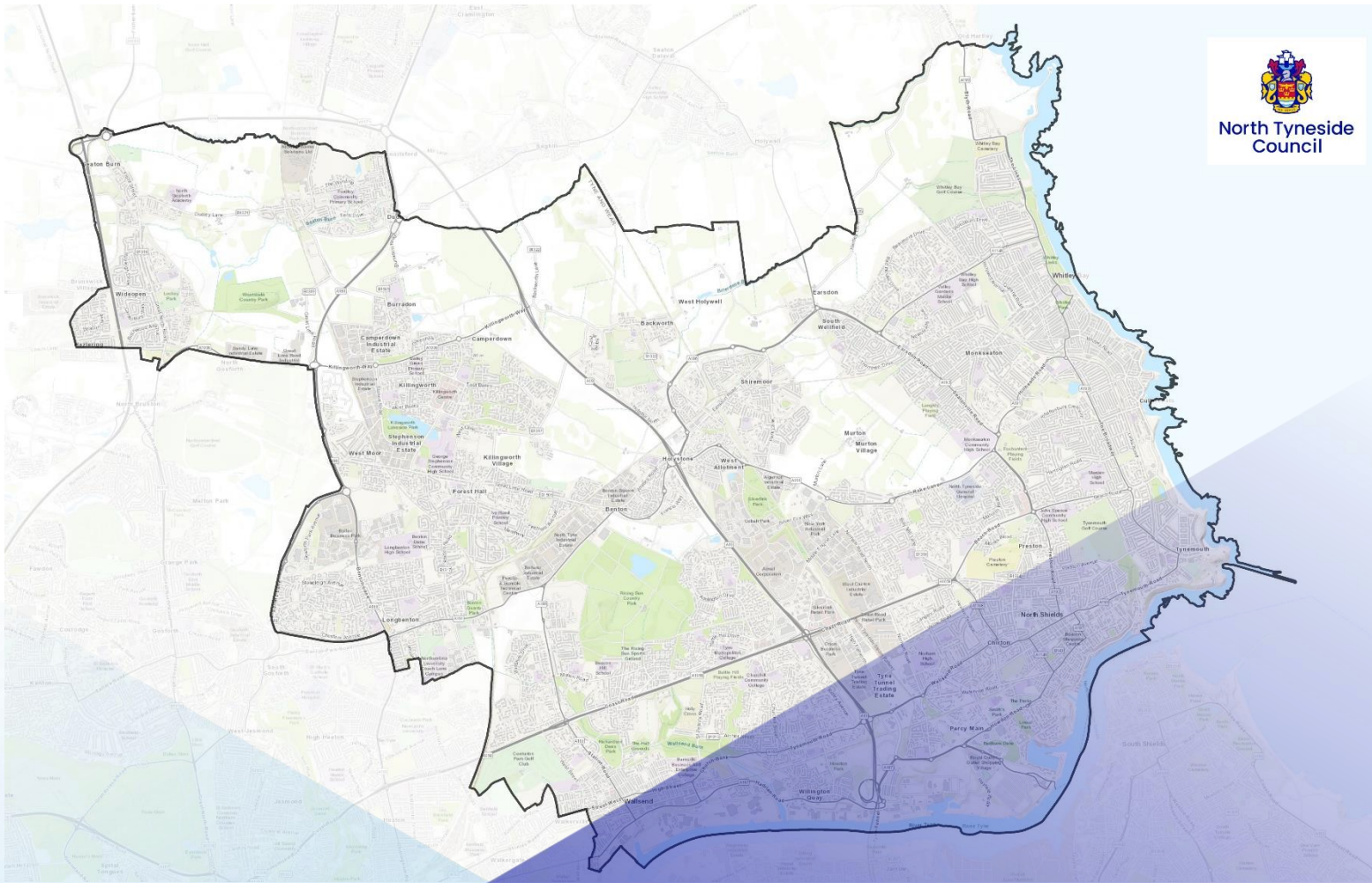




North Tyneside Council



Polling District and Place Review

(Acting) Returning Officer Submission
(for consultation) – 4 December 2023



North Tyneside Council

INTRODUCTION

We must review our Polling Districts and Polling Places at least once every five years. The next Review must start and finish between 1 October 2023 and 1 January 2025.

This document provides details of the Review, along with the initial recommendations of the (Acting) Returning Officer.

These recommendations will be open to a second round of consultation, **from 4 December 2023 to 1 January 2024**, open to all residents, stakeholders and any interested parties. We shall be seeking representations from local disability groups on the accessibility and suitability of polling places. Any comments should be addressed in the first instance to Allison Mitchell, Head of Governance (Allison.mitchell@northtyneside.gov.uk) who will collate these on behalf of the (Acting) Returning Officer.

We will consider the following factors:

- Identifying new Polling Places: We will look for new Polling Places in areas where the existing provision is unsuitable or unavailable.
- Feedback: We will consider feedback received following recent elections, consultation, from members of the public, elected members, and other stakeholders.
- Accessibility: We will try to ensure that every Polling Place is accessible to electors with disabilities.
- Facilities: We will make sure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- Elector numbers: We will try to comply with the Electoral Commission guidance on the maximum number of electors that should be allocated to a polling station.
- Future housing developments: We will consider the impact of proposed housing developments on polling station electorates.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Parliamentary Constituency

A geographical area that is represented by a Member of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons.

Polling Districts

A Polling District is a geographical area created by the subdivision of a UK Parliamentary constituency. All Wards within North Tyneside are divided into Polling Districts, which form the basis upon which the register of electors is produced.

Polling Places

A Polling Place is the building or area in which Polling Station will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer (the official in each constituency who conducts an election).

Polling Station

A Polling Station is the room or area within the Polling Place where voting takes place. Unlike Polling Districts which are fixed by the local authority, Polling Stations are chosen by the relevant Returning Officer for the election.

ROLE OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION

The Commission does not have a role in the review process. However, it does play a role after the conclusion of the review.

Once we have published the results of the review, specified interested parties may make representations to the Commission to reconsider any Polling Districts and Polling Places. The Commission may ask us to make any alterations to the Polling Places that they think necessary. If the alterations are not made within two months, they may make the alterations themselves.

We have done some initial research to inform the proposals in this paper. We invite your comments on these proposals.

The electorate figures we used are for electors on the Electoral Register published on 1 September 2023.

The following pages provide the polling scheme details for every Ward. The associated interactive map can be viewed here:

<https://ntcouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=594a6ab672d44e9087aa8cdd569ce84e>

A – Weetslade Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Weetslade Ward, (formerly Weetslade Ward and part Camperdown Ward) lies within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

As indicated on the interactive map, there are two small sections of Camperdown Ward moving into the new Weetslade Ward.

Proposed Polling District	Current Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
AA	Daverson Hall, Elmwood Avenue, Woodlands Park, NE13 6PX	1155	0.7
AB	St John`s United Reformed Church, Canterbury Way, Wideopen, NE13 6JQ	930	0.8
AC	St Columba`s Church, West View, Wideopen, NE13 6NH	1040	0.7
AD	Chapelville Sheltered Housing, Front Street, Seaton Burn, NE13 6EH	700	0.5
AE	John Willie Sams Centre, Market Street, Dudley, NE23 7HS	1278	0.4

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer notes that all the polling station electorate is within the recommended tolerances set by the Electoral Commission.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any issues or concerns with the Polling Districts or Polling Places in Weetslade Ward and therefore does not propose any changes to the existing arrangements.

B – Camperdown Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Camperdown Ward (formerly parts of Weetslade, Camperdown and Longbenton Wards) will be situated across the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency and Newcastle upon Tyne North Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Camperdown Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Current Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
BA	Jubilee Court Recreation Room, Jubilee Court, Annitsford, NE23 7RR	1693	0.7
BB	Festival Cottages Recreation Room, Festival Cottages, Front Street, NE12 5UT	1847	0.8
BC	Training Room, Block A, The Killingworth Site, Harvey Combe, Killingworth, NE12 6QQ	263	0.6
BD	West Moor Community Building, Benton Lane, West Moor, NE12 7NP	1498	1.1

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- Polling District BA takes in a small section of Polling District AE but there are no properties included within this section.
- Polling District BB takes on a small section of Polling District AA.
- Create a new Polling District BC to keep this area within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.
- Create new Polling District BD which forms West Moor and the new housing development east of the A189. This area must be kept separate as it falls into Newcastle upon Tyne North Borough Constituency.

As electors to the very south east of Polling District BC (Yates Close) would potentially have to travel over one mile north to Festival Cottages to cast their vote, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes the use of the Authority's Killingworth Site as a new Polling Place. The new Polling Place has been assessed and meets all the criteria set out in the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and is closer to Yates Close by ½ mile. The Polling Station will be in the Training Room in Block A and will be adequately sign posted from the main road.

The (Acting) Returning Officer notes the distance from the furthest street in Polling District BD exceeds one mile, however, following investigation, there were no alternative buildings to hire in the area.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Camperdown Ward and therefore does not propose any changes to the existing arrangements.

C – Longbenton & Benton Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Longbenton & Benton Ward, (formerly parts of Longbenton Ward and Benton Ward) lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne North Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Longbenton & Benton Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Current Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
CA	St Aidan`s RC Church Hall, Coach Lane, Benton, NE12 8AD	909	0.9
CB	The Oxford Centre, West Farm Avenue, Longbenton, NE12 8LT	3187	0.6
CC	St Bartholomew`s Primary School, Goathland Avenue, Longbenton, NE12 8FA	1271	0.5

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- Create new Polling District CA, to incorporate part of the former Benton Ward, Polling District ED. This runs from the Metro line south, to the Ward boundary.
- Merge CB and CC and rename CB.
- Polling District CC to incorporate the industrial area up to the north Ward boundary, formerly part of Polling District CA.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to merge Polling Districts CB and CC to ensure that the Polling Place falls within the Polling District. He is aware that the electorate voting in person at this Polling Station exceeds the recommended number given by the Electoral Commission. To mitigate this, the Polling Station will be a double station.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Longbenton & Benton Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes to the existing arrangements.

D – Killingworth Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Killingworth Ward, (formerly part Killingworth Ward and part Camperdown Ward) lies within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

As indicated on the interactive map, Killingworth Ward has been reduced in geographical size to incorporate all of Polling District DA, part DB and part BC.

Proposed Polling District	Current Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
DA	White Swan Centre, Citadel East, Killingworth, NE12 6SS	2424	0.9
DB	White Swan Centre, Citadel East, Killingworth, NE12 6SS	1954	0.8

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- To merge Polling District DA with the Killingworth Village area of Polling District DB.
- Polling District BC part is renamed to Polling District DB.

The (Acting) Returning Officer notes that Polling District DA electorate slightly exceeds the recommended maximum number of polling station electors. This will be mitigated with the use of a double station. However, the polling station electorate and turnouts will be kept under review and if necessary, an interim review will be conducted to consider changes to the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is aware that there will be a high proportion of electorate attending the White Swan Centre to cast their vote. Consideration had been given to using Bailey Green Primary School, however, due to parking and children's safety, it was not a viable option.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is of the opinion that the room in the White Swan Centre could comfortably accommodate the required amount of Polling Stations and electorate, therefore, no other changes to the Polling Place is proposed.

E – Forest Hall Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Forest Hall Ward, (formerly parts of Benton, Longbenton and Killingworth Wards) lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne North Borough Constituency and the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Forest Hall Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
EA	Forest Hall Primary School, Delaval Road, Forest Hall, NE12 9BA	1556	0.8
EB	St Andrew’s United Reform Church, Station Road, Benton, NE12 8AW	1440	0.5
EC	Springfield Park Community Centre, Springfield Park, Forest Hall, NE12 9AG	607	0.7
ED	Ivy Road Primary School Farne Centre, Ivy Road, Forest Hall, NE12 9AP	969	0.5
EE	Feetham Court Sheltered Housing, Feetham Court, NE12 9QJ	749	0.5

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- Polling District EA to remain unchanged.
- The south boundary of Polling District EB to be extended to the Metro line to incorporate streets to Goathland Avenue and then further extended east of Station Road to Whitley Road.
- Polling District EC to remain unchanged.
- Polling District EE to be renamed ED.
- New Polling District EE to be created (formerly part of Killingworth Ward) to incorporate the area east of Bamburgh Road to the boundary of the Ward. New Polling district EE falls into the

Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency and therefore must remain independent.

The (Acting) Returning Officer received a complaint from a resident about pedestrian access to the Church Hall at St Bartholomew's Church from their car park. The complainant advised that the path was long and was on an incline which made it difficult for her husband to walk to the Polling Place. Alternative pedestrian access via the Churchyard was available, however on inspection, some of the footpaths within the Churchyard are uneven due to tree roots and this may cause a potential trip hazard. The complainant suggested the use of St Andrew's United Reform Church which is very close by. At the time of the complaint, St Andrew's United Reform Church was not in the same Ward, however, due to the boundary changes this Church now falls within the boundary of Forest Hall Ward. St Andrew's United Reform Church is fully accessible, has car parking available and is closer to the public highway than St Bartholomew's Church. It is therefore proposed that St Andrew's United Reform Church is the allocated Polling Place for Polling District EB.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Forest Hall Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes to the existing arrangements.

F – Backworth & Holystone Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Backworth & Holystone Ward, (formerly part Killingworth Ward and part Valley Ward) lies within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Backworth & Holystone Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
FA	Palm Court Recreation Room, Palm Court, Great Lime Road, NE12 9HW	1250	0.9
FB	Holystone Out of School Club, Holystone Primary School, Whitley Road, NE27 0DA	1593	0.6
FC	Backworth Park Primary School, Hotspur North, Backworth, NE27 0FZ	682	0.2
FD	Eccles Grange Sheltered Housing, Church Road, Backworth, NE27 0FW	1184	1.0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- The remaining part of Polling District DB which falls into this Ward to be renamed FA.
- Merge a small part of Polling District DC, Miller Close and The Wheatsheaf, with Polling District DD part and rename Polling District FB.
- Polling District KB part to be renamed Polling District FC.
- Polling District KC to be renamed Polling District FD.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any

issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Backworth & Holystone Ward and therefore does not propose any changes to the existing arrangements.

G – Wallsend North Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Wallsend North Ward lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Wallsend North Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
GA	St Columba`s RC Primary School, Station Road, Wallsend, NE28 8EN	1464	0.7
GB	Elmfield Gardens Recreation Room, Elmfield Gardens, Wallsend, NE28 8AN	1418	0.6
GC	Redesdale Primary School, Wiltshire Drive, Wallsend, NE28 8TS	911	0.3
GD	Wallsend Jubilee Primary School, Mullen Road, Wallsend, NE28 9HA	2474	1.0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist. The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to merge part of Polling District IC with Polling District GA to align to the new Ward boundary.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to merge Polling Districts GB and GE. For a long period of time, electors, from both Polling Districts, have shared the same Polling Place and will be familiar with the Recreation Room at Elmfield Gardens. The (Acting) Returning Officer has investigated suitable alternatives within the area, however there were no premises available to him. Furthermore, once these Polling Districts are amalgamated, the electorate still falls within the acceptable tolerances set by the Electoral Commission.

The (Acting) Returning Officer notes that Polling District GD electorate slightly exceeds the recommended electorate for a Polling District. After investigation there was nothing else within the area to hire as a venue, however the polling station electorate will be kept under review and if necessary, an interim review will be conducted to consider changes to the Polling District. In the meantime, the Station will become a double station to mitigate potential high footfall during the Poll.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Wallsend North Ward and therefore does not recommend any further changes.

H – Battle Hill Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Battle Hill Ward lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend Borough Constituency and Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Battle Hill Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
HA	Wallsend Baptist Church – Millfield Avenue, Wallsend, NE28 9JG	902	0.8
HB	Battle Hill Multi Use Centre, Bray Close, Wallsend, NE28 9RJ	1990	0.6
HC	Crossgates Extra Care, Bellshill Close, Wallsend, NE28 9TY	1087	0.4
HD	Hadrian Park Primary School, Addington Drive, Wallsend, NE28 9RT	1370	0.5
HE	Holystone Out of School Club, Holystone Primary School, Whitley Road, NE27 0DA	6	0.7

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to incorporate the lower section of the Rising Sun Countryside Park into Polling District HA to align to the Parliamentary Constituency boundary.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to merge Polling Districts HB, HC and HD. Investigations have been undertaken with Tyne Met College and the Jolly Bowman Public House, to no avail, however, Battle Hill Multi Use Centre is available and falls within the centre of the new proposed Polling

District, therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes the merge and use of the new Polling Place.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is aware Hadrian Park Primary School would prefer not to be used as a Polling Place due to the impact on the school. Unfortunately, the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any suitable alternative Polling Places in the area and would welcome any suggestions that could be investigated.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to rename Polling District HE to HC and HF to HD.

The (Acting) Returning Officer finds himself in an unusual position with regard to two properties at the most northern point of the new Ward. He must create a new separate Polling District, HE to account for this as it falls within a different Parliamentary Constituency to that of the rest of the Ward. It is proposed that these electors cast their vote at their nearest Polling Place within their Constituency, which is Holystone Out of Hours Club.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Battle Hill Ward and therefore does not propose any further changes.

I – Wallsend Central Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Wallsend Central Ward lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Wallsend Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
IA	Wallsend Customer First Centre, 16 The Forum, Wallsend, NE28 8JR	1134	0.7
IB	Wallsend St Peter`s C of E Primary School, North Terrace, Wallsend, NE28 6PY	781	0.5
IC	Richardson Dees Primary School, High Street East, Wallsend, NE28 7RT	1341	0.7
ID	Wallsend Customer First Centre, 16 The Forum, Wallsend, NE28 8JR	737	0.5
IE	Western Community Primary School, Rutland Road, Wallsend, NE28 8QL	926	0.3
IF	Temporary Polling Station, St Peter`s Road	1150	0.6

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The Acting Returning Officer proposes Polling Districts IA, IB, IC part, ID and IE to remain unchanged.

The (Acting) Returning Officer received a request to use Carville Primary School as a Polling Place for Polling District IA. The reason for this request was the current distance electors had to walk to their Polling Place at Wallsend Customer First Centre was too far. The (Acting) Returning Officer

has established that the furthest distance an elector (residing in Philiphaugh) would have to walk to their current Polling Place would be 0.7 mile. He believes that this is an acceptable distance to travel therefore, is not minded to amend the Polling Place. In the same request, it was suggested that the rectangular area (along High Street East, down Coach Lane to the Metro line, along Holly Avenue and up Wagon Way) be incorporated into Polling District IC as the Polling Place was closer. Whilst this is correct, the (Acting) Returning Officer explains that moving these streets would increase the Polling Station electorate in Polling District IC by approximately 200, split the Polling District over the busy main road of High Street East and make St Peter's Primary School a much quieter Polling Station. The (Acting) Returning Officer welcomes the comments, however, on this occasion, it is his conclusion that the existing number of Polling Districts is more than sufficient to serve the electors of this Ward.

There is a new section of Wallsend Central Ward at the north east of the Ward, formerly part of Howdon Ward, Polling District JD. This Polling District is served by a temporary porta cabin on St Peter's Road. It is the view of the (Acting) Returning Officer that this type of Polling Station should not be used, however, he has been unable to identify an alternative venue within this Polling District. He therefore, proposes to continue to use the porta cabin for this year and from 2025 utilise the new onsite development at the top of St Peter's Road.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Wallsend Central Ward and therefore does not propose any further changes.

J – Howdon Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Howdon Ward lies within the Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend and Tynemouth Borough Constituencies.

Please view the interactive map for Howdon Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
JA	Howdon Library, Churchill Street, Howdon, NE28 7TG	1019	0.6
JB	Our Lady and St Aidan’s RC Church, Coniston Road, Wallsend, NE28 0EP	1626	0.3
JC	Howdon Hub, Denbigh Avenue, Howdon, NE28 0PP	1721	0.4
JD	Stephenson Memorial Primary School, Martin Road, Howdon, NE28 0AG	1647	0.6
JE	St Paul’s Centre, George Street, Willington Quay, NE28 6SL	516	0.6
JF	Ferndene, Threap Gardens, Howdon, NE28 7HT	455	0.4
JG	No Polling Place as land	0	0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist. The Checklists for Polling Districts JA and JF highlighted that the room used at the Polling Place was very small and struggled to accommodate two Polling Stations, therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer suggests that the Polling Place for Polling District JF, formerly JE, be relocated to Ferndene, Threap Gardens. This means that it will no longer share a Polling Place with JA, which was small for a double station.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- Polling Districts JA, JB and JC remain unchanged.
- Polling Districts FA and FB remain unchanged but renamed to JD and JE.
- Create a new Polling District JG to address the discrepancy in boundary lines at the very south east of the Ward. This piece of uninhabited land falls within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency therefore must remain separate.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Howdon Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes to the existing arrangements.

K – Shiremoor Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Shiremoor Ward lies within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency and the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Shiremoor Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
KA	West Allotment Community Centre, Benton Road, West Allotment, NE27 0EP	1500	0.5
KB	Backworth Park Primary School, Hotspur North, Backworth, NE27 0FZ	679	0.5
KC	Shiremoor Library, Earsdon Road, Shiremoor, NE27 0HJ	1330	1.0
KD	Shiremoor Community Centre, Stanton Road, Shiremoor, NE27 0PW	1289	0.6
KE	Northumberland Scouts, Horsley Avenue, Shiremoor, NE27 0UG	819	0.4
KF	No Polling Place as land	0	0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer does not propose to change to Polling Districts KA and KE (formerly KF) as these all fall within the Electoral Commission guidance that a Polling Station should not have more than 2250 electors allocated to it and the Polling Places are well established and central to the Polling Districts.

The (Acting) Returning Officer approached St Edmund's Church to see if they were available to be used as a Polling Place for Polling District KB, however, they replied stating that the building was currently closed and were unable to assist us. On investigation, there is little provision within the area. A Charity Shop at Northumberland Park had been previously used, however, it was difficult to maintain the secrecy of the ballot as the Shop

remained open. The (Acting) Returning Officer therefore proposes to use Backworth Park Primary School. However, he would welcome any suggestions on an alternative premises within the Polling District.

Furthermore, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to redraw the boundary line of Polling District KB and KC along the wagon way at the rear of Richardson Gardens to the Metro Line to the south so that the following streets: Delaval Crescent, Richardson Gardens, Hastings Drive and Trevelyan Close are now incorporated into Polling District KC. This has been proposed as these houses were built on the land since the last Boundary Review and form the same estate to their east. At the same time, the (Acting) Returning Officers proposes to move Bluebell Court, Hartley Mews and St Marks Court into Polling District KD.

Following an internal review of all Polling Places, an issue was identified with Bertram Grange Community Centre whereby disabled access was achieved by portable ramps to the building; this was not ideal for disabled voters. The (Acting) Returning Officer has contacted a number of alternative venues and has been able to identify Shiremoor Library as a suitable alternative. The Library is a fully accessible building and on one of the main roads through Shiremoor. It has good transport links and is a well known community hub due to its shared use with the Pharmacy and Doctor's Surgery. The (Acting) Returning Officer therefore proposes to use the Shiremoor Library as the Polling Place for Polling District KC.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to create a new Polling District, KF; this forms two small pieces of land to the South West of the Ward. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England have placed these industrial and commercial areas into the Shiremoor Ward but for Parliamentary purposes, they fall within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency and therefore cannot be merged with other Polling Districts within Shiremoor Ward. As there are no electors registered within these areas, the (Acting) Returning Officer has not allocated a Polling Place, however, should this situation change, the (Acting) Returning Officer would use the Council Offices as a temporary Polling Place.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been

highlighted, therefore, as the (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues, he does not propose any other changes.

L – Chirton & Percy Main Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Chirton & Percy Main Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Chirton & Percy Main Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
LA	St Peter`s Church Hall, Central Avenue, North Shields, NE29 7JB	1650	0.5
LB	Norham High School, Alnwick Avenue, North Shields, NE29 7BU	721	0.3
LC	Cedarwood Trust, Avon Avenue, North Shields, NE29 7QT	1472	0.7
LD	Balkwell Community Welfare Centre, Heaton Terrace, North Shields, NE29 7LY	1449	0.7
LE	East Howdon Community Centre, Chatton Street, Wallsend, NE28 0JT	255	0.2
LF	St John`s Parish Church, St John`s Terrace, Percy Main, NE29 6HS	1416	1.0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

Polling Districts LA, LB and LC to remain the same, with a small sliver of LC moving into North Shields Ward.

New Polling District LD comprises of old Polling Districts LE and LF. The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes this merge to remove the use of the Temporary Polling Station on Verne Road. The furthest distance to the proposed Polling Place, Balkwell Community Centre, is 0.7 mile and the electorate of the new Polling District falls within the Electoral Commission guidance that a Polling Station should not have more than 2250 electors allocated to it. Furthermore, the use of temporary porta cabins does not fully meet the current legislation as set out in the Elections Act 2022.

The Community at of East Howdon moves into this Ward. Due to the distance from its neighbouring communities, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to maintain this area as an individual Polling District. The Polling District will be renamed to LE.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to create a new Polling District LF. This comprises of FD and part of FE and FF. It is proposed to use St John's Parish Church as the Polling Place as the (Acting) Returning Officer had received comments that Woodlea Tenants Centre was harder to find. The (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that the furthest distance (Commissioner's Wharf) to the Polling Place is one mile so would welcome any alternative suggestions for the Polling Place.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted. Additionally, all electorate figures fall within the Electoral Commission guidance that a Polling Station should not have more than 2250 electors allocated to it.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is therefore, not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Districts or Places in Chirton & Percy Main Ward and therefore does not propose any further changes.

M – New York & Murton Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, New York & Murton Ward lies within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency and Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for New York & Murton Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
MA	Phoenix Rise Sheltered Housing, Ambassadors Way, North Shields, NE29 8SQ	643	0.6
MB	Phoenix Rise Sheltered Housing, Ambassadors Way, North Shields, NE29 8SQ	1457	0.5
MC	The Robin Hood Public House, Murton Lane, Murton, NE27 0LR	85	0.2
MD	St Aidan`s Church Hall, Billy Mill Lane, North Shields, NE29 8BZ	2236	0.2
ME	No Polling Place as land	0	0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The introduction of the Elections Act 2022 placed a duty on Returning Officers to make it easier for disabled people to vote, in particular a Returning Officer must take all reasonable steps to ensure a disabled voter can vote independently and in secret at the Polling Station. The Temporary Polling Station at Norham Road North is sited on a grassed verge making it difficult for all voters to access and almost impossible for wheelchair users, therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to move their Polling Place to Phoenix Rise.

The (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that electors of Murton Village must make their way to New York Village, along an unlit road with no pavements, to cast their vote. He proposes that the Robin Hood Public

House is now used as their Polling Place. To stop the same issue of access for those residents of New York Village and to address the use of a Temporary Polling Place at Greenlea, the (Acting) Returning Officer suggests that these station voters merge into MB and now use the Polling Place at Phoenix Rise. Whilst the current station electorate is low for Polling District MC, there is housing development underway which will inevitably increase elector numbers in the future.

The (Acting) Returning Officer recognises that the station electorate for Polling District MD is nearing the acceptable levels recommended by the Electoral Commission, he does not feel changes are warranted at this time. This will of course but monitored and adjusted, if necessary. To mitigate capacity, this Polling Place will continue to operate as a double station.

Finally, there is a small section of land at the very north of the Ward which was formerly part of Valley Ward. As this is within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency a separate Polling District must be created; this has been named ME. The (Acting) Returning Officer will identify a Polling Place for this Polling District should houses be built on this land.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in New York & Murton Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

N – Preston with Preston Grange Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Preston with Preston Grange Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Preston with Preston Grange Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
NA	North Shields Methodist Church Parlour, Lansdowne Terrace West, North Shields, NE29 0PR	941	0.5
NB	St Cuthbert`s RC Church, Albion Road West, North Shields, NE29 0JB	1210	0.7
NC	Tynemouth Pool, Beach Road, North Shields, NE29 9PX	1369	0.7
ND	Preston Grange Community Centre, Preston Grange, North Shields, NE29 9JA	1388	0.7

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to change the layout of the Polling Districts within Preston with Preston Grange Ward.

One of the driving factors for this change is the introduction of the Elections Act 2022. This Act placed a duty on Returning Officers to make it easier for disabled people to vote. In particular, the Returning Officer must take all necessary steps to ensure that an elector votes independently and in secret at the Polling Station. The use of a temporary porta cabin at Regency Gardens makes it extremely difficult for anyone with mobility problems to access and the (Acting) Returning Officer wishes to significantly reduce the number used. The (Acting) Returning Officer had approached Tyne Met College, Primrose Lodge Care Home, the Snooker Club and the Alexandra Public House to see if they could accommodate a

Polling Place in this area but unfortunately none were able to support our request.

The (Acting) Returning Officer therefore proposes to realign the Polling District boundaries so that they better serve the area, taking into consideration natural dividers within the Ward, station electorate figures and distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street in the area. He will realign the Polling District boundaries so that NA and NB extend north up to Queen Alexandra Road, incorporating part of Polling District NC. The (Acting) Returning Officer also proposes to extend the southern boundary of Polling District ND to Queen Alexandra Road, thus removing Polling District NC in its entirety. Current Polling District ND will be renamed NC and the Polling District to the very north of the Ward, will be renamed ND.

The Polling Places which currently serve Preston with Preston Grange Ward have all been reviewed and fully meet the checklist provided by the Electoral Commission. The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of the any other issues or concerns in this Ward, therefore, he does not propose any other changes than those listed above.

O – Tynemouth Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Tynemouth Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Tynemouth Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
OA	Marden Residents Association, Bavington Gardens, North Shields, NE30 3QD	1209	0.5
OB	Linskill Centre, Linskill Terrace, North Shields, NE30 2AY	675	0.7
OC	Sir James Knott Memorial Nursery School, River View, Tynemouth, NE30 4AG	313	0.4
OD	Our Lady and St Oswin's Church, Front Street, Tynemouth, NE30 4BX	1014	0.3
OE	Guide & Scout H.Q., Manor Road, Tynemouth, NE30 2LS	1386	0.8
OF	Scout Headquarters, Links Road, Cullercoats, NE30 3TQ	326	0.2

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

Following the publication of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's final proposals on Wards, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- To rename Polling District PA, formerly of Cullercoats Ward, OA.
- To amalgamate the areas of Preston Ward which have moved into Tynemouth Ward with the most eastern part of OB and rename OB.
- The (Acting) Returning Officer approached King Edwards Primary School with a view to using part of the School as a Polling Place for OB. For this to work, School staff would have escort polling staff

around their building therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer has identified and decided to use the Linskill Centre as a Polling Place as it is a well established public venue on the main road within the Polling District.

- To incorporate into OC, the small area of land to its north west border containing, Hazeldene Court, St Aidan's Court and part of Northumberland Park.
- For Polling Districts OD, OE and OF to remain the same geographically.

The (Acting) Returning Officer notes that Polling Districts OD and OE use the same Polling Place, the Guide and Scout Hut on Manor Road. Electorate turnout at this station is higher than the average which means the Polling Place is busy. The (Acting) Returning Officer has contacted Kings Priory School and Our Lady and St Oswin's Church to see if they can be used instead. Unfortunately, Kings Priory School were unable to accommodate therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer has opted to use the Church on Front Street, Tynemouth. He acknowledges that parking is limited so, if necessary, he will take steps to make a proportion of the public parking on Front Street available to voters.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Tynemouth Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes than those listed above.

P – Cullercoats & Whitley Bay South Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Cullercoats & Whitley Bay South Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Cullercoats & Whitley Bay South Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
PA	Marden Bridge Sports Centre, Hillheads Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 8RW	1333	0.8
PB	St Mary`s Catholic Primary School Nursery, Farrington Road, North Shields, NE30 3EY	952	0.5
PC	Cullercoats Methodist Church Hall, Farrington Road, North Shields, NE30 3LJ	796	0.4
PD	Cullercoats Primary School, Marden Avenue, NE30 4PB	1691	0.4
PE	Rockcliffe First School, Grafton Road, Whitley Bay, NE26 2NR	1093	0.3

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes:

- To merge the parts of former Polling Districts QC and RA together, rename PA and use Marden Bridge Sports Centre as the Polling Place.
- To keep Polling Districts PB, PC and PD in their current form.
- To create a new Polling District PE from the area of land to the very north east of the Ward, formerly Polling District RD.

All Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Cullercoats & Whitley Bay South Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

Q – North Shields Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, North Shields Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for North Shields Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
QA	Royal Quays Community Centre, Prince Consort Way, North Shields, NE29 6XB	825	0.3
QB	Temporary Polling Station, Upper Elsdon Street, North Shields, NE29 6SP	605	0.6
QC	Rudyard Court Sheltered Housing, Lower Rudyard Street, North Shields, NE29 6PD	1205	0.3
QD	St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Lovaine Place, North Shields, NE29 0BU	959	0.3
QE	East End Youth and Community Centre, Kettlewell House, George Street, NE30 1EL	748	0.4
QF	St Augustin's Church, Jackson Street, North Shields, NE30 2HY	1836	0.4

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to:

- Create a new Polling District QA from part of former Polling District FF.
- Create a new Polling District QC from part of former Polling District FG.
- Create a new Polling District QD from part of former Polling District LD and a sliver of LC.

In April 2023, a complaint was received from a motorised wheelchair user that she could not access her polling station on Upper Elsdon Street due to

it being a temporary porta cabin. The introduction of the Elections Act 2022 placed a duty on Returning Officers to make it easier for disabled people to vote, in particular a Returning Officer must take all reasonable steps to ensure a disabled voter can vote independently and in secret at the polling station.

The (Acting) Returning Officer had considered the use of The Parks Sports Centre as an alternative Polling Place, however, he is acutely aware that the Temporary Polling Station on Upper Elsdon Street is far more centrally located within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer examined the turnout figures over the last three years and although minimal, there is a slight increase in elector turnout at the Temporary Polling Station, therefore he has taken the decision for this to remain in place.

Year	Polling Place	Station Voters	Vote Cast	Station Turnout (%)
2021	The Parks	528	54	10.2
2022	Temporary	587	86	14.7
2023	Temporary	605	70	11.6

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in North Shields Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

R – Whitley Bay North Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Whitley Bay North Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Whitley Bay North Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
RA	Temporary Polling Station, along the footpath between Schools, at the end of Deneholm, NE25 9AT	745	0.3
RB	Livingstone Hall - Whitley Bay Baptist Church, Park Avenue, Whitley Bay, NE26 1DX	1676	0.4
RC	Whitley Bay Customer First Centre, York Road, Whitley Bay, NE26 1AB	1776	0.5
RD	St Mary's Church Hall, Claremont Gardens, Whitley Bay, NE26 3SF	1879	0.7

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The creation of the Whitley Bay North Ward takes on board areas from the former Whitley Bay and Monkseaton North Wards. The Polling Districts remain relatively unchanged.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to incorporate the land holding Valley Gardens Middle School and Whitley Bay High School into the area to their south and rename this Polling District RA. This Polling District currently utilises a temporary porta cabin placed between both Schools. The (Acting) Returning Officer wishes to reduce the number of temporary stations used and has approached both Schools with a view to using a room within their buildings. Unfortunately both Valley Gardens Middle School and Whitley Bay High School were unable to accommodate, therefore, for the time being, the (Acting) Returning Officer will continue to use the temporary porta cabin placed between the Schools. He would

however, welcome any suggestions for an alternative Polling Place for Polling District RA.

He also proposes that former Polling District SD is renamed RD, no change is made to Polling District RB and that the small section to the east of the Ward is moved into Polling District RC.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Whitley Bay North Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

S – Monkseaton Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, Monkseaton Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for Monkseaton Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
SA	Langley First School, Mobile Unit, Drumoyne Gardens Nursery Path, NE25 9DL	1111	0.5
SB	Appletree Gardens First School, Appletree Gardens, Monkseaton, NE25 8XS	2012	0.5
SC	Crosskeys Community Hall, Elmwood Road, Whitley Bay, NE25 8EX	1662	0.5
SD	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Church Close, Whitley Bay, NE25 9PG	945	0.5

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to create Polling District SA by merging former Polling Districts QA and QE. For a long time, these former Polling Districts have shared a Polling Place due to the limited availability of a venue in former Polling District QA. Merging these formally will address this issue and the station electorate still falls well within Electoral Commission guidance. In addition, the western boundary of SA will be reduced to run straight along the rear of Briar Vale and Langley Playing fields.

The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to create a new Polling District SB, using Appletree Gardens First Schools as the Polling Place. The boundary of this new Polling District will run down the eastern side of the Ward to Foxhunters roundabout, along Seatonville Road to its junction with Bromley Avenue, down Bromley Avenue to where it meets Cauldwell Lane, along

Cauldwell Lane and Front Street to the Metro line. This adjustment has been made to account for a more equal electorate and to incorporate former Polling District SC which, due to Local Government Boundary Commission for England changes, moved their current Polling Place to outside the Ward. The (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to merge the Bromley Avenue triangle (Bromley Avenue/Seatonville Road/Cauldwell Lane) into Polling District SC.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in Monkseaton Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

T – St Mary’s Ward

When the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries come into force, St Mary’s Ward lies within the Tynemouth Borough Constituency and the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency.

Please view the interactive map for St Mary Ward to see an overview of the changes.

Proposed Polling District	Polling Place	Station Electorate	Distance in miles*
TA	Southridge First School, Beaumont Drive, Beaumont Park, NE25 9UD	1183	1
TB	Cemetery Lodge, Blyth Road, Whitley Bay, NE26 4NH	547	0.3
TC	Whitley Lodge First School, Woodburn Drive, Whitley Bay, NE26 3HW	1579	0.4
TD	Earsdon and Wellfield Community Centre, Church Way, Earsdon, NE25 9JY	185	0.2
TE	Wellfield Middle School, Kielder Road, NE25 9QW	548	0.3
TF	Temporary Polling Station, Junction of Rosemount Way, and Newsteads Drive, NE25 9YE (Turnberry)	704	0.5
TG	No Polling Place as land	0	0

*This measurement is the distance to the Polling Place from the furthest street within the Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer does not propose any geographical changes to the Polling Districts within St Mary’s Ward.

The (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that there are very few public buildings within this Ward that could be used as a Polling Place. He has particular concern over the use of temporary porta cabins, this is because the introduction of the Elections Act 2022 placed a duty on Returning Officers to make it easier for disabled people to vote, in particular a Returning Officer must take all reasonable steps to ensure a disabled voter

can vote independently and in secret at the polling station. However, he is also acutely aware that, in exceptional circumstances, the use of a temporary porta cabin cannot be avoided.

The (Acting) Returning Officer has identified an alternative venue for the temporary porta cabin on Westley Drive and proposes to use Cemetery Lodge at Whitley Bay Cemetery as a Polling Place. The (Acting) Returning Officer assures the public that the use of the Lodge would not interfere with services taking place.

The (Acting) Returning Officer has approached both Wellfield Middle School and South Wellfield First School with a view to using a room within one of the Schools as a Polling Place. Wellfield Middle School can accommodate a Polling Place within the School, therefore, the (Acting) Returning Officer proposes to replace the temporary porta cabin in Polling District TD for the School Hall.

Despite making contact with three local businesses in Polling District TF, formerly SB, the (Acting) Returning Officer has been unable to identify a suitable alternative venue for the porta cabin, therefore, it is proposed for the cabin on Rosemount Way to be retained, however, should any elector be able to identify a different location, the (Acting) Returning Officer would very much welcome their comments.

Whilst the station electorate is very low for TD, due to the geographical nature of Earsdon, the (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that this area should remain an individual Polling District.

The (Acting) Returning Officer must create a new Polling District TG to address the discrepancy in boundary lines at the very south west of the Ward. This piece of uninhabited land falls within the Cramlington and Killingworth County Constituency therefore must remain separate.

All static Polling Places have been reviewed following the Electoral Commission Evaluation Checklist and no serious issues have been highlighted.

The (Acting) Returning Officer is not aware of any other issues or concerns with the Polling Places in St Mary's Ward and therefore does not propose any other changes.

Finally, the (Acting) Returning Officer received a submission from a Political Party which raised three topics relevant to the Polling District and Polling Place Review, these were:

- Use of Schools and Nurseries
- Out of Polling District Polling Places
- Addressing Boundary Conflicts

Use of Schools and Nurseries

Concerns were raised about the closure of schools and nurseries on Polling Day. The (Acting) Returning Officer acknowledges that some nurseries may be asked to close on Polling Day and Schools may allocate one of their annual training days but he can confirm that no child will lose a day of statutory education because of the School being used as a Polling Place.

Out of Polling District Polling Places

The (Acting) Returning Officer takes all steps necessary to identify Polling Places within the Polling Districts but sometimes this is just not possible. Regarding Polling District GE, which had been specifically mentioned by the Political Party, the (Acting) Returning Officer can confirm that action has been taken to address this issue within this Review.

Addressing Boundary Conflicts

The (Acting) Returning Officer is very much aware of the conflict which has been created by the separate independent and simultaneous Boundary Reviews by the Boundary Commission for England and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and can confirm that he has created Polling Districts to take these very complex sets of proposals into account.