

# Somerset

## Personal Details:

**Name:** Frances Nicholson  
**Email:** [REDACTED]  
**Postcode:** [REDACTED]  
**Organisation Name:** (District or county councillor)

## Comment text:

Dear Sir

My name is Frances Nicholson, email [REDACTED], postcode [REDACTED]. I am responding as a district or county councillor.

(I intend to stand down at the next election (I will be 73 and will have served for 18 years) so this consultation response should not be seen as self-serving or in any way self-interested.)

I recognise the difficulty of balancing local ties, sentiments, and communities of interest and need in order to arrive at the best fit between numbers of members and the populations and areas they are to represent.

Over the last few months I have been listening to parish council discussions and views within the division that I currently represent: Dulverton and Exmoor, the furthest west and most deeply rural and sparsely populated part of Somerset comprising 23 parishes mostly with parish councils, some with parish meetings. All the parish councils in the division considered a number of ways of setting the boundaries to achieve, or nearly achieve the target electorate: 1) cut off the northern part and add it to Minehead, 2) cut off the eastern end and add it to Wiveliscombe, and 3) divide the division between east and west and consider how to make 2 rural divisions from the current Dulverton and Exmoor and Dunster divisions, and one urban division from the current Minehead and Dunster divisions.

What was quite clear in all the discussions was an overriding wish for rural parishes with like contexts and challenges to be placed together.

Parishes on Exmoor and the Brendon Hills (the eastern part of the current division) have a very strong and strongly rural identity. They do not want to become the periphery of an urban area.

The third option found most favour with parishes and I believe it can satisfy the electorate number requirements. It could be arranged as follows:

A single member West Exmoor Division

[See Attached]

This parishes in this division are all wholly or in a few cases partly in Exmoor National Park.

A single member East Exmoor and Brendon Hills

[See Attached]

This is a rural area running inland from the West Somerset coastline.

A 2 Member Minehead Division

[See Attached]

Naming the divisions

Other submissions to the LGBCE which propose these divisions have proposed different names for the two rural divisions.

I believe that naming the western one Dulverton and Exmoor would be a mistake (I have thought it a mistake for some time) Dulverton is not the biggest centre of population. It is more than balanced by Porlock. West Exmoor would describe the area accurately and precisely and would recognise that the division comprises many communities and settlements, all of whose communities are important.

I believe naming the eastern division Carhampton would be to make the same mistake. East Exmoor and the Brendon Hills would also be a better and more inclusive name.

Not quite local unanimity

Brompton Regis Parish Council would rather be in West Exmoor than in East Exmoor and the Brendon Hills. I have considerable sympathy with their view, but the number of electors in that parish would unbalance the numbers.

Little potential for swapping parishes

It should be noted that Luxborough parish council (at the eastern edge of West Exmoor) stated emphatically at its meeting last week that it considers that West Exmoor is the area which it has affinity, a community of interest and of need. It would not wish to be moved to East Exmoor and the Brendon Hills.

Yours faithfully

Frances Nicholson

## **Attached Documents:**

- east-exmoor-and-brendon-hills.png
- minehead.png
- west-exmoor.png

Polling district	Parish	Parish ward	Grouped parish council	Existing division	2023	2030
W-DAJ	Brompton Ralph			Dulverton & Exmoor	183	181
W-DAK	Brompton Regis			Dulverton & Exmoor	317	306
W-DAL	Brompton Regis			Dulverton & Exmoor	60	52
W-DAO	Carhampton			Dunster	162	175
W-DAP	Carhampton			Dunster	634	634
W-DAU	Clatworthy			Dulverton & Exmoor	70	71
W-DBE	Dunster			Dunster	751	758
W-DBP	Huish Champflower			Dulverton & Exmoor	211	202
W-DCL	Old Cleeve	Old Cleeve		Dunster	476	468
W-DCM	Old Cleeve	Roadwater		Dunster	414	408
W-DCN	Old Cleeve	Washford		Dunster	501	510
W-DCY	Skilgate			Dulverton & Exmoor	93	86
W-DEQ	Timberscombe			Dulverton & Exmoor	338	329
W-DER	Treborough			Dulverton & Exmoor	65	64
W-DET	Upton			Dulverton & Exmoor	131	130
W-DFO	Withycombe			Dunster	230	236
W-DFT	Wootton Courtenay			Dulverton & Exmoor	242	248
						4,858

<b>Polling district</b>	<b>Parish</b>	<b>Parish ward</b>	<b>Grouped parish council</b>	<b>Existing division</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2030</b>
<b>W-DBY</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>Alcombe North</b>		<b>Dunster</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>314</b>
<b>W-DBZ</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>Alcombe South</b>		<b>Dunster</b>	<b>1,976</b>	<b>1,989</b>
<b>W-DCA</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>Central</b>		<b>Minehead</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>945</b>
<b>W-DCB</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>Central</b>		<b>Minehead</b>	<b>2,256</b>	<b>2,290</b>
<b>W-DCC</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>North</b>		<b>Minehead</b>	<b>1,916</b>	<b>1,989</b>
<b>W-DCD</b>	<b>Minehead</b>	<b>Periton &amp; Woodcombe</b>		<b>Minehead</b>	<b>1,789</b>	<b>1,819</b>
						<b>9,346</b>

Polling district	Parish	Parish ward	Grouped parish council	Existing division	2023	2030
W-DAM	Brushford			Dulverton & Exmoor	464	467
W-DBB	Cutcombe			Dulverton & Exmoor	332	341
W-DBC	Dulverton			Dulverton & Exmoor	914	915
W-DBD	Dulverton			Dulverton & Exmoor	239	237
W-DBI	Exford			Dulverton & Exmoor	335	324
W-DBJ	Exmoor			Dulverton & Exmoor	112	115
W-DBK	Exton			Dulverton & Exmoor	176	167
W-DBT	Luccombe			Dulverton & Exmoor	127	125
W-DBU	Luxborough			Dulverton & Exmoor	163	159
W-DCK	Oare			Dulverton & Exmoor	38	39
W-DCR	Porlock			Dulverton & Exmoor	1,139	1,163
W-DCW	Selworthy & Minehead Without	Minehead Without		Dulverton & Exmoor	35	36
W-DCX	Selworthy & Minehead Without	Selworthy		Dulverton & Exmoor	355	362
W-DFN	Winsford			Dulverton & Exmoor	249	262
W-DFP	Withypool & Hawkridge			Dulverton & Exmoor	39	37
W-DFQ	Withypool & Hawkridge			Dulverton & Exmoor	149	146
						4,895