

Newcastle upon Tyne

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Comment text:

Related subject: Whole city

Please see attached document.

Attached Documents:

- labour-group-initial-boundary-commission-submission-v4.3.docx

Labour Group Initial Boundary Commission Submission

Community Grouping Exercise March 2024

Introduction

The LGBC has requested that comments are made with regards to the community groupings that would be expected within the boundary of Newcastle upon Tyne that will help form the most appropriate warding pattern. Before noting the various parts of the city a list of what has been noted as “hard boundaries” where wards should not overlap has been drawn up. These may be roads, railway lines or large open spaces.

Proposed Hard Boundary lines with the City

- A1 for its full length
- A69 (from Lemington Roundabout to end A69 at Denton Burn)
- The Town Moor – the central open area at the heart of the city
- Claremont Road
- A167 (M) Central Motorway between Swan House Roundabout to the junction with B1318 Great North Road
- A1058 Jesmond Road from the motorway exit to the local authority boundary
- The East Coast Main (rail) line from where it crosses the Ouseburn up to and including Chillingham Road Depot
- North Walbottle Road

Other potential boundaries (soft boundaries)

- A696
- West Road from A69 junction in west to corner of Wingrove Ave
- Hillheads Road
- Stamfordham Road
- Roman Ave within the Walker area
- Haddicks Mill Road from Haddicks Mill roundabout southwards to corner of Jesmond Dene Road
- New Bridge Street from the exit from the central motorway

West of the City

Chapel: Chapel House and Chapel Park. Chapel House shopping centre is the centre of the ward connecting both Chapel House and Chapel Park. This would be the existing ward, without the new lower Callerton estate

Great Park and the Villages – Great Park continues to expand with the district heart being the Great Park Town Centre. It has two First Schools and once the Great Park Academy is built will have education provision for the entire journey. Hazlerigg and Great Park are connected via Havannah Nature Reserve which is used by both community and people from all three northern villages access services in Great Park including schools and the Town Centre. Whilst this would be a large ward, the alternatives would be to split up either the villages from each other or the Great Park which would break community ties.

Kingston Park: This would unite the communities of Kingston Park, which are currently divided between three current wards, and bring in the Callerton developments. Callerton is part of Woolsington Parish Council, alongside Woolsington and Kenton Park Foot. The new developments are forming their own communities which are centred around Kingston Park, a large district and commercial hub.

Lemington: Lemington is constrained by the A1 to the East, the A69 to the North and there is a clear boundary to the west as a result of the large open space between Lemington and Walbottle. This was the ward existed from 2004 until 2018 and is recognised locally as such.

Lower Callerton, Newburn, Throckley, Walbottle: The villages of Newburn, Throckley and Walbottle are intrinsically linked together, with people attending local schools and the area has two centres in Throckley and Newburn. Lower Callerton, a new development currently part of the GO4 polling district, is to be linked to Hexham Road via a footbridge over the A69 and the development will continue to grow closer to the existing communities making this a logical addition to the ward. The bridge will enable residents to access Walbottle and link the communities. North Walbottle Road is a natural boundary for the ward.

Newbiggin Hall and Westerhope: There are two district hearts to this ward with Westerhope Village being one, which is accessed by residents in Newbiggin Hall and Westerhope Village, with access paths from both sides. Rapperton Court and Pilton estates are accessed off Newbiggin Lane, which is currently split between two wards and this would be united into the new ward. Newbiggin Hall has district heart with a small shopping centre and large GPs surgery which is accessed by residents. Buses travel through Westerhope Village and into Newbiggin Hall on a loop. Metropolitan estate in Etal Park is accessed both from Stamfordham Road in Westerhope Village and from Etal Lane.

West Denton and Hillheads: West Denton Shopping Centre and the new Outer West Leisure Facility will be at the heart of the West Denton and Hillheads ward. The ward retains the communities of West Denton as one area and combines with Hillheads. There are shared schools: St John Vianney, Beech Hill, Westerhope Primary and West Denton Primary which are accessed by residents in West Denton and Hillheads. The smaller district heart within Hillheads is the shopping area with the Hillheads Pub. The new boundary would be Beaumont Terrace & Langdon Road, and Beaumont Terrace and Stamfordham Road. This is a natural boundary due to it being the end of the Hillheads area and the start of Westerhope Village.

East of the City

Jesmond

Jesmond is bounded by the Town Moor to the West and by Jesmond Dene to the East which create hard boundaries between communities and for transport. To the South is the A167 (M) Central Motorway which separates the community from the City Centre, there are two pedestrian underpasses. Osborne Road/ Acon Road is the largest destination shopping and leisure area, the Cradlewell shops also are a popular part of the community. Conservation areas in Jesmond recognise the heritage of the area including the distinctive terraces, historical school buildings, and churches. The main public transport links are the two Metro stations and bus routes along Osborne Road.

To the South of Jesmond is the A1058 Jesmond Road, which is a significant barrier between communities on either side. This Road is one of the main routes in and out of the city with a few key crossing points. Adjacent to the road are two cemeteries and embankments which further separate the two sides.

Neighbourhoods:

Osborne Road and Acorn Road are the bustling commercial and communal centre for most of Jesmond, this includes local shopping and destination hospitality. Connections from West Jesmond are limited by the Metro line, however they are clearly part of the same community. Meanwhile, terraces to the East of Osborne Road are continuous down to Cradlewell. West Jesmond Primary is the main primary school for all of this area.

Cradlewell is a distinctive shopping area which provides some local amenity, however it is also a destination area due to location. It is situated above the main entrance into Jesmond Dene and has strong passing trade from the A1058 Jesmond Road.

Brandling Village sits between the Great North Road, Central Motorway, and Metro line. Although relatively isolated, the main connections are across the Metro line on to Osborne Road and to West Jesmond Primary School.

Conclusion:

Newcastle Labour ask that the Commission consider a Jesmond Ward which brings together the distinctive Jesmond community. It would also make sense to include Jesmond Dene (but not including Paddy Freeman's Park), the Dene is very artificially a part of Dene and South Gosforth Ward.

Inner East and Heaton

Communities of the Inner East End are separated from the City Centre by the A167 (M) Central Motorway. Between Jesmond Road and the Tyne Bridge there are only 3 pedestrian crossings, which create clear division, additionally the West side of the motorway is dominated by university campus. However, the Quayside runs continuously underneath the Tyne Bridge and so is not necessarily a boundary at this point.

Heaton is clearly bounded by the Ouseburn to the West, the A1058 Coast Road to the North, and the railways to the South. It is defined by the two main streets, Heaton Road and Chillingham Road, from where amenities serve the local areas.

Common to these areas are bus routes from Chillingham Road to the City Centre via New Bridge Street where other services merge route. For most, the nearest supermarkets are Morrisons on Shields Road and ASDA in the Byker Retail Park, both of which are very busy shops. The area is also vibrant with small businesses on local streets which are more densely packed than other areas. The population is a diverse mix of students, young professionals, families, and retirees with a strong sense of community. This means that the population is relatively more dynamic compared to more settled communities to the North and East. For secondary schooling, the community commonly look to Jesmond Park Academy and St Mary's Catholic School as there is not a secondary school in the immediate area.

Neighbourhoods:

Sandyford maintains a distinctive identity which has been historically recognized as an individual ward. This identity has always contrasted with Jesmond as residents feel the two are separate. Sandyford has a vibrant set of local restaurants and the Bluebell Pub which draw in customers from both Shieldfield and the Warwick Street area, which have good pedestrian and road connections. St Catherine's Roman Catholic Primary School is the main primary school in the area, however many children in the area also attend Hotspur and Christ Church. Jesmond Vale is isolated by Jesmond Road and the Jesmond Dene from other areas, though there are good footpath connections into Sandyford and the Blue Bell pub. The Cresswell shops provide a good level of local amenity, however the community has to look further afield for many services. Jesmond Vale has excellent access to the green spaces along the Ouseburn such as Armstrong and Heaton Park which are well used by the community.

Shieldfield is an area predominantly made up of local authority housing, including a mix of houses, low rise flats, and four high-rise tower blocks. There has also been the development of purpose built student accommodation in recent years. Shieldfield Forum provides a local hub for community organisations, businesses, and a play space.

The St Annes/Battlefield area is separated from Shieldfield by the A193, the railway lines, and a steep hill, however these areas have much in common. The area contains local authority low rise housing, each building having a distinctive character and community. There are local shops and services serving the community and public transport is very frequently available on New Bridge Street. There is a significant student population around Melbourne Street where there is purpose built blocks. Further downhill are flats on the Quayside.

The terraces between City Stadium and Heaton Road are connected to communities both towards the City Centre and to Heaton proper. Businesses on Heaton Park Road are accessible to communities on both sides of these areas.

Heaton mainly consists of terraced Tyneside flats, which give way to larger and more detached properties closer to the Northwest corner, while there are bungalows in the Northeast.

Conclusion:

Newcastle Labour ask that the Commission consider a ward which brings the Inner East areas into a single ward as they have a clearly interconnected community, bounded by the Central Motorway and Jesmond Road. The inclusion of Heaton Park would also make sense as it is a well-used connection between Sandyford and Heaton Park View. Meanwhile, a Heaton ward should be limited by the Coast Road and railways which serve as strong dividing lines between communities.

East End (Byker, Walker, Walkergate)

The East End is tightly knit and has a strong character due to the industrial heritage on the riverside, including the world-famous ship building at Wallsend. Due to industrial decline and the relative growth of other parts of the city the area has moved from four full wards of Walker, Walkergate, Monkchester, and Byker to three, with Monkchester being split between the remaining wards. The area has high levels of deprivation, low motor vehicle ownership, and has the densest area of LA housing in Newcastle.

Byker is strongly identified by the Byker Estate and Shields Road. Walker meanwhile is a community which is much wider than the existing ward. The hard boundaries of this are the Heaton Railway Depot, the LA boundary with North Tyneside (though there are strong connections between Walker and Wallsend), and the River Tyne. The Walker identity reaches as far West as Allendale Road, Brough Park, and the ex-Parsons industrial site.

Shields Road and Wallsend are the main destination shopping and employment areas for all three existing wards, and further away is the city centre. Church Walk and Welbeck Road also provide more localised amenities. There remains some industry in the area which provides local employment opportunities at Neptune Energy Park, Siemens, and Glasshouse Street. Walker Park is the largest green space and provides destination facilities and there are local parks spread throughout the rest of the East End. The two secondary schools Walker Riverside and Benfield School serve the whole of the East End and beyond.

Public transport is important to the area, given the low car ownership. The main bus routes run between the city centre and Wallsend, they converge on Shields Road and separate out along Welbeck Road, Walker Road, and the Fossway (these are also the busiest roads in the area). There is also Metro services available at Walkergate and Byker Stations, however this remains distant to much of the community.

Neighbourhoods:

Walkerville is a neighbourhood which lies north of the Metroline between Walkergate Metro Station and the LA boundary with North Tyneside. The area was originally a private housing development and underwent significant changes during the 1970/80s which solidified a distinct local community. The community shares bus services along Apple Tree Gardens, the Walkerville Community Association, and Apple Tree Gardens Park.

Walkergate as a distinct area within the current ward is the area between the Walkergate Metro Station and Roman Avenue. There are local services on Shields Road and the Fossway. The area is served by Walkergate Community School. It is bounded by the industrial estate to the West, the Metroline, Millers Dene, Walkerdene, and Roman Avenue which separates the area from Byker Old Town.

Eastfield Estate wraps around the East End Football club which is a focal point of the local community. This is bounded by Stotts Road, Maurice Road, and the LA boundary. The estate is marked by the similar local authority housing design and communal green spaces.

Daisy Hill is bounded by Millers Dene, the Fossway, and East End Football Club. This is a largely LA housing with communal greens spaces and a tightly knit community. The Ray Gray Community Centre, the neighbouring football fields, and the convenience store within the estate are the focal points of the community. Polling district X02 ties together Eastfield and

Daisy Hill which share much of the local communal space and this makes sense as a polling district.

Walkerdene is commonly referred to as the area South East of the Dene which runs along the rear of Kentmere Avenue between the Fossway and Ennerdale Road. The area is mainly accessed via Westbourne Avenue. Westbourne Avenue has some local businesses and access to St Albans Primary School and Sir Charles Parsons School which bound the community on the East side.

The 'Dale' streets form a neighbourhood between Ennerdale Road and Welbeck Road. On the East side is the A186 which is a busy and fast moving road, residential streets are blocked at the end due to rat running and speed concerns. Abbeyvale Road and Warfedale Road are separated by this road and so somewhat isolated, the neighbourhood is identifiable by the 1950s prefab construction. This area is tied together with Walkerdene in the X03 Polling district. This polling district is relatively large and is a mix of different housing which is accessed through separate routes.

Welbeck Road currently forms the boundary between Walker and Walkergate wards. This is not a clear separation of communities, rather this is a focal point of the wider community. There is no clear reason that streets adjacent to Welbeck on each side would be in separate wards, for instance Middle Street and Byker Terrace.

Walker Park is a central feature of Walker. Surrounding to the North, Hexham Avenue, Midway, and Tyneview are each distinctive To the south of Walker Park is a mix of private estates (the Terraces and low rise flats), local authority multistorey flats, and relatively newer social/private housing South of Walker Road. To the West of the Park is Central Walker. Church Walk has been the traditional district shopping centre, some services have become available recently at Aldi and Tree Top Village.

Pottery Bank is to the South of Walker Road. The area is clearly walker, however there are some local amenities such as Pottery Bank Community Centre.

The Monkchester area is the furthest West extent of the Walker identity. In the past there has been a Monkchester Ward, however this was effectively a second Walker ward which is no longer tenable due to population changes. The Monkchester Community Centre is an important part of the community and local shopping is available on Welbeck Road. Byker Old Town is the area between the B1313, Welbeck Road, Roman Avenue, and Grace Street. Local shopping is easily accessible on Welbeck Road, however for greater variety the community are close to Byker Retail Park and Shields Road.

Byker Estate is one of the most distinctive local authority housing developments in the UK. Built in the 1970s the area and listed, the estate is managed by Karbon Homes and served by a communal heating system. This gives way to industrial areas above the Ouseburn and new developments along the Ouseburn which are markedly separate communities. There are some local services within the estate, however Shields Road is close enough to provide for most of the Estate, the Stagecoach 12 also runs to Shields Road along Commercial Road.

Shields Road is the most significant communal centre and destination in the East End, it is a defining feature of Byker. There are many shops and pubs on the high street as well as a library and swimming pool. The community south of the railway have easy access to Shields Road for as local services. This area is predominantly local authority flats and a tightly knit community distinct from the North side of the railway.

St Peters was a successful redevelopment of the area around the marina which has created a distinct community on the waterfront. Due to steep banks below Walker Road and the remaining industrial area upstream the area is isolated from other areas of Byker.

Conclusion:

Newcastle Labour ask that the Commission consider minor changes in this area. The current ward arrangements for Walker, Walkergate, and Byker work very well. These are cohesive wards which are readily identifiable to local residents. However, it must be recognised that Walkergate is 14% oversized. In order to balance ward sizes, we ask the Commission to consider changes between Walkergate and Walker along Welbeck Road which is a focal point of the wider community, rather than a boundary. We also suggest the Commission consider changes to the boundary between Walker and Byker at the Welbeck Road/ Kingston Avenue boundary.

Dene

The current ward of Dene and South Gosforth combines two very separate communities and should be split by the natural boundary of Haddicks Mill Road. The South Gosforth part of the ward looks towards Gosforth High Street for shopping and the Gosforth three tier system for education. This would be more suited to a ward that contains other Gosforth areas towards the High Street.

Dene communities would include housing along both side of Benton Park Road, High Heaton 30s semis, Benton Lodge, housing both sides of Newton Road to the Coast Rd at the Corner House pub.

A second Dene ward (previously known as North Heaton and now Manor Park) could contain Cochrane Park, Victoria Glade, Haydon Grange, Wills Building, the Spinney and the bungalows area and other housing to the south of the coast road. These communities will look towards Chillingham Road for shopping and Ravenswood and Benton Park school for primary education, and Jesmond Park Academy for secondary education.

Central / North Newcastle

The current **Monument** ward is a series of city centre communities:

- Quayside from Guildhall eastwards consists of Broad Chare/Trinity Chare/Pandon Chare to Milk Market; Akenside Hill & apartments above restaurants, the Pepperpot Estate & All Hallows & Dog Bank below All Saints Church /the end of the historic Pilgrim Street.
- Close, westwards along the river towards Skinnerburn Road, with new & renovated apartment buildings below the Stephenson Quarter.
- Blackfriars/Low Friars/Stowell Street, older medieval area along the city Walls towards Gallowgate & St Andrews.
- City Centre – apartments above most of the retail spaces – Clayton Street/Dean Street/Grainger Street in particular; Waterloo Apartments/Thornton Court/Clayton Street West – dense apartment developments.
- North of the Haymarket & the Civic Centre & west of the Central Motorway is the old Victoria Square/Jesmond Rd west Edwardian villas & the Sloane Court development, plus student halls.
- NW of Barras Bridge is Claremont Road up to St Luke's & Framlington Place -again, historic Edwardian buildings.
- Leazes Pk Road, Leazes Crescent/Tce & the St Thomas' early Victorian conservation area
- Summerhill conservation area, the Westgate Hill area , Victoria Street & the old St Ann's Convent, focused on Summerhill Bowling Club.
- Below Summerhill & above Scotswood Rd, to N & W of Newcastle College site - New Rye Hill & St Paul's estate; Cambridge St/Maple Tce estate.
- Given that Monument, as a city centre ward addresses city centre concerns, it should include the Helix site & the proposed new housing development on the northern boundary of the site in Monument. The boundary would be Diane Street from the junction with Elswick Road & Westgate Road along to the junction with Stanhope Street/Wellington Street & Barrack Road.

Spital Tongues

Spital Tongues is almost an autonomous "village" needs to stay in one ward ideally in its entirety. Spital Tongues should include all down Claremont Rd to the RVI, and also both student accommodation Richardson Rd and Castle Leazes.

The main student accommodation part of Spital Tongues is Castle Leazes (there is also Richardson Road Student accommodation). Both are currently in Arthur's Hill. From Sept 2024 Castle Leazes will be vacated of its 850 students for demolition. If planning application is successful then there will be 2,000 students living at the new build Castle Leazes from Sept 2027 term.

Wingrove

The east border of Wingrove is naturally from the Town Moor - so eastern line of the ward starts at Moorside North / Moorside South / Wingrove Avenue (with the natural border being the Campus for Ageing and Health and the cemetery and town moor). The new Muslim Community Centre / School just opened at the south end of St Nicolas Cemetery (between Hadrian and Severus) needs to stay in the same ward as the residential communities of

Wingrove Avenue / Wingrove Rd etc as many of its attendees come from these streets (not from the east side).

The natural North-South boundary of Wingrove is from the A167 in the north to West Road in the south. Please note that when the roads immediately south of the A167 ie: Wingrove Road North and Woodburn/Ridgeway down to Fenham Hall Drive were divided pre-2018 and part of Blakelaw this did not make sense and was unpopular with communities are happier now. This should include the old quarry field north of Queensway/Kingsway junction as people from these streets look after it.

The Queensway social housing estate should ideally stay together from A167/ Morrisons boundary in the north to Fenham Hall Drive in the south and Queensway in east to Two ball Lonnen in west.

It would not make sense of any boundary spilt in the middle of the above such as down Kingsway in terms of traffic flow and the recent LTN experimental order showed that traffic solutions needed to address the movement of traffic from Wingrove Road North to Two Ball Lonnen. Also dividing this part of Fenham along Kingsway is a socio economic division between the more affluent Kingsway and housing estate Queensway.

Any spilt down the middle of the ward south of Fenham Hall Drive like down Bolbec makes no sense partly due to the shared issues all the surrounding streets have with Dame Allan's School and traffic issues.

Around West Rd then the streets off West Rd ie: Wingrove Avenue to Baxter Avenue all need to stay together. The Hindu Temple on Baxter Ave should also ideally stay in the same ward as rest of these streets.

Blakelaw Ward area

The Ward has three distinct communities - Blakelaw, Cowgate and North Fenham. Plus a more peripheral community to the northeast. They gel well together with activity concentrated around the new sports hub, the Blakelaw Centre and English Martyrs Church; and the Cowgate Centre and Cowgate Cricket Club.

As a post war development there are strong ties through family history to the area with subsequent generations choosing to stay in the ward, making some tightly knit communities.

West Fenham

Natural borders are the A1 to the West, the A167 (Stamfordham Road) to the North and the A186 (West Road) to the South.

While Silver Lonnen (A191), Netherby Drive and Two Ball Lonnen might be thought of as borders, in reality they aren't, with the community spanning all three of them and residents regularly crossing all three roads to access the two primary schools (Stocksfield School and English Martyrs Catholic Primary School), shops (on Silver Lonnen, the West Road, Two Ball Lonnen and Cedar Road), green spaces (Denton Dene North and King George V Field), churches and pubs.

Connectivity will be further improved with additional pedestrian crossings due to be installed on Silver Lonnen and Netherby Drive in the next few months.

As a note for future ward naming arrangements renaming the ward 'Fenham' would be helpful, since there is currently no East, North or South Fenham

Gosforth

The current wards of Gosforth, Parklands and Fawdon and West Gosforth cover a larger area of the city from central to northern areas. Much of this area is part of the three tier educational system with the focal point of shopping being Gosforth High Street (especially for those in central Gosforth and the housing that stretches from the High Street on to the Great North Road towards the racecourse and the junction with the A1). Fawdon has its own shopping area but also links to central Gosforth through education.