

CARLISLE CONSTITUENCY PROFILE

Situation

The constituency lies in the north west corner of England. When the County of Cumberland was created after the Norman Conquest of England the town of Carlisle became the County Town as a base for the defence of England against then Scots. The constituency however includes a large rural hinterland to the north and east of the town.

Physical Geography

The constituency is partly a plain towards the west, while it is rolling hillocks towards the east. Its eastern boundary is the far northern Pennines, its northern boundary is the border with Scotland and its western boundary the Solway Firth. The principal rivers are the lower Eden, the Petteril, the Caldew, the Lyne and the Esk, the first and last mentioned being the most important.

Communications

Carlisle town has excellent rail connections with Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Preston and Barrow. Buses connect the rural areas with Carlisle railway station. The M6/A74(M) corridor gives good connectivity by road to the north and south. However, all other roads in the constituency are single carriageway and are thus prone to delay when slow moving HGVs or agricultural tractors prevent overtaking; improvement is badly needed.

Population

The approximate population figures for the main towns and villages are as follows.

Carlisle	74,300
Brampton	4,300
Wetheral	4,100
Longtown	3,000
Scotby	2,400

The urban population of the constituency is approximately 85% and the rural area 15%.

Economy

Carlisle town has been since the late 18th century an industrial town, originally dominated by the textile industry but now having a tyre factory, a biscuit factory and numerous smaller businesses. The latter are mostly in the industrial estates in Kingstown and Kingmoor on Carlisle's northern fringe. There are plans to emulate this on the southern fringe but this is outside the constituency. The Cumberland Infirmary is fairly large and provides much employment. The town is fairly prosperous and acts as a magnet for north and west Cumbria as well as parts of southern parts of Scotland.

Politics

Carlisle town (except for the two unitary wards north of the River Eden) is strongly Labour supporting. In the unitary elections of 2022 all those wards returned Labour Councillors. North of the Eden but still within the town are the wards of Stanwix Urban and Belah. In 2022 Stanwix Urban returned a Lib Dem Councillor and Belah returned a Green Councillor. Previously both wards had been held by the Conservatives for many years. The rural area consists of Brampton, Wetheral, Houghton and Irthington, Longtown and Corby and Hayton wards. In the unitary elections of 2022 the three first mentioned wards returned Conservative candidates and the last two mentioned wards returned Liberal Democrats. Longtown had previously elected a Conservative candidate for many years.

Local Authority

Carlisle Constituency lies entirely within the Cumberland Unitary Authority area.