

**Review of Polling Districts and
Polling Places for the
Midlothian Local Government
Area - 2013**



Consultation Responses Received

1. From Philip Bowen

From: Phil Bowen [bowenp@hotmail.co.uk]

Sent: 15 November 2013 22:05

To: Election Team; Election Team

Subject: RE: Alternative Polling Station to King's Park Primary School

Dear Sir,

As part of the Midlothian consultation I would like to formally submit a request to re-consider the use of King's Park primary school Dalkeith as a Polling Station. I would like the council to seriously consider alternatives in the area. There are a number of venues that could be used The Dalkeith library has previously been used. St John & King's Park church hall or dalkeith rugby club or Justinlees Pub could be considered. I would like to see the council conduct an open minded review of these or any alternatives in the area.

The children at King's park lose a day's schooling each year because of elections and parents have to either take holiday or pay a child minder to look after their children. I do not think it is a good message for midlothian council to send out that school can simply be missed for one day. In 2014 there is also an extra day's disruption for the independence referendum.

I look forward to hearing your response.

regards

Phil Bowen

M 07798 882 506

38 Newbattle Gardens, Eskbank, EH22 3DR

2. From Moira Nelson & Stuart McDonald

From: Kings Park Primary PTC [kpps.ptc@gmail.com]

Sent: 22 November 2013 09:35

To: Election Team

Subject: Use of Kings Park Primary and an election station

Hi,

As part of the current review into polling districts and polling places we were hoping that you would consider an alternative polling station to King's Park Primary school in Dalkeith. Every time there is an election the children at the school lose a day's education. Parents are also inconvenienced as they have to take time off work or make additional child care arrangements which can often incur cost.

In the coming year we have a number of elections on the cards, i.e. European elections and the Scottish referendum. Add to this, the general election to be held no later than May 2015, and the Scottish parliamentary elections, to be held no later than May 2016.

Thus you will understand our concern at the number of days the children will lose over the coming few years should Kings Park Primary school continue to be used as a venue.

Previously the Dalkeith library and arts centre has been used for such events, and we would nominate this as an alternate venue to Kings Park Primary School.

Please can you look actively into an alternative venue to the school?

Regards

Moira Nelson & Stuart McDonald

(Co Chairs Kings Park Primary Parent Council)

3. From Alison McLean

From: Alison McLean [alison@drydenaqua.com]

Sent: 28 November 2013 12:46

To: Election Team

Subject: Polling Place Review 2013

I would like to put forward my thoughts on closing Kings Park Primary School for polling. As a parent of a child who attends this school it is very inconvenient to arrange extra childcare at my own cost along with the missed day of school. I do feel not only do the children get more than adequate time off from school but to further this with additional days due to polling is unacceptable.

Kind regards

Alison McLean

Alison McLean

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4. From Gillian McDonald

From: gill McDonald [gillmcdonald@hotmail.com]

Sent: 28 November 2013 15:39

To: Election Team

Subject: Review of polling places

It has come to my attention that there is a review of polling places currently being conducted.

I have looked at the details on the council website and the factors which are taken into account when choosing polling places: location, size, availability and accessibility.

In my opinion the availability factor should rule out the use of school buildings during term time where this would result in disruption to education.

My children attend Kings Park Primary School which has up to now been used as a polling place. In 2014 there are two definite and potentially two additional elections. It is unfair that these events cause the closure of the school and children's education suffers.

There are other options nearby such as the library and several church halls which could be used instead.

I urge the council to find an alternative to the use of Kings Park as a polling place.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of this review.

Yours faithfully,

Gillian McDonald

5. From Laura Hill

From: Laura E Hill [lorb@talktalk.net]

Sent: 28 November 2013 18:06

To: Election Team

Subject: polling station

This is a request for King's Park to stop being used as a polling station!
As a parent of two KP pupils I find it very difficult when they are given a day off school simply for voting.

As a teacher in another Midlothian school, I cannot be at home with my polling-school-pupils and also at work! Other parents have the same problems with childcare. It's also frustrating to see other staff and children getting a day 'off' while we are in school – it causes trouble between children in Gorebridge every year as the large school is used and smaller ones have a normal school day.

There is NO need for schools to be used as polling stations – there are plenty of buildings available without children missing a valuable day of school. Libraries, sports centres, church halls and art centres could be used, with much less disruption.

Please reconsider the use of schools as Polling Stations, it's an unacceptable waste of our children's education and a logistical nightmare for working parents.

Thank-you,

Laura Hill

6. From Nicola Johnson

From: Nicola Johnson [missnicoladickson@hotmail.com]

Sent: 28 November 2013 18:34

To: Election Team

Subject: Kings Park Primary

Each year King's Park school is closed on election day with the subsequent impact on children and parents. Next year with the independence referendum this will mean an additional day that the school is closed. I would like to request that the use of King's Park school as a polling station be reviewed and alternative found.

7. From Karen Langham

From: Karen Langham [karen.langham@eh22.com]

Sent: 28 November 2013 20:57

To: Election Team

Subject: Review of Polling Places

Dear Sir/Madam

I write to request that you consider alternatives to Kings Park Primary as a polling venue.

As a working parent it is challenging enough to manage school holidays without additional closures for elections. There are over 400 pupils in Kings Park and every family is impacted in some way....extra childcare costs, self employed loss of earnings or having to use days from holiday entitlement. Employee's having additional time off affects the employer too!

There must be other venues. Churches? Clubs?

Kind regards

Karen Langham