

From: [BCE Reviews](#)
To: [BCE NorthEast](#); [BCE WestMidlands](#)
Subject: FW: Official Liberal Democrat submissions for the second consultation
Date: 18 April 2012 16:55:28
Attachments: [Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - east mids.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - east of england.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - London.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - north east.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - north west.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - south east.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - south west.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - west mids.pdf](#)
[Lib Dems - 2nd consultation - yorkshire.pdf](#)

From: Tom Smithard [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 April 2012 11:12
To: BCE Reviews
Cc: James Simon - Boundary Commission for England; Hartley Sam - Boundary Commission for England
Subject: Official Liberal Democrat submissions for the second consultation

Simon, Sam

Please find attached submissions for the second period of consultation from the Liberal Democrats. Again, we have produced one submission per region.

If you could confirm these have been received I would appreciate that.

All the best
Tom

Tom Smithard
Head of Strategic Research, Liberal Democrats
[REDACTED] 8-10 Great George Street, London SW1P 3AE

This email was received from the INTERNET and scanned by the Government Secure Intranet anti-virus service supplied by Cable&Wireless Worldwide in partnership with MessageLabs. (CCTM Certificate Number 2009/09/0052.) In case of problems, please call your organisation's IT Helpdesk.
Communications via the GSi may be automatically logged, monitored and/or recorded for legal purposes.

Submission to the Boundary Commission for England second period of consultation: North East of England

1) OVERVIEW

There are a number of areas where there appears to be a near unanimous view on the Boundary Commission’s proposals for the redrawing of the North East’s Parliamentary constituency boundaries. For example, on the one hand there is much disagreement with the proposed Consett & Barnard Castle constituency and, on the other hand, agreement with the principle of not crossing the River Tyne within Tyne & Wear.

The counter-proposals from both Conservatives and Labour refer to the desirability of avoiding splitting communities and of minimising the numbers of electors who change constituency, but in a number of places they do not follow this logic. The Liberal Democrat counter-proposals achieve a higher percentage of electors remaining in the successor constituency and re-unite more natural communities.

Across the region the % of electors who would remain within the main successor to their present constituencies are:

BCE proposals	73%
Conservative counter-proposals	79%
Labour counter-proposals	75%
Lib Dem counter-proposals	82%

At a more localised level, within the 3 seats of Middlesbrough, Middlesbrough South & East Cleveland, and Redcar, the % of electors who would remain within the main successor to their present constituencies are:

	Middlesbrough	Middlesbrough South & East Cleveland	Redcar
BCE	75%	83%	77%
Conservative	75%	83%	77%
Labour	75%	83%	77%
Lib Dem	87%	93%	100%

At the same time the Liberal Democrat proposals for this area reunite both the town of Marske and the community of Ormesby into single communities, whilst the Commission’s and other parties’ proposals split these two natural communities.

Thus, within the statutory requirements for the review and taking into account the Commission’s policy of not splitting wards, we consider that our counter-proposals

still offer the arrangement for the assignment of the North East's wards into 26 constituencies that best fits the various statutory criteria.

Our detailed comments, grouped by geographical area, on some of the many submissions to the commission are as follows.

2) BERWICK & MORPETH, BLYTH & ASHINGTON AND HEXHAM

We and the Conservatives both propose to include the town of Alnwick in the name of a Berwick & Morpeth constituency. Alnwick is a Northumberland market town with a strong identity which is distinct from Berwick and Morpeth.

There is also agreement between us and the Conservatives on the retention of the whole of the town of Ponteland within the Hexham constituency. Ponteland has strong cultural and transport links with Hexham and this has been the basis for widespread opposition to the Commission's proposal from local residents. We note the lack of formal objection or counter-proposal regarding Ponteland East in the official Labour proposals.

We fully agree with the Conservatives that Rothbury, a town with strong links to Berwick and historically part of the Berwick constituency, should retain its ties to Berwick. Linking Rothbury to Hexham makes no sense to local residents and swapping it and Ponteland East would minimise disruption to local residents while having zero knock-on effect on the placement of other wards. We therefore disagree with the Labour proposal, which leaves the Commission's proposed Hexham constituency unchanged. We note that the local Blyth Valley Labour Party has suggested the formation of a constituency containing Hexham and Berwick, which would be mostly rural and geographically very large; we do not consider that this would enable an MP to offer effective representation to all parts of their constituency. Their proposal pays no attention to the Commission's policy of not creating a constituency that crosses the Tyne. It would create a huge rural constituency in Northumberland (Berwick and Hexham) which would be very difficult for one MP to cover; this constituency would also be separated down the middle by the hills of the Northumberland National Park.

We also note a proposal from Richard Henry Warne (number 019673) which suggests separating Morpeth from Berwick. He has concerns that an MP would not be able to cover such a large area from the Scottish Borders to Morpeth. We would argue that the current MP serves an area that currently stretches from the Scottish Borders to south of Morpeth with no reported difficulties. And with the geography and numerical constraints the only viable option is to include Morpeth in the Berwick seat.

We would move Bothal and Choppington wards, both within the current Wansbeck constituency, into the Blyth & Ashington constituency. Both of these villages have good links with Ashington through the region's mining history, and this would keep the communities of Ashington and Bedlington together. This would allow for the town of Newbiggin, at the north end of the Commission's proposed Blyth & Ashington constituency, to remain in a constituency with Lynemouth, retaining the strong links between those coastal communities. We note the general agreement regarding the

proposed name of Blyth & Ashington, which contains the two largest settlements within the constituency and best reflects local ties.

We would also like to acknowledge the many submissions supporting bringing Morpeth into the Berwick & Morpeth seat, including Morpeth Town Council, Morpeth School Federation, councillors and local residents. There has also been an overwhelming response from Rothbury residents in support of keeping the division in the Berwick constituency, including from local councillors, vicars, parish councils and local residents. Finally there has been lots of support for keeping Bothal and Choppington in the Blyth & Ashington constituency, including from local councillors, town councils, the football club and local residents.

3) WHITLEY BAY AND NEWCASTLE EAST & TYNEMOUTH

We and the Conservatives have similar objections regarding these two seats. The proposal of these two seats is contrary to the Commission's stated aims to respect local ties and to minimise the displacement of electors.

We and the Conservatives propose to include Battle Hill ward in a Newcastle East & Wallsend constituency, reuniting it with Wallsend ward. We agree that linking Wallsend with Newcastle is more logical than linking it with Tynemouth.

We also believe that removing Killingworth from the proposed Whitley Bay constituency, retaining the strong constituency boundary of the A19, is a sensible proposal. We would instead include Killingworth in a Cramlington & North Tyneside constituency, which is made up entirely of wards from the existing North Tyneside and Blyth Valley constituencies. We believe this will be less disruptive and confusing for electors than the Conservative proposals while retaining good local links.

We would also move Holywell ward into our proposed Blyth & Ashington constituency; as this ward is currently in the Blyth Valley constituency, this minimises disruption for its electors. This would allow us to retain the current Tynemouth constituency, which is within the electoral quota - minimising disruption for its electors and respecting current boundaries.

4) GATESHEAD, SUNDERLAND AND SOUTH SHIELDS

We propose no changes to the Commission's proposed Sunderland and Houghton-le-Spring constituencies. We welcome the broad consensus on Houghton-le-Spring between ourselves and the Conservatives, with the exception of Ryhope ward. We also welcome the broad consensus between ourselves and the Conservatives on Sunderland, with the exception of Redhill ward.

With regard to Gateshead, we note the similarities between our proposals and those advanced by Gateshead Council in their 'option 2'. We believe that the proposals of Gateshead Council better reflect local ties and existing boundaries than those of the Commission. We also note the lack of official Labour counter-proposals and the various objections to the Commission's Gateshead proposals.

5) DURHAM, DARLINGTON AND HARTLEPOOL

We welcome the cross-party agreement with the Commission's proposals for a Darlington constituency and note that Darlington Borough Council has described the proposals as an improvement on existing arrangements. We agree with the Conservative assertion that this is the most logical extension of the existing Darlington constituency. We welcome too the broad consensus regarding the extension of the proposed Durham seat by adding Ferryhill ward, although retaining all the wards from the existing City of Durham constituency means that Trimdon does not need to be added; this has cross-party support.

We agree with the Commission and other parties that adding Burnopfield and Dipton wards from the old North West Durham constituency to the proposed Chester-le-Street constituency is the best way to bring the size of its electorate up to the required quota. However, we do not believe that this necessitates a change in name from North Durham and that the current name better reflects the constituency's geographical boundaries.

We welcome the cross-party consensus regarding the addition of Blackhalls ward to a Hartlepool constituency. Although we welcome the reuniting of this currently split ward within one constituency, we disagree with the Commission proposal to include it within an Easington constituency. Hartlepool Borough does not on its own have enough electors to fall within the necessary quota and Blackhalls ward, given its ties into Hartlepool, is the most logical addition to the Hartlepool seat. This would allow us to reunite the town of Billingham within one constituency, again a move which has cross-party support.

We wholly welcome the cross-party opposition to the proposed Consett and Barnard Castle constituency. We agree with Labour and Conservative concerns regarding community cohesion, ease of communication and accessibility and we note the widespread local opposition to the Commission's proposals on these bases. We agree with Labour and the Conservatives that retaining a North West Durham constituency is a much better proposition, as this minimises disruption and better reflects existing community and cultural ties.

We are pleased to note that the Conservatives have modified their initial proposals for a Bishop Auckland constituency so that there is now one proposal for this constituency which has cross-party support. The current constituency can be preserved intact, minimising disruption for electors. Only the addition of those parts of Chilton and Shildon East which are currently in Sedgefield constituency is needed to bring our Bishop Auckland proposal within the required quota, reuniting these currently split wards within one constituency.

6) MIDDLESBROUGH, REDCAR AND CLEVELAND

We are concerned about the Commission's proposal to split the town of Marske-by-the-Sea, breaking local ties, and are pleased to see the Conservatives agree with us. We believe, however, that retaining the wards of Longbeck and St Germain's within the Redcar constituency better reflects local ties than the proposal to include them with Middlesbrough South & Guisborough. Our proposal also includes Saltburn,

another coastal town, within the Redcar constituency and therefore ensures the entire civil parish of Marske, New Marske and Saltburn is wholly contained within one constituency, streamlining well with existing governance arrangements and cultural ties.

Our proposal therefore moves only one Middlesbrough ward, Beckfield, into the new Redcar constituency and is broadly based on current constituency boundaries, minimising disruption for electors and better retaining community links than the proposals of the Commission and other parties.

We were disappointed to note that the Labour Party has agreed with the Boundary Commission that the wards of Normanby and Teesville, currently both in Redcar, should be split with Teesville moving to Middlesbrough South. This has the effect of splitting Normanby high street in two and putting it into two separate constituencies. We are pleased that the Conservatives have agreed with our submission that this should be avoided to protect existing communities.

We note our agreement with Middlesbrough Council regarding the name of the proposed Middlesbrough constituency, which we and the council both propose should be named Middlesbrough & Thornaby. We and the council are also in agreement regarding the proposed Middlesbrough South & Guisborough constituency, which should retain the Middlesbrough South & East Cleveland name. This better reflects the geographical make-up of these constituencies.