

Northumberland

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: New Hartley

please see attached document.

Attached Documents:

- Objection to boundary changes [REDACTED].docx

We object to the proposed creation of a new Division in Northumberland entitled New Delaval and New Hartley.

We have lived in the village since 1992 and found it to be a united community, and has annual events where the entire village come together.

From what I understand, the new division is being created to balance out the number of electors in this part of Northumberland.

In doing this it splits our close community into two, and each of the split areas are forced together with other areas.

We live in Montrose Close, which is proposed to become part of the New Delaval and New Hartley area. This puts this part of our village in with an area that is not even reachable easily by public transport, and would take between 48 minutes and 1h 25 mins with multiple bus changes to reach if you were to attempt it! Seems ridiculous when the proposal is parting us from our neighbours who are only a minutes' walk away!

Even when the new rail line is established, this will not help any travel between these two areas.

In our village currently we have our own school, parish council, Residents' association, and religious groups. Small local services (pub, shop, creative hub, post office) also operate across the whole village. The schoolchildren of the village attend schools in New Hartley, Seaton Sluice and Seaton Delaval. These areas share boundaries at parish, county and parliamentary levels.

The New Hartley Community Association arrange events and activities throughout the year for residents of the village which brings us all together. We have an annual summer fair, Easter fair, craft fairs, Christmas fairs and things like scarecrow competitions, decorate a lamppost for Christmas. These activities are all well attended and residents are engaged. We also receive a village newsletter to keep us up to date with the activities that take place.

Our village also has a Community Garden, Food bank, walking group, craft group, in bloom group. Why would you want to split the village and take this away from us?

If we're in the same boundary as New Delaval, Blyth, I don't see how we could operate as a close community, and have the same interests at heart.

This split is contrary the reasons put forward in paragraph 140 of the review which states that

*We adopt the Council's suggestion to add the streets to the south of Amersham Road to Plessey division which we consider **unites a community** currently divided between Plessey and South Blyth divisions. We propose to adopt the Council's suggested South Blyth division, including the revised boundary with Wensleydale, which we also consider **reflects our three statutory criteria**.*

Please consider the following calculations and suggestions regarding voter numbers and revised boundaries from our Community Association:

The review states that current Seaton Valley should be represented by 3.5 councillors to meet the equalisation. It either needs to be represented by 3 or 4 councillors to meet the equalisation task of the Commission but without destroying the community identity or administrative efficiency – at all

levels of local administration. This can only be achieved by sharing one councillor's responsibility with another parish or division.

We have already highlighted the reasons why the current proposals are not appropriate, but there are alternatives.

- 1) do nothing and accept the representative inequalities but keep the communities integrated and identifiable with consistent local government.

The review report accepts that the current Seaton Valley divisions of Hartley, Holywell and Seghill with Seaton Delaval have a collective variance of +13%. This is only 76 electors above the 10% maximum and has shown to work effectively and efficiently with 3 county councillor and 9 parish councillors across the 3 divisions.

It has implications for New Delaval which loses the 707 electors from New Hartley North (difference between Existing Hartley 4371 and proposed Hartley 3664) and sets this division outside +/- 10% range. New Delaval is then left with 3419 electors and needs a minimum of 3470 electors. A difference of only 51.

New Delaval division boundary could easily be adjusted with the adjacent division of Isabella, Plessey and/or South Blyth to equalise this representation and maintain more identifiable community boundaries.

Whilst the Commission has already rejected this option, we would urge you to reconsider this as the least bad alternative to balancing the three statutory requirements.

- 2) Alternatively, there is an opportunity to rebalance internal divisions within Seaton Valley to re-establish historic communities and include a whole division of East Cramlington.

The electoral population of Seaton Valley in 2028 is projected to be 13,091. To be equally represented by 4 councillors it needs an electoral population of 15,560, and to be within 10% variance it needs between 14,004 and 17,116.

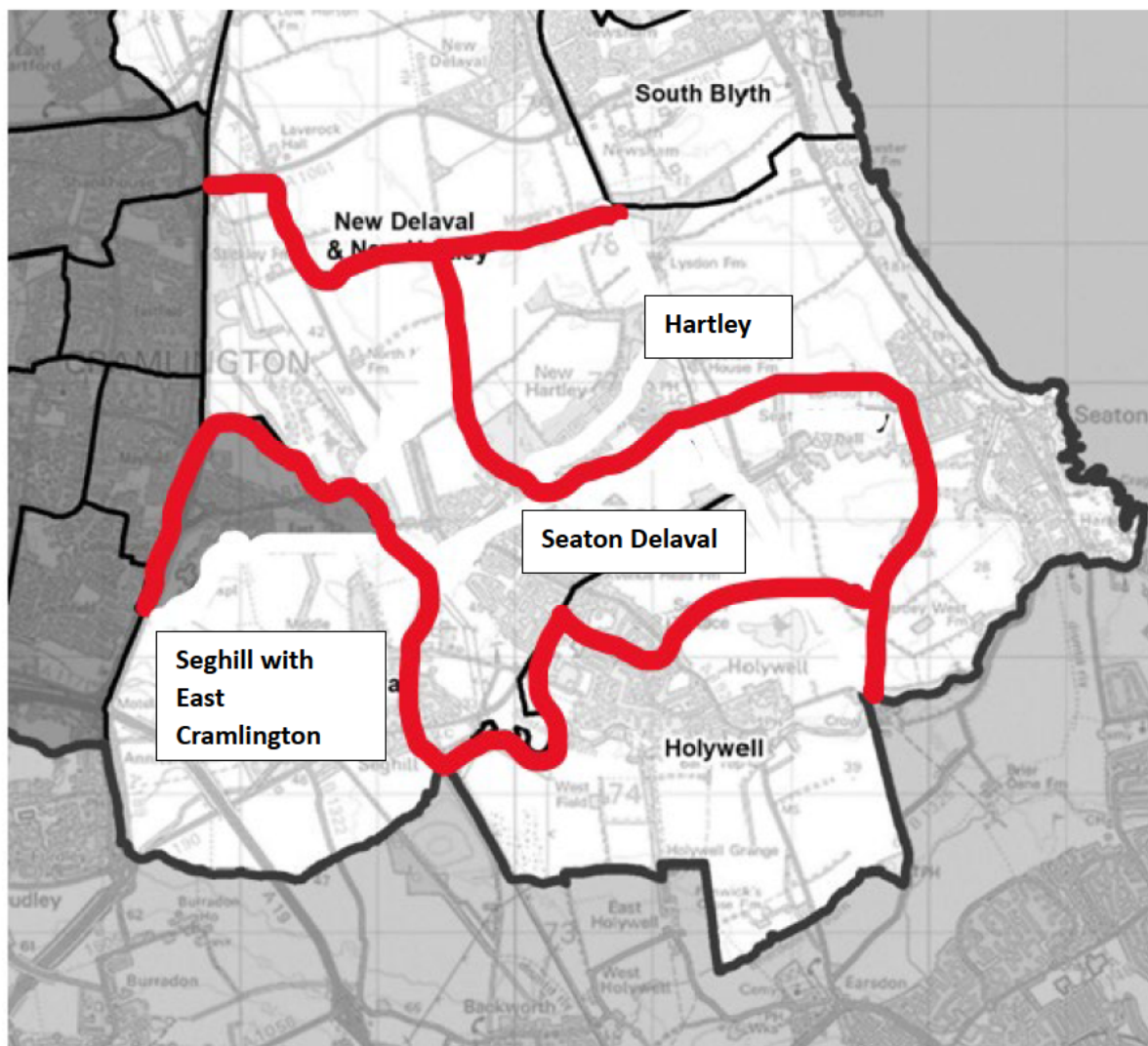
The electoral population of East Cramlington is projected to be 3,244 by 2028. Adding this to Seaton Valley gives a 4 councillor population of 16,335 or +4% variance

Without detailed identification of numbers it is difficult to be precise over where the boundaries would occur, particularly in Seaton Delaval.

It is suggested that:

- Hartley ward is reduced to +10% variance by moving the area around Seaton Delaval Hall into Seaton Delaval.
- Holywell is reduced to -4% variance by moving the northern boundary with Seaton Delaval southwards
- Seghill and Seaton Delaval are separated
- Seaton Delaval boundary modified southwards and new boundary with Seghill west of the Blyth/Tyne rail line
- Seaton Delaval Population estimated at +9% variance.
- Seghill with Cramlington East (or part) +8% variance.

Potential division boundaries shown below (subject to verification of numbers at a street level.



This approach meets the Commissions Statutory criteria of equalising representation, maintains community identity and delivering efficient local administration.

