

Northumberland

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Comment text:

Related subject: I live in the Bamburgh Division

I generally support the proposals but I believe that the Ellingham parish should be rejoin the Bamburgh Division (it was previously included until the 2013 elections). The parish naturally faces towards the Seahouses rather than Longhoughton service centre, most of the people who live in Ellingham have work or social connections to the Bamburgh Division not least because the principal transport routes connect them in contrast to the ease of getting to and from Longhoughton settlements.

Attached Documents:

- Electoral Commission NCC review 2023.docx

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9 July 2023

Local Government Boundary Commission
Northumberland Consultation website

This note expands on my comments on the consultation form on the website and my suggestion that the change in boundaries to deal with Northumberland's expected population increase provides an opportunity for Ellingham parish to rejoin the Bamburgh Division.

I think I have some relevant experience: I stood as a county councillor candidate for the Bamburgh Division in 2008 and was elected as its county councillor in 2013; I stood down in 2017. In the 2008 election Ellingham parish was in the Bamburgh Division and for 2013 it had been transferred to Longhoughton.

My experience was that the transfer, although possibly made for valid population reasons at the time, did not reflect either on the ground issues for residents nor how the parish interacted with the two Divisions. Ellingham parish is in many ways well connected to the Bamburgh Division: the principal transport routes connect the main villages of Seahouses and Ellingham. The smaller hamlets in the parish naturally look to and use the Seahouses or Belford service centres, and many residents have work or social connections to the villages in the Bamburgh Division. Most of the policy and issues that emerge are identical.

Conversely, the lack of easy transport arrangements between Ellingham and Longhoughton discourages connections between them (although the issues are of course similar).

The similarity and easy connectivity should make it easy for the Bamburgh Division councillor to absorb Ellingham. A practical matter for a rural councillor is the number of parish councils with which they have to interface: Bamburgh currently has 5: Ellingham would make 6, not a high number for a rural councillor. The increase in population resulting from a transfer would bring Bamburgh close to the County average rather than a few percent below as in the current proposal.

I hope you consider this suggestion seriously: it always struck me as a shame that the parish was removed from the Division for the reasons noted above, and this is an opportunity to provide more relevant representation.

[REDACTED]