

Review of polling districts and polling places 2024

Returning Officer's comments

The Returning Officer for the City of Portsmouth, and Portsmouth North and Portsmouth South parliamentary constituencies, has examined the current polling arrangements and comments on the current scheme are set out in this document.

It is important to note that Portsmouth is currently the subject of an electoral review which is being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The electoral review is looking at Portsmouth's wider electoral arrangements including the number of councillors, the number of wards, the ward boundaries and the ward names. The electoral review is entirely separate and independent of the Council's review of polling districts and polling places.

The Commission's electoral review is expected to be completed in 2025 for implementation at the May 2026 elections. There will be significant changes to the ward boundaries which in turn will have an impact on the Council's scheme of polling districts and polling places. Therefore, a further comprehensive review of polling districts and polling places will be required to take account of the new ward arrangements.

Reviews of polling districts and polling places have already been undertaken proactively, including in both 2022 and 2023, to ensure that the Council's polling arrangements are kept up to date.

Based on all of the above factors, no proposals for change to the current scheme are suggested. Comments on the existing arrangements are set out by ward in the following pages.

Natalie Brahma-Pearl
Returning Officer for City Council elections and
Acting Returning Officer for Parliamentary elections

12 August 2024

Baffins ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Baffins ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022. This included an increase to six polling districts. The changes made have been reviewed following two rounds of local elections and the recent General election and are now considered to better meet the needs of electors in the ward.

Central Southsea ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

The polling places at Holy Spirit Church and Fernhurst Junior School, for polling districts CA and CB respectively, have a high number of allocated voters and are typically split into two polling stations, particularly at higher turnout polls. The polling station for polling district CB is located in the main hall of the school for General elections and for other polls the Francis Lodge outbuilding is used instead to reduce disruption to the operation of the school.

Charles Dickens ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

There are no comments on the current arrangements for Charles Dickens ward.

Copnor ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Copnor ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022 with a further adjustment completed in 2023. The changes made have been reviewed following two rounds of local elections and the recent General election and are now considered to better meet the needs of electors in the ward.

Cosham ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling place for polling district MD, St Phillip's Church, has a high number of allocated voters and is typically split into two polling stations, particularly at higher turnout polls. It is noted that the portacabin used as the polling place for polling district MA at Fairfield Square is not ideal but nevertheless operates efficiently. No feasible alternative has been identified elsewhere in the polling district.

Drayton & Farlington ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

Some voters at the recent General election raised concerns about the gradient of the hill at the approach to Solent Infant School. However, no suitable alternative has been identified in the polling district. Of the nearby Scout facility and junior school, both are unavailable and St Andrew's Church is considered to be too far to the east of the polling district to be convenient for the majority of voters.

Eastney & Craneswater ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

There are no comments on the current arrangements for Eastney & Craneswater ward.

Fratton ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Fratton ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2023. The changes made have been reviewed following the local elections and the recent General election and are now considered to adequately meet the needs of electors in the ward.

Hilsea ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Hilsea ward were modified at the review completed in 2022. The changes made have been reviewed following the local elections

and the recent General election and are now considered to adequately meet the needs of electors in the ward.

Milton ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Milton ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022. This included an increase to six polling districts. The changes made have been reviewed following two rounds of local elections and the recent General election and are now considered to better meet the needs of electors in the ward.

Nelson ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

There are no comments on the current arrangements for Nelson ward.

Paulsgrove ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

It is noted that portacabins are used as the polling places for polling districts LB and LE and that these are not ideal. However, both operate efficiently and no alternative has been identified elsewhere in either polling district.

St Jude ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

There are no comments on the current arrangements for St Jude ward.

St Thomas ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

There are no comments on the current arrangements for St Thomas ward.