

# County Durham

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## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Evenwood and West auckland

I disagree with the Boundary Commision proposals for increasing the Evenwood Ward to 3 seats and reducing the West Auckland Ward to 1 seat. They both should remain as 2 seat wards.

The West Auckland/Bishop Auckland conurbation is a built up area stretching from West Auckland in the West to Bishop Auckland in the East. Part of the current West Auckland Ward are two housing estates Etherley Dene and Rush Park, which are similiar to the Lakes estate in West Auckland as they are part of a town and not a rural community. It would not be appropriate to place them in an enlarged Evenwood Ward as the communities would have nothing in common with Evenwood, Cockfield, Staindrop, or Ingleton. These two estates look towards the West Auckland/ Bishop Auckland urban conurbation for schooling, health care, shopping, council sevices and leisure and not towards Evenwood. Similarly the villages of Escomb and Witton Park also look to the West Auckland/Bishop Auckland urban corridor because of their historic ties. The two villages have no links to Evenwood, Cockfield, Staindrop and Ingleton.

I fully accept that the current West Auckland and Evenwood Wards need to increase in size to remain two seat wards. The best way to do this would be to move Hummerbeck from Evenwood into West Auckland and a number of houses on Ullswater Avenue in West Auckland which are currently in the Evenwood Ward.

There are also a number of housing developments which will be constructed in the Etherley area which will increase the population of the West auckland Ward over the next 5 years. Toft Hill is another community which is currently in the Evenwood Ward which has historic links with the

West Auckland/Bishop Auckland conurbation through shared doctors, schooling, shopping, council services and leisure, which will increase with new Tindale development.

The Evenwood Ward will also need to increase in size and the way this should be done is by adding more rural and semi rural communities to Cockfield, Woodland and Evenwood. This would be best achieved by moving, Ingleton, Headlam, Hilton, Gainford and Staindrop into the Ward. All of the communities mentioned above are served by Staindrop Secondary School, so already have much in common. None of those communities have anything in common with Etherley Dene, Rush Park, Witton Park or Escomb.

Expanding the Evenwood Ward into three seats will result in over a third of the electorate being in a small area as Rush Park, Etherley Dene, Witton Park, Escomb and Toft Hill are either urban communities or overspill from an urban area.

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*