

## **NOTICE OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2024**

### **Background**

Every Council is required to regularly undertake a review of all polling districts and polling places within its administrative boundary at least once every four years. The last full review was completed in 2019. A new review must take place within 16 months of October 2023.

### **Definitions**

A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area. All wards within West Northamptonshire are divided into polling districts, which form the basis upon which the register of electors is produced. Most are defined by parish boundaries but there are exceptions. The Council is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections and for keeping the polling districts under review. Although there is no requirement to sub- divide local government electoral wards into polling districts, it is recognised good practice to do so. In addition, and unless there are special circumstances that lead the Council to determine otherwise, each parish must be in a separate polling district.

- A polling place is the geographical area within which a polling station is located. In the absence of any legal definition, this can be regarded as widely as the entire polling district or as narrowly as the actual building used as a polling station.
- A polling station is the premises where voting takes place and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district.

Although the review is of polling districts and polling places, it is accepted that polling stations are inexorably linked to the review and comments are invited regarding those stations currently used and/or any suggested alternatives, ensuring that:

- a) Electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- b) As far as is reasonable and practicable, that polling places are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when designating a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

As a result, we are now looking for your thoughts and views about our existing arrangements to help us decide what, if any, changes should be made in this review.

Attached is a Polling District Schedule which shows the existing polling districts, polling places and polling stations for West Northamptonshire. This gives the location of our current polling stations that we plan on using at all forthcoming elections.

## Scope of the Review and Proposed Changes

It should also be noted that polling stations are not a formal part of the review, it is essential that the Council and Returning Officer have regard to the adequacy and suitability of premises used, particularly in relation to accessibility by disabled electors. The Polling District Schedule identifies areas where there are currently issues with the polling station, or else the polling station is located outside of the polling district. The Returning Officer is also always interested in hearing from residents about how polling in West Northamptonshire can be improved. Please let us know if you have any thoughts on your local polling station that you would like to share.

The following changes are proposed to the current schedule of polling districts, places and stations. Feedback on these proposals is particularly welcomed.

### General updates

- 1) To update all polling district references in order for them to match the new parliamentary boundaries, please see Appendix B for the polling district converter.
- 2) Creation of new polling districts in order to match the new boundaries, the amended polling districts can be seen in Appendix D. Polling districts are either created to allow for the new boundaries or to improve the polling station splits where more than one polling district to a polling place.
- 3) Amendments have been made to some polling districts to ensure a more equal split of voter ratio to polling stations, these can be seen on Appendix D.

### Rural Parishes

- 4) New Polling District DMLB to vote at Pitsford Village Hall, High Street, Pitsford NN6 9AD due to boundary change resulting from Community Governance Review.
- 5) New Polling District DMLD to vote at Moulton Community Centre, Sandy Hill Lane, Moulton NN3 7AX (as a consequence of 4).
- 6) Slapton (Polling District SRSM) The current polling place is Slapton Chapel Room, Chapel Lane, Slapton NN12 8PE. However, the facility is no longer available for use, and for the Parliamentary Election in July 2024 Abthorpe Village Hall was used. It is therefore proposed that Abthorpe Old School, School Lane, NN12 8QT becomes the polling place for this polling district.
- 7) Adstone Parish (Polling District SRSA). The current polling place is The Old School Hall, School Lane, Adstone, NN12 8DU which serves 72 electors. It is proposed that Maidford Village Hall, Church Lane, Maidford NN12 8HX be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 8) Castle Ashby Parish (Polling District SCHF) – the current polling place is Compton Estates Club, Castle Ashby, NN7 1LJ which serves 79 electors. It is proposed that Denton Village Hall, Vicarage Lane, Denton, NN7 1DT be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 9) Courteenhall Parish (Polling District SHRE). The current polling place is The Old Grammar School, Courteenhall, NN7 2QD which serves 66 electors. It is proposed that Roade Library, High Street, Roade NN7 2NW be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 10) Canons Ashby Parish (Polling District DRSG). Electors previously used a polling place in Woodford Halse. From May 2025 this will be in a different ward and can no longer

be used. It is proposed that Eydon Village Hall be used as the polling place for this polling district (the only other polling district in the same ward and parliamentary constituency).

- 11) Brockhall Parish (Polling District DCMA). Electors in this area previously used a polling place in Whilton. From May 2025 this will be in a different ward and can no longer be used. It is proposed that Flore Millennium Hall, 56 High Street, Flore NN7 4LW be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 12) Haselbech Parish (Polling District DNEG). Electors in Haselbech previously used a polling place in Naseby Parish. From May 2025 Naseby (Polling District DNSE) will be part of Naseby Ward while Haselbech will be part of the Rural North East ward. It is proposed that Kelmarsh Hall (L + A Suite), Kelmarsh NN6 9LY be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 13) Winwick Parish (Polling District DBCF). The current polling place is a domestic dwelling which serves 59 electors. It is proposed that West Haddon Village Hall, The Green, West Haddon NN6 7AN be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 14) The Polling District boundaries for Weedon Bec, Dodford, Stoke Bruerne and Roade have now been realigned with no properties affected by this move.
- 15) Great Houghton Parish (Polling District NSCH) will now vote at Parsons Memorial Hall, Leys Lane, Northampton NN4 0AN due to the Community Governance Review boundary change.
- 16) A new polling district has been created for Caldecote. (Polling District STWC) The electors will now be within the parish of Tiffield and vote at The Church Room, High Street, Tiffield NN12 8AB instead of going to Towcester (due to the Community Governance Review boundary change).

## **Daventry**

- 17) Daventry North East Ward (Polling Districts DDEA, DDEB and DDEC). It is considered that Daventry Court Hotel is not ideally situated due to issues that can occur when other events clash with polling day. Due to the increase in the electorate it is proposed that Monksmoor C of E Primary School, Croxden Way, Daventry NN11 2PD be used as it is a central location to these polling districts.
- 18) Daventry North West Ward (Polling Districts DDWA, DDWB, DDWC and DDWD). As above re: Daventry Court Hotel. Due to the increase in the electorate and it now being in a different ward, it is proposed that Ashby Fields Primary School, Wimborne Place, Daventry NN11 0XY be used as this is a central location to these polling districts.

## **Towcester**

- 19) Towcester Polling Districts have all now been aligned with Towcester Ward and Parish boundaries.
- 20) Part of Towcester Ward (Polling District STWE) currently goes to The Towcester Methodist Church. Subject to further investigation, it is proposed to utilise the Tove Valley Centre, Northampton Road, Towcester which is closer to the electors, with parking facilities, and more accessible.

## Northampton

- 21) New Parts of Northampton Kingsthorpe South Ward (Polling Districts DKSA and NNKSB). It is proposed the polling place for these polling districts is All Saints Church of England Primary School, Boughton Green Road, Northampton NN2 8QY.
- 22) Northampton Rushmills area (Polling District NSCTA). It is proposed that Abington Vale Primary School Stirling Campus, The Avenue, Northampton NN1 5BT OR Workbridge, Bedford Rd, Northampton NN4 7AD be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 23) Part of Northampton Semilong Town Ward (Polling District NNSGE) – it is proposed that Mobile Unit, Malcolm Arnold Academy, Trinity Avenue, NN2 6JW be used as the polling place for this polling district (subject to point 34 below).
- 24) Part of Northampton Parklands Ward (Polling Districts NNPKA and NNPKB). It is proposed that Parklands Community Centre, Devon Way, NN3 6DX OR Fernie Fields Sports and Social Club, Fernie Fields, Moulton, Northampton NN3 7BD be used as the polling place for this polling district due to boundary changes.
- 25) Part of Northampton Headlands Ward (Polling District NNHDC) It is proposed that Eden Close Community Centre, Eden Close, Northampton NN3 6NS be used as the polling place for this polling district due to boundary changes.
- 26) Northampton Headlands Ward (Polling District NNHDF). It is proposed to investigate an alternative venue either at The Read Well Care or The Arbours Primary Academy, Northampton.
- 27) Northampton Blackthorne and Rectory Farm Ward (Polling District NNBRB). It is proposed that as there is a usable community centre within the polling district, we no longer use a mobile station and use Goldcrest Court Community Hub, 10 Goldcrest Court, Northampton NN3 8XS be used as a polling place for this polling district.
- 28) Northampton Talavera Ward (Polling District NNTVC). It is proposed that as there is a usable and recently renovated Lodge Farm Community Centre, Crestwood Road, Northampton NN3 9JJ be used as the polling place for this polling district.
- 29) Northampton Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill Ward (Polling District NSFBF). It is proposed to investigate an alternative venue either within the confines of the University campus or at Northampton Judo club.
- 30) Northampton Duston Ward (Polling Districts NSDUE and NSDUD). It is proposed that Duston School, Berrywood Road, Northampton NN5 6XA be used as mobile stations are difficult to locate and costly.
- 31) New Part of Northampton Duston Ward (Polling District NSDUJ). It is proposed the polling place for this polling district is Chiltern Primary School, Chiltern Way, Northampton NN5 6BW.
- 32) Northampton Weston Favell & Abington Vale Ward (NSWAD and NSWAC). It is proposed that Standens Barn Primary School, Flaxwell Court, Northampton NN3 9EH be used as we have been informed on several occasions that the lighting and access to Standens Barn function room is not suitable.
- 33) Northampton Dallington Spencer Ward (Polling District NNDSB & NNDSA). It is proposed to investigate an alternative venue at St Andrews Methodist Church, Harlestone Road, Northampton NN5 6AB as Montague Crescent is no longer available.
- 34) Northampton Kingsley and Semilong Ward (Polling Districts NNKID, NNKIE and NNKIF). It is proposed to investigate an alternative venue at Bethany Homestead,

- Kingsley Road, Northampton NN2 7BP or combine with NNKIC and go to Kingsley Park Methodist Church, 36 Kings Park Terrace, Northampton NN2 7HG.
- 35) New Part of Northampton Kingsley and Semilong Ward (Polling District NNKIF). It is proposed the polling place for this polling district is Malcolm Arnold Academy School, Trinity Avenue, Northampton (subject to 34 above).
- 36) Northampton Kingsley and Semilong Ward (Polling District NNKIA). It is proposed that Kingsley Primary School, 22 Wallace Road, Northampton NN2 7EE as we have been informed on several occasions that the Pioneer Public House is no longer suitable due to lighting and accessibility requirements.
- 37) Northampton Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill Ward (Polling District NSFBA). It is proposed to relocate the polling place for this polling district to Briar Hill Community Centre, The Springs Walk, Northampton NN4 8SX, mobile stations are difficult to locate and are costly and specifically this station is located on a sloping grass verge which requires additional support depending on weather conditions.
- 38) Part of Northampton Abington and Phippsville Ward (Polling District NNAPG). It is proposed to relocate the polling place for this polling district to Old Northamptonians, Billing Road Northampton NN1 5RX. Mobile stations are difficult to locate and are costly.
- 39) New Part of Northampton Abington and Phippsville Ward (Polling District NNAPB). It is proposed the polling place for this polling district to Abington Avenue Utd Reform Church, Abington Avenue, Northampton NN1 4QA.
- 40) New Part of Northampton Abington and Phippsville Ward (Polling District NNAPD). It is proposed the polling place for this polling district to Stimpson Avenue Academy, Stimpson Avenue, Northampton NN1 4LR.
- 41) New Part of Northampton Blackthorn and Rectory Farm Ward (Polling District NNBRE). It is proposed to investigate a polling place for this polling district, we will look into the use of the Goldcrest Community Hub (subject to point 27 above).
- 42) New Part of Blackthorn and Rectory Farm Ward (Polling District NNBRA). It is proposed the polling place for this polling district to Abington Avenue Utd Reform Church, Abington Avenue, Northampton NN1 4QA.
- 43) A new Polling District SNVA was created due to the Local Government Boundary and the Community Governance Review changes, this area is in a different Parliamentary Constituency to the rest of Wootton and therefore we are investigating the possible use of Caroline Chisholm School, Wooldale Road, Northampton NN4 6TP.
- 44) A part of Billing Ward (Polling District NSBLE) it is proposed to find an alternative to Standens Barn (polling district in different ward to point 32), we are investigating the possibility of using the Venue at Billing Aquadrome.

## **Accessibility of Elections and the Elections Act 2022**

New requirements and guidance on the accessibility of elections were introduced as part of the Elections Act 2022. As a result of these new rules the Council has been reviewing the accessibility of our preferred polling stations around West Northamptonshire. Where polling stations are not fully accessible, there may be no alternative available. In these circumstances the Council and Returning Officer ensures that additional time and effort is undertaken to work with polling station staff to ensure we offer fair access for all voters. The Council and Returning Officer welcomes feedback on the accessibility and suitability of our polling stations for disabled voters, particularly where alternative facilities might improve the service to voters.

## Review Timetable

Action	Date
Formal consultation commences:	15 November 2024
End of formal consultation:	5 January 2025
Outcome report taken to Democracy and Standards Committee:	23 January 2025
Republish register of electors of affected polling districts	1 February 2025

## How to respond

Full details of this review (along with maps of all polling districts) can be viewed on our website at [www.westnorthants.gov.uk/have-your-say](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/have-your-say)

A schedule of the existing polling districts, polling places and polling stations can also be viewed at Appendix A. The results of our accessibility questionnaire can be viewed at Appendix B.

It is important that we consult as widely as possible on future arrangements. Any comments on the existing structure or proposed changes would be most welcome. Comments should relate to –

- The suitability and appropriateness of existing polling districts and polling places (see Appendix A);
- The suitability and appropriateness of proposed changes to polling districts and places (see Scope of the Review and Proposed Changes section above);
- The suitability and appropriateness of existing polling stations, particularly with respect to the accessibility of stations for disabled voters or the identification of alternative and potentially better venues (see appendix B);
- Constructive suggestions on how to improve existing arrangements, or positive comments in relation to current polling arrangements.

The easiest way to respond to this consultation is by completing our online form, which can be found on the polling district review pages on our website at: [www.westnorthants.gov.uk/have-your-say](http://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/have-your-say)

Responses can also be sent to Electoral Services, at the address below or emailed to [electoralservices@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:electoralservices@westnorthants.gov.uk) Please make the subject of your email POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW.



You can also write to –  
Electoral Services  
West Northamptonshire Council  
The Guildhall  
St Giles Square  
Northampton  
NN1 1ED

Please ensure responses are received by no later than 5 January 2025.

Anybody making representations should be aware that, upon completion of the review, all correspondence and representations received must, by law, also be published alongside reports to the Democracy and Standards Committee and will help inform decisions made by that body.

Consultation issued by Anna Earnshaw, Electoral Registration Officer, Returning Officer and Chief Executive

15 November 2024