



# **2018 Review of Parliamentary constituencies**

**Report on progress during 2017**

**January 2018**



# **Boundary Commission for Scotland**

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### **Report on progress during 2017**

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 3(2C) of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, as amended by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011.

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## **1 Previous report**

- 1.1 We submitted our previous progress report in January 2017, in which we reported that we had published our Initial Proposals, completed the initial public consultation on them, and were preparing the comments which we had received for publication for the statutory secondary consultation period.

## **2 This review**

- 2.1 We are undertaking our 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies. The review resulted from the passage of the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, which came into force on 16 February 2011.
- 2.2 The allocation of constituencies for Scotland in this review is 51 constituencies, plus 2 island constituencies specified by the legislation, one covering Na h-Eileanan an Iar (the Western Isles) and the other covering the Orkney and Shetland Islands.
- 2.3 Under the review, the smallest permitted electorate of a constituency is 71,031 and the largest permitted electorate is 78,507, unless the area of a constituency is more than 12,000 square kilometres when it may have a smaller electorate. In addition, no constituency may have an area of more than 13,000 square kilometres.

## **3 Progress this year**

- 3.1 We published on our website approximately 1,500 comments which we had received on our Initial Proposals for the 4 week secondary consultation period specified in the legislation, from 28 February 2017 to 27 March 2017.
- 3.2 We advertised the consultation by way of a news release and the posting of a news item on our Facebook and Twitter pages.
- 3.3 From April 2017 onwards we held monthly meetings to agree the changes which we should make to our Initial Proposals for constituencies in order to form our Revised Proposals.
- 3.4 As in previous Reviews one of our objectives when designing constituencies has been to minimise the number of constituencies which combine parts of more than one council area. In order to assist with that, in our Initial Proposals we designed constituencies for groups of council areas where it was possible for a whole number of constituencies to exactly cover the combined extent of the council areas in each group.
- 3.5 When deciding on changes required for our Revised Proposals, we first considered comments which would result in alterations to our approach to grouping council areas, and concluded that we should make some changes to these groupings.
- 3.6 We then considered each area of Scotland, and agreed our Revised Proposals. We made our final decisions on our Revised Proposals at our meeting in August 2017.
- 3.7 We published our Revised Proposals on 17 October 2017 for the statutory 8 week period of public consultation, which lasted until Monday 11 December 2017. When we published our Revised Proposals, we distributed information widely, including to:
  - 79 display points around Scotland, such as public libraries and council offices;
  - Hand delivering our proposals to Members of Parliament for Scottish constituencies;
  - House of Commons Library and Vote Office;
  - House of Lords Printed Papers Office;

- Members of the Scottish Parliament;
  - Scottish Parliament Information Centre;
  - Scottish headquarters of political parties with MPs representing Scottish constituencies;
  - Scotland's 32 local authorities;
  - Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority; and
  - Electoral Registration Officers.
- 3.8 We also published the Revised Proposals on our consultation portal which includes a consultation facility incorporating interactive mapping and online submission of comments.
- 3.9 We advertised the consultation by way of a news release and the posting of a news item on our Facebook and Twitter pages.
- 3.10 At the same time, we published the papers and minutes from our meetings at which we had developed the Revised Proposals, together with a constituency index designed to assist in finding the relevant papers. This was welcomed by political parties and others. We also published online the comments received during the secondary consultation.
- 3.11 Our consultation period on the Revised Proposals ended on Monday 11 December 2017. We received approximately 730 comments during the consultation period.

#### **4 Future steps**

- 4.1 We will consider all of the comments which we received on our Revised Proposals in order to decide whether any changes will be required to form our Final Recommendations.
- 4.2 We remain confident that we will be able to submit our report to the Secretary of State in September 2018.
- 4.3 At the same time as we submit our report, we will publish on our website our papers and the minutes of our meetings at which we had developed our Final Recommendations, as well as the comments received during the consultation on our Revised Proposals.

