



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

Telephone 01572 722577 Email: governance@rutland.gov.uk

RECORD OF OFFICER DECISIONS

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, this document records decisions that would otherwise have been taken by the relevant local government body, or a committee, sub-committee of that body or joint committee in which that body participates but have been delegated to an officer of that body.

DECISION TAKER (name and title)
Name: Mark Andrews Title: Chief Executive Officer
DELEGATION GIVEN UNDER
<input type="checkbox"/> A specific express authorisation (at a meeting, include date and name of meeting): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Under general authorisation (in the constitution or other document stating what section applies):
THE EFFECT OF THE DECISION
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant a permission or Licence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affect the rights of an individual <input type="checkbox"/> Award a contract or incur expenditure which materially affects the council's financial position <input type="checkbox"/> Approval of a document, including for submission to another body or for consultation.
ARE YOU FOLLOWING A PROCESS TO COME TO THE RESULTED ACTION OR ARE YOU MAKING A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO OR MORE ALTERNATIVES?
<input type="checkbox"/> Following a process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Choosing between alternatives
IS THE RECORD OF THE DECISION, INCLUDING THE DATE, DECISION AND REASONS ALREADY PUBLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANY OTHER STATUTORY REQUIREMENT?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (state where) – Please consult the Monitoring Officer who may advise no further action is required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

TITLE OF DECISION:
Review to change the Polling Place and Polling Station for the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton from the Jackson Stops Public House in Stretton to the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Stretton, LE15 7QR.
PURPOSE OF THE DECISION
To allocate an appropriate polling place and polling station for electors in the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton.
DECISION DETAIL
The polling Place and polling station for the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton will be the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR with effect from 1 March 2023.
PROPOSED WORKS
N/A
COST OF THE SCHEME
N/A
REASON FOR THE DECISION
The Stretton Community Hub is considered a more suitable venue for conducting an election poll and it is felt that this revision will better serve both communities. Full details at Appendices A – G.
OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
N/A
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODY DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS CONSULTED, OR IF AUTHORISATION WAS GIVEN AT A MEETING THEN DECLERATIONS AT THAT MEETING
N/A
SUMMARY OF EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION NOT DISCLOSED
N/A

Signed: Original signed

Date: 7 March 2023

Appendices:

Appendix A - Definition of Terms.

Appendix B – Arrangements for electors in Stretton and Thistleton.

Appendix C – Existing polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

Appendix D – Recommended revised list of polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

Appendix E - Example letter to stakeholders and supporting documentation (includes copies of polling place/district evaluation checklists).

Appendix F – Comments from Stakeholders.

Appendix G – Environment Health Assessment of St Nicholas Church Stretton – 22 February 2023.

Definition of terms

Polling District

1.1 A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary constituency for the purposes of a UK Parliamentary election.

1.2 In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district and, in Wales, each community should be a separate polling district, unless there are special circumstances. This means that a parish or community must not be in a polling district which has a part of either a different parish or community within it, or any un-parished part of the local authority area within it, unless special circumstances apply. Those special circumstances could arise if, for example, the parish/community has only a small number of electors and it is not practicable for the parish/community to be its own polling district.

1.3 In Scotland, each electoral ward must be divided into two or more polling districts unless there are special circumstances. Given the size of wards in Scotland, it is difficult to envisage what those special circumstances might be in practice.

1.4 When a parish or community is not a separate polling district or a Scottish electoral ward is not split into two or more polling districts, the special circumstances and the recommendation resulting from these should be clearly set in the review document for the council or relevant committee to consider.

Polling Place

1.5 A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer. 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.

1.6 We are aware that some authorities designate the entire polling district as the polling place. However, Section 18B(4)(e) of the RPA 1983 states that 'the polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station'. We therefore consider that polling places should always be defined more specifically than simply the polling district - for example, by designating the name of the polling place (normally a particular building or area and its environs).

Polling Station

1.7 A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the relevant Returning Officer for the election.

Polling Arrangements for electors in Stretton and Thistleton with effect from 1 March 2023

A change of polling place and polling station is proposed for the electors in the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton as a more accessible venue has now become available for use. The current venue is a public house and has served the two Polling Districts well, but the recently opened Community Hub offers the option of a more suitable polling venue for these polling districts.

The public house was the only suitable venue for a polling place when the 2018 review was conducted. The public house largely met the needs of the electorate, but it did have some drawbacks as far as accessibility was concerned, for example the winding route necessary for wheelchair access to avoid the steps at the front of the venue. It was for that reason it was deemed sensible to conduct a review to consider the suitability of the new venue.

The outcome of the review found that the hub is a more suitable venue as the inside of the building comprises a large, open plan, level and accessible area which would be ideal for use as a polling station (See enclosure 6 of Appendix E). The area has been modernised and refloored and now provides much better accessibility with an ideal surface for wheelchairs and other mobility aids throughout. The entry to the polling station is also level, allowing all electors to use the same entrance. With the hub being a recent addition to the area, its committee are keen to make it the focal point for the community and has therefore volunteered to make the venue available for polls as a priority.

We received 9 representations in total; 4 of these were from residents of the two polling districts, and these are included in Appendix F. Of the representations from residents, two mentioned the lack of parking and two (from the same resident) raised concerns about mould under the new flooring in the church hall. The concerns regarding mould under the flooring were also raised directly with the Health and Safety Executive. As a result of these concerns, Rutland County Council requested a visit and report from an Environmental Health Officer, which was provided by Peterborough City Council, and a copy of the Report is attached at Appendix G.

The environmental health report found that despite the narrow lane congestion could be limited by using appropriate signage and that the lane itself should only be for those attending with limited mobility.

The Environmental Health Officer reported that there was no evidence of damp or mould within the church at the time of the visit, and that suitable ventilation holes had been drilled following the employment of a new contractor.

The Environmental Health officer recommended that the venue is suitable for use as a polling station, although recommendations 1 - 6 of Appendix G would need to be implemented by the Community Hub, for the venue to allow this. All of these recommendations have been discussed with the Stretton Community hub team and they are willing to implement them in time for the elections in May and for future

elections where required. The implementation of these recommendations would aid accessibility for disabled persons using the polling station.

It is therefore recommended that the polling place and polling station for the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton be changed to the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Stretton, LE15 7QR. It is considered that the new venue would better meet the requirements of the electorate of the two polling districts, and it is also better designed to meet the accessibility needs of disabled persons wishing to use the polling station.

Existing polling district, polling places and polling stations.

Polling District	Polling Place	Polling Station	Electors @ 1 December 2022
Stretton	Jackson Stops Inn, Stretton	Jackson Stops Inn, Stretton	247
Thistleton	Jackson Stops Inn, Stretton	Jackson Stops Inn, Stretton	79

Recommended table of polling districts, polling places and polling stations – wef 1 March 2023

Polling District	Polling Place	Polling Station	Electors @ 1 December 2022
Stretton	Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR	Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR	247
Thistleton	Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR	Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR	79



Rutland
County Council

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Letter to:

MP
ARO
Chairman/Leader/Ward Cllr
Political Parties
Rutland Access Group
Police
Parish Clerk/Cllrs/Parish Meeting
Stretton Community Hub
Third Sector Org
Vista

8 February 2023

Review of Polling Place and Polling Station – Districts of Stretton and Thistleton

Rutland County Council is conducting an interim review to change the Polling Place and Polling Station for the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton from the Jackson Stops Public House in Stretton to the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church in Stretton, in compliance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The notice of the review has been published today and I enclose a copy for your information.

The aim of the process is to ensure that the facilities are in the most appropriate locations and afford access to disabled people. The review is to be completed by 22 February 2023 to enable the Council to use the new polling place and polling station, if suitable, in this year's local elections. The review will be presented to the Proper Officer who has delegated authority to authorise changes between reviews, and we will look to make a permanent change at the next compulsory review (later this year).

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires that polling places and polling stations used should be kept under consideration, and an evaluation of their suitability carried out after each election. If any changes are identified as being desirable, the same steps should be followed as for conducting the compulsory review. The next compulsory review period will not start until 1 October this year, but we have been made aware of a more suitable venue to be used as a polling place and polling station and the elections team have already started the background work and made a visit to assess the suitability of the proposed new venue. Ideally, we would wish to have a fully accessible bespoke building, conveniently located for all electors in the area. In reality, however, we are often limited to what buildings are available within a polling district. The aim of



continually reviewing polling places and station buildings is to try and ensure that the best access is provided for as many electors, with varying needs, as possible.

The aim of this process is to ensure that facilities are in the most appropriate locations and have access for disabled people in advance of the ordinary elections on 4 May 2023.

The review has been made following receipt of information explaining that the new Community Hub is now up and running and that it might be a more suitable venue to use as a polling place and polling station for the two polling districts concerned. The building is approximately 100 metres from the existing polling place. As the Returning Officer for parliamentary elections, we would like to know what you think about future polling arrangements and welcome any comments on the suitability of existing and potential new polling stations, particularly their accessibility.

I have attached supporting information which is also available on the council's website at: www.rutland.gov.uk. Please address any comments to the Electoral Registration Officer by email at elections@rutland.gov.uk or by post, by the close of the consultation on 22 February 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Andrews
Returning Officer

Enclosures:

1. Notice of Review
2. Review of Polling Place and Polling Station for Stretton and Thistleton Information Sheet 2023
3. Map of Area
4. Details of Revisions to polling locations for Electors
5. Current and revised polling place and polling station for the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton
6. Evaluation Checklist - Revised polling place and polling station for polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton

Notice of Review

Review to change the Polling Place and Polling Station for the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton from the Jackson Stops Public House in Stretton to the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Stretton, LE15 7QR.

1. Notice is hereby given that Rutland County Council (the "Council") is conducting a review of the polling place and polling station for the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton that fall within the county ward of Greetham.
2. The (Acting) Returning Officer (ARO) for the Parliamentary Constituency of Rutland and Melton will make comment on the proposals and those representations will be published on the Council's website and notice boards within 30 days of receipt by the Council.
3. Details of the existing arrangements and the Returning Officer's proposals for the change will form the basis of this review.
4. The Council welcomes input from all residents within the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton. Representations may be made about the existing or proposed arrangements and their accessibility for electors, the representation made by the ARO or any other matter pertaining to the review.
5. The Council particularly welcomes any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability to make a representation or to comment on the proposals, the ARO's representation or any other matter pertaining to the review.
6. Where appropriate persons or bodies making representation should, if possible, propose alternative arrangements.
7. The proposals are available for inspection at the Council offices at Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP and on the website at www.rutland.gov.uk
8. Representations should be addressed to Electoral Services, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP or by email to elections@rutland.gov.uk
9. The review will run from 8 February 2023 to 22 February 2023. Final recommendations will be presented to the Proper Officer of the Council on 23 February 2023. Implementation will take place immediately following the Proper Officer's decision.

Mark Andrews
Returning Officer

REVIEW TO CHANGE THE POLLING PLACE AND POLLING STATION FOR THE STRETTON AND THISTLETON POLLING DISTRICTS - INFORMATION SHEET

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 details the timings for the compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and the last compulsory review period commenced on 1 October 2018 and the next compulsory review will commence 5 years from that date on 1 October 2023. The Council may however carry out an interim review to change polling places before the end of the current part of the 5-year cycle if required.

Rutland County Council is carrying out an interim review of the Polling Place and Polling Station for the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton before the compulsory review later in the year. The reason is that the current polling place is not ideal, and another alternative venue is thought to be better suited for use as a polling station.

Currently the polling place for these two polling districts is the Jackson Stops Public House in Stretton and electors vote in a side room of the venue and for those requiring accessible access there is a potentially awkward route through the venue to get to this location.

Proposal

It is proposed that the electors in the Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton should vote at a new polling place and polling station. The polling place would be the Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton, LE15 7QR and the Polling station be the main hall inside the Community Hub. This venue is approximately 100 metres from the current venue. The venue is considered a more suitable venue for conducting an election poll and it is felt that this revision will better serve both communities.

What does the review involve?

The review must be carried out to make sure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.

On commencing the review a notice will be published with details of the review, including when and where comments or representations can be made.

Any elector from the two polling districts concerned may make a representation in relation to the location and suitability of polling place. The council also welcomes comments or representations from any Councillors in the area, past or potential candidates, local political parties and indeed any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability.

On completion of the review the council will publish all correspondence sent and received, details of the results of the review including any issues raised and indeed any changes which have been approved, giving the reasons for its decisions.

What is a Polling District?

A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary constituency for the purposes of a UK Parliamentary election.

In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district and, in Wales, each community should be a separate polling district, unless there are special circumstances. This means that a parish or community must not be in a polling district which has a part of either a different parish or community within it, or any un-parished part of the local authority area within it, unless special circumstances apply. Those special circumstances could arise if, for example, the parish/community has only a small number of electors and it is not practicable for the parish/community to be its own polling district.

The two Polling Districts of Stretton and Thistleton would continue to vote at the same polling place/station.

The total current potential turnout figures for both polling districts are approximately 262 in person electors.

What is a Polling Place?

A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer. 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, however, there is no legal definition of what a polling place is. It could be as large as the polling district or as small as a particular building. Currently in Rutland, all polling places are actual buildings

What is a Polling Station?

A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the relevant Returning Officer for the election. There can be more than one polling station in a polling place.

When deciding which buildings to use as polling stations, the Council tries to make sure that they are located as conveniently as possible for the majority of electors and that they are accessible to everyone, particularly anyone with a disability.

Thought must be given, for example, to the distance people have to travel to vote and any barriers to them getting there, such as major roads or rivers.

Should you wish to make representations about the review please submit them in writing to:

Electoral Registration Officer (Polling Places Review)
Rutland County Council
Catmose
Oakham
LE15 6HP

Or via email to: elections@rutland.gov.uk

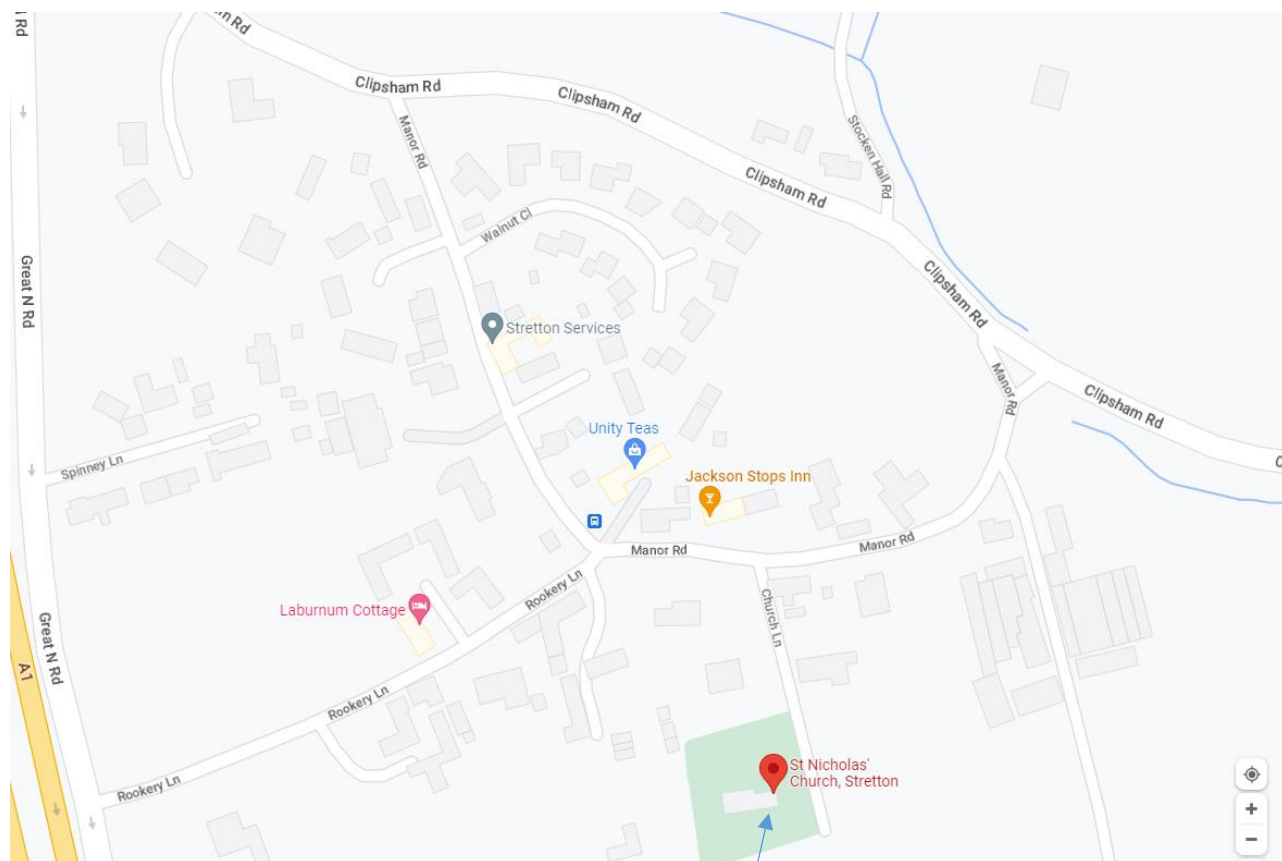
Stretton and Thistleton Polling Districts



Details of Revised Locations for Stretton & Thistleton Electors

Further details on Stretton Community Hub Association website at:

<https://strettonrutland.co.uk/community/>



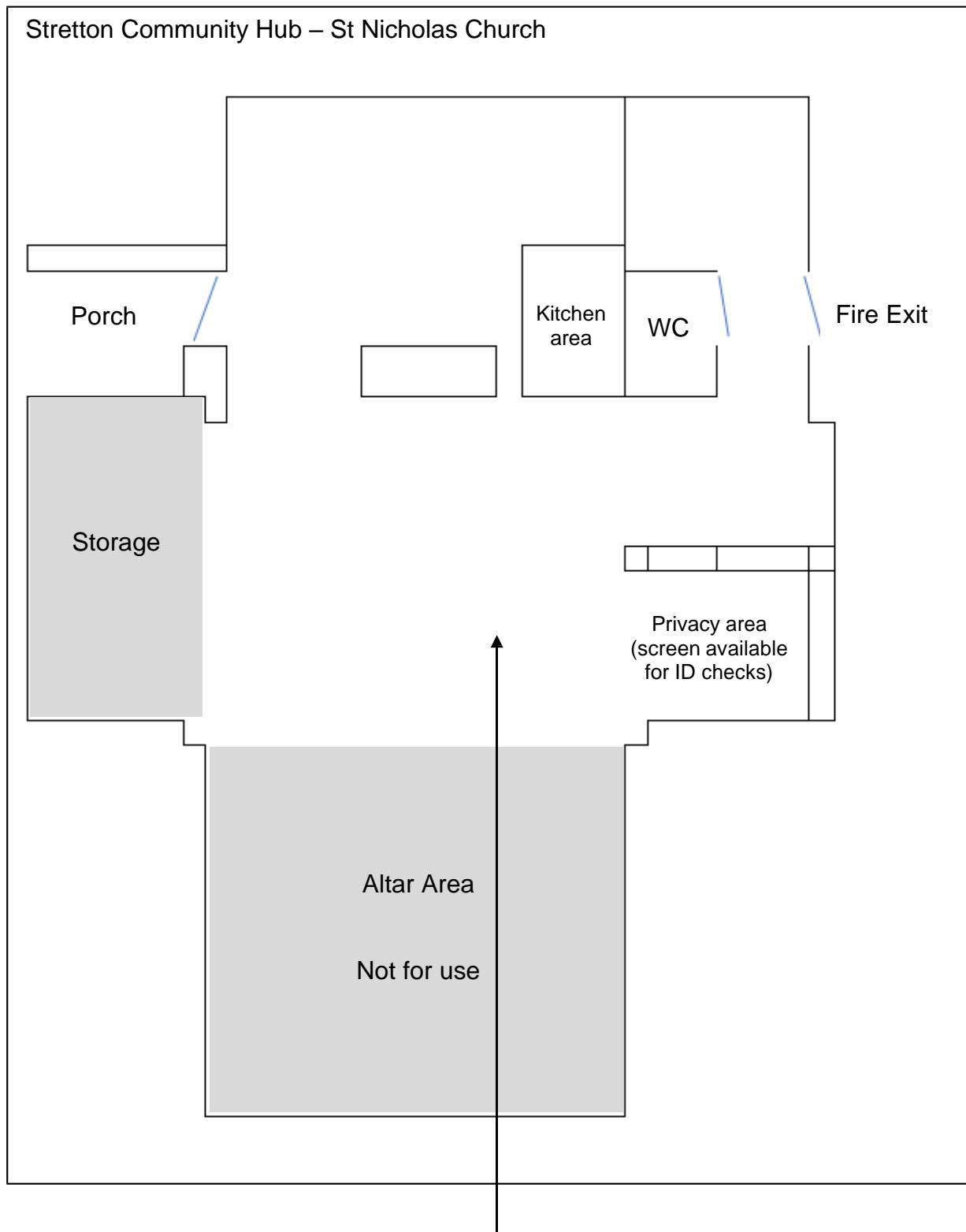
Stretton Community Hub located in St Nicholas Church Stretton

There is a road straight to the Community Hub (Church Lane) off Manor Road opposite the Public House, the Jackson Stops and is shown above in the map.

Satellite view of site



Polling Place/Polling Station



Polling area with sufficient space for polling booths, presiding officer and poll clerk tables, ballot boxes and additional seating if required for electors.

Current and revised polling place and polling station for the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton

Electorate figures the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton are accurate to 3 January 2023 and are acceptable for proposed polling place/station.

Table 1 – Current

Polling District		Polling Place	Polling Station	Electors @ 3 January 2023
GRD	Stretton	Jackson Stops, Stretton	Room in Jackson Stops, Stretton	241
GRE	Thistleton	Jackson Stops, Stretton	Room in Jackson Stops, Stretton	79

Table 2 – Proposed

Polling District		Polling Place	Polling Station	Electors @ 3 January 2023
GRD	Stretton	Stretton Community Hub St Nicholas Church Church Lane Stretton LE15 7QR	Stretton Community Hub St Nicholas Church Church Lane Stretton LE15 7QR	241
GRE	Thistleton	Stretton Community Hub St Nicholas Church Church Lane Stretton LE15 7QR	Stretton Community Hub St Nicholas Church Church Lane Stretton LE15 7QR	79

Polling place / polling station – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details – Jackson Stops Public House, Stretton														
<p>The current polling place remains in situ, but this evaluation covers a new, potentially more suitable location for the electorate from the Stretton and Thistleton polling districts.</p>														
Polling place identifier	Stretton Community Hub													
New Polling place name	Stretton Community Hub													
New Polling place address	Stretton Community Hub St Nicholas Church Church Lane Stretton LE15 7QR													
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>GRD (Stretton)</td> <td>GRE (Thistleton)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In person</td> <td>195</td> <td>67</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Absent votes</td> <td>46</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>241</td> <td>79</td> </tr> </table>			GRD (Stretton)	GRE (Thistleton)	In person	195	67	Absent votes	46	12	Total	241	79
	GRD (Stretton)	GRE (Thistleton)												
In person	195	67												
Absent votes	46	12												
Total	241	79												
Building availability for future elections / referendums	Building available but still to discuss full terms. Have agreed exclusive and short notice use for polling days. No issues expected. Available for local elections in May.													
Polling place review														
Check	✓	Comment												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there suitable transport links? 	✓	Road access good and there is also a bus stop in the village.												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.? 	✓	No												

Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment? If so, could it accommodate all allocated voters going in and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout? 	√	The internal area is large enough to accommodate a reasonable queue during peak periods if polling booths are situated towards the rear of the accommodation. Only room for a single station. Small recess with screen available for privacy for ID checks if required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? 	√	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development? 	√	No

Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events.

Venue yet to be used.

Part B – External areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there good public transport links to the polling place? 	√	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb? 	√	Very small lip from road to footpath.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the building clearly identifiable? 	√	Yes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is additional signage required between street and entrance? 	√	Yes (sign at bottom of road and entrance gate to footpath)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day? 	√	Yes (See picture p9)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there parking facilities for disabled people? 	√	On road parking available and to be prioritised for disabled. (See picture p11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there parking facilities for polling staff? 	√	At top of drive but limited to allow others to turn round. (See picture p11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the approach to the building have external lighting? 	√	Yes – security lighting and outside lighting above footpath. (See picture p11)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the building have level access? Yes. If no – Has a purpose-built ramp been installed? If so, does it have a handrail? Does the ramp have a gentle slope? Does the building require a temporary ramp or is 	√	Yes
	X	
	X	
	X	
	X	

Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

there an alternative disabled access?		
• Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?	√	Yes (See picture p9)
• Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?	√	Yes
• Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?	√	Yes (See picture p9)
• Are there any external security concerns?	√	No
• Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	√	Outside and in porch if weather inclement. (See picture p9)

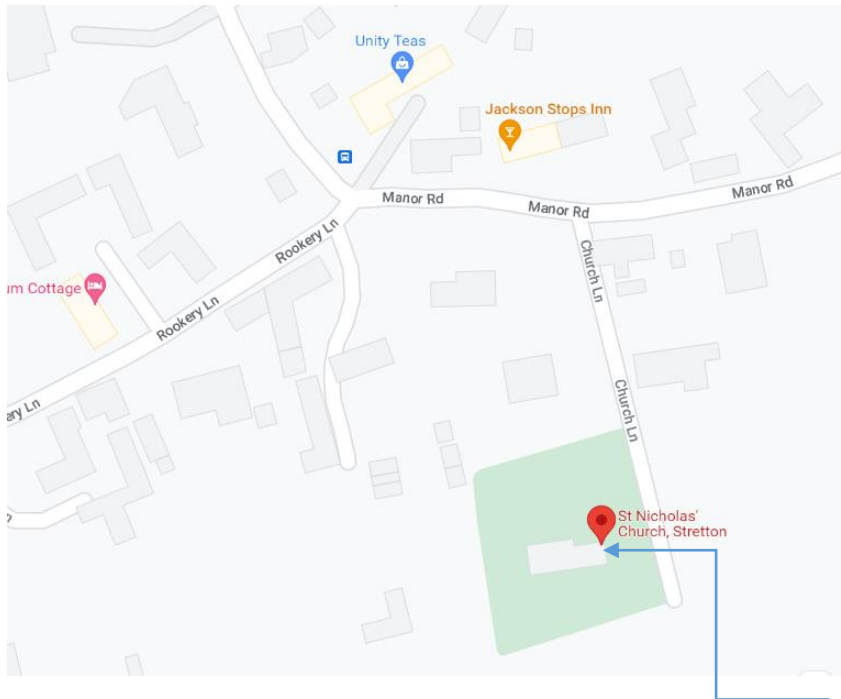
Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

External plan – B1

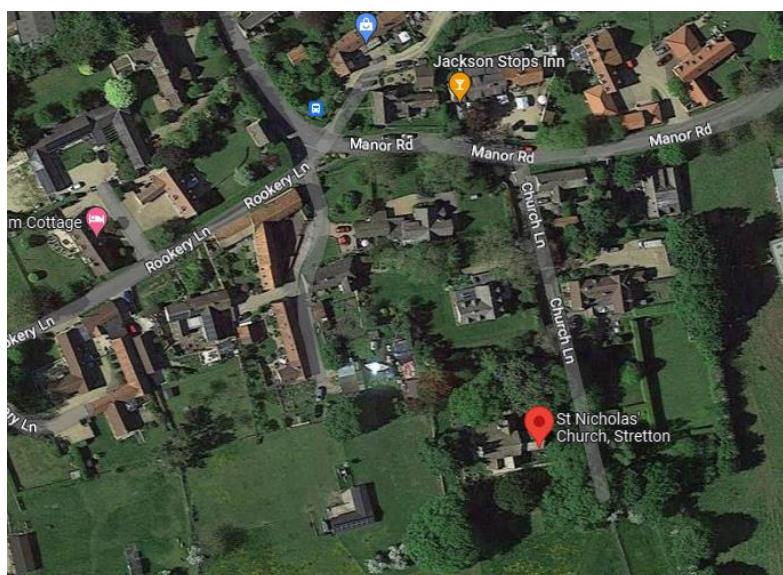
Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.



Stretton Community Hub, St Nicholas Church – location of new polling station

There is a road (Church Lane) up to the Hub and on road parking available and can be seen below on satellite view of site.



Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

Part C – Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?	√	Yes
• Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	√	There is a step to the fire door which may require assistance for someone in a wheelchair but Community Hub will provide a ramp for this to assist. (See picture p10)
• Are any doormats level with the floor?	√	Yes
• Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	√	Yes
• Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	√	No
• Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	√	Yes
• Are there toilet facilities?	√	Yes (See picture p10)
• Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	√	Yes, but limited to sink (with Quooker tap) and kettle. (See picture p10)
• Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	√	Yes
• Is there adequate space for signage?	√	Yes
• How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	√	One
• Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	√	No, but has wifi.

Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen and toilets, and highlight any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate door swing direction and ease of opening, any areas of poor lighting, and any areas of uneven floor, etc.

See diagram on page 8

Part D – The polling station(s)		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Is there sufficient space to accommodate and manage the flow of a high volume of electors in the case of a high turnout of electors?	√	Yes
• If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?	√	No.
• Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?	√	Yes (See pictures p9)

Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

• Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?	√	Yes
• Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?	√	Yes
• Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?	√	Yes – would need to discuss with hub ahead of first use though.
• Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?	√	Yes
• Can the official notices be clearly displayed, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s)?	√	Yes

Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.

See diagram on page 8.

Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

Comment	Name/organisation	Response by (A)RO

Date reviewed:

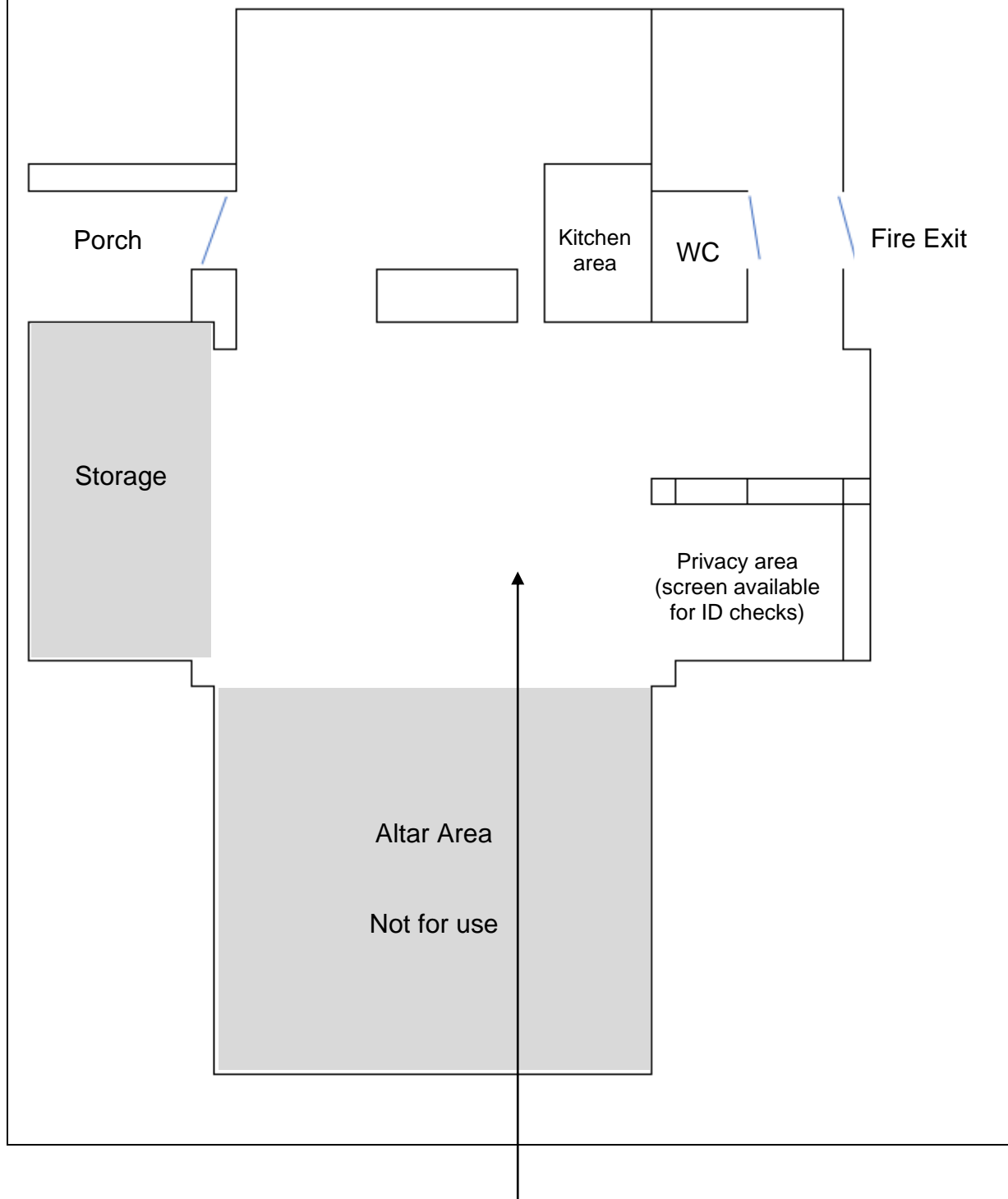
Officer initials:

Additional comments from (A)RO

Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

Stretton Community Hub – St Nicholas Church



Polling area with sufficient space for polling booths, presiding officer and poll clerk tables, ballot boxes and additional seating if required for electors.

Date reviewed:

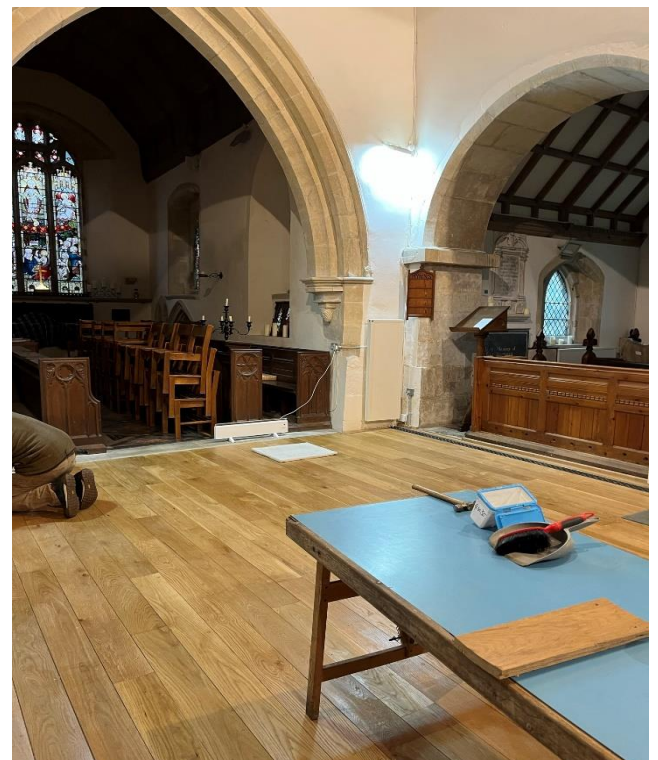
Officer initials:

Pictures of Polling Place

View from polling station area to entrance and porch area from outside



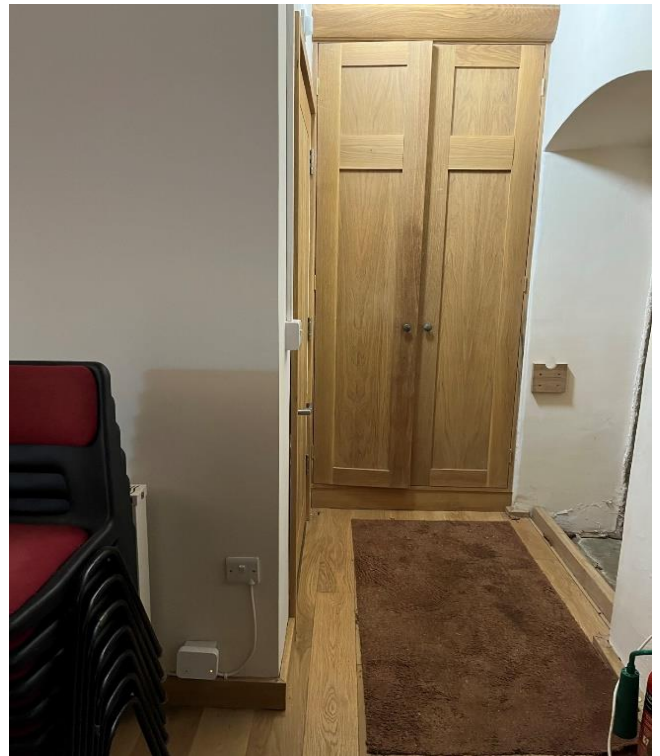
View of area for polling booths



Date reviewed:

Officer initials:

WC(1) and corridor to WC and Fire Exit (2)



Kitchen area for polling station staff and privacy area for ID checking



Date reviewed:

Officer initials:


On road parking and road to Polling Place




Footpath to entrance and security/outdoor lighting



Appendix F

Comments received from stakeholders during consultation.			
Comment(s)	Date	Name/organisation	Response by RO
Fine with me	8 February 2023	Ward Member	Nil
<p>Thank you for the document - I have reviewed it and all appears to be in order - we will source a ramp for the fire door on the days needed to make available access through this door for wheelchair access.</p> <p>Just one point Part C - kitchen facility for staff - we did say that we would source a microwave/cooler box for the day or days needed (I do not know if this is relevant to be included).</p> <p>Is there anything more I need to do at this time or just wait for confirmation of change of polling station from you?</p>	8 February 2023	Stretton Community Hub	Nil
<p>When reviewing the options for polling in the village of Stretton please give consideration to the attached Transport Statement which the residents of Church Lane commissioned earlier in the Hub Project. The lack of parking, passing places and pathways means the Lane has to be cordoned off whenever there is a function or event. Anyone driving to the Village has to park on Manor Rd and walk up the Lane to get to the Church. Mobility is an issue for many parishioners. The tried and tested option of the Jackson Stops, with its own car park, has been very successful.</p>  <p>210224_St Nicholas Church, Stretton_TN</p>	14 February 2023	Registered Resident	See Environmental Health Assessment at Appendix G.
Thank you for the consultation; it is appreciated. However, neither the CLP or BLP have any comment to make.	14 February 2023	Rutland & Melton Constituency Labour Party	Nil

<p>Please consider this email an absolute objection to using the Church in Stretton as a voting station</p> <p>We have resided in Stretton for 30 years and the polling has NEVER been held in the Church for many reasons including those below.</p> <p>Notwithstanding that the building has undergone an overhaul (which didn't require planning permission, and would most certainly have been refused for many reasons), nothing has been done to improve the limited access that many from both parishes with mobility issues will have to endure.</p> <p>It is already the case that most voters have to travel into the village to use the Jackson Stops which has been very successful in the past, but the extra walk up the narrow steep slippery lane especially later in the voting day will become more hazardous on this very badly lit area.</p> <p>The paths from the Church gate to the door alone are an absolute skating nightmare.</p> <p>The cost of heating this venue is absolutely insane and will need to be on for days before you could ask the volunteers who attend to be there for this purpose and length of time.</p> <p>The new floorboards are already infested with mould. Which is a very dangerous</p> <p>in 1999 when my then neighbour tried to get planning permission for access and was refused. "Nothing has changed. "</p> <p>Video of mould is Stretton in Rutland church under new flooring.</p>  <p>Video.mov</p>	<p>15 February 2023</p>	<p>Registered Resident</p>	<p>See Environmental Health Assessment at Appendix G.</p>
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<p>I am Chairman of Thistleton Parish Meeting. I do not have any system for consulting all residents in the village. I have however spoken to a representative few. Although they would much prefer to vote at the Thistleton Community Hub - St Nicholas Church- they appreciate that we are the much smaller community and perforce must continue to make our way to Stretton. We have a number of elderly residents and I assume that you will ensure that parking and access to the venue is suitable. We have no objection to the change.</p>	<p>15 February 2023</p>	<p>Chair Thistleton Parish Meeting</p>	<p>See Environmental Health Assessment at Appendix G.</p>
<p>During the County Council review process for the polling station in Stretton Rutland I would ask the council to liaise with the HSE about the Health issues of Mould that has already taken hold in the new flooring in the Church.</p> <p>This was submitted to HSE as follows:</p> <p>Health and Safety issue Reported to HSE:</p> <p>Business or organisation name Parish Council</p> <p>Issue location Church</p> <p> Church lane. Stretton</p> <p> Oakham Rutland</p> <p> No postcode was provided</p> <p>Location Description No location description was provided</p> <p>Your Issue The Church has recently had some refurbishing. During the work it was noted there were extensive problems with the flooring. Due to the extensive nature of the flooring issues it was decided that the flooring would be relaid. During the relaying it was found that there was already extensive water ingress to the underside of the floor planks and</p>	<p>16 February 2023</p>	<p>Registered Resident</p>	<p>See Environmental Health Assessment at Appendix G.</p>

<p>Mould had already taken hold. Stretton Parish Council has now asked Rutland County Council to review the place for polling from the local public house to the church. If this move were to go ahead all voters attending the Church in order to vote would be in effect forced to be exposed to Mould leading to serious health effects especially those already with weakened immune systems allergies severe asthma chronic, obstructive, or allergic lung diseases.</p> <p>Date submitted 16/02/2023</p>			
<p>St Nicholas Church is not in a suitable location for the polling station for the following reasons.</p> <p>Church Lane is a narrow lane with a small turning area at the top for cars, a public footpath runs across this area.</p> <p>All vehicles will need to be parked in Manor Road and traffic cones to restrict access for vehicles placed at the bottom of Church Lane. This happens when there are events at the church but not the hours 7am until 10pm.</p>	19 February 2023	Registered Resident	See Environmental Health Assessment at Appendix G.
<p>Thank you for your letter dated 8th February 2023, and the opportunity to comment on your review of the polling district and polling place for the Stretton and Thistleton Polling District in Rutland.</p> <p>I confirm I have no comments or observations to make, other than to support the review as a mechanism for ensuring the most appropriate and accessible Polling Places and Polling Stations are used.</p> <p>If you wish to discuss any further, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p>	21 February 2023	ARO	Nil
<p>Additional comments from (A)RO:</p>			



Stretton Community Hub, St. Nicholas Church, Church Lane, Stretton. LE15 7QR

22nd February 2023

Health and Safety visit with Jeremy Barnes – Electoral Services Manager. Also present at the inspection Sue Armstrong- Brookes (Chairman Community Hub Association), Penny Isaacs (Community Hub Association), and Greg Harker. Visit to assess the suitability of the venue for election duties.

Issues raised to be specifically addressed within the report are parking access and suitability, and the presence of damp and mould within St. Nicholas Church.

Parking Access and Street Lighting

Off Manor Road, Stretton, is Church Lane which is the access road to St. Nicholas Church. Church Lane is an unadopted road with 2 residential properties with entrances off Church Lane. There is no existing street lighting along Manor Road or Church Lane.

HR001 - Manor Road - view from the end of Church Lane looking left shows potential parking spaces for constituents that can take the short walk-up Church Lane.



HR002 - Manor Road with view of the turning to Church Lane on the right in the photograph, and the gravel drive on the left is the car park to Jackson Stops Inn.



HR004 - View of Church Lane from outside the Church looking down the lane. Limited parking for some vehicles.



HR005 - At the top of Church Lane is a suitable area to be used as a turning circle for vehicles.



Recommendations:

1. Consideration should be given as to how to limit the vehicles on Church Lane. To limit the potential for the congestion of vehicles on Church Lane, I would advise that signage is displayed at the entrance to Church Lane off Manor Road instructing only constituents with limited mobility to use Church Lane for parking whilst voting.

Pathway Access and artificial lighting to St. Nicholas Church

Gated entrance with flagstone pathway leading to the entrance of the church.

HR006 - There is a floodlight facing the pathway located on the tree and a small light on the right-hand side of the same tree as entering the gate.



HR007 - Gated entrance to the pathway leading to the church entrance.



HR008 – Flagstone pathway leading to the entrance of St. Nicholas Church.



HR009 – Entrance porch and doorway to St. Nicholas Church, the porch area has an artificial light.



Recommendations:

2. Carry out an assessment during darkness to establish whether the existing artificial lighting is adequate. It was mentioned to me that the Community Hub Association has access to additional lighting in the form of fairy lights that can be placed on poles to the left-hand side of the path if required.
3. The path would need sweeping to ensure that there are no leaves/ debris which would make it unnecessarily slippery. It is an old flagstone path which is mostly level but generally suitable and accessible for everyone.
4. The large mat should be temporarily removed during election duties as this poses an obstacle for those with mobility issues.

Internal space and facilities St. Nicholas Church

The main church hall, access to the kitchen facilities with kettle and crockery and W.C. are all on one level, therefore, making it accessible for everyone. There is fixed mains central heating.

There was no evidence of the presence of damp or mould within the church at the time of the visit. In discussion with Greg Harker who has overseen the recently laid new flooring, I understand that the original new flooring was laid and had issues with warping due to insufficient ventilation underneath the flooring, this has recently been rectified by a new contractor located in Northampton and additional ventilation holes drilled in the noggin.

Due to the size and construction of the church there is suitable and sufficient natural ventilation available.

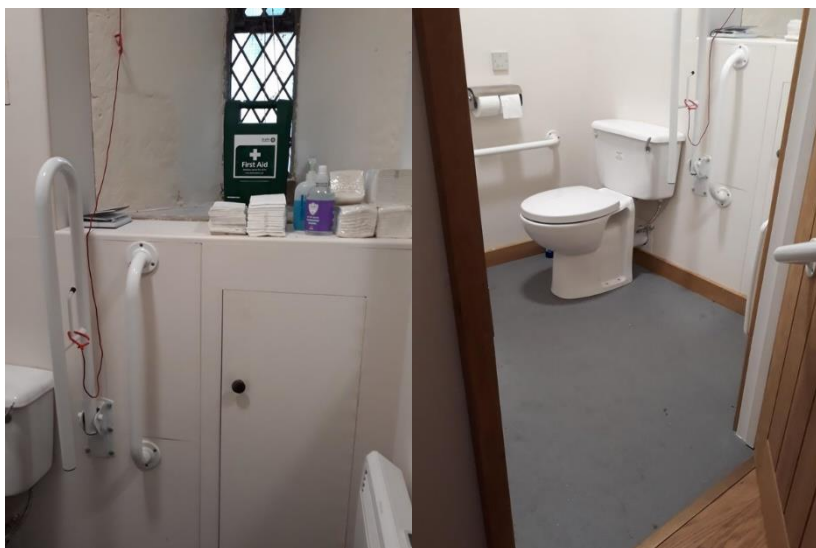
HR010 – Entrance doorway to St. Nicholas Church from inside the building showing level accessibility.



HR011 – Main room area of St. Nicholas Church with the newly laid wooden flooring showing level accessibility.



HR012 and HR013 – level access w.c. facilities.



Recommendations:

5. Due to the size and construction of the building the mains heating system may not be sufficient to adequately heat the building to a comfortable temperature for the two-election staff which will be located in the church for up to 16 hours. I was advised that there are electric portable heaters available for use if required.
6. There is no fridge so a cool box with ice packs can be provided for storing milk/ packed lunch items for the election staff.

Conclusion

St. Nicholas Church, Stretton has been assessed as a suitable venue for the purposes of election duties subject to consideration of the recommendations highlighted within this report.

Helen Rooke
Environmental Health Officer
Peterborough City Council & Rutland County Council