

## Polling station scheme and responses to the Returning Officer's proposals

### Central Hove Ward, Hove Constituency

Polling District	Electorate (1/9/14)	Previous Polling Place	Number of polling stations
UY	5,188	Hove Town Hall, Norton Road	3
UZ	2,201	Hove Library, Church Road	1

Hove Town Hall is not available for use as a polling station on 7 May 2015 as it will be undergoing refurbishment.

The Returning Officer's staff have approached a range of alternative premises, including the Parish Room at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Norton Road. This is considered to be a suitable venue for polling. It is in the same road close to Hove Town Hall. It is a large room with suitable facilities for voters, and there is disabled access via Hova Villas. A note can be inserted on poll cards to direct disabled voters to the alternative access.

### Responses

Two people responded with their approval of the use of the Parish Room, Church of the Sacred Heart.

One person suggested that Hove Salvation Army be considered as a polling place. However, this is in Goldsmid ward, and is not suitable as it is too far outside the voting area.

Another person suggested that King's House would perhaps be a better location. However, there are no suitable rooms on the ground floor.

One party has expressed disappointment at the loss of Hove Town Hall, but have approved the use of the Parish Room, Church of the Sacred Heart, even though this is not ideal.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parish Room, Church of the Sacred Heart be used as a polling place for UY, Central Hove ward.

**Goldsmid Ward, Hove Constituency**

<b>Polling District</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Previous Polling Place</b>	<b>Number of polling stations</b>
NV	4,118	Ajex Hall, Eaton Road	2
NW	2,172	All Saints Church Hall, Eaton Road	1
NX	2,138	Vallance Community Centre, Sackville Road	1
NY	1,843	Cottesmore St Mary's RC Primary School, The Upper Drive	1
<b>NZ</b>	<b>1,617</b>	<b>Avondale Centre, Montefiore Road</b>	<b>1</b>

The Avondale Centre is no longer available for hire as a polling station.

The Returning Officer's staff have not been able to identify alternative premises within the polling district itself. However Brighton & Hove Sixth Form College (BHASVIC) has been approached, and they do have a suitable room for hire. This could be approached from Crocodile Walk, and has disabled access. The college would be able to remain open.

**Responses** Three people responded with their approval of the use of the Refectory Room, BHASVIC, for NZ polling district.

One party also raised deep concerns about the use of the Ajex Hall, Eaton Road for the NV polling district. This had been designated as a polling place following a consultation last autumn, to replace Somerhill School, avoiding the need to close the school on election day. They have raised objections to the replacement of Somerhill School, and do not consider Ajex Hall to be a sufficient provision, as it is not as central as the school, and it would be a long walk or drive for many residents. They believe that some residents, will be put off voting.

The Returning Officer's staff have approached other venues such as the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Garden Café in St Ann's Wells Gardens. They have also considered the use of the bowling club or a portacabin in the Gardens. These are not ideal alternatives, neither is it considered appropriate to revert to the use of Somerhill School, On balance, it could be confusing for voters to change the venue again, as it was used successfully for the May 2014 European elections.

**Recommendation**

That the Refectory Room, Brighton & Hove Sixth Form College (BHASVIC), be used as a polling place for NZ, Goldsmid ward

That the Ajex Hall be retained as a polling place for NV, Goldsmid ward.

**Wish Ward, Hove Constituency**

<b>Polling District</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Previous Polling Place</b>	<b>Number of polling stations</b>
SV	2,082	St Leonard's Church Hall, Glebe Villas	1
SW	1,432	Aldrington Recreation Ground Pavilion, Saxon Road	1
SX	1,395	Aldrington Recreation Ground Pavilion, Wish Road	1
SY	1,470	Children's Centre, West Hove Infant School	1
SZ	774	Sanders House Communal Room, Ingram Crescent West	1

The Pavilion at Aldrington Recreation Ground, Saxon Road, is not available for use as a polling station because it has been leased to a private playgroup. At the last election, the Wish Road pavilion was used as a polling station for both SW and SX polling districts. However, this would not be a suitable arrangement for the combined City Council and General Elections on 7 May 2015.

The Returning Officer's staff have approached a range of alternative premises, but have not been able to identify suitable premises in a central location.

One option could be to site a portacabin in Saxon Road. It is difficult to site a portacabin in the Recreation Ground itself. However, it would be feasible to site a marquee in the Recreation Ground.

**Responses**

Two respondents are in favour of using a marquee. One respondent also commented that accessibility for people with wheelchairs, walkers, mobility impediments, pushchairs etc is essential. It was also suggested that St Leonards Hall in Glebe Villas might be suitable. However, this is already used as a polling place for another voting area.

One respondent is in favour of a portacabin at the Saxon Road side of the park.

During the consultation the Returning Officer has received assurance from council officers that the siting of a portacabin is possible. It is also considered that there are fewer security risks with a portacabin than a marquee.

**Recommendation**

That a portacabin be used as the polling place for SW, Wish ward, to be sited in Saxon Road or the western side of Aldrington Recreation ground.

