

County Durham

Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Teesdale - currently Barnard Castle East & West

I do not believe that it is right and democratic to have such a large geographic area as Teesdale made into one ward. Each councillor in this ward would have to cover vast areas, with very different community and needs. For instance residents in Middleton-in Teesdale look to the Dale and neighbouring upland regions in Weardale, Cumbria and North Yorkshire in their working and community activities, while residents in Gainford look to the urban areas in the Tees Valley. On a practical level the journey time from one area to another would limit contact between voter and representative - so that democratic representation would be compromised. Equally, it would be harder for voters to hold their representatives to account - a very important democratic consideration.

It is really important for councillors to know situations 'on the ground', so technology would not be able to help in many situations - and the limits of mobile phone and internet access in the area would also add to difficulties in using technology to mitigate the distances involved.

The current situation, with 2 wards is not ideal as it splits the main centre of Barnard Castle in two. However the solution to all this would seem simple - have three separate areas (east, central and west) each covered by one County Councillor.

Attached Documents:

None attached