

# North Tyneside

## Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]  
Postcode: [REDACTED]  
Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Benton and Forest Hall (formerly Benton)

I fully support the LGBCs proposal for a new Benton and Forest Hall ward for the following reasons:

- 1) It keeps the existing ward more or less the same and the existing community ties together.
- 2) It maintains continuity of local representation. councillors and candidates know the area and its residents well.
- 3) A main road (Whitley Road) runs through this ward and its operation affects the residents either side of it. We have one set of councillors that we have to deal with over it - you have kept this arrangement. If it was split we would have to speak to two sets of councillors over one road.
- 4) The boundaries retained or changed adhere to the natural boundaries that exist, for example:
  - a) In the south west of the ward at Four Lane Ends, it is separated from its neighbouring ward, Longbenton by a railway line and very busy five lane road junction that is a main east-west/north-south artery, and a major bus/car/metro interchange. It makes sense to keep that particular boundary as it is.
  - b) the removal of the section north of Clousden Drive/Farne Road and East of Forest Hall Road follows a natural break of allotments and an old Wagonway and does not split existing communities.
  - c) The addition of the area south of Ashleigh Grove and Goathland Avenue makes use of existing roads and schools for boundaries.
  - d) It also brings the Benton metro station under one set of councillors. This is of great benefit because the station suffers from antisocial behaviour. We now no longer have to deal with two sets of councillors for it.
- 5) It equalises the number of electors between wards and maintains representation from three councillors.
- 6) It maintains the same representation of councillors for the Benton Quarry Park a shared communal resource for residents north and south of Whitley Road.

7) It maintains the preservation of the built environment as there are two conservation areas very close to each other that would be kept as they are. Residents in the conservation areas exchange information and support each other.

I am aware that the council would like to alter your proposal significantly. It has not engaged with residents or been transparent, and I completely disagree with its proposal. Please see the attached document for the reasons why I disagree with theirs and further support for yours.

Thank you.

## **Attached Documents:**

- LGBC response.docx

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
16<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Proposed Boundary Changes in North Tyneside for the Benton ward.**

This letter explains my support for your proposed changes to the Benton ward and my objection to the council's alternative proposal, should it submit it.

The picture below (Image 1) shows the boundaries between the existing Longbenton and Benton electoral wards overlaid on a google map of the actual area. On it, I have drawn the boundaries in yellow and red, identified the closest houses between the two wards, and the metro (railway) line.

The LGBCs proposal is to keep these boundaries as they are. They work well because the existing metro line forms a natural boundary, as does the Four Lane Ends transport interchange, and also the busy multi-lane road junction at Benton Lane/Front Street/ Benton Road A191 that is a main north-south/east-west traffic artery.



**Image 1 – existing boundaries that the LGBC proposes to remain the same**

North Tyneside Council intends to respond to the LGBC proposal suggesting some drastic changes. This proposal, shown in Image 3, is to add a substantial part (about a third) of the current Benton ward to the Longbenton ward. As well as the physical barriers of the metro line, road junction, and transport interchange, there is no community link between these areas.



LGBCs proposal would retain the existing links that and the council's proposal would destroy them.

To demonstrate the lack of link between the two areas the council wishes to join. In image 2 House A and House B are in the current Longbenton ward and House C in the current Benton ward. They are in the same ward in the council's proposal.

- In order to get to each other by car you would have to drive north half a mile to the Goathland Avenue/West Farm Avenue junction, crossing the metro line along the way, and then drive into the estate, as shown by the black and blue lines in Image 2 below.
- To walk between House A and House C you would have to walk along Front street and then down a badly lit unpaved lane to cross the metro by footbridge, as shown by the orange line in Image 2. To walk between House B and House C you would still have to follow the black line because there is no pedestrian access to House B other than the road. I know this because I used to cycle this way to work.

There is no link between these areas.



**Image 2 – Shortest travel route between the houses closest to each other in Longbenton and Benton wards.**

The LGBC proposal keeps the number of electors in both Longbenton and the Benton and Forest Hall wards the same. At present there are approximately 7,700 electors in Benton and 8,800 in Longbenton. The council's proposal adds over 2000 electors to the Longbenton

ward, which contradicts the stated aim in its cover letter to keep them the same across wards (Image 4).

Furthermore, I believe the council's proposals are politically motivated. In the last local elections 70% of the nominations for the two candidates that came second and third in Benton came from the area the council wants to move, and opposition candidates secured nearly 50% of the vote. In the area it wants to move it to opposition candidates only secured 31% of the vote. I state this as an ordinary resident who is not a member of any political party.

Finally, the council has performed a limited engagement with some residents affected by the proposal. It sent a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March that some residents did not receive until the 31<sup>st</sup> March, with a deadline of comments by 10<sup>th</sup> April, a bank holiday. At best this would have given residents only 9 days to respond over the Easter half term when many people are away. The QR code it put on its letter (Image 4) did not work. The council has been asked, but so far has been unable to confirm, if non respondents are classed as being in favour of its proposal.

I live in a different part of Benton that would be dramatically changed if the council's proposal for Longbenton and Benton was adopted. I have spoken to fellow residents and none of us have been informed of this proposal or what its alternative is for what remains of Benton.

The LGBC has been fair, open, and transparent with its proposals. North Tyneside council has not.

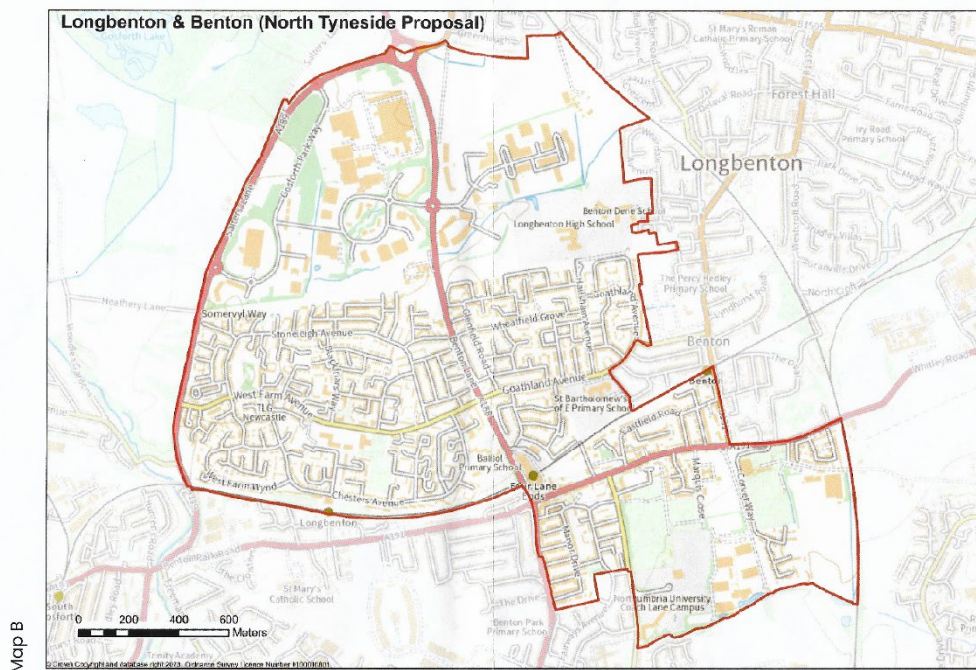
If the council does submit its alternative proposal for Longbenton and Benton, I would be grateful if you would scrutinise any evidence it puts forward very carefully because I have spoken to a few people about this and have not met one who is in favour of it.

Thank you for your time and well done on your proposals and the quality of them. I fully support them.

Regards

A black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

Encs



**Image 3 – North Tyneside Proposal**



Quadrant, The Silverlink North,  
Cobalt Business Park,  
North Tyneside, NE27 0BY  
**Tel: 0191 643 2828**

23 March 2023

Dear Resident,

As you may know, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is conducting a review into the electoral wards in North Tyneside. This is to make sure local councillors all represent a similar number of electors. You can comment directly on the LGBCE's consultation at [consultation.lgbce.org.uk](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk)

North Tyneside Council intends to respond to the LGBCE's proposals, suggesting some changes.

This includes a possible change to the electoral ward covering the area you live in. We would like to know which of the attached maps you consider best reflects your community and why. 'Map A' is the LGBCE's proposal, and 'Map B' is our proposal.

You can give your feedback by scanning this QR code or going to the link, answering a couple of questions, and telling us if you prefer A or B. The feedback form will close at midnight on 10 April 2023.

If you require further assistance to submit your feedback, you can contact us on the telephone number at the top of this letter.

Thank you.

Director of Resources



[bit.ly/LGBCE-NT](https://bit.ly/LGBCE-NT)

**Image 4 – Cover letter from council**