

Future of older person's provision in Kent County Council

BRIEFING NOTE

Consultation 21 June – 1 Nov 2010

Kent County Council is reviewing the way it provides residential services for older people – specifically the homes operated directly by the county council.

The reason

The reason behind this can be summed up in four headings

- **People:** More people are living longer and living with dementia. People rightly expect more choice in care
- **Care:** High quality care is a continuing priority. Dignity in care is crucial and more people want care at home
- **Buildings:** Residential care should be in high quality buildings. Some KCC buildings have reached the end of their useful life and don't meet expectations. All residents should have the opportunity for en suite bathrooms
- **Cost/the market:** Good quality care can be commissioned for less money. The private and voluntary sector is set up to care for more people.

Future Models of Care

There is a large, thriving care sector in Kent. Many private and voluntary care organisations already have established relationships with KCC adult social services, which buys residential care from them.

There will always be a need for residential care for those who are unable to stay living independently in their own home, and those who choose not to. There will also be a need for a wider range of specialist provision – and more of it.

For example:

- **Recuperative care** where people need short periods of intensive support between a stay in hospital and returning home. This helps avoid the need for a return to hospital later and helps people be ready to return home
- **Dementia care** where there is an integrated, team approach by social services and the health service
- **Extra care sheltered housing** – in partnership with local councils providing individuals with their own apartment, access to communal facilities and care staff on site 24 hours a day able to offer immediate response in an emergency.

Current provision

Kent County Council adult social services currently operates 16 residential care homes for Older People across Kent.

- Three of the homes, Gravesham Place (Gravesend), Westbrook (Margate) and West View (Tenterden) are relatively new facilities, providing an integrated service with the health service. These 'integrated care centres' are built to modern standards with en-suite facilities. They provide a high standard of care, including rehabilitation

- Broadmeadow in Folkestone is also newly built and offers supported discharge from hospital to prevent delays. It is in the process of being extended to provide specialist dementia care, alongside professional health service support
- The remaining 12 homes provide good quality care, including some recuperative care, and are generally popular with their residents. However, they are older buildings without en-suite facilities and are increasingly expensive to maintain. The cost of modernising these buildings, and adding the specialist services that are needed, would be very high. The cost of a place in our homes is much higher than in the private and voluntary sector.

Opportunities

KCC adult social services has secured funding to deliver more extra care housing, building on the success of schemes that have recently been completed across the county. These schemes provide 275 apartments for vulnerable people, built through a partnership with 10 local councils. Extra care apartments offer older people the chance of a home of their own in a shared building with 24-hour care and facilities. It is proposed that Bowles Lodge, Cornfields and Manorbrooke could become extra care housing sites.

The extension of Broadmeadow to provide a 'Centre of Excellence' for dementia services will allow services to be transferred from Lawrence House, which will close. The formal consultation has been completed and work is already underway with staff and those who use the service to provide support throughout the transfer, either into Broadmeadow or to another home of their choice.

There is a thriving private and voluntary care market in Kent and some major providers are working to modernise their own facilities. Partnering arrangements could be looked at as a way of providing the modernised services that are needed, and expected, by the people of Kent.

Proposals

In order to make sure of the most appropriate outcome for each home, Kent County Council adult social services needs to consider the location and service need in each place. The proposals being put forward are listed below.

- Wayfarers in Sandwich is proposed to be sold as it is for another organisation to run
- We are proposing that some of the services at Blackburn Lodge at Sheerness, Doubleday Lodge at Sittingbourne and Kiln Court at Faversham could be run by another organisation, with terms set by Kent County Council
- Bowles Lodge at Hawkhurst, Cornfields at Dover and Manorbrooke at Dartford are proposed to be replaced by extra care housing, which offer older people the chance of a home of their own, in a shared building with 24-hour care and facilities
- Ladesfield at Whitstable, Sampson Court at Deal and The Limes at Dartford are proposed to close completely in the next two years
- Dorothy Lucy Centre at Maidstone will be kept as it is. A decision about its future will be taken at a later date.

Practical implications

It is important to establish what private or voluntary organisations might be interested in being involved, if the proposals are agreed after a consultation process. With this in mind, the early part of a formal tendering process will be carried out while the consultation process is taking place.

These proposed changes are not straightforward. If approved, they will inevitably create a lot of anxiety. This will affect those who use the homes, their families, and members of staff. So, if the proposals are approved, KCC members of staff will work carefully with every older person affected, and their families. They will work to find good and suitable alternative places to live, with the right care. Similarly, all residential home staff will be supported throughout the change.

To make sure we seek the view of all interested parties, Kent County Council adult social services will talk to a wide range of people and organisations:

those who live in the residential homes and use the services, their families and carers, members of staff and union representatives, county councillors, local district and borough councillors and MPs, other statutory agencies, such as representatives from the health services special interest groups.

County councillors have agreed that there will be a period of formal consultation. This will be your opportunity to let us know what you think of the proposed changes.

Please send your comments by 1 November 2010 to:

Older Persons Futures
Room 3.12
Brenchley House
123-135 Week Street
Maidstone
ME14 1RF

You can also phone 01732 525477 or email opfutures@kent.gov.uk

Find out further information on the Kent website
www.kent.gov.uk/opfutures