

**Salisbury District Council**  
**Returning Officer Comments on Polling District/Places/Stations**  
**November 2007**

I make the following comments as the Acting Returning Officer for Salisbury Constituency and as Returning Officer for Salisbury District Council.

Salisbury District currently has 122 polling districts of varying levels of electorate size. 109 venues are used at election time either as a single or joint polling station. Every attempt is made to ensure that suitable access arrangements are made where possible to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Currently nine schools are used, only one of which closes on election day. The decision to stay open or close is entirely up to the Head of the School (of Board of Governors). To date there has not been any significant issues raised.

In my opinion it would be beneficial for voters if alternative premises could be provided as polling stations where a caravan/motorhome is currently used as a temporary venue. However, I am also aware that some polling places do not have any suitable alternative venues options and in these instances the only alternative would be to merge polling stations with other venues outside of their normal polling place. This is not the best way forward for electors as this may deter an element of the electorate from voting if it is necessary to travel further distances to their polling station. Although postal voting is available.

Access to polling stations is important when selecting venues. In particular, for those voters who use a wheelchair, a walking aid or voters who may be partially sighted or blind. I would therefore like to see a reduction in the use of temporary caravans/motorhomes in particular. However, I am pleased to learn that some alternatives have already been found and I understand that the Election Team will continue to endeavour to find more suitable venues where possible. Following consultation there is a possibility that the use of even less temporary polling stations (TPS) will be necessary. If after the review, any venues continue to need attention, there is always the option of supplying additional temporary ramps if the buildings involved will lend themselves to adaptation (however, this is not always possible).

I am not aware of any complaints regarding the polling station arrangements either during or following the May 2007 elections. Any comments that were received have already been included in the Polling Station Schedule.

Overall, I believe the polling stations used for elections held within the Salisbury Constituency and Salisbury District Council are satisfactory for both the voter and the polling staff. I am also confident and satisfied that the Election Team endeavour at all times to ensure that voters have the best possible opportunity to access a polling station which is most convenient to them.

After inspecting the Polling Station Schedule if anyone wishes to make representations or suggest alternative sites for any polling station within the District, please write to:  
Salisbury District Council, Electoral Registration, PO Box 2117, Salisbury SP2 2DF or  
email: [elections@salisbury.gov.uk](mailto:elections@salisbury.gov.uk).



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