

Overnight short break units for children with disabilities

Consultation document

What are the proposals?

Worcestershire County Council is consulting on proposed changes to the way that Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust deliver overnight short breaks for children and young people in Worcestershire.

The proposals are 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 1 ½ of the empty buildings to create 5 bedrooms for adults
 - 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 short breaks that families need. The care needs of children, young people and their families are assessed through their social work assessment and overnight short breaks will be provided to any family who needs it. If you have questions about your current need for overnight short breaks please contact your social worker or the Children with Disabilities Social Work Team (0-16 years): 01905 844342 or Young Adults Team (16-25 years): 01905 845715.

More information is available within the [June 2019 Cabinet papers](#), the background information further down this consultation document and the additional consultation information available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ShortBreaksUpdates

If you have any questions about any of the information published as part of this consultation, please email shortbreaks@worcestershire.gov.uk or call 01905 843657.

Consultation questions

Anyone who would like to share their views on these proposals can answer an online survey available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/ShortBreaksUpdates or 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 or call 01905 843657.

The consultation will run from Friday 14th June to Thursday 1st August 2019.

1) Are you a parent carer, young person or professional?

- Parent carer
- Young person
- Professional
- Other _____

2) How old is your child? (If you are a young person completing this questionnaire, please tick the box for how old you are)

- 0-16 years
- 17-25 years
- Over 25 years

3) Which district do you live in? If you are a professional, please choose the district that you work in, or countywide.

- Bromsgrove
- Redditch
- Malvern Hills (including Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn)
- Worcester City
- Wychavon (including Evesham, Pershore and Droitwich)
- Wyre Forest (including Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley)
- I do not live in Worcestershire
- I am a professional who works countywide

4) If you are a parent carer or young person, do you/your child currently access overnight short breaks (e.g. at a short breaks unit or with a family)?

- Yes
- No
- About to start (e.g. just been referred, on a waiting list or just starting to access)
- Not sure

5) If yes, what overnight short breaks provision do you access/are starting to access?

- Ludlow Road, Kidderminster
- Osborne Court, Malvern

- Providence Road, Bromsgrove
- Moule Close, Kidderminster
- Family based (via Barnardos)
- Acorns Children's Hospice, Worcester
- Not sure

6) Overall, do you support these proposals for the delivery of short breaks provision?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Not sure

7) Do you have any comments on the proposed changes to Osborne Court Short Breaks Unit in Malvern?

8) Do you have any comments on the proposed closure of Ludlow Road Short Breaks Unit in Kidderminster?

9) Do you have any other comments on these proposals?

Please provide your email address if you would like to be kept up to date with this consultation

Overnight short break units for children with disabilities

Background information and more detail about the proposals

In March 2017 Worcestershire County Council 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 the 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.

[Click this link to read more about the January 2018 consultation \(scroll to the bottom of the page\)](#)

We received lots of 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 spoke more to parent carers, professionals and providers about their 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 (these are in no particular order):

- 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). This is not about reducing overnight short breaks for current families or any future families that need it.
- 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 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 (Providence Road and Moule Close) 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 these units. These have included offering more day support, tea time visits and clubs for other children and young people.

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 short breaks 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 (new laws stated that these units have to be registered with Ofsted which means changes need to be made to the way services are currently run)
- How units could be used to deliver services in the future
- Changing the way we currently pay them for short breaks services

What are the proposals?

Worcestershire County Council is consulting on proposed changes to the way that Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust deliver overnight short breaks for children and young people in Worcestershire.

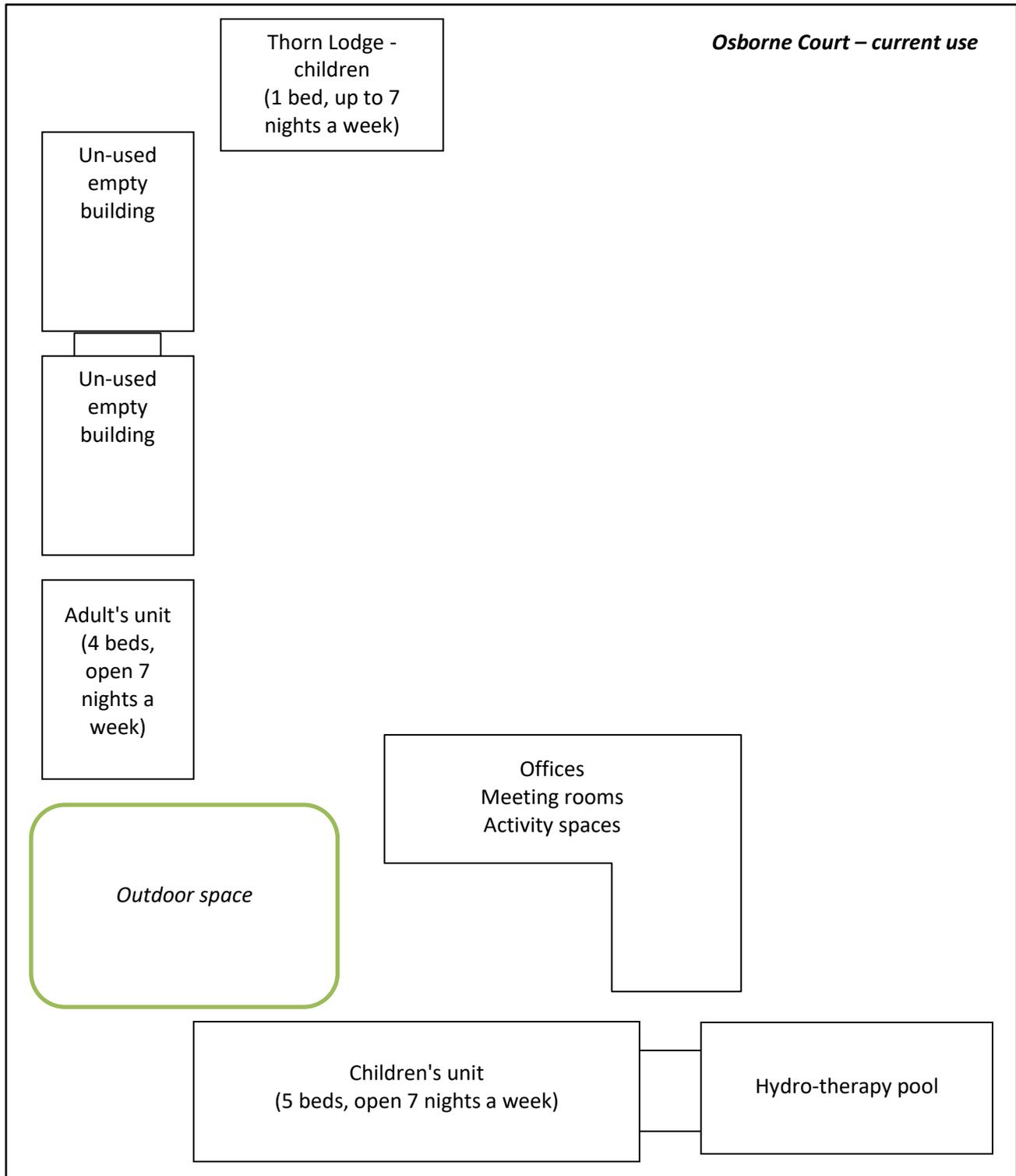
The proposals are to:

- 1) 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
- 2) Close Ludlow Road short breaks unit

How is Osborne Court currently used?

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

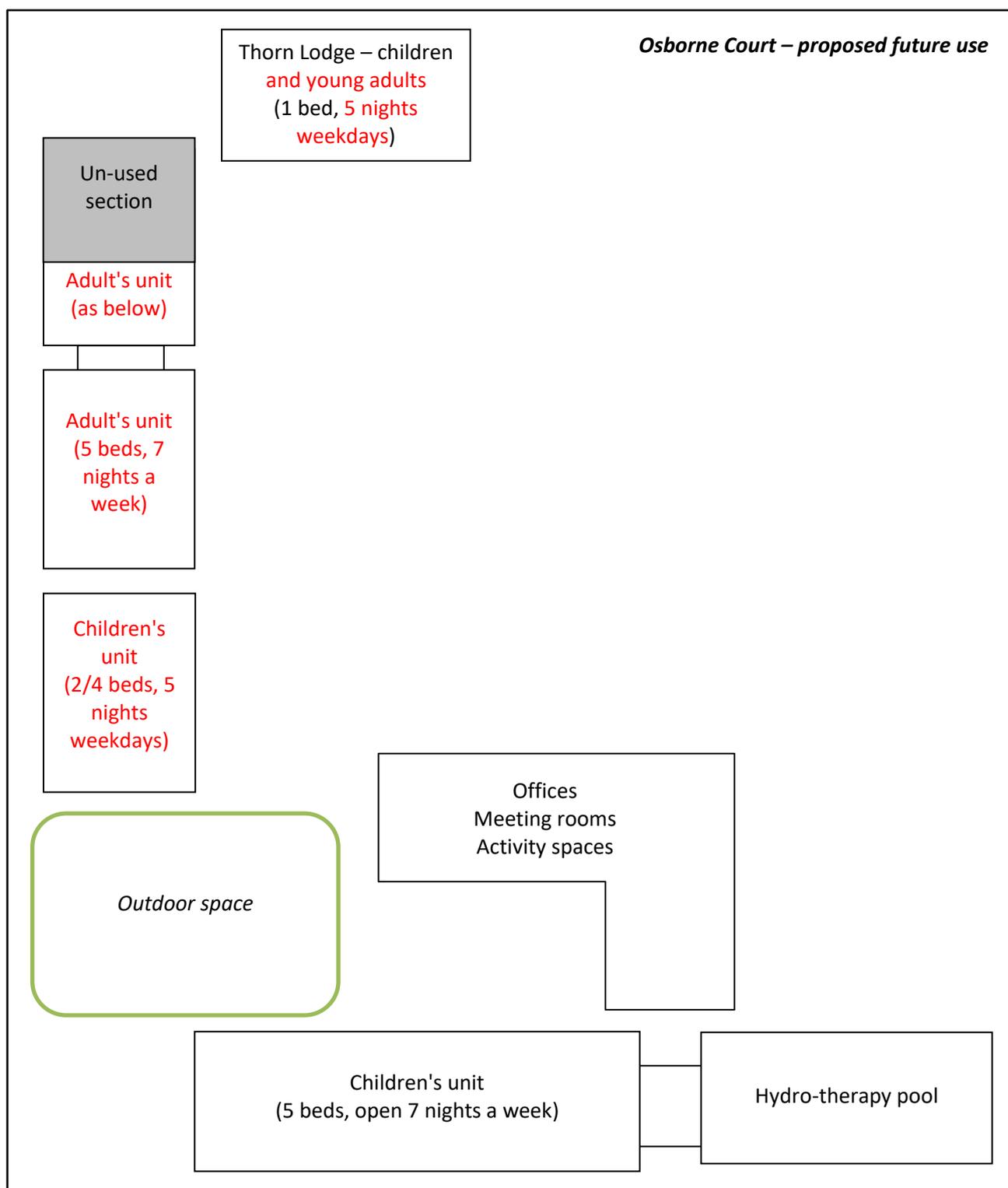
- A children's unit which has 6 beds (5 are used at any one time) – open 7 nights a week
- Thorn Lodge which has 2 beds that are open up to 7 nights a week but used as a 1 bedroom bungalow for children and young people with complex needs
- An adult's unit which has 4 beds – open 7 nights a week
- 2 un-used 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 one and a half of the currently empty un-used buildings to use for adults (this will create one extra bed for adults and the space to expand in the future if needed)
- 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 (over 18 years) who are preparing to move to adult services



Why would Ludlow Road be closed?

- These proposals would mean that current and future families would access alternative short break units that can be flexible to their needs, better support the move from children's to adult services and not be under constant review
- It is not cost effective to run Ludlow Road as a 4-bed unit and the site footprint limits any substantial refurbishments to significantly increase the number of beds available there. It is also not possible for Ludlow Road to offer the same flexibility, sustainability and support for young adults as can be delivered at Osborne Court.

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 overnight short breaks met. The proposed changes would increase the number of beds per night available from 20 per week (currently delivered at Ludlow Road) to 24 per week (to deliver between Providence Road and Osborne Court)
- Increasing the beds available for adults at Osborne Court means that:
 - More young people will continue getting overnight short breaks as an adult on the same site meaning the move from children's to adult services will be smoother
 - Thorn Lodge can be used for children with more complex needs and those preparing to move to adult services (post 18)
- Refurbishments will mean units are better quality and children will have access to good facilities and outdoor space
- These proposals would meet current and future overnight short break needs at a lower overall cost
- Proposals would deliver a stable, resilient, sustainable and responsive service for families that is not under constant review

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

- For families currently using Ludlow Road, alternative overnight short breaks could be further away from the family home and/or school and the move 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 suitable alternative short break provision. Detailed plans will also be put together to make the change as smooth as possible. The changes at Osborne Court are likely to be ready by April 2020 so there is lots of time to plan the changes with families
- There will be less overnight short break units in the north of the county
 - All overnight short break units support children and young people from across the whole county and not just families in specific areas. For families living in the north of the county, transport and travel would be reviewed as part of the change planning with individual families.