

East Riding of Yorkshire

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Comment text:

Proposed warding pattern for East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) 2024.

In my view it is better to make as few changes as possible to electoral boundaries, to avoid voter confusion. I assume polling district boundaries should be considered inviolable, although in one or two instances it would help the current exercise if some could be amended. However, the existing warding arrangements clearly do not satisfy the aim to be within +/-10% of the mean number of electors per councillor across the county.

I propose no changes to the following wards: St Mary's, Hessle, Tranby, Willerby & Kirk Ella, Goole North, Goole South, Snaith, Airmyn & Rawcliffe & Marshland or (save for a possible change of name) North Holderness. My preference would also be to make no change to Cottingham North or Cottingham South, although I accept that the former is outside the target +/-10% variance. If this really cannot be tolerated, the best solution would seem to be to move another part of Woodmansey (Nurseries ward) into Cottingham North, to be alongside Woodmansey Dunswell, which is already there.

In the case of the three wards sitting south of the River Ouse (Goole North, Goole South and Snaith, Airmyn & Rawcliffe & Marshland), there is a conundrum in that the total electorate adds up to 23,155 in 2023 and 23,967 in 2029. These figures justify the current allocation of 6 councillors across the three wards, with variances of (-4%) and (-5%) in the two years respectively. However, I have not been able to find any configuration of the polling districts which results in a variance less than 10% in at least one of them. As a result, my recommendation is to leave them as they are, rather than make changes without any gain.

Beginning at Beverley, the centre of the county area and the seat of the council, and proceeding in a clockwise spiral:

St. Mary's – no change (unless required to rebalance with Minster & Woodmansey – in which case, move polling district PB into St. Mary's and WL from St. Mary's to Beverley Rural).

Beverley Rural – keep all existing civil parishes and add Riston and Catwick to the east, from current Mid Holderness. While this improves the variance in Beverley Rural (to 0% from current -7%), the primary motivation in proposing this change is to resolve the outage in Mid Holderness.

Mid Holderness – this is currently too small to require 3 councillors, especially by 2029. My proposal is to remove the 2 civil parishes outlined above, along with Burstwick and Burton Pidsea to the south (to SW Holderness and SE Holderness respectively), and change this to a two-seat ward, with 7,853 electors in 2023 (-2% variance) and 7,867 in 2029 (-6%).

South East Holderness – add Burton Pidsea as described above, otherwise no change. Elector numbers are 11,932 in 2023, 12,428 in 2029, which improves variance from the current -7% to -1% in both years.

South West Holderness – add Burstwick, otherwise no change. Elector numbers are 12,606 in 2023, 12,728 in 2029, improving variances from the current -7% and -10% to +5% and +1% in the two years respectively.

Cottingham North and Cottingham South – no change. However, if a resolution to the current variance is unavoidable, move civil parish ward Woodmansey Nurseries from Minster and Woodmansey into Cottingham North. If this is required, a further improvement to variance in Cottingham would be to move polling district EA from Cottingham North into Cottingham South. In that case, the two Cottingham Castle parish wards would benefit from differentiation in their names, e.g. EA to become Cottingham Castle Ward South, while EB becomes Cottingham Castle Ward North.

Minster and Woodmansey – too large for 3 seats in 2023, but coming into acceptable tolerance in 2029. If the figures are considered out of limit, and to avoid moving Woodmansey Nurseries into a different parliamentary constituency, a possible solution would be to move PB into St. Mary's, with the knock on effect on WL as mentioned above.

South Hunsley – too large for two council seats, particularly by 2029 due to rapid population growth in this area. Proposed solution is to move Welton civil parish (all 3 polling districts) into Dale. This would now make South Hunsley too small, so it should be rebalanced by adding Skidby into South Hunsley. Electorate in the newly defined South Hunsley ward would be 7,497 (-7%) in 2023, 8,266 (-2%) in 2029.

Dale – currently too large for 3 councillors (+14% and +18% variance in 2023 and 2029 respectively). By adding Welton and removing Skidby, this ward expands further to 16,628 and 17,974 electors in the two years. It should therefore be divided into 2 distinct wards with two council seats

each. As Elloughton-cum-Brough already has a joint parish council, successfully combining the town of Brough with the nearby village of Elloughton, a sensible division would be to convert this to a county council ward with 8,060 electors in 2023 (0% variance) and 9,109 in 2029 (+9% variance). The rest of Dale with no further changes would consequently have 8,568 electors in 2023 (+7%) and 8,865 in 2029 (+6%).

Goole North, Goole South, Snaith, Airmyn & Rawcliffe & Marshland – no change, for the reasons given earlier.

Howdenshire – needs to be considered with Howden. While Howdenshire itself currently has a very good fit to the desired number of voters per seat, Howden has already outgrown its single seat warding, and is projected to reach a variance of +45% by 2029. This means Howden is too big for a single seat, but not big enough on its own for two. Even removing the adjacent parishes of Asselby and Barmby-on-the-Marsh will not bring Howden to an acceptable variance by 2029. My proposal is to expand northwards, adding the following civil parishes: Bubwith, Eastington, Ellerton, Foggathorpe and Spaldington; and in this way make up a 2 member ward. It would comprise 7,383 electors in 2023 (variance -8%), growing to 8,833 (+5%) in 2029. Subsequently, the rest of Howdenshire would be too small to sustain two seats on the council, unless we add civil parishes from further north. This can be achieved by adding three “orphan” parishes from Wolds Weighton: Sancton, South Cliffe and Seaton Ross. The resulting warding arrangement would have 8,299 electors in 2023 (+3% variance) and 8,541 in 2029 (+2%).

Pocklington Provincial – has the most extreme variance of all the existing wards in 2023 (+28%). In principle, the elector numbers, 15,371 in 2023 and 16,062 in 2029, are sufficient to merit 4 councillors. As 4-seat wards are not entertained, this would need to be subdivided into 2 wards. One of these would most sensibly be formed from the three polling districts in Pocklington itself (RD, RE, RF). This has 8,537 electors and 9,044 in 2023 and 2029 (acceptable variances of +6% and +8%).

However, the rural villages which make up the balance of current Pocklington Provincial (Stamford Bridge, Wilberfoss, Barmby Moor, Catton, Newton upon Derwent and Sutton upon Derwent) would not be sufficient to constitute a two-member ward on their own. To achieve this objective, I propose to add the following civil parishes which are currently in Wolds Weighton ERYC ward and Goole and Pocklington parliamentary constituency: Allerthorpe, Bielby, Cottingwith, Everingham, Melbourne, Thornton. In total, these hold 8,539 voters in 2023 (+6% variance) and 8,723 (+4%) in 2029.

Wolds Weighton – civil parishes within Bridlington and The Wolds constituency. Having shed all of the civil parishes lying in the adjacent (Goole & Pocklington) constituency, the choice is now between expanding eastwards to pick up some of the rural villages currently in the Driffeld and Rural ward, or slimming the ward down to two seats, with a narrower set of component villages. As the ward would become geographically very dispersed to maintain three seats, my recommendation is to follow the former route. A possible configuration would be to form a 2-seat ward comprising Market Weighton, with the retention of Bishop Wilton, Bugthorpe, Fangfoss, Full Sutton, Hayton, Kirby Underdale, Millington, Nunburnholme, Shiptonthorpe, Skirpenbeck and Yapham. Market Weighton would provide over two-thirds of the electors in this ward, with the other eleven villages bringing just under one-third of the total. Its voter numbers would be 8,669 (+8% variance) in 2023, and 8,848 (+5% variance) in 2029.

Create new 'Central Wolds' ward – In fact, the remaining villages in Wolds Weighton, together with the rural parts of Drifffield & Rural amount to only about 2,700 voters. Therefore, there is a need to add some of the more populous villages currently situated in the East Wolds & Coastal ward, in order to form a new ward with 2 council seats. My recommendation is to go north around Drifffield into Naffeton, Kilham and contiguous civil parishes. The resultant new ward would comprise the following CPs: Goodmanham, Londesborough, Warter, Huggate, Wetwang, Fridaythorpe, Fimber, Sledmere, Cottam, Langtoft, Kilham, Thwing, Wold Newton, Burton Fleming, Rudston, Burton Agnes, Kelk, Harpham, Skerne & Wansford, Nafferton, Garton, Tibthorpe, Bainton. This is a geographically wide area, but less so than Wolds Weighton would need to be if it remained as a 3-seat ward wholly within the Bridlington and The Wolds constituency. Its elector numbers would be 8,203 in 2023 and 8,552 in 2029 (+2% variance in both years).

Drifffield & Rural – variance is improved by contracting to Drifffield alone with the addition of Kirkburn. This is a well founded pairing, as Kirkburn CP includes both the village of Kirkburn and the historical township of Kelleythorpe. The electors in the latter outnumber Kirkburn voters by a factor of approximately four to one; while Kelleythorpe is closely allied to Drifffield itself. The electorate in Drifffield and Kirkburn combined is 11,638 in 2023 (-3% variance) and 12,659 in 2029 (+1%).

Bridlington (3 wards: North, South and Central/Old Town) – Bridlington currently has 8 seats across the three wards, needing the addition of rural villages (Grindale, Bempton and Boynton) to sustain it. Even with these additions, the overall variance for the town is -7%. In my view, there should be 7 seats serving the urban population of Bridlington, while the rural villages should move to East Wolds & Coastal with which they share many similarities of character. The allocation of these seven seats requires minimal movement between the three existing wards to achieve good variances in each of them. I would envisage that polling district CC moves from Bridlington North into Bridlington South, with which it has more in common with regards to its population density and seafront outlook. At the same time, the urban part of Bridlington Central and Old Town could take one step to the east (and therefore move further towards the centre of Bridlington), by adding polling district CD and removing BC, which has more of a rural feel. The BC parish ward might be renamed, e.g. to 'Bridlington Outer'.

This would leave Bridlington Central and Old Town with 7,985 electors (0% variance) in 2023 and 8,461 (+1%) in 2029. Bridlington North would have 8,214 (+2%) in 2023 and 8,578 (+2%) in 2029; and Bridlington South would have 11,673 in 2023 and 12,192 in 2029 (variance -3% in both years).

East Wolds & Coastal – a widely dispersed ward currently, which would benefit from becoming more compact and better aligned to its title (East Wolds and Coastal). By adding the rural villages to the north and west of Bridlington along with 'Bridlington Outer', while relinquishing villages into the new Central Wolds ward as listed above, the new East Wolds & Coastal ward would attain 8,280 voters in 2023 and 8,631 in 2029. It would therefore support two councillors, with variances of +3% in both years.

North Holderness – no change.

I attach a new version of the Electoral Data file provided by the LGBCE, to clarify all of the wards proposed, showing how the figures for voter numbers and variances are reached. For comparison, Electoral Data (2) includes the amendments related to Cottingham as outlined, although this is not my recommendation.

Finally, I believe some wards might be renamed, in keeping with these proposals.

1. No name changes proposed to: St Mary's; Goole North; Goole South; Snaith, Airmyn & Rawcliffe & Marshland; Hessle; Tranby; Willerby & Kirk Ella; Cottingham North; Cottingham South.

2. Retain the name, with redefined boundaries as described above in: Beverley Rural; South East Holderness; South West Holderness; Dale; Wolds Weighton; Bridlington Central & Old Town; Bridlington North; Bridlington South; East Wolds & Coastal.

3. New wards created: Elloughton-cum-Brough; and Central Wolds. The other new ward, bounded by the triangle between Stamford Bridge, Cottingham and Everingham (from parts of existing Pocklington Provincial and Wolds Weighton). As the River Derwent flows under Stamford Bridge and through many of the parishes in this ward, perhaps the name could be 'Derwent'.

4. New ward names, with rationale:

a. Rename North Holderness as 'Hornsea'. Hornsea is already the name colloquially given to this ward, and the villages in the ward tend to consider themselves as aligned to Hornsea the town.

b. Consider renaming Mid Holderness ward, if North Holderness is no longer used as a name. A possible alternative name is 'Lambwath' ward. The Lambwath Stream runs all the way through it, a water course which is remarkable in that it rises at Aldbrough a few metres away from the coast, flowing inland and away from the sea.

c. South Hunsley – if the proposal to remove Welton is accepted, it may be sensible to rename this ward. The main claim to the name South Hunsley today seems to be in the school of the same name – but this is situated in Welton. The attractive village of Swanland would now sit in the middle of the ward and might lend its name to it.

d. Howden – I would suggest the ward should retain the name of Howden, which is an important town in its own right. To reflect the wider area of the ward, perhaps it could be named 'Howden and West Howdenshire'.

e. The remainder of Howdenshire, with the addition of Seaton Ross, Sancton and South Cliffe, could then be renamed 'East Howdenshire'.

f. The three polling districts in Pocklington now forming a single ward, this could be named simply 'Pocklington'.

g. Driffield parish with Kirkburn: rename as 'Driffield' or 'Driffield Town'.

h. Minster & Woodmansey – if the option to remove Woodmansey Nurseries ward and retain the two remaining Woodmansey wards, which are focused on Beverley Minster were to be adopted, the village of Woodmansey itself would no longer be inside the ward. Hence a change of name to 'Beverley Minster' would seem appropriate.

Attached Documents:

- electoral-data-file---proposed-amendments-to-eryc-warding-pattern.xlsx