

Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries Dumfries and Galloway Council Area

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to: -
 - Consider the consultation responses for Dumfries and Galloway Council area as set out in paragraphs 18 to 29 and decide whether to hold a local inquiry.
 - Consider whether it wishes to:
 - a) adopt the published Revised Proposals as Final Recommendations subject to satisfactory design in other groupings being agreed OR
 - b) amend its proposals for constituency boundaries or names and consult upon them again
 - If a local inquiry or further consultation is not required, consider the draft Final Report as set out in paragraphs 3 to 17 and agree the proposed wording.

Rules

2. The rules for reviewing Scottish Parliament constituencies state:
 - **Rule 1**
 - So far as is practicable, regard must be had to the boundaries of the local government areas having effect from time to time under section 1 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
 - **Rule 2**
 - The electorate of a constituency must be as near the electoral quota as is practicable, having regard to Rule 1.
 - Boundaries Scotland may depart from the strict application of Rule 1 if it thinks that it is desirable to do so to avoid an excessive disparity between the electorate of a constituency and the electoral quota or between the electorate of a constituency and that of neighbouring constituencies.
 - **Rule 3**
 - Boundaries Scotland may depart from the strict application of Rules 1 and 2 if it thinks that special geographical considerations (including in particular the size, shape and accessibility of a constituency) render it desirable to do so.
 - **Rule 4**
 - Boundaries Scotland need not aim at giving full effect in all circumstances to Rules 1 to 3 but it must take account (so far as it reasonably can)—
 - (a) of the inconveniences attendant on alterations of constituencies other than alterations made for the purposes of Rule 1, and
 - (b) of any local ties which would be broken by such alterations.

Constituencies at the start of this review

3. At the start of this review, Dumfries and Galloway Council area was covered by two constituencies wholly within the council area. The constituencies are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Constituencies at the start of this review

Constituency name	Designation	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Dumfriesshire	County	61,848	3.2%

Constituency name	Designation	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Galloway and West Dumfries	County	57,094	-4.7%

Provisional Proposals

4. We designed constituencies for this area within our overall approach to grouping council areas for constituency design. Our proposed grouping for this area included two constituencies exactly covering the extent of Dumfries and Galloway Council area. The area has an electorate of 118,942 and a theoretical entitlement to 2.0 constituencies.
5. We discussed our Provisional Proposals for this council area and our discussion and conclusions are recorded in the minute of our meeting of 14 December 2022. We agreed proposed constituency names and designations and our discussion and conclusions are recorded in the minute of our meeting of 5 April 2023.
6. In deciding upon our Provisional Proposals for Dumfries and Galloway Council area we agreed a constituency design that had regard to Dumfries and Galloway Council area boundary and retained two existing constituencies unchanged wholly within it that offered an equal balance of electors while considering local ties (Rule 1, 2, 4).
7. We agreed our Provisional Proposals should align the constituency boundary to the ward boundaries by following the centre of the River Nith rather than the riverbank. Following the centre of the River Nith made no difference to the number of electors in each constituency.
8. Our Provisional Proposals: retained the existing constituencies, which have been in place since 2011, offering continuity for the local electorate; retained two constituencies that sit wholly within Dumfries and Galloway Council area boundary; follow ward boundaries by following the River Nith rather than the riverbank; and maintained both constituencies within 5% variation from the electoral quota (Rule 1, 2, 4).
9. Our Provisional Proposals were as shown in Table 2. Details of the wards contained within each constituency in the Provisional Proposals were included in the maps of our Provisional Proposals which are available on our website.

Table 2 – Provisional Proposals

Constituency name	Designation	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Dumfriesshire	County	61,848	3.2%
Galloway and West Dumfries	County	57,094	-4.7%

10. On 17 May 2023 we published our Provisional Proposals for these council areas for the specified consultation period of one month.

Responses to Provisional Proposals Public Consultation

11. There were no responses received during the consultation on our Provisional Proposals for Dumfries and Galloway Council area. We agreed to make no

changes to our Provisional Proposals. Our discussion and conclusions are recorded in the minutes of our meeting of 29 August 2023.

12. On 15 November 2023 we published all representations received during the consultation on our Provisional Proposals.

Local Inquiry

13. There were no responses to the consultation regarding our Provisional Proposals within Dumfries and Galloway Council area and therefore a local inquiry was not required within this grouping.

14. We agreed revised constituency names and designations and our discussion and conclusions are recorded in the minutes of our meeting of 22 February 2024.

Revised Proposals

15. The Revised Proposals retained the two existing constituency boundaries, as had the Provisional Proposals, except for the alignment with the River Nith.

16. On 16 April 2024 we published our Revised Proposals for this council area for the specified consultation period of one month.

17. Our Revised Proposals are shown in Table 3. Details of the wards contained within each constituency in the Revised Proposals were included in the maps of our Revised Proposals which are available on our website.

Table 3 – Revised Proposals

Constituency name	Designation	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Dumfriesshire	County	61,848	3.2%
Galloway and West Dumfries	County	57,094	-4.7%

Responses to Revised Proposals Public Consultation

18. We received nine responses during the one-month consultation period regarding our Revised Proposals for Dumfries and Galloway Council area.

19. A member of the public supported the Revised Proposals.

20. A member of the public felt that Moffat has more in common with South Lanarkshire or the Scottish Borders.

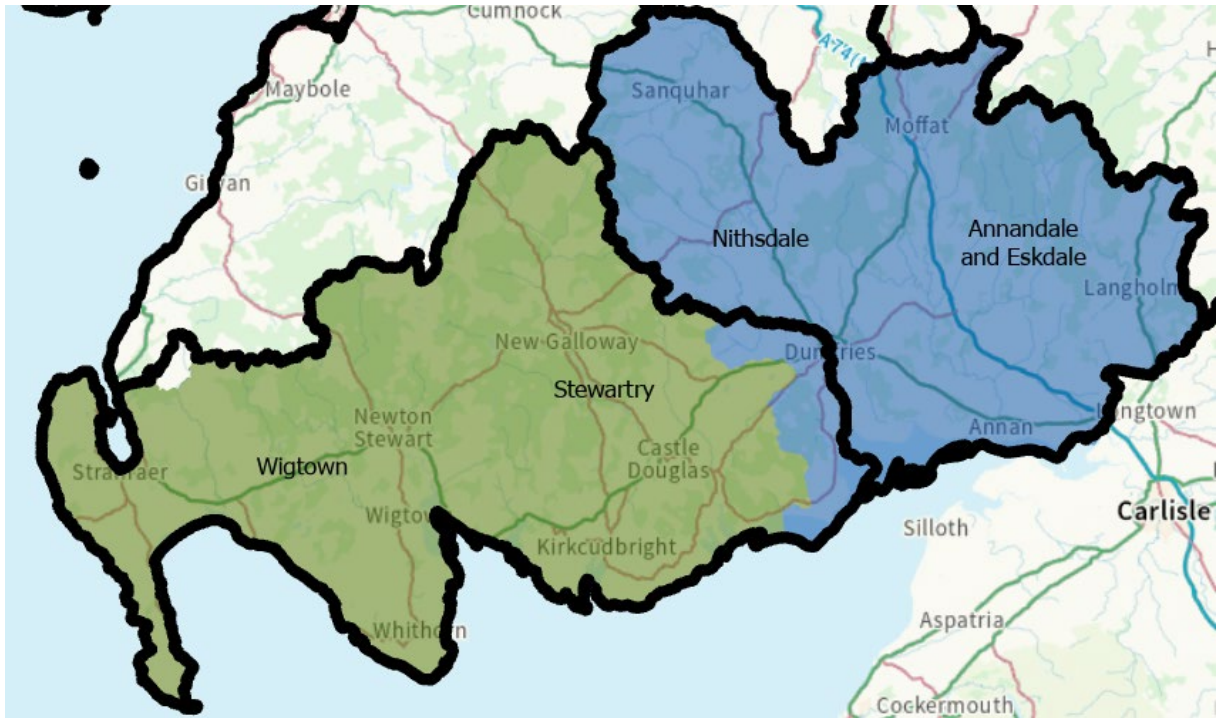
21. Moffat has been in a Dumfries Scottish parliament constituency since 1999. Historically Moffat was in a Dumfries county (rule 1).

22. A member of the public suggested the boundaries of Wigtownshire, Stewartry and Dumfries be reinstated.

23. Wigtownshire, Stewartry, Nithsdale and Annandale and Eskdale were local government districts from 1975 to 1996. The suggestion may respect historical boundaries but proposes two constituencies with wide variations from the electorate quota (rule 2).

District Suggestion	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Nithsdale, Annandale and Eskdale (Dumfries)	77,084	28.7%
Stewartry and Wigtonshire	41,858	-30.1%

24. The map below shows a Wigtonshire and Stewartry constituency and a Nithsdale, Annandale and Eskdale constituency. The black line shows the Revised Proposals.



25. Three members of the public opposed to splitting Dumfries between two constituencies.

26. From 1999 to 2011 Dumfries was wholly in a Dumfries Scottish Parliament constituency. Placing Dumfries in a Dumfriesshire constituency would result in both constituencies with electorates with wide variation from the electoral quota, see table below.

Suggestion	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota
Dumfriesshire	73,998	23.5%
Galloway and West Dumfries	44,944	-25.0%

27. A member of the public stated they wished a more urban and a more rural constituency.

28. The map and table above show a more urban, Dumfries, and rural constituencies.

29. The Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party supported the Revised Proposals.

Summary

30. The Commission's Provisional and Revised Proposals retained the existing constituency boundaries and names. The existing constituencies were both within 10% of the electorate quota.
31. There were no responses to the consultation on Provisional Proposals. Neither Dumfries and Galloway Council or a body of 100 electors objected to the Provisional Proposals therefore the Commission agreed not to hold a local inquiry there.
32. Some of the responses to the consultation on Revised Proposals suggested more urban or rural constituencies and to avoid dividing Dumfries between constituencies. A Dumfries constituency and a more rural West Dumfries-shire constituency would create constituencies with wide variation from the electorate quota (rule 2).

Constituency Names

33. The Commission will have the opportunity to review all constituency names and designations prior to the publication of its Final Recommendations.

Secretariat
June 2024

