



**General Purposes Committee**  
6<sup>th</sup> April 2009

**Report from the  
Democratic Services Manager**

Wards Affected:  
Brondesbury Park, Dudden Hill,  
Queen's Park, Northwick Park,  
& Stonebridge

**European Elections 2009 - Polling Places**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to the polling places to be used for the forthcoming European Elections.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That proposed changes to the polling places as set out in paragraph 3.2.1 – 3.2.6 be noted;
- 2.2 That the list of polling places for the European Elections 2009 attached as appendix 1 be agreed;
- 2.3 That authority be delegated to the Democratic Services Manager to make any further changes required to the polling places and stations for this election, in consultation with the three largest group leaders.

**3. Detail**

- 3.1 In November 2007, the General Purposes Committee received a report on the outcome of a review of polling districts and places in the borough carried out by the Democratic Services Manager. The review is a statutory requirement imposed by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and must be carried out every four years. At that meeting, members approved the polling places for each polling district in the borough.

3.2 A number of polling places used for the Greater London Authority Elections in 2008 are not available for the forthcoming European Elections and alternative locations are proposed below:

3.2.1 **EBP3: Proposed Polling Place – Malorees Junior School, Christchurch Ave** (replacing Queen’s Park Community School, Aylestone Avenue).

The date of the European Elections coincides with GCSE examinations and the school needs the hall for this purpose. Malorees Infants School was proposed as an alternative polling place however the governing body were reluctant to an additional day’s closure. Agreement has however been reached to use the Junior School instead. Both schools are close to the previous polling place. This arrangement will be kept under review for future elections.

3.2.2 **EDU1: Proposed Polling Place – Neasden Library, Neasden Lane** (replacing Hut outside St Catherine’s Memorial Hall, Dudden Hill Lane).

For the past few years, two portacabins for Polling Districts EDU1 and EDU2 have been placed in the car park outside St Catherine’s Memorial Hall as the Nursery staff who use the hall have been reluctant to close the nursery. This has always caused logistical problems in delivering and positioning the cabins given the location on a busy roundabout and the small space involved. An area within the new Neasden Library has been identified as suitable and more convenient for voters in Polling District EDU1. The suggested area within the building is adjacent to the main library and can be isolated for polling purposes. This would mean that only one portacabin would need to be sited outside St Catherine’s Memorial Hall for voters in Polling District EDU2. If successful, it is the intention that this be a permanent change of location.

3.2.3 **EQP5: Proposed Polling Place – Kilburn Library, Salusbury Road** (replacing Salusbury Road Primary School, Salusbury Road).

Although Salusbury School has been used as a polling station for years, some parents have complained about the inconvenience caused by the closure of the school for polling and it has been suggest that Kilburn Library could be used instead. The Returning Officer recognises that closure means that parents need to make alternative arrangements for their children although some schools use the closure as an opportunity for staff training. The Returning Officer uses school premises as a polling station where there is no alternative or where the school is in the most convenient location for the voter. Where the area in which voting takes place can be isolated from the rest of the school premises, some schools are able to remaining open through out the poll. In the case of Polling District EQP5, Kilburn Library is approximately 50 metres from Salusbury School on the other side of road near to a zebra crossing. The Library Manager has no objection to the Library being used and polling can take place at the far end of the building to allow the library to remain open. Additional costs will be incurred to pay for security staff when the library staff are not on site. If successful, it is the intention that this be a permanent change of location.

3.2.4. **NNP1**      **Proposed Polling Place – hut in the car park outside Northwick Park Station, Northwick Avenue** (replacing Hut outside 31 Rushout Avenue).

In the absence of an alternative permanent building in Polling District NNP1, a temporary hut has been placed on Rushout Avenue for a number of years. There have always been problems in positioning the hut on this residential road which is part of a bus route and well used, especially in the mornings, causing local buses to be delayed for up to 15 minutes. Around the corner, on Northwick Avenue there is an entrance to Northwick Park Station which has four parking bays, two of which could be used for the temporary hut for the days required. Negotiations have been taking place with Transport for London and will be reported to the meeting. If successful, it is the intention that this be a permanent change of location.

3.2.5. **NNP5:**      **Proposed Polling Place - Sudbury Court Wembley Pavilion, East Lane** (replacing Wembley High Technology College, East Lane).

Wembley High Technology College school hall is not available as a polling place as the students need it for GCSE examinations. Although there is a second hall on site, access to this would require voters to walk some considerable distance through the school site which, it is felt, would be inadvisable given that pupils and staff will be on site. Sudbury Court Pavilion is directly across the road from the school, easily accessible by a *pelican/zebra* crossing. The Pavilion was booked to be used but the sports club concerned is willing to make alternative arrangements. This arrangement will be kept under review for future elections.

*Comments from Ward Councillor Detre:*

*I believe that this would be too far for residents in Carlton Ave West, Paxford Road.*

3.2.6 **SST1:**      **Proposed Polling Place – Children Centre, 160 Pitfield Way** (replacing St Raphael’s Community Centre, Rainborough Close).

St Raphael’s Community Centre has been used as a polling place for a number of years. Recently, however, the council has been involved in legal action with the current occupiers making the future of the premises unclear. It is considered ill-advised for it to be hired as a polling place at this time. One alternative are the premises formally used by Brent In2 Work on Besant Way which would be centrally located for voters, however, neither of the two rooms inside are considered to be large enough to hold the two polling stations required for the district. A more suitable alternative site is felt to be the Children’s Centre on Pitfield Way. While this is at the far end of the district, the activity room is sufficiently spacious for voters and polling staff. This arrangement will be kept under review.

Comment from Ward Councillor John:

*Please note that after discussions with my fellow Ward Councillors; we all agree with the recommendations pertaining to our ward as outlined in the report.*

- 3.3 In each case, where a change is made, in addition to the normal poll card, a letter will be sent to every elector in the polling district advising of the change of location.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The Returning Officer can only reimburse Council premises such as schools for incurred costs such as heating and lighting. A rental fee will have to be paid to non council premises, there may be a saving in hiring of one less temporary hut.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires the Council to divide every parliamentary constituency or part thereof within its area into polling districts and that these be kept under review. The Council must also ensure that all electors are given such reasonable facilities for voting as may be reasonable in the circumstances.

#### **6.0 Diversity and Inclusion Implications**

- 6.1 The purpose of this report is to ensure that suitable arrangements are made for all electors to vote without impediment.

#### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

- 7.1 None arising from this report.

#### **8.0 Environmental Implications**

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

#### **Background Papers**

- Report of the Democratic Services Manager to the General Purposes Committee – 13 November 2007
- Representation of the People Act 1983
- Correspondence from ward councillors

#### **Contact Officers**

Any person wishing to inspect the above mentioned papers should contact Anne Reid, Democratic Services, Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley HA9 9HD (tel 020 8937 1359, e-mail: anne.reid@brent.gov.uk).

**PETER GOSS**  
**Democratic Services Manager**