

York

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Comment text:

Related subject: LGBCE proposal to change Derwenthorpe ward boundaries

I have heard through local media that the Local Government Boundary Commission has plans to divide Derwenthorpe so that parts of the development will fall within different wards.

The press release by LGBCE dated 25 November 2025 explains why this change is going ahead, which includes:

'An electoral review is being carried out to make sure that each local councillor represents about the same number of electors, and that the wards they represent reflect community identities.'

Of all communities in York, Derwenthorpe must be one of the few that has its own clearly defined identity, and it seems perverse to split this community into three parts just to meet the other main requirement, that the councillor should represent the same number of electors.

There are many reasons why my partner and I believe that Derwenthorpe should remain as one community, reflecting the community identity that is the objective of this proposed change to the wards. Some of these are listed here:

Unlike the surrounding wards, Derwenthorpe has been conceived of and planned as a single community. It is a community of mixed tenure residents, jointly managed by Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust and members of the Derwenthorpe community.

The visual style of Derwenthorpe, its architecture and road layout, the landscaped grounds and green spaces, the footpath and cycle routes through the estate, all designed with one vision, show how different it is to the neighbouring wards.

Each of the four quarters of Derwenthorpe is served with a single road in and out, there are no through roads so there is no need for residents of other wards to enter or pass through Derwenthorpe without the need to visit somebody in Derwenthorpe.

All the current housing (except the new, final phase, under construction) is heated and supplied with hot water from a central source (the Super Sustainability Centre) which residents of Derwenthorpe pay for communally. This is of no interest to surrounding wards.

All residents pay an Estate Management Fee to maintain the appearance of the grounds, and of the two lakes which balance the flow of rainwater from Derwenthorpe to the river system. Again, this is of no interest to surrounding wards.

Derwenthorpe has many community activities that engage with people from across the estate, engendering a sense of ownership and a tangible sense of community for Derwenthorpe as a whole.

If there is a requirement for councillors to represent the same number of electors, and if it is not possible to have Derwenthorpe as its own ward (surely exceptions can be made when there is such a clearly identifiable community as Derwenthorpe), then LGBCE should look to incorporate fragments of adjacent wards in with Derwenthorpe, not the other way round.

I do hope our concerns will be listened to and acted upon, we meet Derwenthorpe community members all the time and everyone we have spoken to agree that it is nonsensical to break Derwenthorpe up into different wards, especially when one of the reasons for adjusting the ward boundaries is that '...the wards they represent reflect community identities.'

Attached Documents:

None attached