



Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Final Recommendations

The new electoral arrangements for the Westmorland and Furness Council area have now been completed with the final recommendations being published on the Boundary commission for England website on 30 September 2025.

Whilst there will be no immediate impact to Dalton Town Council, the change to the Westmorland and Furness electoral boundaries will have a knock-on effect for some Parish Councils and this includes Dalton.

The new Westmorland and Furness boundaries will become effective from the May 2027 elections and for Dalton this will see the electoral boundary for what is currently Dalton South ward reduced to run down Long Lane and Newton Road. (To clarify, this is the Newton Road on the far side of the Long Lane junction, not the residential side of Newton Road).

The final recommendation from the boundary commission is for the two electoral wards Dalton North and Dalton South to be renamed Askam and Dalton and their elected representatives be 1 and 2 respectively. This is reducing the current 4 members to 3.

Westmorland and Furness Community Governance Review

On 9th October 2025 Westmorland and Furness Council approved the commencement of a community governance review. The executive summary on their agenda items says: *To launch a community governance review and public consultation on parish and town electoral arrangements to ensure they reflect the communities they serve, taking changes and developments into account since the last review along with ward changes made through the recent Local Government Boundary Commission for England review.*

The rationale and evidence for seeking approval for the above recommendations

Westmorland and Furness Council is required to keep parish/town electoral arrangement under review. The formal mechanism to undertake such a review is a Community Governance Review (CGR). The last reviews were undertaken by the former district councils, in some cases some years ago. Since then, new residential development and changes to communities have taken place. In addition the Local

Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) have just completed their review of electoral arrangements for Westmorland and Furness. Following the review, it is necessary to review parish/town electoral arrangements to, where appropriate, bring them into alignment, ensure they remain fit for purpose, take into account the changes in communities, and to ensure they continue to reflect local needs.

During a community governance review a District or Unitary Authority can create, alter or abolish parishes, group or de-group parishes and create parish wards if needed.

As part of the recent LGBCE review a public consultation was undertaken on their draft recommendations, these recommendations were that in order to keep the electoral numbers within acceptable limits to ensure equal representation, Newton would be moved from Dalton South ward into Low Furness ward.

A Parish Council can straddle two district council electoral boundaries however, it is unusual and generally avoided. It is legally possible but it requires special arrangements and approval from the LGBCE. In order for Dalton TC to retain Newton it would need LGBCE approval and I would think that this would be unlikely given that it was not mentioned in the recent review.

My opinion is that from the May 2027 we will lose Newton to Stainton, Urswick and Bardsea Parish Council and this will have a knock-on effect on the number of councillors Dalton have. LGBCE identified that Dalton have 1 elected member representing Newton which we would lose, the Band D calculation would also be affected as there will be fewer properties within the parished area to collect the Dalton TC precept from. Any assets in Newton

The total number of councillors for each parish council are determined by figures issued by the National Association of Local Councils and are based on electorate figures for the parished area. (Dalton & Newton - 6081), we don't have exact information on the figures for Newton & Woodbine but if we use an arbitrary figure of 250 this brings us down to 5831, using up to date figures from NALC that would indicate we should have 13-14 councillors so it may be that your councillor numbers increase rather than decrease despite losing Newton.

The first public consultation opened on the 13th October and runs to 8th December although there appears to have been little or no public advertising. I can supply the consultation forms should anyone want to complete one.

H F Thomson

28 October 2025

Town Clerk

