



# Epping Forest District Council

## **ELECTORAL AND COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 8th March, 2012**

**Place:** Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

**Room:** Council Chamber

**Time:** 7.00 pm

**Democratic Services  
Officer** R Perrin - Office of the Chief Executive  
rperrin@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors C Whitbread (Chairman), D Stallan (Vice-Chairman), C Finn, D Jacobs and J Philip

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

(Chief Executive) To declare interests in any item on the agenda.

**4. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Purpose of Committee:

(a) To consider and make recommendations to the Council on:

(i) requests for community governance reviews and how and when they should be carried out;

(ii) any future Parliamentary and District reviews;

(iii) the outcome of such reviews;

(b) To be responsible for progressing such reviews, including conducting public consultation in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007;

(c) To keep under review the need for a larger membership of the Committee bearing in mind its future workload;

Conduct of Reviews

The Committee shall be authorised to agree the detailed arrangements for consulting local communities on such reviews subject to the policy and budget approved by the Council.

Policy Issues

The Committee shall if necessary consider and make recommendations to the Council on future policy to be adopted in regard to such reviews;

**5. MINUTES (Pages 3 - 4)**

To confirm the minutes of the last meeting of the Sub-Committee.

**6. REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES - SECONDARY CONSULTATION (Pages 5 - 32)**

To consider a report on the secondary round of consultation on the Boundary Commission for England's proposals for new Parliamentary constituencies.

## EPHING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Committee:** Electoral and Community Governance Review Committee **Date:** Thursday, 20 October 2011

**Place:** Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 5.30 - 5.55 pm

**Members Present:** Councillors C Whitbread (Chairman), D Stallan (Vice-Chairman), D Jacobs, J Philip and Mrs C Pond

**Other Councillors:** Councillors Mrs M Sartin, Mrs A Grigg and R Morgan

**Apologies:** C Finn

**Officers Present:** I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), W MacLeod (Elections Officer) and R Perrin (Democratic Services Assistant)

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### **26. Substitute Members (Council Minute 39 - 23.7.02)**

Councillor C Pond attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor C Finn.

### **27. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct.

### **28. Terms of Reference**

The Terms of reference were noted.

### **29. Minutes**

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2011 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to minute 20 Substitute Members being amended by deleting "Councillor Whitbread" and substituting "Councillor Stallan".

### **30. Parliamentary Constituency Review**

The Assistant to the Chief Executive reported on the drafted response to the Boundary Commission for England's review of the Parliamentary Constituencies.

The general responses from the committee supported the initial proposals from the Commission and were set out as follows;

(a) that the committee had concentrated the discussions on the 3 constituencies affecting the District and were not commenting on the Eastern Region or the rest of the Essex Sub Region;

(b) that the Epping Forest Constituency as amended, met the legal requirements as to the number of electors and by joining Lambourne Ward with the rest of the constituency it would create a logical single unit. The committee paid particular attention to the fact that Lambourne appears to have strong links with the Theydon Bois area therefore the choice that the Commission had made seems to be logical;

(c) that in terms of the Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar Constituencies the committee had restricted the comments to noting the new configuration of District Wards both within the area and neighbouring Councils. The reason for that was that the Committee thought that the Council should strongly support the Epping Forest Constituency as now proposed because any weakening of that position would mean changes could be made as a result of representations from any other area. The committee wishes to send a strong message to the Commission that the new Epping Forest Constituency had our firm support;

(d) that the Committee was also very pleased to see that the District Wards covering the Parish of North Weald remain in their present Parliamentary Constituency because there was a history of this area being transferred between different Parliamentary Constituencies over the years and the Committee was glad that the initial proposals of the Commission provide continuity.

However in relation to Matching Green, the Council had already made an order to include all of Matching Green in Matching Parish and that had now been supported by the Local Government Boundary Commission which had made consequential changes to the County Electoral division and District Ward boundaries to align them with a new Parish boundary. This left an anomaly as the Parliamentary boundary would still follow the previous route. With that in mind the Committee asked for strong representations to be made to the Commission for the anomaly to be put right and the Parliamentary boundary made to follow the other three boundaries in that area. It was suggested that if the anomaly was perpetuated a degree of voter confusion could be expected during a Parliamentary election which was likely to be held to concurrently with another local government election as these would be on different boundaries. It was preferable, in the Committee's view, that this should be addressed now and boundaries unified for 2015.

The Parish Councils of Moreton, Bobbingworth & The Lavers and Matching had been advised of the change in the Parliamentary boundary at Matching Green as this would transfer 160 voters from the Brentwood and Ongar Constituency to Harlow Constituency. This would be within the 5% tolerance prescribed in the rules to which the Commission was working. However, the changes in the Matching Green boundaries had taken place after the publication of the electoral registers on which the review was based. The Committee were therefore conscious that it would need a decision to waive the criteria to allow the change to be made. However, the Commission had some discretion to take account of current boundaries provided that does not contradict the electoral quota and the Committee took the view that it was worth making this point.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(1) That the proposed formal response (set out in the Appendix to the report) to the Boundary Commission for England in respect of the review of Parliamentary Constituencies be approved subject to amendments to 2.2 and the removal of word "adverse";

**Electoral and Community Governance Review Committee**  
**Thursday, 20 October 2011**

- (2) That a copy of the Council's views be sent to the three local members of Parliament;
- (3) That the relevant Government Minister be advised ( with copies to the local MPs) about the Council's concerns about the Constituency boundary at Matching Green; and
- (4) That the action taken by the Committee in authorising the Assistant to the Chief Executive (accompanied by Councillor R.Morgan, the local District member for the Matching area) to attend the Commission's hearing about the review on 31 October 2011 in Colchester and present these views in person be confirmed.

**31. Matching Green Boundary**

The Assistant to the Chief Executive reported that the Local Government Boundary Commission had agreed to make the order realigning the County Electoral Division and District Ward boundaries with the new Parish boundary. A copy of the order was awaited.

**CHAIRMAN**

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 At the last meeting, the Committee agreed its general approach to the review of parliamentary constituencies as follows:

(a) to support the proposed revisions to the Epping Forest constituency;

(b) to limit comments on the proposed changes to the Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar constituencies to a statement of general support;

(c) to make representations to the Boundary Commission for England concerning the anomaly in the parliamentary boundary at Matching Green, bearing in mind changes to other local government boundaries in that area; and

(d) to authorise the Assistant to the Chief Executive to make representations to the Commission regarding (c) above, at the public hearings being held in Colchester on 31 October and 1 November 2011, if possible accompanied by the District Member for the Matching Green area, Councillor R Morgan.

1.2 The report submits draft representations on the parliamentary review for submission to the Council on 1 November 2011 and also on the brief to the Assistant to the Chief Executive for the public hearing on this review and the Matching Green boundary in particular.

## 2. Parliamentary Review – General Response

2.1 The Council is asked to comment on the Commission's proposals in four respects. These are set out below with, after each heading, a suggested response.

2.2 **Whether the Council agrees in full, in part or not at all with the Commission's initial proposals for the Eastern Region.**

### **Response:**

The Council has no adverse comment on the proposals for the Eastern Region, subject to the comments set out below in relation to the Essex Sub-Region.

### 2.3 Which sub-region proposals the Council agrees with and why.

#### Response:

The Epping Forest District is part of the Essex Sub-Region and the Council has restricted its consideration of the Commission's initial proposals to consideration of that Sub-Region. The Council fully supports the proposals for new constituencies in the Sub-Region and in particular the new constituencies of Epping Forest, Brentwood and Ongar and Harlow.

The proposals for the local area seem to the Council logical in that:

- (a) the new constituency for Epping Forest retains its current community identity;
- (b) the one change (ie the addition of Lambourne district ward) to the Epping Forest constituency is appropriate in community governance terms in that the ward has links to the neighbouring Theydon Bois ward which sits at the heart of the Epping Forest constituency;
- (c) that the community links between Lambourne and Theydon Bois wards are reflected in local services, local retailing facilities, transport links and in terms of distance which places Lambourne much closer to the heart of the Epping Forest constituency than to Brentwood;
- (d) that the new Epping Forest constituency provides North Weald Bassett ward with continuity of parliamentary representation in that it remains in Brentwood and Ongar thereby avoiding the difficulties experienced in previous reviews where the ward has been transferred between different constituencies at different times;
- (e) that the new Epping Forest, Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar constituencies meet the Commission's electorate criteria and create constituencies which are logical and justified by existing community links;
- (f) that the only aspect of the Essex Sub-Region review which the Council cannot support is the boundary at Matching Green between the Harlow and Brentwood & Ongar constituencies, which the Council regards as anomalous in that it divides a single community taking no account of recent changes to the



Parish, District and County Electoral Division boundaries with which the constituency boundary was previously coterminous;

(g) that aligning the parliamentary constituency boundary at Matching Green with the other local government boundaries in that location would transfer approximately 160 electors from the Brentwood & Ongar Constituency to Harlow which, in the Council's view, is within the electoral tolerances prescribed in the Commission's criteria for the review;

(h) that if the Parliamentary boundary is not coterminous with the other boundaries in Matching Green, voter confusion will occur at Parliamentary elections as to polling arrangements if elections are held concurrently.

### **3. Matching Green**

- 3.1. The Local Government Boundary Commission has agreed to make an order realigning the County Electoral Division and District Ward boundaries with the new parish boundary. In presenting a case for realigning the Parliamentary constituency boundary as well, the Council would be going against one of the key criteria of the Commission for conducting this review.
- 3.2 This criterion relates to local government boundaries which can be taken into account. The legislation allows the Commission "to take into account, if and to such extent as they think fit, local government boundaries as they exist on the most recent ordinary Council election day before the review date." For this review, the Commission is able to take into account those boundaries which existed on 6 May 2010. The Commission's criteria state that any changes in local government boundaries which took effect in May 2011 or will take effect in the future are not to be taken into account.
- 3.3 The case to be put forward about the parliamentary boundary will therefore be based on convincing the Commission to depart from its own criteria. Although the wording of the Act gives some hope that such a case might be successful in exceptional circumstances, it cannot be taken for granted. In the event that the case fails to convince the Commission, polling arrangements at a Parliamentary election in Matching Green will obviously need very careful attention.

3.4 It is recommended that the case for changing the parliamentary boundary should be made in person as well as by correspondence. A member of the Committee or the Assistant to the Chief Executive should be authorised to present the Council's case. With this in mind, the Council is provisionally booked to speak at the public hearing to be held on 31 October 2011 (pm) in Colchester. Unfortunately, this hearing will be held prior to the Council meeting on 1 November 2011, when the Committee's recommendations on its formal response will be discussed. However, it is suggested that in making representations at the hearing, the Assistant to the Chief Executive should condition his comments by informing the hearing that these are provisional views which are subject to confirmation at the following night's Council meeting.

## ***Report to Community Governance Review Committee***

***Date of Meeting: 8 March 2012***

**Subject: Review of Parliamentary Constituencies - Secondary Consultation**

**Officer Contact: I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive) (Tel 01992 564243)**

**Democratic Services: R Perrin (Tel 01992 564532)**

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### **Recommendations:**

**(1) That a review be undertaken of consultation submissions on the three local constituencies;**

**(2) To review the Council's previous response to this review and decide whether a report should be submitted to the Council on**

**(a) any comments by others where it is felt that this Council should respond; and**

**(b) whether that response should be re-affirmed or altered.**

1. (Assistant to the Chief Executive) The secondary round of consultation on the Boundary Commission for England's proposals for new Parliamentary constituencies runs from noon on 6 March 2012 to noon on 3 April 2012.

2. This will consist of publication on the Commission's website of all the representations received in response to the first round of consultation. The aim of this phase is to allow respondents the opportunity of commenting on the views of others (see Appendices 1 and 2 attached).

3. 22,000 written responses were received and a schedule will be tabled showing all the references to the 3 local Constituencies: Epping Forest, Harlow and Brentwood & Ongar. The decision of this Council at stage 1 is set out in Appendix 3 attached. This written response by the Council was preceded by an appearance at one of the public hearings when the same points were made. The boundary anomaly at Matching Green was particularly emphasised.

4. In view of the closing date for the consultation, it is important that any views to be expressed are ready for despatch for the Council agenda for 27 March 2012, namely 15 March 2012. In order to cope with the restricted timescale, members are encouraged to visit the Boundary Commission for England's website from noon on 6 March for some background reading.

5. Due to the limited time available, it seems unlikely that this Council can comment more widely on this review. It is sensible to leave this to the political parties and any individual Councillor who wishes to respond.

6. The next stage of the process will be for the Commission to publish further consultation on changes that it wishes to make in response to the response in the two previous rounds. This

consultation will, however, not be general in nature but targeted at those areas where changes are being made. This is currently scheduled to take place “towards the end of 2012”.

7. A map will be displayed at the meeting on the proposals affecting this area published by the Commission at the first stage. Appendices 4-6 set out the Commission’s original documentation.



*Ian Willett*

31 January 2012

Dear Chief Executive

### **The 2013 Review of Parliamentary constituencies in England**

I wrote to you in December last year regarding arrangements for the next phase of the Boundary Commission for England's consultation on Parliamentary constituencies in England, in particular requesting assistance with displaying the responses to the Commission's initial proposals.

I can now confirm that the secondary consultation will now start at noon on 6 March 2012 and end on noon 3 April 2012.

Due to the high levels of responses we received, over half of which were online, the Commission has decided that it will not publish the representations in hard copy. Details about arrangements are in the attached Newsletter.

I appreciate all the assistance you offered for displaying these representations but we will no longer need to place hard copies for public display.

I can confirm that the Commission will still publish its revised proposals both in hard copy and online for the final consultation planned for this autumn. Such hard copy publication in constituencies around the country during the final consultation is required by statute. I will contact you again nearer the time with further details. The assistance that you have offered so far in identifying places for display will I am sure be of great help as we plan for the final consultation period.

If you have any queries, please contact us at our address below.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colette Batterbee".

**Colette Batterbee**  
Communications manager

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# Newsletter

Issue 1/2012

## Secondary consultation period details announced

1. We are pleased to announce the imminent publication of the representations we received on our initial proposals for new Parliamentary boundaries. The initial consultation attracted a very significant and encouraging rate of response and engagement, with well over 22,000 unique written representations being received, in addition to over 1,100 oral representations that were made at public hearings.
2. The publication of the written representations and verbatim transcripts of the public hearings will start the statutory 'secondary consultation period', when individuals and organisations have an opportunity to submit to us comments on the representations that have been made by others. The period of consultation as prescribed in the legislation is short (four weeks), so we are providing advance notice now - to give people maximum opportunity to submit their views in time - of our intention to publish at noon on Tuesday 6 March 2012. Respondents to the secondary consultation will therefore need to ensure that their comments are received by us no later than noon on Tuesday 3 April 2012.
3. We will be publishing all representations on our website in an easily searchable format and encourage people to make use of our site to search, browse and comment on initial representations. More than half of the representations on our initial proposals were made through our website, which provides a secure and quick method through which to give us your views.
4. Whilst our original intention was to publish in hard copy in every proposed constituency within a region all the representations received in relation to that region (see *A guide to the 2013 Review*, paragraph 74), the very high level of response to the initial proposals has meant that we have had to revisit that intention. As the number of representations involved is so large, we have determined that the significant expenditure that would be involved in reproducing hard copies of them all and placing the resulting large number of volumes in hundreds of places of public deposit across England could not justify a further application for additional funds, both having regard to the present pressures on public expenditure and as such expense would not represent value for money. Furthermore, the exercise could not in practice be carried out without having a detrimental impact on the timetable for completing the review or requiring the secondary consultation to take place at times which would not be suitable (over the Easter holidays or at times which would clash with local elections). We therefore consider that there

are strong overriding reasons in the public interest why the representations should be published only on our website and not in hard copies across the country.

5. People who require assistance in viewing the representations online are encouraged to use widely available public internet facilities (such as in most public libraries), where assistance with using the internet is generally available. If any individual is unable to access the internet at all, please contact us. We will consider any reasonable request to provide support for an individual to gain access to the material on the internet if all other steps have failed and we may be able (if strictly necessary to do so) to provide a hard copy of specific representations we have received.

#### Contact details

The Boundary Commission for England  
35 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BQ

T: 020 7276 1102

E: [information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk)

W: [consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/](http://consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/)



## REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES – RESPONSE OF EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Council's response to consultation being conducted by the Boundary Commission for England about its initial proposals for new Parliamentary Constituencies in Essex.
- 1.2 These responses were approved at the meeting of the Council held on 1 November 2011.

### 2. Representations in Response to Consultation Questions

- 2.1 The Council is asked to comment on the Commission's proposals in four respects. These are set out below with, after each heading, a suggested response.

#### 2.2 **Whether the Council agrees in full, in part or not at all with the Commission's initial proposals for the Eastern Region**

##### **Response:**

The Council has not reviewed the proposals for the Eastern Region, other than those which affect the Epping Forest District and has no comment to make.

#### 2.3 **Which sub-region proposals the Council agrees with and why.**

##### **Response:**

The Epping Forest District is part of the Essex Sub-Region and the Council has restricted its consideration of the Commission's initial proposals to the constituencies affecting the Epping Forest District. The Council fully supports the proposals for new constituencies of Epping Forest, Brentwood & Ongar and Harlow.

The proposals for the Epping Forest District seem to the Council logical in that:

- (a) the new constituency for Epping Forest retains its current community identity;
- (b) the one change (ie the addition of Lambourne district ward) to the Epping Forest Constituency is appropriate in community governance terms in that the ward has links to the neighbouring Theydon Bois ward which sits at the heart of the Epping Forest Constituency.
- (c) that the community links between Lambourne and Theydon Bois District Wards are reflected in local services, local retailing facilities, transport links and in terms of distance which places Lambourne much closer to the Epping Forest constituency than to Brentwood.
- (d) that the new Epping Forest constituency provides North Weald Bassett Ward with continuity of parliamentary representation in that it remains in Brentwood and Ongar thereby avoiding the difficulties experienced in previous reviews where the ward has been transferred between different constituencies at different times;

(e) that the new Epping Forest, Harlow and Brentwood and Ongar constituencies meet the Commission's electorate criteria and create constituencies which are logical and justified by existing community links.

#### 2.4 Which Sub Region does the Council disagree with and why?

##### Response:

The Council has not reviewed proposals for the Eastern Region, having concentrated on the 3 local constituencies. However, the Council cannot support the boundary at Matching Green between the Harlow and Brentwood & Ongar Constituencies, which the Council regards as anomalous in that it divides a single community, taking no account of recent changes to the Parish, District and County Electoral Division boundaries with which the constituency boundary was previously coterminous. This is discussed in greater detail under the next question.

#### 2.5 What are the Council's alternatives for areas with which the Council disagrees and which meet the statutory rules?

The Council is unhappy about the anomaly which will be created at Matching Green if the Commission's initial proposals for the boundary between the Brentwood & Ongar and Harlow constituencies are not changed.

The Council contends that having different electoral boundaries at this location will cause considerable confusion among voters when Parliamentary elections are held concurrently with those for local government. Over recent years, concurrent elections have become the norm and there are very strong cost arguments for continuing this policy. There will, in the view of the Returning Officer, be problems in running such elections on different boundaries.

The effect of re-aligning the Parliamentary boundary at Matching Green would have the effect of transferring 160 voters (approx) from the Brentwood & Ongar constituency to Harlow. In terms of electorate figures, a comparison is given below:

##### Present Electorate (Commission's Initial Proposals)

Brentwood & Ongar	74,240
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Harlow	73,223
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##### Proposed Electorate (By re-aligning the Parliamentary Boundary at Matching Green)

Brentwood & Ongar	74,080 (96.65% of electoral quota)
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Harlow	73,383 (95.74% of electoral quota)
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These new electorate figures are within the tolerances of + or – 5% of the quota as prescribed in the statutory rules.

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A map showing the relevant boundaries is attached.

# Eastern region

## Initial proposals summary

### Who we are and what we do

The Boundary Commission for England is an independent and impartial non-departmental public body which is responsible for reviewing Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England.

### 2013 Review

We have the task of periodically reviewing the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England. We are currently conducting a review on the basis of new rules laid down by Parliament. These rules involve a significant reduction in the number of constituencies in England (from 533 to 502), and require that every constituency – apart from two specified exceptions – must have an electorate that is no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473 (please refer to *A guide to the 2013 Review* for details of how this has been calculated).

### Initial proposals

We have now completed the first stage of the review process and have published our initial proposals for the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. Information about the proposed constituencies is now available on our website or in hard copy at a local ‘place of deposit’ near you.

### What is changing in the Eastern region?

The Eastern region has been allocated 56 constituencies – a reduction of two from the current arrangement.

Our proposals leave nine of the 58 existing constituencies unchanged.

As it has not been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties or unitary authorities, we have grouped these into sub-regions. The number of constituencies allocated to each sub-

region is determined by the electorate of the combined local authorities.

Sub-region	Existing allocation	Proposed allocation
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	17	16
Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk	23	23
Essex	18	17

Consequently, it has been necessary to propose some constituencies that cross county or unitary authority boundaries.

Of the unchanged constituencies, one is in the County of Cambridgeshire, one is in the County of Essex, one is in the County of Norfolk, five are in the County of Suffolk and one is in the Borough of Thurrock.

Substantial change is required, however, throughout the region in order to comply with the new rules.

We have proposed three constituencies that contain electors from both Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

Another proposed constituency contains electors from both Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, and includes the towns of Downham Market and Wisbech.

Additionally, we propose that electors from the town of Newmarket in the County of Suffolk be combined with the District of East Cambridgeshire.

### How to have your say

We are consulting on our initial proposals for a 12-week period, from 13 September 2011 to 5 December 2011. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to contribute to the design of the new constituencies – the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be when analysing all the views we receive.

We ask everyone wishing to contribute to the design of the new constituencies to first read the *Initial proposals* report and accompanying maps before responding to us.

In particular, we would like to know:

- if you agree in full, in part or not at all with our initial proposals for the Eastern region;
- which sub-regions you agree with and why;
- which sub-regions you disagree with and why; and
- if you can propose alternatives for areas you disagree with that meet the statutory rules we set out in our report.

You can find more details of how to respond on our website, or you can write to us direct or email [eastern@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:eastern@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk). You can also find details of where and when we will be holding public hearings in your area on our website.

Boundary Commission for England  
35 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BQ

Tel: 020 7276 1102

Email: [information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk)

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## Find out more

You can find out more about the Boundary Commission for England and the 2013 Review by:

- visiting our website (search online for 'boundary changes' or go to [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk)); and
- reading *A guide to the 2013 Review* (available on our website).

If you have any questions, you can:

- email [information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk);
- call 020 7276 1102; or
- write to The Boundary Commission for England, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ.

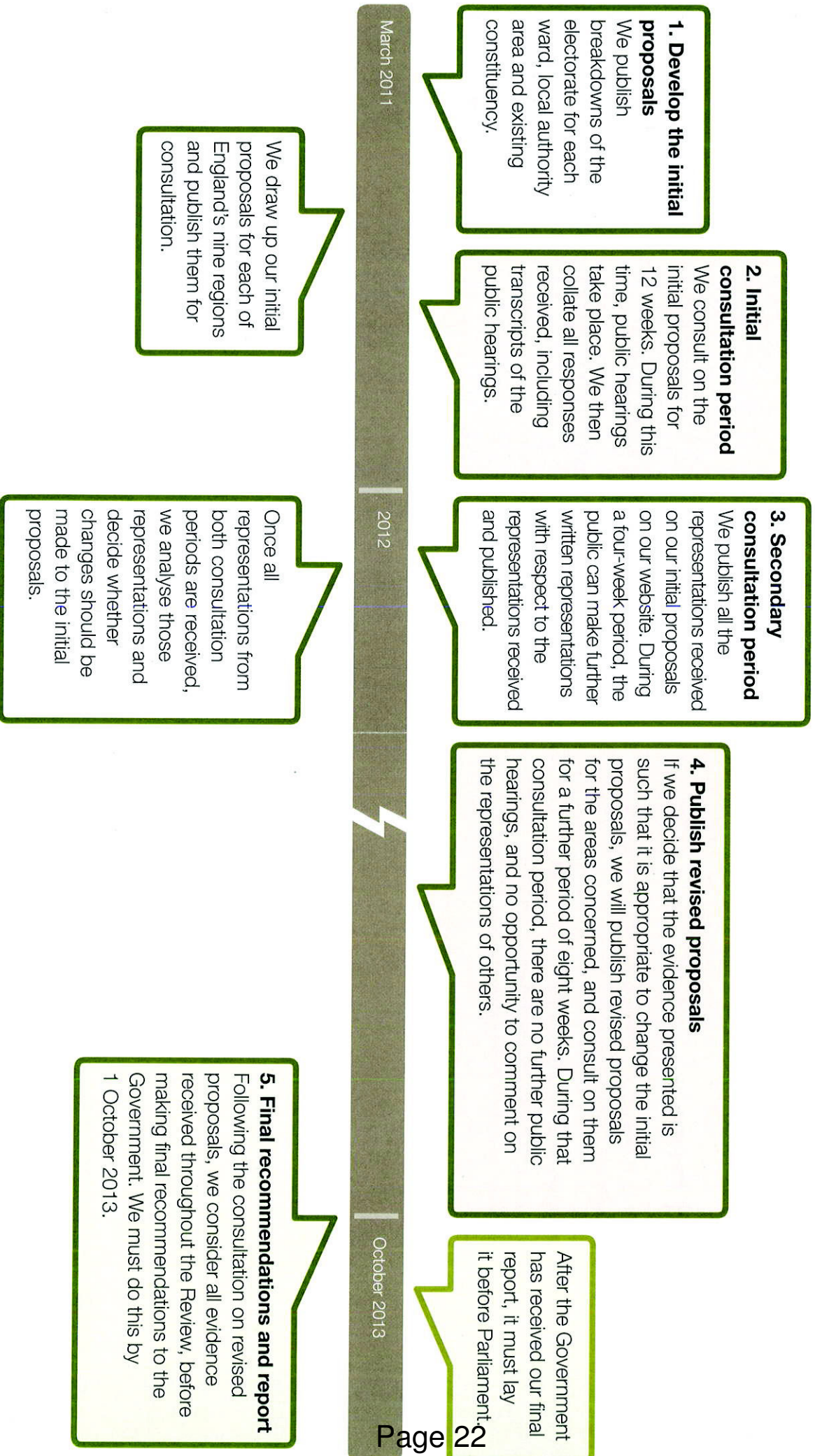
# The 2013 Review of Parliamentary constituencies explained

The Boundary Commission for England is the independent public body that reviews all Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England every five years.

We are currently carrying out a review under new rules laid down by Parliament. This Review, which concludes in 2013, means substantial changes to Parliamentary constituencies in England: reducing the total number of constituencies from 533 to 502 and making sure that each constituency has similar numbers of registered electors. In many cases this means redrawing the existing boundaries.



# Timeline for the 2013 Review



## 2. Background to the 2013 Review

4. In February 2011, the UK Parliament passed legislation<sup>2</sup> stating that all four Boundary Commissions covering the UK (there are separate Commissions for Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) must conduct a review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries, and make recommendations to the Government, by October 2013. The four Commissions work separately, and this report covers only the work of the BCE and, in particular, introduces our initial proposals for the Eastern region.

5. Parliamentary constituency boundaries are important, as they define the area that a Member of Parliament will represent once elected to Parliament. The next General Election is expected to be in 2015 (as, at the time of writing and subject to legislation, the Government intends to introduce 'fixed-term' Parliaments – i.e. that last for five years). Therefore any recommendations we make, if accepted, are likely to be used for the first time at the General Election in 2015.

6. The legislation we work to states that there will be 600 Parliamentary constituencies covering the UK – a reduction of 50 from the current number. For England, that means that the number of constituencies must reduce from 533 to 502. There are also new rules that the Commission has to adhere to when conducting the review – a full set of rules can be found in the BCE's *A guide to the 2013 Review*,<sup>3</sup> published in the summer of 2011, but they are also summarised later in this chapter. Most significantly, the rules state that every constituency we recommend (with the exception of two covering the Isle of Wight) must contain between 72,810 and 80,473 electors.

7. This is a significant change to the old rules under which Parliamentary boundary reviews took place, where achieving as close as possible to the average number of electors in each constituency was an aim but not an overriding legal necessity. For example, in England, constituencies currently range in electorate size from 55,077 to 110,924. Achieving a more even distribution of electors in every constituency across England, together with the reduction in the total number of constituencies, means that a significant amount of change to the existing map of constituencies is inevitable.

8. *A guide to the 2013 Review* contains further detailed background, and explains all the policies and procedures that we are following in conducting the Review, in greater depth than in this consultation document. We encourage anyone wishing to be involved in the Review to read this document to enable greater understanding of the rules and constraints placed on the Commission, especially if they are intending to comment on our initial proposals.

### The rules in the legislation

9. The rules contained in the legislation state that every constituency in England (except two covering the Isle of Wight) must have an electorate of between 72,810 and 80,473 – that is 5% either side of the **electoral quota of 76,641**. The legislation also states that when deciding on boundaries, the Commission may also take into account:

- a. special geographical considerations, including the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency;

<sup>2</sup> The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, available at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Available at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/publications](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/publications) and at all places of deposit

- b. local government boundaries as they existed on 6 May 2010;
- c. boundaries of existing constituencies; and
- d. any local ties that would be broken by changes in constituencies.

10. It is essential to understand that none of the factors mentioned in the list above overrides the necessity to achieve an electorate in each constituency that is within the range allowed, as explained previously. In particular, it should be noted that we are obliged to take into account local government boundaries as they existed in May 2010. Our initial proposals for the region and the accompanying maps are based on the wards as they existed in May 2010. *A guide to the 2013 Review* outlines further our policy on how, and to what extent, we take into account local government boundaries. We propose to use the local government districts and wards as at May 2010 as the basic building blocks for construction of constituencies.

11. We have also taken into account the boundaries of existing constituencies so far as we can. We have tried to retain existing constituencies as part of our initial proposals where possible, so long as the other factors can also be satisfied. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, because of the scale of change required to fulfil the obligations imposed on us by the new rules, this has proved difficult. Our initial proposals retain 16% of the existing constituencies in the Eastern region – the remainder are new constituencies (although in a number of cases we have been able to limit the changes to existing constituencies, making only minor changes as necessary to enable us to comply with the new rules).

### The use of the regions used for European elections

12. Our proposals are based on the nine regions used for European elections. This report relates to the Eastern region. There are eight other separate reports containing our initial proposals for the other regions. In early 2011, following a consultation exercise on the issues, we decided to use these regions as a basis for working out our initial proposals. You can find more details in *A guide to the 2013 Review* and on our website. While this approach does not prevent anyone from making proposals to us that cross regional boundaries (for example, between the Eastern region and the London region), in light of the reasons we have set out for the region-based approach and the level of support for this approach expressed in response to our consultation, we would need to have compelling reasons provided to us in order to persuade us to depart from the region-based approach.

### Timetable for the 2013 Review

#### Stage one – initial proposals

13. In March 2011 we published breakdowns of the electorate for each ward, local authority area and existing constituency, which were prepared using electorate data provided by local authorities and the Office for National Statistics. These breakdowns are available on our website.<sup>4</sup> The Commission spent a number of months considering the factors outlined above and drawing up our initial proposals. We published our initial proposals for consultation for each of England's nine regions on 13 September 2011.

<sup>4</sup> At [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk)



### **Stage two - consultation on initial proposals**

14. We are consulting on our initial proposals for 12 weeks, until 5 December 2011. Chapter 4 outlines how you can contribute during the consultation period. We are also hosting four public hearings in the Eastern region, at which people can give their views (see chapter 4). Once the consultation has closed, the Commission will collate all the responses received, including transcripts of the public hearings.

### **Stage three - consultation on representations received**

15. The legislation requires us to publish all the representations we receive on our initial proposals. This publication will mark the start of a four-week period, likely to be in spring 2012, during which anyone can make further written representations with respect to the representations we have received and published. Once we have all the representations from both consultation periods, the Commission will analyse those representations and decide whether changes should be made to the initial proposals.

### **Stage four - publication of revised proposals**

16. If we decide that the evidence presented to us is such that it is appropriate to change our initial proposals, then we must (under the legislation) publish our revised proposals for the areas concerned, and consult on them for a further period of eight weeks. This is likely to be towards the end of 2012. During that consultation period, there is no provision for further public hearings, nor is there a repeat of the four-week period for commenting on the representations of others.

### **Stage five - final recommendations**

17. Finally, following the consultation on revised proposals, we will consider all the evidence received at this stage, and

throughout the Review, before making final recommendations to the Government. The legislation states we must do this by 1 October 2013. Further details about what the Government and Parliament must do to implement our recommendations are contained in *A guide to the 2013 Review*.

18. At the launch of each stage of consultation we will be taking all reasonable steps to publicise our proposals so that as many people as possible are aware of the consultation, and can take the opportunity to contribute to our review of constituencies.

### 3. Initial proposals for the Eastern region

19. The Eastern region comprises the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk (which are covered by a mix of district and county councils and unitary authorities).

20. The region currently has 58 constituencies. Of these constituencies, only 26 have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. The electorates of 27 constituencies currently fall below the lower 5% limit, while the electorates of five fall above the upper limit. As discussed in chapter 2, following our consultation on using the regions as the basis for our initial proposals, we have taken an initial decision that the Eastern region is to be allocated 56 constituencies, a reduction of two.

21. In seeking to produce initial proposals for the region in which 56 whole constituencies, each with an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota, could be proposed, we first considered whether, and how, the local authorities could usefully be grouped into sub-regions. We were mindful of seeking to respect, where we could, the external boundaries of local authorities. Our approach in attempting to group local authority areas together in sub-regions was based both on trying to respect county boundaries wherever possible and on achieving, where we could, obvious practical groupings such as those dictated in some part by the geography of the area.

22. Our division of the Eastern region into sub-regions is a purely practical approach. Respondents to our consultation are welcome to make counter-proposals based on other groupings of counties and unitary authorities, if the statutory factors can be better reflected in those counter-proposals.

23. We noted that the combined electorate of the three unitary authorities (Bedford,

Central Bedfordshire, and Luton) that were part of the former County of Bedfordshire was 432,090, which indicates an allocation of 5.6 constituencies. It is not possible to allocate six whole constituencies to Bedfordshire with electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. Therefore Bedfordshire needed to be grouped with a neighbouring county. We also noted that the County of Hertfordshire had an electorate of 811,936, which indicates an allocation of 10.6 constituencies. With an allocation of 11 constituencies, the average of each constituency would be 73,812, just 1,002 electors above the lower limit (72,810) of the 5% target. We considered that, in all likelihood, it would prove difficult to design 11 satisfactory constituencies all with electorates within the 5% target. We therefore considered that we would review Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire together and allocate them 16 constituencies, which is one fewer than at present. Three of our proposed constituencies cross the boundary between Hertfordshire and the District of Central Bedfordshire. One proposed constituency crosses the boundary between the Borough of Bedford and the District of Central Bedfordshire. One proposed constituency crosses the boundary between the District of Central Bedfordshire and the Borough of Luton.

24. We noted that the County of Norfolk needed to be grouped with a neighbouring county as the number of electors in Norfolk, at 651,119, is such that we cannot allocate a whole number of constituencies to the county. Allocating eight of the largest permissible constituencies would need an electorate of 643,784, while allocating nine of the smallest constituencies would require 655,290 electors.

25. The County of Cambridgeshire (including the City of Peterborough) also needed to be grouped with a neighbouring county as a result of the number of electors (562,526) in the county. If we allocated

seven constituencies to Cambridgeshire, the average electorate of each constituency would be 80,361, which is just 112 below the upper limit (80,473) of the 5% target. While the County of Suffolk did not need to be grouped with a neighbouring county, we decided that we would include it in a group with Cambridgeshire and Norfolk to allow us greater flexibility in proposing constituencies, when considering the other factors to which we have regard. The grouping of these three counties allowed the allocation of 23 constituencies, which is the same as at present. One proposed constituency crosses the boundary between Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, one proposed constituency crosses the boundary between Cambridgeshire and the City of Peterborough, and one proposed constituency crosses the boundary between Cambridgeshire and Norfolk.

26. We noted that the electorate of the County of Essex and the boroughs of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock was 1,280,544, which would allow us to allocate 17 constituencies, each with an average electorate of 75,326, which is 1,315 below the electoral quota. We considered that it was not necessary to group the County of Essex and the boroughs of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock with any other county. Therefore, we decided to allocate 17 constituencies to Essex, which is one fewer than at present. Our proposals include two constituencies that cross the boundary between Essex and the Borough of Southend-on-Sea, and two constituencies that cross the boundary between Essex and the Borough of Thurrock.

#### **Initial proposals for the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire sub-region**

27. There are currently 17 constituencies in this sub-region, only six of which (Hertford and Stortford, Hitchin and Harpenden, Mid Bedfordshire, North East Bedfordshire, South West Bedfordshire, and South West

Hertfordshire) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. Of the remaining constituencies, ten are below the 5% limit, and one is above. We propose to reduce the number of constituencies to 16.

28. We considered whether we could leave unchanged any of the six existing constituencies that have an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which all the electorates are within the 5% limit, and taking account of the reduction in the number of constituencies in this sub-region, we propose changing all the constituencies.

29. In Luton, in order to increase the electorate of the existing Luton South constituency, we propose the inclusion of the Barnfield and Saints wards of the Borough of Luton, currently in the Luton North constituency. As a consequence of this change, it is necessary to increase the electorate of the Luton North constituency by including the four Central Bedfordshire District wards that contain the town of Dunstable, which have a direct link into the constituency along the A505. To compensate for the loss of Dunstable, the South West Bedfordshire constituency is extended northwards with the inclusion of four Central Bedfordshire wards, including the town of Flitwick, that are in the existing Mid Bedfordshire constituency.

30. We noted that the electorate of the existing Bedford constituency was too small and we propose that it be extended to the west to include the Bromham and Turvey wards of the Borough of Bedford. However, this change requires us to alter the existing North Bedfordshire constituency and we therefore propose that the remainder of the Borough of Bedford be included in our North Bedfordshire constituency, together with seven wards from the District of Central Bedfordshire, including the towns of Ampthill, Biggleswade, and Sandy.

31. The electorate of the existing Hertsmere constituency is too small and we propose to increase its electorate by including the Carpenders Park ward of the District of Three Rivers. Although there is no direct road link within the constituency between the Carpenders Park area and Hertsmere, including this ward allows us not to have to make more significant alterations to the St Albans constituency to the north and the Welwyn Hatfield constituency to the north east.

32. The three Abbots Langley wards to the north of Watford and the Ashridge ward of the Borough of Dacorum are included in our South West Hertfordshire constituency. Five wards from the District of Three Rivers to the south of Watford are included in our Watford constituency, in place of the three Abbots Langley wards. We noted that this would alter the existing South West Hertfordshire constituency, which could have been left unchanged. However, we considered that the five wards from the District of Three Rivers that we propose including in the Watford constituency – Ashridge, Hayling, Moor Park & Eastbury, Northwick, and Oxhey Hall – are close geographically to Watford.

33. The electorate of the existing Hemel Hempstead constituency is too small and, to compensate for the loss of the Ashridge ward mentioned previously, we propose that the South East Bedfordshire ward of the District of Central Bedfordshire, from the existing Luton South constituency, be included in our Hemel Hempstead constituency. The electorate of the existing St Albans constituency also needs to be increased and we propose that the constituency be extended northwards to include two wards of the City of St Albans (Redbourn and Sandridge), both of which are very close to St Albans itself, from the existing Hitchin and Harpenden constituency. As a result, we propose that the existing Hitchin and Harpenden constituency be extended

northwards to include three wards from the District of Central Bedfordshire (Langford and Henlow Village, Shefford, and Silsoe and Shillington), which have direct links with the existing Hitchin and Harpenden constituency.

34. Of the remaining five existing constituencies in Hertfordshire, only the Hertford and Stortford constituency has an electorate that is within 5% of the electoral quota. However, we have altered this constituency to accommodate the changes that have to be made to the other four (Broxbourne, North East Hertfordshire, Stevenage, and Welwyn Hatfield) in order for all five to have an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota.

35. We propose that the existing Stevenage constituency be extended to the north to include the Chesfield ward of the District of North Hertfordshire and to the east to include the Walkern ward of the District of East Hertfordshire. In particular, we noted that the Chesfield ward contains an area that links directly into the north of Stevenage.

36. We propose that the existing Broxbourne constituency be extended northwards by including two wards of the District of East Hertfordshire (Great Amwell and Stanstead Abbots). To compensate for the loss of these wards, we propose extending the existing Hertford and Stortford constituency to the north west by including two wards of the District of East Hertfordshire (Little Hadham, and Thundridge & Standon).

37. The existing Welwyn Hatfield constituency is extended eastwards by including three wards from the District of East Hertfordshire (Hertford Rural North, Hertford Rural South, and Watton-at-Stone). To compensate for the loss of these wards, the existing North East Hertfordshire constituency is extended northwards to include two wards from the

District of Central Bedfordshire (Potton, and Stotfold and Arlesey). To reflect the change in the composition of the constituency, we propose changing this constituency's name to Letchworth.

### **Initial proposals for the Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk sub-region**

38. There are currently 23 constituencies in this sub-region, 15 of which (Broadland, Cambridge, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, Huntingdon, Ipswich, Mid Norfolk, North West Norfolk, Norwich South, South Cambridgeshire, South Norfolk, South Suffolk, South West Norfolk, Suffolk Coastal, Waveney, and West Suffolk) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. Of the remaining constituencies, four have electorates that are below the 5% limit, and four are above. We are proposing no change to the number of constituencies.

39. We considered whether we could leave unchanged any of the 15 existing constituencies that had an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which all the proposed electorates are within the 5% limit, we propose changing all but seven constituencies (Cambridge, Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, Ipswich, Norwich South, South Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal, and Waveney). Our proposed South Norfolk constituency differs only to take account of a very small ward boundary alteration.

40. In Suffolk, as stated previously, it is possible to make minor changes to three of the seven existing constituencies in order to reduce the electorate of the existing Bury St Edmunds constituency, which has 85,933 electors. We do not propose any change to the five constituencies of Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, Ipswich, South Suffolk, Suffolk Coastal, and Waveney. In order to retain the existing Central Suffolk and North

Ipswich constituency, we are proposing to reduce the size of the existing Bury St Edmunds constituency by moving three wards of the District of Mid Suffolk (Badwell Ash, Gislingham, and Rickingham and Walsham) and one ward of the Borough of St Edmundsbury (Pakenham) to our proposed West Suffolk constituency. To compensate for this change, the Suffolk town of Newmarket is included in our Newmarket and Ely constituency, together with the whole of the District of East Cambridgeshire, which almost entirely encircles the town. Although this creates a cross-county constituency, the town of Newmarket has strong communication links with Ely and the rest of the proposed constituency.

41. We propose no change to the existing Cambridge constituency. While the existing Huntingdon and South Cambridgeshire constituencies have electorates that are within 5% of the electoral quota, we are proposing changes to both these constituencies in order to accommodate changes that are required to the North East Cambridgeshire, North West Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, and South East Cambridgeshire constituencies.

42. As we propose to retain the existing Cambridge constituency, the Queen Edith's ward of the City of Cambridge remains in our proposed South Cambridgeshire constituency together with 22 wards from the District of South Cambridgeshire. We propose that the remaining 12 wards of the District of South Cambridgeshire be included in a new St Neots constituency, with ten wards from the south of the District of Huntingdonshire.

43. Our proposed Huntingdon constituency contains 15 wards from the District of Huntingdonshire, including the towns of Huntingdon and St Ives, and seven wards from the District of Fenland, including the town of Chatteris.

44. We propose two constituencies covering the City of Peterborough and surrounding area, with the Peterborough North constituency containing 17 wards north of the River Nene. The six Peterborough wards to the south of the Nene, and the Peterborough ward of Eye and Thorney, are included in our Peterborough South constituency with seven wards from the District of Fenland, including the town of Whittlesey, which are from the existing North East Cambridgeshire constituency, and four wards from the north of the District of Huntingdonshire, including the towns of Ramsey and Yaxley, from the existing North West Cambridgeshire constituency.

45. The remaining 13 wards of the District of Fenland, including the towns of March and Wisbech, are placed in our new Wisbech and Downham Market constituency, which crosses the county boundary between Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. This constituency also contains 13 wards from the west of the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, including the town of Downham Market. There are good road links along the A1101 and A1122 between the two towns named in the constituency.

The remaining 29 wards from the Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, including the whole of the existing North West Norfolk constituency, form our proposed King's Lynn constituency.

46. In Norfolk, the changes that have to be made to the three existing constituencies of Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, and Norwich North, in order to bring the electorates to within 5% of the electoral quota, mean that the neighbouring constituencies of Broadland, Mid Norfolk, North West Norfolk, and South West Norfolk all have to be altered as a consequence, even though their electorates are within 5% of the electoral quota.

47. We propose a Thetford and Swaffham constituency that contains 24 wards of the

District of Breckland and seven wards of the District of South Norfolk. Our South Norfolk constituency contains 28 wards of the District of South Norfolk, with only a minor change from the existing constituency to take account of a very small ward boundary alteration.

48. In the City of Norwich, we propose no change to the existing Norwich South constituency and that the existing Norwich North constituency be extended. We consider the two Drayton wards and the two Taverham wards of the District of Broadland to be the most suitable for inclusion in the constituency.

49. The existing Great Yarmouth constituency is extended to the north by including three wards from the District of North Norfolk (Stalham and Sutton, Waterside, and Waxham) from the existing North Norfolk constituency. The remaining 31 wards of the District of North Norfolk form our proposed North Norfolk constituency. We propose a new Broadland and Dereham constituency containing 16 wards from the District of Broadland and 12 wards from the District of Breckland.

#### **Initial proposals for the Essex sub-region**

50. There are currently 18 constituencies in this sub-region, only five of which (Chelmsford, Colchester, Rayleigh and Wickford, Saffron Walden, and Thurrock) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. Of the remaining constituencies, all 13 have electorates that are below the 5% limit. We propose to reduce the number of constituencies to 17.

51. We considered whether we could leave unchanged any of the five existing constituencies that had an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which all of the electorates are within the 5% limit, and taking account of the reduction in the number of constituencies in this sub-region, we

propose changing all but two constituencies (Colchester and Thurrock).

52. In south-east Essex, the existing Castle Point constituency, at 64,562, does not contain sufficient electors. In seeking to increase the electorate of this constituency, we noted that there was no direct transport link between Canvey Island and the East Thurrock area to the west. Nor did we want to divide the town of Rayleigh between constituencies by including any wards of the District of Rochford in our proposed Castle Point constituency. We therefore propose including two wards from the Borough of Southend-on-Sea (Leigh and West Leigh), because there are continuous development and close transport links between Leigh and the Borough of Castle Point. This also avoids dividing the Borough of Castle Point between constituencies.

53. We propose to include three wards of the Borough of Southend-on-Sea (Milton, St Luke's, and Victoria) in our Southend West constituency. This requires the inclusion of the towns of Hawkwell and Hockley in an enlarged Rochford and Southend East constituency. We propose to include three additional wards of the Borough of Basildon (Pitsea North West, Pitsea South East, and Vange), and the Rettendon and Runwell ward of the Borough of Chelmsford, in the Rayleigh and Wickford constituency.

54. We propose a Basildon and Thurrock East constituency that contains the six wards of the Borough of Basildon that incorporate the town of Basildon, and five wards of the Borough of Thurrock, including the towns of Corringham and Stanford-le-Hope. We propose retaining the existing Thurrock constituency.

55. We noted that the electorate of the existing Epping Forest constituency is too small and we propose to include the Lambourne ward of the District of Epping

Forest (which has direct road links into the rest of the constituency) from the existing Brentwood and Ongar constituency.

To compensate for this change, we propose that the existing Brentwood and Ongar constituency be extended southwards to include the Orsett ward of the Borough of Thurrock.

56. We noted that the electorate of the existing Harlow constituency is also too small. By not altering the boundary between the Harlow constituency and the Brentwood and Ongar and Epping Forest constituencies, we decided to extend the Harlow constituency by including three wards (Broad Oak and the Hallingburys, Hatfield Heath, and The Rodings) from the south west of the District of Uttlesford.

57. As a consequence of our changes elsewhere, we propose a new Billericay and Great Dunmow constituency that contains four wards of the Borough of Basildon, six wards of the Borough of Chelmsford and five wards of the District of Uttlesford. By doing so, we are also able to make only a minor change to the existing Chelmsford constituency, which is reduced by including the Galleywood ward of the Borough of Chelmsford in the Billericay and Great Dunmow constituency. Our proposed Maldon constituency does not extend as far to the west as the existing constituency. It contains the whole of the District of Maldon, four wards of the Borough of Chelmsford, including the town of South Woodham Ferrers, and the Tiptree ward of the Borough of Colchester.

58. We propose retaining unaltered the existing Colchester constituency. We also propose a Braintree and Witham constituency containing 17 wards from the south of the District of Braintree. This constituency respects the district boundaries of Chelmsford, Colchester, and Uttlesford to

the south, east, and west respectively. The remaining 13 wards of the District of Braintree, and 19 wards of the District of Uttlesford, from the existing Braintree and Saffron Walden constituencies, form our proposed North West Essex constituency. Our proposed North East Essex constituency contains 13 wards of the Borough of Colchester and ten wards of the District of Tendring, thereby entirely surrounding the Colchester constituency. The remaining wards in the District of Tendring form our Harwich and Clacton constituency.



## 4. How to have your say

59. We are consulting on our initial proposals for a 12-week period, from 13 September 2011 to 5 December 2011. We encourage everyone to use this opportunity to contribute to the design of the new constituencies – the more public views we hear, the more informed our decisions will be when analysing all the views we receive.

60. In particular, we ask people to bear in mind the tight constraints placed on the Commission by the rules set by Parliament as well as the decisions we have taken regarding adoption of a regional approach and use of local government wards discussed in chapter 2 and in the BCE's *A guide to the 2013 Review*. Most importantly:

- a. We cannot recommend constituencies that have electorates that are more or less than 5% from the electoral quota (apart from the two covering the Isle of Wight).
- b. We are basing our initial proposals on local government ward boundaries (as at May 2010) as the building blocks of constituencies. Our view is that, in the absence of exceptional and compelling circumstances, it would not be appropriate to divide wards in cases where it is possible to construct constituencies that meet the 5% statutory requirement without doing so.
- c. We have constructed constituencies within regions, so as not to cross regional boundaries. Compelling reasons would need to be given to persuade us that we should depart from this approach.

61. These issues mean that we encourage people who are making a representation on a specific area to bear in mind the knock-on effects of their proposals. The Commission must look at the recommendations for new constituencies across the whole region (and, indeed, across England). We therefore

ask everyone wishing to respond to our consultation to bear in mind the impact of their counter-proposals on neighbouring constituencies, and on those further afield across the region.

### How can you give us your views?

62. There are two ways you can give us your views on our initial proposals: in writing (including by email or through the online form on our website), or in person at one of a series of public hearings we are conducting during the consultation period. People are welcome to both attend a hearing and send us a written representation.

### Written representations

63. We encourage everyone to make use of our consultation website, at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk), when contributing to our consultation. The website contains all the *Initial proposals* reports and maps, the electorate sizes of every ward, and an online facility where you can have your say on our initial proposals.

64. You can also contribute to our consultation by writing directly to us at: Boundary Commission for England, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BQ. Or email us with your views, at: [eastern@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:eastern@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk). If you wish to comment on more than one region, please send your email to [reviews@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk). If you wish to write to us directly, we encourage you to follow the structured approach outlined below and on the separate summary sheet, copies of which can be found at your local place of deposit, or downloaded from our website, at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk).

65. We encourage everyone, before submitting a representation, to read our approach to data protection and, in particular, the publication of all representations and personal data within

them. This is available at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk), or by phoning 020 7276 1102.

### Public hearings

66. The Commission will be holding public hearings across all the English regions. In the Eastern region we will be hosting four public hearings during the consultation period. Our website ([www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk)) has more details of these hearings, and an opportunity to register to attend and speak. The table below shows the locations and dates of the hearings in the Eastern region.

#### Locations and dates of public hearings

City/town	Location	Dates
Colchester	Town Hall, Colchester CO1 1PJ	Monday 31 October - Tuesday 1 November 2011
Norwich	Norwich City Hall, St Peter's Street, Norwich NR2 1NH	Thursday 3 - Friday 4 November 2011
Luton	Town Hall, Luton LU1 2BQ	Monday 7 - Tuesday 8 November 2011
Cambridge	Best Western Gonville Hotel, Gonville Place, Cambridge CB1 1LY	Thursday 10 - Friday 11 November 2011

67. The purpose of the hearings is for people to have an opportunity to make representations orally to an Assistant Commissioner, who will chair the hearings

and subsequently provide the Commission with a report on their findings. The hearings differ from the way we used to conduct 'public inquiries' in past reviews - these were much more judicial in style, with people being allowed to cross-examine each other. The new legislation that Parliament has introduced specifically rules out such inquiries, specifying instead that we host public hearings. These are intended purely as a way for people to make representations orally, direct to representatives of the Commission, as well as to provide an opportunity for the Commission to explain its proposals.

68. It is important to stress that all representations, whether they have been submitted through the online facility on our website, made in person at a hearing or sent to us in writing or by email, will be given equal consideration by the Commission. Therefore it does not matter if you are unable to attend or speak at a public hearing - even after the last public hearing in the Eastern region has been completed on 11 November 2011, you will still have three weeks left to submit your views to us. By statute, time for the public hearings is strictly limited and you may wish to ensure that your full representations about our proposals are made to us in writing.

69. You can find more information about public hearings, and can register to attend, on our website at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk), or by phoning 020 7276 1102.

#### What do we want views on?

70. While you are welcome to write to us on any issue regarding our initial proposals, it would aid our understanding and analysis if you, when contributing, followed the structured approach available on our consultation website at [www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk](http://www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk). This structured approach is also

outlined below and available in our separate summary leaflet (copies of which are available in places of deposit and on our website).

We encourage anyone wishing to contribute to the formation of our final recommendations to follow this approach. The structured approach will also allow us more easily to identify representations on specific areas, or from specific people, during the subsequent four-week period of consultation (referred to in chapter 2).

71. We would particularly like to ask two things of those considering responding to our consultation. First, if you support our proposals, please tell us so, as well as telling us where you object to them. Past experience suggests that too often people who are happy with our proposals do not respond in support, while those who object to them do respond to make their points. That can give a rather distorted view of the balance of public support or objection to proposals, and those who support our initial proposals may then be disappointed if they are subsequently revised in light of the consultation responses. Second, if you are considering objecting to our proposals, do please use the resources (maps and electorate figures) available on our website and at the places of deposit to put forward counter-proposals that are in accordance with the rules to which we are working.

72. Specifically, while anyone is welcome to submit views in whatever format, we are looking for views structured around the following questions:

- a. Do you agree in full, in part or not at all with our initial proposals for the Eastern region?
- b. Which sub-regions do you agree with and why?

- c. Which sub-regions do you disagree with and why?
- d. What are your alternatives for areas you disagree with that meet the statutory rules set out in chapter 2?

73. Above all, however, we encourage everyone to have their say on our initial proposals and, in doing so, to become involved in drawing the map of new Parliamentary constituencies. The more views we get on our initial proposals, the more informed our consideration in developing those proposals will be, and the better we will be able to reflect the public's views in the final recommendations we present in 2013.

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Bradwell, Silver End and Rivenhall	Braintree	3,671
	Braintree Central	Braintree	5,893
	Braintree East	Braintree	4,965
	Braintree South	Braintree	5,242
	Coggeshall and North Feering	Braintree	3,975
	Cressing and Stisted	Braintree	1,791
	Great Notley and Braintree West	Braintree	5,185
	Hatfield Peverel	Braintree	3,474
	Kelvedon	Braintree	3,934
	Witham Chipping Hill and Central	Braintree	3,546
	Witham North	Braintree	3,432
	Witham South	Braintree	6,242
	Witham West	Braintree	4,989
<b>5. Brentwood and Ongar CC</b>			<b>74,240</b>
	Brentwood North	Brentwood	4,556
	Brentwood South	Brentwood	4,211
	Brentwood West	Brentwood	4,973
	Brizes and Doddinghurst	Brentwood	4,704
	Herongate, Ingrave and West Horndon	Brentwood	2,940
	Hutton Central	Brentwood	2,885
	Hutton East	Brentwood	2,851
	Hutton North	Brentwood	3,079
	Hutton South	Brentwood	3,047
	Ingatestone, Fryerning and Mountnessing	Brentwood	4,769
	Pilgrims Hatch	Brentwood	4,553
	Shenfield	Brentwood	4,167
	South Weald	Brentwood	1,407
	Tipps Cross	Brentwood	3,042
	Warley	Brentwood	4,508
	Chipping Ongar, Greensted and Marden Ash	Epping Forest	3,313
	High Ongar, Willingale and The Rodings	Epping Forest	1,737
	Moreton and Fyfield	Epping Forest	1,720
	North Weald Bassett	Epping Forest	3,529
	Passingford	Epping Forest	1,772
	Shelley	Epping Forest	1,705
	Orsett	Thurrock	4,772
<b>6. Broadland and Dereham CC</b>			<b>79,080</b>
	Dereham-Central	Breckland	4,581
	Dereham-Humbletoft	Breckland	2,001
	Dereham-Neatherd	Breckland	3,316
	Dereham-Toftwood	Breckland	3,607
	Eynsford	Breckland	1,867
	Hermitage	Breckland	1,710
	Launditch	Breckland	1,627
	Springvale and Scarning	Breckland	3,773
	Swanton Morley	Breckland	1,796
	Taverner	Breckland	1,780
	Two Rivers	Breckland	3,331
	Upper Wensum	Breckland	1,780
	Acle	Broadland	2,220
	Aylsham	Broadland	5,844
	Blofield with South Walsham	Broadland	4,446
	Brundall	Broadland	4,522
	Burlingham	Broadland	2,039
	Buxton	Broadland	1,958
	Coltishall	Broadland	2,069
	Eynesford	Broadland	2,410
	Great Witchingham	Broadland	1,924
	Hevingham	Broadland	2,127
	Horsford and Felthorpe	Broadland	3,486

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Springfield North	Chelmsford	6,714
	The Lawns	Chelmsford	4,220
	Trinity	Chelmsford	4,425
	Waterhouse Farm	Chelmsford	4,424
<b>13. Colchester BC</b>			<b>73,638</b>
	Berechurch	Colchester	6,330
	Castle	Colchester	6,796
	Christ Church	Colchester	3,187
	Harbour	Colchester	4,367
	Highwoods	Colchester	6,628
	Lexden	Colchester	4,309
	Mile End	Colchester	6,942
	New Town	Colchester	5,966
	Prettygate	Colchester	5,937
	St Andrew's	Colchester	6,073
	St Anne's	Colchester	6,419
	St John's	Colchester	4,091
	Shrub End	Colchester	6,593
<b>4. Epping Forest CC</b>			<b>73,785</b>
	Broadley Common, Epping Upland and Nazeing	Epping Forest	1,618
	Buckhurst Hill East	Epping Forest	3,438
	Buckhurst Hill West	Epping Forest	5,154
	Chigwell Row	Epping Forest	1,813
	Chigwell Village	Epping Forest	3,221
	Epping Hemnall	Epping Forest	4,805
	Epping Lindsey and Thornwood Common	Epping Forest	4,874
	Grange Hill	Epping Forest	4,797
	Lambourne	Epping Forest	1,573
	Loughton Alderton	Epping Forest	3,311
	Loughton Broadway	Epping Forest	3,173
	Loughton Fairmead	Epping Forest	3,227
	Loughton Forest	Epping Forest	3,373
	Loughton Roding	Epping Forest	3,470
	Loughton St John's	Epping Forest	3,407
	Loughton St Mary's	Epping Forest	3,373
	Theydon Bois	Epping Forest	3,258
	Waltham Abbey High Beach	Epping Forest	1,775
	Waltham Abbey Honey Lane	Epping Forest	4,569
	Waltham Abbey North East	Epping Forest	3,186
	Waltham Abbey Paternoster	Epping Forest	3,328
	Waltham Abbey South West	Epping Forest	3,042
<b>15. Great Yarmouth CC</b>			<b>79,323</b>
	Bradwell North	Great Yarmouth	5,062
	Bradwell South and Hopton	Great Yarmouth	5,148
	Caister North	Great Yarmouth	3,659
	Caister South	Great Yarmouth	3,555
	Central and Northgate	Great Yarmouth	5,370
	Claydon	Great Yarmouth	5,472
	East Flegg	Great Yarmouth	3,895
	Fleggburgh	Great Yarmouth	1,868
	Gorleston	Great Yarmouth	4,071
	Lothingland	Great Yarmouth	4,331
	Magdalen	Great Yarmouth	5,228
	Nelson	Great Yarmouth	4,971
	Ormesby	Great Yarmouth	3,505
	St Andrews	Great Yarmouth	3,425
	Southtown and Cobholm	Great Yarmouth	3,489
	West Flegg	Great Yarmouth	4,002
	Yarmouth North	Great Yarmouth	3,475

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Stalham and Sutton	North Norfolk	3,416
	Waterside	North Norfolk	3,593
	Waxham	North Norfolk	1,788
<b>16. Harlow CC</b>			<b>73,223</b>
	Hastingwood, Matching and Sheering Village	Epping Forest	1,671
	Lower Nazeing	Epping Forest	3,198
	Lower Sheering	Epping Forest	1,708
	Roydon	Epping Forest	1,743
	Bush Fair	Harlow	5,572
	Church Langley	Harlow	6,204
	Great Parndon	Harlow	5,062
	Harlow Common	Harlow	5,486
	Little Parndon and Hare Street	Harlow	5,750
	Mark Hall	Harlow	5,029
	Netteswell	Harlow	5,377
	Old Harlow	Harlow	5,338
	Staple Tye	Harlow	4,978
	Sumners and Kingsmoor	Harlow	5,300
	Toddbrook	Harlow	5,284
	Broad Oak and the Hallingburys	Uttlesford	2,746
	Hatfield Heath	Uttlesford	1,408
	The Rodings	Uttlesford	1,369
<b>17. Harwich and Clacton CC</b>			<b>76,724</b>
	Alton Park	Tendring	3,392
	Beaumont and Thorpe	Tendring	1,845
	Bockings Elm	Tendring	3,517
	Burrsville	Tendring	1,741
	Frinton	Tendring	3,362
	Golf Green	Tendring	3,929
	Great and Little Oakley	Tendring	1,725
	Hamford	Tendring	3,228
	Harwich East	Tendring	1,874
	Harwich East Central	Tendring	3,559
	Harwich West	Tendring	3,883
	Harwich West Central	Tendring	3,770
	Haven	Tendring	1,756
	Holland and Kirby	Tendring	3,847
	Homefields	Tendring	1,667
	Peter Bruff	Tendring	3,245
	Pier	Tendring	3,323
	Ramsey and Parkeston	Tendring	1,732
	Rush Green	Tendring	3,462
	St Bartholomews	Tendring	3,885
	St James	Tendring	3,441
	St Johns	Tendring	3,797
	St Marys	Tendring	3,715
	St Pauls	Tendring	3,711
	Walton	Tendring	3,318
<b>18. Hemel Hempstead CC</b>			<b>76,457</b>
	South East Bedfordshire	Central Bedfordshire	6,034
	Adeyfield East	Dacorum	3,927
	Adeyfield West	Dacorum	4,037
	Apsley and Corner Hall	Dacorum	6,236
	Bennetts End	Dacorum	4,481
	Boxmoor	Dacorum	6,277
	Chaulden and Warners End	Dacorum	6,754
	Gadebridge	Dacorum	4,121
	Grovehill	Dacorum	5,544
	Hemel Hempstead Town	Dacorum	3,954