

# Submission to the Boundary Commission for England third period of consultation: **East Midlands**

## Summary

There is a factual error in the Commission's report concerning the Liberal Democrat counter-proposals in the Leicestershire / Northamptonshire / Nottinghamshire / Rutland sub-region. We would, therefore, ask the Commission to reconsider the scheme we put forward.

We welcome the change the Commission has made to its proposal for Mansfield.

We welcome the fact that the Commission has kept to its original proposals in Lincolnshire, much of Derbyshire and Derby, and in Northampton.

We consider that the changes that the Commission has made to four constituencies in Derbyshire, affecting the disposition of three wards, are finely balanced judgement calls with which we are content to accept the Commission's view.

The change that the Commission has made to the Kettering and Wellingborough constituencies would not have needed to be considered if it had agreed to our proposal for an unchanged Wellingborough seat.

The Commission's proposal to move the Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph ward into its proposed Sherwood constituency means that it is now proposing three Nottinghamshire constituencies (Bassetlaw, Broxtowe, Sherwood) which contain a ward which is inaccessible from the rest of the seat. We are not in agreement with the Commission's failure to comply with the spirit of the legislation or the letter of its own guidelines in respect of these three proposed constituencies.

We are not in agreement with the Commission's failure to respect the boundaries of the City of Nottingham to the extent of proposing three constituencies that cross the Unitary Authority boundary.

We are not in agreement with Commission's continuing proposal to split communities in the Hinckley and Bosworth District.

If the Commission is not minded, having considered the factual error in its report, to adopt our original proposals in the Leicestershire/Northamptonshire/ Nottinghamshire/Rutland sub-region, we would suggest a more modest proposal which would solve the problems of inaccessible wards, the City of Nottingham, and Hinckley and Bosworth by changing thirteen proposed constituencies in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire.

If the Commission is not minded to change thirteen constituencies at this stage, it could consider solving the Hinckley and Bosworth problem by making changes to only five constituencies.

### Factual Error in the Commission's report

In paragraph AC212 of the Commission's report states that "the Liberal Democrats' counter-proposal generates substantially greater change to existing constituencies". This is not true. Our counter-proposal, in fact, generates less change than the Commission's proposal.

The number of electors who are moved under our counter-proposal in the sub-region is 386,469. The number moved under the Commission's original proposal was 411,648. This has been reduced under its revised proposal to 405,396.

We propose eight unchanged constituencies, compared with seven in the Commission's original proposal, increased to eight in the revised proposal. We propose only three constituencies which draw less than 60% of its electors from an existing constituency, compared with seven in the Commission's proposal. Of these, only one has less than half its electors from an existing constituency, compared with two in the Commission's proposal.

The error of fact in paragraph AC212 is built on mistakes in paragraphs AC205, AC206 and AC207.

Our arrangement, it is claimed, "involves the omission of six constituencies in either substance or name". It is further claimed that "the initial proposals involved the loss of four constituencies". The false inference is made that the Commission's Nottingham East is based the existing constituency of the same name when 58% of the electors are from the existing Gedling constituency. The Commission's initial proposed Sherwood (53% from the existing constituency) is exhibited as continuing while our proposed Hucknall (71%) is portrayed as new. The Commission's proposed Nottingham North and Hucknall (44%) is depicted as continuing while our proposed Nottingham North (57% and no name change) is listed as new.

A comparison of change from existing constituencies between the BCE's initial and revised proposed constituencies and the Liberal Democrat proposed constituencies in the Leicestershire/Northamptonshire/Nottinghamshire/Rutland sub-region shows that the report's claim that "the Liberal Democrats' counter-proposal performs less well than the initial proposals when considered with reference to its impact on existing constituencies" is simply untrue:

	BCE initial		BCE revised		Liberal Democrat	
unchanged	Ashfield Corby Harborough Leicester East Leicester South Loughborough Rutland & Melton	7	Ashfield Corby & East Northamptonshire (Corby) Harborough Leicester East Leicester South Loughborough Mansfield Rutland & Melton	8	Ashfield Bassetlaw Charnwood Leicester East Leicester South Loughborough Mansfield Wellingborough	8
100%	Bassetlaw Mansfield	2	Bassetlaw	1	Hinckley & Bosworth (Bosworth)	1
90-99%	Broxtowe 97.72% Kettering 93.04% Wellingborough 92.78%	3	Broxtowe 97.72% Kettering 95.47% Wellingborough 93.00%	3	Gedling 95.53% North West Leicestershire 93.91%	2
80-89%	Northampton North 84.56% Leicester West 83.79% Newark 80.78% South Northamptonshire 80.75%	4	Northampton North 84.56% Newark 84.02% Leicester West 83.79% South Northamptonshire 80.75%	4	Northampton North 84.56% Leicester West 83.79% South Northamptonshire 80.75%	3
70-79%	Mid Leicestershire 77.96% Daventry 71.02%	2	Charnwood 77.96% Daventry & Lutterworth (Daventry) 71.02%	2	Newark 78.69% Daventry 73.57% Rushcliffe 73.01% Mid Leicestershire (Harborough) 72.42% Hucknall (Sherwood) 70.55%	5
60-69%	Northampton South 69.30% Nottingham South & West Bridgford (Nottingham South) 65.78%	2	Northampton South 69.30% Nottingham South & West Bridgford (Nottingham South) 65.78%	2	Northampton South 69.30% Nottingham West & Beeston (Broxtowe) 68.05% Harborough (South Leicestershire) 66.64% Rutland & Corby (Corby) 63.44% Kettering 61.57%	5
50-59%	Nottingham East (Gedling) 58.03% Bosworth 56.41% Blaby (South Leicestershire) 54.51% Coalville & Keyworth (North West Leicestershire) 54.47%	5	Nottingham East (Gedling) 58.03% Bosworth 56.41% Blaby (South Leicestershire) 54.51% Coalville & Keyworth (North West Leicestershire) 54.47%	5	Vale of Belvoir (Rutland & Melton) 59.11% Nottingham North 57.24%	2

	Sherwood 53.28%		Sherwood 54.30%			
0-49%	Nottingham North & Hucknall (Nottingham North) 44.19% Nottingham West (Nottingham East) 36.52%	2	Nottingham North & Hucknall (Nottingham North) 44.19% Nottingham West (Nottingham East) 36.52%	2	Nottingham Central (Nottingham East) 36.77%	1

### Mansfield

We are pleased that the Commission has agreed with us, the Conservative Party, the Labour Party, and the majority of those who made representations, that Mansfield should remain unchanged and coterminous with the District of the same name.

### Lincolnshire

We welcome the Commission’s confirmation of its initial proposals in Lincolnshire. We are particularly pleased that it has resisted the Conservative Party counter-proposal in the Lincoln area. The Commission’s proposal for a Lincoln constituency that includes the whole of the Lincoln built up area is far superior to the alternative.

### Derbyshire and Derby

We are pleased that the Commission has confirmed its initial proposals for six seats in Derbyshire and Derby. North East Derbyshire has been made coterminous with the District of the same name. Chesterfield is, with the return of the suburb of New Whittington, once again made whole. In Derby, the railway line has been used as the natural boundary between the two City constituencies. Erewash and South Derbyshire have logical boundaries as a consequence.

We consider that the changes that the Commission has made to four constituencies in Derbyshire (Amber Valley, Bolsover, Derbyshire Dales, High Peak), affecting the disposition of three wards, are finely balanced judgement calls with which we are content to accept the Commission’s view.

### Northamptonshire

We welcome the Commission’s confirmation of its initial proposals in Northampton. We are particularly pleased that it has resisted the Conservative Party counter-proposal which proposed that the Billing ward, instead of the Spencer ward, join Northampton North.

The change that the Commission has made to the Kettering and Wellingborough constituencies would not have needed to be considered if it had agreed to our proposal for an unchanged Wellingborough seat.

### Inaccessible wards

The Commission has not taken into account Rule 5 in Schedule 2 of the Act, nor paragraph 35 of its own Guide to the 2013 Review in relation to three constituencies in Nottinghamshire (Bassetlaw, Broxtowe, Sherwood).

Rule 5 states that the Commission may take into account “special geographical considerations, including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency”.

Paragraph 35 states that the BCE seeks to create constituencies “that do not contain ‘detached parts’, i.e. where the only physical connection between one part of the constituency and the remainder would require travel through a different constituency”.

The Commission, in its initial proposals, failed to comply with the spirit of the legislation or the letter of its own guidelines in respect of both Bassetlaw and Broxtowe. It has compounded the problem, in its revised proposals, by adding an inaccessible ward to its proposed Sherwood.

To have one such constituency in a county might be regarded as misfortune; two looks like carelessness; three is surely cause for greater concern.

The Commission describes its proposed Broxtowe constituency, divided by the river Trent without a crossing, as “far from ideal”. We would describe it as an unacceptable breach of the spirit of the law and the letter of the BCE guidelines. Gotham Parish Council polled its electors. 89% rejected the Commission’s proposals.

The Commission has not acknowledged our concerns about the inaccessibility of the Misterton ward from the rest of its proposed Bassetlaw constituency. There is no public right of way across the farmland that separates Misterton from the rest of the constituency.

The inclusion of the Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph ward in the Commission’s revised Sherwood constituency is perhaps the least egregious of the three. There are public rights of way, on foot and on horseback, but no vehicular access.

### The City of Nottingham

The Commission’s proposals to give the City of Nottingham, which qualifies for two and a half constituencies, four seats, three of which extend beyond the Unitary Authority boundaries, arbitrarily dividing the settlement of Arnold in the Gedling District, drew much criticism. The Commission, in its report, has not addressed this.

## Hinckley and Bosworth

The Commission's proposals to split the urban area of the town of Hinckley and to split the joined villages of Barwell and Earl Shilton drew much criticism. Again, the Commission, in its report, has not addressed this.

### A more modest proposal

We understand that our counter-proposal caused more disruption in four constituencies (Corby, Harborough, Kettering, Rutland and Melton) than the Commission's proposal. Throughout the rest of the sub-region, however, it caused less. It solved the problems of inaccessible wards. It solved the Nottingham problem. It solved the Hinckley problem.

If the Commission is not minded to reconsider its opposition to our counter-proposal in the light of the error we have pointed out in its report, we have a more modest proposal which solves these problems without affecting the four previously disrupted constituencies.

This would change thirteen of the Commission's proposed constituencies (Bassetlaw, Blaby, Bosworth, Broxtowe, Charnwood, Coalville and Keyworth, Leicester West, Newark, Nottingham East, Nottingham North and Hucknall, Nottingham South and West Bridgford, Nottingham West, Sherwood) as follows:

Proposed constituency	Consisting of	Elect.
Ashby and Keyworth	North West Leicestershire wards: Appleby, Ashby Castle, Ashby Holywell, Ashby Ivanhoe, Breedon, Castle Donington, Ibstock and Heather, Kegworth and Whatton, Measham, Moira, Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe, Ravenstone and Packington, Valley. Rushcliffe wards: Cotgrave, Gotham, Keyworth North, Keyworth South, Leake, Nevile, Soar Valley, Stanford, Tollerton, Wiverton, Wolds.	73,371
Bassetlaw	<b>UNCHANGED</b> Bassetlaw wards: Beckingham, Blyth, Carlton, Clayworth, East Retford East, East Retford North, East Retford South, East Retford West, Everton, Harworth, Langold, Misterton, Ranskill, Sturton, Sutton, Welbeck, Worksop East, Worksop North, Worksop North East, Worksop North West, Worksop South, Worksop South East.	78,306
Blaby	Blaby District ( <b>ALL</b> )	73,026
Bosworth	Hinckley and Bosworth wards: Ambien, Barlestone Nailstone and Osbaston, Barwell, Burbage St. Catherines and Lash Hill, Burbage Sketchley and Stretton, Cadeby Carlton and Market Bosworth with Shackerstone, Earl Shilton, Groby, Hinckley Castle, Hinckley Clarendon, Hinckley De Montfort, Hinckley Trinity, Newbold Verdon with Desford and Peckleton, Ratby Bagworth and Thornton, Twycross and Witherley with Sheepy.	78,641
Broxtowe	City of Nottingham ward: Dunkirk and Lenton. Broxtowe wards: Attenborough, Awwsworth, Beeston Central, Beeston North, Beeston Rylands, Beeston West, Bramcote, Chilwell East, Chilwell West, Cossall and Kimberley, Greasley (Giltbrook and Newthorpe), Nuthall East and Strelley, Nuthall West and Greasley (Watnall), Stapleford North, Stapleford South East, Stapleford South West, Toton and Chilwell Meadows, Trowell.	77,112
Charnwood and Coalville	Charnwood wards: Anstey, East Goscote, Forest Bradgate, Mountsorrel, Queniborough, Rothley and Thurcaston, Syston East, Syston West, Thurmaston, Wreake Villages. Hinckley and Bosworth ward: Markfield Stanton and Fieldhead. North West Leicestershire wards: Bardon, Coalville, Greenhill, Hugglescote,	76,406

	Snibston, Thringstone, Whitwick.	
Gedling	Gedling wards: Bonington, Burton Joyce and Stoke Bardolph, Carlton, Carlton Hill, Daybrook, Gedling, Killisick, Kingswell, Lambley, Mapperley Plains, Netherfield and Colwick, Phoenix, Porchester, St. James, St. Marys, Valley, Woodborough, Woodthorpe.	74,203
Leicester West	City of Leicester wards: Abbey, Beaumont Leys, Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Fosse, New Parks, Westcotes, Western Park. Charnwood wards: Birstall Wanlip, Birstall Watermead.	75,304
Newark	Bassetlaw wards: East Markham, Rampton, Tuxford and Trent. Newark and Sherwood wards: Balderton North, Balderton West, Beacon, Bridge, Castle, Caunton, Collingham and Meering, Devon, Farndon, Lowdham, Magnus, Muskham, Sutton on Trent, Trent, Winthorpe. Rushcliffe wards: Bingham East, Bingham West, Cranmer, Manvers, Oak, Thoroton, Trent.	73,564
Nottingham North	City of Nottingham wards: Basford, Berridge, Bestwood, Bulwell, Bulwell Forest, Mapperley, Sherwood.	75,360
Nottingham South and West Bridgford	City of Nottingham wards: Bridge, Clifton North, Clifton South, Dales. Rushcliffe wards: Abbey, Compton Acres, Edwalton Village, Gamston, Lady Bay, Lutterell, Melton, Musters, Ruddington, Trent Bridge.	74,440
Nottingham West	City of Nottingham wards: Arboretum, Aspley, Bilborough, Leen Valley, Radford and Park, St. Ann's, Wollaton East and Lenton Abbey, Wollaton West.	74,678
Sherwood	Ashfield wards: Hucknall Central, Hucknall East, Hucknall North, Hucknall West. Gedling wards: Bestwood Village, Calverton, Newstead, Ravenshead. Newark and Sherwood wards: Blidworth, Boughton, Clipstone, Edwinstowe, Farnsfield and Bilsthorpe, Ollerton, Rainworth, Southwell East, Southwell North, Southwell West.	74,752

This would have the advantages of: increasing the number of unchanged constituencies by one; increasing the number of constituencies coterminous with a local authority by one; eliminating all three cases of inaccessible wards; reducing the number of constituencies crossing the City of Nottingham boundary from three to two; and repairing divided communities in Gedling and in Hinckley and Bosworth.

Ashby and Keyworth would be a more coherent cross-county seat than the Commission's proposed Coalville and Keyworth with the A42 main road running along the spine of the Leicestershire side towards Nottinghamshire.

Bassetlaw (as in our counter-proposal) would be unchanged and would not suffer from an inaccessible ward.

Blaby would be coterminous with the district of the same name and would not suffer from the division of communities in Hinckley and Barwell/Earl Shilton.

Bosworth would be entirely made up of Hinckley and Bosworth wards and would not suffer from the division of communities in Hinckley and Barwell/Earl Shilton.

Broxtowe would not suffer from an inaccessible ward, although it would cross a Unitary Authority boundary.

Charnwood and Coalville would consist of wards from three districts, compared to two in the Commission's proposed Charnwood.

Gedling (as in our counter-proposal) would consist of the whole of the present Gedling constituency with the addition of two Gedling wards. It would therefore consist entirely of wards from Gedling District, compared with the Commission's proposed Nottingham East which straddles the City of Nottingham UA boundary.

Leicester West would consist of the existing constituency and two Charnwood District wards, compared with the Commission's proposal which adds three Blaby wards. The three Blaby wards, which make up Braunstone Town, are a better geographical fit than the two Charnwood wards, which make up the village of Birstall.

Newark would consist of wards from three districts, compared with two in the Commission's revised proposals, but there is far less change from the existing constituency which only loses the cathedral town of Southwell and only gains the settlement of Radcliffe on Trent.

Nottingham North (as in our counter-proposal) would consist entirely of City of Nottingham wards, compared to the Commission's Nottingham North and Hucknall which crosses the UA boundary, includes wards from two other local authorities and divides the settlement of Arnold.

Nottingham South and West Bridgford would consist of City of Nottingham and Rushcliffe wards as does the Commission's proposal.

Sherwood would not suffer from an inaccessible ward and would be much less changed, losing only two Gedling wards to Gedling, gaining three Newark and Sherwood wards from Newark.

An even more modest proposal

If the Commission is not minded to solve the problems of in Nottinghamshire, it could still repair the damage in the town of Hinckley by making changes in five of its proposed constituencies (Blaby, Bosworth, Charnwood, Coalville and Keyworth, Leicester West).

Proposed constituency	Consisting of	Elect.
Ashby and Keyworth	North West Leicestershire wards: Appleby, Ashby Castle, Ashby Holywell, Ashby Ivanhoe, Breedon, Castle Donington, Ibstock and Heather, Kegworth and Whatton, Measham, Moira, Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe, Ravenstone and Packington, Valley. Rushcliffe wards: Cotgrave, Gamston, Keyworth North, Keyworth South, Leake, Ruddington, Soar Valley, Stanford, Tollerton, Wolds.	76,650
Blaby	Blaby District <b>(ALL)</b>	73,026
Bosworth	Hinckley and Bosworth wards: Ambien, Barlestone Nailstone and Osbaston, Barwell, Burbage St. Catherines and Lash Hill, Burbage Sketchley and Stretton, Cadeby Carlton and Market Bosworth with Shackerstone, Earl Shilton, Groby, Hinckley Castle, Hinckley Clarendon, Hinckley De Montfort, Hinckley Trinity, Newbold Verdon with Desford and Peckleton, Ratby Bagworth and Thornton, Twycross and Witherley with Sheepy.	78,641
Charnwood and Coalville	Charnwood wards: Anstey, East Goscote, Forest Bradgate, Mountsorrel, Queniborough, Rothley and Thurcaston, Syston East, Syston West, Thurmaston, Wreake Villages. Hinckley and Bosworth ward: Markfield Stanton and Fieldhead.	76,406

	North West Leicestershire wards: Bardon, Coalville, Greenhill, Hugglescote, Snibston, Thringstone, Whitwick.	
Leicester West	City of Leicester wards: Abbey, Beaumont Leys, Braunstone Park and Rowley Fields, Fosse, New Parks, Westcotes, Western Park. Charnwood wards: Birstall Wanlip, Birstall Watermead.	75,304

### Conclusion

We hope that the Commission will look again at our original counter-proposal in the light of the error contained in its report. We also hope that the Commission will seek to improve shortcomings in its scheme and that this response is helpful to it.