

Neil Stock
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Ofcom
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12th February 2019

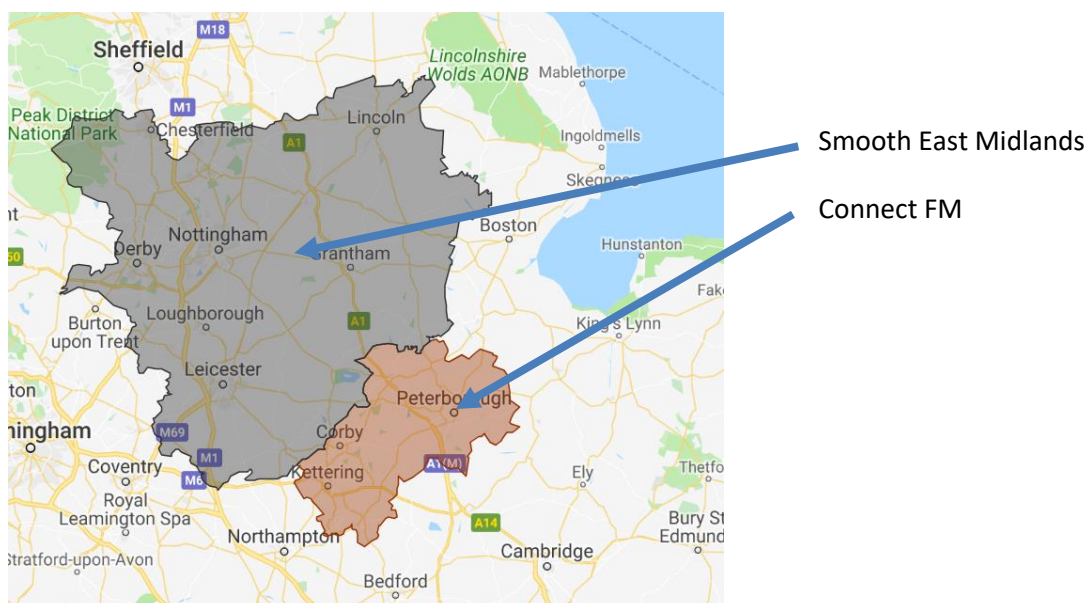
Dear Neil

I am writing to request that Ofcom designates the area, which incorporates the licences below, as an approved area for the purposes of Section 314 of the Communications Act 2013:

Smooth East Midlands (Licence AL277)
Connect FM Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough (Licence AL43)
Connect FM Peterborough (Licence AL245)

The Connect licences AL43 and AL245 currently programme share from studios based in the Kettering area following a previously agreed programme sharing arrangement. This request is being made to extend that arrangement to provide Communicorp with alternative options in respect of programme-sharing and co-location to the approved areas as set out in Ofcom's Statement on localness on commercial radio published on 26th October 2018.

The proposed area is shown below:



The proposed area is smaller than the Central approved area, under which the Smooth East Midlands licence is currently allocated as it excludes the West Midlands part of the Central approved area. It does however include part of the county of Northamptonshire in the East Midlands and the area around Peterborough.

The area covered by the Connect FM licence for Kettering, Corby and Wellingborough is part of the county of Northamptonshire which is geographically part of the East Midlands region. The licence area of Peterborough was also part of the county of Northamptonshire until 1965. Both Connect licence areas have strong links geographically and culturally to the East Midlands region and many large companies have their regional offices based in Nottingham.

Both Kettering and Wellingborough are connected via mainline rail links to the major towns of Leicester, Derby and Nottingham, with Leicester just a 23 minute journey by train from Kettering as opposed to 1 hour to London. Peterborough is an average 1hr and 8 minutes commute by train to London.

Peterborough is connected to Nottingham and Leicester by the main road network with journey times to Leicester (41 miles) via the A47 taking just over an hour and to Nottingham (58 miles) via the A1 and A52 taking 1hr 20min. The 98 miles to London from Peterborough would take over 2 hours.

The county of Northamptonshire has strong sporting links with the East Midlands in particular with Leicestershire with Leicester and Northampton competing in the rugby union premier league.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Everitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Colin Everitt