

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND

HELD AT

CATHEDRAL QUARTER HOTEL, 16 SAINT MARY'S GATE
DERBY DE1 3JR

ON

THURSDAY 27 OCTOBER 2016
DAY ONE

Before:

Mr Scott Handley, the Lead Assistant Commissioner

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THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's proposals for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries for the East Midlands region. My name is Scott Handley. I am an Assistant Boundary Commissioner for England. I was appointed by the Commission to assist them in their task of making recommendations for new constituencies in this region. I am responsible for chairing the hearing today and tomorrow. I am also responsible, together with my fellow Assistant Commissioner, Mr Ashraf Khan, who is sat there, (indicating) for analysing all the representations that are made about the initial proposals and for then presenting the proposals to the Commission on whether or not the initial boundaries should be modified.

I am assisted today by members of the Commission staff led by Gerald Tessier, who is sitting beside me and who will shortly provide an explanation on the Commission's initial proposals for this region. He will tell you how you can make written representations and he will deal with one or two administrative matters.

The hearing today is scheduled to run from 10 am until 8 pm and tomorrow it is scheduled to run from 9 am until 5 pm. I can vary that timetable and I can also take into account people attending 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 it cannot extend into a third.

The purpose of the public hearing is to allow people to make oral representations about the initial proposals for the East Midlands region. A number of people have already registered to speak and have been given a time slot. I will invite them to speak at the appropriate time. If there is any free time during the day or at the end of the day then I will invite anyone who has not registered but would still like to speak to do so. I would like to stress that the purpose of the public hearing is for people to make oral representations about the initial proposals. The purpose is not to engage in a debate with the Commission nor is the hearing an opportunity for people to cross-examine other speakers during their presentation. People may seek to put questions to clarify matters that are brought up by speakers but they should be done through me as the Chair. I will now hand over to Gerald who will provide a brief explanation on the Commission's initial proposals for the East Midlands region.

MR TESSIER: Thank you very much and good morning. As Scott has mentioned, my name is Gerald Tessier 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. At this hearing I lead the team of staff responsible for ensuring that the hearing runs smoothly.

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

I would like to talk now about the Commission's initial proposals for the East Midlands region, which were published on 13 September 2016. The Commission's proposals for the region are for 44 constituencies, a reduction of two. Our proposals leave seven 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 is not including 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 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 a whole number of constituencies to individual counties; therefore, we have grouped some local authority areas into sub-regions.

The East Midlands region has been allocated 44 constituencies, a reduction of two from the current number. Our proposals leave seven of the 46 existing constituencies unchanged. As it has not always been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties, 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.

In Lincolnshire, two of the existing seven constituencies are unchanged while two constituencies have changed due to changes to local government ward boundaries. More substantial change is required however in other parts of the region. Consequently it has been necessary to propose some constituencies that cross county or unitary authority boundaries.

In Derbyshire we propose that the City of Derby and the County of Derbyshire be grouped to form a sub-region. We have proposed three constituencies. They include wards from both authorities. In Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire it has been necessary to propose two constituencies that cross county boundaries. We propose one constituency that contains electors from both Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, which combines the towns of Daventry and Lutterworth and another that contains electors from both Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, combining the town of Loughborough and the southern part of Rushcliffe Borough. 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 ward 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 will 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 in 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 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 this hearing for people to contribute in writing. There are also reference copies of the proposals present at this hearing. They are also 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 2016.

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 make an oral representation. The Commission is legally obliged to take a record of the public hearings. 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 written representations for a four-week period during which members of the public will 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 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 and which is also available on our website.

Before I hand back to the Chair, I would mention a couple bits of housekeeping. If you need the toilets they are on the ground floor and if there is a fire alarm, it is not a test and we all have to evacuate the building as quickly as possible please. Now I would like to hand back to the Chair to begin the public hearing and thank you all for your attendance today.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. The first part of the hearing today deals with the representations made by the political parties and we will be hearing from the Liberal Democrats, Conservatives, Green Party and Labour. The first representation is to come from Mr Alan Fox of the Liberal Democrats.

MR FOX: (Liberal Democrats) Mr Assistant Commissioner, ladies and gentlemen, I am Alan Fox. I am the boundaries coordinator for the East Midlands for the Liberal Democrats.

We broadly agree with the Commission's approach and with most of its proposals in the East Midlands. We agree that there is no need in the East Midlands for there to be a ward split and we agree with the Commission's proposed sub-regions of Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and a central sub-region. We agree with the Commission's view that it should take into account rule 5 and we do so in our proposals. We support the Commission's proposals in regard to the whole of Lincolnshire.

In Derbyshire, in Nottinghamshire, in Leicestershire and in Northamptonshire we do suggest some modest adjustments involving groups or pairs of constituencies but we do agree with the Boundary Commission's proposals in full for the constituencies of Chesterfield, Erewash, High Peak, South Derbyshire, Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark, Nottingham North, Harborough, Leicester East, Leicester South, Leicester West, Rutland and Melton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough.

In two seats we support the Boundary Commission's boundaries but not the names. In South Leicestershire the Commission is proposing a constituency which loses the southernmost part of Leicestershire. We therefore propose that the seat should revert to its previous name of Blaby. It does include more of the Blaby district than the current South Leicestershire constituency.

We propose that the West Bridgford constituency keep the name Rushcliffe. The whole of the proposed constituency is either in the Rushcliffe borough or was in the previous Rushcliffe Wapentake. The name West Bridgford only refers to a very small part of the constituency.

Our five adjustments are in Derbyshire, Derby, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. In Derbyshire - I do not know; can people see the map okay? - the Boundary Commission has decided to divide the district of North East Derbyshire in three. In so doing it has severely split the community of Dronfield. This is the problem in Dronfield. The areas of Dronfield, Woodhouse and Stubble within the town of Dronfield suffer a rather embarrassing split. We think that this is unnecessary, especially because the North East Derbyshire district is actually within quota. You can have a constituency within quota. We therefore propose that there be a North East Derbyshire constituency coterminous with the district.

The Bolsover constituency then having lost the North East Derbyshire wards can regain the four Bolsover wards that the Commission proposes it lose to make the Bolsover district whole again and gain four wards - Alfreton, Ironville and Riddings, Somercotes and Swanwick from Amber Valley.

Amber Valley then can keep the two Ripley wards and the Wingfield ward, which then means that the valley of the River Amber remains in the Amber Valley constituency. We would propose that should the Commission be minded to keep its current proposals for the Amber Valley constituency that the constituency be renamed Mid Derbyshire because it no longer contains most of the valley of the River Amber. Having gained Ripley and Wingfield the Amber Valley then loses Allestree, which then joins Derbyshire Dales to make up for the North East Derbyshire wards that we propose not to include. It may seem strange to include a Derby ward in the Dales but it is probably nearer to the Dales than it is to the valley of the River Amber.

Our second adjustment is in the City of Derby. Something rather strange has happened in Derby. The Commission says in its book that it has managed a north-south split but when we look at the map, we actually see an east-west split. What is more, if you are going to go for an east-west split, which actually the Boundary Commission praised last time around, it makes sense to be able to repair the damage in the Chaddesden area, Oakwood ward is coming in from Mid Derbyshire but Oakwood, Chaddesden and Derwent wards make up the community of Chaddesden in Derby.

Next slide. Here (indicating) you see the Derwent ward, which is in the Commission's proposed north and the very unsatisfactory boundary it has with the rest of Chaddesden. If you look on the left-hand side of that map you see the railway line, which is a very, very good boundary. Our proposal then is to swap the Derwent ward with the Sinfin ward to the south. If I can have the next slide, Sinfin village here and the area of all Allenton in the Sinfin ward actually had better communications with the rest of our Derby West than they do with each other because you have got the railway sidings and the Rolls-Royce factory in the middle.

In Nottinghamshire we propose some changes to the Commission's proposed Nottingham East and Carlton, Nottingham South and Beeston, Broxstowe and Hucknall and Sherwood constituencies. We agree with the decision to use the River Trent as a firm boundary in this area of Nottinghamshire. It makes sense. But, in choosing to cross the city boundary a further three times, the Commission has ended up splitting communities. In the district of Broxstowe it has split the communities of Bramcote and Beeston. Here is some of the constituency boundary proposed by the Commission. The problem in Broxstowe is that all these communities flow into each other and the ward boundaries were never intended to be boundaries between communities.

In the Gedling borough, the split between Carlton and Arnold is probably the best the Boundary Commission could have done, to split Carlton and Arnold, but it is not a very satisfactory one as it snakes behind people's back gardens and around residential roads. We therefore propose a Nottingham South that is entirely within the city boundary; that is to say it is made up of all the wards in the Commission's proposed

East and Carlton and South and Beeston, that are within the City ward apart from Wollaton West.

We then propose a Broxstowe constituency, which includes not just the Bilborough ward but also the Wollaton West ward from the City of Nottingham but does not gain the four Hucknall wards, and loses three Broxstowe wards to the north; that is Greasley, Kimberley and Watnall and Nuthall West.

We propose a Gedling which consists of all of the wards that are currently wholly within the Gedling constituency. Those that are partly within the Gedling constituency, with the exception of Bestwood St Albans and the Dumbles ward, which is a Gedling ward, plus the two wards of Lowdham and Dover Beck, which sit rather awkwardly in the Commission's proposed Sherwood.

That then leaves us with a Sherwood constituency which is very much closer to the current constituency. We will no doubt be criticised for proposing a constituency that includes parts of four local authorities, but we have here managed to actually reduce the number of local authorities contained within both our Nottingham South and our Broxstowe constituencies. We do not think that there should be an arbitrary rule against having a constituency with wards from four local authorities. There are already two such in existence in Devon and West Sussex. The Commission has proposed more this time around, including one in this constituency.

In Leicestershire the Commission is proposing unnecessarily to divide the North West Leicestershire district. North West Leicestershire is a constituency that is within quota and is coterminous with its local authority. We believe that it should remain as such. The cross-county constituency proposed, which the Commission is calling Loughborough and South Rushcliffe, we believe has three problems. Firstly, if you are going to have a cross-county constituency it is our contention that it should be easily accessible to cross the boundary in as many places as possible. There are only two road crossings between the Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire parts of the proposed constituency.

The next problem is the problem of divided communities. It would have been possible, given the changes in this part of the world, to repair the division to the village of Mountsorrel. The village of Mountsorrel has been divided for many years and it would have been possible to repair this. In fact it is possible to repair it. Instead of repairing the division to Mountsorrel, the Commission has decided to divide another village, the village of Sileby. So here is the village of Sileby cut in half with its railway station being in two different constituencies. We think that it is unnecessary to divide these two villages.

The third problem with the Loughborough and South Rushcliffe constituency is the name. South Rushcliffe basically does not mean anything. There was a south division

of the Rushcliffe Wapentake in the early part of the 19th century for the purposes of poor relief, but it does not mean anything now, and it was certainly only in currency for a few years and they would have referred to the north division and the south division rather than North or South Rushcliffe.

We therefore propose that North West Leicestershire should remain unchanged, coterminous with the district of its name. That then means that the two Shepshed wards need to go back into Loughborough. Putting The Wolds ward into the Loughborough constituency means that the number of road crossings on that cross-county boundary increases from two to seven. Then the wards of Quorn and Mountsorrel Castle and Barrow and Sibley West can go into Charnwood, which repairs the damage to both of those villages. That then means that the ward of Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton can remain in the Bosworth constituency.

The next problem is in Northamptonshire. The Commission has decided, unnecessarily we think, to divide both the Daventry district and the South Northampton district. In the case of the Daventry district it has left these two wards, Woodford and Weedon, in South Northamptonshire almost wrapping themselves around the town of Daventry. This has left a Northampton South that goes all the way to Wollaston and Bozeat. There is also a problem in Northampton itself in that by putting the ward of Semilong into south rather than to north - it is one that is split between the two constituencies at the moment - it has used a shopping road as a boundary rather than a much stronger boundary, which would have been the railway line.

Next slide. Here is your shopping street. Here is your Asda, when there is actually a very good strong boundary to the west there, which is the railway line. So our solution for Northamptonshire is to include the two Daventry wards that are currently in South Northamptonshire into the Daventry and Lutterworth constituency. This cross-county constituency has a very strong and long cross-county boundary and there actually 17 road crossings on that. By including the whole of the South Northamptonshire district in a constituency, it does then need also to include Wollaston and Bozeat. That then means that with Semilong having gone into North, North needs to actually take the two Wellingborough constituencies that the Commission proposed for Daventry and Lutterworth, but the bulk of the people living in these two wards live in Earls Barton and Ecton with very strong communications into Northampton itself. If you live in Earls Barton at the moment, according to the Commission's plans and you were going to Daventry, you would actually be driving through Northampton North, Northampton South and South Northamptonshire before you got to Daventry.

Then we propose that two wards be transferred from Northampton North to Northampton South, and those are the Abington and Park wards.

Each of those proposed five adjustments or tweaks can be taken separately but, taken together, even though we are only proposing changes to 18 constituencies, they

represent a significant improvement to the good work of the Commission on this review. Within these 18 constituencies our alternatives propose to move 362,653 electors compared to the Commission's 475,862.

One constituency altered by the Commission that we propose to keep unchanged is North West Leicestershire. That increases the number of such constituencies from seven to eight. We have been able to repair significantly the damage to local community ties, particularly where we have been able to see villages and other communities previously divided - able to be put back together again. Two of our proposed constituencies, North East Derbyshire and North West Leicestershire are coterminous with their local authorities. That doubles the number of such constituencies in the region from two to four.

Finally, we have been able to reunite five local authorities. That is Bolsover, Daventry, North East Derbyshire, North West Leicestershire and South Northamptonshire, which were all divided in the interim proposals. That increases the number of local authorities which are undivided from 11 to 16. Six of our 18 proposed alternative constituencies are made up of wards in only one local authority area. That is Bosworth, Derby West. North East Derbyshire, North West Leicestershire, Northampton South and Nottingham South. That compares to only two in the same 18 constituencies - Derby North and Northampton North - of the ones proposed by the Commission.

We are obviously here not just to put forward our proposals, but to listen to others. We will listen to the submissions of other parties, organisations and individuals throughout the process. We reserve the right to add or amend our proposals in the light of what we hear in the course of these hearings. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you Mr Fox. Are there any questions for clarification? Yes. If you could give your name as well so we have that.

MR COOK: (Labour Party) My name is Greg Cook and I am representing the Labour Party. It is one point on your Derbyshire county proposal, which is to do with the ward of Lowgates and Woodthorpe in Chesterfield. I am not clear which constituency that would be in. I do not think it is listed here specifically in the document.

MR FOX: It remains in Bolsover. Yes, it is not listed because it is not moved from---

MR COOK: It has moved from---

MR FOX: The Commission's proposals. The Commission's proposals are that the Bolsover and Dronfield constituency consist of wards from Bolsover, North East Derbyshire and the one Chesterfield ward of Lowgates and Woodthorpe. We propose that it not be moved from the Commission's proposal.

MR COOK: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Okay, that is very good. Then thank you very much.

MR FOX: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We will move on now to the representation by the Conservative Party and I will invite Mr Roger Pratt to speak.

MR PRATT: (Conservative Party) Thank you very much indeed. My name is Roger Pratt. I am the boundary review director for the Conservative Party and this is a representation on behalf of the Conservative Party and the East Midlands region Conservatives.

We support the allocation of 44 seats to the East Midlands and we support the Commission's groupings and the proposed allocations to the sub-regions, so ten for Derbyshire, 27 for Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland and seven for Lincolnshire.

We have been guided throughout in our proposals by the rules for redistribution of seats. We have done this in conjunction with the rules on geographical considerations, on local government boundaries. There are two particular parts to local government boundaries: how many constituencies are contained within a local authority; and how many local authorities are contained within a constituency. The boundaries solve existing constituencies and any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies. I will be quoting on occasions from both the initial proposals document as well as the Assistant Commissioners' report from the last review or, more precisely, the aborted review that happened last time and I will also quote from the guide to the 2018 review that the Commission issued.

In Derbyshire we support the constituencies of Chesterfield, Erewash and South Derbyshire. Chesterfield is just the existing constituency plus one ward. South Derbyshire is a minor change and Erewash is plus the ward of Ockbrook and Borrowash. We particularly support that, as did, in the aborted review, the Assistant Commissioners, who supported that ward at AC158 page 32:

"There is overwhelming support for the inclusion of Ockbrook and Borrowash ward in Erewash".

They quote a number of people on evidence including Ockbrook and Borrowash Parish Council. Those three constituencies in Derbyshire we support.

However, we do not support the other seven constituencies. We believe that there is too much change from the existing pattern of constituencies in Derbyshire and there is too much change within these particular seven constituencies. I quote in particular with regard to the Bolsover and Dronfield constituency in the initial proposals document at page 13, item 33:

"The Bolsover constituency is ... therefore significantly reconfigured in our proposals".

We do not think that is necessary. We do not support those seven constituencies; we are supporting, suggesting five different seats. I will come on to Derby in a minute. We will deal with the rest of Derbyshire and then we will come on to Derby.

Amber Valley: we retain much more of Amber Valley, over 10,000 more electors in the Amber Valley constituency than the proposal. In Bolsover it is much more like the existing Bolsover seat with nearly 15,000 more electors from the existing Bolsover seat. In Derbyshire Dales, instead of the addition of North East Derbyshire wards, we are adding the town of Belper into the Derbyshire Dales constituency. In High Peak we are adding three wards. Again I quote from the Assistant Commissioners' report last time, on pages 25 and 26 with item AC109:

"Turning then to local ties, there is clear evidence of strong ties between Tideswell, Bradwell and Hathersage and Eyam wards and the wider constituency of High Peak. On the evidence we have heard we are entirely satisfied that residents of all three wards tend to look north for their local services and tend to associate themselves more with the High Peak constituency than with the Derbyshire Dales constituency to the south".

That is why we would add those three wards to the High Peak constituency.

In North East Derbyshire, like the Liberal Democrats, we would make the North East Derby coterminous with the local authority. For some reason the Commission have decided to divide it three ways. We think this is totally unnecessary and splitting North East Derbyshire. Effectively North East Derbyshire is the constituency that disappears under the Commission's proposals in Derbyshire. We think a much more sensible solution is to make it coterminous with the local authority.

Those are our two maps: the map of the Commission's proposals and our alternative map. Our alternative map is much more like the existing map in Derbyshire and 50,000 fewer electors are moved from their existing constituencies. We believe that that is a very big improvement in Derbyshire. We restore local ties in the town of Dronfield, which is divided by the Commission proposals. We have already heard that. We restore local ties between the towns of Ripley and Codnor, which are divided by the Commission proposals. We also reunite the Parish of Ripley, which contains the Heage and Ambergate ward and part of the Codnor and Waingroves ward in one constituency.

We reflect ties in the Hope Valley, which is divided between the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales local authorities.

The placing of the town of Belper in the Derbyshire Dales constituency reduces the number of local authorities within the seat from three to two. Belper was also contained in the West Derbyshire constituency, which was the predecessor to Derbyshire Dales, until 2010 when it was transferred to Mid Derbyshire. Dronfield has never been part of the West Derbyshire or Derbyshire Dales constituency.

The Commission's plans unnecessarily split the Bolsover local authority between two seats. Our plans reunite the authority in one seat.

The Commission's plans unnecessarily split the North East Derbyshire local authority between three seats. Our plans reunite the authority in one seat. The local authority is then coterminous with our proposed North East Derbyshire constituency. Again I quote from the report last time. In AC140, page 30:

"The resulting North East Derbyshire constituency would be entirely contiguous with the boundaries of the district council of the same name, as would Chesterfield, save in respect of Lowgates and Woodthorpe ward, which would remain outside the constituency within Bolsover".

That was the solution in the aborted review and we believe that that is the correct approach this time. We have two fewer constituencies contained within three local authorities than under the Commission's proposals. We note also in the Assistant Commissioner's report from the aborted review at AC44 the Assistant Commissioner on that occasion was looking at the number of local authorities represented in a constituency and compared the BCE, the Boundary Commission's initial proposals to another counter-proposal, which was worse. I would like to compare it with our proposals. The Commission's proposals has four in one, two in two and four in three, our proposals have four in one, four in two and two in three. That is a better reflection of local authorities and 51,251 fewer electors move from their existing constituencies; so we would say that our Derbyshire is considerably better than the Commission's proposals, particularly under rules 5(b) and (c).

In Derby, we propose the following seats: a Derby East and a Derby West with a swap of two wards. The two wards, as with the Liberal Democrats, were Derwent and Sinfin; so we agree entirely with the Liberal Democrats in terms of Derby and our proposal is exactly the same as theirs. Interestingly, they made the point, which I was going to raise, about Derby being north and south. On page 14 of the initial proposals document it says:

"We did explore different configurations of constituencies in the City of Derby but considered that our proposals more closely resemble the existing pattern of constituencies and retain the north-south axis of the two existing Derby constituencies".

I would ask you to look at the map of the Commission's proposals and come to a conclusion as to whether that is a north-south axis. I would not suggest that it was. I think ours is neater and I think ours is a better reflection on an east-west basis and then I would go for east-west constituencies. So we restore the ties in the Chaddesden area, which is made up of the Chaddesden and Derwent wards which are divided by the Commission's proposals. I would refer you again to the report last time, item 180 on page 35, where it says:

"Turning then to the City of Derby itself, we heard evidence of particular local links from the Member of Parliament for Derby North" -

and the Member of Parliament for Derby North at the time was Mr Williamson, the Labour Member of Parliament at the time –

"Mr Williamson MP described particular local ties between Derwent and Chaddesden wards, between Oakwood and Chaddesden wards and between Oakwood and Spondon wards".

We would retain all those wards in one constituency by linking Chaddesden and Derwent, where we think there is a bad breaking of local ties there, as has been illustrated by Mr Fox for the Liberal Democrats. We also restore ties between Sinfyn ward and the Blagreaves and Normanton wards, which are divided by the Commission's proposals, and we reflect the natural division made by the Derwent Valley line between Derwent and Darley wards.

If we now move to Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland, in this region we support the Commission's proposals in their entirety for the following seats. In Ashfield it is a very minor change, which we support. Bosworth, which takes in North West Leicestershire wards. We support that. We support the Charnwood constituency, which has only two local authorities in it, which is an improvement on the current position where Charnwood has three local authorities. We support Daventry and Lutterworth. We think that is the best way of having a cross-border constituency between Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. We support the minor change in Harborough, no change in Leicester East and Leicester South, and Leicester West taking three Blaby wards.

We also support no change for the Mansfield constituency, the North West Leicester constituency, which adds Shepshed, Northampton North, which is a seat containing Northampton North and the East of Northampton, which we think makes a very logical

constituency totally within the Northampton borough. We support the Nottingham East and Carlton constituency combining part of Nottingham East, part of Gedling.

We support the Nottingham North entirely within the Nottingham local authority. We support Rutland and Melton, which is a minor change, and South Leicestershire, which is more of Blaby. Certainly we will take advice on whether the name of that should change to Blaby, but I do note that it is not entirely within the Blaby local authority. There are three constituencies where we support the constituencies' composition but we do not support the name of the constituency. A minor technicality is we think it should be Loughborough and South Rushcliffe rather than Loughborough and Rushcliffe South. I just refer to item 44 in the guide to the 2018 review when the compass reference used will generally form a prefix in cases where the rest of the constituency refers to the county area or a local council, with a suffix where it refers to a population centre. It is the local council so we think it should be a prefix. That is obviously a fairly minor point. We believe the Sherwood constituency should be called Sherwood Forest to recall that it is a wider area than just Sherwood. We would actually go for North Rushcliffe rather than just Rushcliffe for the name of the West Bridgford constituency, because obviously there is a South Rushcliffe and it might be slightly confusing; so we have gone for North Rushcliffe in that particular case.

We do not support the Commission's proposals in nine constituencies, in Bassetlaw, Broxstowe and Hucknall, in Corby, in Kettering and Newark, Northampton South, Nottingham South and Beeston, South Northamptonshire and Wellingborough. In Northamptonshire - if we talk with Northamptonshire - first of all we propose the following seats. Firstly we propose a seat of Corby and East Northamptonshire which, as you will see, we have changed to that name. That was the name that it was given after the Commission's proposals - the aborted review. It was suggested to be Corby and East Northamptonshire despite the fact that the composition on that occasion did not change. The electorates have changed since and I refer to AC335 on page 61 where it says:

"A substantial volume of representations have been received which propose that the name of the constituency be expanded to Corby and East Northamptonshire. We consider that the name proposed in the representations would command greater support than that currently in use".

So we would call it Corby and East Northamptonshire. We do not believe that Irthlingborough is the right area to take out of that constituency. Therefore, we propose two small Corby wards be included within Kettering so that Kettering does not then need to take a Wellingborough ward. We change our Northampton South constituency so that it reduces the number of local authorities in the constituency from three to two. Currently there is just one local authority in Northampton South. We think to increase it from one to three is excessive and we would not therefore include the Wellingborough wards that are proposed to be within it.

South Northamptonshire: we would agree with the Liberal Democrats about taking the two wards at the bottom in South Northamptonshire, but we would not extend that through to the two Wellingborough wards. We then have a Wellingborough and Rushden constituency - and again we have added the name Rushden into the constituency - moving 8,000 fewer electors in that case. So there are eleven wards that we change in Northamptonshire and you can see that on the diagram [there](#). Basically we take Bozeat and Wollaston back into Wellingborough. We take Brayfield and Yardley and Hackleton back into South Northamptonshire. We take Finedon back into Wellingborough. We think that Grange Park and Harpole and Grange links with Northampton South much better than the two wards suggested, so we would include those within Northampton South.

We would include the two Corby wards, Rural West and Stainion and Corby Village, in Kettering and have that appropriate change. Those would be our changes. That is the current plan for Northamptonshire and that is the proposal. We think we have a much more compact, for example, Northampton South seat; so we think our Northampton South seat is much more compact than the proposals, and Wellingborough is much nearer the existing constituency.

In terms of Northamptonshire, we restore ties between the towns of Irthlingborough and the towns of Raunds and Stanwick, which are divided by the Commission's proposals. We restore ties between Bozeat and Wollaston wards and the town of Wellingborough, which is divided by the Commission's proposals. We restore ties between Finedon ward and the town of Wellingborough divided by the Commission's proposals. We reflect ties between the Grange Park and Harpole and Grange wards and the town of Northampton. Grange Park is a natural urban continuation of Northampton and is cut off from the rest of South Northamptonshire by the M1. Harpole and Grange ward consist of expanding commuter villages, which have strong links to Northampton and which were a part of the Northampton South constituency until 2010.

We restore ties between the Brayfield and Yardley and Hackleton wards and the remainder of South Northamptonshire divided by the Commission proposals. Both of these wards are rural in nature and have strong ties with the predominantly rural South Northampton constituencies. We reduce the number of local authorities contained within the Northampton South constituency from three to two and 12,455 fewer electors move from their existing constituencies.

We in southern Nottinghamshire propose the following seats: a Broxstowe and Hucknall seat and a Nottingham South and Beeston seat. The Broxstowe and Hucknall seat we would have three local authorities rather than two, so we would take out the Nottingham ward and include two further Broxstowe wards. Nottingham would become in four constituencies rather than five, which we believe is excessive under the Commission's proposals.

So we just change three wards. Bilborough we take into Nottingham South and Beeston and, to compensate for that, we move Chilwell West and Toton and Chilwell Meadows back into their existing constituency of Broxstowe and Hucknall. That is our alternative plan there. You can see on that the Bilborough ward, which is there, which we think sits unnaturally in that seat, so we move it back into a Nottingham-based seat which we think is much more sensible. The advantages are that we restore ties between the village of Toton and the town of Chilwell, the town of Stapleford and the wider Broxstowe borough, which are divided by the Commission's proposals. We reflect ties between the Bilborough ward and the Beechdale and Wollaton areas of Nottingham, which are divided by the Commission's proposals.

We remove the orphan ward of Bilborough from the Broxstowe and Hucknall constituency, which is thereby contained in only two local authorities as opposed to three under the Commission's proposals; we reduce from five to four the number of constituencies contained in the Nottingham local authority; and we move 11,649 fewer electors from their existing constituencies. Again, we believe that those are much better proposals under the rules 5(b) and (c).

In northern Nottinghamshire we propose a very minor change of one ward between Bassetlaw and Newark, so the Sturton ward we would move from Bassetlaw into Newark. That is the consequence; so we reflect local ties between Rampton and Sturton ward divided by the Commission proposals.

In Lincolnshire we support the Commission's proposals in their entirety for five of the seats, for Boston and Skegness, which takes in two wards from Sleaford, for no change in Gainsborough, for very minimum change in Grantham and Stamford and Louth and Horncastle just because of ward changes and no change in South Holland and The Deepings. However, we do not support the Commission's proposals for the Lincoln seat or for the Sleaford seat. We would make slight changes to those, so that we would have more of the existing Lincoln seat in Lincoln and more of the existing Sleaford and North Hykeham seat in Sleaford and North Hykeham; and so we move over 6,000 electors back to their existing constituency.

We change seven wards. Basically Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East we retain in its current constituency of Lincoln as well as Waddington West, so we bring the two Waddingtons together. We would just take one ward in from Sleaford. Apart from Waddington West, we would take just Heighington and Washingborough into Lincoln and then we would put all the North Hykeham wards, which are currently in Sleaford and North Hykeham, back into their existing constituency. That is what happens with the map. I refer to paragraph 29 of the initial proposals, pages 12 and 13, when it says in 29:

"We considered" -

it was regarding the Lincoln constituency -

"the Lincoln constituency extending far south".

They considered another arrangement but they believed the Lincoln constituency would extend far south with the inclusion of rural wards from the existing Sleaford and North Hykeham constituency. I would suggest on the map sir that it does not extend any further south than the current constituency, because the ward of Waddington is currently within Lincoln. That ward is currently within Lincoln, and that clearly is the ward that goes far south, but it is currently within Lincoln; so it is in its existing constituency. It was suggesting that you have to go somewhere down here because it says "far south". All we are adding is that ward, which is not a ward that could be described as far south in terms of Sleaford and North Hykeham; so, we believe ours is a better arrangement and an arrangement which moves far fewer electors.

We restore strong ties between Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East, including RAF Waddington and the City of Lincoln which are divided by the Commission's proposals. We reflect ties between Bracebridge and Waddington West where there is continuous urban development and which are divided by the Commission's proposal. We include the entire parish of Waddington in one constituency which is a divided parish under the Commission's proposals. We also restore North Hykeham to a constituency with Sleaford and thereby move far fewer electors than the Commission's proposals. We therefore move 12,654 fewer electors than the Commission.

Just a reminder that these were our guiding lights, these were the guiding principles when we looked at alternatives: the rules in terms of particularly local government links and boundaries of existing constituencies and local ties. So we propose considerably better local authority links, particularly in Derbyshire, in Wellingborough local authority, Nottingham local authority, thus being more compliant with rule 5(b). We move 67,598 fewer electors than the Commission, restoring many wards back to their existing constituency, thus being more compliant with rule 5(c). We break fewer local ties, restoring ties for example in Dronfield, in Ripley and Codnor, in Derby, in Northampton, in Nottingham, Broxstowe and Lincoln, thus being more compliant with rule 5(d).

In conclusion, we support the 44 constituencies in the East Midlands but believe that there is a much better scheme available, particularly in respect of Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and also Nottinghamshire. We will submit to the Commission before 5 December a comprehensive document outlining our rationale and whether we support the Commission or propose alternatives. We will take into account representations made at public hearings and may, in the light of these, amend our submission from that which we have outlined today.

Sir, I thank you and if there are any questions of clarification I am happy to take them.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any questions from the floor?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mr Pratt, can you tell me how many local authorities undivided by the Commission's proposals you propose to divide?

MR PRATT: Undivided by the Commission proposals we propose to divide? I cannot think; I am trying to think of anyone that we do that with. Obviously we add a further local authority to the High Peak constituency. That would be in terms of High Peak. I do not think we change anything anywhere else in terms of dividing ones that are already together within the Commission proposals.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think, Mr Pratt – Mr Assistant Commissioner - that you probably divide Derbyshire Dales and that you also divide Corby, which are presently undivided.

MR PRATT: I beg your pardon. In terms of Corby I accept that because of the fact that we then do not have the proposal in terms of Irthlingborough; so, yes, in terms of Corby that is right. In terms of Derbyshire Dales obviously we add three wards to High Peak and I think that is probably to what you are referring. Obviously other local authority links are much better under our proposals.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I have another question? Do you not consider the area of Corby known as Corby Village, which includes half the railway station and the parish church, to be part of Corby?

MR PRATT: I do not deny that we had difficulty with regard to this proposal, the problem being that Corby is just oversized, the Corby constituency is just oversized, and it is a question of what you decide to move. We did look at various alternatives and we believe that is the least worst option and we think that those two wards have quite close ties to Kettering; indeed, the majority of places in those two wards have in fact Kettering postcodes and they are most closely linked to Kettering. Others will give more evidence on that, such as the Member of Parliament for Corby, later in the hearings, but obviously that was a difficult decision but that was, we felt, the least worst option in terms of trying to address the fact that Corby was just over the quota size.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. We will move on now to the representative from the Green Party, Miss Kat Boettge.

MISS BOETTGE: (Green Party) Hello. Good morning. I would like to use the opportunity to make it a bit different to what my colleagues have done here. I would like to come back to some more general points. I appreciate that this is an enormous task that the Commission has to do here and it must be quite complex. Foremost, we in the Green Party agree in principle that we need a reform and we need to equalise the size

of the constituencies. It must be very difficult to do so. We also agree that we need a full reform and a review of the current system.

To bring some more general points down. Foremost, the data used for this review are the electoral register from 2015. You may remember that the transition at the time to the new register has been quite complex and difficult and, some might say, it was pushed through. It was actually quite heavily criticised by the Electoral Commission at the time. This register consequently was quite incomplete. As a comparison, in the last referendum there were 2 million more voters registered than there was at the time, so I am not quite sure how this data is actually adequate for looking at constituencies.

Also, the register at the time, as still yet, has been, and historically has been, neglecting certain groups, including more transient and well politically involved individuals, such as minorities, renters, woman and so on and so forth. I fear that these are not taken into account properly here. Using the electoral register full stop may not be adequate. Indeed, the Electoral Reform Society has been criticising this since 2011. We have alternative data we could use.

One argument of the reform is to save money, and I understand that. If we ask people on the street they probably would agree, but let us not forget, put it in context. This has come up after the expense scandal where basically politicians have been shamelessly abusing expenses, on our expenses. I do not want to be too sceptical and cynical here, but I would argue was this a political move to, kind of, counteract the scandal politicians have been involved in.

Secondly, if you want to save money, which is a fair enough yet again argument, this Government has been increasing peers, the House of Lords, quite enormously in the last few years. These are unelected, undemocratic and quite expensive politicians. I would argue that people on the street would not agree with that. Interesting also is that whilst MPs are being reduced from 650 to 600, the Cabinet size would remain the same; so we could say that ministers in the Cabinet are therefore over proportionately stronger after the review. Again I would ask: how is that serving democracy?

Finally, although we have a strong objection generally speaking against this voting system of first past the post, there are some good aspects of it, including that each person has got their MP who can help them with any issues arising. Of course, increasing overall constituents means that MPs may struggle to really attend and serve the people.

Let us go to a few regional points. I think it is very difficult to cross boundaries of local authorities - and we have heard a little bit from colleagues here - if at all, and, it is part of the criteria, we should respect community ties as well as local authority boundaries, if possible.

I have got strong objections that we cross counties, generally speaking, although between Northamptonshire and Leicestershire it might not be as severe as between Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. Let us look at specifics; for example, the Broxstowe constituency, which I happen to know quite well because I am a town councillor there. It is quite an interesting constituency anyway. It is quite a marginal one. I do not know if you are familiar that Anna Soubry won the last two times, and it has been always quite an interesting constituency because it can go either way.

This proposal would mean that it is likely to become a stronger Labour seat. However, Kimberley is a town within the Broxstowe constituency. It is a very proud historic old town and I know it quite well. Kimberley people already feel quite removed from the Broxstowe local authority, let alone the constituency. If we stretch it further to the north, including Hucknall town, it really does not make any sense if you know the community and the community spirit. Hucknall and Kimberley or Broxstowe have no natural ties per se.

That brings me to the next point, including a City ward of Bilborough into Broxstowe makes no sense. It really makes no sense in regard to community ties and also access. Although they are neighbouring, there is hardly any public transport. There are no issues of overlapping. That is really important. A constituency and an MP representing constituents should also take into account the specific issue of an area. If we are crossing local authorities from the city to the suburban areas I think that gets lost, and I think it may make people feel more alienated from their MPs.

A good point was put forward. I think it was quite a good point and I had similar thought on this. I think for Broxstowe, if we need to increase it, which is fair enough, there are some Broxstowe local authority wards that could be added instead of a Nottingham City ward of Bilborough. For example, Nuthall and so and so forth.

Another constituency which we are concerned about is Gedling, for example. Again it is a suburban area. It is not part of the Nottingham City nor of that identity, so crossing boundaries, and particularly crossing over the wards of Sherwood and Berridge, I think is really not serving right the community tie criteria as outlined in the proposal. In actual fact I probably would not change much at all for the Nottingham City wards. It is very different then in the suburban areas.

Other aspects which I would like to mention here is names. It is interesting because a couple of things I have heard I would agree; other things we have picked up on. For example, Derby should be West and East rather than North and South. Additionally on Hinckley and Bosworth we would drop the word Bosworth because it actually does not represent the electorate within that.

Finally, I would like to just say overall of this reform; yes, we are due a reform; we need one; but I think we are missing a chance here. We need to reform our undemocratic

system. I have mentioned first past the post, which is not democratic. That is not just my opinion; it is a statistical fact. There are ways how we can keep our local MPs whilst still having additional Members of Parliament.

I believe people are not registered on the electoral register nor vote because of disillusion with politicians. Many votes do not count. I hear it all the time. People say "I would vote Green in the General Election but I do not because I want to keep the Tories out, so I vote Labour", which is fair enough but that is not really what democracy is for. Every vote should count. So let's use this opportunity. Let's look at the overall system. I'm not surprised people are disillusioned with an unelected House of Lords and with first past the post. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any questions from the Floor on that submission? (None) Okay, thank you.

MISS BOETTGE: And we will hand in a more detailed proposal.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I understand. We will move on now to the representation from the Labour Party. That is made by Mr Greg Cook.

MR COOK: (Labour Party) Thank you very much, sir. My name is Greg Cook and I am an official of the national Labour Party based at our head office in Victoria Street, London SW1. I am making this presentation and submission on behalf of the Labour Party and the East Midlands region of the Labour Party. It is presented as an overall response to the initial proposals of the Boundary Commission. It follows a detailed consultation process within the region which has involved all Members of Parliament, constituency Labour Parties and others.

What I am going to cover in this statement is basically four areas. Firstly some comments on the review process, the role of the Commission; secondly, some on the statutory criteria, the policies of the Commission; and finally to look at the initial proposals and to advance some counter-proposals which we wish to make.

To start firstly with the review process itself, the Labour Party welcomes the initial proposals of the Commission and the clear, comprehensive way in which those proposals have been set out. While we disagree with some of them - we will be setting out some alternatives which we believe better fit the statutory criteria - we accept that in all cases the Commission have fully considered the different options and explained the decisions which they have made. We also welcome the Commission's efforts to stimulate and encourage public participation in the process, and, from our part, to consult with political parties on the policies and procedures which will be used; and we are grateful in particular for the opportunity at this hearing to set out our views.

We note that under the terms of the Acts the Commission may choose, in choosing between different schemes, take into account four criteria: special geographical circumstances, local government boundaries, the boundaries of existing constituencies and any ties that will be broken by changes to constituencies. It is self-evident that the Commission may not be able to respect all these criteria, indeed, in some places, any of them, in every part of the region while keeping the electorates of constituencies within the permissible range. We accept that in some areas the disruption to existing constituencies is likely to be substantial, that it may be difficult to respect local authority boundaries and that local ties may be broken; so where we put forward alternative proposals to those of the Commission, we do so on the basis that we believe them to be, on balance, more consistent with those statutory criteria. We note, and obviously accept, the electoral quota for the review at 74,769 and that all seats in this region must therefore be between 71,031 and 78,507.

I turn to some areas where the Commission have published some policy guidance on their approach. Firstly, the use of European electoral regions, which we welcome, as sub-national review areas of the purpose of the initial proposals. Were they not to be used, the review of constituencies in England would become much more complex, with almost limitless options. The result would be that meaningful consultation and public participation would be harder to achieve. We note that the electorate of the East Midlands region at 3,275,046 gives an entitlement to 44 seats with an average electorate of 74,433, which is just 236 below the electoral quota.

We also note the Commission's policy on using district and unitary wards as the smallest unit with which to build constituencies and their remarks on this issue, which state that they recognise that there may be exceptional and compelling circumstances that make it appropriate to divide a ward, but we note that no such proposals have been made in the East Midlands region or indeed anywhere else. We support that policy. We believe that any such proposal must be treated on its merits but within an assumption that whole wards and divisions should remain intact in the absence of those compelling and exceptional circumstances such as are described.

Thirdly, on the issue of so-called orphan wards, we note the concept of the orphan ward when one ward of a local authority is added to a constituency which is otherwise wholly or partly in another local authority and that this is regarded, by definition, as undesirable. We do accept that such arrangements are often anomalous and they are clearly at odds with the respect for local authority boundaries. However, we believe that a dogmatic policy which considers that such arrangements are always undesirable is not appropriate and that the addition of other wards for the sake of just not having a single ward in such a scenario is not, by itself, necessarily to be preferred if it means that ties are broken and electors moved in that ward.

We note in this particular region the relatively low average electorate of wards means that such arrangements are largely unnecessary in most areas. The Labour Party will

obviously again consider any such proposal that is made by the Commission or others on its merits. We note there is no requirement on the Commission to avoid the use of the crossing of county boundaries as there used to be under the rules as there were before, but in this region the Commission have allocated whole numbers of seats to Derbyshire and Lincolnshire and that the other three counties comprise one large review area. We believe the use of counties as units in this way is a sensible approach and obviously consistent with respect for local authority boundaries.

Finally on this section, on the names of constituencies, we note and support the Commission's policy on names of constituencies. We are aware that there is a tendency, particularly when constituencies are enlarged, for the names of those constituencies to become more complex and unwieldy and, as a matter of principle and practicality, would resist that. Also, where a constituency is largely unchanged, we would normally support the retention of the existing name, but we will again consider all proposals on their merits and taking account of local opinion.

I turn to the initial proposals of the Commission. We have set out here our views on those initial proposals and an outline of some alternatives. While we will refer to those alternatives in terms of the statutory criteria, we are not in this submission including the detail of the community ties and the other relevant local matters which will be amplified in the statements of individuals in the areas affected. We note the Commission proposes that the counties of Derbyshire and Lincolnshire should be allocated ten and seven constituencies respectively, and that Leicestershire - and I should say for the purposes throughout this representation Leicestershire includes the unitary authority of the County of Rutland - as well as Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire should be jointly allocated 27 constituencies.

We believe the allocation of seven whole seats to Lincolnshire is obviously sensible. There is no practical alternative to that. We do note, however, were the Commission to include Derbyshire as part of a group in comprising the whole of the rest of the region, it would bring the average electorate of that grouping much closer to the electoral quota than that for ten seats in Derbyshire or 27 seats in Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire, which might allow the Commission greater range of electorates in the counties concerned. One result of that might practically be that there might be more flexibility in preserving local ties. We will consider any proposal along those lines which may be made during consultation process. Against that, however, such an arrangement would obviously result in at least one additional seat which included parts of more than one county. So we accept the review areas as set out by the Commission but we will, as I say, consider all the alternatives that may be proposed.

We start in Lincolnshire and we note that the electorate of Lincolnshire, that is 521,281, gives a theoretical entitlement to 6.97 constituencies and it should therefore have an allocation of seven whole seats. We also note that four of the existing seats can be retained unchanged or with minimal change to reflect new ward boundaries. We

therefore support the proposed Gainsborough, Grantham and Stamford, Louth and Horncastle and South Holland and The Deepings constituencies.

We also support the proposal of the Commission to increase the electorate of Boston and Skegness by the addition of the North Kesteven wards of Heckington Rural, Kirby la Thorpe and South Kyme. We agree that the best way to increase the electorate of the Lincoln constituency is by including in it the town of North Hykeham, which we believe has strong ties to that city and was indeed part of the Lincoln constituency until 1997. We also agree that the constituency should include the ward of Skellingthorpe, which is north of the City of Lincoln and is currently in that constituency and has only limited road connections with the rest of the Sleaford constituency.

We believe though that the inclusion of the Waddington West ward in the Lincoln constituency is unnecessary. We do accept, and we assume this is the reason that the Commission have made this proposal, that there is continuous residential development between Waddington West and the Bracebridge ward of Lincoln; but they are in separate local authorities and currently they are in separate constituencies. Nor do we believe that Waddington West has significant ties to North Hykeham that will be broken by its not joining it in the Lincoln constituency. We do not therefore believe that any of the statutory criteria justify its transfer, particularly when the Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East ward is being transferred the other way from Lincoln to Sleaford. Therefore the retention of Waddington West in Sleaford would enable the Parish of Waddington to be united.

In respect of Northamptonshire, the county has an electorate of 493,591. The theoretical entitlement of 6.6 constituencies means that numerically there has to be at least one constituency which it shares with the county of Leicestershire. We support the proposed Corby constituency, which is altered only with the town of Irthlingborough being transferred to the Wellingborough constituency, which we believe is justified as it does have ties to Higham Ferrers and Rushden. We also support the inclusion of the Wellingborough borough ward of Finedon in the Kettering constituency, which is otherwise unchanged.

In Northampton we note the very low electorates of the exiting Northampton North and Northampton South constituencies. There must be almost 30,000 electors added to them to make up two constituencies within 5 per cent of the electoral quota, with the electorate of the whole borough being just 137,787. We believe it is right that these electors are added to the south of the town and would oppose any proposal to include part of Daventry district in the Northampton constituency. We believe the northern boundary of Northampton is much more clearly defined than that in the south, which is semi-rural and includes many newer residential neighbourhoods. We also note the inclusion of Irthlingborough;

The Wellingborough constituency is too large and we therefore accept that in addition to Earls Barton and Harrowden and Sywell, which are in the Daventry constituency currently, the Bozeat and Wollaston wards must also be in a different constituency. The result of that is that the initial proposals of the Commission do divide the borough of Wellingborough between four different constituencies despite it having only 52,566 electors. While this is unsatisfactory, it is largely a function of its location at the edge of the region limiting the options available, and in particular the need to increase or reduce the electorates of all the other seats in the county. We do note that, despite the division of the borough, only 9,746 electors, which is 18.5 per cent in the borough, moved constituency under these proposals.

We do wish however make a counter-proposal for the Northampton North and Northampton South constituencies which we believe better reflects community ties within Northampton. That is that the wards of Castle, King's Heath, Semilong and Spencer should be included in Northampton North and Billing Park and Riverside in Northampton South, which we believe would differentiate between the entirely urban North constituency, which would include the town centre, and the semi-rural South constituency which would include communities within Northampton centred on the A45 and the A5076, which is basically the previous pattern of seats in the town prior to 2010 when the Northampton South constituency also included the wards of what are now the wards of Brayfield and Yardley and Hackleton.

We support the South Northampton constituency being made up of the whole of the rest of that district, plus two wards of Daventry borough. We also support the creation of a constituency between Northamptonshire and Leicestershire which has Daventry and Lutterworth as local centres within it and including the whole of the Earls Barton and Harrowden and Sywell wards. We do though make a counter-proposal which affects the Leicestershire part of this seat.

We therefore move on to Leicestershire. We start by saying that we welcome very much the initial proposals for Leicester, which are identical to those that were made in the aborted review five years ago, which retains the two seats of Leicester East and Leicester South unchanged and the Leicester West seat intact, but having the addition of the three wards that make up Braunston Town, which we believe is the obvious option for increasing its electorate. We are though concerned the Commission's decision to create a seat including the town of Loughborough and part of the borough of Rushcliffe has caused unnecessary disruption to existing seats, with significant changes being made to all of them.

We note that the constituencies of North West Leicestershire and Rutland and Melton could remain unchanged. We propose that they should, which would allow the town of Shepshed to remain in the Loughborough constituency and North West Leicestershire constituency to be coterminous with its district. We propose that, rather than including part of North West Leicestershire, the Bosworth constituency should include the Blaby

borough wards of Croft Hill, Normanton and Stanton and Flamville. We would propose that the Harborough constituency should be amended from its current configuration only to include the Bosworth ward in the Daventry and Lutterworth constituency. That constituency, instead of including Fleckney and Lubenham, which would remain in Harborough, should include the wards of Dunton, Peatling and Ullesthorpe.

We then propose that the Hinckley and Bosworth wards of Groby, Markfield, Stanton and Field Head and Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton should, instead of being included in Charnwood, be in a seat with twelve wards of the district of Blaby, plus the town of Broughton Astley, because most of its electors would be in the Blaby district. We propose initially it should be called Blaby. That constituency name was of long standing. It was revised to South Leicestershire prior to 2010 but is a historic name and also would comprise most of this constituency, but an alternative may be, for example, Mid Leicestershire constituency.

All of these changes together would allow the Loughborough constituency, the existing one, to be altered only by the transfer of the ward of The Wolds to a seat which we would call Charnwood and Keyworth. That would mean it would also retain the ward of Sileby, which would reunite Sileby again. The Charnwood and Keyworth constituency would include the five wards of Rushcliffe borough, which the Commission propose should be in the Loughborough and Rushcliffe South constituency. We believe that this constituency would be at least as robust as the Commission's proposal, with the main towns and villages of Charnwood constituency, including East Goscote and Queniborough, which are transferred to Rutland and Melton under the initial proposals, returned to it, reflecting the ties which they have to Syston, which are broken under those proposals. Also that The Wolds ward, which has a much longer boundary with Rushcliffe than does any part of the proposed Loughborough and Rushcliffe constituency, has numerous road links with this part of Rushcliffe and is part of the Charnwood borough. The Charnwood and Keyworth constituency would also contain parts of only two local authorities.

These changes overall in Leicestershire would mean that two additional seats, North West Leicestershire and Rutland and Melton would remain completely unchanged, Harborough and Loughborough would each be reduced only by the loss of one ward, so they would retain respectfully 97.5 five per cent and 96.6 per cent of their electors. Obviously North West Leicestershire district would remain coterminous with its district, so in all these ways we believe it is far more compliant with the statutory criteria. In total, 451,852 electors would remain in the same constituency, compared with 431,339 under the initial proposals. In Nottinghamshire we welcome the retention of the Bassetlaw and Mansfield constituencies unchanged and the minimum change to reflect new ward boundaries to the Ashfield constituency.

We do accept that there must be major changes to the City of Nottingham, which has an electorate of just 187,351 and an entitlement therefore to only just over two and a half

constituencies. We note the initial proposals of the Commission have just one constituency wholly within Nottingham and four others which are partly in Nottingham and partly in other districts. But we do support the proposed Nottingham North constituency, which includes five of the six wards of the current seat. We also believe that there is logic in creating a Nottingham South and Beeston constituency, recognising the close ties between Beeston, particularly in the university area of the constituency.

We do note the Gedling constituency is divided by the initial proposals, but we welcome the Commission's intention to try to keep the towns of Carlton and Arnold together, albeit in different constituencies. We accept the West Bridgford constituency, which includes the Clifton wards. Also the conclusion of the Bilborough ward in a Broxstowe and Hucknall constituency, which we believe is a logical seat.

We do note, however, that the Sherwood constituency has been amended significantly. We believe ties have been broken, particularly by the transfer of the wards of Boughton and Ollerton to the Newark constituency. These wards include villages with a coalmining tradition and have strong ties to similar communities such as Edwinstowe, Bilsthorpe, Rainworth and Rufford, all of which have been part of the Sherwood constituency since its creation in 1983 and, indeed prior to that, in the previous incarnation of the Newark constituency. We therefore propose that they should remain in Sherwood and that the Newark and Sherwood wards of Dover Beck and Lowdham should be in the Newark constituency, which they largely are at the moment and that the Gedling ward of Trent Valley should be included within the Nottingham East and Carlton constituency. Overall these changes would mean that 69,895, which is 97.4 per cent of electors in Newark, and 45,718, which is 63.5 per cent of those in Sherwood, would remain in the same constituency compared with 91.6 per cent and 52.2 two per cent under the initial proposals.

In Derbyshire we note that the electorate of the county of Derbyshire at 756,550 gives an entitlement to 10.12 constituencies. The Commission have allocated ten seats. Several of the seats as proposed have electorates well above the electoral quota, and in certain parts of the county the Commission have limited choices as a result as to their proposals.

We support the unchanged High Peak constituency, which remains coterminous with its borough. We do not believe there is any benefit in amending it in any way. Indeed, once again, we would say that there is no basis really within the statutory criteria for it to be changed, in that it is coterminous with its local authority so there is no local authority boundary reason. It is exactly the same as the existing constituency. Clearly, if there are no changes then no ties are broken by any changes, so we would strongly support the retention of an unchanged High Peak.

We note the borough of Chesterfield and the districts of Bolsover and North East Derbyshire, which currently contain three whole seats, have a combined electorate of

only 212,817, which means they have an entitlement to just 2.85. Also the shape of the current North East Derbyshire constituency limits the available options by which it may be enlarged to the south.

We therefore agree that the rural western part of North East Derbyshire district should be included in the Derbyshire Dales constituency and that the reconfiguration of the remainder of the seats with the Bolsover and Chesterfield constituencies in the north of the Amber Valley borough has created a coherent new pattern of seats, although we do regret the division of the Bolsover district between two seats.

We also support the proposed Erewash constituency, which is preserved intact with the addition of Ockbrook and Borrowash ward. In Derby we note that the City has an electorate of 170,659 and a theoretical entitlement to 2.28 constituencies. Currently there are two seats wholly within the City and the Allestree, Oakwood and Spondon wards are in the Mid Derbyshire constituency.

We agree with the decision of the Commission to retain Allestree in a constituency with Belper and Duffield. Allestree is a discrete community within Derby. It has strong ties along the A6 with these towns within the Mid Derbyshire constituency, but we do note that the remaining 16 wards of Derby still have a combined electorate which is too large to sustain two whole seats. We therefore accept that the Mickleover ward, which lies to the west of the A38, is the most suitable to include in South Derbyshire constituency, of which it was a part until 1997. We believe that the arrangement of the rest of Derby into two seats is sensible and the seats would have a very clear boundary south of the City centre along the railway line.

We do believe that the inclusion of the Aston ward of South Derbyshire in the Derby South constituency is an anomaly. It is an orphan ward anomaly. Also its inclusion in Derby South is in order to reduce the electorate of South Derbyshire rather than to increase that of Derby South. We recognise however that there is no obvious alternative within the current arrangement of seats to that. We would consider any counter-proposal which retained Aston ward in South Derbyshire. Finally, on this, on the matter on which there appears to be some unanimity, at the moment at least, we believe that Derby East and Derby West may be rather more appropriate names for these seats.

To sum up: we set out the details, the ward lists for all the counter-proposed constituencies, the 15 counter-proposed constituencies, which we make within the appendices. We, as the other parties, will make a detailed written submission, including statistics and maps of the constituencies before 5 December. We reserve our position and we will comment on all proposals that have been made, and which will be made during this consultation during the secondary consultation period.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Are there any questions on that submission? No. In that case we will take a break. The next booked slots we have are at one o'clock. I do not know if there is anybody who is going to be fitted in before that. On that basis we will reconvene the hearing at one o'clock.

After a short break

Time Noted: 1:00 pm

MR SHIPMAN: I am speaking about Bolsover. I will keep it short and sweet so I do not bore you to death. I live and work in Bolsover. I work for a local authority within the district of Bolsover. We all know that the confusion that constituents have over who is responsible for what and who their representative is for that particular area. Working in local government I see this problem on a daily basis. So why not better respect the local authority boundaries for Bolsover and North East really. One question I have got is: what connection does Dronfield have to the district of Bolsover? They are so far apart, the connections themselves just do not work. The roads themselves connecting Dronfield and Bolsover - it does not even exist.

So, even under the Boundary Commission's own guidelines, if you like, what they have done to Dronfield is actually a mess, because it actually splits Dronfield up and it does not respect their own guidelines. Therefore I do not think that the current proposals by the Boundary Commissions are quite appropriate for North East and Bolsover, and I think they should better respect the local authority boundaries rather than splitting things up and what-have-you, and that is what I have got to add to that.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. We will move on now to Cllr Alex Dale. Before you start to speak, could you give your full name and address please?

CLLR DALE: My name is Alexander Guy Dale and my full address is 9 Aston Close, Dronfield, Derbyshire, S18 2FR. Unfortunately I will be speaking for quite a while, so I apologise about that if I do bore you.

Good afternoon everyone. As I say, I live in Dronfield in North East Derbyshire. I serve as a councillor on neighbouring Unstone Parish Council as well as Dronfield Town Council and I represent Coal Aston ward in the parish of Dronfield on North East Derbyshire District Council. I am also chairman of the North Derbyshire Conservative Association, which includes the current constituencies of Bolsover, Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire.

I am here to express my very strong objections to the Boundary Commission's initial proposals for the North East Derbyshire and Bolsover areas as part of the 2018 review

and also to support the counter-proposals already put forward by the Conservative Party.

Firstly, I wish to make this hearing aware of two motions, which were recently passed at Dronfield Town Council and Unstone Parish Council, with the unanimous support of all councillors present at the meetings, including several Labour councillors and independent members as well as Conservatives. At Dronfield Town Council we voted to strongly object to the Boundary Commission's initial proposals on the basis that it will see the Parish of Dronfield split between two constituencies. The Motion also stated that the proposals have no regard to the existing constituency of North East Derbyshire, which is to be split into three. It failed to respect local ties, as Dronfield has no shared identity, cultural or otherwise, with Bolsover and its district.

At Unstone Parish Council we objected similarly that Unstone Parish was to be based in a new constituency with Bolsover and district. We criticised the proposals for having no regard to the existing constituency or district council area of North East Derbyshire. We explained that the proposals failed to respect local ties, as Unstone again has no shared identity with Bolsover and its district; there are no direct bus routes from Unstone Parish to Bolsover and nor is Bolsover a local sphere of influence for residents living in Unstone Parish. It was our belief that Unstone Parish should remain firmly within North East Derbyshire district, to which it has strong local ties. We proposed as a more suitable alternative, a North East Derbyshire constituency which is coterminous with the district council area and would satisfy the electorate criteria.

These two motions I feel spell out very clearly the reasons why the draft proposals are not in the best interests of our area and nor do they comply with the Boundary Commission's own criteria for how constituencies should be reviewed. However, I want to draw a bit further on some of these key points and explain why the Commission's draft proposals need to be significantly revised. The initial proposals give no regard to the existing constituencies. North East Derbyshire constituency, as I have said, is to be split across no less than four other constituencies. While I support the movement of Barrow Hill and New Whittington into the Chesterfield constituency, given that that ward is already past the borough council area, carving up the rest of North East Derbyshire into Derbyshire Dales and two new seats is unacceptable. This is a constituency, which under its current name and the variation of North Eastern Derbyshire, dates back to 1885 and has largely included the same towns and villages since then. Certainly since 1950 it has covered very much the same area it covers now. It already correlates well with the district council area of the same name but it is not quite coterminous, so could be improved further.

As for Bolsover, the seat dates back to 1950 and again has largely covered the same area since then. However, under the Commission's proposals, it is set to be split in half, despite there being no need to do so. The initial proposals also have no regard to the existing local authority areas. North East Derbyshire district will be split across three

different constituencies, which, I know as a local councillor, will only serve to confuse residents and make it more difficult for the district to lobby government with a united position. Again, North East Derbyshire District Council has been around for many years, dating back to 1974. However, in reality, it goes much further under different names; so, from 1894 the bulk of North East Derbyshire district area was known as the Chesterfield Rural District, which combined with the Clay Cross and Dronfield Urban District to form the very same area that is now the district council. The important point here is that local people self-identify as being part of North East Derbyshire. The area clearly has a sense of shared heritage. In my view residents want to continue identifying as being part of North East Derbyshire and the Commission's draft proposals put that under significant threat. A coterminous North East Derbyshire district constituency would satisfy the electorate criteria, so I fail to see why this has not already been proposed.

Bolsover District Council has also been in place since 1974, but again also has a shared heritage dating back to 1894 as the Clowne and Blackwell Rural Districts and the Bolsover Urban District. The Bolsover District Council area does not have a sufficient electorate to form a constituency of its own, but there is absolutely no reason why it should be split in-between two. It is my view that the residents in Bolsover will want the district to remain firmly together and it would be better suited by adding Alfreton, Somercotes and Ironville and Riddings to the south of the seat from Amber Valley.

The draft proposals fail to respect local ties. As I have said, the two districts of North East Derbyshire and Bolsover have distinct identities and cultures. However, nowhere is the Commission's failure to respect local ties more clear than in the way that Dronfield Civil Parish area is to be split between two constituencies. By moving Dronfield Woodhouse into Derbyshire Dales and the rest of the Dronfield ward into a new seat with Bolsover, the Commission is splitting a town that has an incredibly cohesive and united community. The residents I have spoken to are shocked when I tell them what is planned. I would challenge the Commissioners to come to Dronfield and walk along Pentland Road, which is the boundary between Dronfield Woodhouse ward and Gosforth Valley. This road effectively cuts through the middle of a very large housing estate which sees itself very much as part of the Dronfield community.

There are also no direct bus routes between Dronfield and Bolsover. No one in Dronfield, Unstone, Eckerton or Killamarsh would see Bolsover as a local sphere of influence and instead residents flock to Sheffield and Chesterfield as the main centres locally. Finally, the draft proposals do not give adequate regard to the geographical factors. I accept that North East Derbyshire district is an unusual shape in the way that it wraps around Chesterfield and I can appreciate that Bolsover is quite a long and thin constituency. However, I do not feel that the current proposals do anything to improve that. After all, they would be putting Dronfield in the same constituency as Tibshelf, which is 30 minutes away by car. Similarly, they would put Dronfield Woodhouse in the

same constituency as Sudbury which is over an hour away by car. When you look at the Bolsover and North East Derbyshire districts, the main geographical separation is the M1 motorway and the Commission's draft proposals again fail to respect this rough dividing line between the two areas with the two new constituencies crossing it.

In summary, I do not feel that the Commission's draft proposals are adequate in meeting any of the criteria, as set out in the terms of reference. The proposals could be significantly improved by making a North East Derbyshire coterminous seat and keeping the Bolsover District Council area together, with the addition of Lowgates and Woodthorpe in the North and Alfreton, Somercotes and Ironville and Riddings in the south.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that the objections I have put forward to the current proposals are not partisan. The Motions carried at Dronfield and Unstone achieved unanimous cross-party support. In the latest edition of the Dronfield Eye magazine, the North East Derbyshire Labour MP, Natascha Engel, has made clear her concerns over the splitting up of the seat, saying that it will only cause even greater confusion about who represents whom. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any questions anyone has on clarification? No. That is great. Thank you very much. In that case we will move on to Cllr Kevin Buttery. If you could give your name and address.

CLLR BUTTERY: Kevin Buttery, 8 Dell Park Avenue, Kilburn, Belper, DE56 0PR. I am Cllr Kevin Buttery and the leader of the Conservative Councillors' Group and the council leader at Amber Valley Borough Council and also the Chair of the Amber Valley Conservative Association.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Commission for treating Derbyshire as a separate entity and for not crossing regional boundaries. I am surprised that the Commission has proposed more changes than I believe are necessary. I am here to support the counter-proposals put forward by the Conservative Party and in particular in relation to Amber Valley. The Commission's proposals split the parishes of Ripley specifically the ward of Heage and Ambergate and part of the Codnor and Waingroves ward. I believe that Ripley should be reunited with the Amber Valley constituency, with which it has historical ties.

I do not consider it appropriate to have Ripley Town Council and its parishes split between different Members of Parliament, which is the current commission's proposal. Amber Valley Borough Council's headquarters are also based in Ripley, so the affiliation themselves is with Amber Valley. Ripley and its parishes have no ties with Clay Cross and should clearly remain within the Amber Valley parliamentary constituency.

I do appreciate that some areas within Amber Valley need to be allocated to other constituencies, and I can understand why Alfreton, Somercotes, Ironville and Riddings have been grouped with other communities also along the A38/M1 corridor, such as South Normanton.

I do not support a Clay Cross and Alfreton seat as I do feel the North East Derbyshire seat should also become coterminous with the North East Derbyshire authority area.

I do support placing the town of Belper into the Derbyshire Dales constituency, in which it does have historical ties. It was previously part of West Derbyshire before the change in 2010 when it was transferred into the newly created Mid Derbyshire seat. I am aware that local Conservative district and parish councillors in Belper support this move because of the links Belper town has with the rural community, the South West Parishes, Crich and Alport wards of Amber Valley, which are already located in the Derbyshire Dales constituency. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you, are there any questions. No. Thank you very much. We will move on now to Mrs Margaret Beckett.

MRS BECKETT: (MP for Derby South) Thank you very much. This section of the hearing may be more focused on what might be called partial representations so, as we have already heard, from people who are reflecting particular areas or interests rather than as this morning the whole of the region. Although I intend to comment only on the proposals for Derby, I do want to stress at the outset that I have no personal bias and no personal axe to grind on the proposals for change to the existing constituency of Derby South, nor can I have because the Commission have - I might say - cleaved or divided it half to the new proposed Derby North and half to the new proposed Derby South. Consequently I have an almost equal interest in both the proposed new constituencies.

I am going to confine my comments to what is proposed for the constituent wards of the Commission's scheme, since, if they do decide to reconsider any part of the scheme, it is those wards which will be the building blocks. I am very conscious that they are big wards and - can I say at the outset? - that I think any and all of us who have looked at the position and tried to consider what might be put forward as alternatives to the Commission's proposals have probably all got the deepest sympathy with the Commissioners in the task that faces them.

In paragraph 36 on page 14 of their report, the Commissioners says say that they are proposing what they call a "reconfigured" Derby South and that, compared to the alternatives, these proposals and I quote "more closely resemble the existing pattern of constituencies and retain the north-south axis of the two existing constituencies". If I may say so, I accept that the map shows a north-south line, but it seems to me, as it has to others who spoke this morning, that the constituencies which are proposed are a

Derby East and a Derby West; and that, far from retaining a local identity, I feel that the proposals as they stand, and particularly with the nomenclature as it stands, might cause considerable confusion. When I think of my present case load, my spirit quails at the idea of all of those who presently are and have been, for perhaps generations, in Derby South expecting to be represented by the MP who will sit in Derby East.

That brings me to the proposed new Derby South. I accept of course that it retains four wards from the existing constituency. But to those four wards, it is proposed to add one ward from the existing Derby North, two from the existing Mid Derbyshire and one, Aston, the orphan ward, from South Derbyshire. With regards to Aston ward, which it is said may have been added primarily to reduce the numbers of electors in South Derbyshire, not only is it unlike the other three new wards in a different local authority area, but large parts, perhaps most of that area, are on the other side of the A50, which is a not insignificant boundary. So I am afraid it is quite hard for me to see that the proposed new Derby South, one way or another, resembles the existing pattern of the constituency.

That brings me to that pattern in terms of what the Commission calls the “north-south axis”. There are wards in the proposed Derby North which may never have been in that constituency, certainly in modern times, although I accept that I have only represented the area for 33 years. In which time there have been a number of boundary reorganisations. Equally there are wards in the proposed new Derby South which may never, ever have been in Derby South before, and I certainly know that that is also the view of at least some of my political opponents locally.

Having said all that, I fully recognise both that the Commission’s main driver has to be the numbers of electors and the real difficulties that presents. But my final, and perhaps my principal concern, arises from the combination of those numbers and the nature of my existing constituency. Although over the years ward boundaries and ward names have varied, to me the core part of Derby South has always been in the inner city areas, which in today’s constituency are mostly reflected in the wards called Arboretum Normanton and Osmaston and Sinfen, which now nearly everybody now calls just Sinfen but does contain the old Osmaston ward.

These are the areas of my constituency where you have always been likely to find the greatest levels of unemployment and deprivation and also the areas where classically there is most likely to be a transient population and under-registration of electors. The electoral numbers for the new proposed - I am going to call it Derby East but the Commission still calls Derby South - are already not that far from the Commission’s maximum. We all know that the Electoral Commission warned the Government that it believed the electoral register to be incomplete by several millions, and we now know that that was certainly the case, short by at least 2 million electors across the country, whose existence the Commission has not been able to reflect in these proposals.

Finally, all I would say is I would urge the Commission to bear in mind when they are re-examining their proposals, the very strong likelihood that their proposals for Derby East and West may in reality bring them much closer to perhaps in breach of their electoral guidelines. The latest figures that I have seen for their parliamentary electorate in Derby certainly would bring both the new constituencies over 77,000 and, I see from looking at the Commission's book, there are only four constituencies out of 44 in the region that presently would be at that number. Those are rural constituencies where the same considerations and circumstances of under registration are, it seems to me, less likely to apply. So all I am saying is I hope the Commission will bear that in mind if and when they look afresh at these proposals. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Could I ask you a question just for clarification? Obviously the Commission works on the basis of the numbers and of the point for this, but is your position that any constituency boundaries, particularly in Derby South, drawn on that basis, may be short lived because by the time another review comes along the numbers will have changed significantly?

MRS BECKETT: I think that is absolutely correct. Now that we know--- I mean, in the old days when you had to take more account of local links and some of the other things that people have been taking about today, the Boundary Commission only did something about every ten years and there was more likelihood of retaining a local identity and a local pattern. But in five years' time, yes, I think it is extremely likely that there will could be significant change and that could mean significant change in the constituencies, which seems to me to be highly undesirable if we want to encourage people to have a sense of community and to vote, whoever they vote for.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any other questions? No. Okay, thank you very much.

MRS BECKETT: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The next speaker is booked at 2.30 so we will adjourn now for lunch until 2.30.

After the luncheon adjournment

Time Noted 2.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon. We will make a start again. The first person who is going to make a submission is Mrs Janet Scott, so if she could come forward please. If I can ask before you start if you will give your full name and address.

MRS SCOTT: My name is Janet Scott and I live at 7 Victoria Embankment, Nottingham.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

MRS SCOTT: (Nottingham Conservatives) I am Janet Scott and Chairman of Nottingham Conservatives. I am here today to propose a change to the Commission's proposals for Broxstowe and Hucknall and Nottingham South and Beeston. Under the Commission's proposal moving Bilborough ward to the new seat of Broxstowe and Hucknall will mean Bilborough ward will become an orphan ward in the City of Nottingham. We wish to propose that Bilborough ward be kept in the City and placed in the new seat of Nottingham South and Beeston, thereby keeping Bilborough's long established ties with the City of Nottingham.

We also wish to propose that the wards of Chilwell West and Toton and Chilwell Meadows be moved back to the new seat of Broxstowe and Hucknall from Nottingham South and Beeston, thereby restoring the ties between those wards and the current seat of Broxstowe and indeed the fact that it borders Stapleford town. Numerically this direct swap also makes sense, as Bilborough has an electorate of just over 11,000, whilst the combined electorate of Chilwell West and Toton and Chilwell Meadows is around about the same number.

Finally, I would like to propose that Nottingham South and Beeston be renamed Nottingham West and Beeston as we believe this far better describes the proposed new constituency. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any questions on that matter? No. Thank you very much. I will call Ms Linda Woodings, and if you could just give us your name please.

MS WOODINGS: Thank you. My name is Linda Woodings. I am a city councillor in Nottingham, although I do not speak on behalf of the City Council. I am also a member of the regional board of the Labour Party for the East Midlands and I am a magistrate on the Nottinghamshire Bench. I would like to speak in relation to the proposals that relate to Nottingham and its surrounding seats; specifically in relation to the proposals for Nottingham South and Beeston. Although we are heavy hearted to see the loss of Clifton North and south wards to the proposed new Bridgford ward, I do accept the logic, considering the criteria that the Boundary Commission have been set - that there is a logic to using the River Trent as a boundary.

I do also support the proposals of the Boundary Commission that there is a logic and rationale to the inclusion of Beeston as a part of Nottingham South, for two reasons. First of all, the University of Nottingham is directly on the west of the boundary of Nottingham South. However, the two areas of that part of Nottingham South and Beeston are linked by having large student populations from the University of Nottingham. In fact there is no boundary between the two; the conurbation simply

extends across the road. It is from one residential area straight into another. But there are also very strong local transport links between the current Nottingham South and Beeston. Significantly there is a new tram link; there is the train link; and there are numerous local bus routes linked by the main artery of the A6004. Similarly, because there are those very same links, especially the tram, we do see the logic of that continuing through to Chilwell and then on to Attenborough and Toton for the same reasons; so I do see the logic of extending the constituency boundary down to covering those areas. Other proposals put forward seem to split Chilwell and that seemed illogical. For the Nottingham East and Carlton proposals, once again there is a distinct rationale to extending Nottingham East out eastwards to cover Carlton, Gedling, Netherfield and Colwick.

When I first moved to Nottingham in 1999 I lived just off Porchester Road, and I was bemused to learn that the other side of that road fell within a completely different parliamentary constituency. In truth - and you can see it quite clearly on the maps provided by the Commission for this consultation - there is no distinctive border and the conurbation extends unhindered over the current boundary. There is no natural border now between the two. Also I feel there is merit to ensuring that the Carlton area and the Arnold areas have been kept together as communities, albeit they would not be in separate constituencies.

Finally, I would want to make comment about the nature of city populations and particularly university-city populations. The Office for National Statistics estimated, in their mid-year analysis of population in 2015, that the residential population of Nottingham was 318,900. Nottingham also has a high turnover population because, at the last census in 2011 through to the ONS calculation in 2015, 21 per cent of the City's population had changed. There are also substantial amounts of house building in the City at the moment and in the surrounding suburbs of the City. Currently the highest rate of building for 15 years; 1,800 dwellings currently under proposed or being developed at the moment with an on-target move to a further 2,500 homes by 2020 from 2015. That is just in the City boundary. Add into that factor with the introduction of individual registration, Nottingham and its surrounding areas, like every other university city, will be left significantly underrepresented in Parliament under the current criteria used. Yes, every student adds value to Nottingham City and its surrounding suburbs, but as individuals they are there for nine months of the year; they are still entitled to be counted and to have their voice heard; and they still raise casework and concerns with their local MPs.

Of course I accept that the Boundary Commission has used the criteria as laid down in the regulations, but it remains that Cities, and especially university cities, are disadvantaged by the criteria set, and I believe it right to state for the public record at this public hearing that I hope the Boundary Commission will give consideration to this when they examine their proposals.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any questions to raise on that? Okay, thank you.

MS WOODINGS: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The next person we will call is Cllr Jonathan Smale. If you could give your name and address please before you start to speak.

CLLR SMALE: Good afternoon everyone. I am Jonathan Smale, councillor for Chaddesden. My address is 6 Chapple Side, Chapple Street, Spondon Derby, DE21 7JQ. The reason I am standing here is for two reasons really. As a local councillor for Chaddesden we also have a local level issue in terms of distinguishing the boundaries between Derwent and Chaddesden as they are postally all one group, so I personally feel that Derwent should be grouped with Chaddesden in the constituency for Derby South. I just feel that we already struggle with having local issues being identified between both ward councillors of each constituencies. I think separating them on a national issue will make confusion for the MPs and their staff because they might receive complaints from one other constituent that does not identify to them where it should belong to the other MP.

Furthermore, I think it is a bit concerning that the names stay the same. I certainly think that they should be renamed as East and West. I think it is crazy that Oakwood, one of the most northern wards of our City, is in the southern district of the constituency and yet you have Blagreaves, which is one of the most southern constituencies of Derby, that is going to be put into Derby North. So I certainly think that the names should probably change to East and West to properly reflect a more even look on the map, but that is everything I have got to put forward. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: There is a question. If you could give your name and address before you start your question please.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: My name is James Strawbridge of 4 Melbourne Road, West Bridgford. I would just like to ask the speaker if Derwent ward were put into the same seat as the territory to its east, would he recommend that Sinfin ward be transferred into the more western half of Derby?

CLLR SMALE: Absolutely. I would agree with that. It would be definitely Sinfin obviously because it is more towards the southern area of the Derby City boundary itself, so it would be more suited if Sinfin was put into the western side and obviously Derwent gets put into the eastern seat - or should I say southern seat. We are not --- You know, speaking hypothetically if there were name changes of course.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: Furthermore, it would seem, looking at the map, that the railway line makes a more obvious boundary between east and west in the north of the City than in the south of the City.

CLLR SMALE: Absolutely. I completely agree. If you are looking at the current boundary, as they are pre-boundary review, you can definitely see the north and south divide with the proposed changes. It does not really look as a north-south divide, it looks more of an east and western split. I think that fits with a great description in terms of the railway line showing that boundary between both constituency seats.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much.

CLLR SMALE: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We will move on now to Mr Chris Williamson please. Again, if you could give your name and address.

MR WILLIAMSON: Of course, yes. Chris Williamson Queen Mary Lodge, Duffield Road, Derby, DE22 1AA.

I will start by just making clear that I used to be the Member of Parliament for Derby North from 2010 until 2015. I have lived in and around Derby all my life so I am very familiar with the City. I want to speak in support of the Boundary Commission's proposals in essence. As you will be aware, I am sure, from 1950, since we have had single member constituencies in this country, Derby North and South have always been the configuration for the parliamentary constituencies in Derby.

I was mentioned in dispatches by one of the earlier contributors following a presentation I made to the Boundary Commission's aborted proposals last time. I was making the point then that there is certainly a community of interest I think between Derwent and Chaddesden. Indeed, people who live in Derwent very often refer to themselves as living in Chad, as it is known colloquially; but I do understand and accept that the Boundary Commission is in a very difficult place because of the immovable arithmetical formula that you have to apply, and so I think it will inevitably therefore mean that, all over the country, there will be the need for some unfortunate splitting of communities of interest. However, I do come back to the point that there is a strong community of interest between Chaddesden and Derwent.

If I might perhaps suggest an alternative configuration if the Boundary Commission are minded to do so, it would be to consider moving the Normanton ward out of the new Derby North and bringing the Chaddesden ward back into the constituency. The reason I say that is I was a councillor in Normanton for 20 years, so I know the area very well,

and there is a very strong community of interest between Sinfin and Normanton. Indeed, a large part of the Normanton ward, the Austin Estate, a lot of people who live there would often refer to themselves as living in Sinfin. It is very close to the old Sinfin Estate, so there is a strong community of interest there. If the Boundary Commission were minded to make a shift, I would suggest that would be the one that would make more sense. Doing that would mean that it would certainly be within the numerical criterion that you are obliged to follow. I think that would result in the Derby North constituency having 77,211 constituents and Derby South would be 75,885. I accept that, as things currently stand in your existing proposition, the numbers are slightly closer than that, but that would still be well within the margin that you have to work with. That I think would also make it easier to sustain that historic Derby North and South configuration. I do say that is important. It has stood the test of time for over 60 years now and I think therefore it would be something that the Boundary Commission ought to think very carefully before they move to a different configuration. I would suggest therefore that the proposition that I put forward, if you are minded to make a change to take account of the community of interest between Chaddesden and Derwent, that might be the one to do.

Having said that of course, there is a strong community of interest between Arboretum and Normanton, so there is no easy solution here. It could equally be argued that there is as strong a community of interest between Normanton and Arboretum as there is between Chaddesden and Derwent. That is why I say it is very difficult. There is no easy solution. Indeed, as I made the point local people living in Derwent refer to themselves as living in Chad, colloquially known, people living in the Arboretum ward will refer to themselves as living in Normanton. They do not really make that geographic distinction in the way in which the council has to for its administrative purposes. To me that would seem to be a reasonable compromise to take account of the points that have been made by other contributors.

I am not making necessarily a strong case for that, but if the Commission is minded to make a shift that would be the one that I think would make the most sense. Having said that however I would be quite content with the proposition that the Boundary Commission has actually put forward in the first instance.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think we have a couple of questions on that. If you could give your name and address

MR FOX: Alan Fox, 59 St Albans Road Leicester. Mr Williamson, if you move the Chaddesden ward into the proposed Derby North, that then leaves the Oakwood ward adrift from the proposed Derby South, so you end up with a Derby South that is not contiguous. Is that your intention?

MR WILLIAMSON: No, I do not think it does actually and, as I say, it is not a perfect solution, it is the best compromise I think. But if you actually look at the boundaries,

there is a common boundary between Spondon and Oakwood in fact, so I do not think that that would necessarily create the difficulty that you have identified.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes,

MR PRATT: Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. My question was the same.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think we need your address as well.

MR PRATT: Sorry, from the Conservative Party, Matthew Parker Street. I do not know if the Commission have got on there they have got the proposed Derby South seat. I think if you look at it, can you find where there is a link between Oakwood and Spondon on that?

MR WILLIAMSON: I take the point you are making there. It is very tenuous and I guess you could legitimately argue that there is not an obvious connection. However, I stand by the point that if you want to make a change in order to bring in Chaddesden and Derwent together, the sort of suggestion I am making would be the best way forward. I am not actually making a strong point in that regard because I actually made the point at the outset that I actually support the proposition put forward by the Boundary Commission, but if you want to make that change, which I understand all the speakers have made this morning, it seems the only way in which you can do that --- Obviously that is an issue. I am not sure whether you made that point yourself this morning in terms of bringing Derwent and Chaddesden together, but there is an anomaly that you quite rightly pointed out. They are quite close but I do take your point that it looks slightly anomalous if you were to go for that.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Just to be clear, is there a connection between them boundary-wise or not?

MR PRATT: I am looking at the Boundary Commission map and certainly I can see no connection between Oakwood and Spondon. In between is the Chaddesden ward. I cannot see a connection.

MR WILLIAMSON: When you drive up I think it is Oregon Way(*sic*) you have Chaddesden on your left-hand side, Spondon on your right-hand side and at the end of Oregon Way it leads you into Oakwood.

MR PRATT: I do not know if you want to have a look at the---

MR WILLIAMSON: I can see the point you are making. All I am saying is that if you drive up Oregon Way you will find that when you get to the end that kind of leads you into the Oakwood Estate. On the right-hand side you have Spondon, on the left-hand side you have--- It is not ideal; I accept that.

MR PRATT: But the ward boundary might not quite reflect that.

MR WILLIAMSON: It might not, no.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Okay, thank you.

MR WILLIAMSON: Sorry, the infrastructure, if you like, the road does reflect---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: There is a connection on the ground although the ward boundary might not show. Yes, I understand what you are saying. We have just got one further question. I think we need your name and address again, or name at least for---

MR STRAWBRIDGE: James Strawbridge. Looking at the ward map, it is clear that if one wishes to retain local ties between wards in both the north and south of the City, that the best way of keeping on the one hand Chaddesden and Derwent in the same seat and, on the other hand, Normanton and Sinfin in the same seat is to put Derwent into the proposed South, which ought to be called East, and Sinfin into the proposed North, which ought to be called West. That way Sinfin is in the same seat as Normanton et cetera. Anyway, I have made my point.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We are running slightly ahead of schedule, but as people have attended we will continue. If I can ask Mr James Strawbridge to make his submission please.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: My name is James Strawbridge. I have made an independent submission. My address is 4 Melbourne Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5BG. I have several voluntary hats, including being the treasurer of my local community association and being on governing bodies.

When it comes to the initial proposals for the region there are two main areas which need reconsideration. First within Derbyshire, the Derbyshire Dales constituency can easily be brought up to quota without requiring major changes in the north-east of the county. The neatest and obvious option is to return the four Belper wards to the seat, given that for the six elections 1983-2005 the seat contained the town which is, after all, served by the same railway as Matlock and very much part of the Derwent Valley. I recall much vociferous opposition on topographical grounds two boundary reviews ago to Belper being put into the same seat as Ripley. I was at the hearing.

The four Belper wards would bring the Derbyshire Dales electorate to 77,461. An alternative would be to add the two wards of Duffield and Allestree, whose 14,973 voters would give the seat a total of 75,882. Either option enables Amber Valley to retain the four wards of Ripley, Ripley and Marehay, Ironville and Riddings and

Wingfield which gives it an electorate of just over 74,000 if Belper is returned to Derbyshire Dales and 75,743 if the second option is taken. This then means that you need have hardly any change to North East Derbyshire. All you need to do is add on the wards of Pilsley, Moreton and Shirland to compensate for the loss of Barrow Hill and New Whittington to Chesterfield. This gives you a North East Derbyshire with 75,189 voters.

Finally, the re-drawn Bolsover, having lost Pilsley, Morton and Shirland, receives from Amber Valley the three wards of Alfreton, Somercotes and Swanwick to give a new electorate of 76,342, which is hardly any different from the Bolsover proposed in the 2011 review. I think it more acceptable for Alfreton to be in the same seat as Shirebrook than for Shirebrook to end up in the same seat as Dronfield, as in the current proposal.

We now turn to Nottinghamshire where the proposals, although they are quite a lot better than 2011, not least given there is a far more acceptable cross-border seat with Leicestershire, they need some tweaking. The most important thing here is that Bilborough does not belong in a county seat. It belongs in the same seat as Aspley ward. Those wards have been together for a great many reviews. I therefore propose a Nottingham North comprising all the current constituency plus Berridge from current Nottingham East - 75,421.

You then have two options, depending on whether you want to keep the current Gedling constituency together. If you accept the splitting up of current Gedling, then you have a Nottingham East and Carlton with the Sherwood ward instead of Arboretum. This keeps Sherwood and Mapperley wards together and those two wards have been in the same seat for as long as one can remember, certainly since the mid-1950s. Arboretum ward belongs better with other central wards like Radford and Park and Bridge. You would end up with a Nottingham East and Carlton with just under 75,000 voters. With the Arboretum ward added on to the proposed Nottingham South and Beeston, you then would not need to include the two most western wards of Chilwell West and Toton and Chilwell Meadows and those could reimburse the Broxstowe and Hucknall division as proposed. They would accurately compensate for the loss of Bilborough ward.

However, this is all assuming that one wishes to split the current Gedling constituency into two. It might be neater to do it as follows. First of all, after the re-drawn Nottingham North you take all the other five wards of current East and you add from current South, Radford and Park, Leen Valley and Bridge, giving you a Nottingham central of just over 72,000 voters. The rest of the western bit of Nottingham, the Wollaton, Dunkirk, Lenton bloc, you add to all but the most northern three of the current Broxstowe constituency, which still keeps the university bloc together, and it means that it keeps all of Chilwell and Beeston together. You lose to a re-drawn Sherwood, the wards of Kimberley, Watnall and Nuthall West and Greasley. Then you have a re-drawn Sherwood, which manages to keep Hucknall in a seat that is mainly with territory

to its north and east as opposed to with territory entirely to its west. In short, you have Hucknall, you have Kimberley and Watnall and Nuthall West. You have the three most northern wards of Gedling borough around the Calverton, Newstead, Bestwood belt and you finally have the remaining wards from Newark and Sherwood, apart from Dover Beck and Lowdham, which together with Dumbles augment the current Gedling to bring it up to quota. In short, a Gedling that is comparable to that initially proposed by the Commission two reviews ago.

I happen to think that is the neatest solution, not least because, if you are going to have a reduction, it is better to carve up one seat completely the better to preserve most of the others. You end up with a seat that includes the whole of current Gedling and a seat that includes the whole of Nottingham North, plus one that includes most of Nottingham East and another with most of Broxstowe.

Elsewhere in the region there is only one minor point I have to make. That relates to one ward in North West Leicestershire: Ellistown and Battleflat, which I think should be kept in the revised North West Leicestershire since, if you look at the map, it has closer ties to Coalville. I hope you could hear all that.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Do you have a copy of that information or have you submitted that online?

MR STRAWBRIDGE: I will submit it all online to you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is very good. Are there any queries or questions? Yes, one at the back.

MR WILLIAMSON: It is not a question as such, I just wanted to clarify a point I made in my submission if I may. I referred to Oregon Way; I inadvertently referred to Oregon Way. I meant to say Acorn Way. I realised as soon as I had sat down. I hope you do not mind me taking this opportunity to correct the record. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Could you give your name again please?

MR WILLIAMSON: Yes. It is Chris Williamson.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any other points?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I am from the Belper Labour Party. Thanks for the very interesting geography lesson you gave there. My concern about that proposal is not so much a question: is the Belper going into Derbyshire Dales? Coming from the area myself I know that the community then in Belper has much more affinity with Ripley in Amber Valley and those areas. If it was in Derbyshire Dales it would become very kind

of cut off. We have got very poor transport links with there. Ripley is within walking distance. You can't do that with the rest of the Dales.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: You are on the same railway line as Matlock I believe.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: The other option would be to put Duffield and Allestree in with Derbyshire Dales to make up the numbers. That would enable the four Belper wards to stay in Amber Valley.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right okay. It is just---

MR STRAWBRIDGE: I think that it is unnecessary to require a major revision of the two seats in the North East of the county. That is the current North East Derbyshire and the current Bolsover. I also happen to think that - I do not know whether you would agree on this - Ripley belongs better in the same seat as Codnor, Heanor and Langley Mill than in the same seat as Clay Cross.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I do not think we want to get into discussing the---

MR STRAWBRIDGE: In short the six---

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Excuse me. The point that you have made, the statement that you are making, is that Belper and Ripley have some tie together.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They have a much greater community than we do to Matlock.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We will take that on with the information we have got here. Are there any other points? Yes. If you give your name again for the record.

MR FOX: Alan Fox. On the alternative proposals for what should go into Derbyshire Dales, you say it can either be Belper or Allestree and Duffield. Would you agree that it could just be Allestree, as in the Liberal Democrats proposals?

MR STRAWBRIDGE: You might have a problem there if Duffield and Belper were then put into Amber Valley because that might exceed the quota. I am not sure that you would be able to remove an extra ward from the north of Amber Valley unless you completely withdrew my proposed Bolsover, where the aim is to have as little disruption

as possible for the North East Derbyshire Bolsover bloc, rather like the 2011 proposals for that part of Derbyshire.

MR FOX: I think actually that the Liberal Democrat proposals which put four Amber Valley wards into Bolsover mean that Duffield does not then---

MR STRAWBRIDGE: I would be very interested to see that.

MR FOX: The second thing is--- I do not know if you saw my presentation this morning.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: I was not here sorry.

MR FOX: It would appear that you have replicated our proposals for both Gedling and for Sherwood.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: Well, I am pleased that I have agreed with somebody.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Is there a Miss Helen Aldred in attendance? No. In that case we will move to Ms Carol Wright? Again, if you would give your name and address please.

MS WRIGHT: Thank you. Good afternoon everybody. I am Carol Wright. I live at 39 Swinton Rise, Ravenshead, Nottingham. I have lived in Sherwood constituency since its inception in 1983. I worked as office manager for the Member of Parliament for Sherwood for nearly 20 years, until he stood down in 2010. I have an extensive knowledge of the constituency and have submitted evidence to previous boundary reviews.

I broadly accept the Commission's proposals and the amendments outlined by my colleague Greg Cook. I want to address specifically the proposals for the Ollerton and Boughton wards. I would argue for them to remain in the Sherwood constituency. The constituency was formed in 1983 at a previous boundary review from former mining villages, including Ollerton, Boughton, Bilsthorpe, Bestwood, Linby, Calverton and Blidworth. Indeed, the last colliery to close in Britain was the Thoresby colliery in Edwinstowe, also in the constituency, only last year.

The communities retain strong community links. Originally the mines were sunk and built by teams of miners and families who came down from the North East and who set up during that time in the 1920s most of the welfares and the leisure services just purposely to keep their communities together. Mainly the links are orientated towards the west of the Sherwood constituency. Bus routes are most frequent to Mansfield for shopping and banking rather than through the rural villages towards Newark in the east. The Lowdham and Dover Beck wards are essentially rural farm land and have no mining history. They were moved into the Newark constituency by the Boundary

Commission before the 2010 election. There seems little benefit, except to confuse the electorate, in moving them back. The electoral numbers are similar.

I would finally make a few remarks about Hucknall. The movement to the new Broxstowe and Hucknall constituency would reduce the number of local authorities in Sherwood from three to two. As a constituency caseworker, I can tell you that that is quite a benefit because most people ring in and say "Well, I've rung the council", but do not really know which one. So I know the difficulties of working with multiple local authorities and health districts.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any queries? No. Yes. Sorry, did you have a point to make? Give your name again please.

MR STRAWBRIDGE: James Strawbridge. Would I be right in deducing that you would rather see Hucknall with territory entirely to its west in Broxstowe than with territory mainly to its east or north-east as at present?

MS WRIGHT: Probably, yes. I am ambivalent about that bit really. I think if Hucknall has to go out of the Sherwood constituency--- I mean ideally we would want to keep the Sherwood constituency as it is, but certainly I think it is more important to swap and keep Ollerton and Boughton and not bring Lowdham and Dover Beck back.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: That is in line with the way that people travel and the history of those villages; isn't it? That is what you are saying.

MS WRIGHT: Yes, absolutely. I am not sure that people in Hucknall go west as a general rule. There are few bus links. Most of the bus links and indeed the tram link from Hucknall is into the City. It goes down through Nottingham North and into the City from there, so there are no real bus links or anything out to the west from Hucknall.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not even to Watnall and Kimberley.

MS WRIGHT: Well, the A610 runs up through that way and that may be a commuter route for vehicles, but I would not have thought it was much of a better bus route.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much for that submission. We do not have any more appointments until 3.50 so we will adjourn for a break now until 3.50 this afternoon.

After a short break

Time Noted: 3.50 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon. We will continue and we are going to receive a representation from Mr Peat. If you would like to come forward and if you could give your name and address before you start to speak.

MR PEAT: My name is Stephen Peat. I live at 19 Wood Road, Spondon in Derby on the border in the north, Mid Derbyshire boundary of Pauline Latham. I came to this position today to talk to about the changes and swallowing up Spondon into this new boundary consisting of Sinfin, Allenton, Alvaston, Chellaston, Chaddesden and parts of South Derbyshire.

Looking at the information on the website the new boundary would be 76,000 people. I believe that has underestimated the full population and the size of the new housing development that is planned for the period of 2017 to 2027. If you look at the joint structural plan of Derby City Council, they are estimating that in Spondon, south and east side, there could be a housing population, including different types of houses, of 10,000 people that could be established by 2017. Alvaston and Boulton Moor have planning applications already submitted for up to 8,000 people that will be located in this area. Chellaston have planning applications submitted for an extra 7,000 people and Sinfin area up to 3,000 people. The total population within the next five to ten years will be 106,000 instead of 76,000. The information from the national census and the population added to the register for the European referendum, an annual population growth of 2 per cent a year, is the population of many wards will rise by 10 per cent within ten years. That is an estimation.

I believe Derby needs three constituencies instead of two because the data from the electoral roll. Knowing only 75 per cent or 80 per cent submit their registration forms since the changes have taken place. Normally it was in the family. Some people do not fill them back and send them back, so there is a percentage of people missing off the register that should have been counted on. If the Boundary Commission looked at the census, take the people who came from Europe and subtract the people from that and children, you know the information needs to be changed to cater for that population increase in the census.

Also another point I would like to consider, the new Derby South boundary will cause a difference on insurance costs and rising. I just renewed my insurance with an insurance company after I had been searching round. I had a discussion with the insurance broker and asked about boundary changes: how would it affect my insurance, car insurance and anything else? He said areas, some parts of Derby that if this new boundary is going to go ahead will cause with the latest data from the crime figures, employment and associated - what makes insurance higher, how they do their - projections will show Spondon people will pay higher insurance in this new boundary compared to the present Mid Derbyshire boundary.

The second question people of Spondon wants taken to the local forums, Spondon people want to go into Erewash instead of the new one because the boundary is so close together. Everything is interlinked between the two, Erewash, Chad and Derby City Council and Spondon, because it seemed to be a suburb outside the City of Derby's own little area; so people see Erewash as their chosen location to do most businesses instead of the City of Derby. That is to review Spondon, especially to go into Erewash.

Another point of issues is that the Government want to cut MPs by 50. I believe we will not be able to cope with the situation we are under because the population growth is forecast another million, two million over the next coming years; over ten years it will another five million on to the electoral roll. These MPs will be overwhelmed with the work, so they have to employ more people to do the work. Saving the cost of running an MP, it will cost more because the workload will increase; so in the end it is better to keep the number of MPs as they are.

Thank you very much. I want to put a final conclusion. A lot of people want to know where will the surgeries be held for these new boundaries. This Derby South one is very vast. It covers a large area. People have not got transport to travel between one location to another because public transport does not run, so when you want to see your MP he is not there half the time and it would be difficult. I hope the Boundary Commission reviews these boundary changes again and looks at the proper population, looks at other information. If they did that they would see that 76,000 per boundary is underestimated for the size of population, knowing if you include the European people who voted in the Europe that could be pushing 95-100,000, if you included them across the country. If you predict population growth and aging population slowed down, less deaths, things like that, the number of people for each electoral boundary will exceed the 106,000 even pushed up to 110,000 and that goes to the principles of 76,000. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We have no more submissions programmed now until ten past five. On that basis we will adjourn until then.

After a short break

Time Noted: 5.10 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon. We will reconvene now. I would just mention as a matter of policy all of the evidence we are hearing is being recorded both visually and there is an audio record, and that is being used to form a transcript of the event later on. So it is important that you do give your name and address before speaking. If I can call now Dr Alison Martin.

DR MARTIN: I am Dr Alison Martin. I live at 42 Evans Avenue, Allestree, Derby. I wish to speak about the situation with regard to Allestree ward.

I am a resident of Allestree and I have lived there for 15 years. Previously I have lived in Milford, which is a village between Duffield and Belper. I very much support the Boundary Commission's proposals for Allestree, which retain the ward's connections with Duffield and Belper. Allestree is better placed in a constituency with Duffield and Belper, both for geographical reasons and for the facilities that the residents share. Duffield and Belper are only two and five miles, respectively, from Allestree and all those three places are easily connected along the A6 road as it goes north. The 6's bus route has buses running every ten minutes between them.

All these places are in the Derby travel to work area, and many residents in the locations work in the rail industry or for Rolls Royce. This is a very long-standing situation. Many residents, such as myself, have lived in all these areas over the years. For example, this means that I use the GP surgery in Duffield, and I have done for the last 25 years.

A large part of Allestree is in the catchment area for the secondary school in Duffield, the Ecklesbourne School. This is one of the top performing state schools in the country and people move to that area of Allestree with the specific intention of obtaining a place for their child at that school. It is fair to say that for many people this does entail a financial sacrifice, but it is the Duffield school that they want their child to attend. There is, nevertheless, a very good secondary school in Allestree, Allestree Woodlands, and, as the former chair of governors at Allestree Woodlands, I can say that it attracts many students from Belper, and, again, this has been the case for many years.

So Allestree is very much a distinctive area on the outskirts of Derby, looking towards Duffield and Belper. Particularly in more recent years Belper has seen an improvement in its fortunes. The high street is very vibrant and many people from Allestree like to go there to shop. There is good parking and, as I say, it is easy to go there along the A6 on the bus. Sometimes it is easier than getting into Derby.

It is true that Allestree is also very close to parts of Derbyshire Dales, noticeably Quarndon on the far side of Allestree Park, but Quarndon is very much a rural village in line with the rest of Derbyshire Dales. People from Allestree, like people from all over the country in fact, enjoy visiting Derbyshire Dales; places such as Ashbourne. But that is the kind of thing they do on a day out. In Derbyshire Dales we have rural villages and market towns extending right to the far north of the county. Allestree, Duffield and Belper are all places on the outskirts of Derby connected by good transports links and, I have said, residents share each others facilities. For these reasons I believe the Boundary Commission has made a sensible and reasonable decision to keep Allestree in the same constituency as Belper and Duffield. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We do not have any other attenders due until 5.30 so we will adjourn until 5.30.

After a short break

Time Noted: 5.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We will move on and we will hear from Mr Adrian Pegg. If you could give your name and full address before you begin to speak please.

MR PEGG: My name is Adrian Pegg. I live at 110 Radbourne Street, Derby. I've lived in Derby all my life. Looking at the current proposals they show an east-west split rather than a north-south split. Therefore, I would like to see the new constituencies renamed as Derby East and Derby West.

I was also surprised that Derwent ward and Chaddesden ward had been split and the linkage between them broken because, you know, there are social links between the two wards. People that live in Derwent ward do not necessarily associate themselves with the name Derwent, and the vast majority associate themselves with Chaddesden. There is also a linkage between Derwent and Oakwood wards. Historically, before previous boundary changes, parts of the current Derwent ward were in Oakwood Breadsall ward. One of the roads in Chaddesden is also split between Oakwood and Chaddesden, so there is a historical linkage there as well.

I also feel that the boundary seems slightly illogical, splitting the constituency down the middle of the road, in this case Chaddesden Park Road. If Derwent is brought into the constituency, the boundary would follow the railway line and make it a more of a logical connection there. So I would like to suggest that Derwent ward is added into the new Derby South constituency.

To mitigate the disparity in the number of electors, I would also suggest that Sinfin ward is added to the new Derby North constituency. There are similar linkages there as well between Blagreaves, Normanton and Arboretum wards, more so than between Boulton and Chaddesden ward. Again, the boundary under the current proposal goes down the main road, linking the Blagreaves and Sinfin wards; so bringing that into the Derby North ward would create, I think, much more of a logical boundary.

In conclusion, I suggest that Derwent ward is added to the proposed Derby South constituency; Sinfin ward is added to the proposed Derby North constituency; and the two new constituencies to be renamed Derby East and Derby West. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any queries? No. Thank you for your representation.

MR PEGG: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: At the moment we have somebody booked at six o'clock and somebody at ten past six. We will reconvene at six o'clock but is anybody aware of anything else that might be attending? No. Okay, on that basis we will reconvene at six o'clock.

After a short break

Time Noted: 6.00 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We have two more pre-booked speakers. The six o'clock person has not arrived at the moment but we will go ahead and call Mrs Amanda Solloway. If you would give your name and full address before you begin to speak please.

MRS SOLLOWAY: (MP for Derby North) Amanda Solloway and it is 211 Victoria Avenue, Borrowash, Derby DE72 3HG. It is great to have the opportunity talk about these changes and, I have to say, when I first saw them, I was actually I think quite surprised. We had had a bit of speculation, I guess, in terms of what we thought they might look like and this had not figured in what I had envisioned, I guess.

For me, the key thing was that when you talk about an MP for Derby North, when you talk about Derby North and Derby South the proposals in my mind are not Derby North and Derby South that are seen here. So I looked and it became very clear in my mind that we need to be talking about an East and a West. I think when you look down it, I think it absolutely makes sense to do that. If you look at the way they are now, you can understand why it is North, why it is South and why it is Mid Derbyshire, but if you look at calling what is a proposed Derby North, Derby North, I just really cannot understand how that equates; so for me I cannot say clearly enough that I think East and West should be the way we view this going forward.

In terms of the proposals that are suggested for the wards, there are a few things that I would like to say. Clearly, I can say with some insight in terms of how the constituents view where they come from. So, as an example I would like to say that I really do believe that we should be looking at Derwent and Chaddesden together. I think that it makes absolute sense.

I think when I look at constituents and the cases they bring forward, they will often refer to themselves as living in Chaddesden as an example. The postcodes are often very similar. If you talk to people when you are going out and about, people actually think if it is in Derwent that they come from Chaddesden as well. It is a very clear identity. I was thinking about this. When we were looking at the campaign going back two years ago, we were you talking about identity and what it means in terms of coming from Derby.

We could say very clearly “I come from Derby”, but there is something I think around people in Derwent. They would say they actually come from Chaddesden and I think it would be a shame to take away that identity; so for me that is a really clear link.

I also feel that the proposal of Sinfin to go into what is proposed in terms of Derby South, again to me does not resonate in terms of identity. I think we need to consider people’s views in this. So when I am looking at, as an example, the case for putting Derwent I believe in with Chaddesden, there is lots of things that we see. There is things like schools, as an example. You know, I have been to Lees Brook School in Chaddesden. It has had a rebuild. It is a place I know that a lot of constituents go to. There is shopping. Again I was thinking about this. There is a real importance and, as silly as it sounds, you know, you have the shopping opportunities of food shopping. So you can talk about: do I go to Asda? And I am a great Asda fan. Some people like Morrison’s and some people like Sainsbury’s and the access that you have. For example, you have got Chaddesden, you have got the Wyvern, so you have got a Sainsbury’s, but just down the road on Sir Frank Whittle Way you have got the meteor centre, which is sort of Derwent, which again people would potentially go to. I think we need to consider these things when we are looking at the changes.

For me it is about community and it is about making sure that people have the opportunity to stay as a community. That is why I really do believe we should be looking at West and East and we should be significantly looking at the fact that Derwent is a great omission in terms of what should be in East and that Sinfin for me more fits in with the community that is in West. Is there anything else that I need to say?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any points raised? No. I think that is fine. That is good. Thank you very much.

MRS SOLLOWAY: Okay. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We have one more pre-booked speaker who has not arrived at the moment, so we will adjourn matters until 6.30 and we will take a view then as to what we will do. Thank you.

After a short break

Time Noted: 6.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The final person that we had booked has not turned up. We have decided that we will keep the hearing open until seven o’clock and if anybody comes before then we will still hear them but it seems pretty unlikely now. So we will adjourn but if somebody comes we will start up again, up until seven o’clock.

After a short break

Time Noted: 7.00 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Okay, it is seven o'clock. As we said, there have been no further attenders so we will close today's proceedings and reconvene at nine o'clock tomorrow morning. Thank you all for attending.

Adjourned until 9.00 am on Friday 28 October 2016

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