

Extended consultation for Adult Overnight Residential Respite

Updated Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1) Why are you asking me to give my views on this consultation?

Southampton City Council is extending a consultation on how we might provide overnight residential respite for adults with learning disabilities, in the future. Before Christmas, we encouraged the people and families who use residential overnight respite at Kentish Road, Rose Road and Weston Court to take part in a formal and targeted consultation to give their valuable feedback. This started on Thursday 24 October and finished on Monday 16 December 2024.

A report based on this feedback went to Southampton City Council's Cabinet on 28 January, and it was decided that a final decision should be postponed until additional information was gathered.

In addition, Cabinet made the decision to open the consultation up to the public. This means that anyone can share their views on the consultation, so we are actively seeking a wider range of views, whilst continuing to target those people that currently use these services, to gain valuable feedback about the proposal.

It is important that we understand your opinions and the potential impact on you of the options that have been presented. This is so that we can consider your responses and propose the recommended decision.

2) When do I need to respond by?

Wednesday 19 March 2025.

3) What is the best way for me to respond?

Please complete the questionnaire.

For people that use the services, we have supplied a copy of the standard questionnaire. You can return this to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Alternatively, you can complete the questionnaire directly online. You can find it if you search for it on this link: www.southampton.gov.uk/RespiteConsultation

We have also developed an easy-read version of the questionnaire, which can also be found on the same link: www.southampton.gov.uk/RespiteConsultation

If you would like help to complete the questionnaire, you can email adultcare@southampton.gov.uk and one of our team will help you

4) What if I want help to understand and share my views about the consultation?

For those that are directly using the services, there is an option for additional support to understand the proposal and options. Those people have been written to separately. If you are concerned that you should have received a letter and you haven't, because you access these services, please get in touch with adultcare@southampton.gov.uk and we can help you.

5) Why do we need to change what we have now?

Our existing contracts for Adult Overnight Residential Respite with our external providers are coming to an end. There is therefore a need to review what these services should look like and how they are provided in future.

Like many councils across the country, Southampton City Council is also facing significant financial challenges. We have seen an increase in the number of people needing to use respite services and we expect that need to increase over the coming years. This means we need to review how we meet people's need for overnight residential respite in the most cost-effective way at the same time as continuing to provide good quality services.

6) What are the proposals?

We are considering two options, which also include reducing our use of external providers. This could mean that in future Southampton City Council would provide most of the overnight residential respite.

The two options are:

Option 1: Southampton City Council would become the provider at Weston Court and run this as well as Kentish Road. This would also involve an expansion of Kentish Road from 4 beds (+1 emergency bed) to 6 beds (+1 emergency beds) to meet needs overall. This would also accommodate those cared for at Rose Road whose needs are less complex and can be met within Kentish Road or Weston Court.

Under this option there would be 2 sites (Kentish Road and Weston Court) for the majority of respite.

Option 2: Services at Weston Court would be stopped. This would mean the majority of overnight residential respite will be provided by Southampton City Council at Kentish Road. This would involve an expansion of Kentish Road from 4 beds (+1 emergency bed) to 8 beds (+1 emergency bed) to meet needs overall. This would also accommodate those cared for at Rose Road whose needs are less complex and can be met within Kentish Road.

Under this option there would be 1 site (Kentish Road) for the majority of respite.

7) What would be the savings from the proposals?

The proposals deliver a saving of between £357,000 and £457,000, depending on which option is chosen, whilst also increasing the number of nights available.

Here are the main reasons why the proposed future delivery model will deliver savings:

- Having a single service rather than two separate services (in the case of Weston Court and Kentish Road provision). It is more cost-effective to employ one Registered Manager for both sites (when currently there are two)
- Internal operational savings - operating the current Kentish Road 1:3 staffing model across a larger number of core respite beds (i.e. 6 beds under option 1 or 9 beds under option 2) is more efficient than the current model where the 1:3 staffing model operates across 4 beds. Reducing the use of agency staff.
- The higher cost services we commission will be focused on those people with more complex needs. Extra staff will be needed to support adults with additional needs alongside staff with skillsets that can't be met at Weston Court or Kentish Road; whilst using the additional capacity at Kentish Road to provide the respite for people whose needs can be met there.
- Full use of available capacity at Kentish Road – we are currently operating at around 79% occupancy and only using 4 beds (plus 1 emergency bed). By fully using the first floor at Kentish Road, increasing the number of beds from 4 to 6 (plus 1 emergency bed) or to 9 beds (plus 1 emergency bed), depending on which option is chosen, and increasing occupancy, it spreads our costs across a greater number of beds.

8) Why have you extended the Consultation?

The feedback that we have received so far showed that most people did not support Option 2 (the single site option) for a number of reasons. This was mainly due to there being only one site delivering the majority of respite in Southampton. It was felt that this would mean less choice for carers, less accessibility for people living on the east of Southampton, insufficient capacity to meet future need and a one size fits all approach that people didn't feel would work.

However, as part of the consultation, we have also received strong views to the question about whether people agreed/disagreed with Southampton City Council's proposal that the Council delivers all the overnight residential respite from Kentish Road and Weston Court as opposed to using external providers.

We have also heard that some carers would like more time to respond to the consultation.

We are therefore extending the consultation to give anyone who hasn't responded another opportunity to do so. This now includes people who don't directly use these services. We also want to seek views about Southampton City Council or external providers providing our respite services at Kentish Road and Weston Court.

9) What difference does it make whether the services at Kentish Road and Weston Court are provided by Southampton City Council or external provider/s?

Details of the differences between whether Southampton City Council or external providers deliver the services at Kentish Road and Weston Court are set out in a separate information sheet that is available on the Respite Consultation website.

10) What if I disagree with all the options in the proposal?

There is space on the questionnaire that tells us if you agree or disagree with the options and there is a question that will help us understand why you disagree to help inform our recommendation.

11) When will a decision be made?

The consultation closes on Wednesday 19 March 2025. The feedback we receive will then be further analysed and used to inform the final recommendations to Cabinet at their 29 April 2025 meeting where a decision will be made.

We will be extending existing contracts with our current respite providers to allow enough time for the decision-making process and the final approved option from this to be implemented.

12) Who within Southampton City Council is the decision maker?

The final decision will be made by Cabinet. Council Officers will prepare a report for Cabinet that will include all the consultation feedback, the different options, and the impact of each option. Council officers in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, Councillor Marie Finn, will propose a recommended option for Cabinet, but the final decision sits with Cabinet.

13) How will I be informed about the decision?

We will write to current carers and individuals receiving respite care, whether they respond to the consultation or not and inform them about the decision. The decision will also be shared on Southampton City Council's website.

14) When will the changes happen?

Depending on the outcome of any decision, we will expect to start making changes from early May 2025. The time it will take to complete the changes will depend on the decision and is covered in more detail in Question 30 below.

The following frequently asked questions are directed more specifically at people using our residential respite services.

Those people that are indirectly affected are also encouraged to review this information in order to inform their response to the consultation

15) I'm worried that this consultation is about the council reducing my bed night allocation.

This proposal is not about reducing or changing the allocations that people already have.

16) Will I have a social work review once a decision is made?

Care and Support reviews will be carried out in line with legislation. A review will be arranged with carers and cared for individuals if the proposed changes affect where they currently receive respite.

17) What if my needs change whilst the consultation is running, and I need to change my number of nights?

If your needs change during the consultation, you should contact your allocated Social Worker or Learning Disability Duty. You can phone them on 023 8072 5550.

18) Will the services be operating as normal during the consultation?

Yes, all respite services will be operating as normal. However, we all need to be aware that we have already seen an increase in the number of people receiving a residential overnight respite offer. We are aware that this is already having an impact on the choice of specific bed nights some carers would like with their bookings. This is likely to continue to feature going forward even with the new options.

19) Will I be expected to change what site I attend?

If the cared for person attends Weston Court at this time and their needs are being met there, there will not be a change to where the respite is provided should the decision be made that Southampton City Council be the registered care provider for both Weston Court and Kentish Road, (this is Option 1).

If the cared for person attends Weston Court and the decision is made that Southampton City Council should run and provide the overnight residential respite service from Kentish Road only, then there would need to be a change to Kentish Road for your support (this is Option 2).

If the cared for person attends Rose Road Association for their overnight respite and the needs of the cared for person can be met in Kentish Road, then there would be a change to the site they attend with either of the options that are proposed.

20) If carers have an emergency, will there be a bed available for that?

We will continue to have emergency bed capacity available through the residential overnight services whichever option is chosen. However, we want carers to work with us and their respite providers about what the emergency plan for them looks like and to potentially use some of the other more flexible services to develop an emergency plan (if that meets your needs as a carer and the needs of the cared for person).

21) I am currently using the services. What if the person I'm caring for cannot have their needs met in either Weston Court or Kentish Road due to their complexity of needs?

We will continue to commission overnight respite from other providers, like Rose Road, for people with more complex needs, for example requiring nursing oversight. We are undertaking a procurement (buying) exercise for all our respite services over the coming months and are planning to use this opportunity to create more options for people with more complex needs.

22) I'm worried that the Kentish Road service may not be as good as my current service. What reassurance can you provide to me about the quality of the service at Kentish Road?

Kentish Road is rated as Good with the Care Quality Commission. We continue to use quality assurance monitoring to ensure our services are delivered to a good standard. The team at Kentish Road will be open to meeting with carers or cared for people, so that they can understand more about how the service is delivered.

23) Will my support staff change?

The Council Direct Care Services would work with the external providers to explore whether transfer of employment applies however, this will be a personal choice of those staff that are eligible. The Council Direct Care Services would work together with the external providers to ensure a smooth handover and continuity of care.

24) Can I now make bookings after 30 June 2025?

We understand from feedback that carers are keen to make bookings, and we understand the need to do this. We have asked all three providers to reopen bookings as usual from 30 June 2025.

25) How will bookings be managed in the future?

It will depend on which option is chosen but ideally, we would like to arrange to have a central booking email and contact number for both Weston Court and Kentish Road. Booking recording would be on a live document for the service to record booking requests.

26) Will I still be able to attend with my friends/peers?

As our services do now, we would try and ensure that people attend with any friends or peers. Equally, we know that some of our cared for, may find being around other cared for people difficult (perhaps due to sensory issues or other needs). We would assess how compatible individuals are when taking bookings.

27) What other services could meet my respite needs now, or in the future?

Outreach and Home Care – dependent on the person's needs, this could be explored now for some people. This means that carers could have time out during the day or evening and a support staff will stay with the cared for person at home. In some cases, support staff could stay in your home overnight so you can go away for a night too.

Non-residential overnight breaks (such as supported holidays) - this is currently being developed, and we are planning to have this offer up and running from Autumn 2025.

Day services – we are planning to have a more flexible approach with our day service providers, so that there is availability for some extended days, evenings or at weekends. We will be asking our day service providers to work in a more inclusive way (this could be within specific settings or in the way in which support is provided).

Shared Lives – overnight respite or day respite are available through this route.

Direct Payments - if you would like to explore this, we can provide more information about it for you.

28) If Weston Court is closed and, barring limited space at Rose Road for higher needs, all service users will be using Kentish Road, will we be assured that we will get our full allowance of respite and how will it be decided who gets what, due to the fact that weekends will be extremely sought after, will we have to book months or years in advance?

We have undertaken a detailed review (demand and capacity analysis) of how many people currently need overnight residential respite care. This has included looking at how many people may need care in the future. This has also included projections for population increases and children and young people transitioning to adult services. Our financial modelling for both options has taken this into account, but this is clearly tighter for Option 2 (single site).

Through this process, we have been made aware that allocation and access has not always been applied to a set structure. Following the consultation closing we will work with carers to develop guidance on allocations and equitable access.

29) What provision would Southampton City Council/Kentish Road make for service users who don't cope in a larger environment such as Kentish Road, if Option 2 (single site option) were chosen? Weston Court works well on a smaller, family like environment which is appreciated by the users and keeps the air of calmness, this is invaluable to a lot of our young adults with SEN needs.

This would depend on the option taken forwards. If the decision were to continue with a two-site respite offer with Kentish Road and Weston Court, the availability of the small, family-like environment at Weston Court would remain. If the option were, however, to close Weston Court and use a single site at Kentish Road, there is flexibility within the site to provide quieter space and separation from the main part of the building. Kentish Road has a sensory room as well as a large, secure garden and patio area. The upstairs accommodation also offers an additional lounge and fully functioning kitchen area, which provides a smaller, home-like environment for those who prefer that element of support. We will consider individual's preferences, needs and wishes and understand that building size, layout and environment have an essential impact upon the success of respite provision.

30) How long would it take to implement the changes whether it's option 1 or 2?

This will differ depending on which option is chosen and whether the decision is taken for Southampton City Council to deliver the services at Weston Court and Kentish Road or use external providers.

If the decision is taken to bring both services in-house, it is expected that the changes could take up until end September 2025 to complete.

If the decision is to use an external provider for one or both of the sites, the changes will involve a procurement and could take up until December 2025 to fully complete, particularly if the Kentish Road service was transferred to an external provider. This is because of the time it takes to run a procurement exercise.

Within both the above timeframes, we have also allowed sufficient time for a transition period for those cared for people who would move from one site to another. We would be committed to working with each person who is impacted by a move, their carers, and professional network to develop a detailed, person-centred transition plan. This will include working with the current service provider to ensure that the needs of each client are fully understood, ensuring that details regarding person centred care and support plans are shared to maintain a cohesive, consistent approach to care delivery and our staff are trained and fully aware in supporting each person's needs.

Accessible language will be used to communicate the changes to clients and their families/carers. Additionally, we will commission further advocacy support from our

advocacy provider, The Advocacy People, to support people through the process if they would find this helpful.

The transition will be gradually managed with opportunities to get to know staff and visit premises beforehand. This can include short visits, lunch / tea visits or overnight stays, depending on the needs and wishes of the individual and their families.

31) Would the decision regarding Weston Court also impact Way Ahead Day Service (who currently run Weston Court) as this is also an important function in many SEN adults lives?

The respite contract currently awarded to Way Ahead for Weston Court Respite is separate to the Day Service provision, provided by Way Ahead. The Way Ahead day service provision remains unchanged. We have not been made aware of any impact.

32) Will the provider of my current service change?

This will depend on the final decision.

If the decision is for Southampton City Council to provide all the overnight respite at Kentish Road and Weston Court, then there would be no change of provider at Kentish Road (as the Council already provides this service) but the management and running of Weston Court would transfer from an external provider to the Council.

If the decision is for external providers to provide all the overnight respite at Kentish Road and Weston Court, then the management and running of Kentish Road would transfer from Southampton City Council to an external provider who would be identified via a procurement process. It is also possible that the management and running of the Weston Court Service could transfer to a different external provider as a result of the procurement process.

If the decision is for Kentish Road to remain with Southampton City Council and Weston Court to remain with an external provider, then there would be no change of provider at Kentish Road. However, it is possible that the management and running of the Weston Court Service could transfer to a different external provider as a result of the procurement process (given that the current contract for Weston Court is coming to an end, the Council would need to go out to tender for a new contract).