



2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies

Report on progress during 2021

January 2022

Boundary Commission for Scotland

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Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 3(2C) of the
Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, as amended

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The Speaker
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

27 January 2022

Dear Speaker

1. As required by section 3(2B)(a) of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended by the Parliamentary Voting System Act 2011 and Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020), hereafter referred to as ‘the Act’, we are required to submit to you as Chair of the Boundary Commission for Scotland a report setting out the progress we have made on the current boundary review. As you will be aware, you are required by section 3(2C) to lay our report before Parliament.
2. All actions to date have taken place against a background of Covid-19 which has required the Secretariat, like others, to work from home and for Commission meetings to be held virtually. We do not believe, however, that there is any risk to delivery of our Final Recommendations before 1 July 2023, as required by the legislation.

Start of the review

3. Along with the Commissions in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, we formally commenced the 2023 Review on 5 January 2021, with the publication of the total UK electorate, electoral quota, and allocation of constituencies to each part of the UK (for the 2023 Review, Scotland is allocated 57 constituencies).

Meeting with the representatives of the qualifying political parties

4. In line with previous practice, we invited representatives from the qualifying political parties in Scotland to a virtual meeting, held on 28 June 2021, to discuss the statutory rules and our planned approach to the review.

Policies and Procedures

5. We published our Policies and Procedures Booklet in Autumn 2021. This guide, aimed at all those with an interest in the 2023 Review, provided background information on the 2023 Review, our approach and intended timing.

Our initial proposals for new constituency boundaries

6. We published our initial proposals for 57 constituencies in Scotland on 14 October 2021. As required by the Rules in Schedule 2 to the Act, all constituencies other than the two ‘protected’ Scottish constituencies (Orkney and Shetland, and Na h-Eileanan an Iar) had electorates within 5% (69,724 – 77,062) of the electoral quota (73,393).

7. Our initial proposals retained 11 of the existing 59 constituencies without change. This includes the two protected constituencies.

Initial consultation period

8. The statutory eight-week consultation period, during which representations on our proposals were invited, ran from 14 October 2021 to 8 December 2021. In support of the consultation we undertook a publicity campaign which included press advertising and social media advertising.
9. In response, we received over 1,100 representations. 89% of these representations were made through our online consultation website.

Secondary consultation period and public hearings

10. During the next stage of the review we will publish the written representations made during the initial consultation period. We will invite comments on those representations during a six-week consultation period which we expect to commence in February 2023. We will support this consultation period with similar publicity as undertaken for the initial consultation
11. Section 5(4)(c) of the Act requires us to hold between 2 and 5 public hearings during the six-week secondary consultation period. During this six-week period, we intend to hold five public hearings across Scotland, the maximum permitted number of Hearings in order to make them readily accessible to as many people as possible. Each Hearing will be chaired by a Sheriff Principal and will last a single day. We published details on the secondary consultation and public hearings on 24 January 2022.

Revised proposals

12. After the secondary consultation period concludes we will consider all representations received and whether to revise our initial proposals in light of the evidence submitted. We would expect the four week consultation period on any revised proposals to be held in Autumn 2022.

Next report

13. We will submit a further report to you in January 2023 on further progress with the 2023 Review.

The Hon Lord Matthews
Deputy Chair of the Commission

Professor Ailsa Henderson
Boundary Commissioner

Dr Susan Walker
Boundary Commissioner

Isabel Drummond-Murray
Secretary to the Commission

