

North Yorkshire

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Organisation Name: East Ayton Parish Council (Representative of parish/town council)

Comment text:

Related subject: East Ayton, Scarborough

Please see attached letter an appendices.

Attached Documents:

- east-ayton-parish-council-boundary-review.pdf

EAST AYTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Proposed Changes to the Electoral Wards

Dear Sir/Madam

East Ayton Parish Council met formally on the 29th May 2025 and discussed the proposed changes to electoral wards and the underlying reasoning put forward by North Yorkshire Council.

It was noted that the proposal put forward had been driven by political parties and their own interests with no thought to the communities they are manipulating. The Parish Council also questioned how such a scheme could have been put forward without officials alerting the communities to the process and mechanism for involvement.

The Council also discussed the data presented and the limitations for a body such as ourselves to properly evaluate the populations and the acceptable divisions. The Council also discussed the current geographical size of Derwent Ward at over 200 square miles and the relevance of a target number of electorate of 5,800 as a one size fits all approach when an urban electoral ward could be as small as just 4 square miles.

Following a formal proposal the Parish Council voted to reject the proposed changes to the electoral wards. Summary reasons to oppose this proposal:

1. Geographical distances and transport communications
2. Economic relationships and access to services and facilities
3. Administrative functions and allocation of resources North Yorkshire Council/North York Moors National Park Authority
4. Community cohesion and shared use of assets
5. Ability of elected representatives to adequately support the common interests of East & West Ayton which the current structure does.

We attach as an appendix the detailed reasoning as to why this proposal has no logical or practical basis to be adopted.

Yours faithfully

Dawn Naylor
East Ayton Parish Clerk

Appendix to East Ayton Parish Councils Letter

Detailed Reasoning

The existing electoral wards reflect the geographical make up of the Scarborough and Whitby coastal location. The two main towns, Scarborough & Whitby sit remote from any other significant community with large areas of open moorland rising to significant height and separating the two towns. Villages are located on two main routes out of Scarborough. The A171 to Whitby and the A170 to Pickering. The villages and Parishes along the A171 reflect the valleys and coastal shapes. The villages and the Parishes along the A170 are arranged around the River Derwent catchment with those in the Vale of Pickering stretching from the Northern escarpments over looking Hackness and Troutsdale to southern side of the Vale, some over 4 miles in length.

It is the rurality and travel distances which lay behind the configurations and populations for each of the electoral wards which the under target numbers reflect. The desire to rebalance the electoral numbers are understood but serving an electoral population of around 6400 in a very tight urban area with regular public transport is very different to serving a rural electorate in a vast rural area poorly serviced if at all by public transport and travel distances of 15 plus miles between electorate.

Trying to reduce the numbers of Councillors due to the creation of the mega North Yorkshire Council must not be at the expense of Parish Councils and their communities. Logic and common sense must prevail. The proposed re distribution does bring most into the 10% or close to target with the exception of Cayton. It is noted that the reconfiguration which separates West Ayton from East Ayton clearly takes no account of the geographical distances that the Scalby centred ward would create and the travel involved. For an environmentally conscious councillor looking to use public transport to attend meetings or visit a specific site in say Snainton would require 2 bus rides and around 1 hour travelling. By car it is a 10 mile journey taking 20 minutes. Scalby is not a logical relationship to the communities along the A170. Scalby is a logical relationship to the communities along the A171 northwards.

The two villages of East & West Ayton although separated by the River Derwent, there has existed a stone bridge since before 1492. Around 1752 the existing stone bridge was built to enable horse drawn coaches to get from York & Pickering to Scarborough and ever since the two communities has grown ever closer. The historical Parish separation was based on access to a church, which back then was determined before the bridge was built. Now access to a Church of England for the community is in East Ayton and the two Parishes join together for Remembrance Sunday at this church. The Methodist Church is in West Ayton and again used by both communities.

For most who live in East & West Ayton describe themselves as living in Ayton, although technically no such place exists. That is except for people who live in Seamer area where both Highways England (on the A64) and North Yorkshire Council Highways installed all the road signs at key roundabout showing where to go to "Ayton". The community of "Ayton" is therefore officially recognised as being one by two Statutory bodies. Both East Ayton and West Ayton have been defined as "service villages" to Scarborough in Planning terms. The Planning function treats them as one community. The status of a "service village" for West Ayton is almost entirely based on the facilities in East Ayton. In East Ayton the supermarket / petrol station (7 days 6am to 10pm), post office (6 days), pharmacy, dentist, fish & chip shop, restaurant, public house, hotel, hairdressers x 2, infant & junior school, Betton business park and café/, furnishing shop, Ayton village hall, Ayton Sports Club and Ayton Sports Field and play area. In West Ayton there is a Community Library, Public House, Ayton sports field, tennis courts and soon to be a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) funded from shared use of section 106 monies from both East & West Ayton housing developments to support the community organisation Ayton Sports Association. Also the West Ayton and Snainton GP Surgery serving the whole of the Derwent Ward and some of Seamer and Irton is on the A170 in West Ayton. The two communities of East & West Ayton depend on each other for the key services of a community.

The villages along the A170 of Hutton Buscel, Wykeham, Ruston, Brompton, Sawdon and Snainton all depend upon the supermarket, petrol station, Post Office, Pharmacy, Dentist and Hairdressers in East Ayton. In terms of communication within the existing Derwent Ward the A170 connects the villages of East Ayton, West Ayton, Wykeham, Brompton and Snainton with other smaller communities connected to this road. The 128 bus service connects all these communities and a new number 3 connects East and West Ayton to Scarborough via the Racecourse Road where the majority of new housing is occurring. East Ayton is not expanding towards Seamer & Irton.

The communities of the Upper Derwent catchment of Mowthorpe, Wrench Green, Hackness, Silpho, Whisper Dales, Troutdale and Langdale all depend upon the route through Forge Valley which runs on the East Ayton side of the River Derwent and joins the A170 in East Ayton. This route is also used by the health & social care teams to support those in living in these rural areas. It is a primary winter gritting route for NYC Highways and is the only route for HGV's supporting forestry and farming in the upper catchment due to a low bridge at Hackness. At the North end of Forge Valley an alternative route Low Road is used to get in to Scarborough, again this road runs for most of its length in the Parish of East Ayton. East Ayton is the key to the wider communities of the Upper Derwent and the focal point for the majority of interests these communities have which Scalby is not.

Via Social Media the community engage with East & West Ayton Facebook group with over 2,300 members. During Covid the two communities of East & West Ayton came together via a separate social media page and provided care and support to those at risk. At no time was it considered that it should be a West Ayton and Scalby group.

The North York Moors National Park includes large area of East Ayton especially its centre, church, the original cottages and its Forge Valley National Nature Reserve. All the Parishes of the Upper Derwent catchment are also in the National Park including parts of West Ayton. The Derwent Ward has this common alignment and interest which the Parish of Seamer & Irton does not. The Parish of Scalby has an interest but only as it abuts the National Park Boundary. This is an important administrative matter as the Planning functions of the National Park and North Yorkshire Council are separate and work to very different Local Plans. This is important with regards elected representation at Planning Committees and many other committees that elected representatives are a part of.

It is noted that those proposing the change only make reference to Seamer and East Ayton on the basis that they share the same road and this is the reason to combine the two. It makes no reference to the fact that East & West Ayton are physically joined to each other. They also make no reference as to how the proposed Scalby/West Ayton/Derwent catchment/A170 corridor proposal makes any sense.