

12th April 2025

Devolution Priority Programme Consultation
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
LONDON SW1P 4DF
CumbriaDevolutionConsultation@communities.gov.uk

Submission to Cumbria devolution consultation

I am making this submission to the *Cumbria devolution consultation* on behalf of the Association of British Counties, an unincorporated association which celebrates the 92 historic counties of the UK, highlighting their importance to our heritage, culture and sense of community and identity.

The Association of British Counties (ABC) has no views on the structures and functions of local or regional government. Our concern is that administrative terminology and administrative area names are chosen to draw a clear distinction between administration and the historic counties. Hence, our concerns relate solely to Question 7 and the extent to which the proposals reflect local identities. Our answers are below.

Questions 1-6: Neither strongly agree nor disagree.

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through the Mayoral Combined Authority will support the interests and needs of local communities and reflect local identities? Strongly disagree. Reason:

The proposed name of '*Cumbria Combined Authority*' would not reflect local identities. Rather, it would further undermine the traditional identities of Cumberland, Westmorland, the Furness area of Lancashire and the Sedbergh area of Yorkshire.

Until recent times the word '*Cumbria*', when used at all, was a formal Latinised synonym for the historic county of Cumberland. Its usage was only really extended beyond Cumberland with the establishment of the *Cumbria Constabulary* in 1967 and *Cumbria County Council* in 1974. The name '*Cumbria*' was always wholly inappropriate for the administrative area it was attached to. This, compounded by the 1974 council area being given a 'county' identity, has, over the last half a century, massively undermined the traditional identities of Cumberland, Westmorland, the Furness area of Lancashire and the Sedbergh area of Yorkshire.

Instead, we propose that the new authority be named the '*Lakeland Combined Authority*'. The name '*Lakeland*' has been commonly used to describe this part of the country since at least as far back as the 18th century. '*Lakeland*' has national and international recognition and could be used as a regional name without it being seen as a county or undermining historic county identities. The police force should be similarly renamed.

These moves should be backed up by an end to the '*ceremonial county*' of '*Cumbria*' and a return to appointing the lord-lieutenants directly to the historic counties, as proposed by ABC's [Historic Counties of the United Kingdom Bill](#).

Yours sincerely

Peter Boyce

Peter Boyce
Chairman, Association of British Counties



The proposed 'Cumbria Combined Authority' compared to the historic counties of the region.