

Member Appointment Round – The Board of Boundaries Scotland – Applicant Information Pack



The Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans is seeking to appoint a Commissioner to Boundaries Scotland. The Minister values highly the benefits of having different points of view on the board and welcomes applications from people from all walks of life.

The appointments process for this board vacancy follows the [Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#) and is regulated by the [Ethical Standards Commissioner](#).

Key dates for this appointment round

Closing date	Tuesday 28 July 2026
Sift of applications	Wednesday 19 August 2026
Date applicants will hear about the outcome of their application	Friday 21 August 2026
Interviews	Interviews will be in person at St Andrews House, Edinburgh on Monday 31 August 2026 Please keep this date available. It is unlikely that we will be able to offer an alternative interview date.
Ministerial decision	W/C Monday 14 September 2026
Estimated start date	Late November 2026

A warm welcome from the Chair

Dear applicant

Thank you for your interest in this vacancy for the Board of Boundaries Scotland.

The Commission is an Advisory Non-departmental Public Body sponsored and wholly funded by the Scottish Government. It is an independent, non-political body created by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. We are supported in our work by a small Secretariat that also supports the Boundary Commission for Scotland in its work on UK Parliamentary boundaries in Scotland.

This is an exciting time to join the Commission. The Scotland Act 2016 devolved to us responsibility for undertaking reviews of Scottish Parliament electoral boundaries. We also have the responsibility to undertake reviews of ward boundaries for local government elections as well as the administrative (external) boundaries of local authorities. We are about to begin a programme of rolling reviews of local ward boundaries, with pre-consultation beginning in late 2026.

The Commission comprises a Chair, Deputy Chair and four Commissioners. The new postholder would join the three continuing Commissioners.

I have served previously as a Commissioner and Deputy Chair and have the privilege of now serving as its Chair. I have always found it to be a rewarding and enjoyable role with the capacity to make an important difference in Scottish public life.

If you would like to find out more about Boundaries Scotland, our strategic priorities and past work before you apply I would encourage you to visit our website <https://boundaries.scot/> If you would like further information, I, or another member of the Commission, would be very happy to discuss any matter with you informally and in confidence. In the first instance, please contact Boundary Scotland's Secretary, Kirsty.mavor@scottishboundaries.gov.uk who will be able to put you in touch with a current member.

The Commission would particularly welcome those with first-hand experience of communication and media engagement but we would also encourage applications from those with skills and background in the range of criteria set out in the person specification later in this pack. We would also particularly welcome applications from groups currently under-represented on Scotland's public bodies.

Thank you once again for your interest. I very much look forward to receiving your application.

Ailsa Henderson
Chair, Boundaries Scotland

Information about the role

Remuneration	<p>The Commissioner role is remunerated at a daily fee of £228 per day. The role is non-pensionable.</p> <p>Commissioners are reimbursed for reasonable expenses.</p>
Time commitment	<p>Usually no more than 2 days per month to support Commission meetings. Meetings usually take place in person in the Commission offices in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Meeting papers are available in the weeks before for members to digest material and form preliminary views before collectively reaching decisions at meetings.</p>
Length of appointment term	<p>This appointment will be for 4 years. At the end of that period, you may be eligible for reappointment, subject to evidence of effective performance, satisfying the requirements of the person specification for the role at the time of reappointment and Ministerial approval.</p> <p>There is no automatic right to re-appointment. The combined total length of appointments cannot exceed 8 years.</p>
Location of meetings	<p>The Commission meets at Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HD. Hybrid arrangements are in place for when members are unable to attend meetings in person but there is an expectation that individuals will normally attend in person. Travel expenses are reimbursed.</p>
Disqualifications	<p>A member of the Scottish Parliament cannot also hold a public appointment for public bodies listed in the Schedule to the Scottish Parliament (Disqualification) Order 2025.</p>

	<p>Former Ministers and senior civil servants (Director General level and above) should ensure they comply with any applicable business appointment rules and if needed, seek advice from The Public Appointment's Team at Public.appointments@gov.scot before applying for this role.</p> <p>This is a sensitive role requiring impartiality, partisan neutrality and independence of thought. A history of partisan activity would normally preclude someone from appointment and a recent history would be considered disqualifying.</p>
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Boundaries Scotland

Boundaries Scotland is a Non Departmental Public Body based in Edinburgh and constituted under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The Commission is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations for:

- constituencies and regions for the Scottish Parliament;
- the number of councillors on each council in a local government area;
- the number of wards for local government elections and their boundaries; and
- the extent (external boundaries) of council areas.

The Commission reviews the electoral arrangements of council areas every 15 years and most recently completed reviews of the six Councils containing inhabited islands. The rules governing local government reviews are set out in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The Commission assumed new responsibilities for review of Scottish Parliament electoral boundaries in May 2017 and completed a review of constituencies and regions in May 2025; the new boundaries that we recommended were subsequently used for the recent Scottish Parliament election in May this year. The rules for reviewing constituencies and regions are set out in the Scotland Act 1998

The Commission is served by a secretariat provided by permanent civil servants from the Scottish Government. The secretariat is headed by the Secretary to the Commission, who in addition to advising and supporting the Commissioners, oversees the day to day management of the office and is accountable to the Scottish Government for the Commission's budget. Further information is available on the Commission's website <https://boundaries.scot/>.

The role of Commissioners

Commissioners are collectively responsible for formulating proposals for changes in Scottish Parliament and Scottish local government electoral and administrative boundaries. They do this by:

- Supporting the Chair and Deputy Chair to develop the overall strategic direction of the Commission within the legislative framework
- Engaging fully in collective consideration of the issues, in reaching any recommendations, taking account of the full range of relevant factors, including any guidance or directions issued by the Scottish Ministers
- Representing the Commission whenever it is advantageous to do so and enhancing the Commission's standing and other parties' understanding of the Commission's role
- Attending scheduled and ad hoc Commission meetings, and contributing by reading papers, participating in group discussion, helping to reach a consensus view
- Ensuring that high standards of Corporate Governance are observed at all times.

The selection panel

Chair	James Newman, Team Leader, Elections Team, Constitution Directorate, Scottish Government
Panel member	Ailsa Henderson, Chair, Boundaries Scotland
Independent panel member	Malcolm Burr, Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland

Please note that applicants will be asked to declare if they know any members of the selection panel. The panel will also declare if they know any applicants. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be managed in line with the [Ethical Standards Commissioners Code of Practice for Public Appointments](#).

Person specification

We are looking for a new Commissioner who can put their skills and experience to good use on the board. The table below sets out the skills, knowledge, experience and attributes that we are seeking and explains how the criteria will be tested. You may have gained your experience through work, by being active in your community, in a voluntary capacity or through your own lived experience.

In providing the evidence sought, you can draw on examples from your working and/or personal life, or through your participation with a private, public, voluntary, charity or community organisation.

We are seeking a Commissioner who will strengthen the Board’s expertise in communications, media and local government planning, while also bringing strong analytical and strategic capability, and political acuity.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate evidence of the Priority and Essential Criteria at application and at interview stage in order to be considered for appointment.

The Priority Criterion is weighted as more significant than the Essential Criteria. Of the candidates who meet the Essential Criteria, those that provide the strongest evidence on the Priority Criterion will be considered most able to fulfil the role. In the event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit on the Priority Criterion, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the Essential Criteria in determining the candidates most able to fulfil the role. Finally, should candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the Essential Criteria, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the Desirable Criteria in determining the candidates most able to fulfil each role.

Priority criteria	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
1. Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Engagement in a Public or Political Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable expertise in communicating within a public or political environment, including the ability to shape messaging, engage stakeholders and influence understanding of complex issues. • Ability to horizon scan and anticipate emerging issues within Scotland’s political and civic landscape. • Strong interpersonal and influencing skills, with the ability 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p> <p>Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.</p>

	to engage respectfully with diverse communities, including rural and underrepresented groups.	
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Essential criteria	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
1. Understanding of the Scottish political landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of parliamentary process and procedure in a Scottish context. • Experience of working with elected representatives. • Understanding of Scotland’s diverse geography and communities. 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p> <p>Interview: You will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.</p>
2. Experience of strategic planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of working to achieve long term aims of an organisation, such as experience of contributing to the development and implementation of a strategy or business plan. • Ability to identify a range of priorities, challenges and risks facing an organisation, taking into account their potential impact to inform strategic decisions. 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p> <p>Interview: You will be asked to undertake a <u>practical exercise</u> and will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.</p>
3. Good communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate with a range of different audiences including Ministers and Parliamentarians • Ability to represent/promote the Commission to a wide range of stakeholders, including local and 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p>

	national government, community groups, the Scottish Parliament, politicians and the media – being an ambassador.	Interview: You will be asked to undertake a <u>practical exercise</u> and will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.
4. Good analytical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to analyse complex information, including quantitative data and GIS mapping. • Ability to use sound judgement and reasoning to reach conclusions. • Confidence in making reasoned judgements and able to articulate and justify the rationale for these, particularly in a sensitive or complex situation. 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p> <p>Interview: You will be asked to undertake a <u>practical exercise</u> and will be asked questions on this criterion at interview.</p>

The desirable criterion is not a requirement for appointment. Applicants who do not meet this criterion will not be disadvantaged unless candidates are otherwise assessed as being of equal merit. If you do not have relevant evidence against the desirable criterion, please enter "N/A" in the relevant section.

Desirable criteria	Example indicators	How this will be assessed
1. Knowledge of Scottish Local Government and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of local government and planning in Scotland and can provide examples. • Proven ability to draw insights and ideas from experience of working with local government. • Ability to apply insights and learning from local government 	<p>Application: Using no more than 400 words, please demonstrate how you meet this criterion in the box provided in the online application form.</p> <p>Interview: You will be asked questions on</p>

	to the work of Boundaries Scotland.	this criterion at interview.
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CV
<p>In addition to providing evidence against the criteria assessed at application stage, you will also be asked to provide a career history. This should include information from your professional, personal and voluntary experience which is relevant to this role.</p> <p>This should be no more than 4 pages, using Arial font, size 12. You may wish to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dates • Information about the organisation • Information about your role, experience and contribution

How to apply online

1. Download and save the 'Applicant Information Pack'.
2. Click 'Apply Now' on the advert.
3. Complete the personal information and conflict of interest questions.
4. Add evidence against Priority Criterion 1 and Essential Criteria 1-4.
5. Add evidence against Desirable Criterion 1 if applicable.
6. Upload your CV.
7. Follow the instructions and click submit.

[Further guidance on how to apply can be found here.](#)

We strongly recommend that you draft your answers in a word document and check the word count / spelling and grammar before copying and pasting your answers in the relevant sections of the online application form.

Please note that you will not be able to update your answers or supporting documents once the online application is submitted. Late applications will not be accepted by the selection panel.

If you use assistive technology, please contact the Public Appointments Team for an accessible application form by email at public.appointments@gov.scot

The Assessment Process

The assessment process will happen as follows:

1. The selection panel will assess all application forms against the criteria for appointment (see the person specification). Those who demonstrate evidence that most closely meet the criteria tested at this stage will be shortlisted for interview.
2. The selection panel will interview candidates, the questions they ask will relate directly to the criteria for appointment. You will be asked to undertake a brief **prepared verbal response** to a **practical exercise** as part of your interview. Full details of this will be sent in advance to candidates invited to interview.
3. The selection panel will also ask questions relevant to the fit and proper person test (see below) which will include questions about [the Principles of Public Life](#).
4. The selection panel will review the evidence provided and agree on which candidates are most meritorious. The most meritorious candidates will be recommended to the appointing Minister.
5. The appointing Minister will make a decision about whom to appoint based on evidence from the selection panel. The appointing Minister may request to meet with candidates before making a final decision.
6. Appointees will be asked to complete pre-appointment checks which will include a Disclosure Check (there is no charge for this). Appointment is conditional on satisfactory completion of these.

Fit and proper person checks

In the context of public appointments, a fit and proper person is someone who is suitable because they meet the requirements of the role, and their past or present activities and behaviour means they are suitable. Tests are built into different stages of the appointment process to ensure that:

- Conduct to date has been compatible with the public appointment
- Membership is not barred by the body's constitution e.g., criminal record or bankruptcy (see disqualifications)
- There are no unmanageable conflicts of interest
- Political activity is declared
- There is agreement to abide by the Principles of Public life in Scotland. Please read the principles here: [Code of Practice | Ethical Standards Commissioner](#)
- There is confirmation that the time commitment required for the role can be met.

Political neutrality and independence

This is a sensitive role requiring partisan neutrality to preserve the independence of Boundaries Scotland. Boundaries Scotland sets boundaries of electoral significance. It is essential that our work is neutral in its effects, not providing undue advantage to any political parties over others. Since it is important that our work is – and is perceived to be – independent of political influence we place a high importance on political and partisan neutrality in our working procedures and membership.

Social media checks for candidates invited to interview

The selection panel may consider publicly available information about candidates which is posted by candidates on social media. Any findings that the selection panel agree are pertinent to the role or that may call into question suitability for the appointment, credibility of the appointments process or the public body will be discussed with candidates at interview. Consideration of any issues will take place openly and transparently to establish the facts. Candidates will be given an opportunity to respond to any concerns. This information will be handled in line with the Privacy Notice for public appointments.

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018

Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 Scottish Government recognises the implications of the Supreme Court judgement dated 16 April 2025 for public appointments subject to the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. The Supreme Court ruled that a person with a full gender recognition certificate (GRC) which recognises their gender as female, is not a “woman” for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 and consequently the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018. Revised statutory guidance on the Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 (“2018 Act”) was [published](#) on 26th June 2025 following the Supreme Court Judgment dated 16 April 2025 on the definition of “Man”, “Woman” and “Sex” in the Equality Act 2010, and consequently in the 2018 Act.

In order to comply with the 2018 Act, Scottish Government must now request data on biological sex as registered at birth from all applicants for Public Appointments on Boards which are captured by the 2018 Act. Following your application you will receive a request from the Public Appointments Team to request this data from you. The Scottish Government is committed to dignity, fairness and respect for all and actively invites applications from all.

Frequently asked Questions and Answers

Who can I contact to speak about this role?	Please contact Boundary Scotland’s Secretary at kirsty.mavor@scottishboundaries.gov.uk
Who can I speak to about a disability related reasonable adjustment?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team Email: public.appointments@gov.scot Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via contactSCOTLAND-BSL
I am having a problem with the application process who can I speak with?	Please contact the Public Appointments Team (see contact details above).
Do you have any advice about how to complete an application form?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Do you have any advice for candidates attending interviews?	Yes. More information is provided here: Introduction - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Will you reimburse expenses for attending an interview?	Yes. You can claim reasonable expenses, further information will be provided with the invitation to interview.
What does ‘appointed on merit’ mean?	Appointed on merit means that the people who are appointed most closely meet the criteria that is sought for the board vacancy at a point in time. People are assessed on the evidence that they present in the appointments process and the findings of the fit and proper person test.
What role does the Ethical Standards Commissioner (ESC) have in the appointments process?	The ESC regulate and monitor the public appointments process . The Commissioner plays a role in ensuring appointments are made on merit and use fair methods. More information about the Commissioner’s role is provided here: Public appointments Information leaflet Ethical Standards Commissioner
Can I apply if I am not a British citizen?	Yes. You can apply for and be appointed to the Boards of Public Bodies if you are not a British citizen however you must be legally entitled to work in the UK.

Would remuneration for a public appointment impact on my benefits?	Possibly. Taking up a remunerated public appointment may affect benefits payments. This will depend on individual circumstances and you should seek advice from your benefits provider. More information is provided here: www.gov.uk/browse/benefits
Do the selection panel see information from the diversity monitoring form?	No. Diversity monitoring information provided by applicants is not shared with the selection panel. Sometimes information about a reasonable adjustment is shared with the selection panel to ensure that requirements are met (e.g. if a BSL interpreter is required).
How will my personal information be handled?	All personal information will be handled with great care and in line with UK GDPR and data protection requirements. Further information can be found in the Privacy Notice here: Privacy notice - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
Can I get feedback on my application or interview?	Yes. You can request feedback.
Is any training provided if I am offered and take up an appointment?	Yes. Each board has their own induction process and training offer. New appointees are also invited to attend an induction day hosted by the Scottish Government.
Is it possible to hold more than one public appointment?	Yes. It is possible to have more than one public appointment. You should check that you can make the time commitment for an additional appointment and that there are no unmanageable conflicts of interest.
Are public appointments announced?	Yes. Every appointment is announced here: Public appointments: news releases - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) The board may also announce new appointments on their own website and social media platforms. Information published will include a biography and details of any political activity within the last 5 years.
What standards are expected of board members?	The conduct expected of board members of Scottish public boards is set out here: Members of devolved public bodies: model code of conduct - December 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) (this includes the Principles of Public Life)

How can I complain about the public appointments process?

Further information about the complaints process for public appointments can be found here: [How to apply - Public appointments: guide - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)
Anyone concerned about public appointments can raise a complaint and have it independently investigated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.
[Investigation process public appointments | Ethical Standards Commissioner](#)

For further information

Please contact the Public Appointments Team, Scottish Government

Email: public.appointments@gov.scot

Deaf, deafblind and BSL users can contact the team via [contactSCOTLAND-BSL](#)

