



# COMMUNITY

## Services Consultation

Proposed changes to some of our services:

### **Children's Centres and Youth Hubs**

(Open Access Services)

### **Public Health Services**

(Health Visiting Service and Children  
and Young People's Counselling Service)

### **Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities**

Community Learning and Skills  
(Adult Education)

### **Gateways**

**Public consultation runs from  
17 January to 26 March 2023**

**[kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](https://kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)**



# COMMUNITY

## Services Consultation



**Alternative Formats:** If you need this document or any of the consultation documents in an alternative format, please email [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

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# Introduction

We are running a consultation on proposed changes to some of our community services. We want to share our proposals with you and invite your views. The services in this consultation are:



**Children's Centres and Youth Hubs**  
(Open Access Services)



**Public Health Services**  
(Health Visiting Service and Children and Young People's Counselling Service)



**Community Services**  
for Adults with Learning Disabilities



**Community, Learning and Skills**  
(Adult Education)



**Gateways**

This is the first significant change that we are proposing to the way we use our buildings to deliver our services for residents in over 40 years. This consultation is an important first step in what we hope will be an ongoing conversation between the Council, our residents, and our partners over the coming years as we meet the challenges that face us together.



**Please read the information within this consultation document to find out what the proposed changes are and why we are proposing them.**

There is a glossary on page 113 which will give you more information on some of the words we use in this document. On page 110 you will see information on how you can respond to the proposal and guide our next steps.

You will find more information on our website:

- The Design Handbook which gives more detail on how we have reached our proposals as well as what the total provision is for each district (with maps)
- Equality Impact Assessments
- The data and information we have used to develop the proposals
- Easy read consultation document
- Consultation questionnaire

Please visit **[www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)** to view this information or get in touch with us if you need to access it in another way. Contact details are on page 110 of this document.

# Why are we proposing changes?

In 2022, KCC set out our four-year strategy, Framing Kent's Future (2022 to 2026), which highlighted how we would tackle the challenges presented to us, such as rising poverty, ever-increasing demand for services like health and social care, growing numbers of households, and the impacts of climate change. In that document we acknowledged that many of the assumptions that have underpinned our strategic approach over the last ten years, such as low inflation, low interest rates and resilient supply chains, are now under threat.

And since that time, it has been necessary to speak out and address the rising financial pressures the Council is facing. In November 2022, the Leader of the Council wrote to the Central Government to raise concerns about the £50m budget deficit which KCC faces over the next year, and the expected deficits in future years which are of a scale never seen before. The additional money that KCC can raise from council tax and business rates barely covers the normal inflationary pressures that we face each year. That leaves significant growth in certain service areas unfunded. We need to look ahead to secure positive outcomes for our residents in the years to come.

We are fully aware that the next four years will not be easy and are conscious of the challenges we all face – some of which have been brought into sharper focus by the COVID-19 pandemic, escalating global tensions and the cost-of-living crisis.

Considering this, we need to address the following:

- Kent County Council has many buildings (our estate) across the county which are used for delivering services to communities. There is a backlog of approximately £165m in maintenance costs required across our entire estate in order to keep these buildings in good repair and open for use.
- We need to find savings so that we can balance the budget. (This means ensuring that there is enough money to fund what we need to pay for. The council budget is set in February each year.)
- We also have commitments in our Net Zero action plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our own estate and how we operate to 'Net Zero' by 2030. Our estate is currently not efficient, and we aren't able to reduce our carbon footprint with the number of buildings we have and the condition many of them are currently in.
- We are committed to providing effective support to residents in need of our services, so this is at the forefront of any proposals for change.





## The new Family Hubs model

The Department for Education has launched the Family Hubs model which is an exciting programme that will see positive changes to our Open Access Children's Centres and Youth Hubs as well as our Children's Public Health services.

KCC has recently taken a key decision to accept Transformation Status from the Department for Education which means significant investment will be provided by Government to enable the development of the Family Hubs model. We will now begin a process of co-designing what our Family Hub service offer will look like. This consultation deals with the specific delivery locations of the services that would make up a Family Hub model.

By transforming these services into new Family Hubs, we can provide a more joined up service to our residents, providing consistent support to them and their families.

In a Family Hub, several different organisations and their services work in partnership together. We call this a multi-agency approach. A number of Public Health services are already co-located within our buildings and with the implementation of the Family Hub model, we are looking to expand our co-located and integrated service offer. This is in line with Government thinking, to ensure professionals and community partners come together to provide a single point of access to family support services. You will read more about this later in the document.

The Government's guidance on Family Hubs suggests the service provision that should be linked together to create the 0–19-year-old offer, or 0-25 for those with special education needs or disabilities (such as Children's Centre Services, Youth Services and Public Health provision such as Health Visiting). However, our proposals about where to locate the services that would make up a Family Hub, where to provide outreach, and where to co-locate with other KCC services have been informed by the Needs Framework we have developed.



# What are we proposing?

We are proposing some changes to how we deliver some of our community services which we refer to as the Community Services Model. It's about making sure that resources are in the places where they're needed most. We've developed these proposals by first creating a **needs framework** to understand the parts of Kent where there is the greatest need for KCC services.

**Our work so far has led us to propose working from fewer permanent buildings, meaning that some of our buildings would close. We also want to co-locate more of our services, meaning that more than one service would be available from some of the buildings you might visit. Delivering some services by outreach (in a range of community and other venues) will continue, and people will still be able to access some services online as they do now. Our proposals are subject to feedback from the public and work to further assess the practicalities of co-locating services.**

Our network of library buildings is an important part of our proposals. We are currently proposing that some library buildings are used for co-location which means that more than one service could be provided from them on a permanent basis. For example, a library building could accommodate the library service as well as the Family Hub service (Children's Centre and Youth Hub provision). Library buildings could also provide space for outreach services. For example, Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education) may respond to changing community needs by providing a certain course in a library building, so it is easily accessible for that community.

We already co-locate some of our services, and these proposals would see us doing much more of this to provide more services to customers in single locations.

Information on the co-locations we are proposing can be found in this document. You will find information on the buildings we are proposing to close within the sections about each individual service. The proposed make-up of buildings per district can be found in the Design Handbook.

# There are three ways that people can access services:

## Permanent buildings

(where services are based in a dedicated, permanent building)

The changes we are proposing would mean that we have a more manageable and affordable number of buildings across Kent, which would help us to continue providing services for people in a variety of ways.

In areas where we have identified higher levels of need, we have generally proposed retaining a permanent physical presence. Where there is an opportunity to co-locate, we propose delivering more than one service from the same building.

**New co-locations** would follow the success of community 'hubs' such as the Swanley Link and Southborough Hub in Tunbridge Wells. **We'd like to hear your ideas of how we could make any new community hubs a destination that meets your needs.**



## Digital

(the use of technology to deliver a service online or virtually)

The changes we're proposing do not impact our current digital offer. However, we need to innovate and improve what we can do digitally. Accessing services digitally is an important part of what we currently do and will continue to be in the future. **We'd like you to tell us what you think is important to you when accessing services online.**

## Outreach

(the delivery of a service which does not take place in a dedicated or permanent space)

We will continue to use outreach to provide services in community locations such as village halls and in other ways such as from mobile vehicles or people's homes.

**This is work we already do, and we'd like you to share your ideas on how outreach could be more effective in your area.**

Our proposals are subject to feedback from the public and work to further assess the practicalities of co-locating services. This consultation document sets out some of the ways we think we can adapt and do things differently and **we are keen to hear from as many people as possible.**



## The Needs Framework

To address the challenges we have outlined, we are proposing to reduce our estate and to co-locate services. In order to do this in an appropriate way and to achieve the outcomes we want to, we have looked at the need for our services across the county by considering a range of data. We call this the Needs Framework.

The Needs Framework looks at needs across different wards. Kent is made up of 271 wards which are small sub-divisions of the county's 12 districts. We have used this structure to **map the likelihood of need for our services** and to determine where areas of focus are within each of our districts.



## How we have used data

We started by looking at a variety of indicators of need across all the wards in the county. The indicators we looked at were:

- Deprivation
- % of the population aged 0-15
- Deprivation Affecting Children
- % of reception age children who are overweight or obese
- % of deliveries to teenage mothers
- % of low birth weight live babies
- % of people over 65 living alone
- Deprivation Affecting Older People
- Long term unemployment
- Ethnic diversity
- % of pupils achieving a pass in English and Maths at GCSE
- % of people who report a long-term illness or disability
- Population growth
- Population density
- Digital exclusion
- Transport connectivity
- Broadband speed

For every ward in the county, we assigned a score of 1 for the lowest 20% and 5 for the top 20% to those adversely impacted by each of the above indicators. This gave us a total “score” for each ward; allowing us to categorise each ward from greatest to lowest overall need. This gave us a snapshot of what overall need was likely to be across the whole of the county and enabled us to create a first draft of the buildings we would retain and those we would leave.

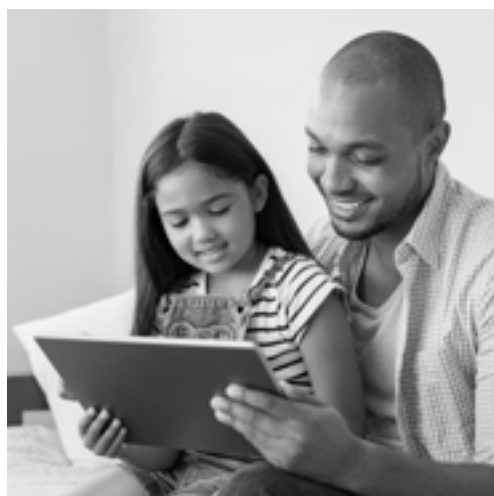
You can look at the indicator data we have used and the scorings for each ward on our website: **[www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)**

## Service specific consideration of the data

A key part of the process was focusing on the indicators most relevant to particular services and what that meant for the development of our proposals. We looked at specific combinations of indicators for each service, to understand the profile of needs in different areas. For example, wards with high numbers of children impacted by deprivation would be areas of focus for Open Access and Public Health services for children, but not necessarily for Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities.

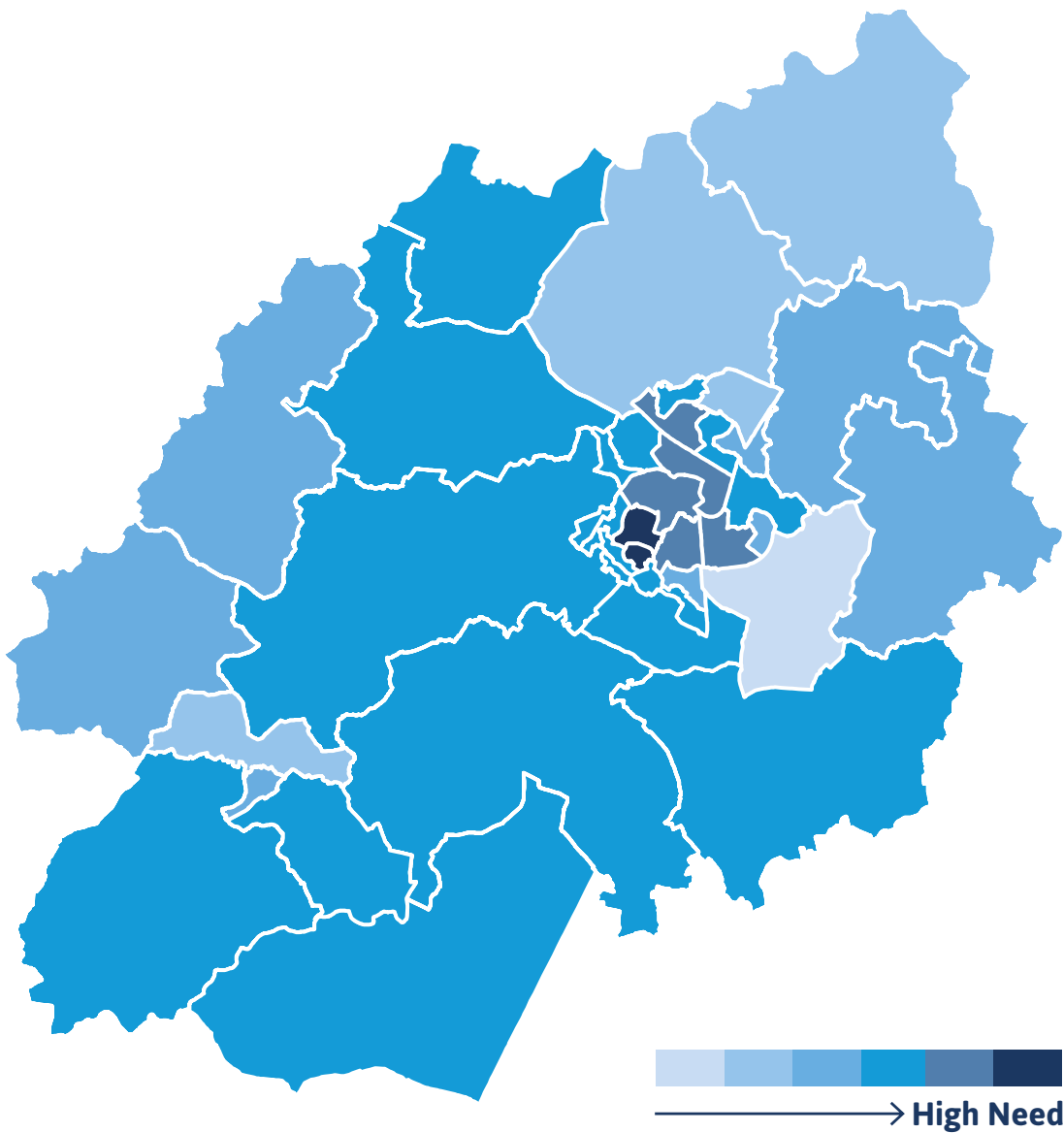
This allowed service teams and the KCC property team to refine the first draft of proposals, ensuring that what we are now putting forward reflects service specific, service user and other practical considerations.

The indicators which were identified as being relevant to each service area are set out in the table opposite. (The exception to this is Gateways, as the needs for this service were addressed towards the end of the process for designing the proposals.)



Indicator	Open Access	Public Health	Community Learning and Skills	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Deprivation including focused study of child and older people deprivation levels	✓	✓	✓	✓
Long term unemployment	✓	✓	✓	
Ethnic diversity	✓	✓	✓	
Educational attainment	✓	✓	✓	
Long term illness and disability				✓
% of ward population aged 0-15	✓	✓		
Reception age children who are overweight or obese	✓	✓		
Deliveries to teenage mothers	✓	✓		
Low birth weight infants	✓	✓		
Over 65s living alone			✓	
The increase in the population in 2020 compared to 2015	✓	✓	✓	✓
Population density	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital exclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transport connectivity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Broadband speed	✓	✓	✓	✓

We used interactive software to view the combinations of this data for each service, district by district. An illustrative example is set out below for children’s services and public health in Ashford:





## How we have considered people with high needs for services

A ward considered as high need was typically one that had high population density, impacted by high levels of deprivation and poor access to transport or the internet. We considered that in these areas, residents are likely to need more support from our services.

Whilst targeting services in wards with the greatest need, this has to be balanced with the fact that there is need for our services across the whole county, and there will be individuals who need to access our services even in areas of lower need. Our analysis showed there are greater numbers of residents with 'high needs' who may require our services in areas like Thanet and Swale than in places like Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells. For example, there were around 6,300 pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Thanet in the 2021/2022 academic year compared to around 2,200 in Tunbridge Wells. However, the data shows pockets of need for services in lower need locations and allows us to identify where to focus our services in districts like Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells. These factors also led to the further refinement of proposals.





## How we have considered the people that use our services

The service teams also provided information about the people who already use our services and how they access them. This additional layer of service intelligence enhanced the conversations we had about how to be effective in our delivery of services for people. For example, we may have an area of high need where the professional judgement of service teams is that outreach would be a more effective means of reaching the community than retaining a permanent building. The following indicators were used to better understand people's needs in each area:

Indicator	Open Access	Public Health	Community Learning and Skills	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Number of adults with learning disabilities in each district				✓
Forecast population of 0–5-year-olds in 2040	✓	✓		
Children whose main language is not English	✓	✓		
Children with Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)	✓	✓		
Children eligible for Free School Meals	✓	✓		
0-19 social care referrals	✓	✓		
Children in care children	✓	✓		
Children with Fixed Term Exclusions	✓	✓		
Young people known to the Youth Offending team	✓	✓		
Early help episodes	✓	✓		
Service demand data e.g. Number of clients aged 26+ with learning disabilities attending day centres	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Again, these considerations led to the further refinement of proposals.**

## How have we built the proposal?

As we have set out, **the Needs Framework was the starting point for the proposals but it does not provide a perfect formula** for decision making. The proposals set out in this document are the result of many months of refinement following collaborative workshops and meetings between service teams, the KCC property team and a dedicated project team. The result of our work was a holistic view of needs which was used as the basis for conversations with service teams about **how our existing buildings could meet the identified needs**.

Service teams contributed their working knowledge of localities across the county and its residents, and this allowed the KCC property team to refine the first draft of proposals, ensuring that what we are now putting forward reflects service specific, service user and other practical considerations.

We acknowledged that **Community Learning and Skills** have large multi-purpose buildings with specialist equipment and facilities that are typically in central locations with good transport links. The existing estate for this service is therefore largely unchanged in our proposals.



We also established that the additional specific data provided by the service team for **Adults with Learning Disabilities** is only available at District level so the ward-level framework would not be as applicable to Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities as other services. This is because it was more difficult to combine the initial indicator data with the service specific data for this service. However, this service places a greater emphasis on being in community settings where clients can experience proximity to the wider community. That meant expanding the opportunity to co-locate and/or using other buildings for outreach.

Once we identified the needs for the other services, we started to look at what was needed in terms of **Gateways** provision. Gateways have a 'meet and greet' function which supports people to find the service they need, and how to access it. We considered this service would be best utilised in central, more urban locations and we wish to explore the possibility of expanding the service and enhancing the customer experience in any new community hubs. As you will see later in this document, we are therefore proposing to expand our Gateways provision.

Through ongoing conversations with both service teams and the KCC Property team, we continued to consider whether the proposed network of permanent buildings would meet the identified need. A further key step in the development of our proposals was to look at **practical considerations relating to our estate**. Iterations of the proposals were reviewed with service teams, district by district, so that we could facilitate conversations about proposed building closures and co-location.

## Factors we considered when reviewing our estate

- What buildings we currently have in wards with the highest need
- Whether the buildings house a service which meets the needs identified in the ward they are in
- Whether there is a suitable building in a neighbouring ward within a reasonable travel time so that it can be considered accessible to those that need it. This was determined to be no more than 30 minutes travel time on public transport
- Whether a building under consideration is in a good location – which for us meant initially looking at town centres where it's easier for residents to access by public transport or in proximity to shops or other services
- The requirements services have in relation to the buildings they work from such as amount of space for activities, storage etc
- The potential for co-locating more than one service
- Any building constraints such as access issues or required adaptations
- Maintaining a percentage greater than 85% of residents within 30 minutes travel time on public transport of one of our buildings
- Whether the number of buildings supports the number of service users we currently have in an area
- Whether the number of service users justifies the cost of running the building
- Whether outreach could be a more effective way of meeting the identified needs in a ward rather than retaining a dedicated building
- Whether there is capacity to host outreach from other buildings



The results of all of this work are the proposals set out in the rest of this document which have been developed through discussion, refinement, and transformational thinking about how we can work differently but continue to deliver effective services.

Whilst the focus of our work has been to ensure we have a permanent physical presence for those who need us the most, there may be instances where we have decided to leave a dedicated service building in an area that we have identified as being high need. Factors such as the opportunity to co-locate or low numbers of service users were considerations taken into account in reaching these decisions. For example:

- Closure of Beaches Children's Centre in Sheppey East ward, an area of high need in Swale. Family Hubs are proposed to co-locate from Queenborough and Sittingbourne libraries. **These sites collectively will meet the need and demand for children's services and are in better, more central locations for people to reach and ease of access for young people.**

## Other options we have considered

As well as the proposals we are sharing in the consultation, we also considered the options below. They all contain building closures as part of the solution (except the option to do nothing). This is because any other options such as reducing opening hours on some buildings would not help us achieve our aims of saving money and meeting our Net-Zero targets.

	What?	Why?
<b>Alternative Option 1</b>	Close the buildings that are the most expensive to run	More financial savings which would help the Council balance its budget
<b>Alternative Option 2</b>	Close the buildings which are the most environmentally inefficient	This would reduce our carbon footprint and help us towards our carbon Net-Zero target
<b>Alternative Option 3</b>	Close the buildings with the highest market value, meaning they would have the highest financial return if they were sold	This would help the Council balance its budget
<b>Alternative Option 4</b>	Do nothing	No changes



## Impact of these options

As described earlier in this document, we need to reduce our costs while protecting services for the most vulnerable. All four options listed above would negatively impact vulnerable communities and those with highest need could be left without sufficient access to services. This is why we are not proposing these four options. Instead, we are proposing the model based on a Needs Framework, to ensure community need is at the heart of the proposals.

We need to provide a service offer that is effective (meets resident need), sustainable (reduces carbon emissions) and efficient (reduces costs). The table overleaf demonstrates whether each alternative option would achieve our aims of providing an effective, sustainable and efficient community service offer.



Alternative Option	Effective (meets resident needs)	Sustainable (reduces carbon emissions)	Efficient (reduces costs)
1: Close most expensive buildings to run	✗	✓	✓
2: Close most environmentally inefficient buildings	✗	✓	✓
3: Close highest market value buildings	✗	✗	✓
4: Do nothing	✗	✗	✗
5: Proposed option - close buildings based on a community needs framework	✓	✓	✓

The table above shows how each alternative option impacted our objectives. None of the four options deliver an effective, sustainable and efficient service delivery model the way that the proposed option (Option 5) does.

### **Alternative Option 1**

(close the most expensive buildings to run) would lower our costs and would reduce our carbon footprint slightly. However, there would be no accounting for whether the buildings that remain were best placed or suited to meet the community need. As our rationale states, we need to reduce our costs and carbon footprint whilst delivering based on the need of residents as identified in the Needs Framework. Therefore, Alternative Option 1 is not proposed.

### **Alternative Option 2**

(close the most environmentally inefficient buildings) would reduce our carbon emissions significantly and would reduce our costs slightly. However, as with Alternative Option 1, it would not necessarily result in the Council retaining the right buildings to meet the needs of the most vulnerable communities. Alternative Option 2 is not proposed.

### **Alternative Option 3**

(close the buildings with the highest market value) would not reduce our carbon emissions very much. Whilst it would lower our costs, it would focus on making more money from selling buildings, rather than lowering costs. As with Alternatives 1 and 2, there is no accounting for the needs of the community and as such Alternative Option 3 is not proposed.

### **Alternative Option 4**

(do nothing) would not reduce our carbon emissions and would not lower our costs. Being unable to reduce our costs would mean we wouldn't have sufficient funds in the future to ensure our services are available for those that need them.

### **Alternative Option 5**

(close buildings based on a community needs framework) meets our aims of saving money and reducing our carbon footprint whilst meeting the needs of Kent residents.

**What would be  
the impact of  
the proposals?**

# Anticipated savings

## Delivering value for money services:

The financial challenges facing councils across the country have been well documented recently and we need to continue working hard to find savings, whilst delivering value for money services for our residents.

We measure what we spend in two ways. Firstly, what we spend on our physical buildings and secondly, what we spend to deliver services.

In 2019/20 we spent £9.8m on the day to day running of the 219 physical buildings in scope of our proposals. We have used 2019/20 data as this is the last financial year where the assets were used at normal capacity.

In 2019/20 we spent £41.3m delivering the five services included in this consultation from physical buildings, through outreach provision and online.

If we were to make all of the changes proposed in this consultation, we are forecasting it would save £6.9m over the next five years in total, relative to the projected spend if we did not implement the proposal.

	2019/20 Spend	Anticipated Saving
Physical Buildings	£9.8m	£1.6m
Delivering Services	£41.3m	£4m - £5.3m

**Total anticipated saving: £5.6m - £6.9m**

£4m of spend associated with delivering services in physical buildings which are proposed to be closed has been repurposed for delivery of services through outreach.

## What would happen to the buildings we close?

No decisions have been made yet about which buildings to keep.

This public consultation is part of a process to determine which buildings are most needed to meet the needs of Kent's communities. Following this consultation an informed decision can be made around which buildings are needed. Part of that decision will include firstly considering if any other KCC or partner services could make use of the building. If a building is not required, then it would be declared surplus to requirements. We would then evaluate the best way of selling that building. Where these buildings are on sites shared with other service providers, we would engage with them during this process.

When KCC sells any building, it must comply with both Government legislation and our own Disposal Policy (Freehold Property Assets Disposals Policy). The Policy sets out the way in which we sell our buildings. KCC has an obligation to the taxpayer to give priority to the best financial offer for a building it is selling, to maximise the benefit to Kent residents. Any capital receipts from selling buildings will be reinvested into our priority capital programme.

# Supporting our Net-Zero by 2030 ambition

As part of KCC's Environmental Policy, we have committed to achieve net zero emissions by 2030 for our own estate and operations. Monitoring against this target started in 2019/20. One of the actions we have committed to in our Net Zero plan is reducing KCC's buildings estate by 2030 as our building estate accounts for the largest proportion of our carbon footprint.

The proposals we have suggested could save around 500-800 tonnes of KCC's greenhouse gas emissions. This is equivalent to 18-22% of current greenhouse emissions related to our community buildings and approximately a 5% reduction in our overall carbon emissions from our whole operations.

These figures are based on available data and relate only to KCC's emissions as we cannot effectively model what impact the proposed changes will have on the emissions of service users and other organisations. We are however focusing on reducing the emissions within our own control, linked to our estate.



# What would the new way of working mean for our service users?

We understand that the proposals could mean changes for people, depending upon how they currently access our services. We have set out in this section what we think the general impacts will be across all service areas:

## Proposed building closures

Some people may need to travel further if they want to access one of our alternative permanent buildings. Distances to the next nearest building are provided in the service sections of this document.

## Outreach

Some people may access services by outreach which means they will be delivered in a different location, depending on need for the services. This could be another KCC building or another type of building like a village hall or community centre. It may mean that some people could access services closer to where they live, without having to travel to the next closest permanent building.





## Co-location

We are proposing that a greater number of our buildings have more than one KCC service based in them, which we refer to as community hubs. For example, a community hub could house Family Hubs services as well as Library services.

## Digital

People will still be able to access some of our services online in the same way they do now.

Impacts which are specific to particular service areas are set out in the service sections later on in this document.

Also, we have undertaken detailed analysis on how the proposals may impact people based on a range of factors: age, disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief, marriage/civil partnership, sexual orientation, and carers' responsibilities. You can view the Equality Impact Assessments on our website (or upon request), and we welcome your feedback on our assumptions about equality and diversity as part of your consultation response.



## What would the new way of working mean for our staff?

We're encouraging everyone to take part and have their say on the proposals being presented in this public consultation, including KCC staff. Any future decisions made as a result of this consultation will be informed by the comments, ideas and feedback gathered from those who take part.

No decisions have been made. However, in line with our statutory duty, if as a result of any decision following the public consultation there is a requirement for changes to how and where staff roles are delivered, there would be a separate consultation with staff before any changes are agreed. We have begun engagement with our recognised Trade Unions to share the scope of the proposals, and we will continue to engage with them throughout the programme.

# What would the new way of working mean for our partners?

As a council we are committed to continue working with partners to deliver services to residents. Both the public sector and civil society as a whole (including the social sector or voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors) play a vital role in shaping strong resilient communities in our county. We have already begun conversations with our key strategic partners but welcome the views of all organisations and groups who may be impacted by the proposals for service delivery, as well as contributions about how we could work more effectively together in the future.

Where we are proposing to exit buildings, this may mean there is less space for partners to co-locate with us. Wherever possible we will endeavour to make space available for other partners and agencies to deliver alongside our services.

**We welcome and encourage feedback from organisations in this consultation.**





## **‘Business As Usual’ Activities**

We will be required to continue to manage our buildings in a way that best serves the residents of Kent between now and the final decision being made. That means that some changes to buildings may be required outside of the scope of this programme. For instance, if a lease runs out on one of our buildings, or if a health and safety matter arises, action will need to be taken so that we know we can continue to provide services appropriately and that we are keeping our staff and residents safe.

In the case where a lease runs out, the Council may take steps to renew it and keep delivering services from that location. Alternatively, we may need to find other options to replace the building should the landlord not wish to allow us to renew or extend the existing lease.

Where health and safety matters, or other building maintenance issues arise, our business-as-usual activity may involve works being undertaken to fix issues or could, in some cases, require temporary closure of buildings. We will be clear, if the situation arises, to indicate what measures are temporary ahead of any formal, long-term decisions being made because of this consultation.



There are a small number of instances where services are moving location because of plans or previous decisions made outside of this consultation. This is due to leases expiring or other buildings coming to the end of their life or suitability for the service need. Changes to the services and locations below will be seen much sooner as part of our Business As Usual management:

### **Dover Discovery Centre, Dover:**

co-location of Libraries, Community Learning and Skills, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Children's Centre Services (from Poltons Family Centre).

### **Oakwood House, Maidstone:**

co-location of Community Learning and Skills (from St Faith's), Civic Ceremonies and Registry Office (from Archbishops Palace).

### **Walmer Centre, Dover:**

exit building and relocate Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities to Meadowside Short Break Centre.

### **TRACS, Dartford:**

exit building and relocate Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities to Yew Tree Centre.

### **The Dartford Bridge Learning and Resource Centre:**

exit building and relocate Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities to Yew Tree Centre and Youth Hub service to Temple Hill Library co-location site.

## How have we considered equality and diversity?

Equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of our proposals as we ensure we are meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

Equality, diversity and inclusion was first considered through our Needs Framework, which consciously included data for many characteristics that are protected by Equality law. For example:

- data indicators in the Needs Framework include the percentage of 0–16-year-olds living in a ward, indicating where Open Access Services may have the greatest impact on younger people.
- data indicators in the Needs Framework include transport connectivity, indicating what percentage of households will be able to access services in a building within 30 minutes on public transport. Transport mapping for the final proposals was also undertaken to understand the accessibility of the proposed network of buildings. As we know, older people, the young, and those with a disability are more likely to be reliant on public transport to access services.

We have also undertaken a detailed equality analysis for each service to understand the potential impacts of the proposals on people with protected characteristics. In doing so, we have considered the impacts of specific building closures, as well as the impacts of the proposals more broadly. This analysis has helped us identify how we can mitigate any adverse impacts on people with protected characteristics, where we think they will arise. This includes, for example, the locations from which we provide outreach and ensuring that we select sites for service delivery that are accessible and inclusive.

Each service EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) is available to view online or in hard copy on request.

Our obligation to assess the equality impacts of our proposals is an ongoing one. Therefore, after the consultation, we will update the EqlAs to reflect any new information that has come to light during the consultation process and inform our assessment of the anticipated equality impacts of the proposals. This updated analysis will continue to inform the proposals, including if we proceed with them in their current form or make changes. The revised EqlAs will then be used during the decision-making process.

This public consultation is a vital part of the equality analysis process and our EqlAs will be updated following a thorough review of the responses we receive. We are particularly keen to hear from residents that have any concerns about the impact the proposals set out in this document may have on the protected characteristics. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Our EqlAs also consider the impact of the proposals on carers.





# Our proposals

Firstly we will describe our proposals for co-locating services. Following this, we will share more specific proposals for each of the services within this consultation.



## Our proposals for co-locating services

Co-location of services simply means that we will deliver more than one service from a building. As set out earlier, the financial pressures on the Council mean that we must find ways to use our estate more effectively and so with this proposal we are considering where co-locating services within a building is appropriate based on the needs of the community.

We have proposed this where there is evidence a community has a higher need for multiple services and there is an opportunity to make more use of our existing buildings. In the first instance we have considered which services are needed and which buildings would be suitable to host what's required for them to support the local community.

We are considering how Gateways could enhance the customer experience in these new community hubs. We know that some residents benefit greatly from speaking to someone about what they need. Gateways offer a 'meet and greet' function which could help find out what service can support them best and how they can access it.

We already have some great examples of service co-location across Kent and these proposals give us a chance to take what we have learned already and, where appropriate, do more of it. However, co-location of services brings up some challenges and we need to make sure any proposed new community hubs are suitable for services to deliver from. For example, there may be additional safeguarding requirements or the need for improved accessibility, so the buildings we have suggested for co-location are subject to feedback from the public and further assessment of the practical implications.

# Here are our proposals for co-locating services:

District	Proposed Community Hub Location	Co-located Services
Ashford	Stanhope Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
	Tenterden Gateway	Gateway, Community Learning and Skills, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
	Ashford Gateway Plus	Community Learning and Skills, Gateway, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Dartford	Dartford Library, Central Park Gardens (existing co-location)	Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
	Temple Hill Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
Dover	Dover Discovery Centre (as part of 'business as usual' activity)	Library, Community Learning and Skills, Family Hub, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Gateway (Gateway is proposed)
Gravesham	Gravesend Library	Gateway and Library
Maidstone	Oakwood House (as part of 'business as usual' activity)	Community Learning and Skills, Registration (and Coroners)
	Kent History and Library Centre	Gateway and Library
Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks Library / Kaleidoscope	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Library
	Swanley Link	Gateway, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities

<b>District</b>	<b>Proposed Community Hub Location</b>	<b>Co-located Services</b>
<b>Swale</b>	The Eden Centre	Library, Gateway and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
	Queenborough Library	Family Hub and Library
	Sheppey Gateway	Community Learning and Skills, Library and Gateway
	Faversham Library (existing co-location)	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Library
	Sittingbourne Library	Family Hub and Library
<b>Thanet</b>	Ramsgate Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
	Cliftonville Library	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Gateway and Library
	Broadstairs Library	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Library and Community Learning and Skills
	Thanet Gateway Plus	Gateway and Library
<b>Tonbridge and Malling</b>	Tonbridge Library	Gateway and Library
<b>Tunbridge Wells</b>	Cranbrook Library	Family Hub and Library
	Amelia Scott Cultural Hub (existing co-location)	Community Learning and Skills and Library

# Proposals for the five services in this consultation





# Children's Centres and Youth Hubs (Open Access Services)

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Public Health Services  
(Health Visiting Service and  
Children and Young People's  
Counselling Service)



This section tells you about our current services included in this consultation and also tells you about the Family Hubs Framework. Both children's and youth services are involved in Family Hubs which aims to bring services together for people, so they are easier to access. We have been successful in becoming one of the 75 Family Hub Transformation local authorities (councils) identified by the Department for Education. This means that we will implement the Family Hub Framework over the next 3 years. Practically, this means that service users will see children's and youth services coming together to provide an 'all-through' service delivery. We are proposing to bring these services together at the same locations, meaning that some buildings that users currently access for services will close. The full details of where we are proposing to deliver the Family Hub services and which buildings we are proposing to close are included later in this section.

This section of the document tells you about what a Family Hub is and what the change will mean for people that use our services. In this consultation, we would like your views to help us think about how the Family Hubs model will work in Kent, which includes how we use our buildings.

# Children's Centres and Youth Hubs (Open Access)

## What is the service and what does it do?

Open Access provides universal and targeted services for children and young people aged 0-19 (and up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities), as well as their parents/carers and families.

Open Access provides support from Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, as well as various community settings through outreach. Services include one-to-one support, group sessions and targeted activities.

Children's Centres provide services to families with children up to age 8. Examples of these are:

- Parenting programmes and support
- Public Health services such as Kent Health Visiting, support with infant feeding, development or behaviour concerns, healthy eating, immunisations, toileting, sleep and accident prevention
- Activities for babies and toddlers such as baby play groups, Messy Play, Stay and Play, music and song groups
- Adult Education such as English Learning Classes
- Cooking Groups





Youth Hubs provide services to young people between 8-19 years (and up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities). Examples of youth services provided currently in Youth Hubs are:

- Drop-in activities for young people including crafts, cooking
- Wellbeing activities
- Youth offending support services
- Support for young people not in education, employment or training
- Volunteering opportunities
- Duke of Edinburgh award programmes
- Parenting programmes

The Open Access service currently operates from 75 Children's Centres (including delivery from two commissioned Children's Centres; Millmead in Margate and Seashells on the Isle of Sheppey). Commissioned means that other organisations run the services in these centres on our behalf.

The Open Access service currently operates from 12 Youth Hubs across the county in addition to commissioning a further 12 district-based youth service contracts, where other organisations run services on our behalf.

## Public Health

### What is the service and what does it do?

KCC has a role in preventing poor health outcomes and reducing health inequalities. We do this by commissioning a range of public health services, the full range of which can be found online: [\*\*www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health\*\*](http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health)

Only two of KCC's Public Health Services will be affected by the proposals in this consultation:

#### Kent Health Visiting Service including Infant Feeding Support

The Kent Health Visiting Service, delivered by Kent Community Health Foundation Trust, supports families from the antenatal period, when baby arrives, right up to school entry. The service delivers the national Healthy Child Programme, which aims to promote optimal health and wellbeing for all children aged 0-5 years. It is formed of a multi-skilled team led by Health Visitors, who are registered nurses or midwives and have a specialised qualification in public health, public health nurses and community nursery nurses.

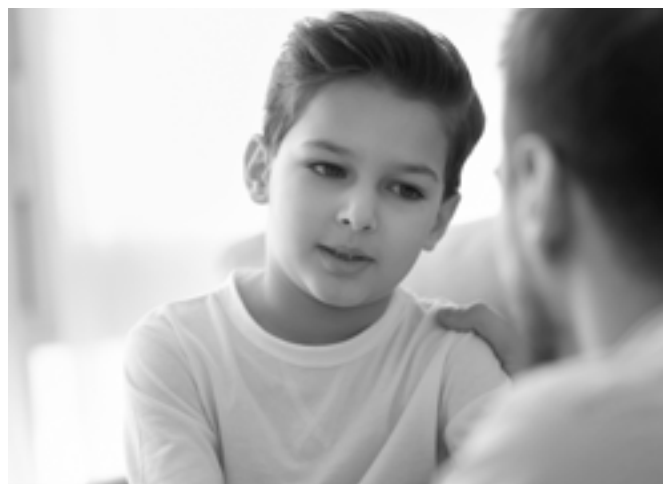
Infant feeding support is a universal part of the health visiting service's role. Advice and support for breastfeeding is available on the We Are Beside You website<sup>[1]</sup> and social media channels. The health visiting service also offers a specialist infant feeding service, providing advice and specialist support over the phone, and in clinics held in local communities including children centres.

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[1] [www.wearebesideyou.org.uk](http://www.wearebesideyou.org.uk)

## The Children and Young People's Counselling Service

This service is also delivered by Kent Community Health Foundation Trust, for children and young people aged four to nineteen, including those who do not attend school. A team of qualified counsellors help a young person gain understanding and develop strategies to better handle their emotions. These sessions can be offered via video link, phone or in person. Most young people are seen in a health clinic which can be held online or in person from a venue such as a youth hub. As detailed below, some Youth Hubs where counselling is available face to face currently are proposed for closure. The service will now be delivered in Family Hub locations and via the alternative methods outlined above.



## What is a Family Hub and how is it different?

In November 2021, the Government launched plans for the roll out of a national Family Hubs programme. The Government's vision is to develop the Family Hubs Model Framework across all Local Authorities (councils) in the country. The Government has supported this ambition with dedicated funding to transform community-based provision and Kent was identified as one of 75 eligible Local Authorities to apply for this funding.

Family Hubs bring together support from a number of different organisations, with professionals from different services working together to offer high quality, joined up support for the whole family. Hubs will be designed to provide family help early, from pregnancy, through the child's early years and later childhood, adolescence (teens) and into early adulthood until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)).

In a Family Hub, several different organisations and their services collaborate together. We call this a multi-agency approach. A number of Public Health services are already co-located within our buildings and with the implementation of the Family Hub model, we are looking to expand our co-located and integrated service offer. This is in line with Government thinking, to ensure professionals and community partners come together to provide a single point of access to family support services. It will provide a high quality range of services that are joined up, so they are easier to access.

**Our proposal is to integrate youth hubs, children's centres and health visiting services as well as midwifery and other key community services into 0-19 Family Hubs. However, we would like to keep some specialist settings. Details of specific buildings are contained later in this document.**



The Department for Education set out 3 principles for Family Hubs:

### **Access:**

There is a clear, simple way for families to access help and support through a digital and virtual offer, outreach activity and, in some specific locations, accessing a Family Hub building.

### **Connectivity:**

There are multi-agency services working together to provide a universal and targeted offer for families, 0-19 (up to 25 for SEND). There are professionals working together, through co-location, data sharing and a common approach to their work. Co-location means sharing buildings. The model is supported by the need for families to only have to tell their story once, with services being more efficient, and families receiving more effective support. This also involves statutory services, the community, charities, and faith sector partners working together to get families the help they need.

### **Relationships:**

The Family Hub model prioritises strengthening relationships and builds on family strengths. Relationships are at the heart of everything that is provided in Family Hubs.

## What is a Family Hub and how is it different?

In line with Government proposals, we are aiming to deliver Family Hubs by developing our current Open Access (Children's Centres and Youth Hubs), Health Visiting, and Youth Counselling offer, improving our integration and joint understanding with health colleagues, updating our outreach and digital offer as well as improving our joint working and collaboration with wider partners. More details are provided below.

We have considered:

- **Where buildings and community assets can have the greatest impact.** As part of this we have explored a wide range of data within our Needs Framework and feedback to understand how our existing services are used by communities and where our services are most needed.
- **How best to improve access to services in response to the Needs Framework** so that families will have greater choice about how they access information and support from services, whether in person, through outreach into communities, and through online support (where appropriate). As part of this, we have considered how best to offer online (digital) support in a way that is accessible to families across the county and makes best use of technology. We acknowledge that some residents would see their closest Children's Centre or Youth Hub close, however by incorporating effective outreach and digital provision we are enabling access through different methods.

- **When support is provided to families, so that families who need to can access support at an early stage** and there is reduced risk of any difficulties getting worse. This will also help us make sure that specialist services have the capacity to support families with the most complex needs.
- **The opportunity to co-locate services where possible, so that support can be delivered in a more joined up way for families,** and there is less need to re-tell their stories to different organisations or access multiple locations.
- **The opportunity to work more closely with** community partners, charities and faith organisations to reach out into communities and to meet families' needs in a more effective way.
- **The importance of working in partnership** with children, young people, families and communities to design, deliver and review services to make sure they meet the needs of local people.





## What will be different?

### We will:

1. Work with our partners to transform Children's Centres and Youth Hubs into a new network of Family Hubs across Kent including the closure of some of our Children's Centre and Youth Hub buildings. You can find detailed information on the proposed closures later on in this section of the document. This will enable us to provide services out in different community settings (outreach) by reducing the limitations of being based in fixed locations.
2. Deliver outreach services out in community venues, led by the needs of communities. You can find detailed information on existing and proposed outreach later in this section.
3. Establish a clear offer of online information, advice and support which will complement in-person delivery of services. As part of this, we need to ensure that we make our digital offer as inclusive as possible for people across Kent, considering those who have reduced access to the internet. You can find more information on our plans for a digital offer later in this section.



4. Provide a targeted approach, offering early support when needed to help reduce people's need for more specialist services in the future. With partner agencies working more closely together shared assessments will be delivered and a wider range of support identified.
5. Provide opportunities to access services, information, advice and guidance in a range of ways including: delivery from Family Hub buildings, needs-led community outreach, some virtual delivery (interactive online services) and improved digital access and information.
6. Create community spaces which enable the whole community to access a range of services in one physical location. This means co-location with some of the other services in this consultation, as well as some of our libraries.
7. Provide easier access within Family Hubs and via the alternative methods such as the Digital Hub to what other organisations offer from community and voluntary services such as support for debt and welfare, support for separating and separated families, and substance misuse support services.
8. Look into the possibility of developing opportunities for families to register the birth of babies within targeted community-based services alongside other early years and health services in line with Family Hub Model.

# Our proposals

## Impact of the proposals

The proposals may mean that some service users would need to travel further to reach their nearest Family Hub building. Distances to the proposed nearest buildings are explained in the table below. As described earlier, the Family Hub model means that services and partner organisations would co-locate and work together. Although some service users would have to travel further to access a Family Hub, co-location in turn would provide a better, more joined-up experience for people, providing access to more services and support in one location.

Delivering outreach sessions in communities that don’t have a permanent KCC building means that some people will be able to access some of our services within their community. If someone’s local Children’s Centre or Youth Hub building closes, outreach provision may be closer to them than the nearest alternative building as set out in these proposals. We expect that some service users who previously accessed some Open Access and Public Health services at permanent KCC buildings would therefore now access those services at outreach locations instead. Outreach sessions will be based on community need. Further detail on outreach locations is provided below.

In-person services will be supplemented with a strong and easy-to-use digital and virtual offer, to improve access to information, guidance and support for residents. However, we have recognised that online-based resources need to be carefully designed and co-produced with service users, to ensure that these are easy to use and helpful. There are limitations to online services, so we have a commitment to ensure that these platforms are used where it is appropriate and suitable to do so but is not the sole method for all information, guidance and support.



Some service users may have more difficulty travelling further and may be more dependent on an outreach and digital provision to access services. The impact of co-location in busier centres with more people and more diverse populations may also be more disruptive for some service users. Creating Family Hubs that are welcoming and inclusive is an important part of moving towards a Family Hub model.

## Detail about the proposals

As well as continuing to develop the service, we are proposing to use some of our buildings differently.

On page 42 of this document you will see a list of co-location sites which shows where Family Hubs would co-locate with other KCC services.

The table on page 61 shows each of the buildings we propose to retain and which we propose to leave. Buildings that we have indicated to 'Remain' are proposed to become Family Hubs.

Where we have proposed leaving a building, we have provided details of the nearest alternative permanent location and the distance in miles.

You'll see later in this section that we provide distances for accessing Health Visiting through outreach; however, we aren't able to present distances for Open Access outreach because it is varied in nature and the provision is dependent upon need and demand.



## District Ashford

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Ashford North Youth Centre	Remain		
Bluebells Children's Centre	Leave	Sure Steps Children's Centre The Willow Children's Centre Waterside Children's Centre	4.1 4.4 4.8
Little Explorers Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (Tunbridge Wells) The Willow Children's Centre	8.6 11.9
Ray Allen Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Stanhope Library The Willow Children's Centre Waterside Children's Centre	0.4 1.1 2.0
Sure Steps Children's Centre	Remain		
The Willow Children's Centre	Remain		
Waterside Children's Centre	Remain		

**District Canterbury**

<b>Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Apple Tree Children's Centre	Leave	Little Hands Children's Centre Riverside Youth Centre	3.5 7.7
Briary Children's Centre	Remain		
Joy Lane Children's Centre	Leave	Whitstable Youth and Community Centre Briary Children's Centre Riverside Youth Centre	1.5 5.8 6.9
Little Hands Children's Centre	Remain		
Poppy Children's Centre	Remain		
Riverside Children's Centre	Leave	Moving to co-locate in Riverside Youth Centre	0.1
Riverside Youth Centre (commissioned service)	Remain		
Swalecliffe Children's Centre	Leave	Whitstable Youth and Community Centre Poppy Children's Centre	1.6 3.0
The Tina Rintoul Children's Centre	Leave	Riverside Youth Centre Little Hands Children's Centre Briary Children's Centre	4.8 5.4 7.3
Whitstable Youth and Community Centre	Remain		

## District Dartford

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Brent Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library	0.6
		Oakfield Children's Centre	1.0
Greenlands at Darenth Children's Centre	Leave	Knockhall Children's Centre	3.9
		Oakfield Children's Centre	3.1
Knockhall Children's Centre	Remain		
Maypole Children's Centre	Leave	Oakfield Children's Centre	2.3
		Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library	3.3
Oakfield Children's Centre	Remain		
Swanscombe Children's Centre	Remain		
Temple Hill Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library	0.4
		Oakfield Children's Centre	1.8
The Dartford Bridge Learning and Resource Campus	Leave (as part as business as usual activity)	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library	3.2

## District Dover

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Blossom Children's Centre	Leave	Deal Youth Hub	1.3
		Proposed Community Hub at Dover Discovery Centre	8.2
		Samphire Children's Centre	9.2
Buckland, St Nicholas Church Children's Centre	Remain		
Deal Youth Hub	Remain		
Samphire Children's Centre (Aycliffe)	Remain		
The Sunflower Children's Centre	Leave	Buckland Children's Centre	6.1
		Deal Youth Hub	6.7
		Proposed Community Hub at Dover Discovery Centre	9.8



## District Folkestone & Hythe

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Caterpillars Children's Centre	Remain		
Dymchurch Children's Centre	Leave	New Romney Children's Centre	3.9
Five (Shepway Youth Hub)	Leave	Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre	1.0
		Caterpillars Children's Centre	2.1
Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre	Remain		
Hawkinge Children's Centre	Leave	The Village Children's Centre	2.7
		Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre	2.8
		Caterpillars Children's Centre	3.0
New Romney Children's Centre	Remain		
Lyddle Stars Children's Centre	Leave	New Romney Children's Centre	4.2
The Village Children's Centre	Remain		

## District Gravesham

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Bright Futures Children's Centre	Remain		
Little Gems Children's Centre	Remain		
Little Pebbles Children's Centre	Remain		
Northfleet Youth and Community Centre (Sprints)	Remain		
New Beginnings Children's Centre	Leave	Next Steps Children's Centre	0.6
		Little Pebbles Children's Centre	1.4
		Northfleet Youth and Community Centre (Sprints)	2.0
Next Steps Children's Centre	Remain		
Riverside Children's Centre	Remain		

## District Maidstone

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
East Borough Children's Centre	Leave	Sunshine Children's Centre	1.6
		Greenfields Children's Centre	2.4
Greenfields Children's Centre	Remain		
Info Zone (Youth Hub)	Remain		
Marden Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (Tunbridge Wells)	7.4
		Greenfields Children's Centre	8.1
Sunshine Children's Centre	Remain		
The Meadows Children's Centre	Remain		
West Borough Children's Centre	Remain		

**District Sevenoaks**

<b>Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Edenbridge Children's Centre	Remain		
New Ash Green Children's Centre	Leave	Next Steps Children's Centre, Gravesham	8.3
Spring House Children's Centre	Leave	Children's Centre service will deliver outreach from Sevenoaks Library	1.2
		Edenbridge Children's Centre Public Health will continue to deliver from Spring House	9.9 0
Swanley Children's Centre	Leave	Swanley Youth & Community Centre	0.5
Swanley Youth & Community Centre	Remain		
West Kingsdown Church of England Primary – Children's Centre Provision	Leave	Swanley Youth & Community Centre	6.8

## District Swale

Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Beaches Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Queenborough Library	8.0
		Seashells, Sheerness Children's & Family Centre (commissioned service)	9.0
Bysing Wood Children's Centre	Remain		
Grove Park Children's Centre	Leave	Woodgrove Children's Centre	1.4
		Milton Court Children's Centre	1.6
		Murston Children's Centre	2.6
Ladybird Children's Centre	Leave	Seashells, Sheerness Children's & Family Centre (commissioned service)	3.3
Milton Court Children's Centre	Remain		
Murston Children's Centre	Remain		
New House Youth and Sports Centre	Leave	Milton Court Children's Centre	0.6
		Murston Children's Centre	5.2
		Bysing Wood Children's Centre	8.8
St Mary's Children's Centre	Leave	Bysing Wood Children's Centre	1.5
		Murston Children's Centre	7.5
		Milton Court Children's Centre	9.0
Woodgrove Children's Centre	Remain		

**District Thanet**

<b>Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Birchington Children's Centre	Remain		
Callis Grange Children's Centre	Leave	Cliftonville Children's Centre Six Bells Children's Centre	2.3 2.8
Cliftonville Children's Centre	Remain		
Newington Children's Centre	Remain		
Newlands Children's Centre	Remain		
Priory Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Ramsgate Library Newlands Children's Centre Six Bells Children's Centre	0.3 1.0 4.3
Quarterdeck Youth Hub	Remain		
Six Bells Children's Centre	Remain		

## **District** Tonbridge & Malling

<b>Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Burham Children's Centre	Leave	Snodland Children's Centre and Samay's Youth Centre	5.3
		Woodlands Children's Centre	5.5
Little Foxes Children's Centre	Remain		
Snodland Children's Centre and Samay's Youth Centre	Remain		
Tonbridge Youth and Children's Centre	Remain		
Woodlands Children's Centre	Remain		

**District Tunbridge Wells**

<b>Current Children's Centre / Youth Hub Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Cranbrook Children's Centre	Leave	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library	0.1
Little Forest Children's Centre	Remain		
Harmony Children's Centre	Leave	Tunbridge Wells Youth Centre Little Forest Children's Centre	2.2 3.6
Southborough/Highbrooms Children's Centre	Leave	Tunbridge Wells Youth Centre Little Forest Children's Centre	2.5 2.2
The Ark Children's Centre	Leave	Tunbridge Wells Youth Centre Little Forest Children's Centre	1.2 2.9
Tunbridge Wells Youth Centre	Remain		



This table is specifically about Health Visiting Services. It shows the children's centres that accommodate Health Visiting Services which are proposed to close. It then tells you the nearest venue where you would be able to access this service instead. You will notice that some of the provision is by outreach:

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Ashford	Bluebells Children's Centre	Sure Steps Children's Centre	4.1
		The Willows Children's Centre	4.4
		Waterside Children's Centre	4.8
	Little Explorers Children's Centre	Tenterden Gateway	0.4
		Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (Tunbridge Wells)	8.6
		The Willows Children's Centre	11.9
		New outreach in Upper Weald Ward	10.8
Canterbury	Joy Lane Children's Centre	Whistable Youth and Community Centre	1.5
		Briary Children's Centre	5.8
		Riverside Youth Centre	6.9
		Current outreach in Gorrell Ward	1.5
	Riverside Children's Centre	Riverside Youth Centre	0.1
		Current outreach at Spring Lane	
		Neighbourhood Centre	1.2
		Canterbury and District Early Years Project	1.0
	Swalecliffe Children's Centre	Whistable Youth and Community Centre	1.6
		Poppy Children's Centre	3.0
		Current outreach in Gorrell Ward	2.4

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Dartford	Brent Children's Centre	Proposed Community Hub at Temple Hill Library	0.6
		Oakfield Children's Centre	1.0
		New outreach in Newtown Ward	0.8
		Current outreach at Dartford East Health Centre	1.0
	Greenlands (Darenth) Children's Centre	Knockhall Children's Centre	3.9
		Oakfield Children's Centre	3.1
		New outreach in Darenth Ward	0.5
		Current outreach at Dartford East Health Centre	2.4
Dover	Blossom Children's Centre	Deal Youth Hub	1.3
		Samphire Children's Centre	9.2
		New outreach in Aylesham, Eythorne and Shepherdswell Ward	7.5
		Current outreach in St. Radigunds Ward	8.9
	The Sunflower Children's Centre	Buckland Children's Centre	6.1
		Deal Youth Hub	6.7
		Dover Discovery Centre	9.8
		New Health Visiting outreach in Aylesham, Eythorne and Shepherdswell Ward	3.9
		Current outreach in St. Radigunds Ward	9.0
	Hawkinge Children's Centre	The Village Children's Centre	2.7
		Caterpillars Children's Centre	3.0
		New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services) in Hythe Ward	7.2
Folkestone & Hythe	Lyddle Stars Children's Centre	New Romney Children's Centre	4.2
		New outreach in Lydd	0.3

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Gravesham	New Beginnings Children's Centre	Next Steps Children's Centre	0.6
		Little Pebbles Children's Centre	1.4
		Northfleet Youth and Community Centre	2.0
		Current outreach in Northfleet South Ward	5.0
Maidstone	East Borough Children's Centre	Sunshine Children's Centre	1.6
		Greenfields Children's Centre	2.4
		New outreach in Maidstone North Ward	0.5
		Current outreach in Shepway South Ward	2.6
		Current outreach in Harrietsham and Lenham Wards	8.9
	Marden Children's Centre	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library (Tunbridge Wells)	7.4
		Greenfields Children's Centre	8.1
		New outreach in Marden and Yalding Ward	0
		Current outreach in Coxheath & Hunton and Headcorn Wards	5.7
			7.4
Sevenoaks	New Ash Green Children's Centre	Next Steps Children's Centre (Gravesham)	8.3
		New Outreach in Ash and New Ash Green Ward	0.2
	Spring House Children's Centre	It is proposed that Public Health services would remain in the current setting	
	Swanley Children's Centre	Swanley Youth and Community Centre	0.5

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles	
Swale	Ladybird Children's Centre	Seashells Sheerness Children's and Family Centre	3.3	
		Milton Court Children's Centre	6.2	
		New outreach in Queenborough and Halfway Ward	0.6	
	St Mary's Children's Centre	Bysing Wood Children's Centre	1.5	
		Murston Children's Centre	7.5	
		Milton Court Children's Centre	9.0	
		Current outreach in Abbey Ward	0.3	
	Thanet	Callis Grange Children's Centre	Cliftonville Children's Centre	2.3
			Six Bells Children's Centre	2.8
Current outreach in St. Peters Ward, Dane Valley Ward and Central Harbour Wards			1.0	
			1.8	
			3.3	
Priory Children's Centre		Newlands Children's Centre	0.8	
		Six Bells Children's Centre	3.9	
		New outreach in Ramsgate	0.3	
		Current outreach in Central Harbour Ward, Dane Valley Ward	0.7	
		3.9		
Tonbridge & Malling	Burham Children's Centre	Snodland Children's Centre and Samay's Youth Hub	5.3	
		Woodlands Children's Centre	5.5	
		New Health Visiting outreach in Burham and Wouldham Ward	2.2	
		Current outreach in West Malling & Leybourne Ward	6.3	
Tunbridge Wells	Cranbrook Children's Centre	Proposed Community Hub at Cranbrook Library - New Start for Life outreach	0.1	

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
	Harmony Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub Little Forest Children's Centre	2.2 3.6
	Southborough/ Highbrooms Children's Centre	Little Forest Children's Centre Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub New Health Visiting outreach in Southborough and High Brooms Ward	2.2 2.5 0.3
	The Ark Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub Little Little Forest Children's Centre	1.2 2.9

This table is specifically about Children and Young People's Counselling Services. It shows the children's centres that accommodate Children and Young People's Counselling Services which are proposed to close. It then tells you the nearest venue where you would be able to access this service instead:

District	Current Children's Centre Buildings	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
<b>Dover</b>	Blossom Children's Centre	Deal Youth Hub Samphire Children's Centre	1.3 9.2
<b>Tunbridge Wells</b>	The Ark Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub Little Forest Children's Centre	1.2 2.9
	Harmony Children's Centre	Tunbridge Wells Youth Hub Little Forest Children's Centre	2.2 3.6

## What could Outreach look like for our service?

Outreach is informed by need and is determined by information from our services and partner organisations such as the community safety partnerships, schools or early years settings. It takes many forms and is both flexible to demand and dependent on available resources.

It enables services to reach children, young people and families in the places and spaces that they use across their local community, such as libraries, schools and village halls. So you might see services delivered in a community space, as opposed to a permanent Family Hub, for a specific period of time before they are moved to another locality where there is a rise in need.

Some outreach and targeted work will also include home visits, which may be more comfortable and convenient for some to access support and guidance.

We have identified areas potentially needing increased outreach to support communities where we are proposing to leave buildings, and these are listed in the table below. The exact location of the new proposed venues cannot be confirmed at this time as no decisions have been made on the proposals. It will be subject to community need and availability of community premises.

The table opposite shows the districts and wards where there is existing outreach provision and where we propose to deliver new outreach provision, and which services this will involve.

<b>District</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Current Outreach or New Proposed Outreach</b>
Ashford	Tenterden North	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Ashford	Stanhope	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Ashford	Upper Weald	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Canterbury	Sturry	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Canterbury	Gorrell	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Canterbury	Northgate	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Canterbury	Barton	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Dartford	Newtown	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Dartford	Darenth	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer

District	Ward	Services	Current Outreach or New Proposed Outreach
Dartford	Newtown	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Dover	North Deal	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services)
Dover	Aylesham, Eythorne and Shepherdswell	Health Visiting Service	New Health Visiting Service outreach
Dover	Aylesham, Eythorne and Shepherdswell	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services)
Dover	St. Radigunds	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Folkestone and Hythe	Walland and Denge Marsh	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New Outreach offer
Folkestone and Hythe	Hythe	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services)



<b>District</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Current Outreach or New Proposed Outreach</b>
Gravesend	Northfleet South	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Maidstone	Marden	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Maidstone	Shepway South	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Maidstone	North	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services)
Maidstone	Coxheath and Hunton	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Maidstone	Headcorn	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Maidstone	Harrietsham and Lenham	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Sevenoaks	Ash and New Ash Green	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer

District	Ward	Services	Current Outreach or New Proposed Outreach
Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks Eastern	New Health Visiting Service outreach
Swale	Queenborough and Halfway	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes Current and continuing outreach health visiting services)
Swale	Abbey	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Thanet	Central Harbour	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Thanet	Dane Valley	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Thanet	Central Harbour	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Thanet	St. Peters	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Tonbridge and Malling	Burham and Wouldham	Health Visiting Service	New Health Visiting Service outreach
Tonbridge and Malling	Hadlow and East Peckham	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach

<b>District</b>	<b>Ward</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Current Outreach or New Proposed Outreach</b>
Tonbridge and Malling	West Malling and Leybourne	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach
Tunbridge Wells	Benenden and Cranbrook	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer
Tunbridge Wells	Southborough and High Brooms	Health Visiting Service	New Health Visiting Service outreach
Tunbridge Wells	Paddock Wood West	Open Access, Health Visiting Service and other multi-agency community partners	New outreach offer (includes current and continuing outreach health visiting services)
Swale	Abbey	Health Visiting Service	Current and continuing outreach

## How does Digital technology support the service?

Having a digital offer that will provide families with advice, support and access to services available across the 0-19 (25 with SEND) age range is an essential part of the Family Hubs model. The development of this digital offer is still very much in the formative stages, guided by the Department for Education. We will develop our digital offer with children, young people and parents/carers, to ensure it is easy to use and meets the needs of all users.

Having the Family Hub offer online will help our service users find information in an easy, accessible way. To ensure the content is accessible for everyone, we will co-design and test with a wide range of user groups, including those with disabilities or where English is not the first language. We also intend to develop digital tools to give people more control over how they access our services, for example an online booking system to book appointments. The development of digital and virtual service delivery will help parents and carers to access support in a time and place that will suit their needs. This could include online delivery of parenting support, or learning opportunities made available virtually.



# Community Services for Adults **with** Learning Disabilities

This section tells you about our current services and our proposals.



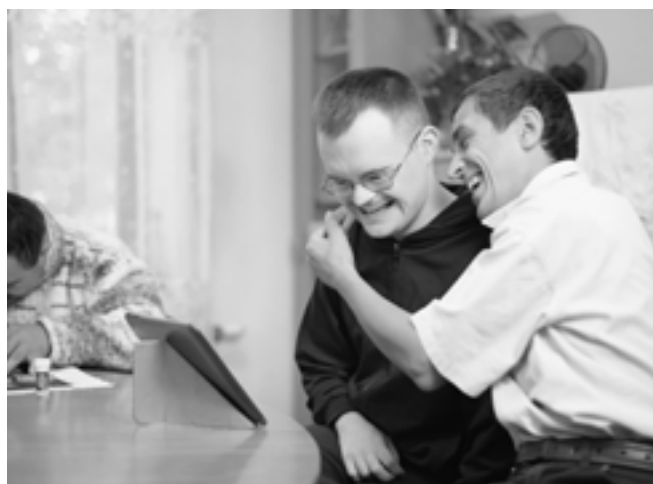
# What is the service and what does it do?

The service provides opportunities for adults with a learning disability and assessed support needs to learn new skills and form and maintain friendships and support networks. We support people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, promoting social inclusion as well as providing respite for carers.

We currently support approximately 400 people across Kent, providing about 1750 half day sessions per week.

Activities offered typically include:

- Physical fitness, including walking, cycling, swimming, dance, aerobics, boxing, bowling, boccia, chair exercises, sailing, and fishing
- Art and crafts, including painting, clay modelling, sewing, flower pressing
- Cooking, both for developing life skills and just for fun
- Gardening
- Photography
- Community outings using local services and venues such as cafes, pubs, shops, libraries, church clubs
- Interest groups such as history, transport, nature and conservation, singing, drama, using and developing digital skills



Everyone accessing our services will have an individual, outcome-focused support plan, keeping the person's needs at the heart of tailoring the plan and ensuring outcomes are achievable for the individuals. Much of our work involves supporting people to plan for the future – for themselves and their loved ones. This includes developing skills to live more independently and supporting work experience placements.

Previously, in 2017 there was a move away from traditional 'day centres'. Under the Good Day Programme service delivery was moved into smaller premises and room hires in closer proximity to the wider community. This has enabled greater opportunities to integrate and work more fully with other organisations and the general population. We collaborate with local communities to make them safer for people with learning disabilities and/or autism and are involved in many local projects.

We currently have 14 main sites across Kent and have 13 satellite services where we use space as needed to support our community outreach work. Many of our physical building spaces have access to fully equipped changing places and quiet/sensory rooms where the people who use our services can go to benefit from all that it offers.



## What else have we considered?

The Government's White Paper called '**People at the Heart of Care (2021)**' sets out an ambitious 10-year vision for how support and care in England needs to be transformed. The vision puts people at its heart and revolves around 3 objectives:

1. People have choice, control and support to live independent lives.
2. People can access outstanding quality and tailored care and support.
3. People find adult social care fair and accessible.



# Our proposals

## Impact of the proposals

The proposals may mean that some service users would need to travel further to reach their nearest building. Distances to the nearest buildings are explained in the table opposite.

We know that change can be particularly challenging for some of our service users as a result of their specific needs. Attending a different location may cause them distress which impacts upon their wellbeing and may result in new behaviours; however the service is knowledgeable in positive risk management assessments and will take a person-centred approach to managing any impacts on individuals that result from this programme. Service users would be supported through any change to help alleviate fear and anxiety. Whilst it's difficult to understand the individual impacts from data alone, further travel distances may also be an issue for our service users, and impact on their carer's ability to drop them off at their closest centre.

If the proposals are implemented our service will benefit from an increase in where it may be able to use KCC spaces for outreach in the community, which could be more convenient for our service users and their carers. In some cases, this may mean that people are able to access services closer to where they live. The co-location proposals also provide more opportunities for our service users to integrate with other council services and to foster positive relationships with communities in new spaces and places. We are aware, however, that the impact of co-location in busier centres with more people and more diverse populations may be disruptive for some people, particularly in light of the specific needs of some of our service users. Space requirements and service user experience will be important aspects in our thinking about the suitability of co-location proposals. If these proposals are implemented, then we will work to make sure that the facilities needed by service users are available.

We are not proposing to change our approach to how outreach is planned and delivered. Further information on outreach (including types of activities and venues) is provided on our website: [www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)

## Detail about the proposals

We are proposing to use some of our buildings differently.

On page 42 of this document you will see a list of co-location sites which shows where Community Services would co-locate with other KCC services.

The table below shows the buildings we propose to leave and the buildings we propose to remain in.

District	Current Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Ashford	Ashford Gateway Plus	Remain		
Canterbury	Swalecliffe Day Opportunities Centre	Remain		
	Northgate Hub	Leave	Thanington Hub	2.3
			Swalecliffe Day Opportunities Centre	6.5
			Prince of Wales Youth Club	0.4
	Thanington Hub	Remain		

District	Current Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Dartford	TRACS, Essex Road	Leave as part of business as usual activity	Yew Tree Centre	1.5
	Yew Tree Centre	Remain		
	The Dartford Bridge Learning and Resource Campus	Leave as part of business as usual activity	Dartford Library, Central Park Gardens	3.0
Dover	Walmer Centre	Leave as part of business as usual activity	Relocation to Dover Discovery Centre	8.0
Folkestone & Hythe	Bridge Resource Centre	Remain		
	Phase II	Remain		
	Folkestone Sports Centre	Leave	Phase II	14
Gravesham	Milton Haig	Remain		
Maidstone	Maidstone House	Remain		
Sevenoaks	Eden Centre	Remain		
	Sevenoaks Leisure Centre	Leave	Relocate to Sevenoaks Library	0.1

District	Current Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Swale	Crawford House	Remain		
Thanet	Minnis Day Centre	Remain		
	Hartsdown Leisure Centre	Leave	Minnis Day Centre Cliftonville Library Broadstairs Library	3.4 2.7 3.5
Tonbridge & Malling	Tonbridge Community Service	Remain		

## Outreach

We propose to keep our current person-centred approach to understanding and identifying what requirements are for outreach activities. You can view the extensive list of the types of outreach activities we offer, and types of locations, on our website: **[www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)** or on request.

Outreach work is a key part of the service provided by Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and forms approximately 50% of our overall activity.

That's because our clients need and want opportunities to be out and about in the community, experiencing greater independence and doing activities that enhance their wellbeing.

We work with adults aged 18+ with learning and physical disabilities. When planning outreach activities, reference is made to their individual care and support plans. A further assessment is undertaken within the referred-to-service of what clients like or are good at or if there is an identified need to learn personal safety, community awareness and inclusion.

The opportunity to work with local community resources/partner organisations that provide access to specialised equipment and skills also informs the outreach activities we can plan/offer.

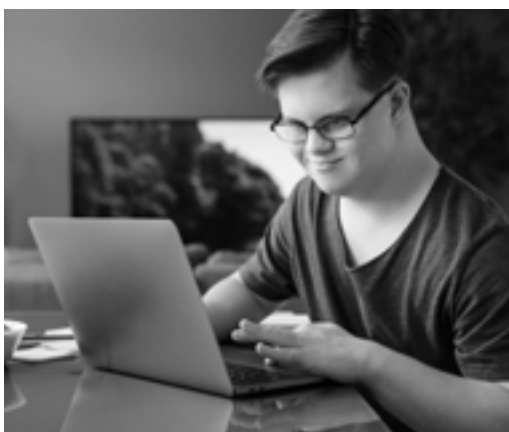
Weather such as a heatwave or heavy rain means we may have to plan differently on the day. The access to flexible and accessible community spaces is therefore very important.

## What do we provide digitally using technology?

We support people who use our services with a range of digital sessions, including live activities such as bingo, storytelling, physical exercises and have some videos posted on YouTube for people to access at a time convenient for them. This is currently provided at service specific locations. In order to develop this offer, we are looking to whether sessions can be provided on a county-wide basis releasing more staff back to supporting those that need the face-to-face support in local settings.

KARA systems installed during Covid have had a really positive impact on people, reducing social isolation, increasing safety and enabling people to develop their digital skills which can be used for development in other areas, such as online services, banking, shopping.

We have recently engaged with the Technology Enabled Care System (TECS) pilot in the coastal area and hope to roll this out across the county in the coming months. This project enables people to consider how telecare and digital solutions can support them in a manner that is person-centred, convenient and gives them the choice and control to live their lives to the fullest, and is part of a wider approach to supporting people.



# Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)

This section tells you about our current services and our proposals.





# What is the service and what does it do?

Community Learning and Skills (CLS) provides a wide and varied curriculum offer, from entry level, including the following areas of learning:

- Traineeships
- Apprenticeships
- A comprehensive accredited programme focussed on delivering employability skills and career progression
- Family Learning
- Programmes targeted at developing neighbourhood learning in deprived communities
- A substantial programme of personal and community development learning

CLS targets five specific groups:

- Young people entering the world of work
- Adults seeking skills for employment
- Organisations seeking to improve the skills and potential of their staff
- Adults learning for personal development, pleasure, and wellbeing
- Families, especially those in Kent's disadvantaged neighbourhoods

CLS delivers its curriculum via four areas:

- Skills
- Creative
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Apprenticeships, Study Programmes and Traineeships



# Our proposals

## Impact of the Proposals

We anticipate there will be minimal disruption from the proposed changes. There is only one location proposed to close, with the nearest alternative being very close by, on the same bus route and with a car park with designated bays for Blue Badge holders. Service users are likely to benefit from the proposal to close Broadstairs Adult Education Centre and move to Broadstairs Library in that they could access more than one service from the building, and it is in better condition so would provide a more pleasant user experience. The impact of co-location in Broadstairs Library, with more people and more diverse populations, may be disruptive for some people. Space requirements and service user experience will be important aspects in our thinking about the suitability of co-location proposals.

We provide services in fixed locations across Kent, as well as lots of outreach in other KCC buildings, community hubs and other venues.

On page 42 of this document you will see a list of co-location sites which shows where Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education) would co-locate with other KCC services.

Our fixed buildings and future proposals are:

District	Current Buildings	Proposal	Nearest Alternative	Distance in Miles
Ashford	Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre	Remain		
Canterbury	Canterbury Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Dartford	Dartford Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Dover	Deal Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Folkestone & Hythe	The Cube	Remain		
	The Pottery	Remain		
Gravesham	Gravesend Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Maidstone	Maidstone Adult Education Centre	Leave as part of business as usual activity	Reopening at Oakwood House	1.1
	Maidstone Adult Education Centre Skills Centre Plus	Leave as part of business as usual activity	Reopening at Oakwood House	1.5
Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre – Hatton House	Remain		
Swale	Sittingbourne Adult Education Centre	Remain		
	Sheppey Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Thanet	Margate Adult Education Centre	Remain		
	Broadstairs Memorial Hall & Pottery	Leave	Broadstairs Library	0.1
Tonbridge & Malling	Tonbridge Adult Education Centre	Remain		
Tunbridge Wells	Amelia Scott Cultural Hub	Remain		

# What could Outreach look like for our service?

Community Learning and Skills (CLS) is mostly a demand-led service and while a proportion of that demand is consistent in some areas, there is also constant emerging demand. Therefore these proposals do not impact the current outreach offer significantly.

Where new demand for the service is in areas where CLS does not have a physical presence, services are provided from outreach venues such as other KCC buildings, local community hubs, village halls, and other available places, which are rented on a short-term basis for the duration of that particular service provision. This includes parenting courses from Children's Centres or English and Maths classes in areas of high unemployment. Some of this already takes place in Children's Centres and Youth Hubs and we would want to build on this in the new Family Hubs model.

We are not proposing to change our approach to how outreach is planned and delivered. Read more about our outreach offer on our website:

**[www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)**



## What could Digital look like for our service?

We use established and modern technologies and platforms to support the provision.

Our computers are complemented by large screen laptops for home study (for eligible learners) and use in community-based venues. Online virtual learning environments and online electronic portfolios provide a library of resources and a repository for learners' course work and homework. We review our processes and systems to ensure they are as accessible and inclusive as they can be.

Delivery has evolved from traditional face to face in classrooms to a hybrid approach of in person and online lessons, with classrooms resembling studios as tutors broadcast their sessions to learners who 'Zoom' in or use 'Teams' to take part along with the learners in the classroom. Adult Education runs a wide range of fully online courses and online seminar lectures. Our online course catalogue and enrolment systems enable learners to search and read up about our courses from their homes – or anywhere with an internet connection – and most of our courses can be easily enrolled onto online. CLS will continue to keep abreast of technological advances to build on and enhance existing uses of technology to further widen accessibility and enhance the learner experience.

We are not planning to change our digital offer as part of this consultation.

Find out more about our current digital offer on our website:

**[www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/adult-education](http://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/adult-education)**

# Gateways

This section tells you about our current services and our proposals.



# What is the service and what does it do?

A Gateway is a hub which allows for services from a range of different organisations to be based together and collaborate under one roof. This can include services from Kent County Council, Local District/Borough or Town Councils and community or charity organisations. A Gateway is designed to match and meet community needs. They have a 'meet and greet' function which means that when people come into the building, someone will speak to them to find out what service they might need, and how they can access it. This could be promoting self-help, assisting with applications, direct referrals to services, or signposting to a service or organisation. This all depends on what the person needs and how much support they might require to access it.

There are currently 9 Gateways across the Kent. These are:

- Ashford Gateway
- Dover Gateway
- Eden Centre, Edenbridge
- Gravesham Gateway
- Sheppey Gateway
- Swanley Link
- Tenterden Gateway
- Thanet Gateway
- Tonbridge Gateway

# What are we proposing to do differently

The proposals mean there would be an increase in Gateway service provision across Kent to reflect need. By co-locating with other KCC services in new and existing locations, we will be able to provide a fuller service offer including:

- Finding out what people need
- Signposting people to the right service or information
- Assisting customers to carry out tasks such as Blue Badge applications

We will also be able to offer space for a range of other organisations to provide services from our Gateways as we do currently. This means that customers can benefit from a range of services under one roof. It is anticipated that Meet and Greet staff will also have knowledge of services available from the local District or Borough council as well as third sector partners (including voluntary and community organisations), to enable effective sign posting. We invite other organisations and services into Gateways based on our understanding of the changing needs of the residents that use our Gateway service and this changes depending on the specific location. It may include partners such as Post Office services depending on what is needed and not provided elsewhere in the area. We are always working with partners to try and provide the right offer for communities.

Gateways have been located in wards with high numbers of other services to enable high quality co-location opportunities and support for customers accessing KCC services and potential partners.



# Our proposals

## Impact of the proposals

The proposals would mean that service users in Gravesham, Tonbridge and Malling and Dover will need to access Gateways (and the organisations they partner with) from alternative locations.

As the proposed alternatives are less than a mile away in each case, we anticipate that the disruption associated with travel will be minimal. It is possible that service users will no longer be able to access District and Borough council services and services from partner organisations from the same location as they access Gateway services. The creation of additional journeys may have a larger impact on people who find getting around more difficult.

There will however be positive impacts as the proposal means we will be able to offer Gateway services in more locations by co-locating with KCC services. The list of co-location sites can be found later in this section. More areas will be served by Gateway services, which means they will be accessible to more people across Kent. The impact of co-location in busier centres with more people and more diverse populations may be disruptive for some people. Space requirements and service user experience will be important aspects in our thinking about the suitability of co-location proposals.

## Detail about the proposals

The table on the next page shows the 9 districts in which we have Gateways and proposed moves to Gravesend Library, Tonbridge Library and Dover to Dover Discovery Centre. These moves will mean we are sharing the building with more

KCC services. (Please note that the Dover Library service may need to move into the Dover Gateway building at some point during the consultation whilst refurbishment works are carried out on the Discovery Centre.)

<b>District</b>	<b>Current Buildings</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Nearest Alternative</b>	<b>Distance in Miles</b>
Ashford	Ashford Gateway Plus	Remain		
	Tenterden Gateway	Remain		
Dover	Dover Gateway	Leave	Service relocation to Dover Discovery Centre	0.5
Gravesham	Gravesham Gateway	Leave	Moving to Gravesend Library	0.9
Sevenoaks	The Eden Centre	Remain		
	Swanley Link	Remain		
Swale	Sheppey Gateway	Remain		
Thanet	Thanet Gateway Plus	Remain		
Tonbridge and Malling	Tonbridge Castle Gateway	Leave	Moving to Tonbridge Library	0.8

Our co-location proposals mean that Gateway services would be available from more locations across the county, together with a range of other services. The table opposite shows the full list of buildings where Gateways would be co-located:

<b>District</b>	<b>Proposed Community Hub Location</b>	<b>Co-located Services</b>
Ashford	Stanhope Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
	Tenterden Gateway	Gateway, Community Learning and Skills, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
	Ashford Gateway Plus	Community Learning and Skills, Gateway, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Dartford	Temple Hill Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
Dover	Dover Discovery Centre	Library, Community Learning and Skills, Family Hub, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and Gateway (Gateway is proposed)
Gravesham	Gravesend Library	Gateway and Library
Maidstone	Kent History and Library Centre	Gateway and Library
Sevenoaks	Swanley Link	Gateway, Library and Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
	The Eden Centre	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Library and Gateway
Swale	Sheppey Gateway	Community Learning and Skills, Library and Gateway
Thanet	Ramsgate Library	Family Hub, Library and Gateway
	Cliftonville Library	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Gateway and Library
	Thanet Gateway Plus	Gateway and Library
Tonbridge	Tonbridge Library	Gateway and Library



## What could Outreach look like for our service?

There is currently no provision for outreach for Gateways, but we are considering how we could run 'pop-up' support from our other community buildings. This will be considered on a needs basis, however it could mean running drop-in help for people needing support with Blue Badge application forms for example.

## What could Digital look like for our service?

Gateways currently support people in accessing services digitally where they cannot do it themselves. This might be helping them to log Highways faults, complete Blue Badge application forms, or helping people with access to a computer. There are no proposals to move the Gateway service digitally instead of face to face, but the service will continue to use digital technology to help people where we do so currently (such as helping people to navigate other services online).



# How you can get involved and have your say

The consultation runs from 17 January to 26 March 2023.

Please visit **[www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](https://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)** where you will find all the information about this consultation and be able to fill in the questionnaire to give us your views.

Alternatively, you can fill in a paper questionnaire and send it to us at:

## Freepost KENT COMMUNITIES

If you have any questions before you respond to the consultation, you can get in touch. You can also use these contact details to request alternative formats of the consultation information:

**Communityservicesfeedback@kent.gov.uk**  
**03000 419815**

There will be drop-in events across Kent where you can come and talk to us about the proposals and ask your questions. If you have any accessibility requirements, please get in touch and let us know in advance:

<b>District</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Ashford	Ashford Gateway, Church Road, Ashford, TN12 1AS	Wednesday 22 February	10am-1pm
	The Willows Children's Centre, Halstow Way, off Brookfield Road, Ashford, TN23 4EY	Tuesday 28 February	4-8pm
Canterbury	Canterbury Library, The Beane House of Art & Knowledge, 18 High Street, Canterbury, CT1 2RA	Wednesday 15 February	10am-1pm
	Little Hands Children's Centre, 16 Hollowmede, Canterbury, CT1 3SD	Monday 13 February	4-8pm
Dartford	Dartford Library, Market Street, Dartford, DA1 1EU	Friday 17 February	10am-1pm
	Oakfield Children's Centre, Oakfield Lane, Dartford, DA1 2SW	Thursday 9 February	4-8pm
Dover	Deal Library, 5 Broad Street, Deal, CT14 6ER	Friday 10 February	10am-1pm
	Buckland Children's Centre, St Nicholas Church, The Linces, Dover, CT16 2BN	Tuesday 14 February	4-8pm
Folkestone and Hythe	Wood Avenue Library, 17 Wood Avenue, Folkestone, CT19 6HS	Friday 24 February	10am-1pm
	Folkestone Early Years Centre, Dover Road, Folkestone, CT20 1QF	Tuesday 21 February	4-8pm
Gravesend	Gravesend Library, Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BE	Thursday 9 March	10am-1pm
	Riverside Children's Centre, Dickens Road, Gravesend, DA12 2JY	Thursday 2 March	4-8pm

<b>District</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Maidstone	Sessions House, County Hall, County Road, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ	Friday 3 March	10am-1pm
	Sessions House, County Hall, County Road, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ	Friday 10 March	4-8pm
Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks Library, Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, TN13 1LQ	Tuesday 7 March	10am-1pm
	Swanley Youth and Community Centre, St Mary's Road, Swanley, BR8 7BU	Wednesday 8 March	4-8pm
Swale	Sheppey Gateway at Sheerness Library, 38-42 High Street, Sheerness, ME12 1NL	Monday 27 February	10am-1pm
	Milton Court Children's Centre, Brewery Road, Milton Regis, Sittingbourne, ME10 2EE	Thursday 23 February	4-8pm
Thanet	Margate Library, Thanet Gateway Plus, Cecil Street, Margate, CT9 1RE	Monday 30 January	10am-1pm
	Six Bells Family Centre, 201 High Street, Margate, CT9 1WH	Monday 20 February	4-8pm
Tonbridge and Malling	Larkfield Library, Martin Square, Aylesford, ME20 6QW	Wednesday 8 February	10am-1pm
	Tonbridge Youth and Children's Centre, 2 Danvers Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1TR	Friday 3 February	4-8pm
Tunbridge Wells	Southborough Hub, Southborough Civic Centre, 137 London Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 0ND	Tuesday 7 February	10am-1pm
	Little Forest Children's Centre, Friars Way, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 3UA	Thursday 2 February	4-8pm



# Timeline and decision-making process

Subject to the outcome of the consultation, the proposals will be updated with due regard to the feedback we receive. We expect a final decision on the specific location of our buildings will be made later in the summer 2023.

We would then anticipate changes starting to be made from early 2024. The full implementation period is expected to be up to two years.

Transition to the Family Hub initiative will take place earlier and will be driven and supported by the Department for Education.

## Glossary

**“Services”:** We will refer to ‘services’ throughout this document. It means the departments in the council that are responsible for things like children’s centres and adult education. There are five services involved in this programme:

1. Children’s Centres and Youth Hubs (Open Access)
2. Public Health
3. Community Learning and Skills
4. Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
5. Gateways

**“Capital Receipts”:** The money made by the Council from selling buildings.

**“Priority Capital Programme”:** A group of key projects that use money from the Council’s Capital Budget (as opposed to the Revenue Budget) to deliver things like Highway improvements and school expansions.

**Commissioning:** This is when we decide what services need to be delivered and how, then we award contracts for organisations to run and manage these services.

**Delivery:** This means how we do what we do. We 'deliver' our services in three key ways: from buildings, in the community (outreach) and online.

**Outreach:** the delivery of a service which does not take place in a dedicated or permanent space.

**Digital:** the use of technology to deliver a service online or virtually.

**District:** There are 12 districts across the county and they are made up of smaller 'wards':

1. Ashford
2. Canterbury
3. Dover
4. Dartford
5. Folkestone and Hythe
6. Gravesham
7. Maidstone
8. Thanet
9. Swale
10. Sevenoaks
11. Tonbridge and Malling
12. Tunbridge Wells

**Wards:** Each of the 12 county districts is made up of up to 39 wards.

# COMMUNITY

**Services Consultation**



The consultation runs from 17 January to 26 March 2023  
Please visit [www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation](http://www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation)

# COMMUNITY

## Services Consultation



Public consultation runs from  
17 January to 26 March 2023

**Alternative Formats:** If you need this document or any of the consultation documents in an alternative format, please email [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

