

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations Representation on behalf of Brentwood Access Group

From: Jim Hoare

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 12:38 PM

Subject: Re: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations

Thank you very much for sending this to us. We discussed this at our last meeting and asked all our members for feedback via our Facebook page.

We warmly welcome the approach of your team to the issue of accessibility at polling stations.

The feedback from our members is to ask that all polling places must have step free access and a lower booth for wheelchair access. Given the mix of urban and rural areas in the borough, clearly the need for parking close by, including designated Blue Badge bays is important and where possible public transport access.

One of our members who is visually impaired raised the issues she faces when voting. Her desire is to be able to cast her ballot secretly - as is the right of every voter. To assist visually impaired voters, she wondered if any alternate high tech voting methods are being developed? She made one suggestion which I thought was an excellent suggestion. Could there be some larger print voting cards (and perhaps Braille?) available to make it possible for people with some residual vision to vote without involving other people?

None of our members has raised a negative comment about any particular proposed polling place.

Thank you for consulting us. If we can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Best Regards

Jim Hoare

Chair

Brentwood Access Group

Facebook Group: [Access is Freedom!](#)

From: Abigail Wood
Sent: 17 October 2023 12:08
Subject: Polling station review comments

Dear Carol

Thank you for inviting the parish council to respond to the proposed polling station review. Following a council meeting, I have been asked to email you with our comments and **objection** to the planned permanent requirement for residents in the KB polling district to continue to use the Ingatestone Community Centre as their polling station.

Previously, voting for the KB polling district took place in the Roman Catholic Church in Ingatestone. Unfortunately this location has now been withdrawn as a polling station which resulted in a temporary move to the community centre at the other end of Ingatestone. For a resident living in Marks Close, walking to their polling station, the distance has increased from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles each way to vote, which the parish council considers to be unacceptable.

Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council request that due consideration is given to using either the Library or the United Reformed Church Hall instead as a closer option to the KB polling district residents. Parking is available at the library and both locations are served by a local bus stop at the Furlongs. The Library is not open on a Thursday and the book shelves are totally moveable.

By considering one of the two locations instead, the journey distance for those voting will reduce to just under a mile (the locations are essentially opposite each other). IFPC consider it vitally important for the democratic rights of the residents of the KB polling district, that their polling station is as close as possible to where they live.

We hope that the above comments and objections will be taking into serious account when making your decision.

Kind regards
Abi

Abi Wood PSLCC, CertHE Community Governance, CiLCA, BA (Hons)
Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish Council



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Opening Hours: Tuesday - Thursday, 9-5pm (an answer phone facility is available outside of these hours)



Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations Brentwood Labour Group Response

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this review. We have considered the maps and comments made across the Borough and have developed the feedback as outlined below.

1. Proposals where we have no objections

Blackmore & Doddinghurst

Brentwood North

Brentwood West

Brizes, Stondon Massey & South Weald

Herongate, Ingrave & West Horndon

Hutton East

Hutton North – Hutton St Peter

Ingatestone, Fryerning & Mountnessing

2. Proposals we support

Hutton North – Poplar

We support the new location and welcome the school no longer being used as a Polling Station.

Brentwood South – Hogarth

We support the alteration in polling district boundaries.

Brentwood South – Queens Road

We support the altered and expanded polling district boundaries.

Pilgrims Hatch – Ashwells

We support the creation of a new polling district.

3. Proposals where we have comments or believe changes could be beneficial

Brentwood South – Warley Mount

We would appreciate further consideration of whether the Brentwood Mosque Community Hall is viable, rather than move the polling place outside the district and ward. Alternatively, could the Seaxe Room at the Essex Arms be considered, if reasonable adjustments were made for access.

Hutton South – Thriftwood and Thrift Park

We believe that the cluster of roads that comes from Brocksparkwood, as well as potentially Wendover Gardens and Victors Crescent would be better served as part of Thrift Park, geographically – with St Stephens Church a very large polling station, with parking available, a bus stop nearby and capable of managing this increased capacity.

Hutton South – Three Arches

We understand that any development on Maple Hall has now been postponed, which makes a move unnecessary at this point. Therefore, we recommend that this site is used, as has been the historic case.

If an alternative site is used, we believe options could include investigating buildings at Thriftwood, which is just outside the ward, or alternatively that if the decision is to move the polling station to a neighbouring district, St Stephens Church would be preferable rather than using the Knights Way Centre. Given they are only 340ft apart, we feel it would lead to considerable voter confusion if both stations existed; otherwise, we have a scenario where people on Knights Way would need to walk past a polling station, on their own road for a very short distance, to get to their own polling station.

This also removes the need for extra polling station costs.

Shenfield

In line with the example of Pilgrims Hatch, we question whether a new polling place should be viable towards the North of the Ward, potentially around Shenfield School, to enable a greater number of voters to have access on foot to a polling place.

04.10.2023

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
Liberal Democrat Group Representations

From: David Kendall

Sent: Saturday, October 21, 2023 7:04:57 AM

Subject: Re: Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Thank you for your e-mail.

The one particular area I am aware the Lib Dem group have a problem with is the lack of a polling station for the Heybridge area of Ingatestone / Mountnessing. The Catholic Church / Hall on the Roman Road was previously used as a polling station but in recent years that has not been possible. Instead residents have had to go all the way down to the Ingatestone Community Club to vote which is at the other end of the village and is a considerable walk particularly for the elderly.

This has definitely deterred residents from voting in the past and the issue needs to be seriously addressed. Another venue needs to be found that is nearer to the Heybridge estate including a possible portable option to ensure that more people have an opportunity to vote. I am concerned that as a Council we are not covering all the bases in terms of access and equality issues if we continue with the existing arrangements. Please could this matter be looked at again?

Thank you

Regards

David

Cllr David Kendall

Chair - FAIR Committee

Brentwood Borough Council

From: Darryl Sankey

Sent: Saturday, October 21, 2023 5:21 PM

Subject: Re: Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Dear all, fyi, the Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council have requested the library or the United Reform Church, both in Ingatestone High Street and considerably closer than the Community Centre.

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
Representations from local residents

From: Ann Hill

Sent: 07 October 2023 13:52

Subject: Hutton North Proposed Polling Station Changes

I do not agree with closing St Peters as a polling station but think it would be a good idea to close Long Ridings School as a polling station and transfer that responsibility to Bishops Hill AC, together with some of the requirements currently handled at St Peters. Bishops Hill has easier parking which would help alleviate some of the congestion at Long Ridings and Claughton Way.

St Peters should continue as a voting location as to close it would require in longer distance for those in the very north of the catchment (I live in the middle by the way) and some people do not have a car and need to attend the polling station on foot.

Regards

Ann Hill

From: Susan Hickman

Sent: 20 October 2023 11:36

Subject: Ward Boundaries / Polling Districts

To place Great Warley village in the polling district of Herongate, Ingrave and West Horndon is a complete and utter nonsense.

Great Warley forms part of the Warley community, where local shops, public transport and leisure facilities are all available and in close proximity.

The boundary lines of the previous ward of Warley made complete sense and require no change, simply for change sake.

Susan Hickman

Bird Lane

Great Warley.

CM133JU

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations The Conservative Group Representation

Please find below representation from The Conservative Group in respect of the 2023 Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations:

1. New Brentwood North Ward – Location, Health & Safety and Impact of Use

The Polling Station at Doddinghurst Road Church should be reviewed to see if there is a more suitable site available to serve for the Sawyers Hall Polling District located in the Swayers Hall Lane area that would better serve the needs of local residents, the majority of whom live in that area. There is a wide choice of public authority buildings in the area that should be capable of serving to facilitate such a polling place / station.

The Polling District boundary should reflect the individual local community be reshaped so if the above is possible then we would suggest that Doddinghurst Road and offshoots (e.g. Rushdene Road and St Kildas Road) should be included in the St Georges Polling District. This would mean that residents in the Doddinghurst Road area would be able to vote at same polling station as their close neighbours from nearby roads such as Kimpton Road and Robin Hood Road.

We believe these changes have the potential to provide more convenient and safer locations for the majority of residents and this would encourage increased participation in the democratic process.

2. New Hutton North Ward – Location, Health & Safety & Impact of Use

Long Ridings School should be retained as a polling station. It is a convenient and well known location within the area and has been used as a polling station since the estate was first built in the 1950s.

The draft proposals of just two polling stations do not recognise the significantly increased size of the ward and the geographical separation of the three distinct neighbourhoods located within it.

Due to the indirect road access between the Long Ridings estate and Rayleigh Road we believe the suggestion of removing Long Ridings School as polling station is unacceptable and will reduce participation in the democratic process by local residents.

Rayleigh Road is not a suitable location for many residents living on the Long Ridings estate, presents safety concerns and would deter people from accessing their polling station. Access via the woodland walk in Hutton Poplars does not meet accessibility requirements and would not be safe for all residents, particularly in the hours of darkness. It does not have lighting or a prepared tarmac surface so walking using this route does not meet the health and safety requirements of residents as many of them (especially women) will feel unsafe using it.

Rayleigh Road suffers from significant traffic congestion problems at peak times and we believe this will deter those who might consider driving to the Adult Learning Centre polling station and this will similarly reduce participation in the democratic process.

We note the comment re: suitability of the Long Ridings Polling Station and we believe that meaningful discussions with Long Ridings Primary School could address any concerns there may be over accessibility (e.g. choice of classroom and/or temporary ramp). We propose retaining the Long Ridings polling place/station (making any improvements to access needed), together with the St Peters Polling Station and the newly proposed Adult Learning Centre for residents living around the Rayleigh Road and Hutton Poplars area.

The Polling Districts should be suitably modified to accommodate these three polling stations.

3. New Hutton South Ward – Location, Impact of Use

We do not support the replacement of the Three Arch Bridge Community Hall with a polling place at Knights Way Centre, which is outside of the polling district. Instead we believe that the Three Arches estate residents should be able to vote at a polling station set-up at King George's Playing Fields (KGPF) - which is within the Polling District, centrally located, accessible and has ample parking.

Having two Polling Stations as close as Knights Way Centre and St Stephens adds to confusion for voters and would lead to road congestion at busy times in an area with little parking provision – the effect of this would be to discourage participation.

King Georges Playing Fields is readily accessible for residents with the entrance centrally located on Ingrave Road, with good pedestrian access from multiple directions and plenty of parking available on site with free parking for 30 minutes which is perfectly adequate for voting.

4. New Warley Ward – Location, Impact of Use

The Clements Park polling district should be expanded to include residents at "The Galleries". Residents would then be able to vote with the rest of the local community within Clements Park at Holly Trees polling station. The draft proposal boundary creates an unjustified division between close neighbours and can lead to local unnecessary confusion over polling places.

Christ Church Centre polling station to be moved to Eagle Way (Trampoline Centre/Keys Hall) to accommodate the large number of residents living around the original Eagle Way housing estate, the old Ford Head Office and new residential developments. The draft proposal does not reflect the optimal location given the increased geographical distribution of residents in this area and is not offering a central location readily accessible to the majority of voters in the polling district.

We are content with the proposals for the other nine wards. Please feel free to call to discuss us should any points require clarification or alternatively if you wish to meet us to discuss.

Regards,

Cllr Keith Barber
Hutton North Ward, Brentwood Borough Council

(on behalf of The Conservative Group – Brentwood Borough Council)