

STATUTORY CRITERIA FOR REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

The Representation of People Act 1983 (Sections 18A and 18B) sets out the criteria which the local authority must demonstrate that they have met as far as practicable. The statutory criteria are:

Polling districts at Parliamentary Elections

- “18A (1) Every constituency is to be divided into polling districts.
- (2) A relevant authority must -
- (a) divide its area into polling districts for the purpose of Parliamentary elections for so much of any constituency as is situated in its area; and
 - (b) keep the polling districts under review
- (3) The following rules apply -
- (a) the authority must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
 - (b) in England, each parish is to be a separate polling district.
- (4) Subsection (3) (b) does not apply if, in any case, there are special circumstances.”

Polling places at Parliamentary Elections

- “18B (1) A polling place is to be designated for each polling district in a constituency.
- (2) But subsection (1) does not apply if the size or other circumstances of a polling district are such that the situation of the polling stations does not materially affect the convenience of the electors or any body of them.
- (3) A relevant authority must -
- (a) designate the polling places for the polling districts in its area, and
 - (b) keep the polling places in its area under review.
- (4) The following rules apply -
- (a) the authority must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
 - (b) the authority must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and

practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

- (c) the authority must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing;
 - (d) the polling place for a polling district must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district.
 - (e) the polling place for a polling district must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station.
- (5) If no polling place is designated for a polling district the polling district is to be taken to be the polling place.”