



Boundary Commission for England

Initial proposals - North West

Contents

Allocation of constituencies	2
Sub-regions	3
Headline numbers and summary of schemes	5
Breakdown of schemes by sub-region/county	8
Preferred Scheme	8
Alternative Scheme 1	13
Names of constituencies (preferred scheme)	16

2023 Review

Electoral Quota = 73,393

Electorate range = 69,724 - 77,062

Allocation of constituencies

Table 1: Allocation of constituencies by ceremonial/metropolitan county

County/metropolitan county	Electorate	Mathematical Constituency entitlement
Cheshire	827,414	11.27
Cumbria	389,717	5.31
Greater Manchester	2,000,428	27.26
Lancashire	1,114,043	15.18
Merseyside	1,049,947	14.31
Totals	5,381,549	73.33

Sub-regions

Table 2: Headline numbers by sub-region

Sub-region	Electorate	Mathematical Constituency entitlement	Existing constituencies	Proposed constituencies	Average constituency size of proposed sub-region
Preferred sub-regions					
Cheshire and Merseyside*	1,877,361	25.58	26	26	72,206
Cumbria and Lancashire*	1,503,760	20.49	22	20	75,188
Greater Manchester	2,000,428	27.26	27	27	74,090
Region Totals	5,381,549	73.33	75	73	73,719

* In our preferred scheme, the proposed Southport constituency actually crosses the Merseyside/Lancashire boundary. This table displays the sub-regions whole, and has not been re-calculated based on the proposed crossing.

The sub-regions are the same in each of the schemes presented.

Due to its mathematical entitlement of 5.31 constituencies, Cumbria cannot be considered on its own. As such, without resorting to a cross-regional boundary constituency, we need to create a constituency which crosses the county boundary with Lancashire to the south. Therefore the ceremonial counties of Cumbria and Lancashire have been combined as one sub-region.

The Metropolitan County of Merseyside (including the Wirral), and the ceremonial county of Cheshire (comprising the two unitary authorities of Cheshire East, and Cheshire West and Chester, plus the metropolitan boroughs of Halton and Warrington, hereafter referred to simply as Cheshire) can technically each be considered on their own, as their respective mathematical constituency entitlements are 14.31 and 11.27. However, the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral cannot be considered on its own, as it only has an entitlement of 3.33 constituencies. In order to avoid a constituency which crosses the River Mersey, some wards from the Wirral will therefore have to be included in a constituency of which the bulk is in the Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority. In both schemes at least one further constituency crossing between Cheshire and Merseyside is required.

Greater Manchester has a mathematical constituency entitlement of 27.26, and as such is being considered as a sub-region in its own right.

Headline numbers and summary of schemes

Table 3: Headline numbers for schemes

Schemes	Constituencies - ward changes				Districts in constituencies incl. Unitary Authorities			Constituencies crossing more than one ceremonial/metropolitan county	Split wards	Orphan wards ¹	Const. names retained
	Number wholly unchanged	Number changed by rewarding only	Minor substantive changes (1-2 wards)	Major substantive changes (3+ wards)	One	Two	Three or more				
Preferred Scheme	10	1	21	43	46	23	4	4	3	5	52
Alternative Scheme 1	11	1	14	49	45	23	4	4	0	6	34

Names of wards to be split:

- **Preferred Scheme:** Bowness and Levens (*South Lakeland*), Miles Platting and Newton Heath (*Manchester*), Upton (*Wirral*)

The Secretariat's aim has been to have regard to existing constituencies by retaining as many unchanged as is practicable while also having regard to the other statutory factors.

¹ Orphan ward refers to a ward from one local authority, in a constituency where the remaining wards are from at least one other local authority.

Despite its large geographical size, options for schemes in Cumbria are limited due to the natural geography, being largely surrounded by three other regions and the sea, and patterns of communications and settlements. Cumbria currently contains six constituencies, but now only has the electorate for five. This factor, alongside the requirement for a constituency which crosses the boundary with Lancashire, results in significant change across Cumbria. In both schemes, the Secretariat has decided to cross the Cumbria/Lancashire boundary only once, by extending the existing Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency north across the county boundary into the District of South Lakeland. In the preferred scheme we are proposing to split the Bowness and Levens ward, to retain the integrity of the communities of Bowness on Windermere and Windermere in one constituency. This will also retain the whole of Lake Windermere itself within a wholly Lake District constituency.

In the preferred scheme, the Southport constituency crosses the Merseyside/Lancashire county boundary in the north, thereby crossing the sub-region boundary. Although not required by the electorates, this allows for a set of proposals which the Secretariat considers much better respects both local ties and the boundaries of existing constituencies across Cheshire and southern Lancashire. Conversely, not doing so would have considerable detrimental effects across much of the North West. Our alternative scheme demonstrates the knock-on effects of not crossing at Southport, which includes a third county crossing between Cheshire and Merseyside.

Both schemes require two cross-county boundary constituencies between Cheshire and Merseyside. The first of these involves using the natural geographic boundary of the River Mersey to bisect the Borough of Halton. The proposed Widnes constituency would extend north into the Borough of Knowsley, across the county boundary. This would allow the proposed Runcorn constituency to extend south west into Cheshire West and Chester. This results in minimal change in the boroughs of Warrington and St Helens, and what the Secretariat considers to be a more practicable sequence of constituencies across Cheshire, especially within Cheshire East, where there is only minor change. The caveat to this is that under this proposal the River Dee is used as a point of division within the City of Chester. Although we have sought not to divide Chester, maintaining the current constituency in that area has major negative knock-on effects across Cheshire, which were deemed unsatisfactory.

The second of these cross-county boundary constituencies crosses Cheshire West and Chester and the Wirral. This is unavoidable due to the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral not being considered on its own, and the Secretariat's avoidance of creating a constituency which spans the River Mersey. On the Wirral itself, the Secretariat considers the arrangement proposed within the preferred scheme to be significantly superior to that of the alternative. In our preferred scheme we propose to split the Upton ward. This will facilitate a configuration of constituencies which, it is considered, better respects both the existing constituencies and community ties on the Wirral.

In Greater Manchester, the preferred scheme and alternative scheme are largely the same. The key difference between them is in the east of the county, within the metropolitan boroughs of Manchester, Tameside and Oldham. In our preferred scheme, we are proposing to split the Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward, within the City of Manchester authority. The split allows for an arrangement of constituencies which it is considered better reflects the existing distribution, and results in less change to the existing constituencies. The Secretariat considers this split is a better solution than not splitting a ward in this area, the consequences of which are demonstrated in the alternative scheme.

The numbers displayed in Table 3 make both schemes appear of a similar nature. Despite this, the Secretariat considers the preferred scheme to be a superior configuration of constituencies. The ward change numbers alone do not reflect the significant negative impact of the alternative scheme on the existing configuration of communities and local ties.

Breakdown of schemes by sub-region/county

Preferred Scheme

Table 4A: Preferred Scheme - sub-region/county breakdown

Sub-region/ county	Constituencies - ward changes				Districts in constituencies incl. Unitary Authorities			Constituencies crossing more than one ceremonial/ metropolitan county	Split wards	Orphan wards	Const. names retained
	Number wholly unchanged	Number changed by rewarding only	Minor substantive changes (1-2 wards)	Major substantive changes (3+ wards)	One	Two	Three or more				
Cheshire and Merseyside*	2	1	9	14	18	8	0	3***	1	2	15
Cumbria and Lancashire	1	0	2	19	7	10	3	1**	1	1	19
Greater Manchester	7	0	10	10	21	5	1	0	1	2	18
Totals	10	1	21	43	46	23	4	4	3	5	52

*The Southport constituency is being wholly considered within Merseyside for the purposes of these numbers

**Morecambe and South Lakeland crosses the county boundary between Lancashire and Cumbria

***Southport crosses the county boundary between Merseyside and Lancashire; Widnes crosses the county boundary between Cheshire and Merseyside; Ellesmere Port crosses the county boundary between Cheshire and Merseyside

Cumbria and Lancashire

The LGBCE re-warding of the Broughton and Coniston ward results in significant disruption across Cumbria if the ward is retained within the existing Barrow and Furness constituency. As such we are forced to extend the constituency eastwards, across the Leven Estuary. The links eastwards are not ideal: there is a railway line but no direct road link, although the A590 is the key road in this area of south Cumbria and no part of the constituency is inaccessible. This arrangement also allows for a more practicable configuration of constituencies across Cumbria.

Although crossing three local authorities, the proposed Copeland constituency contains the majority of the Lake District. It is with this in mind that the Secretariat is proposing to split the ward of Bowness and Levens within the South Lakeland authority. Under our proposal, if this ward is not split, Lake Windermere itself will be divided between two constituencies, one of which is the cross-county, Morecambe based constituency. This ward split will also prevent the communities of Windermere and Bowness on Windermere from being separated. The significant knock-on effects of producing a proposal which would keep Lake Windermere together without a ward split are demonstrated within the alternative scheme.

One cross-county boundary constituency is required within the Cumbria and Lancashire sub-region. The Secretariat proposes this is achieved by extending the existing Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency north. This allows for a single county crossing, contained within one constituency. A key contributing factor to this decision is the natural boundary of the River Lune, which separates the communities of Morecambe and Lancaster.

The Secretariat's intention, where possible, to respect natural geographic features such as rivers and estuaries has resulted in a reconfiguring of the existing Lancaster and Fleetwood Constituency. Our proposed constituencies of Lancaster, and Blackpool North and Fleetwood now reflect the boundary that is the uncrossed River Wyre estuary.

The preferred scheme depends upon the Southport constituency crossing the Merseyside and Lancashire county boundary and including the four wards of the District of West Lancashire that are not currently part of the West Lancashire constituency. It is considered that these wards are suitable for inclusion in the Southport constituency, as they are bounded to the north and east by the Ribble and Douglas rivers, and to the south by the existing West Lancashire constituency - which can remain unchanged.

In the south and east of Lancashire there are a number of constituencies which can technically remain unchanged. However, retaining these results in considerable disruption to the existing constituencies of Burnley, Pendle, Preston, South Ribble, and the Ribble Valley. As such, the Secretariat considers that some relatively minor change across the whole area results in a more suitable configuration and distribution of constituencies, while attempting to minimise disruption overall.

Cheshire and Merseyside

With the exception of the Southport constituency, the Metropolitan Borough of Sefton is little changed, and the Bootle constituency remains entirely unchanged. The City of Liverpool consists almost entirely of wards containing more than 10,000 electors, and only one constituency which can technically remain unchanged. As a result, there is fairly significant change in terms of wards in the city, but the Secretariat considers that any impacts on community ties are minimal. The proposals we have for this area allow for relatively minor change in the boroughs of St Helens and Knowsley.

As mentioned above, we are proposing to use the natural geographic boundary of the River Mersey to bisect the Borough of Halton. The proposed Widnes constituency would extend north into Knowsley, and cross the county boundary. Widnes and Runcorn have not previously been split, but this scheme allows for the remainder of Halton, containing the Runcorn suburbs, to be included in a constituency with the centre of Runcorn, and permits what the Secretariat considers is a much more suitable arrangement of constituencies across Cheshire. In order to avoid a potentially large number of fairly arbitrary ward splits to equalise electorate numbers, a county crossing is required, and the Secretariat considers this is the most practicable of the options explored.

The division of Halton along the Mersey necessitates the Runcorn constituency extending into one of the Cheshire unitary authorities. We propose the best direction is west, along the southern bank of the River, into Cheshire West and Chester. This allows the Borough of Warrington boundary to only be crossed once, with the Tatton constituency now including the two wards which constitute the settlement of Lymm, and no longer breaching the boundary with Cheshire West and Chester. This configuration allows for minimal change within the rest of Cheshire East, including a wholly unchanged Macclesfield constituency.

There is a positive knock-on effect in this area as well: although the existing Weaver Vale constituency would be entirely reconfigured, it would then be centred on the town of Northwich, and would not extend beyond its local authority boundary.

As mentioned previously, under this proposal we are using the River Dee as a point of division within the City of Chester. Although we would have preferred to propose a scheme that did not divide Chester, maintaining the existing constituency has major negative knock-on effects across Cheshire, which were considered to be unsatisfactory and disproportionately disruptive, resulting in three separate county crossings between Cheshire West and Chester, and the Wirral, and substantial reconfiguration of all constituencies across Cheshire. This is largely due to the fact that as the Wirral cannot be considered on its own, there must be a constituency which crosses from Cheshire West and Chester. The Secretariat considers that, in this instance, a somewhat arbitrary split within Ellesmere Port is less appropriate than using the River Dee to determine a clear physical constituency boundary. The proposed county crossing is therefore in a constituency which contains Ellesmere Port, and follows the bank of the Mersey to the north.

The majority of wards on the Wirral contain between 9,000 and 12,500 electors, and the Wirral is having to be reconfigured from four constituencies to three. As such, significant change is required if no wards are split. Therefore, the Secretariat proposes to split the Upton ward. This will facilitate a configuration of constituencies which it is considered better respects both the existing constituencies and community ties on the Wirral. This ward split allows us to only transfer six wards and ~67,000 electors between constituencies. As one constituency must be reconfigured entirely, this becomes a relatively minor change. However, if no ward is split, constructing a viable configuration of constituencies requires transferring 11 wards and ~122,000 electors. The Secretariat considers that, apart from the greater number of electors affected, this results in a significantly inferior distribution of constituencies on the Wirral, with no real respect for local ties, physical geography (e.g. the Birkenhead docks), nor existing constituency boundaries. The alternative scheme displays the configuration if no ward is split.

Greater Manchester

Greater Manchester is the sub-region of the North West which sees the least change, and we are able to retain seven constituencies wholly unchanged, of which four are along Greater Manchester's southern border. The distinction between the cities of Salford and Manchester - using the boundary of the River Irwell - has been retained. The Secretariat has, where possible, sought to respect the local authority boundaries of the historically independent satellite towns of Manchester with each other, as opposed to the centre - i.e. avoiding a Bolton-Bury local authority crossing, and instead crossing from both Bolton and Bury into the Salford authority.

Within Greater Manchester we are proposing one ward split. This is the Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward, within the City of Manchester authority. This ward split allows the Secretariat to better respect the existing configuration of constituencies in the east of Greater Manchester. The knock-on effects of not splitting this ward are detailed below.

Alternative Scheme 1

Table 4B: Alternative Scheme 1 - sub-region/county breakdown

Sub-region/ county	Constituencies - ward changes				Districts in constituencies incl. Unitary Authorities			Constituencies crossing more than one ceremonial/ metropolitan county	Split wards	Orphan wards	Const. names retained
	Number wholly unchanged	Number changed by rewarding only	Minor substantive changes (1-2 wards)	Major substantive changes (3+ wards)	One	Two	Three or more				
Cheshire and Merseyside	3	1	2	20	20	5	1	3*	0	2	10
Cumbria and Lancashire	0	0	4	18	4	10	5	1**	0	2	9
Greater Manchester	8	0	8	11	21	6	0	0	1	2	15
Totals	11	1	14	49	45	21	6	4	0	6	34

*St Helens North crosses the county boundary between Merseyside and Cheshire; Widnes crosses the county boundary between Cheshire and Merseyside; Ellesmere Port crosses the county boundary between Cheshire and Merseyside

**Morecambe and South Lakeland crosses the county boundary between Lancashire and Cumbria

Cumbria and Lancashire

This scheme demonstrates the impact of attempting to maintain the integrity of Lake Windermere, within a wholly Cumbrian constituency, without splitting any wards. The immediate consequences are the combining of the coastal ports of Workington and Whitehaven in the same constituency, and the construction of two separate constituencies which extend completely east-west across Cumbria. Having two constituencies spanning the county pays little regard to the existing configuration of constituencies, community ties, or reasonable transport links (particularly in the winter months). The arrangement for the Morecambe, Barrow and Furness, Lancaster, Blackpool North and Fleetwood, Blackpool South, and Fylde constituencies is largely unchanged between the two schemes.

This scheme does not feature any crossing between Southport and Lancashire. As a consequence, there are again considerable negative knock-on effects in this area including the Chorley and Hyndburn constituencies each extending into three separate local authorities. Similarly, we are not able to retain any constituencies unchanged, and there is an additional orphan ward. This scheme is intended to demonstrate the consequences of not crossing at Southport, and the Secretariat's belief that the preferred scheme provides a more suitable solution.

Cheshire and Merseyside

Not crossing between Merseyside and Lancashire at Southport allows the constituencies of Southport, Sefton Central, and Garston and Halewood to remain wholly unchanged, and would mean slightly less change within the City of Liverpool, although the same issues of ward electorate numbers persist. There is once again a split along the Mersey between Widnes and Runcorn, with the Widnes constituency crossing the county boundary. However, under this scheme not only is there disruption within the Borough of St Helens authority, the constituency would have to cross the boundary with the Borough of Warrington, creating a further county crossing between Cheshire and Merseyside. The Secretariat considers that not only does this cancel any gains made by not crossing at Southport, but this crossing is less respectful of community ties.

There is a further domino effect across Cheshire, with the Tatton constituency extending towards Macclesfield, which in turn causes significant change across Cheshire East. There would no longer be a constituency centred around Northwich, and we consider that it would be difficult to justify a constituency extending north-south across the whole of Cheshire West and Chester.

The configuration of constituencies on the Wirral demonstrates the difficulty of being able to reflect community ties if a ward split is not proposed in this area.

Greater Manchester

The south and west of Greater Manchester remain the same between both schemes. The only changes occur in the east, where this scheme demonstrates the effect of not splitting a ward. Without such a split, the existing Manchester Central constituency is completely bisected, and the resulting two constituencies extend some way into the Oldham and Tameside local authorities respectively. The southern of these two constituencies in particular bears especially limited regard to the existing configuration of constituencies and communities in this area.

Names of constituencies (preferred scheme)

Table 5: Constituency names and designations

Constituency name and designation	Name unchanged?	Designation unchanged?
Altrincham and Sale West BC	✓	✓
Ashton-under-Lyne BC	✓	✓
Barrow and Furness CC	✓	✓
Birkenhead BC	✓	✓
Blackburn BC	✓	✓
Blackpool North and Fleetwood BC		
Blackpool South BC	✓	✓
Bolton North East BC	✓	✓
Bolton South and Walkden BC		
Bolton West CC	✓	✓
Bootle BC	✓	✓
Burnley CC	✓	
Bury North BC	✓	✓
Bury South BC	✓	✓
Carlisle CC	✓	✓
Cheadle BC	✓	✓

City of Chester and Neston CC		
Chorley CC	✓	✓
Congleton CC	✓	✓
Copeland CC	✓	✓
Crewe and Nantwich CC	✓	✓
Denton and Hyde CC		
Ellesmere Port BC		
Failsworth and Droylsden BC		
Fylde CC	✓	✓
Hazel Grove CC	✓	✓
Heywood CC		
Hyndburn BC	✓	✓
Knowsley BC	✓	✓
Lancaster CC	✓	
Leigh South and Atherton CC		
Liverpool Garston BC		
Liverpool Norris Green BC		
Liverpool Riverside BC	✓	✓
Liverpool Wavertree BC	✓	✓
Liverpool West Derby BC	✓	✓
Macclesfield CC	✓	✓

Makerfield CC	✓	✓
Manchester Blackley BC		
Manchester Central BC	✓	✓
Manchester Longsight BC		
Manchester Withington BC	✓	✓
Morecambe and South Lakeland CC		
Northwich CC		
Oldham West and Royton BC	✓	✓
Oldham East and Saddleworth CC	✓	✓
Pendle CC	✓	
Preston BC	✓	✓
Ribble Valley CC	✓	✓
Rochdale CC	✓	✓
Rossendale and Darwen CC	✓	✓
Runcorn and Helsby CC		
Salford BC		
Sefton Central CC	✓	✓
South Cheshire CC		
South Ribble CC	✓	✓
Southport CC	✓	
St Helens North BC	✓	✓

St Helens South BC		
Stockport BC	✓	✓
Stretford and Urmston BC	✓	✓
Tatton CC	✓	✓
Wallasey BC	✓	✓
Warrington North BC	✓	✓
Warrington South BC	✓	✓
West Lancashire CC	✓	✓
Westmorland and Eden CC		
Widnes and Halewood BC		
Wigan CC	✓	✓
Wirral West CC	✓	✓
Workington CC	✓	✓
Worsley and Eccles CC		
Wythenshawe and Sale East BC	✓	✓