BCS Paper 2022/10

2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies
Consideration of Revised Proposals for City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian council areas

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to consider responses to the initial and secondary consultations on its initial proposals and whether it wishes to make changes to its proposals for City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian council areas.

Background

2. The total electorate for City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian council areas is 515,990 giving a theoretical entitlement of seven constituencies.

3. The Commission's initial proposals for this area proposed seven constituencies and retained two existing constituency boundaries. A map of the proposed constituencies is at Appendix A.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Wards
Midlothian	71,210	All wards
East Lothian Coast	73,939	East Lothian 1 (part), 2 - 6
Edinburgh East	73,187	East Lothian 1 (part) Edinburgh 11(part), 12(part), 13(part), 14, 15(part), 16(part), 17
Edinburgh South	70,893	Edinburgh 8(part), 10(part), 15(part), 16(part)
Edinburgh South West	73,315	Edinburgh 1(part), 2(part), 7(part), 8(part), 9, 10(part), 11(part)
Edinburgh West	76,903	Edinburgh 1(part), 2(part), 3(part), 5(part), 6(part), 7(part)
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,543	Edinburgh 4, 5(part), 6(part), 11(part), 12(part), 13(part)

Representations received

4. 83 responses were received during the two consultation periods that related solely to Edinburgh (15 Initial /9 Secondary), Midlothian(1 Initial /0 Secondary) and East Lothian(48 Initial /10 Secondary) council areas. All responses have been shared with the Commission. All responses to the initial consultation stage are available on the Commission's consultation site www.bcs2023review.com. Each response has been allocated a reference number from the consultation site.

Summary of responses

5. Suggestions and comments received during the initial consultation included:
    - opposition to the proposed boundary in Musselburgh as it split the town between two constituencies;
    - support for the initial proposals in Edinburgh and Midlothian; and
    - some alternative boundary suggestions in Edinburgh.

6. The maps in this paper show alternative suggestions in block colours, existing ward boundaries are red and Initial Proposal boundaries are a black line.

City of Edinburgh Consultation Responses and Analysis

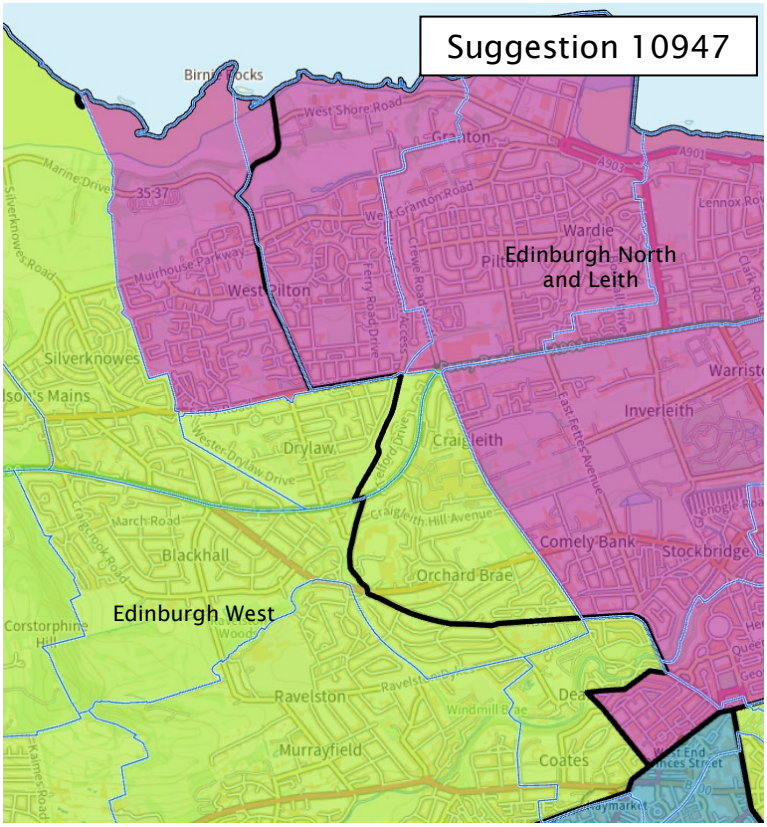
7. There were 15 responses regarding the initial proposals for City of Edinburgh council area.

8. Ten responses were broadly supportive of the proposals (10922, 11208, 11287, 11407, 11532, 11994, 12012, 12093, 12096, 12130).

9. Two members of the public (11487, 11551) opposed the proposals for Edinburgh East but offered no reasons. One also questioned the legislation underpinning the reviews.

10. A member of the public (10947) suggested placing Muirhouse within an 'Edinburgh North and Leith' constituency because it has strong links with West Pilton. The respondent cited Community Renewal Muirhouse(CRM), Craigroyston School Catchment Area and Muirhouse GP catchment area as indicators of community ties between Muirhouse and West Pilton. The respondent also cited the deprivation within the area as a further reason to maintain community ties. They also suggested adding parts of Craigleith into the proposed 'Edinburgh West' constituency to balance the electorate between constituencies.

11. The table and map below show that this suggestion is possible by making consequential changes to the proposed Edinburgh West constituency. If the proposed Edinburgh North and Leith constituency is expanded west to incorporate Muirhouse and Salvesen Community council area (3,554 electors), then redrawing the Edinburgh West boundary further east following the Craigleith & Blackhall Community Council boundary along Crewe Road South and Orchard Brae (3,267 electors) ensures that the electorates of the suggested constituencies are very close to that of the proposed constituencies.



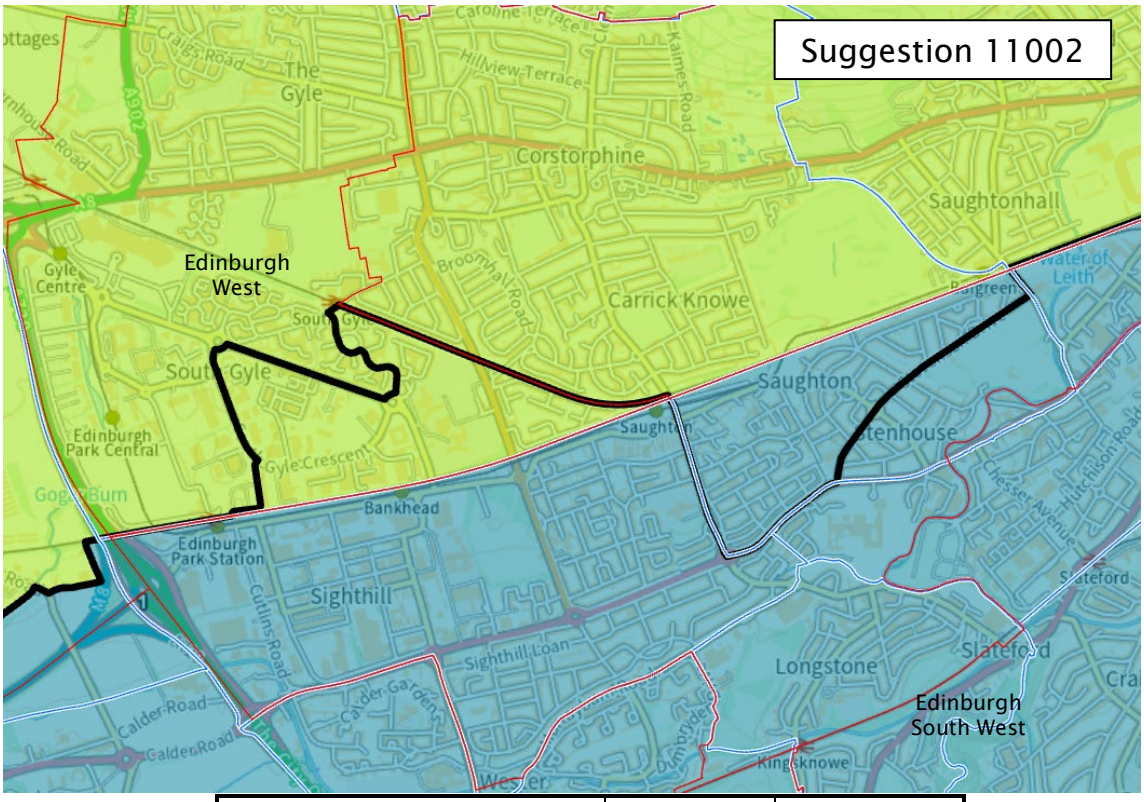
Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East	73,187	*
Edinburgh South	70,893	*
Edinburgh South West	73,315	*
Edinburgh West	76,719	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,727	

12. The advantages of this suggestion are:
    - a historical boundary similar to the one suggested was in place in this area between 1983 and 1997 between Edinburgh Leith and Edinburgh West constituencies; and
    - it follows community council boundaries which may be recognised by local communities.

13. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:
    - the existing boundary in this area has been unchanged since 1997 and may be seen as an established boundary; and
    - it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

14. A member of the public (11002) suggested designing constituency boundaries along main roads in the South Gyle rather than through minor neighbourhood roads, placing their housing development within a single constituency.

15. This suggestion could be accommodated with consequential changes in the neighbouring constituency to avoid 'Edinburgh West' exceeding its quota. Whilst proposed boundaries in the area followed existing constituencies it would be possible to follow existing ward boundaries and better reflect the local ties within the area that may have be split by the current constituency boundary. The Gyle area of Edinburgh South West constituency (1,478 electors) could be placed within Edinburgh West constituency and the balancing change to the Edinburgh South West constituency would be electors from the Saughton area (3,393) moving from Edinburgh West. The map below demonstrates that following ward boundaries (red lines) would meet the suggested change and also keep the suggested constituencies within the electoral quota. The initial proposals retained the existing Edinburgh South West boundary.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East	73,187	*
Edinburgh South	70,893	*
Edinburgh South West	75,230	
Edinburgh West	74,988	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,543	*

16. The advantages of this suggestion are that it:
    - follows community council area and ward boundaries;
    - does not require consequential changes elsewhere; and
    - follows more easily identifiable boundaries (railway/tram line).

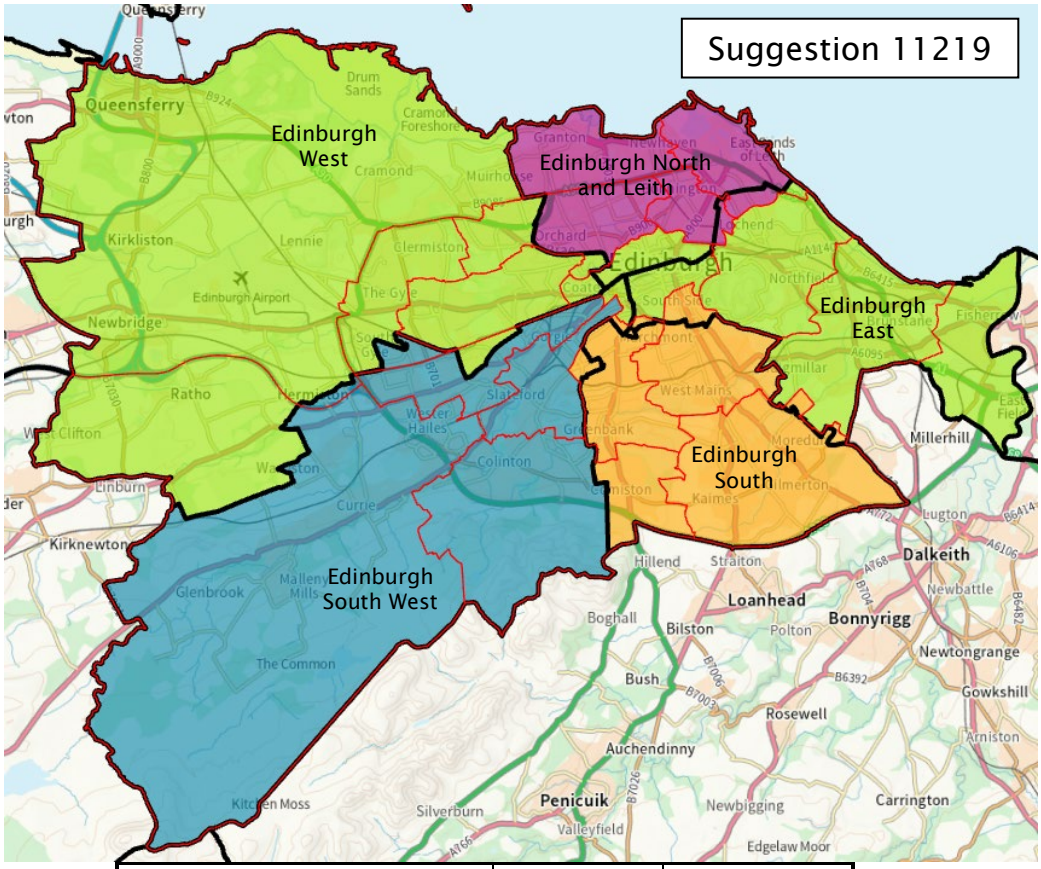
17. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:
    - the existing boundary in this area has been unchanged since 2005 with the South Gyle boundary unchanged since 1997; and
    - it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

18. A member of the public (11219) suggested dropping the name 'Leith' from the proposed Edinburgh North and Leith constituency name or re-drawing the boundary of the proposed constituency to include the whole of Leith.

19. No suggested Leith boundaries were provided and some may argue over the exact boundary of Leith but the Commission could consider accommodating all of the Edinburgh “Leith” wards in a single Edinburgh North and Leith constituency but this requires changes to the proposed Edinburgh East, Edinburgh South and Edinburgh South West constituencies. This alternative option follows ward boundaries and is shown in the map below, with electorate

table. The area east of the initial proposals (Easter Road) in Leith would transfer from Edinburgh East to Edinburgh North and Leith and avoid splitting wards 12 (Leith Walk) and 13 (Leith) with the transfer of 4,126 electors from ward 12 and 3,410 electors from ward 13 both proposed to be in Edinburgh East.

20. In order to accommodate these changes all of City of Edinburgh's ward 11 (City Centre) is placed in the proposed Edinburgh East constituency. The three wards that make up the Edinburgh South constituency are not split as opposed to the initial proposals where parts of ward 10 (Morningside) ward 15 (Southside/ Newington) and ward 16 (Liberton/Gilmerton) are in other constituencies. A map of the suggestion and accompanying electorate is shown below.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East	73,061	
Edinburgh South	72,108	
Edinburgh South West	74,631	
Edinburgh West	74,817	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,224	

21. The advantages of this suggestion are it:
    - aims to recognise community ties within Leith;
    - places Leith within a single constituency; and
    - follows Scottish Parliament, community council and ward boundaries.

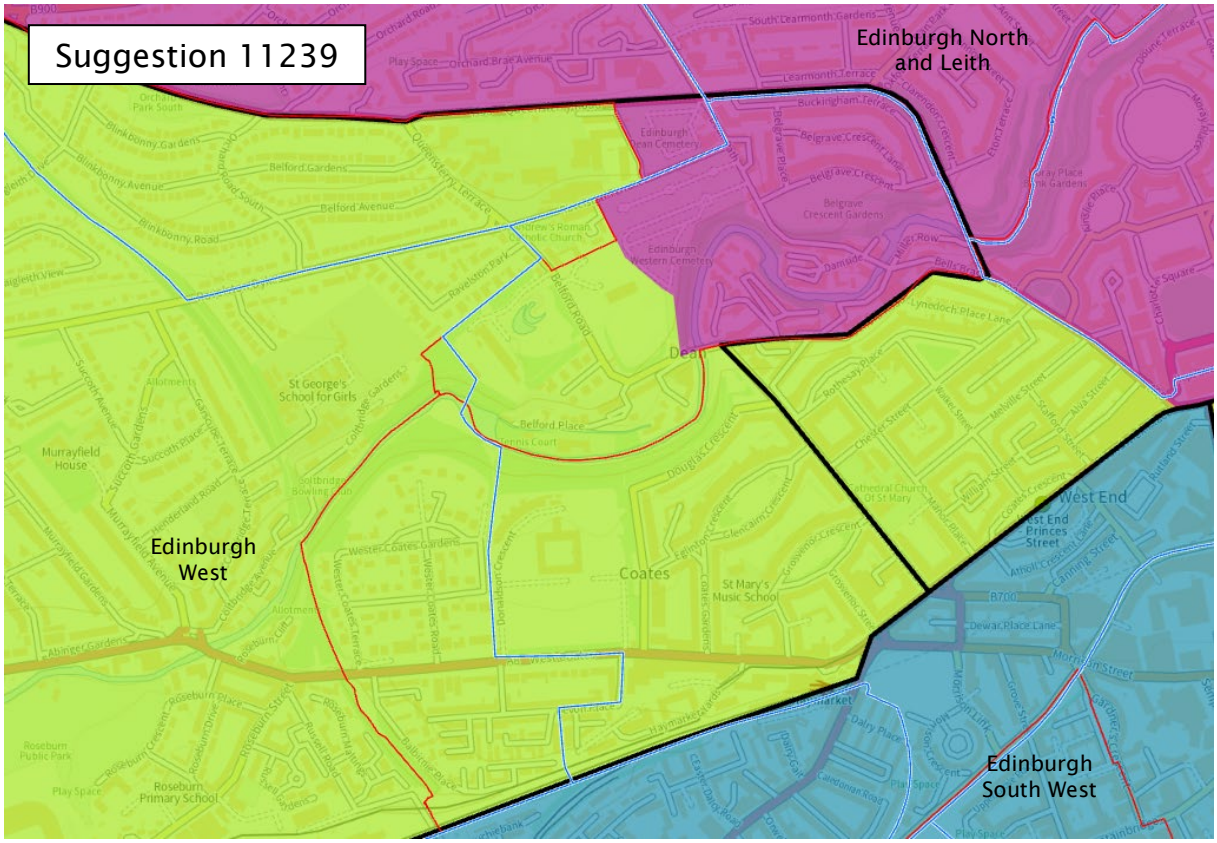
22. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:
    - the existing constituency boundaries in this area have been relatively unchanged since 1997;

- it requires consequential changes to all other Edinburgh constituency boundaries to accommodate the transfer of a relatively small number of electors from Edinburgh East to Edinburgh North and Leith;
- some may debate whether the whole of Leith is within a single constituency; and
- it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

23. Two members of the public (11316,11466) made similar suggestions that the areas of Leith Links and "the colonies" just south of Leith Links be placed in a Edinburgh North and Leith constituency rather than Edinburgh East. These suggestions are accommodated in the alternative boundary suggested above.

24. A member of the public (11239) suggested moving Dean Village from the proposed Edinburgh West constituency into the proposed Edinburgh North and Leith constituency.

25. This suggestion would transfer approximately 1,200 electors and is shown on the map below.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East	73,187	*
Edinburgh South	70,893	*
Edinburgh South West	73,315	*
Edinburgh West	76,933	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,513	

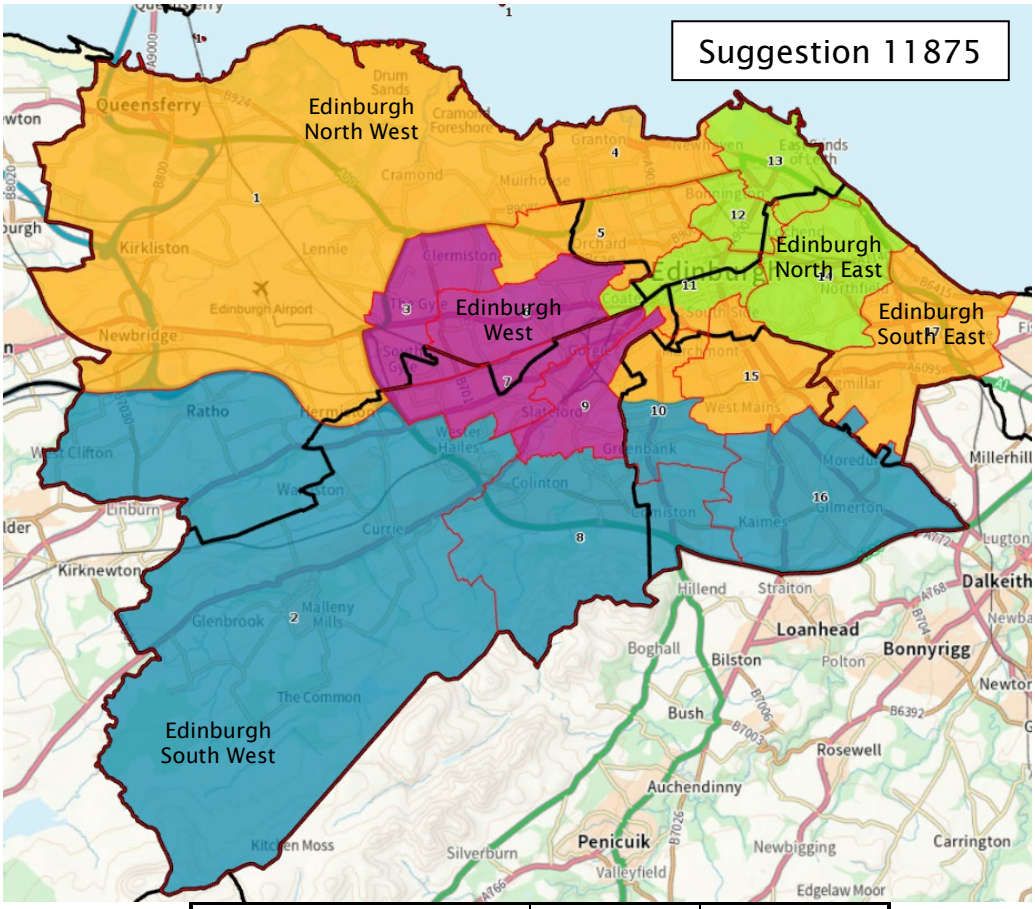
26. The advantages of this suggestion are:

- it makes minimal changes to the initial proposals (1,100 electors); and
- it partially follows recognised boundaries (wards and community council areas).

27. The disadvantages of this suggestion are:
    - there is no historical precedent for the suggested boundary; and
    - it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

28. A member of the public (11875) made an alternative suggestion which aims to minimise the number of wards split between constituencies in Edinburgh. Their suggestion splits two wards. The Commission's initial proposals split 12 wards but minimised change to the existing constituency boundaries.

29. Their alternative suggestion is shown in the map and table below. The suggestion follows the Commission's proposed boundary at Musselburgh.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh North East	76,501	
Edinburgh North West	70,869	
Edinburgh South East	75,435	
Edinburgh South West	73,877	
Edinburgh West	74,159	

30. The advantages of this suggestion are that it respects local ward boundaries where possible throughout the grouping.

31. The disadvantages of this suggestion are that it:
    - creates new constituencies that require substantial changes to the initial proposals;
    - creates an Edinburgh South West constituency that stretches from Ratho to Gilmerton; and
    - it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

32. City of Edinburgh Council (11347) expressed a preference for all five Edinburgh constituencies to sit within the city boundary but accepted that changes to legislation regarding the electorate quota made that impossible.

33. A member of the public (12092) suggested that Edinburgh City Centre should have its own constituency rather than being sliced up and placed in other constituencies. They believe the issues of electors in the city centre are different to those of electors in suburban areas. They go on to suggest that this is also true of close links between Portobello and Musselburgh and also links between communities in parts of Glasgow.

34. A member of the public made comments regarding matters that were out-with the scope of the review or misunderstood the legislation underpinning the review (12012).

35. Christine Jardine MP (12132) was supportive of the proposals for an Edinburgh West constituency.

36. A member of the public (12011) questioned the inclusion of half of Musselburgh in an Edinburgh East constituency.

37. A member of the public (12058) opposed the size of the Edinburgh West constituency.

38. Ian Murray MP (11994) supported the initial proposals for South Edinburgh. Whilst acknowledging this suggestion was out-with the terms of the 2023 Review he asked if the Commission could be mindful of the large amount of housebuilding in the south of Edinburgh and the impact that may have on the electorate in the area and the likelihood it would quickly exceed the electorate quota limits of the current review.

Midlothian Initial Consultation Responses

39. There was a single response to the initial proposals for Midlothian council area.

40. A member of public (11587) suggested the Midlothian constituency boundary should follow the city bypass/ A720 road and that those settlements within the bypass such as Danderhall and Millerhill should sit within Edinburgh. They suggested that these areas have difficulty accessing Midlothian Council services.

41. Danderhall and Millerhill contain approximately 2,900 electors and including them within an Edinburgh constituency would result in Midlothian being below the electoral quota for the review.

East Lothian Initial Consultation Responses

42. There were 48 responses to the initial proposals for East Lothian council area.

43. None of the responses were supportive of the Commission's initial proposals.

44. 33 responses from members of the public suggested the proposals in Musselburgh would break community ties and also took issue with Musselburgh being represented by two MPs. (11936, 11873, 11313, 11252, 11226, 11113, 11105, 11096, 11064, 11061, 11048, 11010, 11008, 11007, 11006, 11003, 11000, 10994, 10989, 10987, 10986, 10985, 10979, 10978,10976, 10974, 10965, 10953, 10949, 10946, 10913, 10912, 10911 and 10907). Three responses (12086,12116,12120) from members of the public opposed the proposed constituency boundary in Musselburgh and suggested it would break local ties. Two responses (12091,12133) from members of the public opposed the proposed constituency as they suggested it will break local ties in Musselburgh and cause confusion with different boundaries for ward, Scottish Parliament and UK Parliament representatives. A member of the public (12065) opposed the proposed Musselburgh boundary as they suggested the town would suffer being a small part of a large city constituency.

45. East Lothian Council (11681) expressed concern that the proposals would split the council area between constituencies and they had particular concerns regarding the division of Musselburgh between constituencies. However the Council acknowledged that given the electoral quota limits for the 2023 Review it would not be possible to avoid splitting East Lothian. The Council went on to suggest alternative constituency names: East Edinburgh and West Musselburgh; and East Lothian.

46. 10 responses were made in the secondary consultation in relation to the proposals for East Lothian council area.

47. Three members of the public (11700) opposed the East Lothian Coast name. One also opposed splitting Musselburgh (12019) and one stated the name didn't capture the variety of topography within the constituency (12057).

48. Musselburgh and Eskdale Community Council (12171) opposed the proposals in Musselburgh on the grounds that they would break long standing community ties in Musselburgh.

49. Some members of the public made comments regarding matters that were out-with the scope of the review or misunderstood the legislation underpinning the review. Nine suggested the changes would mean they had further to travel for local facilities (schools, doctors etc).

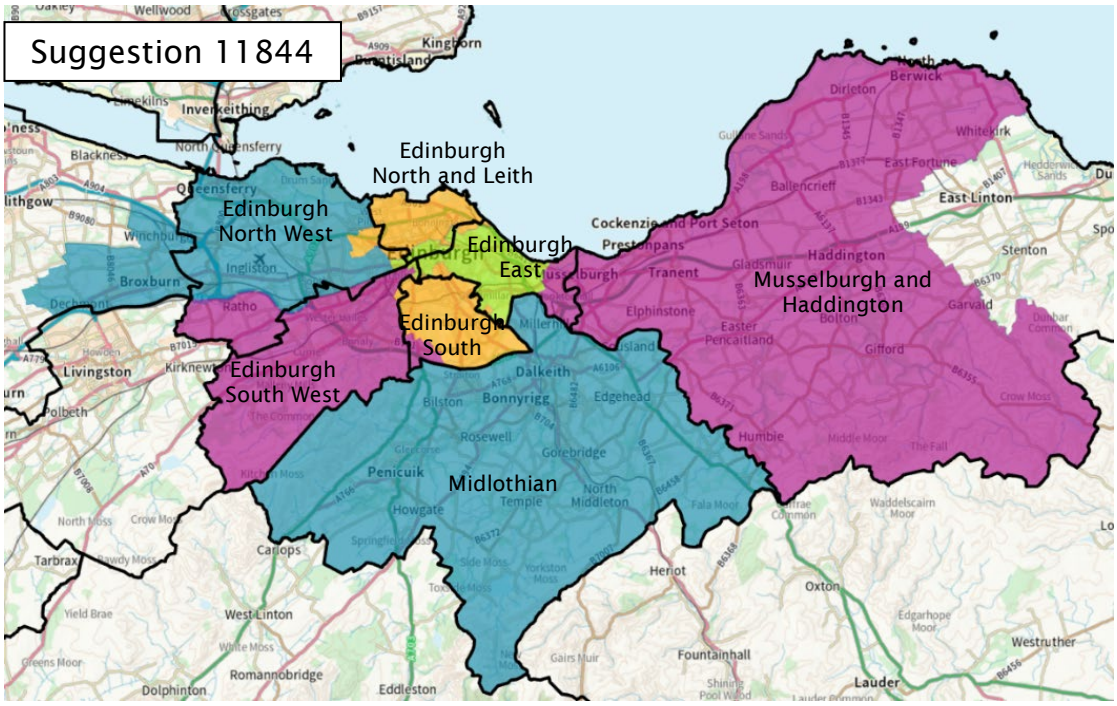
All Scotland Consultation Responses that apply to this grouping and Analysis

50. There were approximately 140 general responses to the initial consultation opposing the 2023 Review or making comments out-with the legislation for the review.

51. A member of the public suggested that the Commission should not group council areas for designing constituencies because it offers less flexibility in constituency design and may bring political bias. They also suggested constituency names based on the principle of a main area or town and a subsidiary area (12161).

52. A member of the public (11879) suggested smaller constituencies across Scotland.

53. A member of the public (11844) submitted an all Scotland suggestion which they believe would improve on the Commission's initial proposals because only one constituency is composed of areas within three local authorities and outside the four large cities, only the towns of Paisley and Bearsden are split between constituencies. They went on to state that their suggestion may allow improved local connections between MPs and their constituents and for the multi-level representation to be better synchronised. This suggestion amends the Commission's council area groupings and places East Lothian ward 6 (Dunbar and East Linton) in a constituency with parts of Scottish Borders. It also suggests placing West Lothian ward 2 (Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh) within an Edinburgh constituency. A map of the suggestion and accompanying electorate is shown below.

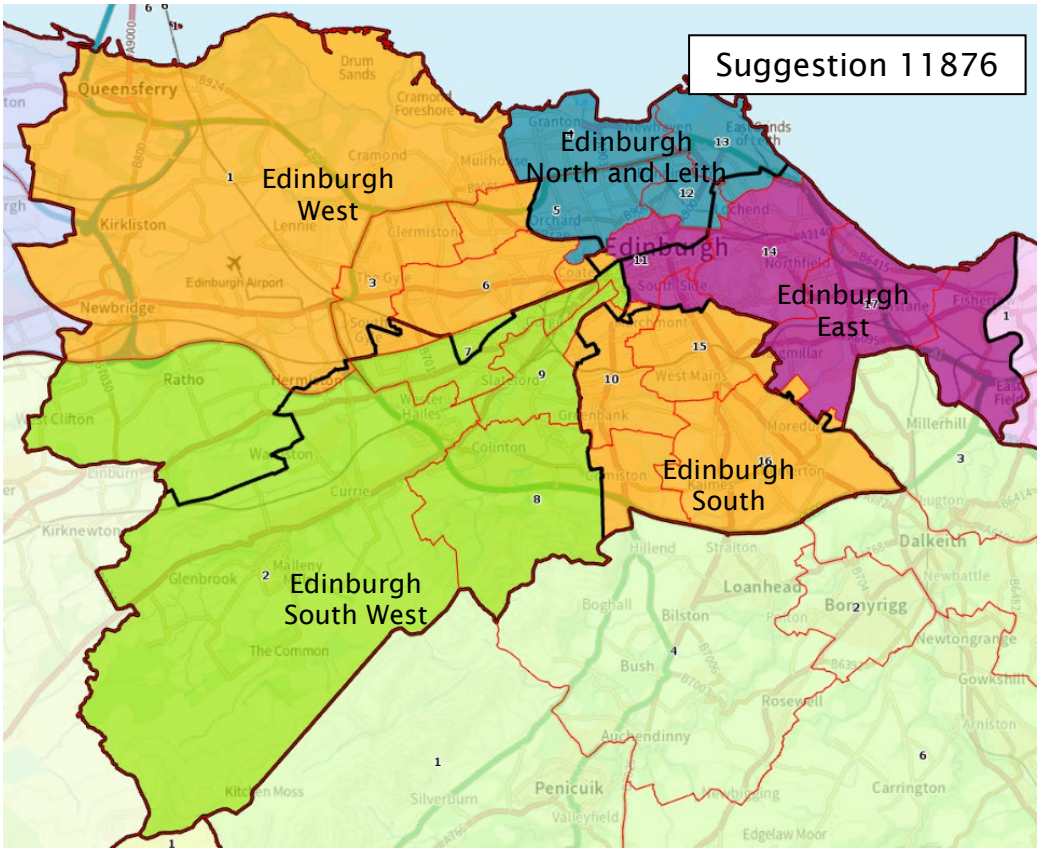


Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh North West	76,969	
Edinburgh South West	76,714	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,830	
Edinburgh South	74,018	
Edinburgh East	73,072	
Midlothian	71,210	*
Musselburgh and Haddington	70,784	

54. The advantages of this suggestion are that it:
- avoids the division of Musselburgh between constituencies; and
- follows ward boundaries to a greater extent than the initial proposals.

55. The disadvantages of this suggestion are that it would make changes in Edinburgh, Scottish Borders and West Lothian where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

56. A member of the public (11876) submitted an all Scotland alternative suggestion. They suggested making alterations to all of the City of Edinburgh constituencies in order to minimise the number of divided wards. Their suggestion splits four wards. A map of the suggestion and accompanying electorate is shown below.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East	73,369	
Edinburgh South	72,611	
Edinburgh South West	75,727	
Edinburgh West	72,910	
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,224	

57. The advantages of this suggestion are:
    - it follows ward boundaries to a greater extent than the initial proposals; and
    - there was a Berwick and East Lothian constituency (1950-1983) which included the East Lothian towns of Dunbar, North Berwick and Haddington with the Border towns of Eyemouth and Coldstream.

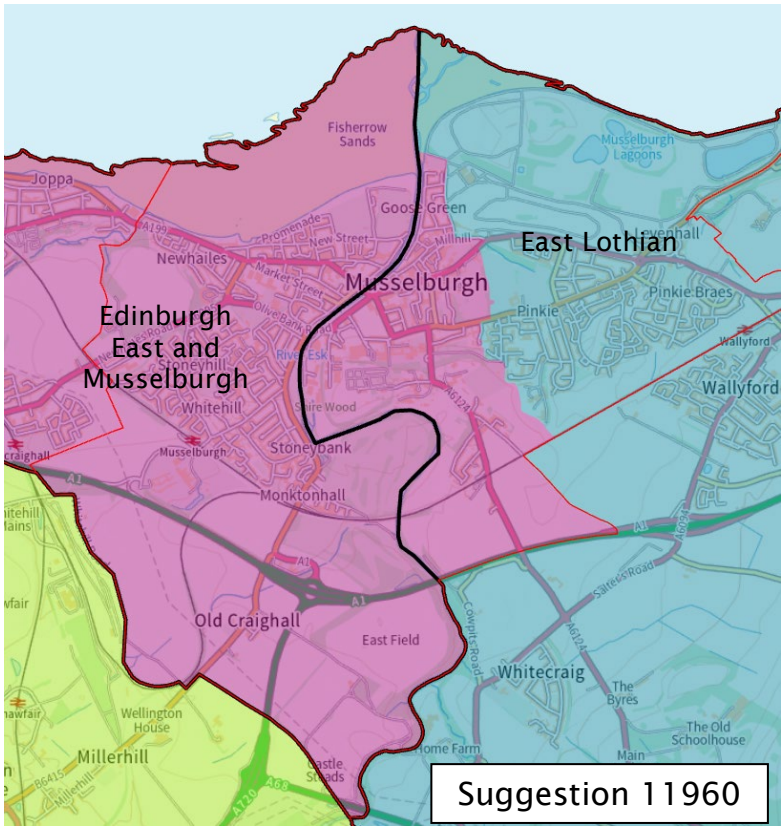
58. The disadvantages are that it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals which in many areas were based in existing constituency boundaries.

59. The Scottish Liberal Democrats (11828) supported the Commission's proposals for this grouping.

60. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (11960) accepted that the initial proposals in Edinburgh "consolidate the existing constituencies, subject to adjustments to bring all electorates within quota".

61. They accepted it was necessary to include part of East Lothian council area in a constituency with East Edinburgh but have suggested an alternative boundary in Musselburgh. They suggested extending the proposed boundary to include a greater area of Musselburgh within an Edinburgh East constituency which includes a further 2,600 electors. They suggested partly following a historical UK Parliament boundary in Musselburgh used from 1997 to 2005 and partly a polling district boundary. Their suggestion is within the electorate quota for the 2023 Review and could even accommodate approximately 1,200 more electors. They are the only respondent to provide a possible solution to Musselburgh being split between constituencies. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (12170) also submitted a response to the secondary consultation in which they reiterated their comments on Edinburgh and East Lothian constituencies from the initial consultation period. They also noted that other organisations (East Lothian Council and the Scottish Labour Party) had agreed with them and acknowledged that a split in East Lothian was unavoidable given the electorate growth since the last completed review.

62. A map of the suggestion and accompanying electorate is shown below.



Constituency	Electorate	Unchanged
Edinburgh East and Musselburgh	75,839	
Edinburgh South	70,893	*
Edinburgh South West	73,315	*
Edinburgh West	76,719	*
Edinburgh North and Leith	76,727	*
East Lothian	71,287	

63. The advantages of this suggestion are that it:
    - may offer a more recognised boundary in Musselburgh;
    - may resolve most of the comments raised during the initial consultation; and
    - does not split the older historical village of Musselburgh between constituencies.

64. The disadvantages of this suggestion are that it still splits part of Musselburgh between constituencies.

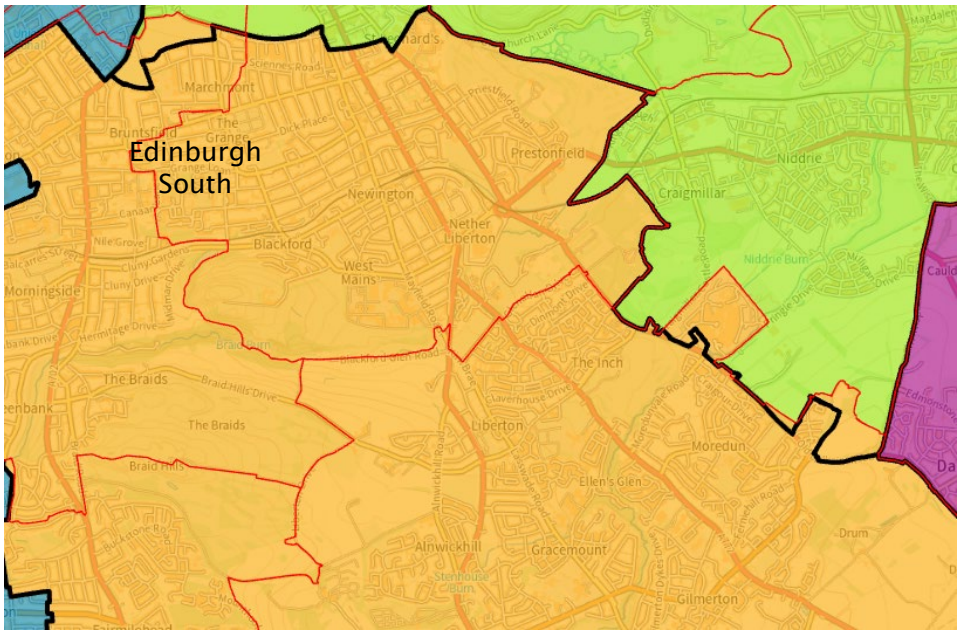
65. The Scottish Labour Party (11802) expressed regret that it was no longer possible for East Lothian council area to be coterminous with a single East Lothian constituency. They suggested that the simplest solution would be for part of Musselburgh to be in an Edinburgh East and Musselburgh constituency as was the case between 1997 and 2005. The response went on to express reservations regarding the proposed East Lothian Coastal name although no alternative was suggested.

66. The Scottish Labour Party broadly supported the initial proposals in Edinburgh because they minimised change but noted this approach split numerous council wards. They suggest two minor changes which would follow ward boundaries in Morningside and Liberton/Gilmerton, affecting only 137 electors who would transfer from Edinburgh East to Edinburgh South (see map below). The Scottish Labour Party also made a submissions to the secondary consultation (12174, 12147) in which they reiterated the points made in their submission to the initial consultation.

Suggestion 11802

Edinburgh
East

67. The



advantages of this suggestion are that it:

- better aligns ward boundaries with constituency boundaries; and
- makes minor changes to the initial proposals (less than 140 electors).

68. The disadvantages of this suggestion are that it would make changes where there has been some support and little opposition to the initial proposals.

69. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party (12170) submitted a response to the secondary consultation in which they reiterated their comments on Edinburgh and East Lothian constituencies from the initial consultation period. They noted that other organisations (East Lothian Council and the Scottish Labour Party) had agreed with them and acknowledged that a split in East Lothian was unavoidable given the electorate growth since the last completed review.

Constituency names

70. There was opposition to the proposed “East Lothian Coast” name but few alternatives were suggested.

71. Two members of the public (11015 and 11244) suggested renaming the proposed 'Edinburgh East' constituency as 'Edinburgh East and Fisherrow'.

72. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party suggested “Edinburgh East and Musselburgh” should their suggestion regarding a larger part of Musselburgh in the Edinburgh East constituency be adopted. They also suggested a deviation from the Commission’s stated policy of avoiding the name of the council area if the constituency doesn’t follow the boundary exactly by calling the proposed East Lothian Coast constituency “East Lothian”.

73. The Commission has generally adopted a policy of only using the same name for constituencies and council areas if they are coterminous. However the initial proposals proposed a West Dunbartonshire constituency and a Dumfries and Galloway constituency that did not follow their council area boundaries.

74. East Lothian Council suggested the names "East Edinburgh and West Musselburgh" and "East Lothian".

75. Two members of the public (11874, 11921) suggested re-naming East Lothian Coast as East Lothian. One supported the name Edinburgh South and also suggested Edinburgh Pentlands instead of Edinburgh South West.

76. A member of the public (11875) suggested alternative names:
    - Edinburgh North East could be called "Edinburgh Central & Leith";
    - Edinburgh South East could be called "Edinburgh East"; and
    - Edinburgh South West could be called "Edinburgh Pentlands" although they went on to suggest that this name is too similar to a ward name.

77. A member of the public submitted a general comment on constituency names and enclosed an article from Political Quarterly "What's in a Name? The Length of Westminster Constituency Titles, 1950-2024" (11977).

78. The constituency names in this paper are provisional. The Commission will have the opportunity to review all constituency names and designations prior to the publication of its revised proposals.

Summary

79. The Commission's initial proposals retained the existing Midlothian constituency and Edinburgh South West constituency and minimised change to the existing constituency boundaries within Edinburgh and retained the existing constituency names. In East Lothian, Musselburgh was split between constituencies and the constituency was renamed East Lothian Coast.

80. There has been a low level of response to the initial proposals for Midlothian and Edinburgh council areas and few alternative suggestions were submitted.

81. The main issue raised has been the division of Musselburgh between two constituencies. Musselburgh has been placed in a separate constituency from East Lothian (Edinburgh East and Musselburgh 1997-2005 and Edinburgh East constituency 1950-1983) before but the town has never been split between two constituencies by the River Esk. Despite the opposition to the initial proposals for Musselburgh only one alternative suggestion was submitted. In it the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party suggested extending the proposed Edinburgh East constituency boundary to include more of Musselburgh. This suggestion is minor and minimises change to other constituency boundaries. The suggestion partly follows historical constituency boundaries (UK Parliament and Scottish Parliament) but could be extended to include even more of Musselburgh.

82. The Scottish Labour Party suggested minor changes to constituencies in Edinburgh in order to follow two ward boundaries. This suggestion would affect fewer than 140 electors.

83. The single comment on the proposed Midlothian constituency raised concerns with both the constituency and council area boundary. which is unchanged and coterminous with the council area boundary. This comment possibly suggests Boundaries Scotland undertaking an administrative area boundary review between City of Edinburgh and Midlothian council areas.

84. There were several alternative suggestions in Edinburgh but they lacked strong support, while there was generally support or a lack of opposition to the initial proposals.

85. As stated above the constituency names in this paper are provisional. The Commission will have the opportunity to review all constituency names and designations prior to the publication of its revised proposals.

Recommendations

86. Taking into account all of the evidence arising from the public consultations on the initial proposals, the Secretariat invites the Commission to decide whether:
    - to adopt any of the alternative suggestions;
    - to amend its proposals for constituency names; or
    - to adopt without amendment the initial proposals for City of Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian council areas as the Commission's revised proposals (as in Appendix A), subject to consideration of all other constituencies.

Secretariat
May 2022

BCS Paper 2022/10

Appendix A

Initial proposals - City of Edinburgh, East Lothian and Midlothian council areas