

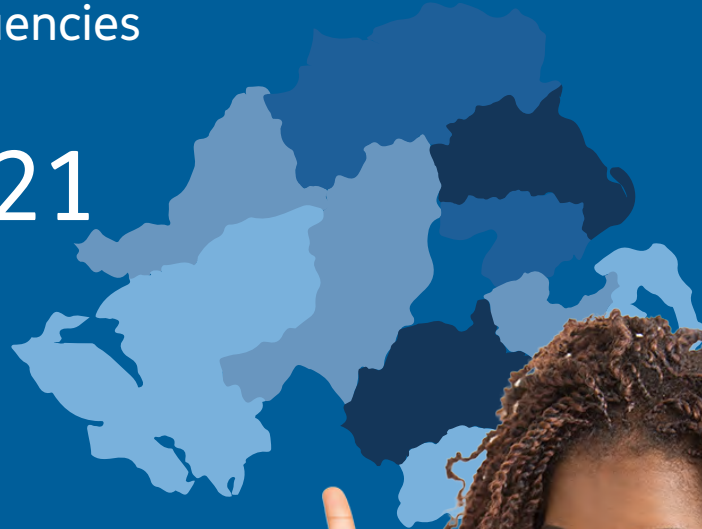
Boundary Commission
for Northern Ireland



Making changes to voting areas in Northern Ireland

An Easy Read version of: Guide to the 2023 Review of
Parliamentary Constituencies

October 2021



easy
read



Contents

Page

Introduction **3**

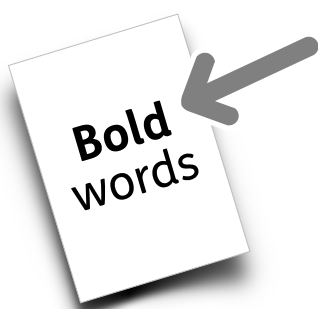
Preparing for our review **5**

Our suggestions **6**

The review **8**

After the review and the future **13**

Further information **14**



In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



The UK is split up into Parliamentary constituencies - these are specific voting areas which each have their own **MP**.



MP stands for Member of Parliament. An MP represents their voting area in the **House of Commons**.



The **House of Commons** is responsible for making laws and checking the work of the Government.



The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland decides how to split up Northern Ireland into voting areas.



There are separate Boundary Commissions for England, Scotland and Wales.

The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland is:



- independent - this means we are not part of the Government.



- impartial - this means we don't take sides and we try to make our work fair to everyone.



We need to send a report to the House of Commons about the voting areas in Northern Ireland. We call this a review.



To write our review we will carry out a check on the voting areas that are already in place.



This information is a guide to how the review we are doing now will work.

Preparing for our review



We have to follow rules that are in the law.

The rules say that we must:



- only include people in our review who are registered to vote.



- only have 18 voting areas in Northern Ireland.



- finish our review by July 2023.

Our suggestions



We will suggest how Northern Ireland should be split into the different voting areas.

Before we make our suggestions we will think about:

- rules that say how many people should be in each voting area.
- the shape of the land, like looking out for big rivers or mountains.
- voting areas that are already in place.
- any problems if we made certain changes to the voting areas that are already in place.



We won't think about how changing the voting areas might change the results of voting.



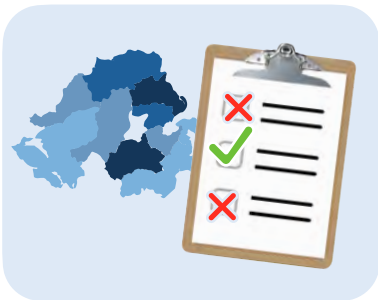
We feel the voting areas that are already in place are a good starting point.

This does not mean that everything will stay the same.



Naming voting areas

If we only make small changes then we may not have to change the names of the voting areas.



If the changes we make are bigger, we may change the names of some voting areas.

The review



The review gives you the chance to speak up about the suggestions we make for voting areas.



We will put our suggestions online.



You can then either write to us or speak at one of our public group sessions.

Here is how the review works in detail:

1. Preparing our plans and suggestions



We will put a lot of thought and detail into making our suggestions for voting areas.

We will follow the rules set out in the law.

These will be our first plans and suggestions.

2. Publishing our first suggestions



We will put our first suggestions on our website.



We will also be putting printed versions at 'display points' around Northern Ireland.

A list of the 'display points' will be put on our website.

3. First consultation



A **consultation** is where we ask people what they think about our suggestions.



After we make our first suggestions, you will have 8 weeks to tell us what you think.

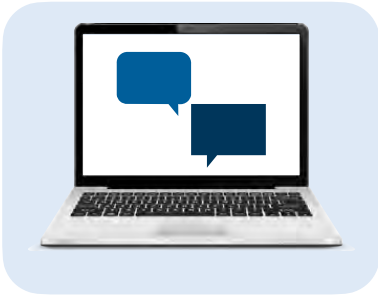


You can tell us what you think is good or bad about our suggestions for voting areas.



It may be helpful for you to suggest your own ideas if you feel our suggestions will not work.

4. Second consultation



When people have told us what they think about our first suggestions, we will put what people have said on our website.



There will be another 6 weeks for everyone to make comments on what other people have said.

5. Public hearings



During the same 6 weeks we will hold up to 5 **public hearings**.

Public hearings are in-person group meetings or discussions.

These public hearings let people speak about our suggestions in person.



Information about these public hearings and how to take part will be on our website.

6. Third consultation and second round of suggestions



At the end of the second consultation, we will put all the written and spoken comments on our website.



We will decide if any changes need to be made to our suggestions.



If we do make any changes to our suggestions for voting areas, we will put this on our website.



There will then be another 4 weeks where you can comment on the new suggestions.

7. Final suggestions and the report



We will look at comments on the new suggestions and decide if there needs to be more changes.



We will then write a report about our final suggestions for voting areas in Northern Ireland.



We will send the report to the House of Commons.

After the review and the future



The Government cannot change our report or suggestions unless we ask them to.



The next time there is an election for MPs, the voting areas we suggested will be used.



The next review of voting areas will take place in 2031.

Further information



A lot of this information will be posted on our website:

www.boundarycommission.org.uk

For more information you can contact us by:



- post:
The Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland
The Bungalow
Stormont House
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SH



- phone: 028 9052 7821



- email:
contact@boundarycommission.org.uk

This Easy Read information was produced by easy-read-online.co.uk