

Review of polling districts and polling places 2026

Returning Officer's comments

This is an interim review which is looking at the designation of polling places and the sub-division of electoral wards into polling districts. Reviews of the polling arrangements are undertaken on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date. This review is not connected to the separate local government reorganisation process.

The current polling arrangements have been examined, and this document sets out comments and recommendations for each ward as appropriate.

Since the last review in 2024, the situation has changed in several locations, and some polling places are no longer available. It is therefore recommended that the polling district boundaries are redrawn in Milton and St Thomas wards as shown in within this document. It is also necessary to designate alternative polling places in certain wards as identified in my comments.

Dated: 24 July 2026

Natalie Brahma-Pearl
Returning Officer for City Council elections and
Acting Returning Officer for Parliamentary elections

Baffins ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Baffins ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022. It is considered that the current arrangements continue to meet the needs of voters and no changes are suggested.

Central Southsea ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

The polling places at Holy Spirit Church and Fernhurst Junior School, for polling districts 'CA' and 'CB' respectively, have a high number of allocated voters and are typically split into two polling stations, particularly at higher turnout polls. The polling station for polling district 'CB' is located in the main hall of the school for General elections and for other polls the Francis Lodge outbuilding is used instead to reduce disruption to the operation of the school.

No changes to the current arrangements are suggested for Central Southsea ward.

Charles Dickens ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

No changes to the current arrangements are suggested for Charles Dickens ward.

Copnor ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Copnor ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022. It is considered that the current arrangements continue to meet the needs of voters and no changes are suggested.

Cosham ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

It is proposed that Highbury Community Centre is designated as the polling place for polling district 'MD'. It is adjacent to the current designated polling place, St Phillip's Church, and provides a more modern and accessible facility for voters. There is also sufficient space to enable the polling place to accommodate two polling stations as is typically required at high turnout polls.

It is noted that the portacabin used as the polling place for polling district 'MA' at Fairfield Square is not ideal, but no feasible alternative has been identified.

Drayton & Farlington ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

Cosham Baptist Church is currently designated as the polling place for polling district 'NA'. However, St Colman's Church was previously designated and is now available once again for use as a polling place. It is therefore recommended that St Colman's Church is designated as the polling place for polling district 'NA' because it is more appropriately located within the relevant polling district. It will also reduce congestion at Cosham Baptist Church which also accommodates a polling place for Cosham ward.

The gradient of the hill at the approach to Solent Infant School has been raised as a concern. However, no suitable alternative has been identified in the polling district. Of the nearby Scout facility and junior school, both are unavailable and St Andrew's Church is considered to be too far to the east of the polling district to be convenient for the majority of voters.

Eastney & Craneswater ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

No changes to the current arrangements are suggested for Eastney & Craneswater ward.

Fratton ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

Binstead Community Centre is due for demolition, so a new polling place needs to be designated for polling district 'FA'. It is recommended that Buckland United Reformed Church is the most suitable alternative venue and that this is designated as the polling place for polling district 'FA'.

It is recognised that some issues arise from the location of polling places for both polling districts 'FB' (Fratton ward) and 'JD' (Copnor ward) at North End Baptist Church. However, no suitable alternative venue has yet been identified to resolve this issue.

Hilsea ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The polling districts and polling places for Hilsea ward were comprehensively reviewed and reconfigured at the review completed in 2022. It is considered that the current arrangements continue to meet the needs of voters and no changes are suggested.

Milton ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

Milton Park Primary School is no longer available for use as a polling place and a reconfiguration of arrangements is therefore required. It is proposed that the current polling district 'ED' is split and the polling districts for Milton ward are redrawn as shown in the map in Appendix A of this document. A second polling place for Milton ward will therefore be situated at Eastney Community Centre but there is sufficient space to accommodate both polling stations plus the polling station for Eastney & Craneswater ward.

Nelson ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The Salvation Army (Powerscourt Road) is no longer available for use as a polling place, and it is recommended that St Mark's Church Centre is formally designated as the polling place for polling district 'IE'. St Mark's Church Centre is also the designated polling place for polling district 'ID', but there is sufficient space to accommodate two polling places at this venue.

Paulsgrove ward (Portsmouth North Constituency)

The Port House at Port Solent is no longer available for use as a polling place. At the 2026 local elections, the City & Guilds Training centre was used as the replacement venue. It is centrally located to the Port Solent development, and it is recommended that this venue is formally designated as the polling place for polling district 'LG'.

It is noted that the portacabins used as the polling place for polling districts 'LB' and 'LE' at Fairfield Square are not ideal, but no feasible alternatives have been identified.

St Jude ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

No changes to the current arrangements are suggested for St Jude ward.

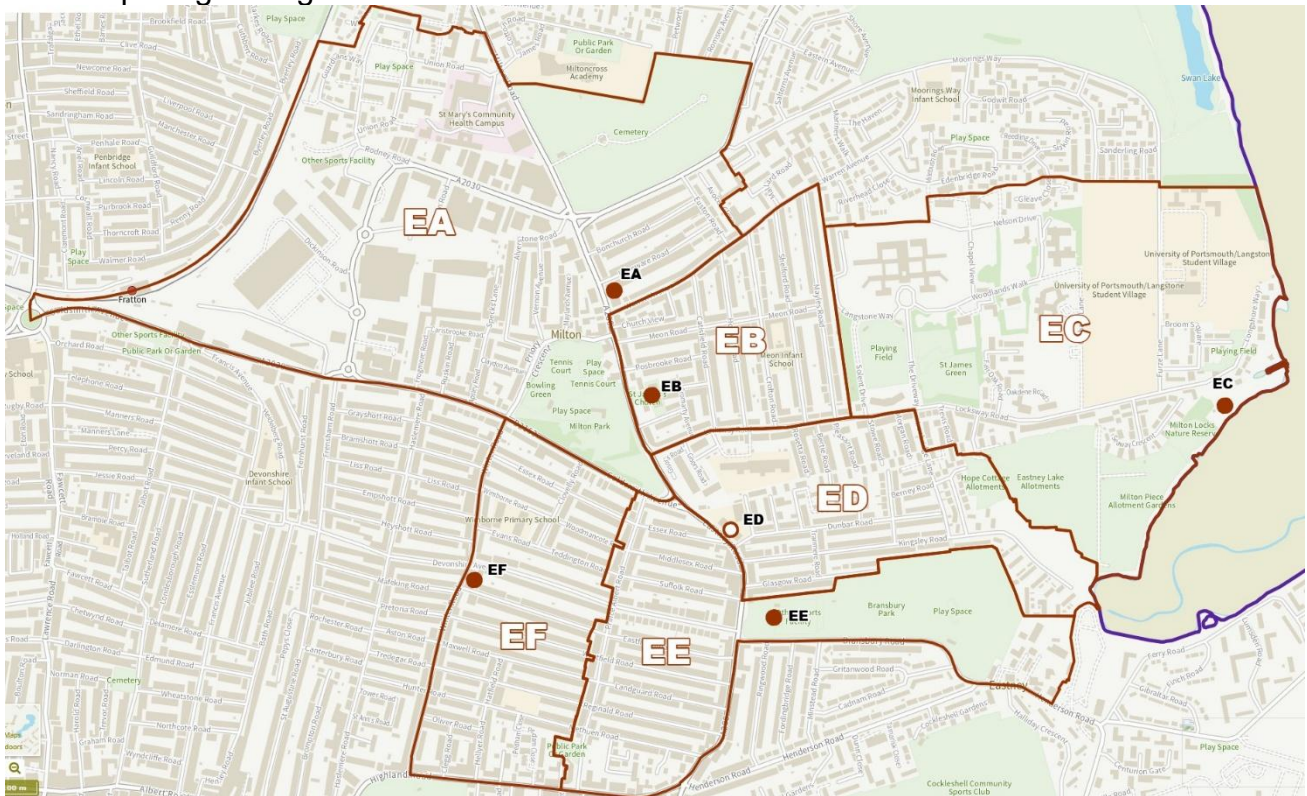
St Thomas ward (Portsmouth South Constituency)

A reconfiguration of the arrangements for St Thomas ward is necessary because Cottage Grove Primary School is no longer available for use as a polling place. No suitable alternative venues have been identified in the Cottage Grove/Elm Grove part of the ward.

It is therefore recommended that the polling districts are redrawn as shown in the map in Appendix B of this document. The voters south of Elm Grove are reallocated to polling district 'AA' in addition to some small amendments to the boundary of polling district 'AC'.

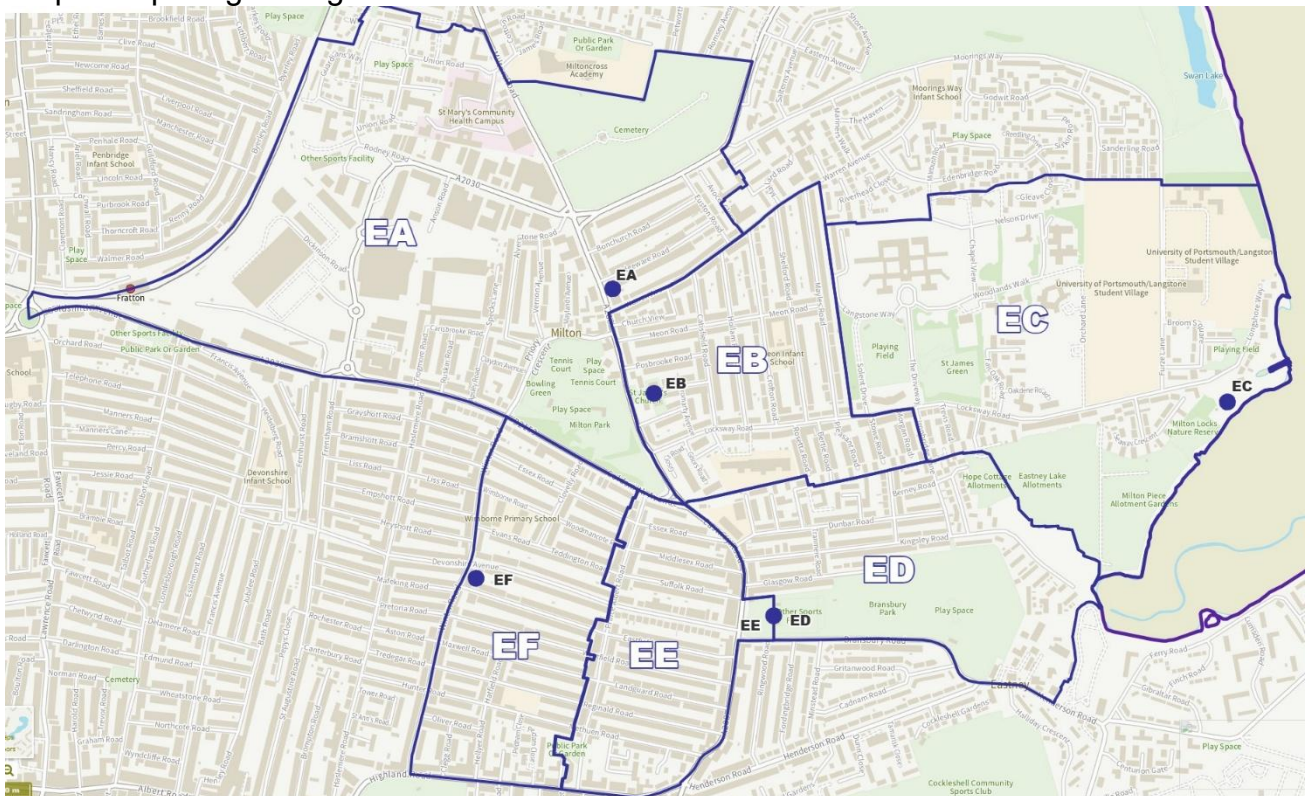
Appendix A - Milton ward

Current polling arrangements for Milton ward



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Proposed polling arrangements for Milton ward



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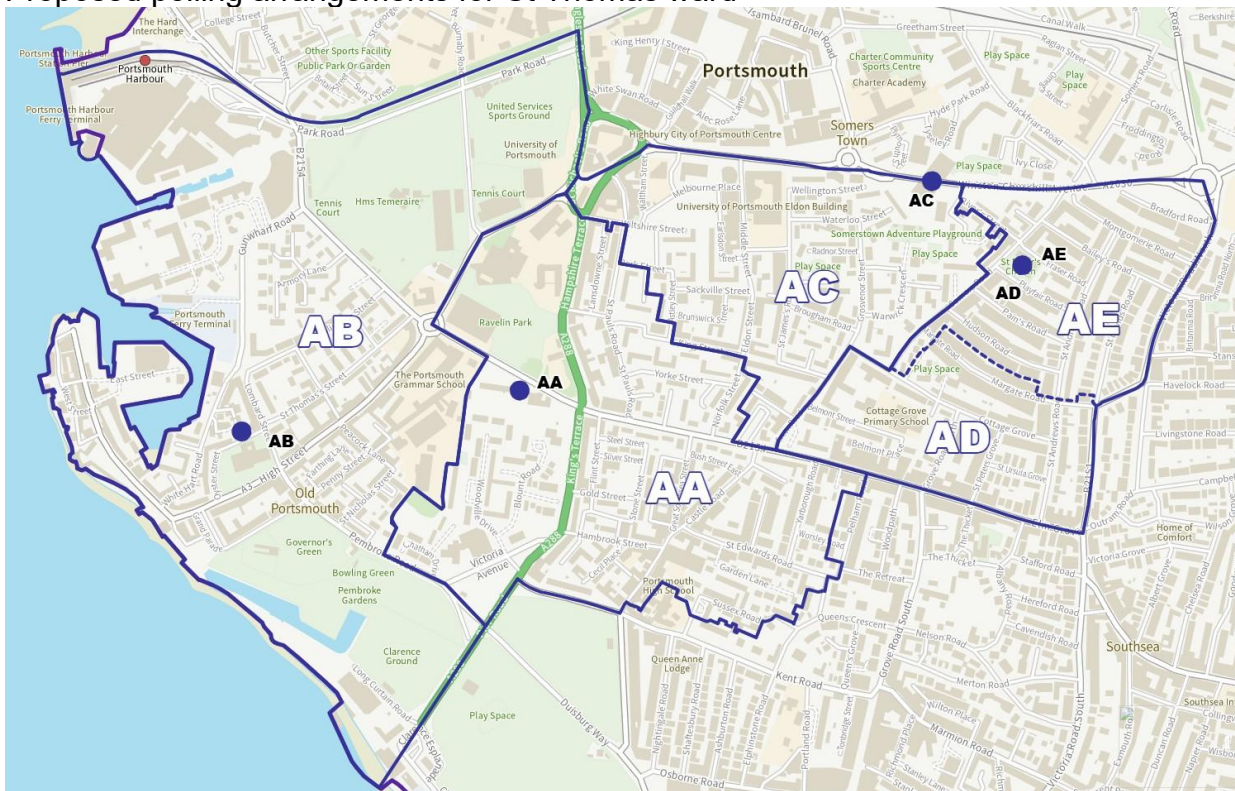
Appendix B - St Thomas ward

Current polling arrangements for St Thomas ward



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Proposed polling arrangements for St Thomas ward



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