

North East



Initial proposals

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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 North East?

The North East region has been allocated 26 constituencies – a reduction of three from the current arrangement.

Our proposals leave none of the existing constituencies unchanged; however, there are a number of constituencies where we have made only minor changes, as necessary, to enable us to comply with the new rules.

We are not proposing any constituencies within Tyne and Wear that cross the River

Tyne. As a result it has not always been possible to allocate whole numbers of constituencies to individual counties.

Three constituencies cross the boundary between Northumberland and Tyne and Wear. One of these creates a constituency that includes the town of Cramlington with wards from Tyne and Wear; another creates a constituency that includes three Borough of Gateshead wards in a constituency that is largely made up of wards from the County of Northumberland. The third constituency comprises areas of Whitley Bay and Holywell.

In addition, one constituency crosses the county boundary between Northumberland and Durham, the Borough of Middlesbrough is divided between three constituencies, and the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees is divided between four constituencies.

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 North East region; 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 northeast@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.

1. What is the Boundary Commission for England?

1. The Boundary Commission for England (BCE) is an independent and impartial non-departmental public body, which is required by Parliament to review Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. We conduct a review of all the constituencies in England every five years. Our role is to make recommendations to Parliament for new constituency boundaries.

2. The Chair of the Commission is the Speaker of the House of Commons, but by convention he or she does not participate in the formulation of the Commission's recommendations, nor in the conduct of the review. The Deputy Chair, Mr Justice Sales, and two further Commissioners take decisions on recommendations for new constituency boundaries. Further information about the Commissioners can be found in the 'About us' section of our website.¹

3. Our website also contains all the information needed to view and comment on our initial proposals. You can also contact us with any general enquiries by emailing information@bcommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk, by calling 020 7276 1102, or by writing to:

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

¹ At www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/about-us/

2. Background to the 2013 Review

4. In February 2011, the UK Parliament passed legislation² 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 North East 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*,³ 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;

² The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, available at www.legislation.gov.uk

³ Available at 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 none of the existing constituencies in the North East region, 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 North East 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 North East region and the North West 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.⁴ 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.

⁴ At 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 two public hearings in the North East, 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 North East region

19. The North East region comprises the counties of Durham and Northumberland, the boroughs of the former Metropolitan County of Tyne and Wear, and the unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees. The region currently has 29 constituencies. Of these constituencies, only five (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland, North Tyneside, Stockton South, Sunderland Central, and Tynemouth) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. The electorates of the remaining 24 constituencies fall below the 5% limit and, in many cases, are significantly smaller.

20. As discussed in chapter 2, following our consultation on using the regions as the basis of our initial proposals, we have taken an initial decision that the North East region is to be allocated 26 constituencies – a reduction of three on the current number.

21. In seeking to produce initial proposals for the region that would result in 26 constituencies, each with an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota, we first considered whether, and how, local government authorities could be usefully grouped into sub-regions. We were mindful of seeking to respect, where we could, the external boundaries of local authorities and natural boundaries, such as the River Tyne. Our approach in attempting to group local authorities together in sub-regions was based on both trying to respect natural boundaries, and achieving, where we could, obvious practical groupings.

22. Tyne and Wear, with an electorate of just over 828,000, could be allocated 11 constituencies within 5% of the electoral quota that would be wholly contained within its boundary. However, this would necessitate crossing the River Tyne, which we considered to be undesirable. Darlington, with an electorate of 78,463, is the only other area of

the North East that could be allocated a whole number of constituencies within its boundary. The electorates of all the other counties and unitary authorities in the North East are such that it is necessary to group them with a neighbouring county or unitary authority. Therefore we decided that we would review the whole of the North East region as one unit in order to allow for a greater range of options.

23. Our initial proposals for the North East region contain two constituencies that are wholly contained within the County of Northumberland, four constituencies that are wholly contained within the County of Durham, and nine constituencies that are wholly contained within the metropolitan boroughs of Tyne and Wear.

24. In addition, we have proposed three constituencies that cross the county boundary between Northumberland and Tyne and Wear, and one constituency that crosses the county boundary between Northumberland and Durham. In the boroughs of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees we have proposed six constituencies. We propose a further constituency that contains parts of Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, and Durham.

25. In reference to the county unitary authorities of Durham and Northumberland, the use of the term ‘ward’ throughout this document should be taken to mean electoral division.

26. We considered whether it would be possible to leave unchanged any of the existing constituencies that had an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which the electorates of all constituencies are within 5% of the electoral quota, we have altered all the constituencies in the region.

27. Our proposed changes to Tyne and Wear have been fairly widespread. This is largely due to the small constituency electorates across the former metropolitan county, particularly in Newcastle upon Tyne, and the relatively large electorates of the urban wards. Currently the Borough of North Tyneside and the City of Newcastle upon Tyne have five constituencies that are wholly contained within the Tyne and Wear boundary. The electorates of these two boroughs do not allow for the allocation of a whole number of constituencies without having to cross the River Tyne or the county boundary with Northumberland.

28. Our proposals create two constituencies, Newcastle upon Tyne North and Cramlington, and Whitley Bay, which contain wards of the County of Northumberland. Our proposed Whitley Bay constituency includes seven wards from the existing Tynemouth constituency, the two wards of Battle Hill and Killingworth of the Borough of North Tyneside, and the ward of Holywell of the County of Northumberland, from the existing Blyth Valley constituency. We consider that there are good communication links in this area. We propose that the town of Tynemouth not be included in the same constituency as Whitley Bay but in a new constituency called Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth.

29. Our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne North and Cramlington constituency comprises four wards of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, three wards of the Borough of North Tyneside, and six wards of the County of Northumberland, which contain the town of Cramlington. In proposing these constituencies we are attempting to ensure that the town of Cramlington is not divided between constituencies.

30. Our proposals create two constituencies – Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth,

and Newcastle upon Tyne South – based on an east/west axis along the River Tyne from the Northumberland county boundary to the North Sea coast. This arrangement ensures that a constituency is not divided by the River Tyne. The Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth constituency includes three wards from the existing Tynemouth constituency, three wards from the existing North Tyneside constituency and four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency. Our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne South constituency includes the two wards of Ouseburn and South Jesmond from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency, four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency and four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne North constituency. We propose a new Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency that, in contrast with the existing Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency, does not extend to the River Tyne due to the creation of our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne South constituency. This new constituency comprises eight wards of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne and two wards, Benton and Northumberland, of the Borough of North Tyneside.

31. Currently the combined metropolitan boroughs of Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland have seven constituencies. Due to the combined electorate of these boroughs we propose six constituencies that are wholly contained within this area. The existing Jarrow, Gateshead, and South Shields constituencies all have electorates that are significantly below the 5% limit. Having decided not to create a constituency that crosses the River Tyne, we propose to include the wards of Boldon Colliery, and Cleadon and East Boldon of the Borough of South Tyneside, which are in the existing Jarrow constituency, in our proposed South Shields constituency. Consequently, our Jarrow and Gateshead East constituency

includes all the wards in the existing Jarrow constituency, except for the two mentioned above, and also includes four wards from the existing Gateshead constituency. We did consider whether there were other Gateshead wards that we could include in the constituency, but decided that the inclusion of the four we have proposed would be the most suitable.

32. We also propose a Gateshead West constituency, which includes six wards from the existing Gateshead constituency and five wards from the existing Blaydon constituency, which, due to the changes that we have proposed elsewhere in the region, would no longer exist.

33. Our proposed Washington constituency includes all the wards from the existing Washington and Sunderland West constituency, except for the Redhill ward of the City of Sunderland. It also includes the two wards of Lamesley and Birtley of the Borough of Gateshead, from the existing Blaydon constituency.

34. The existing constituency of Sunderland Central remains largely unchanged. The constituency gains the Redhill ward from the existing Washington and Sunderland West constituency but, as a consequence, the Ryhope ward of the City of Sunderland is transferred to our proposed Houghton-le-Spring constituency, the name of which has been changed from Houghton and Sunderland South. The Ryhope ward has been in a previous constituency with Houghton. We propose that Sunderland Central constituency be renamed Sunderland.

35. The County of Northumberland currently has four constituencies, all of which have very small electorates. We propose having two constituencies that are wholly within the county boundary. We considered whether a

constituency comprising large areas of the existing Berwick-upon-Tweed constituency could be extended south and westwards to Hexham, and whether the town of Morpeth could be included in a constituency with either Berwick-upon-Tweed or with Hexham. However, electoral figures and the shape of the Ulgham ward, which almost surrounds the town of Morpeth and extends to the North Sea coast, led us to include the town of Morpeth in a constituency with the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Consequently, our proposals result in a Berwick and Morpeth constituency that extends down the North Sea coast. Furthermore, as a result of our proposal to include the whole of the town of Cramlington within a constituency that includes wards from the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, we propose a new Blyth and Ashington constituency which includes the town of Bedlington, and extends to the coastal communities of Seaton Sluice in the south and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea in the north.

36. We propose a Hexham constituency that extends from the newly created Rothbury ward to just south of the A69, but not extending as far as the Durham county boundary. This proposed constituency, in order to have an electorate that is within 5% of the electoral quota, crosses the county boundary between the County of Northumberland and the Borough of Gateshead, and includes the following three wards from the existing Blaydon constituency: Ryton, Crookhill and Stella; Crawcrook and Greenside; and Chopwell and Rowlands Gill, of the Borough of Gateshead. This arrangement results in the proposed Hexham constituency being the largest in England in terms of area, at 2,603.85 square kilometres. (Legislation states that no constituency can be larger than 13,000 square kilometres.)

37. The County of Durham currently has six constituencies. Our proposals create four

constituencies wholly contained within the county, one constituency that contains two wards from the County of Northumberland, and one constituency that contains wards from the County of Durham, the Borough of Darlington, and the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

38. We propose a Consett and Barnard Castle constituency that crosses the county boundary between Northumberland and County Durham by including the wards of Haltwhistle and South Tynedale. The constituency also includes a number of wards from the existing North West Durham and Bishop Auckland constituencies. Although this constituency is very rural in nature, there are a number of roads across the county boundary that link the north and south of the constituency.

39. We propose a significantly altered Bishop Auckland constituency which includes the towns of Crook and Spennymoor. Our proposed constituency no longer extends westwards to the boundary with Cumbria. Our proposed Chester-le-Street constituency is similar to the existing North Durham constituency and includes all the wards from that constituency as well as the Burnopfield and Dipton ward from the existing North West Durham constituency. We propose the change of name as we consider that it suitably reflects the community in this part of County Durham.

40. Our proposed Durham constituency now includes the Ferryhill and Trimdon wards but does not extend beyond the west of Brandon, as the existing constituency does. Our proposed Easington constituency remains largely unchanged, but with the inclusion of the Thornley and Wingate wards from the existing Sedgefield constituency; this has been done to increase its electorate.

41. In the Borough of Darlington we propose a Darlington constituency that includes all the

wards in the existing Darlington constituency and the wards of Heighington and Coniscliffe, and Hurworth, which are currently in the Sedgefield constituency.

42. We propose a Sedgefield and Yarm constituency that crosses the county boundaries between the County of Durham and the Borough of Darlington, and the County of Durham and the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. It includes the Middleton St George, and Sadberge and Whessoe wards of the Borough of Darlington. To compensate for the transfer of the Heighington and Coniscliffe, and Hurworth wards to our proposed Darlington constituency, we have extended our proposed Sedgefield and Yarm constituency to include wards to the west and south of the town of Stockton-on-Tees, including the towns of Yarm and Ingleby Barwick from the existing Stockton South constituency. This proposed constituency is served by major roads that link the parts of the two boroughs and county that are included in the constituency.

43. As a result of the changes we have made, four wards from the existing Stockton South constituency have been included in a new Stockton and Billingham constituency. This enables almost all of the town of Stockton-on-Tees to be included in a single constituency. The three wards of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, which cover the Thornaby-on-Tees area, are now included in our proposed Middlesbrough constituency.

44. Eleven wards from the existing Middlesbrough constituency are included in our proposed Middlesbrough constituency. In addition, our proposed Middlesbrough constituency includes the two wards of Ladgate and Marton of the Borough of Middlesbrough, from the existing Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency, and three wards of the Borough

of Stockton-on-Tees, which are in the existing Stockton South constituency. Four wards from the existing Middlesbrough constituency are included in our proposed Redcar constituency.

45. As a consequence of our changes, our proposed Redcar constituency also contains the Park End ward of the Borough of Middlesbrough, from the existing Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency. The three wards of Normanby, Ormesby, and St Germain's of the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland are included in our proposed Middlesbrough South and Guisborough constituency which, apart from these additions and the transfer of the Park End ward, is unaltered. We propose that this new constituency's name be changed from Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland.

46. Our proposed Hartlepool constituency has just one change from the existing constituency – the addition of the Billingham North ward of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

4. How to have your say

47. 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.

48. 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.

49. 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?

50. 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

51. We encourage everyone to make use of our consultation website, at 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.

52. 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: northeast@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. 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.

53. 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, or by phoning 020 7276 1102.

Public hearings

54. The Commission will be holding public hearings across all the English regions. In the North East region we will be hosting two public hearings during the consultation period. Our website (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 North East region.

Locations and dates of public hearings

City/town	Location	Dates
Newcastle	The Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8QH	Monday 14 – Tuesday 15 November 2011
Darlington	The St George Hotel, Darlington, Durham Tees Valley Airport, Darlington DL2 1RH	Thursday 17 – Friday 18 November 2011

55. 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.

56. 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 North East region has been completed on 18 November 2011, you will still have two 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.

57. You can find more information about public hearings, and can register to attend, on our website at www.consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk, or by phoning 020 7276 1102.

What do we want views on?

58. 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. 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).

59. 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.

60. 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 North East region?
- b. What are your alternatives for areas you disagree with that meet the statutory rules set out in chapter 2?

61. 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.

Annex: Initial proposals for constituencies, including wards and electorates

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
1. Berwick and Morpeth CC			76,351
	Alnwick	Northumberland	3,197
	Amble	Northumberland	3,222
	Amble West with Warkworth	Northumberland	3,363
	Bamburgh	Northumberland	3,671
	Berwick East	Northumberland	3,229
	Berwick North	Northumberland	3,162
	Berwick West with Ord	Northumberland	2,985
	Bothal	Northumberland	3,576
	Chevington with Longhorseley	Northumberland	3,431
	Choppington	Northumberland	3,631
	Lesbury	Northumberland	4,152
	Longhoughton	Northumberland	3,047
	Lynemouth	Northumberland	3,410
	Morpeth Kirkehill	Northumberland	4,157
	Morpeth North	Northumberland	3,391
	Morpeth Stobhill	Northumberland	3,096
	Norham and Islandshires	Northumberland	3,512
	Pegswood	Northumberland	3,038
	Ponteland East	Northumberland	3,687
	Shilbottle	Northumberland	3,912
	Ulgham	Northumberland	4,135
	Wooler	Northumberland	3,347
2. Bishop Auckland CC			79,163
	Bishop Auckland Town	Durham	6,230
	Chilton	Durham	7,105
	Coundon	Durham	5,342
	Crook North and Tow Law	Durham	5,922
	Crook South	Durham	6,666
	Deerness Valley	Durham	7,494
	Sildon West	Durham	5,615
	Spennymoor and Middlestone	Durham	7,631
	Tudhoe	Durham	7,224
	West Auckland	Durham	6,498
	Willington	Durham	7,140
	Woodhouse Close	Durham	6,296
3. Blyth and Ashington BC			75,939
	Ashington Central	Northumberland	3,717
	Bedlington Central	Northumberland	3,383
	Bedlington East	Northumberland	3,446
	Bedlington West	Northumberland	4,359
	College	Northumberland	3,741
	Cowpen	Northumberland	3,383
	Croft	Northumberland	3,310
	Hartley	Northumberland	4,043
	Haydon	Northumberland	3,711
	Hirst	Northumberland	3,540
	Isabella	Northumberland	3,378
	Kitty Brewster	Northumberland	3,980
	Newbiggin Central and East	Northumberland	3,765

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Newsham	Northumberland	3,396
	Plessey	Northumberland	3,496
	Seaton with Newbiggin West	Northumberland	3,531
	Seghill with Seaton Delaval	Northumberland	4,211
	Sleekburn	Northumberland	3,040
	South Blyth	Northumberland	3,381
	Stakeford	Northumberland	3,766
	Wensleydale	Northumberland	3,362
4. Chester-le-Street CC			75,337
	Annfield Plain	Durham	6,102
	Burnopfield and Dipton	Durham	6,378
	Chester-le-Street North and East	Durham	6,747
	Chester-le-Street South	Durham	6,683
	Chester-le-Street West Central	Durham	6,066
	Craghead and South Moor	Durham	5,790
	Lumley	Durham	5,961
	Ouston and Urpeth	Durham	6,190
	Pelton	Durham	6,616
	Sacrison	Durham	5,329
	Stanley	Durham	6,646
	Tanfield	Durham	6,829
5. Consett and Barnard Castle CC			74,583
	Barnard Castle East	Durham	6,929
	Barnard Castle West	Durham	6,553
	Benfieldside	Durham	5,203
	Consett North	Durham	6,787
	Delves Lane and Consett South	Durham	8,788
	Esh	Durham	5,186
	Evenwood	Durham	6,623
	Lanchester	Durham	6,154
	Leadgate and Medomsley	Durham	7,694
	Weardale	Durham	6,842
	Haltwhistle	Northumberland	3,868
	South Tynedale	Northumberland	3,956
6. Darlington BC			73,324
	Bank Top	Darlington	2,695
	Central	Darlington	2,772
	Cockerton East	Darlington	4,126
	Cockerton West	Darlington	2,937
	College	Darlington	3,256
	Eastbourne	Darlington	4,567
	Faverdale	Darlington	2,116
	Harrowgate Hill	Darlington	4,666
	Haughton East	Darlington	3,106
	Haughton North	Darlington	2,740
	Haughton West	Darlington	4,167
	Heighington and Coniscliffe	Darlington	2,967
	Hummersknott	Darlington	2,936
	Hurworth	Darlington	2,881
	Lascelles	Darlington	2,917
	Lingfield	Darlington	2,904
	Mowden	Darlington	3,134
	Northgate	Darlington	2,796
	North Road	Darlington	4,363
	Park East	Darlington	4,266
	Park West	Darlington	2,978
	Pierremont	Darlington	4,034

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
7. Durham CC			78,549
	Belmont	Durham	5,074
	Brandon	Durham	7,453
	Coxhoe	Durham	5,444
	Durham South	Durham	5,183
	Elvet	Durham	7,685
	Ferryhill	Durham	7,424
	Framwellgate Moor	Durham	7,860
	Gilesgate	Durham	5,964
	Neville's Cross	Durham	7,035
	Newton Hall	Durham	6,175
	Sherburn	Durham	7,292
	Trimdon	Durham	5,960
8. Easington CC			75,599
	Blackhalls	Durham	6,203
	Dawdon	Durham	5,340
	Deneside	Durham	5,553
	Easington	Durham	6,150
	Horden	Durham	6,478
	Murton	Durham	6,087
	Peterlee East	Durham	5,897
	Peterlee West	Durham	5,669
	Seaham	Durham	6,949
	Shotton	Durham	7,172
	Thornley	Durham	5,740
	Wingate	Durham	8,361
9. Gateshead West BC			73,466
	Blaydon	Gateshead	7,357
	Bridges	Gateshead	5,702
	Deckham	Gateshead	6,758
	Dunston and Teams	Gateshead	6,258
	Dunston Hill and Whickham East	Gateshead	6,863
	Lobley Hill and Bensham	Gateshead	7,251
	Low Fell	Gateshead	7,160
	Saltwell	Gateshead	5,783
	Whickham North	Gateshead	6,625
	Whickham South and Sunnyside	Gateshead	6,850
	Winlaton and High Spen	Gateshead	6,859
10. Hartlepool BC			77,334
	Brus	Hartlepool	4,895
	Burn Valley	Hartlepool	4,120
	Dyke House	Hartlepool	3,523
	Elwick	Hartlepool	1,700
	Fens	Hartlepool	4,068
	Foggy Furze	Hartlepool	3,845
	Grange	Hartlepool	4,127
	Greatham	Hartlepool	1,690
	Hart	Hartlepool	5,262
	Owton	Hartlepool	4,116
	Park	Hartlepool	4,672
	Rift House	Hartlepool	4,742
	Rossmere	Hartlepool	4,871
	St Hilda	Hartlepool	4,353
	Seaton	Hartlepool	5,323
	Stranton	Hartlepool	3,998
	Throston	Hartlepool	4,705
	Billingham North	Stockton-on-Tees	7,324

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
11. Hexham CC			74,937
	Chopwell and Rowlands Gill	Gateshead	7,269
	Crawcrook and Greenside	Gateshead	6,764
	Ryton, Crookhill and Stella	Gateshead	6,399
	Bellingham	Northumberland	3,277
	Bywell	Northumberland	3,558
	Corbridge	Northumberland	3,477
	Haydon and Hadrian	Northumberland	3,517
	Hexham Central with Acomb	Northumberland	3,237
	Hexham East	Northumberland	3,435
	Hexham West	Northumberland	3,539
	Humshaugh	Northumberland	3,772
	Ponteland North	Northumberland	3,488
	Ponteland South with Heddon	Northumberland	3,560
	Ponteland West	Northumberland	3,359
	Prudhoe East	Northumberland	4,454
	Prudhoe West	Northumberland	3,760
	Rothbury	Northumberland	4,157
	Stocksfield and Broomhaugh	Northumberland	3,915
12. Houghton-le-Spring BC			78,342
	Copt Hill	Sunderland	8,977
	Doxford	Sunderland	7,992
	Hetton	Sunderland	8,902
	Houghton	Sunderland	9,150
	Ryhope	Sunderland	8,227
	St Chad's	Sunderland	7,965
	Sandhill	Sunderland	8,514
	Shiney Row	Sunderland	10,082
	Silksworth	Sunderland	8,533
13. Jarrow and Gateshead East BC			77,865
	Chowdene	Gateshead	7,214
	Felling	Gateshead	5,741
	High Fell	Gateshead	6,580
	Pelaw and Heworth	Gateshead	6,755
	Wardley and Leam Lane	Gateshead	6,369
	Windy Nook and Whitehills	Gateshead	7,619
	Bede	South Tyneside	6,097
	Fellgate and Hedworth	South Tyneside	6,031
	Hebburn North	South Tyneside	6,502
	Hebburn South	South Tyneside	6,147
	Monkton	South Tyneside	6,487
	Primrose	South Tyneside	6,323
14. Middlesbrough BC			74,770
	Acklam	Middlesbrough	4,802
	Ayresome	Middlesbrough	4,455
	Beechwood	Middlesbrough	3,865
	Brookfield	Middlesbrough	4,745
	Clairville	Middlesbrough	3,861
	Gresham	Middlesbrough	5,389
	Kader	Middlesbrough	4,079
	Ladgate	Middlesbrough	4,229
	Linthorpe	Middlesbrough	7,031
	Marton	Middlesbrough	3,837
	Middlehaven	Middlesbrough	2,693
	Park	Middlesbrough	4,294
	University	Middlesbrough	3,866
	Mandale and Victoria	Stockton-on-Tees	7,557
	Stainsby Hill	Stockton-on-Tees	4,835
	Village	Stockton-on-Tees	5,232

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
15. Middlesbrough South and Guisborough CC			75,711
	Coulby Newham	Middlesbrough	7,046
	Hemlington	Middlesbrough	4,290
	Marton West	Middlesbrough	4,276
	Nunthorpe	Middlesbrough	4,081
	Stainton and Thornton	Middlesbrough	2,356
	Brotton	Redcar and Cleveland	5,374
	Guisborough	Redcar and Cleveland	6,023
	Hutton	Redcar and Cleveland	5,916
	Lockwood	Redcar and Cleveland	1,570
	Loftus	Redcar and Cleveland	5,022
	Normanby	Redcar and Cleveland	5,643
	Ormesby	Redcar and Cleveland	4,744
	St Germain's	Redcar and Cleveland	5,076
	Saltburn	Redcar and Cleveland	4,801
	Skelton	Redcar and Cleveland	5,765
	Westworth	Redcar and Cleveland	3,728
16. Newcastle upon Tyne Central BC			76,006
	Blakelaw	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,928
	Dene	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,507
	East Gosforth	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,297
	Kenton	Newcastle upon Tyne	8,032
	North Heaton	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,698
	North Jesmond	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,337
	West Gosforth	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,437
	Wingrove	Newcastle upon Tyne	8,047
	Benton	North Tyneside	7,863
	Northumberland	North Tyneside	6,860
17. Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth BC			76,167
	Byker	Newcastle upon Tyne	6,953
	South Heaton	Newcastle upon Tyne	6,943
	Walker	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,527
	Walkergate	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,077
	Chirton	North Tyneside	8,267
	Howdon	North Tyneside	8,257
	Preston	North Tyneside	7,040
	Riverside	North Tyneside	7,930
	Tynemouth	North Tyneside	8,407
	Wallsend	North Tyneside	7,766
18. Newcastle upon Tyne North and Cramlington BC			77,038
	Castle	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,497
	Fawdon	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,169
	Parklands	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,670
	Woolsington	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,837
	Camperdown	North Tyneside	7,882
	Longbenton	North Tyneside	8,147
	Weetslade	North Tyneside	7,646
	Cramlington East	Northumberland	4,164
	Cramlington Eastfield	Northumberland	3,885
	Cramlington North	Northumberland	4,220
	Cramlington South East	Northumberland	3,284
	Cramlington Village	Northumberland	3,715
	Cramlington West	Northumberland	3,922
19. Newcastle upon Tyne South BC			73,443
	Benwell and Scotswood	Newcastle upon Tyne	8,473
	Denton	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,805
	Elswick	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,231
	Fenham	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,908
	Lemington	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,461

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Newburn	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,065
	Ouseburn	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,158
	South Jesmond	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,003
	Westerhope	Newcastle upon Tyne	7,600
	Westgate	Newcastle upon Tyne	5,739
20. Redcar BC			73,065
	Beckfield	Middlesbrough	3,771
	North Ormesby and Brambles Farm	Middlesbrough	4,381
	Pallister	Middlesbrough	4,331
	Park End	Middlesbrough	4,562
	Thorntree	Middlesbrough	4,288
	Coatham	Redcar and Cleveland	3,910
	Dormanstown	Redcar and Cleveland	5,212
	Eston	Redcar and Cleveland	5,557
	Grangetown	Redcar and Cleveland	3,223
	Kirkleatham	Redcar and Cleveland	5,130
	Longbeck	Redcar and Cleveland	5,480
	Newcomen	Redcar and Cleveland	3,360
	South Bank	Redcar and Cleveland	5,012
	Teesville	Redcar and Cleveland	5,279
	West Dyke	Redcar and Cleveland	5,940
	Zetland	Redcar and Cleveland	3,629
21. Sedgfield and Yarm CC			73,210
	Middleton St George	Darlington	3,514
	Sadberge and Whessoe	Darlington	1,625
	Aycliffe East	Durham	5,042
	Aycliffe North	Durham	6,338
	Aycliffe West	Durham	5,666
	Sedgfield	Durham	5,644
	Shildon East	Durham	6,799
	Eaglescliffe	Stockton-on-Tees	8,288
	Ingleby Barwick East	Stockton-on-Tees	7,498
	Ingleby Barwick West	Stockton-on-Tees	7,457
	Parkfield and Oxbridge	Stockton-on-Tees	4,953
	Western Parishes	Stockton-on-Tees	2,630
	Yarm	Stockton-on-Tees	7,756
22. South Shields BC			78,101
	Beacon and Bents	South Tyneside	6,862
	Biddick and All Saints	South Tyneside	6,336
	Boldon Colliery	South Tyneside	7,340
	Cleadon and East Boldon	South Tyneside	6,996
	Cleadon Park	South Tyneside	5,287
	Harton	South Tyneside	6,828
	Horsley Hill	South Tyneside	7,024
	Simonside and Rekendyke	South Tyneside	6,426
	Westoe	South Tyneside	6,616
	West Park	South Tyneside	5,869
	Whitburn and Marsden	South Tyneside	5,833
	Whiteleas	South Tyneside	6,684
23. Stockton and Billingham BC			78,324
	Billingham Central	Stockton-on-Tees	5,267
	Billingham East	Stockton-on-Tees	5,321
	Billingham South	Stockton-on-Tees	4,972
	Billingham West	Stockton-on-Tees	4,828
	Bishopsgarth and Elm Tree	Stockton-on-Tees	5,304
	Fairfield	Stockton-on-Tees	4,837
	Grangefield	Stockton-on-Tees	5,324

Constituency	Ward	District/borough/city/county	Electorate
	Hardwick	Stockton-on-Tees	4,842
	Hartburn	Stockton-on-Tees	5,480
	Newtown	Stockton-on-Tees	4,954
	Northern Parishes	Stockton-on-Tees	2,695
	Norton North	Stockton-on-Tees	5,036
	Norton South	Stockton-on-Tees	4,896
	Norton West	Stockton-on-Tees	5,206
	Roseworth	Stockton-on-Tees	5,156
	Stockton Town Centre	Stockton-on-Tees	4,206
24. Sunderland BC			76,770
	Barnes	Sunderland	8,959
	Fulwell	Sunderland	9,211
	Hendon	Sunderland	8,744
	Millfield	Sunderland	7,656
	Pallion	Sunderland	7,602
	Redhill	Sunderland	8,705
	St Michael's	Sunderland	9,031
	St Peter's	Sunderland	8,566
	Southwick	Sunderland	8,296
25. Washington BC			74,642
	Birtley	Gateshead	6,321
	Lamesley	Gateshead	6,849
	Castle	Sunderland	8,668
	St Anne's	Sunderland	8,661
	Washington Central	Sunderland	8,998
	Washington East	Sunderland	8,856
	Washington North	Sunderland	8,824
	Washington South	Sunderland	8,275
	Washington West	Sunderland	9,190
26. Whitley Bay BC			73,213
	Battle Hill	North Tyneside	8,331
	Collingwood	North Tyneside	8,578
	Cullercoats	North Tyneside	7,513
	Killingworth	North Tyneside	7,935
	Monkseaton North	North Tyneside	6,996
	Monkseaton South	North Tyneside	7,686
	St Mary's	North Tyneside	6,909
	Valley	North Tyneside	8,054
	Whitley Bay	North Tyneside	7,168
	Holywell	Northumberland	4,043

Glossary

Assistant Commissioner	Independent person appointed at the request of the BCE to assist it with the discharge of its functions.
Borough constituency abbreviated to BC	Parliamentary constituency containing a predominantly urban area.
County constituency abbreviated to CC	Parliamentary constituency containing more than a small rural element.
Designation	Classification as either a borough constituency or as a county constituency.
Electorate	The number of registered Parliamentary electors in a given area.
(Statutory) Electorate range	The statutory rule that requires the electorate of every constituency (as at the review date) to be within 5% of the UK electoral quota.
Final recommendations	The recommendations submitted in a formal final report to the Government at the end of a review. They may – or may not – have been revised since the initial proposals in any given area.
General review	Major review of all Parliamentary constituencies in England at the same time. From 2011 all Parliamentary constituency reviews are general reviews.
Initial proposals	First formal proposals published by the BCE during the review for public consultation.
Public hearing	Formal opportunity in a given area for people to make oral representations, chaired by an Assistant Commissioner. In each region of England there may be no fewer than two and no more than five hearings, and each may last a maximum of two days.
Representations	The views provided by an individual, group or organisation to the BCE on its initial or revised proposals, either for or against, including counter-proposals and petitions.
Review date	Proposals must be based on the numbers of electors on the electoral registers on this date, which is defined in the Act as the date two years and ten months before the final report is to be submitted (i.e. 1 December 2010 for the review that is to conclude with a final report by 1 October 2013).
Revised proposals	The initial proposals as subsequently revised.
UK electoral quota	The average number of electors in a constituency, found by dividing the total electorate of the UK (less that of the four specific ‘protected’ constituencies) by 596.
Unitary authority	An area where there is only one tier of local council (above any parish or town council). This contrasts with those ‘shire district’ areas that have two tiers (i.e. both a non-metropolitan county council and a district/borough/city council).

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