

# **Boundary Commission for Scotland Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme July 2008**

## **Introduction**

1. The Boundary Commission for Scotland is covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 which is regulated by the Information Commissioner's Office. The Boundary Commission has adopted the Freedom of Information Model Publication Scheme for public sector organisations produced by the Information Commissioner's Office which appears at Appendix A.
2. That Publication Scheme requires the Boundary Commission for Scotland to produce an information guide which details what is available under the classes of information specified in the scheme, and the methods by which that information can be obtained. This document does so, and that information guide is at Appendix B.
3. Further information about the Freedom of Information regime covering the Commission is available from the Information Commissioner's Office ([www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)).

## **Obtaining and Locating Information**

4. The information that the Commission publishes under the Publication Scheme is normally available from the Commission's website [www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk](http://www.bcomm-scotland.gov.uk). In addition to information contained in webpages, documents are published as Adobe Acrobat PDF files, with electorate data made available as Excel workbooks.
5. Requests for hard copies of Commission information should be directed to the Commission Secretariat. If you do not have full details of what you require, you should contact the Secretariat to discuss your requirements.
6. You can request information held by the Commission that does not appear in the information guide by contacting the Commission Secretariat.

## **Copyright**

7. All Commission publications are subject to Crown Copyright. All materials, including maps, may be reproduced for personal use or use within an organisation. For that there is no need for formal permission, and no royalty payment is required. Electronic and hard copies of maps must retain the Commission's logo, copyright statement and Ordnance Survey licence number. Please contact us if you want to reproduce the material for other purposes to discuss the copyright implications.

## **Charging Policy**

8. The published reports of the Commission's reviews are available for purchase from TSO (The Stationery Office). Copies of other publications are available free of charge.

9. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a charge may be made for dealing with requests for information. Public authorities are not obliged to deal with requests for information if the costs of finding the information exceed an amount set in the legislation.

### **Feedback, Questions and Further Information**

10. It is important to the Commission that its Freedom of Information policy meets your needs. Any suggestions for additional classes of information which might be included in future, or how information might be made more accessible, would be welcomed.

11. Any questions or comments about this policy should be sent to the Commission Secretariat.

### **Contact Details**

12. Contact details for the Boundary Commission for Scotland and its Secretariat are:

Boundary Commission for Scotland  
3 Drumsheugh Gardens  
Edinburgh  
EH3 7QJ  
Tel: 0131 538 7510  
Fax: 0131 538 7511  
Email: [secretariat@scottishboundaries.gov.uk](mailto:secretariat@scottishboundaries.gov.uk).

### **Complaints about this policy**

13. Complaints regarding this policy or the provision of information should be made in the first instance to the Secretary to the Commission at the above address.

14. If you are unhappy with our response to your request you can ask us to review it and if you are still dissatisfied, you can make an appeal to the Information Commissioner:

The Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Tel: 01625 545745  
Fax: 01625 524510  
Email: [mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

## Appendix A - Model publication scheme

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

This publication scheme commits an authority to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the authority. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme available to the public.

### Classes of information

Who we are and what we do.

- Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

What we spend and how we spend it.

- Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

What our priorities are and how we are doing.

- Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

How we make decisions.

- Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

Our policies and procedures.

- Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

Lists and registers.

- Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

The services we offer.

- Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

### **The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available**

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

### **Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme**

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

### **Written requests**

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

## **Appendix B – Information guide for the Boundary Commission for Scotland**

This information guide lists the information produced by the Boundary Commission for Scotland that is available under each of the classes of information specified in the Model Publication Scheme.

Information is available on the Commission website unless stated otherwise.

### **Who we are and what we do.**

Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

### **What we spend and how we spend it.**

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

### **What our priorities are and how we are doing.**

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

#### *Annual report*

The Commission produces an Annual Report.

### **How we make decisions.**

Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

#### *Boundary review documents*

Documentation produced as part of the boundary review process is made available on the Commission's website. This includes maps, news releases, information notices placed in newspapers, transcripts of local inquiry proceedings and local inquiry reports.

The Commission receives representations from organisations and individuals on its proposals. These are published on the web in summary only, and are available in full for inspection by arrangement.

#### *Commission meeting documents*

Minutes, agendas and papers of the Commission's meetings are made available on the Commission's website. Meeting documents that relate to the Commission's decision making will only be published once the proposals or report to which they relate have been published.

### **Our policies and procedures.**

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

#### *Code of practice*

The Commission maintains a Boundary Commissioners' Code of Practice.

### **Lists and registers.**

Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

#### *Register of interests*

The Commission maintains a Register of Interests for Commissioners.

**The services we offer.**

Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

*Published reports*

At the end of each review, the Commission prepares a report. These reports are made available on the Commission's website, and are also published by TSO (The Stationery Office).

*Guidance documents*

The Commission produces guidance documents on its work and context.

*Archive material*

The Commission passes its archival material to the National Archives of Scotland. Some historical material is added to the Commission's website.