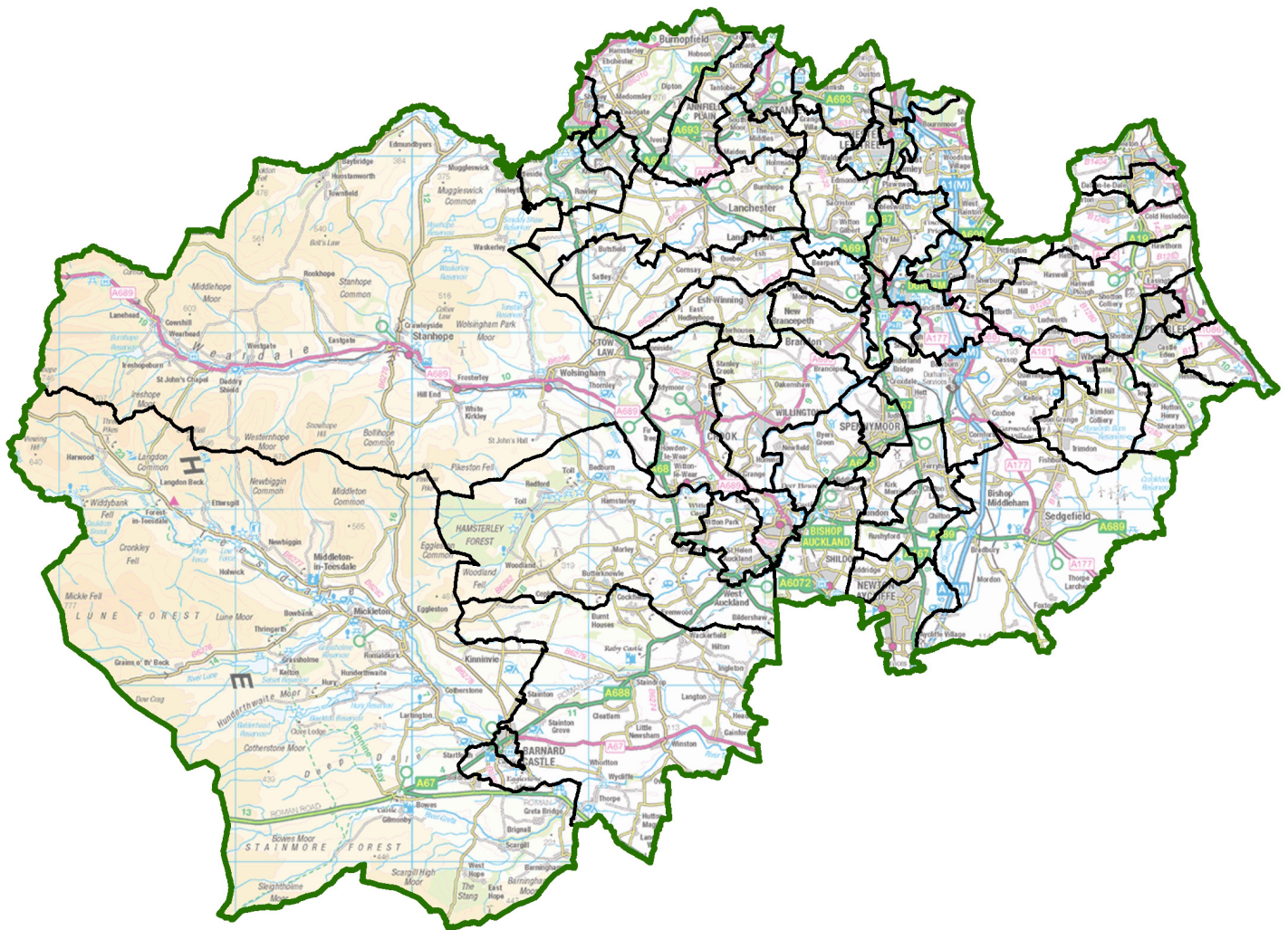


The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



New electoral arrangements for Durham County Council Final Recommendations

November 2023

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament.¹ We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Wallace Sampson OBE
- Liz Treacy
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why County Durham?

7 We are conducting a review of Durham County Council ('the Council') as some councillors currently represent many more or fewer electors than others. We describe this as 'electoral inequality'. Our aim is to create 'electoral equality', where the number of electors per councillor is as even as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The divisions in County Durham are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the county.

Our proposals for County Durham

9 County Durham should be represented by 98 councillors, 28 fewer than there are now.

10 County Durham should have 51 divisions, 12 fewer than there are now.

11 The boundaries of nearly all divisions should change.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for County Durham.

How will the recommendations affect you?

13 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which division you vote in, which other communities are in that division, and, in some cases, which parish council ward you vote in. Your division name may also change.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the county or result in changes to postcodes. They do not consider parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to consider any representations which are based on these issues.

Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for County Durham. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on division patterns for the county. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
15 November 2022	Number of councillors decided
22 November 2022	Start of consultation seeking views on new divisions
30 January 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
2 May 2023	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
10 July 2023	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
28 November 2023	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation² states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors³ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our divisions.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create divisions with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

19 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2022	2028
Electorate of County Durham	391,146	406,665
Number of councillors	98	98
Average number of electors per councillor	3,991	4,150

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a division is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the division as having 'good electoral equality'. All but one (Lower Teesdale division) of our proposed divisions for County Durham are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2028.

Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2028, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2023. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted an increase in the electorate of around 4%.

23 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

³ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Number of councillors

24 Durham County Council currently has 126 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that reducing the number of councillors by 28 to 98 will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of divisions that would be represented by 98 councillors – for example, 98 one-councillor divisions, 49 two-councillor divisions, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor divisions.

26 We received several submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on division patterns and our draft recommendations. There was a mixture of support and opposition to our decision that the Council be represented by 98 councillors. However, we were not persuaded by the arguments put forward that the retention of 126 councillors or any alternative number to 98 would result in the authority being able to carry out its statutory functions in a more effective manner. Based on the evidence received, we remain satisfied that a council size of 98 will ensure the Council can function effectively both now and in the future.

Division boundaries consultation

27 We received 71 submissions in response to our consultation on division boundaries. These included a county-wide proposal from the Joint Administration, which is composed of the four political groups that currently govern the authority (the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats, the Durham Group and the Independent Group). Within this submission, alternative proposals were made by the political groups where they differed on particular boundary proposals. Another county-wide submission came from the Labour Group. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for division arrangements in particular areas of the county.

28 The proposals made by the Joint Administration provided for a mixed pattern of one-, two- and three-councillor divisions for 98 councillors. The Labour Group proposed a mixed pattern of divisions based on 96 councillors. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of divisions resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries

29 Our draft recommendations were based on a combination of both county-wide schemes we received, which each contained various proposals that reflected our statutory criteria. We also considered local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In

some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

30 We visited the area in order to look at the various different proposals on the ground. This tour of County Durham helped us to decide between the different boundaries proposed.

31 Our draft recommendations were for nine single-councillor divisions, 28 two-councillor divisions and 11 three-councillor divisions. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

Draft recommendations consultation

32 We received 300 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included comments from the political groups, local organisations, parish councils and local residents. The majority of the submissions focused on specific areas – particularly our proposals in the Consett and Teesdale areas.

33 Based on the evidence received, we were persuaded to make significant changes to our draft recommendations in these areas. We consider that our final proposals provide for a better reflection of our statutory criteria.

Final recommendations

34 Our final recommendations are for nine three-councillor divisions, 29 two-councillor divisions and 13 one-councillor divisions. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

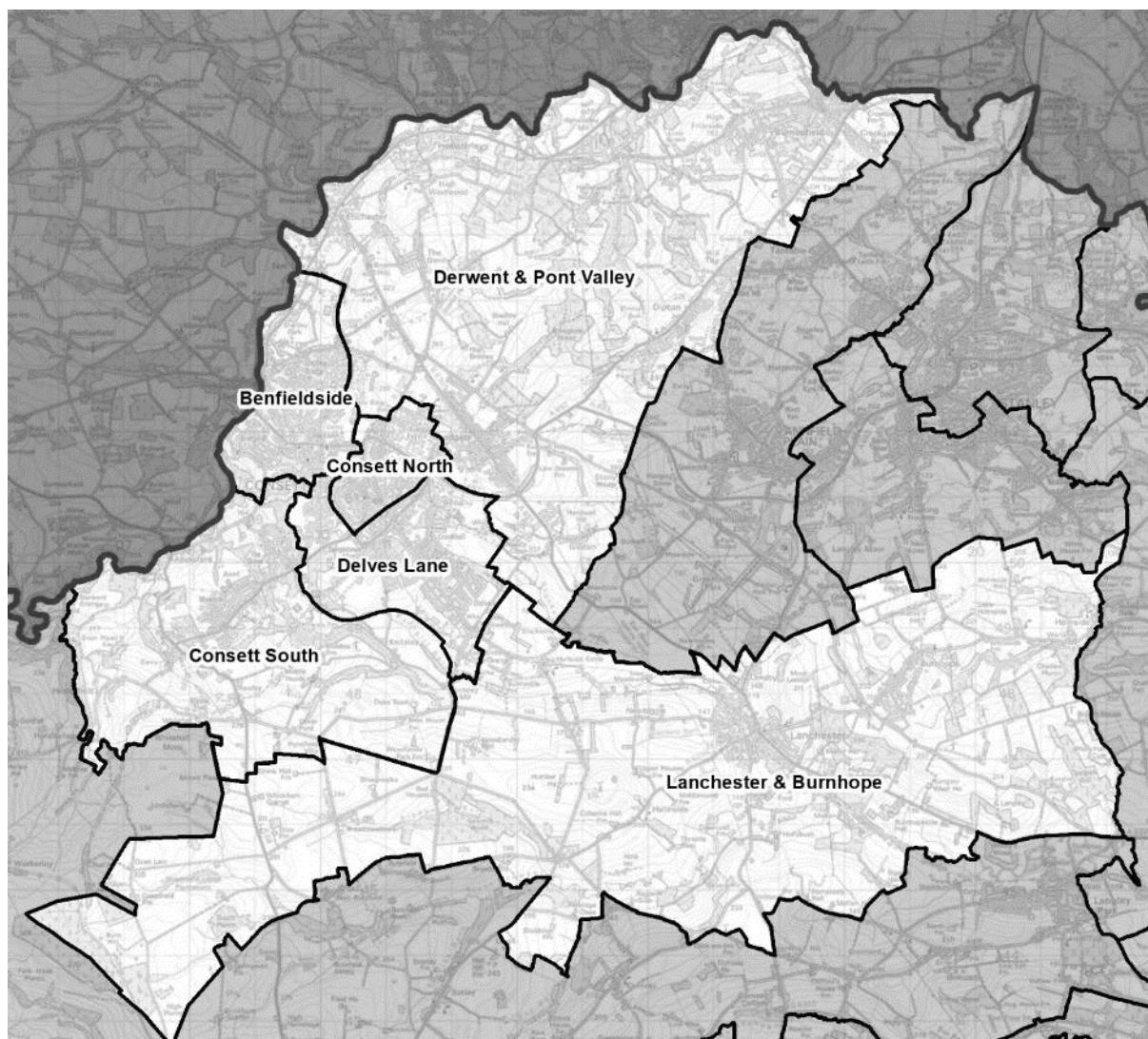
35 The tables and maps on pages 8–36 detail our final recommendations for each area of County Durham. They detail how the proposed division arrangements reflect the three statutory⁴ criteria of:

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

36 A summary of our proposed new divisions is set out in the table starting on page 45 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁴ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Consett



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Benfieldside	2	0%
Consett North	1	3%
Consett South	1	-5%
Delves Lane	2	1%
Derwent & Pont Valley	3	6%
Lanchester & Burnhope	1	10%

Benfieldside

37 Councillor Earley and eight local residents supported our proposed Benfieldside division, mainly agreeing with our decision to incorporate the entirety of the Blackhill area. Councillor Earley also supported the removal of Medomsley Edge from the current Benfieldside division. With no further submissions received, we are confirming our proposed Benfieldside division as final.

Consett North and Derwent & Pont Valley

38 While we received support for our Burnopfield, Dipton & Ebchester division from Councillor Andrews and some support from local residents for our two-councillor Consett North division, we received significant opposition to our proposals from the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Bell, Councillor Shield, Councillor Rooney, the Hamsterley Mill Residents' Association, the Medomsley Community Action Group, the Ebchester Village Trust and 48 local residents. These respondents argued that Consett town is distinct from the villages of Leadgate and Medomsley and that these areas should therefore be placed in separate divisions. A handful of submissions also opposed The Dene being placed in a different division from Medomsley village.

39 Many of these submissions supported a three-councillor Derwent & Pont Valley division, composed of the entirety of the Burnopfield, Dipton & Ebchester division we had previously proposed, in addition to the villages of Leadgate and Medomsley. This would allow for the creation of a single-councillor Consett North division, which would be composed mainly of the town centre. We consider that a three-councillor Derwent & Pont Valley division and a single-councillor Consett North division will best reflect the community evidence we have received during the two rounds of consultation, so we recommend them both as part of our final proposals.

40 The Liberal Democrats requested that electors bounded by Leadgate Road, Sherburn Terrace, Front Street and the A692 be included in Consett North division. While we recognise that the A road could represent an identifiable boundary here, this change would result in a Consett North division that would be significantly under-represented. We have therefore not adopted this modification.

41 It was suggested by the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Shield and Councillor Rooney that we rename Consett North to Consett Central given the division will largely comprise Consett town centre. However, we have decided to retain the Consett North name, given it is to the north of our recommended Consett South division.

Consett South and Delves Lane

42 Although supportive of the decision to transfer Healeyfield parish from Lanchester division into a division with The Grove and Moorside communities, the Liberal Democrats, Councillor Haney, Councillor Shield and over 20 local residents opposed our Consett South division. This was because we had placed these three areas in a larger three-councillor division that included the current Delves Lane division. It was broadly argued that the Healeyfield, The Grove and Moorside communities were distinct from the communities in the existing Delves Lane division and should therefore be placed in two separate divisions.

43 We were persuaded, based upon the evidence received, that a single-councillor Consett South division and a two-councillor Delves Lane division will provide a better reflection of community identities and interests in the Consett area and we are recommending these two divisions as part of our final recommendations.

Lanchester & Burnhope

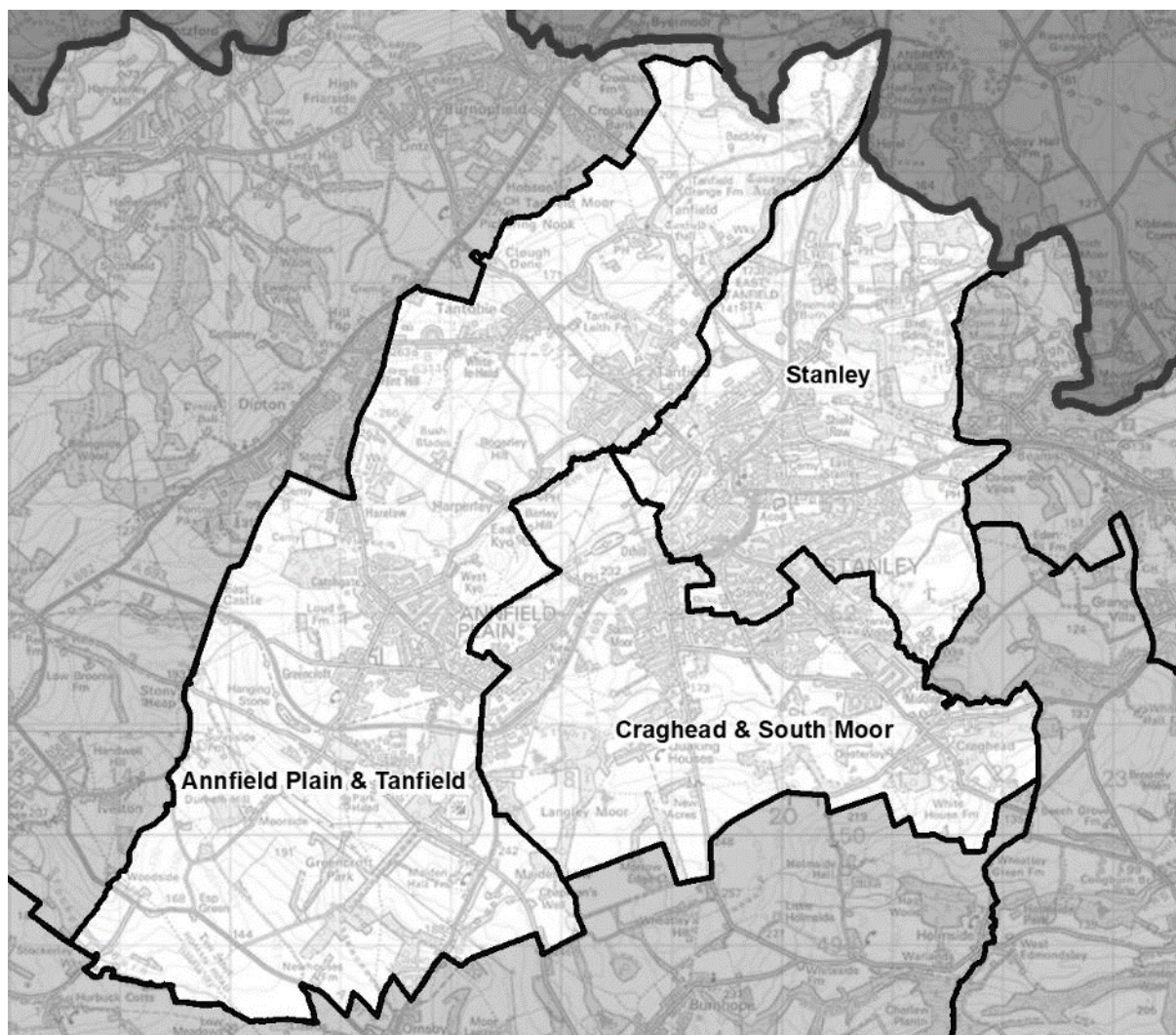
44 Greencroft Parish Council, Councillor McGaun, Councillor Oliver, Councillor Jarvis and 20 local residents expressed dissatisfaction that Greencroft parish had been included in our previously proposed Consett North division. These respondents argued that they shared little in common with Consett and should instead be placed in Lanchester division.

45 We carefully considered these submissions. However, incorporating Greencroft parish into Lanchester division would result in the division having a forecast electoral variance of 16% by 2028, when compared to the county average. We are required to ensure that electoral variances are kept to a minimum, and we consider that such a variance is too high and not justified by the evidence received. We have therefore not adopted this specific proposal as part of our final recommendations.

46 Instead, we have decided to place the parish in our Annfield Plain & Tanfield division, as per the suggestion of Councillor Shield, the Hamsterley Mill Residents' Association, the Medomsley Community Action Group and over 40 local residents. While this does not reflect the preference of electors residing in Greencroft parish, we consider that this arrangement is preferable to placing the parish in a division with Consett town and will adequately reflect our statutory criteria.

47 We have also renamed this division Lanchester & Burnhope, as proposed by Burnhope Parish Council, Councillor McGaun, Councillor Oliver and several local residents. We were persuaded that doing so will ensure the division name properly reflects its constituent communities.

Stanley



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Annfield Plain & Tanfield	2	1%
Craghead & South Moor	2	-2%
Stanley	2	1%

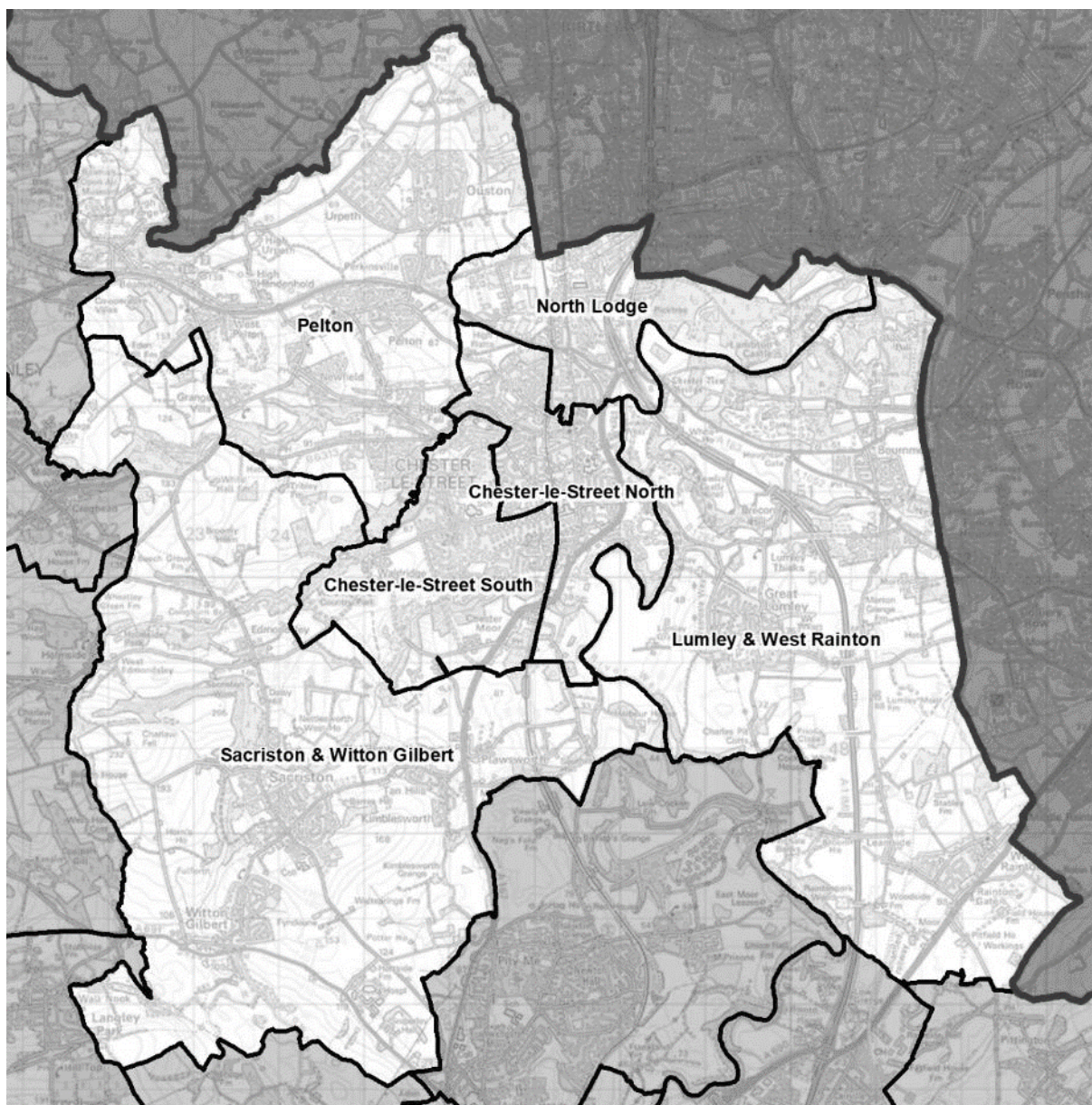
Annfield Plain & Tanfield

48 Bar the inclusion of Greencroft parish, for the reasons justified in the previous section, we recommend no further changes to our Annfield Plain & Tanfield division as part of our final recommendations.

Craghead & South Moor and Stanley

49 We received no submissions in relation to these divisions during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for both divisions as final.

Chester-le-Street



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Chester-le-Street North	2	-7%
Chester-le-Street South	2	-4%
Lumley & West Rainton	2	-5%
North Lodge	1	-5%
Pelton	3	-3%
Sacriston & Witton Gilbert	2	0%

Chester-le-Street North and Chester-le-Street South

50 While broadly supportive of the divisions proposed for the Chester-le-Street area, the Labour Group, with the support of the North Durham Constituency Labour

Party, suggested some modifications to the two divisions. They proposed that the area immediately east of the East Coast Main Line, which includes Chester-le-Street Community Hospital, Relton Terrace, Clifford Terrace and Orchard Gardens, should be included in Chester-le-Street North division. They were of the view that the railway line forms a strong, identifiable boundary that has limited crossing points. They also proposed that the area containing the residential roads of Cragside, Gibside, Gainford and Wynyard be included in our proposed Chester-le-Street South division rather than our draft Chester-le-Street North division to achieve a better level of electoral equality and achieve more identifiable boundaries.

51 We agree that these modifications will result in two divisions that will reflect communities, achieve a good level of electoral equality, and have strong boundaries, so we are therefore adopting them as part of our final recommendations.

Lumley & West Rainton

52 We received no submissions in relation to Lumley & West Rainton division during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

North Lodge

53 The Liberal Democrats, North Lodge Parish Council, Councillor Martin and 10 local residents supported our proposed North Lodge division. We are therefore confirming the division as final.

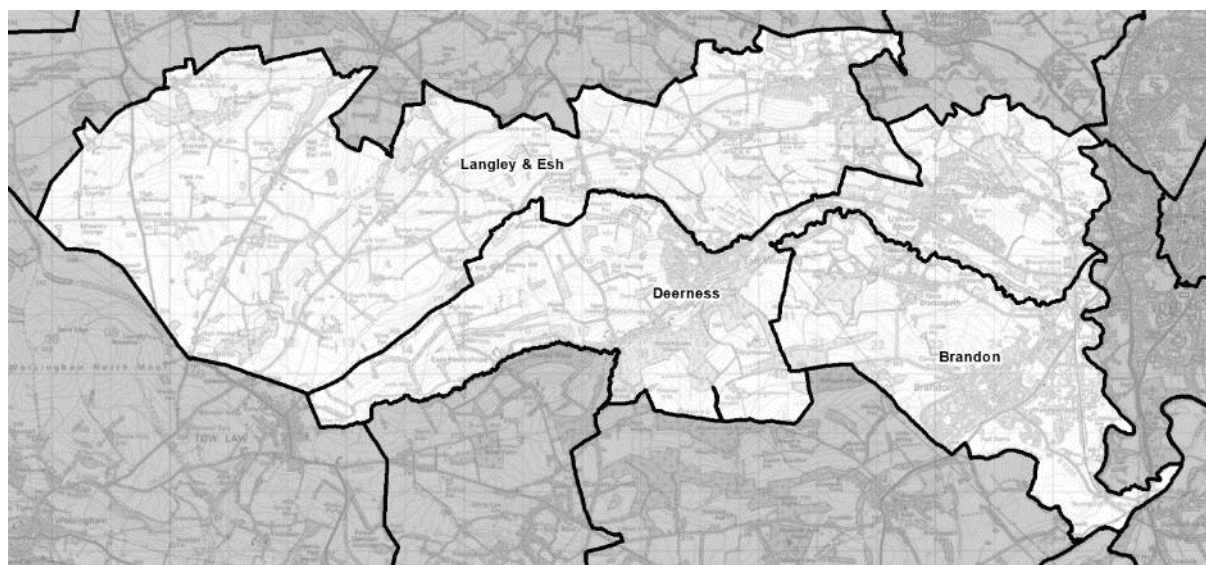
Pelton

54 Ouston Parish Council, Pelton Parish Council and Urpeth Parish Council all expressed their support for our three-councillor Pelton division. We are therefore confirming the division as final.

Sacrison & Witton Gilbert

55 The Liberal Democrats supported our proposed Sacrison & Witton Gilbert division, despite it being significantly different from the proposal they had submitted for the area during the previous consultation. With no further submissions received relating to this division, we therefore confirm the division as part of our final recommendations.

Brandon and Esh



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Brandon	2	6%
Deerness	2	9%
Langley & Esh	1	6%

Brandon and Deerness

56 Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council requested that the current arrangements remain, so that the Brandon, Meadowfield and Langley Moor communities continue to be linked together within Brandon division, with New Brancepeth excluded. However, transferring New Brancepeth to the adjacent Deerness division would result in that division having a forecast electoral variance of 21%, which we consider too high to accept. We also consider that an alternative arrangement of placing New Brancepeth in Willington & Hunwick division would not be reflective of local community identities and interests. Therefore, we have decided to confirm our proposed Brandon and Deerness divisions as final.

Langley & Esh

57 We received two submissions in relation to this division during consultation. One of these came from the Liberal Democrats. While largely supportive of the division, they argued that Satley parish should be moved to this division from Weardale division. They stressed that significant community links exist between Satley and the rest of the proposed Langley & Esh division. However, a local resident supported the inclusion of Satley parish within Weardale. After considering the evidence received, we have been persuaded by the proposal made by the Liberal Democrats and have transferred Satley into our proposed Langley & Esh division as part of our final recommendations.

Durham city



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Belmont	2	6%
Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe	2	9%
Framwellgate & Newton Hall	3	-9%
Neville's Cross	2	-3%

Belmont and Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe

58 The Liberal Democrats, Councillor Ormerod, Shincliffe Parish Council and several local residents opposed our decision to exclude Shincliffe parish from Elvet & Gilesgate division and place it in Bowburn & Coxhoe division. They argued that Shincliffe parish is distinct from the parishes that comprise Bowburn & Coxhoe division, and that the parish would fit more appropriately within our Elvet & Gilesgate division.

59 We were persuaded by the evidence received that placing Shincliffe parish in an Elvet & Gilesgate division would better reflect community identities and interests. However, including the parish in Elvet & Gilesgate division would result in the division being significantly under-represented. Therefore, we have decided to transfer the unparished area around Habgood Drive and Cuthbert Avenue from our draft Belmont division to our final Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe division. We have also transferred the unparished Gilesgate area, north of Sunderland Road, from Elvet & Gilesgate division to our final Belmont division. This was supported by Councillor Freeman, who stated that these two modifications would better reflect community identities and interests. This will result in both divisions having a good forecast level of electoral equality by 2028.

60 Belmont Parish Council expressed regret that we had ‘not considered Belmont Parish Council’s views’ which it submitted during the previous consultation. Belmont Parish Council had previously requested the retention of the current division boundaries and the current allocation of three councillors. Councillor Ashfield also expressed concern at the reduction of councillors for Belmont division. However, as previously outlined in the draft recommendations, it is an unavoidable consequence that we must reduce the allocation of councillors per division and redraw division boundaries across the county to achieve an effective balance of our statutory criteria. We are therefore recommending a two-councillor Belmont division as part of our final recommendations, which now excludes the unparished area around Habgood Drive and Cuthbert Avenue but includes the unparished Gilesgate area.

Framwellgate & Newton Hall

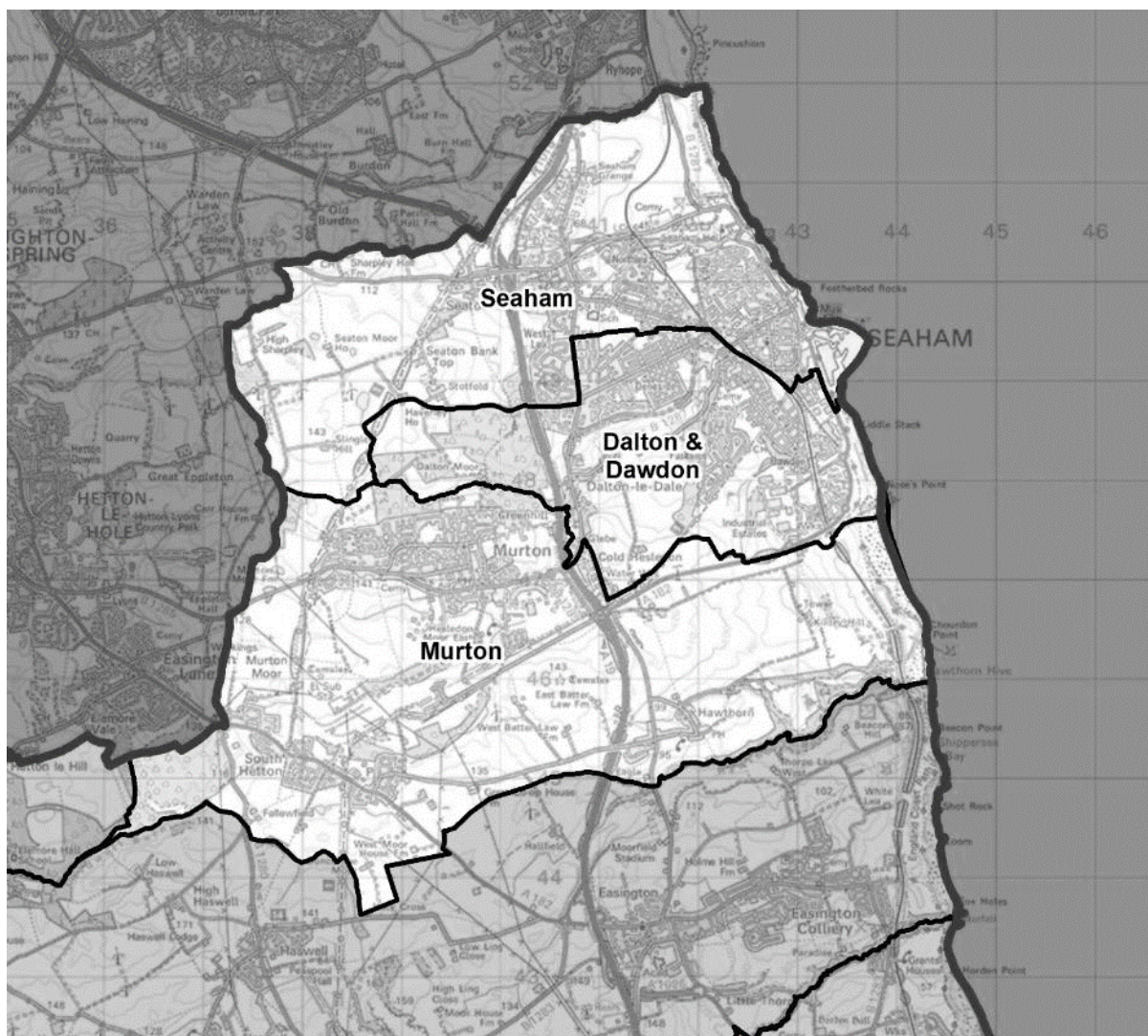
61 We received two submissions relating to this division. One local resident requested that the Kimblesworth Grange area be incorporated into our Framwellgate & Newton Hall division. We decided not to adopt this proposal as it would mean splitting Witton Gilbert parish across two divisions, which, in our view, would not contribute to effective and convenient local government.

62 Another local resident requested that the Aykley Heads area be transferred to Framwellgate Moor parish. However, changing external parish boundaries falls outside the scope of this electoral review and is the responsibility of the County Council via a Community Governance Review.

Neville’s Cross

63 We received no submissions in relation to Neville’s Cross division during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

Murton and Seaham



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Dalton & Dawdon	2	0%
Murton	2	1%
Seaham	2	9%

Dalton & Dawdon, Murton and Seaham

64 The Labour Group expressed disappointment that their proposals for this area of the county, which were submitted during the previous consultation, were not adopted. They therefore submitted a revised version of their initial proposals, proposing three two-councillor divisions, named Dawdon, Murton and Seaham & Deneside. However, we decided not to adopt these proposals as we consider that the community evidence the Labour Group supplied was not persuasive enough for us to significantly alter our draft recommendations here. In addition, as outlined in our draft recommendations, our proposed Dalton & Dawdon division will have

excellent electoral equality and unites Dalton-le-Dale parish in one division, which will promote effective and convenient local government.

65 A local resident opposed South Hetton parish being included in Murton division, stating that the area is closer to the Easington area than it is to Murton parish. However, removing South Hetton parish from our Murton division would result in Murton division having a forecast electoral variance of -24% by 2028, which is unacceptably high.

66 We are therefore confirming our Dalton & Dawdon, Murton and Seaham divisions as final.

Easington, Pittington, Sherburn and Shotton



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Easington & Shotton	3	0%
Pittington & Sherburn	1	-9%

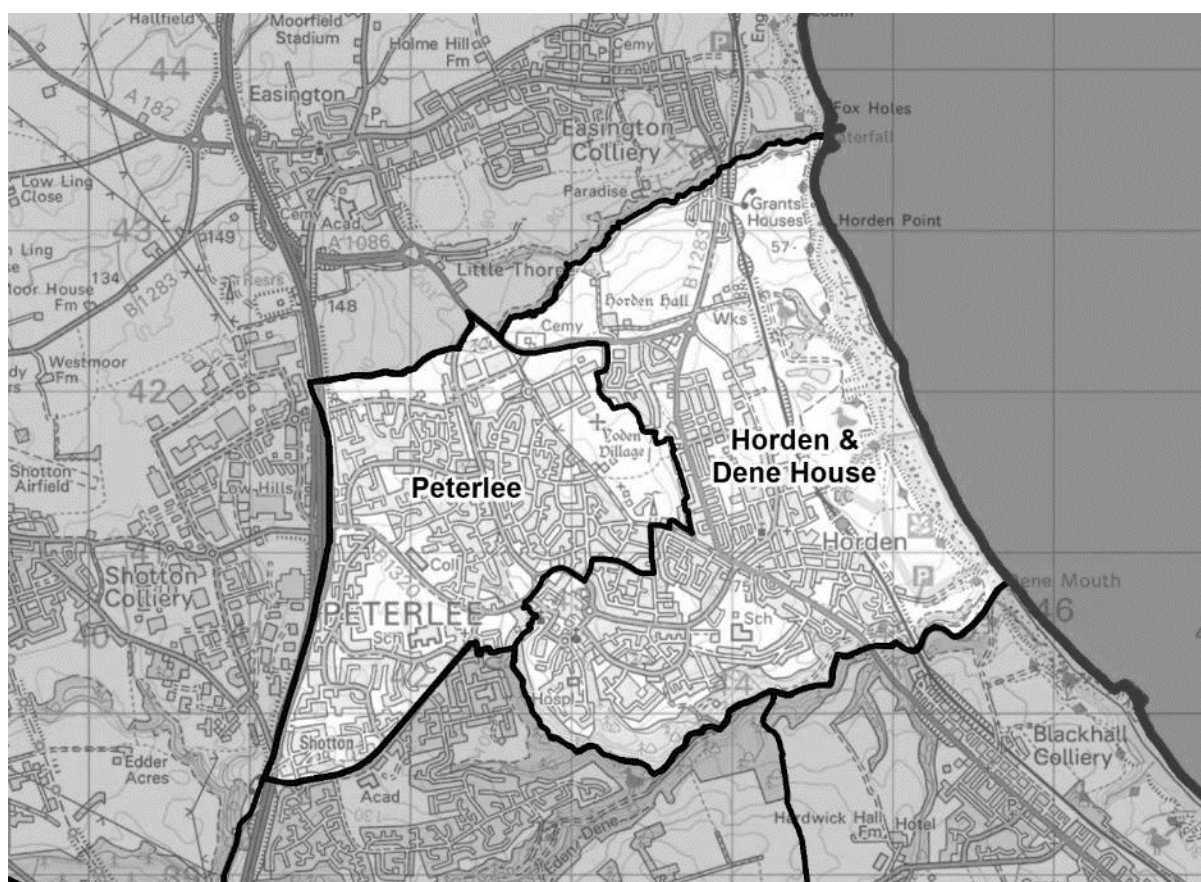
Easington & Shotton

67 We received three submissions that opposed this division, from Councillor Hood, Haswell Parish Council and a local resident. These respondents opposed the creation of a large three-councillor division comprised of Easington Colliery, Easington Village, Haswell, Shotton and Shadforth parishes, arguing they were disparate and did not have shared community identity and interests. We examined Councillor Hood's proposal, which proposed a single-councillor Easington division and a two-councillor Shadforth, Haswell & Shotton division. However, both divisions were forecast to have significantly high levels of electoral inequality. We consider such levels of electoral inequality would not reflect our statutory criteria, so we have decided not to adopt these divisions as part of our final recommendations. We are instead confirming our draft recommendations for Easington & Shotton division as final.

Pittington & Sherburn

68 Councillor Hall opposed our single-councillor Pittington & Sherburn division, and specifically our decision not to include Sherburn Hill village. Councillor Hall argued that Sherburn Hill shares much stronger links with the communities in our Pittington & Sherburn division, than with those in our Easington & Shotton division. However, as noted in our draft recommendations, we have not included Sherburn Hill village in Pittington & Sherburn division as it would result in a forecast electoral variance of 13% for the division. We are not persuaded that we have received sufficient community evidence to justify this variance. We also noted in our draft recommendations that placing Sherburn Hill in our Easington & Shotton division ensures that the entirety of Shadforth parish is in one division. We maintain our view that this aids effective and convenient local government. We are therefore not recommending any changes to this division as part of our final recommendations.

Horden and Peterlee

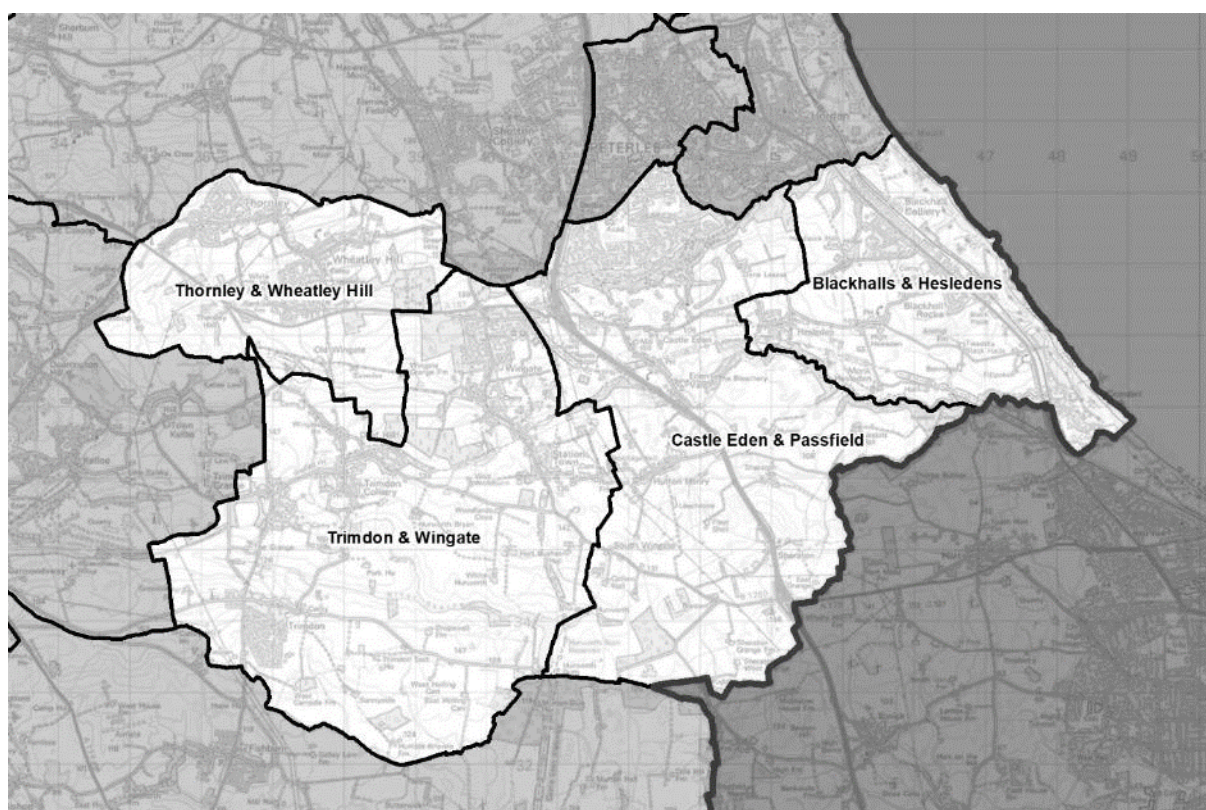


Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Horden & Dene House	2	-1%
Peterlee	2	5%

Horden & Dene House and Peterlee

69 A local resident disagreed with our proposals to link part of Peterlee parish with Horden parish. However, no alternative arrangement was suggested by the local resident that better reflected our statutory criteria, so we have decided to recommend no changes to these two divisions as part of our final recommendations.

Blackhalls, Thornley, Trimdon and Wingate



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Blackhalls & Hesledens	1	10%
Castle Eden & Passfield	1	8%
Thornley & Wheatley Hill	1	6%
Trimdon & Wingate	2	6%

Blackhalls & Hesledens and Castle Eden & Passfield

70 The Labour Group requested that we combine our proposed single-councillor Castle Eden & Passfield and Monk Hesleden divisions into a larger two-councillor division named Blackhalls. They argued that the communities within these divisions share a historic and current community connection and should therefore be placed within the same division.

71 We have decided not to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations. We maintain the view, as outlined in our draft recommendations, that a single-councillor division for Monk Hesleden parish provides the best reflection of our statutory criteria, creating a division for a parish that is somewhat distinct from communities immediately to its west. We also note that, in its submission, Monk Hesleden Parish Council did not express a need to be linked with the communities in our proposed Castle Eden & Passfield division.

72 However, we did note that Monk Hesleden Parish Council requested that Monk Hesleden division be renamed Blackhalls & Hesledens. We have decided to adopt this name as part of our final recommendations, as we consider that this name better reflects the communities that will make up this division, which includes Blackhall Colliery, Blackhall Rocks, Crimdon, Hesleden, High Hesleden and Monk Hesleden.

Thornley & Wheatley Hill

73 We received no submissions in relation to Thornley & Wheatley Hill division during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

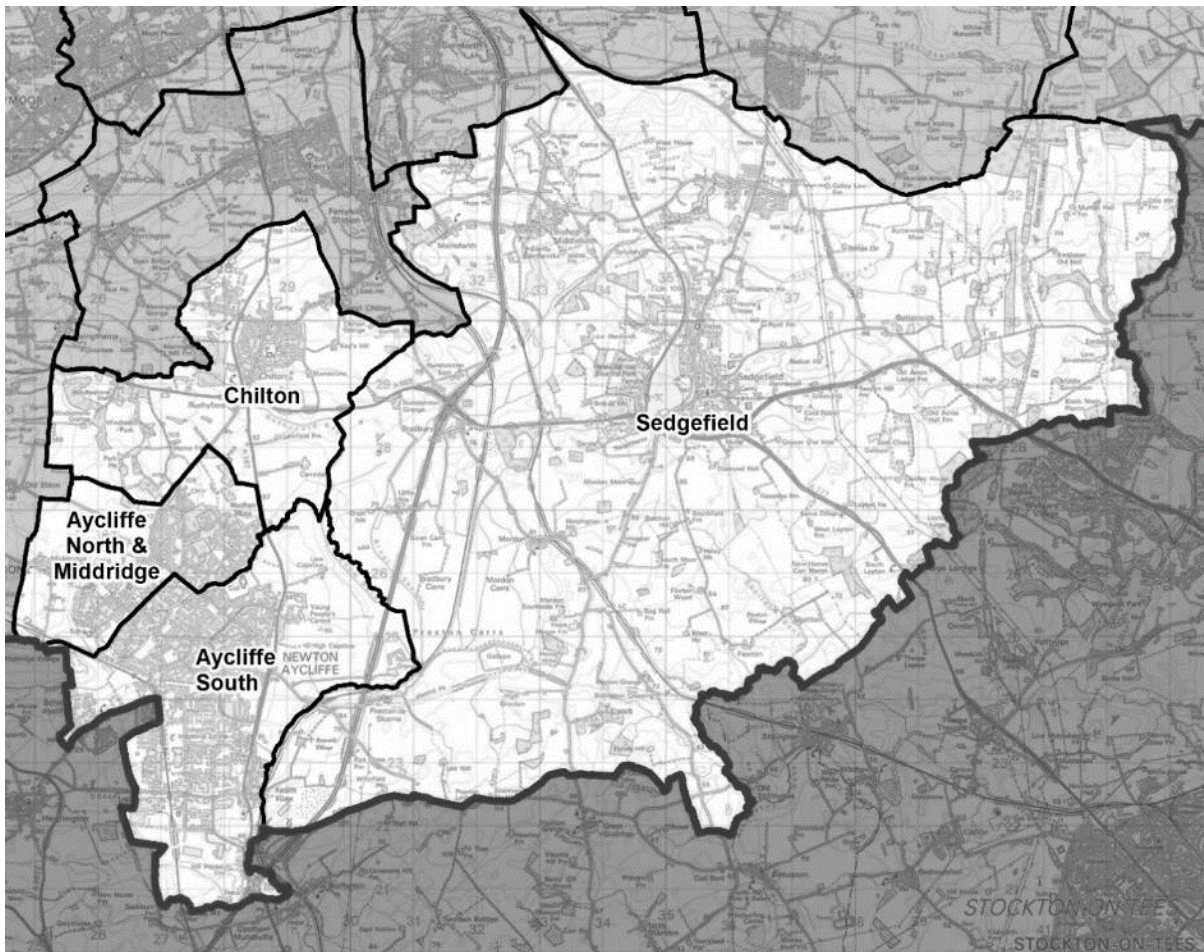
Trimdon & Wingate

74 We received two submissions in relation to this division. The Labour Group proposed that we divide it into two single-councillor divisions. A desire for a single-councillor Wingate division was also expressed by Councillor Higgins.

75 The Labour Group suggested placing Trimdon parish in a division with Station Town. Wingate parish would then be linked to Trimdon Foundry parish. We have decided not to adopt the proposal, as the former division would contain detached areas. We consider that such proposals would not reflect community identities, nor promote effective and convenient local government.

76 Splitting this division along the Trimdon, Trimdon Foundry and Wingate parish boundary would result in single-councillor Wingate and Trimdon divisions with forecast electoral variances of 2% and 11%, respectively. We consider that the community-based evidence submitted by the Labour Group and Councillor Higgins is not persuasive enough for us to recommend a single-councillor Trimdon division with a high variance. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendations for a two-councillor Trimdon & Wingate division as final.

Newton Aycliffe and Sedgelyield



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Aycliffe North & Middridge	2	7%
Aycliffe South	3	-5%
Chilton	1	-8%
Sedgelyield	2	-5%

Aycliffe North & Middridge and Aycliffe South

77 Councillor Chandran, of Great Aycliffe Town Council, supported our proposals 'as they do not interfere with the internal parish boundaries'. With no further submissions received with regard to these two divisions, we are confirming them both as final.

Chilton

78 We received no submissions in relation to Chilton division during consultation. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

Sedgefield

79 Sedgefield Town Council supported our decision to adopt its proposal to extend the current Sedgefield division to incorporate the parish of Bishop Middleham, stating that it will effectively reflect community identities and interests. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

Bowburn, Coxhoe, Ferryhill and Spennymoor



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Bowburn & Coxhoe	3	1%
Ferryhill	2	-2%
Spennymoor	2	10%
Tudhoe	2	-1%

Bowburn & Coxhoe

80 The Liberal Democrats supported the inclusion of Cornforth parish within Bowburn & Coxhoe division, noting that it would ensure electoral equality across divisions. However, Councillor Crathorne opposed the inclusion of Cornforth parish in Bowburn & Coxhoe division, expressing a strong preference that it remain in a Ferryhill division. This would result in an anticipated electoral variance of 21% for our Ferryhill division and -13% for our Bowburn & Coxhoe division. We consider such variances are too high to accept as part of our recommendations. We therefore confirm our decision to place Cornforth parish in Bowburn & Coxhoe division as part of our final recommendations.

81 As justified in our Durham city section, we have decided to transfer Shincliffe parish from our proposed Bowburn & Coxhoe division into Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe division. We have also decided to include Croxdale & Hett parish, as supported by Croxdale & Hett Parish Council.

Ferryhill

82 Councillor C. Maddison and Councillor L. Maddison agreed with our decision to include Kirk Merrington and North Close in Ferryhill division. However, we received submissions that challenged our decision. Both Spennymoor Town Council and Councillor Gilling argued that these two areas form part of Spennymoor parish and therefore share closer community links with the larger Spennymoor area. They stated that these two areas should be included either in a Spennymoor or Tudhoe division. Councillor Foster stated that the inclusion of these areas in a Tudhoe division would aid effective and convenient local government.

83 However, we are unable to include these areas either in our proposed Spennymoor or Tudhoe divisions, as it would result in significant electoral inequality for Ferryhill division. This was recognised by Councillor Ranyard, who acknowledged that incorporating these areas into a Spennymoor division would be difficult to achieve while ensuring good electoral equality. We are therefore keeping Kirk Merrington and North Close in Ferryhill division as part of our final recommendations.

Spennymoor and Tudhoe

84 Councillor L. Maddison and Councillor Ranyard agreed with our decision to not include the Coundon area in Spennymoor division. Councillor L. Maddison, Councillor Molloy and Councillor Ranyard also approved of our decision to incorporate the Binchester and Newfield areas into Spennymoor division. Spennymoor Town Council, Councillor Foster, Councillor L. Maddison and Councillor Ranyard agreed with our decision to place the entirety of the housing estate near the Merrington Lane Industrial Estate in Tudhoe division. This estate is currently split between the existing Tudhoe and Ferryhill divisions.

85 However, Spennymoor Town Council, Councillor Foster, Councillor C. Maddison, Councillor L. Maddison and Councillor Molloy opposed our decision to move the current boundary between Spennymoor and Tudhoe divisions to the rear of Ox Close Crescent, thereby including several roads around Dundas Street in Tudhoe division. These respondents stated that this placed the commercial centre of Spennymoor town within Tudhoe division, and that the current boundary, which runs through the town centre along an underground stream, represents a natural boundary. It was also argued that the town centre contains shared facilities and that the current boundary allowed both the current Spennymoor and Tudhoe councillors to engage in town centre matters. Councillor Ranyard deemed the boundary between our Spennymoor and Tudhoe divisions as broadly acceptable, although they did recognise that placing Spennymoor town centre in Tudhoe division may be confusing for electors.

86 We have carefully considered the evidence received. We note that our Spennymoor division is forecast to have an electoral variance of 10% by 2028. Expanding the division eastwards and following the existing boundary would result in

an electoral variance of 15%, which we consider too high to accept, based on the evidence received. Therefore, we are not changing the boundary between our proposed Spennymoor and Tudhoe divisions as part of our final recommendations.

87 In our draft recommendations, we asked whether renaming our Spennymoor and Tudhoe divisions to Spennymoor West and Spennymoor East, respectively, would be welcomed. This had been suggested by Councillor Ranyard. However, this was opposed by Spennymoor Town Council, Councillor C. Maddison, Councillor L. Maddison and Councillor Molloy. They agreed that the current division names are locally recognised and changing them would cause confusion for electors. We are therefore retaining the Spennymoor and Tudhoe division names as part of our final recommendations.

88 Spennymoor Town Council requested that the parish electoral arrangements proposed in our draft recommendations be amended, so that six town councillors are allocated to Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange parish ward and four town councillors to Tudhoe parish ward. We had recommended that both Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange and Tudhoe parish wards be represented by five town councillors each. However, our policy is to allocate the current number of total councillors to each parish ward based on the five-year electorate forecast. We consider that changing the total number of councillors for a parish ward is a matter best resolved locally and that the Council may wish to make such changes via a Community Governance Review.

89 While the Liberal Democrats, Councillor L. Maddison and Councillor Ranyard supported the incorporation of Croxdale & Hett parish into our Tudhoe division, Croxdale & Hett Parish Council and Councillor Foster opposed this. In particular, the former stated that the parish has formed strong community relationships with the parishes that comprise our Bowburn & Coxhoe division, and that they should thus be kept together in the same division. We have been persuaded by the evidence received by Croxdale & Hett Parish Council and Councillor Foster, and have transferred the parish into our recommended Bowburn & Coxhoe division. The inclusion of Croxdale & Hett parish was also supported by Shincliffe Parish Council, which noted that it would achieve a more equal level of representation between divisions.

Bishop Auckland and Shildon



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Bishop Auckland	3	1%
Shildon & Dene Valley	3	1%

Bishop Auckland

91 Bishop Auckland Town Council expressed concern that our proposed Bishop Auckland division included areas outside the Bishop Auckland parish boundary, asserting that such an arrangement could cause confusion for electors. However, we consider that the unparished South Church area, which is the area immediately outside the town council boundary that we included in Bishop Auckland division, shares close geographic links with Bishop Auckland town. We consider including the South Church area in Bishop Auckland division provides an effective balance of our statutory criteria.

92 We nonetheless agree with Bishop Auckland Town Council that a future Community Governance Review to possibly bring the South Church area within Bishop Auckland parish might be beneficial and contribute to effective and convenient local government.

93 Bishop Auckland Town Council also stated that it would prefer the area to remain represented by four councillors, as opposed to the three we have recommended. However, given the reduction in the number of councillors for the authority as a whole, it is an inevitable consequence that we must reduce the allocation of councillors per division and redraw division boundaries across the county to achieve an effective balance of our statutory criteria. Therefore, we are not able to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations.

Shildon & Dene Valley

94 Eldon Parish Council supported our proposed three-councillor Shildon & Dene Valley division. We have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendations for this division as final.

Crook and Willington



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Crook	3	-7%
Willington & Hunwick	2	-8%

Crook and Willington & Hunwick

95 Councillor Currah supported our proposed Crook division, stating that it re-established links between the villages of Roddymoor, Billy Row and Witton-le-Wear.

96 We also received three submissions, all from local residents, that expressed support for our proposed Willington & Hunwick division. One of the local residents welcomed the decision to incorporate the Helmington Row area in particular.

97 However, Councillor Reed disagreed with our proposal to exclude the Helmington Row area from Crook division, providing evidence of the links it shares with Crook village. However, removing it from our Willington & Hunwick division

would result in that division having a forecast electoral variance of -13% by 2028. We are not persuaded that we have received sufficient community identity evidence to justify such a variance. We are therefore keeping Helmington Row in our proposed Willington & Hunwick division as part of our final recommendations.

98 Councillor Reed also stated that the Crook division boundary should not go as far north as East Hedleyhope village. However, we consider that following the Hedleyhope parish boundary, which runs just south of East Hedleyhope village, to be an identifiable boundary. We therefore recommend no changes to our proposed Crook division as part of our final recommendations.

99 Councillor Reed also noted that a residential development near High West Road 'remain(ed) on the cards' and that we should take account of this development when considering the Crook division boundary. However, when submitting electorate forecasts to us, we ask local authorities to take account of any developments that will contain electors five years after the review has finished. The Council determined that this development would not contain any electors by 2028 and has therefore not included this development in the forecast. We are content with the overall forecast and cannot consider developments that will come on line outside of the five-year forecast period.

Teesdale and Weardale



Division name	Number of councillors	Variance 2028
Barnard Castle	1	3%
Evenwood	1	-5%
Lower Teesdale	2	-12%
Upper Teesdale	1	-10%
Weardale	2	-5%
West Auckland	2	4%

Barnard Castle, Evenwood, Lower Teesdale, Upper Teesdale and West Auckland

100 We received over 75 submissions that related to our draft recommendations for Barnard Castle, Evenwood and West Auckland divisions.

101 Councillor Bell, Councillor Cosslett and Councillor Potts supported our Evenwood and West Auckland divisions. They welcomed the former incorporating areas such as Escomb and Witton Park from the current West Auckland division. However, West Auckland Parish Council, the Escomb Community Association, Escomb Primary School, Witton Park Methodist Church, Councillor Yorke, Dr Sam Rushworth (the Labour Parliamentary Candidate for the Bishop Auckland constituency) and 36 local residents opposed our single-councillor West Auckland division, on the basis that it excluded the Escomb and Witton Park areas. These communities are currently in the existing West Auckland division and the respondents opposed them being transferred to a larger three-councillor Evenwood division.

102 Similarly, we received representations from 26 local residents, Staindrop Parish Council, Ingleton Parish Council and Raby Estates opposing their inclusion in our proposed three-councillor Evenwood division. Many expressed a strong preference to be in a division that looks towards Barnard Castle and the broader Teesdale area. Several of these submissions requested that our three-councillor Barnard Castle division be sub-divided into smaller divisions, stating that it was too large and formed of distant and disparate communities.

103 We found that creating divisions in this area, which both reflected the community evidence received while also securing good electoral equality, was a difficult task. We are somewhat constrained by the distribution of settlements and the topography in this area, meaning our scope for alternative division patterns is limited.

104 Therefore, after careful consideration, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposal for a two-councillor West Auckland division that incorporates the Escomb and Witton Park areas, along with the part of Etherley parish that includes High Etherley and Toft Hill.

105 We have also sub-divided our three-councillor Barnard Castle division. We are instead recommending a single-councillor Barnard Castle division, comprised solely of Barnard Castle parish, bounded by a single-councillor Upper Teesdale division to the west and a two-councillor Lower Teesdale division to the east. We consider that these three divisions reflect the evidence provided by residents and parishes who expressed a preference for smaller divisions in the Teesdale area.

106 Although our Lower Teesdale division is forecast an electoral variance of -12% by 2028, we consider that this is justified on the basis of strong community evidence we received during consultation.

107 In addition, we are recommending a single-councillor Evenwood division that is similar to the current two-councillor Evenwood division, except for Cockfield parish and the part of Etherley parish that includes High Etherley and Toft Hill. As a result of these changes, Etherley has been parish warded in our final recommendations (see paragraph 115 for details).

Weardale

108 We received three submissions in response to this division during consultation. The Liberal Democrats supported our Weardale division, but Tow Law Town Council opposed its inclusion in Weardale division, instead stating a preference to being placed in a division with the Crook area. However, removing the parish from Weardale division would result in a forecast electoral variance of -23%, which we consider to be unacceptably high. We are therefore confirming our Weardale division as final, with Tow Law parish remaining in the division.

109 A local resident expressed a preference for Sunnyside to remain in the same division as Tow Law. We were not persuaded to make this change as we consider that insufficient community evidence had been supplied to justify this change.

Conclusions

110 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in County Durham, referencing the 2022 and 2028 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and divisions. A full list of divisions, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the divisions is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2022	2028
Number of councillors	98	98
Number of electoral divisions	51	51
Average number of electors per councillor	3,991	4,150
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	4	1
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendations

Durham County Council should be made up of 98 councillors serving 51 divisions representing nine three-councillor divisions, 29 two-councillor divisions and 13 one-councillor divisions. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed divisions for Durham County Council. You can also view our final recommendations for Durham County Council on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

Parish electoral arrangements

111 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different divisions it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

112 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority division arrangements. However, Durham County Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

113 As a result of our proposed division boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for City of Durham, Etherley, Peterlee, Spennymoor and Stanley.

114 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for City of Durham parish.

Final recommendations

City of Durham Parish Council should comprise 15 councillors, as at present, representing three wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Aykley Heads	1
Elvet & Gilesgate	6
Neville's Cross	8

115 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Etherley parish.

Final recommendations

Etherley Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Etherley & Toft Hill	9
Hummerbeck & Bildershaw	2

116 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Peterlee parish.

Final recommendations

Peterlee Town Council should comprise 22 councillors, as at present, representing five wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Acre Rigg	5
Dene House	4
Eden Hill	4
Howletch	4
Passfield	5

117 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Spennymoor parish.

Final recommendations

Spennymoor Town Council should comprise 22 councillors, as at present, representing six wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Byers Green	1
Low Spennymoor & Tudhoe Grange	5
Merrington	1
Middlestone	4
Spennymoor	6
Tudhoe	5

118 We are providing revised parish electoral arrangements for Stanley parish.

Final recommendations

Stanley Town Council should comprise 20 councillors, as at present, representing seven wards:

Parish ward	Number of parish councillors
Annfield Plain	2
Catchgate	2
Craghead & South Stanley	3
Havannah	3
South Moor	3
Stanley Hall	4
Tanfield	3

What happens next?

119 We have now completed our review of Durham County Council. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2025.

Equalities

120 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Durham County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Annfield Plain & Tanfield	2	8,188	4,094	3%	8,408	4,204	1%
2	Aycliffe North & Middridge	2	8,362	4,181	5%	8,851	4,426	7%
3	Aycliffe South	3	11,571	3,857	-3%	11,793	3,931	-5%
4	Barnard Castle	1	4,255	4,255	7%	4,279	4,279	3%
5	Belmont	2	8,627	4,314	8%	8,769	4,385	6%
6	Benfieldside	2	8,154	4,077	2%	8,337	4,169	0%
7	Bishop Auckland	3	12,206	4,069	2%	12,604	4,201	1%
8	Blackhalls & Hesledens	1	4,341	4,341	9%	4,573	4,573	10%
9	Bowburn & Coxhoe	3	11,791	3,930	-2%	12,631	4,210	1%
10	Brandon	2	8,700	4,350	9%	8,768	4,384	6%
11	Castle Eden & Passfield	1	4,439	4,439	11%	4,466	4,466	8%
12	Chester-le-Street North	2	7,658	3,829	-4%	7,728	3,864	-7%

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13	Chester-le-Street South	2	7,917	3,959	-1%	7,975	3,988	-4%
14	Chilton	1	3,584	3,584	-10%	3,823	3,823	-8%
15	Consett North	1	4,182	4,182	5%	4,262	4,262	3%
16	Consett South	1	3,877	3,877	-3%	3,927	3,927	-5%
17	Craghead & South Moor	2	7,975	3,988	0%	8,136	4,068	-2%
18	Crook	3	11,196	3,732	-6%	11,520	3,840	-7%
19	Dalton & Dawdon	2	8,236	4,118	3%	8,307	4,154	0%
20	Deerness	2	8,514	4,257	7%	9,081	4,541	9%
21	Delves Lane	2	7,437	3,719	-7%	8,348	4,174	1%
22	Derwent & Pont Valley	3	12,946	4,315	8%	13,218	4,406	6%
23	Easington & Shotton	3	11,887	3,962	-1%	12,454	4,151	0%
24	Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe	2	8,120	4,060	2%	9,077	4,539	9%
25	Evenwood	1	3,838	3,838	-4%	3,948	3,948	-5%
26	Ferryhill	2	7,914	3,957	-1%	8,147	4,074	-2%
27	Framwellgate & Newton Hall	3	10,746	3,582	-10%	11,322	3,774	-9%
28	Horden & Dene House	2	8,144	4,072	2%	8,203	4,102	-1%

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
29	Lanchester & Burnhope	1	4,511	4,511	13%	4,568	4,568	10%
30	Langley & Esh	1	4,270	4,270	7%	4,414	4,414	6%
31	Lower Teesdale	2	6,622	3,311	-17%	7,344	3,672	-12%
32	Lumley & West Rainton	2	7,508	3,754	-6%	7,917	3,959	-5%
33	Murton	2	7,946	3,973	0%	8,412	4,206	1%
34	Neville's Cross	2	7,745	3,873	-3%	8,010	4,005	-3%
35	North Lodge	1	3,773	3,773	-5%	3,935	3,935	-5%
36	Pelton	3	11,526	3,842	-4%	12,035	4,012	-3%
37	Peterlee	2	8,525	4,263	7%	8,700	4,350	5%
38	Pittington & Sherburn	1	3,659	3,659	-8%	3,781	3,781	-9%
39	Sacrison & Witton Gilbert	2	7,695	3,848	-4%	8,332	4,166	0%
40	Seaham	2	8,905	4,453	12%	9,027	4,514	9%
41	Sedgefield	2	7,575	3,788	-5%	7,873	3,937	-5%
42	Shildon & Dene Valley	3	12,106	4,035	1%	12,601	4,200	1%
43	Spennymoor	2	8,671	4,336	9%	9,134	4,567	10%
44	Stanley	2	8,141	4,071	2%	8,348	4,174	1%

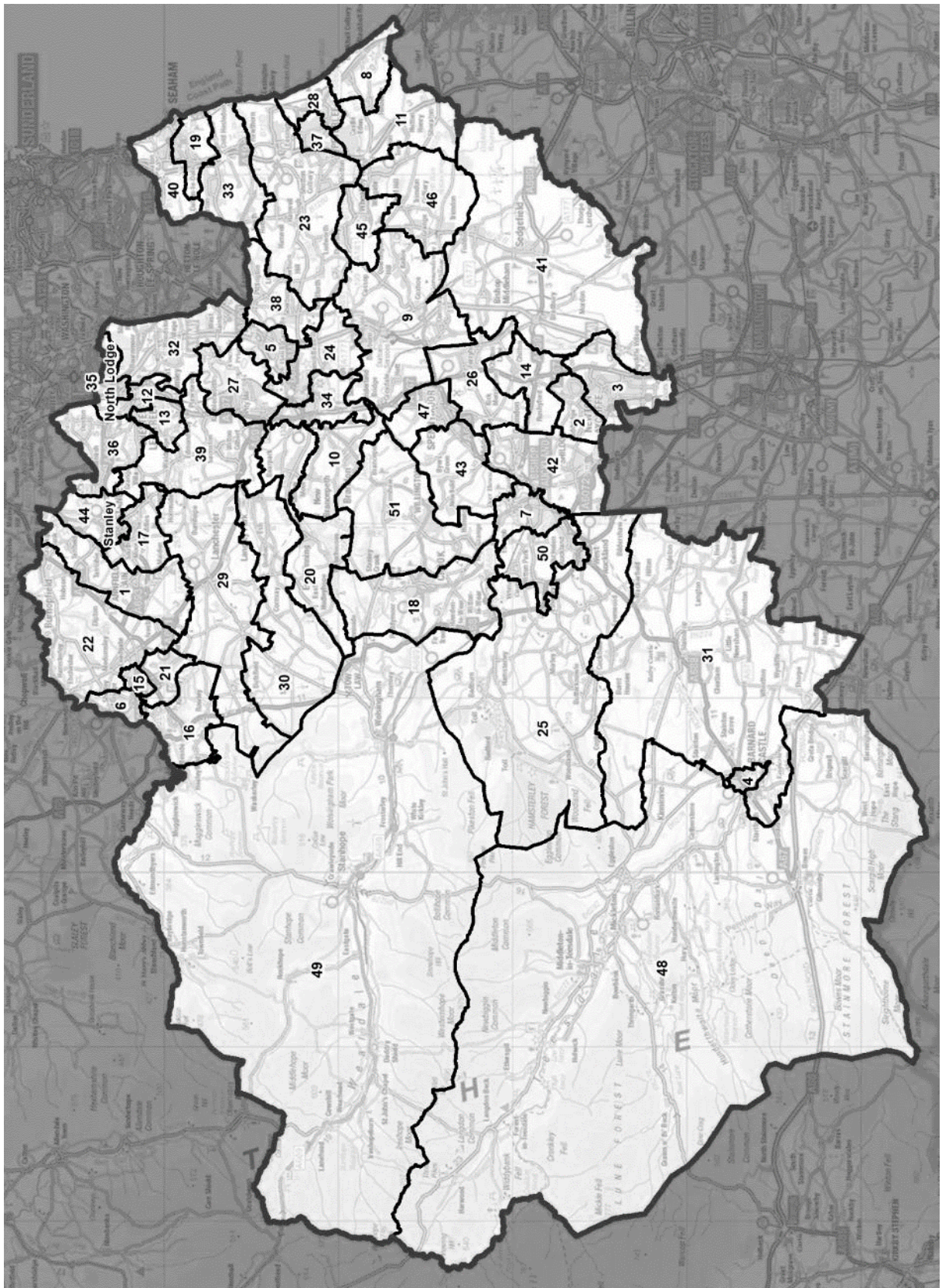
	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2028)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
45	Thornley & Wheatley Hill	1	4,308	4,308	8%	4,394	4,394	6%
46	Trimdon & Wingate	2	8,406	4,203	5%	8,824	4,412	6%
47	Tudhoe	2	7,833	3,917	-2%	8,242	4,121	-1%
48	Upper Teesdale	1	3,704	3,704	-7%	3,729	3,729	-10%
49	Weardale	2	7,707	3,854	-3%	7,882	3,941	-5%
50	West Auckland	2	7,997	3,999	0%	8,606	4,303	4%
51	Willington & Hunwick	2	7,208	3,604	-10%	7,602	3,801	-8%
	Totals	98	391,146	–	–	406,665	–	–
	Averages	–	–	3,991	–	–	4,150	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Durham County Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral division varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



Number	Division name	Number	Division name
1	Annfield Plain & Tanfield	30	Langley & Esh
2	Aycliffe North & Middridge	31	Lower Teesdale
3	Aycliffe South	32	Lumley & West Rainton
4	Barnard Castle	33	Murton
5	Belmont	34	Neville's Cross
6	Benfieldside	35	North Lodge
7	Bishop Auckland	36	Pelton
8	Blackhalls & Hesledens	37	Peterlee
9	Bowburn & Coxhoe	38	Pittington & Sherburn
10	Brandon	39	Sacrison & Witton Gilbert
11	Castle Eden & Passfield	40	Seaham
12	Chester-le-Street North	41	Sedgefield
13	Chester-le-Street South	42	Sildon & Dene Valley
14	Chilton	43	Spennymoor
15	Consett North	44	Stanley
16	Consett South	45	Thornley & Wheatley Hill
17	Craghead & South Moor	46	Trimdon & Wingate
18	Crook	47	Tudhoe
19	Dalton & Dawdon	48	Upper Teesdale
20	Deerness	49	Weardale
21	Delves Lane	50	West Auckland
22	Derwent & Pont Valley	51	Willington & Hunwick
23	Easington & Shotton		
24	Elvet, Gilesgate & Shincliffe		
25	Evenwood		
26	Ferryhill		
27	Framwellgate & Newton Hall		
28	Horden & Dene House		
29	Lanchester & Burnhope		

A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/county-durham

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/county-durham

Political Groups

- Dr Sam Rushworth (Labour Parliamentary Candidate for Bishop Auckland Parliamentary constituency)
- Durham Labour Group
- Durham Liberal Democrat Group
- North Durham Constituency Labour Party
- Teesdale Branch Labour Party

Councillors

- Councillor V. Andrews (Durham County Council)
- Councillor S. Ashfield (Shincliffe Parish Council)
- Councillor R. Bell (Durham County Council)
- Councillor A. Chandran (Great Aycliffe Town Council)
- Councillor J. Cosslett (Durham County Council)
- Councillor P. Crathorne (Cornforth Parish Council)
- Councillor M. Currah (Durham County Council)
- Councillor K. Earley (Durham County Council)
- Councillor C. Foote-Wood (Barnard Castle Town Council)
- Councillor N.C. Foster (Spennymoor Town Council)
- Councillor D. Freeman (Durham County Council)
- Councillor S. Gilling (Spennymoor Town Council)
- Councillor D. Hall (Durham County Council)
- Councillor D. Haney (Durham County Council)
- Councillor E. Henderson (Durham County Council)
- Councillor J. Higgins (Durham County Council)
- Councillor C. Hood (Durham County Council)
- Councillor G. Jarvis (Greencroft Parish Council)
- Councillor O. Johnson (Lanchester Parish Council)
- Councillor C. Maddison (Durham County Council)
- Councillor L. Maddison (Durham County Council) x4
- Councillor C. Martin (Durham County Council)
- Councillor M. McGaun (Durham County Council)
- Councillor P. Molloy (Durham County Council)
- Councillor D. Oliver (Durham County Council)

- Councillor R. Ormerod (Durham County Council)
- Councillor R. Potts (Durham County Council)
- Councillor D. Ranyard (Spennymoor Town Council)
- Councillor A. Reed (Durham County Council)
- Councillor K. Rooney (Durham County Council)
- Councillor A. Shield (Durham County Council)
- Councillor R. Yorke (Durham County Council)

Local Organisations

- Ebchester Village Trust
- Escomb Primary School
- Escombe Community Association
- Hamsterley Mill Residents' Association
- Medomsley Community Action Group
- Raby Estates
- Witton Park Methodist Church

Parish and Town Councils

- Belmont Parish Council
- Bishop Auckland Town Council
- Brandon & Byshottles Parish Council
- Burnhope Parish Council x2
- Croxdale & Hett Parish Council
- Eldon Parish Council
- Greencroft Parish Council
- Haswell Parish Council
- Ingleton Parish Council
- Monk Hesleden Parish Council
- North Lodge Parish Council
- Ouston Parish Council
- Pelton Parish Council
- Sedgefield Town Council
- Shincliffe Parish Council
- Spennymoor Town Council
- Staindrop Parish Council
- Startforth Parish Council
- Tow Law Town Council
- Urpeth Parish Council
- West Auckland Parish Council

Local Residents

- 231 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative, and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority.
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names, and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative, and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative, and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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