

EXETER CITY COUNCIL REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS & POLLING PLACES/STATIONS 2019

Information Sheet

General Information

1.1 The last full reviews of Parliamentary polling districts and places in Exeter, were undertaken in 2015 and 2016 following reviews of electoral arrangements in Exeter and Devon respectively, carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The reviews were completed in January 2016 and again in January 2017. The Council is now required to carry out a further scheduled statutory review to be completed in 2019.

- The Parliamentary polling districts and places are replicated for local government elections.
- The Act requires each local authority to undertake a review every five years. The last statutory review was undertaken in 2014.
- The final decision on the situation of polling stations rests with the Returning Officer.
- It should be noted that City Ward, County Division and Parliamentary Constituency boundaries cannot be changed under this process.
- A **polling district** is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, i.e. a UK Parliamentary constituency, a European Parliamentary electoral region, a ward or an electoral division.
- A **polling place** is a geographical area in which a polling station is located. In Exeter polling places are the same as the polling district to allow a greater degree of flexibility in deciding where a polling station should be.
- A **polling station** is the actual room or building where the process of voting takes place, and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district. The Returning Officer for the particular election must provide a sufficient number of polling stations, and allot the electors to those polling stations in such manner as he or she thinks the most convenient.

List of Current Polling Stations by City Ward

Address	District	Electorate
Alphington Ward		
Temporary Polling Station, Seven Stars Hotel, Alphington Road, Exeter, EX2 8JB	AA	733
Alphington Sports Club, Church Road, Exeter, EX2 8SW	AB	1208
Alphington Village Hall, Alphington Community Assoc, Ide Lane, Exeter, EX2 8UT	AC	2061
West Exe Technology College, Hatherleigh Road, Exeter, EX2 9JU	AD	2538
Duryard & St. James Ward		
University of Exeter, The Central Block - Birks Grange, New North Road, Exeter, EX4 4PQ	BA	1759
University of Exeter, Library - Lopes Hall, St. German`s Road, Exeter, EX4 6TH	BB	739
Exeter Cricket Club Pavilion, Prince of Wales Road, Exeter, EX4 4PR	BC	1486
St Sidwell`s C of E Primary School, York Road, Exeter, EX4 6PG	BD^	2869
Exwick Ward		
Redhills Primary School, Landhayes Road, Exeter, EX4 2BY	CA	2456
The Thatched House Inn, Exwick Road, Exeter, EX4 2BQ	CB	1947
Exwick Parish Hall, Station Road, Exeter, EX4 2FD	CC	1084
Exwick Community Centre, Kinnerton Way, Exeter, EX4 2PR	CD	1898
Heavitree Ward		
South West Baptist Assoc., Wonford Baptist Chapel, 36-38 Wonford Street, Exeter, EX2 5DL	DA	1502
Scout Hut, South Lawn Terrace, Exeter, EX1 2SN	DB^	2616
The Community Room, Ladysmith Infant School, Off Pretoria Road, Exeter, EX1 2PS	DC	1217
Community Room, Hamlin Gardens, Exeter, EX1 3AA	DD	604
Community Centre, Bodley Close, Exeter, EX1 3LG	DE	1017
Mincinglake & Whipton Barton Ward		
Beacon Heath Church, King Arthur`s Road, Exeter, EX4 9BE	EA	1538
The Beacon, Pendragon House, Beacon Lane, Exeter, EX4 8LZ	EB	2127
Whipton Community Hall, Pinhoe Road, Exeter, EX4 8AG	EC	832
Community Room, Rennes House, Vaughan Road, Exeter, EX1 3JW	ED	2143
Newtown & St. Leonard`s Ward		
Victoria Park Tennis Club, Lyndhurst Road, Exeter, EX2 4NX	FA	1217
St Leonard`s Church Centre, Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NG	FB,FBA	1679
St Luke`s Campus, College Road, Exeter, Devon, EX1 2LT	FC	925
Belmont Chapel, Western Way, Exeter, EX1 2DB	FD	2301
Belmont Bowling Club, The Green, Blackboy Road, Exeter, EX4 6SS	FE	1081
Pennsylvania Ward		
Sylvania Community Hall, Mincinglake Valley Park, Exeter EX4 7DR	GA	1730
St James' Church Hall, Mount Pleasant Road, Exeter, EX4 7AH	GB	2322
St Marks Church Hall, St Marks Avenue, Exeter, EX1 2PX	GC	2391
Baptist Church Hall, Pinhoe Road, Exeter, EX4 7HZ	GD	1263
Pinhoe Ward		
Temporary Polling Station, Orwell Garth, (Off Summerway), Exeter	HA	1436
Pinhoe C of E Primary School, Harrington Lane, Exeter, EX4 8PE	HB	2061
The Hall Church, Main Road, Exeter, EX4 8HS	HC	2028
St Lukes Science and Sports College, Harts Lane, Exeter, EX1 3RD	HD	838
Priory Ward		
Community Room, Grandisson Court, Off Bishop Westall Road, Exeter, EX2 6NJ	JA,JAA*	755
Countess Wear Village Hall, 28 School Lane, Exeter, EX2 6LB	JB	1047
Wynstream Primary School, Burnthouse Lane, Exeter, EX2 6AY	JC	2471
Wonford Methodist Church, Church Hall, Burnthouse Lane, Exeter, EX2 6NF	JD,JDA	2277
St. David`s Ward		
Sea Cadet HQ, Canal Banks, Haven Road, Exeter, EX2 8DU	KA	1487
Community Room, Abbeville Close, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4SJ	KB,KBA	901

Address	District	Electorate
Community Room, 66 Weavers Court, Exeter, EX2 4EF	KC	740
Wesley Room, Mint Methodist Church, Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AT	KD	1705
Exeter Community Centre Trust, 17 St David's Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG	KE	2656
St. Loyes Ward		
Clyst Heath Nursery & Community Primary School, Royal Crescent, Exeter, EX2 7QT	LA*	2379
Woodwater Academy, Woodwater Lane, Exeter, EX2 5AW	LB*	1534
St Peter`s High School, Quarry Lane, Exeter, EX2 5AP	LC*	1294
Community Room, Russet House, Russet Avenue, Exeter, EX1 3QB	LD	1792
St.Thomas Ward		
Montgomery Primary School, Redvers Road, Exeter, EX4 1BS	MA	1943
St Thomas Church Hall, Church Road, Exeter, EX2 9BQ	MB	2111
West Exe Nursery School, Cowick Street, Exeter, EX4 1HL	MC	750
St Thomas Baptist Church, Dorset Avenue, Exeter, EX4 1LZ	MD	1808
Bowhill Primary School, Buddle Lane, Exeter, EX4 1JT	ME	904
Topsham Ward		
Matthews Hall, Fore Street, Topsham, Exeter, EX3 0HF	NA* ^	2900
Topsham Town AFC, Exeter Road, Exeter, EX3 OLT	NB*	1264
100 Club, Wear Barton Road, Exeter, EX2 7EH	NC	1611
Newcourt Community Centre, Blakeslee Drive, Exeter, EX2 7FN	ND*	1328

*Polling station located in East Devon Constituency.

^Double station

Current Arrangement of Polling Districts

Maps are available upon request.

What the Rules say*.

- (a) the authority must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- (b) the authority must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled;
- (c) the authority must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place;
- (d) the polling place for a polling district must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate any area wholly or partly outside the district;
- (e) the polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station.

*(Representation of the People Act 1983 s.18)

Please also note that the Council must publish any correspondence submitted in respect of this review.

Access

All polling stations should have access facilities for disabled electors. This includes wheelchair users. There are various building regulations which determine how adaptations can be made. It is not always possible for the owners of buildings to make permanent structural changes. Where permanent facilities are not possible, Electoral Services try to make temporary provision, usually by means of a portable ramp. However, it must be remembered that, on occasion these ramps can cause a hazard and thus it is not always a practical solution.

A polling station should be within reasonable walking distance for most electors.

Practical Considerations

Availability

There is no such thing as a purpose built polling station. We have to adapt and use the buildings which are available in the locality. Whilst regulations permit the Returning Officer to use schools, the owners of other buildings (Church halls, sports clubs etc.) have no such obligation.

Suitability

When selecting a polling station there are some basic criteria which need to be considered.

- Geographically central for the majority of the electorate.
- Appropriate for democratic use.
- Health and safety arrangements
- Enough useable space.
- Exclusive use.
- Access
- Welfare facilities for staff
- Cost

Topography

Considerations such as steep hills and other natural boundaries, railway lines, busy main roads etc. need to be taken into account.

Other Factors

Use of Schools

The current policy is that schools should not be used, where there is a reasonable and viable alternative. This is not always possible. Whilst regulations permit the Returning Officer to use schools as polling stations, every effort will be made to ensure that the school remains open on polling day, although ultimately this decision lies with the school itself. Any alternate suggestions for other suitable venues will be considered.

Overall Number of Polling Stations

There are no legislative limits on the number of polling stations an authority can provide. However, when considering numbers, there needs to be sufficient to run efficient and effective elections, which are as accessible and convenient to the electorate as possible and which follow the principle set out above.

Timetable

Publication of Notice of the Review – 10 June 2019

Consultation period – 10 June – 19 July 2019

Publication of the Returning Officers representations – within 30 days of receipt

Report to Executive Committee – 8 October 2019

Submit to Council – 15 October 2019

Publication of Review Report – by 22 October 2019

Implementation of report recommendations – from Register of Electors published on 1 December 2019, to take effect for the elections due after that date.

Potential Issues and Considerations

Below is information relating to some known concerns relating to polling stations.

1. Alphington Ward

St. Andrews Church Hall (AA) has ceased to be available as a polling station. A temporary polling station was put in place at the Seven Stars Hotel on Alphington Road, for the elections which took place on 2 and 23 May 2019. Temporary cabins are less than ideal due to cost and accessibility factors. The Seven Stars is also located slightly outside of the AA polling district and is within the AD district. This means that there are a number of residences and electors surrounding the new site, which are not currently able to vote there. Possible solutions include; combining the current AA and AD polling districts and for all electors to go to West Exe Technology college, or; the arrangement concerning the temporary facility is maintained with the boundaries of AA and AD redrawn to accommodate this.

2. Duryard & St.James Ward

There are currently two polling stations reasonably close together in Duryard & St. James Ward (BB & BC) Lopes Hall and Exeter Cricket Club. The number of electors at Lopes Hall is relatively small (about 700) and could be merged with the Cricket Club to form one polling district and station.

3. Exwick Ward

The polling district (CB) currently utilises the Thatched Tavern as a polling station. Should consideration be given to approaching Exeter College to enquire as to whether they may have a room available within their nearby facility?

4. Newtown & St.Leonard's Ward

Similarly, Belmont Bowling Club (FE) is located near to Belmont Chapel (FD). It may be possible to combine the two districts together. However, this would require Belmont Chapel to accommodate two polling stations.

5. Pinhoe Ward

The temporary polling station at Orwell Garth continues to cause high profile complaints regarding access for elderly and disabled electors, as well as adequately maintaining the secrecy of the ballot. The use of Willowbrook School may need to be considered as an alternative venue.

6. St.Thomas Ward

West Exe Nursey School (MC) is located near to St. Thomas Church Hall (MB). It may be possible to combine the two districts together. However, this would require St. Thomas Church centre to accommodate two polling stations.

Alternate suggestions for any other current polling station will be also be given consideration.

Point of Contact

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List of Consultees

The (Acting) Returning Officer, Exeter City Council (Exeter Constituency)
The (Acting) Returning Officer, East Devon District Council (East Devon Constituency)
The Returning Officer, Devon County Council
All Exeter City Councillors
All Devon County Councillors for Exeter
Ben Bradshaw MP (Exeter Constituency)
Hugo Swire MP (East Devon Constituency)
Exeter Labour Party
Exeter Conservative Association
Exeter Liberal Democrats
Exeter Green Party
Exeter UKIP
Exeter Women's Equality Party
Exeter British National Party
Exeter For Britain Movement
East Devon Labour Party
East Devon Conservative Association
East Devon Liberal Democrats
East Devon Green Party
East Devon UKIP
Age UK Exeter
Action on Hearing Loss
Devon Insight
Living Options Devon
Step One
Scope
University of Exeter Students Guild
Estuary League of Friends