

# York

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## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Fulford & Heslington Ward

I propose a minor amendment to the north-west boundary of the Fulford & Heslington ward to ensure greater electoral equality and better reflect the identity and interests of local communities.

### Specific Proposed Amendment

The ward boundary should be extended slightly westward along Heslington Lane to include all residential properties forming the core of Heslington Village.

**Current Issue:** The existing boundary arbitrarily splits the cohesive Heslington Village community, leaving properties like the Hesketh Almshouses and Dalham House (and all associated residential properties up to a defined point on Heslington Lane) in an adjacent ward.

**Proposed Inclusion:** The boundary should be moved to a point just after the junction of Newton Way and Heslington Lane, when approaching from the west. This ensures the entire village, which shares common amenities, history, and a distinct village identity, is contained within a single ward.

### Statutory Arguments Bolstering the Proposal

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is required to conduct reviews based on three main statutory criteria, outlined in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. My proposal directly addresses all three:

### 1. Electoral Equality (The Primary Criterion)

While this is a minor boundary change, ensuring all residents in a cohesive area are represented by the same set of councillors helps in the calculation of the elector-to-councillor ratio.

Including these few dozen electors within their natural community ward (Fulford & Heslington) will contribute to a more accurate elector-per-councillor figure for both the affected wards, upholding the principle of electoral parity as close as possible to the average for the City of York Council.

### 2. Community Identity and Interests (The Key Argument)

This is the strongest point for this specific change. The LGBCE must ensure wards reflect the identities and interests of local communities.

**Cohesive Community:** Heslington Village possesses a clear, recognised social, historical, and geographical identity. Residents of the proposed inclusion area (Hesketh Almshouses, Dalham House, etc.) all use the same local parish council, attend the same village events, and share the same access points and local amenities (e.g., Heslington Village Post Office, Heslington Village Hall, village conservation area).

**Splitting the Community:** The current boundary fragments a clearly identifiable community of interest. Residents on one side of an arbitrary line on Heslington Lane are forced to look to councillors from a ward whose focus is geographically and communally distinct (e.g., focusing on more rural or western areas), while their immediate neighbours are represented by the Fulford & Heslington councillors. This is detrimental to effective local representation.

**Effective Representation:** Placing the entire village in the proposed ward will allow councillors to represent a single, unified community interest, leading to more effective and responsive local government.

### 3. Securing Convenient and Effective Local Government

The Commission must ensure ward boundaries contribute to convenient and effective local government.

A boundary that follows a natural, recognised break-point (such as a clearly defined edge of a village settlement) is inherently more intelligible and easier to administer than one which bisects a contiguous residential area. It avoids confusion among residents regarding who their representatives are and which ward they belong to.

### Conclusion

This proposed change is not about manipulating elector numbers but about creating a logical, coherent, and identifiable ward boundary that

respects the community integrity of Heslington Village, thereby fulfilling the LGBCE's statutory duty to reflect community identity and interests and secure effective local government.

## **Attached Documents:**

- map.jpg