



Northamptonshire County Council

Children, Families and Education

**Help us to Shape
Children's Centre
Services in
Northamptonshire**

CHILDREN'S CENTRE SERVICES CONSULTATION

MARCH 2016

Children's Centre Services have been providing support to Northamptonshire families for over ten years, and over that time the county – and the people living here – have changed. There are more children in Northamptonshire than at any time before, and new people come to live here every day.

The ways in which we provide Children's Centre Services have changed too.

These services have been vital to the delivery of early childhood support to families. They bring together a range of support including health visiting, childcare, family support and adult learning. We want to make sure that we can continue to do this, but we need to do it with less money.

When Children's Centres were first introduced, the Government gave the Council a pot of money specifically to pay for them. This is no longer the case and the funding for Children's Centres has to be found from the Council's budget. Over the past few years, the Government has reduced the amount of funding it gives to the Council, and we have to reduce our total spending on Children's Centre services by £3million for next year (April 2016 to March 2017), from £10.1million to £7.1million.

Government policy with regard to the way Children's Centre Services are delivered has also changed, moving from providing whatever support was possible to every family that wanted it to focussing support upon those families that could benefit most. In response to this, in 2014, we started to deliver some information and advice for parents and carers from our Libraries, along with a variety of parent and carer groups and sessions for babies and toddlers. This meant more intensive support could be provided as needed by our contracted providers, to families who could most benefit.

In partnership with our Children's Centre Services providers, – Action for Children, Spurgeons, the Corby Children's Centre Consortium and the LibraryPlus service – we have looked at how, what and where we can deliver support within the smaller budget available to us, and this document outlines how we are proposing to do that.

We would like your views on these proposals, so we can be confident that the best support possible can be delivered in the very different and difficult financial climate that we now face.

Our questionnaire is on line and you can find it by clicking the link below.

- <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NCCChildrensCentreServices2016>

If you need help completing the questionnaire you can ask in your Children's Centre or Library.

If you would like to put forward your views without using the questionnaire, you can write to us at: -

- **Children's Centre Consultation, Northamptonshire County Council, Room 126 Old Goal Block, County Hall, Northampton, NN1 2ED**

Or you can email us at: -

- CCConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

The consultation close at midnight on Thursday 28th April 2016.

Whichever way you choose to tell us your views, we look forward to hearing from you.



Cllr. Heather Smith
Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education



Alex Hopkins
Director of Children, Families and Education

What are Children's Centre Services?

Children's Centre Services provide a range of early years support services to families. There are 50 designated Children's Centres in Northamptonshire and the support that they provide includes: -

- Advice, information and guidance services for parents / carers and expectant parents;
- Programmes about parenting including behaviour management, bonding, healthy lifestyles etc;
- Training and employment services to help parents who need to enhance their employment prospects;
- Access to Health Visitors and Midwives;
- Help, advice and support for families experiencing difficulties including domestic abuse.
- Support to access nursery / pre-school provision and links with local primary schools to help prepare for starting school.

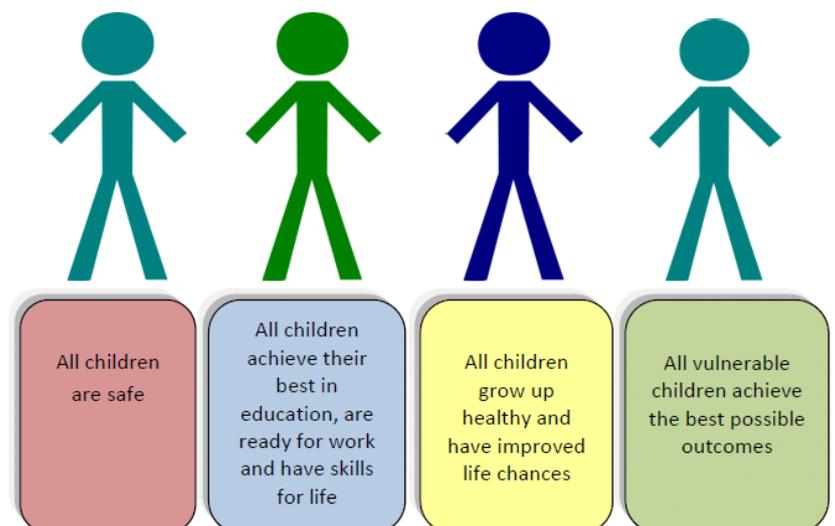
In addition, any parent or carer of a child aged under 5 years old can get answers to some of their questions, and be supported to access other places providing support and help, in every Library in the county, which form part of our Children's Centre Services network.

These services support good early child development and school readiness, helping families in the crucial early years of a child's life.

Our commitment to children and young people

Northamptonshire County Council is committed to every child, young person and family. Our aim is to make sure that every child fulfils their potential.

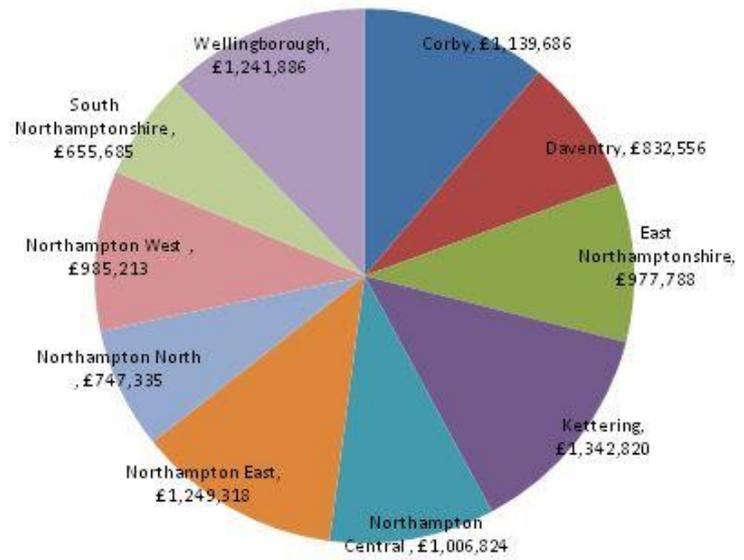
Delivering Children's Centre Services is one of many ways that we work with partners and with families to help to achieve this.



Why do things need to change?

Austerity measures implemented by Central Government have significantly reduced the amount of money available to Northamptonshire County Council to deliver services.

In the current financial year, 2015 - 2016, we will have spent £10.1million on Children’s Centre Services, distributed around the county as shown in the graph at Figure 1.



Distribution of funding 2015 - 2016

Figure 1

As part of a range of measures to reduce spending by £61 million from April this year, the Children’s Centre Services budget is to be reduced by £3 million, to £7.1 million.

We have also reviewed the way that we target our limited resources upon those most in need.

Research tells us that families living in poverty are more likely to need support than those living in more affluent areas. So that we can help as many of these families as we can, we spend more on Children’s Centre Services in areas of the county that we know have more less-well-off people living in them.

We achieve this using our ‘Fair and Equitable Funding Mechanism’ (FEFM). It uses data from Central Government called the ‘Indices of Multiple Deprivation’ (IMD). The IMD takes information from a wide variety of sources and looks at things such as income, cost of housing, education, to give a ranking to each area in the country according to how deprived it is. We also use a measure called “Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index” (IDACI) since this looks at those measures of deprivation which directly affect children.

The last time we looked at the FEFM, in 2012, we used the IMD data that had been compiled in 2010. The IMD was updated in 2015 and so we have refreshed the FEFM to take account of this new information.

As a result, the total funding available will be divided amongst the ten areas of Children’s Centre Services as shown in Figure 2.

The change in the distribution of funding as a percentage of the full value is shown in Table 1 below.

It is not possible to carry on delivering as we have been with the money now available. The financial savings must be made, across Children’s Centre Services and many other areas of delivery funded by the Council.

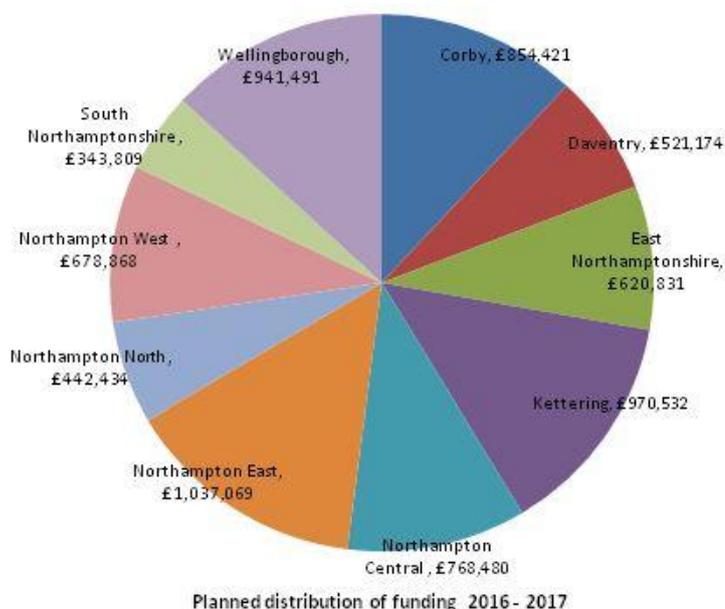


Figure 2

We think that the proposals set out here are the best possible ways of using the money available to us. They allow us to maintain high quality Children’s Centre Services to support the families that need them most, including those that are experiencing domestic abuse and violence. Children’s Centres Services will continue to be delivered partnership with a range of other organisations including the NHS, JobCentre Plus and the Voluntary Sector.

	% of total funding per area		
	2015 / 2016*		2016 / 2017*
Corby	11%	↑	12%
Daventry	8%	↓	7%
East Northamptonshire	10%	↓	9%
Kettering	13%	↑	14%
Northampton Central	10%	↑	11%
Northampton East	12%	↑	14%
Northampton North	7%	↓	6%
Northampton West	10%	↓	9%
South Northamptonshire	6%	↓	5%
Wellingborough	12%	↑	13%

* figures are rounded and so may not add up to 100%

Table 1: Percentage of total Children’s Centre Services funding allocated to each locality, 2015 – 16 and from 2016/17



What else is available to help families?

In addition to the services described in the sections above, families are able to access the following, all of which are provided by the Council, local health providers and / or Central Government: -

- Up to 15 hours free childcare a week for all three and four year olds (due to increase to 30 hours for eligible families from September 2017).
- Up to 15 hours free children care a week for eligible two year olds in low income families.
- The Healthy Child Programme which focuses upon delivering screening tests, immunisations, development reviews, information and guidance on parenting and health choices to all children, young people and families.
- Health visiting service.
- Our Early Help Families programme, supporting families with multiple and / or complex problems.
- The Family Nurse Partnership which delivers a home visiting programme for first time parents who are under the age of 19.
- Adult learning opportunities.
- Maternity services.

In addition, schools, rather than the Council, now receive more of the funding for education. Many have used this to develop and enhance pre- and after-school activities.

The Council is also working with partners in the voluntary sector to support individuals and community organisations that want to run groups or activities in their local area.



What are we consulting on?

Children's Centre Services in Northamptonshire are provided by

- Action for Children, a registered charity that delivers services nationally, in Daventry, Kettering, Northampton East and Central, South Northamptonshire and Wellingborough;

- Spurgeons, a registered charity based in Rushden, in East Northamptonshire, and Northampton North and West; and
- Pen Green Children and Families Centre, Kingswood Children's Centre Ltd and Woodnewton Academy (soon to come together as Corby Children's Centre Consortium) in Corby.

Our providers have worked with us to develop proposals for the way the services could be delivered in the future.

These proposals are explained in the rest of this document. Each area of the county is taken in turn. We first indicate how services are delivered at the moment and then the proposals for delivering them from the summer.



It should be noted that the services and support delivered in our Libraries as part of the Children's Centre core offer, are unaffected by these proposals, and will continue to be delivered throughout the county. The Library Service will continue to work in partnership with the other service providers to ensure that the overall offer best meets the needs of individual communities. Additionally, our partners, including Adult Learning, Job Centre Plus, Health Visitors, Midwives and others, will continue to deliver core services from Community venues.

Where proposals are being made to stop using buildings currently designated as Children's Centres we shall actively seek alternative uses for those buildings that benefit children in the local community and wherever possible will designate the local library as the named Children's Centre for that area in order to maintain as wide a network as possible.

Please take time to look at the proposals for your area and then, on the last page, you will see how you can let us know your views.

Corby

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by the organisations that make up the Corby Children's Centre Consortium and services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently four designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them: -

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| • Exeter | Full time |
| • Kingswood | Full Time |
| • Pen Green | Full time |
| • Woodnewton | Full time |

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with the Corby Children's Centres' providers we have drawn up proposals to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the local schools and community centres.

The reduction in funding is significant, and means that it will not be possible to retain all existing staff, services and buildings. Proposals are under consideration as follows -

Pen Green and Kingswood

- Retain existing staff wherever possible and maintain existing services on an outreach basis from Pen Green.
- Retain the Kingswood base but with significantly fewer staff and therefore the capacity to deliver fewer services than at present.
- Make a severe cut to Service Level Agreements with voluntary sector organisations across Corby which would reduce these services considerably.
- Shut down weekend services, reduce the social work team, and some group-work interventions at Pen Green.

Exeter and Woodnewton

- Significantly reduce the social work and family support team and cease all services with voluntary sector organisations. This will reduce services and groups available to vulnerable families.

In all areas, staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services.

Daventry

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children. Services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently five designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.: -

- Daventry West Full-time
- Daventry East Part-time
- Brixworth Library Part-time
- Long Buckby Part-time
- Woodford Halse Part-time

These venues offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including Southbrook Hub, Food Bank and the Methodist Church.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services.

- Daventry West continue Full-time
- Daventry East continue Part-time
- Brixworth Library continue part-time
- Long Buckby the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area.
- Woodford Halse the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

East Northamptonshire

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Spurgeons. Services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently seven designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.: -

- Rushden Full-time
- Higham Ferrers Full-time
- Irthlingborough Part-time
- Newton Road Part-time
- Oundle Library Part-time
- Raunds Library Part-time
- Thrapston Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Spurgeons we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the local schools and community centres. Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services

- Rushden continue Full time
- Higham Ferrers will continue to offer some services but on a part-time basis
- Irthlingborough continue Part time
- Newton Road continue Part time
- Oundle Library continue Part time
- Raunds Library continue Part time
- Thrapston continue part-time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

Kettering

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children. Services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently seven designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.: -

- Highfield Road Full-time
- Montagu Street Full-time
- Meadowside, Burton Latimer Part-time
- Desborough Part-time
- Ronald Tree Part-time
- Rothwell Part-time
- Thornton Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the Crescents Community Centre and Grange Methodist Church.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services

- Highfield Road to continue to offer some services but on a part-time basis
- Montagu Street continue Full-time
- Meadowside, Burton Latimer the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area
- Desborough the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area
- Ronald Tree this venue will no longer be used
- Rothwell the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area
- Thornton this venue will no longer be used

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

Northampton Central

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children. Services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently three designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.: -

- Gloucester Children's Centre, Camborne Close Full-time
- Spring Lane Full-time
- Vernon Terrace Full-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including

- Quakers Meeting Rooms, St Giles Church, Polish Club, Victoria Rd Congregational Church and Alliston Gardens and Vernon Terrace Community Centres;
- Briar Hill Community Centre; Abbey Centre Methodist Church, and Delapre Community Rooms;
- Doddridge Centre, Little Springers Nursery, Spring Lane Family Centre, Northampton Bangladeshi Centre and St James Community Centre.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services

- Gloucester Children's Centre, Camborne Close
the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area
- Spring Lane
to continue to deliver services from this site but on a part-time basis
- Vernon Terrace
the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the Central Northampton library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

Northampton East

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children. Services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently five designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.: -

- Thorplands Full-time
- Blackthorn Full-time
- Ecton Brook Full-time
- Headlands Part-time
- Abington Library Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including Bellinge Community Centre, United Reform Church (Abington Avenue) and others yet to be identified. Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Services

- Thorplands continue Full-time
- Blackthorn continue Full-time
- Ecton Brook continue Full-time
- Headlands this venue will no longer be used
- Abington Library continue Part-time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

Northampton North

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Spurgeons and services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently three designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them: -

- Kingsthorpe Full-time
- Parklands Part-time
- Penfold Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend.

PROPOSED

In partnership with Spurgeons we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the local schools and community centres. Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Service.

- Kingsthorpe continue Full time
- Parklands this venue will no longer be used
- Penfold continue Part time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible..

Northampton West

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Spurgeons and services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently five designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them: -

- Camrose Full-time
- Wootton Full-time
- Duston Part-time
- Hunsbury Part-time
- Upton Meadows Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend..

PROPOSED

In partnership with Spurgeons we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the local schools and community centres. Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.

Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them and services for all families will continue to be delivered by Health Visitors. Additionally, all local Libraries will be used to deliver universal Children's Centre Service.

- Camrose the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the building used by Children's Centre services in Kings Heath will continue to offer services on a part-time basis.
- Wootton this venue will no longer be used.
- Duston the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area
- Hunsbury will continue to offer some services but on a reduced part-time basis
- Upton Meadows continue Part time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

South Northamptonshire

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children and services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently six designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them: -

- Deanshanger Full-time
- Towcester Full-time
- Bugbrooke Full-time
- Brackley Part-time
- Middleton Cheney Part-time
- Roade Library Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend..

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

Outreach will be delivered at a range of venues including the local schools and community centres. Staff will continue to visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them.

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- Deanshanger the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area.
- Towcester the current Children's Centre venue will no longer be used, however, the local library will continue to offer Children's Centre Services on a part-time basis for this area.
- Bugbrooke this venue will no longer be used.
- Brackley continue Part-time
- Middleton Cheney to continue to offer some services but on a reduced part-time basis
- Roade Library continue Part-time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

Wellingborough

NOW

Children's Centre Services for families that can most benefit are delivered by Action for Children and services for all families are provided by Health Visitors and by the Library Service.

There are currently five designated venues as shown below, although services are also delivered from a range of community venues and staff visit children and families in their own homes where this is the best way to support them: -

- Croyland Full-time
- Penrith Drive Full-time
- Earls Barton Part-time
- Oakway Part-time
- Wellingborough Library Part-time

These offer a range of timetabled service, and some Centres also offer activities at the weekend..

PROPOSED

In partnership with Action for Children we have drawn up the following proposals, to ensure that services continue to be delivered to those families that will most benefit.

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- Croyland this venue will no longer be used
- Penrith Drive continue Full-time
- Earls Barton continue Part-time
- Oakway this venue will no longer be used
- Wellingborough Library continue Part-time

By making these changes, we will be able to ensure that we retain the staffing capacity to deliver as many front-line services as possible.

How do I take part in the consultation?

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If you need help completing the questionnaire you can ask in your nearest Children's Centre venue, or Library.

If you would like to put forward your views without using the questionnaire, you can post your thoughts to: -

- **Children's Centre Services Consultation, Northamptonshire County Council, Room 126 Old Goal Block, County Hall, Northampton, NN1 2ED.**

Or you can email us at: -

- CCConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk.

However you choose to take part in the consultation, we look forward to hearing from you.



If you require further information or clarification of any part of this document, please email CCConsultation@northamptonshire.gov.uk or write to the address shown above.