

2013 Review of Polling Districts and Places

The initial consultation period on the current Review of Polling Places ended on Friday 22 November 2013.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is now publishing proposals for future Polling Districts and Polling Places within the city for the next 4 year period. The current arrangements, together with initial proposals, ward maps and proposals for the next 4 year period can be viewed at <http://www.derby.gov.uk/media/DerbyCityCouncil-acting-Returning-Officer-Initial-Recomendations-2013.pdf>

Comments received in relation to the first stage of the review process are shown below.

Allestree Ward

Comment 1, 24 October 2013

'I am writing to let you know on behalf of all three Ward Councillors in Allestree that we fundamentally disagree with and object to the recommendations put forward for voting arrangements in the Allestree electoral division.

We formally object to the retention of the Woodlands public house as a polling station and its inclusion in the final recommendations is unwelcome.

This public house used as a polling station is widely disliked by local electors who have frequently complained to us about it and many residents resent having to use a public house as a voting place. It is seen as a disincentive to local voters at a time when we want to maximise on peoples' willingness to vote.

The Woodlands public house is in close proximity and very near geographically to the polling station at the Holy Family church which is very well liked and well used and has excellent facilities including some parking. A widely held view from residents is that they would prefer to use the Holy Family Church venue rather than a public house even if it means walking a few extra yards to get to it!

The formal submission therefore from the Allestree Councillors is that polling districts AL2 and AL3 should be combined into one polling district. This new combined polling district should vote at the Holy Family Church. This would enable the Woodlands Public House to be deleted from the list.

The proximity of the two polling stations means that there will be little inconvenience to Allestree voters, many of whom travel to the polling station by car in any event. For those who do walk, the very short extra distance created by deleting the Woodlands public house should not pose a serious problem. Allestree already has the highest number of registered postal votes in the City so most constituents with access or mobility problems already vote by post in any event.

Our proposal will also make staffing the polling stations much simpler as there will be one less polling station to staff and manage.

The Allestree Councillors therefore formally submit to the review that polling station AL3 as proposed should be deleted and merged with polling district AL2 with its location confirmed at the Holy family Church.

The Woodlands public house polling station, as proposed should be deleted.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that you have received this submission and how you propose to react to it in due course.'

Councillors Hickson, Davis and Webb

Alvaston Ward

Comment 1, 24 October 2013

'Looking at the map each ward seems to be centrally catered for. I am sure that access has been investigated before recommending any venue. I expect there will be plenty of advance notice of any changes. Sorry this may not seem to bring any fresh ideas but it seems everything is quite suitable. Lets hope it re ignites voter interest.'

Joy Lewandowska

Boulton Ward

Comment 1, 18 November 2013

'The concerns we express below about the Moorhead Polling Station on 15/11/2012 arise because Moorhead Landau Forte Academy was in session and not closed as on previous election days.

Provisions made for voting on the 15th November 2012 were not up to the usual standard of easy and convenient access for all for voting, including the disabled and those with mobility problems. Some provision for parking for voters with or without disability was not available as had been the case on past election days.

At approximately 10.15am on the 15th we started to turn the car into the Polling Station and found the school gates closed, with no warning signs. There were no on road parking spaces near the School/Polling Station because they were full, most likely with people connected to the School and perhaps Merrill School. There were no parking spaces available for voters until halfway down Stanley Road (the nearest side Street). At a normal City Council election, the parking problem would be greatly compounded at busy times when Moorhead Landau Forte Academy would be in session. We would not be classed as disabled voters, but there seemed to be no provision for disabled voters walking on foot or for those bringing disabled voters including those that are frail and unable to walk far.

The actual distance to walk from the road side/side entrance school gate along the pathway to the room designated as a polling station was further than in past elections. The Polling Station was too far for some walking, especially those with mobility problems. In practice, we think, some of these voters would give up and go home.

The side entrance school gate to the Polling Station is very close to the school patrol crossing at school run time. Congestion occurs in the morning/afternoon when, over a period of time at Moorhead Landau Forte and Merrill schools. There are daily parking issues. Some works traffic is also starting to use Brackens Lane at these times. We are aware that some complaints were made about the darkness of the path leading to the Polling Station but in May, this should not be such a problem.

We do not feel that the arrangements made for voting at Moorhead/Landau Forte Academy for the 15th November, 2012 would encourage people to vote. Therefore, please could consideration be given to the Brackens Hotel Function Room on Brackens Lane, Alvaston?’

Joan & David Hodgkinson

Chaddesden Ward

Comment 5, 3 October 2013

Thanks for the details below but the Chaddesden ward recently changed their venues to enable our Children Centre buildings to be used. (CD1 and CD5). By the way to be exact and to stop any confusion they are called the Audrey Drive Children’s Centre and the Meadow Lane Children’s Centre, after complaints that North and South were confusing to local people.

I would be interested to hear of any changes to the present locations in Chaddesden ward please.

Councillor Sara Bolton

Derwent Ward

Comment 1, 24 October 2013

‘I do believe we are happy with our polling stations in Derwent ward’

Councillor Margaret Redfern