

Acacia Court (formerly Kiln Court) Stakeholder Meeting
Thursday 20th March 2025, 10am
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
KCC, Councillor
FTC, Councillor
Abbey School
THA Trust
Kent Police

Kent County Council (KCC) – Faversham Town Council (FTC) - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UAS Children)

Introduction
Introductions made and agenda shared.
Update
<p>A KCC representative commenced the meeting by explaining that the current number of arrivals is very low, as wave height impacts the arrival rate. The young people are transitioning quickly, and the centre currently accommodates three individuals, with two more expected to arrive today. One positive aspect of the low arrival rate is that the young people have been placed in centres where others speak their language, which can be challenging during the peak summer season.</p> <p>The representative also mentioned that recently, all the young people across the centres participated in a sports day at the Cranbrook centre, which they thoroughly enjoyed.</p> <p>Furthermore, the representative highlighted that the young people are eager to engage in volunteering opportunities. They have shown enthusiasm by assisting in moving stock from one room to another and are set to contribute to the improvement of the centre's garden by planting vegetables and plants.</p> <p>There are instances where young people reside at the centre for longer than average periods. In such cases, the independent living programme is being developed further to help them acquire essential skills.</p> <p>The centre continues to expand its commitment to the community, with young people now attending the local gym. Recently, two members of Abbey School visited to discuss internet safety with the young people during a community meeting. They suggested collaborating on an event for Refugee Week.</p>
Stakeholder Feedback
<p>An FTC representative advised that they had recently been door-knocking in the area, and the neighbours did not raise any concerns about the centre, indicating that it is not having a negative impact on the local community. They inquired whether any young women had been residing at the centre.</p> <p>A KCC representative explained that the centre is only Ofsted registered to house 16-17 year old boys. There are very few young females arriving at the port, and there are other supported accommodation options available for them.</p> <p>An FTC representative mentioned that a community member would like to reach out and offer assistance to the centre. They asked how they could contact the centre.</p>

A KCC representative advised that they are happy to be contacted directly.

A KCC councillor representative shared that the residents' views of the centre are positive, with one resident noting that it was lovely to see the young people playing football together. There is someone in the local community who has a youth centre and can help connect the centre with the cricket club. They explained that at the recent annual town meeting, no concerns were raised about the centre, unlike the previous year when many issues were brought up. The police at the meeting reiterated to the residents that no calls had been made to them regarding behaviour at the centre.

A representative from THA Trust expressed that they had not heard any complaints and commended the centre for its good work.

A representative from Abbey School shared that their staff had a great visit to the centre and found the environment to be lovely. They expressed interest in collaborating on activities for Refugee Week.

A Kent Police representative mentioned that one of their officers has had positive interactions with the centre. They explained that although initial reactions to the centre were negative, the efficient management and excellent staff quickly alleviated concerns. The centre has been a refreshing addition to the community and has helped dispel misconceptions. They noted that there was a recent incident involving an individual, unknown to the centre, jumping the fence and cutting across the site, but the police responded promptly, and no damage was caused.

A KCC representative thanked the police for their quick response and expressed gratitude for the positive change in views. They advised that they would continue with their slow and steady approach.

AOB

None raised.