

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

2023 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND

HELD AT

Central Hall Westminster, London

ON

FRIDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2022

DAY 2

Before:

John Feavoyour QPM, Lead Assistant Commissioner

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JOHN FEAVYOUR: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this public hearing on the Boundary Commission for England's initial proposals for new parliamentary constituencies in the London region. I'm sure one or two more people will join us during the day, but the hearing is scheduled to start at 9:00, it is 9:00, so I'm going to start.

My name is John Feavours, 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 London. I am responsible for chairing the hearing today, and I am also responsible, with my fellow Assistant Commissioner Parjinder Basra, 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 those 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 9:00 until 17:00 this afternoon. 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 London region, and the comments we have so far received on them which have been published on our consultation portal 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 time slot, and I will invite them to speak at the appropriate time. If there is any free time during the day, or at the end of the day, then I will invite anyone who 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. 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 so 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 London.

TIM BOWDEN: Thank you very much and good morning. As John has mentioned, my name is Tim Bowden, and I am a 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 John has already stated, they will chair the hearing itself, and it is 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. Please ask one of us outside of the hearing if you do require any help or assistance.

We encourage attendees to wear a mask during the hearing, but of course to remove it whilst making your presentation and your speaking slot. We also encourage you to practise social distancing during the day. We have provided hand sanitiser around the venue to help you sanitise your hands regularly. If of course you have any coronavirus-related symptoms or develop them, we ask you to leave the hearing and follow government advice.

I would like to talk now about the Commission's initial proposals for London, which were published on Tuesday 8th June 2021. The Commission's proposals for this region are for 75 constituencies, an increase of two. Our proposals leave two of the existing constituencies wholly unchanged and 10 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 8th June and 2nd August, receiving 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 two protected constituencies allocated to the Isle of Wight). This approach is permitted by the legislation and has been supported during previous public consultations. This approach does not prevent anyone from putting forward counter-proposals that include one or more constituencies being split between the regions, but it is likely that compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade us to depart from the regional-based approach we adopted in formulating our initial proposals.

The statutory rules allow us to take into account local government boundaries as they existed on or were in prospect on 1st December 2020. These include both the external boundaries of local councils and their internal boundaries – known as wards or, in other parts of the country, 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 at this hearing and throughout the rest of the consultation period. We're 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 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 our website. I do 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 would like to remind all participants that this hearing is part of a public consultation, and you will 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 online on our YouTube channel shortly after the hearing. After the secondary consultation, we will publish a verbatim transcript of the whole public hearing and publish all the responses we have 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 available on our website.

At this stage, I thank you for your attendance today, and before handing back to the Chair to begin the public hearing, just to make everybody aware, we are not expecting any fire alarms today. Should you have any further questions about the venue, please do ask a member of my team. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you, Tim. Let's commence the hearing. Janet Wong, I think you are here. Would you like to come forward, please? Janet, can you sit on the chair in front of the microphone just to the side here please. When you're ready, I'd like you to read your name into the record for me, please. Tell us which town you are from, and then, in your own time, off you go.

JANET WONG: My name is Janet Wong, and I'm a resident of the Royal Arsenal in Woolwich. I am someone who takes an active interest in what goes on in my area and who represents me on the council and in parliament. That's what motivated me to respond to this review and the proposed new constituencies in writing last year. As I said in that written response, I appreciate that the existing Greenwich and Woolwich constituency I live in has too many voters and that some parts, therefore, need to be transferred out as a result. However, I very much welcome the Boundary Commission's proposal to keep the distinct Greenwich and Woolwich constituency and agree that the right ward to move out of the present seat is Glyndon, which mostly covers the Plumstead area. I think it's right that the Commission has proposed to keep the whole of Woolwich, including the Royal Arsenal, together in a single constituency.

I want to stress to you today that the Arsenal is an intrinsic part of historic Woolwich. While it is physically separated by the Plumstead Road from the rest of Woolwich town centre, the Arsenal, centred around No 1 Street where I live as the main arterial fairway connecting General Gordon Square and Beresford Square with the riverside front, is recognised as a core part of that town centre not only by my fellow residents but also in all the council strategies and planning guidance. The amenities like the Dial Arch pub on the Arsenal, our cafes and restaurants, the banks, the shops on Victoria Parade, the new Woolwich Works cultural quarter and the Thames Clipper terminal are all heavily used by Woolwich residents living south of the Plumstead Road. Large numbers of them will undoubtedly use the Woolwich Crossrail when it opens. In turn, my Royal Arsenal residents regularly travel using the DLR or Southern and Thameslink trains from Woolwich Arsenal station on the Woolwich New Road as well as making extensive use of shops in Powis Street, the Woolwich Tesco store centres on Grand Depot Street and successful restaurants in the town centre.

What I'm trying to say, in short, is that there are strong community ties that link residents on the Arsenal with those in the rest of Woolwich town centre. That is why I was surprised, when looking at some of the other written responses to the constituency, to see a small number of suggestions that the Arsenal should be separated from the rest of Woolwich and put in with Thamesmead and Erith. In my view, that would be totally wrong. I am a Woolwich resident, and the Arsenal is very much part of Woolwich. Having lived in the area for nearly a decade, I feel strongly that Woolwich extends from the river close to my flat down to the bottom of Woolwich Common and east to around Burrage Road. It is a very cohesive local area, and it is important, in my view, that the whole of Woolwich Riverside ward and the whole of Woolwich Common ward remain united in one constituency.

I also support the proposed Greenwich and Woolwich constituency because it keeps Woolwich in a seat with Charlton and Greenwich to the west rather than seeking to place us with Thamesmead, Plumstead or Eltham, areas that I feel little connection to as a Woolwich resident. This is a much more logical combination than putting Woolwich with any other areas and properly reflects how I think of my neighbourhood communities. My current social peripheral is predominantly Woolwich, Charlton and Greenwich, and it rarely extends any further east west past Woolwich to Plumstead, Thamesmead and Bexley or south to Eltham and Bromley. I can't say I've ever even visited any of those areas, and they feel very distant to me. To conclude, whatever amendments you might make in other parts of London, please do stick with your initial proposal in relation to Greenwich and Woolwich so that the Royal Arsenal, where I live, stays in Woolwich, that the whole of Woolwich stays together, and that Woolwich remains joined with Greenwich and the other communities in between along the river. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you. Can I just check? Are there any points of clarification needed on anything that's been said? No. Janet, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along this morning. I appreciate it. Thank you.

The next person on my list who is present is Mr Rob Andrew. Rob, are you in a position to come forward, please? Thank you. If you'd be kind enough to sit on the chair near the microphone for me please. Good morning. Mr Andrew, as I have said to everybody else who's spoken to me yesterday and today, if you'd be kind enough to read your name into the record, tell us which town you are from, and then, in your own time, off you go.

ROB ANDREW: Thank you. My name is Rob Andrew, and I represent West Norwood and Tulse Hill.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you.

ROB ANDREW: A little bit more specifically. This is a representation on behalf of Norwood Action Group, which is a long-established voluntary organisation working for the closely linked communities of West Norwood and Tulse Hill, mainly in SE27. This concerns the proposals for a Norwood constituency in the south of London. West Norwood town centre must not be severed in two. The current constituency of Dulwich and West Norwood is geographically and socially cohesive and administratively relatively simple. Its population is about 71,500, within the required range. Therefore, the reason for change can only be due to external pressures. These pressures must not be allowed to be catastrophic for West Norwood. The proposals also conflict with the guidelines in multiple ways. I refer to local government boundaries as they existed, boundaries of existing constituencies, the inconveniences attendant on such changes, and the BCE intends to have regard generally to existing constituencies, as far as possible. West Norwood is a vigorous and lively town with a strong identity with about 40,000 residents. It is conjoined with Tulse Hill, and both have been in the same borough since 1885, uninterrupted by the 1997 reorganisation. The proposal for West Norwood town centre to be split through the middle between Streatham and Norwood constituencies, and thus between inner and outer London boroughs, has no logic other than satisfying the external pressure. It can only be utterly disruptive to decades old arrangements with numerous serious inconveniences and consequences.

Our position on a north-facing hillside means we naturally connect with the north. We have no ties of any kind with Norbury and Upper Norwood, let alone South Norwood, all in the London borough of Croydon. The steep hill from West Norwood town centre up to the Upper Norwood Ridge, which is at 90 metres, 295 feet, elevation – you can see Crown Dale just a little above the arrow; that is the high point. That ridge has been a watershed and a natural boundary for centuries. Public transport connections between the north and south areas are thin. The population of West Norwood and conjoined Tulse Hill share services, needs and aspirations. Administratively, both look northward deeper into Lambeth for all manner of arrangements and services, including health, social services, police, etc, and eastward to Southwark in some regards. Both Lambeth and Southwark are inner London boroughs.

We also feel a strong connection and share community interests with the centres of Herne Hill and Dulwich to the north of us. We are all within the same constituency and have been for decades. These interests include shared public transport routes, schools

and main hospital, which is King's College Hospital. Contrariwise, we neither have nor feel a connection with the area to the south beyond Upper Norwood. The high hilltop behind us of Upper Norwood provides the border of the present Croydon North constituency as well as the London Borough of Croydon. The geography is a natural division between completely unconnected communities. If it is thought that there must be some commonality between West Norwood, Upper Norwood and South Norwood because of the Norwood names, this is totally mistaken. There is none.

The hills have been a natural division between administrative districts for centuries. The infrastructure has consequently developed distinctly separately; the separation firmly established and working well for the topographically divided population centres. The proposal of the Commission would sever our close-knit community of West Norwood and break coherent representation. This would literally divide in two West Norwood district centre and primary shopping area as defined in the Lambeth Local Plan 2021, and de facto on the ground, and create a division of representation. Continuity of representation would be lost between the severed West Norwood portion and the rest of West Norwood and Tulse Hill. Currently, most young people are schooled within the constituency, the rail and bus routes likewise, and all are served by the same main hospital. The proposal would mean that the future MPs of Norwood and Streatham constituencies would have to liaise on all these matters and countless others. Unhelpfully, the MP for the proposed Norwood constituency would primarily be concerned with the largest southern portion beyond Upper Norwood, West Norwood being less than a quarter.

This southern area has different schools, different rail and bus routes and different hospitals than the northernmost tip that would be half of West Norwood town centre. For example, how could that MP fully engage with hospitals, such as King's and the Maudsley to the north, whilst fully engage with Croydon's hospitals for the majority of their constituents? To conclude, this representation has not attempted to address all issues. It is restricted to the most fundamental and is indicative of other challenges. We are only aware of damage and unaware of any advantage of changing the current Dulwich and West Norwood boundary which, with an electorate of 71,500, already conforms to Parliament's specification with headroom for population growth. It would be a most inappropriate and ill-conceived decision to separate the southern portion of West Norwood into a constituency with which it would have no material connection of any kind and not feel any connection whatsoever.

Instead, it would create a massive, probably impossible challenge for the MP to represent proficiently. This must be avoided. The existing constituency of Dulwich and West Norwood needs no adjustment to hit the required electorate count whilst maintaining all the magnificent bonds that have been built over so many years. New bonds of the same effectiveness cannot be built between West Norwood and Lambeth and the north of the London Borough of Croydon. To avoid this would also have the virtue of avoiding the additional, equally appalling proposal of Herne Hill to our north being split between three constituencies; Herne Hill being a town centre in its own right. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Can I just check, are there any points of clarification in relation to what Mr Andrew has said? No. Rob, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along this morning and speaking to me.

ROB ANDREW: Thank you. It's been my pleasure.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: The next person on my list this morning who I understand is here is Hugh Seaborn. Mr Seaborn, could you come forward please?

If you'd like to take a seat, Mr Seaborn, and when you are ready, will you read into the record your name and where you are from, and then, at your own convenience, off you go.

HUGH SEABORN: Thank you very much. Good morning. My name's Hugh Seaborn, I'm Chief Executive of the Cadogan Estate. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity of addressing this public hearing. The Cadogan Estate is a family-owned business with multi-generational time horizons and a strong commitment to the local community. We have substantial holdings across 93 acres of Chelsea comprising many homes, shops on famous thoroughfares, like King's Road and Sloane Street, restaurants that will be known to a lot of people in the area, Colbert, Manicomio, Vardo and so on. Numerous hotels - Jumeirah Carlton Towers, Cadogan Hotel - as well as lots of business space. This land has been owned by the family for over 300 years. It's unusual. We also own cultural institutions such as the Cadogan Hall, which is a 900-seat concert hall which we run ourselves, the Saatchi Gallery, the Royal Court Theatre and the Chelsea Physic Garden, all of which receive financial support because we consider that they're such important constituents of the thriving place and a thriving community.

We support local churches and important local institutions, such as the Chelsea Hospital and the Army Museum, and retain ownership of schools and pubs and small shops that serve local residents, primarily, because they're part of the layering of uses that help people make a connection to an area and which contributes to its identity. We do all these things and more besides, not out of charity, out of an enlightened self-interest because we have such extensive holdings in the area. We've owned them for a very long time, and we plan to own them for a very long time into the future. If we're going to do this and prosper in the long term, then we need the local area and local communities to remain vibrant, healthy and resilient in the face of all the turbulence that we know about, particularly at the moment.

It's a concern really for the future resilience of Chelsea and the communities within it that has led me to respond to your proposal on the boundary changes. I believe they will be damaging as they stand at the moment in Chelsea. Put simply, the Boundary Commission proposals will cut through a close-knit neighbourhood and split it in two, and this will be detrimental to Chelsea as a place and to the people who live and work there and their connection with their political representation. Over time, this would have a similar effect as a physical barrier, a ring road or something of that sort, which causes

fragmentation of ownership and representation and undermines local cohesion. As you know, the proposals divide Chelsea into two parts between Chelsea West and Chelsea East, neither of which have any presence or historical relevance. Chelsea East will become part of Westminster, and Chelsea West will remain attached to Fulham as it is at present.

So each of King's Road and the Fulham Road will be split in two. I've recently led a group of businesses, which, incidentally, received really good political support and is needed explicitly to bring businesses together on King's Road. I've done it separately on Brompton Road as well, which also would be affected. We've created a Business Improvement District. This wouldn't be impossible under your proposals, but it wouldn't be proportionately more complex, it would be exponentially more complex because of the division of political representation. It's this creation of cohesion amongst the representation that is so important for the survival of that street and to ensure it thrives and to protect it for the future.

These bids have been very important in Kensington and Chelsea. They're the first two bids in the borough. In Westminster, there are numerous bids and, of course, each one is important, but it wouldn't raise the same level of interest to an MP based in Westminster as it has in Kensington and Chelsea. Chelsea's parliamentary representation has never been divided in such an arbitrary way before. This tripartite division of an area with such a strong cohesive identity has no historical precedence or coherence. To provide more historical context on that, the boundary between the Cadogan Estate and the Grosvenor Estate, which neighbour us, largely coincide with the current borough and constituency boundaries. They are longstanding historical estates and communities with natural borders, often along underground rivers such as the Westbourne, and also along the current local authority and constituency boundaries. These proposals seek to redraw the scope of the political representation of these communities in a way that doesn't have reference to this historical context.

The impact would be that South Kensington and Knightsbridge underground stations and the South Kensington museums and the Royal Hospital, which is occupied by the famous Chelsea Pensioners, will be incorporated into Westminster and the issues and concerns of politics in Westminster. Westminster, in many ways, is the embodiment of the capital city, and it has an intense concentration of uses, a great mixture of uses, not particularly dominated by residential, and I think that sets it apart from the rest of London, if not the whole country. Kensington and Chelsea is very much a residential area, and that defines the politics at present and, I think, will do in the future. They're very different political and social-economic entities. The likely outcome is that matters of relevance to Chelsea East will be of little relevance to the rest of the new constituency and, therefore, unlikely to receive the necessary attention.

From the point of view of Chelsea, key landmarks, such as Sloane Square, Cadogan Hall, Duke of York Square and the Chelsea Physic Garden would effectively be cut off from Chelsea West, and King's Road, which is one of the most iconic landmarks of Chelsea, which I've already mentioned, dates back to the 17th century, will be split

between the two constituencies across its north-south axis. Local businesses of all shapes and sizes need access and engagement with parliamentary representatives, as we all know. The socioeconomic environment is changing fast and, whether it's in response to the pandemic, Brexit or changing social expectations, this will be followed inevitably by law reform; therefore, businesses need clarity in who their representatives are, but in a cohesive way around the broader interests of the area. Therefore, splitting this distinct iconic area in such an arbitrary manner will create misunderstanding and, I think, will undermine effective political representation.

My greatest concern, and our greatest concern at Cadogan, is with the Westminster and Chelsea East element of this because it separates two Kensington and Chelsea wards into a new Westminster seat. As I've already said, these areas have a distinct identity which does not really feel as though it would have an affinity to the representation of the other wards in Westminster City Council. Areas such as Sloane Street, the Brompton Road as well as businesses, including Harvey Nichols, which is on Knightsbridge, would be absorbed into Westminster, and this would confuse their sense of parliamentary representation as well. With the heritage as well established as we have at Cadogan, that comes with a social responsibility, which is something we take very seriously, and it manifests itself in our commitment to our local community. As a consequence, we've committed to various initiatives of local betterment through projects, large and small, which include a 10-year environmental and social sustainability strategy.

We work very closely with the local authority and keep our local MPs fully briefed on this. This addresses many things, but there's a large degree of inequality in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea along north-south lines. What we are aiming to do is to contribute to addressing this through social and environmental initiatives, and the entire thrust of this programme is about community cohesion. As I've already made clear, I think these proposals undermine that cohesion. These are the reasons why Cadogan opposes the proposals to split our small but well-established community in Kensington and Chelsea. I realise the size of the electorate has shrunk and needs to be addressed, so, instead, I'd advocate a solution which results in the reunification of Chelsea within the Chelsea and Fulham seat and the reunification of South Kensington into the Kensington seat. There's very limited affinity for Westminster, and I've talked about this already, I think sufficiently. In practical terms, I support the proposals backed by our local members of parliament, which are the Rt Hon. Greg Hands and the Hon. Felicity Buchan. I think those make practical sense without undermining the community, and I'd be very grateful if you would take these concerns into consideration.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Mr Seabourn. Thank you very much. Can I just ask, are there any points of clarity that anybody needs to raise? No. Hugh, thank you very much for coming this morning and talking to me. I appreciate it.

On my list for later this morning is Mr Abdigania Mohamoud. I think you wish to speak to us earlier. Would you like to go now, sir? As I've said to all of the other speakers, when you get yourself sat down, read your name into the record, tell us which town you are from and then off you go.

ABDIGANIA MOHAMOUD: Hello. My name is Abdigania Mohamoud, and I'm from Greenwich borough. Mr Assistant Commissioner, thank you for giving me the chance to speak to you today. I live in Woolwich on top of a youth club at the edge of Woolwich Common Estate. I heard from some local community group last year that the organisation was looking to change the boundary lines. I felt motivated to submit my views in writing, which I refer to you the submission and reference BCE-65666.

I'm a director of a company which works with young people, that helps to engage young people in positive activities, offering formal and informal education opportunities. We help young people to grow both as individuals and as members of society to tackle youth-related antisocial behaviours by engaging young people via centre-based and off-site programmes and do outreach and detached youth work. In my role as a youth worker and community activist, I'm very much at the heart of the community in Woolwich, especially working with young people, whether it is Woolwich Common Estate, which I live in, neighbouring Barnfield Estate, terraced houses and everyone that I know locally that live in Woolwich. Woolwich is a diverse and multicultural community with high levels of deprivation and some pockets of relative prosperity. We feel part of the same Woolwich community stretching from Herbert Road in the south all the way to the river. Woolwich community spirit is best seen in the Woolwich Carnival, a regular annual event that brings together our active residents' groups, including my own, as well as growing my community.

Woolwich at its best is through the carnival going through the Royal Arsenal and the town centre. I know better than most that Woolwich has its challenges, but there's growing community spirit through that sense of identity that bridges that divide from the expensive flats on the Arsenal and those on my Woolwich Common Estate. I also work closely with the Charlton Athletic community, and there are strong links between Charlton and Woolwich, as well as Greenwich itself. Young people very much make use of the east-west transport links between Woolwich, Charlton and Greenwich, while there is now good links on the DLR and shortly across the river that links Eltham. The links to Eltham are far weaker, with just one bus going to the other side. We have really benefitted from having Greenwich and Woolwich constituency with one MP to represent our interests, from winning the fight to get Crossrail, to helping stop inappropriate 100% private development.

I therefore repeat my support for your proposals to keep the Woolwich Common ward I live in with the Woolwich Riverside area in one parliamentary seat and object to those submissions that seek to split Woolwich Common and place our southern part, including my estate, in an Eltham constituency, or indeed the whole ward into Eltham, as well as those that suggest we divide the Royal Arsenal from the rest of Woolwich. I also repeat my support for the proposal on the basis that they keep Woolwich together with Charlton and Greenwich. These are the places we have links with more than any other places, like Abbey Wood or Eltham.

I also think that there is a very practical benefit to my community, given its poverty and social challenges, in maintaining the Greenwich and Woolwich constituency, as with

small changes in Glyndon Park, which I think makes lots of sense because there are strong links across Woolwich, Charlton and Greenwich. If we can help the issue-related problems in my community and get outcomes for local people. It's often a challenge to persuade young people to engage in the political process, but having constituencies with a clear sense of identity helps a little. Greenwich and Woolwich is one such close-knit community. Local people will not understand being placed in Eltham or Erith and Thamesmead, with which they have little affinity. I hope my views will be taken into consideration, and I look forward to your final outcomes.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Can you just help me? You told me at the start that you'd made a written representation and you gave me the number, but I didn't quite get it. Could you just remind me please?

ABDIGANIA MOHAMOUD: The number is BCE-65666.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any other points of clarification from anybody? Mr Mohamoud, thank you very much for coming along and talking to me this morning. I appreciate it.

ABDIGANIA MOHAMOUD: Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: I'm expecting my next representation at 9:55, which is 15 minutes away. So, we'll adjourn for 15 minutes and wait for the next person to come along. Thank you.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you for that short adjournment. We'll now resume the hearing on the second day of the London hearings. The next person on my list to speak this morning is Souad Talsi. Are you in the room? Would you like to come forward and sit here for me, please? If you sit in front of the microphone. I hope I've pronounced that correctly. As I've said to everybody else who's spoken to me, will you please read your name into the record? Tell us what town you are from and then off you go.

SOUAD TALSI: Thank you very much, indeed. Good morning everyone. My name is Souad Talsi. I am the product of Moroccan migration embedded in North Kensington. I am from the Notting Hill area. I am here to represent the views of the British Moroccan community. I have served the said community for the last 40 years, which has earned me an MBE, and I created, or established, a Moroccan women's centre, which is a local charity that is registered and serves the community since 1985. It is a UN-accredited charity and, at the moment, serves Moroccan and Arabic speaking. I'm here to speak, not only on behalf of the Moroccan community but also the Arabic-speaking community, where Arabic is the second most spoken language in Kensington. I came as a child at the age of 12 in 1972, and we lived in Ladbroke Grove, and I went to Ladbroke School. North Kensington, therefore, is very much my home.

Until 2010, we were rather divided in the sense that our MP was from Westminster, across the canal, and our mayor and councillors were at the town hall in High Street Kensington. It was really quite a bad division. We were rather delighted that the boundaries changed in 2010 and we started having our own MP. We felt then part of Kensington because we are Kensington, and the present proposal will split us once more, as I said when I asked to be heard. Our work is very much embedded in the North Kensington community. North Kensington has way more ties to the rest of Kensington and South Kensington than it has to the three north Westminster wards, Harrow Road, Queen's Park and Westbourne. I know because I live there. The Boundary Commission proposes adding into Kensington seat. There's very little substantial geographical divide between the two areas. The Grand Union Canal and major train tracks separate them with very few crossing points. The lack of genuine linkage between the communities is illustrated in the minimum bus routes connecting the two. Residents in North Kensington firmly feel part of Kensington and would like to see their parliamentary representation reflect that. There are strong community linkages between North Kensington and the South Kensington area, with local charities and institutions, such as the Kensington and Chelsea Foundation, who have generously been supporting my charity.

Those same charities and institutions have no remit at all for North Westminster. I speak also as someone who has been working for the Citizens Advice Bureau since a law student. I worked at the Citizens Advice Bureau from April 1980 until I was hit by cancer in 2009. I know how those who live in the north of the borough when we changed the catchment area in North Westminster could not come and see us. North Kensington is very much part of Kensington. As someone who has been there for the Grenfell victims, I wonder what would have happened if we had an MP that was in Westminster representing those who suffered in the North Kensington tragedy. I think we have to sit and think about this really, really hard. The Grenfell Tower tragedy demonstrated the unity of not only the local people but the local politicians and the MP, Emma at the time. We all worked incredibly hard. We felt we were part of one community, one area, and we feel rather aggrieved by the present proposal to divide us once more, whereby we would need to go to Westminster for an MP and go to a local councillor if we wanted something local.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is the smallest local authority in London, outside the one in the City of London, justifying just 1.15 parliamentary seats. It is surprising that the Boundary Commission has decided to split this into three parliamentary seats, which can really create confusion, and, remember, we're dealing with a community whose English isn't very good, and knowledge of how politics work and boundaries is also quite at a minimum. This makes alignment between central and local government much more difficult. Such a small local authority should not have to deal with three separate MPs. We think it's foolish. I think the alternative proposal, as put forward by our present MP Felicity Buchan, makes sense, and it creates the seat of Kensington and Bayswater. Bayswater area is quite part of North Kensington. In the sense, you just have to walk down Westbourne Park Road and find yourself in Westbourne Grove and then Bayswater. So, we welcome her proposals. I believe that

Felicity's proposal does resolve all of the issues outlined above and creates a seat with strong community linkage, which more closely resembles the current constituency and has greater alignment to the local authority.

The rationale for this alternative proposal that has already been put forward: it recombines Kensington into one seat combining north and south of the borough, South Kensington. This follows the previous logic employed by the BCE for the 2010 boundaries. It reduces the number of MPs representing the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea from three to two, and that makes sense to us. Kensington will still need additional electors. The Westminster wards of Bayswater and Lancaster Gate, who are neighbours, have much more natural community and transport links with Kensington than the north Westminster wards of Harrow Road, Queen's Park and Westbourne. It is there to see. The proposal, therefore, to add Westminster wards of Bayswater and Lancaster Gate and to remove Westminster wards of Harrow Road, Queen's Park and Westbourne. Thank you so much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification anybody needs? No. Souad, thank you very much for coming along this morning. I really appreciate it.

SOUAD TALSI: Thank you so much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: The next person on my list who's present is Greg Hands MP. Would you come forward, please? If you'd like to take a seat. Mr Hands, as I've said to every other MP, once you get yourself settled down, if you'd read your name into the record for me and remind us of which constituency you represent, and then off you go.

GREG HANDS: Good morning, Commissioner, I'm Greg Hands, Member of Parliament for Chelsea and Fulham and here to represent Chelsea and Fulham. Thank you. Let me just start off by saying that I've been the MP for 17 years in all; 12 years most recently for Chelsea and Fulham, five years before that for Hammersmith and Fulham, and eight years as a councillor prior to that. So, I'm reasonably familiar, I would say, with the two boroughs of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and of Hammersmith and Fulham. I participated in the boundary review, I think 2001 or 2002, to create the boundaries that took effect from 2010.

Let me just start off by saying, I think the Chelsea and Fulham combination works really well. It was not done before, prior to 2010, but the way that the structure of riparian London around me works, so you've got the King's Road, the whole length of the constituency. You've got the Fulham Road, the whole length of the constituency, so that works very well. The postcodes SW3, 6, 7 and 10 fit reasonably neatly around that. That, I think, is a good combination. But I wanted to speak, Commissioner, very strongly against splitting Chelsea, which I think would be a very serious mistake. This has never been proposed before to split Chelsea. Chelsea, since it ceased to be a sole constituency in 1997, has been paired either with Kensington or with Fulham but, at all times, Chelsea has been retained as one. The irony here is that Chelsea has been, if

you like depopulating, it's been losing UK electors over the last few decades. You know better than me that normally areas get split when they grow.

Whether it be Milton Keynes, which has become successfully two, maybe three seats. Peterborough, I know, is likely to become two seats. Here Chelsea is getting smaller yet, for the first time in 150 years, the proposal would be to lose Chelsea. Currently, the Chelsea part of the Chelsea and Fulham constituency is around about 36% of the current seat. Clearly, on the new larger seat, it will be an even smaller part and splitting it would, I think, be counterintuitive. The next thing I'd say is there is no such thing as West Chelsea and East Chelsea. Having lived in Chelsea in New York, Commissioner, in the past, I can tell you, there is such a thing in New York City, but there is no such thing in London. There is not a single thing called West Chelsea or East Chelsea, to the best of my knowledge. I think this would break local ties and create inconveniences.

Chelsea is a small, well-knit community. I think virtually every Chelsea major institution has contributed to opposing these plans. The Chelsea Society, the Royal Hospital, the Cadogan Estate, the Chelsea Arts Club. I know some of which have appeared before you yesterday and today. Within Chelsea, this proposal by the Commission would split the King's Road, would split the Fulham Road. It would split historic parishes like St Luke's, which is a Grade I listed church, one of the largest non-cathedral churches in the country. It would split that parish right down the middle. It would split conservation areas like the Cheney Character Area, the Royal Hospital Conservation Area. It would, bizarrely, split quite small streets in Chelsea into parts. Oakley Street would be three quarters in Chelsea West and one quarter in Chelsea East. Flood Street would be precisely the opposite, yet these are small residential streets.

Royal Hospital itself, with its iconic Chelsea Pensioners, would be in Chelsea East, and the Chelsea Pensioner pub would be in Chelsea West. This is a very tightly knit, cohesive community with clear community identity and community values. Chelsea has been one since the 1867 reform act. Now, at a time when the number of UK electors is getting smaller all the time, I think now would be a perverse time, 155 years later, to split it for the first time.

Commissioner, my alternative proposal is to reunite Chelsea, almost as one. There is currently a split ward called Brompton & Hans Town, which has been combined as one ward in the Royal Borough. There's a tiny bit, about 2,500 electors south of Fulham Road, those are traditionally Chelsea, and most of the area north of Fulham Road is traditionally Kensington. But overall, this would reunite by moving Royal Hospital back in; that is where Sloane Square is; that is where the Royal Hospital is; that is where the Chelsea Physic Garden is. All of these, the entire length of the King's Road, would then be reunited back into a Chelsea constituency, a Fulham and Chelsea constituency. I think, Commissioner, that my counter-proposal, by putting Royal Hospital back in, and losing Courtfield, which is more properly a part of South Kensington in any case - as you can see, it's got South Kensington right on top of it in terms of that map. By putting Royal Hospital back into Chelsea and Fulham and putting Courtfield back into Kensington, you reunite the whole of King's Road, the whole of Fulham Road, the whole

of Chelsea, from Stamford Bridge across to Sloane Square, goes back into one constituency through St Luke's, the World's End, the Chelsea Old Town Hall, Chelsea Physic Garden and the Royal Hospital itself. All of these key parts of Chelsea would be reunited back into one constituency. I therefore strongly urge that the Commission reunite Chelsea under this alternative proposal. By moving Royal Hospital ward back into a Chelsea and Fulham constituency, it could then be properly re-called Chelsea and Fulham, which is consistent with its current name, and putting Courtfield into Kensington and Brompton & Hans Town ward, which is majority Kensington anyway, back into Kensington. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification anybody needs from any of that? No. Mr Hands, thank you very much indeed for coming along this morning.

The next person on my list, who I understand is here this morning, is Maureen Duncan. Maureen, are you able to come forward please? If you could take a seat by the microphone for me, please, Maureen. As I have said to everybody else who's come and spoken to me, if you can read your name into the record, tell us what town you are from, and then, when you are ready, off you go.

MAUREEN DUNCAN: Thank you very much. My name is Maureen Duncan. I'm from Tottenham.

I'm Head of the Brook Special Primary School in Tottenham, and I share the building with Willow Primary School and Children's Centre. I'm speaking here this morning on behalf of both schools, our governing body, our staff bodies and our parents. Our schools are situated in the very heart of the Broadwater Farm estate and are currently part of the West Green ward. Although we are very pleased that the proposal seeks to keep Tottenham as a single constituency rather than to be split, we are very concerned that the plans propose to move our West Green ward away from Tottenham to a Hornsey and Wood Green ward constituency. That might not seem particularly significant. It might not seem that too much is really changing, but for those of us who live and have chosen to work in the West Green ward, it would have an enormous impact on our identity as a very distinct community.

As John William Gardner says, 'we know that where community exists, it confers upon its members identity, a sense of belonging and a measure of security. Communities are the ground-level generators and preservers of values and ethical systems.' This sense of belonging and identity stretches back centuries for Tottenham as an area because it has a very long and a very proud history. I think it's absolutely incredible that if you look in the Domesday Book of 1086, Tottenham there is absolutely recognised as a distinct community even then. I think it's remarkable that the boundaries have been maintained like that over all those centuries. If you look at a map of Tottenham in the 1600s, there Tottenham sits, clearly demarcated from Edmonton, from Essex, from Hackney and demarcated from Hornsey. Even in Parliament, the West Green ward has been represented by the Tottenham seat for over 140 years.

The majority of the community live in the east of the ward and Broadwater Farm, and that's where I work. It's where 50% of the population is concentrated. If we pop out to our local high street, it isn't Wood Green or Hornsey that we visit, it's Tottenham. It's not surprising then that I believe that the community of West Green ward see their identity as being firmly entwined with Tottenham. There's no denying that Broadwater Farm conjures up a variety of images in people's minds, many of which have very negative connotations, but I would argue that these images don't actually necessarily paint an accurate picture of current reality.

The estate hasn't been without its problems. It was built in the late 1960s, housed up to 4,000 people but, within 10 years, it wasn't a desirable place to live, and there were cries for its demolition. Racial tensions between black and white residents bubbled up in the 1980s and, with high levels of policing, stop and search procedures escalating, and Cynthia Jarrett dying, these tensions ultimately boiled over into the 1984 Broadwater Farm riots and resulted in injuries and gruesome fatality. You might think then that taking into account those dark days of Tottenham's history that we would want to expunge those memories; that allocating the ward to Wood Green and Hornsey would give the area a new lease of life and give residents a fresh start. Well, Commissioner, I don't agree that that will be the effect because I believe the proposed changes will, in effect, destroy the community ties that have strengthened because of past difficulties.

Broadwater Farm began to regenerate after the riots and, gradually over the next decades, the improvements were palpable and the estate became brighter, cleaner, more habitable and safer. That was possible because of the funding made available, but it wouldn't have been necessary if there'd been a great exodus with residents seeking to move elsewhere, but they didn't. Actually, the support for the renovations came from the community itself. We come to 2022 today, and the rejuvenation is still going on. I'm part of the community design group that's working with the architects and a diverse range of residents, as well as the local authority to contribute to the designs to rebuild demolished blocks of homes. I have staff and parents who are thrilled that they've been given new kitchens and bathrooms so that they feel valued, and the quality of their life has improved. We have over 800 children and their families who choose to bring their children to our schools and who have not been dissuaded from enrolling due to Tottenham's history.

Yes, our community faces many challenges. There is poverty, deprivation and unemployment, but I can assure you, there is resilience, determination, neighbourliness, tolerance and pride in being in and associated with Tottenham. At the Brook and Willow schools, we take every opportunity to articulate our love and passion for Tottenham, to all of our stakeholders, both nationwide and globally. We feel very privileged to be able to make a significant contribution to our Tottenham community. I believe that the community whom I serve at Broadwater Farm want to keep its attachment to the independent voice of Tottenham in Parliament and keep its sense of identity and belonging. As the community looks forward to the rejuvenation of Tottenham High Road, financed through the Future High Streets Fund, as it watches Broadwater Farm Estate's modernisation to better meet the needs of its multi-ethnic community, it is clear to me

that the community's identity and pride in belonging to Tottenham has stood the test of time and is something worth fighting for. Tottenham has risen out of the ashes of its chequered past, but it hasn't risen to fly away to neighbouring wards. It has risen to build a stronger community, a community whose hearts and minds still, after 500 years, belong to Tottenham. To finish, Aldous Huxley summed up what I think I'm trying to say in just three words: community, identity, stability. Thank you for listening.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Maureen. Thank you very much, indeed. Are there any points of clarification anybody needs from that? Maureen, thank you again for coming on and speaking to me this morning. I appreciate it. Thank you.

The next person on my list who's registered, and I believe is in the room, is David Lammy MP. Mr Lammy, are you available please?

We'll just get your presentation set up for you Mr Lammy. I'll say the same to you as I have to all MPs: when we get going, I would ask that you read your name into the record. Could you also place on record the constituency you represent, and then I shall ask you to get on with it, but we'll just get your presentation loaded for you.

DAVID LAMMY: I'm the Rt Hon. David Lammy, the Member of Parliament for Tottenham.

Firstly, can I thank you all for the work that has been done and put into these initial proposals published on 8th June 2021 under the challenging constraints imposed by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011. I speak today as the Member of Parliament for Tottenham. I grew up in Tottenham and have held this position for over 21 years. I'm immensely proud to serve and represent the views of my constituency. I must start by saying that I'm against the Boundary Commission's current proposal, and I'm in favour of the Labour Party's submission. I'm very glad that the initial proposals maintain the integrity of Tottenham as a single constituency. However, I have sincere concerns about the plans for the west of the constituency. I believe that West Green ward should not be moved from Tottenham to Hornsey and Wood Green. I understand that your initial proposals will give the new constituency of Tottenham a projected electorate of 75,516. This is between the permitted range of 69,724 to 77,062. I ask that the panel note that under the Labour Party's proposals, the size of the Tottenham electorate would be 75,968. This electoral size would remain well within the permitted range. In the rest of this presentation, I will seek to highlight the importance of maintaining Tottenham as a single constituency and the importance of West Green ward as part of that constituency.

Tottenham is an area which has a long and proud history. Its existence as a separate community was first documented back in the Domesday Book in 1086, but Tottenham's history stretches further back into the past, as it's believed to have grown up along the path of the Roman Road, the A10, which we all still use today. Perhaps the best illustration of how long Tottenham has been independent and how its boundaries have existed with a constituency over hundreds of years is the 1619 map of Tottenham that

you see on this slide. Tottenham's borders have always comprised, in the north, the hard border with Edmonton. Right back to the Domesday Book, Edmonton and Tottenham have been identified as separate communities with different histories. In the east, the River Lee, the ancient boundary between the counties of Middlesex and Essex, and in the south, the boundary follows the path of Craven Park Road, the New River constructed in 1613 and Seven Sisters Road. In the west, the boundary that now exists between Tottenham and Hornsey and Wood Green largely follows the path of the East Coast Main Line, but this has not always been the case, as Wood Green was until 1888, for roughly 90% of Tottenham's documented history, part of Tottenham too.

Evidence of Tottenham's long and proud history is recorded in many sources, including middle English literature. Tottenham's independent community features in two poems from 1414, the Tournament of Tottenham and the Feast of Tottenham. Further, 'You shall as easily remove Tottenham Wood' is a proverb recorded in the early 19th century by William Robinson's 1840s book, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Tottenham*. This proverb, which specifically references Tottenham's established nature, is further evidence of the Tottenham constituency's enduring identity. Tottenham's most recent and sometimes difficult history further binds the constituency together, as has been said just before I spoke. I must start by talking about our world-class football club. Tottenham Hotspur Football Club, located in Northumberland Park ward in the northwest of the constituency, is a core part of Tottenham's identity. The club first played its matches on the banks of the River Lee nearly 150 years ago and has grown to be one of England's great clubs. It now places Tottenham on the global stage and provides a rallying point for the whole constituency. It is imperative that Spurs remains within the Tottenham constituency. This is all the more the case following the construction of the new stadium. Millions of pounds of additional investment are now flowing into the constituency of Tottenham as a result.

Very sadly, in 2011, following the death of Mark Duggan, Tottenham was the centre of the worst rioting the UK has seen in a generation. In the wake of the riots, Sir Stuart Lipton was appointed by Boris Johnson, then Mayor of London, to chair an independent panel of experts to advise on how to ensure that the riots would never happen again. Sir Stuart found that since the council's move to Wood Green, Tottenham had suffered from a government perception that it was too 'difficult to handle'. I share the view that the community which I represent began to decline at the same time. The independent borough of Tottenham lost its independence and the municipal focus shifted from Tottenham Town Hall on Tottenham High Road to Wood Green on Wood Green High Road. Community ties were broken, and Tottenham suffered as a result. If the Tottenham constituency were to become an addendum to Edmonton or Hackney and lose its independent seat in parliament, as proposals submitted to previous Boundary Commission consultations have suggested, there will be no one who has the political mandate to take up fully the role of championing the area, which Sir Stuart found was essential to ensure that riots in Tottenham were not repeated for a third time.

I believe that this argument extends to the current proposals to move West Green ward from Tottenham to Hornsey and Wood Green. West Green ward is right in the middle of

the 1619 map of Tottenham and has been represented by Tottenham seats in Parliament since 1885. Many West Green constituents have contacted me to make clear that they feel strongly that they are part of Tottenham. Tottenham High Road is the nearest high street for the majority of West Green residents. They are, therefore, more likely to look east than west for community employment and support. I am most concerned that the initial proposals would mean the Broadwater Farm Estate and Lordship Rec no longer being within the Tottenham constituency. I must encourage the panel to note that in its 100-year history, the area has always been tied to Tottenham's broader identity.

Tottenham Urban District Council purchased the area in 1932; they drained it, converted it from farmland to recreational use. Construction started on the Broadwater Farm Estate, inspired by Le Corbusier in 1967. Ever since, between 3,000 and 4,000 people have lived there. The estate quickly suffered from high crime rates and worsening racial tensions, culminating in the 1985 Broadwater Farm riot. The riot, which followed the death of Cynthia Jarrett, and ultimately resulted in the murder of police officer PC Keith Blakelock, is a terrible but fundamentally important part of Tottenham's history. Since then, millions of pounds and decades of work have been spent rebuilding Broadwater Farm, its community and its position within the larger Tottenham area. By the mid-2000s, the estate had been heralded as a success story, with crime rates at a historic low. While the community does suffer from pockets of significant poverty and faces many challenges, it also represents the best of the multi-ethnic, resilient community in Tottenham.

It would be counterintuitive if, just when Tottenham High Road is looking forward to millions of pounds of new investment through the Future High Streets Fund, Broadwater Farm were to become disconnected from its Tottenham identity. It is also important that there is continuity of representation while the estate undergoes further changes, as two unsafe blocks in Broadwater Farm Estate are to be knocked down and new social housing is to be built in its place. I am far from the only one aghast at the proposal that West Green ward would cease to be part of Tottenham. During the first round of consultation, 122 comments were left by residents of the ward, almost all of them against these proposals. Head teachers, as you've heard, from local schools, youth group organisers, local councillors and tens of members of public have voiced their concerns. This is unprecedented in an area of London with the deprivation index that it has that people have taken the time to engage in these proposals. Making up such a fundamental part of Tottenham's modern history, it is unconscionable to us that Tottenham would lose West Green ward. The Broadwater Farm community is very much at the heart of modern Tottenham and to separate it from the rest of the Tottenham constituency is nonsensical.

Now I turn to Harringay ward. The Harringay ward, meanwhile, does share much in common with Hornsey to its west. While they are divided by the railway tracks, addresses on the north of Harringay ward often include Hornsey. The communities also use the same Hornsey and Harringay overground stations. The electorate is also demographically similar. Harringay ward is a ward that I've lived in personally and feel

much connection to, but I am reluctantly prepared to concede that it would be more sensible that Harringay be represented as part of the Hornsey and Wood Green seat if this is what is required to ensure West Green ward remains in Tottenham. This sentiment is reflected in six out of the seven of the comments received by the Boundary Commission for Harringay ward residents. I understand that the borough of Hackney currently has too many wards and accept that it makes sense for some wards to be represented by constituencies to the north, including Tottenham. I would be glad to accept the initial proposal's plans that Brownswood and Woodberry Down become part of the Tottenham constituency. I must conclude by reiterating my key points. I am pleased that the initial proposals maintain a single constituency of Tottenham. However, I am concerned by the plans for the West Green part of the constituency. I must urge the panel to ensure that West Green ward remains within the Tottenham constituency in order that the history of the area and the interests of the constituents are properly represented. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you. Any points of clarification? No. Mr Lammy, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along this morning. I appreciate it.

I'm going to take two more speakers before we have a short break. Maybe even three I'm told. I think we have Mr Jacob Secker in the room. Would you like to come forward, please? Thank you very much. If you'd like to sit down at the chair by the microphone. As I've said to everybody else who's come to speak to me, if you could read your name into the record for me and tell me which town you are from, and then, when you are ready, off you go.

JACOB SECKER: I'm Jacob Secker. I live in Tottenham. I am here on behalf of the Broadwater Farm Residents' Association. I'm the secretary of the Residents' Association. I'm here because we are against the proposal to move West Green from Tottenham to Hornsey and Wood Green. We support the Labour Party proposal on this. Not because we are in any way party political – the Residents' Association is not party political. We are composed of people who support many different political parties and none. I will come to the reasons why we are against this proposal. It's not because we want a particular MP or particular party to represent us. It is to do with the nature of the constituency. We've heard there might be an idea of a north-south split of Tottenham. This would be an absolute disaster.

Tottenham is one community. If you split us between north and south, it's just going to make it much more difficult for our interests to be represented. It's going to make it much more difficult for us to get the help we need to improve our community. The kind of cohesion we need to build will just be lost. We're one community. There's no such thing as a North Tottenham and a South Tottenham community. I've never heard of this. It's Tottenham. You're from Tottenham. That's it. That's how everyone feels. In terms of local pride, that's what everybody talks about.

The specific issue about moving West Green into Hornsey and Wood Green: this would be an absolute disaster we feel. We would lose our ties with Tottenham. Everybody

knows West Green, Broadwater Farm is Tottenham. That's how we all feel. Just to give a bit of background about myself. I've lived on Broadwater Farm Estate since 2008. I lived in West Green before that in private accommodation. I became a council tenant in 2008. Initially, I lived in Tangmere, one of the blocks that David Lammy was referring to, one of the unsafe blocks. I had to move out because it was unsafe. I could have moved off the estate, but I said, 'I don't want to move off the estate. I want you to move me to another block on the estate', and there I have remained in Kenley block on Gloucester Road. There were others who didn't want to be moved off the estate when we found that two of the blocks were unsafe. We wanted to stay part of the estate. Of course, part of that is because we also wanted to stay in Tottenham. We didn't want to move to Wood Green or anywhere else. Tottenham's where we've put down our roots, and that's how people feel on this estate. Nobody's ever sort of heard of us becoming part of Hornsey and Wood Green. It's not anything to do with what we want.

We need an MP who understands Tottenham, who has empathy and sympathy for the people of Tottenham. We're not talking about one particular party because, you know, in years to come, the political scene may change. We don't know, but it has to be somebody who works within the community of Tottenham, who knows the people of Tottenham, who understands that community and is able to represent the interests properly. If we become part of Hornsey and Wood Green, I'll tell you what we'll become. We'll become a backwater. We'll become a forgotten backwater of the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency. There won't be anyone to stand up for us properly. Believe me, whatever you may think, on Broadwater Farm people do have faith in their MP. When there's ever a problem, they will say, 'let's get onto the MP'.

Unfortunately, with other institutions, there's a lot of alienation. I have to say with Haringey Council, to some extent. There are a lot of problems in Tottenham; there's maybe some bad feeling there, but everybody says, 'let's get onto the MP'. We've got an MP who represents us in Tottenham. Let's see if they can help us. I know what it'll be like if we don't have a Tottenham MP anymore. People will say things have changed. We're not represented anymore. We don't have someone to represent us. We don't have somebody who understands us, empathises with us, who's happy and feels at ease talking to us and coming to our estate and listening to our problems. That's what will happen. It will be like being homeless.

I spend a lot of time talking to the people on Broadwater Farm. I door knock. We have meetings where they come to and meet people. You know, you're lucky I came here on time because I walk out my door and people stop me. They want to talk to me about this and that. I know how people feel. I can tell you that they don't want to be separated from their community and become this backwater in the corner of Hornsey and Wood Green constituency to be forgotten about. There are huge problems of poverty and discrimination, frankly, which people from Broadwater Farm suffer, and we have to address those problems. We have to address them because if we don't, the alienation, the disconnection people feel will just get worse, and that's to the benefit of no one. That's not to the benefit of anyone from any particular political persuasion. We can only do that with a strong, locally based MP who can represent our interests, whoever that

person is. We must have that. We don't want to lose our sense that we are part of the Tottenham community. Communities are important. We're not just individuals; communities are important. They are what bind us together and give us some local pride, which can keep us going when there are difficult issues which we must face.

We want an MP who feels comfortable with us, who feels at ease with us, an MP who, like our current MP, can just come to the Windrush event. We have a Windrush event on our estate; he can come down; he can talk to everyone about their experiences. He's an MP who's happy to come to this estate. He doesn't think, 'Oh, it's the Broadwater Farm. I'm not used to this place. I'm more used to dealing with people in Muswell Hill, Hornsey and Wood Green, that's more my area. I won't know what to say to people in Tottenham and Broadwater Farm. It is really Tottenham, isn't it? Although it's not officially anymore'. We need somebody who's comfortable, who people can relate to and who has that kind of connection with the community. I don't believe we will get that if we are no longer part of the Tottenham constituency. This is our identity. This is our community. Tottenham is where our relatives and friends are. Tottenham is what we feel a part of. Tottenham is where many people choose to be. [laugh].

There are problems in West Green. It isn't all bad. We have our good times. We have our Windrush Day. We have our summer fun day. We have a children's Christmas party. We have our celebrations, and that's always been supported by the local MP. We want it to remain that way, and we want strongly, we want to stay part of Tottenham.

JOHN FEAVOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarity on what's just been said? No. Mr Secker, thank you very much for coming along this morning. Next person on my list who I'd like to take is Keith Jackson. Would you like to come forward, please? Reverend Jackson, as I've said to other speakers, if you'd like to read your name into the record for me, please tell us where you are from, and then, in your own time, away you go.

KEITH JACKSON: My name is Reverend Keith Jackson. I represent the small Church of England church on Broadwater Farm and St Francis in Tottenham Hale. It's amazing to see the people that have spoken before me that they have so much history about Tottenham, so immediately I've got to reshuffle three pages of my speech. But it's wonderful. I wondered when the Boundary Commission drew the lines – I struggle to find what's behind it. What's the outcome. What's the benefits. I couldn't find the benefits looking at Tottenham.

I think it's important when we do these things, we consider the real affinity to the areas where people live and where people feel they belong. I would like to highlight, just like Jacob and the rest, the importance of the West Green ward and Broadwater Farm and why I think they should remain within the Tottenham constituency. I'm very much against the Commission's proposal to move West Green ward into Hornsey. As someone who has spent 18 years working on the Broadwater Farm in Tottenham and someone who has lived in Tottenham, and I currently live on the border of Hornsey and Tottenham, literally a stone's throw away from West Green Road itself, I believe I have a real insight

into the people that this will affect. Geographically, West Green has more connection to Tottenham than it does to Wood Green or Hornsey. This is more marked, especially for Broadwater Farm, which is clearly affiliated geographically to Tottenham, rather than Wood Green or Hornsey.

The boundary proposal move that was proposed is not really indefinable. Broadwater Farm's identity and interest clearly sits with the West Green ward. The Broadwater Farm community has a cohesive identity, which lies in Tottenham. Furthermore, we have the recreational spaces of Downhills Park, Lordship Rec, and they are key aspects of the Tottenham constituency, where Broadwater Farm sits right in the middle. Let me say this, Tottenham is a very deprived area, but it's as if the deprivation that you have in Tottenham draws people together; they become a stronger community if they fight for each other. I've experienced this on their estate where, for instance, you'll have a mother will take three different children which are not her own, to look after these children, pick them up from school so the other three mothers can go off to work. There's a strong sense of community feeling on the Broadwater Farm Estate.

Historically, regionally, socially, Broadwater Farm is more connected to Tottenham than to Hornsey and Wood Green. There are three important areas which these boundary changes may be seen to be disadvantaging the people living in the Broadwater Farm Estate and the West Green area. This is all about their identity and where people feel they belong. Identity is very important because it affects people's lives, where they send their children to school and where even they shop. One of the things that was clear to me and very clear to the young people is that they feel they belong to Tottenham. Those young people that come to our church and to the youth work that we provide, they strongly believe they belong in Tottenham.

I believe that people's first point of shopping, for instance, is not Wood Green. People's first choice of shopping is Bruce Grove or the West Green Road. Most people don't say, let us go to Wood Green to shop, most people go to Bruce Grove or West Green. I know this because I do the same. Recently, when we accompanied some youngsters from the Broadwater Farm Church to the Science Museum, just before COVID, we said, 'where should we meet?' Naturally, the kids met us at Seven Sisters station, not Turnpike Lane. Although we live at the far west of the ward on the boundary with Wood Green, if we want a post office, for instance, we go to the one near Broadwater Farm in preference to the one in Wood Green High Road. Similarly, when I booked my first two COVID vaccinations, I did so at the vaccination centre at the Tottenham end of West Green Road. Our church on the Broadwater Farm was founded, in fact, by David Lammy's mother. David Lammy, as an MP, is a model for those on the estate, especially the young ones, because they see somebody they can relate to, and it's the same for Tottenham. They relate to Tottenham as their home.

To put Tottenham into Wood Green and Hornsey, would be like saying to the Tottenham supporters, move to Arsenal Highbury. It just wouldn't happen. One of the most important factors is what I'll term the Wood Green Road versus Green Lanes. These are either ends of Tottenham and Hornsey. The majority of the ethnic diverse people in

Tottenham shop in West Green Road and Bruce Grove. No doubt about that. Just as people in Wood Green shop in Green Lanes or the Wood Green shopping centre, but what is evident, and I'm a hundred percent sure of it, that people who own shops in Bruce Grove or West Green Road, they choose to be in Tottenham because Tottenham is their place of existence.

The other area that I thought was very important is – I went myself down to West Green Road, and I spoke with a number of the shopkeepers there. Their economic situation that exists, it exists in West Green Road not in Green Lanes. Having spoken to them, they believe their economic well-being is sustained by them being in Tottenham because Tottenham trade in Tottenham; people in Tottenham buy and shop in Tottenham. When you take all of these things into consideration, I believe, without a doubt, the boundary should not be moved. People want to keep their identity. They want to feel a sense of belonging, and I think Tottenham offers them that. It certainly does for me because, you know, as a priest, you feel that there are other places you like to go and do other things, but there's such a strong call working at the grassroots end of ministry where you are actually involved in people's lives. People who are struggling. Tottenham is ideal for that, and I don't think I'd like to go anywhere else. I don't want to go to one of the leafy suburbs because I actually am meeting people at the coal face of ministry where they work and where I see them in their worst state. This is what it's all about. Tottenham remains Tottenham because they all trust, and they have this strong community feeling. I think they lose that should they go to Wood Green and Hornsey. For this reason, I feel the Boundary Commission proposal should not be implemented and the boundary should remain as it currently stands.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much.

KEITH JACKSON: Thank you so much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Any points of clarification from that? No. Reverend Jackson, thank you very much for coming along this morning. I'm just going to take one more speaker before we have a small break, but I've heard a phone going off in the audience, and I'm just checking mine's on silent, perhaps you could all just double check yours please, thank you very much.

Mr Joseph Nicholas. Thank you, sir. If you'd like to take a seat, please, Mr Nicholas, and then, as I've said to everybody else who's spoken to me, if you would kindly read your name into the record and tell us which town you are from and then away you go.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS: Thank you, Chair. I'm Joseph Nicholas and I'm in Tottenham. I'm here on my own behalf to argue against some of the Commission's proposals for the redrawing of the boundaries of the Tottenham constituency. I particularly oppose the proposal to move the West Green ward from Tottenham and reassign it to the Hornsey Wood Green constituency. It follows that I therefore support the Labour Party's submission that it should remain part of Tottenham. Additionally, I also oppose the proposal to move the Tower Gardens Estate, which is part of the White Hart Lane ward,

into the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency. My arguments are primarily historical in nature. My view is that the assignment of the West Green ward and Tower Gardens Estate to Hornsey and Wood Green will be to ignore and perhaps even damage Tottenham's history.

Now I'll set out my credentials, as it were, for making these arguments. I'm a member of the Tottenham Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which exists to provide advice on development proposals within Tottenham's conservation areas. I'm a founder member of the Tottenham Civic Society, which is concerned, amongst other things, with the quality of the built environment, and I'm twice the past chair of the Friends of Bruce Castle, the support group for the local authority owned and run Bruce Castle Museum, which is a house in Tottenham's only Grade I listed building. The oldest parts of the building have been dendrodated to the early 16th century when it was occupied by Sir William Compton, one of Henry VIII's leading courtiers. However, it's not the oldest building on the site. Although archaeological traces of earlier structures are still to be located, the Manor of Tottenham is mentioned in the Domesday Book, which would mean that it was in existence for some time before 1086.

However, I'd like to leap forward in time to 1619, when the first map of Tottenham was produced for Richard Sackville the 3rd Earl of Dorset, who had acquired the Manor of Tottenham in 1604. He was a noted spendthrift, one of the 17th century's most accomplished gamblers and wastrels, according to one source, who had by then squandered most of his inheritance. It's been suggested that the map was drawn up at the insistence of his wife, Lady Anne Clifford, who saw it as a means of maximising their income, setting out what they owned and where. I have a copy of the map here. I'm not quite sure how visible it will be. I'll leave it with you in any case. The map's peculiarity is that it's upside down with north at the bottom and south at the top, chiefly to make room for the Sackville coat of arms, which would otherwise have to be at the bottom left and thus not be as prominent.

There are four areas on this map which I've circled. As I say I'll leave this with you. The first of them is the West Green itself, a triangle of land where two roads meet; that junction and that triangle of land is still there today. It's been understood in 1619, and it's been understood ever since as an integral part of Tottenham. It's the location of the West Green and Tottenham War Memorial erected after the First World War to commemorate many of the local men who lost their lives in that conflict. The Green is also home to the Windrush Memorial celebrating the black community which made its home in Tottenham after the Second World War. The second area is the area known as Downe Hills, spelled D-O-W-N-E Hills, which gives its name to the modern Downhills Park located just to the north of the West Green.

This park contains a group of three silhouette statues of people associated with Tottenham. They are Luke Howard, a chemist and meteorologist who created a naming system for cloud formations and whose 250th birthday will be celebrated locally later this year. There was Walter Tull, who played for Tottenham Hotspur and who was amongst the first Afro-Caribbean players in the Football League and was field promoted

to lieutenant shortly before he was killed in the First World War, and Nicola Adams, a former member of the Haringey Police Community Boxing Club, and the first woman to win an Olympic gold medal for boxing at the 2012 Olympics. These three people were born or lived or worked in Tottenham. They do not belong in and have no connection with Hornsey and Wood Green.

The third area on the map is Broad Waters, named for the flooding that occurs in the area following heavy rains. Rain falling on the higher ground to the west flows east towards the Lee navigation. This flooding gave rise to the saying, 'Muswell Hill's gain is Tottenham's pain'. Parts of what is now Lordship Recreation Ground, particularly the Model Traffic Area laid out in the 1930s, still flood after heavy rain today. Broad Waters gave its name to the Broadwater Farm estate, named after the dairy farm that was once there. The Bruce Castle archives have photographs of cattle standing up to their knees in the floods. The area was purchased in 1932 by, what was then, the Tottenham UDC. Haringey, the successor local authority, commenced construction of the estate in 1967. Like the West Green, Broadwater Farm and Lordship Recreation Ground have always been understood as integral parts of Tottenham. I would argue that reassigning them to Hornsey and Wood Green could empty the saying 'Muswell Hill's gain is Tottenham's pain' of its meaning.

The fourth area I've outlined is the Tower Gardens Estate, which is one of the world's first garden suburbs, constructed between 1904 and 1928. This is part of the White Hart Lane ward, which like West Green is proposed to be reassigned to the Hornsey and Wood Green constituency. It isn't covered by the Labour Party submission, but I'd like to argue for its remaining in the Tottenham constituency because the area's part of the old Tottenham Manor, and many of its streets are named after those in Tottenham who once owned land there, from Siward, the Earl of Northumberland in the time of Edward the Confessor, to one Thomas Smith in 1792. For the record, the estate is a conservation area in part because of the house's architectural appearance and their arts and craft detailing. As with the previous three areas I've described, this estate has been seen since its creation as an integral part of Tottenham. I'd conclude by referring again to the Domesday Book. Tottenham, Edmonton, Islington and Hackney are listed therein as separate and distinct communities and have always been separate and distinct communities. Tottenham has existed for far longer than the adjacent areas of Hornsey and Wood Green, and to reassign parts of it to the Hornsey and Wood Green constituencies would, as I said at the start, ignore and perhaps even do damage to Tottenham's history. That concludes my presentation. I'm very willing to answer any questions you may have.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Not questions, but any points of clarity from anybody. Can we just get a microphone over to the front please?

Roger, if you could just repeat your name and then your point of clarity for our speaker, please.

ROGER PRATT: Thank you very much, Chairman. My name is Roger Pratt. You have before you a map of the White Hart Lane ward. You mentioned a particular estate that you think is closely aligned to Tottenham, and I wondered if you could clarify where that estate was. That is very helpful. So the white road that is...

JOHN FEAVYOUR: What's the name of the avenue at the bottom? Risley Avenue.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS: Yes, Lordship Lane here, and this is all the Tower Gardens Estate.

ROGER PRATT: And the road, it's an A road, I can't quite read it.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: I appreciate that we understand where you've been pointing, but the recording won't get that. So you're describing the area between... Could you just perhaps just read out the roads?

JOSEPH NICHOLAS: The southern boundary is Lordship Lane. The northern boundary is The Roundway.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: So, that's the A1080 all the way around.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS: It's the Roundway west arm, then the Roundway east arm.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much.

ROGER PRATT: That is extremely helpful. I'm very grateful.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Any other points of clarification? No. In which case, Mr Nicholas, thank you very much indeed. It would be really helpful to the Commission if you were able to email in your notes, or alternatively, leave them with us as well as the map.

Thank you very much for coming along this morning. My next speaker is scheduled to be on at 11:20. So, I'll take a 20-minute break, and we'll come back then. Thank you very much.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Welcome back after that short break. We're continuing with the morning session of day two in London. The next speaker on my list, and I believe they're present, is Seema Chandwani. Would you like to come forward, please? Thank you. If you can sit in the chair in front of the microphone for me. And I'll say the same to you as I have to all the people that have come to speak, if you could read your name into the record, please. Tell me which town you are from and then off you go.

SEEMA CHANDWANI: My name is Seema Chandwani. I'm a councillor, and I'm from Haringey in London.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you.

SEEMA CHANDWANI: Firstly, thank you for allowing me to address you today. I actually got married on Tuesday, so I think, formally, this is my honeymoon.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Congratulations [laugh]. It is above the call of duty to come along. Well done.

SEEMA CHANDWANI: I came here because, firstly, it's important, but also because I had no idea where Havering or Merton was, so I thought I better choose this one. As you know from round one, 120 local residents and stakeholders participated and unanimously are passionately opposed to your proposal. It was a very high response in compared to others because I obsessively clicked all over the maps. I grew up in the neighbourhood. I've lived in the area for over 40 years. I went to West Green Primary School and I'm now the councillor for West Green. I can tell you that Tottenham isn't an easy place to live. It has many social problems, but it has a real beauty and, I'm not biased or exaggerating, but the best bits are in West Green ward. But that's down to the hard work of the Tottenham community.

West Green, for those of you that don't know, is actually home to three of the Tottenham parks in a constituency where green spaces are scarce. It's home to two of Tottenham's war memorials. One on West Green Road is dedicated to 430 servicemen who lived in a one-mile radius but were all identified as living in Tottenham. St John Vianney Church, where I got married on Tuesday, will now be in a different constituency to its school across the road. Lordship Rec is home to the Model Traffic Area built in the 1930s and still going strong, free to Tottenham's children and pristinely maintained by Tottenham's young people. Identity matters and in Tottenham that's so important. We love Tottenham. It's got the Tottenham Ploughman where we celebrate Tottenham's cheese, Tottenham's breads, Tottenham's pickles and Tottenham's beers, and it all started in West Green and Downhills Park.

A few months ago, Tottenham bakers made it to the finals of the Great British Bake Off. The Team Tottenham pride on social media every week was amazing. I assume that's what it's like to support a winning football team, but as a Spurs fan, I can only assume and imagine [laugh]. We have the Tottenham honey. We have the Tottenham BMX Club, which is actually home in West Green. We have the Tottenham Singers Choir based in West Green. We have Tottenham cake, and of course, we have Tottenham Hotspurs. If it can be Tottenhamised, it will be. I'm not here to sell you merchandise. I just want to come here to explain the identity complex. Park View School is in West Green, and it's become one of the most successful secondary schools in the borough. I lived across the road as a child and, in the nineties, every parent in the neighbourhood fought to stop their child going into that school, it was so bad. They all tried to get their kids into the school in the west of the borough. Thanks to Park View, it doesn't need to do that anymore.

I just want to rewind back a decade before that. In the 1970s, I don't know if you know, but Haringey was where the Creighton experiment took place. Ethnic minority parents like mine were given the opportunity to bus their children to the rich west to get a better education. That experiment entrenched the notion that the west is where the borough's hope lies. I went to Hornsey School for Girls in the west. Like a lottery winner, I was lucky I made it. My dad told me to make friends with Hornsey children and embrace the Hornsey area. Be inspired by it, work hard, and it would mean you can live in a place like Hornsey. He meant well, but all of that came from the Creighton experiment.

Sadly, it just made me feel inferior, made me feel envious, made me feel poor and embarrassed, and I ended up taking a lot of risky choices as a teenager. Haringey is a beautiful place, but it's segregated. An invisible line giving us the highest wealth-race disparity in the UK, according to the Runnymede Trust eight years ago. After the riot, though, something really special happened in 2011. It stopped becoming our ambition to move to the west as part of our self-actualisation. It became our duty to stay, invest and build Tottenham to have good schools, great business opportunities, fantastic parks, strong, positive identity and community ownership. To bring back its historical glory, even if we can't bring back a football trophy. It is why I became a councillor, ensuring no bit of graffiti survives more than a week and to be involved in the political leadership to change Tottenham from Tottenham for Tottenham, instead of having councillors come in from the west, like it did so many times before.

West Green is a huge part of that progress. Broadwater Farm is in West Green. I'm old enough to remember the 1985 riots. I worked there as a youth worker many times over the last 20 years. It was grim, dangerous, and I worked in downtown LA, so I have a bit of a barometer. But, for the first time, there's real hope, a real plan for rebuilding a new estate, both structurally and socially with the community that's there and for the community that's there. It's made possible because Broadwater Farm is part of Tottenham, its identity and engagement, thanks to years of building trust and integrating with the wider Tottenham community through the school, the gym, the health centre and the adult education services, all bringing Tottenham people together into the estate. Broadwater Farm is an asset to us, not a problem.

Moving them socially from that infrastructure and community now, of all times, is deeply worrying. Broadwater Farm is benefiting from the investment in Tottenham and a lot of funding uses constituency boundaries to allocate funds. Only a few months ago, it received £1 million as part of the wider £3.9 million fund coming into Tottenham. I fear moving it to the same constituency as the most affluent parts in Haringey, or even the most affluent parts in London, would dilute its attention, isolated from the wider Tottenham journey and of success and be an outcast in their wider new constituency. David Lammy and I set up the Tottenham Youth Fund three years ago when I was first elected, and we've raised tens of thousands of pounds for youth projects in Tottenham, and it just won't make no sense if this proposal goes ahead and that's a shame.

There are also other charities. The Tottenham District Charity, Hope in Tottenham and the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation are all place-based and all provide important work in

West Green. I'll end by saying this. I really understand the challenge you have. It's a complicated mathematical formula. Something needs to move, but West Green holds both historical significance and future importance. The message this proposal sends to me is very similar as it was when I was growing up. All good things are in the west. We made West Green great for Tottenham and now it's like the west will have it, like it does with all of the other good things in Haringey. That's the message I hope you don't send. We're on a journey. Please don't stop the plane and transfer our pilot onto a private jet. Thank you for listening.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification? No. Seema, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along, and congratulations again on your wedding. Thank you for sharing your frustration as a Spurs fan. It is nothing as I do as a follower of Norwich City, but there you are.

SEEMA CHANDWANI: [laugh] Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: The next person on my list is Neil Nerva. Neil, would you come forward, please? Would you like to take a seat by the microphone for me? Mr Nerva, I'll say the same to you as I have to all of the people who've come to speak to me today: Would you please read your name into the microphone? Tell us which town you are from and then, in your own time, away you go.

NEIL NERVA: Hi everyone. My name's Neil Nerva. I'm a councillor in the London borough of Brent. I live in Queen's Park, which is actually in the Hampstead and Kilburn constituency, which is what I've come to talk about today. I'd just like to start off by saying, which I think Seema picked up at the end, is we live in a democracy. We are privileged to live in a democracy. Sometimes Parliament makes not just I think a bad political decision, but I think a bad technocratic decision. In the formula it has come up with about the size of constituencies and the variation. I respect the fact the Boundary Commission is left now to implement and produce maps which take into account the parliamentary edict of variation, which doesn't actually recognise geographical boundaries and enable local knowledge to be applied.

Within that, I'm making these comments. These are not necessarily the most perfect boundaries, but I think they are good. I think the Boundary Commission, given the comments I have made, I think you've come up actually with quite a good job, and I would respectfully say a lot better than the previous job. I just wanted to speak with some passion, actually, about the proposed West Hampstead and Kilburn boundaries. As you will have seen from my comments, I'm coming to speak in favour of them. I'd like to start off by saying that my part of Brent was put in with the north part of Camden in 2010. Since 2010, so for 2010, 2015 and all the elections which have followed, we have been a cross-borough constituency. We have some experience of what being a cross-borough constituency feels like, I would say it has worked.

If you look at that and you actually put postcodes up, and I think postcodes do have identity, you'll see the vast part of that going right from Finchley Road to Kensal Rise is

actually the NW6 postcode. You really could call this seat NW6. There's a bit of NW10 which is being put in from Harlesden, and there's a bit of the north, which is on the other side of the Finchley Road, which is NW3. I think people within Kilburn have a common identity. The Kilburn High Road is not a divider; it is a unifier. When I go and do shopping along the high road, I don't see that as a boundary. I see that as a common commercial high street.

In fact, it's actually still listed by the GLA, and certainly was by the GLC, as one of the main strategic shopping centres in London. In fact, that was recognised in 2005 by the then government who actually set up the Kilburn Single Regeneration Budget. That was the only multi-borough single regeneration budget in the whole of that work from what was then, whatever CLG was called then, DTLR I suppose. That was the only single budget for Kilburn High Road, and it actually has worked. I just wanted also to highlight the fact that there are two Kilburn wards already; one on the Brent side, and one on the Camden side. If you look at this, it is a homogenous community.

What has happened since 2010, which actually is exciting, is the London overground. If you actually look at this from Finchley Road and Frognal station to Harlesden, you will see that there are stations at Willesden Junction, Kensal Rise, Brondesbury Park, Brondesbury, West Hampstead, and Finchley Road and Frognal. This is a new seat, a finger seat, which actually could almost, if you weren't going to call it NW6, could be called London Overground North London Line because that actually unites the constituency. It's not one of these constituencies where you say, how do you get from one end to the other. There's very good public transport, a movement. I don't just mean people are actually hypothetically moving from Willesden Junction to Finchley Road and Frognal, I'm saying within it, there's people going distances on and off all the time.

The only other point I would highlight to you, which I think may have been highlighted by people who don't like these boundaries, is the position of Frognal. In this new seat, this would be the only area to the east of the Finchley Road which is in the new constituency, whereas currently Belsize and Hampstead Town are also in the current Hampstead and Kilburn. Apart from talking about variation, which we talked about, your ability to actually produce seats where there's 101% unanimity and consensus, and the fact that you are having to work with really difficult issues around variation, I would say, I know people in Frognal, and they actually travel often to Finchley Road shopping centre. In fact, a famous shop, Waitrose, is actually by Finchley Road station and is actually in the West Hampstead ward. Physically, currently. Or South Hampstead.

What I'm trying to say is that there is, even for people feeling that they are isolated on the east side of the road, there is a lot of movement, and there's a hill there in the middle. There is a lot of movement down the hill to the Finchley Road is what I would say. So, all in all, I think actually you have produced very good boundaries. If you are minded to change something because you feel that there is a need to show that something has been changed, I think there is the argument that Cricklewood and Mapesbury should be substituted for Harlesden because that would actually provide a commonality of MP going further up the Edgware Road, but that is a minor detail

compared to the main point about creating what might be regarded as a finger seat which has a homogenous community within it. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you, Mr. Nerva. Are there any points of clarification from anybody? No. Neil, thank you very much for coming in this morning and talking to me, I appreciate it.

The next speaker who is scheduled to speak today and who is in the room is Shanin Rahman. Would you like to come forward, Shanin? Thank you very much. Good morning. Please take a seat in front of the microphone. As I have said to everybody else who has come to speak to me today, when you are ready, please read your name into the record. Tell me which town you are from and then, at your own convenience, off you go. You can take your mask off while speaking if you'd like to.

SHANIN RAHMAN: Thank you. My name is Shanin Raman. I'm from Fortune Green ward, Hampstead and Kilburn constituency. I'm going to read through my statement.

I support the Boundary Commission proposal, as they only make minimal changes to the boundaries of the Hampstead and Kilburn constituency, which I have lived in for many years and believe has a unique identity. These proposals help maintain the social and councillor identity of the parliamentary seat, thus maintaining the close relationship between the MP and issues in their constituency. I welcome the fact that the entirety of Kilburn remains in one constituency and that it remains linked to West Hampstead and Fortune Green ward around where I live under those proposals. I believe those areas are deeply interconnected and do well to be represented by the same Member of Parliament. I would not want those areas to be split across different constituencies as has been proposed in previous boundary reviews.

Personally, I endorse the integration of Harlesden & Kensal Green into the Hampstead and Kilburn constituency as is the case under the Boundary Commission's current proposal, which I believe will allow the communities in the area to have stronger representation in Westminster. I want to speak about this element of the proposal in more details today. Bringing those communities together under one MP will allow them to more effectively track and share challenges and express common interest. For instance, those areas are infrastructurally and economically linked, and residents from those areas are served by more of the public transportation infrastructure which help them to cross commerce and their employment. They also share school and medical facilities. It is, therefore, in their interest to be represented by the same MP who can express shared concerns, and uniting Kilburn and part of Willesden Green with the area of West Hampstead and Kensal Green will help to foster an already clear cultural and economic link between those areas.

Harlesden also has geographic features that closely align with those of the Hampstead and Kilburn constituency. It is an economically deprived area, with some parts remaining in the 20% of the most deprived LSOAs in England. Parts of Kilburn, in particular, face many of those same challenges, particularly around deprivation and

social exclusion. Having those two areas represented by the same MP will allow strong representation of those issues in parliament. At the moment, Hampstead and Kilburn has just three wards from Brent and many more from Camden. I believe that the introduction of another Brent ward, Harlesden & Kensal Green, into that West Hampstead and Kilburn constituency would help address this imbalance and ensure that the local MP can properly understand and represent the needs of Brent residents. Those are just some of the reasons why I believe that changes proposed for this part of North London by the Boundary Commission are sensible, and I would like to put on record that I support them. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification that anybody would like to raise? No. Mr Rahman, thank you very much, indeed, for coming on this morning. I wonder whether - you've read that out from your text - would you be able to share that with us by email so we've got that for the record? I'll get one of the staff outside to take your details and hopefully you can send that in to us as well and that would be helpful. Thank you very much, indeed.

The next person on my list who I think is here is Sophie Andreae. Would you come forward, please? I hope I've pronounced your surname correctly. Thank you. Sophie, as I've said to everybody else who's come to speak, when you are ready, if you could read your name into the record, please tell us which town you are from and then, in your own time, off you go.

SOPHIE ANDREAE: Thank you very much. I'm Sophie Andreae. I'm the chair of the Brompton Association, a civic community society in South Kensington.

The Brompton Association was founded in 1974. It's a registered charity and civic amenity society. It was established with the encouragement of RBKC at the time the first conservation areas were designated within the Royal Borough. Its charitable objectives as a civic amenity society are to encourage the protection enhancement of the historic character of the Brompton Conservation Area and to encourage high-quality design when new buildings are being proposed. The Brompton Conservation Area extends from Brompton Square and Cottage Place north of the Cromwell Road to South Kensington and encompasses the distinctive and very fine historic residential areas of the Egertons and the Thurloes as well as Brompton Square itself. The majority of the residential houses in these areas are listed. The fact that, from the beginning, the conservation area spanned the Cromwell Road is significant. Since being established, the conservation area has been extended to include the now listed South Kensington tube station.

The work of the Brompton Association extends within RBKC along Knightsbridge to Harrods, south to the tube station and west to include the national museums. We work closely with our sister organisation, the Onslow Neighbourhood Association, again, established as a charity and civic amenity society in the 1970s. The Onslow Neighbourhood Association covers the grade II* terraces that comprise Pelham Place and Pelham Crescent as well as the historic area of Onslow Square and the

surrounding terraces down to the Fulham Road. The Brompton Association has a membership that represents some 200 households spanning the whole of this area. The most important point I want to make to you today is that the parish of Brompton is ancient, with the name dating back to Saxon times. Although the two churches, Holy Trinity Brompton and the Brompton Oratory, are cited north of the Cromwell Road, the heart of the community is around what is now South Kensington, where the Old Brompton Road heads southwest.

The historic residential development we see today began with the development of the Pelhams, the Egertons and with Brompton Square in the late Georgian period. This was followed by the development of the Thurloes in the early-Victorian period, together with the national museums after the great exhibition of 1851. The tube came in the late 1860s, and the Circle Line is the oldest underground line in the world. As a neighbourhood and as a community, Brompton Square is very closely associated and linked with the residential areas of the Egertons and the Thurloes and the Pelhams south of the Cromwell Road. This has been the case since the terraces were first built. Whilst the Cromwell Road is now a six-lane highway, and, of course, part of Brompton Square was demolished in the 1960s to enable this, there is a very long-established sense of community which spans either side of this now major road, as the spread of the Brompton Association's membership demonstrates.

Evidence of the local community working together could not be more obviously demonstrated than with the recent campaign to stop inappropriate development by TFL of South Kensington Station; over 2,000 objections were received by RBKC over the past two years to this particular planning application. All the local groups, Brompton Association, Onslow Neighbourhood Association, Pelham Residents' Association, and the Thurloe Owners and Leaseholders Association worked very closely together to defeat this scheme, which was turned down for planning permission late last year. Two thousand objections is more objections than RBKC has ever received to a single planning application. The Brompton Association and other local groups are strongly opposed to the proposed split of our area between three potential new constituencies. It would be enormously damaging for the local community, which sees itself as an entity with, as I have said, its focus on South Kensington as the village heart of our area. In fact, the argument that South Kensington is the village heart of the area from Brompton Square in the north to the Onslows in the south and to Queen's Gate in the west was a key plank of our argument against the wholly inappropriate TFL development proposals, which would have seen a massive new development all around the tube station and the loss of the small shops which so characterise the area. We strongly urge you to adopt the proposed revised boundaries being advanced by Felicity Buchan, our MP. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarity in relation to that representation? No. Thank you, Sophie, thank you very much indeed for coming along this morning.

I'm currently running about 10 minutes ahead of my schedule, but the next person on my list is Sophia McVeigh. Sophia, are you in a position to come forward, please? Thank you very much. So the chair just in front of the microphone please. As I've said to all of the people who've come to speak to me today, if you could read your name into the record and tell me the town that you are from, and then, when you're ready, off you go.

SOPHIA MCVEIGH: I'm Sof McVeigh, and I'm speaking about the same thing that Sophie just spoke about, Kensington.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: And you are from that area?

SOPHIA MCVEIGH: Yes, I am. Thank you. I'm actually here with two hats on. I'm here because I'm a local councillor for Brompton & Hans Town, which covers the South Kensington area, and then I'm also a resident in the north of Kensington. So, I can kind of cover both aspects, and I'm afraid I disagree with the BCE proposals with both hats on. First of all, I will talk about my council ward. Following on from what Sophie said, my ward is pretty rare in that we have two MPs, a Chelsea one and a Kensington one. This is just about workable for my residents, as they know whether they live in Chelsea or Kensington, it's very straightforward. Sadly, the BCE proposal will massively confuse residents by bringing a third MP in really an incredibly small area. This is just not workable, and I don't think it will benefit the democratic process at all.

I also found it very odd that the BCE proposes moving South Kensington out of Kensington. South Kensington is Kensington through and through. It is home to world famous museums, like the Victoria & Albert museum, and if these are part of Westminster, they'll just be dwarfed by the West End and by the British Museum. It's a completely different scale, and they need to sit proudly in their rightful Kensington community and Kensington constituency. As everyone knows, the main reason for boundary changes is to do with the size of the constituency and the ease and suitability by which residents can contact their MP and be represented by their MP. If you live in Kensington, you expect your MP to be the Kensington MP. In a recent example, I think that Sophie touched on, the South Kensington community really turned to and relied on their local Kensington MP recently in a big fight against the overdevelopment of the South Kensington tube station. We had 2,000 residents from Kensington, from the local area, and the MP was able to support them in this, along with the councillors. Again it was a great example of the democratic process in action. I just don't think we should add an extra layer of confusion to this if that's alright. Can we please keep South Kensington in Kensington? This is with my councillor hat on.

Now, to the north where I live, and the proposals there. North Kensington's completely right, it should be in Kensington. I believe in 2010, the BCE actually united the south and the north, and that's where we have it at the moment. It is a coherent constituency right now, and much work has been done to reinforce those north-south ties because there has historically been quite a division, and it's much better that they are united and

communities cross over. We have many museums in the south giving support to the museums in the north, and they're all considered as one.

Personally, very sadly, I was involved in the relief effort following the Grenfell tragedy, and I saw the whole of the Kensington community coming together in this. Again, looking at the map, there is a natural physical divide further north where you have the canals and the tracks. Beyond that, it really ceases to be Kensington; people north of that do not think of themselves as Kensington residents. I think a much better solution is to go slightly to the east, as in Felicity's proposal. You bring in those residents around the park, Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, all around there, that Bayswater area, they use the park all the time. We share activities, dog walking. I have many friends in that area, and it's much more relevant to Kensington than the bit north of the canal. Of course, that's where we have the Notting Hill Carnival, and the Notting Hill Carnival spills over into that area. It actually parades through that part of Bayswater and into the rest of Kensington.

I think we're a much better fit, compliant with Rule 5, I believe, retaining local ties. Just to conclude. From the south, South Kensington needs to stay in Kensington and from the north, Bayswater, I think, is a much better fit with Kensington. I think this will make the constituency of Kensington and Bayswater a really good coherent community, which I'm sure is what you're trying to achieve. So that's all I have to say. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Any points of clarification on that presentation? No. Sophia, thank you very much for coming along this morning.

Next on my list, I believe you are here, is Jonathan Kane. Would you like to come forward, sir, please? Thank you. Jonathan, if you'd like to take the seat in front of the microphone. As I've said to everybody who's come to speak to me, if you would read your name into the record, please tell us which town you are from and then, in your own time, away you go.

JONATHAN KANE: Thank you. My name is Jonathan Kane. I live in London, most specifically in Flood Street in London. I'm Chair of the Flood Street Terraces Residents' Association. I've lived in the Royal Borough for nearly 30 years, and I would like to comment on the Boundary Commission's request or proposal to split Chelsea and Fulham into Fulham and West Chelsea and Westminster and East Chelsea. This would mean, for example, that my Flood Street neighbours in the Royal Hospital ward of RBKC would be separately represented from my Flood Street neighbours living in the Chelsea Riverside ward of RBKC. It also means that our Royal Borough, which happens to be London's smallest borough, splits into three of Chelsea East and Westminster, Chelsea West and Fulham, and Kensington. You only have to hear me say this to see how mad it sounds. The three affected MPs, Greg Hands, Felicity Buchan and Nickie Aiken, have proposed a very sensible alternative solution to modify Chelsea and Fulham, to introduce Kensington and Bayswater and to change City and London and Westminster, and these would meet Boundary Commission requirements if accepted.

Our constituencies, as you've heard very eloquently put from the two ladies before me, should represent where we spend our time, not just where we live. In this particular case, splitting Chelsea in two makes absolutely no sense. East Chelsea residents, as they would now become, shop, eat, live, use facilities, get medical support and educate their children in our Royal Borough. Very few do that in Westminster. West Chelsea residents would and do the same. East Chelsea has very few community ties with Westminster, and Chelsea is a small community. Why can't it retain its identity? The Boundary Commission, as you've heard, also unnaturally splits the Royal Borough. South Kensington, for example, being split in three. The core of South Kensington, Courtfield, staying in Fulham and Chelsea West; Queen's Gate, perhaps moving to Kensington; and Brompton & Hans Town ward moving to Chelsea East and Westminster for no obvious reason.

Kensington would then link with wards in Westminster North like Queen's Park, Harrow Road and Westbourne, and there's a canal and a railway line that physically separates them. So, again, it's not logical. One Boundary Commission requirement is to minimise the impact of constituency changes, and this proposal really does do the opposite. It divides London's smallest borough into three and radically changes our constituencies and crosses the RBKC boundary with the Westminster boundary in two places – it's completely excessive. By comparison, the three MPs have proposed to keep boundary sizes to reflect your minimum requirements, to keep the Royal Hospital ward in Chelsea and Fulham that unites the NHS hospitals that are there, the St Luke's parish with Sloane Square and the Royal Hospital itself. It continues the current constituency along the Fulham and the King's Road, and it keeps Courtfield and Brompton & Hans Town wards in Kensington.

It also logically expands Kensington by linking it with more relevant wards of Bayswater and Lancaster Gate, as you heard earlier, with their seamless interchange between Bayswater and Notting Hill. It leaves RBKC with two MPs and introduces the smallest changes possible to meet the electoral thresholds and your requirement for minimum change. I would argue on behalf of myself and the residents that I connect with and live alongside that your proposal is unjustifiable and overburdensome for the smallest borough in London, which just happens to have only 7,500 voters more than the threshold that would otherwise allow it to have its own constituency. So please, to conclude, drop the proposal to separate Chelsea into east and west, and please seriously consider and adopt the proposal of the three affected MPs. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you, Mr. Kane. Are there any questions of clarification? No, Jonathan, thank you very much for coming along today. I appreciate you taking the time.

The next speaker on my list is scheduled to be here at 12:20. Can I just check there's nobody else in the room who wants to speak who hasn't already done so? Thank you. In which case, I will adjourn for 20 minutes, and we'll start again at 12:20. Thank you.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you for that short adjournment at the end of the morning. The person I was expecting at 12:20 hasn't in fact yet turned up. We're now going to adjourn for lunch, and we will resume at 13:30. Thank you very much.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Good afternoon. Welcome back to the second day of hearings in London. It's 13:30, and I said we'd resume at 13:30. Next on my list today is Dori Schmetterling, I hope I've pronounced that right. Would you like to come forward to the desk, please? I'll say the same to you as I have to everybody who's come to speak to me today: once you've got yourself sat down, would you read your name into the record, tell us which town you are from within London, and then, in your own time, off you go.

DORI SCHMETTERLING: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Dori Schmetterling. I'm from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and I live in the Kensington part.

Both as resident and councillor, I strongly support the alternative proposal for a new constituency of Kensington and Bayswater, as stated in my written submissions. My name is Dori Schmetterling as I've said already. I'm a resident of Pembridge ward, and I represent it as a councillor in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, known as RBKC for short. I lived in Kensington, near my present address, barring about three years abroad, since 1974. Before that, I spent three years a few hundred metres outside the borough in a Westminster bit of South Kensington. I have lived at my present address since 1984. I was elected as councillor in 2018. One can say that my life has been in the area and the area is my life. Of course, I recognise the need for periodic reviews of the constituency and indeed ward boundaries so that population shifts can be taken into account.

The current constituency of Kensington clearly has a natural border in the north, in the form of the Grand Union Canal. The canal runs in line with the borough boundary, as you can see. The drawbacks of the initial proposal for Kensington and Westbourne are: no organic community connection with the areas north of the natural boundary. I'm quite familiar with the area, including the Harrow Road – very different. No real connections for shopping and leisure; cutting off an organic part of South Kensington in the south. If you could please see the map of the south. You can see, for example, Gloucester Road tube station and South Kensington. All that area is currently in the Kensington constituency and that would be cut off, which is unnatural because it breaks up an internationally known cultural area, also known as Albertopolis. Another drawback of the existing proposal is adding yet another MP to the two that RBKC already has. Dealing with two is one thing, but adding a third when there is no really good reason to do so is quite another.

Yes, sometimes we do have issues we need to discuss with the government. Here I shall mention the hugely popular earlier proposal to create a new constituency congruent with the RBKC boundaries in a previous review. Unfortunately, that got lost

for various reasons. Although I'm not here to discuss in detail other people's submissions, I feel I must add that the alternative proposal does not split the North Kensington community and nor does the Westway Trust have any significant activity in the Westminster ward. Indeed, its own website says, 'We manage 23 acres of land underneath the Westway flyover in North Kensington for the benefit of our local community'. This trust is a charity set up to manage the land underneath the A40/M40 flyover in Kensington, amongst other places.

On the other hand, here are some features and benefits of the alternative proposal for Kensington and Bayswater. A seamless connection between, for example, Pembridge and the adjacent Westminster wards of Lancaster Gate and Bayswater. Natural destinations for shopping and leisure, even for my family and me. Good transport links, including cycle routes; similar architecture; historical connection, seen in the names Kensington Gardens Square and Kensington Gardens itself, the majority of which is not in the Kensington constituency at the moment. I have spoken to some people in the Westminster wards who are happy to support the alternative, and, indeed, I noticed a number of the submissions that have already gone in for round one supporting this as well. In summary, I highly commend the alternative proposal for Kensington and Bayswater. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Can you just confirm for me, you keep referring to the alternative proposal; perhaps you can just clarify which one you mean.

DORI SCHMETTERLING: The alternative proposal is in fact submitted by a member of the Conservative Party, which is to keep Kensington's constituency as it is and add the adjacent wards of Bayswater and Lancaster Gate as they're presently constituted, because I'm aware they're going to change in May of this year. As currently constituted, adding Bayswater and Lancaster Gate to the current constituency of Kensington and not to lose the South Kensington wards as proposed in the initial proposal.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you for that confirmation. Any other points of clarification? Mr Schmetterling, thank you very much indeed for coming along this afternoon. I appreciate it.

The next person on my list, who is here this afternoon, is Clive Efford MP. Mr Efford, are you able to come up please. Mr Efford, I'll say the same to you as I have to all other MPs who have come to talk to me: if you could read your name into the record, remind us on the record which constituency you represent and then, in your own time, off you go.

CLIVE EFFORD: Thank you very much. Good afternoon, my name is Clive Efford, and I'm the Member of Parliament for Eltham. Eltham has a long history and has been a location of a Royal Palace since 1305. The lands around the palace were made up of three large parks – Horn, Middle and Great. There are many buildings and structures that mark the extent of the links with the palace across the whole Eltham area. Newmarket Green on the Middle Park estate had one of the largest horse racing stables

in Europe in the 19th century, and the Middle Park Stakes are still run annually at Newmarket. The road named The Course on the Coldharbour Estate also marks the starting point for races that were run across the Great Park to Middle Park. Eltham Lodge on Court Road was built in the 17th century and is now home to the Royal Blackheath Golf Club, and the club occupies what was the Great Park of Eltham Palace.

All this emphasises the significance of Eltham stretching back over a thousand years and how its historic heritage is intertwined across that whole area from north of the High Street to Coldharbour in the south. Various options seek to divide this community or to link it with communities in Bromley to the south, with which it has few common characteristics. The only exception to this, it could be argued, is that it has links with the small part of Mottingham that is in the Eltham constituency. The 2023 Review of the Boundary Commission published its initial proposals for the 2023 Parliamentary Boundary Review on 8th June. The proposal for my constituency of Eltham removes Shooters Hill ward and places it in Erith and Thamesmead and the creation of an Eltham and Chislehurst constituency. I'm seeking to oppose the Commission's initial proposals in support of the submission from the Labour Party and the submission of Mr Peter Challis.

The Commission proposed creating a sub-region in southeast London, including Bexley, Bromley and Greenwich because the populations of these boroughs match the numbers of electors for eight seats. This limited the scope to be flexible when creating boundaries that are understood and acceptable to local people. This is emphasised in the community response to the proposals to place Shooters Hill in Erith and Thamesmead and to include Chislehurst in Eltham. The communities of Chislehurst and Mottingham have strong existing links and associations with adjacent communities in Bromley rather than those in Eltham, from which they are removed. The responses to the Commission's proposals from the people in Chislehurst indicate that this is the case. There is no logic to separating them in this way when less disruptive alternatives exist. The Commission's proposals to remove Shooters Hill from the Eltham constituency ends many years of close association between Shooters Hill and Eltham. Eltham has a long and enduring relationship with Shooters Hill, Plumstead and Woolwich to the north. All of these areas have been linked to Eltham within the local government and parliamentary boundaries over a century.

Eltham has been within the borough of Woolwich since 1899 and then Greenwich. It was initially in the Woolwich and then Woolwich West constituencies from 1885. The link with Shooters Hill continued when Eltham became its own constituency over 60 years ago, and it has continued to be part of this constituency throughout that time. Eltham and Shooters Hill have also been linked by the original train station in Westmount Road, which was opened in 1905 and called Shooters Hill and Eltham Park. Similarly, the Progress Estate in Eltham was built to house workers of the Royal Arsenal. The strength of the links between Eltham and Shooters Hill are reflected in the variety of comments on the proposals from the local community. This demonstrates how communities in Eltham look north towards Woolwich and Plumstead rather than south into Bromley.

Many residents of both Shooters Hill and Eltham who live either side of the Oxleas Woods have been educated or send their children to schools in each area. The community links between the areas are consistent and without a boundary, whereas the border between Bromley and Eltham will be easily recognisable to many local residents. Removing Shooters Hill, which has had a long historic relationship with Eltham, and replacing it with Chislehurst in Bromley will end longstanding historic links, which are understood by local people, confuse voters and risk causing disillusion with the political process.

New Eltham is a community that is clearly connected to Eltham. The common characteristics of the buildings and the roads that run from the north down Avery Hill and Footscray roads demonstrate that this is not a suitable location for a constituency boundary. The railway is in a cutting under the village, so does not provide a local or clear identifiable break that the local community will understand. The village name signs will be on either side of the boundary. New Eltham is a much larger shopping centre than Mottingham with ample parking and has a larger catchment area than Mottingham. It is not possible to justify separating off parts of New Eltham that attract shoppers from such a wide catchment area.

The Coldharbour Estate has been part of the Woolwich West and then Eltham constituency since it was built. There has been a Coldharbour ward as part of the constituency for over a hundred years. The estate was built following the Second World War to accommodate people from across the then borough of Woolwich who were displaced due to the Blitz. Because of this, the early residents of the estate had existing strong ties, not only to Eltham but also other parts of the borough, such as Woolwich and Plumstead. It is clear that despite Coldharbour bordering onto Mottingham and the borough of Bromley, most of its residents still look north towards the borough of Greenwich rather than towards Chislehurst and the borough of Bromley.

The Mottingham shopping precinct is very small with poor parking facilities, which means most of its patronage comes from local residents within walking distance. There are few attributes that link it with the community north of Sidcup Road. Mottingham Station is a long way from this precinct, and I have felt for a long time that the name of the station should be changed to Eltham Palace. While Mottingham Station falls within the borough of Greenwich and the current Eltham constituency, the vast majority of Mottingham is on the Bromley side of the border. The part of Mottingham within Greenwich is only two polling districts out of seven, with the other being made up of the Coldharbour Estate and New Eltham. I understand the desire of the Commission to avoid split wards wherever possible, as this has the potential to cause confusion for electors having multiple MPs for the same ward. However, due to local government boundary changes that are being introduced at the forthcoming elections in May, Greenwich will already be faced with split wards through the boundary points in the borough. Therefore, if any split wards are required in London, choosing to place them in Greenwich is a sensible solution, as the result of any changes will be split wards, regardless.

It is for these reasons that I'm opposing the Commission's proposals in relation to Eltham and the surrounding area. I've had sight of other proposals, such as those from the London Labour Party and the former Greenwich councillor Peter Challis. I believe that both these offer much better alternatives for the whole region and would ask the Commission to consider these options in great depth. If the Commission are not minded to adopt the proposal from the Labour Party, then I would urge you to adopt the proposal from Mr Peter Challis, which meets the Commission's criteria more closely than any other option. I would be interested to hear the Commission's reasons for rejecting that proposal should they do so.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Any points of clarification from that presentation? Can I have a microphone at the front, please? Roger, if you could read your name into the record, please, and then make your point of clarification.

ROGER PRATT: Thank you very much. Roger Pratt. I just wanted to clarify, Mr Efford, what you said about the Mottingham and Chislehurst North ward. Am I right in saying that you said there was a small part of Mottingham which does link with Eltham, but the rest of Chislehurst in the Mottingham and Chislehurst North ward doesn't link with Eltham?

CLIVE EFFORD: Yes. Most of the community that would identify itself as Mottingham is in Bromley. There's a community that's close to what would be called the Mottingham shopping precinct that probably would identify as Mottingham, but, largely, those people would identify as Eltham.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Any other points of clarification? Clive, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along this afternoon. Appreciate that.

My next speaker is not due until 14:00, and I have nobody else here waiting to speak. So, I'll adjourn until 14:00. Thank you very much, indeed.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Welcome back to the afternoon session on this second day of the hearings in London. Is that David? I was going to ask him to come up and he's left the room. No no it's okay, it's fine, thank you very much.

I'll start again. Welcome back to the afternoon session of day two in London. After a brief adjournment I said we would start again at 14:00. The person scheduled for 14:00 isn't actually here, so I'm going to go to someone else who is on my list and see whether Nagus Narenthira is available to come up and talk to us. Thank you very much. Would you like to come and sit up here? Sit in front of the microphone with the light on for me please. Nagus, I'll say the same to you as I say to everybody who's come to talk to me. Would you please read your name into the record. Tell us which town you are from in London, and then off you go in your own time.

NAGUS NARENTHIRA: I'm Councillor Nagus Narenthira. I represent Colindale in Barnet, and I'm here today to actually voice my residents' concerns about this, and I'm here to support the Boundary Commission's proposal of having a Hendon and Golders Green constituency including Welsh Harp and Kingsbury with Colindale and West Hendon. So this is why I'm here. I've got many points I'd like to raise to support this. The A5 is thought to be a natural divide, but it isn't. There are communities on both sides. We link together and work together. For a long time, it was in my mind that this A5 should not be dividing us. I was always thinking that Welsh Harp and Kingsbury wards and Colindale and West Hendon wards would actually be good to have in one constituency as Hendon and Golders Green.

If you think about dividing lines, A41, M1, the main line railway, they are much more of a dividing line than A5. A5 is an artificial divide. The points I would raise in support of that is because Kingsbury Swaminarayan Temple is on Kingsbury Road in Kingsbury ward, but there are a large number of the Indian Hindu community from Colindale and West Hendon that attend that temple. They are very much a big community, but, at the moment, because they are not in the same constituency, they feel a bit left out. It will be very good if they can be all in one constituency. There's another centre called Hanuman Community Centre in West Hendon, Broadway, and they are for Tamils, the Tamil community centre. Lots of people, especially from Kingsbury ward who live in the Tamil community, visit that West Hendon temple. So again there is a big link between that.

Kingsbury Road shops, which has got supermarkets, Indian supermarkets and that, are used by the Indian community a lot from Colindale and West Hendon. That will be good if they are all in one constituency. That's about the culture. I've got two or three other points I would like to raise. Colindale Traders' Association. There are rows of shops on either side of Colindale. One is in Colindale ward, and the other one is in Kingsbury ward. Those shops have got a traders' association. They formed a traders' association, and they meet twice a year to discuss the problems, because the problems are common for both sides of the road, and I attend those meetings along with Kingsbury councillors. We are working together and helping them. That area is actually called Colindale Town Centre. Colindale Town Centre is both sides of A5 and it's one unit. Therefore, that is, I think, a very strong point in supporting this.

Then again, Welsh Harp Reservoir and the boating and the football area is a big nature reserve. Welsh Harp is in West Hendon at the moment. Then there's a committee called the Welsh Harp Consultative Committee where Barnet councillors and Brent councillors sit on it. It's an official committee. I represent Barnet in that committee, and there are Welsh Harp councillors there as well. There are various other officers and various other organisations, like Natural England and the Rivers Authority; various people and various resident groups attend that meeting regularly to look after Welsh Harp area because that's a nature reserve and everyone enjoys visiting that. There's a natural link there as well that we are actually working together already.

Those are my main points. Also there are bus routes, 324, 204 bus routes that go across from Colindale to Kingsbury. There's a lot of transport. Schools - Kingsbury High

School is one of the main secondary schools that has intake from Colindale and West Hendon. There's no other school that is nearby as a secondary school. Hyde School, which is in West Hendon, has a large number of intake from Kingsbury ward and Welsh Harp ward, obviously. Colindale School, which is in Colindale, also has a large intake because it goes sideways like that in bands. Therefore, these people are actually using facilities across. Therefore, I urge you please to keep this proposal as it is because it's very useful for the community, and the community will actually enjoy being in one constituency. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Can I ask, are there any points of clarification? No, Nagus, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along.

NAGUS NARENTHIRA: Thank you for listening to me.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Next on my list who is here is David Pinto-Duschinky. Could you come forward, please? I hope I've got that surname pronunciation right, thank you very much. As I've said to everybody else who's come to speak to me, would you please read your name into the record, tell me where in London you come from, and then off you go in your own time.

DAVID PINTO-DUSCHINKY: My name is David Pinto-Duschinky. I live in Islington, but I was the parliamentary candidate in Hendon, and I have very deep experience of that community, which is why I am giving evidence on the proposals for Hendon and Golders Green, and Edgware and Stanmore. I'm here to speak in favour of the Boundary Commission proposals. I support them because I think they better reflect the actual communities that exist than both the current boundaries and also alternative proposals that have been put in response to the current Boundary Commission proposal. I just wanted to delve into a couple of reasons as to why. An important reason I support the proposal is because of its treatment of the A5 corridor. I think one of the big problems with both the current boundaries and the alternatives that have been proffered to the Commission is that they treat the A5 itself like an iron boundary, like a wall separating two completely separate communities.

I think this just doesn't reflect the lived reality, the organic communities and how people actually live on the ground. I think, actually, what using the A5 as a boundary does is cut communities in half. The reason I support the Boundary Commission proposal is because I think it will actually bring those communities back together. We heard briefly from the previous speaker, just picking up her points on the Welsh Harp, and I think there are so many ways you can talk about that. I'm very active, for instance, with the Friends of Welsh Harp. If you spend time there, what you learn is, whether it's the faith communities, with the Hindu community in Colindale using the Kingsbury temple, whether it's the Muslim community on the other side of the Harp using mainly the Hendon mosque, whether it's the way the different public services are used, whether it's even the fact that Hendon FC football club, the football club for Colindale, Hendon, etc, is based in Silver Jubilee park in Kingsbury. That's a clear organic community, and the actual current boundary splits it in two. I think the evidence for that is overwhelming, and

I think the argument for bringing both sides of the Welsh Harp into one seat, where they can be represented as the whole community they are, is overwhelming.

What I want to do is go a tiny bit further north and look a bit at Edgware and the proposal to take Edgware into an Edgware and Stanmore seat. I think, not just on the basis of demography, but history, geography, public services, faith communities, transport links. I think the evidence is overwhelming that this is a better arrangement than trying to split this community in two using the A5.

Let's start with the name. I don't know if you know, but the wards on both side of the A5, both the Harrow side and the Barnet side are called Edgware. That's a sign, if nothing else, about the fact it is one community, and history points to this. The very fact that the War Memorial is on the Harrow side, talks about the lost of Edgware, and covers both sides, both bits, Harrow, and Edgware and Burnt Oak, is a sign that not only is this one community but it has historically been so for a long time. I think this is hugely reinforced when one then looks at some of the other elements of the community. Firstly, commerce. The fact is that all of the community on both sides of the A5 shops on Edgware High Street and in The Broadwalk. I'm Jewish; the Jewish community in particular gravitates to the shops there but mostly doesn't live on the Barnet side alone.

The idea that the A5 is demarcating two separate communities simply isn't borne out by that fact. The same is true for transport hubs. The transport hub for the area is Edgware Station, and yes that is a north-south link, but when you look at the bus routes, the 606, the 340, the 288, the 86, they all fan out east-west from that bus station connecting the different parts of that community. It all points to the fact that the A5 is not a barrier. In fact, it's artificially cutting into an otherwise organic community.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Sorry to interrupt you. You said they fan out from that bus station; you were referring to Edgware tube station?

DAVID PINTO-DUSCHINKY: Yes. Edgware tube station has a large bus station.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you. I didn't know that, but I do now. Thank you.

DAVID PINTO-DUSCHINKY: Fantastic. They're overwhelmingly east-west, much less north-south, and this pattern is very much reinforced by public services as well. If you look at healthcare, the GP surgeries overwhelmingly cross that boundary. For instance, in Burnt Oak, you've got the Bacon Lane GP surgery, which overwhelmingly serves people on the Edgware and Canons side. Similarly, you've got the Edgware Community Hospital, which absolutely is at that nexus and serves the entire area. All the health infrastructure is very much across the A5, and the same is true of education. If you live in the area, what you find is that the Jewish community, particularly in Harrow, in the Canons area, very much send their kids east to places like Rosh Pinah and Minorah School.

The Hindu community is often going west to Krishna Avanti. You also have kids especially using the 606 bus heading to Totteridge Academy. So the idea that these are two separate communities, I realise that always boundaries get crossed, but these are deeply intermeshed; it's one organic community. I think that's also very much reflecting the faith diversity of it as well. As you'll be aware, Edgware has one of the country's largest Jewish communities, and in fact, the largest synagogue in Europe is Edgware Reform, right at the top of the Barnet side. I think I'm right in saying it's certainly a large proportion, and I think it's even the majority of their parishioners, come from outside the Barnet side, particularly from the Harrow side and also a bit beyond. The same is true for the Masorti and also for the Edgware United, which is further that way.

Again, the dynamic of the faith community does not see the A5 as a barrier but rather as an artificial separation to be crossed. The same is true absolutely for the Muslim community. The big mosques are the Islamic centre of Edgware, right on at the corner of Edgware and Burnt Oak, whose overwhelming parishioner group actually comes from the other side. The Afghan community is quite heavily represented, who also straddle both sides of the road going all the way down to Edgware. Again, it's another community being divided by the A5 not brought together by it. The same is true for the Hindu community. When you look at that, that is an organic community that would be much better represented as a whole rather than artificially divided in two. The other thing I would note on particularly the use of the A5: it's fascinating that we pick the A5, which is not a particularly large road, as this dividing line, whereas the big roads running down the heart of the Hendon constituency, the M1, the A41 or the massive railway lines are not considered major constituency boundaries. It feels like a slightly odd kind of construction.

Trying to summarise: the reason the Boundary Commission proposals make so much more sense is that they will actually bring organic communities back together. Particularly by dealing with the A5 corridor as it is lived rather than as it runs down this straight, but ultimately quite divisive line that is arbitrary and actually cuts organic communities in half. The final point I'd make in closing is I think you can apply that to other parts of particularly the Hendon seat. I make one final point, which is the north-south division is also artificial. Particularly in cutting a swathe and cleaving the Orthodox Jewish community between Golders Green and Hendon, a community that's closely knit, in two. I don't think it reflects the lived reality or the actual community dynamics of the area. For all those reasons, I think the Boundary Commission proposals are the best, and that's why I'd like to support them. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much, indeed. Are there any points of clarification on any of that? David, thank you very much for coming on this afternoon and talking to me. I appreciate it.

Thank you. The next person on my list who's scheduled to speak who's here this afternoon is Mike Katz. Mike, are you able to come forward, please? Thank you. You may have heard me say it before, but for everybody's information, if you could read your

name into the record, please tell us where in London you are from, and then, in your own time, off you go.

MIKE KATZ: Thank you. My name is Mike Katz. I live in West Hampstead and am responding in terms of West Hampstead and Kilburn, which is very helpfully up there on the screen. It's kind of building on comments that I submitted to the written call for evidence, or comments rather, BCE-71954. My name is Mike Katz. I'm speaking here primarily as a resident. I've lived in West Hampstead for more than 20 years. I've been a governor at our local secondary school, confusingly named Hampstead School, but it is right on the border. The top right of that connection there, around there. I've been a governor at our local secondary school, Hampstead, and my two daughters attend our local primary school, which is called Beckford on the map; it changed its name to West Hampstead Primary School over the summer.

For many years, I've been a member of the local community group, the West Hampstead Amenities and Transport Group. I'm not sure whether it's on the Neighbourhood Development Forum, but I certainly receive communications from them, and I take an interest in their activity. As I said, I support the boundary changes proposed for this constituency which strengthens its claim to be the seat for the NW6 postcode. All but two of the wards cover this post code and, indeed, most of the wards have it as the predominant postcode. I'm not entirely sure that it's a determining factor for the Boundary Commission, but it certainly kind of demonstrates that there's a cohesion to the proposed new boundaries. As it currently stands, Hampstead and Kilburn, which has been in existence since, I think, the 2010 election I believe, is overpopulated. It's too large a constituency with about probably more than 80,000 electors. Proposed new boundaries reduce it to about 75,000 voters.

As we know, in most Inner London seats, or what classes as an Inner London seat, despite the presence of some Brent wards in it, in actuality you end up with an elected representative, at both local government and parliamentary level, dealing with far more casework than just 80,000 or 75,000 people. I think it's important that the reduction takes place to make it manageable for whoever is elected as the member of parliament. That 75,000 votes brings it within the Boundary Review guidelines with minimal changes to the wards that currently make up the constituency. It will ensure more balanced political representation across northwest London without impacting on the core political and community identity of the parliamentary seat that will become West Hampstead and Kilburn.

In effect and, building on the previous witness's submission, it does the right thing in not treating the A5 as a hard and fast boundary. It's the Kilburn High Road for me rather than the A5. I live in Fortune Green ward, but I regard myself as a West Hampstead resident. I strongly suspect if you went up and down my road, which is a very short street, you would find that everybody says they live in West Hampstead rather than Fortune Green. I think it's really important that those two wards have been kept together. That hasn't always been the case in previous iterations of proposals for a seat covering this bit of geography. Residents living in Fortune Green and West Hampstead

use Mill Lane and West End Lane for their local amenities and local shops; they send their kids to the local schools, and they, obviously, would benefit from having one MP who can represent their needs and voice their shared concerns, particularly as there are large developments happening around the eastern side of West Hampstead ward to the O2 Centre, which is actually a little bit down from where you are; if you go down right in the bottom corner... There are big plans for that development, and that's going to impact all around that next to South Hampstead, West Hampstead, Froggnal, and indeed in Fortune Green. Similarly, we know that there will be developments in Cricklewood, which will also impact people living in both West Hampstead ward and Fortune Green ward. I'm glad that they are being kept together.

In the past, I've been a Kilburn councillor, so I'm really pleased that the Kilburn High Road and indeed its periphery on both east and western sides have been kept in one parliamentary constituency. This was not always the case in previous iterations and proposals for the seat's boundaries. Indeed, when I first moved to the area as Hampstead and Highgate, it was a Camden only constituency; that contiguity made sense in terms administratively, but it really doesn't make sense in terms of the way that residents use and regard themselves as living in Kilburn, which has its own political and cultural identity and quite a fierce political history. More practically, the way they use local services; the way they use local shops; the way they use local transport services, whether it's Kilburn Park tube and Kilburn High Road overground station. Or if you shoot up the High Road, you have Brondesbury Park and indeed Kilburn tube itself. A great number of buses, both crossing the High Road and going from Willesden and crossing to West Hampstead, but also going, possibly more importantly as the arterial routes, down into London and coming back from central London.

I think it's of absolute importance because the area is so deprived; it's got high levels of social housing on both the Camden and the Brent sides. It's got high levels of deprivation and need, and good old-fashioned poverty, low life expectancy, on both sides. It's really important that, if there has to be a boundary in local authority terms, at least there is a single elected representative at parliamentary level that has both a locus but, most importantly, an agency to bring both sides of the road together and to advocate for the people across the whole constituency, with the possibility I would guess of those in Harlesden & Kensal Green, in terms of levels of deprivation, need it the most. That's a fairly deprived part of the world I know from my understanding of that, which isn't as great as obviously the bits that I know around West Hampstead and NW6, but nonetheless, Kilburn really has needs and needs a single elected representative and that is what it's got.

I think there's also an issue around the wider use of schools and other facilities in those Brent wards which we're now looking at on the screen. There's quite an overlap in terms of schools used. Queens Park Community School, which is secondary school. Some of the primary schools that are used around Kilburn ward in Queens Park ward, on Salisbury Road and down in the South Kilburn estate, which are the bottom triangle bit of Kilburn which has just recently been regenerated. There's a great deal of overlap between those. It's important that those wards are kept together in a unified whole.

There's not a great deal more that I can say about this. Apart from returning to my original point which is I'm glad that the Commission hasn't seen the A5 as an impermeable barrier because, in truth, although the traffic is always atrocious - more work needs to be done to make it less of a barrier for those using it, a better place to live - if there has to be a split at local authority level, it's pleasing that there is still going to be one person responsible for the whole area.

There's just one more thing I'd like to add from my notes. If you zoom out a bit to see the seat in its entirety, I think there's a better balance. At the moment, the constituency is basically one-third Brent and two-thirds Camden. I think there is a case to be made that if you are going to have a parliamentary constituency that is split across two local authority areas, then it is better to have one that is better balanced between the two because I think there's a tendency or possibility, at least potential, for the Brent side, despite everyone's best efforts and endeavours, to be playing second fiddle to the Camden side and with, obviously, a greater balance. I think it's five wards versus four wards on the Brent side, from memory, in the new proposals. That means that there's a better balance.

I think, in many ways, it will be easier, from both a local authority perspective and for the MP and the MP's case workers and the practical logistical perspective, to make sure that everybody has, I'm not going to say equal representation because I'm sure they do at the moment, but there is a better regard to the needs of Brent residents and from Brent's perspective, they pay greater heed to the MP rather than focusing, because there are more wards in Brent in that new seat, than just thinking about Brent Central and the Brent North MP at the moment, and possibly the Hampstead and Kilburn MP - I'm not saying this is done on purpose - but being seen as a bit of an afterthought. I think that's an important factor. If you're going to go across a local authority boundary, do it in a balanced way. I know that's not always the case, but I'm glad that's been achieved in this. That's why I'm supporting this, and, as I said, it maps very well the NW6 postcode. I think that in itself has its own kind of political and cultural identity. For that reason, I'd like to support the Commission's proposals.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much, indeed. Are there any points of clarity from that presentation? No. Mr Katz, thank you very much for coming along this afternoon.

MIKE KATZ: Thank you for the opportunity.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: I have some people booked in this afternoon who haven't yet turned up. I only have one other person here who was on my list this afternoon, although not due yet. Jeffrey Littman. Are you in a position to come and talk to us?

JEFFREY LITTMAN: Yes.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: I will say the same to you as I have to everybody else. If you'd be kind enough to read your name into the record, tell us where you are from and, at your own convenience, off you go.

JEFFREY LITTMAN: Thank you very much, sir. My name is Jeffrey Littman, and I live in Heriot Road, Hendon, Hendon ward, Hendon. Really very much a Hendon person. I mean no disrespect when I say that, unfortunately, I shall scoot off fairly soon because I am an Orthodox Jew. We have this peculiarity, as the rest of the world might view it, that the Sabbath is not on a Saturday, it's Friday night and Saturday. It starts a good half hour before sundown, and it needs a bit of preparation. So, I've got to get back to Hendon fairly soon.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Well, I'm glad we could get you on a little earlier.

JEFFREY LITTMAN: Well I did actually change places with someone who originally was listed for now. Thank you sir. You can see from my headgear what my allegiances are. I'm an Orthodox Jew but, I have to say perhaps I lean towards a more eclectic side of things because I'm quite happy and friendly with people who belong to other religions. In fact my wife has been very active in the Council of... the way Christian and Jewish cross-cultural fertilisation. I'm happy to say a few years ago I actually accompanied her to an International Council of Christians and Jews meeting which was held in Istanbul and was broadened to include the Muslim community. It was fascinating I have to say. So I speak not from a very narrow viewpoint, but from an Orthodox Jewish perspective.

I know David Pinto well, I know Michael Katz as well, but I know David Pinto-Duschinsky, who spoke a little while ago and was most interested in the Barnet boundaries, and that's what I want to particularly to address, especially the proposed Hendon and Golders Green constituency. He is of a somewhat more left-wing type of Judaism. He can drive to the synagogue on a Saturday. We all have to walk, and that's really quite important because I'm going to talk quite a bit about the Jewish community of the area that you've been addressing with your proposals, and I'm in favour of them. This is a first for me. I have many times spoken against things [laugh]. I think that the logic of the Boundary Commission's proposals as I've read them is really impeccable and inevitably involves trade-offs and compromises, but you've got to do that.

If I may respectfully say so, I think you've got it right. I'd say at a preliminary point, though, talking about the Barnet proposals more generally. I used to live in Edmonton. As a teenager, Edmonton not having all that much in the way of attractions, I was usually going off to Palmers Green and Southgate for social activities and for my friendships. So, it's quite a logical extension to push that bit of what is now the Enfield constituency over into a Barnet constituency. I think that makes perfect sense. What's more, I went to a school that's barely three bus stops - it was in Edmonton - three bus stops away from the boundary of Enfield proper. I can't remember whether it was the borough of Enfield or a metropolitan district or some other district, I don't know, but it was Enfield. Edmonton was a borough, not an LCC borough. About a third of the students at the school were from Enfield. So I can speak from personal experience and familiarity in favour of what you propose to do there.

Turning my attention further west and north. My parents, despite bringing me up in Edmonton, they retired, they went to live in Stanmore, and I had a daughter who lived in

Edgware [laugh], so I'm thoroughly familiar with the whole area. I have to say, I think that uniting Edgware properly and joining it to Stanmore, certainly if you are Jewish, you look at the whole; it's very sensible. But let's turn to Hendon, where I have lived for more than 30 years now. Your proposal seems to me logical, sensible and entirely in accord with demographic reality. I don't want to repeat everything that David Pinto-Duschinky has said, but I just endorse everything he said. There is a huge Jewish community spread round, or concentrated I'd say, in Hendon, Golders Green, Cricklewood, which is sort of tacked onto Golders Green, just as Childs Hill is; we think of them as all one area.

I suppose what I'm addressing is really three important roads. The A5, which is called Edgware Road some of its way and The Hyde somewhere else. It's the old Roman road that heads out to, I think, it ends up at Holyhead. I think the Romans were in fact trying to bash the druids there, but then Queen Boudica made them come back. Then there's the North Circular Road, the A406, which is the dividing line between Hendon and Golders Green. Then there's a road, the number of which I can't remember, but it goes through Hendon and Golders Green, more or less north-south, it's called Brent Street in Hendon and it changes its name to Golders Green Road when it gets further south into Golders Green; it heads up to Golders Green Station. I'm addressing them because, I endorse what David Pinto-Duschinky said, there's an element of using them as artificial boundaries when they aren't.

The A5, which sounds like the most important and busiest and noisiest road, is one that people stroll across on a regular basis. The A406, the North Circular, is, in fact, harder to cross. You have to use a bridge. But, this is the point, Orthodox Jews on one side of it and on the other side of it do not feel that they are separated by this road. The synagogue's on my side; I go to a synagogue very close to where I live. People from the Golders Green area come and, we call it davening, they pray there regularly, and vice versa. Just as with Christians, you get preferences for a particular place of worship. You go to it, even if it's further away from you, but still within walking distance on Saturdays – you drive the rest of the week, though. That sort of crossover isn't a crossover. We are one community basically, and it's a shame that it was thought of that we should be split into different constituencies.

I appreciate that Finchley also has a considerable Jewish community, but I think of that as somewhat further away. Perhaps it's looking more to Hampstead Garden Suburb rather than to Hendon and to Golders Green. I'm not sure about it, but there's far less of a crossover there. Certainly the Jews of Hendon, the Orthodox Jews, don't drive on a Sabbath, a Saturday. Jews of Hendon and the Jews of Golders Green should be in one constituency where their common problems can be dealt with by one MP. That includes Cricklewood. The reason why I mentioned Brent Street, Golders Green Road is because that's where you tend to go to do your kosher shopping. If you can't find what you want on your doorstep in Hendon, you go up the road; it's down on the map, but it's up physically. You go up the road a little way to the Golders Green part of the road, and you've got the same shop, better shops or different shops there. It works the other way as well, so it's really a continuum.

The A406 shouldn't be thought of as a boundary or barrier; the Brent Street, Golders Green Road should be thought of as a unifying link road. The only reason why I mention the A5 is because I know that Muslims living on the far side of it, from my point of view on the west, come to their mosque on my side of it every Friday, and the same is true of Hindus. They've got this huge temple in Kingsbury. They're around on the eastern side of the road on the Burnt Oak, Hendon side. They cross over to carry out their devotions there. So if you are looking at things, as I tend to, through a religious prism, your proposals are entirely to be applauded, and I support them wholeheartedly. Thank you.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: You're very welcome. Are there any points of clarification? No. Mr Littman, thank you very much, indeed, for coming along this afternoon. I hope we've managed to get you away in good enough time.

I don't think we have anybody else yet waiting to speak. We'll break for 15 minutes and come back at 14:55. Thank you very much.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you. The hearing was adjourned until just before 15:00. It's now just after 15:00, but we have no speakers scheduled now until 15:30. I'm formally adjourning again until 15:30. Thank you very much.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Good afternoon. It's just coming up on 15:45. I said we would adjourn until 15:45, but I'm still without any further representation. So, we'll adjourn again until the next scheduled speaker at 16:00, and I'll update you then.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Good afternoon. Welcome back to the second day hearing in London. It's 16:00. I said we would adjourn until 16:00 until the next speakers have arrived. The next one on my list, who I believe is present, is Susan Badman. Would you like to come forward? I think you'd like to bring somebody with you, James Thompson. Would you both like to come and sit at the front, please. Whoever's going to sit first, sit on the side with the microphone. If I can say the same to both of you as I've said to everybody who's been along to see me over the last two days: if you can read your name into the record and the town that you are from, and then, in your own time, away you go.

JAMES THOMPSON: Thank you very much, indeed. I'm James Thompson. I'm the Chairman of the Dulwich Society, and this is Sue Badman, who's the Vice-Chairman. We are both from Dulwich, and Dulwich is a part of the current Dulwich and West Norwood constituency and is due to be, under the current proposals, part of the Dulwich and Sydenham constituency. So, just a brief history of the Dulwich Society. We are an amenity society in the area of Dulwich which covers about 1,200 households. It's largely

centred on the old manor of Dulwich, which was a property purchased in 1614 by Edward Alleyn, who was the Elizabethan actor portrayed by Ben Affleck in *Shakespeare in Love*. That land was donated to charity, and the successor organisations still exist today, set up under statute, and there's a scheme of management covering the area of Dulwich. We're an apolitical amenity society covering planning, architecture, traffic, licensing, woods, gardens and wildlife.

The current Dulwich and West Norwood constituency is on the western edge of the Southwark borough, with parts in Lambeth. The southern boundary of the existing area is bounded by a physical hill, ridge, covered by the remnants of the Great Northwood. In modern London, this is not an insubstantial physical barrier, separating Dulwich in the north from Sydenham in the south. Before handing over to Sue, I'd just like to make a couple of key points. Firstly, Dulwich as an area is highly integrated with Herne Hill and with West Norwood, which are to the north and west of the area we're talking about, and these areas straddle the Lambeth-Southwark border.

We have quite a few issues faced by anyone who is on a borough border, and we've certainly found that having a parliamentary constituency which bridges the border has led to a good level of coordination and has been helpful in resolving some of those borough border issues. The new proposed area would take away that north and west section of Herne Hill and West Norwood and add a southern and eastern part of Sydenham. I think the good integration from a physical, political and cultural level between Dulwich and the current north and western areas would be broken. The addition of Sydenham would be difficult because of the physical barrier, which leads to a transport and cultural and community barrier. Sue.

SUSAN BADMAN: Thank you very much. Just to repeat, I'm Sue Badman from the Dulwich Society. I've been a resident in the area of Dulwich for over 35 years. The Dulwich Society itself has been in existence for nearly 60 years and is regarded as one of the major stakeholders in the area. While we accept that some changes need to be made to make sure that all the constituencies have roughly the same numbers of voters, and that's fully understood, the Society does not support the current radical plans, as we see them, to change the constituency boundaries of the current Dulwich and West Norwood constituency and put large areas of Dulwich into a Dulwich and Sydenham constituency. Historically, we've had a much stronger connection with Norwood and West Norwood, and these changes would be a fundamental change to that historical precedent.

Dulwich and Sydenham are separated by a line of sports fields along the South Circular Road, which goes through the Dulwich area. It's backed up, as James has said, by a large area of woodland, part of the historic Great Northwood, extending from Lordship Lane through to Crystal Palace Parade. There isn't any road link between the two areas of Sydenham and Dulwich; there's no road link other than the Sydenham Hill, Kirkdale and College Road, which are approximately a mile apart. There's no direct rail connection between them. There are also, strictly speaking, no existing community connections between Dulwich and Sydenham, which both see themselves as strong

standalone centres. So in particular, the proposed revised constituency cuts across existing community ties. Dulwich tends to look north and west, as has been said. Dulwich community connections are with Norwood, Herne Hill and Brixton.

This is backed up by roads and bus routes and railways and major north-south connectivity. This is likewise for shopping, faith centres, GP surgeries and the main cemetery in Norwood. The Dulwich Society works closely with the amenity groups in Herne Hill and Norwood. Our strongest connections are with the Herne Hill Forum, Herne Hill Society, Norwood Forum and Norwood Action Group. Herne Hill is a key transport hub which serves the Dulwich community, with Herne Hill residents making good use of the Dulwich schools. There are about 12,000 children that crisscross the area every day during term time. There is a very strong interconnection. Parts of West Dulwich in the new constituency would be located within the new Streatham and Norwood constituency, and there are concerns that matters affecting West Dulwich will not receive the attention required.

The Dulwich Society covers north, south, east and west Dulwich, and we will be very concerned about that. A large part of West Dulwich lies also within the boundaries of the Dulwich Estate, and we wouldn't like the Dulwich Estate to be split in that way. We have very strong links with the Dulwich Estate, and it's very important that we can address issues of all the residents in the area. The current MP represents everybody's interests best by acting for Lambeth and Southwark, when many services are shared between the two authorities for the welfare of their residents, and we need to ensure that residents are properly represented to the relevant authority. Herne Hill has developed a distinctive character within the current Dulwich and West Norwood constituency. The proposals mean that it is now split between three constituencies and different service providers, which doesn't really make any sense and would cause problems when raising issues or concerns with MPs and authorities. The MP, in particular, the current MP, has a key convening role across those boundaries, and I think the residents of Herne Hill would feel poorly served if they had to address their issues to three different sets of authorities. In summary, I think the plan to link Dulwich with Sydenham should be reconsidered and Herne Hill should definitely remain with Dulwich, and the West Dulwich, Lambeth sections should be in the same constituency as the rest of Dulwich. Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you both very much. Any matters of clarification on any of that? No. James, Susan, thank you both very much for coming along this afternoon. I appreciate it.

SUSAN BADMAN: Thank you very much.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: The next person on my list, although not scheduled for just now, is Alison Moore. Alison, are you in a position to come forward? Thank you. Please take a seat on one of the chairs in front of the microphone. As I've said to everybody who's come to talk to me today, if you'd be kind enough to read your name into the record and where you are from in London, and then off you go at your own convenience.

ALISON MOORE: Thank you very much. My name is Alison Moore. I come from Barnet. I am an East Finchley councillor and a West Finchley resident. My original submission was on behalf of the Finchley and Golders Green Labour Party. I won't make a long submission, but I did want to make a series of points in support of my written submission, particularly in the context of the counter-proposals that have been submitted. As I detailed in my written submission, I am a longstanding Barnet councillor, as well as a former parliamentary candidate for Finchley and Golders Green. That's not in any way to be political, but it does indicate that, for me, this is not a paper exercise, and my submission stems from my local knowledge over the last 25 years.

My submission noted the challenge for you as a Boundary Commission of casting new constituency boundaries across London and detailed why the proposal for Finchley and Muswell Hill, and by association Hendon and Golders Green, was, we believed, supportable because it is obviously quite a change from the existing. I went on to detail many geographic, cultural, educational, faith and community ties between what I'll call the Barnet wards of East Finchley, West Finchley, Finchley Church End, Woodhouse and Garden Suburb, or maybe the Finchley wards is the easier way of putting it, and the Haringey wards of Fortis Green, Muswell Hill and Highgate. That set of constituents is separated by the A1000, principally.

A number of the counter-proposals cite strong ties across Finchley and Golders Green and between the Finchley wards and those in Childs Hill, Golders Green and the new Cricklewood ward. Perhaps it's helpful to say that I became more active locally around the time the previous boundary change happened. So, I've been through this transition before, and it is fair to say that we've built strong, practical and constituency ties across that Finchley and Golders Green configuration. However, while I know and value the communities right across the constituency, and obviously as a councillor, and I led the opposition for 10 years, so I've been very much a Barnet-wide person, the Finchley and Golders Green arrangements have only been in place since the mid-nineties. Prior to that, Childs Hill and Golders Green wards in particular - and, of course, Cricklewood ward didn't exist at that point - Childs Hill and Golders Green were part of what was then the Hendon South constituency.

So there is precedent previously, and, therefore, I think the argument that the two halves of the current constituency have more in common with each other than the Muswell Hill or Hendon wards, respectively, is not a particularly strong one. Childs Hill, or the western end of Childs Hill, and Cricklewood ward look to the A5. They're part of that A5 corridor. They use Cricklewood Broadway shopping centre; their transport links are largely through the Cricklewood Station or actually down the A5. Childs Hill and Golders Green, slightly to the east, have quite strong links for example, to Hendon, and there is a very strong Orthodox Jewish community. That community is very focal because it's usually within walking distance of synagogues, but there's quite a strong cultural tie there, and that's something I've come to know and experience as a councillor.

I'm happy to answer any questions on those links, but in my written submission, I presented evidence of links between the Muswell Hill wards and the Finchley wards, if I may call them that. Those included school catchments and faith communities; the Jewish community, generally, is more of a liberal and reformed branch across that part of London and, therefore, less tied geographically to their synagogues. Therefore, their communities span quite an area. As it happens, the Finchley Reform Synagogue and the Progressive Synagogue both draw from the Haringey wards as part of their constituency. Anecdotally, as an East Finchley councillor, I have had quite a lot to do with the Methodist church on either side of the border because they've run the local food bank historically, and so they've been part of that community.

So there are a lot of cultural links existing, and, while I wouldn't want my arguments to rest entirely on East Finchley, because, obviously, I know it best as a ward councillor, but I am a West Finchley resident and I know the whole area, they're indicative of a set of strong ties. I made reference to those in my submission for those between Golders Green and Hendon, and there are similar ties there around faith and cultural communities, schools, education, transport and other links. I think it's genuinely harder to lay out obvious, practical and community links between the two halves of the Finchley and Golders Green community. Of course there are some, and I would be daft to say that they weren't, but they're not as systematically demonstrable. That's partly because of distance as well as history.

If I may illustrate one in a slightly anecdotal way. Barnet council runs a series of residents' forums. They're based around the current three constituency areas, and earlier in their genesis, when I was part of an administration, we actually met at the two ends of Finchley and Golders Green alternately in reflection of the distance. That stopped because of budget cuts. When the venue was in the north of Finchley, it was literally a 40-minute drive for people from Childs Hill to come to raise their issues at the residents' forum, and there were no direct transport links. So, it was a car journey generally. So that was a nuisance, but it does illustrate that it didn't serve either community particularly well. Actually, it was notable that the issues that they brought to the forum really didn't have a huge amount of meaning to people from the other end. So I'll leave that bit there.

In summary, I think given the pan-London challenges of realigning the constituency boundaries, Finchley and Muswell Hill configuration is supportable. There are links and proximity, and I believe the arguments in favour of most of the counter-proposals are no stronger or not as strong as those for Finchley and Muswell Hill in the context of that broader challenge that you face in terms of matching those constituencies. I will leave it there if I may.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much, indeed. Are there any points or clarification? No. Alison, thank you very much for coming on this afternoon. I appreciate it.

The next person on my list, who is actually here, is Zoe Garbett. Are you in a position to come forward Zoe? Thank you. Straight in, straight on. Well done.

Zoe, can I say to you the same as I said to every speaker who's come to see me. If you can read your name into the record and also where you are from, and then, in your own time, off you go.

ZOE GARBETT: I'm Zoe Garbett from Hackney Green Party, but also a Dalston resident, and that's the capacity I'm speaking in.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. It's brilliant that you've got this public hearing and the opportunity for us to input. I'm Zoe, and I'm representing the Hackney Green Party as well as being a resident in Dalston, which is one of the wards that is in question in this review. The Green Party overall supports the aims of the Commission striving for more representative and fair democracy, but we have proposed a number of changes. We worked on these with our neighbouring Green Parties and with the London Green Party, which I understand that you've heard from, possibly today. I'm going to only speak to three of the proposals that we have made.

The main one is for Dalston to remain in Hackney North and Stoke Newington, and then we've looked at the numbers because we appreciate this is a numbers game. We looked at moving Stamford Hill West to Tottenham as well as Woodberry Down, which you've proposed, and Brownswood to move to Islington North instead of Tottenham. There's two other proposals that I think Islington would've spoken to. So I'm just going to focus on those three. Focusing on Dalston, I've lived in Hackney for about 10 years and Dalston on and off for about the last three years. I think this is about the kind of local connection that Dalston has got to Hackney and the best people to represent Dalston residents.

We've got Ridley Road Market, which is a famous historical market in the middle of Dalston; it's Hackney's kind of cultural heritage, and it's just incredibly important to the identity of Dalston and Hackney as a whole. I'm part of the Save Ridley Road campaign, which has been a fierce campaign to keep this market as it is, predominantly black-led and black-owned business. It's been this wonderful kind of social and cultural place for artists. It really represents everything that is Hackney, and to move Dalston out of Hackney would just really break up that identity. It's the same with Gillett Square, which is just above Dalston Kingsland Station. This is a public square that was opened 20 years ago. It is a centre of social enterprises and businesses for ethnic minorities, and it's just a hugely important part of – it's just above Bradbury Street there on the map. I've just come from there. There's a demo at the moment to kind of keep one of the African-Caribbean businesses open. Again, that shows Hackney's kind of history.

I'm also Chair of the Tenants and Residents Association for Rhodes Estate, which is just below Dalston Lanes where it says Crosby Walk. There's a whole estate there. That's a whole 1970s council estate, and I represent the residents there in speaking today. There are lots of people who have lived there since the 1970s and are just very connected to Hackney as a whole. In summary, what I'm saying is that I'm representing businesses, the residents of Rhodes Estate, as well as my own views and the Green Party views that Dalston really should remain in Hackney.

The reason for us saying that Brownswood should move to Islington North is because it's better connected. It's kind of physically separated from Hackney. The residents don't identify as fiercely as being in Hackney. A lot of them say they live in kind of Finsbury Park, or that area. It's actually what residents say. Not all of them, but it is just an affiliation they have to living closer to Finsbury Park Station than they do to the core of Hackney. It doesn't have that kind of social and cultural connection or significance to Hackney as Dalston does. I think in the current proposals, Dalston is a bit of an orphan ward being separated off at the bottom, whereas our proposal says to separate three of the wards from the top and Hackney remaining as substantially the same, as its whole. So, that was my main point.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you, Zoe. Any points of clarity required? No. Zoe, thank you very much, indeed, for coming on this afternoon. I appreciate it. Cycle safely home please.

Having just checked my list, I am expecting another speaker in about 25 minutes. So, we'll come back at 16:45 if we can, please. [Unidentified speaker provides information] Let's give ourselves just 10 minutes, then we'll come back at 16:35 and see how we're doing. Thank you.

[After a short adjournment]

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Welcome back to the hearing on day two at 16:35. The next person on my list, who I understand is present, is Thomas Davies. I understand Mr Davies, you'd also like to be joined by Rachael Robathan. Would you both like to come forward, please? If you'd like to take a seat in front of the microphone, and I'll say to both of you what I've said to everybody who's come to speak to me today, when you are ready, if you can read your name into the record and where you are from and then, in your own time, tell me what you'd like me to hear.

THOMAS DAVIES: Thank you very much. My name's Thomas Davies, and I'm here not only as someone who's lived and worked in the City of Westminster and the City of London for more than 20 years, but also in my role as the Chair of the Cities of London and Westminster Conservative Association.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: And you currently live in –

THOMAS DAVIES: Specifically Pimlico. Firstly, I'd like to thank the Commission for all of the hard work that's been put into the process so far and for the opportunity to speak today. I am conscious that this might be considered the graveyard slot being as it is at the end of what must have been a tiring two days. I will aim to keep my contribution brief and to the point.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: You have my full attention, and you may take as much time as you like.

THOMAS DAVIES: Thank you. My primary message is that the City of London and the City of Westminster must be retained within a single constituency. I have reviewed all 115 comments received as well as the 16 more detailed counter-proposals and the submissions from the four major parties. The importance of this issue is made clear, given that, of the submissions that relate to London as a whole, only 17 of these do not comment at all on this significant and unwanted change. Of the remainder, some 86% are in favour of retaining the two cities within one constituency. This includes both the Conservative Party and the Liberal Democrat submissions, but even the Labour Party qualify their position if keeping the two cities together leads to better outcomes elsewhere, which it does. The reasons for the strength of feeling are clear from the submissions: the strong historic links between the two areas that go back many hundreds of years; the importance of retaining the existing commercial connections between businesses and industries across the existing constituency, which don't just include the financial sector, but also the legal profession, tourism and entertainment; the significant challenges that will be faced in relation to policing, security and events were the two cities not represented by a single MP.

The reasons are also aligned with the remainder of the Boundary Commission's own stated objectives: alignment with existing constituency boundaries, the breaking of local ties, which I've just touched on, the inconveniences to businesses and residents that would be caused by the changes, and the strong travel connections which run east-west. For example, the Embankment with its new Cycle Superhighway, the Circle, District, Central, Hammersmith and City, Metropolitan and Jubilee lines, as well as the bus routes that run along the Strand and Oxford Street. Of course, just combining the two cities back together leaves a constituency which is too small. So, the question is what to add. The Boundary Commission's initial proposal, together with the many responses received, broadly make three suggestions: head east to include parts of Chelsea, head northeast and include parts of Kensington or head north and include parts of the existing Westminster North constituency.

I will later invite the leader of Westminster City Council to comment in more detail on the implications of the eastern end of the constituency, but it is clear that if the two cities are retained together, which they must be, then including the Chelsea wards does not work, as this would split the work of the MP across three boroughs. You would already have heard why heading northeast to Bayswater and Lancaster Gate does not reflect the fabric of those areas. The change of character as you head east along the Bayswater Road is clear, and aligning them with Notting Hill and the Kensington area makes more sense. Then we cast our eyes north. A number of proposals commented on the logic of keeping all four Royal Parks within one constituency as well as the strong connections that already exist between the Regent's Park, Marylebone and the West End. To complete the required constituency size, bringing in Abbey Road completes this picture. Abbey Road and Regent's Park wards form the area more generally known as St John's Wood, which again demonstrates how such an alternative proposal reflects the fabric of the local areas. I'm now delighted to ask Rachael Robathan to comment in more detail in some areas.

RACHAEL ROBATHAN: Thank you, Tom. For the record, my name is Rachael Robathan. I am the leader of Westminster City Council. I have also been the ward councillor for Knightsbridge and Belgravia since 2010. I currently live in St James's ward, but it's about to go into Vincent Square ward, in the south of the borough. May I say first that I support what Tom has said about the, very strongly support the proposal to keep the two cities together, reflecting the historic and existing links which exist there and also the proposal to expand north as Tom has set out. As a trustee of the Royal Parks, I would like to endorse the strong view that the Royal Parks within Westminster should be kept together. However, my biggest concern, and what I wish to talk about, is the proposal that Knightsbridge & Belgravia be moved out of Westminster.

I remind you again, that I've represented that area for 12 years. I've worked very closely with the three amenity societies, as you would expect, and the two neighbourhood forums. Indeed, I'm director of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum. I can state very clearly that the residents and those bodies do not see their links as being with the Kensington and Chelsea side of the border. They see them very much in the Westminster side. There are very clear issues that cut across Mayfair, Knightsbridge & Belgravia, St James, the West End. Currently, we are working across all of those areas with our MP to lobby around pedicabs and short-term lets, two very live current issues which cut across those areas. It's also worth stating that because of the Grosvenor Estate, which sits across Mayfair, Belgravia and indeed parts of Pimlico, there is also a continuity there which is very strongly embedded with the residents in those areas.

There are two international centres in London, as you'll be aware, Oxford Street and Knightsbridge. Westminster is the lead city council for both of the Business Improvement Districts. For those two, we work very closely also with our MP on those. Separating one out into a different parliamentary constituency would be disruptive, in my opinion. Just to conclude, I think there is no logic that I could see for moving Knightsbridge & Belgravia away from its existing links within Westminster and putting it in a parliamentary constituency with which it has no connections.

JOHN FEAVYOUR: Thank you very much. Are there any points of clarification from anybody? No. Thomas, Rachael, thank you both for coming along this afternoon. I appreciate your time. Thank you very much indeed.

Can I just check with colleagues and anybody in the room. Is there anybody else waiting to speak? I'm told that there isn't. We are now approaching 16:45. We were scheduled to close at 17:00, but the last speakers were scheduled to be on at 16:50. From one perspective, that slot is already finished. Because there is nobody else waiting to speak, I propose to conclude the hearing in London and thank you very much for coming along. That's the end of the hearing. Good night.