

Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations Review 2019

Representations received up until Wednesday 14 August 2019

Polling District	Polling Station	Representation
All	All	We wish to make no comments regarding the review
CH4	St Andrews Methodist Church Hall, Cheriton	My polling station has always been in this hall. It is just up the road from me - there's no bus service, but it is within walking distance or there's a car park and it wasn't full. I walked in, was immediately given a card, voted and was out within two minutes.
FC1	n/a	If you are considering different venues, please consider the use of the Parish Church Hall (41 Guildhall Street North) a Our Lady Help of Christians, as a future Polling Station. It is central to the town and could easily provide a service to 2500+ voters
HY1/2	New Fountation Pub, Seabrook (in place of Seabrook Church Hall for 02/05/19 and 23/05/19)	I appreciate that you had to find an alternative polling station in a hurry and that The Fountain was probably the only option but I don't think a pub is really an appropriate polling station as some people might feel uncomfortable entering a pub eg some muslims
NDE1	Cricket Club, Hawkinge	The use of this site for the polling station is fine. There is parking for those that cannot walk there. There are no steps to negotiate so safe for less mobile residents too.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	Observations This is a difficult polling station to get to if you don't have your own or access to transport ie car. It is not on a bus route It is some distance from the Town centre The gravel from the entrance to the door makes it very difficult for those with mobility aids to cross. Mobility scooters struggled as well as those with walking frames and sticks. The access to the Club does not allow for wheelchairs. The doors are not wide enough If my memory serves me correctly there is still a step at the door for those with walking aids to conquer.
WDM8	Brenzett Village Hall	The members of Brenzett Parish Council feel that Brenzett Village Hall is the most suitable place for the Polling Station in Brenzett as it is central, well known, fully accessible for everyone and has plenty of parking.
HR1/2	Hythe Football Club, Hythe	Our local polling station used to be at the Light Railway Station and is now at the Football Ground. The football ground is much more difficult to get to for many people. Could it come back to a more central position?
FC1	Town Hall, Folkestone	Very convenient
RM1	Burmarsh Church Hall	Burmarsh Parish Council noted this review by F&HDC at its meeting on 9 th July and agreed to express satisfaction with current arrangements.
NDE9/10	Scout Hut / Black Horse Inn	The scout hut on the A260 was not suitable on grounds of health and safety as it was access from the busy A260. Suggest that the proprietors of the Black Horse Public House be contacted.
HY1/3 & HR1	Age UK, Hythe / Hythe Town Football Club / New Fountain Pub	Age UK Hythe & Lyminge be relocated to either Burton Hall of the Library Foyer.Museum because of the logistics of using an elderly working/eating environment. Hythe Town Football Club be relocated to the Light Railway Hall due to the distance that voters need to travel. The Fountain PH be relocated to the new Indian Restaurant next to the Seapoint garage as a more appropriate venue.
WDM2	Dungeness Lifeboat Station, Dungeness	Dungeness and Lydd on Sea The current Polling Station at Dungeness Lifeboat Station is not easily accessible, and we propose that Heysham Hall, Taylor Road, Lydd-on-Sea is used as a Polling Station. The Polling Station at Dungeness is not on a bus route, is hard for disabled people to access especially in adverse weather conditions. It is too far away for voters to meaningfully take part in elections because of its location. It also lacks street lighting and is dark. Voters particularly those who are vulnerable do not feel safe going to and from. Voters are also deterred from participating on account of feeling they would hinder the launch of the lifeboat or any similar emergency. Voters feel disenfranchised at the location of the polling station and feel that it is not in a suitable location and do not bother. Moving the polling station to Heysham Hall would encourage voters to participate in elections, feel they were part of the democratic process and the council would have representatives who truly reflected the views and wishes of the electorate. Heysham Hall is close to a bus route and has plenty of safe on street parking.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	This location has many negatives for many voters. The road to the club is not the safest with no pavement and a difficult road junction to cross. When you get to the bowling club the entrance is across a gravel parking lot which is not very easy for the less sure footed or those in wheelchairs or using walkers. Finally it is not a very central location within the ward so some voters have a much longer journey than others and therefore require the use of cars

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NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	The Bowls Club does have very good parking arrangements but there should be better defined arrangements for disabled parking. The road outside the Bowls Club does not have a defined footpath or streetlighting.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	<p>New Romney Town Council Response to F.H.D.C. Polling Station Review This response is on behalf of New Romney Town council, it was produced by a working party of four members, representing both Town and Coastal wards, delegated by New Romney Town Council to submit a joint response to the F.H.D.C. Review on polling stations. One of the councillors is disabled and experienced firsthand the problems associated with using The Bowls Club as a voting station. We believe that there are no problems with the Varne Boat Club, the Coastal Ward voting station. So the following observations are purely in respect to the use of the Bowls Club as a voting station in the Town Ward. We believe the following are negatives with respect to the use of the Bowls Club as a polling station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electors could not get to the polling station due to its location, away from the town centre and the most densely populated areas. • There is no pavement in the road leading to the station and the condition of the road is not safe for those walking. • The road is unlit and there is therefore a greater risk as it gets dark. • On arrival voters are meet by a large gravelled car park which has to be crossed to get to the entrance and it is therefore a problem for the less able. • The entrance door was narrow leading to access issues for those in wheelchairs and those needing walking aides. Although there was a ramp there was still a door step to be negotiated. We believe location is key to the democratic process of encouraging a higher voter engagement and turn out, and would therefore suggest there are several better locations for a polling station: 1. The Scout Hut 2. The Methodist Church room 3. The Old School House 4. The March Academy/Leisure centre. These meet the 4 key needs required for a polling station. • Central location • Safe accessibility • Transport access public/private/foot
FC1 - 4	<p>Town Hall, Folkestone</p> <p>South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue</p> <p>Holy Trinity Church Hall, Sandgate Road</p> <p>Wards Hotel, Earls Avenue/Grimston Gardens</p>	<p>Here is our submission to the polling stations review. We have concentrated on Folkestone Central ward as councillors representing it. The current arrangement of polling stations is failing voters. For example people living in FC1 in the Brockman road area have to walk all the way to the town hall to vote when they live right by or much closer to the FC2 polling station. And people living in FC1 in the Phoenix Court (Clarence road) area have a longish walk over a difficult terrain, uphill, for those with mobility issues but who still want to exercise their right to vote in person at the town hall. The proposals from the Returning Officer to move people at the Brockman road end of FC1 into FC2 are sensible in this regard. However they cause their own issues which will be addressed shortly. By contrast currently in FC3 and FC4 you have two polling stations very close together meaning only a short, flat walk for people living in this part of the ward to either Wards hotel or Holy Trinity church.</p> <p>Our proposal is to create a 5th polling district for Central ward to cater better for people living in the Phoenix court (Clarence road) area. This will increase voter participation and demonstrate that the council cares about residents in this area who have been neglected for far too long. The area would fit this model neatly as a self contained part of the ward off Dover road - spanning Clarence road to Queens street.</p> <p>Our proposal is to create the 5th polling district (FC5) polling station at St Augustines church on Dover road which has an accessible downstairs room or at Sunflower house on Foord road. Both are closer and more accessible for these residents than the town hall.</p> <p>Coming back to the issue of the boundary change proposed by the Returning Officer between FC1 and FC2; this is sensible as far as FC1 goes. However it creates a problem for FC2. If you live in Kingsnorth Gardens for example you will no longer be able to vote at the church at the end of your road but have to go all the way to Wards hotel which is practically on the edge of the polling district. This will mean a loss of participation. Our proposal to address this is to close Wards hotel as a polling station and move it to Folkestone College which is more central. As Wards currently doubles as the polling station for Sandgate this would need to be addressed also and could be moved to the Holy Trinity polling station (FC3).</p>

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BR1	Grace Taylor Hall, Lucy Avenue	Broadmead ward continues to expand, with new developments such as Scholar's Village having recently been built off Park Farm Road. The existing Polling Station of Grace Taylor Hall is far too small to cope with major elections or referenda where turnout can be considerably higher than 60% and often struggles for space or is forced to have large queues due to lack of space of additional polling booths. The simple alternative would be to use the Folkestone Academy secondary school located immediately opposite which has ample space for a larger polling station and better parking facilities for those that require it or who have mobility issues.
FC1/2	Town Hall, Guilhall Street South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue	Folkestone Central ward Polling District FC1 requires voters to have to navigate busy roads including Forester's Way, if they live in the area immediately to the east of Foresters Way or south of Grace Hill. It is proposed that the FC1 polling district be split so that all electors living north of Cheriton Road, Foresters Way, Grace Hill (one side) and Dover Road vote at the Catholic Hall at Our Lady Help of Christians on Guildhall Street which also has access from Cheriton Road and was used for many years previously, whilst the remainder continue to vote at Folkestone Town Hall along with the addition of those electors in FC2 south of Bouverie Road West.
NDE3	Hawkinge Community Centre, Heron Forstal Avenue	North Downs East ward currently forces electors in NDE3 to cross Spitfire Way to vote at Hawkinge Community Centre, outside of the Polling District, which is used for other Polling Districts in North Downs East. It would be much more convenient, safer and more accessible for voters in NDE3 to vote at nearby Churchill School in the Polling District.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, Sussex Road	In New Romney ward, the recent change to the Bowls Club for electors in NR2 means that the location is considerably less accessible than the previous location of the Scout Hut which is the preferred option for the majority of local people that we have spoken with regarding the change. It is therefore requested that the change is made to revert back to the Scout Hut.
NDW9	Lyminge Village Hall, Woodland Road	Lyminge Village Hall is currently used as the area's polling station but this does cause an issue for many residents as the Pre-School has to close for the day and residents have to find alternative childcare arrangements or take annual leave. Whilst the Pre-School have expressed a view that they do not want to upset long-standing residents who are used to this venue, the Lyminge Village Hall Management Committee feel that it is unfortunate for the residents left with childcare issues as a result, and would like to take this opportunity, along with the council, to see if an alternative option can be explored. As such, we would like to invite the review panel to consider whether Lyminge Scout Hut, of which the parish council are the landlords, could be used as an alternative. The Scout Hut is on the same ground as the Village Hall so the accessibility and car parking is the same. There are toilets but no kitchen in the building. It is fully accessible for disabled users or users with additional needs.
EF1-3	Wood Avenue Library, Folkestone Salvation Army, Folkestone St John's Church Hall, Folkestone	I wish to place on record my objections to the Acting Returning Officer's proposals for East Folkestone ward. The proposals are merely for numbers purposes and do not take into account the ease of voting for electors in the ward that currently exist. I would propose that the polling stations remain as they were and that EF3 is split into two new Polling Districts and that Wood Avenue Polling Station in made into a double polling station as there is more than enough room at the venue.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	The current arrangements for voting at the Bowls Club in Sussex Road New Romney is not easily accessible and we support the alternative location at the Methodist Church High Street New Romney. The Bowls Club is located down a lane with no public footpath and inadequate lighting. The location is not widely known to many of the electorate and it is too far away for voters to meaningfully take part in elections. The Methodist Church is well known locally and is near a bus route on the High Street. There is plenty of parking nearby in a public car park and some on road parking nearby.