

# County Durham

## Personal Details:

**Name:** Mrs Liz Maddison

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**Organisation Name:** Durham County Council (District or county councillor)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions to be known as Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor electoral Division

As a County Councillor for 6 years and a Sedgefield Borough Councillor before that and a Spennymoor Town Councillor for 21 years I have a good knowledge of both Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions. I have also lived in both of these Divisions.

I am against a name change of Spennymoor East and Spennymoor West as proposed by a resident. This will cause confusion to local residents and organisations who identify with existing named areas. There is a very close link between Spennymoor and Tudhoe residents who use all of the facilities of the Town (schools, shops, Doctors etc) and use the same highway infrastructure that runs through both Divisions. There are organisations who identify themselves with the County Council areas by name. Tudhoe has long been established as a settlement in its own right and its name is included on ancient maps. A name change of Divisions to Spennymoor East and Spennymoor West would remove the identity of Tudhoe Division that could be offensive to some families who have long association with the historic mining communities in both Divisions. Artwork in each of the 3 entrances to the Town Centre commissioned in 2017 by Sedgefield Borough Council spells out the name 'Spennymoor (another: SpMoore)' at one location. Behind the lighting is the family name of every household in both Divisions such is the closeness of our two communities.

Tudhoe Division of the County Council with its parishes of Spennymoor Town Council are easily identified as 'Tudhoe Ward' and 'Low Spennymoor and Tudhoe Grange Ward' and have Town Councillors representing these two parish areas.

In the Tudhoe Division of the County Council we have places and organisations that identify themselves as examples below

Tudhoe Cricket Club

Tudhoe Community Centre

Tudhoe & Spennymoor Local History Society

Tudhoe Colliery Primary & Infant School

Tudhoe Moor Estate (in Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange Ward of Spennymoor Town Council)

Tudhoe Moor Primary School (in Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange Ward)

Spennymoor Settlement (premises in Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange Ward).

Spennymoor Football Club is situated in Tudhoe Grange Ward of the Town Council and Tudhoe Division of the County Council but attracts football fans from all parishes of both Tudhoe and Spennymoor and Spennymoor Cricket Club (in Spennymoor Division) also have a client base from both Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions. Spennymoor Leisure Centre, Spennymoor Library and our Market area and events area all occupy a central position in the Town serving a wide area of clientele.

Any change to the naming of these Divisions to Spennymoor East and West could also cause unnecessary confusion to organisations with their records and statistics where residents identify with existing areas usually by the location of their Town Council parish ward.

Long standing area names within the two Divisions include Merrington Lane, Low Spennymoor, Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange, Durhamgate, Tudhoe Moor, Tudhoe Village, Tudhoe Colliery, Spennymoor, Middlestone Moor, Byers Green all of which feature on old maps of the two Divisions. Local Authority records and statistics (including electoral information) cemetery records, allotment records, NHS/Doctors, Ambulance, School catchment areas, are named as examples)

I do not agree with the proposal to change the boundary between Tudhoe Division and Spennymoor Division where the boundary of Tudhoe Division is extended to include both sides of Ox Close Crescent and the streets above it that are currently in Spennymoor Division (eg Jackson Street, Shaw Street, Villiers Street, Park Parade, North Street, Dundas Street and Dickens Street and a small number of flats on High Street Spennymoor). My rejection of this is on the basis that there is a natural division between the Tudhoe and Spennymoor Divisions who share one high street. This natural Division is the stream that runs through the two Divisions underneath the Leisure Centre and the new Aldi on Oxford Road, Spennymoor, towards the Dene, that is a large grassed area in between Ox Close (currently Spennymoor Division) and Deneside (Tudhoe Division) and runs the full length of each street to join with Mayfields (start of Greenways Estate in Spennymoor Division and Wood Vue in Tudhoe Division). The street of Ox Close joins with Mayfields; and to the rear of Ox Close there is a public walkway leading to Parkside (Greenways Estate) and to Jackson Street, Villiers Street, Dundas Street etc. All of these streets also have road networks directly onto Carr Street/Carr Lane that is in Spennymoor Division. There is also a small estate known as Jubilee Close on Carr Street/Carr Lane in Spennymoor Division that is adjacent to Jackson Street and is also accessed from Carr Lane. There is also a pathway link to Jackson Street and Dundas Street. Changing the boundary of Spennymoor Division will cause confusion to residents in all of these streets who associate themselves with Spennymoor Division and have as mentioned direct road links into Spennymoor Division. Leaving the natural boundary as the Dene between Ox Close and Deneside towards the Cenotaph (commemorating loss of lives in all Wards and both Divisions) and then following the path of the stream running underneath the Leisure Centre in Central Spennymoor towards the dual carriageway (A688) is a more appropriate boundary between the two Divisions.

The area of shops in Spennymoor Town Centre has two natural divisions - from King Street/St Andrews Way to the Cenotaph that is known as 'Cheapside' area of shops (in Tudhoe Division) and secondly from the Cenotaph up to the North Eastern where it also joins with shops on Whitworth and Clyde Terrace (latter two areas of shops are in Spennymoor Division) and is known as 'High Street'. Because of the shared High Street of the two Divisions and close association of both Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions all five County Councillors for Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions have input in the economic prosperity of the Town Centre and work closely with all departments of the Local Authority to improve the social, economic and cultural offering in the Town for the significant number of residents in both of the Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions of the County Council. The County Council's Town Centre and Regeneration Team also involve all 5 County Councillors in discussions on the economic wellbeing of the Town Centre and have also worked with County Councillors to regenerate both Cheapside and High Street areas of the town. The County Council already have teams looking at the Town Centre shops as a whole in both Divisions to ensure that there is a mix of retail offering and already offer advice and funding to businesses and this works well. Since 2017 there has been significant regeneration improvements in the Town Centre (Festival Walk and Leisure Centre) that have created opportunities to offer cultural events in our new market area of the Town. County Councillors from both Spennymoor and Tudhoe Divisions have assisted with input and funding to help with this regeneration of our High Street. The complete separation of the High Street area, shops and cultural/event facilities from Spennymoor Division along the whole of High Street and to put these into Tudhoe Division would remove future opportunities for collaborative working between Spennymoor and Tudhoe Councillors and involvement with County Council Town Centre Management Teams. This would be unfair and disadvantageous to local residents that expect us to represent their interests in Town Centre decisions. Any Planning input on major Town Centre Schemes affecting both Divisions could also be disadvantaged to Spennymoor Division residents if their County Council representatives are excluded from any involvement in future plans. On Town Centre matters notification of specific planning matters within the Division go only to the County Councillors for that area.

I believe the current arrangement whereby the boundary line between the two Divisions is the Dene running between Ox Close and Deneside down to Mayfields and Wood Vue works well and is easily identified as the boundary line because of the large grassed area between the two streets maintained by Spennymoor Town Council. I also believe that the Cheapside shops between King Street and Cenotaph should stay in Tudhoe Division as they do currently at this natural divide between Divisions. I also believe that the shopping and event area from the Cenotaph on High Street up to North Eastern on High Street should stay in Spennymoor Division with the same joint cooperation/joined up high street discussions involving all County Councillors from both Divisions.

I disagree with the proposal that the shops and events areas along the whole of Cheapside and the length of High Street as well as the streets behind the High Street also being placed in placed in Tudhoe Division for the above mentioned reasons. There would be little change to electoral equality by leaving current arrangements as they are as since discussions have taken place on boundary changes there has been more planning applications approved that will before the next Boundary Commission review increase the housing supply in Tudhoe Division.

I disagree with the resident's suggestion that Mayfields and Canterbury Close areas should transfer into Tudhoe division. These are all part of the large Greenways Estate that is in Spennymoor Division and linked with a central road round the estate - Carr Lane - that joins with High Street. I

was pleased that the Commission have also taken a view not to go forward with the resident's suggestion. The addition of Binchester and Newfield into Spennymoor Division is not opposed. The Boundary Commission's view that Coundon and its associated villages should not be included is also welcomed as this proposal put forward by one organisation would have added considerable extra mileage and work related pressure onto this enlarged electoral area.

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*