	0.96	0	1922.00
BWC	1496	2.08	0.94	0	1496.00
BWD	1279	1.84	0.91	0	1279.00
BWE	162	1.99	0.94	0	162.00
CHA	1312	2.05	0.91	45	1396.25
CHB	699	2.13	0.92	0	699.00
CHC	162	1.77	0.91	0	162.00
CHD	20	2.22	1.00	0	20.00
CLA	2628	2.13	0.92	0	2628.00
CLB	1182	2.07	0.95	0	1182.00
CLC	2460	1.91	0.92	72	2587.30
CNA	1437	1.89	0.92	43	1511.54
CNB	4355	1.93	0.92	0	4355.00
HEA	1612	1.94	0.93	0	1612.00
HEB	2346	2.18	0.96	14	2375.23
HEC	1840	2.03	0.94	0	1840.00
HED	91	1.36	0.84	0	91.00
HLA	169	2.40	0.99	0	169.00
HLB	3046	2.18	0.97	0	3046.00
HLC	716	2.10	0.93	0	716.00
HLD	1819	2.13	0.93	0	1819.00
HNA	343	2.22	0.95	0	343.00
HNB	3956	2.21	0.95	11	3979.03
HNC	1795	1.98	0.95	20	1832.43
HSA	1370	2.37	0.94	0	1370.00
HSB	4089	1.99	0.96	42	4169.22
HSC	211	2.53	0.98	0	211.00
HWA	1440	1.72	0.85	0	1440.00
HWB	2517	2.14	0.95	0	2517.00
HWC	2385	1.97	0.93	0	2385.00
LCA	428	2.12	0.88	0	428.00
LCB	828	2.16	0.94	0	828.00
LCC	2166	1.88	0.93	0	2166.00
LCD	94	2.08	0.81	0	94.00
LCE	1180	1.80	0.91	29	1227.48
LCF	64	1.76	0.83	0	64.00

LCG	623	1.91	0.94	0	623.00
LCH	583	2.26	0.94	0	583.00
MEA	2332	1.87	0.92	0	2332.00
MEB	3537	2.01	0.94	0	3537.00
MEC	191	1.79	0.91	0	191.00
MWA	1198	2.34	0.97	0	1198.00
MWB	674	2.50	0.95	0	674.00
MWC	1941	2.05	0.96	0	1941.00
MWD	150	2.29	0.96	0	150.00
PSA	1077	1.93	0.94	0	1077.00
PSB	1385	2.09	0.94	0	1385.00
PSC	384	1.90	0.87	0	384.00
PSD	829	1.78	0.90	0	829.00
PSE	3002	2.05	0.94	154	3299.96
RBA	1797	2.06	0.94	0	1797.00
RBB	2407	1.90	0.94	160	2694.28
RBC	157	2.36	0.88	0	157.00
SLA	2039	1.79	0.93	79	2170.38
SLB	1678	2.07	0.92	0	1678.00
SLC	1834	2.02	0.91	0	1834.00
SPA	1232	1.68	0.88	0	1232.00
SPB	1318	1.78	0.89	22	1352.84
SPC	3633	1.59	0.81	61	3711.87
SSA	84	2.24	0.93	0	84.00
SSB	2668	2.12	0.96	346	3374.17
SSC	4075	2.05	0.93	0	4075.00
SWA	4884	1.99	0.95	0	4884.00
SWB	1350	1.96	0.94	0	1350.00
VRA	2212	1.85	0.91	0	2212.00
VRB	1953	2.02	0.95	0	1953.00
VRC	1528	2.06	0.94	0	1528.00
VRD	163	2.10	0.91	0	163.00
				Total	115783.15

Appendix E: Constrained area forecasts per polling district

Polling district	Polling district forecast	Constraining factor	Constrained forecast (polling district forecast x constraining factor)	Constrained electorate forecast to next whole number
BHA	4263.17	0.9829	4190.271776	4191
BHB	2008.00	0.9829	1973.6632	1974
BWA	935.00	0.9829	919.0115	920
BWB	1922.00	0.9829	1889.1338	1890
BWC	1496.00	0.9829	1470.4184	1471
BWD	1279.00	0.9829	1257.1291	1258
BWE	162.00	0.9829	159.2298	160
CHA	1396.25	0.9829	1372.374125	1373
CHB	699.00	0.9829	687.0471	688
CHC	162.00	0.9829	159.2298	160
CHD	20.00	0.9829	19.658	20
CLA	2628.00	0.9829	2583.0612	2584
CLB	1182.00	0.9829	1161.7878	1162
CLC	2587.30	0.9829	2543.060729	2544
CNA	1511.54	0.9829	1485.696035	1486
CNB	4355.00	0.9829	4280.5295	4281
HEA	1612.00	0.9829	1584.4348	1585
HEB	2375.23	0.9829	2334.611876	2335
HEC	1840.00	0.9829	1808.536	1809
HED	91.00	0.9829	89.4439	90
HLA	169.00	0.9829	166.1101	167
HLB	3046.00	0.9829	2993.9134	2994
HLC	716.00	0.9829	703.7564	704
HLD	1819.00	0.9829	1787.8951	1788
HNA	343.00	0.9829	337.1347	338
HNB	3979.03	0.9829	3910.98999	3911
HNC	1832.43	0.9829	1801.097166	1802
HSA	1370.00	0.9829	1346.573	1347
HSB	4169.22	0.9829	4097.921428	4098
HSC	211.00	0.9829	207.3919	208
HWA	1440.00	0.9829	1415.376	1416
HWB	2517.00	0.9829	2473.9593	2474
HWC	2385.00	0.9829	2344.2165	2345
LCA	428.00	0.9829	420.6812	421
LCB	828.00	0.9829	813.8412	814
LCC	2166.00	0.9829	2128.9614	2129
LCD	94.00	0.9829	92.3926	93
LCE	1227.48	0.9829	1206.48597	1207

LCF	64.00	0.9829	62.9056	63
LCG	623.00	0.9829	612.3467	613
LCH	583.00	0.9829	573.0307	574
MEA	2332.00	0.9829	2292.1228	2293
MEB	3537.00	0.9829	3476.5173	3477
MEC	191.00	0.9829	187.7339	188
MWA	1198.00	0.9829	1177.5142	1178
MWB	674.00	0.9829	662.4746	663
MWC	1941.00	0.9829	1907.8089	1908
MWD	150.00	0.9829	147.435	148
PSA	1077.00	0.9829	1058.5833	1059
PSB	1385.00	0.9829	1361.3165	1362
PSC	384.00	0.9829	377.4336	378
PSD	829.00	0.9829	814.8241	815
PSE	3299.96	0.9829	3243.535512	3244
RBA	1797.00	0.9829	1766.2713	1767
RBB	2694.28	0.9829	2648.210994	2649
RBC	157.00	0.9829	154.3153	155
SLA	2170.38	0.9829	2133.262942	2134
SLB	1678.00	0.9829	1649.3062	1650
SLC	1834.00	0.9829	1802.6386	1803
SPA	1232.00	0.9829	1210.9328	1211
SPB	1352.84	0.9829	1329.706206	1330
SPC	3711.87	0.9829	3648.396138	3649
SSA	84.00	0.9829	82.5636	83
SSB	3374.17	0.9829	3316.471466	3317
SSC	4075.00	0.9829	4005.3175	4006
SWA	4884.00	0.9829	4800.4836	4801
SWB	1350.00	0.9829	1326.915	1327
VRA	2212.00	0.9829	2174.1748	2175
VRB	1953.00	0.9829	1919.6037	1920
VRC	1528.00	0.9829	1501.8712	1502
VRD	163.00	0.9829	160.2127	161
			Total	113840

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ⁱ Department for Communities and Local Government & Local Government Boundary Commission for England, (March 2010), *Guidance on Community Governance Reviews*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/community-governance-review-guidance.pdf>. Paragraphs 170-171.

ⁱⁱ Local Government Boundary Commission for England, (no date), *Electoral Forecasting: User Guidance*. [Online] Available at: https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/electoral_forecasting_-_user_guidance.pdf.

ⁱⁱⁱ St Albans City & District Council, (2024), *St Albans City and District: Authority's Monitoring Report 2024 (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024)*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/AMR%20Authority%27s%20Monitoring%20Report%202024.pdf>.

^{iv} Office for National Statistics, (2020), *Population projections – local authorities: SNPP Z1*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandz1>.