

## 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.

## Initial proposals

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	1,780
	Upper Wensum	Breckland	3,331
	Acle	Broadland	1,780
	Aylsham	Broadland	2,220
	Blofield with South Walsham	Broadland	5,844
	Brundall	Broadland	4,446
	Burlingham	Broadland	4,522
	Buxton	Broadland	2,039
	Coltishall	Broadland	1,958
	Eynesford	Broadland	2,069
	Great Witchingham	Broadland	2,410
	Hevingham	Broadland	1,924
	Horsford and Felthorpe	Broadland	2,127
		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

## Initial proposals

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