

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

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Comment text:

For your attention, we attach our views and comments on warding patterns related to the Fairfield Ward in Stockton on Tees Borough, for the next stage of consultation, for consideration/submission.

Uploaded Documents:

[Download \(https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1605607359_Fairfield+Electoral+Data+001.docx\)](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1605607359_Fairfield+Electoral+Data+001.docx)

Fairfield Ward

Warding Patterns.

Further to our comments on the recent Member Survey for the review of ward boundaries in Stockton, we provide our views on Ward Patterns related to the Fairfield Ward.

Firstly, we would like you to note that the overview and arrangements established in the Fairfield Ward have been maintained for many years and run in a well-defined and orderly manner by two serving Councillors. Time and effort have no boundaries, whatever it takes to establish good common-sense practices and getting the right results for the benefit of the residents.

Ward boundaries are not defined by fences or brick walls, they are defined by communities in established areas and the number of residents that reside within.

Looking at the most recent Electoral Data for the Fairfield Ward shows the Electorate for 2020 at 4541, with a variance of - 12%, and 4575 at variance of - 13% for 2026. Although Councillor/resident representation is lower than the norm, one should consider the interest and identities of the local communities, as for example, in the Fairfield Ward, there are 2 junior Schools for pupils 5 to 11 year olds and 1 CE Academy for pupils 11 to 16 year olds, two public Houses, 1 Library, 1 Youth Club, Scout assembly, 2 Shopping parades, a General Store, 2 Garages - 1 for vehicle servicing and the other for supply of fuel including a general store and car wash facilities. These all facilitate the migration of residents from other nearby surrounding communities of different Wards, who have limited or no facilities established in close proximity. Overall, we consider the Electorate numbers that are shown for 2020 are deflated numbers when you consider the migration patterns of other local residents using the Fairfield Ward facilities.

If it is the case to establish electoral equality for local voters i.e. Councillors represent the same number of people for each Ward area, then Boundary patterns could be established by making some small adjustments to the Ward boundaries, which are easily identifiable for effective representation.

The following are a few suggestions that would need to be considered, to establish Electorate Equality in the Fairfield Ward.

1. Consider the North West Area of the West Side Stockton Development as indicated in Zone D of the Development Plan. This lies at the head of Fairfield Ward, separated by Darlington Back Lane. The scheme consists at the moment of 392 dwellings, including shopping and community hub arrangements.
2. Consider the Stockton West Side Development which in part is encapsulated by the present Fairfield Ward Boundary. The plans indicate that 121 dwellings would be provided out of 859 in total for Zone E development. Adjusting the boundary arrangements further south of the original location to include about half the permitted development, would increase the electorate from 171 to 430 approximate i.e. half the permitted development. It would also reflect on the growth of the Hartburn Ward in this circumstance, as it would even out the variance for the Hatburn Ward in 2026, reflecting positively for the variance of the Fairfield Ward.

Also, to note that within the Fairfield development there are proposals, to include for a Primary School which offer 525 places, with an admission number of 75 pupils per year and to include pre-school Nursery provision of 52 places. Once again, we should consider the interest and identities of local communities and the migration patterns of other nearby Ward residents using the facilities in the Fairfield Ward.

3. Consider the area inclusive of part Surbiton Road that continues from the beck south of the Fairfield/Hartburn boundary, including residents of Hayling Way, Symons Close, Greenfields Way, part of Moulton Grove, Elton Grove, Aiskew Grove, Lyndon Way, Knayton Grove, Sadberge Grove, Scalby Grove and Muker Grove. This area consists of around 276 houses. With the provision of item 2 this would easily provide electoral equality.
4. Consider the area of Fairfield Road. The Fairfield/Grangefield Wards are split with the boundary running down the middle of the road. If you take the rest of Fairfield road in the Grangefield Ward including residents of Claremont Gardens, Fairfield Close, Gilling Road, The Avenue, Bishopton Road West and Bishopton Court, this community consists of around 345 houses. To note, the houses in these areas, once formed part of the Fairfield Ward but was placed into the Grangefield Ward from a previous Electoral Division of Boundaries. To say the least, a lot of residents in these areas, to this day, believe they still reside in the Fairfield Ward, i.e. as per the number of residents contacting the Fairfield Councillors with their problems on a regular basis.
5. Consider the area of Darlington Back Lane across the way from Malcolm Drive. The Fairfield /Elm Tree Wards are split with the boundary running down the middle of the road. If you take the number of houses opposite Malcolm Drive on Darlington Back Lane there are about 32 Houses that could be taken into consideration for electoral equality moving forward.

In summary you could make adjustments in many ways to attain the required electoral equality as noted above, ensuring each local Councillor represents roughly the same number of people. But, consideration must be given, that reflect the interests and identities of local communities. We would not like to see Boundary

adjustments just for the sake of making the numbers up, or for any political manoeuvring. Each Ward has a different perspective in maintaining and running their objectives, some Wards have complex needs whilst others more or less manage themselves, with very little input. Over the years we have created good harmony and excellent feedback from the residents, ensuring effective representation and that local ties are maintained at all times. If adjustments are made to Boundaries to suit electoral equality for each ward, then we must ensure that there is no discrimination between Ward Councillors, due to any boundary changes, and Councillor/resident relationships are not diminished for the pursuance of number crunching.

Fairfield Ward Councillors,

Bill Woodhead MBE and Maurice Perry.