

Local council electoral structure review

About Greater Bendigo City Council

The Traditional Custodians of the land in Greater Bendigo City Council are the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungurung peoples.

Greater Bendigo City Council is about 150 km north-west of Melbourne, with a population of 121,470 in 2021 and a forecast annual growth rate of 2%.

Covering an area of 3,000 km², the council area includes urban centres of Axedale, Bendigo, Elmore, Goornong, Heathcote and Marong.

Greater Bendigo City Council shares its borders with 5 other councils: Campaspe Shire Council in the north, Strathbogie and Mitchell shire councils in the east, Mount Alexander Shire Council in the south, and Loddon Shire Council in the west.

The council area is home to the Greater Bendigo National Park and extensive Box-Ironbark forests. The Campaspe River flows through the municipality into Lake Eppalock. Major roads service the area including the Calder, McIvor, Midland, Loddon Valley, Northern and Wimmera highways.

More Greater Bendigo City Council residents worked in health care and social assistance than any other industry in 2021. These industries employed 19.1% of residents.

The median age in 2021 was 40, which was lower than the rural and regional Victorian overall median age of 43.

Most people in the municipality (70.5%) owned their own home either outright or with a mortgage in 2021, when the median weekly household income was \$1,448.

Current structure

Greater Bendigo City Council is divided into 3 wards with a total of 9 councillors:

- 3 wards with 3 councillors each.

About the review

Under Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020*, Greater Bendigo City Council must now have a single-councillor ward electoral structure.

The Minister for Local Government has appointed an electoral representation advisory panel to conduct an electoral structure review of the council. The panel will advise the Minister on the most appropriate single-councillor ward structure for Greater Bendigo City Council.

The panel is looking at:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards
- the location of ward boundaries
- appropriate ward names.

Electoral structure reviews are an important part of democracy, and your input is valuable. As a local, you know your local council area better than anyone. This is your chance to let the panel know your thoughts about the single-councillor ward electoral structure that you believe would best provide representation for your community.

There are 2 opportunities for you to have your say on the electoral structure of the council:

1. in a response submission to the preliminary report
2. in an online public hearing, if you request to speak in your response submission.

Last review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Greater Bendigo City Council in 2011.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the 2011 review final report.

Review process

Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 June

Information sessions

Session 1: 12 noon, Monday 26 June

Session 2: 6 pm, Tuesday 27 June

Information sessions are for anyone wanting to find out more about the review process. Links to register for an information session will be available on the VEC website.

Wednesday 28 June

Preliminary report

The panel will release a preliminary report including one or more options for the electoral structure on Wednesday 28 June.

Response submissions open from this date.

Wednesday 19 July

Response submission close

The panel must receive all submissions by 5 pm on Wednesday 19 July.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Tuesday 25 July

Public hearing

The panel will hold an online public hearing if anyone requests to speak about their response submission at 2 pm on Tuesday 25 July.

The public hearing will not be held if there are no requests to speak.

Wednesday 23 August


Final report

The panel will submit a final report to the Minister for Local Government including its advice on the electoral structure on Wednesday 23 August.

The Minister will then consider the panel's advice before recommending a change to the electoral structure. Any change to the electoral structure of the council following the review is expected to apply at the next local council elections.

How to make a submission

 On the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

 By email to

GreaterBendigo.ERAPSubmissions@vec.vic.gov.au

 By post to

Electoral representation advisory panel
c/o Victorian Electoral Commission
Level 11, 530 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

Submissions must include your:

- full name
- contact phone number or email address
- residential or postal address.

All submissions will be published on the VEC website. Your name and locality (suburb or town) will be published, but your full address and contact details will be removed. See the submission guide and VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au/privacy for privacy information.

Submission guide

Download the submission guide from the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on the review process and making a submission.

One vote, one value

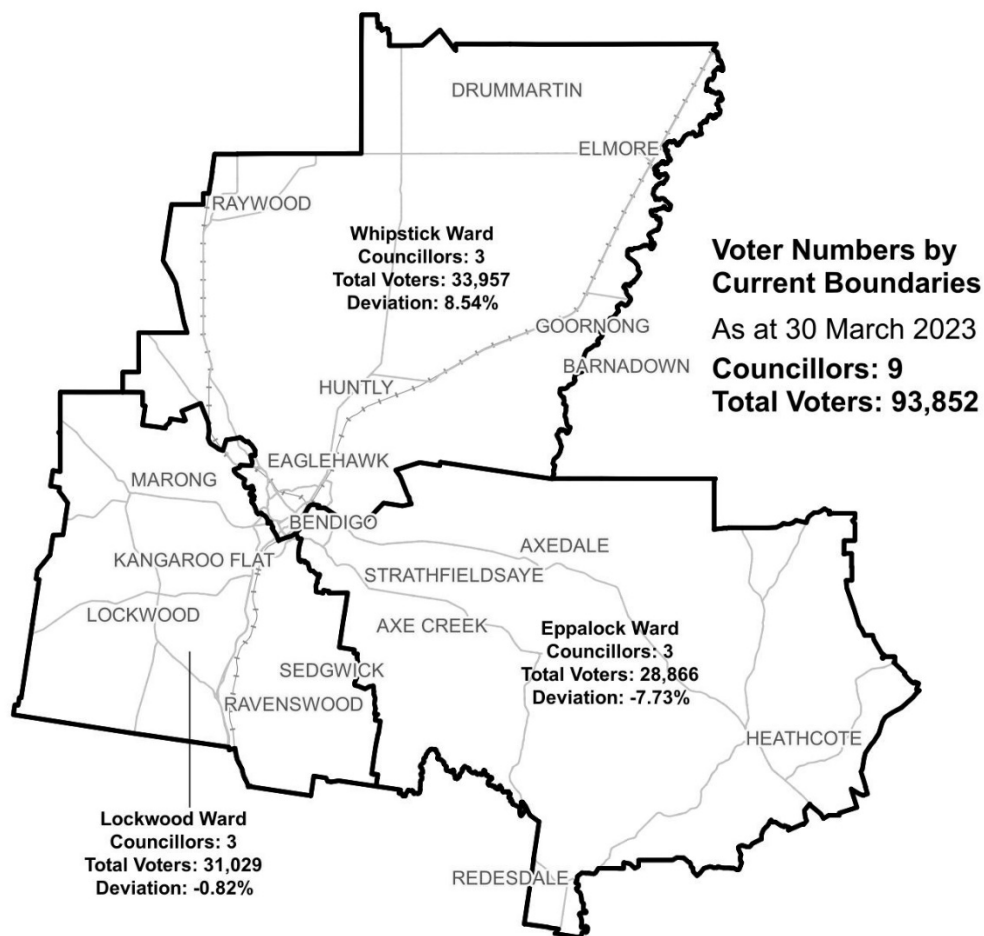
The 'one vote, one value' democratic principle is enshrined in the *Local Government Act 2020*. This means that every person's vote counts equally.

When a local council area is subdivided into wards, the number of voters each councillor represents in each ward must be within plus-or-minus 10% of the of the average number of voters per councillor for all the wards.

The map below includes the current number of voters in each ward and the ward's current deviation from the average. The panel will consider likely population and voter changes to ensure the structure remains equitable.

If you make a submission online, you can use a mapping tool to build your preferred electoral structure. The tool uses current voter numbers to tell you the deviations of the wards you make. This will help you propose a structure that meets the requirements of the Act.

Current electoral structure



Ward	Councillors	Voters	Deviation
Eppalock	3	28,866	-7.73%
Lockwood	3	31,029	-0.82%
Whipstick	3	33,957	+8.54%

Statistics

Area (km²) 3,000

Voters

Voters per square km

31.3

Average voters per councillor

10,428

Population

Current population

121,470

Forecast population growth

2.0 % p.a.

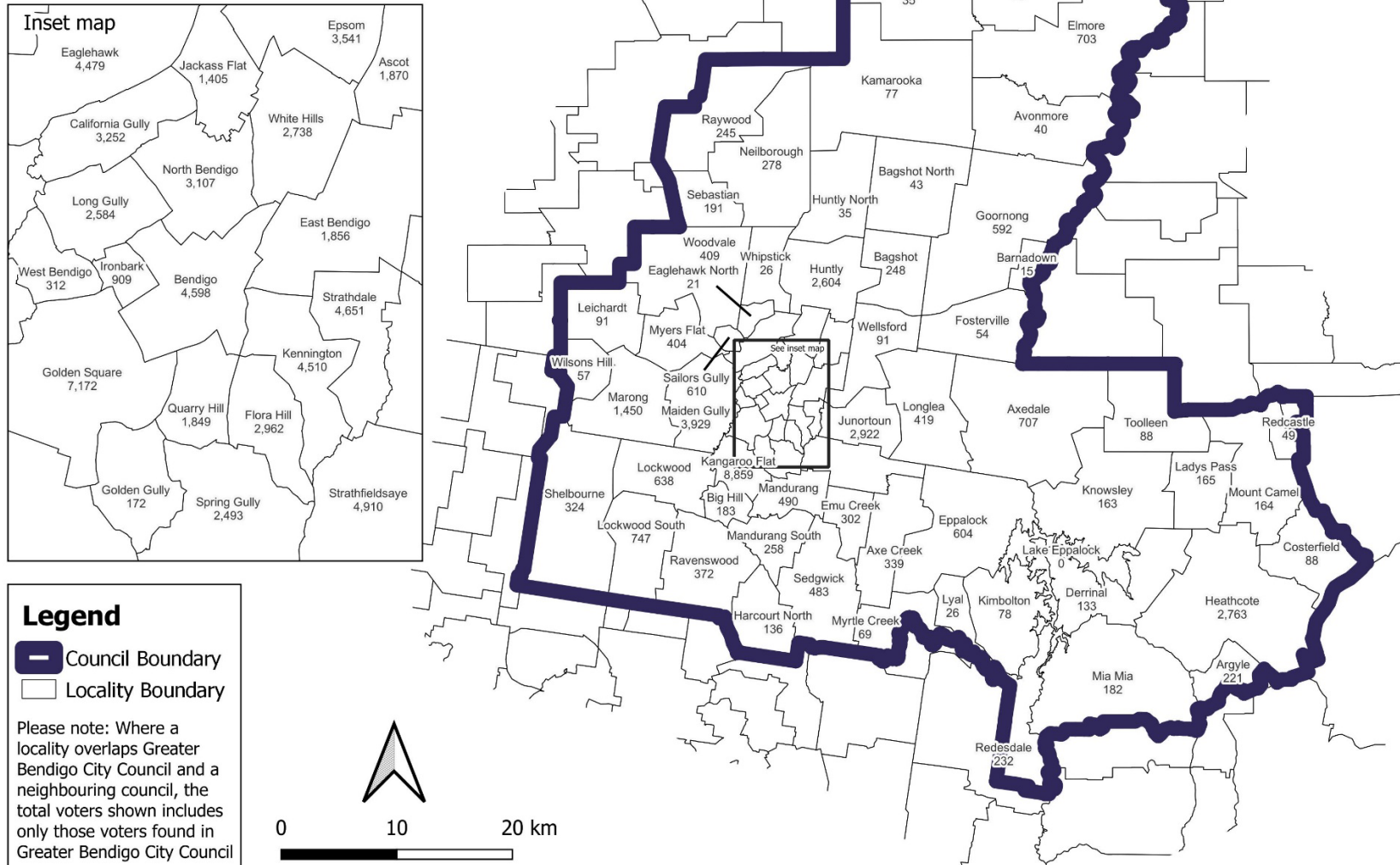
Further census statistics available at abs.gov.au

Voter numbers by locality (map)

Greater Bendigo City Council

TOTAL VOTERS: 93,852

Voter numbers as at 30 March 2023



Voter numbers by locality (table)

Greater Bendigo City Council voter numbers at 30 March 2023

Locality	Voters
Argyle	221
Ascot	1,870
Avonmore	40
Axe Creek	339
Axedale	707
Bagshot	248
Bagshot North	43
Barnadown	15
Bendigo	4,598
Big Hill	183
California Gully	3,252
Costerfield	88
Derrinal	133
Drummartin	35
Eaglehawk	4,479
Eaglehawk North	21
East Bendigo	1,856
Elmore	703
Emu Creek	302
Eppalock	604
Epsom	3,541
Flora Hill	2,962

Locality	Voters
Fosterville	54
Golden Gully	172
Golden Square	7,172
Goornong	592
Harcourt North	136
Heathcote	2,763
Hunter	30
Huntly	2,604
Huntly North	35
Ironbark	909
Jackass Flat	1,405
Junortoun	2,922
Kamarooka	77
Kangaroo Flat	8,859
Kennington	4,510
Kimbolton	78
Knowsley	163
Ladys Pass	165
Lake Eppalock	0
Leichardt	91
Lockwood	638
Lockwood South	747

Locality	Voters
Long Gully	2,584
Longlea	419
Lyal	26
Maiden Gully	3,929
Mandurang	490
Mandurang South	258
Marong	1,450
Mia Mia	182
Mount Camel	164
Myers Flat	404
Myrtle Creek	69
Neilborough	278
North Bendigo	3,107
Quarry Hill	1,849
Ravenswood	372
Raywood	245
Redcastle	49
Redesdale	232
Sailors Gully	610
Sebastian	191
Sedgwick	483
Shelbourne	324

Locality	Voters
Spring Gully	2,493
Strathdale	4,651
Strathfieldsaye	4,910
Toolleen	88
Wellsford	91
West Bendigo	312
Whipstick	26
White Hills	2,738
Wilson's Hill	57
Woodvale	409