

# Wilnecote Ward: Recommendations

A submission was received asking for some of the polling districts to be amended in this ward. After looking at the map it seems sensible to combine polling districts WI4 and WI6 as suggested. These will be combined and will be renamed WI4. The polling district will still vote at Heathfields Infants School.

The amendment to the WI5 and WI3 polling district seems as sensible solution and the remainder of Hedging Lane including the part of Hockley Road will be incorporated into the WI3 polling district. These electors will now vote at the temporary station located on Palmerston Avenue.

It should be noted that although the Wilnecote Ward currently uses two schools as polling station the head teachers are informed of scheduled polls several years in advance thus allowing ample time to plan for a Teacher Training Inset Day. This should help keep disruption and inconvenience to a minimum. Whilst head teachers must provide the Returning Officer with a suitable room to facilitate voting it is not the Returning Officer who chooses to close the school. This is a decision taken by the head teacher and in fact a number of schools that are used as polling stations throughout the borough remain either fully or partially open on polling days.

Schools are required under statute to be made available for voting purposes. This is partly due to the fact that as a public building the access must meet all requirements set out in the Equality Act 2010. Accessibility for disabled voters is a very important issue and ensuring that polling stations are suitable for all sorts of disability is essential. According to statistics provided by Staffordshire Observatory there are approximately 7,000 people within the borough who have mobility issues and an unknown number of people with other impediments. We must be very careful about not accidentally disenfranchising an elector as they are unable to access voting facilities easily. Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 has placed a requirement on the local authority to review the accessibility of all polling stations. A review is undertaken at every poll and a polling station questionnaire is available for completion by electors. No complaints have been received at any of the recent elections in regard to accessibility issues in the Wilnecote Ward.

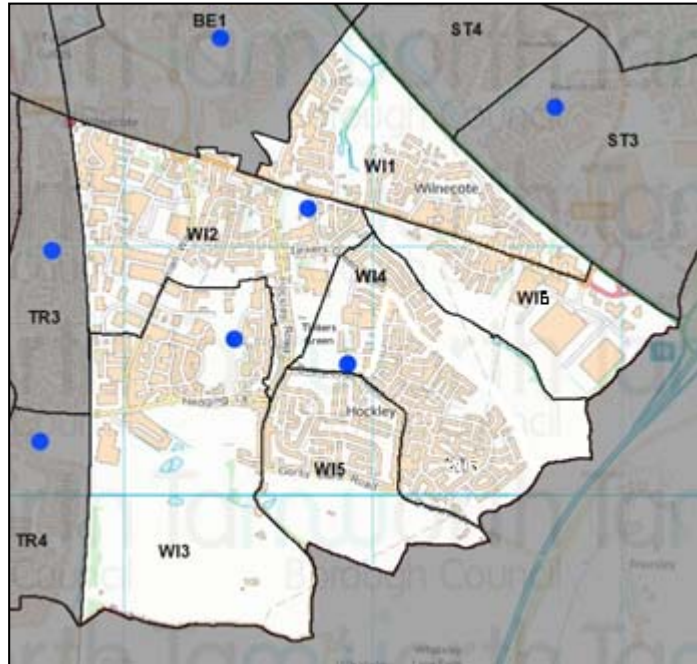
## **Wilnecote Ward: Recommendations continued**

The newly built but unfinished Scout Hut adjacent to Ninefoot Park actually just falls into the Belgrave Ward. At present there is an uneven surface in the car park and there is no dedicated disabled parking bay. The car park is also utilised by the local businesses and the church so parking in this location could potentially be an issue.

Wilnecote Village Hall is too far away from the main population of the ward and there are no bus routes that would help facilitate the electorate to travel there.

Therefore, at the present time I am proposing no changes to the current polling stations and that polling place represent the same area as the polling district plus the adjoining polling district(s) to allow a greater degree of flexibility in deciding where a polling station should be located should the need arise.

# Wilnecote Ward (Proposed)



New Polling District	Proposed Polling Station	Address	Estimated Electorate	Estimated Polling Station Electorate	No of polling stations
WI1	Wilnecote Junior School	Smithy Lane, B77 5LA	1,804	1,480	1
WI2	Wilnecote Junior School	Smithy Lane, B77 5LA	1,888	1,548	1
WI3	Palmerston Avenue – Temporary Station	Wilnecote, Tamworth, B77 5FE	1,544	1,266	1
WI4	Heathfields Infants School	Saxon Close, B77 5LU	2,582	2,117	2
WI5	Heathfields Infants School	Saxon Close, B77 5LU	1,872	1,535	1
WI6	Wilnecote Junior School	Smithy Lane, B77 5LA	372	3,05	Combine with WI1

**Estimated Electorate** = Number of Properties x 2.6

**Estimated Polling Station Electorate** = Based on the average of 82% of electors choosing to attend a polling station.

**Note regarding WI4** - The estimated electorate figures are based on completion of building works = estimated number of properties x 2.6. The estimated Polling station electorate is based on 18% of electorate opting to vote by post. The electorate in the area will be monitored and when required a polling place within the polling district or adjacent polling districts will be found. There are no registered electors as yet in this area.