



**COUNCIL MEETING DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> January 2010

**Report of:** Stephen McNamara, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer

**Title:** Polling Station and Polling District Review in Southmead Ward

**Ward:** Southmead

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Following the review of polling stations and polling districts in Southmead Ward that:

- 1) The boundary between polling districts SOA and SOD is realigned to take all properties in Davidson Road into the latter.

**Summary:**

Bristol City Council undertook a review of polling stations and polling districts in Southmead Ward between 7<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

The review was requested by Cllr Jenny Smith following the June elections evaluation.

**The significant issues in the report are:**

1. The Council is responsible for the designation of polling districts whilst polling stations are selected by the Returning Officer.
2. There is no prescribed size in terms of area or number of electors for polling districts.

**1. Consultation****Internal:**

- Elected ward members for Southmead Ward – Bristol City Council
- Labour, Liberal Democrat, Conservative and Green party whips.
- Eamon McClelland, Strategic Access Officer, Equalities

## **External:**

- MEPs and MPs representing Bristol
- The public were asked to comment via:
  - The council web site
  - Notice posted in the ward
  - Notice posted at the Council House
  - Notice posted at Electoral Services in Corn Street.

## **2. Context**

1. Bristol City Council undertook a consultation as part of a review of polling stations and polling districts in Southmead Ward between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2009 in connection with a proposal from Cllr Jenny Smith to move fourteen properties in Davidson Road from polling district SOA to SOD. The other seven dwellings in Davidson Road are already in SOD.
2. One response was received from Southmead Ward Councillor Jacqueline Bowles who agreed with the proposal, and also requested that the polling station for SOA be moved from The Lanercost Centre to Southmead Community Sports just off Sheaves Park. Southmead Community Sports were approached but the only suitable room in the building is the bar and they were not prepared to close for the day because of loss of earnings.
3. The purpose of the review is to ensure that electors continue to have reasonable facilities to vote at accessible polling stations, as far as practicably possible.
4. This is not a review of constituency and ward boundaries as they fall within the remit of the Boundary Commission and Boundary Committee for England respectively.
5. The Council is responsible for the designation of polling districts whilst polling stations are selected by the Returning Officer.
6. There is no prescribed size in terms of area or number of electors for polling districts. The average number of polling districts per ward is 3 to 4 with 6% of wards having 5 or 6 for

geographic reasons eg disparate population or major roads. Where a polling district has an above-average number of electors, arrangements are made to ensure that the number of polling staff and the premises used are sufficient to cope. Feedback from election reviews suggests that these measures work well.

## **Proposal**

### Polling Stations

It is proposed that the polling stations for the two polling districts remain the same; ie The Lanercost Centre for SOA and The Fonthill Centre for SOD.

### Polling Districts

It is proposed that fourteen properties in Davidson Road be moved from polling district SOA into polling district SOD where the other seven properties in that road are already placed.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

As there is no proposed change to the polling stations, there would be no impact on access issues.

## **Legal and Resource Implications**

**Legal:**                    **Legal advice given by** Stephen McNamara,  
Head of Legal Services

The Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006, introduced a duty for all polling districts and polling places to be reviewed at least every 4 years and as necessary during the intervening period. The review is the function of the council.

**Financial:** None

**Financial advice given** by Stephen Skinner, Finance Business Partner, Resources, Transformation and DCX.

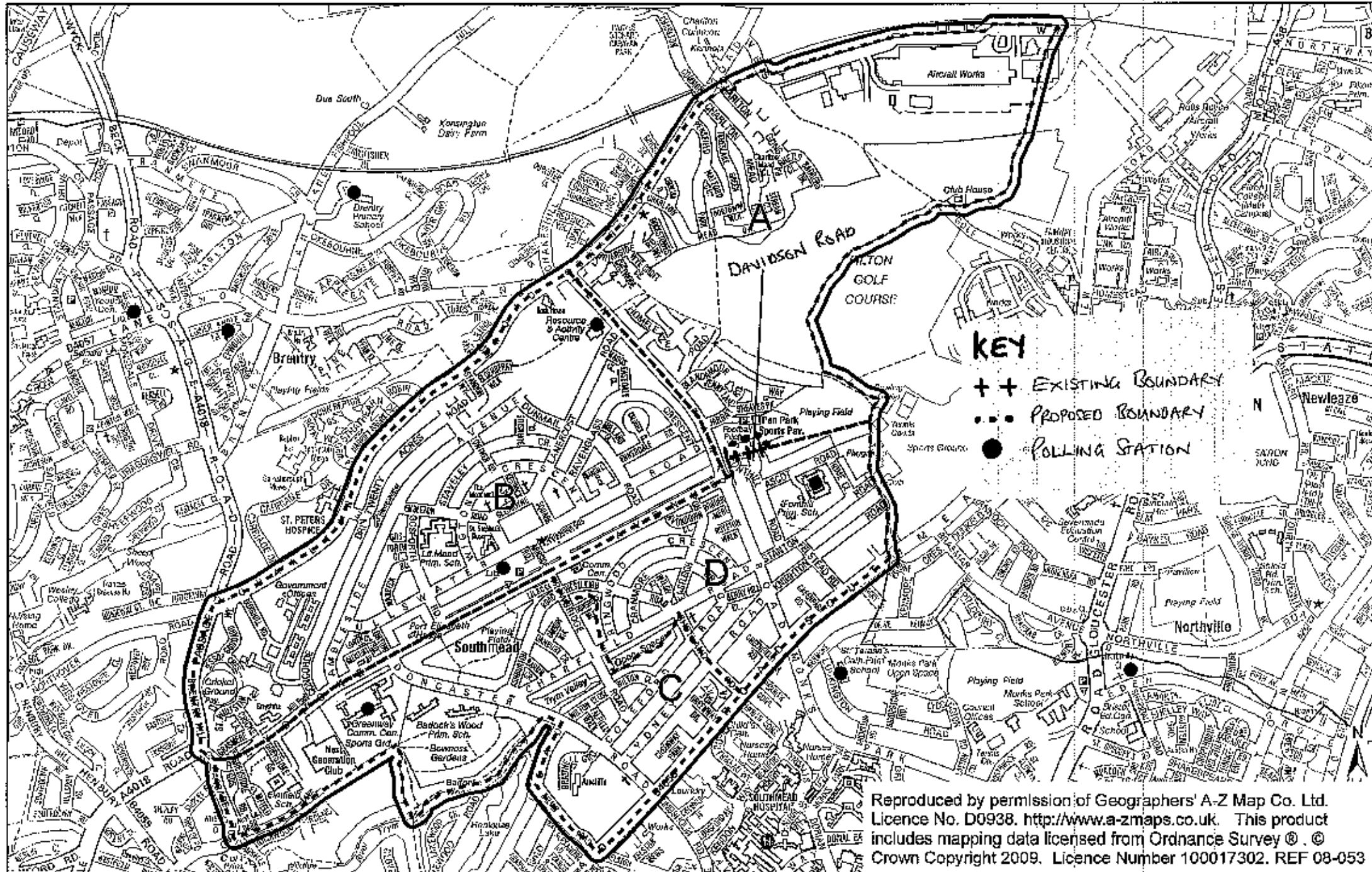
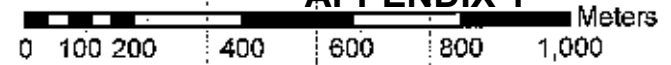
**Appendices:**    A: Map of proposed changes to Southmead  
Ward polling district boundaries.

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

**Background papers:** None



# Southmead Polling Districts



**KEY**

- ++ EXISTING BOUNDARY
- ... PROPOSED BOUNDARY
- POLLING STATION

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