

**PROCEEDINGS**  
**AT THE**  
**2023 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND**

**HELD AT**  
**NOTTINGHAM COUNCIL HOUSE, NOTTINGHAM**

**ON**  
**MONDAY 7 MARCH 2022**  
**DAY 1**

**Before:**

**Mr Peter Fish, Assistant Commissioner**

**PETER FISH:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries in the East Midlands region.

My name is Peter Fish, and I am an assistant commissioner of the Boundary Commission for England. I was appointed by the Commission to assist them in their task of making recommendations for new constituencies in the East Midlands region. I am responsible for chairing the hearing today and tomorrow, and I am also responsible, along with my fellow assistant commissioner, Alison Blom-Cooper, who is in the audience, for analysing all the representations received about the initial proposals for this region and then presenting recommendations to the Commission as to whether or not these initial proposals should be revised. I am assisted here today by members of the Commission staff, led by Tim Bowden, who is sitting beside me.

Tim will shortly provide a brief explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for new constituencies in this region. He will tell you how you can make written representations and will deal with one or two administrative matters. The hearing today is scheduled to run from 10:00 until 20:00, and tomorrow it is scheduled to run from 9:00 to 17:00. I can vary that timetable, and I will take into account the attendance and the demand for opportunities to speak. I should point out that under the legislation that governs the Commission's review, each public hearing must be held over two days and cannot be extended into a third.

The purpose of this public hearing is to allow people to make oral representations about the initial proposals for the East Midlands region, and the comments we have so far received on them which have been published on our consultation portal, [bcereviews.org.uk](http://bcereviews.org.uk). I look forward to hearing your views today. A number of people have already registered to speak and have been given a timeslot, and I will invite them to speak at the appropriate time. If there is any time free during the day or at the end of the day, then I will invite anyone who hasn't registered – but who would like to speak – to do so. I would like to stress that the purpose of this public hearing is for people to make oral representations during the secondary consultation period. The purpose is not to engage in a debate with the Commission about the proposals, nor is this hearing an opportunity for people to cross-examine other speakers during their presentation. People may seek to put questions for clarification to the speakers, but they should do that through me as the Chair.

I will now hand over to Tim, who will provide a brief explanation of the Commission's initial proposals for the East Midlands region.

**TIM BOWDEN:** Thank you very much and good morning. As Peter has mentioned, my name is Tim Bowden. I'm the Secretary to the Commission and thus member of the Commission's staff. I am responsible for supporting the commissioners in their role to recommend new parliamentary constituency boundaries. And at this hearing, I lead the team of staff responsible for ensuring that the hearing runs smoothly. As the chair has already stated, they will chair the hearing itself, and it's their responsibility to run the hearing at their discretion and take decisions about speakers, questioners and timings. My team and I are here today to support them in carrying out their role. So please ask one of us outside of the hearing if you require any help or assistance. We encourage attendees to wear a mask during the hearing itself but of course not to wear one whilst coming up and delivering your presentation at your time slot.

We also encourage you to practise social distancing during the day, and we've provided hand sanitiser around the venue. If, of course, you were to develop any coronavirus-related symptoms, we obviously ask you to not stay at the hearing and to follow government advice. I'd now like to talk about the Commission's initial proposals for the East Midlands, which were published on Tuesday 8th June 2021. The Commission's proposals for this region are for 47 constituencies, an increase of one. Our proposals leave five of the existing constituencies wholly unchanged and six changed only to realign with local government boundaries that have been changed. The 2023 review of parliamentary constituencies was formally launched in January 2021, and we held our first public consultation on the initial proposals between the 8th June and 2nd August, to which we received over 34,000 representations in total. The Commission is required to ensure that the number of electors in each constituency is roughly the same.

In doing so, the number of constituencies in England will increase from 533 to 543. We are undertaking an independent review of all constituency boundaries in England and will present our final recommendations to Parliament by July 2023. We use the English regions as a template for the allocation of the 543 constituencies to which England is entitled, including the two protected constituencies for the Isle of Wight. This approach is permitted by the legislation and has been supported during previous public consultation. This approach does not prevent anyone from putting forward counterproposals that include one or more constituencies being split between the regions, but it is likely that compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade us to depart from the regional-based approach we adopted in formulating our initial proposals. The statutory rules allow us to take into account local government boundaries as they existed on or were in prospect on Tuesday 1st December 2020. These include both the external boundaries of local councils and their internal boundaries, known as wards or electoral divisions.

Wards are well-defined and well-understood units, which are generally indicative of areas which have a broad community of interest. We have therefore sought to avoid dividing wards between constituencies wherever possible but in a small number of cases have done so in order to better reflect the statutory factors. The scale of change in this review is significant, and we look forward to hearing the views of people in this hearing and throughout the rest of the consultation period. We are consulting on our proposals until Monday 4th April, so there is still time after this hearing for people to contribute in writing. There are reference copies of the proposals present at this hearing, and they are also available to view on our easy-to-use consultation website, [bcereviews.org.uk](https://bcereviews.org.uk). You can provide a written representation to us directly through this website and give feedback on anything from where the proposed new boundaries are to the names of the constituencies. We attach just as much significance to representations made orally at public hearings as those made in writing via letter, email or through our website. I therefore urge everyone to submit written representations to us by the deadline of 4th April as we will not be able to consider representations received after this date. Finally, I'd like to remind all participants that this hearing is part of a public consultation, and you'll be asked to confirm your name and town if you make an oral representation. The Commission is legally obliged to take a record of the public hearings, and as you can see, we are taking a video recording, which will be made available on our YouTube channel shortly after the hearing. After the secondary consultation, we will publish a verbatim transcript of the whole public hearing, publish all the responses we've received via our consultation portal, email or letter throughout the consultation period. These may not be published until the commencement of the revised proposals consultation.

The publication of the hearing records and written representations include certain personal data of those who have made representations. I therefore invite all those contributing to read the Commission's data protection and privacy policy, a copy of which we have with us and which is also available on our website. Just in terms of administrative matters, we're not expecting a fire alarm today. So if one does go off, it's the real deal, and if you follow myself or one of my team members and we will guide you where we need to go should you require any assistance. As I say, please do ask us outside of the room. But at this stage, thank you very much for attending today, and I'll now hand back to Peter to chair the hearing. Thank you very much.

**PETER FISH:** Excellent. Thank you very much. And I think our first speaker today is Alan Fox. Alan, are you okay to go? As Tim said, if once you get to the mic, if you could give your name and where you're from and actually the organisation that you're representing, that'd be really helpful. Thank you.

**ALAN FOX:** Good morning. I'm Alan Fox from the Liberal Democrats. I'd firstly like to thank the Commission for all their hard work in this review and thanks to all the many people and organisations that responded to the first round of consultations. Our response, 89059, supported the Commission subregions and 36 of its proposed seats. In that response, we made three counterproposals involving 11 of the Commission's proposed constituencies. We've studied representations made in the initial stage, and we are still not commenting on the names of seats at this point. We are guided by the statutory rule five considerations, as repeated in paragraph 26 of the Commission's guide to the review. And we follow the interpretation of rule five as it's laid out in paragraphs 27 to 37 of the guide.

In the guide, the Commission view is therefore that wards should continue to be the default building block for constituencies, and the bold there is the Commission's bold. The Commission says that ward splits might be allowed where it would 'significantly' enhance the ability to adhere to the rule five considerations, where it would avoid a significant domino effect and where it would avoid otherwise unacceptable outcomes. And it says in paragraph 32 that the number of ward splits should be kept to a minimum and that they should be done on the basis of polling districts and that each constituency involved should have the majority of its electors in the same first-tier authority. The guide makes it clear that the rule five consideration on detached parts means that constituencies should be internally accessible.

So in Northamptonshire, we've been in correspondence with the Commission since June about anomalies in the polling district, electorate data and mapping in North Northamptonshire. The Commission throughout has stated that the data is definitive and that the mapping is indicative. We are now convinced that the ordinance survey mapping is correct. We believe that the data provided in North Northamptonshire is in places incorrect. North Northamptonshire Council was asked whether the data given to the Boundary Commission was accurate. Its reply was, and I'll quote, 'In terms of data supplied to the Boundary Commission for the parliamentary boundary review, this was requested in autumn 2020 backdated to Sunday 1st March 2020. As this was a national request, the Boundary Commission liaised with electoral services and software management suppliers to develop a report that would generate the data to their specifications. The data was subsequently generated using this report and supplied independently to the Boundary Commission by each of the legacy authorities.'

This non-answer is deeply worrying. This is not the first time that we've had problems with the data in Northamptonshire. At the last review, we pointed out a discrepancy of 1,027 electors between two wards within the borough of Northampton, which the Commission was able to

correct in time for its revised proposals. The discrepancies we've been able to detect are on the screen. There may be others. We believe that the Commission is blameless in this. It was given incorrect information, which it then published. And, basically, we're talking about two polling districts having been missed out of the ward data and two of those polling districts having been rolled into the other, which is important – we'll come to that later on – that a polling district is missing for the data for the Earls Barton ward. It has zero electors, but it's very important if you're trying to construct constituencies that include the whole of the Wellingborough Town Council area.

One polling district has been wrongly allocated between wards. That means that for the Commission's proposals, there are 103 electors that are in the Croyland and Swanspool ward that have been incorrectly allocated to the Earls Barton ward. It means that any scheme – and that includes the Boundary Commission scheme and the Conservative Party counterproposal that puts those two wards in separate constituencies – is out by those figures. Accurate ward and polling district electorate and mapping data is vital in any split ward scheme. We are not sure it's available. The Commission proposes three ward splits in the subregion. We think it would be possible to have a scheme with no ward splits in the county, but that would mean splitting the town of Northampton three ways. We think that only one split is necessary to have just the two Northampton seats. The orphan ward split, which is the Wollaton and Bozeat end of the Irchester ward, goes against everything that the Commission says it will do in paragraphs 32 and 37 of the guide and response 84681 from Edward Carlsson Browne points this out. The Commission has only two seats in Northampton but manages to split Wellingborough, a much smaller town, in three.

Many responses argue against dividing the parish and town of Wellingborough, including 70177 from Wellingborough Town Council. The two polling districts with 10 electors that are in the Finedon ward are here and should obviously be in a Wellingborough seat. That's WEB and WEC, which are not shown on the Boundary Commission's data. WMA is the Redhill Grange estate, which the Boundary Commission has taken out of Wellingborough and put into a Daventry seat. Redhill Grange is very definitely part of Wellingborough. WGB, with zero electors, is this area that was taken out of the Great Harrowden parish and put in the Wellingborough parish, at the community governance review. It's important also that that is taken into account. It has zero electors at the moment, but the service roads have gone in. It won't be long before the houses are built, and it has quite a lot of electors in it. And finally, most worryingly, this is WFA down here. This is the area that in the data provided for the review, with 103 electors, is counted as being part of the Earls Barton ward but is in fact part of the Croyland and Swanspool ward.

The Conservative proposal has four ward splits. It only splits Wellingborough in two, but it manages to divide an even smaller town, Irthlingborough. It doesn't provide mapping for its Irthlingborough ward split. We think that it's probably along the main road, which is the green line there, the A6, but we can't be sure. Presumably North Northamptonshire Council didn't provide polling district mapping. The three MPs who put forward this proposal talk about the distinct Crow Hill community up here, but they don't mention the electors who are here, who are very definitely part of Irthlingborough. Response 64346 from Councillor Dorothy Maxwell says 'Irthlingborough and the five villages should remain. The residents who I represent feel the same. Dividing Irthlingborough would create more problems with the A6 dividing both areas for the residents.' The Conservative Party's ward split of the Corby Rural ward shaves off most of the town's hinterland, as can be seen on this map.

Anybody travelling south from the town of Corby here to the south of their constituency would actually go through the village of Stanion, which they put into Kettering. In contrast to the Conservatives' four ward splits and the Commission's three, we propose only one. We've been careful to choose it in a place where we can be reasonably confident of the accuracy of the data and the mapping. The reason for that is that it's not in North Northamptonshire; it's in West Northamptonshire. The area we've chosen is both a separate parish and therefore has the ordinance survey mapping and was a South Northamptonshire ward prior to local government reorganisation. We therefore are fairly confident about that, and this is Grange Park, just by Northampton South.

We support the Commission's proposed Corby seat. We propose that Kettering, which is the only constituency within the county to be within quota should remain unchanged. This is compliant with rule five. With Wellingborough and Rushden, we have a situation where if you add together the five wards that are wholly or partly included in Wellingborough and the three wards that are partly or wholly within Rushden, you get something which is over-quota and doesn't meet in the middle. So there were 39 responses from Finedon, including 35276 – Parochial Church Council of St. Mary the Virgin – and 77346 from Finedon Parish Council, most of which arguing against Finedon going into Kettering. There were 42 responses from the Earls Barton ward, including 78160 from Hardwick Parish Council. All of those responses argue that where they live should be part of the Wellingborough constituency, even those that come from the Earls Barton end of that, which is at the moment part of the Daventry constituency.

Given the problems of joining Wellingborough and Rushden, we propose that there should be a Wellingborough seat and a Rushden seat and that the Wellingborough seat should take in those three wards, Brixworth, Moulton, and Long Buckby from Daventry. The Daventry seat then rotates round to become a West Northamptonshire seat, and then you end up with a seat which we've called 'Rushden and Towcester' are probably the least satisfactory of our proposals. But it is legal, and it does join up. We have worked out ways in which you could have, with four or five ward splits, a Wellingborough and Rushden seat, but it then causes havoc in either Kettering and Corby or around the rest of the county. Putting Grange Park into Northampton South means a rearrangement of Northampton, which means putting back the Abington and Phippsville ward into North, and our Northampton North is supported by the Labour Party. In Leicestershire, the Boundary Commission proposal splits the villages of Sileby and Mountsorrel. We support seven of the Boundary Commission's proposed constituencies and put forward a proposal for three. The Conservative Party proposes to divide the boroughs of Harborough and Oadby and Wigston, and the Labour Party proposes a three-county Rutland and Stamford.

At the last review, the Commission initially proposed to divide the village of Sileby. We put forward a counterproposal, which the Commission adopted in its revised proposals. Now the Commission proposes to split Sileby in exactly the same place. Response 77745 from Murray Sinclair complains about this failure of institutional memory. Response 85971 from Jane Hunt MP expresses her deep, personal regret about the proposed division of the village. There were other responses asking for Sileby to remain whole. Our counterproposal puts both the Sileby ward and The Wolds ward back into Loughborough, and all the responses, including from Councillor Jenny Bokor ask for The Wolds to remain in Loughborough, and that's supported by the Conservative Party. This is Mountsorrel. This is the existing boundary, which divides the village near the village centre. The Boundary Commission propose to change the division of the village to just take a little chunk out in the Baum Drive area of Mountsorrel. Both Labour and Conservative counterproposals put this unsatisfactory boundary back where it is. There are a lot

of responses from Mountsorrel, including 83189 from Carol in Thornborough, all arguing against the splitting of the village.

The Conservatives' proposed Mid Leicestershire is internally inaccessible and therefore is against rule five. That blue line in the middle is the River Soar, which divides the Thurmaston ward from the rest of their proposed Mid Leicestershire. It is possible, I think, on foot and perhaps on horse or by cycle to get across the river in Watermead Country Park, but it's certainly not accessible by car or public transport. The Conservative Party counterproposal divides the settlement of Braunstone Town – response 76091 from Braunstone Town Council. From people outside the area, this is Leicester West. The boundary was changed around the turn of the century, about 100 years ago, to put what people call Braunstone into Leicester while leaving Braunstone Town outside the city.

Braunstone Town Council doesn't represent the area we know as Braunstone; it represents the parish of Braunstone, which we locals would call 'Braunstone Town'. This is the boundary proposed by the Conservative Party in its counterproposal, which goes just down residential streets in Braunstone Town. The Braunstone Town Council states, 'For Braunstone Town Council and the residents of our town, the most important thing is that at all times the parish, and by extension the town, are always placed in the same parliamentary constituency and not split'. But the most stunning piece of butchery in the Conservative Party scheme is their treatment of the town of Oadby; they chop off half the town and attach it to Leicester East.

Oadby does join on to Leicester but not to Leicester East. If you want to get from Oadby to Leicester city centre, you go up London Road that way, all the way through Leicester South; you don't go through Leicester East at all. There's a golf course just here. Oadby does not join on to Leicester East, and Oadby as a town and the borough of Oadby and Wigston should not be divided. Response 82600 says, 'I would not want any part of Oadby and Wigston to be in Leicester City'. And there's a whole load of responses from Blaby, Oadby and Wigston supporting the Commission's proposals. There's also support for a Harborough seat coterminous with the borough. Ian Drummond's response, 53916, says, 'This is splendid.' Again, a lot more responses.

So, we propose moving Sileby and The Wolds back to Loughborough, moving Quorn and Mountsorrel Castle and Mountsorrel to the Mid Leicestershire seat, putting the two Birstall wards, Birstall Wanlip and Birstall Watermead, into the Melton and Syston constituency. Birstall is just next to Syston. In Nottinghamshire, we support the Commission's initial proposals in full. We don't support the Conservative Party's proposal to split the town of Beeston. Broxtowe Borough Council response 72949 supports, in principle, the proposed changes to the Broxtowe constituency boundaries, which have been proposed by the Boundary Commission, and opposes any alternative proposal, which would result in Beeston being split in two. The Commission particularly asked about its proposals about Ashfield and Mansfield. While there's a lot of unhappiness in Mansfield about a couple of wards going into Ashfield, the alternative proposal from the Ashfield and Mansfield district councils then goes on to split the town of Hucknall.

The choice here seems to be between splitting a larger town or a smaller town. We consider that the Commission has gone for the least-worst option in this case of splitting the larger town of Mansfield. We certainly don't agree with some of the proposals from Ashfield and Mansfield that suggest having a split orphan ward in the Ransom Wood ward of Mansfield. Those proposals point out that the borough boundary is not a good one here, but parliamentary

boundary reviews are not the place to address such issues. In Lincolnshire and Rutland, the Labour Party proposes this three-county Rutland and Stamford and then has changes that knock on right the way through to Louth and Horncastle. We support five of the seven seats in Lincolnshire, but we do propose an alternative in the Lincoln and Sleaford area.

We believe that the case for changes shifted here. Local ward boundaries in North Kesteven have changed. The parish of Waddington is no longer divided. This is the current constituency boundary, and this is what is proposed to remain by the Boundary Commission. Waddington Parish Council response 61044 says, 'They would like the Commission to put Waddington under the same parliamentary constituency boundary, one village, one MP.' North Kesteven District Council response 81447 would ask the Boundary Commission to take these confirmed changes into consideration as part of this consultation exercise. We propose a Lincoln constituency that includes North Hykeham, which is part of the continuous urban development of the city. And we propose that the Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East and the Skellingthorpe wards go the other way into a Sleaford seat. And it's telling that all five responses from North Hykeham argue for going into Lincoln and the one response from Skellingthorpe asked to be moved to a rural constituency. Councillor Lance Pennell asks for all Waddington to be in the same constituency. Nobody in the wards we propose to move has argued for the status quo here.

We don't need to spend a lot of time on Derbyshire except to say that if we were starting from scratch, we probably wouldn't have come up with these proposals. But given that only three wards have been moved in the entire county, we support the Boundary Commission's recommendations. Thank you again, Mr Assistant Commissioner and the Commission, and I'm happy to answer any questions of clarification. We will submit a written response by 4th April.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Can I ask then if there are any points of clarification? Yes? Can I ask you just to state your name, town and if relevant the organisation you're from.

**ROGER PRATT :** Thank you very much. Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. Just one question of clarification. In your slides, you put a map up of the Irthlingborough ward. I just wanted to check that isn't the whole of the Irthlingborough ward, is it?

**ALAN FOX:** That's the Irthlingborough parish that I put up. You are proposing to split the Irthlingborough parish.

**PETER FISH:** But in terms of the clarification, that's not the whole of the ward.

**ALAN FOX:** No, no, that is not the whole ward. You can look at the maps. The pink boundaries are the ward boundaries. And as you can see, the black boundaries are the parish boundaries. Irthlingborough ward goes quite a lot further north than that, but what we are complaining about is that not only are you dividing a ward, you are dividing a parish and a town.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Any other questions of clarification? Tim.

**TIM BOWDEN:** Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission. Just one if I can, Mr Fox. Just concerning the data that you outlined in North Northamptonshire, which I'm aware that you've outlined to us previously, I just want to confirm, we have asked North Northamptonshire Council to validate that data that they originally provided to the Commission, which they confirmed to us was accurate, but I'm happy again on the back of this to go back and ask that question again from what you said because we have pushed them. Secondly, if they were to confirm to us that

there was a discrepancy, I just want to confirm for all in the room that the initial proposals – and I think the Conservative Party counterproposal you refer to – would still both be within the electoral range. But I will go again and ask that question of them, but as I say, the answer so far I've had is that they were content with what they provided to the Commission.

**ALAN FOX:** Yes. We will continue from our end to get information from North Northamptonshire Council, but it is quite clear that the reply we got to our question was not an answer.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Roger Pratt. In due course, if you could also confirm your name, town and the organisation you're representing.

**ROGER PRATT:** Thank you very much indeed. My name is Roger Pratt. I'm an official of the Conservative Party. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity and thank the Commission for all their work on this review. So this complements our submission, 85837, and I think the Liberal Democrats have used more or less the same slide. We as a party will judge both our proposals, the Commission proposals and any counterproposals in relation to the rules, particularly rule B, 'local government boundaries', C 'existing constituencies' and 'any local ties' in D. So in the East Midlands, we support the allocation of 47 seats, which is an increase in one of the number of constituencies. And we also support the Commission's groupings, which see Lincolnshire combined with Rutland rather than Leicestershire. That is effectively where the extra seat comes from.

Derbyshire, as I think was said, is very noncontentious. We support, in full, 10 seats. We do note, in terms of Erewash, that there have been a very large number of representations concerning the name. I think it's clear that that is the most contentious thing in the whole of the East Midlands. There are 479 representations from Erewash, which I think is nearly 200 more than any other constituency. So we think it's a no-brainer that you should go back to the existing constituency, that the constituency doesn't change, and we believe it should remain the same. We note that only three wards in the whole county need to move constituency. A composition of five of the 11 constituencies are completely unchanged, and three more alter in a very minor way. Just to note about Erewash in terms of the name, all four qualifying political parties support the Commission proposals for Derbyshire.

So we'll perhaps move on to Leicestershire, which is slightly more contentious. So we support the constituencies of Hinckley and Bosworth, and North West Leicestershire, but in these seats, we put the seats and then our alternatives. So, on the right-hand side are our alternatives, and on the left-hand side are the existing seats. And that is a map of the change we make in terms of Leicestershire. So the advantages of our proposal: we do note that the Commission have improved the local authority links, but we think that is at the expense of existing constituencies. So you have to balance the two. We think the Commission have got the balance wrong, and we believe that you can go for much less change in Leicestershire.

I would just refer to the representation of all the Members of Parliament who have got a scheme, which is the same as our scheme, in terms of an alternative in Leicestershire. So Edward Argar, the member for Charnwood, 84793. Neil O'Brien, the member for Harborough, 68971. Alberto Costa, the member for South Leicestershire, 63663. Jane Hunt, the member for Loughborough, 85971. Alicia Kearns, the member for Rutland and Melton, although she would clearly prefer Rutland and Melton to remain, does endorse – if that can't happen, and we don't believe it can – the alternatives, and her proposal is 84062 and 83633. And there's much support for these alternatives. Just some of the examples, 74951, 63428, 52860, 83136, 82628,

82135 and 80013. So, we don't believe in the coterminous Harborough. It isn't coterminous at the moment. We believe it causes considerable and unnecessary disruption throughout Leicestershire.

The South Leicestershire constituency is completely broken up, which we put back together. The Blaby, Oadby and Wigston seat is a very strangely shaped seat and has poor links. We would actually quote what the Labour Party say in 1.15, when they say, 'Blaby, Oadby and Wigston CC is self-evidently contrived with Stoney Stanton almost physically detached from the rest.' We agree with that. We, like the Liberal Democrats, would return The Wolds ward to Loughborough, and there's a lot of support for that in the representations. Just some examples: 72803, 75714, 73180, 72745, 62854, 62788, 61321, 60655. So we believe there is a strong case that Wolds should return to where it is at the moment. We return Mountsorrel, Thurmaston, Ellis and Fairstone wards to Mid Leicestershire, the successor to their current constituency of Charnwood. We appreciate what was said about Mountsorrel, but we just use the existing constituency boundary there; it is currently split.

We recreate a South Leicestershire constituency where every elector comes from the existing constituency. We return the bulk of Oadby and Wigston to a Harborough constituency. We retain an unchanged Leicester South constituency, that brings Spinney Hills ward back into Leicester South and Westcotes into Leicester West, where it currently is. Under our proposals, a staggering 121,321 fewer electors move constituency. That is quite incredible in a smallish county. We manage to move almost two constituencies, retain them in their constituency, which are moved under the Commission proposals, so 16% of the electorate of the county. So it is very, very much better under rule 51C. So, we note Labour's proposal is to treat Leicester as a subregion, but they do so at the expense of local ties and local authority links. We note there is continuous development between Leicester and some of the surrounding towns. Labour's Leicester West stretches from Beaumont Leys to Eyres Monsell. We particularly object to their Rutland and Stamford seat containing parts of three local authorities, containing effectively two counties and Rutland unitary authority.

We note the Liberal Democrats, as we said, return Wolds to Loughborough. We note their concern over the division of the villages of Sileby and Mountsorrel but believe their solution creates a strangely shaped Loughborough constituency, and it breaks local ties by splitting Quorn from Loughborough. So in terms of Lincolnshire and Rutland, we support the commission's proposals in the entirety for the following seats. And I'd particularly like to note in terms of Rutland and Stamford – which in effect is the new constituency created, so often there wouldn't be that much support – there is quite a lot of support for a Rutland and Stamford constituency, not least from the Liberal Democrats. I would point out support 53878, 71474, 77724, 77709, 83642, 83638 and 82350. Some people suggest that The Deepings should not be in there, but I note there were very few representations from The Deepings, and representation 56420 does actually support its inclusion in Rutland and Stamford.

We would name Grantham 'Grantham and Bourne' to recognise the two main centres of population in the seat. South Lincolnshire we think is a poor name. We would want to retain South Holland and add Holland Fen. So in terms of Lincolnshire and Rutland, we note that Lincoln is an unchanged constituency, and we would strongly support Lincoln remaining unchanged and agree with the Labour Party when they say in 1.22, 'On balance, we believe that changes to Lincoln would not be justified given that both Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East and Skellingthorpe have been part of the constituency for many years and indeed have

some ties to the city.' By changing the constituency, you can't actually break any ties because ties are only broken from an existing constituency.

That's what the legislation says, and we don't think it is necessary to change the Lincoln constituency at all. We just cite representations 84413, 69773 and the MP at 69811. So in terms of Lincolnshire and Rutland, as with Leicestershire, we don't support the Labour proposals for a Rutland and Stamford seat that contains Rutland unitary authority, part of Leicestershire and part of Lincolnshire which is worse under rule 51B. The Liberal Democrats, as we've heard, propose to add North Hykeham to the Lincoln constituency, making change when it's unnecessary. Their justification rests on the ward boundary order made after Tuesday 1st December 2020. It's wards on Tuesday 1st December 2020 that the Commission have to take into account. Without this order, they state, 'We would agree with the Commission on minimal change.'

So if we come to Northamptonshire in this subregion, we support the Commission's proposals in their entirety for those four seats. In this subregion, we suggest these three alternative seats.

Now, this is the position where Finedon is currently split. So Finedon is split by the Commission, and we like others put it back together again. So we put that one back together again, but we make one extra ward split as a result of this, and we've heard about that. And the point about Irthlingborough is that the problem is that Irthlingborough ward, not Irthlingborough parish that was talked about before, includes that area. And therefore Raunds, which is currently with Corby in East Northamptonshire, cannot be included because of that part of the Irthlingborough ward. So it's the strange shape of these new wards. And we know there have been difficulties with these wards, and we will ask one of our representations, probably at the Northampton hearing, to go into more detail about that.

It is a proposal supported by the three Members of Parliament, and I think they will appear in Northampton, and we can give further details about that. I think, but I'm not absolutely certain, that our split would be the, Irthlingborough parish as was mentioned, but I will check that and will get some of our representatives at the Northampton hearing to give further details on that. So, the advantages of our proposal: we do think it breaks ties between Raunds and Corby. Raunds links much better with Corby than Wellingborough, and we would retain all of Raunds in its current seat. We note the many representations on this that the Commission have received. We note that the three Members of Parliament are representation 73119. Peter Bone, the member for Wellingborough, has also got a representation at 85944.

We would also note the Wellingborough Town Council at 84203. We'd also note the North Northamptonshire Council at 74691. And there's another representation, 83854, which links to that and says this had unanimous cross-party support. So I would particularly draw your attention to 83854: unanimous cross-party support in North Northamptonshire. Raunds Town Council, 63311. Stanwick Parish Council 66548. Hargrave Parish Council 64787. 83545, 77098, 76717, 69602, 60366. So a lot of support. And then in terms of Finedon, which I think others would put together as well, we note Finedon Town Council at 77346 and representations 76322 and 76917. We add Irthlingborough town to Wellingborough, which has much better links with Wellingborough than Raunds does. And we note that Rushden Town Council complain about the name and want Rushden included. We agree with that. 75986 is from Rushden Town Council and net we move 3,619 fewer electors under our proposal.

We note that the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats propose similar counterproposals to Northamptonshire seats, an identical proposal for Northampton North. We believe their proposed Northampton South is a poorly connected seat with Billing and Rectory, Rectory Park and Riverside Park wards divided from the rest of the seat by a series of barriers. The two wards have close ties, Northwoods to Headlands and Talavera. In particular, Billing and Rectory ward has close ties to Talavera, which are broken. And this ward stretches to the northern border of Northamptonshire. We note that there are no complaints whatsoever with Billing and Rectory and Riverside Park. The majority of Billing and Rectory is in Northampton South. All of Riverside Park is in Northampton South. And because of the numbers, something had to move. We note not one representation from those complaining.

Now, normally, if there is a complaint, you would get some representations complaining, but I could find no objection to those two wards moving to Northampton North and a few objections in terms of Abington. But what Labour do effectively is they move two wards out of Northampton South into Northampton North, and a split ward, Abington, whereas in the Commission's proposals, which we strongly support, Riverside Park, one ward comes in and a part ward, which is split: Billing and Rectory. So we do believe that this is a proposal that doesn't have any particular support. As I say, no representations were complaining from either of the two wards moved from Northampton South into Northampton North. We would particularly cite the Member of Parliament for Northampton North, Michael Ellis, in 66867. The barriers dividing the Labour and Liberal Democrats' Northampton South seat are these five items – Brackmills Industrial Estate, Delapare Abbey, the River Nene, the Waterside Campus, Northampton General Hospital – and three shires' hospital sites.

All the proposals in Northampton involve change in order to protect Riverside Park and Billing and Rectory. Weak links in Northampton South – they move Castle and Dallington Spencer into North, breaking their ties with Sixfields and Duston East. So there are important ties broken on both sides by this proposal. And this just shows their proposals relating to the numbers in the previous slide. So, we object to the Liberal Democrats' opposition towards splitting. They themselves know they have found working with large, unwieldy wards, and I think there's a particular problem because of the new wards in North and West Northamptonshire. To avoid splitting wards, they propose very radical change, and, I think they admitted that it was the least satisfactory in terms of Rushden and Towcester. Not sure that's quite the word for it. I think the Rushden and Towcester is one of the strangest seats I've seen for a long time to be proposed, and I don't think it's got any merit whatsoever in terms of that.

So let's move to Nottinghamshire, and we support Ashfield. We would, like the Liberal Democrats, oppose the Mansfield Council proposal to split Hucknall. I think it's totally wrong to split Hucknall. We'd note the Member of Parliament for Ashfield, 69860. We'd also note 64010, 86396, 66035. And we notice that there is a lot of opposition to splitting Hucknall. In 85320, they actually say there are 425 signatures on a petition, and this clearly is not on the Boundary Commission's proposals. It's actually on a council's proposal. So coming later in the process, they have, done 425 signatures.

There's also representations 77562, 77548, 77177 and 76451. We note strong support for the Gedling constituency and notice the Member of Parliament, 79921. Newark, we would also note the Member of Parliament at 73429, and Rushcliffe, we'd note the Member of Parliament at 68777. We do suggest a change of name back to Bassetlaw. When you change your name when there's no need to like in Erewash, again, there's lots of support for retaining the name. People prefer to retain the name wherever possible, and that's usually the policy of the

Commission. We'd note the representation of Mark Spencer, the Member of Parliament for Sherwood, at 81132. Now we do not support the proposals in terms of Broxtowe, and we take these as a group of three because they're all interlinked. So this is our proposal, and I think it shows quite clearly that our Broxtowe seat is a much better shaped seat than the original Commission proposal, which has a large area, the Kimberley area. So they've called it, jutting out into Broxtowe.

So the advantages of our proposal are that we restore Bilborough ward to its existing constituency of Nottingham North, meaning 11,941 fewer electors move constituency. Kimberley and Watnall and Nuthall West are divided from Nottingham by the M1. In putting these back, we return 13,041 electors to their existing constituency. We note very many objections to that. We notice that Nuthall Parish in representation 63889 objects, and we also note that the Greasley Parish in 68861 objects and particularly draw your attention to that representation because it shows quite clearly that the parish would be split by these proposals. So between Watnall and Greasley, the parish is split, which we think is unacceptable. Local ties are broken. There are lots of representations objecting, just a few: 82365, 77792, 74015, 73935 and 73615.

So just a reminder that we have looked at these proposals in terms of those rules and judged the proposals in terms of those rules. We support 28 of the 47 constituencies in the East Midlands and propose name changes to five more. We net move 137,798 fewer electors in the Commission – that's practically two constituencies – and we are therefore more compliant with rule 51C. We also restore local ties in Nottingham, in East Northamptonshire, in Wellingborough, in Leicestershire. So we're much more compliant with, 51B; it's Nottingham and Nottinghamshire because in Broxtowe we do as well – 51D. So we will submit to the Commission before 4th of April a comprehensive document outlining whether we support the Commission or propose alternatives. This will be an addition to our first-stage document and this presentation, and we will also fully address the various counterproposals and representations made by others. We'll take account of representations made at the public hearings and reserve the right to amend our position from the position which we have outlined today. So thank you very much indeed, sir. Very happy to answer any questions of clarification.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much, Mr Pratt. Very clear, very helpful. So questions from the floor. Perhaps you could just restate your name just for the record.

**ALAN FOX:** Alan Fox from the Liberal Democrats. The North Northamptonshire response, which you said talked about an all-party agreement, then went on in that same sentence, I believe, to say Conservative, Labour and Green. So I am asking if you had read the whole of that sentence.

**PETER FISH:** So just for clarification. We're not here to challenge as such but seeking clarification. On the point about whether it has all-party support, could you just clarify in the letter the comment?

**ROGER PRATT:** Yes. I was just quoting a letter which says it's got all-party support, and I just quote that letter and ask that representation to be read into the record so that we are aware of that. I'm sure we can get people to clarify that at the Northampton hearing, when clearly there will be representations arguing for the proposal we've put.

**ALAN FOX:** You also spoke about you think that the whole parish of Irthlingborough is included in your counterproposal. How many polling districts do you intend to move from the

Irthlingborough ward into your proposed Wellingborough seat given that there are three polling districts making up the parish of Irthlingborough?

**ROGER PRATT:** As I understand it, there are eight polling districts and two we have in Wellingborough and the other six we have in Corby and East Northamptonshire. I will clarify that or get others to clarify that at the Northampton hearing.

**ALAN FOX:** In relation to compliance with rule 51B, how many local authorities that are undivided by the Commission's proposals do you intend to split and into how many pieces?

**ROGER PRATT:** I think it's only in Leicestershire that it makes any difference. I was absolutely clear in Leicestershire that we felt the Commission had done well in terms of local government boundaries, but that was at the expense of making major change. You've got to have a balance between B and C, and we think they've got the balance wrong. That means that in order to retain people in their existing constituency, which is rule 51C, we are very, very much better, but we are not as good as the Commission in terms of local authority links.

**PETER FISH:** Thanks. I think we're in slight danger of debating the proposals rather than asking for clarification. So perhaps we can move on but thank you for those clarifications.

[break]

If we could restart with Richard? If you, again for the record, just state your name, the town you're from and the organisation you're representing. Away you go. Thank you.

**RICHARD MALLENDER:** Thank you very much. My name is Richard Mallender. I'm representing East Midlands' Green Party. I'm not a staffer; I'm a councillor in Rushcliffe Borough, so just south of the river from here. Thank you very much for the opportunity to put our case here today. I'm afraid we don't have any wonderful maps, but we're not going to be fighting over the parish council boundaries in Wellingborough either. So our main position is that broadly we do accept the majority of the proposals that have been put forward. We would like to look in a bit more detail at Ilkeston and Long Eaton, Loughborough, Hinckley, Bosworth, Rutland and Stamford, Grantham, South Northamptonshire, Wellingborough and Raunds, Broxtowe, Nottingham North, and and Kimberley. So we're quite happy with the Commission's proposals in terms of numbers, including the subdivisions in the subregion, minimising the increase to one constituency. We support this increase of one constituency as with the other parties. Kicking off with Derbyshire, we accept the proposals here. It's only minor changes as has been noted already – just three wards shifting. Quite happy with that proposal overall.

With boundaries, we're not commenting on those in Derbyshire. However, for Ilkeston and Long Eaton, we agree with the idea of retaining the name of Erewash. There's no change to the boundary, doesn't seem to warrant changing the constituency name. It's a name that's well known in the area. There's a lot of historical and modern features in the area, particularly transport links. There's the Erewash Canal, the Erewash line for the railway as well, loads of trails, things like that. It makes sense in our view to retain the existing name. Moving on to Leicestershire, again, we broadly agree with most changes. They seem to meet the aims of the Commission with regard to local ties, local government and geography. We do support the creation of the Melton and Syston constituency, as proposed. We do, having looked through this, support the Conservative and I think the Lib Dem suggestion on excluding Mountsorrel

from the Loughborough constituency and retaining The Wolds. It's the basis of maintaining existing community and ties. We think that the proposal would be better served in this regard.

Hinckley and Bosworth: we do feel there's some doubt about moving Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe into Hinckley and Bosworth constituency. It's consistent with local ties, socially seems to be more connected to North West Leicestershire.

And then onto Lincoln and Rutland. Again, Lincoln is largely unchanged, with no comments there. We support the majority proposal that's been put forward. We accept the proposal that for much of the county, we do recognise the changes required for the creation of Rutland and Stamford.

We have reconsidered our initial position and now support the creation of a Rutland and Stamford constituency on the basis of community and social ties. We had a note there about supporting the Labour counterproposal here. I'm sorry. I don't think we do now. We realise those are two mutually exclusive comments. A couple of our members had rather different opinions about things, and I really wish one of them had got back to me or both of them had got back to me in time to strike out the appropriate paragraph. But the consensus was that as I say, we have reconsidered, and we now support the creation of Rutland and Stamford.

Grantham: we would propose the new Grantham should be named 'Grantham and Bourne'. I think that's one of the other proposals, but I'm sorry I can't remember which one. It reflects local sentiment, and the residents in this part of constituency do look towards Bourne and indeed Spalding and don't consider themselves to be in the orbit of Grantham. So we think that this would be a change worth looking at.

Northamptonshire: so on the general outline, we do accept the majority of the proposal for Northamptonshire. We do recognise the considerable upheaval over the local political landscape over the last few years. And in general, we hope for some stability going forward for residents of that area.

For South Northamptonshire, Wellingborough and Raunds, our main concern is the proposed movement of Bozeat from Wellingborough to South Northamptonshire. Changes do not appear to consider the traditional geographic links such as the River Nene, and travel links from one part of the proposed constituency to another would become difficult, particularly if using public transport. All of Bozeat's cultural links are with Wellingborough, not South Northamptonshire. The Wellingborough constituency is currently within the range of variance, so we do not feel this change is justified or necessary. Northamptonshire has had a major change in local government with the creation of the new unitaries, and further changes to boundaries at this time, we feel, might be confusing and disruptive. We're aware that without going into all the numbers that there's sentiment to that locally as well.

Moving on to Nottinghamshire, we again accept the majority of the proposals that have been put forward and much of the new boundaries within Nottinghamshire. We're ambivalent on the name change to Worksop and Retford as the constituency lies wholly within the Bassetlaw local authority. The name of Bassetlaw is long associated with the area. It's an ancient wapentake, as are many the names of areas in Nottinghamshire. I'm quite happy that as a native of Worksop the two towns are kept in the same constituency, where they can continue to fight like cats in a bag over everything for many years to come. And I see there's the agreement name being retained as Bassetlaw with the Conservatives as well.

On Mansfield and Ashfield, we're happy with the proposals that have been put forward there, shifting those two wards. We recognise the opposition to splitting Hucknall, and we are in agreement with that. Changes to Rushcliffe we feel are clear and fine and align with the new ward boundaries. We have no comment on that one.

On Sherwood, we note and agree the Conservative proposal to change the name to Sherwood Forest. There's already confusion in the area and around urban residents, with the overlapping local authority named Newark and Sherwood, as well as the city ward, an area called Sherwood. It was quite common to hear people saying, 'Where are you from? Oh, what's the local council? Newark and Sherwood.' Or, 'What's your constituency, Newark and Sherwood? Or do you mean Newark or Sherwood?' So Sherwood Forest, I think, might go some way to clearing that confusion, and I think that'll be a good idea.

Nottingham North, Kimberley, Broxtowe. Gosh. I think we could probably spend quite a lot of time on this one. There are clear concerns for residents in Kimberley regarding their inclusion in this proposed constituency, response 85045 being a typical one. Kimberley is a small town outside the city boundary and west of the M1, which is a significant barrier to movement between those two. In terms of being any mode of transport other than by car, you can't get between the two. If you're on foot, forget it. If you're on public transport, it's not very good. Unless you've got alternatives, it is completely segregated by the M1. Concerns have been put forward about the erosion of identity and that concerns in that area may not be heard due to dominance of the city area, which is high in indices of multiple deprivation, notably in Top Valley, and is likely therefore to take most of the MPs' time, possibly to the detriment of others. We note the concerns here and suggest another look be taken at this boundary. We do recognise that there may not be any particularly neat way of addressing it that doesn't produce a cascade of further changes along the northern edge of Nottingham City and possibly even into Gedling. We do note the representation 74245. Ward boundaries in that area look like they were drawn by a drunken monkey let loose with a pen.

We see that the Conservative proposal has some merit, but there's more than one way to skin this particular cat in the area, and we may supply an alternative proposal to the Commission before 4th May, as we would like to have a further look at this one.

So that's it. Thank you for considering our proposals. It's a bit of a canter through I think but well worthwhile and thank you for the opportunity to speak on this. I would like to put on record my thanks to a good friend of mine, Mr James Strawbridge, who basically could get all the information that we've all got written down here in his head and continue chapter and verse about every constituency going, and he's been a tremendous help in putting this together. So thank you very much.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any questions of clarification from colleagues in the audience? No. Thank you very for your time.

I think we have Tom Adams now? As with the other speakers, if you could give your name and town and the organisation you're from, that'd be helpful.

**TOM ADAMS:** Hi, I'm Tom Adams. I'm an official of the Labour Party. This submission is made on behalf of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party and the East Midlands region of the Labour Party. So an overall response to the initial proposals of the Boundary Commission, which follows an extensive consultation process within the Labour Party involving

all our members of parliament, other elected representatives and constituents of Labour parties and complements our written submission, which is number 79476. As an official Labour Party based in London, I'm obviously not qualified to speak in detail on community ties in all parts of this region, and this statement will make the party's outline case but will depend upon the evidence of others. They'll be addressing this hearing and other hearings in the region to make points in favour of our counterproposals, and some of those are speaking later today.

Just to touch on the review process today. The Labour Party welcomes the initial proposals of the Commission while we disagree of some of them and in some cases make alternative proposals, which we believe better fit the statutory criteria. We accept that the Commission have fully considered all the different options and explained the decisions which they have made very clearly. We also welcome the Commission's efforts to stimulate and encourage public participation in this process and to consult with political parties on their policies and procedures, and we'll engage constructively with the process in this region, as we've done in all parts of England, Scotland and Wales. To that end, we thank the Commission for the opportunity to set out our views this morning. We're aware there are a number of counterproposals that have been made for this region in addition to our own, and we'll comment on some of these now, but we'll reserve more detailed comments for our written submission, which we will obviously submit before the deadline.

In terms of the content of what I'll go through this morning: firstly, I'll just comment briefly on statutory rules; secondly, on our views on some of the policies that the Commission have adopted; and finally, on our views of the initial proposals in the East Midlands and an explanation of counterproposals plus a few comments on some of the counterproposals made by others.

Just in terms of the rules, obviously, like the other parties, we are guided by the statutory criteria and our assessment of the initial proposals and our own proposals. In terms of regions, we welcome the Commission's decision once again to use a standard region to subnational review areas for the purposes of constructing their proposals. Despite those no longer being used in European elections, they remain a very widely accepted administrative set of regions in England, and were they to be set aside, the review of constituencies would become much more complex with almost limitless options. So we would certainly not support any proposals which sought to link sections of the East Midlands with any other region. We note this is the first review to be carried out under the terms of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020, which fixes the size of the House of Commons at 650 and adds one more protected constituency. The criteria which the Commission may take into account, which I have already mentioned, will be those for which we will judge the initial proposals and those of others: our special geographic circumstances, local government boundaries, and prospective boundaries, the boundaries of existing constituencies, any local ties that were broken by changes to constituencies and any inconveniences attendant upon those changes.

We set out our views on the rules in our written representation, copies of which are available. In terms of the policies of the Commission, we agree with the Commission that there is merit in continuing the practice of using counties as review areas, noting that under the new rules, the requirements of every constituency to have an electorate within 5% of the electorate quota means that some counties can no longer sustain whole numbers of seats and therefore need to be paired or grouped. Counties and local authorities, in most cases, and therefore the Commission, may take account of them anyway and are likely to affect community ties. In terms of wards and divisions, we note the Commission's policy of using district and unitary wards, the

smallest unit of which to build a constituency. We note in the Commission's guide, they state that there may be circumstances where the splitting of a ward may be necessary to achieve a scheme of constituencies which better meets the rule five criteria. Several such proposals have been made by the Commission across most regions of England, and there are a number of split ward proposals made in the East Midlands.

The Labour Party supports the Policy Commission on this point but believes that any proposal which does split wards should be treated on its merits but with an assumption that whole wards should be used unless there are compelling or exceptional circumstances. We think the use of wards as building blocks is important for making the process more than accessible. While it might result in some rigidity and limit the Commission's options and inhibit their ability to respect community ties were wards to be disregarded, then the process of public engagement and consultation will become much more opaque. If we assume they're not to be divided, then we think that any proposal which does divide them should be truly exceptional and that any proposal which does should demonstrably result in much greater adherence to the other criteria. If that wasn't the case, then we might reasonably ask while the Commission hadn't adopted split ward proposals all over the place. In terms of orphan wards, we note the Commission refers explicitly to these in their guide and the concept of an orphan ward where one ward of a local authority is added to a constituency wholly or partly in another local authority, and this is regarded as undesirable. We accept that such arrangements are often anomalous and clearly at odds with respect for local authority boundaries, but a dogmatic policy is probably not appropriate. And the addition of other wards just for the sake of not having a single ward in such a scenario is not by itself necessary to be preferred, so you look at each case on its merits.

Just finally touching on names, we note and support the Commission's policy on the names and designation of constituencies. We note that despite their policy of not amending the names of a constituency which is wholly or largely unchanged, the Commission have in fact proposed a number of such amendments, some of which have already been discussed this morning, and I'll come back to them later. We're also aware of a tendency for names of constituencies to become more complex, especially as new areas are added. While we don't hold fixed views on names, we would generally support constituency names remaining the same where the constituency is mostly unchanged, but our comments on these issues were largely contained in our written representation.

So, moving on to the East Midlands specifically, we note that with an electorate of 3,481,126, the East Midlands is entitled to 47 seats, which is an increase of one, which we obviously support. As the Commission state in their proposals booklet, it's not mathematically possible to create seven constituencies entirely within the County of Lincolnshire, all which would have electorates, so 5% of the quota. We agree with the Commission that to pair Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire would create a level of disruption in both counties that would not be justified, and therefore Lincolnshire should be placed in a review area with the county and unitary authority of Rutland, as I believe others support.

As the Commission themselves concede, however, that leaves Leicestershire, including the City of Leicester with a theoretical entitlement to 10.28 constituencies, which would leave it with 10 constituencies averaging 75,455 electors, which is 2,062 above the electoral quota, which we believe to be right on the limits of what is practical. We believe this is demonstrated by the initial proposals themselves in this area, which we believe create very unsatisfactory constituencies of odd shapes and which break ties unnecessarily. The City of Leicester has a theoretical entitlement to 3.00 constituencies, and therefore it's unsatisfactory that the long-standing

arrangement whereby it has three whole seats should be discontinued solely to increase the average electorate of those seats so that they are well above the electorate quota. The inclusion of Glenfield and Leicester West also does considerable damage to the shape and integrity of the proposed Mid Leicestershire constituency while the proposed Blaby, Oadby and Wigston constituency, to quote again what my Conservative colleague mentioned from my written submission, 'is self-evidently contrived with Stoney Stanton almost physically detached from the rest.'

The scale of these changes mean that South Leicestershire are technically abolished and the Harborough constituency technically counts as a new seat. We believe the Commission has been forced into these proposals because of their decision that Leicestershire and Leicester needs to be a review area by itself. Therefore, Labour proposes that instead, it should be included in a review area with Lincolnshire and Rutland with an allocation of 18 constituencies. We know that the Commission have opposed the review areas of three or more counties or county unitaries in other regions, and we believe it would be particularly appropriate here as Rutland is currently paired with Leicestershire as it has been ever since its creation as a unitary authority in the 1990s. We set out our proposed review areas on the slide. Then I'll come back later to talk about our specific counterproposal in this area.

A summary of our position across the region: we support the initial proposals in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. We broadly support the initial proposals in Northamptonshire but do make a counterproposal in the town of Northampton itself. We do not support the initial proposals across Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Rutland, and we make a counterproposal using, as I just mentioned, a new review area that covers all three counties.

As others have said, there is not a huge amount to say about Derbyshire. We fully support the initial proposals, which only move three wards across the constituency. We would however, say that we would object to any proposals that have been put forward, of which there have been a few, which would seek to link Derbyshire with Nottinghamshire, which we don't believe to be necessary at all. We note that the Derbyshire proposals are also supported by the other qualifying parties. I'll come back later, talk about names, but we would generally support retaining the name Erewash.

In Nottinghamshire, we note that the Commission, as they have done in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, have had to create constituencies which have a very high average electorate, which has reduced the number of options available. We also note that the need to reduce electorates of six constituencies and significantly increase those of three others is likely to lead to a number of changes, some of which break ties. We believe the Commission have successfully retained the long-established pattern of constituencies, which has not been significantly altered since 1983, and it's well understood. We know that all of the larger towns joining Nottingham would be too large to add to any Nottingham constituency, so we believe the inclusion of Kimberley and Nuthall in Nottingham North is the most acceptable means of increasing the aggregate electorate of the three Nottingham constituencies. We note the counterproposal from the Conservative Party in representation 85837 and alluded to this morning, which would add some of the town of Beeston to the Nottingham South constituency with consequential changes within Nottingham. The proposal, however, omits the Beeston West ward from the seat, thereby dividing the small town and breaking ties. So we oppose that. We believe that local ties are better respected through the addition of Kimberley in Nottingham North than splitting Beeston and adding some of it only to Nottingham South.

We draw the Commission's attention in particular to representation 70945 from Lilian Greenwood MP, which makes some points in support of the Nottingham South constituency as proposed, and she'll be speaking later today. We regret the need to end the coterminosity of the Mansfield district with its parliamentary constituency but agree that the least disruptive way of achieving this is by the transfer of the Brick Kiln and Grange Farm wards to Ashfield constituency, with Eastwood being included in Broxtowe. This enables Broxtowe to remain entirely in its borough. That means the Ashfield district comprises parts of just two rather than three constituencies. We also support the minor changes in Gedling, Newark, Rushcliffe, Bassetlaw and Sherwood, which bring their electorates within the quota. We note that the Liberal Democrats also support the initial proposals across Nottinghamshire and the Conservative support most of them with the exception of the counterproposal around Nottingham, which I've already alluded to.

In Northamptonshire, we recognise the particular difficulties which the Commission have encountered in Northamptonshire. As some others have already said this morning, due to the enormous disparities in the electorates and the need to use the unwieldy former county council divisions, which are now in use as the wards for the new unitary authorities. I'd just like to thank the Liberal Democrats for pointing out that the polling district discrepancy and bring that to the Commission's attention. We therefore accept that it's not possible to create a reasonable scheme of constituencies without dividing wards and that the concentration of medium-sized towns in the east of the county causes particular difficulties. We support the proposal to reduce the electorate of the Corby constituency by transferring the Raunds division to the Wellingborough constituency, which enables the existing Kettering constituency to be retained intact with the addition of the part of Finedon. We also support the proposed Daventry constituency and South Northamptonshire, including the split of the Silverstone division.

We would, however, propose an alternative configuration of Northampton North and Northampton South, which would enable the whole of the urban centre of the town to be in one constituency. We would suggest that the Abington and Phippsville division should be included in Northampton North with which it has strong ties, as well as Castle and Dallington Spencer with Billing and Rectory Farm, Riverside Park in Northampton South, which would retain the traditional north-south split in Northampton and respect the existing constituency boundary in the east of the town. We note that our proposal in the town of Northampton is almost identical to that of the Liberal Democrats and is exactly the same in Northampton North. They additionally have an arrangement which requires only one ward in the whole of the county to be split. While we accept that there is a benefit in their scheme of only splitting one ward, we would say that the proposed Rushden and Towcester constituency would be a very awkwardly shaped seat and would not contain many ties. We do not support the counterproposal of the Conservatives, which would retain the Raunds ward in Corby constituency and transfer Irthlingborough to the Wellingborough constituency while also additionally dividing the Corby Rural ward, thereby breaking ties with those parts that are transferred to Kettering, which they have with Corby. The proposal also contains one additional split ward overall as compared to the initial proposals. And while we, as I've said, accept the need for multiple split wards in the County of Northamptonshire, we don't believe the need to be more than have been proposed by the Commission.

Regarding our Northampton counterproposal, which as stated is very similar to that of the Liberal Democrats, we do note that there have been several submissions from local residents in favour of our proposal, especially related to how it restores ties in the Abington area. We would draw the Commission's attention in particular to 73642, 75143, 79201, 79295, 80403, 81355,

83291. But there are also several others which make many community arguments in favour of our counterproposal in Northampton, and there is the ward list and map of our Northampton counterproposal.

In Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Rutland, we support the creation of a Rutland and Stamford constituency, but we believe that rather than including The Deeping St James and Market and West Deeping wards, the Harborough district wards of Billesdon and Tilton, Nevill, and Thurnby and Houghton, which are currently part of the Rutland and Melton constituency, should retain their link with Rutland. Within Lincolnshire, that would mean that the South Holland and The Deepings constituency could remain completely unchanged, and the whole of the Boston borough would be in the Boston and Skegness constituency.

We would then propose that the East Lindsey district ward of Halton Holegate would be wholly included in Louth and Horncastle constituency. We support the initial proposals for the Gainsborough constituency to be coterminous within the West Lindsey district, for Lincoln to be unchanged and for the amended Grantham and Sleaford and North Hykeham constituencies. On balance, we believe that the changes to Lincoln will not be justified given that both Bracebridge Heath and Waddington East, and Skellingthorpe have been part of the constituency for many years and indeed do have ties to the city and do not support the Liberal Democrat counterproposal.

Within Leicestershire, we propose that the current Harborough constituency should be amended to include the whole of Glen ward but with Bosworth and the divided ward of Fleckney transferred to South Leicestershire. The three Blaby district wards of Millfield, Ravenhurst and Fosse, and Winstanley, which comprised the Braunstone Town area, would then be transferred to the Charnwood constituency, which would continue to include Glenfield and Mountsorrel but also include the Hinckley and Bosworth borough wards of Markfield, Stanton and Fieldhead, and Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton. We support the Melton and Syston constituency as proposed and the Loughborough constituency with the exception of the Mountsorrel ward, which as stated would remain in Charnwood.

We note the objections to the Liberal Democrats proposal, which resulted in Sileby or Mountsorrel continuing to be being divided, and we do have some sympathy with this and would certainly consider any counterproposal which addressed this while having seats that were in our preferred pattern of constituencies in the area overall. We believe that the City of Leicester should continue to contain three whole constituencies but acknowledge that the electorate of Leicester East needs to be reduced and that of Leicester West needs to be increased. We note there are a number of ways this could be achieved. We contain one example in our written submission, which would be that the Abbey ward would be transferred to Leicester East, Evington and Thurncourt to Leicester South, and Aylestone, Eyres Monsell, and Saffron to Leicester West. We will carefully consider all proposals that may be made which have three whole seats fully within Leicester and note that the seats could be balanced by use of a split ward, thereby minimising the number of electors moving between the constituencies.

We note that a number of counterproposals and objections have been made in this area. We would not, however, support the addition of part of Oadby to a Leicester constituency as proposed by the Conservative Party, which would unnecessarily divide the town of Oadby and the small borough of Oadby and Wigston and which would break ties in the area as they themselves admit in their written submission. Nor do we believe that it's necessary to add the

wards of Braunstone Town or some of them, as other proposals have suggested. As stated, our position would be that there should be three whole seats fully within the City of Leicester.

We also note there are a number of submissions opposing moving the Spinney Hills ward out of Leicester South and the Belgrave ward out of Leicester East due to the breaking of ties, and we'll be much more likely to support proposals in Leicester which retain these wards in their existing constituencies. We would draw the Commission's attention in particular to submissions 73649 from Jonathan Ashworth MP on the Spinney Hills issue and submission 70188 on Belgrave ward. We anticipate that one objection to the Labour Party counterproposal in this review area, as has been touched upon by others already this morning, may be that the Rutland and Stamford constituency would contain parts of three counties. We accept this is obviously true, but we argue that it can be justified and the benefits of the counterproposal easily outweigh the downsides. Rutland has the smallest electorate of any district or unity authority in the country and for the boundary view purposes in recent years has been considered to be a unit within Leicestershire, of which the Rutland district used to be part until its status was formed in the '90s. We believe it's an unnecessary constraint and review for it to be linked either with Leicestershire or with Lincolnshire but not both, and there are benefits to linking it with both, namely allowing the retention of three seats fully within the City of Leicester. Obviously, you can't necessarily see all of that clearly, but they are the full ward lists of our counterproposal in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Rutland, and again, all of that is contained in our written submission. There is also a map showing those proposals and a zoomed-in version of the configuration of three whole seats in Leicester as I mentioned.

Just touching again on names overall, as I've stated already, we would normally support keeping constituency names unchanged where the seat does not change or only has minimum change. Therefore, we would generally oppose the changes to the names of the Erewash and Bassetlaw constituencies, as proposed by the Commission, and support the retention of the existing names. Generally, we will be driven by the strength of local opinion as expressed for the consultation and note, of course, that there have been a significant number of submissions relating to the name Erewash, and we generally support keeping that name and will make more detailed representation on names in our written submission at this part of the consultation process.

So in summary, we support the initial proposals in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. We support the initial proposals in the County of Northamptonshire but do have a counterproposal in the town of Northampton. We have a counterproposal in Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, and Rutland, which treats all of them as one review area. Overall, our counterproposals result in 80,000 fewer electors moving constituency as compared to the initial proposals and results in no seats being technically abolished with only one new seat created, unlike the initial proposals. And so, that is therefore more compliant with rule 51C on the boundaries of existing constituencies. In conclusion, we'd like to thank the Commission once again for the opportunity to address the hearing this morning. We'll be represented at all the hearings in the region and look forward to listening to the points made by others. We will, of course, make a written submission at the end of this process, and a copy of what I have said this morning will be sent to the mission staff to a transcription. I'm obviously very happy to take any questions of clarification.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. So any questions of clarification from colleagues in the audience? No? Brilliant, well thank you very much. We are running slightly ahead of time, so I wondered, I see that Lillian Greenwood is in the audience. Would you be happy to go this morning rather than this afternoon? If you'd like to, that would be great.

**LILIAN GREENWOOD:** I'm Lilian Greenwood. I'm the Member of Parliament for Nottingham South and a resident of Meadows ward in Nottingham South. I'm speaking today in support of the Boundary Commission's initial proposals as they affect Nottingham South, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. I've represented Nottingham South seat for almost 12 years, so of course I am very sorry to see any changes to the boundaries, but I recognise that the constituency is above the size permitted. Now I know that the Boundary Commission can't take this into account, but I would like to place on record my concern that the actual number of electors is much higher than stated. There are very large numbers of individuals who should be on the electoral register but who are missing, and that under-registration has been exacerbated in recent years by the move to individual registration and as a result of the significant churn in Nottingham due to a highly mobile population and particularly one with a very large number of students.

As I said in my written submission, I welcome the decision to retain the wards of Clifton East and Clifton West in the new Nottingham South constituency despite them being south of the River Trent. This rightly reflects the significant constituency ties between Clifton, Wilford, and Silverdale and the rest of the City of Nottingham. And particularly with the Meadows, many children in the Meadows travel to Wilford Village for school and to Clifton for secondary school. And The Bridges Community Trust charity, which is responsible for the distribution of area-based grants and delivers services, covers all three of those wards, Meadows, Clifton West, and Clifton East. However, I don't think that's subject to any alternative proposal, so I'm very pleased about that.

Given the number of registered electors in Nottingham City's local authority area, it was obviously inevitable that the Commission's proposals would need to cross the local authority boundary, and I welcome the decision to limit the inclusion of county wards to just one of the three Nottingham parliamentary constituencies. Now, I anticipate that my colleague for Nottingham North is better qualified to speak about the constituency ties between Bulwell and Aspley, and Nuthall East and Strelley, but it's clearly welcome that the proposed new north-western boundary of the new Nottingham North and Kimberley borough constituency largely avoids splitting communities because it takes in Kimberley, Watnall, and Nuthall in their entirety. I support the inclusion of Bilborough ward within the proposed Nottingham South constituency. I don't believe that this severs significant community ties with Aspley or Broxtowe estate.

As will be noted, the Leen Valley ward is currently in a different constituency from Bilborough, and that hasn't proved problematic for representation of local constituents and residents. Now, there is a railway line, and Glaisdale Drive Industrial Estate lying between Wollaton West and part of the Bilborough ward for part of the boundary, but there are ties. For example, many children living in Bilborough attend schools in Wollaton West, and many young people in Wollaton West and indeed across Nottingham South attend Bilborough Sixth Form College. And that's particularly the case because the secondary school in Wollaton, Fernwood, doesn't have a sixth form, so it's a really important link there. There is a Places for People estate at the western edge of Wollaton West, which is right at the far corner, and that's served by the Vale Community Centre, which is in Bilborough ward on the other side of the rail line.

Residents in Bilborough are also served by shops and services in Wollaton West further along Wollaton Vale and Trowell Road. Those are the two main roads which pass through the wards. And both wards are, of course, served by Nottingham City Council services and use the same excellent public transport links. Finally, I wish to oppose the alternative proposal to include three

wards that are currently Beeston wards, Beeston Rylands, Beeston Central, and Beeston North, within Nottingham South. And I note that the only arguments advanced by the Conservative Party appeared to be that it made Broxtowe a better shape and that the M1 would act as a barrier between the parts proposed to take into Nottingham North. I think it's worth noting that the M1 is not the constituency boundary for the whole way and of course runs directly through the existing Nuthall East and Strelley constituency.

I think it's also worth noting that there are proposals to extend the tram line through to Kimberley in the future and that there's actually a very good public transport link between Kimberley and Nottingham City – the rainbow one; Trent Barton Bus Service runs six times an hour – so there are those existing links. Moving back to the issue around Beeston, it's undeniably the case that there are many University of Nottingham students living in Beeston and obviously attending the University of Nottingham campus there, which is within Nottingham South. However, the town does have a very distinct identity. I know it because I'm someone who travels there, but obviously it's not part of my constituency, and I think it would definitely see itself as quite separate to the City of Nottingham. I think the proposal would obviously split Beeston right through the town centre – you can see that that line runs right through the main area where there are shops and services within Beeston – which seems to me to be incredibly disruptive to local residents and is likely to be completely unacceptable and confusing for residents within Beeston, lovely place as it is. So, I would anticipate that if the Boundary Commission were to adopt those proposals, there would be a large number of objections from Beeston residents. However, I'm sure there are representatives of Beeston who can speak better to those issues than I can. Finally, I'd like to thank the Boundary Commission very much for their hard work for setting out what seemed to me to be a very sensible set of proposals in relation to Nottingham and to Nottinghamshire and for affording me the opportunity to speak to you today.

**PETER FISH:** Any questions of clarification? No? Thank you very much. Dudley Bryant, would you be happy to go now? Thank you very much indeed.

**DUDLEY BRYANT:** Good morning and thank you. Dudley Bryant from Boston, and I shall make some comments about Lincolnshire. I support the Commission's proposals for Boston and Skegness within the context of the framework of the Lincolnshire subregion. Chapel St. Leonards and Willoughby with Sloothby fit well with Skegness as part of the East Coast Holiday Complex. It's good to bring back together the whole of Halton Holegate within the same constituency because that previously has been split.

It's a shame that two Boston borough wards, Five Villages and Swineshead and Amber Hill have to be divorced from the rest of the Boston Borough Council area, but when you look at the knock-on effect within the county, there isn't any other solution, I don't think, which makes sense. It's difficult to juggle with these two wards without affecting the viability of the adjoining constituencies in Lincolnshire. I therefore support the Commission's proposals in the wider context of the Lincolnshire subregion as a whole.

As far as Lincolnshire is concerned, I support the name change which has been proposed for South Lincolnshire to be named 'South Holland and Holland Fen' because the name 'South Lincolnshire' actually refers to a much, much wider geographical area than the constituency itself, and therefore South Holland, an existing name, and Holland Fen, which adequately describes the Five Villages and Amber Hill, is much more appropriate. I support the combination of Lincolnshire and Rutland. That makes obvious sense to me. And also there's been a suggestion that the Grantham name should be renamed to 'Grantham and Bourne', and I think

that ideally describes that constituency with the two main centres. Lincoln remaining largely unchanged, I do not support paragraph 42 of the Commission's initial proposals. Wragby to be moved from Gainsborough to Louth and Horncastle: that makes obvious sense; I do support that. And Market Deeping to be included with Rutland and Stamford because of its connections with Stamford.

That is just an overview of my view on Lincolnshire as a whole but also mentioning Boston and Skegness. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Any questions of clarification? Nope. Well, thank you very much indeed.

**PHILIP SMITH:** My name is Philip Smith, and I live in Mansfield. I'm also here representing the Liberal Democrats. I'm going to have a very short little discussion with people about what's happening to Mansfield under the proposals. Currently, the Commission was looking to split part of Mansfield or part of Hucknall. Now I've been a deputy executive mayor of Mansfield. I've been a councillor for Mansfield. I've lived all my life in Mansfield, and I would've loved to see Mansfield stay as one group. But when you look at it, I think it's much more logical to break off these two wards – one of which I would point out I live in – to go into Ashfield because Mansfield is so much of a bigger area, and even though we would be moving into another constituency, we would still be shopping and doing all the other bits that we do normally. And I think from a numbers perspective and a distance perspective – because I know; I live there – it's just a two-minute walk to Ashfield from where I live. In fact, it's less than that. It's a very logical thing to do. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any points of clarification? Thank you very much, and thank you for going early. I think in that case, we will probably adjourn for lunch as we've got no other speakers this morning. We're due back at 13:30, we'll see you all then. Thank you very much indeed.

#### After an adjournment

**PETER FISH:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome back after our short adjournment. Thank you to all those who spoke this morning. We did have a speaker due who can't come because he's tested positive, but Maggie Throup MP is in the room. Thank you very much.

**MAGGIE THROUP:** Thank you and good afternoon, everybody. I'm Maggie Throup, and I'm immensely proud to have served as the fifth Member of Parliament for the constituency of Erewash since May 2015. I'm grateful to the panel for the opportunity to address you this afternoon in respect of section 31 of the Commission's initial proposals for new parliamentary constituency boundaries in the East Midlands region, which relates to the renaming of the Erewash constituency. Following extensive consultation with the constituency that I represent, including residents, businesses, elected representatives, charities and community groups, I wish to oppose the Commission's proposal to adopt a new constituency name of Ilkeston and Long Eaton. Erewash came into existence following the conclusion of the Commission's third periodic review of Westminster constituencies ahead of the 1983 general election. Apart from minor alterations to the boundaries ahead of the 1997 and 2010 general elections, respectively, the constituencies essentially remained unchanged.

This slide shows my constituency very well, with the towns and villages highlighted. So it comprises the towns of Ilkeston, Sandiacre and Long Eaton in addition to the villages of

Cotmanhay, Kirk Hallam, Stanton-by-Dale, Risley, Breaston, Draycott, and Sawley, as, can be seen on the graphic. While each settlement has its own clear sense of community, identity, history and local traditions, they are unified by the name Erewash, derived from both the river and the canal, which flow alongside the constituency's eastern border.

Following the publication of the Commission's proposal to rename the constituency, I instigated an impartial five-week residents' survey to gauge public opinion. The survey question, posed in neutral terms, asked residents to consider the Boundary Commission's proposal and then state a preference. Of those people responding to my survey, 70.1% of respondents favoured retaining the name Erewash, as opposed to just 6.7% who supported the Commission's proposal. This view is further supported by the results of the Commission's first public consultation proposals, with the overwhelming majority of the 479 respondents arguing in favour of the status quo. During the five-week period of my survey, I also received separate representations from the officers and membership of a number of voluntary groups and charities operating within the constituency boundaries whose organisations incorporate the name Erewash. These organisations have raised legitimate concerns about the practical and financial implications that any change of name would have in terms of the cost of rebranding, the need to change bank account details and the requirement to update their constitutions. Many of these groups believe they would be forced into rebranding in order to avoid there being a disparity between the constituency name and their own. However, with the cost of such an exercise estimated to be in the thousands of pounds, this is money they simply do not have.

Whilst the Commission has proposed a new name of Ilkeston and Long Eaton in order to, and I quote, 'reflect the main population centres of the constituency,' the reality of the situation, as we can see from this diagram, would inevitably mean that the name would be shortened to just Ilkeston, most notably both in the chamber of the House of Commons and by members of the press. This would marginalise a significant proportion of constituents living in Long Eaton, who would rightly feel aggrieved at the town's name being dropped simply in the interest of brevity, as well as those living in the eight other constituent parts of Erewash, which this proposal ignores altogether. Whilst wholly unintentional, if the Commission were to proceed with its proposed renaming, it runs the very real risk of inadvertently reopening historic tensions between the two towns, something which has been largely healed in recent decades by the inclusivity that the name Erewash provides. Turning to the Commission's own guidance, section 28 of the third periodic review of Westminster constituencies, the review which established the Erewash constituency in 1983, stated, 'though the names of districts, which emerged at the time of local government reorganisation in 1973, would command general acceptance when applied to a constituency which wholly or mainly corresponded with the area of a district, despite subsequent minor boundary changes in 1997 and 2010, respectively, it remains the case that five out of six electors living within the borough of Erewash still live within the parliamentary constituency.'

Taking into consideration the guidance set in the original 1983 review, and the fact that the Commission did not feel it was necessary to rename the constituency at subsequent reviews when changes were made to the boundaries, there remains a strong case for retaining the Erewash name as the constituency mainly corresponds with the area of the district. In a similar vein, section 44 of the most recent guidance issued by the Commission in relation to the naming of the constituency states that, 'The BCE's policy on the naming of constituencies is that when constituencies remain largely unchanged, the existing constituency name should usually be retained. In such cases, constituency names are likely to be altered only when there is good reason for change. For example, where a constituency named for its main population centre has

over time seen the main population centre change.’ As the 2023 review does not propose any changes to the constituency boundaries, nor has there been any significant shift in the main population centres over the last 39 years, I would make the case that using the Commission’s own guidance, there is no good reason which would justify a change in name.

This argument is further substantiated by a decision of the Commission not to make similar proposals to rename the neighbouring constituencies of Amber Valley, Broxtowe, or Derbyshire Dales. For almost 40 years, Erewash has served not just as a name but as a unifying force, which incorporates all the constituent parts that make up the parliamentary seat. It is clear from the evidence I have presented to the panel this afternoon that the proposal to rename the constituency has failed to gain public support, by burdening voluntary organisations with substantial and wholly unnecessary costs at a time of financial pressure and risks not only alienating large swathes of the community but also reigniting historic tensions within it. Indeed, this proposal appears to go against the very terms of reference that the Commission has set out for the purpose of conduct in this review. The constituency name of Erewash defines the area extremely well, far better than Ilkeston and Long Eaton, as illustrated from the graphics, which would exclude eight other settlements. Therefore, I respectfully ask that the proposed name change is now withdrawn at the earliest opportunity following the conclusion of this hearing and the name of the constituency remains as Erewash. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. I think it was quite clear what your views were, but does anyone in the audience want to ask any points of clarification? No? Thank you very much indeed.

**MAGGIE THROUP:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** We’re slightly rejigging the order because a number of colleagues have had to drop out. I think that Ben Bradley is in the audience? Are you happy to go early – I’m conscious that you’ve just walked in.

**BEN BRADLEY:** I’m Ben Bradley. I am the Member of Parliament for Mansfield. I’m the leader of Nottinghamshire County Council and resident in Newark. So, I know our county fairly well. I wanted to make a couple of representations, with my council hat on, particularly about the Broxtowe area and the proposals around Kimberley and also my Mansfield constituency, which is something I’ve raised a number of times and the rules don’t quite fly, for me. I understand why it doesn’t work, but I’ll go through it for you anyway. So for Mansfield in the first instance, the proposal looks to take out, Grange Farm and also Brick Kiln into the new Ashfield constituency. I understand the need to reduce the numbers, and within the rules as it stands, I can see why that seems logical.

The fact of the matter is – as I say, I raise this on a regular basis with various boundary commissions that come forward – over the east of the constituency, you can see that a small part of Clipstone, in the north there, ends up falling under Mansfield, which is a few hundred houses that divides Clipstone in half. Again, just to the south of that, there are a few hundred houses where Rainworth is divided in half there, where it says Ransom Wood. Those two communities end up being split by that boundary, and that is also coterminous with the district council boundary, which is frustrating because it means when I go to the district boundary review and say, ‘That doesn’t make sense,’ they say, ‘Oh, well, it doesn’t work with the constituency.’ If we change it and if I go to the constituency one, they say, ‘Oh, it wouldn’t work with the districts.’

If we changed it and the can is consistently kicked down the road, residents in those particular areas would argue that they feel very much left out, particularly if their district services because they are on the edge – they fall between two stools, if you like. And it's not always clear apart from which bin is outside your house which council you would be under. There's no logic to the reason that they're in Mansfield in particular. So that's a challenge because in order to do it, as you can see from the map, to divide the urban area in a way that will be sensible, you would have to split those wards in half. I understand the rules that you work to and therefore why you haven't chosen to do that, but that is consistently something that I raise as being the most obvious way, from a community cohesion perspective, of reducing the numbers within Mansfield because those areas should be together with the rest of the urban area of Clipstone or the urban area of Rainworth. That would make much more sense.

I appreciate that would have knock-on effects for the rest of the map, as you worked around. So, if you go over to the west in the map and the bits you've taken out, again, not ideal in that those parts of town are very much Mansfield. I've had a significant number of residents contact me to say that they are not in Ashfield and they don't want to be in Ashfield. Many residents unfortunately don't understand the implications in terms of their services, and obviously they'd still fall under Mansfield District Council, but they certainly feel that they are Mansfield. Those kids will go to school in Mansfield. They'll shop in Mansfield. The transport links take them into Mansfield, and it's divided as you can see by Kings Mill Road East there on the west side of it, which is the A617 that quite neatly splits the two currently. The only thing in between is the hospital, so there's no housing that falls in that gap.

So it does divide communities. As I say, I understand why you've done it and within the boundaries of the rules, it's very difficult to choose something else that wouldn't divide communities in that way. So I guess it makes sense from that perspective, but there is a much neater conclusion to be drawn in the east of the constituency, aside from those rules. So it may not be possible to change it. I understand why, but I wanted to get that on the record.

And then for Broxtowe. Again, if you have a look at the original proposal, I mean there's quite strong feelings about this. They were protesting outside as I came in. Some of those communities west of the M1 there in the north where you've moved them into Nottingham North, and Kimberley, I mean, it's possible to make a case, I suppose, for Nuthall East and Strelley, which sit to the east of the M1, but the rest of it to the west of the M1 really doesn't have a great connection to Nottingham City. In fact, many of them would look westwards even towards Derbyshire perhaps more so than they would into Nottingham, obviously cleaved in half by the big blue line there – the M1 – that means you can't even really freely wander from one side of that new constituency to the other; it's very much separated from the city, not least in terms of transport. So it's quite a challenge to get from Watnall to Nottingham as I've tried on a few occasions, and it's certainly not easy. So I maybe take the blame for that because I run the bus services, but it is a challenge. So those residents – you can see from the strength feeling outside, but also I think that from what I've seen – there are a number of submissions making the case very strongly that they don't feel that affinity to Nottingham City from a community perspective. Obviously, they are their own self-contained towns and parishes from that point of view and very much feel they should stay that way.

There's probably no perfect answer to it because other proposals include dividing areas as well, but I certainly think that the county council submitted a proposal, which I think was in line with the national Conservative Party proposal to instead leave those areas in Broxtowe and actually move the three wards in Beeston across into Nottingham South. Again, there's no perfect

answer to any of this, and you're going to have to divide something somewhere, but the logic in my head is quite simply that Beeston has much more of an affinity to the city, particularly to Clifton, as you can see there right next door. There's already that bit of Clifton there that extends beyond the city, and if anything, putting those Beeston wards in almost closes the gap, if you like – that kind of funnel that ends up in that Clifton estate to the south.

But certainly from both a community and a transport perspective, Beeston is much more connected to Nottingham South than certainly Kimberley or Watnall would be to Nottingham North, not least because the train and the tram run directly from Beeston into Nottingham city centre. There's a lot of student population in Beeston, which is regularly in and out of the city. There is much more of a regular and understood transport connection and a flow of people in and out of the city for work reasons as well as, as I say, social reasons and students from Beeston to Nottingham, much more so than there is from the north west areas that are included in your proposal.

So just to reiterate the previous comments that we've submitted as a county council in the past, we still feel very strongly – and I think residents feel very strongly – that those areas in the North West, particularly Kimberley and Watnall, would not make sense at all to go into Nottingham City, and the county proposal, although not perfect, makes much more sense from my perspective.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any questions of clarification? Yes.

**ALAN FOX:** Hello, Alan Fox from the Liberal Democrats. You spoke about links between Beeston and Clifton. Is there a bridge or any way across the River Trent at that point?

**BEN BRADLEY:** Not currently. There are transport links, as I've said, directly from Beeston into the city. There's a student population that lives in Beeston. As a former Nottingham Trent student who studied on the Clifton campus down there, I know lots of the residents who studied there with me lived in Beeston and regularly got on the bus between the two. But you're right. You do have to go north to make your way around the river there, if you like. There's likely to be more connection there in the future though because we're going to have East Midlands Parkway railway station, with light rail links across to Beeston and then Toton in the north. So there are existing plans that would link them by train into the future.

**PETER FISH:** Any other questions of clarification? No. Well, thank you very much indeed for taking the time.

**BEN BRADLEY:** No problem. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** I'm afraid we don't have any more immediate speakers until about 14:20. I'm sorry it's slightly disjointed this afternoon, but if we can take a short adjournment to 14:20.

After an adjournment

**PETER FISH:** We did slight rejigging, I think, if we can have Darren Henry first, if you'd be happy to speak that would be great.

**DARREN HENRY:** Thank you very much. Hello, I'm Darren Henry. I'm Member of Parliament for Broxtowe constituency and that's since December 2019. I also live in Greasley parish ward and

used to live in Nuthall, both of which are affected by the Boundary Commission for England's proposal. So first, I'd like to point out that I have enjoyed serving the people of Broxtowe constituency as it is currently made up, and it is within range as well. But I do acknowledge that there must be a link made between Broxtowe and Nottingham City to prevent unnecessary disruption elsewhere. However, you will be breaking ties by moving Kimberley, Watnall, Nuthall and Strelley, I would say. Under a previous boundary commission review as well, there were overwhelming arguments for a connection between the city and Beeston as well. I will say that I do welcome the addition of the Broxtowe borough wards that are currently located in the Ashfield constituency as this unites communities in and around Eastwood and at the northern end of the borough council area, and they share common community and historical ties – a good example being that I live in Giltbrook, which is in Greasley, and I would take my dog to the vet's in Eastwood, so that's just an example there.

Another very important example, I think, is that with Eastwood coming in, and people in Kimberley looking towards Eastwood for facilities and community ties, since 1894, there is a local newspaper which is called *The Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*, and so you would be definitely breaking very strong ties between two communities if you moved Kimberley into Nottingham North.

The Commission's proposed link with the City of Nottingham North and Kimberley seat sadly then breaks these community links by removing Kimberley, Nuthall, Strelley and Watnall from Broxtowe. You'll find that living locally, as strange as it may seem, the Sainsbury's supermarket is one hell of a focal point for the area. When I lived in Nuthall, that's where people shopped locally. Also, I live in Greasley now, so if you look between Kimberley, Greasley and Eastwood, there is also the Gilbert Retail Park, which has an IKEA in it, M&S, etc. So there's no reason really to go into the city for a number of extremely popular shops and also the services that are offered by Eastwood, being looked upon by Kimberley and the Sainsbury's as I mentioned being upon by Watnall, Nuthall and Strelley. So the Commission's proposal to split the parish of Greasley by placing Watnall in the Nottingham North and Kimberley seat – which, as I pointed out, I live in – that is clearly breaking a parish link because that's one parish with Watnall moving out.

Broxtowe's current wards are semi-rural, and that mixes with the urban constituency of the inner City of Nottingham. So we're mixing inner city type wards with the market town of Kimberley. It's very different. If Broxtowe borough is to be linked with the city, then I think a southern link would work better with a Beeston link to the city; that would be preferable. There are poor transport links from the northern end of Broxtowe borough to the city, as contrasted with the southern end in Beeston with excellent transport links. Nottingham tram extends out of the city into Beeston. There is no tram link into Kimberley in the surrounding area. Bus routes also in the northern area with Kimberley have very good access and quick access to Eastwood. So that's the focal point of Kimberley looking towards Eastwood rather than the city.

So a proposed Nottingham South, which would include Beeston, which was also effectively proposed at the Commission's last review, the subsequent public hearings from the last review then confirmed that this has a strong local support from the residents and from all political parties. So this could be achieved again by placing the following Broxtowe wards into Nottingham South seat. So that's Beeston North, Beeston Central, and Beeston Rylands. Although it would be desirable also to place Beeston West ward into the Nottingham South seat, this isn't possible due to the accepted range being breached, so I recognise that. However, Beeston West as a removal from the rest of Beeston is justifiable in one area, and it is more

suburban than the other three wards of Beeston North, Beeston Central, and Beeston Rylands, with links to Chilwell to its west.

For example, Park Road, Grove Avenue and Cumberland Avenue were all in Chilwell until the last local boundary review placed them in Beeston West ward. These changes would then allow Bilborough ward to be retained in Nottingham North alongside the Leen Valley ward, which would bring Nottingham North within the accepted range. And it's worth noting that in the previous review, there was substantial opposition to ending Bilborough's link with Nottingham North.

So the advantage of these changes keeps existing links in place. We will be moving one fewer ward. There'll be no need for an exchange of wards between Nottingham North and Nottingham South in regard to Bilborough. The natural merging of residential streets between Beeston and Nottingham, unlike the areas in the northern end of the borough, Beeston is not a parish. The historic Beeston parish of old contained areas which currently lie within the city at the moment. Also, Beeston Hockey Club, Beeston Sidings Mini Nature Reserve are all in Nottingham South. They're called Beeston; they're in Nottingham South now.

There is a regular bus service into the city. A Nottingham tram extends into Beeston. The city centre is only 3.4 miles away. Beeston is home to many of the University of Nottingham students, including 254 halls of residence and 427 other accommodations occupied by students. The eastern edge of Beeston adjoins the University of Nottingham's main campus. The Broadgate Park halls of residence is split between Nottingham and Beeston and will be united in one constituency under a Beeston–Nottingham South proposal. The new road, which was opened between Beeston and Lenton, was needed due to growing links between the two. The road goes through Nottingham Enterprise Zone, and that connects Humber Road, which is in current Broxtowe in Beeston to Thane Road, which is in Lenton in Nottingham South. It is seen by the city council as being key to unlocking the full potential of the Enterprise Zone. Boots, which is an enormous, major employer in the area, its site is currently divided between two constituencies. There is a representative advantage to the whole site being represented by a single Member of Parliament.

So in summary, my counterproposal will be less disruptive than the original Commission proposal, would not split a parish, and moves one fewer ward within the city. So under the original proposal by the Boundary Commission, you'd have Kimberley, Watnall and Nuthall West, Nuthall East and Strelley, and Bilborough – that's four – moving. Under my proposal, it would be Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands – three.

So that would allow Bilborough to retain its links with Nottingham North. A Nottingham–Broxtowe constituency would be split in half by the M1 as well, and it would establish a more natural link with the city, building on Beeston's strong connections with the University of Nottingham and associated business and cultural links. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any points of clarification? Again, if you could just state your name for the record. Thank you.

**TOM ADAMS:** Hi, Tom Adams from the Labour Party. You mentioned that there was support for Beeston being linked with Nottingham in the last review. Can you just clarify whether Beeston was split in those proposals, as they are in this counterproposal, or whether all of Beeston,

including Beeston West, was included in that proposed constituency that had some support last time?

**DARREN HENRY:** Don't know the answer to that.

**PETER FISH:** Okay, I'm sure we can find the answer to that. Any other questions, points of clarification? Thank you very much for your time. So next we have Councillor Flatley.

**ROBERT FLATLEY:** Hi, everyone. My name is Councillor Robert Flatley. I'm a resident of the Mid Derbyshire constituency, but I represent an area within the Erewash constituency, and I also work in Broxtowe. So if you can get your head around that, I've got quite a few interests. I'd like to thank the Commission for allowing me to speak today. I wish to make particular reference to two proposed constituencies in the East Midlands, one in Derbyshire and one in Nottinghamshire. Firstly, if I start with the proposed Ilkeston and Long Eaton constituency. As a Derbyshire County Councillor representing part of this constituency, and as somebody who has resided there for 17 years, I've seen first-hand the overwhelming level of local objection to the proposed name change. The existing name of Erewash has been used for the constituency since 1983, and in that time, the seat has only been subject to one minor boundary change in subsequent reviews.

It has also been the name used for the local government district since 1974. Erewash acts as a neutral name for the area, avoiding the need for preferential treatment for the two largest and similarly-sized towns in the constituency, those being Ilkeston and Long Eaton. Indeed, there is a need to strike a delicate balance between the two towns with Erewash Borough Council itself using both town halls, a joint headquarters to avoid any geographical bias. A name change – particularly the word order mentioning Ilkeston first – appears to give preferential treatment to one town over the other. And secondly, this name also excludes a large number of settlements in Erewash such as Sandiacre, Breaston and Draycott, which would no longer feel identified or included within the new constituency name. Considering the Commission has not proposed any ward changes to the constituency, using the philosophy that “if it ain't broke, don't fix it”, I see no purpose in proposing this arbitrary name change.

Now onto the second and perhaps more complex representation that I'm going to make. I would like to object to the proposals that have been made for the Broxtowe constituency. Although I do not live in Broxtowe, I have lived there previously, and I currently work in the constituency and have spent all my school life being educated there, coincidentally having gone to schools in both Nuthall and Beeston. So I think that I can speak with some authority on both of these areas. I have no objection to the proposals to incorporate Eastwood and Brinsley into the constituency. This is a sensible and logical option in light of the electoral quota that the constituency needs to meet. My objections squarely lie with the proposals to move the wards of Kimberley and Nuthall into the Nottingham North constituency.

This proposal first and foremost would split the civil parish of Greasley over two separate constituencies, and furthermore, it would place a large market town and several villages into a constituency that those communities have no real link to. I understand that many residents in Kimberley and Nuthall have made representations to this effect, and I think their message is quite clear that people living there do not feel they have a strong identification with the City of Nottingham nor do they want to be represented by a city MP. There is also an additional issue that it's very difficult to travel from the north to the south of the proposed constituency via road without going outside the constituency boundary. Indeed, the Commission's proposals use the

B610 as the boundary between the two constituencies, which is coincidentally the only direct road access between Awsworth and Eastwood. Therefore, I would like to add my support to the counterproposal, which would see the three Beeston wards of Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands moved into the Nottingham South constituency.

Though this is not perfect, this to me seems to be the most logical solution on two main accounts. Firstly, the boundary between Beeston and Nottingham is largely indistinguishable. There are several individual buildings such as those located on Boots headquarters site and the University halls of residence such as Broadgate Park, which straddle the boundary. This clearly demonstrates Beeston's nature as a suburb of Nottingham, no different in its build-up in geographical nature to city-based suburbs such as Wollaton other than the fact that it is located in a different local authority. Indeed, the ancient parish of Beeston, in existence before one forms of local government, contained areas now placed under the City of Nottingham. This situation is in stark contrast to Kimberley, which is separated from Nottingham by fields and those housing estates of Nuthall, such as Mornington Crescent and Horsendale, which, although they back onto the city's boundary, do not have any direct road access to the city itself.

Having been to school in Beeston, I'm very much aware of its nature as a university town. The university itself is located within Nottingham City. However, a sizeable portion of its accommodation is located within Beeston. I'm sure that representationally, it would make sense for the University and the majority of its students to be covered by the same Member of Parliament under one single constituency. Furthermore, in answer to the argument that has been levied about splitting Beeston, other than the fact that the existing proposal splits the parish of Greasley, I would argue that the Beeston West ward is much closer in its nature to the neighbourhood of Chilwell, which is to its west, than to other areas of Beeston to its east. Therefore, although splitting the town in the sense of its name, in terms of how the wards interlink, this proposal would retain Beeston West with Chilwell, which it's better linked to, whilst moving the more urban areas of Beeston and into Nottingham, which it's far more coterminous with. Indeed, Beeston is very much a town of two halves, and this counterproposal reflects this.

My second argument in favour of moving the Beeston wards into Nottingham South is it avoids the need for further internal ward changes within the City of Nottingham itself, notably the moving of Bilborough from Nottingham North to Nottingham South. Bilborough has a strong demographic affinity with other areas located in Nottingham North such as Aspley and Broxtowe estate. Changing this would drastically alter the geographic nature of Nottingham seats, making their present names less relevant to the geographic areas they cover. Indeed, Nottingham South would become much more of a Nottingham West seat under these proposals.

I would also like to address the argument made earlier regarding Bilborough College acting as a catchment for secondary schools in Nottingham South. This is clearly not the case. Bilborough College has a significant catchment across the Nottingham and Derby conurbation, having attended myself whilst living in Derbyshire at the time. So any attempt made to link that college specifically with Nottingham South is just simply not the case. I'll again stress I think it is far more logical and less disruptive to move those Beeston wards into Nottingham and retain Kimberley and Nuthall within the existing Broxtowe constituency. I will leave it there, and I thank you once again to the Commission for letting me speak today.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you much indeed. Any points of clarification? No, well thank you very much indeed. Just a bit of slight rejigging to keep things moving along. I think we've got Graham Hills? Are you happy to go now? Thank you very much.

**GRAHAM HILLS:** My name is Graham Hills. I'm here as a resident of Nuthall. I'm also a member of Nuthall Parish Council and to an extent therefore speak for them as well. So in July last year, Nuthall Parish Council filed a proposal in connection with these proposals. Do you have a copy of it?

So, I live in Nuttall and have done for 40 years with my wife and four children. Nuthall is on the junction 16 area of the M1 and so is right in the middle of the issues over the boundaries. So as I've said, I've lived for 40 years there. All our children attended local neighbourhood schools. The parishes to the northwest of the City of Nottingham, they've never actually been included in the City of Nottingham. There's a parish council; other areas near us also have parish councils. So a merger with the city would have some challenging aspects, I think, for the people of Nuthall and the surrounding areas. Watnall adjoins to the northwest, neighbouring Greasley. These are rural areas, with the two former industrial towns of Kimberley and Giltbrook directly north of Nuthall. Further to the west of Nuthall is Strelley. Strelley is a wholly rural area and is marked by the existence of Strelley Hall, which was built in the 17th/18th centuries. It has an early medieval moat. There was one other stately home in the area that covered Nuthall, which was Nuthall Temple. Sadly, when the motorway came through, Nuthall Temple disappeared – or its remains did – under junction 16.

Greenbelt land surrounds Nuthall, and there is a designated conservation area which covers the village centre. In the document I've just given you, there are plans of the conservation area and the green belt area on pages three and six. So the rural nature of these communities of Nuthall, Kimberley, Strelley and Watnall do stand apart from the nature of Nottingham City and the wards in that area. A councillor did prepare a counterproposal, which is at pages seven to 10 of that document, for Beeston to look towards the city wards for its universities. I'm not qualified to comment on that or to say anything about splitting wards, but it could lead to some loss of identity for rural parishes if they found themselves joined in sharing a Member of Parliament with large areas of the city and that their needs may not be met so well if the demands on the time of an MP could be overwhelmed by what I think is the addition of no less than five new and substantial city wards under the current proposals.

I'd like to just say what it's like to live in Nuthall and the way that people look around for their entertainment and their shopping and everything like that. Wherever their places of work, commercially and socially, people see their domestic and family lives as being centred on the local area. The residents look northward towards Kimberley, where there are a lot of facilities. There's a swimming pool, a leisure centre, an academy–secondary school, Sainsbury's with a retail park, a historic high street, GP services and chemists. If you go a further mile along the road, there's Giltbrook, which has an IKEA, M&S and a very significant retail park. For recreation, there are numerous local parks. There are two in Nuthall itself. There are sports facilities and open spaces in Nuthall and Kimberley. If you drive a little bit further out, there's Shipley Park at Heanor which is a very extensive as a park and has a lot of facilities. From there, for recreation – weekends, for instance – an awful lot of people from our area travel out to Matlock and the Derbyshire Dales. So what I'm saying is that there is a northerly outlook from Nuthall rather than southerly, and I think it would be right to say that other than for occasional trips for those of us in Nuthall, travelling into Nottingham City can be a fairly rare event now.

So to summarise, rural communities are far different from those of the city. The worry is that they would be to some extent forgotten or overwhelmed on being added with several city wards. So those are our submissions.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much, very helpful. Any points of clarification? Again, if you just state your name for the record.

**ROGER PRATT:** Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. You may already have got this, but I think the representation number is 63889.

**GRAHAM HILLS:** Thank you very much.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Great, I think our next speaker is Jayne Baumber.

**JAYNE BAUMBER:** Hello, my name is Jayne Baumber. I live at Nottingham Road, Nuthall. I'm a councillor on Nuthall Parish Council, but I'm speaking as a resident. Mine's not as in-depth as my colleague's was. Basically, I'm not very happy with the proposed boundary changes to put Nuthall into Nottingham North. Nuthall is a village, and we are better off served culturally and our values with our neighbours of Watnall, Cossall, Awsworth and the town Kimberley. As my colleague has said, we have a wide range of facilities in Kimberley, a shopping centre, and our values are totally different from Nottingham City. We are a distinct community and have our own rights and current boundaries. Our own current boundaries, we feel are okay. I feel as though we've got nothing in common with Nottingham City – places like Aspley, Strelley and Broxtowe. I believe they've got different issues and problems to the ones of Nuthall. A major problem for Nuthall in the past has been HS2, the 2B route, which severely affects Nuthall. I feel as though this issue wouldn't be so well announced if we were in Nottingham City.

At the moment, I feel as though Nuthall is best served with the parliamentary constituency that we've got at the moment. Nuthall West, Nuthall East and Strelley; they also serve as well. We all have the same facilities and everything as them. So I feel as though Nuthall would lose a lot if we were taken into the city boundary. We'd lose a lot of our values and our culture. We're more happy with being in Broxtowe. If we have to change, I feel as though we would be more in line with Beeston, Rylands Central and the North. So basically, that's my very short presentation just to say I'd rather stay where we are at the moment. I feel as though if we joined with Nottingham City, we'd lose a great deal of our values as a village. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions? Thank you very much for taking the time to come and make your presentation. So I think our next speaker – is William Scott in the room?

**WILLIAM SCOTT:** My name's William Scott. I live in Nottingham South, and I'm speaking here in a personal capacity. I would like to address the issues affecting the Nottingham City constituencies. For many years, Nottingham has been in the happy position of its three parliamentary constituencies being coterminous with the city council boundaries. This has brought considerable advantages in terms of voter identification with their elected representatives. Unfortunately, as the Boundary Commission know, the number of electors within the city boundaries is no longer sufficient to justify three parliamentary constituencies without extending beyond the city boundaries. This means that some neighbouring areas must be added to one or more of those three constituencies along with some consequential reshuffling between the three constituencies. Of course, for historical reasons, the city boundary is drawn very tightly, with many natural urban areas within the Greater Nottingham area being excluded from the city. But Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall are not part of those Greater Nottingham areas. The Commission have recommended adding Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall to Nottingham North and transferring Bilborough from the north of the city to Nottingham South, along with other changes to Leen Valley and Castle wards. Unfortunately, this is wholly artificial

as the residents of Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall do not have a close affinity with Nottingham being separated by the M1, a large track of green belt land and with poor transport links to the city.

I would like to propose that instead of the artificial extension to Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall that the more natural link of Beeston be transferred to Nottingham South to create the constituency of Nottingham South and Beeston, or perhaps even more accurately described as Nottingham West and Beeston. The three wards of Beeston Rylands, Beeston Central and Beeston North have strong links with Nottingham City. These wards are home to a large population of University of Nottingham students who mainly walk into Nottingham to study. The site of major Nottingham employer Boots straddles the boundary of Nottingham and Beeston. The Nottingham Enterprise Zone also straddles the same boundary. A large housing development is planned and will also straddle this boundary. The transport links between Beeston and Nottingham are excellent, with first-class connections from Nottingham City transport and from the tram. In fact, these links are far better than between Beeston and elsewhere in the Broxtowe constituency. In all respects, Beeston is a better fit with Nottingham than the outlying communities, Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions? Thank you very much indeed. I think we have Janet Scott in the room?

**JANET SCOTT:** I'm Janet Scott, and I'm a resident of Nottingham South. I understand the rationale for a parliamentary boundary review, and I've considered the Commission's proposal for Broxtowe, Nottingham South and Nottingham North. I don't agree with the Commission's proposal to include Watnall, Kimberley and Nuthall within Nottingham North. This is mainly due to the M1 being a strong physical barrier between Kimberley and the wards in Nottingham North, poor transport links between these wards and the city and the lack of commonality between rural northern Broxtowe wards and urban Nottingham North. I live in Nottingham South constituency on the river at the start of the Nottingham-Beeston Canal and over many years have been a regular cyclist along the river and the canal to Beeston Lock in Beeston Rylands. During this time, I've seen changes which are reinforcing the feel of Beeston as being within the wider Nottingham urban area. I propose that the Boundary Commission consider the South Broxtowe wards, specifically the wards of Beeston Central, Beeston North and Beeston Rylands, as having increased commonality with Nottingham.

This can primarily be evidenced by the growth of the Nottingham University hub, the increased transport links and the Nottingham Enterprise Zone, all of which have encouraged greater ties between these wards in Broxtowe to Nottingham South. University Park is the largest Nottingham university campus, set in 300 acres in Nottingham South. The west gate access to the university is directly opposite Broadgate in Beeston. This road in Beeston is home to a growing number of Nottingham University students and comprises the Broadgate Park Student Village, one of the largest student villages in Europe. The village straddles the Broxtowe and Nottingham South constituency boundaries. As with some city areas around the university campus, the Beeston wards close to the University Park Campus have seen a rise in student accommodation over recent years, with roads near to the university seeing an increase in the number of houses with multiple occupancy. An article in *The Nottinghamshire Post* on Sunday 21st February 2021 highlighted the increase in student lets in Beeston, and a quick search of the internet shows a number of estate agents and Rightmove offering increased student lettings in Beeston, predominantly close to the university. As such, the Beeston wards close to the

university have a community which includes a mix of locals and students like those areas of Lenton and Dunkirk within Nottingham South.

Consequently, there's an opportunity to bring this large student hub with its similarities of lifestyle facilities and needs into one constituency. There's quick, varied and frequent local transport links between Beeston and Nottingham City. In 2015, Beeston was connected to Nottingham's tram network, bringing quick connectivity between Nottingham and Beeston via the university hospital and the university. Trams run roughly between every seven and 50 minutes. Beeston users can choose to buy season tickets as part of the wider Nottingham Robin Hood transport network, which allows unlimited travel on most buses, trams and trains within the wider Nottingham transport network and is available for adults, students and under-19s. There are regular bus links, including Nottingham City Transport's U36 and night buses 36 and 24. Journey time is around 20 minutes.

Nottingham and Beeston enjoy the connectivity of cycle routes used for both commuting and leisure. The big track, Waterside Cycle Route, runs from Trent Bridge to Beeston Lock in Beeston Rylands, with the city centre in between. A cycle route runs from Nottingham City along University Boulevard at the side of the tram route and onto Beeston. On Friday 8th March 2019, a new pedestrian and cycle path, including a 50-metre bridge over the railway, was opened. This route increased connectivity between employment sites, Lincoln Lenton and the Boots Beeston site, directly with Nottingham Science Park and University Boulevard. Boots retains its strong Nottingham identity and has been a large employer within Nottingham and the surrounding area for many years. Its site of Thane Road is split between Broxtowe and Nottingham South constituencies.

In 2011, parts of the Boots site were designated as part of a new enterprise zone. Along with three other smaller sites, the Beeston Business Park, the Nottingham Science Park and the Medi Park site at QMC, the Nottingham Enterprise Zone is seeking to become the UK centre for innovation in health, beauty and wellness. As well as commercial space, the Enterprise Zone has planned housing for up to 675 new homes. A quote on Inner England's website by the enterprise director at Boots says, 'The site will become a fully integrated part of the wider Beeston and Nottingham communities.' It's envisaged the site will shape opportunities and regeneration in the area. To service businesses within the Enterprise Zone, a new road was opened in March 2021, linking Thane Road in Nottingham South and Humber Road in Beeston Rylands. An article on the [businessdesk.com](https://www.businessdesk.com) on Monday March 29th 2021 talked about the importance of the through road in Nottingham and local communities. The article included a quote from Councillor Rebecca Langton, portfolio holder for communities, highways and strategic transport at Nottingham City Council, who said, 'The new link road could be the key to unlocking significant potential for the city and the surrounding areas. Not only does it create an opportunity to develop new homes for local people, but the Enterprise Zone also helps us to position Nottingham as a key designation for high-growth businesses. The benefits this brings to local residents through inward investment and jobs will help us build a stronger economy as we recover from Covid.' It's clear that the growth of the Enterprise Zone forges closer links between Beeston, particularly Beeston Rylands, and Nottingham South through the opportunity for local economic growth, regeneration, jobs and local homes.

Given what I've outlined, I'm asking the Boundary Commission to look again at the Broxtowe constituency and consider a proposal of the inclusion of Beeston North, Beeston Central, and Rylands within the Nottingham South constituency. This would allow the outlying northern wards

of Kimberley, Watnall and Nuthall to remain in Broxtowe and Bilborough to remain in Nottingham North. Thank you for your time today.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any questions of clarification? Thank you very much indeed for your time. I think we've more or less caught up with our timetable – Simon Murray, are you happy to come and speak now?

**SIMON MURRAY:** Thank you. My name is Simon Murray. I'm a resident of the Sherwood constituency, and I'm a borough councillor for the Newstead Abbey ward of Gedling Borough Council, which forms part of Sherwood constituency. I'm here effectively just to make two very short points. The first point is one where I would ask the Boundary Commission to look again, and the second is to speak in support of the Boundary Commission proposal in relation to Hucknall. So, the first point simply concerns the name of the constituency of Sherwood. It's my view that it would be better for that parliamentary constituency to be called Sherwood Forest County Constituency rather than just Sherwood. Obviously, that name is redolent of a lot of history around here. Let me say this under a golden effigy of the great man, but clearly, the constituency of Sherwood Forest would more accurately delineate the area that the parliamentary constituency represents.

It encompasses all of the most historic names redolent of the myths of Robin Hood – Edwinstowe, Blidworth and Clipstone – all of these areas were once part of the Royal Hunting Forest, but it's not simply emotional motivation that drives my attempt to rename the constituency. It's a more practical one. There is an area within Nottingham City called Sherwood, NG5, and that area causes confusion. I know this because members of Mark Spencer MP's offices often have observed that they get a lot of correspondence from people who are resident in Sherwood NG5, thinking that Mr Spencer is their MP, and so it would avoid that confusion. Of course, Sherwood NG5 is actually part of the Nottingham East constituency, and I think it would remain so. So that's my first point.

My second point concerns that part of the Sherwood constituency that goes into the Ashfield district. As the Commission quite rightly identifies, Hucknall is a single entity, a whole town which is incorporated presently into the constituency of Sherwood. There is a proposal that has come to my attention, I think, promoted by the Ashfield Independents, which would put the ward of Hucknall West into the constituency of Ashfield instead of the proposals from the Boundary Commission, which are to transfer some wards between Mansfield and Ashfield. You see there Grange Farm and Brick Kiln. So, these suggestions made to the Boundary Commission to put Hucknall West into Ashfield does not make any kind of logical sense in my view, and that's because it would effectively cut the town of Hucknall in two. There would be no logical boundary. You can see there one side of the street in Hucknall would form a part of the Sherwood constituency, and one side would be Ashfield, with no logical reason for that. It's clearly one contiguous settlement, and it would make much more sense to do as the Boundary Commission have suggested and to keep Hucknall West within one parliamentary constituency, and that concludes my remarks.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Very clear, very helpful. Any questions? Thank you very much indeed for your time.

**SIMON MURRAY:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Do we have Kashmir Purewal? Are you happy to come now?

**KASHMIR PUREWAL:** My name's Kashmir Purewal, and I'm a resident of Broxtowe. I cannot support the Boundary Commission's proposal to move wards Nuthall, Kimberley and Watnall to Nottingham North and Bilborough to Nottingham South. I support Bilborough to remain in Nottingham North and to move the wards of Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands to Nottingham South. My argument is based on the distinction and distinct similarities of the proposed change in terms of demographics, local links, natural boundaries, proximity and local ties. The reason why I cannot support the Boundary Commission's proposal is there are more factors distinguishing Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley from Nottingham North than there are similarities at a detriment of sporting rural communities. Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley have nothing in common with Nottingham North. They are rural communities where people moved out of the City of Nottingham for reasons of local school catchment areas, links to rural communities and historic ties. People have moved into these areas because of their rural lifestyle and connections to communities in the North, such as Giltbrook and Eastwood. Communities in Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley have better links with the North and have more in common with communities such as Giltbrook and Eastwood rather than Bulwell, Aspley or Bestwood.

For example, the Giltbrook Retail Park, Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser. Communities in Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley associate with history. Historically, parish councils have been in place in these communities for over 100 years. We do not want to lose this identity to Nottingham North. We view association with the city in a negative manner – an example in relation to the debt-ridden Nottingham City Council.

There is already a physical boundary where the M1 separates Nottingham North from Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley. My counterproposal is moving Beeston to Nottingham South, which makes more sense because the Beeston and Nottingham South communities are similar in demographics, connections to the University and student population, an increasing number of HMOs in Beeston in relation to this, the Enterprise Zone, cycle lanes, strong transport links with Nottingham City and in terms of housing, a similar mixture of private and social housing. There is a connection to the University of Nottingham in that it borders Beeston. There are 15 university self-catering accommodations on University Park in Beeston. The students look to Beeston for their essential needs, and there is increasing footfall in the local streets and supporting the local economy. There is no distinct border between Nottingham South and Beeston, and they function collectively as a community. There is continuously increasing HMO and student living accommodation in Beeston due to the increasing student population that are attending a world-class university, attracting many international students for many campuses across the world – China, Malaysia.

Again, there is no distinct border between Nottingham South and Beeston, and both communities function collectively. The Enterprise Zone, a partnership with Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Boots, D2, N2 and The Canals and Rivers Trust, connects Nottingham City with Beeston. Our site in Beeston was awarded enterprise zone status by the Government and is part of Nottingham and Derby's enterprise zone. Along with Beeston Park and Nottingham Science Park, the objective is to become the UK's centre for innovation, life sciences, medical research, health, beauty and wellness. This links the University of Nottingham with the Boots site in Beeston with Nottingham, again further evidence of the enterprise zone, providing strong links between Beeston and Nottingham South. On the back of this, there's an outlined planning permission for around 900,000 square foot of new commercial opportunities, 675 new homes and detailed planning permission for a new public highway. Together with this and having a strong link with Nottingham means more people will be attracted from Nottingham in terms of employment, commercial opportunities and recreation

activities in Beeston. Most recently, there is a new access road, part of the enterprise, linking Thane Road in Lenton and Humber Road in Beeston, again connecting with Beeston. This came as part of funding provided from Nottingham City Council, again highlighting there are more strong links between Beeston and Nottingham, and there is no defined border there. The funding introduced a new bridge, cycle lanes and walkways into the Nottingham Enterprise Zone, connecting Beeston and Nottingham along the canal and University Boulevard. The bridge over the railway connects existing and new employment sites, linking Lenton and the Boots site directly to Nottingham Science Park and University Boulevard. Councillor John Collins states, 'path half the journey of the railway from bus stops and tram on the University Boulevard,' again, evidence supporting a strong link between Beeston and Nottingham South.

Mark Chivers, Enterprise Zone Director at Boots, recognised a connection between the Beeston and Nottingham sites: 'The site will become a fully integrated part of the wider Beeston and Nottingham communities. Development will be carried out to the highest possible environment and sustainability standards, and we'll continue to maintain green spaces in order to allow ecology and biodiversity to flourish and be enjoyed by all.' The largest business in Nottingham, Boots, recognises and supports the important connection between Nottingham and Beeston. Councillor Rebecca Langton, portfolio holder for communities, highways and strategic transport at Nottingham City [Council]: 'The new link road could be key to unlocking significant potential for the city and surrounding areas,' again recognising the potential of connecting Beeston and Nottingham economically. Putting this into perspective, 6 million project linked by Nottingham City Council, funded by D2, N2, local enterprise project to upgrade pedestrian and cycle links between the city centre and Boots in Beeston.

This benefits and attracts employers, employees and businesses from Nottingham South, taking advantage of quicker cycle routes, healthier public transport, improving existing cycle paths and walks around Beeston and Nottingham, again connecting two communities. Contrast this to Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley. Strong transport links already exist between Nottingham and Beeston and in terms of buses, trams, NCT, rail links, cycle [links] and walk groups. In summary, Beeston is part of the Enterprise Zone. It is evident that businesses, the University of Nottingham and Nottingham City Council already support the importance of this connection to the extent that money has already been invested to promote the Enterprise Zone. There is no definite boundary between Nottingham South and Beeston in terms of demographics, connections with the university and student population, the Enterprise Zone, cycle lanes and strong transport links with Nottingham. In terms of housing, there is a similar mixture of private and social housing in both Beeston and Nottingham South. The communities are already connected. There is no evidence that Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley have such an extensive connection with Nottingham North.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any questions of clarification? Thank you very much for your time. Sylvia Gillespie-Bell, are you happy to speak now? I'm conscious it's ahead of your slot, but if you're here it would be great if you'd be happy to speak?

**SYLVIA GILLESPIE-BELL:** My name is Sylvia Gillespie-Bell. I actually live in Attenborough, which is part of the Broxtowe constituency, and I speak on behalf of the Broxtowe constituency. It is evident that I cannot support the Boundary Commission's proposal to move Nuthall, Kimberley, Strelley and Watnall to Nottingham North. It is more connected to Broxtowe. It is far more linked. My proposal is that these areas remain within the constituency of Broxtowe and that Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands be moved to Nottingham South. My main argument for this is based on the following points: that Watnall, Nuthall and Kimberley are

far more attached to Eastwood and Giltbrook and should remain there together. They have nothing in common with the City of Nottingham. There is also a local newspaper known as The Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser, which also links the whole of the area. Many people have moved out of the City of Nottingham and into these areas because of a rural lifestyle and its connections with Giltbrook and Eastwood. These all have links to each other and historically have had parish councils, which have been in place for many years, and the residents do not wish to lose their identity by being joined to Nottingham North.

The residents of this area also have no wish to be linked with Nottingham Council, who are not very well-off and debt-ridden. With regard to the south of the constituency, Beeston has many links to Nottingham South with the University having many sites and residential areas in the Beeston area. There's a very large student population in Beeston. There are good transport links, both by bus and tram into the Beeston area from Nottingham, past many of the residence properties that the students occupy. There are cycle lanes and walk routes connecting Beeston and Nottingham along the canal and University Boulevard. There are many other links to Nottingham City, also many employment sites, which include the Boots site. The Enterprise Zone provides strong links between Beeston and Nottingham. A new access road, part of the Enterprise Zone, links Thane Road and Humber Road. Nottingham City Council was provided with funding to create the road and will include a new bridge over the Beeston Canal and will serve new developments and businesses in the Nottingham Enterprise Zone.

The project involved partnership with the city council, the Nottingham County Council, and the Boots, along with others. Together, they hope to become the UK centre for innovation for life sciences. The Boots site in Beeston, which is part of the Nottingham Enterprise Zone, received outline planning permission for about 900,000 square feet of new commercial opportunities. Many new homes are also being planned for the area.

There is a natural merging of residential streets between Beeston and Nottingham. Unlike the areas in the northern end of the borough, Beeston is not parished. The historic Beeston Parish contained areas which currently lie in the city. There is a regular bus service into the city, and the Nottingham tram extends into Beeston from the centre of Nottingham, and it's only just over three miles away. In Beeston, there are 250 halls of residence and a little over 400 other accommodation properties occupied by students. The eastern edge of Beeston adjoins the University of Nottingham main campus. The Broadgate Park hall of residence is split between Beeston and Nottingham and would be united into one constituency if our proposal is accepted.

In summary, the counterproposal that I put forward would be less disruptive for communities than the original Commission proposal as it would not split a parish and moves a few yards within the city. It also provides having a Nottingham–Broxtowe constituency that is split in half by the M1. It would also establish a more natural link to the city from Beeston. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions of clarification? Thank you very much for your time. I think we have Keith Vaz – are you happy to go? Thanks for going ahead of time.

**KEITH VAZ:** Thank you very much. Mr Assistant Commissioner, thank you for allowing me to address the review, and can I begin by thanking all of you for the work that you have done in ensuring that the public have got the opportunity to comment. This is very, very difficult work, and it's not easy to try and redraw boundaries. I have been involved in politics since the age of 25, so I have now attended eight boundary commission reviews in different parts of the country, four in Leicester, and I appreciate the fact that all these events raise a lot of community concern

and anguish and anxiety. So I hope to be able to draw on the experience that I've had in putting forward the views of the community. I have no skin in the game. I retired from politics in 2019, having served for 32 years as a Member of Parliament in the Leicester East constituency, the boundaries of which changed while I was there.

Previously, half of the Belgrave ward was actually in the Leicester West constituency. I used to call it the West Bank because it was near the river, and those on the right-hand side of the very long Belgrave Road were always in Leicester East. So that was united the last time we had a boundary review against the wishes of the then Member of Parliament, Patricia Hewitt, but I'll give you reasons why that was important in a second. From the various conversations, meetings that I've had, from taking up over 36,000 cases over 32 years, attending 1,800 surgeries, which lasted 4,992 hours, having spent two years of my life on the road between Westminster and Leicester, this has been the centre of my life. So this is my own personal experience. Of course I support the Labour Party's proposals, but this is really me as opposed to any party or any organisation.

I think it was Governor Elbridge Gerry who invented the term 'gerrymandering'. That was called after him as a result of what he was doing in Massachusetts. So I'm not here to say, 'Let's have this boundary change because it's better for the Labour Party.' I'm here to say, 'Let's not do what you're proposing because it's bad for local communities,' and that is the decisive point that I want to make today especially in regards to the Belgrave ward. Belgrave is in many ways the heart of the Leicester East constituency. Many people who first arrive in Britain go and live in Belgrave. We've had communities come from East Africa by celebrating the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the Uganda nations. We've had members of the Somali community. Most recently, the Afghani community. I'm quite certain when members of the Ukrainian community come, they will be living first of all in Belgrave.

Belgrave is the heart of the constituency because it is the hub. Families don't move out of Belgrave; they expand in other parts of Leicester East, and therefore to the north of Belgrave, you have Rushey Mead. Rushey Mead is actually also Belgrave. So when we use the word 'Belgrave,' we mean not just the Belgrave ward; we also mean the North Evington ward, which is to the right of Belgrave, and also the Rushey Mead ward, which is north of Belgrave. Leicester is famous for its communities, in particular the Asian community, and one of the most famous names for the Belgrave Road is The Golden Mile, as you will see when you come down there. This is a reference to the fact that The Golden Mile has a lot of jewellery shops. It has a lot of gold saris and a lot of restaurants serving golden curries, especially buttered chicken. It's the centre of buttered chicken in the whole country.

The fact is, it's known for this, and what is being proposed in taking Belgrave out of Leicester East and putting it in Leicester West is to take the heart of Leicester East away and moving it across the river, actually putting the river right in the middle of a constituency. So our strong argument to you and the Commission is please leave Leicester East as it is for the west side of Leicester East; leave Belgrave ward in Leicester East. This is not just my view. It's the view of over 3,000 people who've either signed a petition or written letters in support of keeping Belgrave in Leicester East. As you look across the Leicester East constituency, you will see Humberstone and Hamilton, which did not exist when I first became the Member of Parliament. It now has 12,000 people. Most of the people who live in Hamilton actually originate from Belgrave. It dealt with the overspill from the inner-city areas.

If you look to the left of that to the ward of Troon, that also is an overspill from Belgrave. So you have families, you have grandparents, grandchildren, parents, all living in the same area and being represented by the same Member of Parliament, and the difficulty if you take it away and stick it into Leicester West is that you will create a huge problem for whoever is the MP for Leicester East. Indeed for my successor, say it had happened before she was elected. She'd have to deal with a lot of the cases in Belgrave because they would naturally assume that was the same MP that their parents and grandparents had.

I also strongly support the idea of Spinney Hill[s] remaining in Leicester South. In a sense, that is the heart of Leicester South. It's for Jonathan Ashworth to make his own arguments. But Spinney Hill[s] not being in Leicester South is the same as Belgrave not being in Leicester East. You're taking the heart out of the community, the centre of the biggest places of worship for his communities, and Spinney Hill[s] is in a sense exactly the same demographics as Stoneygate and Wycliffe – the same people live there and the same type of housing. Similarly in Belgrave, it's the same in Rushey Mead and the same in North Evington and in Troon. I support the movement of Evington ward into Leicester South. I know you have a huge problem with numbers and all three of these seats – probably with the exception of Leicester West – East and South are certainly growing.

We have had the arrival of over 15,000 Portuguese citizens in Leicester. They are from the three enclaves of Goa, Daman, and Dew. They are of Indian origin, but they are Portuguese nationals, and they have now moved into the Spinney Hill[s] in Belgrave area, mostly actually in Belgrave and North Evington, so you have to reduce the numbers; otherwise, you won't be within your quota. The addition of Evington to Leicester South is actually very sensible because Evington is an extension of Stoneygate. As with Belgrave and the movement of people into Humberstone and Hamilton, communities have moved from Spinney Hill[s] into Stoneygate and to Evington. The demographics, the diaspora, of the community is exactly the same there, and therefore it fits very well into Stoneygate. In terms of Thurncourt on that side of the city, that actually is quite a good addition to the large estate seats in Leicester South.

Although it's always sad to see wards leave, the fact is we understand you have to make these decisions, and therefore Leicester South will then give two wards to Leicester West. It'll be a clockwise movement. Three quick final points about Belgrave, if I may. There is a river going through Leicester, and your predecessor as assistant commissioner accepted the argument that Belgrave ward should be united when we appeared before him 10 years ago because he thought it was daft that half of Belgrave should be in Leicester West and half in Leicester East. So he ensured that Belgrave was united and kept the right side of the river. From the position of the Leicester West MP, whoever that is after the next election, he or she will have the Belgrave Road, which is a huge road with lots of businesses.

He or she will also have the Narborough Road in Leicester West, which is absolutely huge, and the casework for that Member of Parliament will be horrendous, and actually will make it very, very difficult for that Member of Parliament to be able to handle the kind of casework that he or she would get from Narborough Road and the Belgrave ward; when I was last doing this job, 30% of my entire casework came from Belgrave ward. That's how much work it generated. The proposal that is made by the Conservative Party, not unreasonable, but I hope you will reject it because I think it doesn't really make much sense to what I've just been saying about communities. It's not unreasonable sometimes to go into the county. It's not unreasonable. There is an overspill. However, in this particular case, what they propose to do is to take two wards from Harborough that have absolutely no connection whatsoever with Leicester East and

stick them onto the end of Leicester East and move Belgrave into Leicester West. Now, these wards are very, very different from the rest of Leicester East, and the demographics are completely different, and I don't think it'll help in any way with community cohesion if we try and do that.

I know I said my final point, but I'm an ex-politician so we say 'final' several times before we get to final. I support the three-county review because I think it is important that we look at Rutland and Leicestershire. I've always regarded Rutland – Rutland people won't like this – as part of Leicestershire. We've got one CCG covering Rutland and Leicestershire, so it's one area as far as the Health Department is concerned, but I think it's also sensible to have Lincoln in that review.

I end where I began. These are not easy things for you to do. They're not easy when government gives you the responsibility to get you down to 75,000. I would've favoured the reduction in the number of MPs. I think we have too many MPs. I might say that of course because I'm not one myself, but there are too many, and actually, we should have had larger constituencies, fewer councillors being paid a salary, but that's for somebody else to decide. We have what we have, and I would urge you to accept what the people of Belgrave, the 3,000 – that's almost a third of the entire population of Belgrave say – please could we stay in Leicester East and move Evington and Thurncourt into Leicester South and leave Spinney Hill[s] in Leicester South, where it has always stayed.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions from the audience? Any points of clarification? If you could just state your name for the record again.

**ALAN FOX:** Alan Fox from the Liberal Democrats. You've spoken quite eloquently about putting Belgrave back together again, but the proposals you've outlined divide the community of Humberstone across Uppingham Road, where the main shopping area for Humberstone is actually the boundary between Evington ward and the North Evington and Humberstone and Hamilton wards, as you well know because I know that you may know Uppingham Road very well, and it is also where the current MP for Leicester East has her offices.

**PETER FISH:** Points of clarification rather than challenges. What's the question?

**KEITH VAZ:** I understand the question. I can trump that. I actually live on Uppingham Road, and I have done for 35 years, so she's just moved closer to me, which is great. It's lovely to have her there. The fact is that Uppingham Road is a very, very strong boundary, and you have, Mr Fox, made my case because everything to the south of Uppingham Road will Evington and Thurncourt go into Leicester South and everything to the north will be Humberstone and Hamilton. Humberstone and Hamilton end at the Uppingham Road. They don't go into Freeman Road North and Trafford Road, which is completely different, and they don't go into Thurncourt. It's a completely different community. As you know, Thurncourt is dominated by a council estate, and the housing in Hamilton and the communities in Hamilton are completely different.

In fact, the Humberstone, which is right at the end – the stone itself is not quite the Stone of Scone, but we like it a lot historically – is in Humberstone. So that won't change at all. It'll be exactly where it is. Humberstone and Hamilton will not be cut in half. It will end at the Uppingham Road, and everything to the south of that very, very big road – because that's the main road to Peterborough; it's not your village street, it is the main road to Peterborough that passes in front of my house – and everything to the south, which will be Thurnby Lodge,

Thurncourt ward, taken us a whole ward, as well as Evington, would then be in Leicester South. Very sensible.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you for the point. I think we need to make sure we keep to points of clarification rather than too much debate around the actual places, but thank you very much, Mr Vaz. Very helpful. We haven't actually got any speakers now until 16:20, so I'm going to propose an adjournment until 16:15, just in case someone comes early. Thank you very much

#### After an adjournment

**PETER FISH:** Our next speaker who is down to speak is John Ydlibi – John, if you're in the room, if you're happy to come and speak now? Thank you very much.

**JOHN YDLIBI:** Good afternoon and thank you for giving me the opportunity to say a few words today. My name is John Ydlibi, and I'm a resident of Brinsley, which is currently in the Ashfield constituency, but it's proposed to move to the Broxtowe constituency. I've lived in the area for 32 years, and Brinsley very much is connected with Eastwood. So to me, the destiny of the two should be very much aligned, and I'm fully supportive of the proposal to move both those areas back into Broxtowe. Brinsley Parish Council itself is in the Broxtowe constituency. The Broxtowe District Council provide all our services like bins and stuff like that, so the connection with Ashfield is very, very limited today, and it makes more sense to realign those villages and parishes back into Broxtowe, where a lot of our representation today is done through Broxtowe District Council. So that's the point I wanted to say about Brinsley and Eastwood. Anyone have any questions?

**PETER FISH:** Very concise. Really helpful. Very clear. Any questions from the audience? Thank you very much.

**JOHN YDLIBI:** Could I make one other point as well? So that's the first point.

**PETER FISH:** Please do, yes.

**JOHN YDLIBI:** The second point really is, I want to talk a bit about North Nottingham and Kimberley moving into the North Nottingham constituency. I very much see Kimberley as a connector to Eastwood. I know it's a very difficult job you guys have trying to move parishes around and districts around to fit the kind of head count numbers you're trying to do, but from my own perspective, I would like to see Kimberley kept within the Broxtowe district as well. It's a town actually in the Broxtowe District Council area as well, and I think with some of the other proposals you're doing with things like Bilborough coming out of North Nottingham, putting that back in and maybe moving one of the Beeston parishes or Strelley into South Nottingham might kind of offset that. So that's my other comment.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Any questions on that? Thank you. Any other points you wanted to make?

**JOHN YDLIBI:** No, that was it, thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Brilliant. Well, thank you very much for your time. Very helpful. The next person down to speak is Matt Turpin – are you happy to go now? Thank you very much.

**MATT TURPIN:** My name's Matt Turpin. I'm from Beeston Rylands in Broxtowe. As well as being a longstanding resident of Broxtowe, I spent most of my life here. I grew up in Stapleford, spent most of my time living in Beeston Rylands. It's been my home for 22 years now in one solid block. I'd just like to say also I'm not a member of any political party, and I have no affiliation to any political party. As well as a resident, I'm here as someone who has made the Beeston area the subject of much of my work over the last decade. I set up a community magazine there in 2011, which is still thriving hopefully. I'm also part of a volunteer team that oversees the local community Facebook group, called 'Beeston Updated'. That has 28,000 members today.

I think we've got a population of 37,000 in Beeston, so that's a considerable chunk of the population. Usual disclaimers with Facebook groups obviously and social media and representation in general. Obviously, they're not absolutely the greatest place to take evidence from, but I do think they are indicative of how a community thinks. I wish to express my support for proposals put forward by the Boundary Commission at this point while also cautioning against other representations that I believe to have not been made in good faith. A strongly backed proposal, which comes from our own MP in Broxtowe, no less, is to answer the question of fair constituent distribution by not focusing on the north of the constituency, which is the current default proposal, but to cleave the town of Beeston in two, pushing one half of Beeston into the Nottingham constituency while retaining the other half. It's more like a quarter actually. I think there are three wards, which are kept there. Beeston West is retained; Beeston Central, Beeston Rylands and Beeston North would be integrated into Nottingham.

This is to anyone with the nearest grasp of local geography absurd, arbitrary and confusing. The reasoning behind this suggestion is specious at best, arguing along the lines that part of Beeston is already in Nottingham. This is not entirely correct. It's some areas east of Woodside Road in Beeston, right on the border of the university. A look at a map shows this is not a sizeable chunk of Beeston, rather a few residential streets that abut the university campus, separated from the rest of Beeston by the Woodside Road – there's a dual carriageway there. The proposal put forward by the MP would instead drag that line into the middle of Beeston, where next-door neighbours would have different MPs, and that would happen across a wide swathe of Beeston. Representation would be all over the shop there. While there has to be a dividing line somewhere, I do not believe this is the place to put it.

The proposal also states that this idea has previously attracted popular local support. In the years I've been involved in the community of Beeston, I've never heard anyone suggest this is anything but an awful idea. This is reflected in a poll we conducted on the aforementioned Beeston Updated site, where the members were asked about the proposal and asked to vote if they were for or against. Well over 98% were opposed. Many commented they were highly confused by the proposal and we worried about the potential confusion regarding services, representations and so on. Again, I offer the usual caveats that come with polling on social media. It's not the most robust. I do give that, but I do again think that this is at least indicative of feeling within Beeston. I'm willing to debate the details of the poll, its wording as well as its findings, available to the Boundary Commission should they feel it is useful in this process.

Other reasons given, such as existing transport links with the city, are baffling considering the reach of city transport provision outside the given boards of the city itself. You know, we're talking about Hucknall – which, technically, the tram goes up to – and city buses go all the way into Chilwell, areas which aren't included in this proposal. Transport is also largely a devolved issue in any house. So it's not really something that concerns MPs very much, so it's of little

relevance anyway. While the prospect of the whole of Beeston one day becoming part of a different constituency is not entirely rejected, I do see many positives from such an arrangement in the future on both a constituency and a local authority level, this isn't that whatsoever. Instead, it will effectively just chop Beeston in two.

So why is this proposal being put forward to the committee? The Boundary Commission is an independent organisation that must oppose political inference and ensure that decisions that are made are for the greater good of the democratic health of the country and each and every constituency that comes under its jurisdiction. Therefore, I do hope they draw the same conclusions that I do here and that many in Beeston do that the proposal put forward by the Member of Parliament for Broxtowe is not just unworkable and bad for existing communities and arbitrary, but a cynical attempt to divide a town for political gain. The area suggested be carved off consistently votes against the political party he represents – and I must state here I'm not a member of any political party; I don't represent them – and as such appears to be a rather cynical party-political attempt at maintaining power and therefore has no merit for further consideration. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Can I ask if there are any questions of clarification from colleagues in the audience? No? Thank you very much for your time.

**MATT TURPIN:** Thank you for the opportunity and listening to me there. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** I think the next person who is due to speak is Councillor June Stendall. Are you happy to come and speak now? Thank you very much.

**JUNE STENDALL:** My name is June Stendall. I'm an independent, nonaligned district councillor in Mansfield who covers the Grange Farm ward that's looking to take the Grange Farm ward into Ashfield. Thank you for letting me speak today. First of all, I need to let you know I have very sadly studied all the responses that are coming from my area and disappointingly have found four who are actually in support of the Boundary Commission's recommendations to move Grange Farm ward into Ashfield, and I'm going to speak if I may on those today because unfortunately for us, unlike other people who spoke here, our MP says it's not for him to get involved. He can't be seen to be manipulating the votes. Also, one of the people who has responded and said they're quite happy is the county councillor for our area, who is the wife of the Ashfield MP. Our county council, the Conservative group, have said they approve, and it's strangely enough that we have the leader of that council, who is also our MP, and then there's another district councillor from a neighbouring ward in Ashfield who says that they all believe they should go into Ashfield. All from a political group and all the replies, all very, very similar, so a little bit disappointed that they didn't do any consultation whatsoever with the residents to ascertain their decisions and their viewpoint on that.

So for me, I did do consultations with every household in my ward. I delivered a leaflet to everyone. I door-knocked quite a few of them. I've spoken to many of them. I've spoken to many people from other areas of Mansfield as well, when you look at where we have come to the numbers of how you can put these numbers into Ashfield without disturbing and upsetting the residents of Mansfield. I've submitted that in, but I'm going to read a few if I may today from it. So using your own criteria that you've set out that was submitted in my submission, we've got things between Mansfield, Grange Farm ward and Ashfield. We have a large expanse of water, the Sutton Reservoir. We have King's Mill Hospital. There's a broad industrial and commercial

barrier between us, including the largest Amazon building in this country, which has 1.75–2 million square footprint.

We also have a landmark Hamilton Hill, Windmill Hill, Coxmoor Golf Club and a major road, the A38 MARR route, the Mansfield–Ashfield regeneration route, and we also have the Robin Hood line railway that comes into Nottingham. All this cuts us off from Ashfield. So the two Mansfield wards – Grange Farm ward and the Brick Kiln ward – have no community ties to Ashfield whatsoever. The only area that they do come in a way closer together – but they're still apart by fields at the back of King's Mill – is a few houses there. That's the only area that they come close to.

So geographically, to all the people of Grange Farm and Brick Kiln who have responded, they don't see that they have an affinity to Ashfield at all. They have no community ties. All their community ties are with Brick Kiln, which falls into the Ladybrook council estate, where they have church, shops and other facilities such as that. We are the closest in Mansfield; we are closer to the town centre than the rest of Mansfield. So we did give some suggestions of where the numbers could be taken from to balance them up. Believe me, I've looked at all numbers until I'm confused, but now I'm not confused.

So we have suggested – and this suggestion has been supported by Mansfield District Council and Ashfield District Council – that the numbers that you need to balance the area from Mansfield into Ashfield should be taken from part of the Ransom Wood ward. Now that area there is in Mansfield, and it's bounded off by a ring road. It sits on its own in the middle of nowhere. So several of those residents there have actually contacted me to thank me for the work that I've done in getting opinions on where we should happily take these numbers from. Now, Rainworth is split, and part of it's in Sherwood. People in that part of Ransom Wood, which is the other side of Rainworth, have said if there was a vote today for them to go into Sherwood District Council – we know this is only for the parliamentary – they would go because they feel so cut off from Mansfield. So those people there will not feel the hit and the hurt that the people of the Grange Farm ward and Brick Kiln ward would feel because of where they are situated. They say that they are a lost area, so putting them into Sherwood – I know it's a hop and a jump – and then moving little villages from Sherwood, such as the little village of Linby and other areas the other side of Ashfield. I think there's less than 400 houses in Linby, and half's in Sherwood and half's in Ashfield, voting for the Member of Parliament, but it's all Ashfield. You've got other areas there that are in Ashfield, but they vote in Newark and Sherwood. So that is the area that we are saying to put into Newark and Sherwood because we know that the people there aren't going to have this impact where in the middle of a council estate, one side is voting in Ashfield and one for Mansfield.

The responses I've had are from people who've said if you do this, they feel they've had their right to vote taken away because they won't go and vote. They've no affinity to Ashfield. To get to Ashfield to see their parliamentary MP, they've got to get three buses, some of them. They've got to get on the train – the train doesn't go into the centre – you've still got to get transport from there to get into the centre of either Sutton or Kirkby. So it's going to prove very difficult, but using the own criteria that the Boundary Commission use, we've got this huge effect, as I've explained, that cuts us off. So we have looked at where the numbers could come from, supported by, as I said, both district councils. As I say, we know that this will be a hop and skip and jump effect, but sometimes when we're looking at these new boundary changes, it's common sense to look at it and say some things that were done in the past, this is an opportunity to undo them, to make them straight for these residents for the future, and we feel

that looking at that is a way to do it. The numbers are there. The numbers do add up to actually balance these numbers, but also, if you look on that map I mentioned of Rainworth, the Ransom Wood ward there has got three different individual communities. So if you do need other numbers and you take the Rainworth part of the Ransom Wood ward, and depending on the numbers you use, you put Linby back together again so it's not 200 houses voting for one and 200 for another. They are a community. Put the community back together again.

Then with the areas around Ratcher Hill, those numbers there would balance it up if you didn't use the smaller numbers at the bottom of Ashfield, where they are Ashfield District Council but vote for a Sherwood MP. I hope I've made that clear today, and I want to thank you very much for allowing me to speak, but this is an opportunity to straighten some things up in history that need straightening up. So I'd urge you to have a look at this, and if you're not sure, please, I'm open to questions.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Very helpful indeed. Are there any immediate questions? Yes. Again, if you could give your name for the record.

**ROGER PRATT:** Thanks very much. Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. You've made it clear that you would suggest part of Ransom Wood went into the Sherwood constituency, but the Ashfield constituency would be too small without those two wards. I just wondered as a point of clarification what you were doing to suggest that the Ashfield numbers came up to the right number.

**JUNE STENDALL:** I'll clarify that for you. I spoke about Linby, which is further down the bottom of Ashfield. I've got quite a bit more in me of where to balance the numbers from. I've also said that we have – because you're only taking the numbers to balance this up – I think is it December 2019?

**PETER FISH:** It's March 2020.

**JUNE STENDALL:** March 2020. We're not taking into account any new buildings that's been there, but also on that MARR route on the Ashfield side of the MARR route below, we have an estate being built that's built all on its own with its own school, its own doctors, the Lindhurst Development. There is an area right next to Ashfield as well. There's one or two in my report that I sent in with photos and maps and everything. I've got copies here if you want them, where we said you could take these numbers from. There are houses there that were there before the date you closed the cut-off. They have not yet got an affinity to Mansfield because it hasn't been there long. So to them, it would be neither here nor there which constituency they would be in. There's also some near Harlow Wood that would go straight into Ashfield, but it's the other end of Ashfield where Sherwood hits Ashfield – because it's Ashfield District Council, but they vote for the Sherwood MP – that the numbers could balance up from.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much.

**JUNE STENDALL:** I'm just trying to see if I've got those written down here for you if you just bear with me. You've got that information?

**PETER FISH:** We've got that in your official representations. Thank you very much. Another question. If you could state your name for the record.

**ALAN FOX:** Alan Fox from the Liberal Democrats. The areas you're proposing to transfer out of Mansfield to get the numbers right, are they polling districts or are they just areas with houses and the electors in?

**JUNE STENDALL:** Well, the area of the Ransom Wood has got three polling districts. You've got the Ransom Wood, which is one polling district. You've got Ratcher Hill as another polling district, and then the one to the bottom is the Bellamy Road. So there's three polling districts in that one boundary at one district ward, so they are clearly marked out as polling districts.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much.

**JUNE STENDALL:** It's Ransom Wood ward, RWA, which is that one.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Any other questions of clarification? Well, thank you very much for your time.

**JUNE STENDALL:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** I think our next speaker is Councillor Jazon Zadrozny – are you happy to come now? Thank you very much.

**JASON ZADROZNY:** I'm Jason Zadrozny. I'm leader of Ashfield District Council. I'm also leader of the Independents for Nottinghamshire County Council. Primarily, I've come to speak about the Ashfield constituency. I heard an earlier speaker talk about the cessation of Ashfield having the north of Broxtowe, which is Brinsley and Eastwood, which we entirely understand. There's a very long historic join there, but we understand that going into the new Broxtowe constituency. Ashfield District Council did submit an alternate proposal, which touched Ashfield, Mansfield and Sherwood constituencies on the basis of some of the things I heard Councillor Stendall mention about communities but also meeting your electoral balance. You're very good at this. You know all the places, but I wonder whether you may be able to bring up the new local government Boundary Commission proposals that have just been accepted this month for Mansfield district. Will you have that map or not?

**PETER FISH:** Unfortunately, no. I'm afraid we don't.

**JASON ZADROZNY:** So Mansfield District Council, as of Tuesday 1st February 2022, have just adopted a whole new set of warding arrangements, which ironically for Brick Kiln and Grange Farm don't change very much, so they probably wouldn't affect your proposals. But given the stuff that Councillor Stendall was saying, there's a very eminently sensible suggestion that would hit all of the community links but also hit your numbers and have that equality fairly sensibly. So obviously, it would be to keep Brick Kiln and Grange Farm back in the Mansfield constituency, but where Councillor Stendall was talking about Ransom Wood and Lindhurst, which is at the bottom of the Berry Hill ward, helpfully, the new wards – Southwell and Lindhurst – and then there's a new Lindhurst ward, which takes into account the building that will be happening for the new Lindhurst developments from 3,000 houses. Those two wards together electorally on the forecasts are to move into the Sherwood constituency, and then from the Sherwood constituency – to develop Councillor Stendall's point further – I think it would be much more congruous to take Hucknall West as a ward (if there was a way to do it entirely down the boundary of the bypass, but if not, where you have that unfortunate wiggle), but take Hucknall West ward back into Ashfield constituency.

So that would for clarity put Hucknall West into Ashfield, put Grange Farm and Brick Kiln back into Mansfield and then the new Lindhurst and Southwell wards into Sherwood constituency. So without messing up the whole East Midlands, I think they would fit much better. The numbers are absolutely bang on for what you need, and from a community point of view, I think they're much stronger because as Councillor Stendall says, Rainworth – in fact, ironically, Rainworth South and Blidworth is my mother's ward; she's a councillor there, but she ends up doing most of her casework in Ransom Wood because people feel they're the same constituency, and they feel that's where their services are. So I think it would correct a lot of those historic confusions there and allow people to be where they feel.

As an aside, which I know is not a problem for the Electoral Commission, but as somebody who leads a council, I see the enormous pressure on our staff to deliver an election that's fair and proper and correct, and dealing with a number of authorities is always challenging. So the more we can reduce that, the better I think, and in that case, that would mean that Mansfield was only dealing still with one other council; Ashfield was only still dealing with one other council, etc., rather than multiple councils who were dealing with their verification and then coming back to account. So I think not to overlabour those points, I think there are three crucial points, which would mean that those three constituencies could meet all of your criteria and make everything slightly smoother for the administrators of it as well.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Very helpful. Are there any questions of clarification? So if you could again give your name for the record.

**ROGER PRATT:** Thank you very much. Roger Pratt from the Conservative Party. I just wanted to clarify because you talked about new wards and existing wards, the Boundary Commission do it on the wards as they were in place in December 2020. So on that basis of those wards, am I right that you are suggesting that the Lindhurst ward and the Ransom Wood ward go into Sherwood in place of the two wards that would come back, which are linked with length?

**JASON ZADROZNY:** I know the Boundary Commission are looking at a point in time, but I think it would be incongruous to have district wards that are different going into a different constituency now. So even if the Boundary Commission kept Brick Kiln and Grange Farm, those wards don't quite exist in the way they are now. The numbers are still almost identical, but they are slightly different boundaries, and I think whatever you do, you have to take those new wards. Otherwise, it would be very, very confusing for residents.

**PETER FISH:** In terms of your proposal, it would be part of the Ransom Wood and part of the Lindhurst ward cutting into it as they are at present that you propose to transfer?

**JASON ZADROZNY:** Yes, but I would take the whole wards if it were I, but what is Ransom Wood is now called Southwell, and at the bottom half of the Berry Hill ward, there's a new ward called Lindhurst, and I would take them in their entirety.

**PETER FISH:** So in terms of what we have to work on, it's part of those wards that you would propose?

**JASON ZADROZNY:** Absolutely, yeah. But there are polling districts set up now, etc. that would make it fairly easy for you to do that.

**PETER FISH:** Thanks very much. Another point.

**ALAN FOX:** Councillor Zadrozny, were the new wards set up on the basis of existing polling districts or have polling districts been set up since the date for the review?

**JASON ZADROZNY:** Good question, Alan. It's not my district, so I don't know, but my understanding is that Warsop to the north where it is a parish is the only place that has kept the existing polling districts in their entirety. It's been a full-scale review for Mansfield apart from that. They may still have the building blocks underneath of polling districts, but I couldn't tell you confidently.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. We've put up the new wards.

**JASON ZADROZNY:** Those two wards are entire communities and literally where it says Lindhurst, that's where there's a development of 3,000 houses well underway now, so a new community that would easily fit more congruously with Sherwood constituency. I know that's a challenge.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Any other questions of clarification? No. Thank you very much for your time.

**JASON ZADROZNY:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** I think our next speaker is Philip Owen – Philip are you happy to come now?

**PHILIP OWEN:** My name is Philip Owen. I am the county councillor for Nuthall and Kimberley, the Broxtowe borough councillor for Nuthall East and Strelley and up until the time the Boundary Commissioners changed my county division, I used to represent Watnall as well. So I can speak, I think, quite authoritatively on the views of all of the residents of the area that you are proposing to put into a city constituency, and I have to say to you that they are objecting in the strongest possible terms just as I am on their behalf and so that you can say I'm representing a 10,000–11,000 electorate this afternoon to put over their majority view.

Our great fear is that we will be subsumed by the city in that we will not maintain our separate identity. We will play second fiddle to any constituency that involves Nottingham City. Indeed, even in the name that you are proposing, Nottingham North and Kimberley, we come second. Already, we've started off coming second, and so I want to put the points to you this afternoon, which in fairness I've already put in my submission, that the communities of North Broxtowe, of Nuthall, of Strelley, of Watnall, of Kimberley, have nothing whatsoever in common with the city at all. You can tell almost immediately you move from the city into Nuthall. It's very different. The residents are part of historical communities, which are based on well-established parish council areas, and they look to North Broxtowe for all of their facilities: schools, shops, Kimberley Shopping Centre, the Giltbrook retail park, are all part of North Broxtowe, which you are proposing – in the sense of the Giltbrook retail park – should be in a different constituency.

I have put forward alternative proposals to you, which you seem to have ignored completely, which is somewhat surprising because I believe they are very similar to the ones that the Boundary Commission came up with a few years ago when you were looking at the boundaries then and you had to abort the process for whatever reasons. Our suggestion is that there are three wards in Beeston which would much more logically – because I accept that this is a numbers game in many respects, and that's what a lot of your decisions seem to be based on – which are much more closely associated with the city. Indeed, you can walk along University

Boulevard, and you wouldn't know when you left the city and went into Beeston. You wouldn't know unless there happened to be a sign there. Beeston itself, particularly the parts that are abutting the city, have simply become student accommodation, a complaint from the few remaining residents in Beeston.

They look to the city. They regard themselves in my view as being a part of the city, and they would fit much more closely with a parliamentary seat that included the city. A lot of the student accommodation there, a lot of houses, have been converted into student accommodation. Purpose-built accommodation for students has been going up at a rate of knots, and at every planning committee at Broxtowe Borough Council, on which I sit, there is at least one application, if not more, to convert further properties in that area into student accommodation. So naturally, they look to the city, and it would make far more sense for them to move into the city to make up your numbers than it would be to move these communities in the north of the borough into a city seat. In fact, the local media has always been called for the past hundred years, *The Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*. There's the name: *The Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*; not *The Nottingham and Kimberley Advertiser* – *The Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*. We are separate communities but work together cohesively.

I make the point once again that we have nothing in common with the city. Many of the people that I represent have actually moved out of the city because they want nothing more to do with it. I'll finish with a very simple summing-up. I was talking to a resident yesterday as I came out of church, and he was asking me what I was doing today, and I said I was coming to talk to the Boundary Commission about the proposed boundary changes, and I said to him, 'What do you think about the proposal to put Nuthall into the city?' His simple reply was, 'It's rubbish!' And that's as succinct a response as I can give to you. I don't think it's appropriate. My residents don't think it's appropriate. I won't go as far as to say it's rubbish, but certainly, that's what he said. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions of clarification from the audience? No. Thank you very much for your time.

**PHILIP OWEN:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** I think there's no further speakers for the moment, so with apologies for the stop and start nature, I think we're going to take another break until 17:30.

After an adjournment

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much, I think we'll start again. Our first speaker is Martin Trollope-Bellew

**MARTIN TROLLOPE-BELLEW:** Thank you. Martin Trollope-Bellew. I'm the chairman of Grantham and Stamford Conservative Association. In December last year, when the executive council met, it discussed the implications for Grantham and Stamford of the boundary changes. We're the one constituency in the East Midlands that's actually going to be cut in half. It is suggested that the northern part with Grantham, it is suggest that it will acutally be called 'Grantham and Bourne' because Bourne wished to be with the south, and probably the only way to placate them was to add their name to the constituency. The southern part, which you have got down as Rutland and Stamford, de facto, the Stamford end of the constituency will constitute probably 43,000 voters while Rutland will constitute 30,100. So, I know certain people

in Stamford wish Stamford to be in the name, but with Market Deeping coming in, if you go Stamford, Rutland, and The Deepings, it's getting too much of a mouthful. The executive suggested that it should be 'South Lincolnshire with/and Rutland.' The other neighbouring constituency, which is currently South Holland with The Deepings, if The Deepings come in with Stamford, I understand they wish to be called 'Fenside,' and the executive supported that because they are all down the Fens.

So that would actually leave the South Lincolnshire title available for South Lincolnshire and Rutland. Being much the larger area in number of voters, it would be only appropriate that South Lincolnshire was first, as is the case with Louth and Horncastle. I'm not too sure about Kensington and Chelsea; they don't seem to go alphabetically. I understand there has been an idea put forward that The Deepings come out of the new constituency. One idea was to put nothing in, which to me is a non-runner because it'll take it above the 5% variation. I understand there is another proposed scheme to bring some of Melton in with it and still leaving The Deepings out. But to me, that would mean that there were two county councils in one constituency, two district councils and one unitary authority. It seems to be rather overdoing local government boundaries to my way of thinking. Thank you very much. That's all I've got to say.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Very helpful. Any points of clarification from the floor? Well, thank you for your time and for coming to talk to us.

**MARTIN TROLLOPE-BELLEW:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** So I think our next speaker is Jane Marshall – Jane, are you happy to come and speak?

**JANE MARSHALL:** Hello. I wasn't expecting this at all. I thought it was just a little room where I spoke to somebody. So apologies for that. Is there any women in? Yeah, I can see. I'll look towards yourselves. So just speaking about the area, I'm from the Broxtowe constituency. I'm here about the Beeston part of that and any proposals to split Beeston. I've got some notes. Is it all right if I read off them?

**PETER FISH:** Whatever you're with, just take your time.

**JANE MARSHALL:** With the Beeston element, I'm very happy how it's been drawn up on this Boundary Commission. I did follow the last Boundary Commission that didn't get enacted, and that was a different model, but this model, I know it well. I know the Broxtowe constituency well. I've lived in Beeston for 20 years myself. I think it's the right move to move Kimberley, Watnall and Nuthall out of that area, and that's an entity on its own, and it makes sense that that moves into the upper part of a constituency into whatever that new constituency would be called. I know there has been quite a lot of uproar within Beeston and, I spotted Beeston and Beeston Updated about trying to split Beeston as an entity into two.

I've been surprised by that suggestion. Anybody who lives in Beeston would be surprised. I know that didn't work. I think a key tenet of the Boundary Commission is keeping communities together. I work and run a community hub that helps all residents of Beeston, and that's what we are. We are focused. We are diverse. Beeston is a completely identifiable community, which encompasses Beeston Central, Beeston Rylands, Beeston North and Beeston West. Any proposal to separate those from other parts of Beeston, including parts of the town centre,

would be met with outcry. It's a definite. Beeston is a very strong, vibrant community on its own. It's an entity of its own. To split it into two, again people here won't know the roads, but Beeston West and Beeston North and Beeston Central. How would you split that between roads? It'd be neighbour upon neighbour having different MPs. If you kept Beeston in but took Kimberley, Watnall and Nuthall, it's a definite entity.

The road boundaries of the University Boulevard and Woodside are natural boundaries between the city and the county and the Nottingham South and Broxtowe boundaries. Dividing Beeston is bizarre in the context of current boundaries, upper boundaries, which keep our community towns whole: Eastwood, Kimberley Stapleford and Beeston. Bringing Eastwood in would make more sense, and there's links there. Kimberley hasn't got any road links to Beeston. It only has it to the centre of the city. There's no direct route on the proposals to split a vibrant, diverse community with a unique cultural identity. Anybody who's been to Beeston will know that we're very proud Beestonians, as the local magazine is and the local Facebook group. I know you're not basing it on Facebook groups, but it is an identity on its own. We would be against this on the core principles of the boundary review. This would diminish the cultural diversity of Beeston and Broxtowe as a whole. It would also split the town hall, which is part of Beeston for the whole of Broxtowe City Council. I am a resident of Beeston, but also I run, as I say, a community hub, and we do a lot of work within Beeston, and to split it in terms of mythical, magical Beeston West and Beeston North instead of the whole identifiable Beeston. Is that all right?

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Very, very good. Very helpful. Has anyone got any questions or clarification? Well, thank you very much for coming and thank you very much for your time.

**JANE MARSHALL:** Yes, I won't do this again.

**PETER FISH:** Oh, well, please do! I think we've got Roy Lakey in the room, are you happy to come up next?

**ROY LAKEY:** Thank you very much. My name is Roy Lakey, and I'm a resident in Nottingham North constituency. I am the constituency chair of the Nottingham North Labour Party. Thank you for affording me time to address you this evening, and may I thank you Mr Assistant Commissioner for your efforts on our behalf? May I also thank your staff who are providing this service to residents of the East Midlands? I know that these matters can be very difficult and complex, and you are to be commended on your work so far.

I've anticipated the boundaries review for some time, so I recognised that some change would be necessary if constituencies in Nottinghamshire were going to be brought into line with the many changes that the city and the county have seen over the past 20 years. Having seen the proposals, I recognise that the electorate in my constituency now makes it the smallest electorate in the entire East Midlands region and that quite likely, substantial change would be necessary to bring it into quota. Of course, like many other people, once you get to know the various communities in the constituency, you come to prefer that no change takes place at all. Having read through the initial proposals and seen the suggestion to adjust the boundaries, I've had to give the Commission's proposal quite a bit of thought.

Prior to the publication of the initial proposals in June 2021, there was quite a bit of speculation as to what the Commission might come up with. Not infrequently, the suggestion of some Hucknall wards to the north of the city being added to Nottingham North was discussed. I was

always sceptical about this idea. When the parameters were different in the previous review in 2013 and 2018, the prospect of quite close-knit communities being divided was often dreaded. Usually, when this was determined upon around the country, there seemed to be little that anyone, the Commission included, could do about it.

If the number of constituencies had to be reduced to just 600, it was clear that many community ties in many constituencies would be broken as a result, and for an area such as Hucknall to be added in its entirety, the consequential impact on Nottingham North would be severe, with probably several wards in the constituency being pushed out. The idea of a community like Hucknall being divided between constituencies would, I know, be very unpopular, but it's not that small an area. In fact, the Boundary Commissioners come up with a proposal that could conceivably work, including the wards of Kimberley, Nuthall East, Strelley, Watnall and Nuthall West in the constituency means that the greater community of Nuthall to the west of the city is moved and moved in its entirety, thus avoiding the more of constituency boundaries that we have seen proposed elsewhere in recent times.

It's a mixed and hard-working community, which has good links to the city of Nottingham via the A610 and the B600. Local Nuthall, Watnall and Kimberley residents come in for work, leisure, shopping and educational opportunities, so it has good links with the city. Given the disparative nature that Nottingham North sees at present, this inclusion from the west would provide more stability and a greater nuance for any Member of Parliament in allowing for more nuanced input into the county and citywide issues of the day. But the important factor in this change is that all the community moves together into the new constituency. Of course, given that this additional 13,000 voters would then push the Nottingham North electorate well above the maximum quota, it's necessary for the Commission to make alterations to the constituency within the city.

Their idea of swapping two adjacent wards between Nottingham North and Nottingham South is a good one – although we'd be sorry to lose Bilborough – minimises the necessary disruption in the city. Removing Bilborough ward and its 11,941 electors and adding Leen Valley, with its 6,526 electors, produces a new Nottingham North constituency very close to the optimum quota of 74,515. I've looked at counterproposals to the Commission's proposal, and I can't find another one that meets this overriding objective. I'll leave the argument about the splitting of the Beeston area perhaps to Beeston residents, but it doesn't look as robust a proposal as the one the Commission itself is suggesting for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It would certainly offend the requirement about avoiding splitting communities within areas such as Broxtowe, with much of the Beeston area still inside Broxtowe borough. I would've thought as a community which has deprivation issues would prefer to be kept together and to be represented by a Member of Parliament who will not only provide coherent representation in Parliament, but be able to receive it along with the council services it needs from borough and county. Thank you once again for the opportunity to talk to you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Are there any questions of clarification from colleagues? Thank you very much for taking the time. Appreciate it.

I think the next speaker we've got is Hannah Land – are you happy to come and talk?

**HANNAH LAND:** Thank you. My name's Hannah Land. I am the chair of the Broxtowe Liberal Democrat Exec and also one of the borough councillors for Bramcote ward in Broxtowe Borough Council. So I'm here to speak about the proposals for Broxtowe on behalf of the party and the people that I represent as a borough councillor.

As a local party and a representative of the Liberal Democrats, we are largely in favour of the proposals by the Commission for Broxtowe. Ideally, we'd see the borough boundaries within Broxtowe represented in the constituency, but we accept that that is not possible given the population size that we're dealing with for the borough. So that means somehow the constituency has to be split within the boundaries of the borough. We feel the best fit is probably the one suggested by the Commission. I understand that the local Conservative Party have put a counterproposal forward that would involve dividing areas of Beeston to split between the Broxtowe constituency and Nottingham South, think, which we would be wholly against. Last year in the county council elections, I stood as a candidate for Stapleford and Broxtowe area, which finds itself split in some strange ways between areas of Stapleford, Bramcote and going towards the area of Strelley, towards Bilborough, which caught us by surprise, and also some of the constituents in that area who didn't realise who their representatives would be.

I fear greatly for that happening at a parliamentary level in Beeston. I don't think it's fair to the population of Beeston to be split that way. I don't believe parliamentary boundaries should split communities that sit together quite well. I understand why the Conservatives might want to do this because their support tends to be much stronger in the area of Kimberley in the north of the borough than it does in the south of the borough in Beeston, which maybe of a more left-leaning persuasion, certainly a more Remain-leaning persuasion, in the borough. So, I'm not going to speak much longer because I think I've laboured the point I want to make. Really, I think we should stick with the recommendations that the Boundary Commission have made. We think these are appropriate and probably the best that can be done under the circumstances. As I said, ideally, we wouldn't have any kind of division within the borough of Broxtowe, but we can't avoid that because of the population levels. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any questions from the floor? As with others, if you could just again just give your name for the record.

**GEORGE CARR-WILLIAMSON:** George Carr-Williamson, the Labour Party. Given your knowledge as a councillor in Broxtowe, are you able to help us at all with the question around the boundary between the Beeston West ward and the Beeston Central ward in terms of it being used as a parliamentary boundary?

**HANNAH LAND:** Sorry. Are you talking about the counterproposal?

**GEORGE CARR-WILLIAMSON:** So it's being proposed that Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands go into Nottingham South, but Beeston West remain in the Broxtowe constituency. I'm just wondering if you have any particular knowledge of the boundary between Beeston West and Beeston Central, whether you think that would work particularly well as a constituency boundary?

**HANNAH LAND:** So the area around Beeston Central sits closer to the university, but then there are beginnings of population moving from Beeston Central probably towards Beeston West, where developments are starting to happen that would lean itself more to student living. So is the suggestion Beeston West would stay in Broxtowe, are we saying? I don't know the areas well enough. As they stand at the moment, that would probably work. I think as things go in a further five to 10 years, there'll probably be an increase in student population in there, which might change the dynamic significantly.

**PETER FISH:** We're looking for points of clarification around the points that the speaker has made rather than a debate around those proposals.

**HANNAH LAND:** I very much feel that what the Conservatives have proposed, dare I say it, amounts to a level of gerrymandering in terms of protecting their voter base. They've got a strong level of support in the north of the borough that won't be reflected in the area of Beeston.

**PETER FISH:** Those are obviously points that you feel. I think what we need to do is look objectively around what the pros and cons are of the particular proposals, and you've made very clearly a point around the community of Beeston, and I think you've made that point. I think going to motives is not the purpose of the conversation. We need to be a bit clear about those, but absolutely making the points you feel about where the boundaries should be and why that should be that and why other proposals don't meet the statutory criteria that we've got is important.

**HANNAH LAND:** So my understanding was all of Beeston was in the Boundary Commission's proposal. Is that correct?

**PETER FISH:** That's correct.

**HANNAH LAND:** So, I feel that preserves the identity that Beeston has as a whole, and also, the division of communities – I've seen the confusion that it can cause, having represented an area where boundaries... and there has to be a division at some point. I appreciate that. But I think if you are going to move parts of Beeston or three quarters of Beeston into a different constituency, then move the whole lot. Divide the boundary at Bramcote, where I represent, for instance, but also, Beeston as an area has the heart of Broxtowe in terms of Broxtowe Council's headquarters being in Beeston. So there's an identity there that Beeston is tied in with Broxtowe. So then to have it sitting in a differently named constituency, again, I think would cause more confusion to the population.

I don't necessarily want to see Kimberley being moved out of the Broxtowe area because it's part of Broxtowe borough, but I feel it's probably better to move a whole town or a whole area rather than putting it because these are effectively invisible lines as well. It's not like you're certainly going to cross into Beeston West and go, 'Oh, you're now in this ward as a big sign.' So the population won't necessarily pay so much attention to it. I've been a local councillor since 2019. I paid very little heed until I got involved in local politics, and I suspect there's many people like myself, and having been campaigning in the area, there is confusion as to who's being represented by whom on a local level. So to then get that within the constituency level as well, I think it doesn't bring cohesion to us as a borough.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Thank you for those points.

**HANNAH LAND:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Our next speaker actually is due at 19:10. So, can I suggest we adjourn to 18:40, we'll check in then to see who is with us.

After two adjournments

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much, if we can reconvene. I think we've got Mr Bell in the audience – sorry to keep you waiting, we had to adjourn because we've got some gaps, but if you're happy to speak that would be great.

**BRADLEY BELL:** My name's Bradley Bell. I'm from Beeston Central ward, and I'm here in my capacity as a member of the public. So, as I said, I'm a resident of Beeston, where I work remotely, and the key point that I would like to put forward to you this evening is that as part of the boundary review, Beeston North, Beeston Central and Beeston Rylands wards should be moved from the Broxtowe constituency to the Nottingham South constituency. I'm going to speak about how my personal experience as a Beeston resident supports this view, specifically talking about transports and community links. So I have a personal link to Beeston Central ward, where I live. I live very near the University Boulevard tram stop, and I'm also linked to the Beeston Rylands ward because I'm moving there very shortly and moving near to the train station there.

So in terms of my points this evening, first of all, I think there's an important point about transport. So tram and bus links from Beeston Central and North to Nottingham South constituency are very strong. It takes approximately 20 minutes to get to the city centre by tram. That's how I came here this evening, and additionally, you can also get to the city centre very quickly by bus. When I recently had friends visit from outside the area, they actually assumed that Beeston was part of the Nottingham City because of the rapid connection between the city and Beeston. This seamless boundary between Nottingham South and Beeston demonstrates just how closely connected these communities are. Linking the Beeston wards of Central, North and Rylands with Nottingham South into a single parliamentary constituency would bring political recognition of these already existing strong local links. If you compare the Beeston to the city links with the Beeston to, for example, the North Broxtowe links, it's a very stark comparison in my opinion.

I checked on Google Maps earlier, and by public transport, it would take me over an hour to get to some of the villages in the north of the current Broxtowe constituency and actually require me to change trams or buses in the city centre, whereas the access and the links with the city in Nottingham South are very quick indeed. Therefore, I think it's very natural for Beeston residents such as myself to feel more connected to Nottingham South than to Broxtowe. As for Beeston Rylands, one of the main draws for me in moving there actually is its very quick connections to Nottingham city centre once again. Not only are there bus routes, but there's also the East Midlands mainline railway, which offers a regular service into Nottingham Station, and I believe that's less than 10 minutes from Beeston.

Additionally, there's the Nottingham to Beeston Canal, which is like an enjoyable cycle or walking connection to the city centre, and you can get there from Beeston Rylands. So once again, I think this demonstrates a much stronger connection between Beeston and Nottingham South than between Beeston and areas in the north of the current Broxtowe constituency.

The second point I would like to make is around the university and the community. The University of Nottingham is clearly an important city institution, but it is one with close links to Beeston. Obviously, it provides a lot of jobs within the local community, and it educates tens of thousands of students. The university sits within Nottingham South. It makes sense for Beeston, with its strong connections to the university, to also sit in the same constituency. The university has particular strong links to the Beeston North and Central wards. As a Beeston resident, I'm not connected to the university at all. I don't study there. I'm not staff there. I still make regular

use of its land and facilities. It's probably about a two-minute walk from my house, and I can see the park there from my bedroom window. I personally make regular use of the Highfields Park. I very often go for a walk there, and the sports centre at the university is where I go if I want to go swimming or whatnot.

Additionally, Beeston is home to large numbers of students from the university. For example, on my road, I know there's quite a few students, and additionally, my next-door neighbours are students. Obviously, students from the university make use of Beeston's shops and facilities, which is a clear link between the university and Beeston.

Finally, I would say that Nottingham students living in Beeston undoubtedly share greater links with Nottingham City than they do with the rest of Broxtowe constituency. So to conclude, I think the arguments I've put forward on local transportation, the community and the university strongly support Beeston North, Central and Rylands moving from Broxtowe into Nottingham South constituency. Thank you very much for listening today.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you. Very helpful. Any questions of clarification from those who are left in the room? No? Well, thank you very much for your time and thank you for coming.

**BRADLEY BELL:** Thank you very much.

**PETER FISH:** We've got two more speakers, who are scheduled at 19:40 and 19:50, although we've not been able to make contact with them, so we're not sure what time they're coming, or if they are, so can I suggest we adjourn until they arrive, and if not, we'll close at 20:00.

#### After an adjournment

**PETER FISH:** Okay, we're going to reconvene. I'm very grateful, I think we've got Tony Mason and Trevor Rood in the room, thank you for coming to join us and coming early. Tony first, are you happy to go?

**TONY MASON:** Good evening. My name's Tony Mason, and I've been a resident of Kimberley for five and a half years. I am a member of Kimberley Town Council, but I'm not here as a representative of the council, and the views that I'm giving tonight are not representative of the council. I'll not be quoting any statistics, but I'm just stating the views of the locals.

When my wife and I decided to move from Dorset to the Midlands, we looked at various locations, but Kimberley was our choice once we visited as the area—

[interruption]

**TONY MASON:** Kimberley is classed as a town, but it has a large village feel. The town is friendly and welcoming, and there is a strong feeling of community spirit. All but one person I spoke to does not want to lose the identity of being part of Broxtowe. They feel that they have good local links with Watnall and Nuthall and especially with Eastwood – Eastwood's right next to us, and I actually play football in Eastwood – and it's felt that the close links Kimberley has with Eastwood will be severed if this proposal goes ahead. Kimberley's well served by Broxtowe Borough Council, and there is a real reason of concern. If it is subsumed into North Nottinghamshire, we will not be getting the service that we now receive. It is felt that Kimberley should continue to have a voice within Broxtowe Borough Council, where it can continue to grow

and be supported and further develop as a community. Kimberley has one established community covering all ages that is well served by local shops as well as a supermarket, and the IKEA retail park is just a short bus ride away. Kimberley, Nuthall and Watnall have nothing in common with the City of Nottingham, and certainly, the residents of Kimberley that I spoke to do not wish to become part of the city. That's it. Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much indeed. Any points of clarification? No. Well, thank you very much for taking the time to come.

**TONY MASON:** Thank you.

**PETER FISH:** And when you're ready, perhaps, Mr Rood?

**TREVOR ROOD:** My name is Trevor Rood. I am actually chairman of Kimberley Town Council, and like Tony, I'm speaking on my own behalf; I'm not representing the council. I think removing Kimberley from Broxtowe doesn't make any sense. We have worked well with Broxtowe for a lot of events, i.e. the chapel on the hill. Kimberley Town Council maintain the chapel, but Broxtowe maintain the cemetery in the grounds. We share both jobs in the Kimberley town with the flowerbeds. We are closely linked when we have events. The school in Kimberley has pupils from other parts of the borough, including Eastwood. The R1 link bus is close to Eastwood for shopping and social events. More than people do go into Nottingham in my opinion. We even have a newspaper called *Eastwood and Kimberley Advertiser*.

So what does that tell you? We are closely linked. The two communities are very closely linked. It makes more sense to me to take areas from the south of the borough, which have closer ties to Nottingham than Kimberley, and like Tony, my general feeling from other people is we feel closer to Eastwood and Broxtowe than we do to Nottingham. I've lived in Kimberley now for 36 years, and I used to live in Nottingham, but I wouldn't leave Kimberley now because it's a very good community to live in, and I hope we stay in Broxtowe. Thank you very much.

**PETER FISH:** Thank you very much. Any points of clarification? Thank you very much for your time, and thank you for going early, being bounced into going. I think that's the last of our registered speakers. Can I just check with colleagues in the room whether there's anyone else waiting to speak? The time is 19:32. We were due to close at 20:00. Given that we've had no walk ins today and all those who had booked slots have spoken, I propose to adjourn the hearing for today. We will reconvene tomorrow morning at 9am, and I look forward to seeing you then. Thank you very much indeed to all those who've taken part.