

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE LONDON REGION - 19 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
John Feavoyour, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Parjinder Basra, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed to increase the number of sub-regions in London, adopting separate North Central London and North West London sub-regions, and separate South Central London and South West London sub-regions. The Commissioners agreed revisions to the boundaries of over half the constituencies proposed in the initial proposals. Their revised proposals would also see an increase in the number of split wards in the region.

### **North East**

Recognising the strength of opposition and arguments against the initially proposed constituencies of Romford, Dagenham and Rainham, and Hornchurch and Upminster, Commissioners agreed the recommendation from the Assistant Commissioners to reconfigure these proposals using splits of the existing Hacton, St Andrew's and Emerson Park wards.

While recognising the opposition raised to initial proposals in other areas of this sub-region, such as Chadwell Heath and Hale End, they agreed with Assistant Commissioners that there were no convincing arguments to make revisions in these areas and therefore retained the initial proposals for the remaining constituencies in this sub-region.

### **Newham and Tower Hamlets**

While noting that there were individual responses in opposition to the initial proposals for this sub-region, Commissioners agreed that there had been no persuasive arguments to revise those proposals, and additionally noted the good overall support that had been received for the proposals in this sub-region. Commissioners therefore agreed to make no revisions to constituencies in this sub-region.

## **North Central**

Commissioners noted the views and evidence provided in relation to the initial proposals for constituencies crossing the A5/A41, and the conflicting evidence of local ties in relation to the proposed Finchley and Muswell Hill constituency. Based upon the analysis of representations and counter proposals, the Commissioners agreed that one of the counter proposals received for the borough of Barnet, specifically that establishing constituencies of Chipping Barnet, Hendon, and Finchley and Golders Green, should be adopted, as it provided a better solution against the statutory factors. Commissioners also agreed to adopt the counter proposal received for four proposed constituencies of Islington North, Islington South, Hackney North and Stoke Newington, and Hackney South and Shoreditch, accepting that persuasive evidence had been received that the City of London's stronger ties were to Westminster rather than Islington. Commissioners accepted the arguments made in favour of a counter proposal for constituencies in the borough of Enfield should be adopted, and the Tottenham constituency. The Commissioners further agreed a Hornsey and Friern Barnet constituency, a Hampstead and Highgate constituency, and a Holborn and St Pancras constituency.

## **North West**

The Commissioners accepted the arguments made against the proposed constituencies covering City of London, City of Westminster, and Kensington and Chelsea, and agreed the counter proposals for constituencies of: Chelsea and Fulham; Kensington and Bayswater; Queen's Park and Little Venice; and Cities of London and Westminster. They agreed to unite both Harefield wards in the Uxbridge and South Ruislip constituency: although they also identified some potentially negative aspects to this approach, and considered that it was important to seek views specifically on this matter during the consultation on the revised proposals.

Commissioners recognised the strength of opposition to the initial proposals regarding Whitton ward, but agreed with the Assistant Commissioners' conclusion that no alternative option or counter proposal better reflected the statutory factors than the initial proposals and thus recommended no changes to the initially proposed constituencies of Brentford and Isleworth, Feltham and Heston, and Twickenham.

Commissioners agreed the adoption of a counter proposal for the borough of Brent, considering that it would better reflect community ties. They also agreed to adopt a Harrow East constituency put forward in a counter proposal. They adopted name changes only for some constituencies, to become Harrow West, Hayes and Harlington, and Ealing Southall. They retained the initially proposed Ealing North, Ealing Central and Acton, and Hammersmith and Chiswick constituencies.

## **South West**

The Commissioners noted the strong opposition to the proposed transfer of the Longthornton and Cannon Hill wards, and the inclusion of the wards of Old Malden and St James in the Wimbledon constituency. Commissioners therefore agreed the adoption of a counter proposal for a Richmond Park and Kingston Town constituency, and a Surbiton and

The Maldens constituency. They then agreed a modified version of a counter proposal for the borough of Merton: a Mitcham and Morden constituency including the whole of Merton Park ward and a Wimbledon and Coombe constituency retaining Wandle ward. The Commissioners noted the impact of this on central Kingston particularly, and agreed that representations should be actively sought on options for this area specifically in the revised proposals report.

As there had been good overall support for the initial proposals for constituencies in the boroughs of Sutton and Wandsworth, Commissioners retained these proposals.

### **South Central**

Commissioners noted the mixed response to the initial proposals for the borough of Croydon and strong opposition to the division of the existing Dulwich and West Norwood constituency in particular. They agreed an amended version of a counter proposal received for the borough of Croydon and part of the borough of Lambeth, comprising revised constituencies of Croydon East, Croydon South, Croydon West and South Norwood, and Streatham and Norbury. This removed the split of Waddon ward and instead split the Woodside ward. They agreed a Lambeth Central constituency largely adopting a counter proposal, but including the whole of Thornton ward. They subsequently adopted a counter proposal for the rest of the boroughs of Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham, which they considered better reflected the statutory factors across the sub-region as a whole.

### **South East**

Noting the overwhelmingly positive response to the initial proposals for Bexley borough, and for the Greenwich and Woolwich constituency, Commissioners made no changes to the initial proposals for the constituencies of Bexleyheath and Crayford, Erith and Thamesmead, Greenwich and Woolwich, and Sidcup and Welling, except for reverting the name of the latter to Old Bexley and Sidcup. In light of further analysis and site visits by the Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed to retain the initial proposals for the constituencies of Eltham and Chislehurst, and Beckenham (but adding Penge to the latter name), and revising the Bromley and Orpington constituencies, keeping Petts Wood and Knoll ward in the Orpington constituency by transferring Biggin Hill ward to the Bromley constituency, and splitting Darwin ward.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE EAST MIDLANDS REGION - 19 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Peter Fish, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Alison Blom-Cooper, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed to reduce the number of sub-regions, combining the Leicestershire sub-region with the Lincolnshire and Rutland sub-region in order to facilitate a better pattern of constituencies overall. Commissioners agreed revisions to the boundaries of less than half of the 47 constituencies proposed in the initial proposals. Their revisions would increase the number of split wards proposed.

### **Derbyshire**

Although there had been a small amount of opposition to the initial proposals in isolated areas, Commissioners agreed there was not persuasive evidence to make revisions, other than to revert to the constituency name of Erewash, in light of strong local support for that.

### **Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Rutland**

#### *Leicestershire*

Noting the strong evidence received of local ties in the city of Leicester, and opposition to a constituency crossing the City boundary, Commissioners agreed to adopt a counter proposal with slight amendments, splitting the Evington ward in order to prevent a number of negative aspects that would result otherwise.

Commissioners agreed to adopt a counter proposal to include The Wolds ward in the Loughborough constituency, in light of strong opposition to its initially proposed inclusion in the Melton and Syston constituency. The Hinckley and Bosworth and North West Leicestershire constituencies had been generally supported, so Commissioners agreed no revision to these.

There had been significant opposition to the proposals in the south and east of the county, and having considered all the evidence presented, Commissioners agreed to adopt the counter proposal that had one constituency cross into the Rutland and Lincolnshire sub-region, which then allowed revised Harborough, Mid Leicestershire, and South Leicestershire constituencies, better reflecting the statutory factors overall.

### *Lincolnshire and Rutland*

The proposed Gainsborough constituency had been well-received and the Commission therefore agreed to retain it. Taking account of all the evidence received on local ties in the Grantham, Lincoln, and Sleaford and North Hykeham constituencies, Commissioners felt that none of the counter proposals reflected the statutory factors better than the initial proposals, and thus recommended no change to these constituencies. The combination of the sub-region with Leicestershire also allowed for small modifications to the Boston and Skegness, Louth and Horncastle, South Holland and The Deepings, and Rutland and Stamford constituencies, bringing them closer to the existing composition, which Commissioners therefore agreed.

### **Northamptonshire**

Commissioners noted the conflicting views expressed in relation to the two Northampton constituencies. Following analysis of the evidence received, they adopted a counter proposal for Northampton to include the Abington and Phippsville, Castle, and Dallington Spencer wards in a Northampton North constituency and Billing and Rectory Farm, and Riverside Park wards in Northampton South.

While recognising the opposition to the Daventry and South Northamptonshire constituencies from the Earls Barton and Irchester wards in particular, Commissioners agreed there was no solution identified that would not have even less desirable knock-on impacts throughout Northamptonshire and therefore retained the initial proposals for these constituencies.

Commissioners noted the particularly large amount of opposition received to the proposals for Wellingborough and the east of the county. Noting strong evidence from representations and site visits to include the Finedon and Irthlingborough communities within Wellingborough, and the Raunds ward with Corby and East Northamptonshire, Commissioners adopted a counter proposal received for the east of the county that included two further split wards - Irthlingborough ward along the A6 (to keep Irthlingborough itself with Wellingborough) and Corby Rural (placing some rural villages surrounding Corby with similar rural areas in the Kettering constituency).

### **Nottinghamshire**

Commissioners agreed to revert to the constituency name of Bassetlaw, in light of strong local support for that. While noting concerns raised in consultation responses regarding Newark and Sherwood constituencies, Commissioners judged that the initial proposals reflected the statutory factors better than any counter proposal received, and therefore

retained the proposed boundaries, although agreed to change the name of the latter to Sherwood Forest.

Following analysis of all the arguments received, and evidence of site visits by Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners decided to retain the proposed constituencies of Broxtowe, Nottingham North and Kimberley, and Nottingham South, which they felt better reflected the statutory factors overall than the counter proposals.

Noting the particularly strong degree of opposition to the initial proposals for Ashfield and Mansfield, after analysing all the alternatives presented, they considered the statutory factors were best reflected in the counter proposals which sought to include the Pleasley Hill and Bull Farm ward and part of the Berry Hill ward in the Ashfield constituency, returning Brick Kiln and Grange Farm wards to the Mansfield constituency.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE SOUTH WEST REGION - 19 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Anita Bickerdike, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
John Feavoyour, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

The Commissioners agreed to retain the sub-regions within the South West region unchanged, and revise the composition of just under half the 58 constituencies proposed in the initial proposals. Their revisions would increase the number of split wards.

### **Gloucestershire and Wiltshire**

#### *Gloucestershire*

While acknowledging the links of Springbank ward to Cheltenham, Commissioners felt those links were not as strong as wards in the town centre of Cheltenham, and following analysis of representations and the site visit by Assistant Commissioners, decided to retain Springbank in the Tewkesbury constituency, as in the initial proposals, and also retain the initially proposed Cheltenham constituency. On the basis of the evidence and site visits, Commissioners also agreed to: transfer the Chalford ward into Stroud, and the Kingswood ward out; transfer the Barnwood and Churchdown St. John's wards out of Tewkesbury and take in the Winchcombe and Isbourne wards.

Similarly, Commissioners noted the opposition to the Cirencester and North Wiltshire constituency, but considered that a cross-county constituency was unavoidable. They did agree to transfer the Northleach and Coln Valley wards and rename the constituencies North Cotswolds and South Cotswolds, with the latter taking in the Kington ward. Commissioners agreed no revisions to the constituencies of Filton and Bradley Stoke, Forest of Dean, or Thornbury and Yate.

#### *Wiltshire*

Reflecting a number of concerns raised about the initial proposals and local ties between the town in the area, Commissioners agreed a revised configuration for the Chippenham, and

Melksham and Devizes constituencies, which included elements of both counter proposals received. This allowed for the towns of Chippenham, Corsham and Calne to be included in the same constituency and the rural wards that surrounded Devizes to continue to be in the same constituency as the town. They agreed minor changes to other constituencies in the county, together with a split of the Chiseldon and Lawn ward to support the pattern of constituencies across the wider area without significant negative consequences, including the urban element north of the M4 in Swindon South and the rural element south of the M4 in East Wiltshire.

## **Dorset**

Commissioners considered all the representations received, noting general support for the constituencies in the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole area, and Mid Dorset, and the mix of support and opposition in relation to North Dorset, South Dorset and West Dorset. They did not feel that there was sufficient evidence to support the splitting of wards contained in a counter proposal relating to the latter three constituencies, or for an exchange of the wards of Chickerell and Upwey & Broadway. They therefore agreed to retain all Dorset constituencies as initially proposed, other than agreeing to revert to the name of Mid Dorset and North Poole in light of strong local opinion.

## **Avon, Somerset, and Devon**

In light of general support, Commissioners agreed no revisions to the five initially proposed Bristol constituencies of Bristol Central, Bristol East, Bristol North East, Bristol North West, and Bristol South. Equally, as there had been general agreement and support for the initial proposals across Somerset, Commissioners made no revisions to the Bath, Bridgwater, Frome, Glastonbury and Somerton, North Somerset, Wells and Mendip Hills, Weston-Super-Mare, or Yeovil constituencies as initially proposed. They did accept arguments for the inclusion of the Norton Fitzwarren & Staplegrove ward in Taunton constituency, and the renaming of one constituency to North East Somerset and Hanham.

While noting some opposition to the cross-county constituency of Tiverton and Minehead, Commissioners felt that this was necessary to support the generally supported pattern of constituencies across the sub-region, but did agree to the constituency taking in the Upper Culm ward. Commissioners recognised the strength of opposition to the proposed Exeter and Exmouth constituencies, and the evidence of strong ties of the Priory ward to Exeter. They therefore agreed to exchange the latter for the Pinhoe ward, and rename the constituency to Exeter East and Exmouth. They further agreed the latter should include the Exe Valley ward, but transfer two wards to Honiton (to also have Sidmouth added to the name).

On the basis of evidence received and a site visit, Commissioners were not convinced by the counter proposals suggesting the split of the Devonport ward instead of the Peverell ward in Plymouth and thus retained the Plymouth Sutton and Devonport, and Plymouth Moor View constituencies as initially proposed. In light of general support for other Devon constituencies, Commissioners also largely retained these unchanged from initial proposals, although did decide to adopt the constituency name of South Devon.



## **Cornwall**

Having considered all the evidence and counter proposals for the Cornwall sub-region, the Commissioners agreed revisions largely following the counter proposal that more closely resembled the existing pattern of constituencies. The revisions contained the China Clay area wholly within one constituency through the inclusion of the Roche & Bugle ward in the St Austell and Newquay constituency, which in turn saw inclusion of the St Columb Major, St Mawgan & St Wenn ward in North Cornwall.

The Commissioners also agreed with evidence to exchange the ward of Threemilestone & Chacewater with that of Constantine, Mabe & Mawnan, but saw no persuasive evidence to revise the proposals for the St Ives and South East Cornwall constituencies.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR NORTH WEST REGION - 22 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Andy Brennan, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
David Brown, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

The Commissioners agreed no change to the number of sub-regions in the North West region, with the number remaining at three. They agreed revisions to the boundaries of just under half of their initially proposed constituencies in the region, and increased the number of split wards proposed.

### **Cumbria and Lancashire**

#### *Cumbria*

The Commissioners recognised the significant opposition to the initially proposed pattern of constituencies in most of Cumbria, and particularly the evidence of communities and local ties in the centre and south of the county. With the exception of retaining the initially proposed Carlisle constituency, Commissioners agreed a new pattern of constituencies for the remainder of the county that was significantly revised. They recognised potential issues with this new pattern, not least the geographic extent of the proposed Penrith and Solway constituency, but considered that these revised proposals on balance provided a better overall pattern of constituencies across Cumbria, which better reflect the community identity evidence received, supported by the site visits of the Assistant Commissioners.

#### *Lancashire*

Largely in consequence of the revisions in Cumbria, Commissioners also revised and renamed the constituency crossing the county boundary, now proposing a Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency that would take in the two Lune Valley wards, and the Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale ward from Cumbria rather than the Bowness & Levens ward.

Commissioners noted particularly strong opposition to the initial proposals for a number of constituencies around the south of the Ribble Valley, with almost universal opposition to the

proposed West Pennine Moors constituency. Reflecting the evidence received from consultation responses and the site visits of the Assistant Commissioners, they therefore agreed significant revisions to the pattern of constituencies across this area, which they felt both better reflected the evidence of local ties and in many places was closer to the pattern of existing constituencies. In particular, Blackburn, Chorley, Hyndburn, and Rossendale with Darwen could all remain either wholly unchanged, or unchanged except to realign with local government ward boundary changes.

Commissioners agreed to unite the two Skerton wards in – and revise the name to – Lancaster and Wyre constituency. They also agreed that there were no convincing arguments for any revisions to the two Blackpool constituencies, Fylde, or Southport.

## **Cheshire and Merseyside**

### *Merseyside*

Commissioners acknowledged the criticism of the initially proposed Liverpool Norris Green constituency in the initial proposals and agreed to restore the name of the constituency to Liverpool Walton. They also agreed to split the Molyneux ward to keep the town of Maghull together without causing a domino effect of disruption to the surrounding – largely supported – constituencies: polling districts C4, C5, and C6, covering Aintree, would be included in the Liverpool Walton constituency, with the remainder of the ward included in the Sefton Central constituency, although Commissioners also agreed to explicitly seek views as to whether a different split of the ward might be better, noting that the built up area of Kirby also extended over the constituency boundary into the ward.

Commissioners accepted the arguments in favour of a further split ward, dividing the Whiston & Cronton ward in order to allow both St Helens constituencies to be much closer to their existing shape and avoid breaking local ties in those constituencies as a result. The southern St Helens constituency should accordingly be named St Helens South and Whiston. Commissioners saw no strong arguments for any other revisions elsewhere in Merseyside.

### *Cheshire*

Commissioners agreed with requests and evidence to bring the three towns of Middlewich, Northwich and Winsford into a single Mid Cheshire constituency, with consequential minor revisions to the surrounding area. They also agreed with evidence to split the ward of Lymm North & Thelwall, to respect the different local ties of its two fundamentally disparate parts without causing widespread disruption to neighbouring generally well-received constituencies.

Commissioners acknowledged the strong opposition to the splitting of Chester between two constituencies, but noted the many responses that recognised it as far from ideal, but nonetheless the best and most appropriate solution for the wider area without significant splitting of wards. Commissioners did agree to revise the constituency name to Chester South and Eddisbury, as well as amending the proposed name of another constituency to Ellesmere Port and Bromborough to recognise the Wirral part of that constituency.

Commissioners did not consider there was sufficient evidence to warrant further revisions elsewhere.

### **Greater Manchester**

Commissioners recognised the opposition to the initial proposals for the Leigh South and Atherton, and Makerfield constituencies. In order to avoid significant consequential disruption across the west of Greater Manchester, Commissioners therefore agreed revision to these two constituencies including splits of both the Atherleigh and Leigh West wards. The areas of Dangerous Corner and Pickley Green would be included in the proposed Makerfield constituency, which would then be unchanged from the existing constituency apart from the addition of these communities: the Leigh and Atherton constituency would include the remainder of both these wards. Commissioners noted that the proposed ward splits, while technically dividing two 'existing' wards, would actually only split one of the new wards being implemented in Wigan (Leigh West).

Commissioners acknowledged the strong and widespread opposition to the initially proposed Failsworth and Droylsden constituency, citing evidence received of geographical separation and a lack of community ties, which the Assistant Commissioners supported following a site visit. Commissioners therefore agreed to maintain the existing Stalybridge and Hyde constituency entirely unchanged, and propose a revised Ashton-under-Lyne constituency containing all the remaining Tameside wards, except the three Denton wards that would form a Gorton and Denton constituency with the City of Manchester wards of Burnage, Gorton and Abbey Hey, Levenshulme, and Longsight. They then agreed that the wards of Ardwick, Fallowfield, Hulme, Moss Side, Rusholme, and Whalley Range be included in a new, compact Manchester Rusholme constituency, with a Manchester Central constituency then consisting of Ancoats and Beswick, Cheetham, Clayton and Openshaw, Deansgate, Miles Platting and Newton Heath, Piccadilly, and the two Failsworth wards.

Commissioners saw no strong arguments to make any other revisions to their proposals elsewhere in Greater Manchester.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE NORTH EAST REGION - 22 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Tim Foy, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Simon Barnes, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed to retain the number of sub-regions at three, but accepted the arguments for no longer keeping constituencies wholly contained within Gateshead. They revised the boundaries of over half the constituencies proposed in the initial proposals, and increased the number of split wards proposed.

### **'North of Tyne' sub-region: Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside and Northumberland**

Commissioners acknowledged the persuasive evidence and arguments that Whitley Bay's ties were south to Tynemouth rather than north, but did not agree that extending Hexham to take in Bedlington and Choppington would be a suitable alternative. They instead agreed a redesigned pattern of constituencies across the area of Newcastle, North Tyneside and south east Northumberland, which aimed to reflect as much as possible the evidence provided of local ties across this area. The revised proposals included three ward splits: in the Riverside ward (at the A19 Tyne Tunnel); the Kingston Park South & Newbiggin Hall ward (using the physical barrier of the A696 as the divide); and Castle ward (split along the Hazlerigg Civil Parish boundary). As there was conflicting evidence received in relation to Callerton & Throckley ward, demonstrating local ties with both Northumberland and Newcastle, Commissioners decided to leave it as initially proposed.

The Commissioners felt there was not a strong enough case to recommend moving Longhorsley ward into a constituency including Morpeth, and thus agreed that the boundaries of the constituencies of Berwick and Morpeth, and Blyth and Ashington remain as in the initial proposals.

### **‘North East’ sub-region: County Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland**

While Commissioners noted the support from Gateshead itself for keeping constituencies wholly within the local authority boundary, they acknowledged that there was no way to achieve a better solution for the rest of the sub-region (particularly Sunderland) without having constituencies cross this boundary. Commissioners therefore agreed to adopt a counter proposal for this whole sub-region, which allowed Sunderland to be split between fewer constituencies and particularly addressed the strong opposition to the initially proposed Jarrow and Sunderland West constituency.

The same counter proposal allowed the City of Durham constituency to include Durham University and Sherburn ward, as well as the adjacent western wards of Brandon, Deerness, and Esh and Witton Gilbert, which the consultation had said are strongly connected to the city through amenities and transport links. Ties between Spennymoor and Tudhoe would also be maintained. Commissioners accepted that this revised pattern was dependent on splitting Trimdon and Thornley ward, placing the five polling districts from the north of the ward into an Easington constituency. They noted that this area had been included in an Easington constituency in the past and had good connections to the east via the A181.

### **‘Tees Valley’ sub-region: Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton on Tees**

Commissioners agreed to retain the Hartlepool constituency as initially proposed, given support for it being kept unchanged from its existing boundaries and coterminous with the local authority.

Commissioners accepted the arguments in favour of a counter proposal that would change the existing Redcar, and Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituencies only to realign to new ward boundaries of the Saltburn ward, better respecting local ties and existing constituencies, and splitting Middlesbrough between fewer constituencies. While Commissioners acknowledged that the proposals split Thornaby between constituencies, they had seen no evidence for a solution that would not cause significantly more disruption across the sub-region, but they did agree to rename a constituency Middlesbrough and Thornaby East.

Commissioners noted the divergent views on the allocation of wards within Darlington local authority between the proposed Darlington and Stockton West constituencies, but decided to retain the initial proposals, as there was some support for this pattern and alternatives would have required combining the North East and Tees Valley sub-regions, crossing the County Durham/Darlington boundary.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR THE EASTERN REGION - 22 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Jane Kilgannon, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
David Brown, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed a change to the composition of two of the sub-regions, with the county of Suffolk being paired in a sub-region with Norfolk, and Essex forming its own sub-region. Commissioners agreed to revise the composition of almost half the constituencies in the initial proposals and increase the number of split wards.

### **Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire**

Commissioners noted relatively little opposition - and general support – across the majority of constituencies in this sub-region. They considered counter proposals made in relation to Luton and Bedford, but noted also support for the initial proposals in those areas: taking account also of site visits conducted by the Assistant Commissioners, they did not feel the case to revise the proposals in these areas was sufficiently persuasive.

Commissioners acknowledged the representations regarding the Sandridge ward and its link to St Albans, due to its geographical proximity and shared community ties. However, they did not feel that the case to split a ward here was sufficiently strong, and the whole ward could not be moved, as it would bring the Harpenden and Berkhamsted constituency below the permitted electorate range. They were not persuaded by the arguments for revisions elsewhere in this sub-region, other than a change of name from Three Rivers to South West Hertfordshire.

### **Cambridgeshire**

Commissioners noted the conflicting evidence received for the initially proposed Peterborough and North West Cambridgeshire constituencies, but were ultimately persuaded that the initial proposals should be maintained, as this better respected local tie and the existing constituencies. While noting the concerns raised about the splitting of ‘the

Giddings' villages, Commissioners did not feel that this warranted the splitting of a ward, and therefore agreed to also retain the proposed Huntingdon constituency.

Commissioners examined the arguments for how wards should be allocated between the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire constituencies, but on balance felt that the persuasive evidence was in favour of retaining the initial proposals, with Trumpington retained in Cambridge and Cherry Hinton transferred to South Cambridgeshire. Commissioners acknowledged representations from areas north of Cambridge that their ties were to that city rather than to St Neots, but saw no convincing alternative constituency proposals: they did, however, agree to change the name to St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire, to reflect the two distinct parts of the constituency. Commissioners were not persuaded to change the name of North East Cambridgeshire to Fenland, as the composition was unchanged from the existing constituency, and the Fens extend much further than the constituency.

## **Essex**

Commissioners noted a substantial amount of evidence had been received regarding the proposed constituencies of Colchester, Harwich and North Essex, and Witham. Following a site visit by Assistant Commissioners, and reflecting the evidence received, Commissioners agreed that the Prettygate ward was an integral part of Colchester, as was the built-up area of Lexden & Braiswick ward, although there was also a geographically large element of the latter that was rural. They therefore agreed that this ward be split, with the rural polling districts remaining in the Harwich and North Essex constituency. As this meant some other part of Colchester need to be taken out in order to meet the maximum electorate requirement, Commissioners agreed all of Old Heath & The Hythe ward should be included in the Harwich and North Essex constituency (noting part already was), as should Mersea & Pyefleet ward, given evidence received of its lack of ties to Witham. These additions to Harwich and North Essex meant it needed to transfer two largely inland wards to Clacton to remain within the permitted electorate range

Commissioners recognised the strong opposition to the initial proposals for Southend, and agreed to split the Pitsea South East ward in Castle Point. This allowed for different alternatives in Southend, and Commissioners agreed to propose the approach that kept the three city centre wards together in a wholly urban and suburban constituency.

Commissioners further considered and accepted arguments for revisions reflecting evidence of local ties in relation to the constituencies of: Witham; Maldon; Braintree (removing the initially proposed cross county boundary constituency of Haverhill and Halstead); Saffron Walden; Harlow, Epping Forest; Brentwood and Ongar; Thurrock; and South Basildon and East Thurrock. They agreed there was insufficient evidence to revise the initially proposed constituencies of Basildon and Billericay, Chelmsford, and Rayleigh and Wickford.

## **Norfolk and Suffolk**

Commissioners agreed arguments that the Norwich South constituency should remain unchanged from the existing boundaries, with the Old Costessey ward remaining in the South Norfolk constituency and the Thorpe Hamlet ward being retained in the Norwich South



constituency. Norwich North constituency would therefore need to take in something additional, and Commissioners agreed this should be the two wards of Drayton North and Drayton South, from the Broadland constituency, noting proximity and strong road connections. They agreed that Great Yarmouth could return to its existing constituency boundaries: as this returned two wards to North Norfolk, the Fakenham area could also be returned to a renamed Broadland and Fakenham constituency. No revisions were justified for North West Norfolk.

Commissioners accepted the arguments in favour of a cross-county boundary Waveney Valley constituency, noting evidence of community ties and a sense of identity shared across the river in this area. This constituency formed a key part of a large counter proposal for the rest of Norfolk and Suffolk that the Commissioners agreed to accept, which saw revisions to most of the remaining initially proposed constituencies in the sub-region, but these revisions brought them closer to the composition of existing constituencies and better respecting local ties. The only remaining constituencies Commissioners agreed should be unchanged from the initial proposals were: Lowestoft; Ipswich; and South Suffolk.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR WEST MIDLANDS REGION – 23 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Sir David Natzler, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Ruth Bagley, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed there was no strong argument to change the number or configuration of sub-regions in the West Midlands region from that initially proposed. They agreed with arguments to revise the composition of less than a quarter of the constituencies in the initial proposals, but increased the number of split wards.

### **Birmingham and Solihull**

Commissioners appreciated the concerns raised by residents of Castle Bromwich and Smith's Wood during the consultation periods, but noted other responses had accepted the need for a constituency crossing the boundary between Birmingham and Solihull, and the absence of other valid alternatives received. Although multiple alternatives had been considered, none appeared to provide a more suitable option, and Commissioners therefore agreed to retain the initial proposals.

Commissioners noted the overall support for the proposed Selly Oak, Edgbaston and Northfield constituencies in South Birmingham, and thus proposed no changes to these initial proposals. As there were very few responses and no counter proposals for the areas that would make significant improvements, Commissioners also decided to retain the proposals for the Hall Green, Yardley, and Ladywood constituencies. They did not accept the arguments for a change of name for Sutton Coldfield constituency, and therefore retained this as initially proposed, effectively unchanged from its existing composition.

Commissioners acknowledged the significant opposition to the proposed configuration of the Erdington and Perry Barr constituencies. Noting the evidence of historic community links between the Kingstanding and Oscott wards and the Erdington area, and following a site visit by the Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed to revise the proposals to include Kingstanding and Oscott wards in Erdington, include Aston and Lozells wards in

Perry Barr, and split the Stockland Green ward, including three polling districts that appeared to be a distinct 'Slade Road community' in Perry Barr and retaining the rest in Erdington.

## **Coventry**

The Assistant Commissioners noted the substantial evidence on the various community links within Coventry. They recognised the counter proposal that aimed to unite the Tile Hill area, and the Lower and Upper Stoke areas, but also noted the community evidence received in favour of retaining the initial proposals, which also represented less disruption to the existing constituencies and moving fewer electors. On balance, Commissioners felt the statutory factors favoured retention of the initial proposals.

## **Herefordshire**

Commissioners noted the evidence and arguments concerning the Stoney Street and Holmer wards, and the significance of the River Wye. They agreed to swap these wards between the Herefordshire constituencies as initially proposed. Commissioners saw no strong argument for any further revisions in Herefordshire.

## **Shropshire**

Commissioners acknowledged the significant number of representations in both consultation periods relating to the Telford constituency. They recognised the ties of both Hadley & Leegomery ward and Priorslee ward to Telford, but noting also that the initial proposals only realigned the constituency to new local government ward boundaries, the Commissioners did not agree the more substantial change set out in a counter proposal.

Commissioners accepted the strong local support for retention of the constituency name of The Wrekin, and agreed that change. They also agreed to adopt the constituency name of South Shropshire, again following strong local support for that in preference to the initial proposal.

## **Staffordshire and the Black Country**

### *Staffordshire*

Commissioners recognised the general support for the composition of Cannock Chase, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and Burton proposed constituencies and did not recommend making any revisions to them. They were not persuaded to change the name of the latter, as its boundaries would be unchanged from the existing, and there had been limited support for the name change.

Commissioners acknowledged the strength of argument in favour of retaining the Streethay area in the Lichfield constituency, and accordingly revised the initial proposals, splitting the ward of Whittington & Streethay.

Commissioners noted the considerable opposition received regarding the composition of the proposed Stoke-on-Trent South constituency, in particular the inclusion of rural wards from

Staffordshire Moorlands. However, Commissioners felt no better alternative for Stoke-on-Trent and the surrounding area had been received that would meet the statutory electorate requirements, and therefore retained the initial proposals.

Similarly, Commissioners acknowledged the strong opposition to the proposals for the rest of central and south Staffordshire, but noted that other responses regretted the disruption to the existing constituencies in Staffordshire but accepted the lack of realistic alternatives that met the statutory criteria without spreading the disruption across a wider area. On this basis the Commissioners did not agree a counter proposal to reconfigure the sub-regions, which would have the effect of causing significantly more disruption instead to generally well-received constituencies in the Black Country and Birmingham. They therefore agreed to retain the initial proposals for Stafford, Stone and Great Wyrley, and Kingswinford and South Staffordshire.

### *The Black Country*

Commissioners retained the initial proposals for Dudley, Halesowen and Stourbridge constituencies, as they were all largely supported in the consultation period and no persuasive evidence had been received to suggest that alterations would better reflect the statutory factors across the sub-region.

Commissioners noted the opposition to the transfer of the St Pauls ward into the West Bromwich East constituency and the opposition to including the Rowley ward in a constituency with Smethwick. After considering the evidence received from consultation responses and site visits by the Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed to amend the proposals for the area, resulting in three revised proposed constituencies: Smethwick; West Bromwich; and Tipton and Wednesbury. While recognising that this disrupts the existing constituency boundaries more than is strictly mathematically necessary, they felt that this configuration was an improvement on the initial proposals, particularly from the perspective of preserving local ties.

The Assistant Commissioners acknowledged the opposition to the proposed changes to Walsall borough constituencies and the different counter proposals received. Following analysis of the evidence from responses and a site visit, Commissioners agreed to retain the existing Aldridge-Brownhills constituency with the addition of Pheasey Park Farm ward and part of the Paddock ward. This would then create a Walsall and Bloxwich constituency, which reflected the evidence of good ties between the two areas.

Commissioners recognised the opposition particularly from the Blakenhall ward that its ties were to the east rather than west, but also noted support for their proposals for Wolverhampton constituencies. Alternatives received appeared to create more disruption for the sub-region as a whole, so the Commissioners decided to retain the initial proposals in Wolverhampton.

### **Warwickshire**

Commissioners acknowledged the opposition to the removal of the Budbrooke ward from the Warwick and Leamington constituency as proposed. Although a counter proposal had been

considered, including a site visit by Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed that there was not sufficient cause to split the ward as the counter proposal would require.

There were no strong arguments for amending the proposed constituencies elsewhere in Warwickshire, so Commissioners agreed to retain the initial proposals across the sub-region.

## **Worcestershire**

Commissioners noted that responses had been limited and generally supportive in relation to the initial proposals for the Worcester, West Worcestershire and Bromsgrove constituencies and therefore retained these. Similarly, responses had supported the boundaries but not the name of the initially proposed Kidderminster constituency, and the strength of local support for retention of the Wyre Forest constituency name persuaded Commissioners to make this revision.

Commissioners acknowledged that the necessary expansion of the Redditch constituency would – as proposed - cut across the ties between the Harvington and Norton ward, and Evesham. However, no suitable alternative had been identified that would comply with the statutory requirements and cause less disruption to the sub-region as a whole, so the Commissioners decided to retain the initial proposals for Redditch, and Droitwich and Evesham constituencies.

## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER REGION - 23 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Professor Paul Wiles, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Suzanne McCarthy, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners, as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

The Commissioners agreed there was no strong argument to change to the initially proposed number or composition of sub-regions in the region. They agreed revisions to the composition of over half the constituencies in the initial proposals, and increased the number of split wards proposed.

### **Humberside and South Yorkshire**

#### *South Yorkshire*

Noting very little opposition to the initial proposals in the Borough of Barnsley and City of Sheffield, the Commissioners agreed to retain the initial proposals across these authorities. They agreed to transfer the Rother Vale ward to the Rotherham constituency, on the basis of the evidence received on local ties.

Commissioners noted the opposition in some responses to the proposed Doncaster East and Axholme constituency, but determined that South Yorkshire and Humberside should be combined as a sub-region to allow for more flexibility when creating constituency arrangements across both counties, noting that if this crossing was not proposed, it would result in extensive disruption to the existing arrangement of constituencies across the sub-region.

While recognising some opposition on specific issues, such as the inclusion of Tickhill & Wadworth ward in the proposed Doncaster Town constituency, and the inclusion of Thorne & Moorends ward in the proposed Doncaster East and Axholme constituency, the Commissioners did not consider that any alternatives received would better satisfy the statutory factors than the initial proposals, and therefore agreed to no change to the initial proposals.

## *Humberside*

Commissioners noted the significant opposition and number of counter proposals received in relation to the configuration of constituencies in Kingston upon Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. Having considered all the evidence and objections, and taking account of the findings of a site visit by Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed a revised set of proposals for the area, expanding Hull constituencies into the built-up areas west of the city (although not as far as the South Hunsley ward), rather than the more rural east. The East Riding constituencies they agreed to reconfigure into constituencies of: Beverley and Holderness, Bridlington and the Wolds; and Goole and Pocklington. This approach included a split of the Wolds Weighton ward, which allowed for an overall better reflection of the existing constituencies, without significant wider disruption. While Commissioners noted that Assistant Commissioners considered that splitting the Central ward between constituencies might bring together more of Hull City Centre in the same constituency, they were not persuaded by the evidence received. They therefore determined the whole ward should be included in the Kingston upon Hull North constituency.

Commissioners noted the opposition across North East Lincolnshire mostly concerned the grouping of the towns of Grimsby and Cleethorpes in one constituency, and the inclusion of the villages of Waltham, New Waltham and Humberston in a constituency with more industrial towns to the north, such as Barton and Immingham. However, after a site-visit to the area by Assistant Commissioners and examining counter proposals received, Commissioners felt no alternative offered an overall better solution for the area, and agreed to retain the composition of the initially proposed constituencies, although they agreed to change the name of the proposed South Humber constituency to Brigg and Immingham.

## **North Yorkshire and West Yorkshire**

### *North Yorkshire*

Commissioners accepted the extensive evidence presented in the representations for including the Claro ward in the proposed Harrogate and Knaresborough constituency. While recognising the objections to the remainder of the proposed Wetherby and Easingwold constituency, Commissioners did not feel that any alternative received offered an improvement on the initial proposals without significant disruption to other areas.

Commissioners noted the strength of opposition to the inclusion of the Bedale and Tanfield wards in the proposed Thirsk and Malton constituency, but also noted the acknowledgement of other responses that no counter proposal would provide a superior solution for the wider area overall. Commissioners therefore agreed no change to the composition of the initially proposed constituencies in the area, but agreed a name change to Richmond and Northallerton.

### *West Yorkshire*

Commissioners acknowledged and accepted the arguments for an alternative configuration of the Bradford South and Bradford West constituencies that would move far fewer electors, and represent minimal change to the existing constituencies in the city, although requiring a

split ward. They accordingly agreed to split the ward of Little Horton between Bradford East and Bradford South, which had been suggested in responses. They also agreed that Ilkley be added to the Keighley constituency name, on the strength of local support for this.

Commissioners noted the widespread opposition to the initial proposals for the seven constituencies wholly or partially within the boroughs of Calderdale and Kirklees. Taking account of all the evidence of local ties received across the Kirklees authority area, Commissioners agreed to unchanged initial proposals for the Huddersfield and Colne Valley constituencies, but revised constituencies of Spen Valley, Dewsbury and Batley, and Wakefield West and Denby Dale (shared with Wakefield), which included splits of the wards of Dalton and Kirkburton. Within Calderdale borough, the Commissioners accepted the arguments in favour of splitting the Ryburn ward, which then allowed revised Calder Valley and Halifax constituencies to be wholly contained within the local authority boundary.

There had been further widespread opposition to the configuration of constituencies in the Leeds local authority area. After assessing all the evidence and arguments, including that of site visits by the Assistant Commissioners, Commissioners agreed to retain the initial proposals for Leeds North East and Leeds North West, but revise the configuration of Headingley, Pudsey, Morley, Leeds Central and Leeds East. Finding the best possible solution for the latter two proved particularly difficult: Commissioners considered no option for this area ideal, as a ward split between them was required in order to avoid significant disruption elsewhere. After lengthy discussion, they did not agree with the recommendation of the Assistant Commissioners and ultimately decided to keep the Gipton & Harehills ward intact, but split instead the Temple Newsam ward.



## **MINUTES OF THE DECISIONS OF THE COMMISSIONERS ON THE REVISED PROPOSALS FOR SOUTH EAST REGION - 24 AUGUST 2022**

Mr Justice Lane, Deputy Chair  
Colin Byrne, Commissioner  
Sarah Hamilton, Commissioner  
Howard Simmons, Lead Assistant Commissioner  
Simon Tinkler, Assistant Commissioner  
Tim Bowden, Secretary to the Commission  
Deputy Secretary to the Commission  
Head of Corporate Services  
Review Manager  
Review Officer  
Business Support Officer

The Assistant Commissioners presented the evidence and their recommendations to the Commissioners as set out in the paper.

### **Overview**

Commissioners agreed there were no strong arguments to change to the sub-regions in this region. They agreed to revise the composition of around one third of the initially proposed constituencies proposed in the initial proposals, and increase the number of proposed split wards.

### **Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey**

#### *Berkshire*

Commissioners noted the opposition to the proposals for some parts of the county, and noted the evidence provided, including that submitted in support of counter proposals, and that of a site visit by the Assistant Commissioners. The balance of evidence they felt supported the logic of the initial proposals, and they particularly noted the negative impact adoption of a counter proposal to preserve unchanged Reading constituencies would have on initially proposed constituencies that were otherwise well received (especially Earley and Woodley, and Wokingham). Commissioners therefore agreed to make no changes to the initial proposals for the county.

#### *Hampshire*

Commissioners noted the opposition to the proposed Fareham and Waterlooville constituency, and counter proposals advocating for the retention of a Meon Valley constituency. However, they agreed that the arguments for adopting such a proposal were outweighed by the significant body of support for the proposed Winchester constituency, which would necessarily be disrupted under these counter proposals, and therefore agreed to retain both constituencies as initially proposed. Commissioners did agree with arguments to rename the proposed Hedge End constituency to Hamble Valley.

Commissioners noted a swathe of proposed constituencies along the Hampshire coast and up the Test Valley had received little comment and general support, and therefore agreed to retain the initial proposals for these, other than a reversion to the names of New Forest East and New Forest West.

The Commissioners accepted the arguments that Bordon and Whitehill should not be divided, and therefore agreed to retain the split of Oakley & The Candovers ward, but transfer The Candovers part of the ward (south of the M3) from North East Hampshire to East Hampshire, thus enabling the transfer of Whitehill Hogmoor & Greatham ward to the Farnham and Bordon constituency. Commissioners did not feel there were persuasive arguments for amendments to the proposed Basingstoke and North West Hampshire constituencies, and agreed to retain these as initially proposed.

### *Surrey*

Commissioners agreed with arguments in favour of including South Park & Woodhatch ward in Reigate, and agreed to make the revision, in turn including Ewhurst ward in Dorking and Horley, and Elstead and Thursley ward in Godalming and Ash.

Commissioners also accepted the evidence of strong ties between Cobham & Downside and Oxshott & Stoke D'Abernon wards: although they felt that a counter proposal to include both wards in Esher and Walton by excluding the Hersham ward was not an acceptable solution, they agreed that the wards could instead be kept together by including both in Runnymede and Weybridge (renamed from Weybridge and Chertsey), with Oatlands & Burwood Park ward transferred to Esher and Walton. Further north, Commissioners agreed that the two Egham wards should be included in Runnymede and Weybridge, and that Virginia Water and the two Englefield Green wards should be included in the Windsor constituency, on the basis of the evidence received of local ties in these areas.

Commissioners felt there was insufficient evidence received to support any revisions to the remaining initially proposed constituencies in the county.

### **Buckinghamshire**

Commissioners acknowledged the concerns received in relation to the proposed Princes Risborough constituency, but agreed that it remained the best option for any configuration of a constituency in the centre of the county, and felt that numerical and geographic constraints make such a constituency unavoidable. They did not feel that any changes to the southern boundaries of the constituency would better reflect the statutory factors, but agreed to change the name of the constituency to Mid Buckinghamshire, to reflect the disparate nature of the communities it covered.

Commissioners were persuaded by evidence that Beaconsfield town had been inappropriately split between constituencies in the initial proposals, and accordingly agreed to split the Gerrards Cross ward, including Gerrards Cross itself in the Chesham and Amersham constituency and allowing the whole of Beaconsfield town to be included in the revised Beaconsfield constituency.

Commissioners felt there was no strong evidence to make further revisions to composition of initially proposed constituencies in the county, but did agree to a number of name changes on the basis of strong local support: Wycombe; Milton Keynes North; and Milton Keynes South.

### **Isle of Wight**

Commissioners noted strong support for the general east and west division of the Isle of Wight in the initial proposals, and that the alternative north and south configuration of a counter proposal drew significant opposition. However, they did accept the evidence presented for an amendment, to have the West constituency span both sides of the River Medina, in turn allowing the wards of Ventnor & St Lawrence to be included in the East constituency. They also agreed that the names of the two constituencies should be Isle of Wight East and Isle of Wight West, reflecting strong local opinion.

### **Kent**

Commissioners noted the substantial objections from the three Ashford borough wards that were included in the proposed constituency of Faversham and Mid Kent, and agreed to transfer them instead to the proposed Weald of Kent constituency, noting that although they had ties to Ashford, ties to each other were stronger, and they could not all be kept together in the Ashford constituency without significant disruption elsewhere. This transfer additionally allowed the Hawkhurst and Sandhurst ward to be returned to Tunbridge Wells constituency, which would see it unchanged from the existing composition as a result.

Commissioners noted the several counter proposals received regarding the two Thanet constituencies. However, after analysing these they agreed there was not persuasive evidence that this would be an improvement on the initial proposals for the area as a whole, and as such they agreed to retain both constituencies as initially proposed, although renaming West Thanet to Herne Bay and Sandwich, recognising the two distinct coastal communities within the constituency. Commissioners were not persuaded by arguments for revisions elsewhere in the county.

### **Oxfordshire**

Commissioners recognised the concerns in responses from West Oxfordshire residents proposed to be included in the Bicester constituency, but determined that any changes necessary to allow them to remain in a constituency with Witney would be too disruptive to every other constituency within the county, which had otherwise been well-received or uncontentious. They did, however, agree that the West Oxfordshire element should be represented in the name and therefore amended it to Bicester and Woodstock.

Commissioners were persuaded by evidence from residents in Stanford ward of their ties to Wantage, and therefore agreed to include the ward in the Didcot and Wantage constituency. Commissioners were not persuaded by any other arguments for revisions to the initial proposals in this county.

## **Sussex**

### *East Sussex*

Commissioners agreed there were no strong arguments to revise the initial proposals for Bexhill and Battle, Eastbourne, and Hastings and Rye constituencies, but did accept the evidence to support the transfer of Hartfield ward - from East Grinstead and Uckfield to Hailsham and Crowborough (and a renaming of the latter to Sussex Weald).

Commissioners recognised the significant concerns expressed particularly from villages north of Lewes that the initial proposals had cut across their ties to the town, but were not persuaded that any alternative received would produce a better pattern of constituencies for the sub-region as a whole.

In respect of Brighton and Hove, Commissioners were persuaded of the argument in favour of returning the Queen's Park ward to the Brighton Kemptown constituency, which required a split of the Hanover and Elm Grove ward, although they agreed to seek views on exactly where that split should be drawn. They also accepted the strong local support for a change of name to Hove and Portslade for the western constituency in the authority.

### *West Sussex*

Commissioners noted the opposition to the initial proposals spanning the local authority areas of Adur, Arun, Chichester, Worthing, and the southern part of Horsham, with particular concerns about the combining of inland rural areas of the South Downs with very urbanised coastal areas in the initial proposals. Multiple counter proposals had been received and considered, with none seeming to provide a good solution for the area as a whole, but Commissioners ultimately agreed to adopt a counter proposal that kept an additional constituency (East Worthing and Shoreham) completely unchanged, and a Worthing West constituency that would be little changed from the existing constituency, losing only the two Rustington wards and gaining the Angmering & Findon ward. The Commissioners then agreed to propose constituencies of Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, and Chichester, that were more tightly drawn to include all of their core urban areas, allowing in turn the remaining Arundel and South Downs constituency to share an inland rural and agricultural identity common across the South Downs national park area.

Commissioners were not persuaded by arguments for revisions to the remaining three constituencies in the county.