

Cheshire East

Personal Details:

Name: Callum Chalmers
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: Cheshire East Liberal Democrats (Political groups)

Comment text:

Please find attached the submission of the Cheshire East Liberal Democrats to the Commission's consultation.

Attached Documents:

- cheshire-east-liberal-democrat-submission-v2.pdf

Cheshire East Liberal Democrats

Submission to the Local Government Boundary
Commission for England consultation on ward
boundaries in Cheshire East (v2 09/12/2024)

Firstly, we welcome the Commission's adoption of our proposed Alderley Edge (as Alderley Edge & Chorley), Alsager, Audlem, Chelford, Crewe Coppenhall (as Crewe North), Crewe Maw Green, Crewe St Barnabas, Dane Valley, Disley, Handforth, Haslington, High Legh, Leighton, Macclesfield East, Macclesfield Hurdsfield, Middlewich, Mobberley, Poynton, Prestbury, Weston, Wilmslow Lacey Green, and Wybunbury wards.

Nantwich & District

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for Nantwich and the rural areas to its west and south (Audlem, Bunbury, Nantwich North & West, Nantwich South & Stapeley, Wrenbury, and Wybunbury).

Crewe

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the western part of Crewe (Crewe North, Crewe South, Crewe St Barnabas, Crewe West). However, we maintain that Crewe Coppenhall would be a better name for the proposed Crewe North ward, as it would contain the entire town centre, and "Crewe North" could lead to confusion with the eponymous town council ward which only covers a part of the area.

The Commission appears to have misunderstood our proposal for the eastern part of Crewe. Our proposed Crewe Maw Green ward is identical to that proposed by the council, including the electors along the west side of Sydney Road, north of the railway line, and has a -6% forecasted variance, not the -10% or -11% claimed by the Commission. The only ward we proposed in this area that would be outside of the Commission's usual upper limit for good electoral equality is Crewe Grand Junction, which has a +12% forecasted variance; this could be brought within 10% by moving the electors along the south side of Remer Street into the Crewe Maw Green ward. We believe that the railway line to Manchester would provide a strong dividing line between our proposed Crewe Grand Junction and Crewe Waldron wards, with only one road and no footpaths crossing between these proposed wards.

Alsager, Haslington & Weston

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the Alsager, Haslington and Weston wards.

Leighton, Shavington and Wistaston

We accept the Commission's draft recommendation for the Leighton ward.

Given our acceptance of the Commission's draft recommendations for Nantwich and Stapeley, we now propose placing polling district 1FDC of Willaston parish into the Shavington ward. This results in a Shavington ward with a +1% forecasted variance, providing for good electoral equality. Additionally, we believe that this better provides for effective and convenient local government than the Commission's draft recommendations, as the boundary between the Shavington and Wistaston wards would follow the parish

boundaries between Wistaston and Rope and between Willaston and Rope and the railway line, rather than cutting a haphazard boundary between the Wells Green area and the rest of Wistaston parish.

Sandbach

We maintain that Sandbach Town and Sandbach Heath are separate communities divided by the Sandbach bypass (Old Mill Road), and are thus better served by having separate wards. Our proposed names for these wards are Sandbach Town and Sandbach Heath, not Sandbach East as claimed by the Commission.

If it is considered desirable by the Commission to include the entirety of Park Lane and the surrounding electors in a single ward, then the best ward for this area to be contained within would be Sandbach Town, as the Crewe Road end of Park Lane has little to do with Elworth and the Middlewich Road end has little to do with Wheelock. Making this adjustment to our proposals would result in a Sandbach Town ward with a +10% forecasted variance and a Wheelock & Winterley ward, identical to that in the Commission's draft recommendation, with a -6% forecasted variance. Given this, we accept the Commission's draft recommendation for the Wheelock & Winterley ward.

See Brereton section for our comments on the western boundary of the Elworth ward.

Middlewich & Congleton Constituency Rural

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the Dane Valley and Middlewich wards.

Both our proposals and the Commission's draft recommendations have a Brereton ward containing the parishes of Arclid, Bradwall, Brereton, and Somerford. The contention is over whether to include Smallwood (otherwise to be in the Odd Rode ward) or Moston and Warmingham (otherwise to be in the Elworth ward). The Commission's draft proposal envisions the Brereton ward as a linear rural ward, noncontiguous on the road network, stretching all the way from Congleton to Crewe, towns that have very little to do with each other. Our proposal, on the other hand, envisions a relatively compact ward containing electors who are situated between and access services and amenities from Congleton, Sandbach, and Holmes Chapel, two towns and a large village with close ties to each other.

A Brereton ward consisting of merely the parishes of Arclid, Bradwall, Brereton, and Somerford would have a -2% forecasted variance and leave an Odd Rode ward, identical to the Commission's draft recommendation, with a 0% forecasted variance. We would like to propose this as an alternative. We would also like to propose renaming the Brereton ward to Brereton & Somerford.

Congleton

The Commission falsely claims here that our proposals do not offer good electoral equality. Our proposed Congleton North ward has a forecasted variance of -5%, not the -11% claimed by the Commission.

Knutsford & District

We consider the proposed division of Knutsford in the Commission's draft recommendations to be harmful to both the provision of effective and convenient local government and the reflection of local community identity. A ward coterminous with the parish boundary is possible and we therefore consider it expedient to pursue that. Furthermore, this proposal was proposed to the meeting of the Council's Electoral Review Subcommittee on Wednesday 31st January 2024 with the explicit goal of making it easier for a Labour candidate to be elected to the Council in Knutsford.

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the Chelford, High Legh, and Mobberley wards.

Wilmslow, Handforth & Alderley Edge

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the Alderley Edge & Chorley, Handforth, Wilmslow East & Dean Row, Wilmslow Lacey Green, and Wilmslow West wards.

Disley, Poynton & Prestbury

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for the Disley, Poynton and Prestbury wards.

Macclesfield

This was the final area of our proposal to be drawn up, and we were already aware of two other proposals for this area: a proposal by the Conservative and Independent groups on Cheshire East Council, which became the Council's proposal, and a proposal by Labour councillors in Macclesfield. Each of these proposals has its own merits and deficiencies: the Labour proposal better reflects community identities, while the Council's provides for much better electoral equality.

We chose to agree with the Council's proposal, with the amendment to match the boundary between the Macclesfield Tytherington and Bollington & Rainow wards, because we believe the Labour proposal to be irreconcilable with providing good electoral equality while promoting effective and convenient local government, the latter being provided by the alignment between the ward and parish boundary.

We consider the idea of placing the Macclesfield section of the Springwood estate in the Bollington & Rainow ward, and the consequent creation of a 233-electoral Springwood ward for Macclesfield town council, to be manifestly ridiculous. Under the Commission's draft

recommendations, the 4618 forecast electors of the Tytherington ward would have the same representation as the 233 forecast electors of the Springwood ward, despite being almost 20 times more numerous.

Bollington & Rainow, Gawsworth and Sutton

See Macclesfield section for our comments on the boundary between the Bollington & Rainow and Macclesfield Tytherington wards.

The Commission claims that our proposed Gawsworth ward would have a +23% forecasted variance. This is not the case. Our proposed division of the parish of Hulme Walfield between the Congleton North and Gawsworth wards is identical to that proposed by the Council between their proposed Congleton West and Gawsworth wards. The Gawsworth ward as specified in our proposals has a forecasted variance of +10%.

Parish Electoral Arrangements

Congleton

We propose 22 councillors, as at present, elected from six wards.

Four wards (Central, North, South East, West) we propose to remain the same as at present, with the same number of councillors. The North East ward we propose to divide into two new wards: Bromley Farm, consisting of the portion of the present ward contained within our proposed Congleton North borough ward, with three councillors, and Buglawton, consisting of the portion of the present ward contained within our proposed Congleton East borough ward, with two councillors.

We also propose renaming the North ward to Lower Heath, the South East ward to Mossley, and the West ward to West Heath, to match the naming of the new wards and avoid confusion with the eponymous borough wards for the North and West wards.

Crewe

We propose 20 councillors, as at present, elected from eight wards:

Six wards (Grand Junction, Maw Green, South, St Barnabas, West) we propose to cover the same area as our proposed borough wards, with double the number of town councillors as borough councillors. The Central and North wards we propose to remain the same as at present, with the same number of councillors.

Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for this grouped parish.

Knutsford

We propose no changes to the electoral arrangements for Knutsford Town Council as we do not propose splitting the parish between borough wards.

Macclesfield

As Macclesfield is Cheshire East's most populous parish, we believe that 12 town councillors is too few. 22 councillors, the same size as the largest parish council, Congleton, would be a better number.

We propose keeping the same boundaries as the present wards, with the following numbers of councillors:

Ward	Councillors
Broken Cross and Upton	3
Central	4
East	2
Hurdsfield	2
South	4
Tytherington	4
West & Ivy	3

Nantwich

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for this parish.

Sandbach

We propose 21 councillors, as at present, elected from four wards.

We propose a Sandbach Town and a Sandbach Heath ward, each with the same boundaries as our proposed borough wards with the same names and five councillors. We also propose an Elworth ward, consisting of the portion of our proposed Elworth borough ward within the parish of Sandbach, with eight councillors, and a Wheelock ward, consisting of the portion of our proposed Wheelock & Winterley borough ward, with three councillors.

Willaston

We propose 12 councillors, as at present, elected from two wards.

We propose to divide the two parish wards along the railway line, which is also the proposed boundary between the Shavington and Wistaston borough wards in our revised proposals, with the North parish ward having seven councillors and the South parish ward having five.

Wilmslow

We accept the Commission's draft recommendations for this parish.