

Agenda



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Date: 5 November 2024
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A meeting of the **Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee**

will be held on Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 6.00 pm
Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

To watch this virtual meeting, follow this link to the council's [YouTube channel](#).

Members of the Committee:

Councillors:

Robert Maddison (Chair)
Ron Batstone
Sarah James

Max Thompson (Vice-Chair)
Diana Lugova
Sally Povolotsky

Substitutes:

Councillors:

Cheryl Briggs
Eric de la Harpe
Katharine Foxhall
Scott Houghton

Patrick O'Leary
Viral Patel
Mike Pighills
Debra Dewhurst

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Nick Bennett
Head of Legal and Democratic

Agenda

Open to the public including the press

1. Apologies for absence

To record apologies for absence and the attendance of substitute members.

2. Minutes

(Pages 3 - 6)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2024.

3. Declarations of interest

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and any conflicts of interest in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

4. Urgent business and chair's announcements

To receive notification of any matters which the chair determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chair.

5. Public participation

To receive any questions or statements from members of the public that have registered to speak. The deadline to register to address this meeting is 5.00pm on Tuesday 12 November 2024 by email to democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk

6. Review of polling districts and polling places

(Pages 7 - 57)

To consider the report of the head of legal and democratic on the review of polling districts and polling places to meet the requirement to undertake a compulsory review every five years.



Minutes of a meeting of the **Community Governance** **and Electoral Issues** **Committee**

held on Tuesday 3 September 2024 at 6.00 pm
in the Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Robert Maddison (Chair), Ron Batstone, Eric de la Harpe, Diana Lugova and Viral Patel

Officers: Susan Baker, Electoral Services Team Leader, and Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager.

Remote attendance: Jordan Kennedy and Chris McMullin, Electoral Services Officers and Susie Royse, Broadcasting Officer

22. Apologies for absence

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Sarah James with Councillor Viral Patel attending as substitute, and Councillor Max Thompson with Councillor de la Harpe attending as substitute.

23. Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 18 March 2024 as a correct record and agree that the chair sign them as such.

24. Declarations of interest

None.

25. Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

26. Public participation

Councillor Barrow addressed the committee. He spoke in support of the draft LGBCE proposals for Grove, which reflected that submitted by the council, and against any alteration to the proposal which could result in East Challow parish becoming part of a larger Grove ward or a larger Grove and Wantage ward. He spoke in support of the retention of Baulking and Uffington parishes within the same ward due to their shared community identity and working relationship between the two parishes.

27. Response to the Local Government Boundary Commission's Warding Proposals for Vale of White Horse

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic on the council's response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) proposed warding pattern for the district.

The committee welcomed the high correlation between the Commission's draft recommendations and those proposals put forward by the council.

The committee raised no objection to the following draft recommendations which reflected the proposals put forward by the council:

- Abingdon South
- Kingston Bagpuize
- Botley & Sunningwell
- Kennington & Radley
- Cumnor
- Marcham & Wootton
- Drayton
- Steventon & East Hanney
- Sutton Courtenay

The committee considered the following draft recommendations on which councillor representations had been submitted.

Abingdon-on-Thames (Abingdon East, Abingdon North wards)

The committee noted that there was a slight the difference between the arrangements for Abingdon set out in the final recommendations for Oxfordshire County Council and those proposed for Abingdon East and Abingdon North district wards around Mattlock Way and Hendred Way. The committee also noted that this was a consequence of the two reviews overlapping - the county review had to take account of the existing district ward boundaries. Whilst accepting the logic of the argument for the recommendations in terms of road access, the committee agreed that greater weight should be given to achieving coterminosity with the Oxfordshire divisions in Abingdon allowing for effective and convenient local government.

The committee agreed to raise an objection to the proposal based on the above.

Blewbury, Harwell & Western Valley and Hendreds

The committee considered the representations received from councillors which argued that Harwell parish should be included in a district ward with other rural villages rather than within a ward with Western Valley parish which had a different identity and demographic. Whilst acknowledging the points raised, the committee noted that a single member Western Valley ward would have an electoral variance of -16%. In addition, the committee noted that, as set out in the Commission's draft recommendations document, the alternative arrangements would not provide for an effective balance of the three statutory criteria.

The committee also considered the representations received in respect of Harwell Campus. These argued that the Campus was geographically closer to Chilton and should be included within the same ward as Chilton parish. The committee noted that the draft recommendation, which reflected the council's proposal, included the Harwell Oxford Campus ward of Harwell Parish Council, currently in the Hendreds ward, within the Harwell & Western Valley ward thus providing for the parish to be included in a single ward. The committee also noted that any proposal to include the whole of Harwell campus within one parish would need to be considered as part of a community governance review (a review of parish arrangements) and could result in related alterations at the district ward level.

The committee agreed to make no objection to the proposal.

In response to the Commission's invitation to comment on the ward name for the proposed Blewbury ward, the committee agreed that Blewbury & Chilton was suitable reflecting the two largest settlements.

Grove

The committee considered the representations regarding the proposed Grove ward. The committee supported the view that Grove should not form a greater ward with either Wantage or East Challow and noted the arguments set out in the Commission's draft recommendations discounting alternative arrangements which would not achieve electoral equality.

The committee agreed to make no objection to the proposal.

Wantage (Wantage Charlton and Wantage Segsbury)

The committee agreed to raise no objection to the proposed ward boundaries. The committee also considered the names of the proposed wards. Following a discussion of suggested alternatives, East and West wards, the committee agreed to support the proposed ward names, Wantage Charlton and Wantage Segsbury.

Faringdon & Stanford, Watchfield & Shrivenham and Ridgeway wards

The committee considered the representations opposing the separation of Baulking parish (proposed to be included in the Ridgeway ward) and Uffington parish (proposed to be included in the Watchfield & Shrivenham ward). The representations argued that the two communities had a shared community and close local government links at parish level. Whilst acknowledging that the draft

Vale of White Horse District Council – Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee minutes

recommendations achieved electoral equality, the committee considered that greater weight should be given to boundaries that reflect natural communities. The committee agreed that the Commission should amend their proposal to facilitate the inclusion of Uffington and Baulking in the same ward.

The committee agreed to raise an objection and request that Uffington and Baulking are included within one ward.

Whilst not opposing the proposed Faringdon & Stanford ward, the committee expressed the view that should the Commission agree an alternative final recommendation in response to the outcome of the consultation, that sufficient consideration should be given to the smaller villages of Buscot, Coleshill, Eaton Hastings, Great Coxwell and Little Coxwell and their community identity. Members expressed concern that the smaller settlements could be used to achieve electoral equality at the expense of the other two statutory criteria.

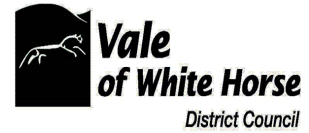
RESOLVED: to authorise the democratic services manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee, to finalise a draft council response based on the committee's decisions set out in the minutes for submission to Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

1. To consider the draft submission agreed by this committee:
2. To authorise the democratic services manager to finalise the document for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

The meeting closed at 6:53pm

Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee



Report of head of legal and democratic

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To: Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee

DATE: 13 November 2024

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Recommendation

That the Committee approves the schedule of proposed changes to polling districts and polling places set out in paragraph 23 of this report.

Implications (further detail within the report)	Financial	Legal	Climate and Ecological	Equality and diversity
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Signing off officer	Emma Creed	Vivien Williams	Kim Hall	Lorne Grove

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out proposals for polling districts and polling places to be actioned prior to the scheduled Oxfordshire County Council elections in May 2025, to ensure electors continue to have reasonable and accessible facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.

Corporate Objectives

2. The report does not specifically relate to any of the council’s corporate objectives, but agreement of the recommendations (amended if the committee sees fit) will ensure compliance with the law.

Background

3. Under sections 18A to 18E of the Representation of the People Act 1983 as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, local authorities are required to conduct a compulsory review of their polling districts and polling places for UK parliamentary constituencies at least once every five years.
4. The last such review in Vale of White Horse was undertaken in 2019. The results of the polling districts and polling places review were agreed by this committee at its meeting on [22 October 2019](#). It is a requirement that the current statutory review of polling districts and polling places is completed between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
5. The current polling arrangements within the Vale are predominantly satisfactory and have been shown at elections conducted in recent years (Police and Crime Commissioner and Oxfordshire County Council elections in 2021, District and Parish elections in 2023 and the Police and Crime Commissioner and Parliamentary elections in 2024) to be practicable.
6. The Elections Act 2022 provides an additional duty for Returning Officers to provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, voters with a disability to vote independently and in secret. The review should therefore include consideration of whether a polling place can either provide or accommodate accessibility equipment, such as level access or a built-in ramp, disabled car parking spaces, sufficient space to manoeuvre within the building and adequate lighting both inside and outside the venue.

Terminology

7. **Polling District:** a geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary constituency or ward into smaller parts within which a polling place can be located which is convenient to electors. By and large each parish is a polling district in its own right and has its own polling place or places. Exceptions are where parishes are sub-divided into electoral wards or split between district wards which necessitates the creation of additional polling districts.
8. **Polling place:** the building(s) within each polling district that will house polling stations.
9. **Polling stations:** the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. The number of polling stations within each polling place is a matter for the returning officer and is not covered in this report.

The review

10. Council gave notice of the review in September 2024. Notice of the review was published on the council's website and given to the Acting Returning Officer (ARO), parish councils and district councillors. The closing date for consultation

responses was 21 October 2024. Consultation responses, including the ARO's comments, are set out in the appendix to this report (Appendices A, B, D, and E).

Key issues

11. Issues have been reported regarding the booking and availability of St Blaise C of E School in the Milton Heights (SJD) polling district. The Headteacher has previously raised concerns regarding the disruption to students when the building is kept open for polling and considers it a safeguarding risk, so the school now closes to accommodate usage as a polling station. It is noted that this council has endeavoured not to use school buildings unless the head teacher confirms that s/he is happy for the school to remain open on election day. An alternative location, Milton Hill Bowls Club, has been successfully used for previous elections (Police and Crime Commissioner 2024) when St Blaise was unavailable to book, and Officers have visited the proposed alternative location to confirm that it is a suitable venue and meets accessibility requirements.
12. Shellingford Community Hall was included in this review to determine whether there was an alternative suitable venue within the polling district, in order to avoid closure of the connected school to accommodate polling. Officers visited the area and determined that there are currently no other suitable locations available within the polling district. Further, representations received by email and via the public consultation survey oppose the change (see Appendices A and B). Although it is against the approach this council has previously taken to avoid using school buildings unless the head teacher confirms that s/he is happy for the school to remain open on election day, it is proposed that there be no change to Shellingford Community Hall until a more suitable venue within the polling district is identified.
13. Merestones is no longer available for hire as a polling place, and has also been deemed an unsuitable location due to having accessibility concerns (a very small venue with poor lighting). Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall has been identified as a suitable alternative location, and has been used successfully as a temporary polling place for polling district SOF Woolstone for the District and Parish elections in 2023, and both the Police and Crime Commissioner and UK Parliamentary elections in 2024.
14. The Beacon in Wantage is the designated polling place for polling districts SSB1 and SSB2 (Wantage Segsbury ward) and SSC1 (Wantage Charlton ward). To reduce the risk of ballot box cross-contamination between parish and district wards when elections are held, and reduce the amount of electors going to a single polling place, it is deemed preferable to move SSC1 to a different location. Wantage Methodist Church has been successfully used for elections since 2021, and despite some negative feedback received in the public survey (see Appendix B) officers visited the location and confirmed that the venue meets accessibility requirements. It is therefore proposed that polling district SSC1 (Wantage Charlton ward) is re-designated to the Wantage Methodist Church, which is located within the polling district.
15. The Corn Exchange in Faringdon is not suitable for continued use as a singular polling place for the entire TGA polling district, as there is a lack of space in the venue compared to the size of the electorate (<7100). Officers identified two

potentially suitable locations that could be designated alongside The Corn Exchange, which were consequently included in the proposals for the consultation – Faringdon Bowling Club and Faringdon United Church. It was noted that out of the two locations, respondents in the public survey identified Faringdon United Church as the preferred venue, but multiple comments also indicated that Faringdon Leisure Centre should be considered for electors in the southern part of the town (see Appendix B). It is therefore proposed that Faringdon Leisure Centre and Faringdon United Church are designated as polling places alongside The Corn Exchange, and that TGA Faringdon is split into three polling districts corresponding to the designated polling places (see Appendix C).

16. The mobile unit at the White Hart was included in this review as it does not meet accessibility requirements, due to a lack of space within the unit alongside poor lighting and a general lack of facilities for polling station staff. Officers visited the area and confirmed that there are no other suitable locations available within the polling district at present. It is noted that residents in the local area may also have difficulty travelling to a neighbouring town or village in order to cast their vote (see Appendix A). It is therefore proposed that there is no change to this polling place, despite the acknowledgement of its unsuitability.
17. Longcot Methodist Chapel is no longer available for hire as a polling place. St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub has been identified as a suitable alternative location, and has also been used successfully as a temporary polling place for polling districts TTG Fernham and TTJ Longcot for both the 2024 Police and Crime Commissioner and UK Parliamentary elections.
18. St Johns Ambulance is no longer available for hire as a polling place. Abingdon Carousel Family Centre has been identified as a suitable alternative location and has also been used successfully as a temporary polling place for polling district XAA2 Abingdon No.2 (Caldecott ward) for both the 2024 Police and Crime Commissioner and UK Parliamentary elections.
19. Stonewater is no longer accepting bookings for use as a polling place. Both Preston Road Community Centre and Abingdon Carousel Family Centre were identified as suitable alternative locations for electors in polling district XAB1 (Abingdon No.4 Fitzharris Ock). Responses from the public consultation did not indicate a preference between the two proposed alternative venues, but an email response did indicate that Abingdon Carousel may be more local for electors in this polling district. Officers have visited this venue to confirm its suitability, and whilst it is suitable as a polling place there are concerns about a lack of space and a lack of parking if too many polling stations are based here (see paragraph 18). It is therefore recommended that Preston Road Community Centre is re-designated as the polling place for polling district XAB1, as this venue is large enough to accommodate another polling district voting there due to having multiple large rooms, and the venue also has more parking available compared to Abingdon Carousel.
20. St Peter and St Paul's Church in Botley was included in this review to determine whether it remains the most suitable location within Botley and North Hinksey parish and should remain as a single polling place for the entire polling district, or whether one or two alternative venues need to be considered due to the size of the electorate in this polling district (<4200) to alleviate the traffic to a single

venue. The consultation for this review included reference to Seacourt Hall, Oxford Rugby Football Club and Botley Women's Institute Hall as potential alternative locations to be considered. Officers visited the area and noted that whereas the facilities offered at St Peter and St Paul's Church are suitable, the venue has very limited parking. Both Seacourt Hall and Botley Baptist Church (part of the same building) were identified as potentially suitable replacement venues as the building has a significantly larger car park, and also meets accessibility requirements for use as a polling place. Botley Women's Institute Hall was also identified as a potentially suitable location, as it benefits from closer public transport links compared to Oxford Rugby Football Club for residents in the local area. Public consultation and councillor responses also supported this conclusion (see Appendices A and B). Due to the size of the electorate in this polling district and the location of the A34 in the parish, it is recommended that the polling district is subdivided into two smaller polling districts – one west of the A34 and the other east of the A34. It is proposed that the western polling district has the building containing both Seacourt Hall and Botley Baptist Church designated as its polling place (with preference given to booking Seacourt Hall), with Botley Women's Institute Hall designated as the polling place for the eastern polling district.

21. The Site Office at Pebble Hill Mobile Home Park is not considered a suitable location for continued use as a polling place, due to a lack of facilities for staff and poor accessibility, as it is a small venue with a narrow doorway. Officers visited the area and determined that the only other suitable location for polling district XDB at present is the Radley Church Room, despite this being outside of the polling district and there being accessibility concerns as the venue has limited external lighting, as the sales office at Redrow does not appear to be available for hire (despite being a suitable location). Radley Church Room has been successfully used as a polling place for polling district XDB since 2021, so it is proposed that this change is made permanent until a more suitable venue becomes available within this polling district. It is noted that a new community building within the polling district was granted planning permission on 29 September 2023 (P23/V0307/FUL) – as such, the existing polling place arrangements will be reviewed once this building is available for use.
22. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review of Oxfordshire has confirmed final recommendations to create or amend certain parish wards and county division boundaries, to ensure electoral equality across the district. Alongside this, the LGBCE Vale of White Horse Boundary Review is due to publish final recommendations regarding changes to district wards on 3 December 2024. It may therefore be necessary to create further polling districts to accommodate the aforementioned changes, until a further comprehensive review of polling districts and polling places is conducted. The Returning Officer has delegated authority to make changes to polling districts and polling places where circumstances dictate that this is desirable, having first consulted with members of the committee and local councillor(s). It may be the case that the Returning Officer must rely on this delegation to avoid calling a further meeting of the committee.
23. The issues and officer proposals are set out below.

Polling district / Parish	Issue	Proposal
SJD – Milton (Heights)	St Blaise C of E school has been unavailable to book for scheduled elections and safeguarding concerns have been raised regarding its usage as a polling place.	Re-designate the polling place for SJD to Milton Hill Bowls Club.
SOC - Shellingford	Shellingford Community Hall requires closure of the attached school in order to be used as a polling place.	No change.
SOF - Woolstone	Merestones is unsuitable in terms of accessibility, and is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for SOF to Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall.
SSC1 - Wantage No.3 (Charlton)	The Beacon is currently the designated polling place for polling districts SSB1 and SSB2 (Wantage Segsbury parish ward) as well as SSC1 (Wantage Charlton ward), which creates a risk of cross-contamination between ballot boxes for the different district and parish wards.	Re-designate the polling place for SSC1 to Wantage Methodist Church.
TGA - Faringdon	The Corn Exchange is no longer suitable as the only designated polling place for the entirety of the Great Faringdon (TGA) polling district, and the polling district would benefit from subdivision due to the size of the electorate in the current polling district (<7100).	<p>Split TGA Faringdon geographically into three separate polling districts – TGA, TGB, and TGC.</p> <p>Designate The Corn Exchange as the polling place for polling district TGC.</p> <p>Designate Faringdon United Church as the polling place for TGB.</p> <p>Designate Faringdon Leisure Centre as the polling place for TGA.</p>

TRB - Fyfield and Tubney	The mobile unit at the White Hart is not a suitable venue for staff, and there are accessibility concerns within the mobile unit.	No change.
TTG - Fernham	Longcot Methodist Chapel is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for TTG to St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub.
TTJ - Longcot	Longcot Methodist Chapel is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for TTJ to St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub.
XAA2 - Abingdon No.2 (Caldecott)	St Johns Ambulance is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for XAA2 to Abingdon Carousel Family Centre.
XAB1 - Abingdon No.4 (Fitzharris Ock)	Stonewater is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for XAB1 to Preston Road Community Centre.
XBA - Botley and North Hinksey	St Peter and St Paul's Church is no longer the most suitable location in this polling district, due to issues around lack of parking, and the polling district would benefit from subdivision due to the size of the electorate in the polling district (<4200).	<p>Split XBA Botley and North Hinksey geographically (using the A34) into two polling districts – XBA1 and XBA2.</p> <p>Re-designate the polling place to the building containing Seacourt Hall and Botley Baptist Church for properties west of the A34 (XBA1), with preference to booking Seacourt Hall.</p> <p>Designate Botley Women's Institute Hall for properties east of the A34 (XBA2).</p>

XDB - Radley No.1	The Site Office at Pebble Hill is not a suitable venue due to accessibility concerns and poor facilities for staff.	Re-designate the polling place for XDB to Radley Church Room.
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Financial Implications

24. There is a modest cost associated with running a polling place. Often this cost is shared amongst a number of parties because the polling place hosts multiple elections at the same time. Cost, however, should not be a prime consideration in determining how many polling places to designate and costs for hire of polling places can be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications

25. In accordance with sections 18A to 18E of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, a compulsory review of the polling districts and polling places for UK parliamentary constituencies must be conducted at least once every five years. This review satisfies the aforementioned requirement.
26. However, it is noted that The Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) (Section 18C (5) and Section 31) allows a local authority to conduct an interim review of any polling district, polling place or polling station within its area, outside of the timescales for a compulsory review, should this be required.

Climate and ecological impact implications

27. As agreed with the climate team, the use of the Climate Impact Assessment Tool is not appropriate for this report. There are no negative climate or ecological impact implications with the proposals set out as the changes proposed do not have any impact beyond the existing arrangements, which is to have a designated polling place per polling district. However, the proposals resulting in an increase in the number of polling places/polling districts would have slightly positive climate and ecological impact implications owing to reducing the need for travel by car or the need to travel as far to reach the designated polling place, as the venues would be located closer geographically to the electorate in that new polling district.

Equalities implications

28. An Equality Screening Assessment was carried out prior to the public consultation for this report, and no negative implications were identified as a result of this review (see Appendix F). This report seeks to ensure that the council and Returning Officer comply with both the Elections Act provisions to assist voters with a disability in addition to the duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Risks

29. There are no discernable risks associated with the proposals set out in this report. By undertaking the review the council is meeting its statutory duty.

Conclusion

30. To meet its statutory obligation to conduct a review by 31 January 2025, and make sure suitable and convenient polling arrangements are provided for local electors before the next scheduled elections in May 2025, a review of polling districts and polling places has been undertaken. The committee is invited to agree the proposals set out in paragraph 23 of this report and note that the Returning Officer may use delegated authority to address issues that could arise which require future changes.

**PROPOSED CHANGES FOR VALE OF WHITE HORSE –
POLLING DISTRICT & POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2024 FEEDBACK (EMAILS)**

Existing Polling District	Designated Polling Place	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	FEEDBACK FROM EMAILS
SJD – Milton (Heights)	St Blaise CE School, School Lane, Milton Heights	No change	Milton Hill Bowls Club	No responses received.
SOC – Shellingford	Shellingford Community Hall, Church Street, Shellingford (on school premises)	No change	Potential change TBC – Stanford in the Vale Village Hall	Response received from Fiona Wright (Chair of Shellingford Parish Meeting) to oppose the proposed redesignation of the polling place to another location, as it was noted at a meeting of the Shellingford Hall committee that local residents do not agree with the location being changed. It was also noted in the response that the Headteacher of Shellingford Primary School (Judith Terrell) advised that shutting the school to accommodate use as a polling station was no inconvenience.
SOF – Woolstone	Merestones, Woolstone, Oxon	No change	Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Broad Street, Uffington	No responses received.
SSC1 – Wantage No. 3 (Charlton)	The Beacon, Portway, Wantage	No change	Potential change TBC –Wantage Methodist Church	Response received from Iain Cameron (Wantage Town Councillor and Deputy Mayor) to advise of Wantage Town Council’s position on parish ward boundaries.

Existing Polling District	Designated Polling Place	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	FEEDBACK FROM EMAILS
TGA – Faringdon	The Corn Exchange, Faringdon	Potential change TBC	Potential changes TBC –Faringdon Bowling Club, Faringdon Leisure Centre and Faringdon United Church	<p>Responses received from Cllr Lucy Edwards and Cllr Bethia Thomas who advised that Faringdon Leisure Centre would be a suitable venue, and that they support the notion to split the polling district and designate more than one polling place.</p> <p>It was noted that the Leisure Centre is a preferable alternative when compared to the original proposed suggestions (Faringdon Bowling Club and Faringdon United Church) as it is located further away from The Corn Exchange which should help with traffic congestion in the centre, and also has ample parking available.</p> <p>Cllr Edwards also noted that whilst Faringdon Bowling Club is a good venue, it isn't geographically located very far from The Corn Exchange and as it only has one entrance/exit there may be some congestion accessing the venue. It was noted that Sudbury House Hotel has also been previously used.</p>
TRB – Fyfield and Tubney	Mobile Unit White Hart, White Hart Public House (Car Park), Main Road, Fyfield	No change	Potential change TBC	Response received from Cllr Mark Coleman to advise that there are a very limited number of suitable venues in the Fyfield area and that some residents would find it difficult to travel to neighbouring villages or towns to vote there.
TTG – Fernham	Longcot Methodist Chapel, Fernham Road, Longcot	No change	St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub, Church Close, Longcot	No responses received.
TTJ – Longcot	Longcot Methodist Chapel, Fernham Road, Longcot	No change	St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub, Church Close, Longcot	No responses received.

Existing Polling District	Designated Polling Place	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	FEEDBACK FROM EMAILS
XAA2 – Abingdon No.2 (Caldecott)	St Johns Ambulance, 200 Caldecott Road, Abingdon	No change	Abingdon Carousel Family Centre, Caldecott Chase	No responses received.
XAB1 – Abingdon No.4 (Fitzharris Ock)	Stonewater, Bridges Close, Abingdon	No change	Preston Road Community Centre Or Abingdon Carousel Family Centre	Response received from Cllr Eric de la Harpe to note that Abingdon Carousel Family Centre is more local for the ward than Preston Road, and appears to be a good venue for holding elections.

Existing Polling District	Designated Polling Place	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	FEEDBACK FROM EMAILS
XBA – Botley and North Hinksey	St Peter and St Paul's Church, 81 West Way, Botley	Potential change TBC	Potential change TBC –Oxford Rugby Football Club, Botley Women's Institute Hall, and/or Seacourt Hall	<p>Response received from Cllr Debby Hallett noting that Seacourt Hall is centrally located in Botley with good transport links and is a well-known location that would be easy for residents to find.</p> <p>It is noted that the WI Hall is on a rural lane with some parking in the designated car park, but no on-street parking, and is separated from the main community by the A34. Cllr Hallett also noted that the Rugby Club is a long distance from the main roads and that not many people go there or would know where it is.</p> <p>Cllr Hallett recommended waiting to split the polling district until the Louie Memorial Pavilion is rebuilt, and then use that one polling place with Seacourt Hall as the other designated polling place, as splitting the PD now will leave one small electorate on the east side of the A34 and a larger electorate on the west side.</p> <p>Response received from Emma Gordon (Parish Clerk) at Botley and North Hinksey Parish Council to recommend the use of Seacourt Hall due to its location and parking facilities.</p> <p>The Rosary Room, Church Hall on Yarnell's Hill was also put forward as a potential alternative to the existing proposed venues, but it was acknowledged that this venue has the same issue with limited parking as St Peter and St Paul's.</p> <p>The WI Hall was noted as a good option for the other side of the A34 as it has good parking, and that it is a more central option compared to the Rugby Club for the residents on this side of the road (should the polling district be split).</p>

Existing Polling District	Designated Polling Place	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	FEEDBACK FROM EMAILS
XDB – Radley No.1	Site Office, Pebble Hill, Mobile Home Park, Radley	No change	Potential change TBC –Radley Church Room, Redrow Site Office	No responses received.

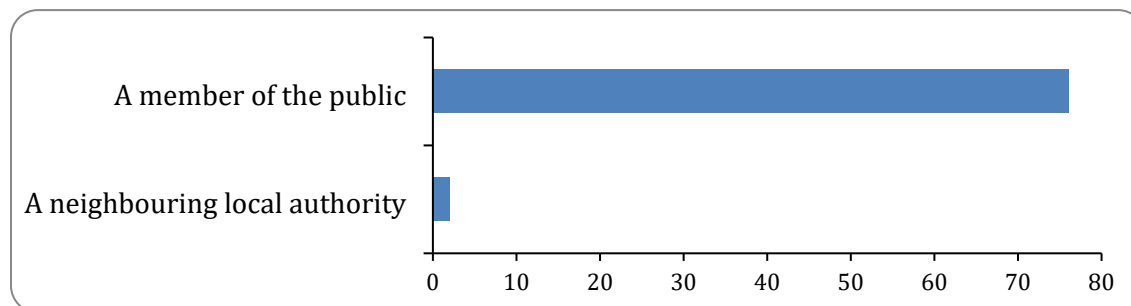
Vale of White Horse Polling Districts and Places Review Consultation

The activity ran from 09/09/2024 to 21/10/2024

Responses to this survey: **78**

1: Are you responding as

There were 78 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
A member of the public	76	97.44%
A neighbouring local authority	2	2.56%
A business/organisation	0	0.00%
Other (please specify)	0	0.00%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

if you selected 'other' please specify:

Wantage Town Councillor

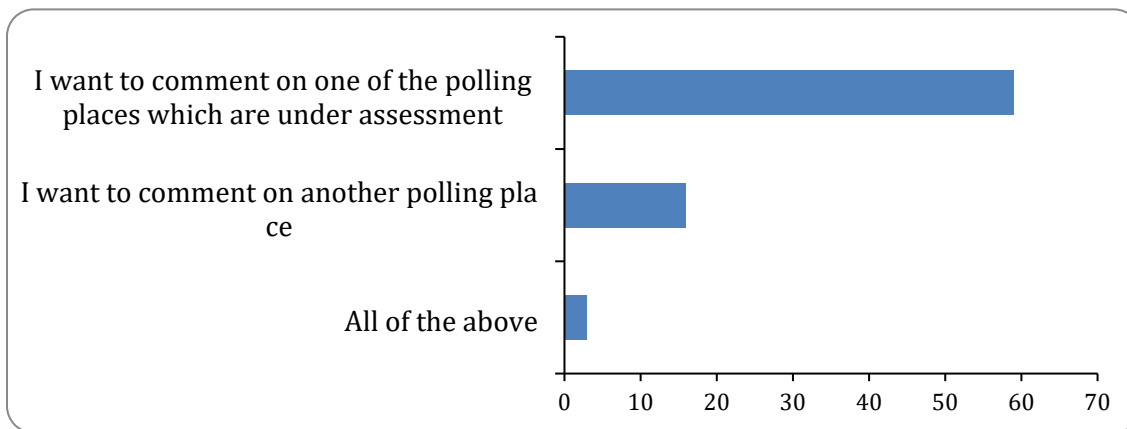
2: If you selected neighbouring local authority or business/organisation, please let us know its name.

Faringdon Town Council

3: Please select one of the options below.

Please let us know if you are commenting on a polling place subject to change

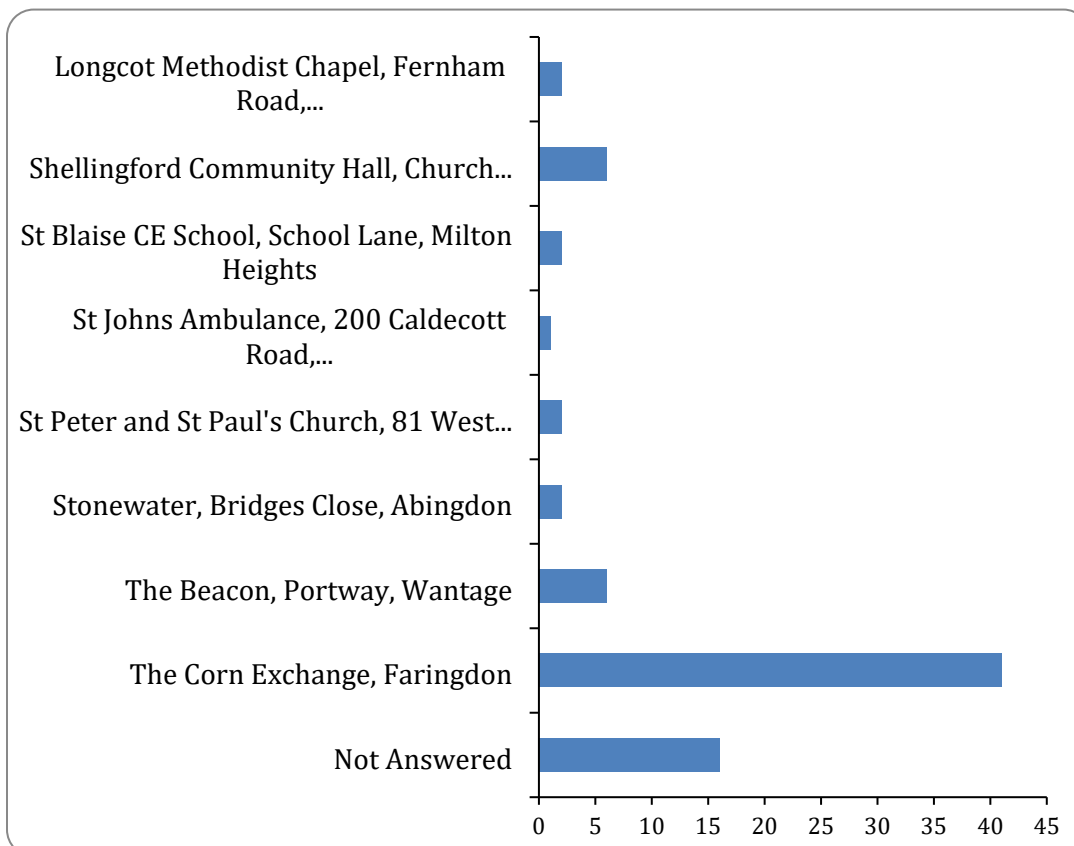
There were 78 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
I want to comment on one of the polling places which are under assessment	59	75.64%
I want to comment on another polling place	16	20.51%
All of the above	3	3.85%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

4: Please use the dropdown list below to select the polling place you would like comment on.

There were 62 responses to this part of the question.



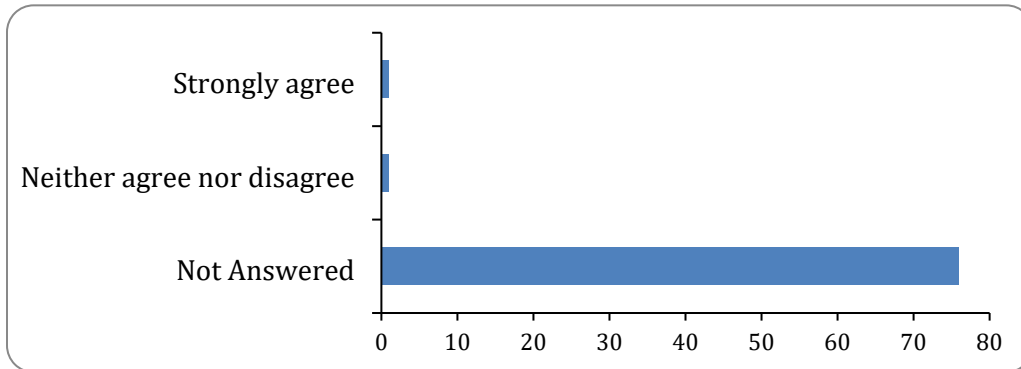
Option	Total	Percent
Longcot Methodist Chapel, Fernham Road, Longcot	2	2.56%
Merestones, Woolstone, Oxon	0	0.00%
Mobile Unit White Hart Public House (Car Park), Main Road, Fyfield	0	0.00%
Shellingford Community Hall, Church Street, Shellingford (on school premises)	6	7.69%
Site Office, Pebble Hill, Mobile Home Park, Radley	0	0.00%
St Blaise CE School, School Lane, Milton Heights	2	2.56%
St Johns Ambulance, 200 Caldecott Road, Abingdon	1	1.28%
St Peter and St Paul's Church, 81 West Way, Botley	2	2.56%
Stonewater, Bridges Close, Abingdon	2	2.56%
The Beacon, Portway, Wantage	6	7.69%
The Corn Exchange, Faringdon	41	52.56%
Not Answered	16	20.51%

5: If you want, you can use the text box below to comment on any of the above polling places, for example to highlight issues or make suggestions based on your voting experience. Please make sure you mention the specific location(s) you are commenting on.

See responses under question 34

6: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from St Blaise CE School to Milton Hill Bowls Club?

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	1	1.28%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	1	1.28%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 I live equal walking distance from both locations so this change would be fine for me. Probably would feel more appropriate not to be walking into a school during term time.
2. Totally support this move, it is too disruptive and not safe for the children to have people accessing the site all day for voting and puts an additional stress and burden on the school staff.

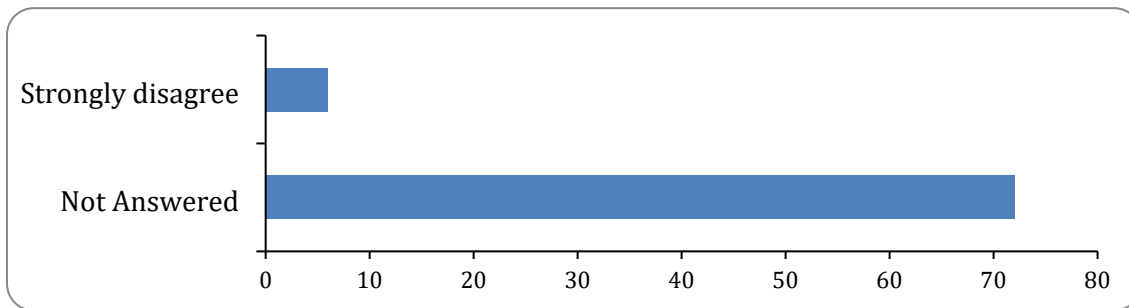
7: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	3	3.85%
Not Answered	75	96.15%

8: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from Shellingford Community Hall to Stanford in the Vale Village Hall?

There were 6 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.00%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	6	7.69%
Not Answered	72	92.31%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 6 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 Shellingford community wants to vote within walking distance in its village hall. Some residents don't drive and there is no public transport.
- 2 We held a joint School / Shellingford hall committee meeting and everyone was extremely upset about the protentional removal of Shellingford Hall as a polling station, including the Head Teacher, who was adamant that the local polling station is a key element in the local community, which VWHDC is keen to support. No one want rural communities to dwindle. Exert from Hall Minutes....

10. AOB

· Possible loss of election voting to Hall.

Great concern was raised about losing elections in village hall. If this happens it will cause significant inconvenience to many villagers, and would very probably result in less villagers voting. School head teacher on the committee stated that election disruption causes NO significant problem to the school day. The Hall has good access for disabled villagers and has excellent parking. It appears that Consultation has been limited / non-existent.

This will be raised urgently at a village meeting. FW to give JT Council contact. MW to contact our MP on this.

- 3 In a functioning democracy any community of a decent size should expect to have a place to register a vote within walking distance. This move has the potential to disenfranchise those most vulnerable such as the elderly and those without reliable transport. Please check your information on public transport as Shellingford DOES NOT have any buses running to or from it.
- 4 You shouldn't have to travel to another town to vote. But the school needs to stay open.
- 5 My wife uses a wheelchair and has no difficulties gaining access to the Community Hall. It is level access without steps. Furthermore, I know that the school has no objections to the use of the Hall for election purposes. Moving the polling place to Stanford or anywhere outside Shellingford would be very inconvenient. Does Stanford have level access (without any steps at all) or blue badge car parking close to the Village Hall?
- 6 Very concerned that we would have to travel to Stanford in the Vale. Once this is changed it will be forever.

9: If you can suggest alternative venues in the local area that could replace Shellingford Community Hall as a polling place, use the box below to let us know.

There were 4 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 Why not Shellingford?
- 2 Shellingford Hall does NOT need to be replaced. PLEASE CAN YOU LET ME KNOW WHO TO CONTACT REGARDING THIS
- 3 How about using the church or would one of the farms be able to offer a venue
- 4 Shellingford Church

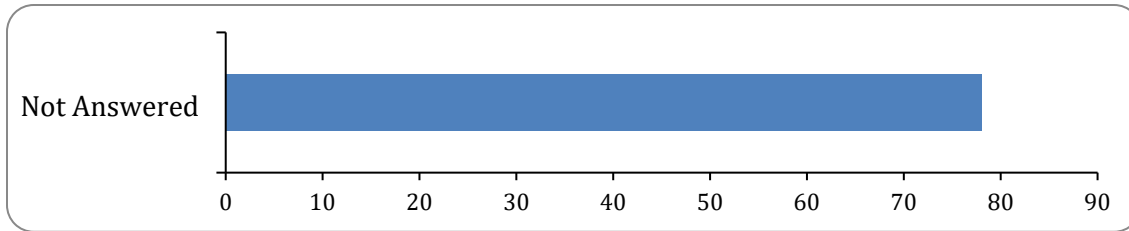
10: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 7 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	7	8.97%
Not Answered	71	91.03%

11: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from Merestones, Woolstone, to Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington?

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.00%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	78	100.00%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

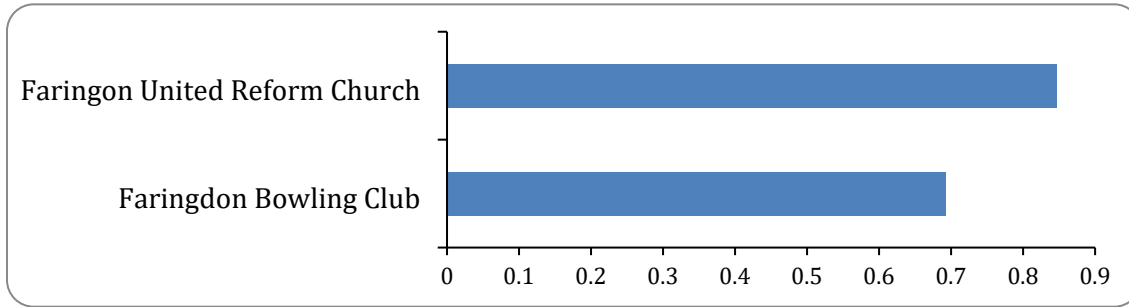
There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

12: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There was 1 response to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	1	1.28%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

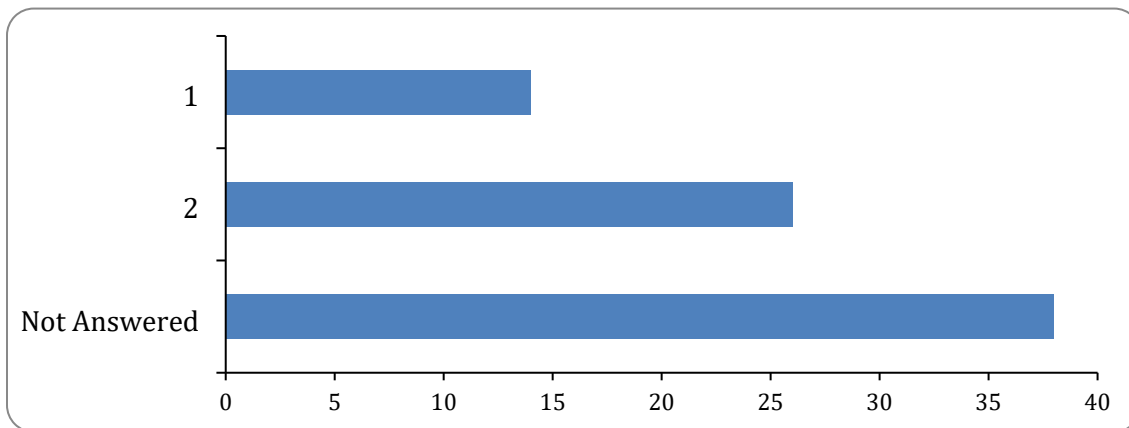
13: Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being your favourite venue, and 2 being your least preferred one. (Faringdon)



Item	Ranking
Faringdon United Reform Church	0.85
Faringdon Bowling Club	0.69

Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 4 your least preferred one. Faringdon - Faringdon Bowling Club

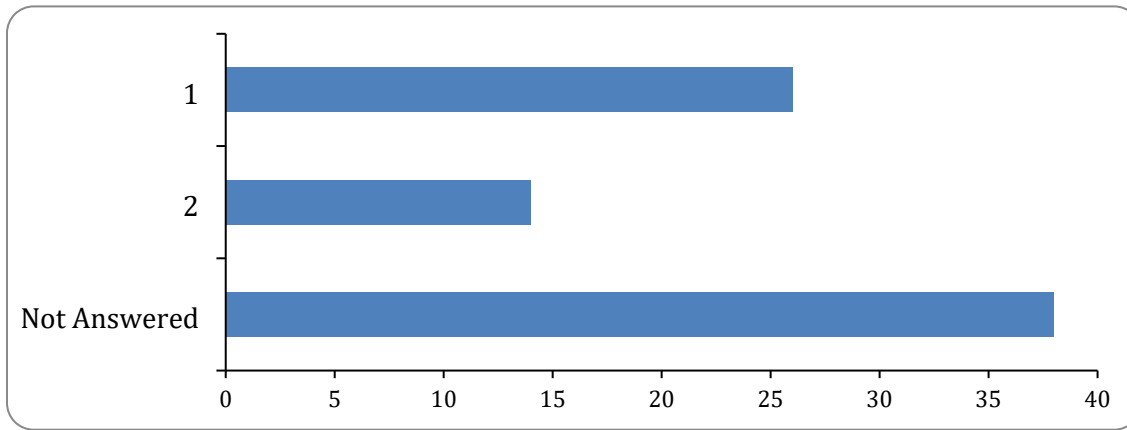
There were 40 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	14	17.95%
2	26	33.33%
Not Answered	38	48.72%

Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 4 your least preferred one. Faringdon - Faringdon United Reform Church

There were 40 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	26	33.33%
2	14	17.95%
Not Answered	38	48.72%

14: If you can suggest other venues in the local area that could be used as a polling place alongside The Corn Exchange, use the box below to let us know.

There were 19 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 Faringdon Community College
- 2 My polling place is not affected but the options did not allow for no comment!
- 3 What was wrong with the leisure centre? seemed to work fine.
- 4 Faringdon Leisure Centre
- 5 I'm interested to know why Faringdon Leisure Centre is no longer considered suitable. It's a much easier location for a significant proportion of the town. Or how about the theatre at FCC? No need to close or involve the rest of the school as I believe it has a separate entrance.
Alternatively, if there is an empty shop or factory unit along Park Road or up Coxwell Road, I wouldn't mind working there (I'm often a Poll Clerk anyway).
- 6 Maybe the two primary schools, Folly View Primary is one end of town and accessible and The Elms Primary is closer to the centre of town so you cover both ends of Faringdon
- 7 Faringdon football club
Faringdon leisure centre
Faringdon school
- 8 The Corn Exchange has always seemed convenient, large enough, well organised, easily accessible - why is it being suggested it should change?

- 9 They are both still very close to corn exchange and parking poor
- 10 Nothing wrong with the Corn Exchange. Big building near to the car park and easy to get to. The others, I wouldn't bother with so would postal vote. Your reasons are *****.
- 11 Faringdon Community College
- 12 The Pump House Project
- 13 Leisure centre
- 14 Faringdon leisure centre
- 15 The leisure centre
- 16 They are all too close together and central. Faringdon now covers a very wide area. The leisure centre has been used before and is an obvious choice for all the new western developments - Coxwell and Highworth Roads.
- 17 Why on earth can we not join the 21st Century and most of Europe and do it all online????????????? You will only need one polling station then for the illiterate!!!!!!!!!!
- 18 It is unclear from the consultation information whether The Corn Exchange will no longer be used. Faringdon Town Council wish to comment that the venue should continue to be used in ADDITION to the other venues proposed, neither of which have a preference.
- 19 The Corn Exchange is a good, central site for a polling station, but it has limitations in the way it is currently used. The current entrance is from the small door on Gloucester Street. The entrance is also used as the exit, which causes a bottle neck as people cannot enter and exit at the same time. In addition for the last few elections, local and national, representatives of the various parties have gathered around this small door. In addition there is usually at least one official in the doorway. The pavement is narrow here, and often people entering/leaving are obliged to step into the road.

When I first moved to Faringdon, many years ago how, the main entrance was used in addition to the side entrance and a 'one way' system was in operation with people entering through one door and left via the other. The main entrance has a large area of pavement outside it, which would allow far more room for representatives to gather whilst allowing those exiting the polling station to do so safely.

I really do think that this original layout needs to be used. The current single entry

is unworkable and unsafe. If you really want to keep one entry/exit point then please use the main door at the front. So much larger and safer for all concerned.

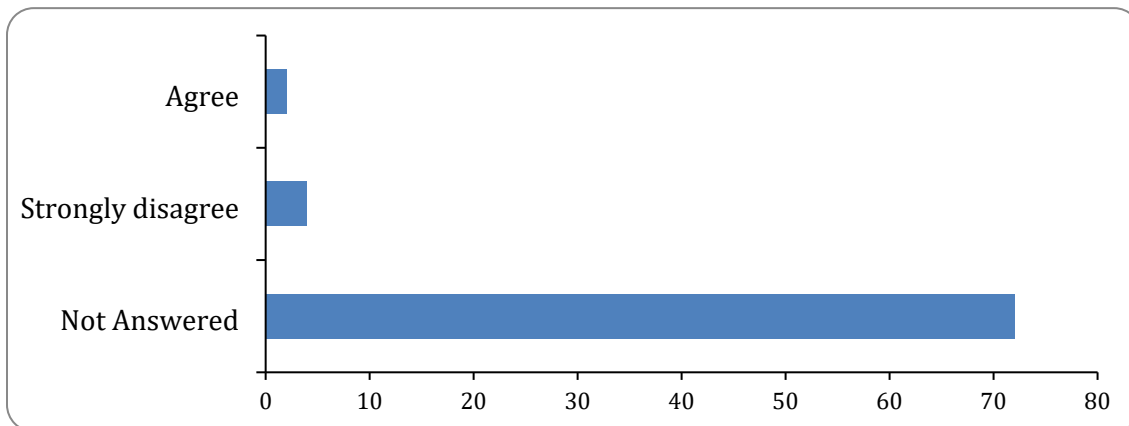
15: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 42 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	1	1.28%
No	41	52.56%
Not Answered	36	46.15%

16: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from The Beacon to Wantage Methodist Church?

There were 6 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.00%
Agree	2	2.56%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	4	5.13%
Not Answered	72	92.31%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 6 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 The Beacon is perfectly accessible and has plentiful parking which the alternative does not. I suspect that if the Methodist church is used people would park at the Beacon and then have further to walk to cast their vote. Not that accessible for disabled voters who rely on a car.
- 2 What's the point? Anyone driving who moves to there will still use a parking space at the beacon - may as well keep it there.
- 3 Little onsite parking. More difficult to access especially for elderly and disabled residents due to parking and the amount of cars trying to come in and out of the turning
- 4 I know both buildings well as have been a Presiding Officer at the Beacon on several occasions although not the most recent elections. I am also a Methodist. I presume that the church has worked well as a polling station previously and in terms of location and as far as parking and disabled access is concerned I think on a par with the Beacon although parking not quite as close. I haven't voted at

the Church as I always have a postal vote which I would encourage others to have, especially the elderly or disabled.

- 5 I agree on the basis that disabled parking will continue to be available at the polling place. I also have a concern about entry/exit by car onto Newbury Street as the sightlines are poor especially when leaving. Although there is parking it is tight for manoeuvring. Have you carried out a risk-assessment for parking and traffic entering and leaving?
- 6 The Methodist Church has very little and difficult car parking . The main entrance has deep steps therefore this building is difficult for the elderly and disabled to access

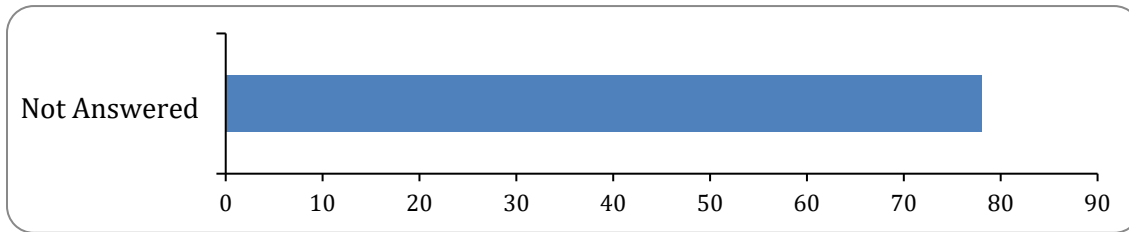
17: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 7 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	7	8.97%
Not Answered	71	91.03%

18: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from the Mobile Unit, White Hart at White Hart Public House, to St Nicholas Church?

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0.00%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	78	100.00%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

19: If you can suggest alternative venues in the local area that could replace the Mobile Unit White Hart as a polling place, use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

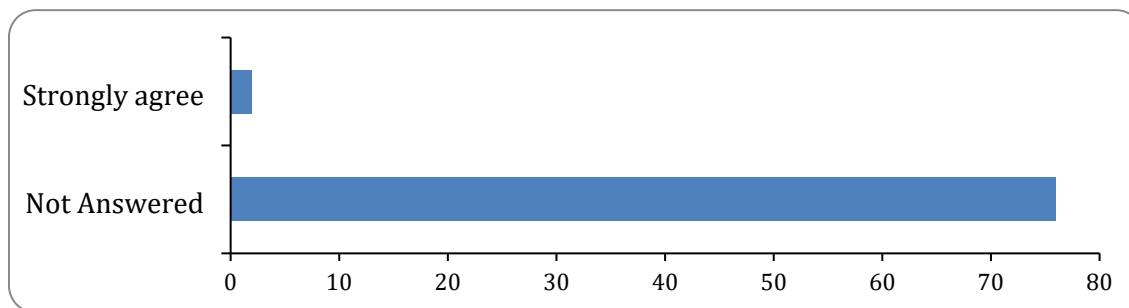
20: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There was 1 response to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	1	1.28%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

21: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from Longcot Methodist Chapel to St Mary the Virgin Community Hub (Longcot)?

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	2	2.56%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

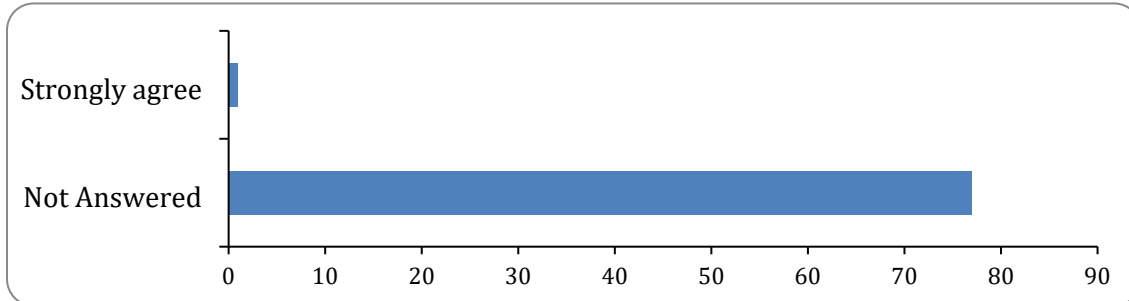
22: Would you like to comment on another polling places in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	3	3.85%
Not Answered	75	96.15%

23: How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from St Johns Ambulance on Caldecott Road to Abingdon Carousel Family Centre?

There was 1 response to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly agree	1	1.28%
Agree	0	0.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	0	0.00%
Disagree	0	0.00%
Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

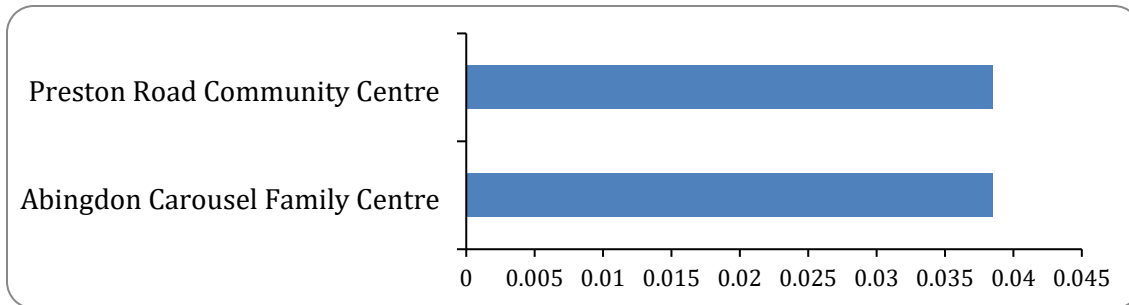
There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

24: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	2	2.56%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

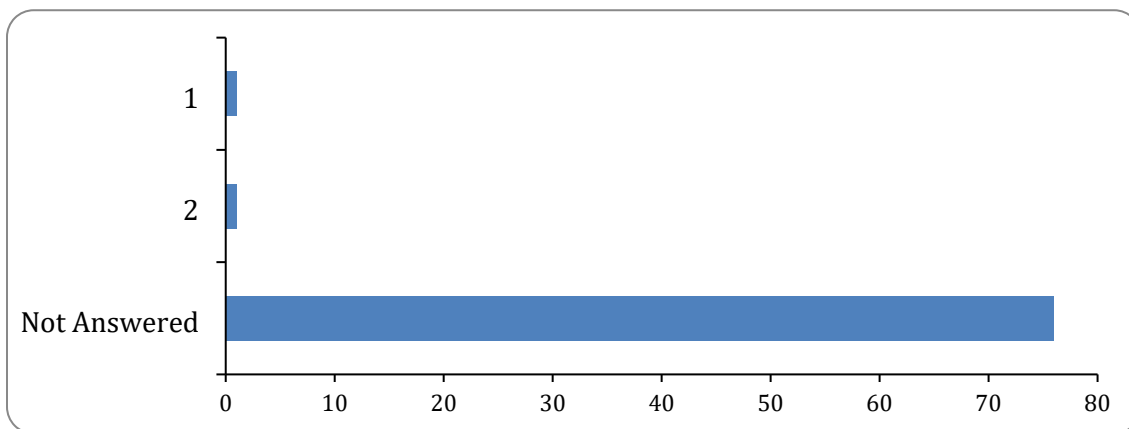
25: Please rank the alternative polling places in order of preference, with 1 being your favourite venue and 2 your least preferred one.



Item	Ranking
Preston Road Community Centre	0.04
Abingdon Carousel Family Centre	0.04

How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from Stonewater to Preston Road Community Centre or Abingdon Carousel Family Centre? Abingdon Fitzharris - Preston Road Community Centre

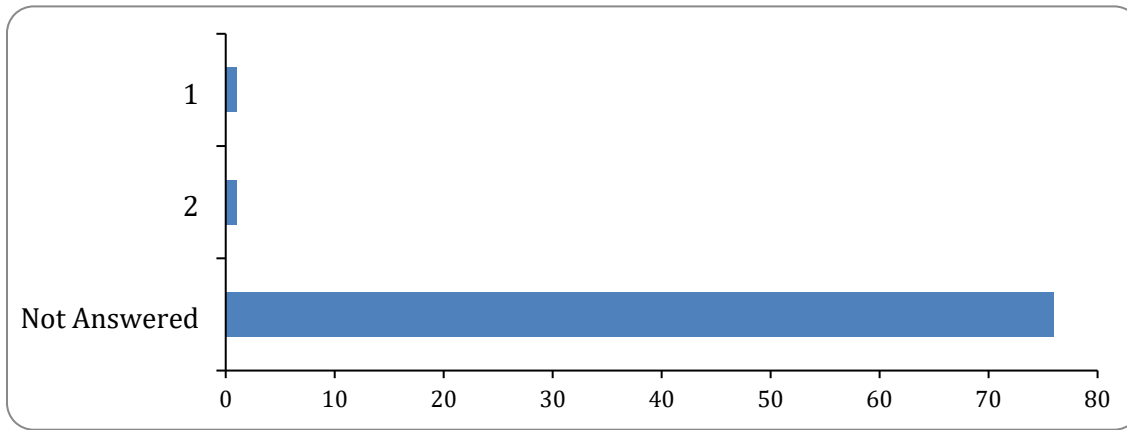
There were 2 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	1	1.28%
2	1	1.28%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

How far do you agree or disagree with the proposal to move the polling place from Stonewater to Preston Road Community Centre or Abingdon Carousel Family Centre? Abingdon Fitzharris - Abingdon Carousel Family Centre

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	1	1.28%
2	1	1.28%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There was 1 response to this part of the question.

- 1 Parking is not great at the carousel

26: If you can suggest alternative venues in the local area that could replace Stonewater as a polling place, use the box below to let us know.

There was 1 response to this part of the question.

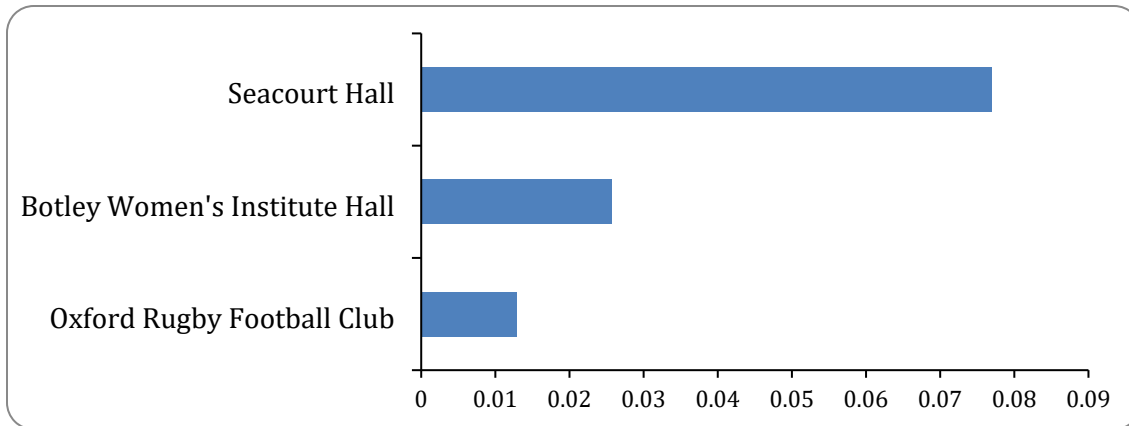
- 1 Stonewater is preferable to the alternatives for the people on tithe farm and Ladygrove

27: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	3	3.85%
Not Answered	75	96.15%

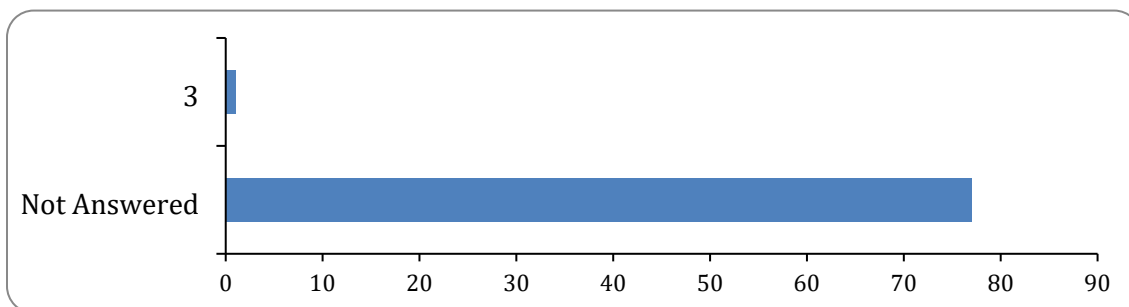
28: Please rank the additional polling places we have identified in order of preference, with 1 being your favourite one, and 3 your least preferred one.



Item	Ranking
Seacourt Hall	0.08
Botley Women's Institute Hall	0.03
Oxford Rugby Football Club	0.01

Please rank the additional polling places we have identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 2 your least preferred one. Botley and North Hinksey - Oxford Rugby Football Club

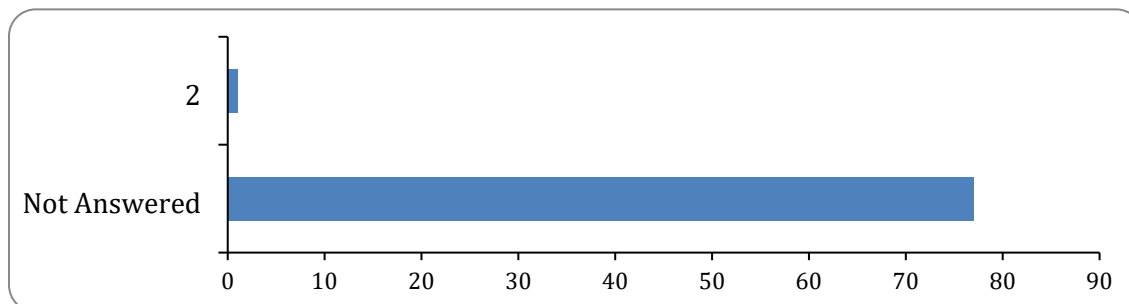
There was 1 response to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	0	0.00%
2	0	0.00%
3	1	1.28%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

Please rank the additional polling places we have identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 2 your least preferred one. Botley and North Hinksey - Botley Women's Institute Hall

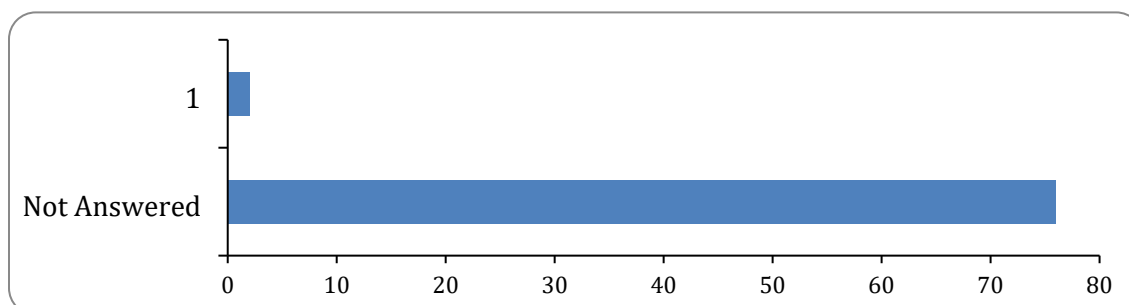
There was 1 response to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	0	0.00%
2	1	1.28%
3	0	0.00%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

Please rank the additional polling places we have identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 2 your least preferred one. Botley and North Hinksey - Seacourt Hall

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
1	2	2.56%
2	0	0.00%
3	0	0.00%
Not Answered	76	97.44%

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please provide them below.

There were 2 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 Seacourt Hall is close to bus stops and the shops and at the centre of the community. It is close to bus stops, cycle parking and car parking. The facilities are fairly new and well maintained.

The Rugby club cannot be accessed by public transport and is down a narrow lane so could get very congested.

The WI is closer to West Way than the Rugby club but still on a narrow lane and a 5min walk from a bus stop.

- 2 The Rugby Club is not an appropriate site, it is located a long way down a narrow lane with poor road access and no public transport.

29: If you can suggest other venues in the local area that could be used as a polling place, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

30: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There were 3 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	3	3.85%
Not Answered	75	96.15%

31: Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being your favourite venue, and 2 being your least preferred one.

Item	Ranking
Radley Church Room	0.00
Redrow Site Office	0.00

Radley. Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 2 being your least preferred one. - Radley Church Room

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

Radley. Please rank the additional venues we have so far identified in order of preference, with 1 being the venue you prefer the most, and 2 being your least preferred one. - Redrow Site Office

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

If you have any comments on the above proposal, please use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

32: If you can suggest alternative venues in the local area that could replace the existing polling place on Pebble Hill, use the box below to let us know.

There were 0 responses to this part of the question.

33: Would you like to comment on another polling place in the Vale of White Horse?

There was 1 response to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	0	0.00%
No	1	1.28%
Not Answered	77	98.72%

34: If you want, you can use the text box below to comment on any of the above polling places, for example to highlight issues or make suggestions based on your voting experience. Please make sure you mention the specific location(s) you are commenting on.

There were 15 responses to this part of the question.

- 1 XAE2 - No problems
- 2 XAE2 - Long Furlong Community Centre. I am happy with this (I use postal voting these days anyway!). But please note that many new properties are being occupied on the North Abingdon estate - Please make allowances for these extra voters!
- 3 TTK Shrivenham. This is a very useful location in the village
- 4 Hinton Waldrist village hall. Convenient for the village, good disabled access, toilets. Should continue.
- 5 I ticked VOWH area but my polling station in Kennington is not listed either as under review or not under review?

I wanted to say I am deaf with mobility disability and have a support dog. The polling station team had to send me home to fetch my ID last time, I had ID but it was not the accepted kind.

Once back again, the team had no deaf accessible communication, the main thing to do is smile, make eye contact and use hand signals that are everyday if you think about it. But if they knew "name" and "address" in BSL, it would be more welcoming and not difficult for them to learn (don't need full sentences and grammar, just two signs delivered with a non-terrified face. They did however want to make sure I understood that my support dog was welcome to join me in the room, when he had decided all the voters must be there to admire/ cuddle him so I'd had a bit of a job getting to the door (delightful).

- 6 TTA Ashbury this is a convenient place for all of our village to vote at and I would not want to see it moved to a place outside the village.
- 7 TTA Ashbury can be difficult for wheelchair users.
- 8 I find that the Polling Station in Ashbury Village Hall is always bright, accessible, convenient and always friendly and well organised by the Polling Staff.
- 9 We use Ashbury Village Hall which is very convenient, clean and has good facilities
- 10 TTA Ashbury is fine for voters (apart from the front access which may be awkward for some) but is very cold in winter for the people working in the polling station. Extra heaters would benefit them.

- 11 I cannot find the Polling Station for Abingdon Caldecott at Abingdon Rugby Club.

This station requires pedestrians to walk along an unpaved road or through woodland to reach it and, particularly after dark, is a disincentive to elderly people to vote.

- 12 We really appreciate the village hall in Ashbury so are delighted this is being retained.

- 13 The Corn Exchange is a good, central site for a polling station, but it has limitations in the way it is currently used. The current entrance is from the small door on Gloucester Street. The entrance is also used as the exit, which causes a bottle neck as people cannot enter and exit at the same time. In addition for the last few elections, local and national, representatives of the various parties have gathered around this small door. In addition there is usually at least one official in the doorway. The pavement is narrow here, and often people entering/leaving are obliged to step into the road.

When I first moved to Faringdon, many years ago now, the main entrance was used in addition to the side entrance and a 'one way' system was in operation with people entering through one door and left via the other. The main entrance has a large area of pavement outside it, which would allow far more room for representatives to gather whilst allowing those exiting the polling station to do so safely.

I really do think that this original layout needs to be used. The current single entry is unworkable and unsafe. If you really want to keep one entry/exit point then please use the main door at the front. So much larger and safer for all concerned.

- 14 TEA Appleton with Eaton, Appleton Village Hall Oaksmere Appleton. A good central venue for the community to vote at.

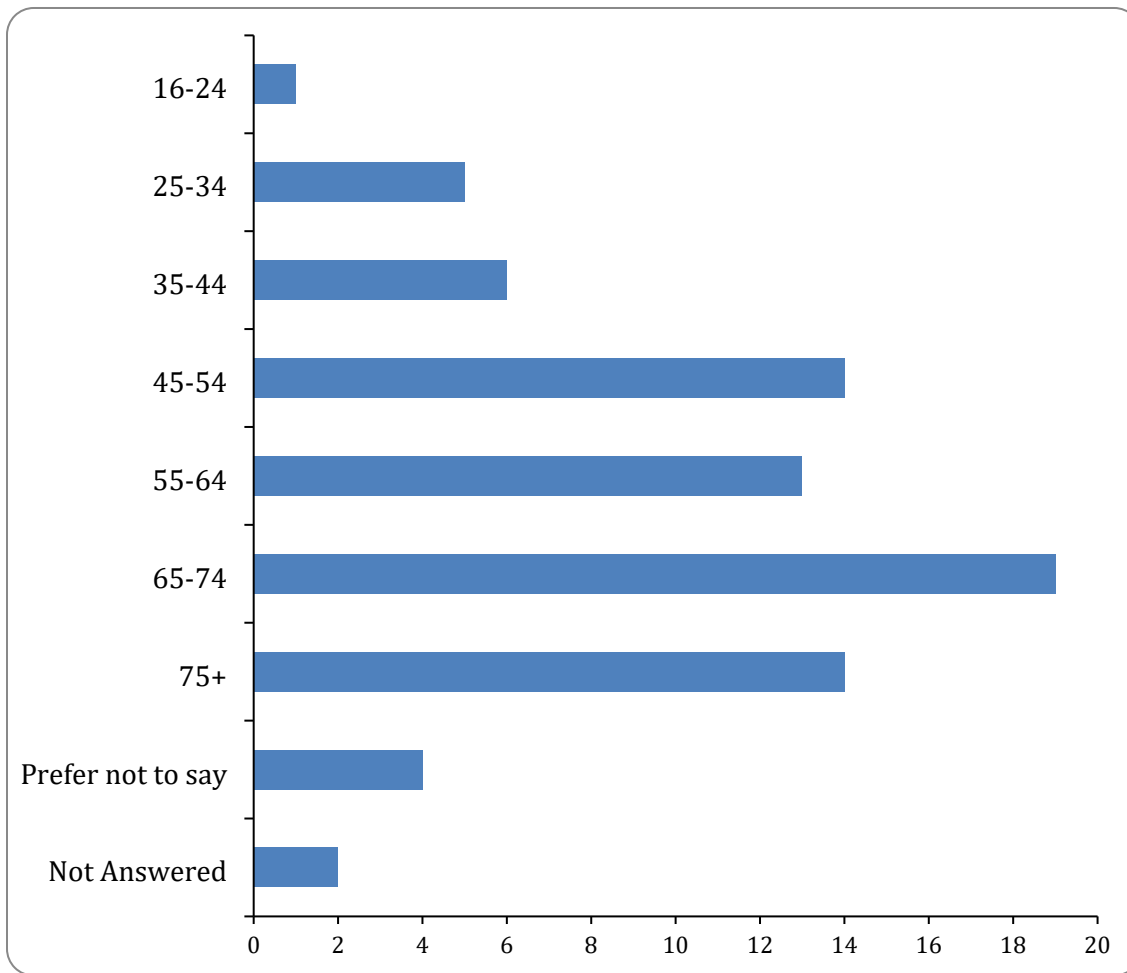
Easy access and parking facilities. Hopefully this location will not feature in any further reviews

- 15 TTK - Shrivenham. The current polling place, the Memorial Hall, is the best available location in the village of Shrivenham - don't move it!

EQUALITIES INFORMATION

How old are you?

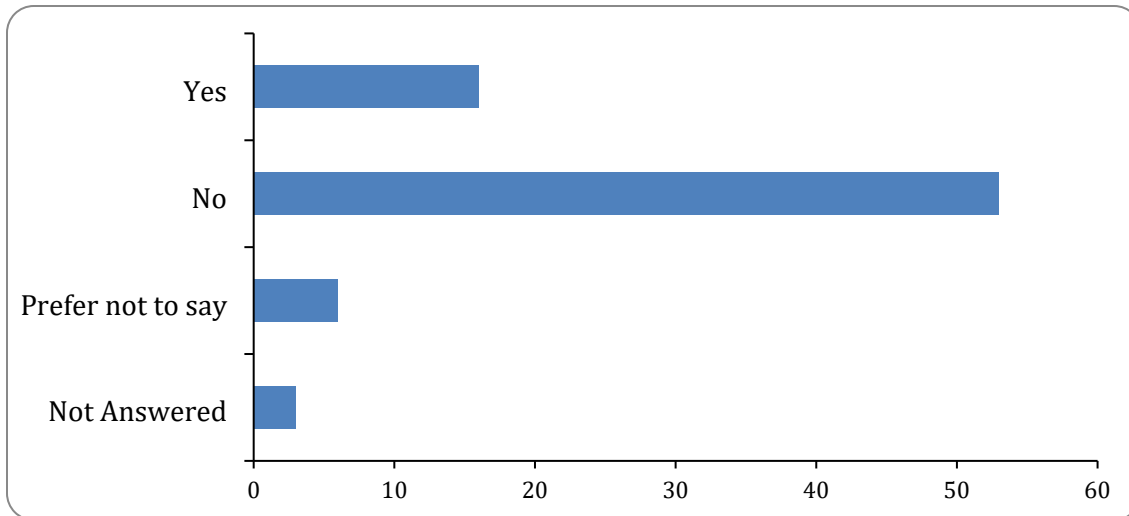
There were 76 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Under 16	0	0.00%
16-24	1	1.28%
25-34	5	6.41%
35-44	6	7.69%
45-54	14	17.95%
55-64	13	16.67%
65-74	19	24.36%
75+	14	17.95%
Prefer not to say	4	5.13%
Not Answered	2	2.56%

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illness lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more?

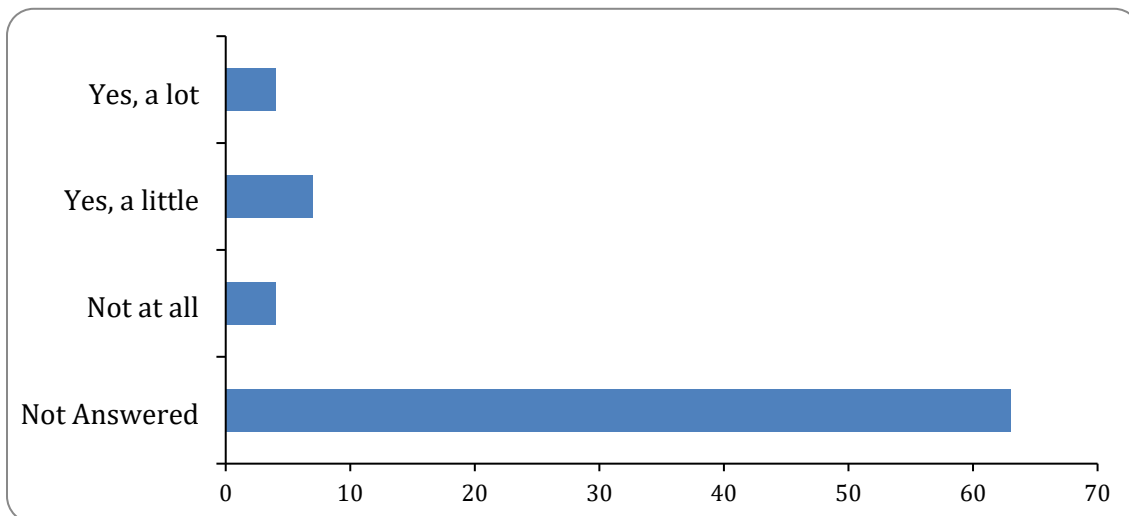
There were 75 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	16	20.51%
No	53	67.95%
Prefer not to say	6	7.69%
Not Answered	3	3.85%

Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day to day activities?

There were 15 responses to this part of the question.



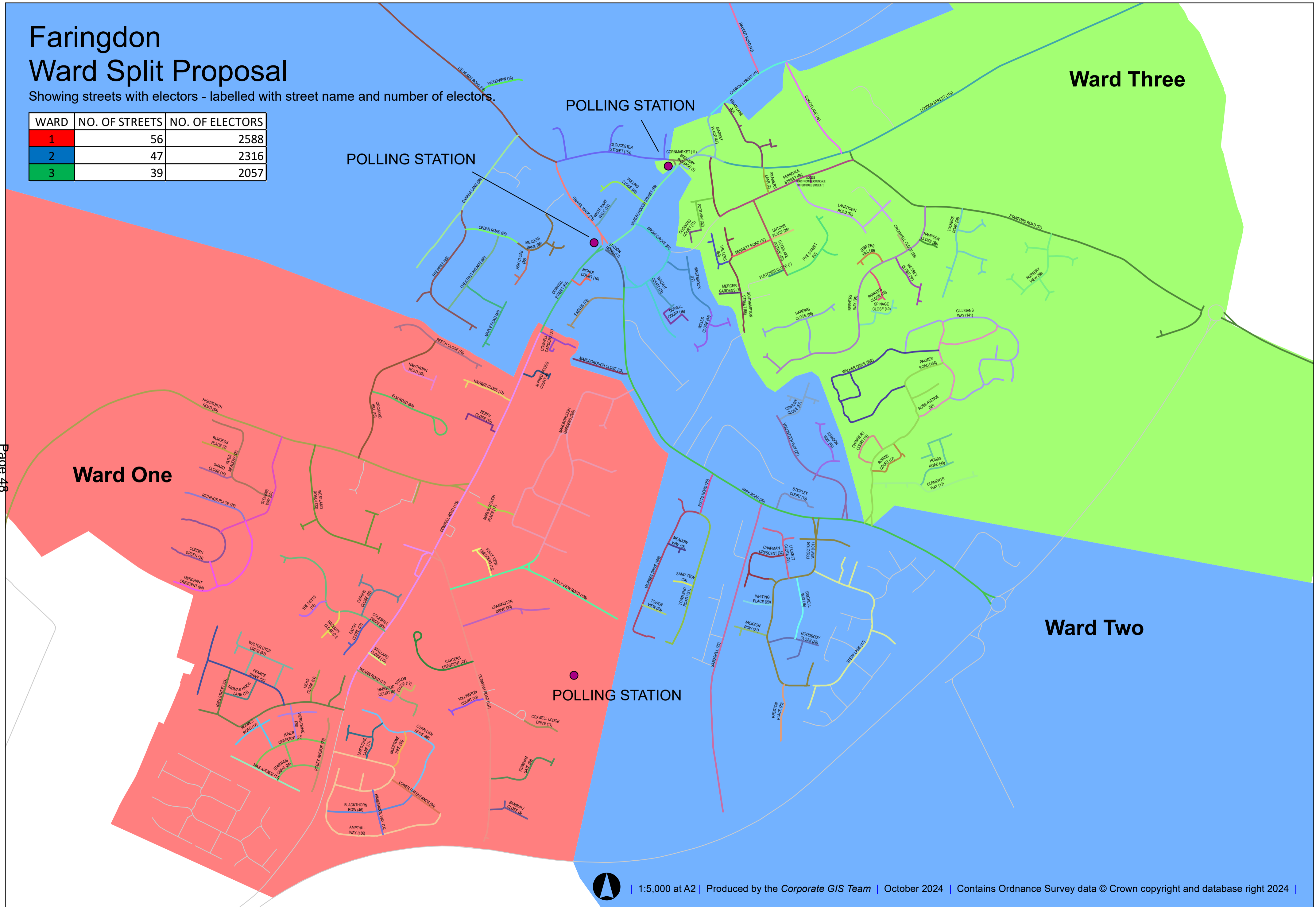
Option	Total	Percent
Yes, a lot	4	5.13%
Yes, a little	7	8.97%

Not at all	4	5.13%
Not Answered	63	80.77%

Faringdon Ward Split Proposal

Showing streets with electors - labelled with street name and number of electors.

WARD	NO. OF STREETS	NO. OF ELECTORS
1	56	2588
2	47	2316
3	39	2057



VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2024

COMMENTS FROM THE ACTING RETURNING OFFICER (WITNEY)

The following comments are the Witney Parliamentary Constituency Acting Returning Officer's (ARO) submission to the above review.

The ARO is responsible for the conduct of elections for the Witney Parliamentary Constituency, which covers part of Vale of White Horse District Council's electoral area.

The following comments concentrate solely on the polling districts and polling places which are located within Vale of White Horse District Council.

"I have had the opportunity to look through your proposed changes with Giles as ARO, and there are no particular comments to make.

- Giles visited Faringdon during the PGE on 4 July 2024, and said the existing layout worked well, but understands that there may be a need for a further polling premise within Faringdon in the future;
- Giles also agrees with moving away from the mobile unit at Fyfield and use of the Church would be an advantage.
- We are not familiar with the location of Fernham; and Longcot, although it is agreed to implement your recommended proposals."

Sharon Ellison on behalf of Giles Hughes
Acting Returning Officer for Witney Parliamentary Constituency
West Oxfordshire District Council

23 September 2024

Review of polling districts and polling places 2024

Acting Returning Officer's comments

The Returning Officer for the Vale of White Horse District Council and Acting Returning Officer for Oxford West and Abingdon and Didcot and Wantage (Part) 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 Vale of White Horse District Council 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 the district council'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 late 2024 for implementation at the May 2027 elections. There will be 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, since the previous compulsory review completed in October 2019, including prior to the district and parish elections in May 2023 and prior to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Parliamentary elections in 2024, to ensure that the council's polling arrangements are kept up to date. I welcome this proactive approach to ensure issues are addressed as they arise and to ensure voters and election staff have suitable venues. I note there are a few proposals for change suggested to the existing arrangements but that for the majority no changes are proposed. Comments on the proposed changes are set out by ward in the following pages.

Steven Corrigan, Returning Officer for Vale of White Horse District Council and Acting Returning Officer for the Oxford West and Abingdon and Didcot and Wantage (Part) Parliamentary Constituencies

October 2024

Polling district / Parish	Issue	Proposal	RO comments
SJD – Milton (Heights)	St Blaise C of E school has been unavailable to book for scheduled elections and safeguarding concerns have been raised regarding its usage as a polling place.	Re-designate the polling place for SJD to Milton Hill Bowls Club.	Support. The venue has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis.
SOC - Shellingford	Shellingford Community Hall requires closure of the attached school in order to be used as a polling place.	No change.	Support the continued use of the community hall. I note that the headteacher has not objected to the use of the school on election days.
SOF - Woolstone	Merestones is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for SOF to Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall.	Support. The venue has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis.
SSC1 - Wantage No.3 (Charlton)	The Beacon is currently the designated polling place for polling districts SSB1 and SSB2 (Wantage Segsbury parish ward) as well as SSC1 (Wantage Charlton ward), which creates a risk of cross-contamination between ballot boxes for the different district and parish wards.	Re-designate the polling place for SSC1 to Wantage Methodist Church.	Support. The argument to provide an additional polling place is sensible.
TGA - Faringdon	The Corn Exchange is no longer suitable as the only designated polling place for the entirety of the Great Faringdon (TGA) polling district, and the polling district would benefit from subdivision due to the size of	Split TGA Faringdon geographically into three separate polling districts – TGA, TGB, and TGC	Support. Faringdon covers a large geographical area and the provision of additional polling places across the parish should be welcomed providing more convenient polling stations and address congestion both in the

	the electorate in the current polling district (<7100).	Designate The Corn Exchange as the polling place for polling district TGC Designate Faringdon United Church as the polling place for TGB. Designate Faringdon Leisure Centre as the polling place for TGA.	town and at The Corn Exchange on election days.
TRB - Fyfield and Tubney	The mobile unit at the White Hart is not a suitable venue for staff, and there are accessibility concerns within the mobile unit.	No change.	Agree – there are no suitable alternative venues in the polling district and travel to a neighbouring polling district would not be convenient for electors.
TTG - Fernham	Longcot Methodist Chapel is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for TTG to St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub.	Support. The venue has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis.
TTJ - Longcot	Longcot Methodist Chapel is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for TTJ to St Mary the Virgin (Longcot) Community Hub.	Support. The venue has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis.
XAA2 - Abingdon No.2 (Caldecott)	St Johns Ambulance is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.	Re-designate the polling place for XAA2 to Abingdon Carousel Family Centre.	Support. The venue has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis.

<p>XAB1 - Abingdon No.4 (Fitzharris Ock)</p>	<p>Stonewater is no longer available to hire as the designated polling place for this polling district.</p>	<p>Re-designate the polling place for XAB1 to Preston Road Community Centre.</p>	<p>Support. Preston Road Community Centre has recently been used as a polling place and is able to accommodate an additional polling station.</p>
<p>XBA - Botley and North Hinksey</p>	<p>St Peter and St Paul's Church is no longer the most suitable location in this polling district, due to issues around lack of parking, and the polling district would benefit from subdivision due to the size of the electorate in the polling district (<4200).</p>	<p>Split XBA Botley and North Hinksey geographically (using the A34) into two polling districts – XBA1 and XBA2.</p> <p>Re-designate the polling place to Seacourt Hall for properties west of the A34 (XBA1).</p> <p>Designate Botley Women's Institute Hall for properties east of the A34 (XBA2).</p>	<p>Support the idea of providing a polling place in each area of the parish divided by the A34. Suggest this is kept under review. Seacourt Hall was previously successfully used as a polling place prior to the development works.</p>
<p>XDB - Radley No.1</p>	<p>The Site Office at Pebble Hill is not a suitable venue due to accessibility concerns and poor facilities for staff.</p>	<p>Re-designate the polling place for XDB to Radley Church Room</p>	<p>Radley Church Room has been successfully used at recent elections on a temporary basis. Suggest this is kept under review.</p>

Equality Impact Screening Form

As a public authority we need to ensure that our strategies, policies, and services have had proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A screening process can help you to decide whether the initiative you are responsible for has a negative impact on an individual or group of people with any protected characteristics.

This initial screening template will help you to decide whether an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for the development or review of the Strategy/Policy/Service

Title of Strategy/Policy/Service:	Legal & Democratic
Service Area:	Electoral Services
Officers responsible (Name and title):	Steven Corrigan (Democratic Services Manager); Susan Baker (Electoral Services Team Leader); Jordan Kennedy (Electoral Services Officer); Ben Silverthorne (Trainee Democratic and Elections Officer)
Is this a new or existing strategy /policy/project	New project
Aims and objectives of the Strategy/Policy/Service	The Polling District & Polling Places review focuses on the existing polling districts and polling places across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, identifying if there is any need to merge polling districts (because it is not necessary to keep two) or reallocate polling stations. The impact to electors is minimal because the merging of polling districts will not affect the public, and the allocation of polling stations is done in accordance with the accessibility requirements outlined in The Elections Act 2022. Where possible, we are

	making changes to allocate new polling stations that are more accessible, whilst also remaining within the polling district (so it is easy for electors to travel there). If there is no available alternative electors will continue attending their existing polling station, and so no changes will be made.
Who are the customer groups/staff affected?	Electors across both the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts
Will there be any effect on other Council procedures or strategies?	No

Potential impact that the Strategy/policy/service could have with regard to the protected characteristics

Will this Strategy/practice/service/policy/plan have a particular impact on any of the following groups:	Employment			Relevance/Risk (if any):
	Relevance/Risk:			
	High	Med	Low/none	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	

Will this Strategy/practice/service/policy/ plan have a particular impact on any of the strands within the Public Sector Equality Duty:	Relevance/Risk:			Relevance/Risk (if any):
	High	Med	Low/none	
	Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Rural isolation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Socio economic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	
Fostering good relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X	

	High:	Med:	Low/none:
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Overall impact on equalities	Selected mostly high → High Priority → EIA to be completed	Selected mostly high and/or medium → EIA to be completed	Selected mostly low → Low Priority → Do not complete EIA not relevant
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X

Note: If there are any high or medium impacts identified a full Equality Impact Assessment will be required.

If an Equality Impact Assessment is not required, please sign and send this screening form to equalities@southandvale.gov.uk

Signed <i>J. Kennedy</i>	Dated 23.08.24
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