

**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL  
REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS & POLLING  
PLACES 2019**

**FACT SHEET**

**General Information**

- The last full review of Parliamentary polling districts and places, was undertaken in 2015.
- Since 2015, Gloucester's electorate has risen due to development. Projected figures show a potential rise in the next 5 years of an estimated 3,900 electors in Gloucester.
- The Parliamentary polling districts and places are replicated for local government elections.
- Ward boundaries cannot be changed as part of the review.
- The final decision on polling districts and polling places is made by the Council and the final decision on the situation of polling stations rests with the Returning Officer.
- A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, ie. a UK Parliamentary constituency, a ward or an electoral division.
- A polling place is a geographical area in which the polling station is located.
- A polling station is the actual area 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.

**Accessibility**

- A polling station should be within reasonable walking distance for most electors.
- All polling stations should have access facilities for disabled electors, including wheelchair users.
- There are various building regulations which determine how adaptations can be made and it is not always possible for the owners of buildings to make permanent structural changes.
- Where permanent facilities are not possible, the Council tries 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.

## **Practical Considerations**

- 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.
- 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 (including parking).
  - Welfare facilities for staff.
  - Cost
- Considerations such as natural boundaries, railway lines, busy main roads etc. need to be taken into account.
- There are no legislative limits on the number of polling stations an authority can provide; however a polling station should not have more than 2,500 electors allocated to it. There are currently 72 Polling stations, with some acting as double or triple stations.