

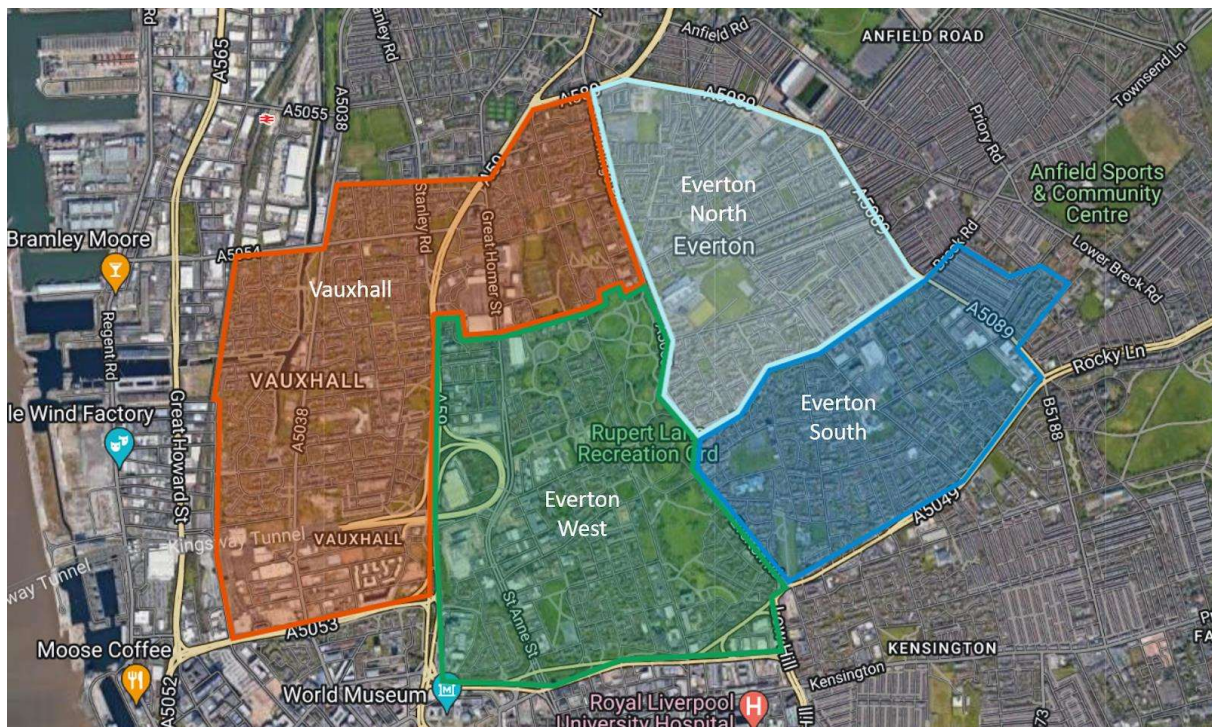
## To the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

This submission is made on behalf of Liverpool Green Party. This submission focuses on the suggested amendment to two of the proposed wards: Vauxhall and Scotland Road.

Having considered the March 2022 draft recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), we believe that the existing communities of the proposed Vauxhall and Scotland Road wards would be better represented and served by our proposal below.

We believe that by joining the LGBCE's proposed Vauxhall ward with the west and north parts of the LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward, creating a two-councillor ward called Vauxhall, and by creating a separate ward called Everton West from the south and east sections of the LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward, would be much more beneficial to the residents of these distinct communities and would better meet the criteria laid out in the Commission's three legal factors.

Map of our proposed wards are below with Everton North and Everton South included for reference.



Google Map version of the boundaries can be consulted on the link below.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=1thKLrqfMPWuwJwqetSP-K3VJhVqeQFM&usp=sharing>

**Table 1. Ward proposal key figures**

	<b>New Vauxhall</b>	<b>NEW Everton West</b>
Number of councillors	2	1
Electorate 2019	4870	2730
Electorate 2027	8460	4168
Variance with 2027	<b>-2%</b>	<b>-3%</b>

Source: Own work using data from LCC and LGBCE.

### **Everton West ward**

The proposed Everton West has a well defined boundary.

- Hunter Street, Islington and Erskine Street to the South.
- Low Hill, Everton Road, Everton Park and Heyworth Street to the East
- Conway Street, Northumberland Terrace, the Sainsbury's supermarket boundary and all houses in Wilcock Close to the North.
- Scotland Road to the West.

The councillor for Everton West would represent a fairly similar number of residents compared to other councillors around the city. The inclusion of the tower blocks at Conway Street and the housing between Scotland Road and Great Homer Street would create a more balanced ward in terms of population and potential growth, supporting good levels of electoral equality, and variance by 2027 improving from -9% to -3%.

Our proposed ward of Everton West encapsulates a cohesive community which has been traditionally linked to the wider Everton area (Everton North and South) with Everton Park at its heart. There are well established and recognisable green and community hubs across Everton West:

- In and around Prince Edwin Street including Everton Skatepark, Millstead School, Faith Primary School and the Everton Community Garden.
- The hub around the Shrewsbury House Youth Club, St Peter's Church and Everton Nature Garden.
- Resident-led community organisation, West Everton Community Council (WECC), using the area-specific name of "West Everton" and focusing their activities solely on the Gt.Homer Street side of the existing ward of Everton.
- Community-led newspaper The Everton Telegraph, produced three times a year jointly by St Peter's Church and Shrewsbury House, focusing solely around the area of our proposed Everton West.

There are two main areas within Everton West that bring some bespoke issues and specific needs for the ward due to the presence of two University Campuses and two small industrial estates.

- University campuses: John Moores University City Campus off Byrom Way and Hunter Street. Liverpool Hope University Creative Campus on Shaw Street.
- Two small industrial/service estates, one on Trafalgar Way and one off St Anne Street.

The above, especially the presence of the University campuses has the direct impact of creating problem issues between students and local residents, and potential concerns such as 'houses of multiple occupancy' (HMOs) that the rest of the LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward are less likely to face. Having one designated councillor to liaise continuously with all stakeholders here, fostering positive inter-community relationships would deliver a much more effective kind of local governance for this particular community.

### **Several Communities, Several Identities**

A petition against the LGBCE's proposed larger, two-councillor ward has been gathering considerable support among residents in Everton West. Talking to people on the doorstep has highlighted to us their dissatisfaction with the merger of parts of Kirkdale with parts of Everton. This proposed larger area of 'Scotland Road' is definitely not one, homogenous community, indeed when talking to residents, they do not associate themselves with Scotland Road but if anything with Great Homer Street. Scotland Road is not a focal point for them but a clear dividing line.

Scotland Road may once have been a thriving hub for community activity and identity but as housing units have replaced high street shops, those days have long since disappeared. Kirkdale and Vauxhall are distinctly different communities over the other side of Scotland Road to that in Everton. To amalgamate these two groups would be to ignore very well-established local community identities and to misunderstand years of rivalry between different groupings of people within these communities.

### **Geography, Landscape and Limitations**

The current ward of Everton comprises several community enclaves mainly due to the physical landscape of the area. The large hill of Everton Park between Netherfield Road South, Netherfield Road North and Heyworth Street / St. Domingo Road splits Everton's residents in two. This is why we agree with the LGBCE's proposal to create separate wards of Everton North and Everton South at the top of the hill.

We would further suggest that the landscape and current land use within the lower western and north-western parts of Everton (between St. Anne Street and Great Homer Street and Shaw Street, Netherfield Road South and Netherfield Road North) creates a further north/south split between residents and has led to different community groupings within these areas.

The residents to the north of Anderson Street form one small community towards the bottom of the hill, whereas the people to the east of Netherfield Road North, stretching as far as Northumberland Terrace form a second small enclave being either on, or at the top of, the hill. Indeed most of the residents in this latter area are assigned to the EVE polling district within the ward, with its polling station (Clock Community Centre) being a local focal point for this area. In an ideal world, this section of Everton would be within the new North Everton ward boundary. We do appreciate however, that the inclusion of these electors would significantly alter the proposed electoral tolerance for North Everton away from its current good balance. This leaves the quandary of what to do with these two smaller communities in the interests of 'balancing the books'.



We have reached the compromise of keeping these two northern areas together as one and merging them with the north end of our proposed larger Vauxhall ward. They are geographically closer to their neighbours in our Vauxhall ward than they are to the residents to the south of Conway Street, never mind to the residents even further to the south in the large residential area between Prince Edwin Street and New Islington.

This would help to define smaller working areas for councillors in both wards and would minimise geographic limitations and social challenges between either end of a very large area, with diverse concerns. On balance, it makes more sense to us from the perspective of generating effective local government to allocate one councillor to a smaller Everton West ward and two councillors to what would be a less geographically demanding ward of Vauxhall.

Our proposed ward of Vauxhall creates an area which comprises an overall more complementary social demographic and would be easier for two councillors to devise a ward work plan across an area with a less diverse set of challenges to address. We believe that the LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward would not generate such effective and convenient local government and it lumps together too many groupings of people with diverse interests and identities. We believe that we have struck a better balance with our proposal.

### **New Vauxhall ward**

Our proposed Vauxhall ward, would merge Vauxhall and the north and west part of the LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward, producing a two-councillor ward with a well-defined and easily recognisable boundary:

- To the South: Leeds Street to the far South, then cutting East after Wilcock Close, skirting the footprint of Sainsbury's supermarket to cross over Gt. Homer Street to meet up with Conway Street, the North edge of Everton Park and Northumberland Terrace as an additional Southern boundary line to meet up with Heyworth Street/St Domingo Road.
- To the East: St Domingo Road.
- To the North: Boundary Street, Commercial Road, Great Mersey Street, Kirkdale Road and Everton Valley.
- To the West: Pall Mall, Love Lane and the Merseyrail Northern Line railtrack as far as Boundary Street.

The joint area of Vauxhall and part of LGBCE's Scotland Road ward offers a more cohesive area for the existing communities of those areas as they naturally come together around the Eldonian Village Post Office, The Trinity Catholic Primary School, the League of Welldoers community centre and the Health Centre, as well as the green areas in and around the Liverpool Leeds Canalside Park and the green spaces to the north of Everton Park.

Our proposed new Vauxhall ward provides better levels of electoral equality, improving from +11% to -2%, as well as consolidating the interests and needs of similar residential areas and communities.

The Scottie Press local paper as referred to in the LGBCE's Draft Recommendations Report has not been in full circulation since ca. 2020. Residents within Everton inform us that it did not tend to cover the area of West Everton and that it was predominantly a publication for the Kirkdale side of Scotland Road. Further research suggests that some of the paper's key reporters left their roles following the receipt of a cease and desist order from local community organisations and politicians of whose practices the paper was often critical.

To cite the existence of the Scottie Press amongst the reasons for this whole 'Scotland Road' area being one community and thus contributing to an argument for effective governance within this area, whilst simultaneously understanding some of the reasons behind its latter-day stalled circulation, seems to be a slap in the face to people who were indeed trying to highlight failings of effective governance on the part of the council and community organisations in this area.

## **Conclusion**

A concern of ours is that by creating a larger, two member ward that comprises West Everton, nothing is going to change for the better for its residents. Under the current system of three ward councillors over a large area, these residents have lived through literally years of neglect. Residents tell us that they are regularly unable to get hold of any of their elected representatives and that their problems are ignored and left unsolved for months, sometimes years. They are fed up and deserve a lot better from their local council. Local residents feel that with three councillors over such a large area, effective local government is currently dead in West Everton.

It is our belief that if these residents are not afforded the opportunity to belong to a smaller ward represented by one dedicated councillor (the same opportunity that is being afforded to the majority of citizens across the city) then their concerns will continue to be overlooked in an area that is vast and that has a myriad of concerns and identities.

Facing a similar situation of having two councillors under LGBCE's proposed Scotland Road ward, could potentially spell 'business as usual' once again for the residents of West Everton. Whereas, having one single councillor who would be fully accountable to local residents within a smaller area would make for a more equal deal for the local communities and for far more effective governance. One of the recommendations of the Caller Report was for Liverpool City Council to deliver a better deal for its citizens. It is our belief that this will not happen for the people of West Everton if LGBCE's Scotland Road ward proposal remains unchanged.

Our revised proposal ensures that the new wards:

- leave each councillor representing roughly the same number of voters as other councillors elsewhere in the authority, more balanced than LGBCE's draft proposal as seen in table 1;
- reflect community interests and actual identities as they exist in small enclaves, with clearly identifiable local and geographical boundaries;
- promote effective and convenient local government, providing a better balance of social challenges for ward councillors.