

Appendix V

LITTLE STANMORE AND EDGWARE LOCAL POLLS (1922-1923)

For a number of years prior to these polls the Parish Councils of Little Stanmore and Edgware had established a Joint Lighting and Fire Committee. The Committee had been informed by the contractor housing the current fire engine and horses that he was unable to continue with the contract. The Committee's response to the problem was to propose purchasing a **new fire engine and to erect a fire brigade station**. Expenditure associated with the project required the approval of meetings of the parishioners of the two parish council areas.

The Chairman of the Joint Committee, Rev. D. Tatton, explained that an increase of £300 in annual expenditure on fire protection was necessary to effect the improvements required, and that this would be equivalent to an additional rate of no more than 2d in the pound. A new fire engine was felt to be needed as water pressure in the district varied from 120 lb down to as little as 15 lb per square inch. "At such a low pressure, a hose without the pumping engine is practically useless."

Opponents of the scheme, led by Cllr. G.R. Mann (district councillor for Little Stanmore and a parish councillor for Edgware) pointed out that Edgware Parish Council was divided 3-3 on the merits of the scheme, and that the current Edgware rate of 9s 6d in the pound "was quite as much as the ratepayer could afford." Cllr. Mann was also dissatisfied with the tendering process and felt that cheaper alternative arrangements for fire protection could be implemented

The Little Stanmore Parish Meeting took place on 13 December 1922 in the Whitchurch Institute with Rev. Tatton in the Chair. A resolution was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by parish councillor Cllr. C.L. Clark in favour of raising expenditure for the scheme, but it was defeated on a show of hands by 65 votes to 26. A poll was demanded by parish councillor Cllr. F.W.T. Krohn, and the Chairman, believing that many Edgware residents had just voted, pointed out that the poll was restricted to ratepayers and Parliamentary electors of Little Stanmore. The date for the poll was fixed for 27 December 1922.

The Edgware Parish Meeting was held on 19 December 1922 with Rev. J. Goggin in the Chair. In addition to parish councillors, 33 parochial electors were present together with (according to the *Hendon and Finchley Times*) "many inhabitants of the Parish of Little Stanmore." Father Goggin invited the Chairman of the Joint Lighting and Fire Committee to address the meeting. The Rev. Goggin then proposed and parish councillor Cllr. D.E. Erlebach seconded a motion authorising the Parish Council to proceed with the scheme. On a show of hands the motion was defeated by 19 votes to 16. A poll was demanded by Cllr. Erlebach, assented to by the Chairman, and the date fixed for 1 January 1923.

Meanwhile, the poll in Little Stanmore Parish was held on 27 December 1922 with voting on the following motion:

To consent to the Parish Council of Little Stanmore in accordance with section 11 of the Local Government Act 1894, incurring the necessary expenses and liabilities in joining with the Edgware Parish Council in the purchasing of a Fire Engine and the erection of a Fire Brigade Station.

Electors: approximately 1,000
Total valid votes cast: 176
T'out: approximately 17.6%

Preference	Votes	%
Against the proposal	102	58.0
In favour of the proposal	<u>74</u>	<u>42.0</u>
	28	16.0

Electors in Edgware Parish polled on 1 January 1923 on a motion of similar wording:

To consent to the Parish Council of Edgware in accordance with section 11 of the Local Government Act 1894, incurring the necessary expenses and liabilities in joining with the Little Stanmore Parish Council in the purchasing of a Fire Engine and the erection of a Fire Brigade Station.

Electors: approximately 660

Total valid votes cast: 107

Turnout: approximately 16.2%

Preference	Votes	%
Against the proposal	67	62.6
In favour of the proposal	<u>40</u>	<u>37.4</u>
	27	25.2

[Note: The London Borough of Barnet archive at Hendon Library contains a remarkable collection of ephemera from the Edgware Parish poll. Items include: the official notices, the issued ballot papers (stamped with an official mark and showing the voters' marks), the unused ballot papers in their original booklet, the ballot paper 'account', a small unused booklet of (pink) tendered ballot papers, and a marked *Register of Electors* that indicates which electors had voted.]