



Reigate & Banstead
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Banstead | Horley | Redhill | Reigate

REPORT OF:	ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER/ RETURNING OFFICER
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TO:	COUNCIL
DATE:	18 DECEMBER 2014

AGENDA ITEM NO:	11	WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL
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SUBJECT:	REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES
RECOMMENDATIONS: 1. The premises set out in Annex 1 be designated the polling places for the polling districts stated with effect from 1st January 2015; and 2. Taking into consideration any responses to the current consultation on using Reigate Park Church, the Electoral Registration Officer be delegated authority to designate a polling place for the SPW1 polling district of South Park & Woodhatch Ward.	
SUMMARY This report sets out the proposals for polling districts and polling places in the Borough following the statutory review undertaken under the Electoral Administration Act 2006.	

STATUTORY POWERS

1. The Electoral Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places.
2. Reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 2013. The current review must therefore be completed by 31 January 2015.
3. The last statutory review of polling districts and polling places was carried out in 2011.
4. Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 sets out all the steps that must be undertaken to complete a review. Officers have also had regard to guidance published by the Electoral Commission.
5. In conducting a statutory review Local Authorities are required to demonstrate they have met the criteria set out in the legislation as follows:
 - Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;

- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

REVIEW PROCESS

6. In accordance with statutory requirements the Council gave notice of the review on Monday 28 July 2014 and sought comments from a wide range of stakeholders including:
 - The Acting Returning Officers for Parliamentary Constituencies within the Borough
 - All Borough Councillors
 - County Council Divisional Councillors for Reigate and Banstead
 - Surrey County Council
 - Horley Town Council
 - Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council
 - MPs for the borough
 - Political Parties
 - Residents Associations
 - Access Groups - Eastern Disability Alliance Network / Citizens' Advice Bureau
7. The Review information was also available via the Council's web site for public consultation.
8. As part of the review process Officers visited all premises currently designated as polling stations along with any identified potential alternative premises and considered existing arrangements against a range of criteria including:
 - Convenience for electors
 - Accessibility
 - Car parking
 - Facilities for staff
 - Health & Safety
9. Representations received are detailed in Appendix A including those received from visits to premises carried out by the Eastern Disability Alliance Network and Citizens' Advice Bureau.
10. A representation was also received relating to changes in the current Ward Boundaries which is outside the scope of this review.

Accessibility Issues

11. There are still concerns regarding access for the elderly and/or disabled electors at the Meadvale Parish Room polling place in Somerset Road, Redhill. Due to the proximity of the entrance to the highway it is not possible to have a ramped access. Officers have visited a number of alternative venues, but these are either unavailable or unsuitable.

12. Comments and concerns about access raised by the representatives of the Eastern Disability Alliance Network and Citizens' Advice Bureau have been passed on to the relevant premises managers.
13. A schedule of existing and proposed polling places is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES

14. As a result of the review, two changes are proposed to the designated polling places, as summarised below.

Horley East

15. Oakwood School has been the designated polling place in recent elections. However, development of the school has included demolition of the previous polling station. No alternative rooms are available at Oakwood School and in the elections in May 2014 temporary porta cabins were required to operate a polling station.
16. An alternative polling place is proposed at Langshott School. This is very close to Oakwood School.
17. An objection was received from Horley Town Council due to concerns regarding the school closing on polling days. School closures are a matter for the Head Teacher and Governors of individual schools to determine. Langshott School has confirmed a closure will not be necessary.
18. It is therefore recommended that the polling place for Horley East (HOE1) be designated as Langshott School.

South Park & Woodhatch

19. Following the consultation closure, the Electoral Registration Officer was informed that St Luke's Church will be undergoing redevelopment during 2015 and will, therefore, not be available for use as a polling place.
20. Officers have carried out a review of alternative locations and identified Reigate Park Church in Park Lane East as the preferred location. This is considered a very suitable location with good accessibility. Consultation with Ward Members, Group Leaders and the local MP is currently underway.
21. It is therefore recommended that the designation of a Polling place in South Park & Woodhatch (SPW1) be delegated to the Electoral Registration Officer, taking into consideration the outcomes of the current consultation.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

23. There are no specific resources implications arising from this report.

CONSULTATION

24. Consultation has been undertaken as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of this report.

CONCLUSIONS

25. The Council is obliged to have suitable arrangements in place in order to provide voting facilities for all the electors of the Borough. The process of review is ongoing and Officers will continue to pursue alternative more suitable premises where existing premises fall below the standards sought by the Council.

Background Papers: Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983
Electoral Commission guidance
Review documentation; representations received.

Ward	District	Polling Station	RO initial comments	Consultee comments (if any)		Access For All comments Representations received from the Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Eastern Disability Alliance Network	RO recommendation
				Name	Comment		
BANSTEAD VILLAGE	BAN1	BANSTEAD CIVIC CENTRE	No proposed changes			I'm concerned about lack of disabled parking only 4 in main car park – 2 of which are not near entrance. On polling day people are able to use maybe as a drop off point or park out the back of building and use the back entrance if necessary.	No change
	BAN2						
	BAN3	THE MEAD ROOM, BANSTEAD COMMUNITY HALL	No proposed changes				No change
CHIPSTEAD, WOODMANSTERNE & HOOLEY	CHW1	WOODMANSTERNE VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes.			No disabled parking but plenty of space. No other issues.	No change
	CHW2	PETER AUBERTIN HALL	No proposed changes.				No change
	CHW3	HOOLEY VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes.	Cllr B Gardner 01.08.14	I would recommend Hooley and Mugswell retain their current polling station as residents tend not to travel, and a number are elderly.	No disabled parking - limited normal parking spaces. Ramp has a sharp turn and may require assistance. No other issues.	No change
	CHW4	NETHERNE VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes.				No change
EARLSWOOD & WHITEBUSHES	EWB1	EARLSWOOD INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL	No proposed changes. Also used for polling district RHE3.				No change
	EWB2	RED CROSS CENTRE	No proposed changes.			There are plenty of parking spaces close by although none are dedicated. There is a slight step at the external doors. The building is single storey and has a gentle slope leading to entrance. There is a toilet offering disabled access.	No change
	EWB3	WHITEBUSHES VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes.			There are no hazards/obstructions. The building is easy to access and has its own car park. The back entrance to the hall also has a ramp for easy wheelchair access. There is no lighting on the path leading from the estate to the hall for approx. 15 metres. The road access has no pavement.	No change
	EWB4	SALFORDS VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes. Also used for SAS1.				No change
HORLEY CENTRAL	HOC1	REGENT HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE	No proposed changes.			Disabled parking facilities are available. There is level access. Automatic front doors are wide enough for motorised wheelchairs. Disabled toilet facilities are available. The building is modern with good access.	No change
	HOC2	THE ARCHWAY THEATRE	No proposed changes. Double polling station.				No change
	HOC3	ST FRANCIS CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes. Also used for polling district HOE2.				No change
HORLEY EAST	HOE1	LANGSHOTT SCHOOL	Considered suitable. School hall will be made available. Changed from Oakwood School due to demolition of previous polling station and lack of suitable alternative rooms at Oakood (double polling station) or within the area.	Horley Town Council 11.08.14	Horley Town Council objects to the proposal to use the school hall at Langshott Primary School as the Polling Place for Polling District HOE1. Members believe that security and child protection issues would require the school to close on election days, losing valuable education time for its pupils. Members suggest that other alternatives could be considered at the Oakwood School campus (the previous site of HOE1), which would not require that school to be closed for election purposes.		Recommended. The previous facility used at Oakwood School has been demolished and rebuilt within the school campus. At a meeting with the Head Teacher and Site Manager, the ERO was informed that there were no other available options that would not require closure of the school. Oakwood School cannot close for polling day due to the elections falling within the exam timetable. Langshott School is considered suitable and the ERO has been informed that closure in 2015 is not necessary. This will be assessed moving forward.
				Limes Avenue Action Group 20.08.14	As far as our local area is concerned, the current polling facilities appear satisfactory. The only disappointment is the loss of the Oakwood School facility which was a good location for many local residents.		
	HOE2	ST FRANCIS CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes. Also used by polling district HOC3.			Double doors would need to be locked back. Lots of parking spaces but none disabled as such.	No change
	HOW1	PATHFINDER SCOUT HALL	No proposed changes Double polling station.				No change

HORLEY WEST	HOW2	ST WILFRID'S CHURCH	No proposed changes.			18 parking spaces available close by but none are dedicated to disabled parking. Front doors offer level access. Disabled toilet facilities are available and easily accessible.	No change
KINGSWOOD WITH BURGH HEATH	KBH1	WAR MEMORIAL HALL	No proposed changes.	Cllr Mrs Spiers 28.07.14	The three polling stations in this ward are perfect for my residents that part of the ward, Kingswood hall serves Kingswood well, and lower Kingswood is well served by the village hall. All the buildings are easily found, have good toilet facilities and kitchens for the staff. Please leave them alone.	Car park surface uneven. Plenty of parking space, although no marked disabled parking. Corridors at front of building may cause problems - better to use side doors for access straight into the hall. No disabled toilet facilities.	No change
	KBH2						
	KBH3	KINGSWOOD VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes.			Small car park with no disabled parking. Car park surface is uneven. No disabled toilet, needed support using an ordinary sized ladies toilet. Difficulty moving a wheelchair through the main hall. Much effort required.	No change
	KBH4	CHURCH OF THE WISDOM OF GOD CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes.			Cllr B Gardner 01.08.14	I would recommend that Lower Kingswood retain their current polling station as residents tend not to travel, and a number are elderly.
MEADVALE & ST JOHN'S	MSJ1	EX-SERVICE & SOCIAL CLUB / ST MARY'S CHURCH CENTRE	The Ex-Service & Social Club has been used while St Mary's Church Centre is re-built. There is limited on street parking in Chartfield Road so it is intended to revert to using St Mary's Church Centre, Chart Lane, Reigate once the new building is complete.	Meadvale and St John's ward Liberal Democrats 15.08.14	We would prefer St Mary's as we assume the access will be better for those with mobility issues and there should be parking available.		At the time of writing this report, St Mary's Church Centre has re-opened although contractors are still on site.
				Reigate Conservative Association 10.09.14	Unsuitable for General Election. St Mary's Church Centre - Good		
	MSJ2	MEADVALE PARISH ROOM	Retain although there is no disabled access and owing to the proximity of the entrance to the highway it is not possible to have a ramped access. Suitable alternative premises has not been found.	Reigate Conservative Association 10.09.14	Difficult because no parking. At a General Election people will be queuing up the road. St John's School - possible alternative to Meadvale Parish Hall but access is not obvious or easy.		No change
	MSJ3	WOODHATCH COMMUNITY CENTRE	No proposed changes.			The building is 20 years old and has very good disabled access.	No change
MERSTHAM	MER1	MERSTHAM COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL	No proposed changes.	Cllr B Gardner 01.08.14	I would recommend that Merstham retain their current polling stations as residents tend not to travel, and a number are elderly.		No change
	MER2	RED OAK CHILDREN'S CENTRE	No proposed changes.				No change
	MER3	WOODFIELD SCHOOL	No proposed changes.				No change
	MER4	CANADA HALL	No proposed changes.			Accessible extension currently being built which will include flat access and disabled toilet. At the moment, wheelchair users get in using pathway via church or vicar's driveway. This is on target to be completed by May 2014.	No change
NORK	NOR1	ST PAUL'S CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes. Double polling station.	Cllr N Harrison 29.07.14	I agree that there should be no changes to Nork ward polling districts and stations.	Main road parking - no kerb dropped unless you block vicar's driveway.	No change
	NOR2	THE BEACON SCHOOL	No proposed changes - a ramp is provided on polling day. Also used for polling district TAT2.				No change

PRESTON	PRE1	THE PHOENIX CENTRE, MERLAND RISE	Previously held at the Community Centre and Merland Rise Church which have been demolished. Considered suitable for use until building of the new community facilities is complete.				No change
REDHILL EAST	RHE1	ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH	Replaced Phoenix Centre, East Surrey College in 2014 which was unsuitable due to access and unable to hold 2 polling stations. No further changes proposed.				No change.
	RHE2	THE WARWICK SCHOOL	No proposed changes. No other suitable premises have been identified.				No change.
	RHE3	EARLSWOOD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL	No proposed changes. Also used by polling district EWB1.				No change.
REDHILL WEST	RHW1	HOLY TRINITY CHURCH CENTRE	No proposed changes.				No change.
	RHW2	ST MATTHEW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL	No proposed changes. Double polling station.				No change.
REIGATE CENTRAL	RGC1	ST PHILLIP'S CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes.			Very good access to the building - no obstructions at all. Newly built disabled toilet facilities are available. Would recommend walking to this polling station due to lack of parking in and around the venue.	No change
	RGC2	COLMAN REDLAND CENTRE (SMALL HALL)	No proposed changes. Also used by polling district RGH1.			Concerned about the uneven and broken pathway into the polling place being "potentially dangerous to both visually and mobility impaired voters, including those using powered wheelchairs" - building work on site may have damaged the pathway further.	No change - no other suitable premises available.
	RGC3	DONYNGS (CRECHE)	No proposed changes.				No proposed changes.
REIGATE HILL	RGH1	COLMAN REDLAND CENTRE (SMALL HALL)	No proposed changes. Also used by polling district RGC2.				No change.
	RGH2	ST MARK'S HALL	No proposed changes. Double polling station.			Parking may be a problem as there are minimal amounts of parking spaces on the highway. On one side of the approach to the polling station there is minimal lighting, there is one lamp post and one light above the entrance to the hall. There is also easy access to the big hall.	No change. Access comments passed to hall management.
SALFORDS & SIDLOW	SAS1	SALFORDS VILLAGE HALL	No proposed changes. Also used for polling district EWB4.			There are dropped kerbs close to the building and the pathway is a little uneven but offers easy access. There is a low step but shouldn't cause access problems. Entrance doors should be wide enough to allow wheelchair access when locked back. No internal hazards/obstructions. Disabled toilet facilities are available.	No change.
	SAS2	REIGATE VALLEY COLLEGE	No proposed changes.				No change.
SOUTH PARK & WOODHATCH	SPW1	ST LUKE'S CHURCH	No proposed changes. Replaced Sandcross Infant School which located to new premises. Double polling station.			Path leading into church is steep and uneven. Temporary ramp is provided by the church. No internal hazards/obstructions. No disabled toilet but doors are wide enough to allow wheelchair access.	After close of consultation, the RO was informed that St Luke's Church has been granted planning permission for building works and will not be available for the elections in May 2015. Reigate Park Church has been identified as suitable alternative premises and the consultation process is underway.
	SPW2	DOVERS GREEN SCHOOL	No proposed changes.				No change.

TADWORTH & WALTON	TAW1	ST JOHN'S CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes. Double polling station.				No change.
	TAW2	THE COMMUNITY CENTRE	No proposed changes.				No change.
TATTENHAMS	TAT1	ST MARK'S CHURCH HALL	No proposed changes. Double polling station.	Cllr N Harrison 29.07.14	I agree there should be no changes to Tattenhams ward polling districts and stations.		No change.
	TAT2	THE BEACON SCHOOL	Considered suitable - a temporary ramp is provided on polling day. Also used for polling district NOR2.				No change.