

In *Stage Four* the Committee considers any comments made and decides whether to change its draft recommendations before publishing its final recommendations and sending them to The Electoral Commission.

How can I make my views known?

During stages one and three, the dates of which will be publicised, you can write to the Committee with your comments. Copies of the draft and final recommendations are available at local information points and on our website: <http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk>

Can I comment on the Committee’s final recommendations?

Anyone can make their views known on our final recommendations by writing directly to The Electoral Commission.

How can I get more information?

The Committee will respond to any enquiries whether by letter, telephone, fax or email. All our contact details are on the back page of this leaflet. Please contact us if you would like to know when your area will next be reviewed, or if you would like a copy of the *Guidance* which sets out in more detail the principles and our approach to periodic electoral reviews.



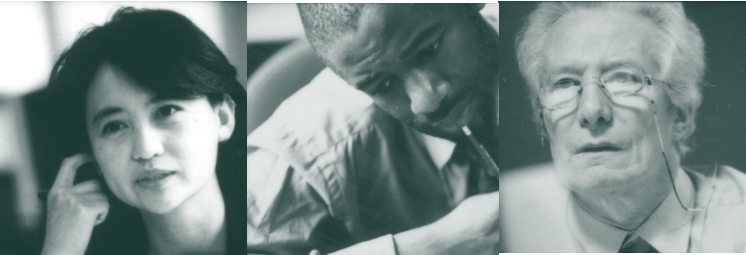
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The
Boundary
Committee
for England

Part of The Electoral
Commission

Who we are
What we do



What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a statutory committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. Following the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI2001No 3692), The Boundary Committee has taken on the functions of the Local Government Commission for England. The Order also transferred to The Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and their implementation.

Who serves on the Committee?

The Committee is chaired by an electoral commissioner and has six deputy commissioners drawn from various backgrounds. They include academics, businesspeople and former local government officers.

The deputy commissioners are supported by a director and a small full-time staff.

The Boundary Committee is completely independent from Government and political parties.

Who decides what the Committee does?

The Electoral Commission has charged The Boundary Committee with the task of undertaking periodic electoral reviews of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England.

What is a periodic electoral review (PER)?

The Local Government Act 1992 requires that the electoral arrangements of every local authority in England be reviewed on a periodic basis.

The Committee can make recommendations for changes to the number of councillors elected to the council; the number and boundaries of electoral areas ('wards' in the case of district, borough and city councils, or 'divisions' in the case of county councils); and the names of wards or divisions. The Boundary Committee can also recommend changes to parish warding arrangements.

What is the purpose of a periodic electoral review?

One of the principles of local government in England is that each councillor on a local council should represent, as closely as possible, the same number of electors. Over time, new building developments and population changes mean that the number of electors in individual wards or divisions increase or decline. The primary purpose of a review is to address any inequalities, taking into account the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflecting the interests and identities of local communities. Boundaries must also be easy to identify.

How will an electoral review affect me?

In some cases, the ward or division in which you live may either gain an extra councillor or lose a councillor because of population

changes. Boundary changes to wards may mean that you are no longer in the same ward or division that you used to be, and are therefore represented on your council by a different councillor.

Contrary to what is sometimes believed, electoral reviews do not affect postal addresses and postcodes, house prices, ecclesiastical parishes (although civil parish and town councils may be affected) or the catchment areas for schools.

How will I know if a review is being conducted in my area?

When the Committee starts any review, an advertisement is placed in local papers, and radio, television and newspapers are kept informed. The local council is provided with posters to display in libraries and information points. The Committee also writes to town and parish councils.

What happens during a review?

Each review lasts around a year. There are four stages:

In *Stage One* the Committee invites proposals from local authorities, town and parish councils, local people and other interested parties on how the present arrangements can be improved.

In *Stage Two* the Committee considers these proposals and decides on its draft recommendations.

In *Stage Three* these recommendations are published and comments invited on them, again from local authorities, town and parish councils, members of the public and other interested parties.