

**BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**

**PROCEEDINGS**

**AT THE**

**2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND**

**HELD AT**

**CHAPEL, UNITED REFORM CHURCH HALL,  
20 WIDMORE ROAD, BROMLEY BR1 1RY**

**ON**

**THURSDAY 20 OCTOBER 2016  
DAY ONE**

**Before:**

**Mr Howard Simmons, The Lead Assistant Commissioner**

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Time Noted: 10.00 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning and welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for the new parliamentary constituencies in the London region.

My name is Howard Simmons. I am the Assistant Commissioner appointed by the Commission to assist them in their task of considering all the representations made. I am supported in that by two other Assistant Commissioners: Emma Davey and Richard Wald. We will be considering all the representations and putting forward recommendations as to whether or not the current set of initial proposals should be modified.

I am supported today by a team of staff from the Commission led by Gerald Tessier, who is on my right. Shortly, he will be providing an outline of the Commission's initial proposals for the new constituencies. He will also run through how you can make representations and cover some other administrative matters.

Today's hearing is scheduled to run from 10 am till 8 pm and tomorrow from 9 am until 5 pm. I should stress this is a two-day hearing, and can be only a two-day hearing.

We have a number of speakers booked in. We can also take people who call in casually. During the course of the two days I will be making arrangements and having adjournments to fit the pattern of speakers attending.

The purpose of the hearing is to allow people to make oral representations about the initial proposals. Basically, it is not a process of cross-examination. We want to hear people's views. The second round of consultation will be when people can consider those representations and make comments on them, or raise issues about them. However, during the course of today I will allow people to raise matters of clarification, but all questions should be directed through me as chair of the hearing.

I will now pass over to Gerald who will run through the initial proposals for the London region.

MR TESSIER: As Howard has mentioned, my name is Gerald Tessier, and I am a member of the Commission's staff. I am responsible for supporting the commissioners in their role to recommend new parliamentary constituency boundaries. I lead the team of staff responsible for ensuring that the hearing runs smoothly.

As Howard has already stated, they will chair the proceedings and it is their responsibility to run the hearing at their discretion and take decisions about speakers, questioners and timings. My team and I are here today to support Howard in carrying out his role. Please ask one of us outside the hearing if you need any help or assistance.

I would like to talk now about the Commission's initial proposals for the London region published on 13 September 2016. The Commission's proposals for this region are for 68 constituencies, a reduction of five. Our proposals leave four of the existing constituencies unchanged. We use the European electoral regions as a template for the allocation of the 499 constituencies to which England is entitled. That does not include the two constituencies to be 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 have adopted in formulating our initial proposals.

In considering the composition of each European electoral region, we noted that it might not be possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties. The London region has been allocated 68 constituencies, a reduction of five from the current number. Our proposals leave four of the 73 existing constituencies unchanged. As it has not always been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual London boroughs, we have grouped them into sub-regions. The number of constituencies allocated to each sub-region is determined by the electorate of the combined boroughs. Of the existing constituencies, we propose to retain one in the borough of Havering; two in the borough of Richmond upon Thames; and one in the borough of Kingston upon Thames.

Substantial change is required, however, throughout London in order to comply with the electoral quota. Consequently, it has been necessary to propose 38 constituencies that cross London borough boundaries. Of these, 36 contain part of two London boroughs and two contain parts of three or more London boroughs. In order to create 68 constituencies wholly within London, we have proposed one constituency, that is Bow and Canning Town, that crosses the River Lea. We have not proposed any constituencies that cross the River Thames.

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 who are responsible for running elections. It is our view that only in exceptional and compelling circumstances will splitting a ward between constituencies be justified, and our initial proposals do not do so. If an alternative scheme proposes to split

wards, strong evidence and justification will need to be provided and the extent of such ward splitting should be kept to a minimum.

The scale of change in this review is significant. 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 2016, so there is still time after this hearing for people to contribute in writing. There are for reference copies of the proposals present at this hearing and they are also available on our website and deposited in a number of places around the region. You can make written representations to us through our consultation website at [www.bce2018.org.uk](http://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. You will be asked to provide us with your name and address if you make an oral representation. The Commission are 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 in the spring of next year. The publication of the record of the hearing and written representations will include certain personal data of those who have made the 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 and is also available on our website, and also on the board over there (indicating).

At this stage I will hand back to the chair to begin the public hearing. Thank you for your attendance today. Before I do that, there are a couple of items of housekeeping. The toilets are just outside the door through there, if you require them, and, if there is a fire alarm, it is not a test, so please evacuate the building following the signs and congregate outside at Boots (indicating). Thank you very much.

**THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER:** We have a number of speakers booked in. Has Ms Robertson arrived? No. Mr Robert Neill? Would you like to come forward and speak from the podium? Can you start your address by introducing yourself by name and address?

**MR NEILL:** (MP for Bromley and Chislehurst) My name is Robert Neill. I am the Member of Parliament for Bromley and Chislehurst. My address is the House of Commons, London SW1 OAA.

What I would like to say relates predominantly to the Bromley and Chislehurst proposals and the borough of Bromley. In terms of my experience, I have represented the Bromley and Chislehurst constituency since 2006. Before that, I was London Assembly member for the Bexley and Bromley constituency from 2000 to 2008. In terms of broader London experience, I was leader of the Conservative

group on the London Assembly during that time, and was previously, in the 1990s, regional chairman for Greater London of the voluntary side of the Conservative party. I might at some point, in the second stage of written representations, return to some of the counter-proposals in the light of any evidence that is put forward, but I do not intend to do that today.

In short, I strongly support the Commission's proposals in relation to Bromley and Chislehurst. What they do is effectively take the constituency back to the one I was first elected to represent at a by-election in 2006, and it was the configuration the constituency had from 1997 until the 2010 general election when the Chislehurst and Bromley parts of the borough were merged into one parliamentary constituency.

It is, I think, a better configuration than my current constituency for two reasons. One relates to the move which takes Cray Valley West ward out of the Bromley and Chislehurst constituency and puts it back into the Orpington constituency. That was where it had always been until 2010. Although I am very fond of my constituency and Cray Valley West—we work well with them—it is much more naturally part of the Orpington community. They have an Orpington postal address and Orpington telephone numbers. The local policing arrangements fall within the same sector as Orpington; and local authority social services area teams fall within the Orpington sector. For those in need of jobs, the Jobcentre in Cray Valley West ward is in Orpington. The rest of my constituency looks towards Bromley for those sorts of public services. Generally, their public service focus is on Orpington, and I think most would regard Orpington as their principal nearby shopping centre and the main place they would go to rather than Bromley.

Referring to Jo Johnson, the current MP for Orpington, quite often people write to him first because they assume, from where they are, that they are in Orpington and he is their Member of Parliament. As a consequence, we pass them over to him.

Further, the Crays are really one community for local government purposes. They need six councillors and so they are divided into two wards, but churches, residents associations and community groups serve both wards, so putting those two wards back together makes a great deal of sense.

Similarly, in terms of the wards which are added to the Bromley and Chislehurst constituency from Beckenham—Bromley Common and Keston and Hayes—until 2010 they had always been associated with a Bromley constituency. They were previously in the Ravensbourne constituency until Bromley and Chislehurst was created in 1997. That was the successor constituency, if you like, to the old Bromley constituency, which had been represented historically by Harold Macmillan. They have been part of that constituency ever since Bromley was created as a separate division in 1945, so Hayes and Keston and Bromley Common have very strong links with the centre of Bromley itself. Those will be restored by the Commission's proposals.

In terms of practical modern-day benefits, if you arrived at Bromley South station a 10-minute walk would take you to the beginning of the Bromley Common and Keston constituency. It comes very close to the centre of Bromley itself. In the north of the Bromley Common ward is a quite active and busy local shopping centre called Chatterton Village. All shopping centres seem to be called villages now, but it is quite a major local parade of shops. People in the southern part of the Bickley ward of my constituency will regard that as their local shopping centre. There is the same overlap. People go to doctors' surgeries both sides of the boundary; people will go to local churches and parishes across both sides of the boundary.

For policing purposes, Hayes, Bromley Common and Keston are part of the same sector as the rest of the Bromley and Chislehurst constituency. It is the central part of the borough, and for local authority social services and other purposes they are put together with the rest of central Bromley. Therefore, it is restoring a natural link. Bromley Common gives the name away; it is regarded as an integral part of Bromley. Bromley bus garage is currently in the Beckenham constituency. Bromley Town Football Club plays at Norman Park, which is currently in the Beckenham constituency but would be restored under these proposals, so it makes a great deal of sense as far as that is concerned.

Ever since the boundary change in 2010 my colleague Bob Stewart, who represents Beckenham, and I have quite often found that people automatically write to me first because they assume I am still their Member of Parliament; they have always assumed they have been in a Bromley constituency. The fact there are two Bobs may not make it any easier also.

For all those reasons, I would strongly endorse the Commission's proposals. I do not want to give hearsay evidence, but the feedback I have had from constituents and people I have talked to indicates that putting it back to where it has always been historically makes a good deal of sense. Unless I can assist any further, those are my submissions.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. That is most helpful. Are there any matters for clarification? If not, thank you very much for your submissions.

Would you start by introducing yourself by name and address for the record?

MS GRAY: I am Christine Gray, 91 Park Avenue, Mitcham.

MS GODFREY: I am Angela Godfrey, 46 Woodland Way, Mitcham. We have come today because we would like to oppose the disintegration of the constituency of Mitcham and Morden and ask that that community can stay together. If it does happen, one half of our town centre will be in the Cricket Green and one in the Figges Marsh area, so that divides the town in half. We need to keep our town centre because that is the heart of Mitcham.

We rely on our one MP. We rely on her and trust her. We have built up a relationship with her and, if this happens, we will lose her. We feel quite strongly about that.

Together, Christine and I run a lunch and afternoon tea club for the elderly. We usually have 16 members coming for lunch and about 10 for tea. It is important to them that we keep our town centre the way it is and not split it into two sections. Mitcham is a really old town. We first appeared in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and we just do not want to split it up; it is a family place. We have spent a lot of money rejuvenating our town centre, and it feels to us that the money will be wasted.

I have lived in Mitcham for 20 years, and Christine has lived there a lot longer. We want Mitcham and Morden to be together with Siobhain who helps us with all our grants and everything to run our pensioner club, and many other things we need to do in Mitcham.

MS GRAY: That is what we would like to say. We feel very strongly about this. We do not want to go into Streatham, which is another borough; we just need to know where we stand in voting terms and where the MP is. We would have to build up a new relationship with another MP. I believe our end of Mitcham will go into Streatham or Tooting, which is in Wandsworth and Lambeth, so it takes away our area. We just like Mitcham.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you for your submission. I do not know whether there are any points of clarification, but for others in the audience this relates to the fact that the current one constituency is to be divided between a number of others. People have a great deal of concern about that. Indeed, representations were also made about this at the Westminster hearing, so we have noted that there is public concern about that.

We still do not have Ms Robertson. Who is the next speaker?

MR STREET: My name is John Street, but Tom Chance is going to speak in my slot.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Would you like to come forward and speak? By way of introduction, could you give your name and address at the beginning for the record?

MR CHANCE: I am Tom Chance, Flat 2, Tremaine Road, Anerley.

MS JEFFREY: My name is Nicola Jeffrey, and I live at No. 88 Seymour Villas, Penge.

We would like to address the proposed constituencies of Beckenham and Croydon North. You propose to move Shirley, a ward in the London Borough of Croydon, into the Beckenham constituency which will otherwise contain six wards from Bromley. You have also proposed to move Crystal Palace, a ward in the London Borough of

Bromley, into the Croydon North constituency, which will otherwise contain seven wards from Croydon.

We are concerned about this swap. First, it will leave voters in both wards represented by MPs whose overriding focus will be elsewhere. MPs are not accountable for the delivery of borough services, but they will inevitably tackle case work and constituency issues that are borough matters. The MP for Croydon North will focus his or her time on matters in Croydon and is unlikely to pay as much attention to matters in his or her one ward in Bromley. The reverse will be true of Shirley.

The Crystal Palace ward already suffers from multiple boundary issues. Around half of the ward forms part of the wider commonly known area of Crystal Palace that spans five boroughs. There is already a strong feeling in that ward that the local council does not pay the area enough attention, it being a far-flung corner of the borough. The proposal will not help. The other half of the ward would probably identify with the ward of Penge and Cator which currently sits in both the same borough and Westminster constituency but is projected to move into the Beckenham constituency. This proposal would cut the area in two.

MR CHANCE: I would add that, in common with comments from Bob Neill, people would commonly go to services in Penge from that ward which would be in the Beckenham constituency, so again you will have a situation where people would end up being unsure as to which MP to go to in relation to services.

We have proposed, therefore, that the words “wards of Shirley and Crystal Palace” are simply swapped around to create more geographically coherent constituencies. We are aware that this would take the electorates of each constituency outside the margin of variance that is allowed. Your figures suggest that the electorate for Shirley is 30% larger than that for Crystal Palace, but we would like to point out that GLA figures from the census updates show that the voting age population is only 5% larger. We estimate, using that GLA data, that 92% of the voting age population in Shirley is accounted for by the Commission’s electorate figure, compared with just 73% in Crystal Palace.

Overall, the electorate figures represent 89% of the voting age population in Beckenham and 77% in Croydon North. The voting age population of the proposed Croydon North constituency is about 20% larger than Beckenham. This is doubtless due in part to the fact that the Crystal Palace ward and other parts of Croydon North have much higher levels of private renting, deprivation and a younger population. Our concerns are, therefore, on one level to do with the odd result for the two wards. On another, they go to the methodological problems you have been asked to work with, with the out-of-date electoral figures and, in the case of Crystal Palace and some Croydon wards, far too low a figure that under-represents the younger and poorer renting members of the constituency. The target variance in the size of the constituencies is then too narrow to enable you to create sensible constituency boundaries that take account of local factors.

We believe these problems will compound the already unfair and unrepresentative voting system to leave many voters in Bromley, Croydon and across London without the correct voice they deserve.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any matters for clarification from the floor? In that case, thank you.

We still do not have Ms Robertson, so I suggest we now have a 15-minute recess and recommence when hopefully more people turn up.

Time Noted: 10.25 am

After a short break

Time Noted: 10.40 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Would Maggie Mansell like to come to the podium? By way of introduction, could you state your name and address, please?

CLLR MANSELL: My name is Cllr Maggie Mansell. I am a councillor in the London Borough of Croydon representing the ward of Norbury, which is to the north of Croydon and which it is proposed should join with Mitcham and Streatham. I would like to speak about the community links which Norbury people have, and why we want to stay in Croydon and have few links with Mitcham or Streatham. Then I want to say a little bit about the additional cost to the public purse in having that tripartite constituency.

The people of Norbury see Norbury as a village centred on the London Road shops, and they look to Croydon rather than Streatham for larger items of shopping. The allocation of children to schools would be affected because that is done by Croydon and it would mean they were allocating to a constituency outside Croydon. I am not only a councillor; I am also chair of the governing board of Norbury Manor Primary School which is very close to the border; it is on Abingdon Road. I do not know whether you can see it, but this is Norbury; that is the train station; and the school is there; it is that close to the border, but it does serve this area (indicating). Obviously, we have children crossing boundaries. They are small in number, but sometimes they have problems by having crossed a border. To give just one illustration, we have a fairly high number of families with problems and, therefore, children with special needs of various descriptions. One child from Lambeth was evicted and placed by that authority in Mitcham, but still had been placed in our school. That child had a number of problems, no doubt brought about by some of the disruption and family problems, and we needed psychological support. It took six months, with the help of two MPs, Steven Reed and Siobhain McDonagh, councillors in Streatham and myself, to establish contact with the psychological services which would accept responsibility for a child from a Croydon school.

You can say that that is an administrative cock-up—I think that is the technical term—and it should not have taken that long, but it is an illustration of some of the problems you have when crossing administrative boundaries.

We have quite a number of children with special needs. If we were to move into Streatham, or into Streatham with Mitcham, we would have to deal with more children who would have to receive psychological and other services in addition to the normal school services from other boroughs. It would mean that the all those who live in Norbury and Croydon would be looking to the wrong borough to get their services. That is just an illustration of some of the complications.

A few people from Mitcham come into Norbury Manor Primary School. Norbury people look to Croydon because the transport links go in that direction; they do not easily go through to Mitcham. We have good transport links to London through the rail station, which varies in consistency but is there, so people see themselves as part of Croydon.

We look to Croydon for shopping, cultural links and entertainment. Fairfield Hall is a big entertainment hub. It is not just a building; it is the cultural centre. At the moment it is being refurbished, but we are working very hard to ensure that those cultural events continue in other locations, but people from Norbury tend to look that way rather than to Streatham or Mitcham.

I am in contact with councillors across my borders in Mitcham and Streatham. Issues that have crossed the boundaries up to now have been fairly rare. It is usually a planning application on the border where people from both sides have views. I would say that happens maybe once or twice a year. Therefore, the links with Streatham and Mitcham are not strong, but they are strong with Croydon.

NHS GPs are in the Croydon network which is coterminous with the borough boundaries. They link with the services mostly at Croydon University Hospital for acute services, and the community district nurses are managed by that hospital, which is a little further down the road towards Croydon.

As to the history of Croydon's services, I can go back to 1980. The Mayday Hospital is about there down the London Road, if that helps. We have been coterminous with the local authority boundary, the health service boundary and the police service boundary. The police were at one time two areas, but together they were coterminous with Croydon. I can go back to the mid-1980s. I am older than I look. That has served Croydon well, because we have developed not just physical links but personal ones within the services which have continued and been updated over the years. It is quite important in the way we operate services, but GP services in particular are being looked at through the NHS in terms of six localities within Croydon, linking with the hospital services and the local authority services. That is very important ongoing work and it is what the Department of Health and the

Government want in order to get the most effective clinical and financially sustainable services.

I am a member of my local residents association. We have five in Norbury. We work together as a group. When we wanted to develop a BMX park for young people. That is the park; it is just north of the train station (indicating). The people along the borders here objected to this BMX park because it would mean that people from Streatham would come in. They did not want young people from Streatham there. I do not agree with them. I do not like that attitude. When we develop services I am very happy for anyone who wants to use them to use them, but it does show an attitude of mind. They see themselves as Croydon and not associated with Streatham.

Just imagine an MP for this tripartite constituency liaising with three NHS areas. Already they deal with at least two, possibly three, hospitals, but that is not the administrative area of the NHS. They will be dealing with three planning departments, three housing departments, three social services departments, three courts, three police areas and three voluntary sectors. We have a very vibrant voluntary sector in Croydon which provides services in Norbury and across the whole borough. We are one of the two premier voluntary sector collaborations. The other is probably Harrow in London. It is very well supported. We have a history of volunteering. One just sprung up; it is called the knitting group that meets every week at the library. It knits blankets. I do not know where they go, but on one occasion they decided to decorate Norbury High Street. Those little groups tend to develop across borders and the rest of Croydon, not just stay in one ward. Norbury very much feels part of Croydon.

I have an SW16 postcode simply because the Post Office is in Streatham. Probably the only time I go to Streatham is when the Post Office cannot deliver a parcel, but the postcodes are very anomalous anyway. Thornton Heath in the north of Croydon has a Surrey postcode, whereas the wards in the south of Croydon would love to be in Surrey. They often describe themselves as being in Surrey, but their formal postcode is Croydon. Therefore, the postcodes do not really match up.

We have very few links with West Norwood. There is a library run by a voluntary board but funded jointly by both Croydon and Lambeth. That is one of the few links, but I would say that is an administrative anomaly; it is not part of our normal links.

That is all I wish to say. Norbury feels very much part of Croydon, not Streatham or Mitcham. We have very few links with Streatham and Mitcham, and I think it would cost the public purpose time and money to try to make these rather complicated links.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much; that is very helpful. You have set out the issues and concerns very clearly. Are there any matters for clarification? If not, thank you very much indeed.

Time Noted: 11.00 am

After a short break

Time Noted: 1.00 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, we are reconvened, and we have a speaker. Mr Pelling, would you like to come to the podium? Would you introduce yourself by way of name and address, please?

CLLR PELLING: My name is Andrew Pelling. My address is 50 Croham Valley Road, South Croydon, CL2 7NB. I am a councillor in Croydon in Waddon ward. I have previously been a councillor in Coulsden East ward, Broad Green ward and Heathfield ward, so that gives me a good understanding of some of the geography. I am also a former London Assembly member for Croydon and Sutton, as well as a former Member of Parliament for Croydon Central.

I very much recognise that the Commissioners have a very difficult job in trying to make the borders work within the 5% deviations from the mean that is allowed, but I do have some concerns and I feel that the Labour Party proposal offers a better solution for Croydon. I am here to talk only about Croydon, Sutton and Bromley.

First, I am concerned about the split that has taken place in the Shirley community. I was very much involved in making proposals for the last local government boundary changes in 1998. I know that the western border of the Shirley ward was very much to make up the numbers for the Heathfield ward that abuts Shirley ward to the west. I was a Heathfield ward councillor, as I mentioned earlier. Splitting the Shirley ward away at its western border in that way is a difficult matter. Because of the way the numbers had to be broken down to secure targets there, we split the shopping parade in that part of Wickham Road. We also separated out Shirley from Upper Shirley, of which it is very much a part, and also North Shirley as well. Unfortunately, that is not a very strong border established at local government level.

All of these things are very important for any Member of Parliament representing these parliamentary constituencies, of which there is a current real example. There is a controversy in the area about the Croydon plan. The local authority plan for the whole of Shirley includes, quite rightly, parts of the Ashburton ward to the north and Heathfield ward to the south. You probably know these maps very well. For example, there is Bywood Avenue and Woodmere Avenue up in this direction which regard themselves as very much part of Shirley (indicating). Indeed, the Monks Orchard Residents Association covers both sides and they would find themselves split. We also have the Spring Park Residents Association. The whole of this area would find itself split in this way.

Referring to the controversy over planning, which has very much concerned and exercised Shirley residents in terms of additional housing proposed by the authority, in future you will have a situation where there are two Members of Parliament

representing a divided area. That is a very real practical example of difficulties that would be created by this division, although I accept of that the Commissioners have to make the divide somewhere and the numbers are very difficult. However, I think the Labour proposal provides a solution there. I do know informally that local residents associations are concerned about this division.

The Commissioners in trying to sort out problems with numbers chose to take two of our wards across into the Bromley borough. I am not entirely sure that fits very comfortably with a very great deal of the governance that takes place within public sector partnerships and economic development partnerships that have long existed in this part of south London. The South West London Waste Partnership comprises four boroughs going out to the west from Croydon. It is very useful in the proposal made by the Labour Party that Beddington North is in the Croydon North constituency, because there will be quite a community of interest, perhaps a community of controversy, over the future incinerator being built in Beddington North. Therefore, it would be better to have a community of interest represented by Croydon-based MPs in those circumstances. The London Assembly seats—I mentioned earlier that I used to be the London Assembly member for Croydon and Sutton—include Croydon and Sutton, so that has been the trend.

Members of Parliament will have to deal with future controversies as a result of the transformation plan being put forward by South West London NHS, such that it would work better with any excess wards, if I can so impolitely describe wards in Sutton and Croydon, in terms of representation. The South London Partnership, which is an economic development partnership, also includes Croydon and boroughs to the west, so I think that in terms of that approach that is a good way to go.

Purley is included. Purley down here is in the Croydon Central constituency (indicating). Indeed, Purley ward, because of some of the difficulties in drawing local government ward boundaries, extends a long way down along Foxley Lane and on to the Webb estate. It strikes me that the inclusion of Purley in a Croydon Central seat—I appreciate that “Croydon Central” is just a description, but nevertheless that is the community the Commissioners feel is being created and has been nominated as Croydon Central—is somewhat eccentric; it would sit rather oddly with the people of Purley to regard themselves as being part of Croydon Central. Purley is well to the south of South Croydon. I think they would feel that is an unusual inclusion.

Boundaries give people a very strong sense of identity. Surprisingly, a lot of people who have lived for a long time in Purley and Coulsden still talk of the advantages of the old Purley and Coulsden District Council. They do not feel part of Croydon and would rather not be part of it. Therefore, I think there is another controversy as regards the inclusion of Purley because of that reference to the district council.

I have an additional concern. I am not sure whether or not it is a concern of the Commissioners, but I think there is an advantage if you end up in a situation where there is continuity within the Croydon South constituency by road. If as a Member of Parliament you want to travel by road the reality is that you have to go through

Croydon Central to get to the other part of your constituency. I think that is a weakness in a way. I suppose you could walk over the downs, over a very steep hill and past the quarry at the very far end, but that does seem rather peculiar. We have ended up in a situation where the Croydon South constituency is divided in two by road. I can appreciate that might happen in a rural constituency or a constituency with islands, or something like that, but it seems odd that in an urban constituency that should have occurred. That is up in Mitchley Avenue; Mitchley Avenue is in Purley, and you have to travel along that before you can get into the separate part of the constituency (indicating).

I think a good approach and a change from the current layout by the Commissioners is to bring Heathfield ward in with Selsdon. I think the change in bus route provision over the years ties the Heathfield ward with Selsdon, particularly between the Forestdale estate and Selsdon Vale with the T33 and 64 buses that run from New Addington through Selsdon and on to Croydon. It shows that that is a strong link. There may be people who feel New Addington should remain part of Croydon Central, but those transport links are very good. Further, the 359 bus, which is a service that has been in existence for about two or three years and ties Monks Hill in Heathfield ward to Purley, argues in favour of Purley being in that southern seat.

Croham ward is currently included in Croydon Central in the proposals by the Commissioners. I think that the vast majority of that seat demographically is very similar to Sanderstead and Selsdon. A homogeneous approach may not necessarily be important, but if you want a homogeneous approach that is also significant.

Finally, as to the ward I represent, Waddon has previously been in Croydon Central and I think it sits quite comfortably within the Croydon Central constituency. After all, the eastern side of the ward and Roman Way is right up against the centre of Old Town. Old Town is in both Waddon and Fairfield wards, so, although it is a very strong road link, people would feel it is the same community. Therefore, what the Commissioners have suggested is a good proposal there. That is all I have to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. That is helpful. Are there any matters for clarification?

Is anyone else present who wishes to speak? If not, I suggest we now adjourn for lunch. Our next booked speakers are at 2.30.

Time Noted: 1.15 pm

After the luncheon adjournment

Time Noted: 2.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We reconvene this afternoon. I believe we have two speakers with us. Would Mr Donald Massey like to come forward and

speak from the podium? Perhaps you could by way of introduction give us your full name and address, please.

CLLR MASSEY: My name is Cllr Don Massey from the London Borough of Bexley. I am the cabinet member for finance and corporation services. I am representing Conservative councillors in Bexley today. We have a majority of 45 out of 63 seats on the council.

The views I am expressing are supported by all three Conservative parliamentary associations in Bexley: Erith and Thamesmead, Old Bexley and Sidcup and Bexleyheath and Crayford. We are also supported by the two Conservative Bexley MPs; the Rt Hon James Brokenshire and the Rt Hon David Evenett, who will speak immediately afterwards.

We believe that the Boundary Commission has developed very reasonable plans for Bexley, but that a couple of amendments would better reflect the communities that exist within this borough and to the immediate west in Greenwich. Bexley does not have enough voters for three seats but too many for two seats. Therefore, it has to have one cross-border seat. We agree with the Boundary Commission that this should be to the west with Greenwich, as obviously you have the Thames to the north, Dartford to the east, which is in Kent, and to the south, as you can see, this line here is the major A20 trunk road which is dual carriageway for virtually the whole length of the boundary (indicating). That splits the communities of Sidcup and Chislehurst. Consequently, the only options are to go west, which is what the Boundary Commission have proposed.

Looking first at the Old Bexley and Sidcup seat, which is the one in the south down here, we agree with that totally (indicating). It is the existing seat of Old Bexley and Sidcup, but you have added the Danson Park ward. That is good because it gives more connectivity to the community of Welling. Welling spreads over several wards, but it also keeps together Sidcup, which is spread over four wards, and Old Bexley. Therefore, we think this is a very logical seat; it is an extension of an existing seat, and basically it should not be changed in any way whatsoever.

In respect of the other two seats in the north of Bexley and the cross-border seat with Greenwich to the west, we think there are some slight amendments that would better reflect the community ties. We are proposing to take out of the cross-border seat of Woolwich two wards: St Michael's, which basically is just to the west of the red line there, and Lesnes Abbey ward, which is here, with one exception (indicating). We have noted the technical guidance, but we believe that one polling district—that little square up there—should be taken out of Lesnes Abbey, and I will explain the circumstances (indicating). We believe they should be swapped with the Thamesmead East seat, which is right up by the river here, and the one next door to the east, which is Belvedere (indicating).

At present, there is a cross-border seat between Greenwich and Bexley: Erith and Thamesmead. This is important, because it means that the community of

Thamesmead is within one parliamentary seat. We are concerned that the present Boundary Commission proposals put Thamesmead's two wards in different seats. Thamesmead Moorings, which is on the west side there, is in Greenwich and the Woolwich seat, whereas the Thamesmead East seat is in the Erith and Crayford seat (indicating).

The boundary between Greenwich and Bexley was created when the London boroughs were put in place in 1965 and that was before the original development of Thamesmead. Thamesmead was subsequently built. To be honest, it has been an awkward relationship ever since. It has needed a lot of liaison between the boroughs of Greenwich and Bexley, but it does not sit easily with them.

I ought to show you the views of the present MP, Teresa Pearce, who said in 2011 in newspapers and also in the past couple of weeks that in her view Thamesmead must be in the same constituency. I would also like to draw your attention to the document you produced after the hearings in Lewisham for the last abortive proposals where, on page 13, you make reference to the division of Thamesmead and, later on in the document, there is a quote from the Labour Party MP, Teresa Pearce, on page 40, where she says, "Thamesmead should be together in one seat". It is important that there is, shall we say, cross-party consensus that Thamesmead ought to be put together.

We also feel there is an exceptional case for splitting the ward of Lesnes Abbey, and we are mindful of your technical guidance here. We are not ignoring it. We do believe there are very good reasons for it. Bexley is going through a Local Government Boundary Commission review at this very moment, and on 9 November the final proposal will be submitted and laid before Parliament. In the draft proposals the only change to the existing Thamesmead East ward is the addition of polling district LA1E.

The proposal has overall support from the community and the political parties within Bexley, because both the Labour Party and Conservative Party in their proposals recommended that LA1E polling district go into Thamesmead East, and no dissent has been expressed at any stage of the consultation.

If I can show you where it is, it is that little square there (indicating). It is important you note that just to the south of it is the North Kent railway line. There is only one crossing of that railway line, which is at Abbey Wood station. As you are probably aware, Crossrail, or the Elizabeth line as you could call it, is going into Abbey Wood. A lot of infrastructure is being built round there at the moment. The south Thamesmead framework is very important, and it has been the subject of a lot of liaison between Greenwich and Bexley, as well as the Peabody Group, in putting that together. That polling district is an integral part of the whole area, and the only reason it was put in there was to make up the numbers at the last ward boundary changes. We very much believe that polling district LA1E should come out from Lesnes and be split from the rest of that ward.

I should also say that further south into Lesnes Abbey ward there is Lesnes Abbey Woods. That is on an escarpment rising up from the River Thames flood plain. Lesnes Abbey is a ward that is totally split, and that is one of the reasons why everybody has said it should disappear at the next ward boundary review. As I said, the final proposals will be coming out on 9 November. The only delay is further consultation in the north east part of Bexley round here (indicating). We believe this will go ahead because nobody has said anything against it, including the Boundary Commission.

I want to move further south and talk about St Michael's ward. St Michael's ward is effectively that western side there (indicating). You have Bexleyheath, which spreads over Brampton, Christ Church and Barnehurst. It is the normal suburban spread that we have in Bexley from a certain era, or just after the second world war, when a lot of housing spread down the railway lines. Welling is an intrinsic link with that. I suppose it is a linked seat between part of Welling and part of Bexleyheath, but because it is above the Bexleyheath railway line that goes on to Dartford and west into Lewisham. While there are some road crossings around here, there are fewer ones around here, so St Michael's naturally looks towards Bexleyheath for its community ties (indicating). That is why we believe it should go east, not west.

Furthermore, when you look up here, though you cannot quite see it, you have Plumstead cemetery and Lesnes Abbey open space, so the community is divided from Plumstead to its north west. That is why we believe that both St Michael's and Lesnes Abbey wards to the north fit better into Erith and Crayford than the cross-border seat.

We believe that Thamesmead East sits very firmly in that cross-border seat because of its link with Thamesmead Moorings to the west. I want to stress that basically the facilities for the town of Thamesmead—it is actually called Thamesmead Town—are on the west side. There is in effect only housing on the east side, plus the Crossness sewage works, and in a way all the facilities are that side. That is why it is very important to have those two linked.

We also believe that to the east the ward of Belvedere should be included in this cross-border seat. As you can see from the map, the Thames escarpment runs roughly above the railway line here (indicating). The escarpment on this flood plain is quite steep in these places. A lot of development is going on. We have had lots of discussions with the GLA over housing zones and stuff like that in this area. That is intrinsically linked to the area to the west; that is, both Thamesmead and further west towards Woolwich. That is why we believe we should swap Belvedere and Thamesmead with Lesnes and St Michael's, but obviously with the little exception of the polling district.

In conclusion, we feel that the Boundary Commission proposals have considerable merit, but swapping the wards of St Michael's and Lesnes Abbey, with the exception of polling district LA1E, with the wards of Thamesmead East and Belvedere, Erith

and Crayford, improve the measures. We believe that the Old Bexley and Sidcup shape should remain unaltered.

I confirm that the proposed amendments meet all the statistical criteria as evidenced by the information I have given to you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any matters for clarification? In that case, thank you; that is very helpful.

The next speaker is Mr Evenett. Please introduce yourself by way of name and address.

MR EVENETT: (MP for Bexleyheath and Crayford) I am David Evenett, Member of Parliament for Bexleyheath and Crayford. I was the MP for Erith and Crayford from 1983 to 1997.

I live in Bexleyheath and have been involved in the area since the early 1980s. I am proud of Bexleyheath being a collection of communities, which we value very highly: Bexleyheath town, Welling town, Crayford town, Erith town, Thamesmead town, Belvedere village, Bexley village and Sidcup town. We are a collection of communities. There is great support in these communities from both residents and local businesses for their area commercially, historically and geographically.

I follow Cllr Massey in saying that south of the borough we have no problems with the Boundary Commission's proposals. However, up in the north and middle we feel that the initial proposals risk splitting and destroying existing community links. Therefore, I am very strongly against it.

I strongly support the Conservative counter-proposals to the Boundary Commission's initial draft set out already, because not only does it avoid splitting local communities, but maintains local ties. I do not want to reiterate what has already been said about what is being gained and what is being lost, because it is exactly the same as Cllr Massey highlighted. I would like to start off with St Michael's ward, which is in my constituency at the moment. Geographically placing it in the Woolwich seat makes no sense whatsoever. It has no community links or interests with Woolwich. It has a small residential boundary with Lesnes Abbey ward across Brampton Road, but, as we have already heard from Cllr Massey, Bostall Heath and Bostall Wood separate St Michael's from the rest of the proposed Woolwich seat, and there is no residential connection with that area either, yet St Michael's is an integral part of Welling and Bexleyheath. There can be no doubt that the traditional links between these two areas are very strong. It has large residential borders with Brampton in the east and East Wickham in the west. The ward belongs in a seat with either Bexleyheath or Welling.

Turning to Thamesmead, I had the privilege of serving as Member of Parliament for Thamesmead East for some years. It was incredibly difficult because the town centre was in the west of Thamesmead and in the Woolwich seat before the current

proposed boundaries were implemented in 1997. To have it in two different constituencies was very disadvantageous and detrimental to the development of the town, and I fought hard in the past to ensure Thamesmead would be put together in one constituency, which it eventually was.

When the Boundary Commission last time proposed the split there was strong opposition from local residents in Thamesmead, local councillors and the local MP, Teresa Pearce, who made the comment that, although geographically half of it is in Greenwich and half in Bexley, it was one town. I totally agree with that, and could not have put it better myself. It is disappointing that the Boundary Commission did not treat the area as one community, but our alternative proposals allow the area to remain together.

Looking at Bexleyheath and Lesnes Abbey ward, Bexleyheath is the largest town in the London Borough of Bexley, and the Boundary Commission currently propose to split it in various ways into three parliamentary seats. Our proposal to split Lesnes Abbey would see polling district LA1E—I will not point it out on the map because you have already seen it—remain in the Woolwich seat, in line with what the Local Government Boundary Commission have suggested for the new Thamesmead East ward, which will come into effect very shortly and will be in place for the 2018 elections.

We have already heard that LA1E is entirely above the railway line and provides a clear boundary for the ward and the proposed split. This area obviously belongs to the rest of Thamesmead East, which the Local Government Boundary Commission have recognised, but splitting Lesnes Abbey and moving the other polling districts into the Erith and Crayford constituency, where lots of them have Bexleyheath postal codes already, avoids a three-way division of Bexleyheath, which I am afraid would create uncertainty for residents in the area if we did not do this. This proposal unites most of Bexleyheath in one seat, Erith and Crayford, and also allows the constituency name to be changed. I think it should be Bexleyheath, Erith and Crayford, because Bexleyheath is the major town and in terms of population and commercial activity it is an important centre for the borough. Belvedere has good community links with Thamesmead East, as well as Lesnes Abbey and Erith, but the ward could well be on either side, but it is closer to Woolwich and Thamesmead than it is to Crayford.

What we have proposed also means that the alternative for Woolwich is a Thamesmead and Woolwich river border seat, and that would be consistent along the whole of the constituency.

I know that you are not keen to split wards. I read with interest in your advice that in limited circumstances you would consider dividing a ward if there are special circumstances in order to achieve the statutory electoral range and, if so, it should be divided. The BCE are prepared to take into account, as appropriate, any new ward boundaries introduced after 7 May 2015. I very much hope, therefore, that this will be one that you would seriously consider supporting.

What we would see if we went along this route is a more consistent community link. We have already talked about the Old Bexley and Sidcup seat being kept as it is, with one minor change, but also having a consistency of community across what I hope will be a Bexleyheath, Erith and Crayford seat.

However, I was asked to speak about an alternative if you were against splitting wards. Although I believe this is possible, it is our second best. It would be an alternative option with no split wards. This would involve Erith and Crayford gaining the Danson Park and Lesnes Abbey wards in their entirety—in other words, with no split over the railway—and losing Thamesmead East and Belvedere wards. Woolwich would gain the Thamesmead East and Belvedere wards, but lose St Michael's and Lesnes Abbey wards. Old Bexley and Sidcup would gain the St Michael's ward and lose the Danson Park ward.

Danson Park is similar to St Michael's; it is both part of Bexleyheath and the Welling community. It has strong community ties with the Brampton and Christ Church wards in the east, East Wickham, Falconwood and Welling wards in the west and St Michael's in the north.

Therefore, it could easily be moved into Erith and Crayford without breaking those community ties. For all the reasons I have already highlighted, this is a second option and is second best if we do not accept the transfer and split of a ward. What it does mean most definitely is that it would all be within the numbers you require, and I believe it would make a real difference to communities.

I am passionate about Bexley. I happen to believe it is the best borough in London, probably in the country, because of its community and history. It has a huge, interesting and varied history. Despite the fact we have come together as one London borough—I was not around in 1965 when it started—we have a great community feeling across the borough, but within it we have individual communities that value their history and are thriving. Therefore, if we risk splitting that it will be a huge disadvantage to everybody who lives in it and for Bexley as a whole. But St Michael's has to be part of, hopefully, the Bexleyheath, Erith and Crayford seat, and Thamesmead should not be split. It is not in the interests of the communities, businesses and the people who are very involved in those communities. We have a thriving community sector in Bexley. Personally, I think it would be a disaster if we saw it break because of parliamentary boundary divisions which create artificial divisions, not community cohesion.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is very helpful. Are there any matters arising?

LORD HAYWARD: David, you gave one quote from the BCE guidelines. What you did not do was identify that it was from the guidelines and the paragraph number. For the assistance of the chair and others, I think it would be useful if you identified the number.

MR EVENETT: I do apologise. It is from the guide to the 2018 review and the reference is page 9, paragraph 38.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You mentioned that you would accept a secondary proposal if your proposal to split Lesnes Abbey ward was not accepted. I missed some of the wards you were moving around in that proposal.

MR EVENETT: Obviously, our preferred option is the first one because the communities work better in that way. We passionately believe that part of Lesnes Abbey is part of Thamesmead, and is in the interests of the people there. However, we were obviously aware of the strictures you have given us and we have looked, therefore, for an alternative. Do you want me to go through all of them?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, if you have got them to hand.

MR EVENETT: Erith and Crayford would gain Danson Park ward and Lesnes Abbey ward in its entirety, so there would be no cross-boundary. It would lose Thamesmead East ward and Belvedere ward. The Woolwich seat would gain Thamesmead East and Belvedere and lose St Michael's and Lesnes Abbey, but this proposal would also affect Old Bexley and Sidcup constituency because it would gain St Michael's ward but lose the Danson Park ward.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much indeed; it is most helpful. We have no other scheduled speakers, so I suggest we adjourn until 3.30 pm.

Time Noted: 2.52 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 3.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, we reconvene, but I am afraid we have to adjourn again because we have no scheduled speaker at present. It does not seem very productive just to sit here. Our next speaker is at 4.40 pm. I suggest that we adjourn until then.

Time Noted: 3.31 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 4.40 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We reconvene, but the speaker is yet to arrive. It may be something to do with the torrential downpour, which some of us had the benefit of witnessing. We will wait a little longer and adjourn for perhaps another ten minutes and see if the speaker turns up.

Time Noted: 4.41 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 4.50 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The gentlemen we are waiting for is coming but not today; he will be here tomorrow. The relatively good news, for some anyway—I shall have to stay here—is that the seven o'clock speaker will be going to Harrow rather than here. That is the last booked speaker, which means we have two others due at 5.30 and 6.00. We will wait for them and assume they are coming. We might as well adjourn until 5.30 pm.

Time Noted: 4.51 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 5.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, our 5.30 speaker has arrived. Would you like to come forward? Could you introduce yourself by way of your name and address?

MR LUNDINI: My name is Brandon Lundini. I live in Queen Adelaide Road, Penge, London SE20. I live in Penge and Cator ward which, as we can see, is now becoming part of the Beckenham constituency from Lewisham West and Penge. I have not prepared anything. We were part of the Beckenham constituency until the general election in 2010, and we had been part of that seat since, I think, 1950. I forget the exact year of the review, but we were moved for the 2010 election, or 2015 election, mainly because of various demographic and socio-cultural reasons.

Penge is very different from the rest of the seat. That is because I think at one point Beckenham was the safest Conservative seat in the country. Penge has far higher indices of deprivation. For example, a huge amount of the borough's social housing is concentrated in Penge; it has a much younger population on average; it has a higher percentage of people who do not have English as a first language, and so on. I think Penge resembles much more its neighbouring areas in North Croydon and

that part of Lewisham West that is now going to become part of Peckham and Lewisham West than it does the rest of Beckenham.

I feel strongly about it because the majority of people in the ward of Penge and Cator at the moment currently vote for Labour by quite a large margin, with the Green Party coming second or third. The reason the rest of the seat has a safe Conservative majority is that the social concerns of the rest of the seat are extremely different from those of Penge and Cator. We feel that we would not be adequately represented by an MP for Beckenham, whereas we do get better representation from the current MP for Lewisham West.

Those are just my thoughts on the matter. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to make my opinion heard.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: To clarify, are you speaking as an individual, or do you represent a community group or political party?

MR LUNDINI: I am just a local resident. When I heard there was to be a boundary review I had a feeling that my seat would be torn up since it was one of the newest ones to be created, so I decided to come along so my voice could be heard.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is exactly what it is about. Have you by any chance looked at the interactive mapping on the website at all?

MR LUNDINI: I had a brief look at it when it was first uploaded. That was quite a while ago.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I would encourage you to look at that. I understand the points you are making, but, looking at that, if you were to move the ward back the impact is that you would have to find a solution in terms of what else you would have to do to achieve a viable constituency.

MR LUNDINI: I appreciate that. I know that this has been accompanied by quite a few radical reforms in neighbouring constituencies. For example, I know that my neighbouring seat, Crystal Palace, which is also in the London Borough of Bromley, has been moved to a new cross-border constituency, Croydon North. I appreciate that once you change one seat you have to change all the others. All of this has been done on the basis of population, but the argument I am making is that, while the new constituency might be more numerically fair, it does not really take into account all the social factors affecting the particular communities. That is the root cause of my objection. While the new Beckenham constituency may be numerically balanced, it will not provide adequate representation to the people living in the marginal areas.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I understand; it is a perfectly valid point to make. Are there any points of clarification? If not, thank you very much indeed. Our next speaker is scheduled for six o'clock, so I suggest we adjourn until then.

Time Noted: 5.36 pm

After a short break

Time Noted: 6.00 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ladies and gentlemen, I think we can reconvene. We have one speaker, Mr Hackett. Would you like to come to the podium and introduce yourself by name and address?

CLLR HACKETT: My name is Cllr Danny Hackett. I am a councillor for Lesnes Abbey ward in the London Borough of Bexley. My address is 216 Maiden Lane, Crayford, DA1 4PS.

I am speaking here tonight in my capacity as a ward member for Lesnes Abbey mainly in opposition to proposals I have seen to split my ward and community across two parliamentary constituencies. There are a few reasons why I think that is not the right thing to do, and I will outline them now. First, Lesnes Abbey ward has a direct link with Belvedere ward to the east in the London Borough of Bexley, and the community there feel as one. In addition, you are splitting two parliamentary constituencies, Erith and Crayford, to encompass a large part of Woolwich. People in Lesnes Abbey always refer to themselves as being from Bexley. When I knock on doors and speak to the community people refer to themselves as being from Belvedere, and any split there would not be what local people would want.

In addition, Belvedere and Lesnes Abbey share the same shopping parades. There is one small shopping parade in Belvedere that both communities go to not only to socialise but to go about their daily business.

Furthermore, I also am a director of the Belvedere Community Forum. Although I do not speak on their behalf tonight, that forum is a charity that runs Belvedere Community Centre, which is the only one that serves that part of the borough. Therefore, young people, indeed people of all ages, come to Belvedere Community Centre to socialise, have gatherings, go to classes and attend public meetings. That community centre and the charity that runs it have a constitution that covers quite a large part of Lesnes Abbey ward, and that is all of polling districts LA2 and LA4, so it is the central part. Everyone who lives and works there spends their time coming to the community centre and coming to Belvedere. We represent all of those. It would make it quite difficult, I think, from the point of view of the community centre and the charity if those were split across two different parliamentary constituencies. I will leave it at that.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any matters of clarification? To be clear, you are unhappy with the proposals that have been made about splitting the ward. In terms of the overall Boundary Commission proposals for the area, do you have any other observations?

CLLR HACKETT: Yes. Clearly, I do not support splitting it and currently I support the Labour Party's proposals.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much indeed. If there are no other matters, thank you. I think we have had a fair stint today. Shall we close the proceedings for today? I think we are unlikely to get any passing trade now, so we will adjourn until tomorrow morning at nine o'clock. I look forward to seeing you then.

Time Noted: 6.05 pm

Adjourned until 9.00 am on Friday 21 October 2016

**C**

MR CHANCE, 7, 8

**E**

MR DAVID EVENETT MP, 18, 21

**G**

MS GODFREY, 6  
MS GRAY, 6, 7

**H**

CLLR HACKETT, 24, 25

**J**

MS JEFFREY, 7

**L**

LORD HAYWARD, 20  
MR LUNDINI, 22, 23

**M**

CLLR MANSELL, 9  
CLLR MASSEY, 15

**N**

MR ROBERT NEILL MP, 4

**P**

CLLR PELLING, 12

**S**

MR STREET, 7

**T**

MR TESSIER, 2  
THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25

**U**

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER, 21