

# Gateshead

## Personal Details:

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Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Ryton, Crookhill and Stella ward - boundary changes

New electoral arrangements to Gateshead Council – draft recommendations January 2024 - Ryton, Crookhill and Stella Ward

1) Councillors of Ryton, Crookhill and Stella Ward have not satisfactorily communicated or consulted the proposed changes of new electoral arrangements for this ward to the Barmoor community as follows:

1a) Labour councillors failed to communicate the changes to each household within their ward through the Labour and community newsletters delivered by hand through every household letterbox with the ward over the past year.

1b) Labour councillors failed to consult and make a submission on behalf of the Barmoor residents on the proposed boundary changes (Item 31) but did, however, make a submission on retaining the number of councillors (Item 26) to maintain their membership to the council! Other wards (Item 31) had support from councillors e.g. the Green Party and Liberal Democrats.

1c) First knowledge of the proposed changes was communicated through residents' household letterboxes by a Barmoor resident on 1st April 2024 with a short meeting at Ryton Cricket Club held on 2nd April 2024 where residents unanimously opposed the proposed changes to Ryton, Crookhill and Stella ward boundaries to two elected Labour councillors who appear reluctant to proceed in supporting our disagreement with the proposal.

2 I disagree that there is evidence of Barmoor community links and locally recognised boundaries (Item 34) with Crawcrook and Greenside as follows:

2a) The virtual tour carried out (Item 34) does not reflect that I have been a Barmoor resident for over 20 years and associate with Ryton for medical facilities; community projects, fairs, parks, nature reserve and clubs; shopping and leisure. Barmoor is an historic mining community established in the 1800s with strong links with Ryton through families, socialising and as a working community. A green area was historically established to separate Barmoor from Crawcrook in the original deeds much of which still exists today.

2b) I do not identify with Crawcrook and view it as a separate inconvenient facility of a separate community. Our established community projects and clubs reflect this in their names using both Barmoor and Ryton rather than Crawcrook e.g. Barmoor Allotment Association, Brighten Ryton, Ryton Rugby Club, Ryton Cricket Club, Barmoor Hub and Ryton Fair. We need to maintain established community ethos and associated names not disassociate or break them to support councillors' seats. Councillors should be representing the community not the community representing councillors wishes to ensure they reside and work within the Ryton and Stella ward boundaries!

2c) Both electoral quality (Item 32) and appropriate boundaries (Item 34) through a virtual tour could be achieved by moving the new and proposed estates of Woodside Meadows and Stella which do not bring community services, projects or groups in their establishment to the historical community of Barmoor and Ryton. It should also be noted that Stella is not associated with Ryton in terms of history or community but is associated with Blaydon in its town postal address/code, property searches, maps, shopping and medical services. It does not seem appropriate for new estates to remain within the ward whilst old established communities are pushed out of their ward.

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*