



# East Ayrshire Council Area, North Ayrshire Council Area and South Ayrshire Council Area

## Introduction

1. East Ayrshire Council area is currently covered by 2 county constituencies: Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency, which is wholly within the Council area, and Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley constituency, where approximately 48 per cent of the electorate is contained within East Ayrshire Council area and the remainder in South Ayrshire Council area. North Ayrshire Council area is currently covered by 2 county constituencies, Cunninghame North and Cunninghame South, both of which are wholly within the Council area. South Ayrshire Council area is currently covered by 2 county constituencies: Ayr constituency, which is wholly within the Council area, and Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley constituency where approximately 52 per cent of the electorate is within South Ayrshire Council area and the remainder is in East Ayrshire Council area. The electorates of the 5 constituencies at the start and finish of the previous and current reviews are shown at Appendix C.

## Initial Considerations

2. In forming our provisional proposals for East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area we had in mind the following considerations:

2.1 At the enumeration date of June 2001, East Ayrshire Council area contained 93,201 parliamentary electors, giving the Council area a theoretical entitlement of 1.3 seats.

2.2 At the enumeration date of June 2001, North Ayrshire Council area contained 105,942 parliamentary electors, giving the Council area a theoretical entitlement of 1.5 seats.

2.3 At the enumeration date of June 2001, South Ayrshire Council area contained 90,281 parliamentary electors, giving the Council area a theoretical entitlement of 1.3 seats.

2.4 The combined electorate for East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area was 289,424, giving the area a theoretical entitlement of 4.1 seats.

3. We noted that, rounding the theoretical number of seats down within each Council area would provide constituencies which had electorates exceeding the electoral quota by

between 29 per cent and 52 per cent and rounding up the theoretical number of seats would provide constituencies which were below the electoral quota by between 24 per cent and 35 per cent. We concluded that such divergences from the electoral quota were not acceptable. However, providing 4 constituencies for the combined Council areas allowed the formulation of provisional proposals for constituencies which, on average, would be around 3 per cent above the electoral quota. Accordingly, we decided that the combined Council areas should be allocated 4 constituencies.

4. We proposed bringing together North Ayrshire Council area wards 10-30 thus extending the existing Cunninghame North constituency southwards within the Council area to incorporate part of the existing Cunninghame South constituency. This provided a constituency of North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran with 73,182 electors.

5. Prior to the Fourth Periodical Review, Irvine, Troon and the adjacent landward area lying towards the boundary of East Ayrshire Council area were contained within the then Central Ayrshire constituency. Much of that area, which more recently was within the Cunninghame North and Cunninghame South constituencies, is, under our provisional proposals, now contained within the North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran constituency. We considered extending the remainder of the existing Cunninghame South constituency eastwards but noted that such a proposal would most likely require splitting the contiguous built-up area of Kilmarnock and concluded, therefore, that the area should be extended southwards along the coast to incorporate Troon and Prestwick. This solution ensured that, whilst some community ties would be broken, no major settlement would be divided between constituencies. Accordingly, we proposed that North Ayrshire Council area wards 1-9 should be combined with South Ayrshire Council area wards 1-9, 22 and 23 and East Ayrshire Council area ward 5 to form an Irvine, Troon and Prestwick constituency with 68,703 electors.

6. Our proposals for an enlarged Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency extended the area of the existing constituency southwards within East Ayrshire Council area to incorporate wards 22-24 and 28 which focus on the Catrine, Auchinleck and Cumnock areas to form a new Kilmarnock, Stewarton and Cumnock constituency. We noted that such proposals incorporated a substantial tract of East Ayrshire Council area which is presently within the geographically extensive Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley constituency.

7. We noted that the main communication links in South Ayrshire Council area and much of that part of East Ayrshire Council area included in the existing Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley constituency converged on the town of Ayr. Further, it was clear that, although the towns of Ayr and Prestwick formed a contiguous built-up area, there was a distinction between the two communities which was reflected in the ward names.

8. We concluded, therefore, that East Ayrshire Council area wards 25, 26 and 30-32 and South Ayrshire Council area wards 10-21 and 24-30 should be combined to form an Ayr, New Cumnock and Carrick constituency with approximately 71,500 electors. We further concluded that the proposed constituency was geographically more appropriate than the most likely alternative which would stretch from Ballantrae in the south to beyond Newmilns and Darvel in the North and, because of the structure of the wards, would incorporate a substantial part of the built-up area of Kilmarnock.

## Provisional Proposals

9. On 7 February 2002 we published our provisional proposals for 4 county constituencies for East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area as follows:

Constituencies	Comprising	Electorate (June 2001)
Ayr, New Cumnock and Carrick CC	Electoral wards in East Ayrshire Council area	
	25 Drongan, Stair and Rankinston	3,092
	26 Ochiltree, Skares, Netherthird and Craigens	2,760
	30 Patna and Dalrymple	3,051
	31 Dalmellington	2,636
	32 New Cumnock	2,977
	Electoral wards in South Ayrshire Council area	
	10 Ayr Newton	3,116
	11 Ayr Lochside	2,853
	12 Ayr Whitletts	2,785
	13 Ayr Craigie	2,856
	14 Ayr Central	3,004
	15 Ayr Fort	2,794
	16 Ayr Old Belmont	2,891
	17 Ayr Forehill	2,835
	18 Ayr Masonhill	3,286
	19 Ayr Belmont	3,181
	20 Ayr Doonfoot and Seafield	3,091
	21 Ayr Rozelle	3,080
	24 Annbank Mossblown St Quivox	3,102
	25 Coylton and Minishant	3,025
	26 North Carrick and Maybole West	3,174
	27 North Carrick and Maybole East	3,001
	28 South Carrick	3,196
	29 Girvan Ailsa	2,951
	30 Girvan Glendoune	2,761
	Total	71,498
Irvine, Troon and Prestwick CC	Electoral wards in East Ayrshire Council area	
	5 Crosshouse, Gatehead and Knockentiber	2,644
	Electoral wards in North Ayrshire Council area	
	1 Irvine West	3,916
	2 Irvine Townhead	3,820

3	Irvine Vineburgh and Woodlands South	2,686
4	Irvine North	3,465
5	Eglinton and Lawthorn	3,720
6	Dreghorn	3,571
7	Irvine Landward	3,930
8	Bourtreehill	3,746
9	Woodlands North and Girdle Toll	3,906

## Electoral wards in South Ayrshire Council area

1	Troon North	3,036
2	Troon West	3,134
3	Troon East	3,002
4	Troon South	3,040
5	Prestwick St Ninian's	2,837
6	Prestwick St Cuthbert's and Monkton	3,088
7	Prestwick St Nicholas'	3,131
8	Prestwick Kingcase	2,963
9	Prestwick Toll	3,036
22	Dundonald and Loans	2,980
23	Tarbolton Symington Craigie	3,052

Total		68,703
-------	--	--------

Kilmarnock, Stewarton  
and Cumnock CC

## Electoral wards in East Ayrshire Council area

1	Stewarton East and Dunlop	2,955
2	Stewarton Central	3,124
3	Kilmaurs and Stewarton South	2,983
4	North Kilmarnock, Fenwick and Waterside	3,577
6	Altonhill, Hillhead and Longpark	3,017
7	Onthank	2,608
8	Kilmarnock Central West	2,847
9	Kilmarnock Central East	2,854
10	North New Farm Loch and Dean	2,932
11	South New Farm Loch	2,743
12	Crookedholm, Moscow, Galston West and Hurlford North	2,868
13	Newmilns	2,665
14	Grange/Howard	3,005
15	Kilmarnock Central South	3,122
16	Riccarton	2,980
17	Shortlees	3,042
18	Bellfield	2,861
19	Hurlford	3,083
20	Galston East	2,771
21	Darvel	3,018
22	Mauchline	2,916

23	Catrine, Sorn and Mauchline East	2,868
24	Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan	2,623
27	Auchinleck	2,816
28	Cumnock West	2,957
29	Cumnock East	2,806
	<b>Total</b>	<b>76,041</b>

North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran CC

Electoral wards in North Ayrshire Council area

10	Kilwinning East	3,085
11	Kilwinning South	3,639
12	Kilwinning West	3,614
13	Stevenston North	3,442
14	Stevenston South	3,638
15	Beith	3,543
16	Dalry	3,343
17	Garnock East	3,646
18	Kilbirnie South	2,927
19	Kilbirnie North	3,338
20	Saltcoats East	3,448
21	South Beach	3,654
22	Saltcoats North	3,314
23	Ardrossan South	3,647
24	Ardrossan North	3,452
25	West Kilbride	3,807
26	Largs South and Fairlie	3,532
27	Largs West and Cumbrae	3,745
28	Largs East	3,540
29	Largs North and Skelmorlie	3,029
30	Arran	3,799
	<b>Total</b>	<b>73,182</b>

## Representations on Provisional Proposals

10. During the statutory consultation period, we received 253 representations, including 3 petitions with a total of approximately 420 names and one letter which enclosed 193 signed proformas regarding our provisional proposals. Most objections focused on the following main issues:

10.1 The proposed constituency geography failed to take into account the association of like communities, splitting Ayr from Prestwick and Troon from the North Kyle villages.

10.2 East Ayrshire Council area ward 5 (Crosshouse, Gatehead and Knockentiber) had no geographical affinity with the areas in the proposed Irvine, Troon and Prestwick constituency and should be located in the proposed Kilmarnock, Stewarton and Cumnock constituency.

10.3 Cumnock should not be placed in a constituency separate from Netherthird, New Cumnock and Ayr.

### **Local Inquiry**

11. As a consequence of the objections to our proposals from local authorities in the area, as well as the number of electors objecting, we recognised that we had a statutory duty to hold a local inquiry. At our request you agreed to appoint Sheriff Principal B A Kerr QC, Sheriff Principal of North Strathclyde, as Assistant Commissioner at the inquiry into our provisional proposals. The inquiry was held in County Hall, County Buildings, Ayr on 11, 12 and 13 September 2002.

12. In the period up to the start of the local inquiry, the number of representations received increased to 276. All the representations were seen by the Assistant Commissioner and copies were made available at the inquiry.

13. Following the inquiry, a verbatim transcript of the proceedings and the Assistant Commissioner's Report were made available on our web site.

### **Assistant Commissioner's Report and Recommendations**

14. In his Report to us, the Assistant Commissioner considered whether the combination of Council areas and the number of constituencies we proposed were appropriate. He noted that all of those who appeared at the inquiry and addressed the subject were unanimously of the view that East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area should be combined and, further, that all proposals considered at the inquiry proceeded on the basis of 4 constituencies as ours had done. In considering the proposal submitted by Russell Brown MP, which combined Dumfries and Galloway Council area with the 3 Ayrshire Councils, the Assistant Commissioner noted that neither Mr Brown nor anyone else appeared at the inquiry to speak to or support his proposal and, accordingly, he recommended that we should not give it further consideration.

15. The Assistant Commissioner noted that our proposed North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran constituency generated no controversy and agreed that it was satisfactory and appropriate.

16. The Assistant Commissioner was not persuaded by the arguments and submissions advanced at the inquiry by the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party. He expressed some difficulty in accepting that there is really much communication or linkage between groups of communities in different districts of the area covered by their suggested Carrick, Cumnock and Loudoun constituency. Further, having considered the arguments in great detail, he concluded that the inclusion of the Riccarton, Shortlees and Bellfield wards of Kilmarnock in their proposed new constituency constituted a fatal flaw to their acceptability. The Assistant Commissioner was of the view that these 3 Kilmarnock wards were only included in their proposed Carrick, Cumnock and Loudoun constituency to satisfy the requirements of the electoral quota. He considered whether an acceptable scheme might be achieved by retaining them within the proposed new constituency of Kilmarnock and Irvine, but noted that such a proposition would produce an excessive disparity between the electorates of the resulting constituencies. Overall, the Assistant Commissioner concluded

that the counter-proposals submitted by the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party conformed less well with the Rules. Accordingly, he concluded that our provisional proposals were to be preferred.

17. However, the Assistant Commissioner rejected our proposal to include East Ayrshire Council area ward 5 (Crosshouse, Gatehead and Knockentiber) in the proposed Irvine, Troon and Prestwick constituency. He recommended that ward 5 should be part of the eastern constituency which contains Kilmarnock. He had no strong reason for thinking that South Ayrshire Council area ward 24 (Annbank Mossblown St Quivox) had to be attached either to Ayr or to Irvine. The transfer of this ward to our proposed Irvine, Troon and Prestwick constituency would reduce the imbalance in the electorate which resulted from the transfer of ward 5, and he so recommended.

18. The Assistant Commissioner rejected our proposal to include East Ayrshire Council area wards 28 and 29 (Cumnock West and Cumnock East respectively) in the proposed Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency. He recommended that wards 28 and 29 should, with Netherthird, form part of the new southern constituency which included Ayr and New Cumnock.

19. The Assistant Commissioner agreed with the views expressed at the inquiry that the name of North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran constituency was unnecessarily unwieldy, as it included the words "Isle of" when all knew that Arran is an island. He therefore recommended that the constituency should bear the name "North Ayrshire and Arran". He recommended that our proposed Irvine, Troon and Prestwick constituency should be renamed "Central Ayrshire". Because of his recommended changes to our provisional proposals for Kilmarnock, Stewarton and Cumnock constituency, he also recommended that it should be renamed "Kilmarnock and Loudoun". Similarly, he also recommended that the Ayr, New Cumnock and Carrick constituency should be renamed "Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock".

### **Consideration of the Assistant Commissioner's Report and Recommendations**

20. We noted that there was a general consensus that the 3 Ayrshire Council areas should be combined to provide 4 parliamentary constituencies.

21. We accepted the Assistant Commissioner's analysis of the arguments made for and against the counter-proposals submitted by the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party. We noted that he was not averse to the concept of an Irvine/Kilmarnock constituency but he considered that the proposal for a large rural constituency, including parts of Kilmarnock, was fatally flawed. We agreed with his assessment that it was not practicable, within the terms of the statutory Rules, to design a constituency containing the whole of Kilmarnock and Irvine without creating significant divergences from the electoral quota. Accordingly, we accepted his recommendation that our proposals, subject to minor amendments, should be adopted.

22. We accepted his recommendations that East Ayrshire Council area ward 5 (Crosshouse, Gatehead and Knockentiber) should be included in a constituency with

Kilmarnock; that East Ayrshire Council area wards 28 (Cumnock West) and 29 (Cumnock East) should form part of the constituency which includes Ayr and the New Cumnock wards; and that South Ayrshire Council area ward 24 (Annbank Mossblown St Quivox) should be in the constituency that includes Prestwick, Irvine and Troon.

### Publication of Revised Recommendations

23. On 17 July 2003 we published a notice stating that, having considered the Assistant Commissioner's Report, we had decided to revise 3 of our proposals for parliamentary constituencies in East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area, incorporating all of the recommendations proposed by the Assistant Commissioner. The recommendations for the 4 constituencies were as follows:

Constituencies	Comprising	Electorate (June 2001)
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock CC	Electoral wards in East Ayrshire Council area	
	25 Drongan, Stair and Rankinston	3,092
	26 Ochiltree, Skares, Netherthird and Craigens	2,760
	28 Cumnock West	2,957
	29 Cumnock East	2,806
	30 Patna and Dalrymple	3,051
	31 Dalmellington	2,636
	32 New Cumnock	2,977
	Electoral wards in South Ayrshire Council area	
	10 Ayr Newton	3,116
	11 Ayr Lochside	2,853
	12 Ayr Whitletts	2,785
	13 Ayr Craigie	2,856
	14 Ayr Central	3,004
	15 Ayr Fort	2,794
	16 Ayr Old Belmont	2,891
	17 Ayr Forehill	2,835
	18 Ayr Masonhill	3,286
	19 Ayr Belmont	3,181
	20 Ayr Doonfoot and Seafield	3,091
	21 Ayr Rozelle	3,080
	25 Coylton and Minishant	3,025
	26 North Carrick and Maybole West	3,174
	27 North Carrick and Maybole East	3,001
	28 South Carrick	3,196
	29 Girvan Ailsa	2,951
	30 Girvan Glendoune	2,761
	Total	74,159

## Central Ayrshire CC

## Electoral wards in North Ayrshire Council area

1	Irvine West	3,916
2	Irvine Townhead	3,820
3	Irvine Vineburgh and Woodlands South	2,686
4	Irvine North	3,465
5	Eglinton and Lawthorn	3,720
6	Dreghorn	3,571
7	Irvine Landward	3,930
8	Bourtreehill	3,746
9	Woodlands North and Girdle Toll	3,906

## Electoral wards in South Ayrshire Council area

1	Troon North	3,036
2	Troon West	3,134
3	Troon East	3,002
4	Troon South	3,040
5	Prestwick St Ninian's	2,837
6	Prestwick St Cuthbert's and Monkton	3,088
7	Prestwick St Nicholas'	3,131
8	Prestwick Kingcase	2,963
9	Prestwick Toll	3,036
22	Dundonald and Loans	2,980
23	Tarbolton Symington Craigie	3,052
24	Annbank Mossblown St Quivox	3,102

Total	69,161
-------	--------

## Kilmarnock and Loudoun CC

## Electoral wards in East Ayrshire Council area

1	Stewarton East and Dunlop	2,955
2	Stewarton Central	3,124
3	Kilmaurs and Stewarton South	2,983
4	North Kilmarnock, Fenwick and Waterside	3,577
5	Crosshouse, Gatehead and Knockentiber	2,644
6	Altonhill, Hillhead and Longpark	3,017
7	Onthank	2,608
8	Kilmarnock Central West	2,847
9	Kilmarnock Central East	2,854
10	North New Farm Loch and Dean	2,932
11	South New Farm Loch	2,743
12	Crookedholm, Moscow, Galston West and Hurlford North	2,868
13	Newmilns	2,665
14	Grange/Howard	3,005
15	Kilmarnock Central South	3,122

	16	Riccarton	2,980
	17	Shortlees	3,042
	18	Bellfield	2,861
	19	Hurlford	3,083
	20	Galston East	2,771
	21	Darvel	3,018
	22	Mauchline	2,916
	23	Catrine, Sorn and Mauchline East	2,868
	24	Muirkirk, Lugar, Logan	2,623
	27	Auchinleck	2,816
		Total	72,922
North Ayrshire and Arran CC		Unaltered from provisional proposals (previously named North Ayrshire and Isle of Arran CC)	73,182

### **Representations on Revised Recommendations**

24. Following publication of the revised recommendations, we received 33 representations. The representations fell broadly into the following categories:

24.1 Twenty-nine representations supported the revised recommendations.

24.2 Three representations expressed disappointment at the outcome of the local inquiry.

24.3 Three representations requested that Auchinleck be included in the proposed Kilmarnock and Loudoun constituency.

24.4 Four representations were received concerning the constituency names.

### **Consideration of Representations on Revised Recommendations**

25. We considered the representations received in respect of our revised recommendations. In view of the number and nature of the representations, we were not persuaded to amend our revised recommendations.

### **Final Recommendations**

26. On 23 October 2003 we announced that we were making no further changes to our proposals for 4 county constituencies for East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area.

27. We accordingly recommend the adoption of our proposals for 4 county constituencies for East Ayrshire Council area, North Ayrshire Council area and South Ayrshire Council area, as set out in paragraph 23 above.

