

Simonstone Parish Council Parish Council Meeting

**to be held at 7.00 pm to 8pm on Friday 18th February 2022
Read and Simonstone Village Hall**

AGENDA

The purpose of the meeting is to consider Simonstone Parish Council's Initial response to the Boundary Commission proposals for the changes to the Parliamentary Constituencies which has been submitted to Commission.

The Commission is asking for any additional reasons that may be added to the first response that the residents may wish to be taken into account when reviewing their first response so that a second more informed response can be drawn up prior to the final stage of the work, prior to placing it before Parliament for consideration.

Below is the Parish Councils first response to the Boundary Commission which is for discussion tonight.

Boundary Commission Proposals for the Ribble Valley Constituency June 2021

Simonstone Parish Council has considered the proposed changes to the Ribble Valley Parliamentary Constituency and considered its position at a meeting of Simonstone Parish Council at its meeting on 1st July 2021.

It is worth stating that the Parish Council understands and supports the concept of equal and fair sized Parliamentary Constituencies in the United Kingdom as a crucial building brick of our(or any) Parliamentary Democracy.

By way of background , the Parish of Simonstone has a population of some 1100 people(2011),and alongside our neighbours in Read with a population of approximately 1400 persons (2011) makes up the bulk of the East Whalley Read and Simonstone ward of Ribble Valley BC.

The Parish is entirely within the area of the Pendle Hill Heritage Initiative, operated by the Forest of Bowland AONB from offices in Clitheroe and our voluntary bodies receive grants and support There from and other Ribble Valley services .

We appreciate that this proposal is not about changing Council Boundaries but following recent publicity about Council mergers in Lancashire, there is a high degree of cynicism and mistrust about the longer term intention of this proposal.

More to the point

- 1) Simonstone Parish(and Read Parish) are built on either side of the A671 ,which links Oldham to Clitheroe. Settlements are about 3/4 mile to a mile on either side of this road, which is a Primary Route(and between Burnley and Whalley) is judged one of the most dangerous roads in England).
- 2) The southern route of A678 is a shorter road between Padiham and Blackburn and serves the Simonstone Enterprise Park, a major employer in Ribble Valley, with very few domestic properties close by).

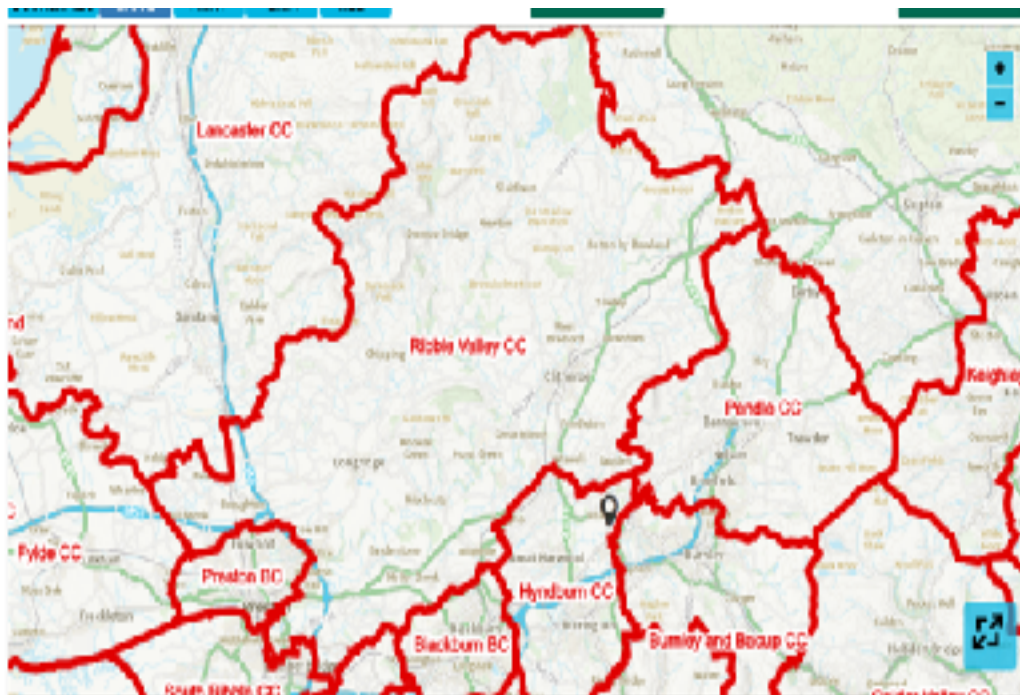
- 3) Public Transport follows this road ; the service bus (M2) provides a half hourly Burnley/Clitheroe service.
There are no direct public transport links to Accrington.
- 4) Our local Primary school, St Peters Simonstone , is a feeder school to Faith or County Secondary Schools either in Whalley (RC) or Clitheroe (other county schools).
- 4) Our primary care is provided by GP Clinics largely in Sabden, Whalley or Clitheroe.
- 5) Hospital Appointments tend to be at Clitheroe Community Hospital or the major DGHs in Burnley or Blackburn.

Thus bearing in mind that for transport, education and health, residents of Simonstone (and Read) look to the rest of Ribble Valley ,and are served by religious and voluntary services from Clitheroe and Environs and cannot directly access services or links with Accrington (the Principal town of Hyndburn Constituency),(Direct public transport is not feasible from the village)

We do not agree to the proposed transfer from Ribble Valley Parliamentary Constituency to the Hyndburn Constituency,

Resolution; Simonstone Parish Council is committed to the maintenance of the Ribble Valley Parliamentary Constituency boundary for Ribble Valley wards .

12/6/21



i The boundaries and the name labels in the wards, existing and proposed constituency layers are visible only at a certain zoom level. Please zoom in to see all the information on these layers.