

pg black	I wish to support the proposal for a county-wide unitary authority based on Exeter.
Mrs D Fifer	I am in favour of one County Wide Unitary Authority as proposed
Jill Elson	<p>I object to the proposal as it does not give local accountability or reduce cost as DCC is in debt by over Â£600m. Devon County Council proposed unelected boards. Housing will be difficult as under current legislation a person who becomes homeless in for example Uplyme can be housed in Ilfracombe as lthe aw states 'has to be housed within the housing authority boundary' this would be the whole of Devon. Many people will have to become unemployed due to lack of transport or cost. Elected representatives costs would be excessive due to travelling time across Devon to attend meetings. The sheer size of electorate would mean an large number of elected represntatives or their divisions would be too large due to the rural nature of Devon.</p> <p>The status quo works why break it up ?</p>
Susan Woollacott	Having listened to the presentation from Plymouth ,I was impressed with their professional approach ,and as Plymouth might make a better job of looking after whats on their doorstep ,ie restricting the unsuitable buildings ,scaling down the huge estates ,and being forward looking on transport ,I shall go for Plymouth.
A Miller	<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>I am opposed to the recommendation that a single unitary authority should be created for Devon.</p> <p>I support the continuation of District and Borough Councils for local government in Devon.</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>A Miller</p>

Geoff Young	<p>I think an option of placing Lowestoft firmly in Norfolk will be of great benefit to residents who have been a poor relation in Suffolk for a long time. Also creating a rural authority will not be all negative as many people think. The smaller District Councils in Waveney have managed their affairs well and with proper reference to their residents. This could easily be built upon across the rural areas of Suffolk. Most regional funding streams appear to cut across the borders of North Suffolk and Norfolk and our health authority does to. Waveney District Council is among the worst in the country and does not seem to be capable of managing our affairs no matter which party has control. The sooner we amalgamate with an effective authority which could make the necessary changes to improve our services and delivery, the better.</p>
Jim White	<p>As a steering group member and former chairman of the the North Okehampton Residents Association I wish to register my support for the unitary authority status for Devon as a whole. This would appear to allow for better economies of scale, removing a tier of relatively ineffective and costly local government at borough / district level and allow for some sense of continuity from the existing functions of Devon County Council. The proposal also fits well with the cultural identity of Devon as a whole and the work of the Devon economic partnership for promoting Devon as a brand in its own right. I support the Boundary Committee's proposal.</p>
David Kelf	<p>I live in and am very active in several community and voluntary groups in and around Seaton, East Devon. I have been here about 25 years. My experience of East Devon District council is not very good. They have consistently let the Seaton area down and it is regarded as a deprived area. Yet we stand on a unique World Heritage Coast adjacent to nationally important Nature Reserves. Tourism and sustainability are important business drivers but there has been very little inward investment and we do not even have a youth centre or sports facility. There is just one football field for the town of Seaton. Many of us are keen to play a serious part in building a true low carbon future based on local provision of many essentials and services. Therefore I would prefer to see one Unitary Authority but most importantly backed by a strong Community Forum for the Seaton area, as is proposed (I assume). I very much favour local decision making - we are the experts on the area we live in. As long as the proposals DO mean that we will get a better LOCAL service then I support the proposals. D L Kelf This is a personal reply but I write as chair of the Seaton Sustainable Living and Environment Group, School Governor, a director of the Devon Association for Renewable Energy and Trustee of the Seaton (World Heritage Coast) Visitor Centre Trust</p>

Adrian Smith	<p>Having read through your proposal, and looked at both the options you have given merit; I can't see how a single unitary authority can benefit the people of Exeter and Devon. How can it be justified in merging several local authorities that are judged by our government to be well performing and profit making into one which is not well performing and half a billion pounds in debt ! They can't manage what they have now, how can they be expected to take on more responsibility!</p>
Amanda Harvey	<p>I am opposed to the draft proposal for a unitary authority covering the whole of Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay) on the grounds that it would be too geographically large and remote from the people it would serve. Such a large unitary would result in a great reduction in democratic representation and would not acknowledge that the specific priorities and needs of communities in the south of Devon are very different to those in the north of the county. Spending decisions should be taken by local communities on issues that are important to them rather than by a remote and out of touch large unitary council. I would urge the Boundary Committee to reconsider the merits of the South Devon and Dartmoor concept, whereby a unitary council consisting of South Hams and Teignbridge District Councils and West Devon Borough Council could be created to serve the needs of rural south Devon.</p>
Mark Fairchild	<p>I agree completely with the recommendation for a single unitary Devon. As a resident of Exeter, I feel I have nothing at all in common with Exmouth, so the idea of an Exeter / Exmouth unitary is a non-starter. To maximise the savings for local tax payers, the most efficient option must be to have a single authority, with one Chief Officer for each service, one financial / HR / Procurement etc system rather than the current 9 (or 2 if the Exeter / Exmouth proposal somehow manages to gain favour).</p> <p>Exeter has always been seen as the county town of Devon, not it's own little island.</p>
Jennifer Durrant	<p>As the restructuring of local government in Devon now seems a given I urge those responsible to ensure the non-statutory functions of the District councils and Exeter City Council are maintained at their present level. I am especially concerned for heritage and the provision of archaeological advice and curation within Devon. It is vital that funding is guaranteed to local museums, especially Exeter Museums Service, and to the services provided by the County and City archaeologists, and Exeter Archaeology. Non-statutory functions must not suffer.</p>

Robert Down	<p>I oppose the proposal for a single Unitary Council (omitting existing Plymouth and Torbay). Devon is a county of widespread centres of population, divided by geographical features such as Dartmoor, and with poor communications. There is significant potential for remoter, but still populous, areas such as the North Devon Peninsula, to be under-represented or ignored by an (eg.) Exeter-centric Unitary Council in spending and quality-of-service decisions. In these circumstances, the claimed cost savings of the change to a single unitary authority are not worth achieving when local representation and democracy are almost certain to be prejudiced. People in North Devon (and probably other remote areas such as West Devon) would prefer to continue paying current council taxes for local representation rather than exchange this for the faint possibility of small savings in the future.</p>
Toby Martin	<p>As a resident of Exeter I feel very strongly against the Devon Unitary bid. The services that Exeter City Council provide are truly outstanding and I feel this would suffer under a unified Devon.</p>
Peter Folland	<p>A unitary authority for Devon MUST include the whole remaining county including Exeter and Exmouth as these urban areas are essential to the economic well-being of the county as a whole. People in Exeter and Exmouth rely on Devon transport links around the county and should help pay for this provision. Correspondingly, many people live in surrounding market towns and work in Exeter and Exmouth; these towns also need investment and the economic balance that sharing Exeter's wealth creates.</p> <p>Also, the parishes in the Exeter hinterland such as Holcombe Burnell are not at all like Exeter, and would be the 'poor relation' in a Unitary Exeter & Exmouth; but would benefit from a County wide unitary authority. For example, Longdown is only 3 miles from Exeter city centre, but does not have either mains gas or drainage. It is unlikely that infrastructure will be improved in the steeply sloped parish to allow for development and the boundary has clearly been drawn on a map with out regard for local character or geography.</p> <p>Unitary Devon please.</p> <p>Peter Folland</p>

Richard Harris	<p>I am deeply opposed to your proposal for a Unitary devon. The council will be t oo big and far too remote from people especially in Exeter. For many hundreds of years Exeter ran its own affairs and it is ridiculous to suggest that Exeter cannot do the same now. Exeter City Council has been an excellent Council for many years including having one of the lowest council taxes in the UK, on the contrary Devon County Council has been average performing and infact its Social Services was downgraded.</p> <p>This proposal will lead to a democratic deficit in Exeter, there may be a community board however the people of Exeter deserve so much more than this. The proposal for a Unitary Devon will mean there will be a councillor for at least 7,000 whereas the proposal for a Unitary Exeter would be no more than 2,500 per councillor</p>
Mr Sylvester	<p>It is disappointing to see this proposal. With have seen the failure of Exeter based decision making process (such as within health) and how the efforts of the Trust focus around need of the greater population base. Such a larger Authority will do very little for local people confidence in the decision making process and control. The shift to larger PCT's was, in part, meant to save management cost, to date there is no evidence to prove this, what evidence is there to prove this move will do the same?</p>
M Church	<p>Was this committee completely off their trolley. Axeminster to Tiverton, tavistock to Ilfracombe utter madness, or was it simply to be able to set up some more Quangos for the Boys! No thought at all to sensible options, ie North Devon, Mid and south, completely useless and not workable, will cost us more tax payers money</p>
Jennifer Netherway	<p>I am absolutely horrified that the EDDC propals for 4 smaller councils has been dismissed out of hand by Devon County Council who want to put forward only one unitary council for the whole of Devon (excluding the two unitary councils of Torbay & Plymouth) EDDC propsted that they merged with Exeter, Mid & North Devon united as did South and West Devon. Smaller and therefore more manageable areas to deal with in a County with a widespread population. From my understanding Devon County Council is already several million pounds in debt already so how on earth can it as a unitary authority manage even more resources efficiently?</p> <p>As a Council Tax payer I feel very strongly that this would not be in the best interests of anyone of us living in the County.</p>

David Newberry	I welcome your report recommending a unitary authority for Devon (leaving aside Torbay and Plymouth) which includes the city of Exeter. I fully support your recommendation and believe it to be the most suitable arrangement for Devon in the 21st Century.
Roger Bullock	I think the proposals this morning for a single council are excellent and reflect the need for cost savings and service delivery
Stewart Oetegenn	Congratulations on proposing possibly the worst option for service delivery in Devon! Do you seriously believe that taking service delivery out of the hands of excellent rated, debt free district councils and placing them in the hands of monolithic debt ridden organisations is a step forwards? Amazing work guys, how can you sleep soundly at night?
R Hughes	These proposals are wrong - the problem with Devon is it is geographically too big - not population. Far more sensible would be a north/south split or even a north west/north east/south split - this would then be more linked to the main traffic arterial routes - or in N Devon the lack of them. South Devon would be the A38 artery. with the A30 forming the northern boundary of South Devon. I would suggest that Exmouth and East Devon would fit much better into a north east Devon area centered onto Tiverton with a north west Devon area centered on to either Barnstaple/Bideford/Holsworthy or Hatherliegh.
Dave Harris	I am very disturbed that the Govt wish to create a single authority in Devon. This would be very wrong and it is my belief that the current system works very well. Exeter, for instance, could not govern East or Mid Devon well as the areas' needs are so widely different. One area simply could not do the job satisfactorily and true local government should mean just that, local with knowledge and understanding of that particular areas' needs. EDDC do a splendid job so please leave things as they are.

PHILIP OLDFIELD

Dear Sir/Madam,

Unitary local government in Devon

I am writing to express my support for a solution in Devon which creates a unitary authority for Exeter and Exmouth and also for the rest of Devon leaving Plymouth and Torbay boundaries unchanged.

I live in Exeter and have previously lived on and off since the 1970s in different towns and villages in Mid Devon and also worked in the mid-1990s in North Devon. Devon is as you know a vast county which possesses a diverse geography of a mainly rural and coastal character interspersed with market towns and two principal cities Exeter and Plymouth. It is fair to say I think that residents and businesses look to these two cities to meet a range of serviced based needs. In essence, their sphere of influence stretches beyond their local government boundary. And whilst living in mid Devon I would often visit Exeter for shopping and also for a range of leisure activities in and around the city.

I have worked in Exeter for the past 10 years commuting daily from Mid Devon. However, it wasn't apparent to me until I actually moved to live in Exeter last year how different I now feel about the need to have strong local democracy and vision for this magnificent city. Exeter has under the strategic leadership of the city council, working very closely in partnership with the private, public and voluntary sectors, set out and been working strongly towards the well supported 20-year vision for the future of the city. I firmly believe that the economic strength of Exeter and its prominence in the region and growing recognition nationally is borne out of the dedication during this time to punch way beyond its weight. And it has done so successfully.

I cannot but help wonder how focused and how driven to succeed Exeter would have been if it had been under the direction of a county wide unitary authority whose councillors would primarily reside in the rural and coastal areas of Devon? It would be entirely natural for them to have loyalties to their own localities and needs which are markedly different from the needs of the city. I wonder if a Devon wide authority would have found it easy to decide to pursue and promote Exeter as the location for headquarters of the South West Regional Development Agency, or for the relocation of the Met Office, or given the dedication necessary for the delivery of the recent Princeshay retail development in the city centre.

These examples of change in Exeter, serve to demonstrate in my view why the city council was recognised as and remains so, an excellent rated authority. Moreover, all of the councillors in Exeter are accountable to the citizens and communities within the city and are also knowledgeable and responsive to the needs that are brought to their attention. How much more difficult would their task be, if with a smaller voice, they were part of a larger Devon wide authority which would have competing strategic priorities and a plurality of "competing to be heard"™ minority interests?

It might of course appear logical that a Devon wide authority would provide economies of scale and thus be seen on one level as providing value for money services. The big question for me is, would this ultimately drive up customer satisfaction? Conversely, the creation of an Exeter and Exmouth unitary authority would be large enough to secure economies of scale but most importantly be local enough to be responsive to its citizens and communities. And in being responsive and focused on its area, customer satisfaction would naturally follow.

The broad area in and around Exeter and Exmouth as defined by the Boundary Commission encapsulates the already strong interrelationships within this local geography where people travel back and forth to learn, to work, to shop and visit. I imagine local people can already sense or would find it relatively easy to feel a mutual connectedness with the areas defined. And if local government should stand for anything, then being accountable to its citizens, driving forward a sustainable economic future focused on the needs of local businesses can only be achieved on a geographic scale which is meaningful to those communities. People relate to their communities, to their sense of place or where on a "global scale"™, they share common issues, such as those linked to rural development. And the scale of Exeter and Exmouth offers the opportunity for a new authority to shape their sense of place; whilst the rural nature of the rest of Devon provides its citizens with the chance to rally around and commune over their own similar issues on a wider geographic scale.

I urge the Boundary Commission to recommend a unitary solution of Exeter and Exmouth and also for the rest of Devon leaving in place the unitary authorities of Plymouth and Torbay.

Yours faithfully,

Philip A. Oldfield BA (Hons) Geography

Stuart Olliver

Further to my earlier submission, I would just like to add that if Devon County Council thinks that a single Unitary for Devon is such a good idea, why didn't they propose this when the first round of submissions were made? Exeter City Council made a submission first time round to be a Unitary council and had opposition from Devon County Council that there should be any changes at all. Now they have changed their minds completely and have decided to have a go themselves. A ridiculous complete U-turn in attitude from an authority badly in debt.

M Price-Hughes	<p>I feel very strongly that a larger council area will loose touch with local small parochial issues and loose touch with local feelings and sentiments. Also the Financial situation that East Devon council has by prudent housekeeping managed to achieve will be totally removed and absorbed into the black hole of Devon District Councils debt, hardly just reward for prudence and financial responsibility. Leave the boundaries as they are and allow the people in East Devon continue to reap the rewards of a LOCAL caring community council, Not some enormous beaurocratic nightmare with responsibility for some regions which could actually be 80 miles apart.</p>
Kevin Pyne	<p>I support the proposal for Devon to become a unitary authority. I feel that in no circumstances should Exeter, which has been the county town of Devon since the coming of the Romans, be allowed to split away.</p>
Anon.	<p>Having read through the Boundary Committee's report, I believe that the opportunity for a separate North Devon unitary authority has been overlooked and needs to be reviewed. The Boundary Committee has, in my opinion, opted for the 'easy solution' without considering the benefits of other routes. The voices of the District Councils to a certain extent seem to have been ignored. Given the precipitation shown by the Boundary Committee for only minor changes to the boundaries of Plymouth and Torquay, then the whole process of consultation, in my mind, is flawed. This is an opportunity for change which should not be overlooked. The County of Devon covers a vast acreage of land, with the north and south being of entirely different character. There are massive development plans in the pipeline for Barnstaple - new shopping centre, college, leisure facilities, etc. All enhancing Barnstaple's reputation as the principal town of the north (from northern Cornwall, through Devon and into Somerset). The people of North Devon should be allowed to take this major development forward. Although I support unitary authorities, I would be disappointed if a single unitary saw the relocation of employment opportunities in local government, from North Devon to the southern half of the county. What I believe has been overlooked is that Local Government employs a large number of people in North Devon, and the loss of a large number of office jobs may place a burden on the economy of the region. In conclusion I believe that Devon is just too large for a unitary to cover the whole of the county. Devon County Council is in certain areas already a large distant conglomerate. It would be disappointing to lose from the northern half of the county the local knowledge of local council staff working to support the local population. To big a region will may mean that local authority employees are working to support towns and villages that are located so far away from where they are based, they</p>

	<p>have no understanding or apathy with them.</p>
Robert Southall-Brown	<p>I totally disagree with a Devon UA. My interests as a householder in East Devon will be totally different to those in North Devon, West Devon and South Devon. The council will not be more efficient as it will need subsections to account for all of these regions, it will not be as locally responsible and Devon County Council currently has debt of over Â£600m whereas East Devon has a surplus to cover contingency planning eg the Napoli debacle, where would Devon find the funds to manage the mess left by the MCA ?</p>
Ms L Pritchard	<p>I would not like to see one council in Devon. East Devon District Council is an efficient council, so why change it. An old saying is, 'If it works, why fix it', and EDDC works for us. Please leave EDDC alone and let it get on with the job it is doing so well at.</p>
Ann Parsons	<p>I object strongly to the creation of one single county unitary authority. Devon is a large county and any feeling of local control would be completely lost. It would be just a remote body. At present one can attend council meetings quite easily in one's area, but having to travel to Exeter would rule that out due to the time and distance involved. It is important the have more local control with people who know the particular area, as Devon is quite diverse. Representation would also be more restricted.</p>
Susan Melzer	<p>I feel that a Devon wide authority would lack representation from Exeter and make decisions such as on Airport development and the new incinerator in Marsh Barton which are not in the interests of Exeter residents and more in the interests of the rest of Devon. There should be more balance and more self determination for Exeter and its nearby commuter villages so I would prefer a Greater Exeter. Having read the draft proposal I feel that we would end up with taxation without representation with this new authority leaving citizens further alienated from the political system.</p>

Peter Lee	<p>My big fear in the Commission's proposal for Devon is that the performance of the currently good authorities will be reduced to the lowest common denominator of the less good authorities through a dilution of effort and ability. West Devon, which serves me has an excellent reputation for customer service and its planning department is extremely customer oriented. West Devon's refuse collection is excellent and its recycling rates are very high whilst at the same time maintaining weekly collections. What I am saying is that the authority has a first class relationship with its rate payers. I am fearful that a Devon wide authority will not supply the same service so I will end up paying either the same, or more for a reduced service.</p>
Maureen Hutchings	<p>In an ideal world I would prefer to retain the status quo as I am very happy with both Teignbridge and Devon County Council services. However, if we accept that there must be a change then I would support unitary Devon and would be against Exeter and Exmouth being taken away from Devon. I would totally reject any proposal from Torbay to enlarge by taking in any areas of Teignbridge or South Hams - particularly Dawlish and Teignmouth! I would also like to think that a unitary Devon would take on the best practice of Teignbridge - particularly in terms of waste disposal and recycling - where Teignbridge leads the way.</p>
malcolm s dobbins	<p>Whole County Unitary is too big and could not act at a local level and still could not do this with Plymouth and Torbay left as they are.</p> <p>The most important thing in this exercise is for an authority to be local and deal with local needs.</p> <p>I therefore believe that the proposal of combining Exmouth and Exeter is the best option you have proposed.</p> <p>However if you really want to make unitaries that represent local needs then there should be FOUR Authorities</p> <p>with an expanded Plymouth and Torbay to make them financially viable, together with Exmouth, Exeter and East Devon plus a further one for North Devon.</p> <p>Malcolm S Dobbins BSc</p>

Martin Lawrence	I agree with the Boundary Committee's recent proposal that the preferred option for local government re-organisation throughout Devon would be the creation of a single Devon wide unitary authority. Not only does this proposal meet the necessary financial criteria, but also recognises the strategic importance of the city of Exeter. I hope that further consultation over the next 12 weeks proves this to be the wider view of Devon residents.
Guy Millward	<p>I think that the recommendations as they stand do not provide the best solution for governance or the economy of Devon.</p> <p>This is because in your draft proposals Devon is split into one excessively large area or conversely rather small areas.</p> <p>If I lived in the larger Devon area I would feel totally unrepresented politically and living in Torbay I already feel we are hugely disadvantaged economically and have a very small voice politically.</p> <p>This proposal is another erosion of our democracy and represents the weak and easy way out.</p>
Jonathan Woad	If we have to go for one of the two options, the only sensible one would be to create the two UA's for Exeter/Exmouth and the rest of the county. I believe that otherwise the authority will spend their entire time dealing with the issues of the bigger urban areas, and there would be less local knowledge of the issues of the rural areas.
Dr J.H. & Mrs D. Prentice	We support the Boundary Commission's proposal to disband the East Devon District Council in favour of a larger authority. We feel that EDDC's policies and decisions have always been heavily weighted in favour of their home town while the opinions and wishes of the outlying areas as presented by their local councils have been ignored or spurned. EDDC operates from unseemly premises the proceeds from whose sale could be profitably be used to benefit the whole community. We would hope that a larger authority could take a more global view of the residents requirements.
Anthony Wiltshire	I fully approve of the plan to remove East Devon District Council and replace it with a unitary body. I feel that EDDC only acts in the interests of the area in the immediate vicinity of its offices and ignores villages and towns further away but still under its control.

Phil Stoneham	<p>Any attempt to create a large unitary rural authority out of what is left of the 'city' unitaries is doomed to failure. It is already breaking down in Cornwall and will no doubt so the same in Devon when the reconstituted county council discovers it does not have sufficient funding to cope with a widely-dispersed population of 750,000. This option will allegedly save the taxpayer money. It won't because of the exorbitant cost of setting the project up in the first place and then administering it with insufficient funding. This government seems to have a major problem with understanding the old saying: 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.'</p>
Clare Thorp	<p>I support the proposal for a Devon Unitary authority. It is an excellent idea.</p>
Peter Howard	<p>I disagree with the proposal for a Single unitary authority for Devon as published. Of the 5 criteria deemed to be underpinning the proposal surely the paramount issue should be that there should be a broad cross section of support. I know of no one who wants a Unitary Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay) except for the leaders of Devon County Council.</p> <p>In the proposal page 26 para 4.24 it is stated that it "we have been persuaded at this stage of the necessity to retain Exeter within the unitary county to provide improved opportunities for the new unitary authority to cross subsidise service costs between the urban and rural areas....." This proposal must be redistributive and asks the question why Plymouth and Torbay are not to be included as the effect would be spread over more wealth generating areas. At present the redistributive emphasis falls solely on Exeter.</p> <p>The priorities of a wealth generating city with large areas of deprivation are not the same as a largely rural area with a large proportion of retirees. I can foresee the rural County population wishing to subsidise at taxpayers expense items such as Village post offices whereas city tax payers would see no benefit, and surely resent the increased cost.</p> <p>Local representation of the largest wealth creating portion of the county (Exeter) would be a very small minority on the full council (possibly as low as 1 in 10) and I do not see how the priorities of the city can be protected.</p> <p>The second proposal for a greater Exeter including Exmouth and its environs is more acceptable as it at least takes cognisance of the impact of the large commuter populace dependent upon Exeter for employment.</p>

	<p>I would ask to record my disagreement with the Unitary Devon proposal and reluctantly to support the only other option namely the Greater Exeter proposal.</p>
<p>June Hopkins</p>	<p>We want to retain South Hams District Council, why fix what isn't broken? Change for change sake. We are not happy with a whole of Devon Unitary Authority. Devon is much too widespread, with many remote areas, for such a large council. If there MUST be change, we support South Hams in the bid to merge with West Devon, the best plan for both of those councils. We are totally against any encroachment of Plymouth City Council into the South Hams, a name we'd prefer not to lose.</p>
<p>Paul Gubb</p>	<p>I really dont think that Devon County should take over almost the entire county. The needs and issues in the south of Devon (more urban) are entirely different from those in the north (more rural), and the local authorities in this area are rated much higher than Devon. If anything, Exmouth and Exeter could join up, as the existing Exeter Council is rated as an 'Excellent' and have no debts, unlike the Devon one, which is, I understand, shedloads in the red! At the very least, there should be a slit between north and south Devon, not one huge authority which cannot feasibly maintain the services and standards we in Devon are used to under the current system. What is wrong with keeping the current or at least some of the current councils and doing away with Devon? They are the expensive ones, and the more local things are, the better. The things they do manage to do at Devon (which isnt much) could be shared out amongst the local councils, this would be better for local areas, and better for Devon. The thing is Devon are lying to people at present, by saying that there would be a freeze on council tax if they get their way, which is rubbish, as the council tax would have to be set at the same</p>

	<p>rate across Devon, whereas at the moment I know the East side is cheaper than the West side, so that would have a huge impact on people having to pay far more to compensate for the rest. That in itself is very wrong. Have some sense here, and keep it local. I have also heard that the idea of Devon would be the biggest in the UK, this is way too big, and very unacceptable. I really think this should be thought out sensibly, and put the people of Devon first here, after all, we are the people who live here and have to live with the consequences when things go wrong because a lower graded authority cocks up, big time.</p>
<p>F.N.Firkins</p>	<p>I totally disagree with the proposal from the boundry commission, I live & work in East Devon, & find their Debt free management of the Council excellent, I do not wish to be joined to something that has a massive debt, which I feel would diminish EDDC's excellent financial management.</p>
<p>Jamie Evans</p>	<p>I would like to say I strongly favour the submission for a Unitary authority for the whole of Devon, to include Exeter. Exeter forms an integral part of the county's economy and cultural life and likewise Exeter looks to a wide surrounding area of countryside and coastline for it's recreation, identity as a regional centre and increasingly it's local food sourcing. Separating the two - as in the Exeter City Council proposal - would appear to create an arbitrary boundary that has no logical delineation (as opposed to Travel to Work Areas etc.). In this instance it would look like an attempt to gain further influence by elected members in the city, with little logic applied in the delineation. I applaud the boundary commission's rejections of the previous Torbay and Plymouth proposals, authorities which also wished to extend their boundaries to cover places where the majority of residents did not wish to be swallowed up by an area to which they felt little affinity. The Devon unitary proposal gets around the problem whereby some areas feel well served by their existing District and others feel that they get a raw deal or feel no affinity. A consensus of opinion across the county would tend to identify with the nearest local town and the county as the next level - District only being of some relevance to parts of North Devon, Exeter and South Hams. District boundaries away from Exeter city - as is currently - are generally arbitrary and follow no historical, or economic boundary pattern. As a caveat to the formation of a county unitary authority, I would just say that</p>

buy-in at the local (market town/nearest big village) level will need to be relatively strong to ensure the current level of disenfranchisement with some of the Districts does not occur. In particular this will need to be especially strong in the city of Exeter. Teignmouth, where I live, tends to split loyalties to itself and to Devon. With work and cultural ties to Exeter, Newton Abbot and to a much lesser extent Torbay. The town's current relationship (as many other towns in the District also find) with the District authority is somewhat fraught, seeing that neither the local interests, or the wider strategic interests are well served. Exmouth - included in the latest Exeter unitary proposal - again tends to see itself first and foremost as a stand alone town in Devon (albeit with slightly stronger links to Exeter). It currently sees itself as relatively poorly served by a District Council located in Sidmouth and I see that moving this to Exeter instead would not remedy the situation. Devon County Council already operates a polycentric model for many services that is decentralised, but that has the critical mass needed to draft in extra resources for delivery in one area when necessary. A small Exeter area authority would still not have this critical mass. DCC provides most of the local authority provided services already, so transferring the remainder would create an efficiency saving. Finally the Devon wide approach matches the geographical delivery of a number of existing services such as Healthcare and SWRDA sub-regional working, so there would be less need for duplicative working. Caveat still though is to make sure the local town level buy-in is sufficient to make this approach work.

Regards,

Jamie Evans

David Ellis	<p>Having now seen the map showing greater Exeter I feel that all this is a "Land Grab" by the city fathers and for what, there is no industry in Exeter it is all retail based basically in one street or services. Exeter is a rural city with one of the few cattle markets left and not as they are trying to make out an urban one. Marsh Barton Trading Estate has the biggest concentration of motor dealerships in Europe, they do not need any expansion because they are all there. Why does Exeter need these Eighteen Parishes when there is so much vacant domestic and commercial properties in the city already. If we wanted to live in the city we would have gone and bought property there, before this goes any further I think the residents of the Eighteen Parishes need to be given the chance to vote on the matter. The best alternative would seem to be that Devon County Council becomes the Unitary Authority if we cannot keep the Status Quo.</p>
Philip Seccombe	<p>My local authority serves about 64,000 households and at that level they can give a personal service, the officers know their area and can appreciate concerns of residents depending upon where they live. A very valuable asset. A county wide unitary authority could not hope to give this level of service thus degrading everyone to a case number with no relevance to locality and no understanding of the different concerns or problems that apply to residents in a particular parish or area.</p>
Ms L Nichols	<p>I am strongly against both the remaining proposals for unitary authorities as I believe that the present two tier system works well. The population and geographic area proposed would be much too big for one unitary authority and would result in services being more distant from consumers. Were Exeter and Exmouth and surrounding areas to form their own unitary authority, this would result in the remaining area being too rural which would not be financially viable. With the credit crunch and expected recession it seems ridiculous to even contemplate spending vast amounts of public money reorganising local government when the present system works well and, with more partnership working between local councils, could work even better, without the need for wholesale re-organisation.</p>
Mrs Westerman	<p>I would like to keep the status quo. I have found East Devon a responsive council and wish it to continue to exist. I would not like to be served by a large council that becomes more remote from the people it should be serving.</p>

Andrew	<p>Dear Review Manager (Devon)</p> <p>I don't very often put forward my views on political issues such as these (in fact this is the first time) however I feel so strongly on this matter that I typed this brief email.</p> <p>My concern here is that there are financial priorities steering the decision to select a unitary Devon as the preferred option and this will lead to poorer services for citizens in the urban areas of Exeter and Exmouth. All too often we are seeing degrading services in all industry sectors and very often on-one to answer to. This is exactly what I would expect to experience with the preferred unitary Devon option.</p> <p>The alternative solution to join Exeter and Exmouth in an unitary authority makes absolute sense as these areas are predominately urban and have different issues and needs to the rest of Devon, being rural.</p> <p>Exeter City Council is very highly rated against other councils and is in a good financial position, the preferred unitary option would be a punishment to all the City council's employees for thier good work and effort.</p>
D E Ham	<p>I am dissappointed there is no attempt to create a 'larger' Torbay that in effect encompasses the population that use the facilities that are the current Torbay - Major Hospital, schools, The South Devon College, Cinemas, Beaches - this would seem a natural boundary to me whilst increasing the headcount somewhat. I would see the boundary being formed by the two natural lines identified by the River Dart and the River Teign and the A381 between Newton Abbot and Totnes. This would also bring the advantage that the infrastructure difficulties - eg Kingskerswell - would fall within the boundary of the elected group and not form a 'ransom' strip which seems to have been the case for fifty years. A clear, clean and simply defined boundary with a sensible 'negotiating' size.</p>

A Stapley

I am pleased that the Boundary Committee has offered a pragmatic and cost saving solution to the reorganisation of local government in Devon by suggesting a unitary council to provide services for the area currently served by a two tier system. Hopefully without simply re-stating the points highlighted in the Committee's report, I offer my reasons for supporting the move to a single unitary council for Devon.

I see this proposal as offering a body of sufficient size to be able to realistically manage, support and develop the needs of a diverse but very interwoven set of communities. The residents of Devon inhabit some of the most varied geographical and socio-economic environments in the UK which benefit from the sharing of operational and financial resources required to maintain and to allow these communities to flourish. Whilst I accept that the authority would be large in terms of the population it serves I do not believe that introducing artificial boundaries, carving up the population in to arbitrary smaller units is a prerequisite of better serving a communities interests.

Any artificial segmentation of the County into smaller units will lead to smaller financial pots stifling projects and reduced ability to implement change either centrally or locally driven. This has identifiably proved to be a problem for many of the smaller unitary authorities already in existence. The support a single unitary will be able to offer to the wider community arises from its ability to use resources for the greater good rather than replacing a two tier administration with a two tier society based on purely wealth and isolationism which in a rural County such as Devon I believe is unsustainable.

It is for this reason that I would also not be supportive of the proposal for a unitary Exeter based on it its geographical area being extended to take in some of the surrounding parishes and Exmouth. Exeter is a significant influence not only in respect of its immediate community, although it does not claim to have any direct link with communities outside of its current urban boundaries, but also in respect of the wider communities in the County. Removing the county town of such a geographically and demographically diverse area would potentially serve to leave the remainder of the County as series of small towns and rural communities with little critical mass in any of the remaining areas. The removal of Exeter would also be detrimental to the citizens and business of Exeter, not only because of the smaller critical resource mass for projects mentioned earlier but because of the influence upon the City of what goes on in the wider community of Devon

county.

The Committee's report has also identified the need for there to be strong voice for the citizens and communities of Devon on a range of matters in national, European and international arenas. I believe that those communities and my interests are best served through cohesion that best delivered by a single representative body.

The proposal for representation of the population by a new single unitary authority for Devon offers me confidence that individual and communities will not only be well represented but actually have a better opportunity to influence decisions relating to their communities than perhaps they have currently. Add to this the ability of a unitary council to be able to see the bigger picture then there should be better coordinated and more positively directed use of resources for individual communities and in such a way as to integrate them into the wider provision of services in Devon.

I also believe the proposal for a single unitary Devon council will best address the need for the integration and coordination of other services within the county such as fire, health and police. Strategically and operationally it will be far more helpful if those responsible for coordinating services have fewer bodies to deal with. This observation is made not only in terms of day to day operations but also countywide emergency situations.

To conclude may I reiterate that the proposal for a unitary Devon council for the remainder of the County outside of Plymouth and Torbay appears to me to be the most financially cost effective and operationally coherent way of servicing the needs of the citizens and communities of the people of Devon.

E Scott

Torbay, with its population of 130k would be a very small authority against both Plymouth and Devon unitaries. Torbay seems unsustainable in its present form. suggest joining Devon unitary

<p>Mr P Sullivan</p>	<p>Devon County Councils proposals take away local democracy, their submission to have area "boards" who will have power to submit suggestions to the county. They are not elected but appointed.</p> <p>We already have in place locally democratically elected councillors, who have a wealth of knowledge and expertise, these are the Town / Parish Councils. These are the people we already contact if we have problems locally.</p> <p>Devon County look to do away with this tier and rely only on their "boards" who may invite a Town / Parish councillor to sit on the board if they wish,</p> <p>The boards are not needed, the Town / parish councils are already in place these are the people who should be used. How is this going to save any money by replacing a District with "Boards"</p> <p>If this is the way Devon CC will act in the future how much more debt are they going to put the county in.</p>
<p>cathy gibson</p>	<p>I cannot see any benefits in this boundary change for residents of East Devon. I only see the negative of taking on the debt from the other councils and having to contribute to paying it off. This means the careful management of our own East Devon council has been for nothing. Why should we subsidise poor management in other areas?</p> <p>In addition, each region of Devon has its own needs, this is a disparate and rural area. Local government can be more responsive to the unique needs of each region.</p>

Clive Leaver	<p>I moved to Devon with my family over 20 years ago. We initially lived in a village some miles from Exeter and then moved into Exeter approx 12 years ago. I have found the needs of the communities in the two areas differed significantly, where we lived previously and indeed the bulk of the county is rural with rural needs whereas Exeter, as an urban area, requires a council structure that can respond to the city's specific needs. It is not that the needs of Exeter are more important than the rest of the County, it is just that they are different, and I feel that Exeter City Council has served these needs very effectively in the time that I have lived here and I feel that to lose this council and absorb the City of Exeter in with the rest of Devon (excepting Plymouth and Torbay), as in your Draft Proposal, would be entirely wrong. In table 3 of your Draft Proposal - Existing authorities, you show the population per hectare with Exeter CC having the second largest concentration after Plymouth CC. Larger even than the population concentration of Torbay BC. Yet Plymouth and Torbay are to remain unchanged whereas Exeter, population concentration 23.62 per hectare, is to be included in with the remainder of the County where, again from table 3, the highest population concentration is 1.79. Please reconsider your decision. Thank you. Clive Leaver</p>
Sue Rook	<p>As taxpayers and customers we don't care who runs what we just want cost effective services. It is already confusing to try and understand which council does what. One council is the best way forward. It will ultimately be better for Exmouth to be a master of its own destiny through a community board than constantly bowing to the will of Sidmouth</p>
john barnard	<p>I wish to support the recommendations. This should provide more coherent, cost effective services to the whole of Devon and allow strategic planning for the whole of Devon, not just small parts or areas such as Exeter that only are only acting in a self interested way. The current two tier system is flawed and counter productive. I anticipate that significant cost savings should be possible.</p>

<p>J Spencer</p>	<p>The financial probity of Devon County Council gives grave concern if the proposals are adopted. The County Council have increased their Council Tax dramatically and have also built up debts. I do feel that the staff of East Devon District council have worked to ensure that the finances are managed correctly. If some saving is to be made then there should be a merger with Mid Devon District Council or Exeter City.</p> <p>The Police authority seem to be increasing their element of the Tax but appear to be unwilling to tackle serious crime. This area is a low offences area and it is our wish that it continues to be so.</p>
<p>Peter Horne</p>	<p>The proposal for a single authority for most of Devon, shame it is not ALL of Devon, is in my opinion correct and right. We have too many layers of local 'management' at present and the duplication of responsibilities etc must add greatly to our tax burden. The economies of scale far outway any other argument. Culturally and geographically local people have, and do, look to Exeter as the hub of our county and as such we need to be part of Exeter as much as Exeter needs to be part of Devon. (Plymouth, although larger, perhaps is nowadays more closely associated with Cornwall and can therefore perhaps justify its 'seperate from Devon' status).</p> <p>Action to reduce local operating costs is very necessary but at the same time tradition and geographic loyalties should not be forgotten.</p> <p>ps In Devonians minds Plymouth and Torbay will always be part of DEVON and 'us volks' in the remainder of the county were very disappointed at the current seperations.</p>
<p>Anna Thompson</p>	<p>I am very stronly opposed to the proposal to disband East Devon District Council. This is an extremely well run, prudently managed Council which provides excellent local services. How can it be better to effectively merge this with a badly managed County Council which is deeply in debt and seems unable to turn this around. By all means change the County Council but not to the detriment of East Devon.The proposal to create a Council covering Exeter and Exmouth is similarly ludicrous - Exmouth is the biggest town in Devon aand would just becoem a 2nd class citizen, always in Exeters shadow. This is not best for Exmouth and not best for East Devon. Please do not break something which doesn't need fixing, just in the name of change.</p>

Tracey Close	<p>I am horrified that my hard working efficient award winning Council that serves my local interest extremely well. It is likely to be replaced by a system that mirrors DCC in its structure. The services I receive from West Devon Borough Council are equitable, cost effective and ensure local needs are addressed and met. However existing services that will mirror the new structure are driven purely by the needs of larger urban areas and towns. Rural areas will as a result have greater inequalities in terms of services and we will subsidise all the fantastic services that the majority of the public living in urban areas demand. We will as a minority be left out to dry, stagnate and rot. Investment in rural Devon is already extremely poor. It will be a very sad day as a rural area when we become part of a bureaucratic Exeter-centric model of local government.</p>
GRAHAM ROWDEN	<p>I would prefer the option for a South Devon & Dartmoor Council, with North/Mid/East/Torridge making up the rest with Exeter & Exmouth combining.</p>
Robert Rowland	<p>I wholeheartedly support the creation of South Hams, Teignbridge, Dartmoor and West Devon Unity Authority. South Hams is an efficient and very well run council. Devon County Council is appalling and cannot supply adequate services at the moment. The roads of Devon are falling into disrepair and the Tourism Dept is a joke. If a Unitary Authority for Devon is decided on, I would hope that the present council and employees would be sacked and a new authority instigated otherwise the huge monolith will grind to a halt, and those of us at the extremities will be totally ignored.</p>
B Hoyle	<p>I was born in rural W Devon and lived in various parts of the country before moving to Exeter. I read with dismay your proposal to create one unitary authority for Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay). I understood that government was seeking to devolve accountability closer to the point of delivery of service. Your proposed creation of county boards only adds to the unwieldy leviathan that is Devon County Council. While there may be an argument for retaining county-wide services such as Police / Ambulance / Fire, big is otherwise not the most effective way of delivering the service we need. Exeter City Council is and always has been an efficient provider of service. The requirements of rural and urban residents are poles apart. Allow both to manage their own affairs. Your report lacks hard evidence e.g. what is the projected Council tax for each of the options listed? On something as important as this shouldn't you allow the electorate to cast their vote?</p>

Jonathan Simmonds

Dear Sirs,

I am incredible proud to live in Exeter and have had a keen interest in the unitary bid made by the City Council. The basis of the initial bid obviously gave me worries, as mentioned in your draft proposals; Exeter is more than just a city. It has one of the fastest growing airports in the country, the new Cranbrook town just outside the city boundaries, the freight terminal and Skypark both in the pipeline, 2 main railway lines (several branch lines), and the end of the only motorway in the South West, it's economic wings spread over a much wider area.

I was therefore pleased when one of the new ideas put forward was the 'Greater Exeter' area. This certainly fits in with the larger than size impact Exeter has on the local economy. I can also see the merits of taken this one step further with the inclusion of Exmouth which while different in socio-economic make up is a popular town for commuters, shoppers and recreational seekers.

I am however shocked and horrified at the thought of losing the City Council and being absorbed in the larger Devon area as suggested in the 'preferred bid'. Devon County Council may provide services to the city at present but I can't find many who believe that there best interest are served by them. The accountability of the City council is clear the councilors are local and the Civic Centre provides a wonderful drop-in centre which I have used several times. I would not know where to start with Devon CC, but then maybe that is because I am not sure I use many of their services.

I want to see Exeter thrive grow and bring high tech jobs to the area (through the schemes mentioned above) and while the economics of scale may be a consideration, without the direction of the local councilors the accountability directly attributed to them what is the point? It is interesting that the Chamber of Commerce is such a big supporter of a unitary bid 'strange that companies who main motive is profit and therefore prosperity and growth are such a fan, does that not tell us all something?

It would appear from the proposal that you believe it is better to hold Exeter back than risk any downturn in rural Devon. This would fuel the popular (but probably mis-informed) perception that Exeter subsidises services across Devon.... have you compared the performance of Exeter City Council against Devon County?

	<p>Please look again at what you have said is one of the largest council in geographical area and explain how rural North and West Devon can be representative and best serve the people of the urban east?</p> <p>I wait with baited breath hoping for that the local city council is expanded due to the Greater Exeter (or some derivation thereof) option being approved by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>Yours truly,</p> <p>Jonathan Simmonds</p> <p>(Copy attached)</p>
Michael Evans	<p>I think it would be a historical tragedy if Exeter which has governed itself since the first Guildhall was built in 1330 AD should loose it's powers of self-government. It has been well governed since I came here in 1943 both financially and administratively and 'if it ain't broke. don't fix it' Devon County, too, is well run as it is. Exeter could be slightly enlarged with advantage and Devon could concentrate on rural and county-town affairs which it understands very well. All reorganisation costs money and takes a long time to bed down efficiently.</p>
R White	<p>I oppose the proposed changes, I believe it is important that the county structures reflect the types of community they serve i.e. rural and city are separate and different and that giving more power to the parishes would cause difficulty, many decisions are best removed one step removed to avoid conflicts of interest.</p>

<p>J SWATMAN</p>	<p>You are an unelected body that has no relevance to my area.</p> <p>Your chairman is Scottish, which says everything about devolution.</p> <p>You have paid no heed to the LOCAL requirements of the people of Devon, nor have you listened to their voice as channeled through their ELECTED MEMBERS in the local councils.</p> <p>You asked for LOCAL plans to be submitted ensuring that money had to be expended from already tight local budgets, only to completely ignore the proposals put forward and introduce a scheme of your own.</p> <p>You have wasted local tax payers money as well as central tax payers money in the way that you have gone about these unnecessary boundary changes, showing that this is a central political plan foisted on to electors who have no truck with central government.</p> <p>The call for local people to have a say in their area seems to have fallen on your deaf ears, as usual, as ideas are steamrollered through to appease a socialist government hell bent on destroying areas that don't vote for them. It also identifies the political control now placed on the Civil Service.</p> <p>This is another way of introducing the grandiose plans of John Prescott, which have been thrown out by nearly all areas allowed to have a vote on them.</p> <p>If your plan for Devon is pushed through then you will no doubt be refunding the costs of preparing plans that Devon councils drew up as requested by you, when you had no intention of even looking at them.</p> <p>The sooner unelected bodies such as you are swept away the better.</p>
<p>Jane Hope</p>	<p>I am horrified that Exeter is probably going to be part of a behemoth Devon County Council. They already milk Exeter for money they get, and spend it on all the outlying places. Why cannot our boundary be merged with the Eastern side so Exeter could be a Unitary authority? This whole idea will wreck Exeter and cost us more for less.</p>

Ian J Treloar	I think Exonians should have been asked if they wanted this - most of them do not! Devon County Council spends far too much money on their areas to the detriment of Exeter. I think as a city, we should have an enlarged unitary authority, run by Exeter for Exeter. I am disgusted by the idea of Devon County running Exeter.
Timothy West	I believe the proposal for the unitary Devon (without a separate authority for Exeter/Exmouth) is the right one, particularly in terms of the cost of running the authority (compared with the current District Councils).
Nigel Giles	I do not want my area to be run by one large council, leave it as it is EDDC are quite adequate.
Keith Owen	Please see letter attached.
Chris & Ann Boothroyd	<p>Despite our postal address, we live in Devon.</p> <p>We object strongly to the proposal for a county-wide unitary authority. This is movement in quite the wrong direction, away from local accountability.</p> <p>"If it ain't broke, don't fix it." While the current structure has its inadequacies, these are not so much structural as human: local authorities are not staffed by a sufficient proportion of capable people. Devon County Council currently serves Uplyme far worse in respect of County responsibilities than does East Devon District Council in respect of its duties.</p> <p>Creating larger and more remote authorities run mostly by mediocrities will simply turn a tolerably-inefficient arrangement into a disaster.</p> <p>It is scandalous that the Boundary Committee says that the status quo is not an option. Who has democratically agreed to that constraint, and when? We certainly haven't.</p> <p>The government talks repeatedly about restoring local responsibility, control and accountability. Why then take it further away? That is hypocrisy.</p> <p>Talk of 'community boards' is wholly unconvincing. If these boards are given real responsibility, resources and accountability, you effectively re-create 'district' authorities under another name, so you don't in reality have a 'unitary' authority. But if you don't give community boards those features, they are simply talking shops and a waste of time and</p>

	<p>money. Which is it? It can't be neither.</p> <p>What you should be doing is reversing the policy. Scrap the SW Regional Assembly and GOSW. Reduce Devon County Council's powers, responsibilities and resources over matters of detail and leave them only the broadest, strategic, policy-making duties. Devolve more resources and responsibilities, partly to the District Councils but mainly to Town & Parish level.</p> <p>That way you achieve greater democracy, greater accountability and a fuller involvement of local people in managing local affairs; a better match of human capabilities to the scale of individual responsibilities; less pernicious Party Politics; less 'looking-over-the-shoulder' and passing of the buck up the line; more efficient, effective and responsible use of money; a stronger sense of community; above all, better services and wiser decisions tailored to the circumstances of particular localities.</p> <p>The Boundary Committee's proposals for Devon are a bureaucrat's dream and a citizen's nightmare. Spare us, please.</p>
Owen Rowland Cole	I propose that S. Hams/West Devon/Teignbridge district councils should be formed as a single Unitary Authority on their own. Plymouth/ Torbay/ Exeter are Urban communities and will neither understand nor support the needs/requirements of rural populations.
Pete Wilkins	Devon should not be split by option 2 , the preferred option a single council Devon is the way forward
Peter Harris	I was totally shocked when I heard your proposals for local government in Devon. As a resident of Exeter for 66 years, I have found Exeter City Council to run and represent the citizens of Exeter in a first class manner. I believe the Council has represented the wishes of the citizens of Exeter and when I myself have had occasion to contact my ward councillor or the council direct, I have been very satisfied with the service provided. In contrast, when I have had reason to contact my Devon County Council councillor and their employees, the Councillor did not reply to me and the employees have taken 4-5 years dealing with a residents parking problem and this still hasn't been resolved. When I pay my Council tax, I want my money spent within Exeter and not subsidising the rest of rural Devon who I understand all pay more Council tax than we Exonians. I cannot believe that Devon County Council who seem to be totally inefficient could even be considered to run the affairs of Exeter along with the rest of Devon. To even consider this is totally out of touch and your proposals totally disregard the whole history and

	<p>identity of our city. Wherever did you get this proposal from? I would obviously strongly favour the unitary Exeter and Exmouth proposal and hope that you will see sense!</p> <p>Yours hopefully,</p> <p>Peter Harris</p>
<p>ERNEST & HILDEGARD FOX</p>	<p>Please UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES seek to absorb East Devon District Council in one unitary authority.</p> <p>We currently have a Council whose financial affairs are efficiently run and who have a reputation for keeping Council Tax down. The large Devon C.C. has at this moment run up a debt of Â£14 million.</p> <p>Who could possibly agree to replacing the sound, efficient and responsible EDDC with a vast, faceless and amorphous DCC whose record of inefficiency speaks for itself ?</p> <p>ERNEST AND HILDEGARD FOX</p>
<p>James Corrigan</p>	<p>Re. your proposal for Devon County Council as a single council for the whole of Devon. I saw this announcement on the news and I was STAGGERED by it. I can't believe that you think that the county council is the best solution. As an ordinary member of the public, I've had to deal with both the county council and the district council. The county is remote, hard to get responses from, bureaucratic and arrogant. There seems to be so many layers to go through that you could easily be lost. I had to battle their education department to get services for my disabled child. On the other hand, the district is easy to get hold of, quick to respond, helpful and seems to want to help. As a born and bred resident of Devon, I have an affinity to my county but NOT to the county council. I should point out that I don't like two levels of local government either and I think that single layers ARE the answer, so I'm not defending the districts either. But Devon is just too big and cumbersome to be the solution. I saw a proposal for four councils which I thought was spot on. Why on earth didn't you put this forward as an option? The second proposal to have Exeter and Exmouth certainly looks as though you would consider councils of this size. I'm afraid that you've got this WRONG. Don't be proud and just bulldoze it through. Listen to the people of Devonshire; not the interests of Devon county council.</p>

Matt Cole

I strongly favour a single unitary authority for Devon, keeping Exeter within a single council rather than splitting into an urban versus rural model which I feel would divide the county along much more than just geographical lines. I cannot see how a divided county would be able to provide services, particularly in the case of the larger, rural area with no obvious centre of population - also, I feel this rural authority would always be the poor relation to the Greater Exeter which would hold a large percentage of the potential income and population.

Keep Devon whole!

Gavin Brake

I strongly disagree with your proposal to have Devon run by one unitary council (excluding Plymouth and Tobay). This proposal would do away with East Devon District Council, which provides a good service to rural communities such as where I live. I strongly oppose this move, which I believe would be inefficient and insensitive to the needs of rural communities

Martyn Hodge	<p>My first reaction was a single Devon would be great, but surely this should also include plymouth and torbay. Should Plymouth/torbay stay as UA, the best option would be a UA covering the Exeter/Exmouth district including crediton/budleigh basically a 10-12 mile radius from exeter city centre. I feel this district should also cover towns/villages within a very short commute such as Crediton where i live. i work in Exeter, but just so happens to live in Crediton, and like me, a lot of people rely on Exeter for alot of services etc, so a single Unitary Authority for the Exeter and its core area would be fine.</p>
Mr R J Hayman	<p>I srongly welcome the recommendation of the Boundary Committe for a Unitary Devon, incorporating Exeter, Economies of scale value for money and some joined up thinking for once instead of the politicised decision making. The empowerment of the 28 towns withtheir own boards is an excellent idea and clealy demonstrates that local accountability will be greatly enhanced.</p> <p>Well done for this 'no brainer'</p>
Mrs Margaret Vegh	<p>I think a single authority for all of Devon would be much too big. I read about the idea of expanding the boundaries of Torbay and Plymouth, and I think this is a much better idea. They are too small. And the catchment areas of the big hospitals map across well. Leaving Torbay as it is will just continue to worsen our problems and widen our inequalities to our neighbours.</p>
Steve Dommett	<p>It is akin to putting the alcoholic in charge of the bar. EDDC, although not perfect, gives us in East Devon a 'local' focus and councilors who know their patch. Why not take away all local authorities and let the MP's run everything? This move may indeed save the new authority money whilst at the same time wiping the slate clean for DCC? How much will this move cost in new offices, new logo, headed paper, renegotiated contracts? How many empty offices, redundant personnel, family break ups, suicides. Yes - face the reality of the real world.</p>

<p>Jenny Patrinos</p>	<p>I was horrified to see that you think the best solution to local government in Devon is a huge remote Council that covers the whole county. In your report you ask for representations that are well argued and evidenced. However, you appear to have ignored the well argued and evidenced case put by North Devon Council so I wonder whether you are really open to argument.</p> <p>Your report seems to be based entirely on your assertion that fewer Councils are cheaper, you then seem to shape all your other arguments to support this. But you entirely miss the need for local government to be local! As evidence I cite the following example:</p> <p>My most recent interaction with the County Council, which is similar to your proposed solution, is an attempt to get them to sort out a local traffic problem (i.e. satnavs directing HGVs down a tiny country lane where they get stuck and need to be hauled by my neighbour, a farmer). The result was a letter informing me that the problem had been referred to Exeter, over 60 miles away. Nothing happened for 2 months. I then took it to my Parish and my County Councillor (who admitted she didn't do anything about it because she was too busy). After three further contacts and an attempt to officially complain (they wouldn't let me!) I was eventually told that an advisory sign would be erected in a few months. I dread the prospect of having to go to the same effort to resolve every contact I have with my "local" Council.</p> <p>Please reconsider because a single Council can't possibly meet the needs of both the north and south of Devon, we are too far away.</p>
<p>James Millar</p>	<p>North Devon and South Devon are physically separated by the central lump of Dartmoor. Travel between North Devon and Plymouth/Exeter is poor - road and rail. Lateral communication by road and water (i.e. - Ilfracombe to Weston) is not bad. Three road routes. Exmoor is separated vertically between Devon and Somerset, very arbitrary. The North Devon phone region used to be part of the Taunton, Somerset region. Main road coach service routes nationwide all go through Taunton, Somerset. Whatever the borderlines of Devon County, it would be more logical and sensible administratively for North Devon and the whole of Exmoor to be joined with Taunton and West Somerset rather than with Exeter and Plymouth, and the rest of Devon.</p>

Louise Harvey	I feel that Exeter should self govern. It must not be allowed to be swamped by an incompetent Devon County Council.
Mr Peter Harvey	A unitary Devon will be too big to reflect the needs of the local people. Exeter / Exmouth should become a Unitary authority.
Ruth Wilson	Sirs, UNITARY COUNCIL TO SERVE NORTHERN DEVON: Life in North Devon has a particular ethos that covers the whole of Barnstaple and Northern Devon. This is very different to the ethos of the much heavier populated Exeter and Eastern Devon. I consider that North Devon should be part of a Northern Devon Council and not a Devon-wide Council so that our coucillors can use their decision-making influence for north Devon and not be distracted by Exeter and Eastern Devon's needs. Please register these views in support of a Northern Devon Council. Signed Ruth Wilson
Neil Richardson	I think option 2 would be the best one for Exeter. It's staggering to think that we could lose 800 years of self rule, and all our decisions made by a primarily rural Council, which is currently over Â£600 million in debt. All of Exeter's excellent ratings would be swallowed up by a decidedly Average Council.
Nick Wright	I think that the proposal put forward by East Devon of 4 Unitaries is by far the best. It gives 4 managable areas. the posposal to have just one will not work, Devon is too big for that and diverse.
Linda Smith	I have to voice my opinion as to the first option, Exeter is the capital city of the region, and currently has a profit making, well run, Excellent council, how it could be seen that this is dissolved and taken over buy, an over staffed, average rated council, who is heavily in debt, is beyond me. I stongly suggest it is reconsidered that option 2 is put forward, or that the whole idea is scraped and tax payers money is saved !
Susan Startin	Dear Sirs I was very disappointed to learn that the Boundary Committee had recommended a countywide unitary authority for Devon. I doubt that a single unitary covering such a large area having poor infrastructure can serve the needs of residents anywhere in the county, but I feel that the citizens of Exeter will be particularly grossly disadvantaged by this proposal. I note that the criteria you have to satisfy include "Deliver the empowerment of citizens and communities, so that all communities have power and resources to influence the

decisions that affect them in their localities". I believe the opposite will be achieved if Exeter is included in a countywide unitary. We are an urban area with very different needs to the rural communities which comprise most of the county. Our requirements and priorities will in my view be completely subsumed in a unitary Devon and Exeter's citizens will effectively be disenfranchised.

I was also most concerned to read paragraph 4.24 of your report which appears to state that Exeter must be included in the county unitary so that it can subsidize the rural areas. Since Plymouth and Torbay have been taken out of the county structure, and thus do not have to subsidize the rural areas, how can it possibly be considered reasonable that Exeter should have to do so?

I realize that affordability is a primary concern and it may be that a single unitary is the cheapest option, but it appears to be at the price of losing local democracy, and that is too high a price to pay.

I do not feel that the County Council's proposal to set up a "city board" for Exeter will in any way meet the needs of the city. Including Exeter in a single unitary Devon will downgrade the city to the level of the market towns, which is unthinkable for a thriving, growing urban area, and is I think likely to lead to economic stagnation.

The other model you have put forward which proposes a unitary Exeter and Exmouth will I believe address most of these concerns and will serve the needs of the people of this part of the county very well. I am not convinced that the single unitary for the rest of Devon will meet the needs of the rural communities, but I must stress that it will not serve their needs any worse than a single unitary which includes Exeter and Exmouth.

I believe that a mistake was made in not granting unitary status to Exeter back in the 1980s when it was granted to Plymouth and Torbay. The arguments are the same and have been acknowledged for Plymouth and Torbay, so why not for Exeter. There is an opportunity now to put this error right and I hope the Boundary Committee will recognize this.

In summary, I would urge the Boundary Committee to reconsider its preferred option for Devon and that the model to be submitted to the Secretary of State should be the two-unitary proposal.

	<p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>Susan Startin</p>
Bob Payne	<p>I think this proposal is terrible. I am quite happy with my current district council (South Hams). Moving control of local services further from me into a far larger area cannot hope to bring improvements. Please leave things alone.</p>
Ms Mandy Kemp	<p>I object to your proposals because I live in East Devon and value the local council looking after our individual requirements. EDDC support the needs and aspirations of local people and manage their costs far more efficiently than the current Devon County Council. We do not wish to be burdened with the large costs incurred by large unaccountable organisations and feel very strongly that the current arrangements work well for local residents. I feel the proposals are change for changes sake and fail to see how the huge costs involved can be justified.</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>Mandy Kemp</p>
Gwyn Cardwell	<p>With reference to your draft proposal on the future of local government in Devon, the two essentials are that any change should have the backing of the population and should be financially viable. I do not think that your ideas meet either criteria.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nowhere are the views of the public taken into account and the only way this can be done is by a referendum, even though the results would be ignored as happened in Cornwall. 2. You state that you 'think' the proposal has potential to make savings in the long term but 'we have not sought at this stage to assess the affordability of our draft proposals'. Hardly encouraging! You must show that either the services will improve for the same cost or that they will remain the same but with a reduction in the council tax. This you have patently failed to do particularly allowing for the probable obscene increases in salaries of retained staff as well as the very generous redundancy payments to staff who go. 3. There is no relationship between East Devon & Exeter. If Exeter were taken away

	<p>from Devon then the new county would become financially unviable resulting in higher council tax.</p> <p>It takes long enough to contact the right person at Devon C.C. let alone getting them to do anything. What it would be like for a larger authority I dread to think. Please leave things as they are, there is no need to change.</p>
Stuart Olliver	<p>I am dead against the proposal that Devon County Council controls what are currently the remaining two-tier councils of Devon. This goes against the idea that Local Authorities are local (Devon is HUGE and there are parts of Devon that are more than two hours drive from each other and cannot be considered local in any respect). I live in East Devon and accept the proposal that Exeter and Exmouth merge to form a Great Exeter, which is the second of the two options on the table. There is some merit in this as Exeter City Council and East Devon District Councils are very successful councils. Devon County Council is massively in debt (more than £500million), which proves that they are incapable of running a council in a good financial manner. The thought of them looking after the whole of Devon fills me with dread! Please please please don't give Devon Control of a single Unitary Council! Let Devon Unitary have the primarily rural parts of you really insist, but Exeter and Exmouth as urban areas could be a success on their own as a single Urban Unitary Council. In fact, I think that is a good option for Devon residents.</p>

<p>John Richards</p>	<p>Ivybridge should remain part of South Hams, Devon. It would be a disaster for the area if we were suddenly bundled up with Plymouth and had to put up with what goes on there, not to mention the fact that we are not an urban community. If changes have to be made then the Devon County Council 'A Unitary Council for Devon' seems to make more sense in terms of economy of scale and identity of the area. However, in the South Hams we have little connection really with what goes on in North Devon e.g. Barnstaple or East Devon east of Exeter. So it would be more of a question of economy of scale rather than identity or democracy and reducing tiers of bureaucracy rather than altering boundaries and having to create everything from scratch. However, there seems to be big problem with connecting with local services via Devon CC here in Ivybridge at present. Simple bureaucratic processes are being turned into obstacles by Devon CC and they are removing local points of contact to their bureaucracy. e.g. resident's car parking permits was bad enough when you could get them renewed in Ivybridge, now you are expected to go all the way to Newton Abbott. It should be all so simple but the officers just get wrapped up in the County Council bureaucracy, so if Devon is going to become a unitary authority then we need local safeguards to democracy and services.</p>
<p>M. Spear</p>	<p>BOUNDARY REVIEW</p> <p>I wish to register my opposition to both of the boundary proposals you have made regarding Devon:</p> <p>a) to have 1 council for the whole of Devon, excluding Plymouth and Torbay;</p> <p>b) as above, with the additional exclusion of Exeter.</p> <p>I live within the area covered by West Devon Borough Council, and am happy with the service I receive from them. I fail to see why any change is necessary. Local government has been constantly reorganised since the 1970s, at considerable cost to the tax payer and with no or little discernible benefit. Why are we going through this whole exercise AGAIN?</p> <p>If the boundaries ARE to be re-organised, then your current proposals, as above, will harm the rural residents of Devon. We will be swallowed up in a huge authority, where urban interests will inevitably prevail. Why have you given no consideration to West Devon's proposal to join up with West Hams Borough Council? This does make a great deal of sense, and surely you must now, (as you should have done earlier), give serious</p>

	<p>consideration to West Devon's view.</p> <p>You must surely understand why people are so cynical about these "consultation" exercises, when the public's views are usually ignored anyway. May I urge you to take note of West Devon's proposals. These are after all put forward by our elected representatives.</p> <p>Mary Spear</p>
John Kelly	<p>Acceptance of the draft proposal for a single unitary authority is vital if the level of bureaucracy that stifles decision making in local government is to be reduced. A reduced number of high quality senior officers with the power to drive through policy is essential. These individuals and their staffs should have financial incentives to ensure that they maximise the performance of the new council.</p>