

Appendix B - Explanation of Proposed Changes to Polling Places and Polling Stations
Appendix B

Below is an explanation of any proposed changes to Polling Places and Polling Stations

Polling District	AA – Berechurch
Ward	Berechurch
Current Polling Station	Plum Hall Common Room, Nancy Smith Close, Berechurch Road, CO2 7QU
Background	<p>We currently use the Colchester Borough Homes site Plum Hall. With the polling station located in the Common Room. This is a small room, similar in size to the typical front room. The space of the room is limited and there is no where for the furniture to be stored elsewhere. Accessibility is less than ideal as the normal entry point goes through the communal front door of the flats, with voters then passing through a corridor on to which individual residential flat front doors open onto. There is a door out onto the patio garden but, this is not level access and it is not accessible. Parking is limited as it is a residential site. The polling station is at the northern tip of the polling district, whilst accessible from the main road it is not central.</p>
Recommendation	<p>We are pleased that we have found an alternate venue, we recommend that the C3 Centre is used as the polling station instead. This community church centred on the former garrison building by Abbey Field Medical Centre. As it serves the community and is on the same site as the medical centre it will be well known to the local community. The site is simply huge so space will not be an issue inside the building. It is accessible with level access and electric outer doors. It is also accessible in terms of being on the main road and having plenty of dedicated car parking spaces. Whilst the site is outside the confines of the polling district and the ward, the site is easily accessible for the bulk of the electorate due to the geography of the district.</p> <p>However, this polling station is still under review due to the cost of the premises. The Electoral Services Team hope to negotiate.</p> <p>The recommendation for the polling place therefore includes the polling district itself and the district that the C3 is in – to meet the requirements of the polling place definition.</p>
Proposed Polling Place	Berechurch and Rainsborowe Road Polling Districts
Proposed Polling Station	The C3 Centre, Ypres Road, Colchester CO2 7FD

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Polling District	AJ - Hamilton Road
Ward	New Town & Christ Church
Current Polling Station	Hamilton Primary School, Constantine Road, CO3 3GB
Background	Whilst it is not always possible or practical, as far as possible, we avoid using any school as a polling station.
Recommendation	We are pleased that we have found an alternate venue, we recommend that the Pegasus Club on Abbey Fields is used as the polling station going forward. This venue is equally central to the bulk of the electorate within the district. It meets the main criteria in being able to offer adequate space, accessibility, facilities, and parking.
Proposed Polling Place	Hamilton Road Polling District
Proposed Polling Station	Pegasus Club, Circular Road North, CO2 7SU

Polling District	AS – East Lexden
Ward	Lexden & Braiswick
Current Polling Station	Kingswode Hoe School, 8 Sussex Road, Colchester CO3 3QJ
Background	Whilst it is not always possible or practical, as far as possible, we avoid using any school as a polling station. We had previously used Kingswode Hoe School and for one election we also used St Mary’s Girls School.
Recommendation	We are pleased that we have found an alternate venue, The Colchester Croquet Club which we have used as a polling station successfully in recent years. Whilst there are some elements of the site that may not be ideal these are negated by other factors. There is not level access to the walkway that leads to the site but, the playing field allows the stepped access to be circumvented. This has been agreed by the site, Electoral Services and our Health & Safety Officer. The size of the carpark is limited, however, there is some off-road parking and the centrality of the polling station to the polling district negates some of this problem. In recent years, neither of these theoretical problems have presented any issue that has been flagged by the polling station staff or voters.
Proposed Polling Place	East Lexden Polling District
Proposed Polling Station	Colchester Croquet Club, Elianore Road, Colchester CO3 3RX

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Polling District	BI – Avon Way
Ward	Greenstead
Current Polling Station	Forest Road Meeting Hall, Forest Road, CO4 3XG
Background	There are three polling stations within the site and going by the Electoral Commission's ratios for polling stations per electorate and staff there should be a fourth station, but the polling station is not suitable to allow this.
Recommendation	Following the consultation period and representation from two ward councillors the decision has been taken to continue to use this premises until the full polling district and polling place review commences, following the Electoral Boundary Review. However, should there be any significant changes this will be reviewed again. In the meantime, we continue to use the Forest Road Meeting Hall as the polling station.
Proposed Polling Place	Greenstead Ward
Proposed Polling Station	Forest Road Meeting Hall, Forest Road, CO4 3XG

Polling District	BJ – Greenstead Road
Ward	Greenstead
Current Polling Station	St John Ambulance Colchester, Greenstead Road, Colchester CO1 2SL
Background	We historically used the St John Ambulance centre on Greenstead road as the polling station for this district. Whilst the venue itself was fine we were not always able to book the venue for use as a polling station. However, due to the nature of the venue's primary purpose as a provider for medical training courses it is difficult to book. Especially, for elections on short notice. This led to the need for a portacabin to be located on the Hythe Tesco Superstore carpark, which is far less than ideal. Considering these difficulties, we had to sort a more reliable venue. The nearest available venue was the Hythe Community Centre. This has served as an adequate polling station for this district. The accessibility, size, and parking of the venue are more than satisfactory.
Recommendation	We continue to use the Hythe Community Centre as the permanent venue.
Proposed Polling Place	Hythe Community Centre, Ventura Drive
Proposed Polling Station	Hythe Community Centre, Ventura Drive, Colchester, CO1 2FG

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Polling District	GD – Layer Breton
Ward	Marks Tey & Layer Ward
Current Polling Station	St Mary's Church, Layer Breton
Background	The suitability of St Mary's Church is limited. Accessibility is the main problem. This has been overcome by mitigatory measures such as the hiring of a portaloo (for the use of staff), lights and a ramp.
Recommendation	We recommend that Birch Memorial Hall is used as the polling station for the Layer Breton polling district going forward. This is a site that is fit for purpose as a polling station and can accommodate another polling station inside. This will reduce the additional cost of the measures we put in place to overcome the unsuitability of St Mary's Church as a polling station. Whilst it may be further for people to travel to vote in person, due to the rural nature of Layer Breton a large portion of voters would likely have driven to the polling station at the church as it was. We will of course write to the electors in the polling district to advise of the change and invite them to apply for a postal vote, with a letter. The change will also be flagged again on their poll cards.
Proposed Polling Place	The Parish of Birch
Proposed Polling Station	Birch Memorial Hall, Birch, Colchester CO2 0LZ