Dear Ian,

I am writing to you to advise you of the outcome of the annual review of the Cold Weather Payments scheme.

The scheme is reviewed after the end of each winter season to ensure that the weather station network remains viable and representative. Expert advice is sought from the Met Office and changes made where appropriate before the start of the next winter period.

As part of this, we consider representations made during the previous winter about the suitability of individual weather stations and the links with postcode districts. Last winter, you asked if further consideration could be given as to whether Morpeth and Albermarle weather station was the most appropriate weather stations for NE22 - NE23.

In its advice, the Met Office stated:

‘The main urban area within NE22 is the town of Bedlington with a winter mean temperature in the range 4.3 to 4.7 °C and is linked to the cold weather payment station at Morpeth (4.0 °C). The main urban area within postcode NE23 is Cramlington with slightly lower mean temperatures in the range 4.0 to 4.4 °C and is linked to the station at Albermarle (3.2 °C). These two postcodes neighbour each other but are part of the boundary between the collection of postcodes linked to Morpeth or Albermarle.’
The Met Office made the recommendation that the current postcode district links to these weather stations should be maintained for winter 2019/20.

In making its recommendation, the Met Office examined the Geographic Information System database showing postcode areas, weather stations, topography, built-up areas and 1km-gridded winter mean air temperature for 1981-2010 (i.e. the latest 30 year measurement of winter mean temperature used to calculate various weather parameters).

In view of the Met Office advice, the postcodes linked to the weather station at Morpeth and Albermarle will remain the same for winter 2019/20.

I have asked for a copy of this letter to be deposited in the house library. If you have any further questions, please contact my officials at SOCIALFUNDSTRATEGY.SINGLEPOINTEOFCONTACT@DWP.GOV.UK

I appreciate this is not the response that you were hoping for.

Best Wishes

Will Quince MP

Minister for Welfare Delivery