



Annual Report 2025-26

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Deputy Chair's introduction

The Commission remains within a quiet period with the next UK Parliament boundary review due by 1 October 2031. Our focus has been on monitoring progress of the implementation of the lessons learned from the 2023 review. We have also continued to discuss governance matters and to keep apprised of developments relevant to our work including attending the annual UK Commissions' meeting.

As I am retiring from the bench, my time as Deputy Chair for this Commission will end in January 2027. I was first appointed as Deputy Chair in 2016 and have had the privilege of overseeing two reviews. I have also worked alongside many dedicated and talented Commissioners including my current colleagues, Dr Susan Walker OBE and Gillian McGregor CBE and my former colleagues, Professor Ailsa Henderson and Paula Sharp. With the continued dedicated support of the Secretariat, I am confident this Commission will continue to deliver high quality UK boundary reviews.

The Right Honourable Lord Matthews
Deputy Chair, Boundary Commission for Scotland
July 2026

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1. Who we are

We are an advisory non-departmental public body (NDBP) sponsored and funded by the Scotland Office.

We are an independent, impartial and non-political body.

2. What we do

We have a statutory obligation to carry out reviews of UK Parliament constituency boundaries in Scotland.

The recommendations from our last review were laid before Parliament on 28 June 2023 and came into force on 29 November 2023. The constituencies were in effect at the 4 July 2024 General Election.

The next review of UK Parliament constituencies is due by 1 October 2031. Preparatory work for this next review will commence in 2028.

3. Membership

The Chair of all four of the UK parliamentary Boundaries Commissions is the Speaker of the House of Commons. In practice, the Chair takes no active part in the business of any of the UK Commissions.

The current Deputy Chair is Right Honourable Lord Matthews who was appointed on 1 January 2016 and will retire in January 2027.

The current Commissioners are:

Gillian McGregor CBE appointed on 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2028.

Dr Susan Walker OBE appointed from 1 January 2021 and reappointed up until 31 December 2028.

Commissioners are appointed using the procedures laid down by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Scotland Office makes these appointments.

Our two Assessors are the Registrar General for Scotland and the Director General for Ordnance Survey, represented by Dominic Cuthbert.

Secretariat

We are supported by a small Secretariat which comprises 6.4 FTE staff members who are assigned from Scottish Government. The Secretary, Kirsty Mavor is the Secretariat's most senior officer.

The Secretariat's time is allocated between support for us and for Boundaries Scotland which is responsible for Scottish Parliament and local authority electoral reviews in Scotland. The Secretariat is funded separately by the Scottish Government for Boundaries Scotland's work.

4. Performance

The focus of our work for 2025 - 26 was:

- engaging with the other UK Commissions, the Scotland Office and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and sending a joint letter to the Minister dated 25 February 2026 highlighting the need for legislative improvement.
- monitoring progress of the implementation of the identified actions from the 2023 Review including approving a new Naming Policy and induction documents for new members of the Commission.
- meeting with the Chair of the Independent Review of the Process for Determining Electoral Boundaries in Scotland and sharing our experience and reflections from previous UK constituency boundary reviews.
- attending the UK Commissions meeting held in Cardiff on 12/13 March 2026, providing an update on our work and hearing developments from other UK Commissions.

During 2026 - 27 we will continue to:

- engage with other UK Commissions, the Scotland Office and MHCLG to try and improve the legislation that governs reviews of UK Parliamentary constituencies.
- monitor progress of the actions from the 2023 Review to ensure improvements are in place before the 2031 Review commences.
- improve the quality of the information published about the Commission and revise our website so that it is more user friendly.
- respond to any queries about us and our work during the year.
- ensure our work is delivered within budget.
- consider equality and diversity in our work.
- use our resources with consideration for the environment.
- undertake our governance duties including management of risk.

5. Engagement and information

Our website is the main way we share information about our work and boundary reviews. We publish our meeting agendas, papers and minutes of meetings on our website as well as other key documents. We also have a series of information papers that explain our work.

Our website also contains maps and an interactive browser for viewing maps of current and past UK constituency boundaries that we have been responsible for.

To help publicise our work we also use facebook, X and bluesky social media channels.

We also liaise regularly with:

- other UK Commissions including attending the annual UK Commissions' meeting.
- the Scotland Office as our sponsoring department.
- viaEuropa for technical advice on mapping data products.
- Esri to develop the way we design boundaries and present information
- National Records of Scotland on shared interests concerning geographic information, electoral statistics and document management.
- Ordnance Survey and other relevant organisations on boundary related issues.
- Association of Electoral Administrators, the Scottish Assessors' Association, Electoral Registration Committee and the Electoral Management Board through attending regular meetings.

6. Governance

This section provides detail of our governance arrangements.

Legislation

Our reviews of UK Parliament constituencies are governed by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986.

Code of Conduct

Our Commissioners must comply with a Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies issued by the Cabinet Office.

Register of Commissioners' Interests

We maintain a register of interests for Commissioners which is reviewed annually.

At the start of each Commission meeting, Commissioners are also asked to declare any interests they may have relating to specific agenda items.

Memorandum of Understanding

We have a Memorandum of Understanding setting out governance arrangements between us and our sponsoring department, the Scotland Office.

The Secretariat meets frequently with the Scotland Office to ensure governance arrangements are in place and are operating effectively.

Data Protection

We handle personal information in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

We have a Privacy Policy for handling any personal information contained in representations made during public consultations on our proposals.

All staff have completed annual mandatory training in data protection.

Freedom of Information

We have a Freedom of Information Policy which incorporates the Information Commissioner's Office Model Publication Scheme for public bodies under the Freedom of Information Act 2018.

During 2025 - 26, the Secretariat recorded eight Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. We routinely monitor the FOI records maintained by the Secretariat at Commission meetings. We are pleased to report that all requests were responded to within the appropriate timescales and no requests for review were requested.

All staff have completed annual training in managing information.

Risk Management

In line with our Risk Management Policy we maintain a risk register. We review the risk register regularly at Commission meetings and consider if there any additional risks, whether each risk is increasing or decreasing and what steps should be taken to mitigate the identified risks.

We will review our approach to risk before we start the next UK constituencies review.

Equality Duty

Our [Equality Statement](#) sets out our commitment to equality and diversity and to meeting the statutory public sector equality duty.

7. Financial Information

Our expenditure for the year 2025-26 is set out under broad headings in the table below. After receiving an initial budget allocation from the Scotland Office, the Secretariat re-forecasts expenditure during the year, and provides regular updates of the expenditure for the year. The UK Parliament must approve budgeted resources.

The budget allocation to Boundary Commission for Scotland from the Scotland Office was £413,000. Actual spend is shown in the table below.

Financial Performance		
April 2025 – March 2026		
	Expenditure	
	Budget (£000's)	Actual (£000's)
Staff costs	233	249
Commissioners' fees	5	4
Accommodation	26	28
Administration	10	9
IT	40	21
Travel & subsistence	5	1
Review costs	94	0
Total	413	312

Staff salaries

Salary costs are determined by the pay arrangements for our 6.4 FTE staff, who are employees of and on loan from the Scottish Government. We agree the number of staff we require with the Scotland Office and the apportionment of staff costs are shared 50:50 with Boundaries Scotland. Salary costs include a VAT element.

Commissioners' fees and expenses

Commissioners' fees and expenses are determined by the Scotland Office and cover attendance at our scheduled meetings and associated preparation, meetings held with other UK Boundary Commission and ad hoc bodies held with other bodies.

The fee rate for Commissions was £505.50 per day and this has not changed since April 2009. The Deputy Chair post is not remunerated.

Accommodation

We share accommodation with Boundaries Scotland. The figures shown in the above table in respect of accommodation reflect our share of rent and services such as insurance, management fees and cleaning.

Administration

Administration costs include IT, procurement and website costs, postage, telephony and printing.

Travel and subsistence

Travel and subsistence includes public transport and car-hire costs incurred by the Secretariat and Commissioners during official business which does not relate directly to a review. Travel and subsistence rates are paid at the same rate that applies to staff of Scottish Government.

Review costs

Review costs cover those items directly attributable to our boundary reviews such as advertising, use of a consultation portal or specialist printing costs and the cost of holding local inquiries, including any associated travel and accommodation.

During 2025- 26 there were no reviews undertaken so no associated costs were recorded.

Reportable transactions

In line with UK Government policy, we publish data on all single transactions greater than £25,000 and all Electronic Purchasing Card (ePC) transactions over £500 on our website. In 2025-2026 we made no transactions greater than £25,000 and made no ePC transactions over £500. These types of transactions are all published on the Scottish Government website.

Funding for 2026 – 27

We have been allocated £413,000 by the Scotland Office for 2025-2026.

Our Corporate Plan for 2026-2029 forecasts spending of:

2026-27 - £332k

2027-28 – £376k

2028-29 – £388k

8. Further information

Please email boundaries.scot@scottishboundaries.gov.uk or phone 0131 244 2001 if you have any questions about this report.

**Boundary Commission for Scotland
Thistle House
91 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD**

www.bcomm-scotland.independent.gov.uk

Telephone: 0131 244 2001

Email: boundaries.scot@scottishboundaries.gov.uk