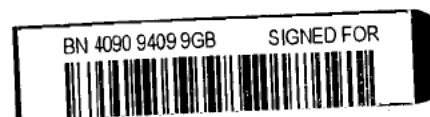
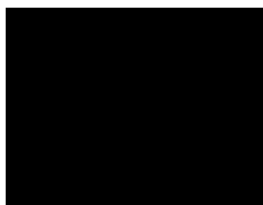


# INGLETON PARISH COUNCIL



Email: [clerk.ingletonparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.ingletonparishcouncil@gmail.com)

4 July 2023

Review Officer (County Durham)  
LGBCE  
PO Box 133  
Blyth  
NE24 9FE

Dear Sir or Madam

## PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY CHANGES

I have been asked by the Members of Ingleton Parish Council of Teesdale, County Durham, to make a response regarding the proposed boundary changes and, in particular, how these changes would affect everyone living, learning and working in and around Ingleton.

In your report you explain the intent of the electoral review and, as a review, it is right that the number of required councillors be assessed and how many should represent each ward or division. As you are an independent body; unbiased to the outcome; so it is right that you take into account the political and economic statistics. But statistics alone cannot assess the colossal effect this border change would have on the people who are removed from being recognised as Tees Dale people. Geographically we are in Teesdale, historically we are in Teesdale and, emotionally, our hearts are very much in Teesdale.

To return to the question of political representation – it has actually been suggested by many as a move, not so much to reduce numbers of councillors, but to increase the number of likely voters of a presumed political affiliation. If this is indeed the agenda, hidden or otherwise, then we take exception to a manoeuvre that would strip away the people's regional identity in such a cavalier way and hope that the review can unmask any such intent. The Parish Council has certainly never received any complaints regarding the number of Council representatives; we have but two who have, I believe, quite sensibly, apportioned the region geographically so that each one can help a specific area. It's a measure which has worked very well in the past so we see very little reason to change it for an expensive, divisive alternative.

We have, in Ingleton, always identified ourselves as Teesdale residents. Even before Teesdale District Council was formed in 1974 we were part of the Barnard Castle Urban District or Barnard Castle Rural District. All authorities were at the heart of Teesdale and it was to them that we paid our council taxes, applied for planning and environmental permissions and received the services of having our dustbins collected.

And indeed, we have been recognised by other authorities/services as being part of Teesdale. The following are just a small sample of such organisations:

- Ingleton is part of the Barnard Castle Police area of responsibility and in particular the Speed Watch team authorised by them.
- Educationally, the majority of our children leaving Ingleton Primary School go on to attend Teesdale Comprehensive Schools, namely in Staindrop and Barnard Castle or Barnard Castle School (which is a public school).
- St John the Evangelist Church in Ingleton comes under the control of the Barnard Castle Deanery.
- Our travel links naturally flow in an East/West direction connecting us to Teesdale and the Teesdale Valley
- The bus service we have in place serves people, young and old, who have no form of transport themselves and it has to be said that we do take advantage of accessing medical services in Barnard Castle as well as visiting the outpatients or friends and family on wards in the Richardson Hospital.
- We have cultural links with Barnard Castle, particularly with The Witham Theatre and The Bowes Museum.

Finally, to use the modern terminology, 'We identify as Teesdale!'

That being said, we take heart in reading the second and third points in Item 4 of the document where it states that:

- the Commission will ensure the recommendations reflect community identity, and
- provide arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

We urge the Commission to recognise and make recommendations that we in Ingleton, be allowed to retain our community identity as Teesdale residents for the following reasons:

- Barnard Castle being left within the borders of its own parish is taking away from the rest of us within the district the recognition of being a very close part of Barnard Castle, as previously exemplified.
- We always have, and always will, be linked far more closely with Barnard Castle because it is geographically nearby which clearly reflects your stated intent, 'to support effective and convenient local government.' Barnard Castle is 8.8 miles away. Were we to be moved into the Weardale District we would be some 14 miles from Crook and 13 miles from Spennymoor which appear to be the key places for administration.
- There is no logical link between Ingleton and the Gaunless Valley, Witton Park and Escombe. The natural links flow along the Tees Valley to Barnard Castle.
- There is very little in common when viewed from an historical perspective; Ingleton's being based on farming and agriculture whilst the Gaunless Valley was based on coal mining
- We have historically and geographically been *a community* within Teesdale and *the community* feels it should remain so.

Because of all these reasons I feel justified in again stating, 'We really DO identify as Teesdale'

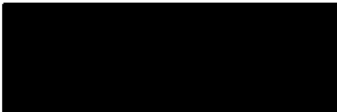
Everyone involved in the planning, consultation and reviewing of this proposal will know that the full effect of any change will not be felt by the majority of the residents until the actual change is announced and the processing begins. This consultation, whilst obviously advertised, is not widely recognised by the general public – sadly, we are all dealing with a lot of upsetting financial worries that take our minds from local administration plans.

But everyone involved in this will also know that, when announced, it will be at that time such a wrench on our historical and geographical links will cause an outcry. They, like us, will know that this change is not in the best interests of the people, whom governments, local and national, actually serve. So it is for those people, as well as those who have and will make a response, that we ask, indeed beg, for this change not to take place as it will cause so very much unnecessary upset.

Is it right that this Parish Council focuses not only on the facts of our situation but the emotions too? We believe so. This is our heritage we are fighting for and that is, in itself, an emotional response.

So, in conclusion, the Members of the Parish Council – and many people of our Parish who have discussed these proposals with us – ask for you recognise our passion and determination to retain our true heritage as Teesdale people and that you recommend Ingleton residents (as well as our neighbours who also, just as passionately, relate to being Teesdale people) be allowed to retain their historic right to belong to the same district as their many family and friends' generations in the long distant past. **Teesdale.**

Yours faithfully



Joyce Mead,  
Parish Clerk  
Ingleton.  
Teesdale  
County Durham