

Consultation Comments and Responses

Consultee	Comment	Response
Councillor Sam Clark	RC - Newton Village Hall No issues, fully accessible venue and central location – no suitable alternatives known	None required
Councillor David Hodgson	EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall, Wisbech Feels that Walsoken Village Hall is unsuitable as it is not in the Staithe Ward – suggests The Meadowgate School, which is in the Staithe Ward as it is big enough to accommodate the number of electors allocated, it is in the location for the polling district it serves, it will only be required for one day in every 4 years and it is accessible to people with disabilities	The Meadowgate School has agreed to fulfil its duty under the Representation of People Act to provide a polling station location that the Returning Officer (RO) deems suitable. The RO recommends that the polling station for EF1 is The Meadowgate School.
Councillor Samantha Hoy	EB1 and EB2 – Octavia Hill Ward, Wisbech Feels the Salvation Army to be unsuitable as it has poor disabled access and not many people know where it is. Suggests the Isle College be used as it is a convenient location and everyone knows where it is	In relation to EB1, the proposal was to use either The College of West Anglia or Awdry House. Approach has been made to The College of West Anglia, however, its current building work makes use of this premises prohibitive at this time, as it is having an impact on the space available for its own use. The RO is unable to force The College of West Anglia to provide us with a room for a polling station as under the Representation of People Act 1983 it does not have the same duty to provide one. A visit has been made to Awdry House as a potential polling station and a room is available that meets the needs of a polling station, however, it is only suitable to serve as one polling station. In relation to EB2, the Thomas Clarkson Academy has been approached for use as a polling station, but has responded that since it was rebuilt it no longer has an area which could be isolated from the rest of the premises and self-contained, also all access points to the Academy are either controlled by remote release operated by the receptionists or by a swipe card and as the Academy was built under a PFI contract it has restricted opening and closing times. The Salvation Army has been used as a polling station for both EB1 and EB2 for several years now without any issues or negative feedback from the public. Whilst the disabled access is

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		<p>not ideal from the car park, there is full disabled access to the premises. It is proposed that the Salvation Army would now be used to serve only one polling district, EB2, which would result in fewer electors using the venue and, therefore, less people to experience any issues that have been suggested. Extra signage would also be provided for this polling station to signpost electors to the station. Furthermore, the Council is devising a website that will provide maps for electors to search for the location of their polling station. Although it is acknowledged that The Salvation Army lies slightly outside the ward, it is the most accessible polling station for this ward being right on its edge and negates the need for electors to cross the busy Churchill Road, and if electors were travelling to the polling station for EB1 they would be travelling further outside the ward and across this busy main road.</p> <p>The RO recommends that Awdry House is used as a polling station for EB1. The RO recommends that the Salvation Army remains the polling station for EB2.</p>
Councillor Simon King	<p>EB1 – College of West Anglia or Awdry House Feels that these venues are suitable for this ward as they are modern buildings with good access, central, plenty of parking and easily found.</p> <p>EB2- Salvation Army, Wisbech Feels that this venue has poor pedestrian and vehicle access, it is no longer in the ward, many people are unable to find it as it is poorly signed, the voting area is too far from the entrance and the car park is up steps and everything is too far for many older people and people with disabilities. Suggests that only one polling station is needed for Octavia Hill Ward. Waterlees used to have three and now there is just the Oasis. Many people now have postal votes and there is an excellent crossing leading straight to the College campus so only the College of West Anglia or Awdry House are needed.</p>	See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy

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	<p>EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall, Wisbech Not in the ward and shared with Kirkgate, everyone associates this venue with Kirkgate, feels it is too far from Staithe, people are always confused about shared polling stations, a narrow entrance into and from the porch makes access difficult. Meadowgate School is in the ward, has excellent access and parking and ‘ticks all the boxes’</p>	<p>See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson</p>
Councillor Kay Mayor	<p>DD1 - St Johns Ambulance, Whittlesey No issues – no suitable alternatives known</p>	<p>None required</p>
	<p>DA1, DA2, DA3 – Bassenhally Ward, Whittlesey Due to the area covered by the new Bassenhally Ward, I would like to suggest that there are two Polling Districts within the ward to be divided by Cemetery Road. The polling station for streets to the east of Cemetery Road to be designated Alderman Jacobs School and the streets to the west of Cemetery Road to be designated the Ivy Leaf Club.</p>	<p>The comments are noted. However, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has not agreed to our proposals in the Community Governance Review for Whittlesey and, therefore, this, proposal cannot be taken forward and remains as detailed within the consultation document. The RO recommends that the polling stations for Bassenhally, DA1, and Elm, DA2, is the Aldermans Jacobs School and for Delph, DA3, the Ivy Leaf Centre.</p>
Councillor Peter Murphy	<p>AD1 – Wenneye, Chatteris No issues – No suitable alternative known</p>	<p>None required</p>
Councillor Kit Owen	<p>BC4 – Burrowmoor School March No issues, easy to locate – No suitable alternatives known</p>	<p>None required</p>
Councillor David Mason	<p>DD1 - St Johns Ambulance, Whittlesey This polling station is marginally off the ward in question (St Andrews). Alternative polling station suggestion would be Park Lane Primary School, which has all the necessary requirements of a polling station and is located in a more central position for the ward.</p>	<p>The RO is recommending that the St Johns Ambulance is used as a polling station for DD1 and DI, Stonald and Kings Delph wards, as it now lies within DD1. Approach has been made to Hanson Brickworks about use of a room in their sale office premises along Kings Delph for DI. However, it has responded that it does not have a room that meets the criteria for a polling station. Schools are only used as a polling station within a ward if there are no other alternatives available due to possible disruption to the school.</p>

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		<p>The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has not agreed to the proposals in the Community Governance Review for Whittlesey and, therefore, the proposal remains as detailed within the consultation document.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for St Andrews Ward is St Andrews Parish Hall, which lies within the ward, and will act as a dual station for DC1 and DC2, St Andrews and St Mary wards.</p>
Benwick Parish Council	CA – Benwick Village Hall No issues – No suitable alternatives known	None required
Chatteris Town Council	AA1 & AA2, AC1 and AD1 – Birch, Curlew, The Mills and Wenneye Wards– No issues	None required. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has agreed to the merging of the two town wards of Birch and Curlew into one single town ward to be named Birch, AA1.
	AB1 & AB2 – Curf and Slade Lode Wards, Chatteris Feel King Edward Centre would be a much better option since late opening would be unfair on the elderly residents of Quaker Way and using Kingsfield School would create traffic problems and could lead to closure of school	<p>The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has agreed to the merging of the two town wards of Curf and Slade Lode into one single town ward to be named Slade Lode, AB1.</p> <p>The comments of the Town Council are noted, however, we always strive to locate a polling station within the ward it serves and Kingsfield School and Quaker Way both lie within this ward whereas King Edward Centre does not. Both Kingsfield School and Quaker Way have indicated that they would be available for a polling station. A visit has been made to Quaker Way and it is an ideal premises for a polling station.</p> <p>If there is a premises available that avoids the need to use a school we would always attempt to use this and we successfully use two polling station in community rooms of sheltered housing schemes at Fleming Court, March and Quinion Close, Whittlesey, with no issues being raised from residents of these sheltered housing schemes.</p> <p>The RO recommends use of Quaker Way Residents Community Room as the polling station for AB1.</p>
Coveney Parish Council	IA1 - Coveney Village Hall No issues, central and accessible – no suitable alternatives known	None required

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Doddington Parish Council	FA – Doddington No issues, has been used for many years – no suitable alternatives known	None required
Leverington Parish Council	RB1 and RB2 – Leverington Village Hall No issues, central, easy access and parking – no suitable alternatives known	The RO recommends Leverington Village Hall is used for RB1, but that Leverington Sports and Social Club becomes the polling station for RB2. It is felt that Leverington Village Hall, whilst a good venue, does have limited space if high numbers of electors attended the polling station at the same time and Leverington Sports and Social Club is an ideal venue for a polling station and has ample parking facilities. The polling districts have been re-drawn to ensure that these venues lie in each of the relevant polling districts.
Littleport Parish Council	IF1 – Littleport Village Hall No issues, central location – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	IG1 – Black Horse Drove Community Room No issues, central location – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	IE1 – St Johns Church Hall Poor disabled access, limited on-street parking and located in East causes confusion. Alternative polling station suggested as Scout Hut, Camel Road, which has parking and disabled access as polling district covers a wide rural area many voters will drive – pedestrian access also available	The RO recommends that the Evangelical Church Hall in Globe Lane, Littleport is used as the polling station for this ward. Whilst not in the polling district, is very close to the boundaries and is central to the main residential areas.
Newton Parish Council	RC - Newton Village Hall No issues, previously used for elections with no problems or complaints and is satisfactory with parking and caters for all disabilities – no suitable alternatives known	None required

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Parson Drove Parish Council	PA - Parson Drove Village Hall No issues, centre of the village, easy to locate and ample parking facilities	None required
Wimblington Parish Council	KA - Wimblington Village Hall No issues, central to village	None required
	KB - Golden Lion, Stonea no other venue is known so it's acceptable and easily accessible	There have been issues with the use of The Golden Lion Public House as a polling station for polling district KB in terms of the nature of the premises and accessibility. Due to the size and rural nature of Stonea there are no known alternative premises within the ward itself. However, there is a space that could be used, if the Golden Lion was ever unavailable, at the Skylark Garden Centre, which although does not lie in polling district KB is quite close to its boundary. The RO recommends the polling place for KB remains as The Golden Lion Public House, with the Skylark Garden Centre as the preferred alternative or any within the polling districts of KB or KA1.
Wisbech St Mary Parish Council	PB, PC, PD and PE – Wisbech St Mary, Murrow, Guyhirn and Thorney Toll Wards No issues and no changes needed	None required
East Cambridgeshire District Council	IA1 – Coveney Village Hall No issues, a large village hall, the only issue is a disabled person may have would be the gravel car park – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	IB1 – Little Downham Village Centre No issues, a prominent large hall used by the community – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	ID1 – Pymoor Methodist Church only building large enough in village in central location	Pymoor Social Club could be used, but it is further out of the village and is more likely to be holding a function when the building is required. It is also too far for elderly residents to walk. The RO recommends that Pymoor Methodist Church continues as the polling station for this ward

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	IE1 – Methodist Church Hall – disabled access is problematic, no parking and not accessible easily if in a wheelchair	The RO recommends that the Evangelical Church Hall in Globe Lane, Littleport is used as the polling station for this ward. Whilst not in the polling district, is very close to the boundaries and is central to the main residential areas.
	IF1 – Littleport Village Hall No issue, this is used as a spilt station and is large enough to accommodate two stations, it is the best venue for this ward as it is more central to the residents – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	IG1 – Community Centre No issues, based on Black Horse Drove and serves the community – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	JC1 – Mepal Village Hall No issues, adequate parking and reasonably lit outside, although the car park does require resurfacing, which may be a trip hazard to some – no suitable alternatives known	None required
	JE1 – Royal British Legion, Sutton No issues, new venue in same complex but nearer the car park, there are several halls in Sutton, but this is the preferred location within the village – The Brooklands Centre has three venues, two of which have been used a polling stations, with the Royal British Legion being the larger of the halls and directly opposite the car park	None required
	JI1 – Witcham Village Hall No issues, large hall and well sized car park – no suitable alternatives known	None required
Wisbech St Raphaels Club	ED1 - St Raphaels Club No issues – no suitable alternatives known	None required
Karen Alexander, Peterborough and Fenland Green Party	DG – Pondersbridge Feels unsuitable as their members living in Turningtree Road area have too far to travel. An effort needs to be made to make a polling station available closer to	The RO notes the comments and recognizes that this ward is a rural location close to Whittlesey and that the village hall lies on the edge of the village. However, the RO recommends that Pondersbridge Village Hall

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	Whittlesey for the residents of DI and DG, many of whom consider themselves to be residents of Whittlesey. The drive to Pondersbridge and lack of public transport makes this site unsuitable. Suggest splitting this area and placing a mobile unit at a more convenient location.	remains as the polling station as there are no other suitable venues for a polling station in this area, it is an established community facility within the area and has worked well for many years as a polling station without any issues.
Anita Barker	EB1 – College of West Anglia or Awdry House Feels that this is a perfect location	See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)
	EB2 – Salvation Army Feels that has terrible access, the entrance is at the side and the car park is up steps, the long walk from car park is hard for disabled people, the distance from the car park and the voting booths, the venue lies outside the ward. Feels that the College of West Anglia or Awdry House are central and are much better in every way listed	
	EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall Feels that this building is not suitable for a shared polling station, it lies outside the ward, Staithe voters never go there, the numbers voting there make it very congested and other people jostle. Feels that Meadowgate School would be much better for all the reasons above.	See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)
Stephen Brunton	EF1 – Staithe Ward Feels it is strange that the polling station is not in Staithe Ward and wonder if somewhere like the Meadowgate School would be a better place	See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)
	EB1 and EB2 – Octavia Hill Ward The polling station at the Salvation Army is not in the ward and is also less than 5 minutes walk away from the Isle College station. Having just one at the Isle College would surely cut down costs of the election in both rent and staffing costs – which could then be used to use a new station in Staithe Ward to save having to revise the costs.	See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)

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Avis Gilliatt, Labour	EG1 and EG2 – Oasis Community Centre, Wisbech No issues, ideal for everyone of all ages – no suitable alternatives known	None required
Robert Goodey	EB1 – College of West Anglia or Awdry House Feels it is easy to find and perfect in every way	See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)
	EB2 – Salvation Army Feels it is hard to find, has no visible entrance or car park, is outside the ward, there is too much walking especially for the disabled. Feels College of West Anglia or Awdry House are the only polling places needed as they provide everything	
	EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall Feels that people associate this venue with Kirkgate, it is not in the ward, people get confused with shared polling places, one big room means the building should not be shared and the entrance is cramped. Feels that Meadowgate School meets all the requirements far better than Walsoken Village Hall	See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)
Yvonne Hazledine	EB1 – College of West Anglia or Awdry House Feels that it is very central and the perfect location	See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)
	EB2 – Salvation Army Feels that the entrance is hidden and the access is bad, the car park is at the back and the distance from the entrance to where you vote is too long, some old people and the disabled find the long walk very difficult and the venue is not in the ward. Feels that the College of West Anglia or Awdry House is a much better location	
	EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall Feels that it is shared with Kirkgate which confuses people, no one expects a polling station so far their ward, it lies well outside the ward boundary, getting in is difficult for her. Asks why not Meadowgate School as it is better in every way.	See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)

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Mrs Judy Hodgson	<p>EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall, Wisbech Feels that Walsoken Village Hall is unsuitable as it is not in the Staithe Ward – suggests The Meadowgate School, which is in the Staithe Ward as it is big enough to accommodate the number of electors allocates, it is in the location for the polling district it serves, it will only be required for one day in every 4 years and it is accessible to people with disabilities.</p>	<p>See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)</p>
Jeanne King	<p>EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall One of the considerations is that the polling place should be central to the ward and Walsoken Village Hall is not even in the ward. I would suggest that for EF1 that Meadowgate School would be suitable, it is in the ward, very accessible and has separate access so that the children attending the school would not be disturbed.</p> <p>EB1 & EB2 – Salvation Army This is not in the ward and access and parking are poor. Many people do not know where the Salvation Army building is and even once they find it are confused by the access as it is not visible from the street. For EB1 and EB2, the Isle College is an ideal site, it is disability friendly, has ample parking and is central to the ward. It is large enough to accommodate all the voters in EB1 and EB2 and I would strongly suggest that a single polling station will improve turnout as when there is more than one people – particularly those who are not regular voters – do get confused. I understand that Waterlees which is of a similar size also has only one polling station</p>	<p>See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)</p> <p>See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)</p>
Brenda Wegg	<p>EB1 – College of West Anglia or Awdry House Feels it is in a very central location and is ideal – no suitable alternatives known</p>	<p>See response for EB1 and EB2 against comment from Councillor Samantha Hoy (first page)</p>

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	<p>EB2 – Salvation Army Feels that no one knows where the Salvation Army is, it lies outside the ward, the parking is terrible and the walking is too much. Suggests the College of West Anglia or Awdry House meet all the considerations above</p>	
	<p>EF1 – Walsoken Village Hall Asks why Kirkgate and Staithe wards cannot have own polling stations as this discourages voting, this venue is not in the ward and the entrance is narrow and bad for wheelchairs. Suggest Meadowgate School is the answer</p>	<p>See response for EF1 against comment from Councillor David Hodgson (first page)</p>
<p>Chris Boden</p>	<p>General Comments</p> <p>1. The Electoral Commission has published updated guidance as to the conduct of reviews of polling districts and polling places with respect to the compulsory reviews which must be started and completed between 1st October 2013 and 31st January 2015 by all local authorities with responsibility for electoral arrangements [hereinafter "the Commission's guidance"].</p> <p>2. The Commission's guidance lays out the statutory obligations which such a review must adhere to, and also gives guidance as to best practice.</p> <p>3. Fenland District Council, in conducting this review, should be committed to follow the Commission's guidance with regards to best practice, as well as adhering to the statutory requirements, whilst seeking at the same time to promote efficient and effective local government.</p> <p>4. I wish to raise objections in respect of three matters: (a) There are, surprisingly, 13 polling districts within the consultation document for which it is proposed that the preferred polling station (or a named alternative polling station) should lie outside the boundary of that polling district. Four of these preferred or alternative polling stations lie outside the District Council ward within which that polling district's electors live.</p>	<p>The review has been delayed as far as practical due to the Community Governance Review, but is being undertaken to comply with the deadline of the 31 January 2015, with the proposals being considered by the last Council meeting on 18 December 2014 before this deadline. The Community Governance Review proposals have been fully taken into account in the consultation document.</p> <p>The Electoral Commission's document is only guidance, which has been followed as far as possible and practicable. In some instances there are no suitable polling stations within the ward and the nearest suitable polling station within an adjoining ward has been identified and in some instances we have identified new potential polling stations within a ward itself and the reasoning for these suggestions is within the consultation report.</p> <p>This guidance recognizes that there are a number of factors that will need to be considered when reviewing existing polling places or assessing new polling places, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Size • Suitability • Accessibility <p>It states that "Ideally, there would be the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for electors in the area</p>

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	<p>(b) Insufficient consideration appears to have been given in the consultation to the effect that the recent Community Governance Review may have in determining appropriate polling districts in Manea, Chatteris and Whittlesey</p> <p>(c) There appears to be an error in the recommendations for Roman Bank Ward within the consultation document, where the proposed polling place for polling district RB2 does not correspond to the accompanying narrative.</p> <p>LOCATING POLLING STATIONS OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARIES OF A POLLING DISTRICT</p> <p>5. The Commission's guidance states (paragraph 2.14) that "A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district" and (paragraph 4.1) that "the polling place must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified in the district)"</p> <p>6. Fenland's consultation document identifies thirteen potential polling stations which lie outside the boundaries of the polling district they would serve. In most cases, these are arrangements which have been in place for some years. Five of these polling districts are affected by the Community Governance Review and I shall deal with those later in this representation. The other eight are as follows:</p> <p>6(i). March North Ward - the use of St John Church Hall as a dual polling station serving polling district BB2 is proposed as an alternative arrangement.</p> <p>6(ii). Benwick, Coates & Eastrea Ward - the continued use of the St John's Ambulance HQ in Plough Road is proposed for polling district DI (King's Dyke).</p> <p>6(iii). Octavia Hill Ward - it is proposed that the preferred polling place for the EB2 polling district continues to be the Salvation Army Citadel.</p> <p>6(iv). Staithe Ward - Walsoken Village Hall is proposed</p>	<p>within which to establish polling stations. In practice, however, the choice of polling places will often be a balance between the quality of a building (access, facilities, etc) and the proximity of the building to the electors. When making a decision, all factors will need to be considered and the authority will need to demonstrate their reasoning behind the decision.</p> <p>.... Alternatively, the local authority should consider whether it would be appropriate to designate a polling place that falls outside the polling district."</p> <p>As stated above, the document was a consultation document and could be subject to change as a result of the consultation responses. However, polling stations have been attempted to be identified within the relevant wards themselves, but this is not always possible due to a variety of reasons, which is documented within the consultation report.</p>

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	<p>to continue as the preferred polling place for the renamed EF1 polling district.</p> <p>6(v).Waterlees Village Ward - it is proposed that The Oasis Village Centre continues to be the preferred polling place for polling district EG1.</p> <p>6(vi). Doddington and Wimblingdon Ward - it is proposed as an alternative that a location in polling district KA1 may serve as the polling station for polling district KB (Stonea).</p> <p>6(vii). Elm & Christchurch Ward - the continued use of Guyhirn Village Hall as the preferred polling station for polling district GD (Rings End) is proposed.</p> <p>6(viii). Parson Drove and Wisbech St Mary Ward - it is proposed that, as an alternative, polling district PD (Guyhirn) may be served by a polling station in polling district GD (Rings End).</p> <p>7. The Commission's guidance makes it quite clear that there must be "special circumstances" to justify any proposal which would cause a polling station to be located outside the boundaries of the polling district which it serves. In cases (iii), (iv) and (v) coherent arguments are put forward to justify this departure from recommended practice.</p> <p>8. In March North Ward, the recommendation does not, however, comply with the Commission's guidance. The report makes it quite clear that alternative arrangements can be made which would avoid the use of St John Church Hall as a dual polling station, which lies outside the boundaries of one of the polling districts it would serve. Several permutations are possible which would comply with the Commission's guidance, but from the content of the narrative in the consultation document, the most obvious solution would be (as suggested in the consultation document) to redraw the boundary between polling districts BB1 and BB2 so that BB2 accommodates St Johns Church Hall, so that the polling place for polling district BB2 be designated "St Johns Church Hall, Station Road, or any within the Polling District" and so that the polling place for polling district</p>	<p>The Braza Club is unwilling to facilitate us using a room as a polling station as it does not have a room available on a Thursday. A visit has been made to March Railway Station Community Room and whilst these rooms could be suitable in future, at present they do not have all the facilities suitable for a polling station.</p> <p>We have no other option, but to re-draw polling districts BB1 and BB2 to identify a polling station within BB2.</p> <p>For BB1, we are considering use of March Youth and Community Centre and for BB2, the Plate and Porter, which would both fall within the relevant wards once the boundary has been re-drawn. Contact and agreement has been received from March Youth and Community Centre about its use as a polling station and it has a space suitable to polling station use and ample parking facilities. Approach and agreement has been received from the Plate and Porter for use of its premises as a polling station for BB2 as it has</p>

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	<p>BB1 be designated "Youth & Community Centre, Station Road, Or any within the Polling District, or St Johns Church Hall, Station Road). [including St Johns Church Hall as a potential polling station for a revised polling district BB1 would be a catch-all provision in case no suitable polling station is available within the polling district itself - St Johns Church Hall is the existing polling station for the polling district so this would not decrease the convenience of voting for electors in that polling district].</p> <p>9. In Benwick, Coates & Eastrea Ward the continued use of the St John's Ambulance HQ in Plough Road is clearly possible. However, it does lie some way outside the polling district and Ward which it is meant to serve, although a single (rather long) road does link many of the electors in the polling district with that polling station. I would ask that consideration be given to the siting of a mobile polling station within the area of the DI polling district. This would clearly improve both accessibility and convenience for electors in that polling district. Mobile polling stations are widely used in other local authority areas around the country specifically to ensure that voters in less urban areas, which have fewer community or other facilities suitable for use as polling stations, are not unfairly disadvantaged so far as the accessibility and convenience of voting is concerned.</p> <p>10. In Staithe Ward a strong argument has been made to satisfy the "special circumstances" requirement for Walsoken Village Hall to be used as the polling station for polling district EF1. However, no justification has been made to allow a less geographically convenient location within polling district EC1 to be used as the polling station for the renamed EF1 polling district. If best practice as laid out in the Commission's guidelines is to be followed, the polling place for polling district EF1 should be designated "Walsoken Village Hall, Kirkgate Street, Or any within the EF1 Polling District".</p>	<p>good disabled access and parking. Whilst St Johns Church Hall has been used successfully in the past as a polling station, it does suffer from a lack of parking, which has been the subject of complaints in past elections, but could be used as a reserve polling station should there ever be an issue with using The Plate and Porter.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for BB1 – March Youth and Community Centre BB2 - Plate and Porter</p> <p>The RO recommends that the St Johns Ambulance is used as a polling station for DI, Kings Delph wards. It is recognized that this does not lie within the DI ward, but the St Johns Ambulance has been used successfully as a polling station for this ward without any issues and is the nearest located station for this polling district, which is a small district of only 100 electors.</p> <p>Use of mobile polling stations is avoided if possible due to the issues that arise with their use for both polling staff and electors. Approach has been made to Hanson Brickworks about use of a room in their sale office premises along Kings Delph for DI. However, it has responded that it does not have a room that meets the criteria for a polling station.</p> <p>The Meadowgate School has agreed to fulfil its duty under the Representation of People Act to provide a polling station location that the Returning Officer (RO) deems suitable.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for EF1 is The Meadowgate School.</p>

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	<p>11. In Doddington and Wimblingdon Ward, mention is made in the consultation document of the potential unsuitability of the existing polling station in Stonea (polling district KB). However, the inconvenience for electors in that polling district of having to travel to Wimbledon to cast their vote would appear to me to outweigh the arguments so far put forward against continuing to use the existing polling station in that polling district. Moreover if, at any time, it was felt that the existing polling station could not continue to serve as a polling station that polling district KB, consideration could be given to the siting of a mobile polling station in the polling district which would be significantly more convenient and accessible for electors than having to travel to another polling district to vote. I'd therefore suggest that, following the Commission's guidance as to best practice, the polling place for polling district KB be designated "The Golden Lion Public House, Or any within the Polling District".</p> <p>12. In Elm & Christchurch Ward an argument could be made that the convenience of electors in the GD polling district (Rings End) would be better served by locating a mobile polling station within the polling district, rather than electors having to continue to travel to Guyhirn Village Hall to vote.</p> <p>13. In Parson Drove and Wisbech St Mary Ward, polling district FD (Guyhirn) will contain almost 700 electors in 2019. Given the relatively large number of electors in this polling district it appears to me to be a breach of the Commission's guidance to propose that the polling station for this polling district may be located in polling district GD (Rings End). No justification has been given for this proposal in the consultation document's narrative, and it is clearly stated in the Commission's guidance that (paragraph 2.14) that "A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district" and (paragraph 4.1) that "the polling place must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances</p>	<p>There have been issues with the use of The Golden Lion Public House as a polling station for polling district KB in terms of the nature of the premises and accessibility. Due to the size and rural nature of Stonea there are no known alternative premises within the ward itself. However, there is a space that could be used, if The Golden Lion was unavailable, at the Skylark Garden Centre, which although does not lie in polling district KB is quite close to its boundary.</p> <p>The RO recommends the polling place for KB remains as The Golden Lion Public House, with the Skylark Garden Centre as the preferred alternative, or any within the polling districts of KB or KA1.</p> <p>The RO recommends continued use of the polling station at Guyhirn Village Hall due to its closeness and small number of electors in this polling district. There have been no known issues with use of Guyhirn Village Hall for this polling district.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for Guyhirn is Guyhirn Village Hall, which will also serve electors in Rings End, which lies within the ward that it serves. The EC's guidance states that a polling station should ideally not exceed 2,500 electors, so the number of electors for this polling station, taken together with Rings End electors, is well below this threshold. The polling district would be PD not FD. If Guyhirn Village Hall were to become unavailable, an alternative polling station would be found within the polling district.</p>

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	<p>make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified in the district)". Consequently I would submit that the polling place for polling district FD be designated "Guyhirn Village Hall, High Road, Or any within the Polling District". Once again, if absolutely necessary, a mobile polling station could be used to allow the 600+ electors in Guyhirn to vote at a convenient and accessible location if no other conveniently located polling station can be identified.</p> <p>POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES CONTINGENT UPON THE OUTCOME OF THE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW</p> <p>14. It should be a matter of regret that the deadline for responses to this consultation falls just a few days before the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is due to respond to Fenland District Council's Community Governance Review (CGR), which proposes changes to the Town Council warding arrangements in Chatteris and in Whittlesey, and which also proposes to change the boundary between the Parish of Manea and the Town of Chatteris. The LGBCE must give its agreement to the CGR proposals for them to be able to take effect. By the time the submissions in this consultation are being considered, the outcome of the LGBCE's considerations will be known. If the CGR proposals are approved by the LGBCE, it will have a significant impact on potential polling district and polling place arrangements in Manea, Chatteris and Whittlesey. I shall therefore deal with these three areas separately, dealing also with any possible changes which may result from the CGR.</p> <p>MANEA DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD</p> <p>15. It is a statutory requirement (with only very unusual exceptions, not relevant in this polling district review) that any Parish must not be included in a polling district with any area outside that Parish, and that, where any Town</p>	<p>The polling district and polling places review was delayed as long as possible due to the Community Governance Review, but to ensure we meet the deadline for the review of 31 January 2015, the proposals need to be considered by last Council meeting before this deadline on 18 December 2014.</p> <p>Agree with comments. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has agreed to the merging of the two separate parish wards of Manea and How Fen into the one parish ward.</p>

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	<p>or Parish is divided into Wards for Town/Parish Council elections, no such Ward shall be included within a polling district which lies outside that Ward. Consequently, Fenland District Council had no alternative, when starting this consultation, but to propose that the revised Manea District Council Ward be split into two polling districts: polling district HA1 (covering the existing Parish of Manea) and HA2 (the 'How Fen' Town Ward of Chatteris Town Council. The consultation proposes that both polling districts should vote together in the same polling place, Manea Village Hall. Given that the electorate of the new 'How Fen' Town Ward of Chatteris Town Council would barely exceed 100, I understand the administrative convenience of such an arrangement. However, if the LGBCE does not agree to the changes proposed by Fenland Council's CGR, I wonder if the interests of the electors of the How Fen Ward of Chatteris Town Council (polling district HA2) would not be better served by allocating their polling district to a more convenient polling station within Chatteris Town, operating a dual polling station arrangement as is being proposed for Slade Lode and Curf Town Wards, and for Birch and Curlew Town Wards?</p> <p>16. If, as I certainly hope, the LGBCE agrees to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals including those in respect of the realignment of the boundary between the Parish of Manea and the Town of Chatteris, then there would no longer be a statutory requirement to maintain two polling districts within Manea District Council Ward, and the whole of the District Council Ward and the whole of the (revised) Parish of Manea could then be included in a single polling district. If the LGBCE agrees to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals in respect of the realignment of the boundary between the Parish of Manea and the Town of Chatteris, I would submit that polling districts HA1 and HA2 be combined within a unified polling district, HA. This will simplify electoral procedures both in compiling/maintaining the electoral register and in managing the polling station at elections.</p>	<p>The RO recommends that the polling station for HA, Manea, is Manea Village Hall.</p>

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	<p>CHATTERIS DISTRICT COUNCIL WARDS of BIRCH & SLADE LODE</p> <p>17. The LGBCE's recent review of District Council boundaries created three new Town Council Wards in Chatteris, each with an extremely small electorate. "How Fen" Town Ward is mentioned above. The newly created "Curlew" and "Curf" Town Wards in Chatteris will also, by statute, require individual, but very small, polling districts to be established, for the reasons given in paragraph 15 above. In its consultation document for this review of polling districts, Fenland District Council has, necessarily, created two new polling districts: AA2 for Curlew Town Ward and AB2 for Curf Town Ward, but has included them for the purposes of allocating a polling station with polling districts AA1 (Birch Town Ward) and AB1 (Slade Lode Town Ward) respectively. If the LGBCE gives its agreement to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals to make the Wards of Slade Lode and Birch co-terminous for Town and District Councils' elections, there will then be no statutory requirement, nor any administrative advantage, in maintaining the AA2 and AB2 polling districts. If the LGBCE agrees to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals in respect of the re-establishment of co-terminosity for the Town and District Council Wards' boundaries of Slade Lode and Birch, I would submit that polling districts AA1 and AA2 be combined within a unified polling district, AA, and that polling districts AB1 and AB2 be combined within a unified polling district, AB. This will simplify electoral procedures both in compiling/maintaining the electoral register and in managing the polling stations at elections.</p> <p>WHITTLESEY DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD OF ST ANDREWS</p> <p>18. The LGBCE's recent review of District Council boundaries created new Town Council Wards in Whittlesey, which are not co-terminous with the new District Council Wards in the Town. The new St Andrews</p>	<p>Agree with comments. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has agreed to the merging of the two separate town wards of Curlew and Birch into one town ward to be known as Birch, AA1. It has also agreed to the merging of the two separate town wards of Curf and Slade Lode into one town ward to be known as Slade Lode, AB2.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for AA1, Birch, is Glebelands Primary School.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for AB1, Slade Lode, is Quaker Way Residents Community Room.</p> <p>The comments are noted. However, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has not agreed to our proposals in the Community Governance Review for Whittlesey and, therefore, this, proposal cannot be taken forward and remains as detailed within the consultation document.</p>

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	<p>District Council Ward is split into two for Town Council elections: the Town Council Wards of St Marys and St Andrews. For the reasons given in paragraph 15 above, the District Council Ward is therefore required to be split into two polling districts. In its consultation document for this review of polling districts, Fenland District Council has created polling district DC1 to cover St Andrews Town Ward and polling district DC2 to cover St Marys Town Ward, whilst proposing that both use the same polling station. If the LGBCE gives its agreement with Fenland District Council's CGR proposals to make the Ward of St Andrews co-terminous for Town and District Councils' elections, there will then be no statutory requirement, nor any administrative advantage, in maintaining these two polling districts. If the LGBCE agrees to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals in respect of the re-establishment of co-terminosity for the Town and District Council Ward boundaries for St Andrews, I would submit that polling districts DC1 and DC2 be combined within a unified polling district, DC. This will simplify electoral procedures both in compiling/maintaining the electoral register and in managing the polling station at elections.</p>	<p>The RO recommends that the St Andrews District Ward of Whittlesey is split into two town wards of St Andrews (DC1) and St Marys (DC2), both to be served by St Andrews Parish Hall as a dual polling station.</p>
	<p>WHITTLESEY DISTRICT COUNCIL WARD OF BASSENHALLY 19. The LGBCE's recent review of District Council boundaries created new Town Council Wards in Whittlesey, which are not co-terminous with the new District Council Wards in the Town. The new Bassenhally District Council Ward is split into three for Town Council elections: the Town Council Wards of Bassenhally, Delph and Elm. For the reasons given in paragraph 15 above, the District Council Ward is therefore required to be split into three polling districts. In its consultation document for this review of polling districts, Fenland District Council has created polling district DA1 to cover Bassenhally Town Ward, polling district DA2 to cover Elm Town Ward and polling district</p>	<p>The comments are noted. However, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England has not agreed to our proposals in the Community Governance Review for Whittlesey and, therefore, this, proposal cannot be taken forward and remains as detailed within the consultation document.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the Bassenhally District ward be split into three town wards; Bassenhally (DA1) and Elm (DA2) to be served by a dual polling station at the Aldermans Jacobs School and Delph (DA3) to be served by a polling station at the Ivy Leaf Centre.</p>

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	<p>DA3 to cover Delph Town Ward. The consultation document further suggests that polling districts DA1 and DA2 use a combined polling station at Alderman Jacobs School, whilst polling district DA3 uses the Ivy Leaf Centre in Gracious Street as its polling station.</p> <p>20. I do not believe that the proposed polling places for polling districts DA1 and DA2 fall within best practice as outlined in the Commission's guidance. I understand the preference given in the consultation document that, for polling district DA1, Alderman Jacobs School continues to be used as their local polling station, even though it lies within polling district DA2. However, in the unlikely event that Alderman Jacobs School is unavailable, the Commission's guidance requires a polling station to be chosen which is as convenient as possible for the electors of that polling district. Naturally, any location within polling district DA1 may be considered, as suggested in the consultation document. But disregarding polling district DA2 as the polling place whilst including the more distant polling district DA3 (which can only be accessed from polling district DA1 by passing through polling district DA2) does not make sense. Moreover, I'd suggest that much of polling district DA3 is too distant from electors in polling district DA1 to provide a convenient location for all of the electors in that polling district (which is one of the Commission's guidance requirements). I'd therefore suggest that the polling place for polling district DA1 be designated "Alderman Jacobs School, Drybread Road, Or any within the polling districts of DA1 or DA2" Similarly, for polling district DA2, the consultation document proposes that, in the event that Alderman Jacobs School is unavailable for use as a polling station, the district's polling station should be located within polling district DA1 or DA3. Without needing to address the issue of the suitability of specific premises, nor of the potential use of mobile polling stations, this proposal entirely disregards the clear advice of the Commission that polling stations should only be considered outside the boundaries of a</p>	

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	<p>polling district if special circumstances apply. The way that the consultation document's proposal is drafted, in the unlikely event of the unavailability of Alderman Jacobs School as a polling station for polling district DA2, no other location within polling district DA2 will be able to be considered, but a polling station would need to be located outside the polling district either in DA1 (which the consultation document recognises has no obviously suitable location for a polling station) or in DA3. To comply with the Commission's guidance as to best practice, I would suggest that the polling place for polling district DA1 be designated "Alderman Jacobs School, Drybread Road, Or any within the polling districts of DA1, DA2 or DA3"</p> <p>21. If the LGBCE gives its agreement to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals to make the Ward of Bassenhally co-terminous for Town and District Councils' elections, there will then be no statutory requirement, nor any administrative advantage, in maintaining the three polling districts of DA1, DA2 and DA3. However, given the number of electors in the new, two-member, District Council Ward of Bassenhally, it will clearly be necessary to have two separate polling districts for the Ward. As currently suggested in the consultation document, the proposed DA2 polling district ("Elm" Town Ward") has a sinuous geographical shape, with some parts of the polling district being much closer to the polling station at the Ivy Leaf Centre than to the polling station at Alderman Jacobs School, and vice versa. I would therefore suggest, in the event that the LGBCE approves the CGR proposals in respect of Bassenhally Ward, that there be two polling districts: one (DA1) comprising the whole of the consultation document's DA1 polling district together with the easternmost part of the consultation document's DA2 polling district; the other (DA2) comprising the whole of the consultation document's DA3 polling district together with the western most part of the consultation document's DA2 polling district. I would suggest that the consultation document's DA2</p>	

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	<p>polling district be divided at Cemetery Road, which would provide a very clear dividing line between the two polling districts which would (together) comprise Bassenhally Ward without increasing the electorate using Alderman Jacobs School beyond the 2,500 guideline (allowing for absent voting). This would, I suggest, best satisfy the statutory and best practice requirements for polling districts in the ward whilst, at the same time, reducing the cost at election time and the administrative inconvenience of having three polling districts when two would be sufficient. It would provide easier access to a more convenient polling station for several hundred electors in the Ward, and it would also satisfy the best practice recommendation that each polling place should lie within the boundaries of its polling district.</p> <p>22. If the LGBCE agrees to Fenland District Council's CGR proposals in respect of the establishment of co-terminosity for the Town and District Council Ward boundary for Bassenhally Ward, I therefore suggest that two polling districts, DA1 and DA2, be established in Bassenhally Ward, divided by Cemetery Road, with polling district DA1's polling place being designated as "Alderman Jacobs School, Drybread Road, Or any within the polling district" and polling district DA2's polling place being designated "The Ivy Leaf Centre, Gracious Street, Or any within the polling district".</p> <p>INCONSISTENCY IN THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT IN RESPECT OF ROMAN BANK WARD</p> <p>23. The consultation document states, on page 35, that "The polling districts for RB1 and RB2 have been re-drawn so that Leverington Village Hall can serve one polling district, the new RB1, and Leverington Sports and Social Club can serve the other, the new RB2. However, it is not known at this time if Leverington Sports and Social Club is available for use as a polling station. Should this premises not be available, then Leverington Village Hall would remain as a dual station for both</p>	<p>Comments noted. It is the intention that Leverington Village Hall or Leverington Sports and Social Club would be used as a dual station to cover both polling districts in Leverington should the other be unavailable.</p> <p>The RO recommends that the polling station for: RB1 is Leverington Village Hall, or any within polling districts RB1 or RB2 RB2 is Leverington Sports and Social Club, or any within polling districts RB2 or RB1.</p>

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	<p>polling districts". This appears to me to be a sensible arrangement, providing a proven viable fall-back position if the preferred new polling station for polling district RB2 is unavailable. However, the recommendation suggested in the consultation document appears to have been misdrafted, as it would not permit Leverington Village Hall to be used as a dual station covering polling district RB2. Leverington Village Hall is located in polling district RB1, and the recommendation proposed in the consultation documents states that the polling place for polling district RB2 shall be "Leverington Sports and Social Club, Church Road, Or any within the polling district". Since Leverington Village Hall does not lie within the polling district of RB2, the intention that Levrington Village Hall could be used as a dual station serving polling district RB2 would be inadvertently frustrated. To ensure, if a fall-back position is required for the polling station covering RB2, that Leverington Village Hall may be used, I would suggest that the proposed polling place for polling district RB2 be amended to read "Leverington Sports and Social Club, Church Road, Or Leverington Village Hall, Gorefield Road, Or any within the RB2 polling district."</p>	
<p>East Cambs Access Group</p>	<p>General Comments on assisting those with disabilities to be able to vote at Polling Stations. Drawing our attention to the following points which might help.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good Signage to the Polling Station, the Blue Badge parking (which may have to have temporary signage indicating it is only for badge holders whilst using the Polling Station), and the entrance. 2. The route from the parking to the entrance should be step free and unobstructed including by political party members and their paraphernalia seeking voters' polling details. 3. It is easier if the entrance doors are left open for those with restricted mobility – if weather does not permit, the entrance needs to be monitored, either by 	<p>Comments noted</p>

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	<p>being in view of the staff, a call system or by someone at the entrance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. If a temporary ramp is used that covers the stepped access ensure that it is placed so that any handrails can be reached when the ambulant voters are using the entrance. 5. Chairs should be available for those queuing to collect their ballot papers. 6. voting stations with shelves at different heights are needed. 7. I think you already provide aids for those with visual impairments to vote independently. <p>As with any venue everyone using it needs to feel Welcome, Be Informed and Supported</p>	