

GENERAL REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES

1. The topics covered in this Newsletter are:-
 - a) **Progress with the general review – Groups 4 – 9;**
 - b) **Indicative timetable for Group 10;**
 - c) **Future groups of review areas;**
 - d) **The electorate to be used by the Commission; and**
 - e) **Enquiries.**

Group 4 – the South London boroughs – final recommendations

2. The Commission announced final recommendations for constituencies in Bromley and Lewisham, and Lambeth and Southwark on 22 May 2002. Final recommendations for the constituencies in other South London boroughs were announced on 12 December 2001.

Group 5 – the North London boroughs – revised and final recommendations

3. The Commission announced revised and final recommendations for constituencies in the North London boroughs on 1 May 2002. The official notice confirming the revised recommendations was published in local newspapers on 9 May 2002 and the representation period closed on 9 June. The representations submitted in respect of the revised recommendations will be considered by the Commission at their meeting scheduled for 1 and 2 July. Decisions in respect of the representations will be announced on 31 July 2002.

Group 6 – local inquiries – Warwickshire and Wiltshire

4. The Commission considered the Assistant Commissioners' reports for these two local inquiries at their meeting of 13 May 2002. On 12 June 2002, they announced the following revised recommendations:-

Warwickshire – a change of name for one constituency

Wiltshire – the transfer of one ward between two constituencies and a change of name for one constituency.

5. The official notice confirming the revised recommendations for both counties will be published in local newspapers on 20 June 2002. The representation period will close on 20 July 2002.

Group 7 – provisional recommendations

6. On 1 May 2002, the Commission announced they would be holding local inquiries for the following review areas:-

Review area	Opening day and time	Location
Portsmouth	Monday 17 June 2002 – 09.30am.	Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Portsmouth
Hampshire and Southampton	Tuesday 18 June 2002 – 10.00am.	The Guildhall, Winchester
Nottingham	Wednesday 26 June 2002 – 10.30 am.	Council Chamber, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham
Nottinghamshire	Thursday 27 June 2002 – 10.30am.	Council Chamber, County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham
Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	Tuesday 25 June 2002 – 10.00 am.	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent

7. The Commission's decisions, in respect of the recommendations contained in the reports that will be submitted by the Assistant Commissioners, are expected to be made known in late November 2002.

Group 8 – provisional recommendations

8. The Commission announced their provisional recommendations for constituencies in the review areas set out below on 15 May 2002. Announcements as to whether local inquiries will be required are expected to be made in late November 2002.

Durham and Darlington
Derbyshire and Derby
North Yorkshire and York.

Group 9 – provisional recommendations

9. The Commission expect to announce their provisional recommendations for constituencies in the following review areas on 24 July 2002:-

East Riding
Gloucestershire
Herefordshire
Kingston upon Hull
North Lincolnshire
North East Lincolnshire.

10. The official notice confirming the provisional recommendations will be published in local newspapers on 1 August 2002. The Commission recognise that publishing provisional recommendations in August may cause difficulty for some and, for that reason, they have decided to

extend the statutory one month representation. The representation period will close on 26 September 2002 and all representations must be submitted by that date.

Indicative timetable for Group 10

11. Group 10 will comprise Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, Oxfordshire, and Suffolk. The Commission will consider options for constituencies in these review areas on 25 November 2002 and expect to announce their provisional recommendations in January 2003.

Future groups of review areas

12. Subject to the provision of accurately revised 2000 electoral data, where it has not already been supplied, by the respective Electoral Registration Officers, the Commission expect that the review areas set out below will form Groups 11 and 12:-

Group 11	Bedfordshire	Group 12	Devon
	Buckinghamshire		Essex
	Cheshire		Kent
	Halton		Medway
	Luton		Plymouth
	Milton Keynes		Southend-on-Sea
	Warrington		Thurrock
			Torbay

13. It is expected that the recommendations for constituencies in the Group 11 review areas will be announced in March 2003 and for those review areas in Group 12 during May 2003.

The electorate to be used by the Commission

14. The Commission have received numerous enquiries about the use of the 2000 electorate for their fifth general review. They would like to confirm that as the general review began with an announcement in the London Gazette on 17 February 2000, they are statutorily required by Paragraph 8(b) of Schedule 2 to the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended) to base their recommendations on the numbers of parliamentary electors on the electoral registers on that date.

15. The Commission have a long held policy of using district wards as their basic building block for creating constituencies and they decided they would use the new wards resulting from the Periodic Electoral Reviews (PERs) being conducted by the Electoral Commission's Boundary Committee for England (formerly the Local Government Commission for England) for this general review. They concluded that it would be a far from satisfactory situation if the new constituencies they recommended were to be based on wards which had been abolished or which would be abolished before they submitted their report to the Secretary of State.

16. As a result of their decision to use the new wards, the Commission need to ask each Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to supply them with information about how many electors would have been in each of the new wards, if the new wards had existed in 2000. This information is required before the Commission can consider options for a review area.

17. The request for this electoral information will usually be made as soon as the Order giving effect to the new wards is made by the Secretary of State: this may be many months before the new wards come into effect at local government elections. The Commission recognise that supplying the figures for the new wards may not, in some cases, be an entirely straightforward matter. New wards have been coming into effect at the local government elections held each year since May 1999. In many

areas of the country the new wards will be introduced over the next few years and the Commission understand that the current position is that some Orders introducing new wards for some areas may not be made until 2003 or 2004.

18. As a result of the statutory requirement that the Commission must base their recommendations on the numbers of parliamentary electors on the electoral registers in February 2000, their Secretariat will contact EROs, once the Order affecting their district has been made, to ask how many electors **would have been in each new ward had that ward existed on 17 February 2000**. Therefore, it is essential that those EROs whose districts have recently undergone, or have yet to undergo, a PER retain their February 2000 registers until such time as they have supplied the figures to the Commission.

19. With this in mind, the Commission asked the Constitution Unit of the Home Office to give advance warning of this requirement to EROs. Items appeared in RPA Circulars Nos.430 and 434 on 22 November 1999 and 9 October 2000 respectively. The Commission also gave advance warning of this requirement in their Newsletter No.3/2000 issued on 7 November 2000.

20. The Commission wish to take the opportunity provided by this Newsletter to thank those EROs who have already provided accurately re-based 2000 ward electorates. For those EROs who have yet to be contacted for revised 2000 electoral figures, the Commission have listed below those district councils and unitary authorities whom their Secretariat will be contacting during the second half of 2002:-

Blackburn with Darwen	Poole
Blackpool	Reading
Bournemouth	Slough
Bracknell Forest	Telford and Wrekin
Cambridgeshire – all districts	West Berkshire
Cornwall – all districts	West Sussex – all districts
Dorset – all districts	Windsor
Peterborough	Wokingham

21. Any ERO who has a query about what will be required should contact Gerald Tessier on 0207 533 5173.

Enquiries

22. Enquiries about timetable matters should be made to Bob Farrance, Secretary to the Commission (0207 533 5169). Any enquiries about ongoing review areas should be made to 0207 533 5177.