

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL24 April 2024Report by the Chief ExecutiveSECOND REVIEW OF SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARIES**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. This report provides an update on the ongoing review of Scottish Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries, highlights the current consultation, which will close on 15 May 2024, and seeks approval from Council to submit a response to Boundaries Scotland supporting the revised proposals for East Renfrewshire.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Council agree to submit a response to Boundaries Scotland supporting the revised proposals for East Renfrewshire for the reasons set out in paragraphs 14 and 15.

BACKGROUND

3. Boundaries Scotland is an independent, non-political body, legally responsible for carrying out reviews of Scottish Parliament boundaries. Its first review took place in 2010. Since then, there has been significant change to the electorate nationally, including the extension of the franchise for Scottish Parliamentary elections to those aged 16 and over.
4. The Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries commenced in September 2022. Provisional proposals for constituencies were published and consulted on between 17 May to 17 June 2023. The review will be complete by May 2025.
5. The average electorate of each Scottish Parliament constituency is 59,902 – the electoral quota, and is calculated by dividing the total electorate of Scotland by 70 constituencies (73 less the three protected islands constituencies), as follows:

Electorate (1 September 2022)	4,250,563
Less electorate of protected constituencies	57,430
Balance	4,193,133
Divided by total non-protected constituencies	70
Quota	<u>59,902</u>

6. The Scotland Act 1998 states that the electorate of constituencies must be as close to the electoral quota as practicable. In addition, Boundaries Scotland takes into account other factors set out in the Act, namely: local authority areas, special geographical circumstances, maintenance of local ties and any inconveniences caused by the alteration of the existing boundaries.
7. Boundaries Scotland's previous (2023) proposals for the East Renfrewshire area are set out below:

Constituency Name	Area size (in sq. km)	Designation	Electorate
Glasgow Priesthill and Giffnock	29	Burgh	63,882
Renfrewshire South	267	County	61,966

8. The initial proposals, as they related to East Renfrewshire would have resulted in:
 - the dissolution of the current Eastwood seat
 - a new seat called Glasgow Priesthill and Giffnock and
 - a change in the boundaries of the current Renfrewshire South seat.

9. On 28 June 2023 the Council agreed a consultation response that expressed concerns about the proposals and requested a local enquiry.

10. East Renfrewshire’s local enquiry took place on 14 December 2023. The Council made the case that the proposals appear to be driven purely by quota numbers and that the proposed constituencies:
 - were not convenient, practical, or efficient to administer;
 - followed boundaries that were not easily identifiable; and
 - failed to have sufficient regard for established and historical local ties: social, familial or cultural.

11. The Council acknowledged, in line with the existing position for Scottish Parliament constituencies, that East Renfrewshire has too many electors to be one constituency and too few to be two. ERC presented its evidence to the Sheriff at the Local Enquiry meeting in December 2023, setting out the rationale for maintaining Eastwood Constituency and including Levern Valley, or part of it, in a revised Renfrewshire South. This included a preferred option of retaining the existing Eastwood Boundary but also included an alternative which followed the ward boundaries and could see Neilston being included, as part of Ward 2, within Eastwood Constituency.

REVISED PROPOSALS & CONSULTATION

12. Following the previous consultation exercise and associated public enquiries, Boundaries Scotland published revised constituency proposals on 16 April 2024. These are subject to a one month consultation which closes on 15 May 2024.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EAST RENFREWSHIRE

13. The revised proposals for East Renfrewshire are:

Constituency Name	Area size (in sq. km)	Designation	Electorate
Eastwood	135	County	60,536
Renfrewshire West	238	County	65,751

14. The revised proposals for East Renfrewshire have taken account of the Council’s submissions. As a result:
 - The proposal for Glasgow Priesthill and Giffnock Constituency has been withdrawn.
 - A revised Eastwood Constituency has been reinstated, encompassing Wards 2, 3, 4 & 5. As a result Neilston would now be part of the revised Eastwood Constituency.
 - Renfrewshire South has been revised and renamed Renfrewshire West. This constituency would contain Barrhead and Uplawmoor and be administered by Renfrewshire Council, which would have the majority of electors.

15. These proposals largely respond to the concerns expressed by the Council in its submissions to the 2023 consultation and local enquiry. The revised proposals, with the exceptions of Neilston moving into Eastwood Constituency and Renfrewshire South being renamed Renfrewshire West, largely mirror the existing East Renfrewshire position. Based on this, it is proposed that the Council responds to the current consultation, supporting the revised proposals.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

16. There are no finance or efficiency implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

17. That the Council agree to submit a response to Boundaries Scotland supporting the revised proposals for East Renfrewshire for the reasons set out in paragraphs 14 and 15.

Steven Quinn
Chief Executive

Legislation

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
The Scotland Act 1998

Report Author

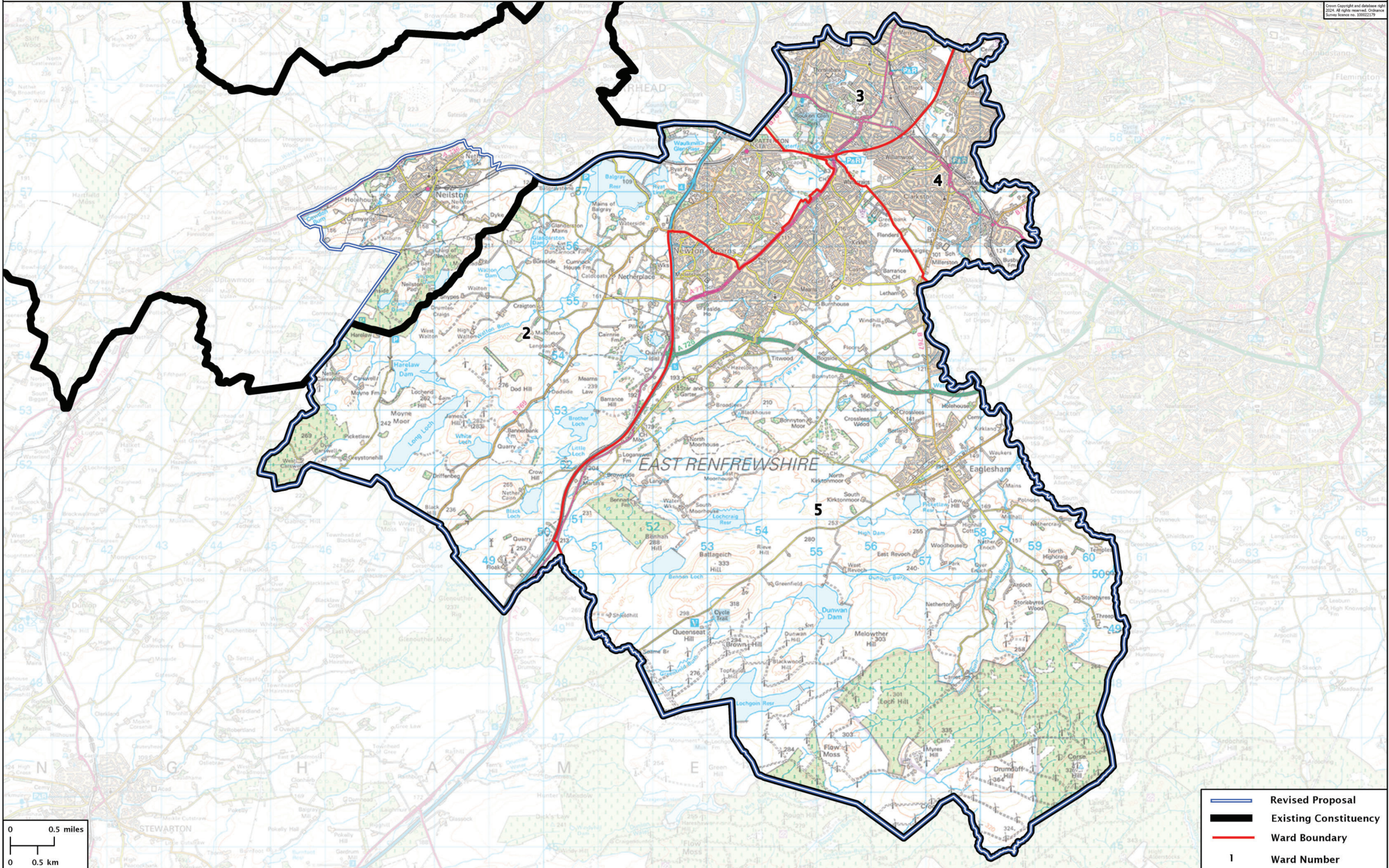
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Annexes for information:

A – Revised Eastwood Constituency Map
B – Revised Renfrewshire West Constituency Map

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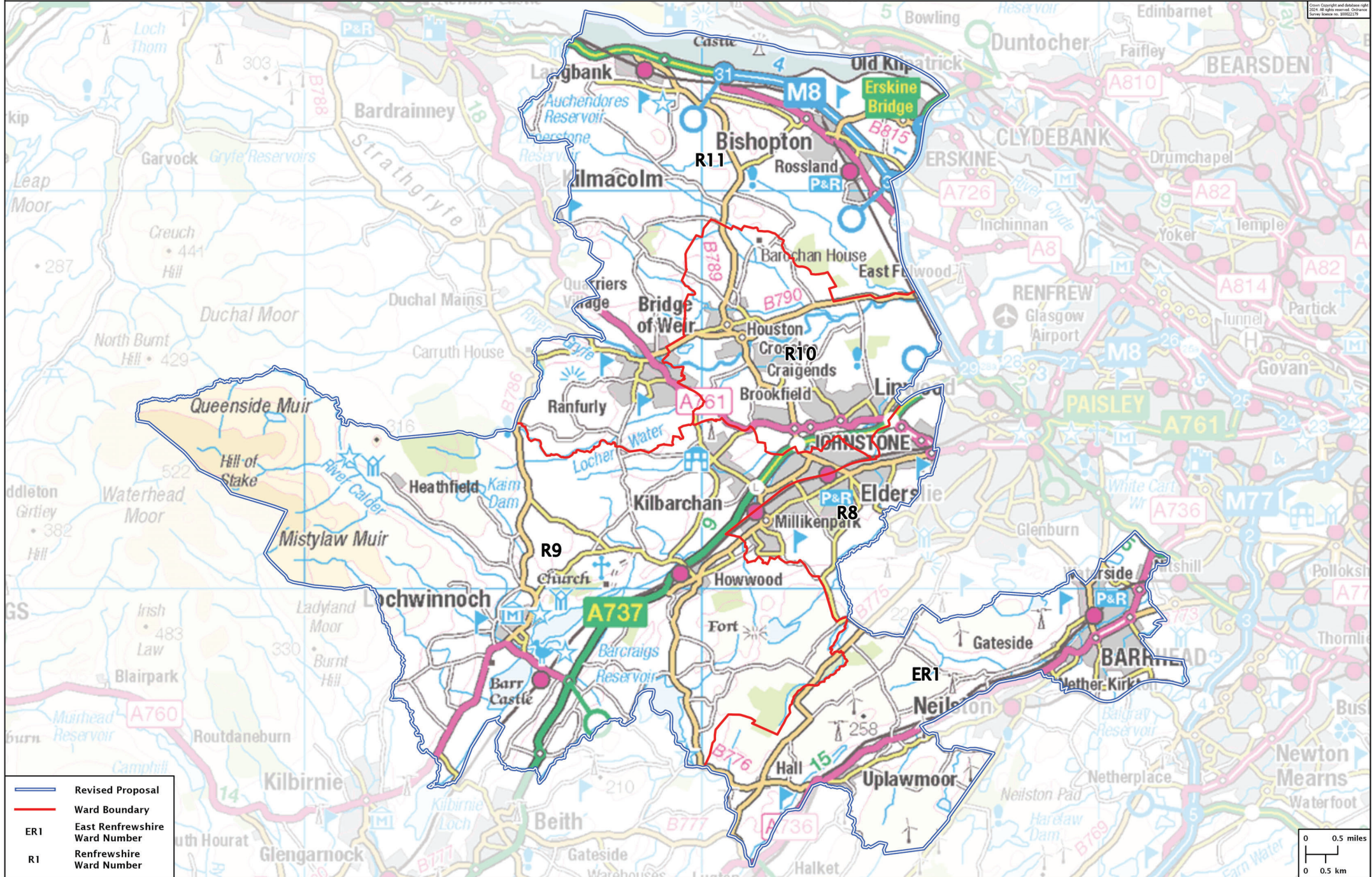
Eastwood County Constituency - Electorate 60,536



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Second Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries - Revised Proposals

Renfrewshire West County Constituency - Electorate 65,751



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