

GENERAL REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES IN WALES

The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales has announced a review of the boundaries of all parliamentary constituencies in Wales.

The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) requires the Commission to review the representation of Wales in the House of Commons and to submit a report to the Deputy Prime Minister not less than eight or more than twelve years from the date of the submission of their last such report. The Commission submitted their last report on 16 December 1994 and the next report must therefore be submitted by 16 December 2006.

The Government of Wales Act 1998 established the National Assembly for Wales and Schedule 1 (Assembly Constituencies and Assembly Electoral Regions) requires the Commission to undertake reviews of the Assembly regions at the same time as the general review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

The Commission formulate their provisional recommendations for a group of constituencies following the rules for redistribution of seats set out in Schedule 2 to the 1986 Act. At the same time the Commission will also formulate their provisional recommendations for the Assembly Electoral Regions following the rules set out in Schedule 1 of the 1998 Act. Notice of those recommendations is published in at least one newspaper circulating in the constituencies affected specifying where details of the recommendations shown on a map may be inspected.

Representations may be made within one month from publication of the notice and a local inquiry will be held if representations objecting to the proposals are received from an interested local authority or from a body of 100 or more electors. The Commission arrange for an Assistant Commissioner to conduct the inquiry

The Assistant Commissioner submits a report to the Commission who may decide to publish revised proposals following the same procedure but they are not obliged to hold a further inquiry. If the Commission decide to modify their revised recommendations before submitting their final proposals to the Home Secretary, the procedure for publication and inviting representations is again repeated. The report containing the Commission's final recommendations relates to all constituencies for Wales. No separate reports are submitted on any group of constituencies.

It is the Deputy Prime Minister's duty to lay the Commission's report before Parliament together with a draft Order in Council giving effect to the recommendations with or without modifications. The draft Order is submitted to both Houses of Parliament for approval and, after it is made, the new constituencies take place at the next general election.

Further information will be available in an information booklet entitled The Review of Parliamentary Constituencies and of Welsh Assembly Electoral Regions in Wales which will be published at the end of February 2003.

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