

**Issued on behalf of
The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland**



Not for Publication before 0001 Hours on 19 March 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland consults councils on ward boundaries

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland has begun its consultation with councils on proposed wards for each council area as part of the 5th Reviews of Electoral Arrangements. Its proposals contain recommendations for councillor numbers in each of Scotland's 32 council areas and the number and boundaries of wards for the election of those councillors.

A 2-month consultation period with each council begins today and will be followed by a 12-week public consultation period. The Commission expects to make its recommendations to Scottish Ministers by May 2016, and that the resulting wards will be available for the Scottish local government elections in May 2017.

Ronnie Hinds, Chair of the Commission, said:

“We are pleased to initiate our consultation on ward boundaries with councils today and look forward to engaging with them on our proposals. It is important that electoral arrangements for Scottish councils are effective and our proposals improve electoral parity and as far as possible take account of local ties and special geographical considerations.

In Scotland as a whole our proposals reduce the number of councillors in Scotland from 1223 to 1217. The public will benefit from electoral representation that more accurately reflects the distribution of voters within council areas.

Overall we forecast 96% of wards will be within 10% of parity for the council area whereas at present 17% are 10% or more from parity. Only 2 wards out of a total of 351 are forecast to be more than 15% from parity compared to 19 existing wards.

After completion of this consultation with councils we will be seeking public views on our proposals over the summer”.

In 2014 the Commission consulted councils and the public on councillor numbers which for the first time were determined using a methodology which took account of levels of deprivation as well as population and its distribution. Population size remains the biggest determinant of councillor numbers and the design of wards.

When reviewing electoral arrangements the Commission is required to take account of the following factors:

- the interests of effective and convenient local Government;
- within each council, each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as may be (known as “parity”);
- local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
- the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and
- special geographical considerations

Contact for further information

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Notes for News Editors

Background

We are the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, and have been responsible for reviewing local government boundaries and electoral arrangements in Scotland since we were established by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. The 1973 Act also defines our constitution and procedures (in Part II and Schedules 4 and 6 of the Act).

We are an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) which is sponsored and financed by Scottish Ministers. We are required to conduct electoral reviews of each local authority at intervals of 8 to 12 years.

The Commission is an independent, non-political body which is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations for:

- the number of councillors in each local authority;
- the number of wards for local government elections and their boundaries; and
- the extent of council areas.

We conducted our Fourth Reviews between 2004 and 2006. The Fourth Reviews recommended the current multi-member wards which have been used for local government elections in Scotland in 2007 and 2012.

The electorate data for this review is based on the September 2013 electoral register.

Full information about the Commission and its work is available on the Commission's website: www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk .

A general introduction to the Commission and its work appears in our Information Paper "The Commission: a general guide" which is available from the Publications section of the website <http://www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/publications/> .

Information on this review is available from the **Reviews in Progress** section of the website:

http://www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/reviews/5th_electoral/.