

REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 13 September 2011 the Boundary Commission for England published its initial proposals for the review of Parliamentary Constituencies in the United Kingdom. The proposals are available to view on the Boundary Commission's website –

consultation.boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk

and paper copies of the proposals are available at a number of deposit points in the District, including Appletree Court, Lyndhurst. The proposals for New Forest District are set out in paragraph 4 below.

- 1.2 There is a 12 week consultation period on the Boundary Commission's proposals, ending on 5 December 2011.
- 1.3 This report asks the Cabinet to agree any representations it wishes to make regarding the proposed revised boundaries. A recommendation is made.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The review is being conducted on the basis of new rules laid down by Parliament. These rules involve the reduction in the number of constituencies in the UK from 650 to 600, and in England from 533 to 502 (including two for the Isle of Wight). They require that every constituency (apart from the Isle of Wight) must have an electorate that is no smaller than 72,810 and no larger than 80,473. In conducting reviews, the Boundary Commission is required to work on the basis of the numbers of electors on the electoral registers at the "review date" (1 December 2010).
- 2.2 Following a consultation exercise, the Boundary Commission decided to subdivide the 500 constituencies on the basis of the European Parliamentary regions. This gave the South East Region (in which New Forest District is situated) 81 constituencies (plus two for the Isle of Wight).
- 2.3 The Act provides that, in developing proposals, the Boundary Commission may have regard to "local government boundaries". These could be counties and their divisions or districts and their wards in force at the last local elections, i.e. 5 May 2011.

3. REPRESENTATIONS

- 3.1 The new statutory framework for undertaking Parliamentary boundary reviews has brought a significant change in the consultation process. The current review is being carried out under a new procedure that relies on a combination of written representations and oral representations at public hearings. The old style of public inquiries has been abolished. The hearings provide an opportunity both for the Boundary Commission to explain its initial proposals and for people to give their views on the proposals.

3.2 Hearings in the South East Region are being held at various venues on a range of dates from 20 October – 4 November. In view of the Boundary Commission’s assurance that it will attach just as much significance to representations made in writing as to those made orally at public hearings, the Cabinet indicated informally that it did not wish to make oral representations.

4. INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR HAMPSHIRE AND NEW FOREST DISTRICT

4.1 The proposals involve a reduction in the number of constituencies in Hampshire (including Portsmouth and Southampton) from 18 to 17. The proposals for New Forest District are:

- (a) the existing New Forest West constituency be extended further to the east, to include the Boldre & Sway; Brockenhurst & Forest South East and Lyndhurst district wards currently in New Forest East; and
- (b) the creation of a new “New Forest East and Romsey” constituency extending into Test Valley Borough Council.

4.2 Maps of the proposed constituencies are attached as Appendices 1 & 2.

4.3 The proposed constituencies comprise the following District/Borough wards:

<i>Proposed New Forest West Constituency</i>		
District	Ward	Electorate at 1 Dec 2010
New Forest	Barton	4,886
	Bashley	2,311
	Becton	4,181
	Boldre and Sway	4,398
	Bransgore and Burley	4,647
	Brockenhurst and Forest South East	4,687
	Buckland	2,679
	Downlands and Forest	2,387
	Fernhill	4,920
	Fordingbridge	5,406
	Forest North West	2,100
	Hordle	4,517
	Lymington Town	4,917
	Lyndhurst	2,392
	Milford	4,366
	Milton	5,023
	Pennington	4,738
Ringwood East and Sopley	2,225	
Ringwood North	4,887	
Ringwood South	4,797	
Total Electorate		80,464

PROPOSED NEW FOREST EAST AND ROMSEY CONSTITUENCY		
District	Ward	Electorate at 1 Dec 2010
New Forest	Ashurst, Copythorne South and Netley Marsh	4,866
	Bramshaw, Copythorne North and Minstead	2,185
	Butts Ash and Dibden Purlieu	5,259
	Dibden and Hythe East	4,565
	Fawley, Blackfield and Langley	4,992
	Furzedown and Hardley	2,697
	Holbury and North Blackfield	5,114
	Hythe West and Langdown	5,054
	Marchwood	4,679
	Totton Central	4,206
	Totton East	4,874
	Totton North	4,841
	Totton South	4,776
	Totton West	3,957
	Test Valley	Abbey
Cupernham		4,030
Romsey Extra		2,535
Tadburn		4,124
Total Electorate		76,543

5. COMMENTS ON BOUNDARY COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It will be seen that the proposed, extended, New Forest West Constituency will comprise 80,464 electors, just 9 fewer than the maximum permitted. The proposed New Forest East & Romsey constituency will comprise 76,543 electors, which is 3,930 below the maximum. It is considered that an attempt should be made to improve the electoral equality across the two constituencies, and this could easily be achieved by retaining the Lyndhurst District Ward (2,392 electors) in New Forest East & Romsey, rather than moving it to New Forest West, as proposed by the Boundary Commission. The numbers of electors in each constituency would then be:

New Forest West	78,072
New Forest East & Romsey	78,935

6. FINANCIAL, CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENTAL AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 7.1 The Leader of the Council supports the recommendation below.

8. RECOMMENDED:

- 8.1 That representations be made to the Boundary Commission for the Lyndhurst District Ward (2,392 electors) to form part of the proposed New Forest East and Romsey Parliamentary Constituency on the grounds that improved electoral equality will be achieved across the two constituencies covering New Forest District Council's area.

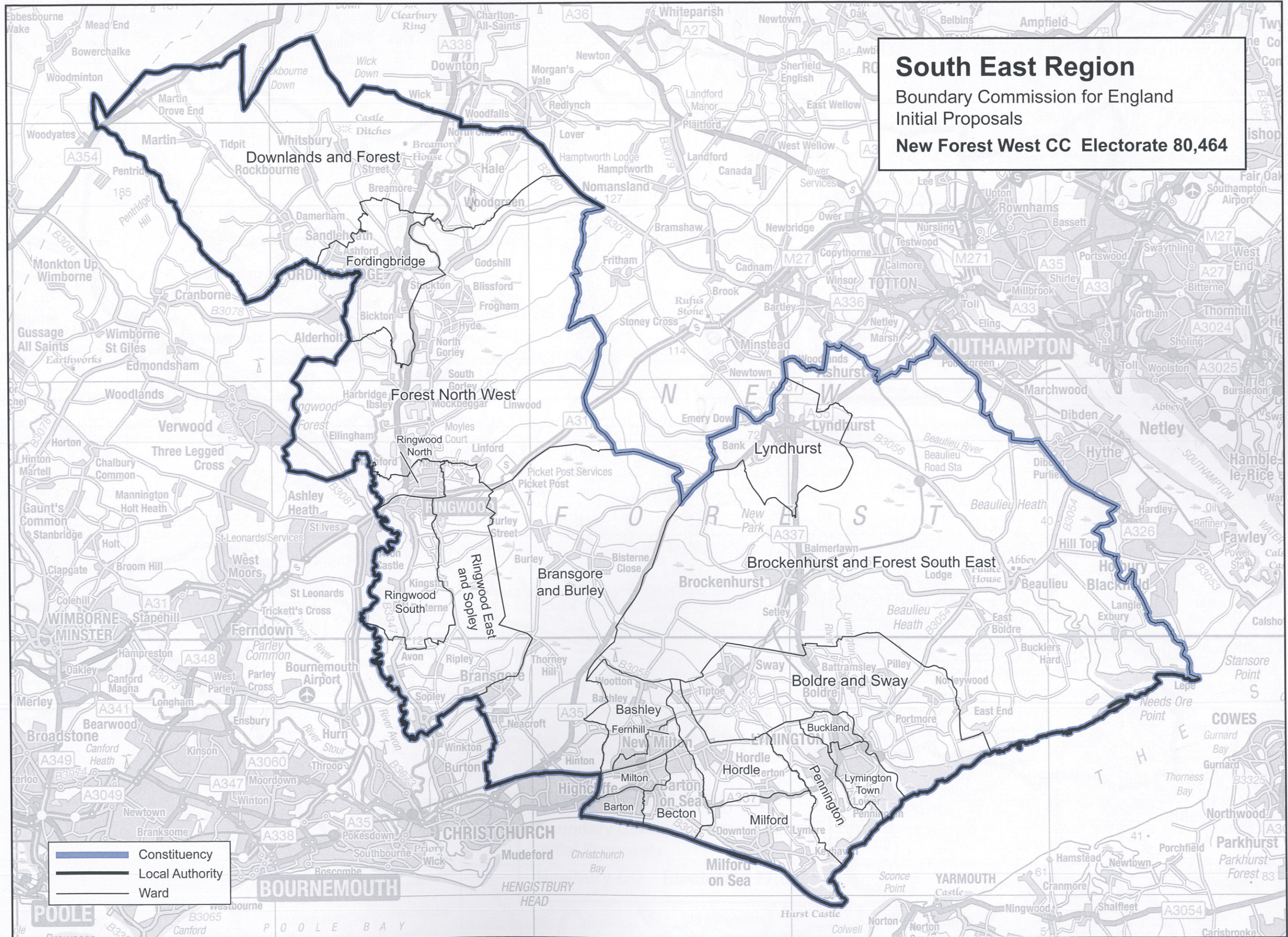
Further information:

Rosemary Rutins
Democratic Services Manager
Tel: (023) 8028 5381
E-mail: rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

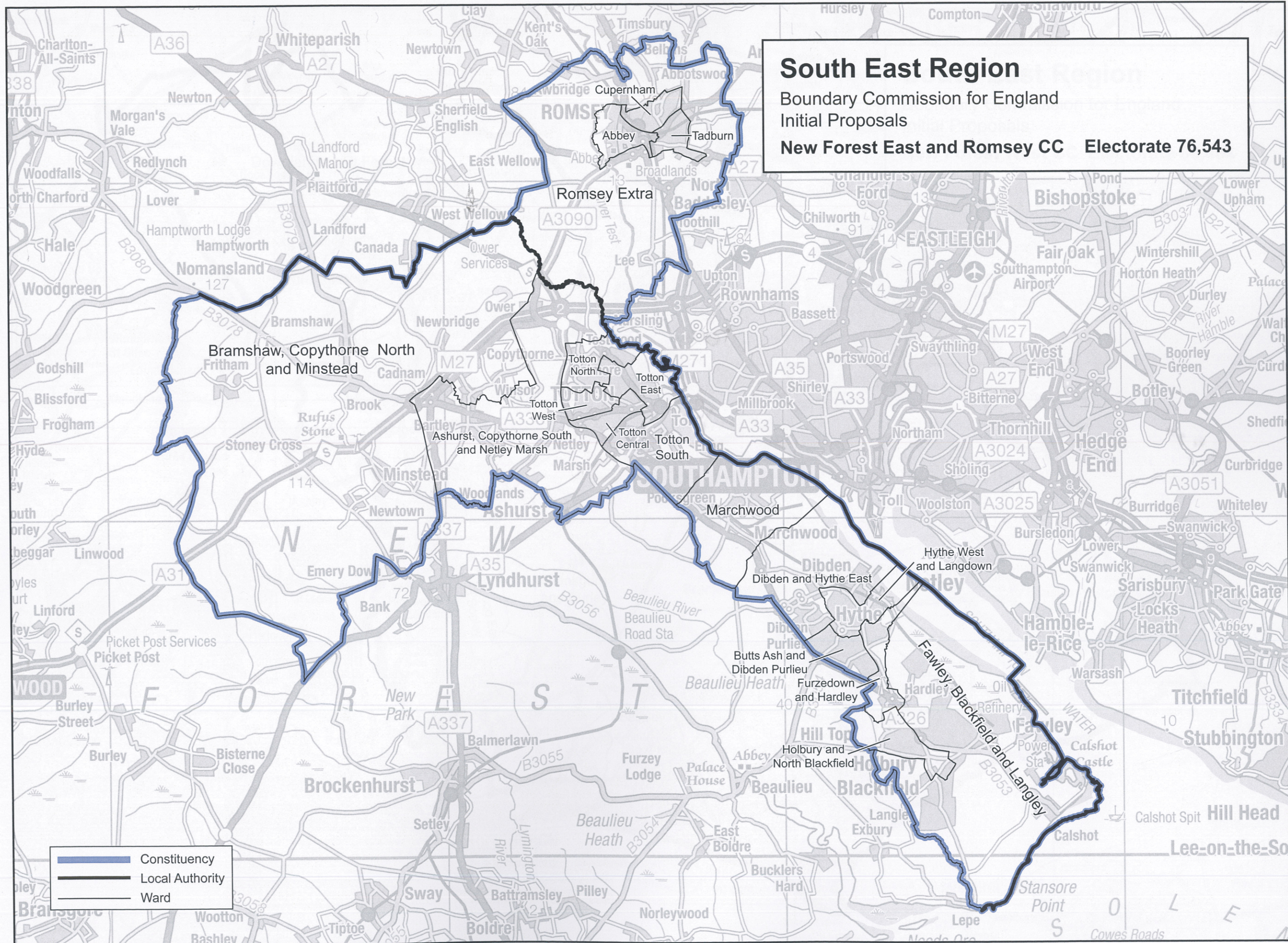
Published documents

South East Region
 Boundary Commission for England
 Initial Proposals
New Forest West CC Electorate 80,464



Constituency
 Local Authority
 Ward

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New Forest East and Romsey CC