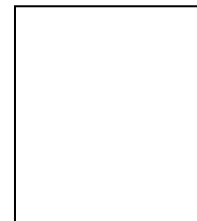




## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL COUNCIL REPORT



---

**Report of:** Chief Executive

---

**Date:** 2 November 2022

---

**Subject:** Review of Polling Districts & Polling Places

---

**Author of Report:** Andy Cain (0114 27 34091)

---

**Summary:** Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006) the City Council must periodically review polling districts and polling places. The last review of polling districts took place in November 2021. Following feedback at that review and following the local and Combined Authority Mayoral elections in May 2022 we undertook to carry out a further review of arrangements in City, Ecclesall, Gleadless Valley and Manor Castle wards. The recommendations contained in this report follow a full consultation with the public on the draft proposals.

---

**Reasons for Recommendations:** The proposed changes will improve access to polling stations for electors.

**Recommendations:** That the boundary changes to polling districts and proposed polling places outlined in this report be approved.

That the Council delegates authority to the Returning Officer to make amendments to polling places and stations where a change must be made during an election period.

---

**Background Papers:** Appendix A – Consultation Responses

---

**Category of Report:** OPEN/~~CLOSED~~\*

---

## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Ann Hardy
<b>Legal Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
<b>Equality of Opportunity Implications</b>
YES/ <del>NO</del> Cleared by: James Henderson
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities Implications</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO
<b>Human rights Implications</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO:
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO
<b>Economic impact</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO
<b>Community safety implications</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO
<b>Human resources implications</b>
YES/ <del>NO</del>
<b>Property implications</b>
YES/ <del>NO</del>
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
All Wards
<b>Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader</b>
Leader of Council
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in</b>
Not applicable
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
YES/ <del>NO</del>
<b>Press release</b>
<del>YES</del> /NO

# Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Authority is required under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006) to periodically carry out a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places. The definitions of the two areas are:
  - **Polling District** – is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area. It is the authority's responsibility to divide its area into polling districts. Each polling district must be wholly contained within a single ward of the council.
  - **Polling Place** – is a geographical area in which a polling station is located. It is the authority's responsibility to designate a polling place for each polling district.
- 1.2. Polling Stations are the temporary facilities established within each polling place where electors cast their vote. Usually, each polling place has one polling station although occasionally two polling districts may share a polling place – in this case, separate polling stations will be established within the same polling place. Although this review does not include Polling Stations the Returning Officer has and will continue to regularly review them.
- 1.3. The Authority has no power to make changes to ward boundaries or names as part of the review process, as this can only be done by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as part of an electoral review.
- 1.4. As part of the review, the Authority must adhere to the following statutory requirements in identifying polling places for use:
  - (a) the authority must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
  - (b) the authority must 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;
  - (c) the authority must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing;

- (d) the polling place for a polling district must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district;
  - (e) the polling place for a polling district must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station.
- 1.5. Furthermore, the Electoral Commission sets the maximum number of electors to be assigned to each polling station. This is currently 2,500. None of the polling districts under this review exceeded this maximum allocation.
- 1.6. Electoral Commission guidance was followed in conducting the review. This sets out the following criteria to take into account for assessing and reviewing polling districts:
- Are the boundaries well-defined? For example, do they follow the natural boundaries of the area? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
  - Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the polling district that are most highly populated? Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g., steep hills, major roads, railway lines, rivers?
- 1.7. The Electoral Commission guidance also includes criteria that should be taken into account when assessing and reviewing polling places:
- Location: Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.? Are there any convenient transport links?
  - Size: Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required? If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place capable of accommodating all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?

- Availability: Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?
  - Accessibility: Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?
- 1.8. These criteria were fully considered in developing proposals for amendments to polling districts and polling places. For some polling districts there are few suitable venues available for use as polling places, and these may not fulfil all of the criteria listed above. In these cases, the Council has considered a balance between the quality of the building (access, facilities etc.) and the proximity of the building to the elector.
- 1.9. An identified polling place or polling station may be unavailable at the time of an election, for example due to fire or flood or if it has been pre-booked for another purpose when an unscheduled election is called. The Council is asked to delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make any necessary amendments to enable changes to be made at short notice in such circumstances.

## **2. Proposed Changes**

- 2.1 The changes proposed following the review are as set out below. In summary, changes to polling districts and/or polling places were proposed for the following wards:
- City
  - Ecclesall
  - Gleadless Valley
  - Manor Park
- 2.2 No changes to polling districts or polling places were proposed in any other wards.

## Proposed Changes

WARD	Current Polling District		Proposed Polling District		Boundary/Polling Place Changes
City	Arundel	GA	Arundel	GA	No proposed change
	Bramall Lane	GB	Bramall Lane	GB	Properties on Margaret Street and Midland Street move into the GD (Edmund) Polling District, voting at Duchess Road Community Centre. Properties in St Mary's House, London Road move into this polling district from the GD (Edmund) polling district, correcting an error in the previous review.
	Cathedral	GC	Cathedral	GC	No proposed change
	Edmund	GD	Edmund	GD	Properties on Margaret Street and Midland Street move into this district from the GB (Bramall Lane) polling district. Properties in St Mary's House, London Road move into the GB (Bramall Lane) polling district, correcting an error in the previous review.
	Kelham	GE	Kelham	GE	No proposed change
	Rockingham	GF	Rockingham	GF	No proposed change
	Springfield	GG	Springfield	GG	No proposed change

WARD	Current Polling District		Proposed Polling District		Boundary/Polling Place Changes
Ecclesall	All Saints	LA	All Saints	LA	Properties on Ecclesall Road South, Knowle Croft, Knowle Lane, Weetwood Gardens, Ryefield Gardens and Weetwood Drive move from this polling district into the LG (Mylnhurst) polling district.
	Banner Cross	LB	Banner Cross	LB	No proposed change
	Bents Green	LC	Bents Green	LC	No proposed change

	Carterknowle	LD	Carterknowle	LD	No proposed change
	Greystones	LE	Greystones	LE	Polling district to be split to form the new LH (Endcliffe Park) polling district. Properties on Carrington Road, Ecclesall Road, Onslow Road, Rustlings Road, Stainton Road, and Nos 1 – 53/2 - 50 Peveril Road and Nos 1 – 53b/2 – 48 Ranby Road move into the new LH polling district, voting at the Hallamshire Tennis, Squash and Racketball Club on Ecclesall Road.
			Endcliffe Park	LH	New polling district created from properties on Carrington Road, Ecclesall Road, Onslow Road, Rustlings Road, Stainton Road, and Nos 1 – 53/2 - 50 Peveril Road and Nos 1 – 53b/2 – 48 Ranby Road move out of the existing LE polling district, voting at the Hallamshire Tennis, Squash and Racketball Club on Ecclesall Road.
	Millhouses	LF	Millhouses	LF	No proposed change
	Mylnhurst	LG	Mylnhurst	LG	Properties on Ecclesall Road South, Knowle Croft, Knowle Lane, Weetwood Gardens, Ryefield Gardens and Weetwood Drive move from this polling district into this polling district from LA (All Saints) polling district.

WARD	Current Polling District		Proposed Polling District		Boundary/Polling Place Changes
Gleadless Valley	Abney	OA	Abney	OA	No proposed change
	Heeley	OB	Heeley	OB	. No proposed change
	Hemsworth	OC	Hemsworth	OC	No proposed change
	Herdings	OD	Herdings	OD	No proposed change
	Mawfa	OE	Mawfa	OE	Proposed change of polling place from the Bagshawe Arms to St Anthony's Church Hall on Sandy Lane.
	Meersbrook	OF	Meersbrook	OF	No proposed change
	Meersbrook Park	OG	Meersbrook Park	OG	No proposed change

	Newfield Green	OH	Newfield Green	OH	No proposed change
--	----------------	----	----------------	----	--------------------

WARD	Current Polling District		Proposed Polling District		Boundary/Polling Place Changes
Manor Castle	Fairleigh	RA	Fairleigh	RA	Properties on Fairfax Road, and Nos 212 – 226 (evens) Prince of Wales Road to move into RB (Lower Manor) polling district, voting at Manor Neighborhood Centre.
	Lower Manor	RB	Lower Manor	RB	Properties on Fairfax Road, and Nos 212 – 226 (evens) Prince of Wales Road to move into this polling district from RA (Fairleigh) polling district. Properties on Beaumont Avenue, Beaumont Close, Beaumont Crescent, Beaumont Mews, Beaumont Road North, Beaumont Way, Circle Close, Dawlands Close, Dawlands Drive, Fallow Grove, Fretson Road, Harborough Avenue, Harborough Way, Jan Wilson Way, Motehall Place, Motehall Road, Motehall Walk, Noehill Place, Noehill Road, Prince of Wales Road (odds), Ravencarr Road, Stonecliffe Road, Stonecliffe Walk, Stonehirst Close, The Circle, and The Crossways move from the RC (Manor Park) polling district into this polling district.
	Manor Park	RC	Manor Park	RC	Properties on Beaumont Avenue, Beaumont Close, Beaumont Crescent, Beaumont Mews, Beaumont Road North, Beaumont Way, Circle Close, Dawlands Close, Dawlands Drive, Fallow Grove, Fretson Road, Harborough Avenue, Harborough Way, Jan Wilson Way, Motehall Place, Motehall Road, Motehall Walk, Noehill Place, Noehill Road, Prince of Wales Road (odds), Ravencarr Road, Stonecliffe Road, Stonecliffe Walk, Stonehirst Close, The Circle, and The Crossways move into the RB (Lower Manor) polling district, with voting taking place at Manor Neighborhood Centre.



	Park Hill	RD	Park Hill	RD	No proposed change
	Skye Edge	RE	Skye Edge	RE	Properties on Manor Oaks Road, Southend Place and Nos 79 – 149/126 – 176 Southend Place moving into the RG (Wybourn) polling district, with voting taking place at St Oswald RC Church.
	Stafford	RF	Stafford	RF	No proposed change
	Wybourn	RG	Wybourn	RG	Properties on Manor Oaks Road, Southend Place and Nos 79 – 149/126 – 176 Southend Place moving from the RE (Skye Edge) polling district into this polling district.

### **3. Representations**

- 3.1 The period to make representations was between 1 September and 7 October 2022 and a total of 10 responses were received (all via the online consultation site), one of which was a duplicate. These are set out in Appendix A (Online Responses).
- 3.2 Representations received were generally in favour of the boundary amendments proposed in all four wards.
- 3.3 A representation was made regarding the access road for the 74<sup>th</sup> Oak Street Scout Hut, which is the polling place for the OF polling district. No changes were proposed to the polling place, and the respondent states they are happy with the polling place itself, but access is difficult due to the surfacing of the road. The road outside of the polling place is not adopted by Sheffield City Council. Whilst this is not an issue that can be addressed directly by the Returning Officer the Council has a duty to have regard to the accessibility of polling places to disabled persons and may therefore wish to instruct relevant Highway and Legal officers to investigate the possibilities of adopting the highway in question or considering any other measures that might be taken to improve accessibility.
- 3.4 A representation in favour of the current polling place was received for the Bagshawe Arms in Gleadless Valley. The proposed move away from this polling place was made following feedback at the last election that it was not suitable as a polling place due to it being a public house. The Bagshawe Arms has served as a polling station in the past and was used in the last two elections due to the former polling place, Orpen House not being available. The Returning Officer was asked to consider an alternative to Orpen House due to concerns about the transmission of Covid and the layout of the property. On balance, it was considered that the proposed new polling place was a more suitable facility for polling and accessible within the polling district boundary.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1. Costs are incurred when an additional polling place is implemented or where there are new polling arrangements at an existing polling place. This is made up of venue hire and polling staff costs. The relevant changes in the polling districts within the Ecclesall ward is estimated to be £1000.

- 4.2. When City Council elections are combined with national elections (including the South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority and Police and Crime Commissioner elections) the cost will be shared.
- 4.3. The estimated £1000 cost is an additional burden to the election budget.

## **5. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 The broad aims of this polling district review are to improve access to polling stations for electors.
- 5.2 This will improve the ability of electors within Sheffield who choose to exercise their right to vote in person to do so easily and efficiently.
- 5.3 An initial Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared. It demonstrates positive implications for individuals and communities as the addition of 1 polling station and the proposed boundary amendments will reduce the overall ratio of electors to stations.
- 5.4 Furthermore, all new stations have been visited in order to ensure access arrangements meet required standards. We will be monitoring the polling stations to ensure there are no negative impacts and will feed this into the formal review following the city and parish council elections in May 2023. This will improve access to voting for all but will have a particularly positive impact on disabled people.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1. The Authority is required under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as inserted by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013) to periodically carry out a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.
- 6.2 The Authority is required to publish its proposals and consult and seek representations. Once the review is completed the Authority must publish its decision together with correspondence and representations made in relation to the review.
- 6.3 This review satisfies those requirements.

This page is intentionally left blank