

SCOTLAND OFFICE

Issued on behalf of
The Boundary Commission for Scotland



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Boundary Commission for Scotland commences 2018 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies

- Rules allocate Scotland 53 constituencies out of 600 across the UK, 6 fewer than at present
- Nearly all constituencies to be within 5% of UK electoral quota of 74,769.2
- 2 Scottish island constituencies: Na h-Eileanan an Iar (the Western Isles) and Orkney and Shetland protected
- Public will be fully consulted on proposals

A national review of MPs' constituencies gets underway today. Rules introduced by the UK Government in 2011 result in a decrease in the number of constituencies in Scotland from 59 to 53.

Across the UK, the number of constituencies is being reduced from 650 to 600, with similar reductions in each part of the UK: England 501 in place of the current 533; Wales 29 in place of the current 40; and Northern Ireland 17 in place of the current 18.

The electoral quota for the review, which is the average electorate per constituency across the UK, is 74,769.2, with the electorate of each constituency having to be within 5% of that, that is between 71,031 and 78,507.

The Boundary Commission for Scotland, responsible for reviewing parliamentary boundaries in Scotland since 1945, must make recommendations on new constituency boundaries to the Secretary of State for Scotland by 1 October 2018, in time for the next Westminster elections in 2020.

Proposals will be published by the Boundary Commission for Scotland for public consultation later in 2016.

Lord Matthews, Deputy Chair of the Boundary Commission for Scotland, said: "The rules within which we work put great emphasis on equal electorates across the UK, and as a result the review is likely to result in significant change for many constituencies in Scotland. Consultation remains a key part of the review process and we will fully consult upon our proposals in due course so people across Scotland can feed in their views".

The rules require broadly equal numbers of voters in each constituency, except where a constituency is larger than 12,000 square kilometres. The rules also limit the size of a constituency to 13,000 square kilometres. The constituencies of Na h-Eileanan an Iar (Western Isles) and Orkney and Shetland are preserved in the legislation, so are not under review.

Further information on the 2018 Review can be found on the Commission's website: www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk

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NOTES FOR NEWS EDITORS

The Boundary Commission for Scotland is an independent advisory non-departmental public body sponsored and wholly funded by the Scotland Office. The role of the Commission is to review the boundaries of constituencies at the Westminster and Scottish Parliaments.

The process to be followed in the 2018 Review will be similar to that used in the 6th Review which commenced in 2011 but was not completed following a decision by the UK Parliament to amend the legislation governing the Review.

Further information on the 2018 Review can be found on the Commission's website: www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk

For further information, please contact Isabel Drummond-Murray, Secretary to the Commission, on: 0131 538 7510 or email secretary@scottishboundaries.gov.uk