



BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD

1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009

December 2009

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

Membership of the Commission: -

The Speaker, The Rt. Hon Michael Martin MP, Ex-Officio Chairman – until 22 June 2009

The Speaker, The Rt. Hon John Bercow MP, Ex-Officio Chairman – from 22 June 2009

The Hon Mr Justice Lloyd Jones, Deputy Chairman – appointed 18 December 2006 and re-appointed in October 2009.

Mr Paul Wood, Commissioner – first appointed 1 May 2008 until 30 April 2013

Mr John Bader, Commissioner – first appointed 1 May 2008 until 30 April 2013

The Registrar General for England and Wales (Assessor)
The Director General of Ordnance Survey (Assessor)

Mr E H Lewis, Joint Secretary (Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales Secretariat) – appointed 1 January 2002

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The Commission welcomes correspondence and telephone calls in English or Welsh

Boundary Commission for Wales

Annual Report 2008 to 2009

FOREWORD

On this occasion there is little to report. The Commission has met on only one occasion during the past year. During the periods between the Periodic Reviews, there is not normally a significant amount of work to be done with the exception of Interim Reviews and we have not conducted any during the period.

Since our last Report the Chairman, Rt Hon Michael Martin PC MP has relinquished office and has been followed by Rt Hon John Bercow PC MP. Also I would like to thank Lord Martin of Springburn as he now is, for his involvement in the Boundary Commission for Wales. I would like to welcome our new Chairman to his post and wish him well in his new office.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to, our Secretariat and everyone else who has assisted in the completion of the Commission's substantive work.

Sir David Lloyd Jones
Deputy Chairman

October 2009

INTRODUCTION

The Sponsor

1. The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Wales is an advisory Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored and wholly funded by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The Commission submits reports to the Secretary of State and it is his statutory duty to lay them before Parliament. Where the report recommends that alterations are required to Parliamentary constituency boundaries or the boundaries of the Assembly electoral regions, he must also lay before Parliament the draft of an Order in Council for giving effect to our recommendations. Should he decide to modify the recommendations, he must also lay a statement of his reasons for so doing. The Lord Chancellor appoints the Deputy Chairman, the Secretary of State appoints one of the members of the Commission, the Assistant Commissioners, and the two Joint Secretaries (see Membership below).

The Commission

2. The Commission is constituted under Section 2 and Schedule 1 of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended). It is an independent, non-political, and totally impartial body and every opportunity is taken to emphasise very strongly that the results of previous elections do not, and should not, enter into the Commission's considerations. The effects of the Commission's recommendations on future voting patterns are also not considered. In its guidance notes for Assistant Commissioners the Commission advises that such factors should not enter into consideration at public inquiries.

3. From the establishment of a permanent Commission in 1944 until 1 January 2002, the Secretariat was staffed in London, at arm's length from the Sponsor Department, by officials of the Office for National Statistics (ONS), and its two predecessors, the General Register Office and the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. The ONS provided accommodation and other ancillary services to the Commission. The staff and other costs incurred by the ONS in supporting the Secretariat were recovered from the Sponsor Department on a quarterly in arrears basis. With effect from 1 January 2002, officials of the Secretariat to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales (LGBCW), located in Cardiff, have staffed the Secretariat.

Membership

4. The Speaker of the House of Commons is the ex-officio Chairman of all four Parliamentary Boundary Commissions in the United Kingdom. The appointment of the Speaker emphasises the independence, impartiality, and non-political nature. The Speaker plays no part in the conduct of reviews. The Deputy Chairman, who presides over the meetings, is a High Court Judge: the Honourable Mr Justice Lloyd Jones (Sir David). The Members are Mr Paul Wood and Mr John Bader.

5. The MoJ has the responsibility for appointing one member to the Commission and the Secretary of State for Wales has responsibility for the appointment of the second member.

6. The Commissioners are part-time appointees who meet, whenever the work programme demands, at the offices shared with the LGBCW in Cardiff. One meeting was held during the period covered by this report. Since the passing of the Boundary Commissions Act 1992, the Commission Members (not including the Deputy Chairman) have been paid a daily fee agreed by the Sponsor Department with the Treasury for work carried out on behalf of the Commission and, with the Deputy Chairman, are entitled to recover any expenses (such as travel and subsistence) incurred on Commission work.

7. The Commission has established both a Code of Practice and a Register of Members' Interests, which are updated annually. Copies of these documents are available on request.

8. The Commission has two statutory assessors. One is the Registrar General of England and Wales who is the Director of ONS, and the other is the Director General of Ordnance Survey. Deputies represent both at Commission meetings; Ms Alison Whitworth on behalf of the Registrar General and Mr Aaron Sollis on behalf of the Director General.

9. There are two Joint Secretaries: Mr Edward Lewis, who heads the Secretariat and is also the Secretary to the LGBCW, and the second, which is currently vacant is appointed by the MoJ.

The Secretariat

10. The role of the Secretariat is to service and assist the Commissioners in the conduct of their reviews and in executing their decisions. The Secretariat is based at the offices of the Secretariat to the LGBCW in Cardiff and liaison about staffing and accommodation now takes place with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Statutory Duties

11. The Commission's primary statutory function is to keep under continuous review the distribution of seats at Parliamentary elections, to conduct reviews of the boundaries of Parliamentary constituencies and to make reports with recommendations to the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended). The Commission may also undertake discretionary reviews in one or more constituencies where the Commissioners believe this appropriate.

Liaison with Other Bodies

12. The Secretariat has maintained regular contact with the other Boundary Commissions by means of meetings and exchange of information. The Commission was represented at a meeting of the Parliamentary and Local Government Boundary Commissions, which took place in London on 31 March / 1 April 2009. Regular contact was also maintained with the National Assembly for Wales and Ordnance Survey.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

13. To keep under continuous review the representation of Wales in the House of Commons and in the National Assembly for Wales.

Specific Objectives for 2008/2009

14. The Commission sets its own objectives for each year. For 2008/09 no objectives were set due to a limited work programme.

Welsh Language Scheme

15. The Commission is required by the terms of our Welsh Language Scheme to submit annual reports to the Welsh Language Board on the operation of the scheme.

BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE

16. The following table compares the actual expenditure with the budget, during the financial year covered by this report, and shows any differences.

Budget and Expenditure by Subhead – 2008/2009

Budget Component	Budget	Expenditure	Difference
	(£)	(£)	(£)
Salaries and NI	26,800	6,464	-20,336
Overheads	30,900	29,971	-929
T&S	1,050	354	-696
Miscellaneous	1,880	338	-1,542
Running Costs Total	60,630	37,127	-23,503
Advertising	12,400	0	-12,400
OS costs	0	0	0
Inquiry Fees	0	0	0
Commission Fees	9,300	1,446	-7,854
ESRI (UK)	0	0	0
T&S	2,200	13	-2,187
Miscellaneous	5,670	862	-4,808
Other Current Total	29,570	2,321	-27,249
Grand Total	90,200	39,448	-50,752

17. The table below shows the planned and actual Secretariat staff levels by quarter during the financial year.

Staff Complement – 2008/2009

Grade	1/4/2008		1/7/2008		1/10/2008		1/1/2009	
	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual	Plan	Actual
Joint Sec.	0.60	0.04	0.60	0.10	0.60	0.06	0.60	0.04
WAG Band E	1.00	0.02	1.00	0.01	1.00	0.01	1.00	0.01
WAG Band C	2.00	0.01	2.00	0.00	2.00	0.04	2.00	0.01
WAG Band A/B	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	3.60	0.07	3.60	0.11	3.60	0.11	3.60	0.06

The planned staff compliment was set by the Memorandum of Agreement for the transfer of the functions of the Boundary Commission for Wales to the Secretariat of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales and was based on estimated requirement of 60% of the Joint Secretary's time plus 100% of 1 x WAG Band E time and 100% of 2 x WAG Band C time in order to complete the Fifth Periodic Review.

Monitoring Expenditure

18. Each quarter, the Secretariat provides the sponsoring department with a report detailing quarterly expenditure and forecast over/ under spends.

OUTLINE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2009/2010

Programme

19. In the forthcoming financial year the budget will be £93,050. The staff complement will be 3.6 whole time equivalents. Our specific objective will be to:

- Ensure that the necessary support is provided to complete the passage of the Interim review into legislation.
- Make the necessary preparations for the any additional interim reviews that may be required.