

Submission of the Conservative Party regarding the Initial Proposals of the Boundary Commission for England for the Eastern Region

1. Introduction

1. This submission represents the views of the Conservative Party representing the current 58 constituencies within the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk within the Eastern Region.
2. We support the allocation of 61 seats in the Eastern Region which results in an increase of 3 constituencies on the existing allocation.
3. We support the principle of dividing the Region into sub-regions for the purposes of allocating constituencies. This ensures that the Factors as outlined in Rule 5 – the Rules for the Redistribution of Seats (Schedule 2 to the Act) are met.
4. However in the Eastern Region we believe that these can be better met by an alternative pairing of counties in a sub-region.
5. We support the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire sub-region with an allocation of 18 constituencies, an increase of one on the current position. We will propose some minor alterations in Bedfordshire to better reflect local ties.
6. We support the sub-region of Cambridgeshire, it is sensible to review this county alone and allocate it 8 constituencies, an increase of one on the current constituencies. We will make an alteration in two constituencies to better reflect the growth in Peterborough.
7. We accept that Suffolk has to be paired with another county in order to allocate constituencies.
8. We would review Essex as its own it has an entitlement to 18.38 constituencies with an average electorate of 74,933. We believe it is possible to provide a better pattern of constituencies if it is allocated 18 constituencies and reviewed on its own.

9. We note that Norfolk which the Commission propose is reviewed alone has an entitlement of 9.21 constituencies with an average electorate of 75,086. We believe it is more difficult to propose constituencies in this area on its own compared with Essex.
10. We would therefore propose a sub-region of Norfolk and Suffolk and allocate this sub-region 17 constituencies, an increase of one on the present position.
11. We believe this alternative is a considerable improvement on the proposals and much better reflects the statutory factors. We improve the position in Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk in terms of Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
12. We will now outline our detailed rationale for our proposed constituencies either supporting the Commission or proposing alternatives.

2. Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire

13. We support the proposal to combine the counties of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and allocate 18 constituencies to the sub-region, an increase of one from the current position. We note that Bedfordshire has to be combined with another county and that although it is possible it would be very difficult to review Hertfordshire alone.
14. We would include the Kempston Rural ward in the proposed Bedford constituency. We note the ward is split between three constituencies including Bedford. We believe the most important ties that are broken within the ward are those with Bedford. For example there is an area to the north west of the A6 which is clearly very closely tied to Kempston West with continuous residential development. We restore these ties thus improving the position under Rule 5 (1) d.
15. By including Kempston Rural you are including all the Kempston wards together in one constituency so uniting Kempston Rural with Kempston Central and East, Kempston North, Kempston South and Kempston West. We would have no objection to the constituency being named Bedford and Kempston.
16. Apart from excluding the Kempston Rural ward we would make no other changes to the proposed North Bedfordshire constituency.
17. We support the proposed Mid Bedfordshire constituency which just changes to align with local government boundary changes and to exclude the Shefford ward.
18. We note in paragraph 30 of the Commission's booklet on the Eastern region that it is admitted that there are no road links between the Stopsley ward and Luton North to which it is proposed it be included.
19. We would retain this ward in Luton South where it currently is and we would include in Luton South the Saints ward. This ward has strong links to Luton South including continuous residential development and numerous roads and a railway line connecting them.

20. We would exclude from Luton South the Central Bedfordshire ward of Caddington which is split between South West Bedfordshire and Luton South, so our Luton South constituency would just contain Luton wards. Therefore the large rural element of this constituency referred to in paragraph 30 would no longer be included.
21. We do not agree with the statement in paragraph 30 that there are no reasonable alternatives. There is a perfectly reasonable and feasible alternative which is that Luton North excludes the Saints ward and includes the Houghton Regis area covering the three more urban wards of Houghton Hall, Parkside and Tithe Farm. We would name this constituency Luton North and Houghton Regis.
22. In respect of the proposed Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard constituency we would exclude the three Houghton Regis wards and include the Eaton Bray and Caddington wards. We do not believe that Eaton Bray is an appropriate ward to include with Luton South. It is currently within South West Bedfordshire and has links to Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard but not to Luton.
23. We would retain the existing name of South West Bedfordshire for this constituency.
24. We support the inclusion of the three Bedfordshire wards of Arlesey, Shefford, and Stotfold and Langford in the cross-border Hitchin constituency. These wards represent 44% of the electorate of the constituency and we do believe they should be respected in the name. We would provisionally suggest Hitchin, Shefford and Stotfold but would welcome alternatives that best described these three wards.
25. We also support the composition of the proposed Hitchin constituency. We agree with the Commission that these areas have established road links and local ties.
26. We note that the proposed constituencies of North East Hertfordshire, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield are unchanged except to realign with new local government boundaries. We support these constituencies which are minor change and thereby compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.

27. The Hertford and Stortford constituency has to reduce in size and we agree that the only logical way to do this is to exclude the Stanstead Abbots, Great Amwell and Hertford Heath wards. We therefore support the proposed Hertford and Stortford constituency.
28. We support the proposed Broxbourne constituency which includes the three East Hertfordshire wards and excludes the Welwyn Hatfield ward of Northaw and Cuffley.
29. We support the proposed Hertsmere constituency which includes the Welwyn Hatfield ward of Northaw and Cuffley. We regret this constituency is no longer coterminous with the local authority and excludes the Bushey North ward. However we can see no alternative to this arrangement.
30. We support the inclusion of the Bushey North ward with the Watford borough in a Watford constituency as the least worst option.
31. We accept that in order to create constituencies within the quota in the south-western part of the county you have to reconfigure the current South West Hertfordshire constituency.
32. We support the composition of the proposed Three Rivers constituency which includes the whole of the local authority plus the Dacorum ward of Kings Langley which does have close connections with both the Gade Valley and Abbots Langley and Bedmond wards.
33. We are not convinced by the name of Three Rivers and we would support an alternative if it commanded widespread support. We would prefer to return to the current name of South West Hertfordshire.
34. We support the Hemel Hempstead constituency which excludes the Kings Langley, Ashridge and Watling wards but includes Bovingdon, Flaunden and Chipperfield ward which has close ties to Hemel Hempstead.
35. We support the proposed Harpenden and Berkhamsted constituency which links the Borough of Dacorum wards of Tring and Berkhamsted with Harpenden from the City of St Albans. We believe this is a sensibly configured, robust constituency. We suggest a minor name change to Berkhamsted and Harpenden.

36. We support the proposed St Albans constituency which is unchanged except to adjust for local government boundaries thus being compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.

37. We therefore support the composition of all the constituencies in Hertfordshire and support minor changes in Bedfordshire to better reflect communities and local ties.

3. Cambridgeshire

38. We support the decision to have a sub-region of Cambridgeshire and to allocate the county an extra seat as it is entitled to 8.06 constituencies. It is one of the fastest-growing counties in England and it is natural that it is entitled to an extra seat.
39. We note that the Commission has provisionally decided to make minor change to Peterborough but did consider other alternatives.
40. We believe it is the right time to recognise that the City of Peterborough is entitled to just less than two seats. With an electorate of 124,450 it is entitled to 1.7 constituencies.
41. We therefore believe that there should be two constituencies with Peterborough within the name. We believe the most logical division of Peterborough is for a Peterborough North and a Peterborough South seat.
42. We believe North West Cambridgeshire is a misnomer as less than 30% of the proposed constituency is from Huntingdonshire and over 70% from the City of Peterborough. It was one of the largest constituencies in the country and all the 22,128 electors it has lost were within Huntingdonshire.
43. We would therefore include the Barnack, Glington and Castor, and Wittering wards in our Peterborough North constituency and Central and West wards in our Peterborough South.
44. We note that the Fletton and Woodston ward now crosses the River and has ties to both the Central and the West wards. The ward is currently split between Peterborough and North West Cambridgeshire.
45. Other than these changes we would allocate the other wards as per the Boundary Commission's proposals.
46. We believe that with these alterations you get two better shaped, more robust constituencies recognising the fact that urban Peterborough is entitled to far more than one constituency and that the River is no longer a divide between constituencies.

47. We support the proposal for the North East Cambridgeshire constituency which sensibly becomes coterminous with the Fenland District Council. This is therefore very compliant with Rule 5 (1) b. We would be relaxed as to whether this constituency was named North East Cambridgeshire or Fenland.
48. We support the proposed East Cambridgeshire which sensibly includes all the wards in East Cambridgeshire thus being compliant with Rule 5 (1) b. It needs to gain two South Cambridgeshire wards to bring it within quota and we support the logical suggestion that Cottenham, and Milton and Waterbeach, are included within the constituency.
49. We support the proposed Cambridge constituency. In order to bring it within quota it needs to lose one ward. We believe that the Cherry Hinton ward is the best choice to link with Queen Edith's ward which is already in South Cambridgeshire.
50. We note the Trumpington ward goes close into the city centre and has ties with the Market and Petersfield wards. Cherry Hinton is much more on the edge of the city and has continuous residential development across the border into Cambridgeshire in the Fen Ditton and Fulbourn ward.
51. We support the proposed South Cambridgeshire constituency. It includes the two Cambridge wards and 15 South Cambridgeshire wards in the southern part of the district. We believe this is the most logical arrangement of wards within the District.
52. The nine remaining wards in South Cambridgeshire in the north western part of the district link together with six wards from Huntingdonshire including the four St Neots wards. There are good transport links between the two districts and we believe this proposed constituency is a sensible combination of wards and we support it.
53. We support the Huntingdon constituency which has to be reconfigured in order to reduce the electorate in North West Cambridgeshire and to provide for the extra constituency in Cambridgeshire.

54. We therefore broadly support the proposals in Cambridgeshire which better link with local authorities in Cambridgeshire. In the City of Peterborough we believe a better configuration is to provide a North and a South constituency to reflect the fact that the City has an electorate which warrants nearly two constituencies.

4. Essex

55. We do not support the sub-region of Essex and Suffolk as we believe a much better arrangement can be found if Essex is in a sub-region on its own and Suffolk is combined with Norfolk.
56. We are particularly concerned at the extensive changes in Southend and Braintree both as a consequence of pairing Essex with another county.
57. By reviewing Essex on its own we believe you can improve the local government links, move fewer electors from their existing constituency and restore local ties. Thus you can improve the position with regard to Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
58. We support three constituencies as proposed by the Commission in Essex: Chelmsford which is the existing constituency minus Galleywood, Basildon and Billericay which is the existing constituency plus Vange, and Rayleigh and Wickford which is the current constituency minus the part of the split ward of Roche North and Rural which is currently in that constituency. These three constituencies are largely based on the existing constituencies and are minimum change thus being compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
59. We would make a minor alteration in respect of the proposed Thurrock constituency. We would return the two Tilbury wards, Riverside and Thurrock Park, and St Chads, and exclude the Chadwell St Mary ward.
60. The two Tilbury wards are very much linked to Grays and local ties are broken by their exclusion. Chadwell St Mary by contrast is a separate area with a very good boundary on its western side which would become the constituency boundary under our proposal being the A1089 dual carriageway.
61. Slightly less electors move constituency under this proposal – 1,324 – so it is more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
62. South Basildon and East Thurrock would be slightly changed to accommodate the alteration with Thurrock.

63. In addition we would remove the Bowes Gifford polling district – DN – within the Pitsea South East ward from this constituency.
64. We would address the need to increase the electorate of the Castle Point constituency by adding the Bowes Gifford polling district of the Pitsea South East ward to the existing constituency.
65. The Commission acknowledge their solution of adding West Leigh to Castle Point is not ideal (paragraph 47 of the Commission’s booklet on the Eastern Region). We do believe our alternative does provide a superior solution regarding the statutory factors. 5,646 fewer electors move constituency and important local ties are restored in Southend thus being better under Rule 5 (1) c and d.
66. Bowes Gifford does have good community links to Castle Point and covers the Bowes Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council. We note that whilst North Benfleet is in Pitsea South East ward, South Benfleet is in Castle Point showing the strong connection.
67. We believe this is by far and away the least worst option to increase the electorate of Castle Point which is coterminous with the local authority.
68. This enables us to address the very considerable disruption to the Southend constituency. In doing so we improve the factors under Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
69. We would propose two constituencies included in Southend-on-Sea unitary authority rather than three in the proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
70. The Commission propose that six Southend-on-Sea wards move constituency under the proposals. We move just one meaning that 38,857 electors within the borough remain in their existing constituency compared with the Commission’s proposals. This is much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
71. Under our proposals Southend West would be the existing constituency which needs to have an additional ward to bring it within quota. We propose the St Luke’s ward.

72. This restores ties in Leigh-on-Sea where the West Leigh ward has close ties with the Leigh ward and the Belfairs ward, the Eastwood Park ward which has ties with the Belfairs ward, and the St Lawrence ward which has ties with the Blenheim Park and Prittlewell wards. Thus our proposals restore local ties and are more compliant under Rule 5 (1) d.
73. Rochford and Southend East would therefore lose the St Luke's ward and gain the part of the split ward of Roche North and Rural that it does not currently contain. This unites Roche in one constituency as is the case under the proposals. The Milton and Victoria wards remain in the constituency restoring their ties with the Kursaal ward thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.
74. We would divide the Epping Forest District between three constituencies rather than four in the proposals thus being better under Rule 5 (1) b.
75. We agree with the Commission in regards adding the Broadley Common, Epping Upland and Nazeing ward to Harlow. We would additionally add the North Weald Bassett ward which has previously been in the Harlow constituency.
76. We would add to the Epping Forest constituency the Passingford and Lambourne wards which both have strong links to Epping.
77. We would retain the High Ongar, Willingale and The Rodings ward and the Moreton and Fyfield wards in their current constituency of Brentwood and Ongar thus returning 3,639 electors to their existing constituency and restoring local ties in Ongar which are broken by the Commission's proposals and restored under ours. This is therefore an improvement under Rule 5 (1) c and d.
78. We would also include in our Brentwood and Ongar constituency the City of Chelmsford wards of Writtle and Chelmsford Rural West. These wards have good links to both Brentwood and Ongar which are better than their links to Braintree.

79. We do not support adding to the proposed Saffron Walden constituency two Epping Forest wards. We realise that the Uttlesford District does not have enough electors to meet the quota and an area has to be added.
80. The City of Chelmsford ward of Broomfield and The Walthams is currently within Saffron Walden and we would retain it in this constituency with its strong links to Great Dunmow. This proposed constituency would only contain electors from the existing constituency and 7,336 electors would be retained in their existing constituency thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
81. We would support a more inclusive name for this constituency and call it North West Essex.
82. We note the very considerable disruption to the existing Braintree constituency which is split between a constituency including Chelmsford wards and a cross-border constituency of Haverhill and Halstead.
83. We do not support this arrangement and instead our Braintree constituency would be no change from the existing constituency except to adjust for local government ward changes.
84. Our Braintree constituency would be totally contained within one local authority rather than split between two constituencies both containing two local authorities. The Braintree local authority would contain two constituencies rather than three under the proposals. These changes are much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b than the proposals.
85. 34,338 more electors are retained in their existing constituency than under the Commission's proposals. This is much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
86. We note that Halstead and the other wards have very close ties to Braintree which are broken under the proposals and retained under our alternative. We therefore improve the position under Rule 5 (1) d.
87. We would retain the Hatfield Peverel and Terling ward in the Witham constituency. It has close ties to Witham which are broken by the proposals and restored under our proposals.

4,659 electors are retained in their existing constituency thus these proposals are therefore an improvement under Rule 5 (1) c and d.

88. As with the Commission's proposals we would include with the ward of Hatfield Peverel and Terling the City of Chelmsford wards of Boreham and The Leighs and Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon and additionally include the ward that the Chelmsford constituency loses – Galleywood – in the Witham constituency.
89. We would include the three Colchester wards that are currently in Witham in the constituency but we would not include Mersea and Pyefleet ward. This ward has very poor links to Witham and is much better included in a Colchester-based constituency.
90. We would not however include the four Maldon wards in this constituency so that it continued only to consist of 3 local authorities.
91. We would include the four Maldon wards in the Maldon constituency thus bringing the smallest district in Essex, as has been the case previously, within one constituency. Thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
92. We would include with the Maldon district the Chelmsford wards proposed to be included in the constituency, all of which are currently in the Maldon constituency, but we would not include Galleywood which is not currently in Maldon.
93. We note that the Boundary Commission exclude the Prettygate ward from the proposed Colchester constituency.
94. Prettygate is clearly a core Colchester ward with close ties to the Shrub End ward.
95. Excluding the Prettygate ward means that Colchester with its growing electorate is too big to sustain just one constituency.
96. We believe a better option is to split Colchester so there is a South Colchester seat and a Harwich and North Colchester seat. All of Colchester would then be combined with one of these constituencies. A similar split of Colchester has happened in the past.

97. This enables the Colchester ward of Mersea and Pyefleet to be included in a South Colchester seat. Its strongest links and ties are to south Colchester. We would also include the Wivenhoe and Prettygate wards in South Colchester.
98. Our Harwich and North Colchester seat would include the Highwoods, Mile End and Castle wards.
99. We believe that this provides a better arrangement in Colchester Borough to reflect the growing electorate and to ensure all electors within Colchester are included in a constituency with Colchester in the name.
100. We would include Brightlingsea in a Clacton constituency, whilst the Weeley and Tendring ward which is split between Clacton and Harwich and North Essex would be included in our proposed Harwich and North Colchester constituency.
101. We therefore propose that Essex is reviewed alone and allocated 18 constituencies. We believe this is an improvement in respect of the Rules on the Commission proposal where Essex is linked to Suffolk.
102. Maldon is united in one constituency rather than two under the proposals. Epping Forest contains 3 constituencies rather than 4, Southend-on-Sea contains 2 constituencies rather than 3, Braintree contains 2 rather than 3. The Braintree constituency is in one local authority rather than two. We appreciate the position in the local authorities of Basildon and the City of Chelmsford, and the Brentwood and Ongar constituency, are slightly worse but overall the local government links are improved under our proposals, thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
103. Net 39,813 fewer electors move constituency under our proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
104. We restore ties in Southend, Leigh-on-Sea, Ongar and Braintree thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.

5. Norfolk and Suffolk

105. We will propose that rather than Suffolk linking with Essex it should be linked with Norfolk. Norfolk and Suffolk are linked in a number of ways and they much more naturally link together than do Suffolk and Essex.
106. We will therefore propose 17 constituencies for this sub-region, an increase of one on the current position. We will propose one constituency that crosses the Norfolk-Suffolk boundary across the River Waveney.
107. Our proposals improve the position in Norfolk and Suffolk considerably. Over 50,000 fewer electors will move constituency. One constituency will be unchanged and a further two constituencies will only change in order to align to local government boundary changes.
108. In respect of local government links the position will again be improved with 2 local authorities consisting of 2 constituencies rather than 3 and one local authority becoming coterminous with a constituency rather than that constituency consisting of 2 local authorities.
109. Our proposals will also restore many local ties.
110. Our proposals considerably improve the position under Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
111. In Suffolk five of the constituencies will remain exactly the same as in the Boundary Commission's proposals.
112. We fully support Ipswich remaining no change which is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
113. We support the South Suffolk constituency which sensibly becomes coterminous with the Babergh local authority being compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
114. We support the proposed Lowestoft constituency which just loses the Bungay and Wainford ward and is minor change.

115. We also support the proposed Suffolk Coastal constituency which combines 13 East Suffolk wards of which 12 are totally within the current Suffolk Coastal and one is partly in Suffolk Coastal. This is therefore very minor change.
116. We appreciate that there is more major change in the proposed Ipswich North and Stowmarket constituency. However we support the proposed constituency which links together communities in Central Suffolk.
117. We would propose the name of the constituency is Stowmarket, Kesgrave and North Ipswich to reflect the main centres in the constituency.
118. We do not support the proposed Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket and North Suffolk constituencies. We have already explained why we do not support the proposed Haverhill and Halstead constituency.
119. We would recreate a West Suffolk constituency based on Newmarket. All the electors are currently in the West Suffolk constituency except for two wards which are currently split between South Suffolk and West Suffolk where the whole wards are in our proposed West Suffolk and South Suffolk becomes coterminous with Babergh District Council.
120. West Suffolk council currently includes three constituencies within it. This would also be the case under the Boundary Commission's proposals. Under our proposals West Suffolk would be wholly within the council area and Bury St Edmunds would be partly within it. So this would be an improvement with the Council only containing two constituencies. This is more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
121. We believe the proposed Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket constituency is poorly constructed with an area just to the south of both towns being excluded from this constituency. This is in effect the successor constituency for both West Suffolk and Bury St Edmunds.

122. 29,192 more electors are retained within their existing constituency of West Suffolk than is the case under the Boundary Commission's proposals thus being much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
123. We note that local ties are broken between West Suffolk wards currently in the West Suffolk constituency and proposed in the Haverhill and Halstead constituency. Their links are with Newmarket and West Suffolk and these are broken under the Commission's proposals and restored under ours being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.
124. We would also recreate a Bury St Edmunds constituency based on the town and including 17 wards from West Suffolk and 6 wards of Mid Suffolk. The vast majority of the electorate are currently in a Bury St Edmunds constituency.
125. 26,641 more electors are retained within their existing constituency of Bury St Edmunds compared with the Boundary Commission's proposals thus being much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
126. We note the very close ties the Rougham and Horringer wards have to Bury St Edmunds and that the Commission places them in Haverhill and Halstead. The ties of these two wards are clearly to Bury St Edmunds and are broken under the Commission's proposals and restored under our proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.
127. We do not support the proposed North Suffolk constituency. It stretches right along the northern Suffolk border without any real centre of population.
128. We would instead create a cross-border Norfolk-Suffolk constituency. This would include the four East Suffolk wards proposed to be included in North Suffolk plus 9 Mid Suffolk wards and 5 South Norfolk wards centred on Diss. This means that there is a centre of a reasonable size within this proposed constituency.
129. We believe this is a robust constituency consisting of wards from two Suffolk districts and one Norfolk district. The River Waveney connects the two parts of the constituency and there is a long boundary between the two counties with plenty of communication routes between them.

130. We would name this constituency Waveney Valley which we believe is a name which would resonate in both Norfolk and Suffolk and is appropriate as the existing Waveney constituency has been renamed Lowestoft.
131. In Norfolk we would retain one unchanged constituency and have two additional constituencies unchanged except to realign its borders with local government ward boundary changes.
132. We would therefore retain the existing Great Yarmouth constituency wholly unchanged. This constituency is coterminous with the local authority and is therefore compliant with Rule 5 (1) b and c.
133. We would retain the North Norfolk wards of Hickling and Stalham in their current constituency of North Norfolk. 6,636 electors would return to their existing constituency and the local ties of these wards to Happisburgh, Hoveton and Tunstead, and St Benet's would be retained. Our proposals are therefore an improvement under Rule 5 (1) c and d.
134. We would therefore propose a North Norfolk constituency which is unchanged apart from realigning the constituency with local government ward boundary changes.
135. We would continue to include all the whole wards from the North Norfolk local authority currently in the Broadland constituency. This includes the town of Fakenham and represents 12,565 electors who will stay in their existing constituency thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
136. We would not include the Breckland wards in this constituency so the Breckland local authority would contain 2 constituencies as opposed to 3 under the proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
137. We would include all the Broadland wards currently in the Broadland constituency with the exception of Drayton North and Drayton South.

138. Our proposed Broadland seat, which we would name Broadland and Fakenham, would be very similar to the current constituency and more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
139. We would include the Drayton North and Drayton South wards with other Broadland wards in the Norwich North constituency. These wards have good links to Hellesdon and used to be part of a Norwich North constituency. We can see no reason why two small Broadland wards should not be included with other Broadland wards in Norwich North. We can see no reason why this proposal should in any way weaken internal transport links for the Broadland constituency as suggested in paragraph 61 of the Commission's booklet on the Eastern Region.
140. We would not include the Thorpe Hamlet ward in Norwich North but include it in its current constituency of Norwich South. Its proposed inclusion in Norwich North divides part of the city centre and Norwich Cathedral moves from Norwich South to Norwich North.
141. 6,820 electors would be retained in their existing constituency and important local ties in Norwich city centre would be restored. Our proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
142. Our Norwich South constituency would be unchanged apart from local government ward changes. We would not include the Old Costessey ward as no electors are currently included in Norwich South from the ward.
143. We would include Old Costessey in their existing constituency of South Norfolk so 7,034 electors would be retained in their existing constituency.
144. South Norfolk has the largest electorate of any constituency in Norfolk and it clearly needs to change.
145. We would exclude the five wards centred on Diss that we include in our cross-county constituency. We would include the three Wymondham wards which are part of South Norfolk district with good links to the rest of the constituency.

146. We would exclude the Wymondham wards from Mid Norfolk just including 3 wards from the South Norfolk district. We would continue to include the Lincoln and Upper Wensum wards in the constituency.
147. 9,305 electors return to their existing constituency of Mid Norfolk. We also note the strong ties of these wards to Dereham which are broken by the proposals and restored under our proposals. Our proposals are therefore more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
148. We support the proposed South West Norfolk constituency which is relatively minor change taking into account ward boundary changes.
149. We support the proposed North West Norfolk constituency which is unchanged apart from to adjust to local government ward changes.
150. We believe our linking of Norfolk and Suffolk provides a much better pattern of constituencies than does the Commission's proposals for these two counties.
151. In Norfolk and Suffolk a net 54,298 electors are retained in their existing constituency compared with the Commission's proposals. An extra constituency is retained unchanged and two further constituencies are unchanged apart from local government ward changes. This is much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
152. One constituency includes only one local authority rather than 2 with the local authority becoming coterminous with the constituency. 2 Districts in Norfolk and Suffolk contain two constituencies rather than 3 under the proposals and whilst South Norfolk has one more constituency contained within it, overall our proposals are an improvement under Rule 5 (1) b.
153. We restore local ties in the Broads area of Norfolk, between Lincoln ward and Dereham, in Norwich city centre, within Newmarket and within Bury St Edmunds. Our proposals improve the position under Rule 5 (1) c.

6. Conclusion

154. We have proposed minor changes in Bedfordshire and no changes in Hertfordshire. Our changes better reflect local ties.
155. Our proposals in Cambridgeshire reconfigure two constituencies to better reflect the growth of electorate in Peterborough.
156. We note that in paragraph 24 of the Commission's booklet on the Eastern Region that the Commission welcomes counter-proposals from respondents to the consultation based on other groupings of counties and unitary authorities, if the statutory factors can be better reflected in those counter-proposals.
157. We have proposed an alteration in the sub-regions in the rest of the Region. We have proposed Norfolk is linked with Suffolk and Essex is reviewed on its own.
158. Net in these three counties 94,111 electors are retained in their existing constituency under our proposals. The local government links in all 3 counties are improved. Many local ties are restored.
159. We maintain our proposals are considerably better in terms of the statutory factors. The Factors outlined in Rule 5 – the Rules for Redistribution of Seats (Schedule 2 of the Act) are better met in all three counties in terms of Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
160. We look forward to giving evidence at the Eastern Region Public Hearings and commenting on any representations received by the Commission. We reserve our right to adjust our position in the light of these representations.
161. We hope the Commission when it publishes revised proposals will change their initial proposals in line with our alterations.
162. We attach as Appendix A a schedule of the composition of our proposed constituencies in the Eastern region, as Appendix B a list of our proposed constituencies and

maps showing the proposals, and as Appendix C maps of the wards we propose to split between constituencies.