

# Proposed changes to the provision of overnight short breaks for children with disabilities

## Consultation document

### What are the proposals?

The proposal is to:

- 1) Develop the Osborne Court campus in Malvern to:
  - a. create 4 more bedrooms for children in the unit currently used for adults - 2 beds will be for Worcestershire County Council to use and 2 will be for other providers (e.g. other Council's) to buy
  - b. refurbish an empty building to create 5 bedrooms for adults (one more bed than the current unit)
  - c. improve support for young people moving to adult services
- 2) Close Ludlow Road short breaks unit in Kidderminster

**Please note: We are not proposing to stop or reduce the overnight respite that families need. The care needs of children, young people and their families are assessed through their social work assessment – overnight respite will be provided to any family who needs it. If you have questions about your current need for overnight respite please contact your social worker or the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team: 01905 \*\*\*\*\* or Young Adults Team: 01905 \*\*\*\*\***

### What is the consultation about?

The Council and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust have considered ways in which the Trust can deliver overnight short breaks. The option that we are consulting on includes making improvements to the Osborne Court campus and to close Ludlow Road Short Breaks Unit. Worcestershire County Council is consulting with service users to find out their views on the proposals. More information on the proposals are included below in pages 4 to 9 below.

### Consultation questions

Anyone who would like to share their views on these proposals can:

Use the online survey available at [LINK](#).

Complete the paper version below and post it to us at: Vulnerable Children and Families Commissioning Team, Worcestershire County Council, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NE

You can also email [shortbreaks@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:shortbreaks@worcestershire.gov.uk) or call 01905 843657.

1) Do you think your needs for overnight respite could be met through these proposals?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Not sure

Comments

2) Do you think the proposed changes to Osborne Court would help make the move from children's to adult services smoother?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Not sure

Comments

3) Do you have any other comments about these proposals?

*Please continue on a separate page if needed*

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## Overnight short break units for children with disabilities

### Background information and more detail about the proposals

In March 2017 we started talking to parent carers, children and young people, professionals and providers about how short breaks were currently delivered. This included overnight short breaks as well as other types of short breaks such as 1:1 support and groups, activities and clubs. We wanted to find out what worked well and what could be changed or improved. Parent carers have said they want:

- Available services – that can accommodate the growing demand and meet individual needs
- Accessible services – available in different places across the county with limited travel times and easy referral processes with broad criteria that are open to all
- Continuous services – to help the move to adulthood a smooth process
- Flexible services – that are there when families need
- Information and guidance – easy access signposting about what is available
- Worthwhile respite for their child – where they can develop social skills and independence
- Worthwhile respite for parent – where parents can have a 'real break' e.g. without the stress of travel, caring for other children etc

We then ran a consultation in January 2018 about redesigning the way overnight short break units are currently run.

We received feedback about these proposals from families, professionals, providers and through a Scrutiny Task Group (a group of councillors who spoke to families and officers about the consultation process). We took a recommendations report to a Cabinet meeting in July 2018 and, amongst other things, it was agreed that we would:

- Continue to deliver overnight short breaks at Ludlow Road but there may be changes proposed about overnight short breaks from April 2019 onwards
- Talk to Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust about changes to their contract for delivering overnight short breaks at Ludlow Road and Osborne Court, and about how their service can be more flexible in the future to meet the needs of children and young people
- Increase the number of beds available at Bromsgrove Short Breaks Unit (Providence Road) by registering the two additional bedrooms with Ofsted so they are available to use if needed
- Work with families, providers and staff to co-design short breaks, including looking at support for young people who are reaching 18 to help them move to adult services and/or live independently

[Click this link to read the full report that was taken to Cabinet in July 2018, including the feedback that we received from the consultation](#)

From July 2018 onwards we continued to speak to parent carers, professionals and providers about overnight short breaks. We ran two co-design events in September 2018 and got lots of ideas about how to deliver overnight short breaks differently. We divided these ideas in to three main themes:

- 1) Reduce/delay the demand for overnight short breaks (e.g. provide more support early on and improve information to help families to find the support they need before reaching crisis point)
- 2) Help short breaks units to be more cost effective (e.g. introduce daytime, evening and/or afterschool short breaks for families who need the break but not necessarily overnight)
- 3) Bring in additional funding (e.g. share the cost of overnight short breaks units with adult services by using some spaces for young people aged 16 to 25 and sell overnight short breaks to other local authorities)

[Click this link to read more about the co-design events](#)

### **What has changed with overnight short breaks?**

We are in the process of registering the two additional bedrooms at Bromsgrove Short Breaks Unit (Providence Road) to be able to use 1 or 2 of the beds as needed. We have also listened to the ideas from the co-design events and have been using our two council-run short breaks units in different ways to be more flexible and meet the changing needs of families. We have been developing these ideas with the staff and families at our units. These have included:

- Offering tea-time visits and short breaks in the day time
- Workers from units taking young people out on days that the unit is closed, to access the community and use the facilities at the unit on a one-to-one basis

### **Conversations with Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust**

Since July 2018, Worcestershire County Council has been speaking with Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust who currently deliver overnight short breaks at Ludlow Road in Kidderminster and Osborne Court in Malvern. We have been talking to them about:

- What needs to be provided (overnight respite at a residential unit for children, young people and adults with a range of health and behavioural needs)
- The Ofsted registration process for Osborne Court and Ludlow Road
- How units could be used to deliver services in the future
- Changing the way we currently pay for short breaks services

### **What are the proposals?**

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust has now proposed to:

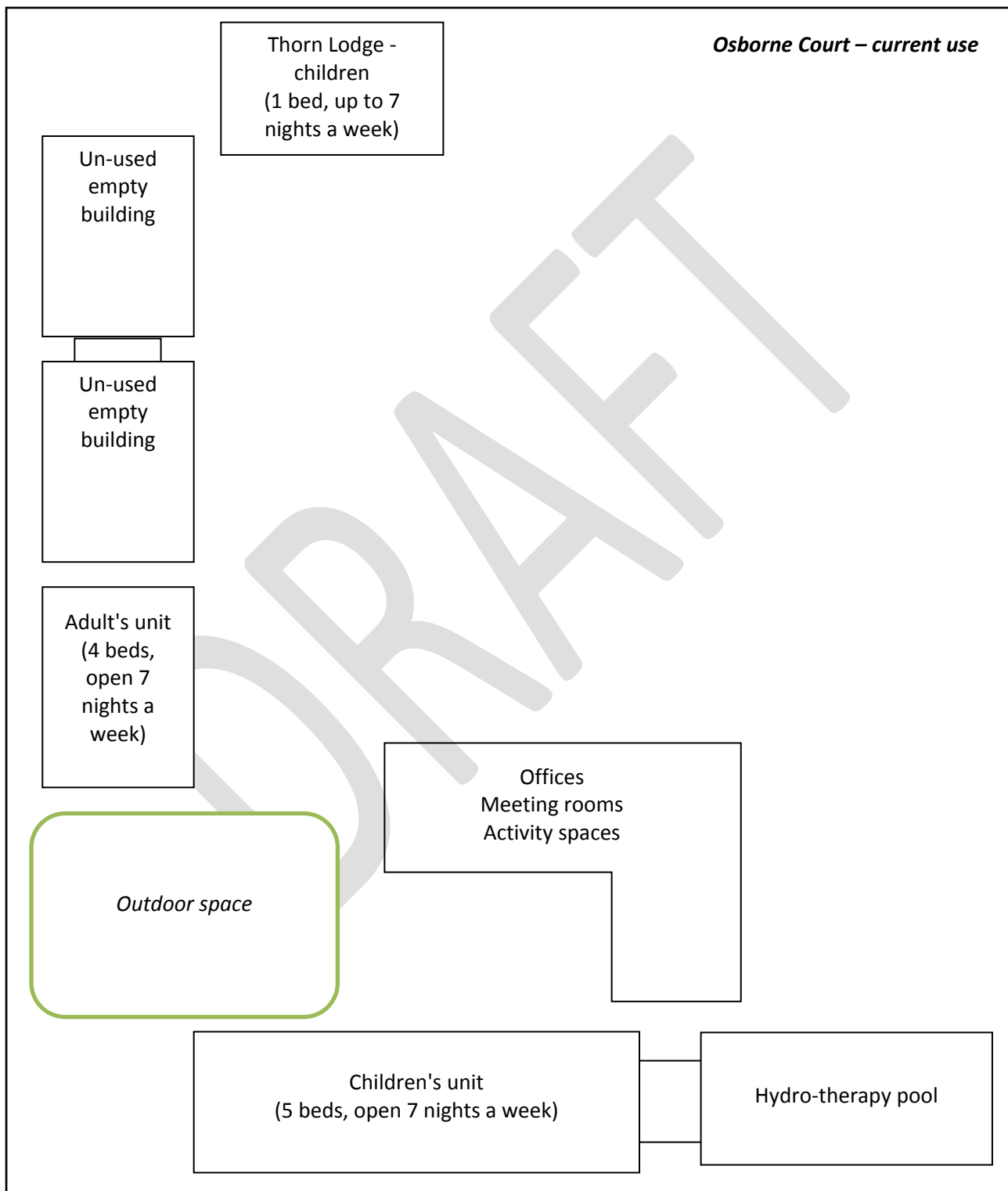
- 3) Develop the Osborne Court campus in Malvern to:
  - a. create more beds for children and adults
  - b. improve support for young people moving to adult services
- 4) Close Ludlow Road short breaks unit

### **How is Osborne Court currently used?**

As can be seen in the below diagram, Osborne Court currently has:

- A children's unit which has 6 beds (5 are funded) – open 7 nights a week
- Thorn Lodge which has 2 beds and is open up to 7 nights a week but mostly used as a single occupancy bungalow for children and young people with the most challenging behaviours

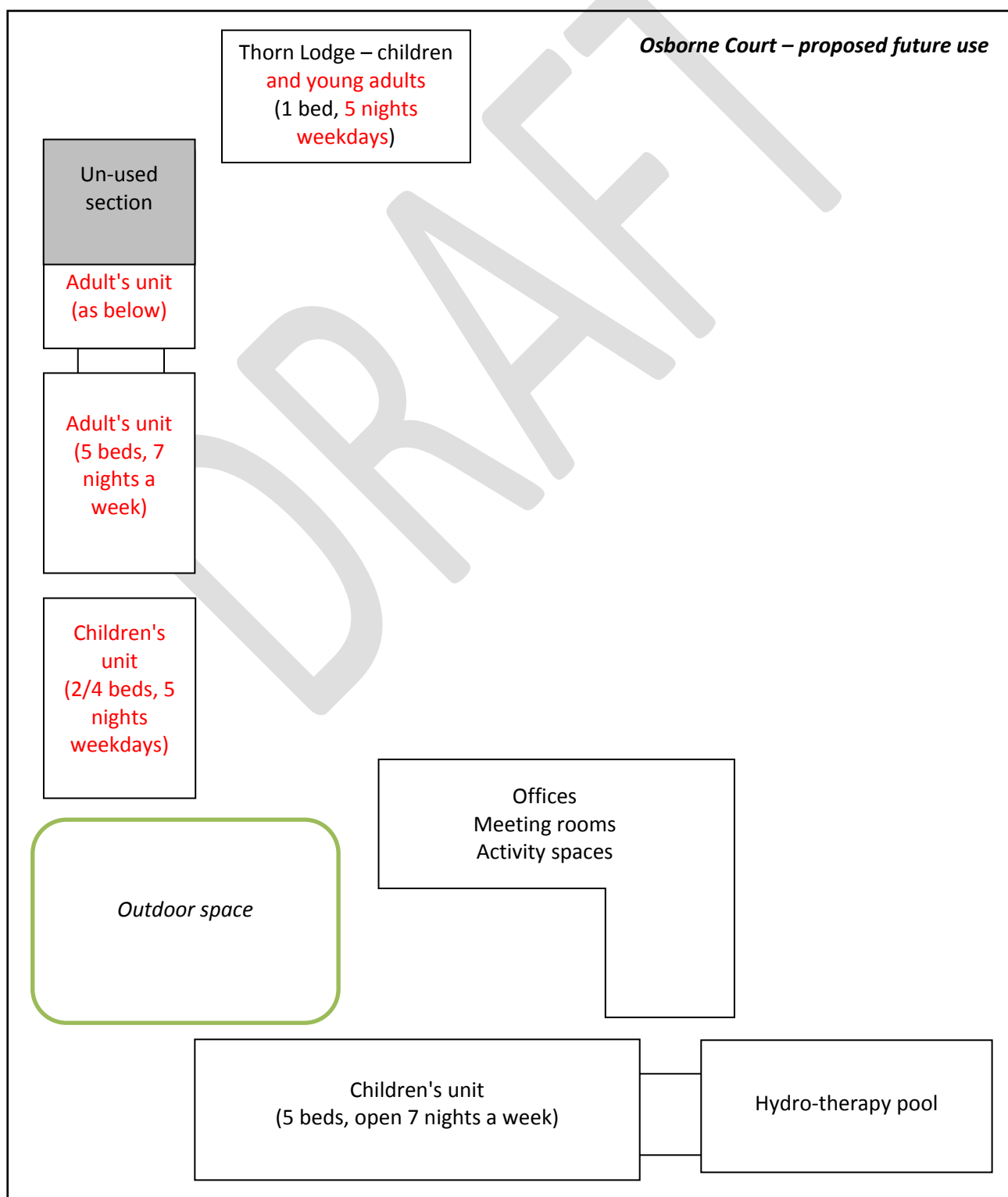
- An adult's unit which has 4 beds – open 7 nights a week
- 2 un-used empty buildings (these are semi-detached)
- A hydro-therapy pool – used by both adults and children at different times
- A block for offices, meeting rooms and activity spaces



## How would Osborne Court be used in the future?

As can be seen in the diagram below (changes are highlighted in red) the proposals are to:

- Keep using the current children's unit as it is now
- Refurbish over half of the current empty un-used buildings to use for adults (this will create one extra bed for adults)
- Refurbish the current adult's unit to create 4 extra beds for children and young people (2 to be used by Worcestershire County Council, 2 available for other providers to buy e.g other Council's)
- Continue using Thorn Lodge for children and young people with complex needs - but for 5 nights a week instead of 7 (weekdays only). This unit can also be used for young adults who are preparing to move to adult services when they reach 18



### Why would Ludlow Road be closed?

- These proposals would mean that current and future families would access alternative respite units that can be flexible to their needs, better support the move from children's to adult services and not be under constant review and threat of closing
- It is not possible for Ludlow Road short breaks unit to offer the same flexibility, sustainability and support for young adults as can be delivered at Osborne Court. The costs to refurbish Ludlow Road would be much higher, and even still couldn't provide everything that Osborne Court can

### What are the benefits of these proposals for families?

- There will be more beds available for both children, young people and adults – meaning current and future families will have their need for respite met
- Increasing the beds available for adults at Osborne Court means that:
  1. More young people will continue getting respite as an adult on the same site. This includes young people with complex needs who may be able to continue to access Thorn Lodge over the age of 18
  2. The move from children's to adult services will be smoother as young people will already be familiar with the Osborne Court campus and staff
- The refurbishments and change-around means that units will be a better quality and children and young people will have access to more outdoor space
- Changing the way we pay for Thorn Lodge will mean that the unit can be consistently used for young people with more complex needs and those preparing to move to adult services
- In 2018 a recommendation from the Scrutiny Task Group stated that: "the outcome of this consultation should result in an overnight short breaks service that is stable, resilient, sustainable and responsive and not under constant review". These proposals would do this.

### What are the benefits of this proposal in terms of funding and meeting future need?

- This model is sustainable for Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and delivers an all-age pathway and provision on one site
- The change in how respite is bought from Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust means that Worcestershire County Council is:
  1. Clearer on how much things cost so we can plan and budget for the future
  2. Able to buy respite more flexibly depending on the changing needs of families
- This proposal would meet current and future respite needs at a lower total cost than current provision

### What are the negatives of this proposal and how would they be managed?

- These proposals, if agreed, involve change for families currently using Ludlow Road. Alternative respite would in some cases be further away from the family home and/or school and the transition to alternative respite could be unsettling for children/young people and their families.



- This would be managed by carrying out assessments, where needed, with each family to identify alternative overnight provision and a detailed transition plan agreed to make the change as smooth as possible. The changes at Osborne Court, if agreed, would not be ready before April 2020 so there time to plan the changes with families.
- There will be less respite in the north of the county
  - This would be managed by looking at transport and travel as part of the change planning with families for current users, and in the way in which we decide which units are appropriate for families in the future. Additional beds are already available at Bromsgrove Short Breaks Unit (Providence Road) which is accessible for some families in the north of the county.

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