

**Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries
Draft Revised Proposals for Constituencies - Argyll and Bute, East
Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas**

Action required

1. The Commission is invited to agree its Revised Proposals for constituencies in Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas, in light of the report from Assistant Commissioner Murphy on the local inquiry held in that area.

Background

2. The Commission agreed its provisional proposals after consideration of Papers BS42 and BS48 at its meetings of 9 March 2023 and 5 April 2023 respectively. The Commission agreed to consult on eight constituencies within Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas. The provisional proposals made changes to all the existing constituency boundaries.
3. A table of the provisional proposals is shown in the table below and a map is shown in Appendix A.

Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota	Wards
Airdrie, Newmains and Shotts	66,243	10.6%	North Lanarkshire 8-9, 12-13, 20(part)
Argyll and Bute	55,737	-7.0%	Argyll and Bute 1-9
Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North	58,415	-2.5%	East Dunbartonshire 1-3 West Dunbartonshire 4-5,6(part)
Bellshill and Coatbridge	63,361	5.8%	North Lanarkshire 7, 10-11, 14-15, 16(part)
Cumbernauld and Chryston	62,578	4.5%	North Lanarkshire 2-6
Dumbarton and Helensburgh	57,666	-3.7%	Argyll and Bute 10-11 West Dunbartonshire 1-3, 6(part)
Kirkintilloch and Kilsyth	62,771	4.8%	East Dunbartonshire 4-7 North Lanarkshire 1
Motherwell	62,652	4.6%	North Lanarkshire 16(part), 17-19, 20(part), 21

4. The Commission consulted on its provisional proposals between 16 May and 17 June 2023.
5. The Commission considered responses to the consultation for Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas at its meeting of 5 October 2023 (Paper BS72) and that paper is attached as an Annex. The Commission agreed to conduct a local inquiry in respect of the proposed: Dumbarton and Helensburgh; and the Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North constituencies because a significant number of respondents opposed a boundary that divided Clydebank between two constituencies.

Local Inquiry

6. Sheriff Principal Murphy (North Strathclyde Sheriffdom) acted as Assistant Commissioner at the local inquiry relating to this grouping, held at Clydebank Leisure Centre on 13 December 2023.
7. The local inquiry was attended by West Dunbartonshire Council, two MSP's, community groups and the Scottish Labour party.
8. The Assistant Commissioner has submitted his report for the inquiry to the Commission and it appears at Appendix B. A full transcript of the Clydebank local inquiry is available at Appendix C.
9. The main issues raised at the Clydebank local inquiry were opposition to the proposals in Clydebank on the grounds that they split the town between two constituencies and opposition to the proposals in Lomond North because they break local ties in that area. The Argyll and Bute – Lomond North ward includes Rhu, Garelochhead, Luss and Arrochar. The comments made at the local inquiry were similar to those received during the public consultation. In summary:
 - West Dunbartonshire Council opposed the provisional proposals and wish no change to the existing constituency boundaries except to align with ward boundaries by Bowling and Old Kilpatrick;
 - Jackie Baillie MSP for Dumbarton constituency opposed the division of Clydebank between constituencies and breaking local ties in Lomond North;
 - Garelochhead Residents Association stated communities in the Lomond North ward have nothing in common with the rest of Argyll and Bute;
 - Marie McNair MSP for Clydebank and Milngavie constituency opposed the proposals because they break local ties in Clydebank. She suggested retaining the existing constituencies as they are within the electoral quota for the review;
 - Rhu and Shandon Community Council stated the proposals break local ties as Rhu looks towards Helensburgh and Dumbarton and not towards the rest of Argyll and Bute;
 - Scottish Labour Party seek no change to the existing Argyll and Bute constituency and made an alternative suggestion by Bearsden; and
 - Helensburgh Community Council opposed the proposals as they break local ties by Helensburgh. They wish to retain the existing constituency boundaries.
10. The Assistant Commissioner's Report stated there were two main issues. Firstly, dividing Clydebank between two constituencies and secondly the electorate of the existing Argyll and Bute constituency and the changes the Commission had made to address that low electorate.
11. He noted that the provisional proposals had added the Lomond North ward into an Argyll and Bute constituency to rebalance the electorate and was strongly opposed as it broke local ties by Helensburgh. Helensburgh looks towards Dumbarton rather than Argyll and Bute for amenities. There were several comments suggesting the Commission apply special geographical considerations and retain the existing Argyll and Bute constituency because it had been considered before. He considered constituents access to their MSP was not as

big an issue as it had been due to the use of email and social media. Regional List MSPs already deal with this issue.

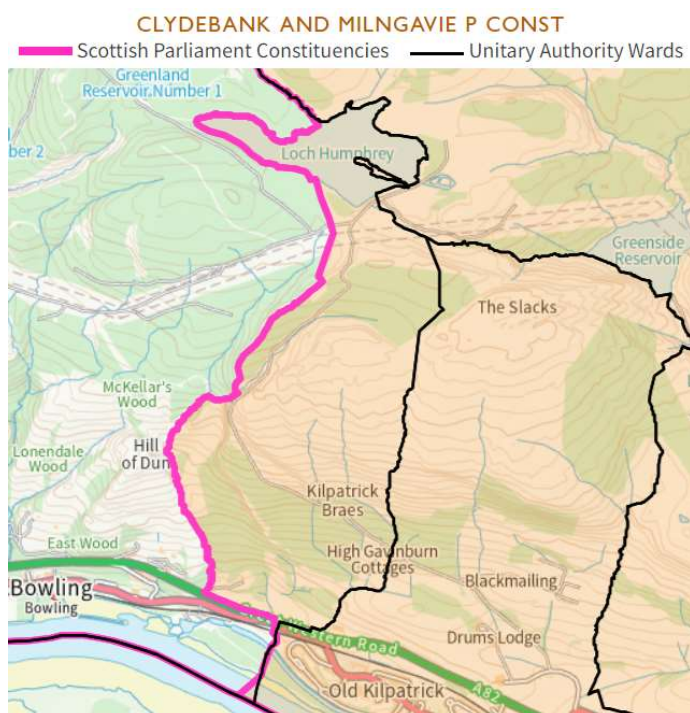
12. In Clydebank he stated there were strong local feelings that Clydebank should not be divided between constituencies and that may lead to voter apathy. The Commission may wish to consider the effects of achieving a better balance of electors for constituencies in the wider area that have resulted in Clydebank being divided.
13. The Assistant Commissioner made no recommendations but asked the Commission to consider all of the comments and suggestions to determine a practical solution.

Options

14. The Commission is invited to consider alternative options and suggestions for constituencies.
15. The maps in this paper show alternative suggestions in block colours and existing ward boundaries in red. The black line denotes existing boundaries unless otherwise stated.
16. There were a number of alternative suggestions provided in Paper BS 72, attached as an Annex, and at the local inquiry. The Commission will wish to review Paper BS 72 again, it considered suggestions from:
 - local residents at Baldernock, Balmore and Bardowie;
 - a member of the public who suggested an alternative boundary by Carfin;
 - Clare Adamson MSP who suggested an alternative boundary by Wishaw;
 - Scottish Liberal Democrats; and
 - a member of the public who suggested an alternative boundary by Clydebank.

West Dunbartonshire Council suggestion (local inquiry)

17. At the local inquiry West Dunbartonshire Council wished no change to the existing constituency boundaries except to align them with ward boundaries by Bowling and Old Kilpatrick. This is shown in the image below, from Ordnance Survey Election Maps website. The pink Scottish Parliament boundary would move eastwards to align with the black ward boundary. The new ward boundaries were introduced in 2017. This area by Bowling contains fewer than 10 electors.



West Dunbartonshire Council suggestion			
Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Argyll and Bute	49,535	-17.3%	Argyll and Bute 1-8
Dumbarton	56,129	-6.3%	Argyll and Bute 9-11 West Dunbartonshire 1-3,
Clydebank and Milngavie	55,112	-8.0%	East Dunbartonshire 1-2 West Dunbartonshire 4-6

18. The advantages of the West Dunbartonshire Council suggestion are that it:

- may assist electoral administration by aligning ward and constituency boundaries; and
- addresses concerns raised in Clydebank and Lomond North (Rule 4).

19. The disadvantages of the West Dunbartonshire Council suggestion are that it proposes an Argyll and Bute constituency with a high variation from the electorate quota, although special geographical circumstances can be considered there (Rule 2).

Scottish Labour Party suggestion (local inquiry)

20. The Scottish Labour Party made an alternative suggestion at the local inquiry. It makes no changes to five of the eight proposed constituencies in this grouping. It also proposes to retain the existing Argyll and Bute constituency; proposes a Dumbarton and Helensburgh constituency that follows ward boundaries, as suggested by West Dunbartonshire Council; and a Bearsden, Clydebank and Milngavie constituency.

21. A table of the Scottish Labour Party suggestion is shown in the table below and a map is shown in Appendix D.

Scottish Labour Party suggestion			
Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Argyll and Bute	49,535	-17.3%	Argyll and Bute 1-8
Dumbarton and Helensburgh	56,129	-6.3%	Argyll and Bute 9-11 West Dunbartonshire 1-3,
Bearsden, Clydebank and Milngavie	66,154	10.4%	East Dunbartonshire 1-3 West Dunbartonshire 4-6

22. The advantages of the Scottish Labour Party suggestion are that it:
- places Bearsden and Milngavie in the same constituency, recognising communities with close ties (Rule 4);
 - retains five constituencies from the provisional proposals;
 - addresses concerns raised in Clydebank and Lomond North (Rule 4); and
 - adopts the suggestion from West Dunbartonshire Council to align electoral boundaries (Rule 4).
23. The disadvantages of the Scottish Labour Party suggestion are that it proposes an Argyll and Bute constituency with a high variation from the electorate quota, although special geographical circumstances can be considered there (Rule 2).
24. At its meeting of 5 October 2023, the Commission also discussed Paper BS 73 - Alternative constituency design groupings - and asked the Secretariat to develop alternative proposals for constituencies based on different council area groupings that might identify possible improvements to the provisional proposals. Two alternative options are discussed within a new grouping of Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas. However these are dependent on the Commission agreeing new constituency designs within a grouping of: City of Edinburgh and East Lothian Council areas; and Midlothian and Scottish Borders Council areas.

New grouping – Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire, South Lanarkshire, Falkirk and West Lothian Council areas

25. A council area grouping of Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas has a total electorate of 1,019,646 and an entitlement to 17.0 constituencies. Two options based on this grouping are discussed below.

New grouping - Option 1

26. Option 1 retains 12 of the existing 17 constituencies. All of the 12 existing constituencies are within 10% variation of the electorate quota, except Argyll and Bute. The existing Argyll and Bute constituency has 49,535 electors and variation from the electorate quota of -17.3%, however the Commission could consider special geographical considerations for that constituency because it contains 23 inhabited islands and many other remote areas with poor transport links.
27. A table of the 12 existing constituencies is shown below and a map is in Appendix E1 and E2

New grouping - Option 1 – existing constituencies			
Constituency Name	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota	Wards
Airdrie and Shotts	54,205	-9.5%	North Lanarkshire 8,9,12,13(part)
Argyll and Bute	49,535	-17.3%	Argyll and Bute 1-8
Clydebank and Milngavie	55,121	-8.0%	West Dunbartonshire 3(part),4,5,6 East Dunbartonshire 1,2
Clydesdale	61,011	2.0%	South Lanarkshire 1-4, 5(part), 6(part)
Coatbridge and Chryston	56,877	-5.0%	North Lanarkshire 5,6,7,10,11
Dumbarton	56,120	-6.3%	Argyll and Bute 9-11 West Dunbartonshire 1,2,3(part)
East Kilbride	60,763	1.4%	South Lanarkshire 6(part),7-10
Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse	59,596	-0.5%	South Lanarkshire 5(part), 17(part), 18,19,20
Motherwell and Wishaw	57,740	-3.6%	North Lanarkshire 13(part),17, 18(part),19,20,21
Rutherglen	62,885	5.0%	South Lanarkshire 11-14, 15(part), 17(part)
Strathkelvin and Bearsden	63,895	6.7%	East Dunbartonshire 3-7
Uddingston and Bellshill	58,842	-1.8%	North Lanarkshire 14-16,18(part) South Lanarkshire 15(part), 16, 17(part)

28. Option 1 proposes five new constituencies to address the electorate growth in West Lothian Council area. In West Lothian there are currently two constituencies but it now has an entitlement to 2.4 constituencies. The existing Almond Valley constituency has an electorate of 70,119 electors and the existing Linlithgow constituency has 76,337 electors. It also addresses the lower electorate in the existing Cumbernauld and Kilsyth constituency with 51,210 electors. Option 1 proposes a:

- Livingston constituency that includes Livingston, Stoneyburn and most of the Fauldhouse and Breich Valley ward except for Fauldhouse. These communities are linked by the A71 road and railway line. It is also similar to the existing UK Parliament constituency although it does not include Broxburn or Blackburn. The boundary splits the Fauldhouse and the Breich Valley ward by following the Breich Water and then the A706 road to the east of Fauldhouse;
- Bathgate constituency that includes Bathgate, Armadale, Blackburn, Fauldhouse and Broxburn. The A89 road links these towns in an easterly-westerly direction and the Bathgate Hills act as a natural boundary between it and the proposed Linlithgow and South Falkirk constituency. It

splits the Broxburn, Uphall and Winchburgh ward by following the recently agreed UK Parliament boundary by Faucheldean;

- Linlithgow and South Falkirk constituency that includes Linlithgow, Grangemouth, Bo'ness and Polmont. The existing UK Parliament constituency of Linlithgow and East Falkirk also includes Linlithgow, Grangemouth and Bo'ness as well as Bathgate, Armadale and Whitburn. The historic county of Linlithgowshire or West Lothian included Bo'ness;
- North Falkirk constituency which includes Falkirk and Stenhousemuir. This is broadly similar to the existing Falkirk UK Parliament constituency although it also includes Denny and Polmont; and
- Cumbernauld constituency that is similar to the existing Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Scottish Parliament constituency but it also includes Denny. It splits the Denny and Banknock ward by following the M80 motorway between Hags and Dennyloanhead in the area. The Commission could avoid splitting this ward but the proposed Cumbernauld constituency would have 66,667 electors and variation from the electorate quota of 11.3%

29. A table of the New grouping - Option 1 - new constituencies is shown in the table below and a map is shown in Appendix E1 and E2.

New grouping - Option 1			
Proposed constituencies	Electorate	Variation from electoral quota	Wards
Bathgate	65,494	9.3%	West Lothian 2(part), 6(part), 7-9
Cumbernauld	64,767	8.1%	Falkirk 3(part) North Lanarkshire 1-4
Linlithgow and South Falkirk	65,523	9.4%	Falkirk 1, 2, 8, 9 West Lothian 1, 2(part)
Livingston	65,050	8.6%	West Lothian 3-5, 6(part)
North Falkirk	62,222	3.9%	Falkirk 3(part), 4-7

30. The advantages of Option 1 are that it:

- retains 12 of the existing 17 constituency boundaries, which would likely be supported during a further consultation stage (Rule 4);
- addresses concerns raised in Clydebank, Lomond North and possibly in Edinburgh regarding the proposed Edinburgh Forth and Linlithgow constituency (Rule 4); and
- contains five other constituencies that aim to reflect variation from the electorate quota and consider local ties in West Lothian and Falkirk (Rule 2).

31. The disadvantages of Option 1 are that it:

- does not consider the existing Falkirk constituencies, who are both within the electorate quota (Falkirk East 61,529 and Falkirk West 63,861). However, they neighbour three constituencies outwith the electorate quota: Almond Valley (70,119); Linlithgow (76,337); and Cumbernauld and Kilsyth (51,210) by at least 14% variation from the electorate quota (Rule 1, 2);
- is interdependent on the Commission agreeing groupings of: Edinburgh and East Lothian; and Midlothian and Scottish Borders; and

- requires special geographical considerations for the Argyll and Bute constituency (Rule 3).

New grouping - Option 2

32. Option 2 also proposes a design of 17 constituencies within this new grouping but it is based on amalgamating wards, splitting no wards between constituencies.
33. Three of the proposed constituencies have variation from the electorate quota above 10%. The proposed Grangemouth and Linlithgow constituency has 66,837 electors and variation from the electorate quota at 11.6% but it could transfer Slamannan with approximately 1,300 electors to the neighbouring Falkirk constituency to address this. The proposed Cumbernauld, Denny and Kilsyth constituency has 67,017 electors and 11.9% variation from the electorate quota but it could transfer approximately 5,000 electors by Blackwood/ Westfield in Cumbernauld to a Coatbridge and Moodiesburn constituency as it includes the Cumbernauld South ward. The existing Argyll and Bute constituency has variation from the electorate quota at -17.3% but the Commission could consider special geographical considerations there.
34. A table of Option 2 is shown in the table below and a map is shown in Appendix F1 and F2.

New grouping - Option 2			
Constituency Name	Electorate	Variation from Electoral Quota	Wards
Airdrie and Shotts	54,976	-8.2%	North Lanarkshire 8,9,12,13
Argyll and Bute	49,535	-17.3%	Argyll and Bute 1-8
Bathgate	61,257	2.3%	West Lothian 6-9
Bellshill	58,269	-2.7%	North Lanarkshire 14-18
Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch and Stepps	63,377	5.8%	East Dunbartonshire 4-7 North Lanarkshire 5
Clydebank and Bearsden	66,154	10.4%	West Dunbartonshire 4-6 East Dunbartonshire 1-3
Clydesdale	64,102	7.0%	South Lanarkshire 2,3,4,5,20
Coatbridge and Moodiesburn	59,108	1.3%	North Lanarkshire 3,6,7,10,11
Cumbernauld, Denny and Kilsyth	67,017	11.9%	North Lanarkshire 1,2,4 Falkirk 3,5
Dumbarton	56,129	-6.3%	Argyll and Bute 9-11 West Dunbartonshire 1-3
East Kilbride	61,700	3.0%	South Lanarkshire 6-10
Falkirk	59,181	-1.2%	Falkirk 4-8
Grangemouth and Linlithgow	66,837	11.6%	Falkirk 1,2,9 West Lothian 1,2
Hamilton and Bothwell	54,493	-9.0%	South Lanarkshire 16-19
Livingston	56,009	-6.5%	West Lothian 3,4,5

Motherwell, Wishaw and Carluke	59,099	-1.3%	North Lanarkshire 19-21 South Lanarkshire 1
Rutherglen	62,403	4.2%	South Lanarkshire 11-15

35. The advantages of Option 2 are that it:
- addresses concerns raised in Clydebank, Lomond North and Edinburgh (Rule 4); and
 - follows ward boundaries which may better reflect local communities (Rule 4).
36. The disadvantages of Option 2 are that it:
- makes changes to a large number of constituencies (Rule 4);
 - splits Cumbernauld between two constituencies (Rule 4);
 - contains three constituencies over 10% variation from the electorate quota but two of could be addressed, as described above. The other, Argyll and Bute, requires special geographical considerations (Rule 2, 3);
 - it is interdependent on the Commission agreeing groupings of: Edinburgh and East Lothian; and Midlothian and Scottish Borders; and

Summary

37. The existing constituencies were created within groupings of: Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas; and North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire Council areas.
38. The provisional proposals were designed within a new grouping of eight constituencies within Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire Council areas.
39. The provisional proposals proposed eight new constituencies.
40. During the consultation on provisional proposals for constituencies, there was opposition to the proposed boundaries that: split Clydebank between two constituencies; placed Helensburgh and Rhu in separate constituencies; Newmains and Airdrie being in the same constituency; and suggestions to include Balmore, Bardowie and Baldernock in a Milngavie constituency.
41. The Commission agreed to hold a local inquiry in Clydebank because more than 100 respondents opposed the proposed constituencies of: Bearsden, Milngavie and Clydebank North; and Dumbarton and Helensburgh as they divided Clydebank between constituencies. The Commission considered responses to the consultation for these areas at its meeting of 5 October 2023 (Paper BS 72).
42. At the local inquiry there was opposition to splitting Clydebank between two constituencies and breaking of local ties in Lomond North. There were suggestions from West Dunbartonshire Council to align a boundary with a ward boundary by Bowling; and a suggestion from the Scottish Labour Party that placed Bearsden and Milngavie in the same constituency.
43. The Assistant Commissioner's Report stated there were two main issues: the division of Clydebank; and the consequential changes of addressing the low electorate in the existing Argyll and Bute constituency. He asked to Commission to consider all of the issues raised at the local inquiry.

Suggestions

44. There were suggestions to retain the existing Argyll and Bute constituency. It has an electorate of 49,535 and variation from the electorate quota of -17.3%. The Argyll and Bute constituency contains 23 inhabited islands (according to the Argyll and Bute Council website) and rural areas with limited transport links. The Commission could consider Rule 3 and apply special geographical considerations in Argyll and Bute. The First Review recommended a Na h-Eileanan an Iar constituency with variation from the electorate quota of -59%, although this has since become a preserved constituency. The provisional proposals proposed an Inverness and Nairn constituency with variation from the electorate quota of +14.4%.
45. Retaining the existing Argyll and Bute constituency avoids the breaking of local ties in Lomond North and dividing Clydebank between two constituencies. Historically a UK or Scottish Parliament constituency has never divided Clydebank between two constituencies. There are no obvious solutions to avoid the division of Clydebank between constituencies other than retaining the existing Argyll and Bute constituency.
46. West Dunbartonshire Council suggested aligning constituency boundaries with ward boundaries by Bowling. This has minimal effect on variation from the electorate quota.
47. The Scottish Labour Party suggested placing Bearsden and Milngavie within the same constituency, communities with close links. Bearsden and Milngavie were in separate UK Parliament constituencies between 1974 – 2005. Since 2005 they have remained in the same constituency and will continue to do so after the 2023 Review of UK Parliament constituencies.
48. The Scottish Liberal Democrats suggestion divided Clydebank between constituencies.
49. There were suggestions to place Balmore, Bardowie and Baldernock in a constituency with Milngavie. These villages contain approximately 500 electors. Historically they have had different electoral boundaries to Milngavie, although they are currently in the same East Dunbartonshire UK Parliament constituency. The Scottish Liberal Democrats suggestion places these villages in a Bearsden, Milngavie and Duntocher constituency but it divides Clydebank.
50. Clare Adamson MSP suggested an alternative boundary to keep Motherwell, Wishaw, Newmains, Coltness and Cambusnethan in a single constituency. Option 1 retains the existing Motherwell and Wishaw constituency boundary.

Options

51. The Commission can consider revised proposals within a wider grouping of Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas but it is interdependent on the Commission agreeing alternative groupings of: constituencies within: Midlothian and Scottish Borders Council areas; and Edinburgh and East Lothian Council areas.
52. Two options have been developed for consideration within the wider grouping of Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, Falkirk, North Lanarkshire, South

Lanarkshire, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian Council areas. Both retain the existing Argyll and Bute constituency, they include:

- Option 1 retains 12 existing constituencies but makes changes to five other constituencies, including two Falkirk constituencies within quota, to address variation from the electorate quota; and
- Option 2 follows ward boundaries across the whole grouping.

Conclusion

53. The Commission is invited to agree its Revised Proposals constituencies for public consultation for Argyll and Bute, East Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire, subject to satisfactory constituencies being designed in other groupings.

Secretariat
February 2024

Appendices B and C on website

