

# North Yorkshire

## Personal Details:

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## Comment text:

Hi LGBCE

Please see attached submission from the Liberal Democrats.

Best wishes

Sarah Crooks

North Yorkshire Liberal Democrats

## Attached Documents:

- 2025-lgbce-ny-lib-dems-final.pdf

**Response from the Liberal Democrats to further draft recommendations  
for North Yorkshire Council review (September 2025)**

We appreciate the LGBCE giving further consideration to the central and western divisions and welcome the opportunity to provide more feedback.

We are convinced by much of the latest draft, including where it differs from the Liberal Democrats' initial submission. However we feel strongly that the latest configuration of Nidderdale/Wharfedale should be reverted.

What we accept

We support all further draft divisions outside the Nidderdale/Wharfedale area, including the revised Skipton, Ripon, Boroughbridge and central North Yorkshire patterns, which collectively balance equality, community identity and convenient governance as set out in the report.

The issue: Nidderdale, Washburn and Wharfedale

The further draft replaces the draft-stage Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale and Wharfedale divisions with an Upper Wharfedale & Upper Nidderdale division, justified in part by the B6265 as 'reasonable vehicular access', and reshapes the surrounding divisions (Killinghall & Scotton and Pannal & Washburn) to make that work.

We do not support this part of the proposal for the following reasons:

**Community identity runs east–west to Harrogate, not across the moor to  
Wharfedale:**

- Pateley Bridge is the service hub for Nidderdale National Landscape and the only town within it; everyday ties run down the dale towards Harrogate, not over Greenhow into Wharfedale.
- Public transport patterns reinforce this: the 24 bus links Pateley Bridge, Summerbridge, Dacre, and Birstwith directly to Harrogate. There is no equivalent everyday link between Pateley Bridge and Grassington.

**Education and youth services are dale-specific, not cross-dale:**

- Nidderdale High School serves the Pateley Bridge area, while Upper Wharfedale School serves Grassington/Threshfield. These are separate communities with distinct catchments.

**The B6265 is not a community spine:**

- The B6265 is a steep, exposed moorland road over Greenhow. It functions as a through-route rather than a link between cohesive communities.

**Local consent already backed a Pateley-centred Nidderdale division:**

- At draft stage, Bewerley Parish Council, Darley & Menwith Parish Council, and Pateley Bridge Town Council any many individual residents all supported the Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale pattern.
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Our alternative (revert to draft-stage LD pattern)

We would like it to be noted that while often described as a “cross-party” submission, the “council” proposal was in practice developed by a Conservative-dominated working group and agreed by the Conservative cabinet. Opposition members had minimal opportunity to influence its content, and key points of disagreement were not reflected in the final document - which explains why the Conservative party felt it unnecessary to provide a separate proposal at the initial stage.

It would therefore be more accurate to view it as the administration’s scheme rather than a consensus across the council as a whole.

We propose reverting to the earlier pattern that the LGBCE itself previously found persuasive: retain a Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale division centred on Pateley Bridge, Bewerley, Glasshouses, Summerbridge, Dacre, and Hartwith-cum-Winsley, and retain a distinct Wharfedale division for Grassington/Threshfield and upper Wharfedale communities. Keep the area near to Harrogate as Pannal & Birstwith rather than Pannal & Washburn.

This delivers electoral equality within acceptable variance, reflects real community boundaries, and follows parish evidence already accepted by the Commission.

#### Statutory criteria test

- **Electoral equality:** the initial draft-stage figures were within  $\pm 10\%$  for all divisions in this area. Reverting to the previous proposal rectifies the new variation.
- **Community identities:** keeps the dale intact, aligns with transport, schooling and service patterns.
- **Effective and convenient local government:** reduces cross-moor representation issues and keeps parish clusters coherent.

#### Naming

- Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale – accurately named for the dale and its town.
- Wharfedale – reflects the historic and geographic identity.
- Pannal & Birstwith – better reflects these Harrogate fringe communities.

#### Conclusion

Fusing Upper Nidderdale with Upper Wharfedale creates a community problem rather than solving one and could lead the many parishes and residents who have objected to the most recent proposals feeling unheard.

The LGBCE had this right at draft stage. We therefore urge the LGBCE to revert to the Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale, Wharfedale, and Pannal & Birstwith pattern for the final recommendations.

We support the further draft recommendations in all other areas and thank the LGBCE for its diligence on this large, rural review.