

# North Yorkshire

## Personal Details:

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## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Richmond and surrounding divisions

Statement in Support of the Boundary Commission's Recommended Electoral Divisions in and Around Richmond

I am writing in support of the Boundary Commission's proposed divisional arrangements for Richmond and the surrounding area. The recommended boundaries are well thought out, reflecting real-world patterns of education, transport, community identity, and local service use. The following five key points explain why the proposals are both appropriate and beneficial:

- **SHARED AMENITIES**

The proposed Richmond Division successfully keeps the town's core intact—maintaining access to schools, shops, and essential services for most Richmond residents. Importantly, including St Martins within the Richmond Division brings key sports and leisure facilities back into the town's electoral area, such as the swimming pool, railway The Station Richmond and Station cinema, rugby club, and football ground. This strengthens community cohesion and ensures residents have convenient access to valued recreational amenities.

- **BETTER CONNECTED**

The new divisional boundaries recognise and preserve the natural connections between Richmond and the northern villages of North Richmondshire. These communities have long-standing ties to Richmond for schooling, employment, shopping, and healthcare. Keeping these

areas together within the same division reflects the way people live and interact locally.

- GEOGRAPHICALLY MANAGEABLE CLUSTER

By using the A1(M) as a defining boundary, the Commission has created a more geographically coherent cluster of communities. This transforms what was previously a long, linear stretch into a well-defined area where villages are within easier reach of one another. This enables more effective representation and allows councillors to serve residents with shared concerns and interests.

- MAINTAINING SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

The revised boundaries maintain appropriate links between villages and the secondary schools they rely on—particularly Richmond School and St Francis Xavier. The inclusion of key feeder primary schools such as Barton, Middleton Tyas, and Ravensworth helps ensure continuity of education and smoother transitions between stages. This reflects real-world schooling patterns and strengthens the connection between rural communities and the town.

This issue is less significant for villages such as Croft and Stapleton, where there is a greater flow of pupils attending Hurworth School and independent schools such as Polam Hall in Darlington. Their close proximity to Darlington and straightforward driving routes naturally orient families toward those educational options.

- DISTINCT COMMUNITY ORIENTATIONS

The proposed divisions also recognise that different rural communities are oriented toward different market towns and service centres. Villages such as Stapleton and Croft, located just a few miles from the County Durham border, are primarily commuter communities for Darlington. Meanwhile, the Cowton's and villages further east tend to gravitate towards Northallerton. In contrast, the northern villages—such as Barton, Middleton Tyas, and Scorton—have strong social, educational, and economic ties to Richmond. The proposed boundaries reflect these distinct patterns, ensuring each area is grouped according to the centre it most closely identifies with.

### Conclusion

The Boundary Commission's recommended divisions for Richmond and its surrounding areas align with how communities' function. They respect local geography, commuting patterns, educational links, and service usage. For these reasons, I fully support the proposed boundaries and believe they will enhance local representation and community coherence.

## Attached Documents:

*None attached*