

Please find below my submission to the Commission regarding the parliamentary boundary review.

Yours faithfully
Gareth Knight

There are four specific proposals regarding constituency names that I make to the Boundary Commission for all review areas regardless of whether or not the Commission's initial proposals are amended.

1. Constituency names for all constituencies where the proposed boundary is in any way different to the existing boundary should be clearly different to the name of an existing constituency. I believe that recycling constituency names from the last review is not only confusing for voters, it is also somewhat manipulative as it fails to make a clear distinction between the old boundaries and the new ones leading to people generalising about the seat. For example, if town X which is current in a constituency called X with 70,000 voters requires a ward from another constituency to make it 80,000, continuing to call it X gives people a clear indication that the additional ward has been tacked on to X. MPs, candidates, councillors, public officials and the media will even go so far as to say "Fred Blogg's constituency has gained 10,000 voters from the neighbouring seat" when in fact it is a new constituency. I remember from previous reviews that some political parties have even argued over constituency names on the (unofficial) basis that they felt a name that highlighted a part of the constituency supportive of their party would be welcomed more by their voters. Incumbents invariably support maintaining existing names – this is a form of manipulation that can be eradicated very easily in the review if the Commission adopt the above principle.
2. Constituency names should not be compass points. While splitting a town into X North, X South and X South West may be useful to those looking at a map, it's extremely rare that this has any real meaning to people living in those areas and this is made even more confusing when existing and new constituencies have boundary changes but the compass point remains. Wherever possible constituency names should be identifiable without a compass, following the model used by the existing Sheffield and Liverpool constituencies.
3. Maintaining an historical element or highlighting a local landmark in a constituency name is important and should be preserved whenever possible but not at the expense of points 1 and 2 above.
4. The use of commas in constituency names should be acceptable where the constituency name best reflects the constituency in question.

In light of these points, I have made suggestions for changes to constituency names for each region. I would like all of these names to be considered in turn even if the commission rejects the principles I have stated above. Please note that should changes be made to the Commission's initial proposals, the same principle applies, and any amended proposals should follow the same principles.

Northern Ireland

Name in Boundary Commission proposal	Proposed alternative name	Justification
Belfast North	Belfast Castle	Name should be different to existing constituency due to

		boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference
Belfast South East	Belfast Stormont	Name should avoid compass point reference
Belfast South West	Belfast Black Mountain	Name should avoid compass point reference
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	Lough Erne and Dungannon	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference
Foyle	City of Londonderry	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes
Glenshane	No change necessary	
Lagan Valley	Portmore and the City of Lisburn	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes
Mid Antrim	Ballymena and Larne	Name should avoid compass point reference
Mid Tyrone	Omagh and Cookstown	Name should avoid compass point reference
Newry and Armagh	Gosford Castle and Bessbrook	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes
North Antrim	Ballymoney and Ballycastle	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference
North Down	Bangor and the Ards Peninsula	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference
South Antrim	Ballyclare and Antrim Town	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference
South Down	Dundrum Bay and Warrenpoint	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes; name should avoid compass point reference

Strangford	Newtownards and Killyleagh Castle	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes
Upper Bann	Craigavon and Banbridge	Name should be different to existing constituency due to boundary changes