

Conservative Campaign Headquarters
30 Millbank
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3rd April 2012

Boundary Commission for England
35 Great Smith Street
London
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Dear Sirs,

Second consultation period – East Midlands Region

We have much pleasure in enclosing our response to the representations received during the first consultation period on the initial proposals for the East Midlands Region.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Pratt CBE
Boundary Review Manager

EAST MIDLANDS REGION

Submission of the Conservative Party regarding the responses to the initial proposals for the East Midlands Region

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 We note that the number of submissions in the East Midlands is less than any other region in England and that none of the existing constituencies has representations from a postcode in that constituency in excess of 100. This fact is true in no other region of England.
- 1.2 We believe that this shows that broadly the Commission has done a good job and note that of the submissions many are in favour of the Commission's proposals which in itself is relatively unusual.
- 1.3 We do not believe that there is therefore justification for a major change to the initial proposals which we believe could prove to be more unpopular than the original proposals.
- 1.4 We therefore reject the alternative proposals of the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats and in particular their alternative county linkings which we believe create more problems and are less compliant with Rule 5 of the Rules for Redistribution of Seats – Schedule 2 to the Act.
- 1.5 We will continue to evaluate the proposals and any alterations on the basis of Rule 5 and in particular look at local government links, existing constituencies and local ties broken from existing constituencies.

1.6 We will now look at each area and comment on the representations made and specifically look at any counter-proposals and assess whether we believe these improve the initial proposals or if they are less acceptable than these proposals.

2. DERBYSHIRE

- 2.1 We note the Liberal Democrats have changed their position in Derbyshire so that they now fully support the initial proposals.
- 2.2 We suggest a few minor amendments to better respect local ties and move fewer electors.
- 2.3 We totally reject the Labour Party counter-proposal which crosses the Derbyshire border twice as opposed to the Commission who review the County on its own.
- 2.4 We agree with the Liberal Democrats when they say in their final submission “The Labour Party’s proposals to cross the Derbyshire county boundary are as unnecessary as they are illogical.”
- 2.5 The Labour Party proposals for Derbyshire are particularly flawed in terms of local government links as we will show in a table later on in this section.
- 2.6 We note in respect of Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire there are very few representations.
- 2.7 Like the Liberal Democrats we support these two constituencies and note they also have the support of both the Councils concerned.
- 2.8 We note that Labour-controlled North East Derbyshire Council are wholeheartedly in favour of the proposals (Representation 007608).
- 2.9 We note Labour-controlled Chesterfield Council had no objection to the proposals (Representation 024180).
- 2.10 We can see no merit in the alternative Labour proposals for these constituencies and particularly note that the North East Derbyshire district would be divided into

three constituencies as opposed to the initial proposals which very logically have it coterminous with the Council which is most compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.

- 2.11 We note that Labour-controlled Bolsover Council support the proposal for Bolsover (Representation 003498).
- 2.12 We can see no merit in the alternative Labour proposals for Bolsover which split the District between two constituencies rather than the Commission's proposals which keep the Council together in one constituency.
- 2.13 In respect of Wingfield ward we note there is considerable opposition from local residents to this ward's proposed inclusion in Bolsover rather than remaining with their existing constituency of Amber Valley which the Boundary Commission name Mid Derbyshire and we would name Amber Valley.
- 2.14 We note some support for the name Amber Valley rather than Mid Derbyshire including from Amber Valley Council (Representation 020951) and the Labour Leader on Amber Valley (Representation 021020).
- 2.15 We note in respect of High Peak there are a number of different views but the majority agree with us that the two wards of Tideswell and Bradwell together with the ward of Hathersage and Eyam which is proposed to be included in High Peak should be included in a block of three wards in High Peak.
- 2.16 We note the various evidence given in writing and at the hearing in Derby that these three wards sit together as part of the Hope Valley. We particularly cite the evidence of the Councillor for Hope Valley ward in High Peak, Cllr. Anthony Favell (Representation 017983).

- 2.17 We have sympathy for the Parish of Eyam which has never been in a High Peak constituency but this is by far the smallest part of the Hathersage and Eyam ward with Haltersage, Tideswell and Bradwell being together in High Peak up until 2010.
- 2.18 We note that representations broadly support the proposal for Derbyshire Dales and we note the evidence of Patrick McLoughlin the MP for Derbyshire Dales at the public hearing in Derby (Day Two, 2.20pm, Pages 48-50).
- 2.19 We note that the Labour Party would link Derbyshire Dales with North East Derbyshire wards and we have noted earlier why we do not believe North East Derbyshire should be split between three constituencies.
- 2.20 We note some support for the composition of the Derby South and Swadlincote seat and some support for retaining the name of South Derbyshire. We note this support includes the Overseal Parish Council (Representation 001515).
- 2.21 We note some support for Derby to be split as currently and as the Labour submission says in a long-standing arrangement on a North-South basis. We note this support was particularly strong at the Derby public hearing from all parties and individuals.
- 2.22 We also note that a standard Labour Party letter which has attracted 168 responses supports their split of Derby on a North-South basis (Representation 025391).
- 2.23 We believe it is right that the two constituencies should be made up, as in the Commission's proposals and in our counter-proposals, from just Derby wards although Labour say in their submission there are few combinations the Commission and ourselves have shown it is possible.

- 2.24 We note the evidence of Mrs. Margaret Beckett, Labour MP for Derby South, who said that “Arboretum and Normanton together, feel very much like the sort of heart and core of what has always been Derby South for a very, very long time.” (Day Two, Derby hearing, 1.54pm, Pages 42-43)
- 2.25 The East-West proposal of the Commission separates these wards. Our proposal unites them in Derby South as Mrs. Beckett requests.
- 2.26 Our proposal is less disruptive than the Commission’s and we commend our proposal to the Commission.
- 2.27 In respect of Erewash we note there is overwhelming support for the Boundary Commission’s proposals. In fact taking representations from both the existing Erewash constituency and the two wards from Mid Derbyshire proposed to be included in the constituency there are more individual submissions on this proposal than any other proposed constituency in the East Midlands.
- 2.28 We note this support includes two Parish Councils from areas currently in Mid Derbyshire but proposed to be included in Erewash; Ockbrook and Borrowash Parish Council who strongly support the proposals (Representation 012900) and West Hallam Parish Council (Representation 021103).
- 2.29 The Erewash proposal of the constituency reverting to the constituency as was in place prior to 2010 is one that is logical, bringing together a number of communities within the same local authority and one that has a wide degree of local support.
- 2.30 The Labour alternative of splitting the Erewash district into three constituencies including a cross-border seat with Nottinghamshire enjoys very little support and is

actively opposed on both sides of the county border. It is also opposed in Ockbrook and Borrowash who have shown quite clearly they want to be linked in a seat with Erewash not in a seat with Derby wards.

2.31 The main counter-proposal regarding Derbyshire comes from the Labour Party and it is flawed in terms of local government links.

2.32 There are two ways in which Rule 5 (1) b can be measured; how many local authorities a constituency comprises and how many constituencies are within a local authority.

2.33 So in regard to the ten proposed constituencies and nine local authorities in Derbyshire we detail below a table comparing the Commission’s proposals and the Labour proposals.

Number of district and unitary local authorities a constituency comprises of

	One	Two	Three	Total
Commission proposals*	5	3	2	10
Labour proposals	1	5	3	9**

* This is no different under our counter-proposals and the Liberal Democrats support the Commission in Derbyshire.

** There are two further constituencies under Labour proposals partly in Derbyshire and partly in another county. Both of those two consist of two local authorities in addition to the two counties.

Number of constituencies within a local authority, i.e. how many MPs a local authority would have to deal with

	One	Two	Three	Total
Commission proposals	3	4	2	9
Labour proposals	1	3	5	9

- 2.34 We believe this table very clearly illustrates why Labour’s counter-proposals for Derbyshire should be rejected.
- 2.35 In Derbyshire we have suggested minor changes to six constituencies involving just seven wards. We believe these have support locally and as overall they are less disruptive than the Commission’s proposals we ask the Commission to adopt our counter-proposals for Derbyshire.

3. NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

- 3.1 We agree with the Commission that these counties need to be reviewed together and that consequently there need to be two cross-county constituencies.
- 3.2 Clearly cross-county constituencies will rarely be popular but we believe the places in which the Commission have proposed to cross the county boundary to be the least worst option.
- 3.3 We note there is some concern about these constituencies of Coalville and Keyworth and Daventry.
- 3.4 Interestingly there are slightly more individual responses of support for the two constituencies on either side of the Derbyshire-Nottinghamshire border where Labour have an alternative cross-county constituency, than there are individual responses against both of the Commission's proposed cross-county constituencies.
- 3.5 In respect of the two cross-county constituencies we support their composition but believe there is a strong case for a change of name.
- 3.6 In the case of Coalville and Keyworth we note that the Members of Parliament from both the Leicestershire side and the Nottinghamshire side accept this constituency (Representations 012649 and 023980).
- 3.7 In the case of Kenneth Clarke MP (Representation 023980) he suggests the constituency be called Rushcliffe and North West Leicestershire and we would support this name change which we believe would better reflect the two areas concerned. We note a number of other submissions have made the same point (For example Representations 017703 and 018821).

- 3.8 In the case of Daventry we believe the overwhelming evidence is that the Leicestershire part should be reflected in the name. We have suggested Lutterworth but would not be averse to South Leicestershire.
- 3.9 The problems are the alternative suggestions which we believe are worse and would be more unpopular.
- 3.10 The Labour Party support the Daventry link but we note they also suggest a more appropriate name is Daventry and Lutterworth.
- 3.11 It is the suggestion that there are two cross-county constituencies in Derbyshire which we reject and have explained earlier why we believe this to be inappropriate.
- 3.12 In the case of the Liberal Democrats they have a link between Rutland and Northamptonshire and Melton and Nottinghamshire.
- 3.13 We note that these links are strongly opposed by the Member of Parliament for Rutland and Melton who in one of his representations produces a press cutting from the Rutland Times showing that the local Liberal Democrats are totally opposed to the change (Representation 021121).
- 3.14 We also note that the proposal to link Rutland and Corby is opposed by both Members of Parliament (Representations 002773 and 003496) and Labour-controlled Corby Council (Representation 014330) and the Labour Parliamentary candidate for Corby Mr. Andrew Sawford (Representation 000198).
- 3.15 The Liberal Democrats fairly acknowledge that there is more disruption in the four constituencies of Corby, Harborough, Kettering and Rutland and Melton. They acknowledge they propose considerable change to Rutland and Melton.

- 3.16 Corby, Harborough and Rutland and Melton do not change under the Commission's proposals and we can see no justification for change. Although there have not been that many representations about these constituencies from local residents, all but one of those support the Boundary Commission's proposals.
- 3.17 In respect of Kettering although the Commission propose a minor change to this seat, the constituency proposed by the Liberal Democrats would split the Borough of Kettering between two seats as opposed to remaining within the one seat of Kettering.
- 3.18 We note that two of the towns that the Liberal Democrats would take out of Kettering are Desborough and Rothwell. We note that the town councils in both these towns support the proposal to remain in Kettering (Representations 014489 and 021947).
- 3.19 We also note that Kettering Council (Representation 020551) and the Returning Officer for Kettering (Representation 022783) both support the Commission's proposals.
- 3.20 We note the Liberal Democrats change substantially the proposed no change constituencies of Corby, Harborough and Rutland and Melton.
- 3.21 It is fair to point out that they leave three other changed constituencies unchanged, namely Bassetlaw, Charnwood and Wellingborough.
- 3.22 However whereas their changed constituencies change considerably, there are only minor changes to these other three.
- 3.23 In the case of Bassetlaw the Commission proposes minor change which has generated very little concern in the representations and that indeed John Mann the

Member of Parliament for Bassetlaw says “the direction and flow that the Commission has taken in Bassetlaw is the right and appropriate one” (Day One, Lincoln hearing, 11.18am, Pages 6-13).

- 3.24 In the case of Charnwood which the Commission rename Mid Leicestershire, the changes made by the Commission are actually helpful and logical as the existing constituency is a strange amalgam of three local authorities which the Commission change to a much more sensible arrangement consisting of two local authorities. We note that every representation about this constituency supports the composition as proposed by the Commission. However some people including the Member of Parliament (Representation 022749) want to revert to the name Charnwood which we support.
- 3.25 In the case of Wellingborough the Commission adds two wards Earls Barton and West to the constituency which are both Wellingborough Council wards. We note this move is popular and has the support of Earls Barton Parish Council who fully support the change (Representation 012261) as do Mears Ashby Parish Council within the West ward (Representation 021126).
- 3.26 In respect of Wellingborough we note Wellingborough Council support the whole of the Council being within the constituency (Representation 011450).
- 3.27 We accept this cannot happen as Finedon needs to be included in Kettering; however we agree that North ward should be included in Wellingborough and this has considerable support, nearly all the representations from the existing constituency relate to this suggested change including two Parish Councils within

the ward, Orlingbury Parish Council (Representations 022188 and 024079) and Isham Parish Council (Representation 024064).

- 3.28 We also note the support of the Member of Parliament for Wellingborough for the Commission's proposals plus North ward (Representation 024251).
- 3.29 In Northamptonshire therefore outside of Northampton we support the Commission's proposals except for the retention of North ward in the Wellingborough seat.
- 3.30 We note the Labour Party support the Northamptonshire proposals in full and we believe the Liberal Democrat proposal would be more disruptive and achieve less public support.
- 3.31 In respect of Northampton we would swap the wards of Spencer and Billing between North and South. We note some support for this given in writing and at the Northampton hearing.
- 3.32 We note support for this change comes from the Member of Parliament for Northampton North Michael Ellis (Representation 021986) and from the Leader of Northampton Borough Council (Day Two, Northampton hearing, 3.36pm, Day 28-30).
- 3.33 In Leicestershire we note all the parties support the proposals for the three Leicester seats.
- 3.34 In respect of Rutland and Melton and Harborough we fully support no change and note that all the representations from residents in these constituencies support no change.

- 3.35 We have explained why we reject the considerable change proposed by the Liberal Democrats.
- 3.36 The Labour Party make more minor changes to these two constituencies which we don't believe are necessary or justified. In particular in Rutland and Melton they add a Charnwood ward meaning it would comprise four local authorities rather than three.
- 3.37 At the moment only two constituencies in England consist of four local authorities and we believe it should be avoided if at all possible.
- 3.38 In addition the Charnwood local authority would comprise three constituencies under Labour's proposals as opposed to two under the Commission's proposals.
- 3.39 The Labour Party's changes to the Charnwood constituency (the proposed Mid Leicestershire) are also worse in terms of local authority links as under their proposals it comprises of three local authorities rather than two under the Commission's proposals.
- 3.40 In these respects Labour's proposals are worse than the Commission's under Rule 5 (1) b.
- 3.41 We have explained why we support the proposed Mid Leicestershire constituency albeit retaining the name Charnwood.
- 3.42 The Commission propose no change to the Loughborough constituency. We fully support this proposal and note the very considerable number of representations in support of this proposal including from the Councillor for the Wolds ward, Cllr. Jenny Bokor (Representation 012277) and a number of Parish Councils.

- 3.43 In respect of the Labour proposal to remove Wolds ward we can see no justification for this. It would mean the constituency consisting of two local authorities rather than one and mean North West Leicestershire local authority would comprise of three constituencies rather than two.
- 3.44 Once again the Labour proposals are worse in respect of Rule 5 (1) b as well as c and d.
- 3.45 Here we agree with the Liberal Democrats when they say they can see no justification for the Labour proposals for Loughborough.
- 3.46 In respect of the proposed Blaby and Bosworth constituencies we note there is both support and opposition to these proposed constituencies. We note the strong support for the proposed Blaby constituency from the former Member of Parliament for Blaby Lord Lawson (Representation 016384).
- 3.47 We believe the proposal of the Commission to be the best available and reject the different proposals of the Liberal Democrats and Labour in respect of these two constituencies because of their consequential disruption elsewhere.
- 3.48 Their proposals for the Blaby local authority are worse than the Commission's proposals as under the Liberal Democrat proposals the authority would be divided amongst four constituencies and amongst three constituencies in the case of Labour. Clearly here the Commission which only divide it amongst two constituencies is most compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
- 3.49 We have explained why we think Coalville and Keyworth to be the least worst option in terms of crossing the border between Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire. We would however support an alternative name for this constituency.

- 3.50 In respect of Nottinghamshire we would make very minor changes affecting two wards but considerably improving local authority links and thereby being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
- 3.51 There is general agreement in respect of the Ashfield constituency.
- 3.52 In respect of Bassetlaw very little concern has been received regarding the minor changes by the Commission. We reject the Labour and Liberal Democrat alternatives because of the knock-on effects elsewhere and note the comments of the Labour Member of Parliament for Bassetlaw referred to earlier.
- 3.53 In respect of Mansfield we agree with the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats and all the representations from the existing constituency which are against the split of the town of Warsop.
- 3.54 We would therefore retain the existing constituency coterminous with the local authority for which we believe there is an overwhelming case under Rules 5 (1) b, c and d.
- 3.55 We note in respect of the proposed Newark constituency there is very little opposition to the combination of Newark and Sherwood and Rushcliffe wards.
- 3.56 We note however there is some concern relating to including one ward from the Gedling Borough (Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph) in this constituency.
- 3.57 We note that none of the three major parties would include this ward with Newark albeit that all three have different solutions.
- 3.58 We believe our solution of including it in the Sherwood constituency to be the most straightforward and simplest solution.

- 3.59 By doing this we reduce from three to two the number of councils within the Newark constituency thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b. We note that the Labour Party would still have the constituency comprising of three local authorities.
- 3.60 We would include the ward with the Sherwood constituency which contains other Gedling wards. Although we appreciate the ward does not have a direct road link with these wards they are in the same local authority and are currently together with a number of these wards in the same constituency of Gedling.
- 3.61 We note that Labour-controlled Gedling Council whilst not wanting the Commission's proposal say that they would rather the ward was in the proposed Sherwood constituency than the proposed Newark constituency so that under these circumstances Gedling Council would include three constituencies rather than four (Representations 024149 and 024273).
- 3.62 We also note the representation from the Conservative Group Leader on Gedling Council in relation to Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph (Representation 024344).
- 3.63 We note the support of Newark and Sherwood District Council (Representation 006853) for the move of Birklands into Mansfield and Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph into Sherwood. We note that this has the support of Conservative, Liberal Democrat and Independent councillors, as evidenced by Cllr. David Lloyd (Day Two, Lincoln hearing, 3.08pm, Pages 15-17). We also note the representation of Nottinghamshire County Council (Representation 019217). Although they would rather be reviewed alone like Derbyshire they specifically support the two moves of

Birklands into Mansfield and Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph into Sherwood in order to reduce the number of local authorities these constituencies consist of.

- 3.64 Making the changes to these two wards of Birklands into Mansfield and Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph from Newark into Sherwood substantially improves the Local Government links.
- 3.65 The number of local authorities Newark comprises reduces from three to two, and the number of local authorities Sherwood comprises reduces from four to three. Mansfield Council becomes coterminous and comprises one constituency rather than two and Gedling Council comprises three rather than four. This is a considerable improvement of the position under Rule 5 (1) b.
- 3.66 We note that as well as the Commission proposing a constituency comprising of four local authorities (Sherwood) Labour with Sherwood and the Liberal Democrats with Hucknall still propose such a constituency.
- 3.67 As we explained earlier there are only two constituencies within England comprising of four local authorities. We believe it should be avoided if at all possible. We do so in the East Midlands while the Liberal Democrats and the Commission have one seat so constituted and Labour have two.
- 3.68 In respect of Sherwood we would cite the evidence of Mark Spencer MP for Sherwood (Day One, Lincoln hearing, 11.51am, pages 15-19) and Andrew Stewart the former MP for Sherwood (Representation 023744).
- 3.69 As regards Nottingham we accept that there is disruption but believe this is necessary because of the very low electorates of the existing seats.

- 3.70 We believe it is right to combine three constituencies with suburbs outside which have very close links to Nottingham.
- 3.71 We support the composition of these seats and note whilst there is some opposition it is not very great. We would add the name Carlton to the Nottingham East seat but would not be averse to Gedling as others have suggested.
- 3.72 In respect of Nottingham we would cite the evidence of our Group Leader on Nottingham City Council (Representation 020232) and the former Member of Parliament for Nottingham South, Martin Brandon-Bravo (Representation 012247).
- 3.73 In respect of Broxtowe we fully support the proposals of the Commission and note they have received more support than opposition.
- 3.74 We note that Broxtowe Council which is run by Labour and the Liberal Democrats as there is no one party in overall control has said if it is not possible to have the constituency with no change then it supports the proposal of the Commission (Representation 020723).
- 3.75 We appreciate the position regarding the Gotham ward although note there is some support for the move even within the ward and that it is noted that this ward has been included with Broxtowe wards in a Parliamentary constituency in the past.
- 3.76 We believe this to be by far the least worst option as other options are much more disruptive to the existing Broxtowe constituency.
- 3.77 We note that under the Commission's proposals Broxtowe Borough has two constituencies within it. Under Labour's proposals it would be four and under the Liberal Democrats' proposals three.

3.78 Overall therefore we believe the Commission have produced the most sensible solution for Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire and with minor changes to just five wards you can improve dramatically the local government links, better respect existing constituencies and break fewer local ties thereby being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.

4. LINCOLNSHIRE

- 4.1 We note there is very little opposition to the no change constituencies of Grantham and Stamford, South Holland and the Deepings and Gainsborough.
- 4.2 We note there is no opposition to the minor change between Louth and Horncastle and Boston and Skegness.
- 4.3 We note that there is some opposition from residents in North Hykeham becoming part of the Lincoln constituency.
- 4.4 We note there is also some opposition to splitting the Waddington Parish between two constituencies, for example the evidence of Ms. Patricia Hopkins (Day One, Lincoln public hearing, 3.13pm, Page 40).
- 4.5 We believe our alternative of keeping the Waddington Parish together and retaining North Hykeham in the Sleaford and North Hykeham constituency is much less disruptive and means the existing Lincoln constituency is kept intact.
- 4.6 We cite the evidence of Karl McCartney the Member of Parliament for Lincoln both at the Lincoln hearing (Day One, 12.14pm, Pages 22-28) and in writing (Representation 024653) and also that of Cllr. Martin Hill the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council (Representation 021772).

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 We believe the Commission have done a good job in the East Midlands which is evidenced by the relatively small number of responses compared to other Regions and the relatively large number of the responses that are in favour of the Commission's proposals.
- 5.2 We believe the cross-county constituencies proposed by the Commission are the least worst option and that any other options suggested would be more disruptive and will engender much more opposition.
- 5.3 We believe the Commission have met well the Rules for Redistribution of Seats – Rule 5 of Schedule 2 to the Act.
- 5.4 We propose minor changes including the movement of just nineteen wards together with a number of suggested name changes.
- 5.5 We believe all these changes improve the proposals of the Commission on the basis of Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
- 5.6 We commend our proposals to the Commission outlined in our final submission (Representation 025307).