

Shaping the Family Hubs and Start for Life Offer

Public consultation 19 July to 13 September 2023

Consultation Questionnaire

We recommend that you read the consultation document (either the Summary or the Full document) before answering the questions.

To take part in the consultation please go to www.kent.gov.uk/familyhubservices to complete the online questionnaire.

Alternatively, fill in a Word/paper version and return it by email:

familyhubsfeedback@kent.gov.uk

Or you can post it to: Freepost FAMILY HUB SERVICES CONSULTATION

We also welcome your feedback by email, letter or phone if you don't want to fill out the questionnaire.

If you have any questions, please contact us on familyhubsfeedback@kent.gov.uk or telephone us on 03000 419292. This number goes to an answering machine which is monitored during office hours. You can also meet us at an event over the summer. Details of these events are in the consultation document and on the consultation webpage:

www.kent.gov.uk/familyhubservices.

Following the end of the consultation we will take all responses into consideration and produce a consultation report. We expect a final decision on the proposals to be made in Autumn 2023.

Alternative formats: If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language, please email: 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.

Privacy: Kent County Council (KCC) collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. KCC respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to

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ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Read the full Privacy Notice on our website, or contact us to send you a copy.

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Section 1 – About you

This questionnaire is for people that wish to respond in a professional capacity (as staff, individuals or as part of an organisation).

Parents/carers, young people and other individuals have a separate questionnaire which is available on our website or from children’s centres and youth hubs.

Q1. Please tell us in what capacity you are completing this questionnaire:

Please select the option that **most closely** represents how you will be responding to this consultation. Please select **one** option.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kent County Council staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Community-based midwifery staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Health Visiting staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Staff from another health-related organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a representative of a local community group or residents’ association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of an educational establishment, such as a school, college or early years setting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | / On behalf of a Parish / Town / Borough / District Council in an official capacity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a Parish / Town / Borough / District / County Councillor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a Kent business owner or representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of a faith group |

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Other, please specify:

Q1a. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or group, please tell us the name of your organisation or group. Please write in below.

Q2. Please tell us the first five characters of your postcode:

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please use your organisation's postcode (Please do not reveal the whole postcode). We use this to help us to analyse our data. It will not be used to identify who you are.

Q3. How did you find out about this consultation? Please select **all** that apply.

Facebook

Twitter

From a friend or relative

Kent.gov.uk website

At a KCC building (e.g. children's centre, youth hub, library or Gateway)

Local KCC County Councillor

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<input type="checkbox"/>	District Council / Councillor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poster / postcard
<input type="checkbox"/>	An email from KCC
<input type="checkbox"/>	KCC's staff intranet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify:

Officers and Councillors advised by Kent Country Council that the consultation would be taking place in follow up to the previous consultation on Community Services.

Section 2 – Family Hub Services

In the consultation document we tell you the activities and services that we must make sure are part of the Family Hubs model. However, there are other activities which are additional and there is choice over what we do. Some of them could form part of the Family Hub service. Below is a list of some of these additional activities. These might be accessed in community settings or by being given information or advice about them and on how to access them.

- Face to face (in person)
- Online services are digital services that users can access at their own pace and time.
- Virtual services are digital services that users must access live at specific times and days. These services require someone to be delivering them.

Q4. For each service below, please select the access methods you think are suitable. You can select one, two or three options for each service.

Please select **all** that apply.

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Education for parents on child development

- | | |
|---|---|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
| / | Online services (accessing information) |
| / | Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online) |

Activities for children aged 0-5

- | | |
|---|---|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
| / | Online services (accessing information) |
| / | Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online) |

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Activities for older children and young people

- / Face to face (in person)
- / Online services (accessing information)
- / Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

Information, advice and guidance about support services for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- / Face to face (in person)
- / Online services (accessing information)
- / Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

Information and signposting to mental health services (children and adults)

- / Face to face (in person)
- / Online services (accessing information)
- / Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

Support for parents/carers of adolescents (teenagers)

- / Face to face (in person)

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/
/

Online services (accessing information)

Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

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Online safety for children and young people

- | | |
|---|---|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
| / | Online services (accessing information) |
| / | Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online) |

Support for young people with substance misuse (alcohol/drugs)

- | | |
|---|---|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
| / | Online services (accessing information) |
| / | Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online) |

Domestic abuse support

- | | |
|---|---|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
| / | Online services (accessing information) |
| / | Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online) |

Debt and welfare advice

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| / | Face to face (in person) |
|---|--------------------------|

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/
/

Online services (accessing information)

Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

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Signposting to information to support separating and separated parents

/	Face to face (in person)
/	Online services (accessing information)
/	Virtual services (e.g. groups, courses, live chat online)

Q5. If you have any comments about any of these methods for a particular service, please tell us below.

It is important that our communities, particularly those in rural areas, continue to receive an accessible service to ensure the health and wellbeing of both children and parents. These services not only provide valuable support to infants, but they also enable people to build trusting relationships, which enables them reach out for support with issues such as domestic abuse, poverty, substance addiction and other concerns. The proposed changes need to continue to provide the opportunity for people to build those relationships and enable professionals the contact with residents to be able to use professional curiosity to really ensure someone is OK. A face-to-face offer is key to this.

The delivery of online services and Digital Exclusion in Maidstone

Online and Virtual Services without a face-to-face offer would be insufficient to meet the needs of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in Maidstone. This is a particular concern as digital exclusion is likely to be compounded by poverty. Access to a mobile phone is very different to having access to a desktop and broadband, nor does it indicate a willingness to engage in this way.

The people that you reach via this consultation exercise are likely to be digitally included. The consultation is online (although a paper copy is available on the online platform at the end of long list of supporting documents which could very easily be missed). Additionally

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in order to complete the survey online you have to register an account which is a barrier in itself. There does not appear to be any proactive engagement with groups in communities aside from 'family fun days' at two children's centres in Maidstone. (Whilst they are described as engagement events in the consultation literature but when you follow the link to the 'drop in events' they are advertised as family fun days with no mention of the consultation).

Data

The 2021 Census tells us on average 93% of Maidstone households returned their census results online, when a digital first approach was adopted for the first time in Census history in in 2021. However, it was identified that two wards in Maidstone had a much lower uptake of digital first, instead opting to return their results using the paper form. These wards were Park Wood, with only 68% returning online, and Shepway South, with only 79% returning online. This tells us that residents in these wards are much less likely to engage digitally which could be due to deprivation and affordability of hardware and broadband. It could also be an indicator of lower levels of digital literacy in these wards.

Digital Kent

How is the Digital Kent Programme supporting this project?

From our experience with the project, it hasn't gone far enough to support groups who require assistance accessing online services and there is a lack of knowledge of district level need despite our willingness to engage as a Council.

Location of Family Hubs

In terms of Family Hubs – the location is key. We don't know from this consultation proposal how many Family Hubs there will be or where they will be located. It is essential that in Maidstone our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families have access.

Maidstone has two neighbourhoods (LSOAs) that rank within the Country's 10% most deprived areas, the needs of which should be closely considered. These areas are in

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Parkwood (ranked 2,915 in the country) and Shepway South. In addition, there are four further LSOAs that rank under 5,000 most deprived in the Country (out of 32,844). These areas are in Parkwood, Shepway South, High Street and Shepway North wards.

There is no information or data included as part of this consultation to suggest that deprivation and high need have informed the proposals. We urge you to engage with districts and to ensure that the future provisions are robust and able meet the needs of children and families in Maidstone and Kent. Please see the data provided in response to Q13 and Q14 which illustrates the need and health inequalities in the most deprived wards in Maidstone.

Q6. Please tell us your suggestions for what services could be delivered online and how. (For example, group sessions using technology like Zoom.)

This question is difficult to answer as there is a lack of information in the consultation documentation on what services will exist and where.

Accessibility must be a key consideration. Schemes to increase digital accessibility, particularly in areas of deprivation, are required to support residents with any changes to the way services are delivered.

As expressed in Q5, we have now found that the Digital Kent project has gone far enough to support residents experiencing digital exclusion. It would have been useful if the measures of success from the Digital Kent project had been included in this document to provide assurances that this model is supporting access to online services for residents, providing confirmation that this is the right direction for services to develop in.

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Q7. In the consultation document we list the mandatory and additional activities that could be part of the Family Hub network. Is there anything else you think should be available for children, families and young people through the Family Hub network in Kent?

The additional services listed in the consultation document are described as services that 'could be' included. There are:

Education for parents on child development • Activities for children aged 0-5 • Activities for older children and young people • Information, advice and guidance about support services for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) • Information and signposting to mental health services (children and adults) • Support for parents/carers of adolescents (teenagers) • Online safety for children and young people • Support for young people with substance misuse (alcohol/drugs) • Domestic abuse support • Debt and welfare advice • Signposting to information to support separating and separated parents

All these services are vital to supporting children and families across Maidstone and should be accessible to all. Need will vary from ward to ward across Maidstone. Therefore, the location of services and resources made available should be need led to ensure that the services offered can meet the needs of children and families in the area. (Please see the data included in response to Q13 and Q14).

Annex F to the Government's guidance for Family Hubs sets out the **core services** that local authorities are expected to deliver through their family hubs and sets out the minimum expectations of the **services which are not receiving additional investment** through the programme. These include **housing**. The guidance sets out minimum expectations and go further provision for family hubs when they can make a more mature offering.

District councils have not yet been engaged by KCC to ensure that the minimum expectations at least are met. The need to do this was brought to the attention of senior KCC officers via Joint Kent Chief Executives who were advised that KCC hasn't had

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sufficient time to engage on this topic. This needs to be addressed with timely and meaningful engagement and collaboration so that to meet minimum expectations family hub staff can be trained to provide signposting and where needed referral to district services and for the go further standard specialist housing advisors can be available face to face.

The minimum expectation is that,

Service available face to face at a family hub:

- Staff in the family hub have a good understanding of housing issues that families may be facing and are able to connect families to appropriate housing support services within the network Service available through the family hub but received elsewhere in the network:
- There is a mechanism for families, particularly those at risk of homelessness, to be connected to wider local housing services within the hub network and/or VCS organisations who can offer more specific or specialist housing advice to families

Virtual services available through the family hub, including static online information and/or interactive virtual services:

- The online family hub presence offers universal materials and information about how to find and access local housing support services

Go further Service,

Service available face to face at a family hub:

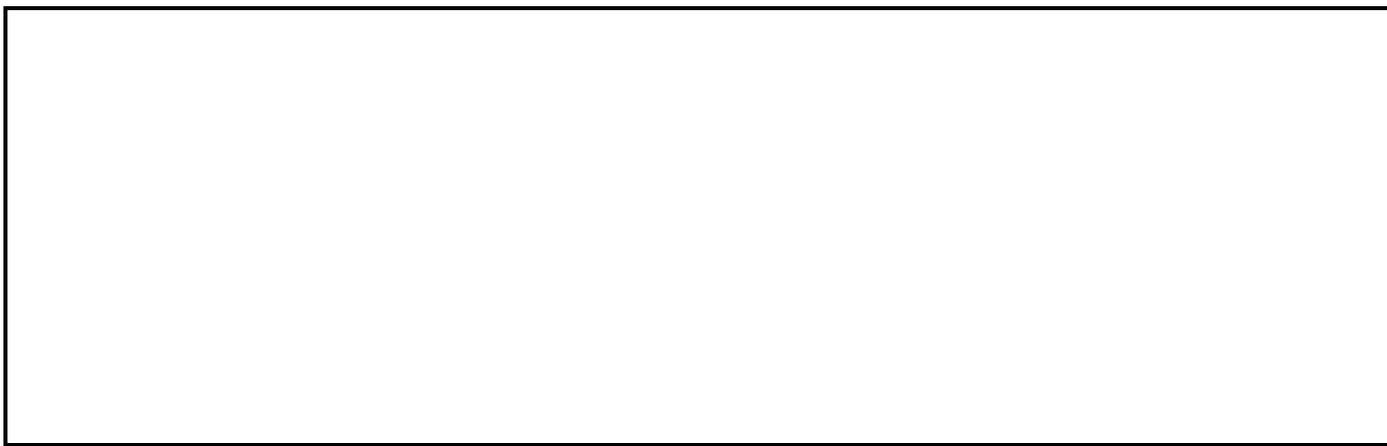
- There is specialist VCS and/or local authority housing staff on site at the family hub at certain times. Where eligible and needed, specialist housing staff will liaise with the landlord or housing service to escalate the issue.

Virtual services available through the family hub, including static online information and/or interactive virtual services:

- Online/virtual support is available at certain times and accessible via the family hub

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Family Coaches

We recognise that parents are experts in their own children and have significant life experience that could be supportive to other families. We propose to strengthen family and community resilience by bringing Family Coaches and a peer-to-peer support offer into the Family Hub network and service.

- Volunteers will have the opportunity to become Family Coaches and will be offered additional support, training, and development to enhance their roles in the Family Hub network.
- Family Coaches will benefit from learning skills in addition to the knowledge they gain through training.
- Opportunities for peer-to-peer support will be developed.

Q8. Please tell us if you have any comments about Family Coaches.

The consultation documentation doesn't explain what role the Family Coach/Volunteer will be replacing? What types of skills gaps are these coaches going to fill? Will Volunteers be recruited to support the demographic needs within each District. For example, language barriers. What happens if there are not enough volunteers within a district how will the gap be filled. There is not enough information on this to be able to make an adequate response.

We are concerned that Maidstone residents could be disadvantaged by this as we are aware that there is a shortage of Volunteers within Maidstone borough. We are also concerned about the impact on organisations and groups within the Voluntary and Community Sector who are already struggling to recruit volunteers and how they will be impacted.

From our experience and engagement with organisations and groups across the Voluntary and Community Sector, Volunteers are increasingly difficult to secure. We encourage you to actively liaise with the VCS to understand the barriers and issues to volunteering and to engage with wider schemes such as the Government Refugee Schemes.

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Q9. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, would your organisation be interested in supporting the development of Family Coaches and peer to peer support?

/	Yes
	No
	Don't know

Q10. If your organisation was to be part of the Family Hubs network, what support, advice or opportunities would you want to see as a member of that network?

Please select **all** that apply.

/	Facilitation of local partner network meetings
/	Training and development opportunities
/	Support and advice for community groups to help them set up and work effectively
/	Opportunities for organisations to share their knowledge and expertise
/	Opportunities for organisations to deliver their services alongside other Family Hub network partners
	Other, please specify:

Support to train family hub staff so that they can meet the minimum expectations for housing services provided from the hubs.

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Support for older children to reduce anti-social behaviour

Q11. Please tell us if there is anything else you think we should consider in the development of Family Hub services.

Accessibility should be a key consideration. Schemes to increase digital accessibility, particularly in areas of deprivation, are required to support residents with any changes to the way services are delivered.

In terms of Family Hubs – the location is key. We don't know from this consultation proposal where Family Hubs will be located. It is essential that in Maidstone our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families have access and that these hubs are also based for easy rural access where public transport and digital accessibility can be more limited.

Need will vary from ward to ward across Maidstone. Therefore, the location of services and resources made available should be data led (Please see the data included in response to Q13 and Q14) and with an awareness of what other services exist in each geographical area and how support/partners can be bridged. This is key for the community when services are being lost. For example to link with:

- a. the delivery of the One Stop Shop at Trinity support their service of Domestic Abuse support.
- b. Other KCC commissioned services such as CGL for substance misuse
- c. 365 Youth Club in the Mall and Switch Youth Café
- d. The link with schools

Section 3 - Proposed changes to youth services

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As part of this consultation, we are proposing to stop funding the youth provision which is run by non-KCC organisations. This is due to the financial pressures we are facing. This means that some activities and clubs would stop unless the organisations are able to find alternative funding (these are shown below).

Q12. We would like to understand your views on the proposal to stop funding this youth provision. Please select from the list below whether there are any district activities in particular that you would like to comment about. Otherwise, please make a general comment about this proposal.

Please select **all** that apply.

Ashford district - activity provider: The Canterbury Academy	
Tenterden - Highbury Hall youth sessions	
Tenterden - Skate Project (Mon)	
Ashford Stanhope - Girls netball	
Ashford John Wallis - Boxing	
Ashford John Wallis - Tennis	
Ashford John Wallis - Basketball	
Ashford John Wallis – British Sign Language	
Ashford Sk8side - Girls Skate project	
Ashford Sk8side - other activities	
Detached community work - Bockhanger and McDonalds	

Canterbury district - activity provider: The Canterbury Academy	
Pyxis (Sun and Mon)	
Riverside - Youth session (Wed)	
Riverside - Neuro diverse group (Thurs)	
Riverside - Volunteer group (Tues)	
Spring Lane - Youth club (Tues, Wed and Thurs)	

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Canterbury bike project (not solely funded by KCC, so may not be impacted)	
Detached community work - City Centre, Sturry Road, Wincheap, Thannington, Hales place and Westgate (Thurs – rotates around various locations)	

Dartford district - activity provider: Play Place	
Bean - Recreation Ground - Juniors (Tues)	
Darenth - Hillrise Park - Seniors (Tues)	
Stone - Stone Baptist Church - Junior and Senior youth clubs (Weds)	
Homework Heroes - Seniors (Weds and Thurs)	
Stone Recreation Ground - Juniors (Thurs)	
Stone Pavilion – Junior and Senior youth club (Fri)	
Knockhall - Greenhithe Community Centre - Junior club (Thurs)	
Temple Hill - Playground – Mixed age	

Dover district - activity provider: Pie Factory	
Aylesham - Junior youth club, Senior youth club (Tues)	
Biggin Hall - Youth session (Wed)	
Linwood - Youth Hub session (Thurs)	
Astor School - Youth session (Thurs)	

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Folkestone and Hythe district - activity provider: Salus	
Hythe - Youth Centre - Juniors (Mon)	
Hythe - Youth Centre - Senior club (Weds)	
Hythe - Youth Centre - Junior club (Fri)	
Hythe - Shepway Autism Support Group - All age (Fri)	
New Romney - Phase 2 - Junior club (Thurs)	
Safety in Action - Local schools - District wide	
D of E (Duke of Edinburgh) Awards	
Residential Junior and Senior Leaders courses	

Gravesham district - activity provider: The Grand	
Gravesend - Youth Job Club (Mon)	
Gravesend - GYG Gone Wild (Mon)	
Gravesend - Mini GYGers (Tues)	
Gravesend - GYG Glam (Tues and Wed)	
Gravesend - GYG Performers (Wed)	
Gravesend - GYG Creative (Wed)	
Gravesend - Higham Youth Club (Wed)	
Gravesend - GYG Committee (Thurs)	
Gravesend - Active Listening Service	
Cobham Youth Club (Fri)	

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Maidstone district - activity provider: Salus	
Sutton Valence - Village Hall - Junior youth club (Mon)	/
Shepway - Youth and Community Centre - Junior club and Senior youth club (Tues)	/
Shepway - Youth and Community Centre - Junior club and Senior club - (Fri)	/
Shepway - Youth and Community Centre - Olympia Boxing (Fri)	/
Shepway - Youth and Community Centre - One to one sessions	/
Shepway - Youth and Community Centre - Small group work sessions	/
Parkwood - Youth Centre - Junior club and Senior club (Thurs)	/
Signs of Safety - District wide annual activity to focus on transition from Primary to Secondary education	/

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Sevenoaks district – activity provider: West Kent Extra	
Sevenoaks - The Hope Church, Youth Group (Tues)	
Swanley - The Junction, St Marys Road Youth Group (Fri)	
Swanley - The Junction, nurture group (Tues)	
West Kingsdown - Youth group (Wed)	
Edenbridge - Eden Centre youth group	
Edenbridge - House (Tues, Wed and Fri)	
Edenbridge - 8-12s session	
Edenbridge - Olympia Boxing (Thurs)	
Edenbridge - Nurture group (Thurs)	
Dunton Green Pavilion - (Mon)	
Westerham - Youth session (Fri)	
Westerham - Olympia Boxing (Wed)	

Swale district – activity provider: Southern Housing	
Faversham Baptist Church - Disability Youth Club (Mon)	
Sheerness Healthy Living Centre – Absolute Arts youth club (Mon)	
Newington – Youth club (Tues)	
Sheerness County Youth Centre – Sheerness Seniors Youth Club (Tues)	
Rushenden – Youth club (Wed)	
Thistle Hill - Detached provision (Wed)	
Faversham Baptist Church – 812 youth club (Thurs)	
Sheerness Youth Centre – Youth club (Thurs)	
Teynham – Detached provision (Thurs)	
Faversham Recreation Ground – Detached (Fri)	

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Swale – School work (various)	
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Thanet district - activity provider: Pie Factory	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - Bike Project (Mon)	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - The Live Room (Mon)	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - ACT! Youth Volunteer Group (Tues)	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - Band Room (Tues)	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - Junior youth club (Thurs)	
Ramsgate Youth Centre - Open Arms (Fri)	
The Pavilion Youth & Community Café - Youth café sessions (Tues, Thurs and Fri)	
Parent and Child group (Wed, all age)	
Detached Community work - Streets based in Ramsgate (Fri)	

Tonbridge and Malling district – activity provider: Salus	
Ditton - Junior youth club and Senior youth club (Mon)	
Snodland - Junior youth club and Senior youth club (Wed)	
East Malling / Larkfield - Junior youth club and Senior youth club (Thurs)	
Detached sessions in Larkfield – Larkfield skate park and other locations when required	
Signs of Safety - District wide annual activity to focus on transition from Primary to Secondary education	

Tunbridge Wells district – activity provider: Salus	
Paddock Wood - Junior youth club and outreach (Mon)	
Rusthall - Detached sessions (Tues)	
Langton Green - youth club (Tues)	
Cranbrook - Junior and Senior mixed youth club and outreach (Thurs)	
Sherwood - Detached sessions	

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Safety in Action - annual activity for year 6 students to focus on the transition from primary to secondary school	
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Q12a. Please tell us how you think the proposal to stop these activities in the district(s) you have selected would make a difference to people.

If you have not selected districts, please move on to the next question.

The proposals to stop the youth services in Maidstone are very concerning as they are predominantly in areas of deprivation (Shepway and Park Wood).

Young people may feel more disconnected from their communities if they lose access to youth activities and clubs that provide them with opportunities for socialisation, learning, expression, and participation. They may also feel less supported by adults who understand their needs and challenges. This might in turn lead to an increase in risk taking behaviours or becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour if they do not have positive alternatives or role models. They may also face more barriers to education, employment, or training if they do not have adequate guidance or resources that youth services provide to supplement that.

Salus, the service provider for the services that are currently delivered, has a strong offer in terms of its approach to youth provision and values working with young people at risk of social exclusion. The organisation's aim is to 'improve young people's social skills and emotional health and wellbeing. They engage and build positive relationships with families, the wider community and partners.

The withdrawal of services designed to make such a positive impact on areas of high need would be an enormous loss. There would no doubt wider consequences for young people and the communities as a result (ASB data??)

We have consulted with local Councillors who are supporting children and families in the areas that the proposals will affect and there is great concern about the withdrawal of these services and the detrimental impact it will have on the well-being and development of young people and the community as a whole now and for future generations. The services are well used and engage young people up to the age of 19 in some areas.

The withdrawal of the Signs of Safety programme would impact all Year 6 children across Kent. It is delivered at a key time when children are transitioning from Primary

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to Secondary education. The programme is designed to provide Year 6 children with advice about how they can stay safe, access services and develop personal and social skills.

Q13. Please tell us your general comments on how you think the proposal to stop these activities across Kent would make a difference to people.

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Withdrawing services from areas of high deprivation and need (health, education, financial) will deepen inequality in an already disadvantaged area.

Maidstone has two neighbourhoods (LSOAs) that rank within the Country's 10% most deprived areas, the needs of which should be closely considered. These areas are in Parkwood (ranked 2,915 in the country) and Shepway South. In addition, there are four further LSOAs that rank under 5,000 most deprived in the Country (out of 32,844). These areas are in Parkwood, Shepway South, High Street and Shepway North wards.

The Youth Services in Maidstone that are being proposed to be withdrawn are in Shepway, Park Wood and Sutton Valence.

The following data which is missing from the equalities assessment (as only district level data is considered) illustrates the need in Maidstone and should be considered as part of these proposals (including Family Hubs):

Park Wood

There are 2,700 children aged 15 years and under living in Park Wood ward.

This area has seen a massive increase in the population of children since the 2011 census, with a total increase in 15 and under population of 44.2%, rising from 1,872 to 2,700. The most significant increase was in the 5 – 9 years age group, which saw a 70.8% change between the Census', rising from 530 to 905.

Deprivation

- 1,144 households in Park Wood are suffering from at least one level of deprivation, an increase of 37.2% since 2011. This accounts for 32.7% of all households in this ward.
- 19.7% of households in this ward have no access to a car or van for travelling. This equates to 689 households.
- There are currently 1,034 low-income households, with a total of 1,016 children. Of those households, 316 of them are living below the poverty line, which includes 369 children.

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- 186 of these low-income households have been impacted by Welfare Reforms over the last ten years and are currently (on average) £21.70 worse off each week because of this.
- Kent County Council predict that the 0 – 5-year-old age bracket will continue to increase in Maidstone, with an average increase across the borough of 10.1% by 2040 (which is in line with census data predictions)
- There are 502 lone parent families (with dependent children) living in Park Wood ward, an increase of 9.6% since 2011.

In terms of Health Inequalities:

- The percentage of babies born with a low birth weight is also significantly higher than both Maidstone and Kent percentages, with 6.4% of births being born with a low birth weight (under 2.5kg). This compares to 5.5% in Maidstone and 5.8% in Kent.
- New mothers living in the area are much less likely to breastfeed, with only 46.6% choosing to breastfeed their infants, compared to 59.1% in Maidstone and 58.1% in Kent.
- Obesity in reception aged children (aged 4 and 5 years) is more prevalent, with 12.3% being recorded as obese, compared to 8.5% on average in Maidstone and 9.4% on average in Kent.
- Obesity prevalence also continues into year six children (aged 10 and 11 years) with 23.7% being recorded as obese, compared to 17.2% on average in Maidstone.

Shepway South

There are 1,225 children aged 15 years and under living in Shepway South ward.

This area has seen an increase in the population of children since the 2011 census, with a total increase in 15 -years-and-under population of 8.6%, rising from 1,128 to 1,225. The most significant increase was in the 5 – 9 years age group, which saw a 17% change between the Census', rising from 329 to 385.

Deprivation

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- 895 households in Shepway South are suffering from at least one level of deprivation, which is not a significant change from 2011. This accounts for 36.4% of all households in this ward.
- 26.7% of households in this ward have no access to a car or van for travelling. This equates to 658 households.
- There are currently 753 low-income households, with a total of 369 children. Of those households, 235 of them are living below the poverty line, which includes 174 children.
- 95 of these low-income households have been impacted by Welfare Reforms over the last ten years and are currently (on average) £21.10 worse off each week because of this.
- There are 203 lone parent families (with dependent children) living in Shepway South ward.

In terms of Health Inequalities:

- The percentage of babies born with a low birth weight is also significantly higher than both Maidstone and Kent percentages, with 6.4% of births being born with a low birth weight (under 2.5kg). This compares to 5.5% in Maidstone and 5.8% in Kent.
- New mothers living in the area are much less likely to breastfeed, with only 46.6% choosing to breastfeed their infants, compared to 59.1% in Maidstone and 58.1% in Kent.
- Obesity in reception aged children (aged 4 and 5 years) is more prevalent, with 12.3% being recorded as obese, compared to 8.5% on average in Maidstone and 9.4% on average in Kent.
- Obesity prevalence also continues into year six children (aged 10 and 11 years) with 23.7% being recorded as obese, compared to 17.2% on average in Maidstone.

Shepway North

There are 1,901 children aged 15 years and under living in Shepway North ward.

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Whilst there has been a decline in the age bracket 0 – 4 years (-11.6%) here has been an increase in the number of 5 - 9-year-olds (8.4% increase).

Deprivation

- 1,275 households in Shepway North are suffering from at least one level of deprivation, an increase of 11.16%. This accounts for 36.9% of all households in this ward.
- 17% of households in this ward have no access to a car or van for travelling. This equates to 593 households.
- There are currently 682 low-income households, with a total of 513 children. Of those households, 251 of them are living below the poverty line, which includes 265 children.
- 108 of these low-income households have been impacted by Welfare Reforms over the last ten years and are currently (on average) £22.30 worse off each week because of this.

In terms of Health Inequalities:

- The percentage of babies born with a low birth weight is also significantly higher than both Maidstone and Kent percentages, with 6.4% of births being born with a low birth weight (under 2.5kg). This compares to 5.5% in Maidstone and 5.8% in Kent.
- New mothers living in the area are much less likely to breastfeed, with only 46.6% choosing to breastfeed their infants, compared to 59.1% in Maidstone and 58.1% in Kent.
- Obesity in reception aged children (aged 4 and 5 years) is more prevalent, with 12.3% being recorded as obese, compared to 8.5% on average in Maidstone and 9.4% on average in Kent.
- Obesity prevalence also continues into year six children (aged 10 and 11 years) with 23.7% being recorded as obese, compared to 17.2% on average in Maidstone.

Sutton Valence and Langley

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ward:

There are 509 children aged 15-years-and-under living in Sutton Valence and Langley ward.

This area has seen an increase in the population of children since the 2011 census, with a total increase in 15-years-and-under population of 6.9%, rising from 476 to 509. The most significant increase was in the 5 – 9 years age group, which saw a 13% change between the Census', rising from 131 to 148.

Deprivation

- 414 households in Sutton Valence and Langley are suffering from at least one level of deprivation, which is an increase of 14%. This accounts for 34.4% of all households in this ward.
- 7.3% of households in this ward have no access to a car or van for travelling. This equates to 88 households.
- There are currently 150 low-income households, with a total of 87 children. Of those households, 42 of them are living below the poverty line, which includes 23 children.
- 18 of these low-income households have been impacted by Welfare Reforms over the last ten years and are currently (on average) £36.20 worse off each week because of this.
- There are 58 lone parent families (with dependent children) living in Sutton Valence and Langley ward, an increase of 13.7% since 2011.

In terms of Health Inequalities:

- The percentage of babies born with a low birth weight is also significantly higher than both Maidstone and Kent percentages, with 6.4% of births being born with a low birth weight (under 2.5kg). This compares to 5.5% in Maidstone and 5.8% in Kent.
- New mothers living in the area are much less likely to breastfeed, with only 46.6% choosing to breastfeed their infants, compared to 59.1% in Maidstone and 58.1% in Kent.

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- Obesity in reception aged children (aged 4 and 5 years) is more prevalent, with 12.3% being recorded as obese, compared to 8.5% on average in Maidstone and 9.4% on average in Kent.

Obesity prevalence also continues into year six children (aged 10 and 11 years) with 23.7% being recorded as obese, compared to 17.2% on average in Maidstone.

Section 4 – Equality Analysis

To help ensure that we are meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 we have prepared an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIAs) on the proposals.

An EqIA is a tool to assess the impact any proposals would have on the protected characteristics: age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, and carer's responsibilities. The EqIA is available online at www.kent.gov.uk/familyhubservices or on request.

Q14. We welcome your views on our equality analysis and if you think there is anything we should consider relating to equality and diversity. Please add any comments below.

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Yes, we feel that more could be done in terms of engagement with Maidstone to ensure that the needs assessment is accurate, and data led. The impact of the proposals on areas of deprivation has not been properly considered. This of great concern because the proposals for the closure of youth services will predominantly affect areas of high need.

In terms of the location of Family Hubs and the service delivery model, it is essential that the future location of Family Hubs are accessible to all children and families across Maidstone. Digital accessibility appears to be a key feature of the model. Digital exclusion must be considered and addressed.

Maidstone has two neighbourhoods (LSOAs) that rank within the Country's 10% most deprived areas, the needs of which should be closely considered. These areas are in Parkwood (ranked 2,915 in the country) and Shepway South. In addition, there are four further LSOAs that rank under 5,000 most deprived in the Country (out of 32,844). These areas are in Parkwood, Shepway South, High Street and Shepway North wards. Data at the level is key to properly understand need.

The needs of these areas MUST be considered as part of these proposal so that existing inequalities are not deepened by these proposals. In addition to the data provided in response to Q13 on the areas of deprivation that will be affected by the proposed withdrawal of Youth Services, please also consider the other key area of deprivation in Maidstone, High Street, in relation to the location of Family Hubs. The data tells us that:

High Street

There are 2,298 children aged 15-years-and-under living in High Street ward. This area has seen a significant increase in the population of children since the 2011 census, with a total increase in 15-years-and-under population of 20.7%, rising from 1,904 to 2,298. The most significant increase was in the 5 – 9 years age group, which saw a 42.1% change between the Census', rising from 520 to 739

Deprivation

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- There are 1,843 households suffering from at least one level of deprivation, a significant increase of 31.17% compared to 2011 (1,405). This accounts for 31.6% of all households in this ward.
- 32.1% of all households living in High Street ward have no access to a car or van. This is 1,637 households.
- There are currently 1,165 low-income households in High Street ward, with a total of 701 children. Of those households, 399 of them are living below the poverty line, which includes 281 children.
- 221 of these low-income households have been impacted by Welfare Reforms over the last ten years and are currently (on average) £30.5 worse off each week because of this.
- There are 397 lone parent families (with dependent children) living in High Street ward, an increase of 3.39%.

Health Inequalities data for High Street Ward (Kent Public Health Observatory) tells us:

- The data suggests that obesity in children is an issue in the High Street ward. High Street ward has a greater proportion of reception age children measured as obese at 10.8% compared to 9.4% in Kent overall and a greater proportion of children at year 6 (10-11 years) also measuring as obese at 22.9% compared to 18.0% in Kent.
- There are 110 more premature deaths per 100,00 people (under 75 years) in the High Street ward compared to in Kent overall. The rate for the High Street ward is also significantly greater than that for Kent at 427.4 deaths per 100,000 population compared to 280.2 for Maidstone overall.
- Males in High street ward have a life expectancy of 2.6 years less than Kent overall.

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Section 5 – More about you

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we are asking you these questions. We'll only use the information to help us make decisions and improve our services.

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

It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Q15. Are you...? Please select **one** option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q16. Is your gender the same as your birth? Please select **one** option.

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

Q17. Which of these age groups applies to you? Please select **one** option.

0-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	16-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	35-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	65-74	<input type="checkbox"/>	75-84	<input type="checkbox"/>	85+ over	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Q18. Which of the following applies to you? Please select those that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I/we have children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am / we are expecting a child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I/we do not have children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q18a. If you answered 'I/we have children' to Q18, which of the following age groups does your child/children fall into? Please select **all** that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 0–1-year-old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 to 5 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 to 10 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 to 19 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q19. Do you regard yourself as belonging to a particular religion or holding a belief?

Please select **one** option.

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

Q20a. If you answered 'Yes' to Q19, which of the following applies to you? Please select **one** option.

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- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Christian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Buddhist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jewish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Muslim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

If you selected Other, please specify:

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

Q21. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010? Please select **one** option.

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

Q22a. If you answered 'Yes' to Q21, please tell us the type of impairment that applies to you.

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You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all that apply. If none of these applies to you, please select 'Other' and give brief details of the impairment you have.

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

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A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be carers.

Q23. Are you a Carer? Please select **one** option.

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

Q24. Are you ...? Please select **one** option.

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

Other, please specify:

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Q25. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong? Please select **one** option.
(Source 2011 Census)

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

*Other - If your ethnic group is not specified on the list, please describe it here:

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire; your feedback is important to us.
All feedback received will be reviewed and considered.

Closing date for responses: 13 September 2023