

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND

HELD AT

SMALL HALL, GUILDHALL, MARKET HILL, CAMBRIDGE, CB2 3QJ

ON

THURSDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2016
DAY ONE

Before:

Ms Sarah Hamilton, The Lead Assistant Commissioner

Transcribed from audio by W B Gurney & Sons LLP
83 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0HW
Telephone Number: 0203 585 4721/22

Time Noted: 10.10 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Cambridge. We are here for the Boundary Commission public hearing. We were due to start at 10 o'clock but I am afraid we are a few minutes late due to the fire drill. In fact we do not have any speakers booked until 10.30 am so what I propose to do, although we have opened, I will not do the formal speech until 10.30 when hopefully there will be more people here. So we will just wait until 10.30. Thank you.

Time Noted: 10.12 am

After a short break

Time Noted: 10.30 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries in the Eastern Region. My name is Sarah Hamilton and I am an Assistant Commissioner of the Boundary Commission for England.

I was appointed by the Commission to assist them in their task of making recommendations for new constituencies in the Eastern Region. I am responsible for chairing the hearing today and tomorrow and I am also responsible, with my fellow Assistant Commissioner Laura Smallwood, who is sitting at the back, for analysing all the representations received about the initial proposals for this region and then presenting recommendations to the Commission as to whether or not those initial proposals should be revised. I am assisted here today by members of the Commission staff led by Matt Grist, who is sitting beside me.

Matt will shortly provide an explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for new constituencies in the Eastern Region. He will tell you how you can make written representations and he will deal with one or two other administrative matters.

The hearing today is scheduled to run until 8 pm and tomorrow it is scheduled to run from 9 am to 5 pm. I can vary that timetable and I will take into account the attendance and the demand for opportunities to speak.

I should point out that under the legislation that governs the Commission's review, each public hearing must be held over two days and cannot be extended into a third. The purpose of this hearing is to allow people to make oral representations about the initial proposals for the Eastern Region. A number of people have already registered to speak and have been given a time slot and I will invite them to speak at the appropriate time. If there is any time during the day or at the end of the day, then I will invite anyone who

has not registered but would like to speak to do so. I would like to stress that the purpose of this hearing is for people to make oral representations about the initial proposals, the purpose is not to engage in a debate with the Commission about the proposals, nor is this hearing an opportunity for people to cross-examine other speakers during their presentation. People may seek to put questions for clarification to the speakers but they should do that through me as the chair.

I will now hand over to Matt who will provide a brief explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for the Eastern Region. Thank you.

MR GRIST: Thank you very much and good morning. As Sarah has mentioned, my name is Matt Grist and I am a member of the Commission staff. I am responsible for supporting the Commissioners in their role to recommend new parliamentary constituency boundaries, and at this hearing I lead the team of staff responsible for ensuring that the hearing runs smoothly. As Sarah has already stated, she will chair the hearing itself and it is her responsibility to run the hearing at her discretion and take decisions about speakers, questioners and timings. My team and I are here today to support Sarah in carrying out her role. Please ask one of us outside the hearing if you need any help or assistance.

We use the European electoral regions as a template for the allocation of the 499 constituencies to which England is entitled, not including the two constituencies allocated to the Isle of Wight. This approach is permitted by the legislation and has been supported by previous public consultation. This approach does not prevent anyone from putting forward counter-proposals that include one or more constituencies being split between the regions but it is likely that compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade us to depart from the regional-based approach we adopted in formulating our initial proposals.

I would like to talk now about the Commission's initial proposals for the Eastern Region. The region has been allocated 57 constituencies, a reduction of one from the current number. Our proposals leave six of the 58 existing constituencies unchanged. As it has not always been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties in the Eastern Region, we have grouped some county and local authority areas into sub-regions. The number of constituencies allocated to each sub-region is determined by the electorate of the combined local authorities. Consequently, it has been necessary to propose some constituencies that cross county and unitary authority boundaries. In Cambridge, Hertfordshire and Norfolk, it has been necessary to propose two constituencies that cross county boundaries. We have proposed one constituency that either contains electors from both Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, which combines the village of Littleport and the town of Downham Market. We have also proposed one constituency which contains electors from both Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire. This combines three wards from the district of South Cambridgeshire in a constituency with the towns of Letchworth and Royston. In Bedfordshire, Essex and Suffolk, it has been

possible to propose a pattern of constituencies that is within the boundaries of these counties.

The statutory rules allow us to take into account local government boundaries as they existed on 7 May 2015. These include both the external boundaries of local councils and their internal boundaries (known as “wards” or “electoral divisions”). We seek to avoid dividing wards between constituencies wherever possible. Wards are well-defined and well-understood units which are generally indicative of areas which have a broad community of interest. We consider that any division of these units between constituencies would be likely to break local ties, disrupt political party organisations and cause difficulties for electoral registration and returning officers; the people who are responsible for running elections. It is our view that only in exceptional and compelling circumstances will the splitting of a ward between constituencies be justified and our initial proposals do not do this. If an alternative scheme proposes to split wards, strong evidence and justification will need to be provided and the extent of such ward-splitting would need to be kept to a minimum.

The scale of change in this review is significant and we look forward to hearing the views of people at this hearing and throughout the rest of the consultation period. We are consulting on our proposals until Monday 5 December, so there is still time after the hearing for people to contribute in writing. There are also reference copies of the proposals present at this hearing and they are available on our website and in a number of places of deposit around the region. You can make written representations to us through our consultation website at www.bce2018.org.uk. I do urge everyone to submit written representations to us before the deadline of 5 December.

Finally, I would like to remind all participants that this hearing is part of a public consultation and you will be asked to provide us with your name and address if you wish to make an oral representation. The Commission is legally obliged to take a record of the public hearings and, as you can see, we are taking a video recording from which we will create a verbatim transcript. The Commission is required to publish the record of the public hearing along with all other written representations for a four-week period during which members of the public have an opportunity to comment on those representations. We expect this period to occur during spring of next year. The publication of the hearing records and written representations will include certain personal data of those who have made representations. I therefore invite all those contributing to read the Commission’s data protection and privacy policy, a copy of which we have with us today and which is also available on our website.

At this stage, I will now hand back to the chair to begin the public hearing and thank you for your attendance today. I will just say, if you have a mobile phone, turn it on to silent or turn it off. We do not think there are any fire alarm drills planned. We have actually had a real fire alarm already this morning so hopefully that will be it for the day. If there

is a fire alarm, we should leave the building via the fire exits and go down into the main square. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Matt. We have a number of speakers booked in this morning. Each have been given a ten-minute slot. Our first speaker is Mrs Sandra Giles. If you would like to come up to the lectern please? For all our speakers, we are asking if you could first of all state your name and address for the record. Thank you.

CLLR SANDRA GILES: Thank you, Chairman. Sandra Ann Giles, 6 Stratford Place, Eaton Socon, St Neots, Cambs, PE19 8HY. A resident of the biggest and best town in the county. Also, as you can see from my badge, a past mayor and proud to serve my town. I have been a district, town and county councillor for a long time.

I am passionate about our town; our residents are passionate about our town. About 14 years ago, we were somewhat alarmed to find that even the AA maps had not got St Neots on there. We are constantly being left out and over-shadowed by the much smaller town of Huntingdon, the old county town. Let's face it, we have not had Huntingdonshire since 1974. So what I am here today to say is, please, when you are naming these constituencies, can we have one that is called "St Neots". Or, if we cannot have St Neots, please can we have "St Neots with Huntingdon". We have got tremendously good public links, A14, A1, A428, we are a major route to the east coast counties. Over 40,000 and growing. As I said before, everything else bigger than us is a city. So I do feel, and our residents strongly feel, that we should be given a constituency that has our own name in it.

I think that is all I need to say. I am conscious we are a little bit behind time and I do not want to keep anyone else waiting. I am sure my husband will pick up on something I have forgotten to say. I could go on. As I said, I am very passionate, so I hope that has come through.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mrs Giles. Do we have any questions for Mrs Giles? I will be asking all the members of the public today if there are any questions.

Our next speaker is Mrs Simone Taylor. Is she with us? No. In which case, Mr Giles, would you like to come up? Can you give us your name and address, although I suspect we already have your address.

CLLR DEREK GILES: Thank you, Chair. It is Derek Giles, 6 Stratford Place, Eaton Socon, PE19 8HY.

Cllr Simone Taylor and Cllr Barry Chapman who is also down to speak have been delayed at a meeting in the Shire Hall and I was going to say could they speak later, especially Cllr Chapman.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is right. I am sure we will be able to slot them in.

CLLR DEREK GILES: I shall not take ten minutes. I am speaking as Mayor of St Neots, the largest town in Cambridgeshire. At 40,000 it has had the most rapid growth in the whole country. It is going to go up to 50 to 60,000 over the next 10, 15 years. The outline plans are already there in context. I am not here to dispute the boundaries, I think that is good. I am here to query the naming of the new constituency. As I said, we are the largest town in the county. I have been a councillor for 25-plus years and the feeling is one of not really connecting with our Parliament because at present it is called Huntingdon – I think it is the Huntingdonshire constituency – and this is a wonderful opportunity to enhance localism, get people with a good identity of parliamentary feelings, and it is a good opportunity. I would like to see instead of Huntingdon, “St Neots constituency”. We are in fact bigger than Huntingdon and St Ives put together, so let us take this opportunity. As my wife has said, we are on the main A1 route, on the A428, we are growing, so yes, please can we rename it. Keep the boundaries the same but rename it.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions of Mr Giles?

So next we have Mr Daniel Summers. Mr Summers, I do not think you were in the room when I gave my introduction. Each speaker has roughly ten minutes and if you would like to come up to the front to speak and, at the start, please give your name and address for the record. Just to let you know too that all proceedings are being filmed today. Thank you.

MR SUMMERS: Thank you. Daniel Summers, 16A Connaught Road, Haverhill, CB9 8JF.

I am submitting a counter-proposal for the whole region. I have considered the proposals that you have put forward. Some of them I support, specifically Bedford, Colchester, Thurrock, Suffolk Coastal, Waveney, Norwich North and Norwich South. I also support the way you have divided the region into the four sub-regions, but I think within each sub-region there are a few weaknesses which can be improved on.

If I start with Essex, I think the major issues in Essex are that you have Hadleigh and South Benfleet being split; the Ashingdon and Canewdon wards of Rochford going in

with Rochford & Southend East, and that is completely cut off from the rest of the constituency by the River Roach and with no physical connection whatsoever. The inclusion of the Purleigh ward of Maldon in the Rayleigh & Woodham Ferrers constituency, which basically splits the Maldon & Witham constituency in two. The inclusion of the northern part of Chelmsford borough in Brentwood & Ongar. The inclusion of Kelvedon with Braintree rather than Witham; and the exclusion of Jaywick, which is the Golf Green ward from the Harwich & Clacton constituency.

Very briefly, going through the proposals that I am making: I think Thurrock is correct. I propose that Harlow join with Waltham Abbey, I think that is a more urban constituency. The big problem in that part of the county is the Broomfield & the Walthams and Boreham & the Leighs wards of Chelmsford, which you have included in Brentwood & Ongar, and they have no connection whatsoever to Brentwood, Epping Forest, or even to the wards of Chelmsford which are immediately to the west of them. So I suggest incorporating those two wards into the Chelmsford constituency. I have made other alterations to the Chelmsford constituency.

I am suggesting keeping Castle Point, combined with the addition of one ward from Southend, and then a new alignment of wards within Southend. So you basically have a core Southend constituency and taking the northern part of Southend in with Rochford.

I also suggest that the division of Basildon is not ideal, and that you could create a constituency that contains most of Basildon and the East Thurrock wards - Corringham & Fobbing and so on.

Further north, I think the proposal to join Clacton and Harwich is spot on. I do not think there is any better way of increasing the Clacton electorate. But I do think Golf Green should go in with Harwich & Clacton, and Little Clacton & Weeley (because that would make it too big) should come out, because although it contains the name "Clacton" it is a very distinct community; not a coastal community. Jaywick has much more in common with Clacton and the rest of that constituency than Little Clacton & Weeley.

I support the Colchester constituency.

In North Essex, what I would propose is that you move the south of that constituency in with Maldon district, and that would unite Maldon. You see on the map there ---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You can use the map if you want.

MR SUMMERS: --- you will see the inclusion of the Purleigh ward there basically drives a wedge into this constituency and there is very little connection between that part of Maldon district and that bit of Maldon district except through the Purleigh ward

(indicating). Maldon is a very small district and I suggest we keep that combined in one constituency.

Then I suggest putting Witham and Braintree into a constituency together. What we have at the moment is Kelvedon up here and all its lines of communication are Witham and Colchester, and it has been included in a Braintree constituency. But what I am proposing is a constituency that basically covers that area there (indicating) and then most of that area has very good connections into the northern part of Chelmsford district, so you could create a constituency which would almost mirror the South Suffolk constituency to the north.

Bedfordshire: I support the inclusion of Elstow & Stewartby in Bedford, I think that is the best option there. I do not support the inclusion of Caddington in Luton South or Stotfold and Langford in North East Bedfordshire. Caddington is a bit of an odd one because you have this long ward which stretches across the entire south of the county, part of which is connected to Luton, part of it is connected to Dunstable, and the main bulk of the electorate is at this end, around Whipsnade and Kensworth and so on and Caddington itself, and they all have very good links with Dunstable. The electorate at this end is something like 200 electors out of 7,000 and, although they clearly have better connections to Luton for the bulk of that ward, it would be better included in the same seat as Dunstable. (indicating)

What I would propose in Luton is Barnfield, which you have included in Luton South, but also Saints going into Luton South. Then the arrangement of the wards in Houghton Regis and Dunstable is quite awkward to bring in a sensible bit of that area to Luton North, so I think the way the Commission have done it with Houghton Regis is correct. I would increase the electorate of Luton North by including Toddington and Barton-Le-Clay, both very well connected via the A6, the M1 and the railway line into Luton.

Going further north, we have Stotfold and Langford there in a wedge of North East Bedfordshire. So given I am proposing all the Bedford wards of Mid Bedfordshire, apart from Wilstead, go in with North East Bedfordshire, you then have to increase the electorate of Mid Bedfordshire, and with Stotfold all its lines of communication are east-west so they are either into Hertfordshire or into the rest of Mid Bedfordshire, so really that is cut off from the rest of North East Bedfordshire, so I would incorporate Stotfold and Langford into Mid Bedfordshire. Then you would have a North East Bedfordshire, which is the bulk of the rural parts of Bedford and Biggleswade and Sandy, and given you have got rid of that area and moved the boundary south, you should call that North Bedfordshire. (indicating) That would be an improvement on the current situation as well as an improvement on the Commission's recommendations.

Suffolk: just a couple of issues. You have incorporated the Pinewood ward of Babergh district in Ipswich, and I do not see there is any need to change South Suffolk at all, there is no need to split the Babergh district. So on Ipswich, I would suggest you

incorporate Whitehouse into the Ipswich constituency, as that has the strongest links with Ipswich town centre or with the current Ipswich constituency. Castle Hill and Whitton have good connections with each other and they can stay in Central Suffolk & North Ipswich.

I do not think there is any need to change South Suffolk. It is within the limits and neighbouring constituencies, apart from Bury St Edmunds, are within the limits as well.

I think the big weakness in Suffolk is the inclusion of the bit of Mid Suffolk district with South Suffolk. I think that creates a very poor boundary along the A14 with alternating settlements in alternate constituencies. As I say, given that South Suffolk is within the allowable range, you can amend Bury St Edmunds - because Bury St Edmunds has to be reduced - in a much simpler way by first of all taking out Needham Market, which is surrounded on three sides already by Central Suffolk & North Ipswich, so that can come out into Central Suffolk & North Ipswich, and then Pakenham, just outside Bury St Edmunds, can move into West Suffolk. That keeps West Suffolk within the allowable limits. It means you have not got to change South Suffolk, and Central Suffolk & North Ipswich would be in the allowable limits as well, so that means no change needed to Suffolk Coastal or Waveney from the Commission's proposals.

The big sub-region, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Norfolk, I think there are a few issues there. You have split Abbots Langley between two constituencies. You have included Carpenders Park in Hertsmere and part of East Hertfordshire in Welwyn & Hatfield. The split of Hertford Heath, Great Amwell, Stanstead Abbots is not great. The inclusion of just the three wards of South Cambs in with North East Hertfordshire and the proposal to retain the name North East Hertfordshire I think is a weakness. The inclusion of Fulbourn with South Cambridgeshire; Milton in Cambridge; Earith in South East Cambs; the inclusion of Fletton & Woodston with Peterborough without some of the neighbouring wards; the inclusion of Littleport with South West Norfolk; the way you have split Walton and St Lawrence in King's Lynn and West Norfolk; the Hermitage ward of Breckland in the Broadland constituency and the Thurlton ward of South Norfolk in Great Yarmouth.

If I start in the south and work north gradually.

You have included two wards in St Albans and one ward in Hemel Hempstead – I am talking about the Gade Valley ward, the Abbots Langley ward and Leavesden ward. The boundary cuts right down the middle of Abbots Langley. So I think those three should be in the same constituency. Given that Watford is far too big on the current boundary, I would suggest they move into Hemel Hempstead. It does mean you have to take out the two rural wards north of Hemel Hempstead, and you have to take out Kings Langley which is perhaps not ideal given you are putting Abbots Langley in, but they are in two different constituencies at the moment, and I think that is preferable to splitting Abbots Langley as has been proposed. Kings Langley has reasonable

connections out to places like Chipperfield and Bovington and so on, so that would not be a huge problem.

To the south of Watford, you have put Carpenders Park in with Hertsmere and there is no connection; no road connection between the two. In the new ward boundaries that we are dealing with, the Carpenders Park ward which currently has its boundary along the railway line now crosses over into South Oxhey, so you are putting the boundary right through the middle of South Oxhey. I think Carpenders Park would be far better in Watford. You have to increase the electorate of Hertsmere and I would suggest London Colney is the way to do that. It is in St Albans district but it has a very distinct community, similar in some ways to somewhere like Borehamwood, so well connected to Hertsmere and used to be in the Hertsmere constituency going back two or three reviews.

Welwyn & Hatfield is big enough as a district to be a constituency on its own so I do not support either the proposal to bring in part of East Herts, because all of that is well connected to Hertford, to a lesser extent to Stevenage and Ware. So Welwyn & Hatfield can be a constituency on its own.

That obviously then removes Northaw and Cuffley from the Broxbourne constituency but you then have this odd boundary [here](#), Great Amwell and St Margarets in the Stanstead Abbots ward, basically merging into one, there is a continuous development over the boundary. ([indicating](#)) So I would suggest Hertford Heath, Stanstead Abbots and Great Amwell all go into Broxbourne. Hertford Heath, although it is called "Hertford Heath" is a rural village. Obviously it has very good connections to Hertford but its connections to neighbouring villages and Broxbourne are pretty good as well, so it is not like you would be splitting the town of Hertford itself.

If we go further north, I would suggest firstly that St Albans does need to be increased and, with the removal of London Colney, needs to be increased even more, so I would suggest Redbourn and Sandridge and the Markyate area, which gives the Watling ward of Dacorum going into St Albans. You have a main road from Markyate all the way down to St Albans via Redbourn, so there is a good connection there. The Sandridge ward is probably better off in St Albans anyway, because you have continuous development over the boundary – the Jersey Farm estate goes over the boundary there.

I would increase the electorate of Hitchin & Harpenden with the inclusion of Knebworth and Codicote from North Hertfordshire, currently in the Stevenage constituency, and they have good connections to places like Wheathampstead, Kimpton and so on.

Then I would increase the electorate of Stevenage by taking that further to the east into East Herts. Some of the wards you have already got but then I would increase it a bit further, so Hertford Rural North, the Mundens & Cottered and Puckeridge. They form a

reasonable unit of wards themselves collectively and the connections into Stevenage are pretty good. There is precedent for that kind of arrangement as there used to be a Hertford & Stevenage constituency which incorporated much of this area.

Then Hertford & Stortford would need to be increased, given the reduction in the south, and I would suggest two wards – Much Hadham and the neighbouring ward – which would be cut off from the rest of North East Hertfordshire otherwise. That would unite Much Hadham and Little Hadham in the same constituency.

Now with the cross-border constituency, it looks like the Commission have just taken three wards in from South Cambs just to get up to the numbers. I think you can create a much stronger constituency by considering the sphere of influence of Royston by taking in a few more wards from this area. At the moment, you have Meldreth in South Cambs and Melbourn in North East Hertfordshire. They are basically neighbouring villages either side of the railway line, they share the same railway station, so I would go right up to Gamlingay, Fowlmere, Foxton and so on with what you are calling North East Hertfordshire but which I think would be better named Letchworth & Royston, given that it includes part of Cambridgeshire.

I think you are right to bring Linton into South Cambridgeshire. There are very strong connections between Linton and Great Abington. I have just come on the bus from Haverhill where I travelled through Linton and Great Abington, and there are very frequent connections between the two. Fulbourn sits poorly in South Cambridgeshire and that should really go into South East Cambs. All its connections are to places like Teversham and Bottisham and would be far better in South East Cambridgeshire.

Similarly, Milton, which you have incorporated into the Cambridge constituency, I think really should not be in the Cambridge constituency. Cambridge district is big enough to be a constituency on its own, I think it should remain a constituency on its own, there is no need to bring in anything from outside. Milton is an outer Cambridge village, with similar characteristics to places like Histon, Impington, Cottenham, and those sorts of villages. Also its inclusion in the Cambridge constituency cuts off Histon and Impington from the rest of its constituency. So I would suggest Milton should go into South East Cambridgeshire.

I would suggest some minor alterations to the north – Willingham & Over coming into South Cambs. I think you are right to bring Gransden and The Offords into South Cambridgeshire as there is a need to reduce the Huntingdon electorate, and I think the best way to do that is in the south rather than the north. I would also move the Fenstanton area into South Cambridgeshire. That has good connections either way towards Huntingdon or Cambridge, so I think bringing that into South Cambridgeshire would be the best way to reduce the electorate of Huntingdon.

For Peterborough, I think it is preferable in an urban area to create an urban constituency. If the urban area is not big enough for one constituency itself, then I think there should be one urban constituency and one mixed constituency, rather than two mixed ones. There is always a danger, when you create a mixed urban-rural constituency, particularly where the rural area is a significant minority, for the rural concerns to get forgotten. Sometimes it is necessary to create a mixed constituency but I think in Peterborough you have the chance to create a core urban seat. I do not support Fletton & Woodston coming into Peterborough without the neighbouring wards. I think the boundary there is fairly weak. Fletton has good connections with Stanground in particular. I suggest the best way to do it is to take out Orton Longueville and Orton Waterville, those two, into North West Cambs. They have very good connections with Huntingdonshire via the A1 and with the rural wards of Peterborough. So in the north, take out the two Werrington wards and put them in North West Cambs, as they have good connections up to Glinton and Wittering and so on. I would also suggest the wards to the east of Peterborough – Newborough, Eye and Thorney – should be in with North East Cambridgeshire. They are fenland communities which have good connections out to Fenland and they would sit much better in a Fenland-based constituency.

There is a need to create a cross-border Cambridgeshire-Norfolk constituency, and I think the way you have done that, by taking Littleport out of South East Cambridgeshire, is not particularly strong, although it has reasonable connections. Again it is just two wards moving into South West Norfolk rather than a wider community. I think if you were to go along with this proposal, I think the retention of the name is certainly not a good idea given it is not all Norfolk.

I would propose a combined Wisbech and King's Lynn constituency called King's Lynn & Wisbech. There are very strong connections between King's Lynn and Wisbech. You have a very rare thing in East Anglia, you have a regular, frequent express bus service between the two, lots of shared services like a hospital – the hospital in King's Lynn is shared between the two – so I would take out the town of Wisbech itself, which I think is seven wards, and then King's Lynn and some of the southern part of King's Lynn and West Norfolk – Upwell and Emneth and so on – which all have connections with Wisbech. I think the big weakness here is this boundary where you have the Walton ward in North West and the St Lawrence ward in the South West. You split the A47, you drive this wedge between Walton and King's Lynn. You have the Tilney villages and the Terrington villages which are split between the two constituencies, so I think those two wards need to be in the same constituency.

I think the Commission is right to bring in the Thetford area with the remainder of the southern part of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. I have looked at ways of trying to keep the whole of the rest of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in one constituency but I do not think that would work without splitting Thetford, so I propose that this area of King's

Lynn and West Norfolk – Gayton and Grimston and so on – joins with the bulk of the current South West Norfolk. (indicating) West Norfolk I think is the best name for that.

The other big issue in that part of Norfolk is the Hermitage ward of Breckland, which has no connections to The Broads. It has reasonable connections to Fakenham but I would still suggest that needs to be in with much of Breckland and I would suggest a Mid Norfolk constituency which, if we keep the boundaries relatively similar to what they are now, would be too big, so I would support taking out Wymondham but I would bring in Diss as there are reasonable connections from Diss to the Guiltcross area of Breckland. I think Mid Norfolk would be the best name for that constituency. Dereham & Diss would be an alternative.

I think the Commission is right in Norwich. There is a need to increase the electorate collectively of the two Norwich constituencies, and I think the best way to do that is those two wards of New Costessey and Cringleford, which the Commission are proposing to move in. I think Wensum is the most appropriate ward to move between the two Norwich constituencies.

One of the big weaknesses I think in Norfolk is the Thurlton ward being included in Great Yarmouth. The river here, the River Waveney, forms a very strong, natural boundary between South Norfolk and Great Yarmouth, so I would suggest that Thurlton should stay in with South Norfolk, and we look to the north to increase the electorate of Great Yarmouth. It needs one extra ward and I think the Waterside ward, which is the Potter Heigham area around here would be the most appropriate. (indicating) It has good connections to places like Caister and the rural area to the north of Great Yarmouth. There is a similar character to those villages as well, so that would be a far better increase in Great Yarmouth than Thurlton would be.

The final thing is that because of the changes I am suggesting in West Norfolk, if we keep Fakenham in with Broadland, it would create an odd boundary here, so I would suggest bringing in Fakenham to a northern Norfolk constituency, which I would propose calling Norfolk Coast, which is the name of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which covers a similar sort of area. Then the area around here along the north Norfolk-Broadland boundary is the best way to increase the electorate of Broadland by bringing in Scottow and Erpingham and so on. I notice you are incorporating Aylsham with North Norfolk and although there are strong connections along there, I would suggest that area should be in with Broadland rather than North Norfolk. (indicating) I would suggest Norfolk Broads would be a reasonable name for that constituency, mirroring the Norfolk Coast constituency.

Overall, I think my proposal addresses some of the weaknesses I have identified. It also creates fewer divisions within local authorities. In the Commission's proposals there were four local authorities which have five constituencies, in my counter-proposal there are none. The Commission have three local authorities with four constituencies,

and I have two. I have reduced by 50% the number of constituencies which cover three local authority areas, so hopefully the outcome of that is there is less confusion and the elections are simpler and hopefully cheaper to administer.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mr Summers. Do we have any questions for clarification for Mr Summers? You have obviously put a lot of time and effort into that, it is much appreciated. We will take this away and you have handed in a written copy as well.

MR SUMMERS: Yes, and I have submitted it all on-line too.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you and many thanks for your time.

Next do we have Mr Mark Slade? We will just check outside because he has booked in, so we will check to see whether he is waiting outside.

Mr Slade, I know you are not booked in just yet but if you are happy to speak now, two of our speakers have been held up in another meeting, so if you would like to come to the front. As you have just arrived, I should explain that all speakers are given roughly ten minutes and if you could start by giving your name and address for the record, and to let you know that all proceedings are being filmed today.

MR SLADE: (Cambridge Green Party) Thank you. Mark Slade, 11 Aster Way, Cambridge, CB4 2XR which is in Orchard Park. This was not at all what I was expecting to come into. I have not really prepared a speech, I am coming here to make a few comments about the process really.

Where to begin? The fact that we have to do these boundary reviews every so often to me shows one of the failures of our current electoral system. We would not have to be doing what we are doing if we had a proportional representative system with more flexible constituencies, more team-member constituencies. I wanted that to be out there on the record.

I am also worried that this electoral review is based around the 2015 electoral register which I know this Commission cannot change necessarily, but it is a big problem because that was the year when they knocked off 80% of Cambridge University students from the register. That means that all the figures which are now being used for the electorate of the city already creates a problem. Why are they not using the population of the city rather than the electorate? It means we will end up with a situation in about five years' time when a whole bunch of students, probably thousands of them, are going to join the register and distort the figures we have got, which has led to this odd inclusion into the city of Histon (sic). I know people in Cambridge were very happy to see Queen Edith's return back to the city – it had always surprised us that it left in the first place.

I should say, by the way, I am talking on behalf of the Cambridge Green Party. I should have started with that. We are very happy to see Queen Edith's back in the city. But this inclusion of Histon in the city ---- I believe it is Histon?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Milton.

MR SLADE: Milton, sorry. You can see on the map, it is clearly divided by the A14. There is not much development between Cambridge and Milton, it is a village by itself. It does not have much affinity to the city. My guess is the reason this has been brought in is because the numbers needed a boost, and the reason the numbers need boosting is because there is an electoral register that has knocked off 80% of the student population who make up a huge proportion of the city.

That is all I really came here to say. I am worried about using an electoral register which is not the best one to use. To be honest, I am not sure why they use electoral registers and not population – there might be a reason for that but it seems odd particularly as students register late; they are going to register on the year.

Also, I am not 100% sure what is happening down in Trumpington. Obviously there are all these new developments happening and there are a lot of buildings that have not been built yet, and by the time we come to the next election there will be people living there and I am wondering if the numbers in the city are taking that into account; what the future developments will be. Cambridge City, I believe I read somewhere, is supposed to grow in population by 10% in the next five years and is that reflected? I am not sure it is, if you using the 2015 electoral register. If anything, that is going to make it look a lot smaller than it is.

Those are my concerns.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, Mr Slade. Do we have any questions for Mr Slade?

MR GERMY: David Germy. I am very concerned by the comment you made that the register does not reflect the number of students in Cambridge. I do not know whether you can answer this or not, but why have those expected student numbers not been included in the Commission's calculations? It would appear to me, if what you have said is absolutely correct, that Cambridge is going to have thousands of extra electors at the expense of some of the other constituencies around.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is probably not a question for Mr Slade. Perhaps I can ask Mr Grist, who is a review manager to explain?

MR GRIST: The Commission has to work to legislation set by Parliament, and the legislation stipulates that we use the electorates from December 2015, so we have to work with those numbers. Those are the parameters within which we have to work.

MR GERMY: So the whole proposal is flawed?

MR GRIST: I could not comment on that, we are just officials, we have to implement the legislation as it stands. That is how it stands.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Do we have another question?

DR GEAKE: (Mid Suffolk Green Party) Hello, I am Helen Geake from Mid Suffolk Green Party and I can explain that it is because of the move to individual voter registration and that people in rented accommodation and students who do not register as part of their household have tended to fall off the register. The way in which people are registering has changed and therefore people who move a lot and students do not get recorded by the head of their household, they have to record themselves separately, and it just so happens they do not seem to have done that in very large numbers.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Slade, many thanks for your time today.

MR SLADE: Matt, this issue with the students, is there a way for you guys to pass this message back to the people who have given you these parameters?

MR GRIST: It is not our job to do that. That is an issue with Parliament that sets the legislation which we work to.

MR SLADE: So we would need to make a complaint?

MR GRIST: Yes, if you want to make a complaint ---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You would need to speak to your MP. That would be the way.

MR SLADE: Okay. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

Dr Geake, would you like to speak now? I know you are booked in for later.

DR GEAKE: My name is Helen Geake and my address is White Cottage, Mill Lane, Woolpit, Bury St Edmunds, IP30 9QX.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I am not sure if you were in the room when I explained that all proceedings are being recorded today.

DR GEAKE: That is fine. Thank you very much.

I am here on behalf of the Green Party to talk about the proposed Boundary Commission changes for Suffolk. I was the Green Party's candidate in the Bury St Edmunds constituency at the 2015 general election. I live in Woolpit, as I have just said, which is in the centre of the Bury St Edmunds constituency and indeed of the whole county.

Could I start by pointing out there is no hearing in Suffolk, so I was obliged to travel for an hour to this hearing. Obviously if I was from Suffolk Coastal, even further away, I would have had to travel further.

I would like to comment specifically on the changes proposed for Bury St Edmunds, but of course we are aware that changes in one place will have knock-on effects on another, so I will briefly cover the whole of the county. A written submission will be coming from the regional Green Party.

The Bury St Edmunds constituency is currently very firmly focused around the market towns of Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket. They are about 15 miles apart along the major road corridor, the A14, and the main Cambridge to Ipswich railway line. We have a number of small adjustments to offer to the Commission's proposals for change.

The first one is here on the first slide. We feel strongly that the wards of Rattlesden and Onehouse - you can see the number of voters there - which are in Mid Suffolk district should be retained within the current boundaries of Bury St Edmunds. Both wards run right up to the A14 corridor. You can see the A14 clearly - fairly clearly - along there. (indicating) They very clearly are in the heart of the constituency and belong in the heart of the constituency.

Next slide. Onehouse parish in particular is very close to Stowmarket. The houses nearest to the town almost constitute a suburb - I am talking about around here and there is a lot more housing planned for there. (indicating) So I would echo Mark's comments about planned housing. The children of the villages in the Onehouse ward go to school in Stowmarket, their GP practices are in Stowmarket, the local ties are all there.

Next slide. The Rattlesden ward contains the village of Drinkstone, and there you can see Drinkstone and there is the major key village of Woolpit. (indicating) Drinkstone is very closely connected to my own home village of Woolpit, we are a united benefice in terms of the church, the children of Drinkstone are bussed to Woolpit primary school, we share a youth club in Drinkstone, we share a health centre in Woolpit. We also

share a twinning association. In many ways we are a single community in two parishes. We do not want to be split between two parliamentary constituencies.

Both of the wards of Rattlesden and Onehouse have strong local ties to Bury and to Stowmarket, in terms of local newspapers and radio, schools, hospitals, cinema, theatre, shopping and so on. In terms of local transport, if you were to try to get from the Rattlesden villages to Sudbury or Hadleigh for an MP's surgery in South Suffolk, where it is proposed they are going to move, it would involve, first, travelling to Bury or Stowmarket, then changing buses for the journey south.

Next slide. The boundary changes also provide an opportunity to reunite Barking & Somersham, which you see there with the number of voters, with Needham Market. Barking & Somersham are currently in the constituency of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich but the ward surrounds Needham Market, which is a small market town, to the extent you cannot drive between the villages of Barking and Somersham without going through Needham. You can see that here. You have to go up there, into Needham Market, and back out to Barking. Barking's GPs surgeries are also in Needham and there are many other local ties of school and community and so on. (indicating)

Next slide. Brett Vale – this one here – also looks much more to Stowmarket than to Hadleigh or Sudbury. (indicating) That is currently in South Suffolk. Local ties would be better served by it being in the same constituency as Stowmarket.

The next slide shows Ringshall. The link between Ringshall and Needham Market should also be maintained. Those are both currently in the Bury St Edmunds constituency. In a sense, it is almost less relevant which constituency they end up in than they are tied together. We are proposing they should be together in the Bury St Edmunds constituency.

Those are the more major changes.

Next slide. The proposals also offer another chance to look at the situation to the north of the constituency, where the wards of Gislingham and Rickinghall & Walsham – you can see them there with the number of voters – are right on the northern edge of the county. People here from Norfolk will be familiar with the county boundary. People from here look quite a lot to Diss in Norfolk, obviously as it is their largest close town, but the town they look to most in Suffolk is Eye. It does not look much of a town here but it is actually a thriving small market town. (indicating) They look much more to Eye in Central Suffolk and North Ipswich than they do to Stowmarket.

Next slide. But, on the other hand, the ward of Mendlesham, which is just to the south – here is Rickinghall & Walsham and Gislingham, Mendlesham is just down here to the south – has significantly closer links to Stowmarket than any other nearby centre.

(indicating) The current constituency boundary puts it in Central Suffolk and North Ipswich.

If we were to swap Mendlesham for Gislingham and Rickingham & Walsham between the two constituencies, we would be able to make a much more coherent Bury St Edmunds and one which better reflects local ties.

If we move on to the west of the Bury St Edmunds constituency, to move Pakenham ward to West Suffolk would help strengthen what is currently a rather thin arm of West Suffolk constituency. It sort of snakes north eastwards over Bury St Edmunds. You can see it over [here](#). (indicating) Adding the wards of Fornham and Great Barton would also help in that aim.

So a summary of our proposals is that we share the aim of moving towards equal constituency sizes, even though as Mark has said, we would have preferred the use of an up to date electoral register. We, in the Green Party, do not agree that reducing the number of MPs will enhance our democracy and, of course, if these reforms were about enhancing democracy we would be looking at reforming our voting system as a whole and introducing a fairer proportional system. But to achieve equal constituency sizes, we do need to look at the knock-on effects of these changes to the Bury constituency.

To compensate South Suffolk for the loss of Rattlesden and Onehouse, which I have put the initials of [here](#), we propose that Hundon, down [here](#), should be brought into the South Suffolk constituency, moving from West Suffolk to South Suffolk, and that also has the advantage of bringing the closely-linked community of Stoke By Clare into the same constituency as Clare. (indicating)

Another sensible adjustment would be to move Chedburgh from West Suffolk to South Suffolk – [there](#). (indicating) That would eliminate the way West Suffolk currently wraps almost right round three sides of the town of Bury St Edmunds.

Lastly, moving the 3,500 voters in Bramford & Blakenham from Central Suffolk and North Ipswich into South Suffolk, would equalise the numbers in all the Suffolk constituencies with no further changes needed to the Boundary Commission proposals for the Ipswich constituency or Suffolk Coastal or Waveney.

The last thing I would like to point out though is that the best way of making the Great Yarmouth constituency large enough, we feel, moving over the border into Norfolk, would be to move the Lothingland ward [there](#) into the Great Yarmouth constituency, and that would have no further knock-on effects as the Waveney constituency would still have a large enough electorate. (indicating) But we are aware, of course, that that is bringing a bit of Suffolk into the Norfolk constituency.

That ends up with all the constituencies being within the Boundary Commission's limits.

That is all I have to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thanks. Are there any questions?

MR SUMMERS: I agree with some of the changes you are suggesting around Stowmarket but I have a couple of issues. Surely, if you are moving Bramford & Blakenham into South Suffolk, you are then bringing part of the A14 corridor into South Suffolk, which goes against your and my proposals in terms of Rattlesden and Woolpit and that area. Also Chedburgh is on the Haverhill to Bury road, on the A143 ---

DR GEAKE: That is right, it is.

MR SUMMERS: So bringing that into South Suffolk it would be out on a limb, and it needs to be either in a Bury-based constituency or a constituency which includes Haverhill.

DR GEAKE: Chedburgh is also on the main road between Bury and Sudbury though and it is a big ----

MR SUMMERS: But the bulk of the electorate is on the Bury to Haverhill road. Chedburgh village itself is on the Bury to Haverhill road and that means it should be in with the neighbouring wards as I think the connections with Hundon and Kedington next door also would be broken in that proposal.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Summers, the questions are meant for clarification. I appreciate you were not in the room when I gave my initial spiel but we are not supposed to be cross-examining people who speak.

DR GEAKE: But that is very useful for us. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. More questions?

MR ROSENSTIEL: Colin Rosenstiel from Cambridge. One of the objectives of the Boundary Commission is to minimise the number of electors whose constituency is changed, and one of the features of these proposals in Suffolk specifically is the very small number of electors who change constituency compared to possibly anywhere else in the country. Have you got an idea of how many more electors would change constituencies compared to the draft proposals in your scheme?

DR GEAKE: I have not, although I could work it out given time. That is why I tried to divide this by starting off with the least possible movement and moving on to the things which would be ideal if we were not worrying about that. In a world where we are trying to make everything logical and perfect, there is the low-hanging fruit and then you go up

to the higher hanging fruit. So the Rattlesden and Onehouse wards are the minimum movement really, which then needs to be compensated by Rickingham & Walsham, Gislingham and Mendlesham. We could reduce it to that, with some adjustment to the figures, and then the other ones are desirable extras. I could calculate that for you if you gave me a bit of time.

MR ROSENSTIEL: (first part inaudible on recording) --- it was still in this Review a remarkably small amount of change compared to the whole of the rest of the region.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Any other questions? Many thanks for your time.

DR GEAKE: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We will now have a morning break and we will reconvene at 10 to 12. Thank you.

Time Noted: 11.35 am

After a short break

Time Noted: 11.50 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to Cambridge on Day 1 of our public hearing. For people who were not in the room when I introduced it earlier, my name is Sarah Hamilton, I am the Lead Assistant Commissioner for the East of England.

We are continuing this morning with hearing from members of the public who will be asked to come to the front and speak for roughly ten minutes. If they could all start by giving their name and address for the record, and just to let you know that all proceedings are being filmed today. After the speaker has spoken, members of the public can ask questions but they are for clarification only; we are not here to cross-examine members of the public who are speaking.

With that in mind, could I ask Mr Richard Fuller to come to the front please?

MR RICHARD FULLER: (Member of Parliament for Bedford) Thank you very much. My name is Richard Fuller, my home address is 20, Braemar Court, Bedford, MK40 1DZ. For today I am also the Member of Parliament for Bedford. I have come today to provide a bit more background to the written submission I have provided to the Commission on their proposals most particularly affecting the constituency of Bedford. I believe you have copies of that submission.

Within that, there is a specific proposal that I make which has three components. The first is to add Kempston Rural ward to the constituency. Secondly, contrary to the proposals made by the Commission, to retain within Mid Bedfordshire constituency the ward of Elstow & Stewartby; and similarly to retain within the Mid Bedfordshire constituency the ward of Aspley & Woburn. I make those recommendations, particularly the first two, based on my experience of community linkages, on the basis of numbers and variance from the national norm, and thirdly about correcting an historical anomaly in terms of understanding the overall identity of Kempston as a community. I think it was five years ago when we had the last set of proposals, when I very much supported the recommendations of the Commission, which at that stage were to include the wards of Biddenham and then Turvey, which are now Kempston Rural, into the Bedford constituency. The reasons for that were obviously about proximity and also I thought a long-term anchoring of the Bedford constituency to the boundary of the region as we abut Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire.

Let me start though on community issues and linkages. As a member of parliament you get to see a number of issues and some of them are short term and some of them are of a longer-term nature, and recently I have been dealing with issues to do with housing, the availability of schools and school places, GP surgeries. The strong recommendation as you read through my submission is to do with the development of housing in the Kempston Rural ward. Five years ago, there was an expectation there would be housing in that part of town, and that indeed has taken place and a very significant housing development that has extended Kempston and also extended Great Denham, both of which are within Kempston Rural ward, in the adjacency to Bedford. So the population centre of that ward has moved very much to the periphery of Bedford. Under the recommendations that the Commission has, there will be a number of roads where you have some houses in Kempston Rural ward and therefore in the Mid Bedfordshire constituency, and then houses on the same street which will be in the Bedford constituency. I do not think that is necessary or indeed desirable.

It is also the case of course with housing that we have issues to do with schools, and indeed one school has recently been built and one school has recently been moved into the constituency. Those are primary schools. Bedford is transitioning to a two-tier system. One of those is Kempston Rural primary school, which will be in my constituency under the current proposals, but also Great Denham which under the current proposals would be outside my constituency. However, both of the secondary schools that those children will go onto are in my constituency – Challenger Trust, which has taken over Hastingsbury School in Kempston, and Biddenham Upper which is already in the constituency of Bedford. So it would seem to me to be preferable that the school journey from primary schools to secondary schools should be accomplished within one constituency.

Thirdly, there is a new surgery at Great Denham, built together with the housing development in Kempston Rural ward. A bit of news - it is not actually closing but there

have been some problems with it and of course that affects a number of my constituents who will naturally use that GP's surgery.

So I think there are a number of very strong, clear linkages that I can identify as a member of parliament for the community in Kempston Rural ward, which ties them and binds them into the infrastructure within Bedford, and that the predominance of change in that ward has been for population increase on the edge of the ward which is essentially either part of Kempston or Bedford for practical purposes.

I would also like to mention a longer-term issue, which I think affects importantly the current proposal that the Boundary Commission has, which is as a member of parliament I have been working very diligently on improving communication networks between Oxford and Cambridge and particularly Oxford to Bedford to Cambridge, and there are proposals for east-west rail, and the dualling of the A421. These are important to Bedford, however the current proposals would increase the number of members of parliament who would have direct relations to those from two to three, because they both cut across Elstow & Stewartby. In fact, the creation of the A421 dualling, which is in place in Bedford but will be increased in terms of traffic by other dualling, and the creation of the east-west rail essentially will create a hard boundary to the south of my constituency in terms of transportation.

I would like to say also on my agenda is looking at rail networks to Northampton, which is an existing line, which, if Kempston Rural was added into the Bedford constituency, would enable me to liaise directly with the members of parliament in Northampton, because that route would be essentially in one constituency.

Those are the community links I wanted to bring to the attention of the Commission.

The numbers – I got involved in politics because I like maths so, forgive me, but when I looked at these things I thought, “There’s a better answer here mathematically to get to the Commission’s proposal of numbers and close proximity to the national quota.” The national quota is 74,769. Under the current proposals for the four non-Luton constituencies in Bedfordshire, there will be variances of 571, 1,500, 2,904 and 3,404 from the actual national quota. So my mathematical brain, whatever is left of it, got into action and the changes proposed in this proposal essentially end up with a maximum variance of 1.3%, so a significant reduction. In fact, I think the maximum variance under this proposal is 571 compared to the current proposals for 3,404. Forgive me for that little indulgence but that is something I wanted to draw to your attention.

Let me just talk a little about identity. Not for submission but I thought I would bring along for you today my 2016 annual report where I refer to myself as Member of Parliament for Bedford & Kempston. In fact when I became an MP for the first time in 2010 I walked up to the Clerk, he said “Which constituency?” and I said, “Bedford & Kempston” and he said, “No, Bedford.” He corrected me. I did not just make it up for

you today, because here is my 2012 annual report where I still refer back then to Bedford & Kempston. It may be that the Commission for historical reasons, and I am a big fan of history, would want to retain the name of Bedford, but it is clear there is a sense that the interests of people in Kempston and the interests of people in Bedford are served by one member of parliament, the member of parliament for Bedford. In our local paper I am referred to as the member of parliament for Bedford & Kempston.

Kempston itself was in one constituency up until 1997, and the 1995 proposals for the first time took Kempston and ripped apart the Kempston Rural parish from the Kempston town wards, and put Kempston town into Bedford to create an urban centre. Well, this is an opportunity to right that historic wrong and to unify Kempston into one constituency. I think that would have a lot of historical significance. Kempston has its own identity. As I travel through the constituency, Kempston has put up a little wall – not a Donald Trump wall but a little wall – which identifies “You are now in Kempston”. There is a clear identity for where Kempston is. Why not use this as an opportunity to bring all of Kempston back together into one constituency?

At the other end, in Great Denham - and this does refer back to something I said in 2011 - you could literally just throw a stone from my constituency and hit the houses in Great Denham, and that is absolutely true. There is a main road between Queens Park ward - Old Ford End Road - and Greenkeepers Lane, which is only stopped by a bollard between the two. These are essentially one and the same, as is recognised by the housing association and others. There is a large Bangladeshi community who come to the mosque in Queens Park or in town who have been located in social housing in the Kempston Rural ward, in Great Denham, as part of that.

For those reasons, the amount of community connection between the constituents in Kempston Rural ward, on schooling, on housing, on issues to do with GPs, on the issue of numbers and getting greater proximity to the targets of the Commission and national legislation, and most important to my mind for the unification of Kempston and righting an historical anomaly, I would urge the Commission to consider carefully the alternative proposal I have presented today.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mr Fuller. Do we have any questions of clarification?

MR ROSENSTIEL: You go on about equalising numbers, you do realise that is no longer part of the objectives of the Commission's rules?

MR RICHARD FULLER: I was referring in my submission about what the overall quota was – I will have to look through my numbers here. As I said in my submission, I know the issue in the legislation was to create more equally sized boundaries, I looked at the

number and I did my maths. I thought I had put that into my submission which you have in front of you today.

MR ROSENSTIEL: The legislative change moved the basis of equalisation from trying to create a general instruction to achieve the greatest equality to everything within these fixed numbers. You do accept that?

MR RICHARD FULLER: Yes, I am happy to accept that. I was just making my mathematical point.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Any more questions? Thank you for your time, Mr Fuller.

MR RICHARD FULLER: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Next we have Dr John Beresford.

DR BERESFORD: (Labour Party) First of all, thank you for the opportunity of addressing you today. My name is John Beresford and I live at 29 Cavendish Avenue, Cambridge, which makes me a resident of Queen Edith's ward.

As well as residing there, I am also ward organiser for the local Labour Party, and also chair and election agent for South Cambridgeshire constituency Labour Party. I am thus potentially the most politically and geographically confused person you will meet today!

I have stood many times in elections for the ward or division over the past 24 years, and frequently meet confusion on the doorstep: "Who do I complain to about the city council?" "Well, you could try the city council, or the MP for South Cambridgeshire." "Not the Cambridge MP?" "Well, you could try but you are not one of his constituents." "Can I stand for South Cambridgeshire?" "Yes and no. You can stand as a parliamentary candidate but not for the district council." "But we are in South Cambridgeshire." "I know."

In South Cambridgeshire, similar conversations take place. "Why are you, living in Cambridge, canvassing me living in Cottenham?" "We are both in South Cambridgeshire." "Why aren't you standing in South Cambridgeshire?" "I could if it was a county council or parliamentary election but not a district council election."

So, firstly, I would be personally grateful if Queen Edith's became part of the Cambridge parliamentary constituency. It would save a lot of repetition and confusion on a lot of doorsteps.

There was a time when Queen Edith's was a logical part of South Cambridgeshire. In the 19th century, dons built huge houses as havens from the hurly burly of Cambridge academic life. Farmers drove their livestock along Cherry Hinton Road and Hills Road to the cattle market at their junction. Land was cheaper than in the town and Homerton established its all-women teacher training college here not entirely on the basis that, as with Girton College, male students would be too exhausted after the considerable journey from town to pay anything but a courtesy call. During the First World War, the troops' VD clinic was built here so patients could not escape and infect the local population, at least without crossing a large number of fields in their pyjamas.

The cattle markets and the fields have long gone, as has Queen Edith's remoteness from the centre of Cambridge. Homerton College is now mixed. The City's main hospital is in our ward. There is solid housing between us and the city; there is no natural boundary.

Knocking on doors and meeting people in Queen Edith's, there is still a strong sense of local community, but of one in Cambridge rather than in South Cambridgeshire. People in Queen Edith's look to Cambridge for their services, their employment and their leisure.

Knocking on doors in South Cambridgeshire, there is also a strong sense of community, but one that sees the value of maintaining some independence from the tentacles of Cambridge. People in the villages look to their own community for leisure – look for example at the growth of community-funded pubs in the area. Many still find employment in the city but there is growing employment outside. People are happy to live in South Cambridgeshire, as recent surveys have confirmed.

I am sure that others have and will make the case for Queen Edith's inclusion in the Cambridge parliamentary constituency on more detailed, social and economic grounds than I have, but I hope the testimony of one who literally has a foot in both constituencies has been useful.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Dr Beresford. Do we have any questions? Many thanks for your time. Thank you.

Do we have anybody else in the room who has not spoken yet who wishes to speak? In which case, our next speaker is booked at 1 pm so I will adjourn until 1 o'clock. Thank you.

Time Noted: 12.10 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 1.00 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back to Cambridge on Day 1 of the public hearing. We are continuing to hear from members of the public this afternoon regarding the Boundary Commission's initial proposals.

I would like to ask Mr John Fisher to speak. Would you like to come to the front and start off by giving your name and address for the record? And just to let you know that these proceedings are being filmed today.

MR FISHER: Thank you very much indeed. My name is John Fisher and my address is 88 Yarmouth Road, Norwich, and I have come down specifically to speak on the Norwich area. I think it is either Seat or Area 34, which is the Norwich North constituency as proposed.

A couple of things initially. The proposal to move Wensum ward from what is currently Norwich South to Norwich North I believe has issues in that Wensum ward tends to be more linked to what I regard as the other areas of the city, which is currently made up of nine and four wards. We have the river basically as a boundary. We also have the links with the UEA, and Wensum ward tends to be linked with student accommodation and student properties and is closer to the UEA, whereas the other four wards suggested to be linked with Norwich North – Mile Cross, Catton Grove, Sewell and Crome – do not have any links there, they are not areas of student accommodation, and they tend to be a separate part of the city. The rest of the city tends to be linked with the UEA and the city centre. So I believe the proposal to put Wensum in Norwich North is not a good one on the grounds of local community, local links and local housing, together with the actual river boundary which is a natural barrier anyway.

Looking to try to make up the difference, way back in the last Review, Norwich North had part of the area on the fringe – Drayton and Taverham. Drayton and Taverham I believe is a more natural link to Norwich North than the proposal of Broadland, where you have the natural links of Thorpe St Andrew, Sprowston, Old Catton and Hellesdon suburban area, and the fringe parishes of which Drayton and Taverham I believe fit more suitably with those. From a shopping point of view, they tend to use the bigger stores on the fringe, the Asdas and Tescos, mainly Asda which is in Hellesdon which is the closest. They do not tend to associate themselves with the city and yet they are linked with the urban area. The fact that Drayton and Taverham used to be part of Norwich North before the last Review means a lot of the residents still feel they are part of Norwich North, they have not taken on board the new change, the fact they are supposed to be rural and linked with the market town, and they do not see the connection at all. In fact a number of them still seem to believe they are part of Norwich North and have links with those particular councillors and that particular MP. So from that point of view I believe those two areas sit more naturally with the fringe parishes of

Norwich North area rather than the more rural Broadland rural market town as proposed.

There is nothing more to say on that, other than I am actually here today representing the MP for Norwich North because she is currently on maternity leave and enjoying her new role as being a very recent mother. I know she is putting forward written representations but I did say I would stand in on her behalf on this particular occasion.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, we appreciate you coming down.

Does anyone have any questions? Thank you, Mr Fisher. Thank you for your time.

MR FISHER: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We next have Miss Anna Bradnam. If you could start by giving your name and address for the record please, and just to let you know that all proceedings are being filmed.

CLLR BRADNAM: Thank you. I am Anna Bradnam, Cllr Anna Bradnam, from 10 High Street, Milton, Cambridge, CB24 6OJ. Thank you.

I have already submitted a comment in writing to the Boundary Commission, some of which I will read but I will add some notes on the end.

You have proposed to include Milton ward from the district of South East Cambridgeshire into the Cambridge City constituency for the parliamentary elections in 2018. I agree with this proposal.

Many residents of Milton work in Cambridge, are educated in Cambridge, shop and enjoy their leisure time in Cambridge. As a result, many feel they already are in Cambridge. Making Milton part of Cambridge would enable a more coherent approach to planning sustainable access to the city from the north. We must plan for an increasing population in Waterbeach, so we must be inventive and courageous if we are to make the journey to Cambridge by train or bus quicker, cheaper, more reliable and altogether more attractive than travelling by car. We need to have an overarching view of what will work and the evidence and confidence to prove it to our residents. This is surely easier to achieve as a plan within one constituency than across two.

Milton residents need to know that when developing plans for the A10, the park-and-ride site which is just west of Milton, for the A14 as well as the new railway station, that we

have an advocate to speak on our behalf, who will look to our interests as well as those of the city.

Almost all Milton residents attend post-16 education in Cambridge, having an MP who represents the sixth form colleges attended by Milton teenagers would surely be useful.

Milton feels perhaps even more politically aligned with Cambridge having voted to remain whilst much of East Cambridgeshire voted narrowly to leave.

Furthermore, we have in fact two sub-wards within Milton. There is Milton Detached as well, otherwise known as Fen Road Chesterton, which is already intimately connected to Cambridge but from which it is literally impossible to get to the rest of the ward in Milton by road except through Cambridge. It makes no sense to have it separate. With over 300 people living in Milton Detached, they are currently somewhat marginalised, so it would be good to have somebody who is able to cover their needs as well as the needs of Milton.

My final point is that Milton ward includes Cambridge Science Park and the new Science Park station and these will have their logical connections in the city not necessarily in the rural surroundings, and ought to be part of Cambridge and part of that planning.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Thank you very much for your time.

Mr Barry Chapman? We can slot you in now. Mr Chapman, I do not think you were here earlier when I made my introduction. Roughly ten minutes, we can have questions for clarification afterwards, not for cross-examination purposes, and everything is being recorded today. Will you start by giving your name and address please?

CLLR CHAPMAN: I am Barry Chapman from 6 Kipping Place, St Neots. I am a councillor for St Neots town, a past mayor, current deputy mayor, a county councillor, a district councillor and past chairman of the Huntingdon Conservative Party.

I am here to speak on behalf of the residents of St Neots and Little Paxton area. I would ask you to imagine somewhere, let's call it Brighton and Hove. Imagine the reaction of Brighton residents should someone propose where they live would be re-named Hove. Imagine the outrage of electors living in Brighton. Imagine the loss of local identity and how they would feel, and imagine the scale of the insult to the people of Brighton and the impact on their community's self worth.

Electors in the Huntingdon constituency live predominantly in three market towns, by far the largest of which is St Neots. The riverside location of the St Neots area has been settled for thousands of years, since Mesolithic times, and is one of the oldest inhabited places in the Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire area. St Neots straddles the River Great Ouse and until the 1960s half the town was in Huntingdonshire – not called Huntingdon – and the other half was in Bedfordshire. St Neots was an urban district until the reorganisation of 1974 and the largest part of Huntingdonshire. The population of St Neots has grown rapidly, firstly through a mass relocation programme of people from London in the 1960s, and secondly from continued organic growth to the point where Little Paxton, a not so little village of 3,000-plus people, now geographically joins St Neots and jointly elects district and county councillors. To the south, villages such as Wyboston and Little Barford are suburbs of St Neots, and although dependent on St Neots for local services they remain in Bedfordshire. To the east of St Neots, there are currently more homes being built than anywhere outside of Cambridge. So St Neots is said to have the fastest percentage rate of population growth of anywhere in the United Kingdom. That population growth in its east and throughout other locations in the town is so rapid that figures given by the district council planners to recent local boundary reviews were accepted as being wrong by many thousands of homes before the local review was even completed.

As a councillor with these rapidly growing populations in my wards, I constantly find residents feel confused and alienated by the constituency being named after the smaller town of Huntingdon to their north. Many do not even bother registering to vote. In some wards nearly half of residents are not registered because they could not feel bothered to vote for a Huntingdon member of parliament. Our MP works very hard for all residents in the constituency but this is lost on many due to the misleading constituency name.

The last national review was abandoned, having proposed the creation of a St Neots constituency recognising St Neots is by far the largest population in Huntingdonshire and second only to Cambridge in size. The St Neots area population is about twice the size of the city of Ely, about as large as Huntingdon and St Ives together, and much larger than at least 10-plus other cities in the UK. True estimates of the St Neots and Little Paxton area population show over 40,000 people, and the district local plan shows the current population expansion adding a further 6,000 and 15,000-plus to the population. That is far more growth than anywhere in Huntingdonshire and more than will be achieved anywhere else in the county during the same period.

I am asking the hearing to correct this injustice, which obstructs a large and growing number of electors from identifying with their constituency. I am asking the hearing to do the thing that will do most to increase the electoral participation. I am asking that the St Neots area residents and electors are treated fairly and not as second-class citizens. I am asking that our constituency be appropriately named “St Neots”.

Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mr Chapman. Do we have any questions? No. Thanks for your time.

CLLR CHAPMAN: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Our next speaker is due at 1.20 so we will wait for 5 minutes to see if they arrive.

Time Noted: 1.15 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 1.20 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to Cambridge on Day 1 of the public hearing.

I understand Mr Walsh has arrived. Mr Walsh, if you would like to come up to the front. I will just explain that you have about 10 minutes to speak to us and please start by giving your name and address, and just to let you know that all proceedings are being recorded. At the end of your speech I will ask if there are any questions by way of clarification.

CLLR WALSH: I should not have to take 10 whole minutes. My name is Ashley Walsh, I live at 7 Grafton Street, and I am also a councillor. I represent the Petersfield division on Cambridgeshire County Council, and I am also leader of the Labour group, for total clarity of my interests.

My contribution will divide into three parts. I will first speak about the Queen Edith's ward and its addition to the Cambridge constituency. I will then cover the Milton ward, and I will then cover the Teversham ward in relation to South East Cambridgeshire and its proposed arrangements.

First of all, I would like to support the Boundary Commission's proposal to add the Queen Edith's ward to the proposed Cambridge constituency. It rights an historic incongruity which was, through nobody's fault, forced upon previous Boundary Commission Reviews by the need to have equal representation, but it is in any case part of the city, there is no obvious natural or local boundary dividing Queen Edith's from the existing constituency. Almost everybody – in fact everybody I would say – in Queen Edith's recognises themselves as Cambridge residents, and it also provides perfect equality between existing local government arrangements and the proposed parliamentary lines. In fact, I would go further and say the new county council division

of Queen Edith's, which will come into being in May 2017, will stretch into the existing Coleridge and Cherry Hinton divisions, and so that will even better reflect existing local government arrangements. The addition of Queen Edith's brings Cambridge up to just shy of 73,000 electors at a time of massive population growth, and brings it within the range extended to the Boundary Commission by the Government's proposed changes.

The second part relates to my thoughts upon the Milton ward. While I would love to have Milton and the more the merrier in Cambridge as far as I am concerned, I do not think the addition of Milton best reflects the mandate of the Boundary Commission particularly with regard to existing local government arrangements and natural and geographic boundaries separating the ward from the proposed constituency.

I can understand why the Boundary Commission might have wanted to add the Milton ward, particularly because the Science Park is part of it, business activity in the ward is close to the King's Hedges and East Chesterton wards, and I can well understand the need to create a Cambridge constituency that comes as close to the median as possible, but I do think there are stronger arguments against having Milton and putting it in with the South East Cambridgeshire constituency.

The first obvious boundary is the A14, which creates a clear boundary between the City of Cambridge and the necklace villages north of the area. I understand the Boundary Commission is not minded to divide wards in order to create new constituencies, so the A14, if the Boundary Commission were to divide a ward, would provide the obvious way to divide up the area and add it to the Cambridge constituency. But Milton is one of a series of necklace villages – Histon, Impington, Landbeach, Waterbeach, Fen Ditton, Stow-cum-Quy and Horningsea, all of which have a shared interest as necklace villages around Cambridge beyond the A14 and which are all currently in the existing South Cambridgeshire constituency. They are also all within South Cambridgeshire district council, not Cambridge city council, so to add Milton to Cambridge would worst reflect existing local government arrangements. Milton is also in the proposed county division which will come into being from May 2017, which contains Waterbeach, Fen Ditton, Horningsea, Landbeach and Chittering. So both on the district and on the county level, the addition of Milton to Cambridge would worst reflects existing local government arrangements.

Removing Milton from Cambridge would leave Cambridge still large enough within the range of electors provided by Parliament, at a time of unprecedented growth in Cambridge's population, the only precedent for which is the Industrial Revolution, and so it would not take very long at all for Cambridge to become close to the median due to its own internal growth in electors.

The removal of Milton from the proposed Cambridge constituency and addition to South East Cambridgeshire would leave South East Cambridgeshire too large, so I propose placing the Teversham ward in the proposed South Cambridgeshire constituency. My

justification for that is that Teversham is very close to Fulbourn, which is going to be moving into the proposed South Cambridgeshire constituency. It is in the same county division currently and will be in the same county division as Fulbourn, and in fact they both have residential roads which bisect the boundary between them, those being Yarrow Road, Fulbourn Old Drift, Speedwell Close and Teversham Road. Teversham and Fulbourn provide a natural pairing, have existing local government arrangements shared between them, and are in the same present constituency.

So I suggest in order to produce electoral equality in Cambridge, South East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire, the addition of Teversham to Fulbourn to compensate for the loss of Milton from Cambridge to South East Cambridgeshire is not only the best in terms of electoral equality but also the best in terms of respecting local government arrangements and local and natural boundaries.

Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Do we have any questions for Mr Walsh? No. Many thanks for your time. Thank you for coming.

CLLR WALSH: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Do we have anybody else who we have not reached but who would like to speak? In which case, we will now adjourn until 2.30 pm. Thank you.

Time Noted: 1.25 pm

After the luncheon adjournment

Time Noted: 2.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to Cambridge, the first day of a two-day public hearing for the Boundary Commission in relation to initial proposals for the Eastern Region. We will continue this afternoon with members of the public coming up to speak regarding those proposals. For people who were not here this morning, we are asking people to speak for up to 10 minutes and if you could all start by giving your name and address for the record. Just to let you know that all proceedings are being filmed this afternoon.

So could I ask Mr Godric Wilkie to come up please?

MR WILKIE: I am Godric Wilkie, I am a resident of Milton, my address is 35 Coles Road, Milton, Cambridge, CB24 6EL. I am here obviously to represent myself and also my partner who has been a resident in Milton for 13 years now, and some other friends

from Milton who share my concerns about the proposed changes but cannot actually be here.

I think the thing I need to stress is the “otherness”, the separateness of Milton; quite palpable separateness. There is a large, geographical, physical boundary in the A14, and as a consequence of that there is only one thoroughfare which connects the village with the town. And Milton very definitely is a village, it self-identifies as a village, the people who live there rarely refer to it as Milton or Cambridge, they just say “the village”, “I am going back to the village now” or whatever. Milton is actually an outlying, essentially rural in nature, village. It is quite uncharacteristic of the rest of Cambridge town proper; it feels different, it looks different, it even smells different.

I have a sheet which I will be leaving which is from the Milton website, where it quite quickly, off the bat, refers to itself as a village. Local estate agents are very happy, very very happy to stress the village and rural nature of it. So it is undoubtedly characteristically quite different from an urban environment of a town like Cambridge.

I could go on about the connection with existing social and political structures – the necklace villages which is the villages around Cambridge referred to as necklace villages. We are all – Milton, Waterbeach – part of a clump in terms of receiving services from South Cambridgeshire district council and so on. So to remove Milton from that existing and quite functional, useful, relationship makes no sense really. The idea that dustcarts would have to cross Milton for no purpose because they were not collecting anything there is strange.

We are quite remote in all sorts of practical ways, not just the fact it is difficult to cross the A14. Public transport between the villages and the town, which we would nominally be part of, is essentially unusable, it simply does not exist in the evenings. So after 7, 8 o'clock at night when buses stop, we can no longer feel part of Cambridge town because we cannot come and go freely.

Culturally, Milton is discrete and separate. We have not historically been included in the cultural benefits of Cambridge town, so for example we do not get free tickets to the Cambridge Folk Festival, an internationally renowned folk festival. Other residents in the town proper get free and reduced-rate tickets. We don't, we never have, because we are considered too far away, too separate.

The town and gown relationship does not extend to Milton, and town and gown is obviously the defining characteristic of residency in a university town. The fact we have no benefits of that sort, they do not extend to us, they never have, just demonstrates the veracity of the fact we are a separate entity.

Other cultural aspects in Milton, to do with various facilities like sports – there is a local football team that is separate from Cambridge; there is a bowls organisation, a bowls

club, which is part of an organisation which recognises it as being the bowls club of that location and not a Cambridge bowls club; scouts; air cadets; army cadets; things of that nature. All of these activities and amenities are all separate and discrete from those of Cambridge. It just seems quite illogical and unnatural to suddenly throw all this community of souls who identify as a village community into a town.

If boundaries are wanting to be changed, an obvious thing to do would be to annexe Girton. Girton is the only college that is outside the town area, so moving Girton into the equation would seem very natural. The people who live in Girton by and large all work in Cambridge.

That is another thing, obviously some people in Milton will - many will - work in the town but partly because of the difficulty of getting from Milton to the town, a lot of people settle there because they do not need to travel to the town because they do not work there. Milton is very reachable from outside Cambridge, there is the A14, the A10, the A428, there is all that infrastructure and roads connecting Milton to the outside world, so it is not even as though you have to go into Cambridge to get to Milton.

The whole thing seems quite bizarre actually. It seems unnatural, it seems contrary to commonsense and there are other alternatives.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any questions? Once again, if you could state your name for the record?

MR ROSENSTIEL: Colin Rosenstiel. You said there was only one thoroughfare through Milton to Cambridge, do you mean the A10? What about the Jane Coston Cycle Bridge?

MR WILKIE: I was thinking about both of those but essentially the Milton Road. To get from Cambridge to Milton, you go on the Milton Road. I believe that is why it is called the Milton Road. So essentially that is one thoroughfare.

MR ROSENSTIEL: You are discounting the railway?

MR WILKIE: The railway currently does not stop at Milton. Even when it does, it will still stop on the other side of the A14 from the village. So, yes, we have the Jane Coston Bridge ----

MR ROSENSTIEL: (inaudible)

MR WILKIE: Sorry?

MR ROSENSTIEL: You are concatenating the two, the cycle route and the A10? I do not understand what you are saying, is all I am saying.

MR WILKIE: One is a pedestrian and bike bridge, and the other is a road, and they run parallel, so essentially there is one thoroughfare. I believe I am correct in saying that.

MR ROSENSTIEL: It just was not clear.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any more questions? Mr Wilkie, many thanks. Thank you for coming today.

MR WILKIE: Thank you. I have some documentation.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Leave it at the desk on your way out.

MR WILKIE: There is a petition. With a few of my friends, we went round one evening and managed to get 57 objections just in a few hours.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Many thanks. Do we have Mr John Meed? If you would like to come to the front. If I could just explain, we are asking people to speak for up to about 10 minutes and if you could start by giving your name and address for the record, and just to let you know everything is being recorded this afternoon.

MR MEED: Fine. I do not think I will need 10 minutes actually. I am John Meed, I live at 10 Hartington Grove, Cambridge, CB1 7UE. That is within the Queen Edith's ward.

I believe that one of the proposals that is being studied is for the Queen Edith's ward to be moved back from the South Cambs constituency into the Cambridge city one. I am just here to say that I heartily support that proposal. We are very much part of the city, we are only five minutes from the station, and in just about every way I would say the residents of Queen Edith's feel part of the city.

I personally have always felt a little disenfranchised being in South Cambridgeshire, because it is a constituency that is largely rural, has rather different population concerns and anxieties from us, and I would like to have the chance to vote for a Cambridge MP.

That is really all I have to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is great. Any questions? Lovely, short and sweet, brilliant.

MR MEED: Indeed.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much.

Next is Mr Brian Attmore. I think you were in the room when I asked if you could start with your name and address please.

MR ATTMORE: Yes, I am Brian Attmore, 32 Beaumont Road, Cambridge. I am very interested in the whole of the Boundary Commission changes. As a whole, I think they are well overdue.

In terms of the details, the only bit I know about and am really interested in is, as the previous gentleman said, in terms of the Queen Edith's ward being moved from South Cambridgeshire back into Cambridge City. I say that because (a) that is pertinent to me and (b) that is the one I really understand. I have lived there for 25 years, I have lived in Cambridge for all bar two years of my life, and I feel culturally, socially, economically and in every way we are part of Cambridge. I have always felt being in South Cambridgeshire was a bit of an anomaly and, on the occasions I have had to talk to my local MP, I have always felt I also wanted to talk to the Cambridge City MP as well as the South Cambridgeshire one. They have both welcomed my input both times, but going ahead I think it is important to say we agree with the proposal and would like it to go ahead.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any questions? Thanks very much for your time.

MR ATTMORE: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We now have a long gap and our next speaker who is booked to speak is not due until 5.20 – we are open until 8 pm today. So what I propose to do is adjourn for an hour and come back at 3.45 just to see if anyone else has booked in during that hour. So we will adjourn until 3.45 pm. Thank you.

Time Noted: 2.45 pm

After a break

Time Noted: 3.45 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen and welcome back to Cambridge for the first day of our two-day public hearing for the Boundary Commission. This afternoon we are continuing to hear from members of the public regarding the Commission's initial proposals for the Eastern Region. I understand we have Mrs Linda Frost. If you would like to come up to the front. We ask for the record you give your name and address, and just to let you know that all proceedings are being recorded this afternoon.

MRS FROST: My name is Linda Frost, I live in Trumpington Meadows, which is on the edge of the city.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We need your full address.

MRS FROST: 9 Forty Acre Road, Trumpington Meadows, CB2 9AL. I was not expecting to speak here, I thought I was going to talk to individuals, however in two minutes I have put together something.

Before I start on Trumpington, I just want to make a comment about Queen Edith's because I lived there for 36 years. During those 36 years I was always very vexed that Queen Edith's was in South Cambs parliamentary constituency, which I thought was ridiculous, because Queen Edith's had nothing in common with all the villages in South Cambs, and Queen Edith's stretches almost up to the railway station in Cambridge City, and we always had city councillors as well. So I am glad that Queen Edith's is now in Cambridge City parliamentary constituency. That is long overdue, so that is quickly out of the way.

I live in a modern development at Trumpington Meadows, which is on the edge of the city. The current boundary between the district and the city is also the parliamentary boundary, which I could show on there. Would it be possible to raise that a bit? It is probably easier if I show you on this map. We are talking about this area here. Trumpington Meadows (inaudible) crosses this boundary here, so it is like that. That's the first part of it. I live this side of it, the city side, but the development is working its way round and it will eventually cover this area. So that will be the city, that will be this bit, that will be the city. Then it will be the same for the parliamentary constituency – that will be the city, that will be South Cambs, and that will be the city again. (indicating) So the people who live on Trumpington Meadows are not happy that their development is effectively divided into three by this boundary.

Between 2007 and 2011, there was a move to change this boundary so that the whole of the development would be in the city, and the new boundary would be the M11, which you can see to the south of the development, near to Junction 11. Both councils were working together, Cambridge City Council and South Cambs district council were working together on this, and they had very good aims for why this was a good idea to change this boundary. They were also changing boundaries on other parts of the city, and the plan you have in front of you there is the one I have given in, and it shows what was being changed between the City and South Cambs. The yellow area at the bottom, the south, is the area that would have changed from South Cambs to the City. If that had happened, then the whole of Trumpington Meadows would have been in Cambridge City. We are trying to build up a new community there and be all together, we do not like being split like this.

So that was discussed between 2007 and 2011, but then at the eleventh hour, South Cambs district council decided to pull out of the arrangement and not do any of the changes on that map at all, which is a great shame because that is now fixed as it is. So now we are doing the parliamentary boundary and we still have this silly boundary that splits this development into three.

We have been told there is going to be a new parish now in this area, because at the moment, this middle section of Trumpington Meadows is currently in Haslingfield Parish which is south east. Where it says Cantelupe Farm, you can see the black line and it sort of loops round. So all this is Haslingfield Parish, and it comes right the way round here. The plan is now to have a new Trumpington Meadows parish. Haslingfield over here is an old village and it does not want to be responsible for new development over here, not even the whole new development, just a little patch in the middle of 600 houses. So they are planning to have this area here as a new parish and Haslingfield will just go up to the M11. This little section here has already been given to Grantchester, which is to the north there. So all this area here is currently under consultation and they are planning to make that a new parish. Why have a new parish for just 600 homes here and the rest of the development is all in the city. (indicating) It does not make sense.

If only that boundary change that was proposed in 2011 had gone ahead, then the whole of the development would be in with the city. At the moment, those people in that part of the district will have a different MP from the rest of the development, and the boundary, as you can see, zigzags its way through here (indicating). I have actually marked where it goes through semi-detached houses, through a row of terraced houses, and it zigzags backwards and forwards, it does not even go in a straight line. So it is going to cause chaos around there, with neighbours with different MPs, different councillors, different services provided by two different councils.

When this first went to consultation at the beginning of this year, in April about 20 residents wrote to South Cambs district council to say they didn't like the arrangement for the new parish because of the effect it would have on the development, and it was signed by 20 residents at the time, and Heidi Allen MP and Daniel Zeichner MP, so both MPs, the City one and the South Cambs MP, both supported our proposal not to have this new parish, or at least to postpone it until such time as this ridiculous boundary can be sorted out.

That is what I want to say. Does anyone want to ask me any questions about that?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Do we have any questions of clarification?

MR ROSENSTIEL: Are you aware that the area you are talking about was actually part of the parish of Trumpington until 1934, when all the rest of the parish of Trumpington was taken into Cambridge? Just to clarify that for the Commissioner.

MRS FROST: Yes, we put that in our original letter. In 1934, I think it was, the boundary was at Hawkstone (?) Mill, which is down here. So the boundary was at Hawkstone Mill in the 1930s and then it was moved back here. So if only they had done those changes in 2011 and brought this boundary here. These houses are going to be more part of the city, they are not a village, and this is not even the whole development, it is only the middle section. (*indicating*) We have to respond to the next stage of the consultation about the new parish by next Monday, the 14th, so various people have put in a robust response to that.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mrs Frost, many thanks for your time in coming here today. Thank you.

We are now due our afternoon break, so we will adjourn until 4.30. Thank you.

Time Noted: 4.00 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 4.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back to Cambridge on Day 1 of the public hearing. It is now half past four. Our next speaker is due at 20 past 5, so I will adjourn until then. Thank you.

Time Noted: 4.31 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 5.20 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back to Day 1 in Cambridge for the two-day public hearing for the Boundary Commission. My name is Sarah Hamilton, I am the Lead Assistant Commissioner for the Eastern Region. For people who were not here earlier, we are continuing to hear from members of the public regarding the initial proposals for the Eastern Region. I would like to ask Mrs Sandra Crawford to come up to the front to speak. When people speak, if they could start by giving their name and address and, just to let you know, all proceedings are being recorded.

CLLR CRAWFORD: You just want to hear my own personal views?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Certainly, yes. That is what we want. If you could start with your name and address and then anything you want to say about the proposals.

CLLR CRAWFORD: Sandra Crawford, councillor for Cherry Hinton in Cambridge.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: And your address?

CLLR CRAWFORD: 99 High St, Cherry Hinton.

The boundary changes should be based on demographic changes, that is the changes in the number of people eligible to vote in that constituency. The changes should not be based on those registered by December 2015, especially not after a new method of registering to vote is implemented, as at least 800,000 people have inadvertently slipped off the register. This includes short-term private renters, young adults and students and many others.

As thousands of potential voters are lost from the estimates of the population within the new constituencies, the new boundaries will be fixed possibly incorrectly and therefore unfairly. Each constituency should be based on the total population eligible to vote, not on those registered at an arbitrary date.

That is really all I wanted to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any questions of clarification?

MR ROSENSTIEL: Colin Rosenstiel. Are you aware that under this new procedure for drawing up boundaries, they will be reviewed again in five years' time?

CLLR CRAWFORD: Yes, but then that would be after the next general election, I assume, would it not, so it could have an unfair effect on the next general election.

MR ROSENSTIEL: Just to give you hope for the future.

CLLR CRAWFORD: Yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, Mrs Crawford. Thank you for coming.

Next we have Mr Daniel Zeichner.

MR DANIEL ZEICHNER: (MP for Cambridge) Thank you. I am Daniel Zeichner, I live at 63 Victoria Road, Cambridge, but I am also the Member of Parliament for Cambridge. I appreciate it has been a long day so I will try and be concise.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We are here until 8!

MR DANIEL ZEICHNER: Until 8! Poor you!

I was elected last year, at the 2015 general election, but I had also stood at the previous general election and I was actually selected by the Labour Party back in 2006, so I have been campaigning across the city for 10 years. I was a student here at King's 40 years ago, stayed here like so many people, worked in IT, first of all for the county council at Shire Hall and then for Philips at the old Simoco site in East Chesterton, and I live in Victoria Road.

My point in saying this is that I have worked in the public and private sectors in Cambridge, I have been a student, I have been a resident, I have been involved in the city's politics for a long time, and I think that does give me some sense of what Cambridge is. What has struck me over the 18 months as an MP, visiting a very wide range of businesses and voluntary community organisations is just what a complicated and diverse city this is. I think I already knew this but it really does strike me as a series really of almost village communities, parochial in the very, very best sense of that word; strong identities. But the one thing that ties them together is all of those communities have a very strong sense of being part of Cambridge; that is where all those places identify with, even down to Cherry Hinton which is sometimes questioned as being part of Cambridge. The Cambridge Folk Festival is in Cherry Hinton; it is the Cambridge Folk Festival. So for everyone I meet in the city, when they talk about "the council" as so often in two-tier areas, the council is here, the Cambridge City Council.

I quite understand your task is to juggle with the numbers, to get them to fit the criteria, but there is a real logic in co-terminosity it seems to me in this city. The status of Queen Edith's has been debated in the past but many, many people who live in Queen Edith's have long felt they live in Cambridge, and I rather agree with them. So I do not have any issue with that.

But I have to say I was absolutely shocked by the proposal to add Milton on – you see that lump on the map on the top. I think I am right in saying that in my 18 months I have not had anyone contact me from Milton mistaking for the fact they live in Cambridge, whereas it happens with Queen Edith's quite a lot. The reason for that to my mind is absolutely clear, because they do not actually live in Cambridge. For many of us, and we do not all perhaps love the A14, it is an absolutely clear-cut boundary. I appreciate the ward spans the road but the people live north of the road, outside Cambridge. So it quite clearly to me is not part of Cambridge.

I would perhaps just draw attention to a parallel. Between the years when I lived here as a student and came back a decade ago, I actually lived and worked in Norwich, and they had the same situation where one ward from South Norfolk, where I was a councillor, was added to the Norwich South seat. I worked for the MP at that time and I can say with absolute certainty that people in that ward got a very different level of representation from the MP, because it is really hard to deal with two district councils, particularly in a two-tier area where you have a county council, a strong city council and a bit added on the edge. So, inevitably, you will deal far more with that main council, as I say particularly when it is a strong urban authority.

So my sense is, whoever is the MP, if this proposal were to go ahead the people in Milton will be disadvantaged by this arrangement, so I do not see any advantage to it for them. Whereas, by adding Queen Edith's to Cambridge, you will actually make the current situation better because we do then get genuine co-terminosity. It seems to me, when we have a proposal which my party has put forward, which does make the numbers work across the county, the fact you end up with Cambridge being Cambridge is a real plus.

I will finish by making a slightly obvious point, which is that Cambridge is a regional driver of the economy, we are having big arguments with the Government about how we make Cambridge work to best advantage with the biomedical campus, all the high-tech businesses here, and particularly in the current uncertain European and global climate, it does seem to me that anything we can do to make sure our voice is heard with clarity should clearly be seized upon. So I think there is a real opportunity here and I really hope the Commission will allow Cambridge to emerge as Cambridge.

Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Any questions? Many thanks for coming.

MR DANIEL ZEICHNER: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We don't have any speakers booked in now until 7.30 pm, so I will adjourn for an hour until 6.30 as it may well be that the speaker for 7.30 can come earlier.

Time Noted: 5.30 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 6.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to Day 1 of Cambridge. Our speaker for 7.30 has not arrived yet, so I will adjourn until 7.30, but if she does arrive early I will re-convene early. Thank you.

Time Noted: 6.31 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 7.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, welcome back to Cambridge on Day 1 of the two-day public hearing. We are continuing to hear from members of the public regarding the proposals by the Boundary Commission for the Eastern Region. I understand we have Mrs Angela Donnelly. If you would like to come to the front and if you could start by giving your name and address for the record and, just to let you know, all proceedings are being filmed this evening.

MRS DONNELLY: I am Angela Donnelly and I live at 261, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 8RP, and that is in the ward of Queen Edith's.

I wanted to say that I was delighted to hear that we could, as a constituency, be included in the city of Cambridge. I believe we were up until 2006 when there were previous boundary changes. We have always felt rather uncomfortable with having to vote in South Cambs. All our municipal dealings are with the city council and Cambridge County Council, we have none whatsoever with South Cambs. Also, we live in the city, on a main road which Hills Road is, we are not rural people and we do not vote the way they vote in South Cambs. So for a couple of decades now we have not had a vote because it is a safe seat of a party we do not vote for. So I would be quite delighted to be part of the city, and that goes for the rest of my household who cannot be here because they are busy doing other things.

That is really all I have to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Lovely. Any questions? Thank you for your time.

As we do not have any other speakers this evening, I will now close for today and we will start again tomorrow at 9 o'clock. Thank you.

Adjourned until 9 am on Friday 11 November 2016

Time Noted: 7.35 pm

A

MR ATTMORE, 37

B

DR BERESFORD, 25
CLLR BRADNAM, 28

C

CLLR CHAPMAN, 29, 31
CLLR CRAWFORD, 40, 41

D

MRS DONNELLY, 44

F

MR FISHER, 27, 28
MRS FROST, 38, 40
MR RICHARD FULLER MP, 21, 24, 25

G

DR GEAKE, 16, 17, 20, 21
MR GERMY, 15, 16
CLLR DEREK GILES, 5, 6
CLLR SANDRA GILES, 5
MR GRIST, 3, 16

M

MR MEED, 36

R

MR ROSENSTIEL, 20, 21, 24, 25, 35, 36, 39, 41

S

MR SLADE, 14, 15, 16
MR SUMMERS, 6, 7, 14, 20

T

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, 2, 5, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39,,
40, 41, 42, 43, 44

W

CLLR WALSH, 31, 33
MR WILKIE, 33, 35, 36

Z

MR DANIEL ZEICHNER MP, 42, 43