

Proposed Changes to Kent's Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services

Post Consultation Report

April 2016

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Part 1: Introduction and Background

Introduction

Kent County Council currently provides accommodation and support services for Children in Care, Care Leavers and vulnerable young people aged 16-25. The current arrangements for accommodation and support include;

- Supported Accommodation (onsite but not family environment)
- Floating Support
- Independent (self-supporting) including KCC Shared Accommodation
- Supported Accommodation (onsite family environment)
- Reception and Assessment (for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children)

The Programme has reviewed the current Supported Accommodation (onsite but not family environment) and Floating Support services. This included a number of pre-consultation activities which captured the views of young people who use the services and the staff that deliver them.

Following this, KCC sought views on different proposed new ways to deliver these services through the public consultation 'Proposed Changes to Kent's Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services', which took place between 30th November 2015 and 8th February 2016.

This report outlines the consultation process, and the main findings from the consultation questionnaire and engagement activities. It also makes subsequent recommendations based on these findings.

Reason for the Consultation

In May 2015, KCC identified a number of challenges with the current accommodation and support services for young people in Kent, including;

- KCC's accommodation and support offer for 16-25 year olds is not clear or consistent; resulting in young people receiving inconsistent service based on their status not their needs. It also means that people have to move to access a service, rather than access their most local service.
- Who uses these services depends on the individual providers; this is influenced by historical arrangements and the location of the services, rather than the needs of the young person. This means that young people with higher needs could be waiting longer to get help.
- Demand for services has changed and there are more young people to help. This is a result of population changes, increases in the number of young people entering care and a large increase in the number of UASC in Kent.
- Services are delivered differently across the County by a large number of organisations. Contracts are of different lengths and price of accommodation and

support varies, making the offer inconsistent. Some areas of the County have a large number of services while other areas do not have any services.

Consultation Proposal

A copy of the consultation document outlining the full details of our proposals along with additional background information is provided at *Appendix A*. The proposals for changes to KCC's Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services were;

Proposal A: Who will use these services

KCC has a duty to assist and support Children in Care and Care Leavers and therefore, needs to ensure that future services commissioned by the authority prioritise this group. Allocation of resources will be targeted at those young people with the highest need first. This could result in less vulnerable young people on the edge of care receiving a service.

Proposal B: Reviewing the service offer

KCC is considering replacing specific services with those that deliver services to a wider client group. Services would cater for the needs of all service user groups, providing 'a core offer', including high, medium and low needs, but would be flexible to meet local demand and individual needs. This means that there would not be specific services for UASC and teenage parents.

Proposal C: Joining up accommodation based support and floating support services for high, medium and low needs

KCC is considering integrating Supported Accommodation, Housing Related Support and Floating Support services to form one service. This would provide a seamless service that is able to deliver a full range of stable, safe and well maintained accommodation (including smaller and larger properties) and appropriate personalised support packages (including specialist support as required) to meet the needs of all service users.

Proposal D: Lining up services with areas of the County

KCC is considering delivering services through four area based contracts or through one countywide contract. This would reduce contract management overheads. The aim would be to create strong relationships between KCC, districts and providers – supporting and facilitating pathways through support and into independence.

Decision Making Process

The public consultation closed on the 8th February 2016. Following this, a thorough analysis of the consultation responses, including formal questionnaire responses and feedback from the engagement activity, was undertaken.

A number of recommendations were presented to Specialist Children's Services Divisional Management Team (SCS Div MT) on 23rd February 2016. Subsequently these formed the basis of a Commissioning Plan.

The Commissioning Plan was presented to and approved by the KCC Strategic Commissioning Board on 23rd March 2016.

Pre-Consultation Engagement Activities

During October and November 2015, KCC undertook pre-consultation and engagement activities with Providers and Service Users to help inform the proposals presented within the Public Consultation document.

Meet the Market Events

Two Meet the Market events were undertaken throughout October/November 2015 with 44 organisations. The events outlined the above challenges and considered some potential solutions. The responses to the solutions included;

- Generic services that can cater for the needs of all young people would be beneficial. However, KCC should consider varying level of needs between different client groups, especially Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) and Teenage Parents.
- Although KCC has a duty to support the statutory client group, non-statutory service users should still have access to services.
- An integrated service was considered a good idea (accommodation based support and floating support) and it was suggested that there are better success rates where integrated support is happening.

Young Adults Council

During October 2015, KCC attended the Young Adults Council to discuss the journey to independence. In summary, the main points from this meeting were;

- Preparation for independence needs to start at an earlier age, including more intensive support around managing expectations and finances.
- More floating support would have been beneficial to help maintain independence. Often, support is stopped after the young person leaves care and there is no safety net.
- Young people want to maintain the same support worker, especially during transitional periods.
- Some Children in Care are only offered a SLOD provision once they reach 18.

Teenage Parent service visits

During October 2015, a series of visits to the five teenage parent services took place. These meetings were aimed at gathering views on a proposal to deliver a non-targeted service. In summary;

- The providers were keen to continue providing a targeted teenage parent service; however they also presented some benefits of providing a generic service and understood financial pressures.
- Out of the 20 service users 13 wanted to remain in a teenage parent specific unit, because they valued the peer to peer relationships and support.
- There were concerns about generic accommodation due to a perceived view that teenage parents have different priorities and lifestyles compared to other vulnerable young people.
- Some service users preferred the idea of generic accommodation, as this represented real life. It was also argued that the accommodation units should be available to anyone who needs support; including single males and couples.

KCC also visited one service that has transitioned from a targeted teenage parent service to a generic service. In summary, the provider commented; *we feel the new range of clients has brought a positive diversity to our project and enhanced the atmosphere of the project.*

Part 2: Public Consultation

Consultation Process

The consultation on Proposed Changes to Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services was launched at 10am on Monday 30th November 2015. The consultation ran for 10 weeks, closing at 5pm on Monday 8th February 2016.

In summary the following consultation activity was undertaken;

30 th November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation launched at 10am. • Details of the Supported Accommodation and Floating Support services consultation were located at www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation • Notification of the consultation launch was sent to a range of stakeholders via approximately 1,490 email addresses and postal addresses, as well as a further 230 emails following identification of other Stakeholders. • Young person flyers were circulated with approximately 1,150 email and postal addresses; including professionals who work with or support young people. • In line with the EQIA consultation details were circulated to charities that support Lesbian, Gay and Transgender groups and Young Carers.
15 th December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following feedback from a service user group, a 'young person friendly' questionnaire was created. • Notification of the updated 'young person friendly' questionnaire was sent to approximately 80 KCC professionals who work with young people. The questionnaire was also used during all resident groups.
December 2015/ January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to 6 resident groups to discuss the proposals with service users, including a workshop with the Young Adults Council. • Meeting with the Kent Housing Options Group and the Joint Policy and Planning Board to discuss and promote the public consultation. • Meetings with 12 District/ Borough Councils to discuss the impact of the proposals and gather their views. • Engagement with 13 current providers to highlight the potential impact of the proposals and encourage them to complete the questionnaire.
6 th January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of consultation responses to date. Reminder emails were sent to approximately 700 email addresses.
8 th February 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation closed at 5pm.

During the consultation process 6 the four online documents were downloaded as follows;

Document (including PDF and Word Versions)	Number of Downloads
Consultation Document	300
Equality Impact Assessment for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services	231
Equality Impact Assessment for Teenage Parent Services	136
Questionnaire	63

Consultation Respondents and Responses

In summary the following consultation responses have been received and considered;

- **209** Consultation Questionnaires; including 70 service users (Feedback was collected at 6 focus groups attended by 52 service users).
- **5** written responses; **2** from professionals, **2** from District and Borough Councils and **1** joint response from **8** service users.
- Feedback from discussions with **10** District and Borough Councils.

Consultation Questionnaire

Overall, **209** consultation questionnaires were completed, this included;

- 148 (71%) from individuals and 61 (29%) on behalf of an organisation
- 70 (33%) from service users
- 83 (40%) paper questionnaires and 126 (60%) online questionnaires

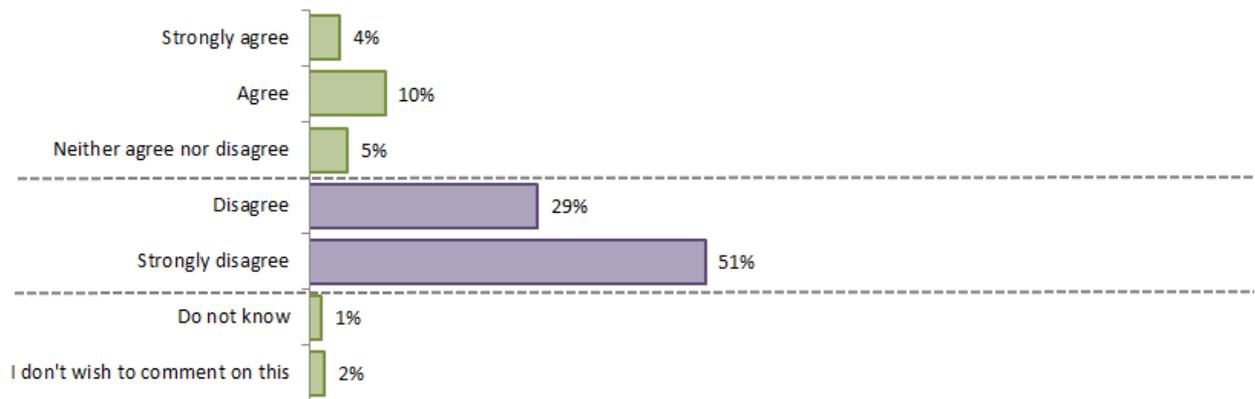
Total Questionnaires Received



Proposal A – Who will use these services?

The vast majority (79%) of those electing to respond to the consultation disagree to some extent with limiting access to services to statutory service users only (Option 3).

To what extent do you agree with the proposals?



Base: All responding (209)

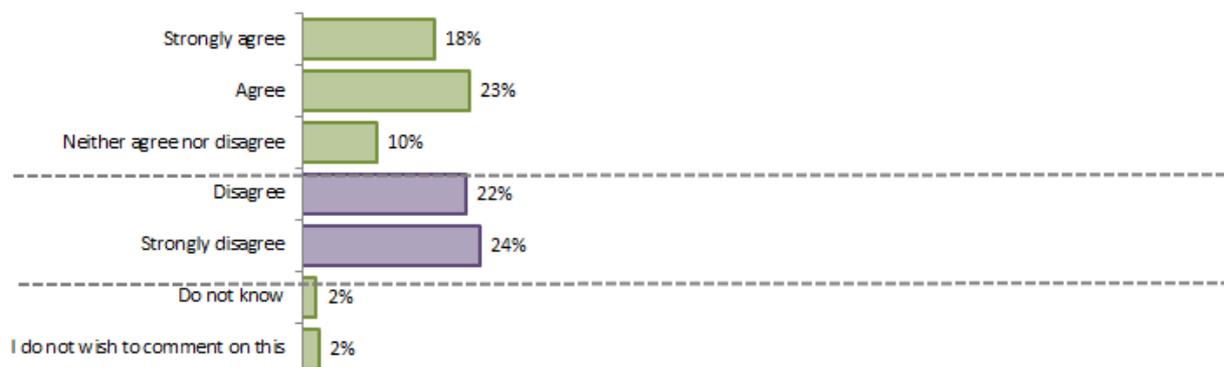
This included 89% of the young people and 100% of the Housing Related Support Providers (current Supporting People provision) who responded to this proposal.

Amongst those members of the public who disagree with limiting services to statutory service users, comments included;

- Over 18s needed support and were not ready for independent living; the needs of over 18 are no different to the needs of under 18s (34%)
- Access to services should be based on individual need not legal status. (7%)

With regards to Option 2, opinions were more split; 46% disagree to some extent with prioritising statutory service users, whereas 40% agree.

To what extent do you agree with the proposals?



Base: All responding (209)

When asked for their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing, other key comments from the public included;

- Over 18s are not ready for independent living and that there is no alternative provision available to them (39%)
- This would lead to an increase in homelessness or anti-social behaviour. There is a lack of alternative housing for young people who are not owed a duty to care and young people may 'fall through the net' (11%)
- Teenage parents would be at risk (3%).

Comments included:

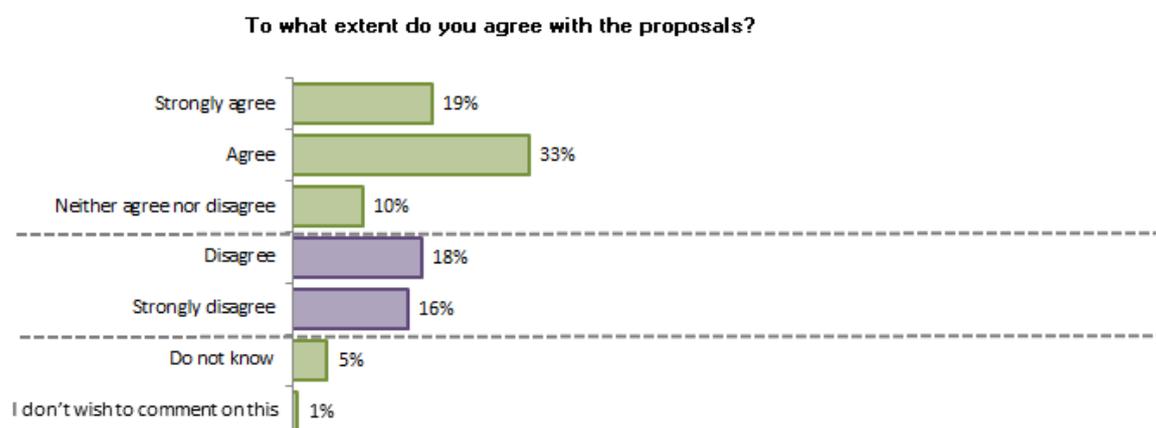
“Only one person in [service] is under 18, the rest would have been rough sleeping. I'm a young girl; I would survive day by day whatever means even if it means prostitution.”

“Everyone that is on the streets is a priority as it's no fun and very dangerous.”

“Having left the Army at 21, if support wasn't available, I would still be on the streets. Not everyone who needs help is under 18.”

Proposal B – A Standard Offer

Opinions are more divided with respect to providing a generic service, instead of targeted services for individual client groups. Whilst 52% agree (or strongly agree) with the proposal, 34% disagree.



Base: All responding (209)

Amongst members of the public disagreeing to provide a generic service, a number are concerned about Teenage Parents; 16 respondents felt that teenage parents and babies should be separate and that babies could be at risk if option 2 is implemented.

Furthermore, 100% of the Teenage Parent service providers disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposal.

When asked for their reasons for agreeing or disagreeing, other key comments from the public included;

- Specialist services are better/one size does not fit all (22%)
- No one would feel labelled or singled out (4%)
- All young people should have access to support/all groups are equal (10%)
- Success of this proposal depends on the type of accommodation; It is important to provide a variety of accommodation to meet individual needs. (7%).

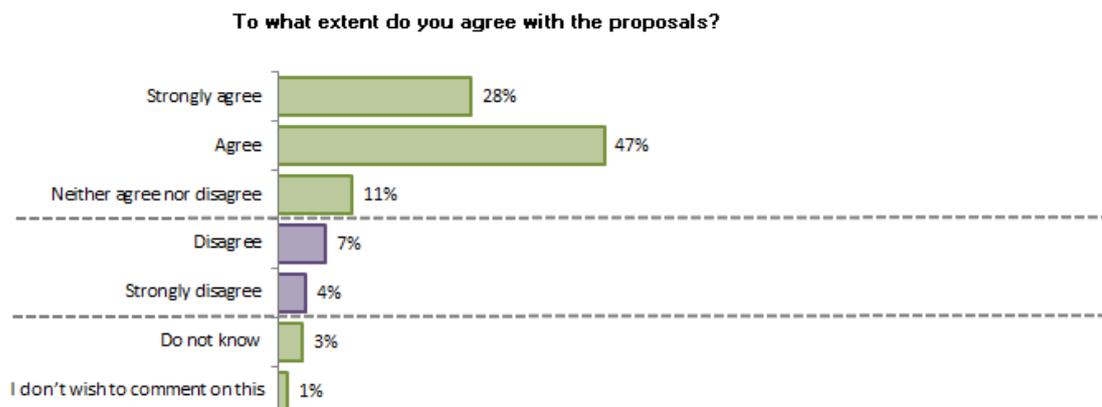
“In my view it is unsafe to accommodate young mums and their small babies alongside disruptive, possibly drug-taking or drinking heavily and potentially violent and damaged young people.”

“As long as those offering the more generic support, have all the tools and knowledge available to them, otherwise young people will find themselves ill-informed and inappropriately advised.”

“I see this could work especially as this would get young people ready for real community living. However it would all need to be risk assessed with possibly some vulnerable groups not mixing with others.”

Proposal C – Joining up Accommodation Based and Floating Support Services

The majority of the public who responded to the consultation were in favour of joining up Accommodation Based Support and Floating Support services (75% of respondents).



Base: All responding (209)

The main reason being; this proposal will create better and seamless transitions and services will be more flexible (39%).

Amongst the 11% disagreeing with the proposal to join up services, 10 (16%) respondents felt that it depends on the individual young person - young people need differing levels of support.

“I believe a range of flexible creative support models are needed according to the issues in any particular Kent community/town.”

“I think it should be optional because although we are learning to live independently when we move out from here, we should be ready to live fully independently.”

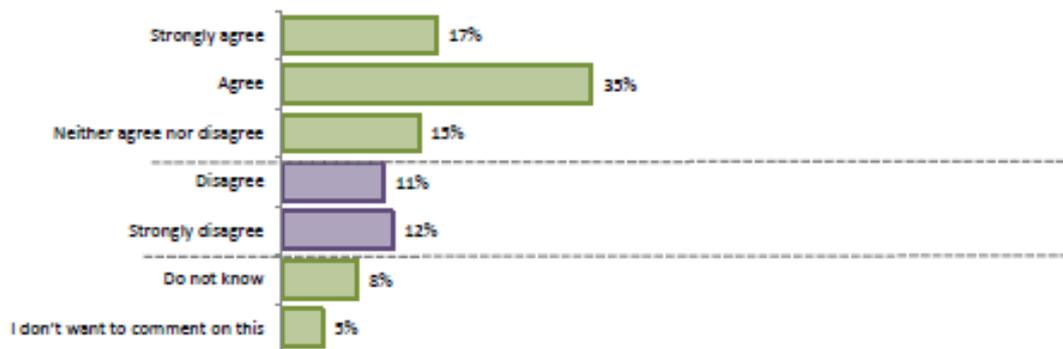
“You wouldn't have to tell your story to 5 different support workers; when you tell your story so many times, you miss some important parts and the key issues/ problems become diluted.”

Proposal D – Lining up services with areas of the County

Out of the responses, 52% agree with reducing the number of organisations delivering services, whereas 23% disagree. Comments included;

“There seems to be too many people/organisations doing completely different things.”

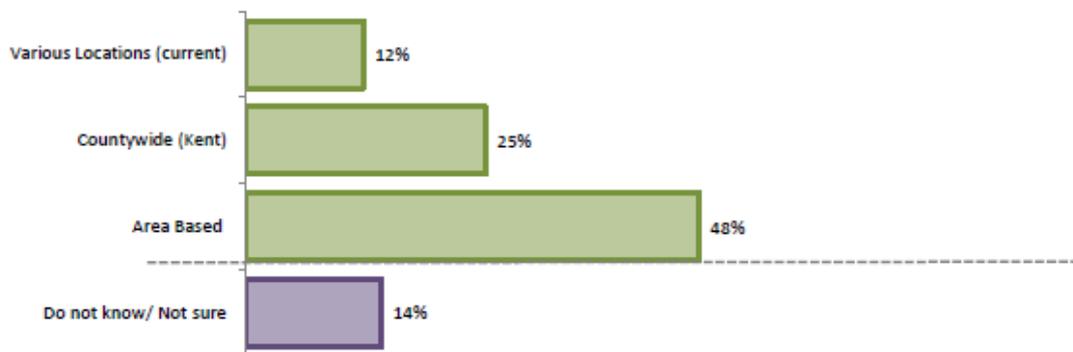
To what extent do you agree with the proposals?



Base: All responding (209)

Out of the responses, 48% were in favour of aligning services with 4 areas of the County, compared with 25% in favour of a countywide service.

Which of the following do you think would deliver the best outcomes for young people who use our services?



Base: All responding (209)

When asked for their reasons for agreeing with aligning services with 4 areas of the County, responses from the public included;

- Young people should be able to maintain a local connection (10%)
- More choice of accommodation is important (6%).

Amongst the respondents, 40 (25%) commented on the importance of consistency across Kent; whereas 31 (19%) made a comment about Kent being too large have consistent services - local areas need different services.

A small percentage (12%) was in favour of keeping services as they are.

“Kent is a diverse county. The issues at Margate and Dover are different to Dartford and Tonbridge for example.”

“County wide would secure support in all areas of Kent which would mean no one in need of the service(s) would have difficulty getting them.”

“Localised support and networks for local people. Improves ability to network and build positive working relationships. Responsive/adapts to the needs of a particular area. Clearer and simplistic in terms of service delivery. In theory a more rapid response is a possibility in problems solving difficulties/issues. Understanding the demography of the area, better ability to map, monitor and safeguard.”

Written responses

During the consultation 5 written responses were received via letter or email. In general, the feedback was;

Key Theme	Comments
Proposal A: <i>Who will access the services?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will happen to the over 18 non-statutory service users who require support? • Housing across the County is in short supply or unaffordable; many young people who will be affected by this change may end up homeless.
Proposal B: <i>A Standard Service Offer</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people want to meet other young people from different backgrounds; however there were concerns that a generic service could cause more disagreements and arguments. • A generic service would not be able to effectively support the different groups’ needs, as services currently do.
Proposal C: <i>Joining up Accommodation Based Support and Floating Support Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A familiar and consistent service is viewed as important for young people. • There is a shortage of floating support; currently young people are waiting a long time to access floating support. • A floating support worker is crucial for when a young person moves into their own accommodation. • Support after a young person leaves care is poor; the majority of support a young person has whilst in care is taken away.
Proposal D: <i>Lining up services with areas of the County</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It can be extremely important to these service users to stay locally. • It is important to recognise that Kent is a very large and diverse county.
Other Comments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These proposals will only provide savings in the short term and could end up costing the council more money in the long run. • Some young people will be excluded until they reach the point of crisis. Also, more young people could end up homeless and turn to drugs or crime.

District and Borough Councils

Individual meetings with 10 District and Borough Councils were held during January 2016.

A number of questions were presented and feedback was recorded. The questions focussed around Proposal A and Proposal D, as these were considered as the two main areas that could impact District/Borough Councils. Ashford Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council were the two authorities not interviewed as they were unavailable.

In general the key points were;

<p>Proposal A – <i>Who can access services?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Districts wanted to keep the access to services as it is for the following reasons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Currently have access to adequate levels of housing-related accommodation and support for vulnerable young people funded by the Supporting People grant. ○ Prioritise young people moving-on from these services. • One District was unsure which option they preferred, as they felt none of the options presented were desirable. • All understood the need for KCC to prioritise Children in Care and Care Leavers however, none of them believed that District & Boroughs had to. • The majority of Local Authorities prioritise Homeless Families over all vulnerable young people.
<p>Proposal A – Option 2: <i>Prioritising Statutory Service Users</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Districts agreed with Option 2 for the following reasons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Currently have in-adequate levels of housing-related accommodation and support for vulnerable young people funded by the Supporting People grant. ○ Important for those on the edge of care to continue receiving access to accommodation and support. ○ Needed assurances that the capacity for edge of care would not be affected by the numbers of UASC coming into Care.
<p>Proposal A – Option 3: <i>Access for Statutory Service Users Only</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Districts agreed with Option 3 (to limit services for statutory young people) for the following reasons; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Districts not in a financial position to accommodate or support vulnerable young people on the edge of care. ○ Increase levels of children seeking to come into Care to access Housing and Support. ○ Increase in safeguarding alerts as more vulnerable young people become rough sleepers and vulnerable to sexual exploitation, gang crime, and trafficking. • Social Housing opportunities would almost be non-existent for Care Leavers should Option 3 be chosen as the Districts would not prioritise them.
<p>Proposal D: <i>Lining up services with areas of the County</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ten District and Boroughs felt that awarding the contract to one strategic partner would be a mistake. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Creates a monopoly. ○ Drives down quality and value for money. ○ Erodes community based accommodation and support suppliers.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk of service failure should supplier go bust. ○ Kent is geographically big with a diverse demographic makeup for one Supplier to manage a countywide contract. ● Eight of the District and Boroughs believed appointing four strategic partners aligned with the new Social Care areas made sense. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A localised approach tailored to the communities within the four areas. ○ Potential for more housing and support options for each of the Districts. ○ One pathway for all vulnerable young people. ○ Standardised Needs and Risk Assessment. ● Two Districts questioned why status-quo on the current contracts was not being considered. ● All felt they would be able to work with each other in partnership. Some concern was raised around reconnection for those young people placed out of Borough. ● Only two of the Districts have a named Housing Options Officer allocated to vulnerable young people. All would welcome working within an integrated referral and allocations team.
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Equality Impact Assessment

Initial Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Supported Accommodation and Floating Support services was undertaken for the proposals prior to the launch of the consultation. An Equality Impact Assessment for the changes to the Teenage Parent Services was also undertaken prior to the consultation. Both EqIAs were available on the consultation website throughout the consultation period.

The initial screening on both Equality Impact Assessments identified that full impact assessments were required due to potential negative impact on the following protected characteristic groups;

- Age
- Gender
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Carer's Responsibility (Teenage Parents)

Full Equality Impact Assessment

Following the consultation a full EqIA has been undertaken. The EqIA identified that the proposed changes to the service could negatively impact upon;

- Age (Proposal A, Option 3)
- Pregnancy and Maternity (Proposal B)
- Sexual Orientation (Proposal D)

Mitigating Actions

The assessments identify that the identified adverse impacts could be minimised if the following actions are taken;

- Services should continue to support young people aged 16 – 21 and services should not be limited to vulnerable young people who are under 18. (Recommending Option 3 is rejected in favour of Option 1 or 2.)
- Develop a priority scoring matrix to support prioritisation of service delivery.
- Source a sufficient range of stable, safe, well maintained and affordable accommodation that meets the requirements of the referral and Young Person's risk and need assessments.
- Teenage Parents are accommodated in self-contained accommodation (such as studio/ bedsit or one bedroom flat) and are not accommodated in a shared environment.
- Undertake risk assessment of Young People referred to the service and facilitate a visit for Young Person to view the accommodation before moving in.
- Join up accommodation based support and floating support services to deliver personalised support in line with the individual outcomes in the support plan and to meet individual needs. Support is flexible/ responsive and not a prescribed offer.
- Continually review the services a young person receives to ensure it is fit for purpose and is driven by the needs of the Young Person
- Purchase 4 area services to help young people live locally whilst giving them more choice.

Recommendations

Throughout the public consultation process, we have heard very clearly about what is important to staff, partners and those young people who use our services.

The following recommendations have been made through a complex and thorough analysis that takes into account a wide range of evidence, including other engagement events with service users, the market and our partners.

Proposal A: Who can access services

It is recommended that Option 3 (limiting services to statutory service users only) is disregarded, as the vast majority (79%) of the public electing to respond objected to providing a service for only statutory service users.

However, there was some support for implementing a service that allows access for all vulnerable young people but prioritises statutory service users (Option 2). Amongst those electing to respond to Option 2, opinions were divided; 46% disagree, whereas 40% agree.

Based on the above, it is recommended that the new service will continue to cater for the following groups, with priority to services based on individual needs;

- 16 and 17 year old Children in Care including UASC
- Care Leavers including former UASC
- 16 and 17 year olds who are at risk of homelessness

- Vulnerable 18 to 21 year olds
- Teenage Parents

Proposal B: Reviewing the service offer

The majority of those electing to respond agree to some extent with providing a generic service for all service users (52%); however, there were a number of concerns around mixing teenage parents.

It is recommended that the new service provides a generic accommodation and support offer that is able to cater for the needs of all young people. However, accommodation and support should take into consideration the individual needs of all young people, notably teenage parents.

Proposal C: Joining up accommodation based support and floating support services for high, medium and low needs

The majority (75%) of the public electing to respond to the consultation agree to some extent with joining up accommodation based support and floating support services.

Following this level of agreement, it is recommended that the new service will provide flexible, joined up accommodation based support and floating support services for high, medium and low needs.

Proposal D: Lining up services with areas of the County

Of the three options presented, 48% of the respondents were in favour of aligning services with 4 areas of the County. Therefore, it is recommended that the new services be aligned to the 4 Specialist Children's Services area boundaries – North, South, East and West.

These recommendations were presented to Specialist Children's Services Divisional Management Team (SCS Div MT) on 23rd February 2016 and subsequently formed the basis of a Commissioning Plan.

The Commissioning Plan was presented to and approved by the KCC Strategic Commissioning Board on 23rd March 2016.

Appendix A

Proposed Changes to Kent's Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services

Consultation – Tell us your views

30th November 2015 to 8th February
2016

Alternative Formats

If you require this document in any other format or language, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call: 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number is monitored during office hours, and there is an answering machine at other times.

1. Introduction

Kent County Council must make sure that children and young people in their care and those leaving their care are provided with good accommodation that has the right level of support. The Council also supports vulnerable young people who are at risk of homelessness and those that are homeless or who may need some support to prevent them coming into Care. Many of these services are not delivered directly by the Council, but funded by us and then provided by other organisations.

What is Supported Accommodation?

This is a form of temporary supported accommodation for young people who are not ready to live independently for a variety of reasons. This type of accommodation could be provided by an individual, company or voluntary organisation and will include onsite support (e.g. training flat, Foyer). The young person will also have access to varying levels of Housing Related Support and guidance to help them gain the skills they need to live independently.

What is Floating Support?

The aim of floating support is to help a young person to maintain their independence in their own home. Floating support services are provided for up to one year and they support a person wherever they live in Kent.

At present there are 508 Supported Accommodation placements. These are as follows:

- 40 – Care Leavers (Statutory)
- 141 – 16 and 17 year olds in Care including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Statutory)
- 298 – Supporting People/ vulnerable young people on the edge of care.
- 29 Teenage Parents.

Floating Support services help 138 young people at any one time across Kent.

We want to make sure that these services continue to meet the needs of those who need to access them, whilst also providing value for money. We have reviewed the current services we provide and believe that by making some changes we could provide a better service more efficiently.

Within this document we have included details of how and why we are consulting, details of the options we have considered and what the impact of the proposed changes would be. We believe our proposals will result in us being able to provide a better service.

Please take time to read the information and then answer and return the questionnaire enclosed within this document. Alternatively you can complete the questionnaire online at www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation

Foster Care services, Residential Care and Supported Lodgings are not included as part of this consultation.

2. Why we are consulting?

The current contracts for a number of these services are coming to an end and this has provided the opportunity for the Council to think about how accommodation and support services are provided for young people. A list of the current services can be found in Section 8 of this document.

A key priority is to improve services and outcomes for young people. We are seeking views on different ways to deliver these services. We value the opinion of all residents of Kent and in particular, current and potential young people that may use our services, practitioners and providers. We will use the consultation responses to inform the development of future services.

We expect to spend the same amount of money on these services as we do now. If any savings are made then they will be re-invested in accommodation and support services.

3. Why do we need to make changes to how we deliver services?

We need to make sure every pound spent in Kent continues to deliver better outcomes for our customers and that we are getting value for money. The current services are delivered through over 30 individual contracts, many of which have not changed for some time. We need to consider how best to manage these services and make the most of working with our partners, such as District and Borough Councils, in the future.

We have undertaken a review of the current Supported Accommodation and Floating Support services. This included a number of pre-consultation activities which captured the views of young people who use the services and the staff that deliver them. The review identified areas where we can make changes and improvements.

4. What are we proposing to change to provide a better service?

We are consulting on;

- a. Who will use these services
- b. Reviewing the service offer
- c. Joining up accommodation based support and floating support services for high, medium and low needs
- d. Lining up services with areas of the County

a. Who will use these services

At the moment, who uses these services depends on the individual providers. This is influenced by historical arrangements and the location of the services, rather than the needs of the young person. This means that young people with higher needs could be waiting longer to get help.

Demand for services has changed and there are more young people to help. This is a result of population changes, increases in the number of young people entering care and a large increase in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children in Kent. We need to consider which young people receive our services to make sure that we are able to support those most in need.

Kent County Council has a **statutory duty** (legal requirement) to assist and support **Children in Care and young people leaving Care** to make a successful transition to adulthood. Currently, these specific groups of young people are not prioritised for all services.

Kent County Council has a statutory duty to support:

- 16 and 17 year old Children in Care
- Care Leavers up to the age of 21 year olds
- Care Leavers who are over 21 and who wish to pursue education or training (support will continue until the end of the agreed programme of education or until the young person is 25)
- 16 and 17 year olds who are at risk of homelessness and those that are homeless

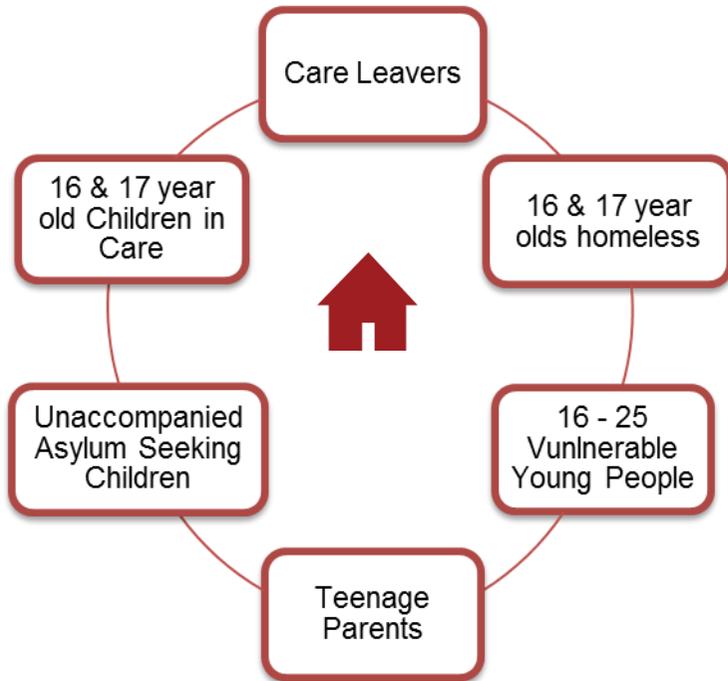
Kent County Council is considering prioritising young people who are entitled to a statutory duty or who may need some support to prevent them coming into Care (option 2).

Kent County Council is also considering limiting services to those who are entitled to a statutory duty by KCC only (option 3). Kent County Council delivers Early Help Services which support young people who are not entitled to a statutory duty.

What options are we considering?

OPTION 1 - Current Model

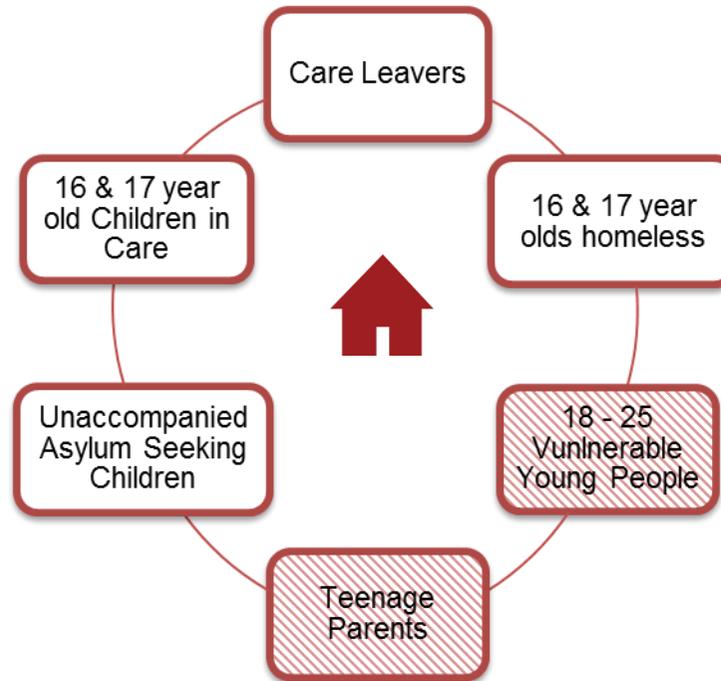
ALL Young People can apply for services



- Who uses these services depends on individual providers and the location of the services, rather than the needs of the young person.
- Young people with higher needs could be waiting longer to get help.

OPTION 2

PRIORITISE Statutory Service Users



- A priority scoring system is used and priority points are awarded to young people who are entitled to a statutory duty regardless of where they live.
- More statutory service users will be supported.
- Fewer young people over 18, who are not entitled to a statutory duty, will be supported.

OPTION 3

Access for Statutory Service Users ONLY



- Statutory service users will be supported.
- Young people over 18, who are not entitled to a statutory duty, will NOT be supported.

b. Reviewing the Service Offer

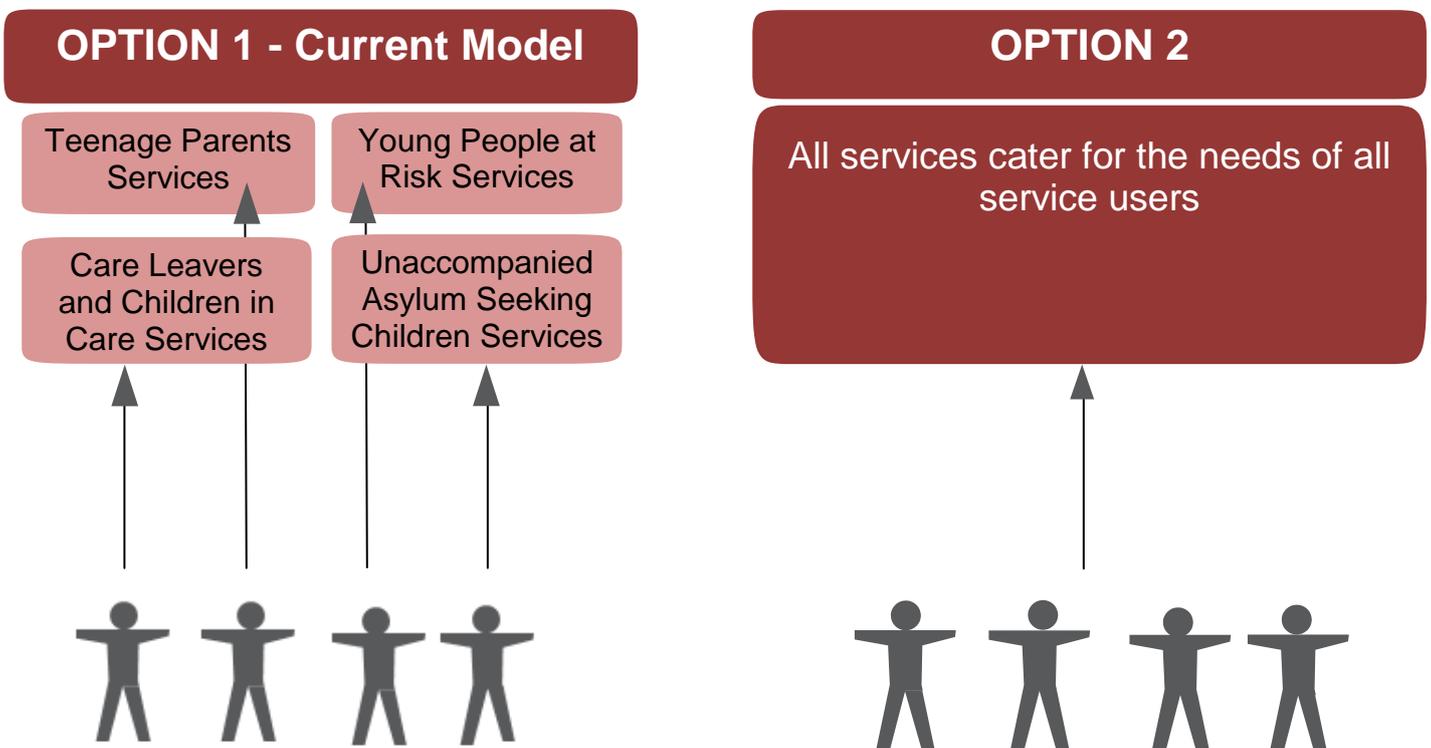
Currently separate services are delivered for:-

- Young People at Risk
- Teenage Parents
- Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)
- Children in Care
- Care Leavers
- Homeless young people needing emergency accommodation

Currently there is no consistent or standardised offer across the County. This means that young people receive an inconsistent offer based on their 'status' not their needs. It also means that people have to move area to access a service, rather than access their most local service.

Kent County Council is considering a standard offer. This would mean that all services would be able to cater for the needs of all young people and there would be no separate targeted services. We believe that this would have benefits of ensuring access can be prioritised according to need, and that there is more likely to be a suitable service available closer to where young people currently live.

What options are we considering?



c. Joining up accommodation based support and floating support services for high, medium and low needs.

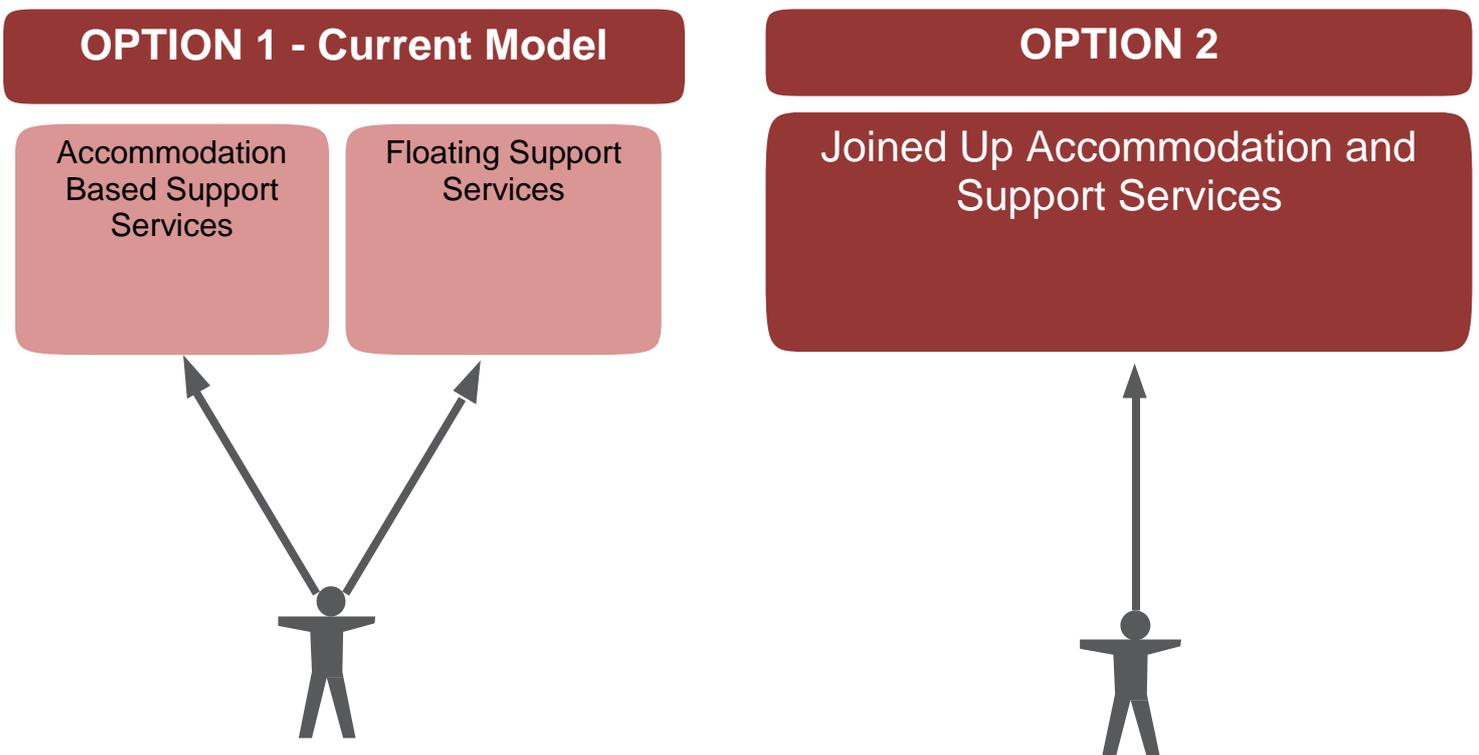
We believe that young people need to be able to access more support services to successfully move on from supported housing and to sustain tenancies, preventing homelessness. This includes gaining the relevant independent living skills.

Currently accommodation based support and floating support services are delivered separately. We also have separate contracts, and with a range of separate organisations that offer “high”, “medium” and “low” levels of support. The service a young person receives often depends on where they live, rather than their needs. This also means that young people often have to move to a new service if their level of need changes, or when they no longer require support. We do not believe the current service arrangements are the best way to help young people to be independent in the future.

We believe that we should design future services in a more joined up way in order to create effective “pathways”. By pathway we mean that the services available to a young person should work together, supporting and enabling them to move from whichever services they initially access through to independent accommodation in the future.

Joining up these services would mean creating a service that is able to deliver a full range of stable, safe and well maintained accommodation (including smaller and larger properties) and appropriate personalised support packages (including targeted support as required) to meet the needs of all young people throughout their journey to independence.

What options are we considering?



d. Lining up services with areas of the County

Currently accommodation based support and floating support services are delivered differently across the County. Some areas have a large number of services while other areas do not have any services.

We believe that there is an opportunity to achieve improved outcomes by lining up services with areas of the County. This would also provide the opportunity to make the most of working with our partners, particularly with our Borough and District Council Housing partners, and would help young people to continue living locally and to have a local connection. This would be part of working to create effective pathways of housing and support.

Lining up services in this way would also reduce the number of separate contracts we manage thereby lowering overhead and management costs, and allowing more resources to be focused on supporting young people.

Kent County Council is considering either a countywide service or 4 area based services (North, South, East, and West Kent) to align with KCC's staff team structures.

What options are we considering?

OPTION 1 - Current Model

Various Local Services



- Large number of local services provided by a number of organisations.
- Different services in different parts of the County.
- Some areas have no services.

OPTION 2

Countywide Service

Kent

- Service delivered across the County.
- Reduced number of contracts and therefore lower overhead and management costs.

OPTION 3

4 Area Based Services



- Services delivered within each area of the County.
- Each area of the County aligned with 3 Borough and District Council Housing partners.
- Young people can continue living locally and maintain a local connection.
- Aligns with KCC Social Care and Early Help staff teams.
- Reduced number of contracts and therefore lower overhead and management costs.

5. Who will be affected by our proposals?

These proposals will affect;

- Children in Care including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Care Leavers aged 16 plus
- Vulnerable young people aged 18 to 21 who have previously been able to request support, and who may need to access support in the future
- Teenage parents and their babies
- Friends and family of Children in Care, Care Leavers and vulnerable young people
- The organisations that deliver services and their staff
- Our Partners, such as District and Borough Councils, who also help young people at risk of homelessness and those that are homeless

6. Have your say

We want to make sure that these services meet the needs of those who need them, and offer Kent residents the best value for money.

We have carried out an Equality Impact Assessment as part of this review, and have published this along with the consultation document at www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation. There is a question about this in the questionnaire and we will use the feedback we receive about our assumptions to update this following the completion of this engagement process.

We want to hear what you think of our proposals that are outlined in this document. Please let us know by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation and completing the online consultation questionnaire.

Alternatively, complete the consultation questionnaire enclosed with this document and send it back to us using the address below:

Email – 16-25accommodation@kent.gov.uk

Post – Kent County Council, Commissioning Unit, Room 2.11, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ (or phone us for a freepost envelope on 03000 414181.)

Alternative formats

If you require this document in any other format or language, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call: 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number is monitored during office hours, and there is an answering machine at other times.

7. What happens next?

This consultation will start on 30th November 2015 and finish on 8th February 2016. Your responses will help us complete our review and better understand the impact of any proposals on those who use the services we provide.

8. Current Services

Service Provider	Name Of Contracted Service	District	Type of Provision
Home Group Ltd	Ashford Young Persons Service	Ashford	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Cantercare	Wincheap	Canterbury	Teenage Parent Service (16-21 years)
Porchlight	Porchlight Young Person Hostel	Canterbury	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Porchlight	New Town Street	Canterbury	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
LIFE Housing	Dartford LIFE	Dartford	Teenage Parent Service (16-21 years)
Home Group Ltd	Daisies	Dartford	Teenage Parent Service (16-21 years)
YMCA Thames Gateway	YMCA Thames Gateway	Dartford	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
YMCA Thames Gateway	Church View	Dartford	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Porchlight	Dover Housing Support Services	Dover	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Home Group Ltd	Dover Young Persons Service	Dover	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Family Mosaic	Old Colonial	Gravesham	Teenage Parent Service (16-21 years)
Depaul Trust	The Grove	Gravesham	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Golding Homes	Maidstone Teenage Parent Service	Maidstone	Teenage Parent Service (16-21 years)
Sanctuary Housing Association	Maidstone Housing Supported Service	Maidstone	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Home Group Ltd	Trinity Foyer	Maidstone	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Lookahead Care And Support	Shepway Young Persons At Risk	Shepway	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Porchlight	Swale Young Persons At Risk	Swale	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Centra	Overton House	Swale	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Centra	Bridge House	Swale	Young People at Risk

			(16-25 years)
Porchlight	New Wharf	Tonbridge and Malling	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
West Kent YMCA	Ryder House	Tunbridge Wells	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Chapter 1	Calverley Hill	Tunbridge Wells	Young People at Risk (16-25 years)
Sanctuary Housing Association	Young People Floating Support East Kent	East Kent	Floating Support Service
Sanctuary Housing Association	Young People Floating Support West Kent	West Kent	Floating Support Service
Ready Homes	Former UASC Framework Contract	Countywide	UASC Accommodation
Social and Community Care	Former UASC Framework Contract	Countywide	UASC Accommodation
Hassan Ibrahim	Former UASC Framework Contract	Countywide	UASC Accommodation
Asphaleia	UASC Floating Support	Countywide	UASC Floating Support Service
Kent Refugee Action Network	UASC Floating Support	Countywide	UASC Floating Support Service
Various	<p>Semi-Independent/ Supported Accommodation (spot purchased)¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16+ Grange, Acorn Homes (Group) Ltd • 4 CSR Services Ltd • Affinity Fostering Services Ltd • Blue Diamond Properties Limited • Bluebells • Bridging The Gap • Cantercare • Creating Lifestyles Limited • Crown Social Care • Dunfield and Mead • Eric Patrick Care Ltd • Golden Care • Good2Go Care Services Ltd • Haven Care Support Services • Independence-Development Ltd • Krossroads • Liberty Group • My Life Semi-Independent Project • North and East London Care 	N/A	Supported Accommodation

¹ As at 09/11/15

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rela Support Services Ltd• Step Ahead | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Proposed Changes to Kent's Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services

Consultation Questionnaire

We are committed to keeping you involved and are keen to listen to your views.

Please let us know what you think by visiting the website at www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation and completing the online consultation questionnaire.

Alternatively, complete the consultation questionnaire below and send it back to us using the address below:

- Email – 16-25accommodation@kent.gov.uk
- Post – Kent County Council, Commissioning Unit, Room 2.11, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ (or phone us for a freepost envelope on 03000 414181)

Please submit your questionnaire by 8th February 2016.

Question 1.

Are you completing this questionnaire on behalf of:

Please select **one** option.

- a. Yourself (as an individual) → Please go to question 1a
- b. An organisation → Please go to question 1b

Please tell us the name of your organisation:

--

Question 1a.

Which of the following best describes you? (Please tick all that apply)

- I am a young person who currently uses these services
- I am a young person who may use these services in the future
- I am a Family member, neighbour or friend of a young person who uses these services
- I am Foster Carer
- I am a Professional e.g. Advocate, Social Worker, Support Worker
- I am a Supported Lodgings Host
- I am a Landlord
- I am a Private Housing Landlord.
- I run a Bed and Breakfast
- I run a Training Flat
- I provide support services to people in their home e.g. Floating Support
- Other please specify

Question 1b.

Which of the following best describes your organisation? (Please tick all that apply)

- Independent Fostering Agency
- Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator/ Provider
- Housing Related Support Accommodation Provider e.g. Young People at Risk Service
- Teenage Parent Service Provider
- Independent Accommodation Provider
- Children's Residential Home
- Local Authority/ Housing Authority
- Housing Association
- A Hostel
- A Foyer
- Secure Accommodation Provider
- A Refuge
- Training Flat Provider
- Support services in someone's home e.g. Floating Support
- Other please specify

Question 2:

We are considering prioritising young people who are entitled to a statutory duty or who may need some support to prevent them coming into Care (Option 2)

This would mean that more young people who are entitled to a statutory duty (Children in Care including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, Care Leavers and 16 and 17 year olds at risk of homelessness) will be supported and fewer young people over 18, who are not entitled to a statutory duty will be supported.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with this prioritisation? (Please tick one option)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | → Please go to question 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | → Please go to question 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | → Please go to question 2a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | → Please go to question 2a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | → Please go to question 2a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | → Please go to question 2a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to comment on this | → Please go to question 3 |

Question 2a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 3:

We are also considering limiting services to those who are entitled to a statutory duty only (Option 3).

This would mean that young people over 18, who the council does not have a statutory duty to support, will NOT be supported.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with only delivering support to Children in Care including *Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children*, Care Leavers and 16-17 year olds at risk of homelessness? (Please tick one option)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | → Please go to question 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | → Please go to question 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | → Please go to question 3a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | → Please go to question 3a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | → Please go to question 3a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | → Please go to question 3a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to comment on this | → Please go to question 4 |

Question 3a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 4:

We are considering a standard service offer.

This would mean that young people will be able to access the same services. Services would cater for the needs for all young people and there would be no separate targeted services.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the creation of a standard accommodation and support offer for all young people who will use these services?
(Please tick one option)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | → Please go to question 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | → Please go to question 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | → Please go to question 4a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | → Please go to question 4a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | → Please go to question 4a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | → Please go to question 4a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to comment on this | → Please go to question 5 |

Question 4a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 5:

We are considering joining up services.

This would mean creating a service that is able to deliver a full range of stable, safe and well maintained accommodation (including smaller and larger properties) and appropriate personalised support packages (including targeted support as required) to meet the needs of all young people throughout their journey to independence.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the joining up of accommodation based and floating support services? (Please tick one option)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | → Please go to question 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | → Please go to question 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | → Please go to question 5a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | → Please go to question 5a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | → Please go to question 5a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | → Please go to question 5a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to comment on this | → Please go to question 6 |

Question 5a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 6:

Kent County Council is considering either a countywide service or 4 area based services.

This would mean there were lower overhead and management costs and services would be delivered in a consistent way across the County.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with reducing the number of organisations delivering services? (Please tick one option)

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | → Please go to question 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agree | → Please go to question 7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | → Please go to question 6a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree | → Please go to question 6a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree | → Please go to question 6a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | → Please go to question 6a |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to comment on this | → Please go to question 7 |

Question 6a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 7:

Which of the following do you think would deliver the best outcomes for the young people who use our services? (Please tick one option)

- Option 1 Current – Services are delivered in various locations across Kent. Some areas have lots of services while other areas do not have any.
- Option 2 – Countywide service(s) (Kent)
- Option 3 – Area based services (North, South, East or West Kent)
- Don't Know/ Not Sure

Question 7a:

Could you tell us why you say that?

Question 8:

If you think there is something we haven't asked you, or you would like to make any other comments on our options and proposals for this service, please use the space below to tell us:

Question 9:

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment on the proposed changes.

An EqlA is a tool to assess the impact any policies or strategies would have on race, age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marriage and partnerships and carer's responsibilities.

The EqlA can be accessed via www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation or on request from 16-25accommodation@kent.gov.uk or 03000 414181.

Have you read the Equality Impact Assessment? (Please tick one option)

- Yes
- No

Question 9a:

Please use this space if you would like to make any comments on the assumptions made by KCC within the Equality Impact Assessment:

Question 10:

What is your postcode?

About You

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we're asking you these questions.

We won't share the information you give us with anyone else. We'll use it only to help us make decisions, and improve our services.

If you would rather not answer any of the other questions, you don't have to.

Question 11. Are You?

- Male Female I prefer not to say

Question 12: Which of these age groups applies to you?

- 0 - 15 25-34 50-59 65-74 85 + over
 16-24 35-49 60-64 75-84 I prefer not to say

Question 13: To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong? (Source: 2011 census)

White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British
<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean
<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> African
<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*
<input type="checkbox"/> Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other*	<input type="checkbox"/> Arab	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say

***Other Ethnic Group** - if your ethnic group is not specified in the list, please describe it here:

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a longstanding physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example), are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Question 14: Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010?

- Yes No I prefer not to say

Question 14a. If you answered Yes to Question 14, please tell us which type of impairment applies to you.

You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all the impairments that apply to you. If none of these applies to you, please select Other, and write in the type of impairment you have.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health condition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long standing illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, diabetes or epilepsy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |

Question 15: Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion or belief?

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|

Question 15a. If you answered Yes to Question 15, which of the following applies to you?

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu | <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other religion, please specify: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> Jewish | <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh | <input type="text"/> |

Question 16: Are you?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/Straight | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay woman/Lesbian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bi/Bisexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Gay man | <input type="checkbox"/> I prefer not to say |

Thank you for taking part in this consultation. Your feedback is important to us and will be used to help us make decisions.

The outcome of the consultation will be available at www.kent.gov.uk/supportedaccommodation in due course.