

**BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND**

**PROCEEDINGS**

**AT THE**

**2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND**

**HELD AT**

**HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL, CIVIC CENTRE, STONE CROSS,  
NORTHALLERTON, DL6 2UU**

**ON**

**FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER 2016  
DAY TWO**

**Before:**

**Mr John Feavour, the Lead Assistant Commissioner**

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Time Noted: 9 am

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning, this is day two of the Boundary Commission for England hearing in Northallerton. It is just after 9 am in the morning and there is nobody booked in this morning and there is nobody waiting to speak to us. On that basis I shall adjourn, pending the arrival of any people on spec, or I think our first booking is at 12.50 pm so we will of course make sure we are back before then, but I will not come back to the hearing until or unless we get anybody else booked or turn up. Thank you very much.

After an adjournment

Time Noted: 12.50 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, welcome to day two of the hearing by the Boundary Commission for England in relation to the initial proposals for boundaries in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. I opened the hearing this morning at 9 am and I adjourned it in the absence of anybody present who wanted to speak. It is now 12.50 pm and we are reconvening because we have a person on the list to speak this morning. My name is John Feavoyour, I am an Assistant Commissioner of the Boundary Commission and it is my responsibility to chair the hearings yesterday and today here in Northallerton and also I was in charge in Leeds last week, Sheffield earlier this week and we are going to Hull next week.

It is my responsibility also, alongside my fellow Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, to consider all of the oral representations made at the hearings, together with all of the written representations which come in to the Boundary Commission and then decide whether and to what extent any of the initial proposals need to be referred back to the Commission itself for any changes. So that is what my role is. All of the written representations and a verbatim transcript of everything that is said in the hearings will subsequently be placed on the Boundary Commission's website in order that anybody can have a look and if they want to comment on what anybody else has said then they can do so. So on that basis we are recording things today and at the start of what you would like to tell us about I would like you to give us your name and address and then set off from there.

So I think it is Mr Peter Morgan, Mr Morgan would you like to come up please? So, as I said, name and address and then tell us what you need us to know sir.

MR MORGAN: Peter Morgan, 22 Wheatlands, Great Ayton, TS9 6ED. I am obviously from Great Ayton and my concern is that Great Ayton is being transferred from the Richmondshire constituency into the Thirsk and Malton constituency.

A few points. First of all, Great Ayton, demographically, probably has an age range slightly higher than other habitations, which of course means that people are probably using public transport more than average. Now, when I first of all saw this

change I wondered what was going on because Thirsk and Malton, to us, is somewhere the other side of the North Yorkshire Moors, it is a sort of – I will not say alien territory – but certainly a distant one with quite a lot of different concerns to us. It is based more on, if you like, the Hull conurbation and the farming, etcetera, also has different conditions and so forth.

I then actually started looking at the constituency boundaries and saw that Malton and Hull, because it had Ryedale district as part of it, extended to the top end of Bilsdale. Now, Bilsdale is a long valley, it is about 19 miles long, quite sparsely populated and so we had a situation whereby the Richmond constituency, including Great Ayton, swung round and just touched the bottom end of this long protuberance of the Thirsk and Malton constituency. So actually we did have a boundary that linked in. However, and I understand all about the number balance and so forth and Great Ayton has about the right electoral number to compensate for the movements of Filey into the Scarborough constituency, and I see the temptation of, you know, here is an adjacent group of people that could easily be transferred in.

However, the physical factors involved are fairly numerous. For a start, there is no direct bus service. It is a minor road, a C-class road, that goes through Bilsdale and there is no bus service apart from two or three weeks in the summer when there is a moors bus runs, that is particularly intended in order to give visitors the opportunity of getting into the hinterland of the moors without needing to use public transport. So I started to look on the internet to see just how long it would take a person by public transport to actually get to the major centres within the Malton and Thirsk constituency. Now, most public meetings are held either in Thirsk or Malton and sometimes they extend down to Helmsley, which would actually be the closest point to us. The results, I found, using the travel planner on the website, taking into account both buses and trains, would count as quite astounding. First of all, the distances involved; to Northallerton we are actually 17 miles from Great Ayton, Thirsk is 23 miles from Great Ayton, Malton is 37 miles from Great Ayton. Even Helmsley is about 19 miles from Great Ayton so the distances are larger than would be involved actually if we remained within Richmondshire. But when I started looking actually at the times for travelling, to get to Thirsk by bus you would first of all be using three buses involving two changes and the travel time would be two hours 27 minutes. To go to a meeting in Malton by bus, you would be using three buses, two changes, and the travel time would be four hours and nine minutes. To Helmsley, which would apparently be closer, the actual travel times increase because there is no direct bus service, so you are going round Whitby, Scarborough and coming back in from the coastal area and that takes four hours and five minutes. Or you could actually use the bus and the train, go to York and catch a bus back out of York to Helmsley, and that would be four hours and 11 minutes. Now, I think you can see that this is totally impracticable for going to any public meeting in these locations.

On the other hand, Northallerton, we have got a direct bus service from Great Ayton, it takes us 43 minutes. To Stokesley, which is another centre that is actually used for constituency meetings, it is eight minutes. So you can see where the comparison

lies. Great Ayton is associated with the Northallerton hinterland, it is not associated with the Northallerton and Thirsk area at all. That is the first point.

Also, of course, Great Ayton had previously various industries, for example we had three road haulage firms based within us, we had a light engineering works, John Burdon's, we had Dalgetty's which was a farm supplier of fertilizer and seed and that sort of thing, based within. Now, it was policy in those days to actually move those out of Great Ayton, really to avoid the large wagons having to negotiate what were unacceptably windy roads. And they were all moved out on to the newly developed business park in Stokesley. So, if you like, Great Ayton's industrial activity takes place in Stokesley about three miles away. As a consequence of course there is a lot of ties in that direction.

Secondary education, we have got two primary schools in Great Ayton, but all the secondary provision is in Stokesley. And Stokesley is also where we have the swimming baths and various other public facilities there. I mean, we used to have our own library, it was closed because there was one at Stokesley three miles away. We kept ours open, it is now run by volunteers, I am the DIY person for the group. We keep things going but it is under our own efforts as volunteers.

So you can see how this link is to the west in order to --- now, of course, put it in two different constituencies, if there is a problem which obviously could quite readily be affecting us both, you are dealing with two MPs instead of just dealing with one that has responsibility for the whole lot.

So that is basically the point of my argument; we are in an age where we are trying to encourage more involvement in politics, we are also in an age where we are trying to encourage more use of public transport and here we are, we are creating a situation which, in fact, is likely to be detrimental to both. So that is it.

The second area of my concern is, well, I mean, it is one that will have been pointed out to you many times, it is really the conditions under which parliament has initiated your activity and the restraints under which they have put you. I notice that you say at Point 40 that although basically you cannot automatically take into account any changes in voter numbers in areas after the date of 2014 you will not actually turn a blind eye to any large population movements, etcetera, etcetera, but parliament has in some respects put you in an awkward position because of course last year we had a referendum. Now, in 2014, I believe, the mechanism for actually registering as a voter changed from the householder registering everyone to people having to register themselves individually, so a lot of people found themselves not on an electoral register after 2014. Now, December 2015 I think is the date that you are using for your data so those people that did not register there are not on your list and of course there tended to be this mad rush just before the referendum for people to get themselves registered again and so after the referendum there will be another boost in the numbers. So you have got a trough there, in effect, where the register is recording fewer voters between those two points. So, I mean I know that is not of your making but it is one of the constraints that obviously is placed on you. Also, of

course, what we have noticed locally is an awful lot of house building and so there is actually a movement in populations as well. How that would actually affect your figures is for someone else to calculate, but there is that factor as well, so the data on which you are actually having to base your conclusions is, shall we say, a little flexible as opposed to being absolute. That is really it.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Morgan thank you very much. Can I just check do we need any clarification from Mr Morgan about anything that he said? Can I have a microphone please? Mr Morgan I am very clear about any questions from the floor, they can only be questions of clarification they cannot be seeking to challenge anything that you have said. Could you say your name first, sir, for the record, and then the question?

MR TIPLADY: John Tiplady from Tadcaster. Just a point of clarification, I do not know whether I am going deaf, did I hear you mention the Hull conurbation?

MR MORGAN: I did, in the fact that I felt that an area --- this is the perception from Great Ayton that that side of the moors, extending downwards, is likely to have a greater connection with the Hull side. Am I totally inaccurate in that?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I have got this very clearly in my mind – what I heard you say was there is a natural affinity with the Humber whereas less so with Thirsk because, frankly, of the moors in between.

MR MORGAN: Yes.

MR TIPLADY: That was just for clarification.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Any other points of clarification? Mrs Morgan has he got it right?

MRS MORGAN: (Inaudible).

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Well we just needed to check that, that is very important. Mr Morgan thank you very much indeed.

MR MORGAN: Right, thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Kohan you have indicated you would like to speak. Do you want to speak now or do you want to speak later?

MR KOHAN: Yes, I would like to speak now.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Okay, I think you know the routine by now.

MR KOHAN: I do.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Mr and Mrs Morgan, Mr Kohan was not on the list but he is here and he asked to speak so here we go.

MR KOHAN: Thank you very much, wonderful, Hashim Kohan, I live at 10, Highlands Grove, Bradford, BD7 4BG. I can place on the record that I do work for the Conservative Party but I am here today not only to speak to you about why I think the Conservative Party's counterproposal is effective but also as a resident of Bradford, a resident of Bradford for all my 27 years and so I feel I have quite an interest in the Commission's recommendations for that particular city.

On the whole I think that the Commission have made a good start for Yorkshire and Humberside, of course our counterproposals take into account some of the things that we would like to change. I would like to specifically talk about Bradford South initially. As a resident of the current Bradford South constituency, I live currently in Great Horton ward, I do believe that Great Horton sits at the centre of a community that is very easily identified as Bradford South. I am very mindful of the fact that the Commission are looking for geographical ties, road links and community links, and so today I just want to run through a couple of those in Bradford South.

I would like to start off by saying that I believe that Great Horton, Little Horton, Royds, Wibsey and Wyke should all be retained in one set constituency as our counterproposal sets out in a new Bradford South constituency. And the reason for that is because the A6036, which is Halifax Road and Beacon Road, the B6380, run right through from Royds into Wibsey. Not only are they major roads which connect the Royds housing estate to Wibsey, but they also connect to the nearest shops, leisure facilities and night time economy of Wibsey village, and that is incredibly important. Royds itself as a community is made up of three, or you could argue, four, major housing estates, they have very few shops and leisure facilities themselves and they do look towards either the city of Bradford or Wibsey as the next major village for most of their shopping and leisure needs.

Wibsey itself is divided, as a community, the Wibsey Slack part of the village is actually in Royds ward and main residential roads, like Reevy Road and Tennyson Road would all be divided across constituencies, where you would have one side of the road in one constituency and the other in another. It is a very soft boundary and does not present itself in a natural way. Wibsey Park Avenue, which runs into Wibsey Park, a main leisure and community focal point, would be in a completely different constituency to the rest of Wibsey village.

Sticking with Wibsey, Little Horton and Wibsey are connected by Manchester Road, which becomes Huddersfield Road, and that is a main dual carriageway and a commuter belt for the residents of both of the Royds housing estates, the housing estates in Wyke and in Wibsey, into the centre of Bradford. The initial proposal boundary at Horton Bank Top, so if you could zoom in to the point where all three wards meet – yes, just right there where your cursor is – I live in Horton Bank Top,

that is where I am from. The initial proposals carve an entire residential community between three constituencies and the Commission's proposals at the initial stage have two of them, predominantly built up with non-Bradford areas, so Wibsey obviously faces towards Kirklees and the Spen constituency while Royds looks towards Halifax and Calderdale.

There are some key points to note there; it is a soft boundary, where, again, one side of the street would be in one constituency and another in another and at that point in the third you could have people who live on a point of three different constituencies all leaning in three different directions. But there is also several primary schools there that have catchment areas across all three boundaries and all three constituency and ward boundaries and also a doctor's surgery which serves a lot of people in that community.

Just jumping into schools and boundaries, Buttershaw School in Royds has a catchment area (and I have included a map for you) which covers large parts of Wibsey and Great Horton as well as Grange School in Great Horton, which has a catchment area covering a large part of Little Horton and Wibsey as well. That is why the identity of these communities is very fluid, people in these wards consider themselves as Bradfordians and not as people who live in Calderdale or Kirklees. I also just want to point out that the Church of England parish of Wibsey and the parish of Low Moor serve residents of Royds. Most of Royds' parishioners will attend the church in Wibsey or in Wyke.

I have not mentioned in my notes but I want to mention today that in addition this part of Bradford South has a very large Muslim population. Unlike the Church of England the Muslim community do not have parish boundaries, many of the mosques in Bradford South are related to various aspects of the diaspora and also on denominational boundaries as well, so there is a very fluid link between worshippers in the Muslim community and these sections of the community. I know, as someone who was raised in the Muslim community myself, that our mosque would be another side of the constituency boundary to where I live.

Just moving on to another part of where the Bradford district might sit better as an alternative to the Boundary Commission's initial proposal, is the opportunity to move Queensbury into a Calderdale-facing constituency as opposed to Royds. I went to school at Queensbury School and so I spent many days of my well spent youth in Queensbury. Queensbury and Shelf already existed as an urban district council until 1974, it has a long history with the Shelf community. The A644 Brighouse Denholme road and the A647 Halifax Road at Catherine Slack both link the Queensbury ward with Northowram and Shelf ward. It is also worth pointing out here that the A644 Brighouse Denholme road runs right through from Queensbury into Brighouse and therefore reflects very well on the Conservative Party counterproposal to create a constituency which includes all those wards along that road as part of a Lower Calder constituency.

In terms of identity, the people of Queensbury have often looked towards Calderdale. The main paper in that village is the Evening Courier, a Calderdale paper, and there is a strong support for the sports teams facing towards Halifax, such as Halifax Town and Halifax Rugby League. There is a shared identity in that respect with the people of the Calder Valley. I have also included a map for you today which shows Queensbury School's catchment area, which covers a large part of the northern section of the Northowram and Shelf ward.

Just moving to another part of Bradford – Tong with Morley and Pudsey – there is a natural link between the ward of Tong and with its neighbours in Morley and Pudsey. I have shown in some maps for you today the A650 and B6135 connect Tong quite closely with Drighlington. Many people in Drighlington, and I know a couple myself, do not even realise that they are actually in Morley North, they think of themselves as Tong themselves anyway. And also, you will see at the top part of Tong ward, the village and community of Tyersal is split between Pudsey and Tong wards to such a degree that Tyersal Football Club, which is a main community and sports club, will be in a different ward to the community it serves.

Tong High School's catchment area also covers parts of Pudsey and the aptly named Pudsey Tyersal Primary School, which is actually in the Pudsey ward, serves both the communities of Tong and of Pudsey ward. In addition the 427 bus route from Morley runs through Tong to get to Bradford. So I just wanted to illustrate the case of why Tong as a community, whilst it is in the city of Bradford, would not fare badly if it faced towards the natural communities in Morley and Pudsey as well.

Finally, Idle and Thackley is another community which does not necessarily need to be Bradford-facing as it has lots of links with its neighbours in north Leeds, particularly in Apperley Bridge, which is Leeds-facing, it has the historic Leeds Liverpool Canal which runs directly into Leeds city centre. It has a brand new train station at Apperley Bridge which services Leeds direct and also the A658 Apperley Lane route into and out of Rawdon, that road also runs on into the Otley ward through Yeadon and finally ends up in Pool-in-Wharfedale which sits in the Adel and Wharfedale ward, which I think is a natural link between the Idle and Thackley community and the communities in north Leeds.

So that is just a couple of points why I think certain parts of Bradford could be improved upon and that is it from me.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Kohan, thank you very much indeed. Does anybody wish to ask Mr Kohan for any points of clarification? (No response). Thank you very much.

Just before I adjourn again, just a point, and gents you have heard me say this so I am really talking to you two, they have heard all this before. Can I first of all just say well done on your understanding of why we are where we are? It is implicit in what you have said sir that you have got your head around the challenge that we have got



in front of us and some of the restrictions that we just have to work within. So, well done for that.

I have been commending this guidance document to people and you have obviously already had a good look at it, indeed, and that is apparent. I am only going back to it again for this reason, and I have said this also to other people who have come here yesterday to talk to me about Great Ayton. You recognise the bits that are fixed; I cannot do anything about the electoral quota, it is fixed, the numbers are in here, I cannot do anything about that at all. Everything else is more flexible, so I do not think I am speaking out of turn, if I am he will clip me round the ear, but we have had a very, very strong argument put to us why Great Ayton should stay within Richmondshire and not where the initial proposals suggested it might go to, so that point is settled.

The thing that I have got to work out with my colleague Collette Rawnsley is that if we do that there is a knock-on effect so we have to find another way of making the numbers work. So if there were any proposals, and I hesitate before congratulating the most recent speaker on what he had to say because he will then go away thinking he has won his argument and I do not want him to think that, well at least not yet anyway, what you heard was not a 'this bit is in the wrong place', he went on from that and said 'but if you do that you can also do this and this'. If there are any thoughts from yourselves or any of your other residents and people who you know in Great Ayton that can help Collette Rawnsley and me understand what else might work, the consultation period is open until 5 December and notwithstanding that you have spoken here today, there is nothing to stop you putting a submission in through the website before that date to help us understand the art of what the options are. I guarantee to do my best for you anyway, but placed with an option, if I just cannot do it, I cannot do it. But if I can, I need to know from you what those options are, because as is self-evident, even though I went to university in Bradford and I lived off Great Horton Road just around the corner where he comes from so I do know where he is talking about, I have never been to Great Ayton, and I apologise for that, but you know the area better than I do, so I am just encouraging you to think about, when you get back home, and if you want to let us know what other options you think might work.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I tried to do this last night, but I did not have the paper, I do not know what the electoral role numbers are.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: All of the numbers for the wards are on the Boundary Commission's website, there is a tool in there, you can go into it, all the numbers are there, you can do colouring in to your heart's content, it is all there.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes, I was doing a general search on the website for the data.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: (After conferring with the Secretary) He knows what I am talking about so I have just given him a challenge to say, come on then let's see if we cannot --- have you got it there Matt?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right, I will get on it.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: So when you click on 'wards' you can shade wards and it will tell you the electorate for every ward in the country.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Right, okay.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Just before I adjourn for lunch what I would say is this: do not concern yourself too much with south Bradford, not that south Bradford is not important but we have got plenty of stuff on south Bradford. So with that, thank you ever so much for coming along today and we will adjourn for lunch and we will come back at 2.15 pm.

#### After the luncheon adjournment

Time noted 2.58 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon everybody, welcome back to day two of the hearing here in Northallerton. I actually adjourned at about 1.15 pm with the intention of coming back at 2.15 pm if anybody was here to speak. There was not anybody so I again stepped it forward from 2.15 pm to now and it just coming up on 3 pm and we have the final two speakers that have been booked in to speak to us here and they are currently in the room. So I really am talking to you two because everybody else has heard what I am going to say now, but my name is John Feavour, I am an Assistant Commissioner of the Boundary Commission for England and it is my responsibility to chair the hearing here in Northallerton, in fact I also chaired the hearing in Leeds, I was in Sheffield and I shall be in Hull next week. It is then my responsibility, together with my colleague, Assistant Commissioner Collette Rawnsley, to consider all of the representations that are made to the Boundary Commission about the Yorkshire and the Humber region. Whether those representations are made through the Boundary Commission's website or whether they are oral representations made here today.

The next part of the process is that all of those representations, including a verbatim transcript of what is said here, will go online at the Boundary Commission in order that anybody else can read what you have said or submitted and indeed comment on any counterproposals that have been brought forward. So that is the process. The reason I am explaining that is that when I ask you to come forward in a moment and sit in front of the microphone it is to invite you to start with your name and address and then tell me what it is that you want me to hear so that we can have that for the record.

So without further ado, Mr Andrew can I ask you to come up to the desk please? So as I said, when you are comfortable, name and address and then what you would like us to hear please.

MR ANDREW: (Conservative MP for Pudsey) Alright, thank you very much. My name is Stewart Andrew, my address is 26, Town Street in Guiseley. I am the Member of Parliament for the current Pudsey constituency.

First of all thank you for the opportunity to come here and talk to you today. The fact is, I suppose, that boundary changes are always going to be incredibly difficult and I think in this case we have to be very objective. There is a number of things I wanted to talk to, first of all is the wider Yorkshire perspective. Looking at the proposals that the Boundary Commission brought forward, as I see it there are some significant issues with it, with the number of seats, I think, that cross local authority boundaries and some of the greater changes that happen all over and so I am here really to speak in support of the proposals that the Conservative Party have put forward, for a number of reasons.

I think the first is that it really does help to improve the local authority links that constituencies within that proposal will be able to enjoy. And I will talk a little bit more about that with specific relationship to my constituency a little bit later. I think the other advantage of the proposal is it brings about less change for Yorkshire as a whole. As I said these things are always going to be difficult, given that we are reducing the number of MPs as well, it is going to be tough. And I think it also aims to secure greater local ties than the current proposal brought forward by the Commission.

If we look at the North Yorkshire situation – the proposal in our proposals – there is actually no change to the current set up of constituencies and I think that that would be fairly significant for the people living in North Yorkshire. That can be dealt with in one entity which, again, as I say, crosses less of the local authority boundaries and enables us to look at it in one entity. The proposals also ensure that there are seven constituencies that do not change at all as opposed to just one in the current proposals by the Boundary Commission.

I am aware of particular anxieties in neighbouring constituencies to mine, not least in the Bradford area. In Bradford South I have been speaking to Judith Cummins who is the local Member of Parliament there and I know that she is very concerned about how many of the wards are splitting off in various directions and I think it would be odd to not have Bradford Bulls within a Bradford constituency so I think our proposal, with the exception of losing Tong, would enable that seat to stay together.

I want to now come on to my constituency. I have to put on record first that I would be very sad to see the constituency separated. It has been a constituency of some historical significance for some time but I suppose I have been expecting that this may be one of the casualties, not least because as it currently stands, the constituency is actually on two sides of a valley. The two sides are quite different in

their make-up, so on one side we have the Pudsey ward and the Calverley and Farsley ward and on the other side we have the Guiseley and Rawdon ward with Horsforth ward. As it happens, under the proposals from the Boundary Commission at the moment, actually that constituency, those four wards, go into three separate directions. If I talk about the southern part of the constituency first, and I think it is really important that Pudsey and Calverley and Farsley are kept together. There are a number of reasons for that; there are lots of links between the two wards and many of the towns and the villages that make up those two wards have a great deal of affinity to each other. In fact, the Calverley and Farsley ward has a fairly significant part of the town of Pudsey within it and so it is important that whichever constituency they go into we try and keep them together. You will also note that the ring road goes through Calverley and Farsley ward and parts of Pudsey ward, which is, again, some important links.

I see in the proposal from the Boundary Commission that they propose to put those wards in with Bramley and Armley. I have to say, I think the Armley ward probably does stretch it a bit. There are some links but they are probably more tenuous than the ones that we are proposing in our submission. Putting it in with Morley North and Morley South, Pudsey and Morley have very similar characteristics; both market towns, both very proud, personal identities. It is probably true to say that many of them --- just like there are Morley Borough Independents representing the town on the City Council, there are many people in Pudsey who still hark back to the days of Pudsey Borough Council. And so I think they have a lot of characteristics that match. Including the Tong ward would mean, then, that the Fulneck and Tong valley would be within that new constituency.

There are some significant issues currently happening within the Tong area. There has been proposals for development within the Fulneck valley and enabling the Pudsey ward and Tong wards to work together on those, I think would be a good idea and it would be certainly something that if I were the local Member of Parliament it would be easier to address those issues and I can only see that intensifying over the years to come. The advantage of that as well is it means there would be 34,160 of my constituents would still be in the new Pudsey constituency so that they would feel that they had not moved as much.

I now want to come on to the northern part of the constituency and specifically the Guiseley and Rawdon ward.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes.

MR ANDREW: The current proposal is to put that in with the Shipley constituency. I have to say that there is already considerable concern about that. Guiseley and Rawdon ward, as you will see, is on the outer edge of Leeds City Council. It often feels sometimes that it is cast aside and I think if it were to be put in, as suggested, there is concern that it will --- it has very --- its links are less strong with the Shipley constituency and with Bradford City Council as a whole. I know that there is considerable concern as was expressed in the initial proposals the first time round

when there was the suggestion that there would be the new Guiseley seat as I think it was called at that time. So as I say, they sometimes feel that they are out on a limb and it would also --- one of the issues we had a couple of years ago, I think it was in 2004, when the Guiseley and Rawdon ward and the Otley and Yeadon ward were created out of the old Otley and Wharfedale and Aireborough wards, it meant that the town of Yeadon and the town of Rawdon were split between two separate wards.

I served as a councillor for Guiseley and Rawdon ward and I know that it caused a great deal of confusion, particularly for people living in Yeadon and for those living in Rawdon. If they were then to be in a separate constituency it would cause even more problems, particularly as it would be facing, in essence, a different local authority. As I say there have been historical problems with that. Now, there is lots of --- certainly on social media, people are getting their submissions ready from what I can see, so I think that is something for you to look forward to, but most of the calls match those of Rawdon Parish Council's wishes which is that they want to be Leeds-facing and in one constituency. And I think that the proposal that we are putting forward would enable us to do that. I know it is --- I think it is called Otley at the moment, but I think if we were going to call it anything I would hope that it would be something like Leeds North and Idle and Thackley or something like that, because that would actually encompass more of the area that we are talking about.

The proposal that we are submitting would ensure that Guiseley and Rawdon remains within the Leeds area, it would also ensure that Guiseley and Rawdon --- that Yeadon particularly would, as an entire town, remain in one constituency and it would also involve most of Rawdon being in that constituency which would bring, almost, the historic Aireborough back together, although not quite. The other advantage is that it actually almost reflects the proposal that was suggested, the final proposal, by the Boundary Commission last time, which took in the wards that we are suggesting which are Alwoodley, Adel and Wharfedale, Otley and Yeadon, Guiseley and Rawdon and Wharfedale ward as it was then. We would simply be swapping Wharfedale ward for Idle and Thackley.

Now, there is a lot of connection between Idle and Apperley Bridge area with Rawdon and Yeadon. We have had a new railway station has just opened at Apperley Bridge, so people from both Yeadon and Rawdon use that as well as those people living in Apperley Bridge and Idle. We have also got the road that runs right through, it is the main A658, if memory serves me correct, running up Apperley Lane joining the Harrogate road which then goes through to Pool-in-Wharfedale and eventually up to Harrogate. The other point about the shape of that constituency is that it would follow to the south, broadly, the ring road that goes across around the city of Leeds, which makes connections quite easy, and also we have to the north we have the River Wharfe running along it. Now, to achieve that, I recognise that it would mean there would be a need for a split ward and I know that that is not something that is always ideal. I think, though, if we are honest, the fact is that we have huge wards in the city of Leeds and in Bradford and I think that probably, whilst it is minimal at this stage, if we are going to have these reviews every five years, I

think the need for splitting wards is going to become more and more obvious, not least because Leeds City Council and Bradford Council, both have what they are calling 'aspirational housing targets' and there are already a significant number of sites along those areas that are in that whole sort of north west of Leeds that have been identified for development and it is expected that there will be a considerable number of houses built over the next five, 10, 15 years and if the wards remain on their current boundaries their populations will increase significantly and I think there will absolutely be a need in future years to split wards. So if we are going to do that we may as well start doing that right from the very beginning and we are proposing a part of Tinshill is put together, as it were.

The proposal also ensures that on that side of the valley, 30,217 people in my constituency will then remain together and I think that that would rest far easier with people. As I say, these are not --- this is not easy, because I think there is a lot of concern locally that local connections may get split, that is inevitable given the remit that you have and the figures that you have to, obviously, adhere to, but I hope that we can ensure that we are causing as little disruption as possible. I think what I like about the proposal is that it ensures that there are seven seats within Leeds and five of those are totally within the boundary so we are reducing the number of cross-boundary issues and I think that that is something that we really need to look at.

Personally I have some further thinking that I may well look at, because whilst I am arguing very much that we need to do this, there is one section of Rawdon that still would not be within the constituency and if the Boundary Commission were open to splitting wards then maybe we could put a bit more of Cookridge together and put all of Rawdon together and basically you would then reunite the historic Aireborough boundaries, but that is something I have got to give a bit more consideration to. So, those are my thoughts and observations really.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Mr Andrew, thank you very much. Can I just ask anybody else here is there any clarifications that anybody needs to ask Mr Andrew to fully understand what he has put forward? (None). No? Mr Andrew thank you very much indeed.

MR ANDREW: Thank you for your time.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ms Hawkins, would you like to come up next please? Thank you, and as you move to your chair if just remind you, if you start with your name and address and then tell me what it is you would like me to hear, please.

MS HAWKINS: Thank you Mr Feavoyour. My name is Barbara Hawkins, I live at 8, Byemore Avenue, Great Ayton, Middlesbrough, Teesside, TS9 6JP. Like Mr Andrew, I would like to keep the Richmond, Yorkshire constituency as it is. It falls within the size rules for new proposed seats. However, we then have Thirsk and Malton short of people, so an additional ward needs to be added, and I argue that the preferred additional ward is Derwent Valley rather than Great Ayton. This is on

the grounds of geography, size, shape and local ties. So, I am proposing that the constituency of Scarborough and Whitby we transfer to Thirsk and Malton Derwent Valley, a second ward from the Borough of Scarborough, the other one being Hertford of course.

There are very few employment, public transport, hospital, leisure, shopping or media links between the proposed Thirsk and Malton constituency and Great Ayton ward. There are many employment, public transport, hospital, leisure, shopping and media links between the proposed Thirsk and Malton and Derwent Valley ward. Prior to 1975 Great Ayton was the largest ward in Stokesley Rural District Council and many of those ties continue. Stokesley School at Stokesley is the only state secondary school for Great Ayton pupils. Those who attend private schools from Great Ayton go into Teesside for their schools, not down to Thirsk and Malton, and Stokesley is the hub for shopping, leisure, commerce, the annual fair is held there, which Great Ayton residents go to.

Since '75 Richmond, Yorks, constituency has occupied the strip along the northern regional boundary and the postcodes, as you saw from my address, Teesside, and there are also postcodes DL for Darlington, so most of them are either DL or TS. So in addition to postal sorting offices, a high proportion of employment – with the notable exception of agriculture, local government and schools – lie in the Tees Valley conurbation at the chemical plants and many industrial plants on Teesside.

For local media, we turn to the Darlington and Stockton Times, we read the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette and for television we look at BBC North East and Cumbria, ITV Tyne Tees and BBC Tees and TFM Radio, and this is not shared with anyone in Thirsk and Malton, and Derwent Valley, of course, access BBC Yorkshire, ITV Yorkshire, BBC Radio York, which you cannot get in Great Ayton, you cannot get these things in Great Ayton, and the press, York.

People who are poorly in Great Ayton attend hospitals at James Cook University Hospital, which is seven miles to the north, or go 18 miles west to here at Northallerton, which is in Richmond, Yorks, constituency, where there is the Friarage. These are all served by local buses. The local Thirsk and Malton hospital is at York and York from Great Ayton is 46 miles with no local direct buses.

Looking at shape, accessibility, between Great Ayton ward and the proposed main towns of Thirsk and Malton it is quite concerning as there are no direct public transport links and travelling by car you would have to come in through the Richmond constituency to get there. There are two buses on Sundays, they are moors buses but they only go in the summer. And it is 22 miles from Great Ayton to Thirsk and 38 miles to Malton and Great Ayton to Hertford ward is 85 miles.

Let us turn to Derwent Valley. It is a rural inland North York Moors ward. Its media links and geography, size, shape and accessibility have far more in common with Thirsk and Malton than the largely coastal Scarborough and Whitby. Derwent Valley also has much more in common with Thirsk and Malton than Great Ayton has. It is

far more logical and convenient for Thirsk and Malton constituents to gain a second Scarborough Borough Council ward – Derwent Valley – than merging with the northerly Great Ayton ward, which on its part would have to cut its many ties with the Richmond Yorks towns here at Northallerton and Stokesley.

Therefore our counter suggestion is to keep Great Ayton ward, which is 4,520 electors, in Richmond, Yorks, which goes back up to the 76,649 and then remove it from the proposed Thirsk and Malton, which brings that down to 68,605, but then transferring Derwent Valley, which is 3,525 to Thirsk and Malton brings that back to 72,130. And Scarborough and Whitby becomes 72,440. All the three proposed constituency totals lie within the recommended totals. I am very pleased to have the final word at your sitting in Northallerton. Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Ms Hawkins thank you very much indeed. Can I just ask whether anybody needs any clarification about what has just been said? (No response) Ms Hawkins, thank you very much indeed. And you are quite right, you have had the final word, well, at least as far as evidence to me is concerned, but as the Chairman I think I get the final word, technically.

Which goes a little bit like this – we have been here in Northallerton for a couple of days now, we were very busy yesterday morning, less so in the afternoon and the evening. We had nobody come along this morning at all. Why do I tell you that now? Only because we were originally scheduled to sit here until 5 pm. On the basis that I have had nobody come in on spec today at all and I have now dealt with my booked speakers I do not propose to sit any longer. So we are just coming up towards 3.30 pm and I am going to bring proceedings at Northallerton here to a close. If you know of anybody else who you think may have wanted to speak to me then I shall be in Hull next Monday and Tuesday and delighted to see anybody there and of course, and a reminder and again everybody to the left has heard me say this, but Ms Hawkins and Mr Andrew for your benefit, I have said this to everybody: this consultation period goes on until 5 December, sir, you have already intimated you may need to do some more thinking and I am sure you will let us know in due course if there is anything that you want us further to consider. Ms Hawkins, one of the things that I have been saying to people is I have been commending the review guidelines to them, it is clear to me from what you have said that you know this very well so well done to you for taking the time to follow the rules. You are both quite right, the issue that we have, that Collette Rawnsley and I have, is that the electoral quota is fixed. I cannot do anything about that number and you have both recognised that. Where we have heard evidence and we receive evidence that suggests other ways of doing this then we will do our very best to try and make that work for as many people as we can.

So, thank you very much indeed and thanks everybody else for coming to Northallerton.

The hearing concluded

Time noted: 3.30 pm



**A**

MR STEWART ANDREW MP, 11, 12, 14

**H**

MS HAWKINS, 14

**K**

MR KOHAN, 5, 6

**M**

MR MORGAN, 2, 5

MRS MORGAN, 5

**T**

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16

MR TIPLADY, 5

**U**

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER, 9, 10