

Appendix 3: Summary of responses to the consultation with Returning Officer comments

Ward	Polling District	Respondent	Summary of response	RO comment
Anston & Woodsetts	ANG	Cllr Tarmey	<p>The current polling place for ANG (Thorpe Salvin) is in Harthill, which is in Wales Ward. Now that Thorpe Salvin has been incorporated into the Anston & Woodsetts ward, I feel that a polling place within the new ward would be more appropriate.</p> <p>Alternative suggestions: South Anston Community Hall and St Peter's Church in Thorpe Salvin.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has considered St Peter's Church, but it is not fully accessible as the main entrance has a step at the start of the path, which comes directly from the road. As there is not a pavement between the road and the stepped entrance, it is not possible to use a ramp. There is second entrance through the graveyard, but this also has steps and electors would have to walk across the grass, as there is no path. Therefore the (Acting) Returning Officer does not consider this to be a suitable building for a polling place.</p> <p>Whilst using South Anston Methodist Community Hall would mean the polling place for ANG would be in the ward, it would be difficult for electors without a car to get to. Harthill is around a 15-minute journey by bus from Thorpe Salvin. In comparison, travelling to South Anston would require electors to get a bus, passing through Harthill, to get a train from Kiveton Park to Worksop and then a bus through to South Anston. Therefore the (Acting) Returning Officer feels that although out of the ward, Harthill Village Hall is a more convenient location for electors.</p> <p>Added to this, there have not been any complaints or comments from electors about the location since Harthill has been used as the polling place for ANG. It is therefore felt that with no suitable locations within ANG, Harthill Village Hall is the most convenient location for electors.</p>

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Anston & Woodsetts	ANG	Alexander Stafford MP	<p>Concerns that the polling place was not within the ward. Also concerns including Harthill not being accessible to electors without a car, an aging demographic in Thorpe Salvin (ANG), and that other communities of a similar size have a polling place in their area. Also concerns of voter confusion in Harthill when the polling place was used for a by-election in the Dinnington ward.</p> <p>Alternative suggestions provided were the Parish Oven Public House on Worksop Road, St Peter's Church on Harthill Road or the use of a mobile unit.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has considered St Peter's Church, but it is not fully accessible as the main entrance has a step at the start of the path, which comes directly from the road. As there is not a pavement between the road and the stepped entrance, it is not possible to use a ramp. There is second entrance through the graveyard, but this also has steps and electors would have to walk across the grass, as there is no path. Therefore the (Acting) Returning Officer does not consider this to be a suitable building for a polling place.</p> <p>The (Acting) Returning Officer is of the opinion that Harthill Village Hall is accessible to electors without a car, as there is a bus between Thorpe Salvin and Harthill, which takes approximately 15 minutes.</p> <p>Whilst some similarly sized communities do have polling places within their area, this will be because there is an available and suitable building that can be used, and this is unfortunately not the case for Thorpe Salvin.</p> <p>The Parish Oven Public House does not have a separate function room and are therefore not able to accommodate a polling station.</p> <p>The use of mobile unit as a polling station is not ideal due to their limitations in terms of size, especially given the additional requirements for the provision of a private area for checking voter ID. There are also significant issues in ensuring mobile units are fully accessible, especially when they are only sited for a short period of time. The (Acting) Returning Officer was not able to identify a suitable site within the polling</p>

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				<p>district where a mobile unit with an access ramp, generator and portable toilet could be sited.</p>
Aston & Todwick	ASB	Aston Hall Junior and Infants School	<p>Objection to the use of the school as it must close on polling day, which impacts on the education of the children, especially as the date tends to be close to SATs.</p> <p>Alternatives suggested: No specific alternatives provided.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has considered Aston Hall Hotel, but the long driveway to the building does not have a footpath, which makes it unsuitable for electors who are walking to the polling station, especially in the evenings, as the driveway only has low-level lighting. here are suitable rooms that could be used for polling stations; however, their availability could not be guaranteed for any by-elections or short notice elections such as UK Parliamentary General election.</p> <p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has also considered the Church of All Saints on Church Lane. The accessibility is not as good as the school, the available room would be quite tight for space and there is very limited parking available by the church.</p> <p>Anston Hall Junior School is located centrally within the polling district, whereas both Aston Hall Hotel and the Church of All Saints are situated to the north of the polling district, which if used, would mean electors in the south of the polling district having much further to travel to vote.</p> <p>As neither alternative is a better option for electors, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes the continued use of Aston Hall Junior and Infants School.</p>

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Aston & Todwick	ASB	Elector in Aston & Todwick	<p>Use of schools should be avoided, why in Aston can't RMBC hire out space at Aston Hall Hotel instead of disrupting education of the children at the nearby school. Democracy is important also is education.</p> <p>Aston Hall hotel instead of the school</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has considered Aston Hall Hotel, but the long driveway to the building does not have a footpath, makes it unsuitable for electors who are walking to the polling station, especially in the evenings as the driveway only has low-level lighting. There are suitable rooms that could be used for polling stations; however, their availability could not be guaranteed for any by-elections or short notice elections such as UK Parliamentary General election.</p>
Boston Castle	BCH	Clifton Park Garden Building	Happy to continue being used.	Noted
Bramley & Ravenfield	BRE	Thrybergh Parish Council	Happy for Thrybergh Parish Hall to continue to be used.	Noted
Brinsworth	BWC	Cllr Adam Carter	<p>BWC polling location should be considered to be relocated, as there are issues with accessibility due to the steep hill up to the school, and that when there is a polling day the school ends up being closed. Consideration to be given merging BWC and BWD polling districts as the BWD Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School does not close during polling days.</p> <p>If BWC is not considered to be merged with BWD, I ask that consideration be given to moving the houses on Whitehill Lane between the junction of Orchard</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has not been able to identify any suitable alternative venues within the polling district. Whilst the (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that the hill to access Brinsworth Howarth School may give some electors difficulties, it is a better option than having to go a considerable distance to use Brinsworth Whitehill Primary School if BWB and BWE polling districts were merged. Whilst there are some cut throughs, not all electors will be comfortable using them, particularly in the dark and would prefer to use the main roads.</p> <p>The (Acting) Returning Officer agrees that it would be more convenient for the electors at numbers 69 to 83 Whitehill Lane to go to Brinsworth Howarth School to vote; therefore, it is proposed to amend the polling district boundary to move the properties from BWD into the BWC polling district. Whilst considering this option,</p>

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			Way and Whitehill Road be moved into the BWC polling district as this would make more geographical sense.	it was identified that four properties on Orchard Way, which is part of BWC, are currently part of the BWD polling district. The polling district boundary will be amended to move them into BWC.
Brinsworth	BWD	Cllr Adam Carter	Similarly, there are 6 houses on Brinsworth Lane between Whitehill Road and Manor Road are in the BWD polling district, whereas the other houses on that road are split between BWB and BWE. Consideration be given to move these into either BWB or BWE.	The (Acting) Returning Officer agrees that it would be more convenient for the electors at numbers 58 to 68 Brinsworth Lane to vote at The Centre on Brinsworth Lane. It is therefore proposed to amend the polling district boundary to move the properties from BWD to BWB. Whilst considering this option, it was identified that this proposal would leave 56 Brinsworth Lane as the only property on the road in BWD polling district. It is proposed to amend the polling district boundary to move 56 Brinsworth Lane from BWD to BWE so that the electors would vote at St Andrews Church, Bonet Lane, as their neighbours do.
Dalton & Thrybergh	DAA & DAC	Thrybergh Parish Council	Happy for Thrybergh Parish Hall to continue to be used.	Noted
Dinnington	n/a	Elector in Dinnington	General objection to the use of schools. Suggested alternatives including village halls, pubs, bus station, and post offices.	The (Acting) Returning Officer uses a variety of buildings including parish halls, community centres and churches. There must be due regard to the legislation and Electoral Commission guidance on polling district and polling places. This includes ensuring there is a maximum of 2,250 polling station voters allocated to a polling station and to have regard for geographical features. This means polling districts are generally small areas and this can mean there are few suitable buildings within the polling districts other than schools. All public buildings have a duty in the law to make themselves available for use as a polling place by the (Acting) Returning Officer. Where there are no suitable

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				<p>alternatives to using a school, the decision to close the school on polling day lies with the Headteacher. Electoral Services will work with schools to see if there is a way to keep the school open while considering safeguarding issues.</p>
Dinnington	DIA	Alexander Stafford MP	<p>Concern raised that DIA polling district is geographically too large as it covered several communities which are very inaccessible including Brookhouse, Slade Hooton, Carr and Newhall Grange that have no safe walking route or public transport options to get to Laughton-en-le-Morthen Village Hall.</p> <p>The suggestion was to split the existing polling district so that Laughton-en-le-Morthen was in one polling district and the smaller villages in another with the polling place at the Traveller's Rest public house in Brookhouse.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has not received any complaints or comments from electors in the DIA polling district over their polling place from previous elections.</p> <p>For electors living in the remote communities mentioned in the representation, they would need to travel into Laughton-en-le-Morthen or Dinnington to access shops and other services such as Doctors or Dentists. There are buses from Brookhouse and Slade Hooton to Laughton-en-le-Morthen.</p> <p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has not been able to contact the Traveller's Rest public house to assess if it could be used as a polling place. Whilst a polling place at the Traveller's Rest would benefit the small number of electors in Brookhouse, it would not solve the accessibility issues raised for Slade Hooton, Carr or Newhall Grange electors.</p> <p>Given there hasn't been any concerns raised with the (Acting) Returning Officer at previous elections about the location of the polling place and lack of an alternative suitable venue, there are no amendments proposed for DIA polling district.</p>

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Dinnington	DIF	Alexander Stafford MP	<p>The current polling station is Woodsetts village hall, which is again in a different ward.</p> <p>During the July 2023 Dinnington by-election only eight people made their way from Gildingwells to Woodsetts to vote in person, as it is not accessible.</p> <p>A mobile polling station/ portakabin could be located outside the village notice board on Woodsetts Road.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer disagrees that Woodsetts is inaccessible to electors in DIF who don't have a car, as there is a bus route which runs between Gildingwells and Woodsetts. The use of mobile units is a last resort due to their limited size, making it difficult to meet the requirements for a private area for checking voter ID and issues in terms of making them accessible.</p> <p>The (Acting) Returning Officer was not able to identify a suitable site within the polling district where a mobile unit with an access ramp, generator and portable toilet could be sited.</p> <p>The only alternative would be to relocate the polling place for DIF to Letwell Village Hall, which would then be within the ward. However, this would be more inconvenient for electors who rely on public transport, as they would have to travel to Letwell via Woodsetts and Dinnington, which would take over 3 hours based on current bus timetables. It is therefore felt that the existing arrangements are the most suitable.</p>
Dinnington	DIH	Firbeck Village Hall	Happy to continue to be used and they are centrally located within the parish, with car parking, disabled access, toilets and kitchen.	Noted
Greasbrough	GRA	Willow Tree Academy (Greasbrough Primary School)	Object to the use of Greasbrough Primary School. Suggested alternatives: Greasbrough Library	The (Acting) Returning Officer agrees that Greasbrough Library is a suitable alternative that has level access and parking facilities.

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				Therefore, the proposal for GRA polling district will be amended to recommend the use of Greasbrough Library.
Greasbrough	GRC	Wingfield Academy	<p>Object to the use of the school as there has been a change of use of the room previously used, and the school would have to close.</p> <p>No alternatives provided.</p>	<p>The (Acting) Returning Officer has searched for suitable alternatives but has not been able to identify any.</p> <p>Forty Martyrs Church has been closed since COVID-19 pandemic and they currently have no plans to reopen.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to GRC polling district being allocated to Rockingham Professional Development Centre, which is already used as the polling place for GRB. However, Rockingham Professional Development Centre is a busy training centre that remains open on polling day, meaning there is only limited space available, and it would not be sufficient for two polling stations. Added to this, the parking availability can be very limited when the building is in use and, whilst there are pedestrian refuges, there are no pedestrian crossings on Roughwood Road, making it difficult for electors in GRC to cross the road to get to Rockingham Professional Development Centre.</p>
Hooper	HOG	Trinity Community Centre	Happy to continue being used as a polling place for HOG polling place.	Noted
Keppel	KEA	Trinity Community Centre	Happy to continue being used as a polling place for KEA polling place.	Noted.

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Keppel	KEC	Roughwood Primary School	Object to the use of the school and feel it is no longer the best place to be used. Also concerned about the disruption to education and the preparation for SATS. No suitable alternatives provided.	The (Acting) Returning Officer has not been able to identify any suitable alternative buildings in the polling district. The only potential building is the Kimberworth Park public house, but they do not have a separate function room and are therefore not able to accommodate a polling station.
Keppel	KEE	St John's Church	Happy to continue being used as the polling place for KEE, as they are centrally located in the estate's shopping area, and they have disabled access.	Noted.
Keppel	KEF	Artworks Community Centre	Happy to continue being used.	Noted.
Rawmarsh West	RAWE	Rawmarsh Ashwood Primary School	Object to the use of the school, as the outside mobile classroom previously used is not available. The school would now have to close to be used as a polling place which would impact on children's education. Suggested alternatives: Spiritualist Church on Ashwood Road, High Street Centre on Rawmarsh Hill and Rawmarsh Church.	The (Acting) Returning Officer has not been able to contact the Spiritualist Church to discuss the possibility of using their building. There is some concern about accessibility of the church due to there being a step from the pavement on to the church property. The (Acting) Returning Officer will continue to try and contact the Church so it can be assessed and considered for use in the future. The High Street Centre at Rawmarsh Methodist Church is not within the polling district and is already used as the polling place for RAWD. The Church of St Mary the Virgin is also not within the polling district. Both locations are uphill from RAWE and could pose an

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				<p>issue for electors in terms of accessibility if they do not use a car.</p> <p>As there are no alternatives in the polling district, the school remains the only suitable building to be used as a polling place for RAWWE.</p>
Rotherham East	ROED	Rotherham Baptist Church	Happy to continue being used.	Noted.
Rotherham East	ROED	Elector in Rotherham East ward	<p>Our home is located off Middle Lane, across from Gilberthorpe St.</p> <p>The polling station allotted to us is at the Baptist Church on Badsley Moor Lane, approximately a 20 minute walk, the street next to us, Newton St has a polling station at the church virtually opposite on Middle Lane.</p> <p>My question is, why are we having to walk the distance we do when there is a polling station virtually across the road?</p>	<p>The ward boundary between Rotherham East ward and Boston Castle ward runs down the centre of Middle Lane.</p> <p>The church referred to us the United Methodist Church Clifton and this is in Boston Castle ward and is the polling place for the BCC polling district.</p> <p>The elector making the representation lives in the ROED polling district of Rotherham East ward. The polling place for the ROED polling district is the Baptist Church on Badsley Moor Lane.</p> <p>This allocation is in line with the legislation and Electoral Commission guidance in that the polling place is located within the polling district.</p>
Rotherham East	ROEJ	Willow Tree Academy (Herringthorpe Infant School)	<p>Object to the use of the school due to the impact on children's education and preparation for KS2 SATs. Whilst the Infant school is used, closing for polling day impacts the Junior school as they are on the same site.</p> <p>No alternatives suggested.</p>	The (Acting) Returning Officer has not been able to identify any suitable alternatives within the polling district.

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Rother Vale	RVB & RVD	Cllr Adam Carter	RVB and RVD should be merged or if this is not possible, supportive of the proposal to make the polling district boundary between RVB & RVD run along the middle of Highfield Lane, as it makes more geographical sense.	Merging RVB and RVD polling districts would not be possible at the current time, as they are in different Parliamentary constituencies. After the next Parliamentary General election, RVB and RV will be in the same Parliamentary constituency. The polling district boundary between RVB & RVD will then be realigned to follow the middle of Highfield Lane.
Rother Vale	RVB & RVD	Waverley Community Council	The members are of the view that the polling station should remain at the AMP Technology Centre, as it is least disruptive to the community, it has parking provisions for all and is disabled access friendly.	As set out in the original proposals, The (Acting) Returning Officer feels that with the growing electorate in RVB and RVD, the rooms available at AMP Technology are too small. If there is an event on at the Centre, there is no guarantee as to which room will be available for use as a polling station and car parking availability is much reduced. The (Acting) Returning Officer must also consider electors who do not drive. AMP Technology is located on a business park some distance from the houses in RVB and EVD, and as more houses are built to the East, they will be even further away. Electors would also need to cross Highfield Spring, which is a very busy road. Waverley Junior Academy is situated amongst the housing, has parking facilities, disabled access and is far more accessible for all electors.
Wath	WHC	St Joseph's Catholic Church	Happy for the church hall to continue being used as a polling place.	Noted