

# 2018 Boundary Review – template blog



By Sam Hartley, Secretary to the Boundary Commission for England

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## Your boundaries are changing

The Boundary Commission for England is looking at how best to draw the boundaries of your MP's constituency, and we need your help to do so.

Parliament has asked us, as an independent and impartial public organisation, to conduct a review of all the constituency boundaries in England. Our task is twofold: to reduce the number of constituencies (in England, from 533 to 501); and to make more equal the number of electors in each constituency.

For example, the number of electors in the smallest constituency in England is currently around 55,000; the largest on the mainland is nearly 95,000. Our job is to get every constituency roughly equal, with each one having between 71,000 and 78,000 electors within it (there's an exception to that rule for the Isle of Wight). These two legal obligations mean that wide scale change is inevitable.

When I think about the challenge facing the Commission in doing this review, I often imagine the country as a jigsaw with 533 pieces – some very large, some very small. First, we glue them all together, and then cut them into a new jigsaw of 501 pieces, all roughly the same size. Sounds easy? But before we cut them up again, we try to make it as much like the first jigsaw as we can, taking into account all the rivers, mountains, railways and roads running through it. We also ask the public three times what they think of it. It's a significant challenge.

And that's where you come in. On 13 September 2016, we published our first set of proposals – a full map of the new parliamentary constituencies. You can see them at [www.bce2018.org.uk](http://www.bce2018.org.uk), and compare how your new constituency relates to your existing one. We are asking people to tell us what they think about our proposals, bearing in mind the rules that we are working to. We want to know whether what we've proposed best reflects the local community ties in your area, and whether there is a better way to draw the map. You have until 5 December 2016 to use the website to tell us what you think of our proposals, though there will be two further opportunities to have your say in 2017.

And if you'd rather have your say direct to one of our Assistant Commissioners, you can do so at a public hearing event in your area, running in October and November 2016. Check our website to find out where your nearest public hearing is and register to attend. And follow us on twitter @BCE2018 to get the latest updates on the progress of the review.

The 2018 boundary review is a major independent constitutional undertaking that will define the boundaries of the Parliamentary constituencies which will be used at the next General Election in 2020. The Commission has had its first go at producing the best map of new constituencies and it is now over to you – the public – to go online at [www.bce2018.org.uk](http://www.bce2018.org.uk) to have your say, and help us shape the new Parliamentary constituencies in England.