

Connors House Stakeholder Meeting

24th June 2026, 3pm – 3.30pm

MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
CCC, Canterbury City Council
Kent Police
CCC, Housing and Community

Kent County Council (KCC) – Canterbury City Council (CCC) - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UAS Children)

Updates
A KCC representative welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for the technical delays at the start. They reported that all was well at Connors House. During May, 27 young people had been accommodated at Connors House, with 22 currently residing there. All young people were settling in well. It was acknowledged that many had experienced the trauma of travelling, and their resilience was recognised. It was noted that, after a day or two, many young people began to socialise more and showed a strong willingness to attend education provision. There were no medical or security incidents to report. All young people were up to date with their vaccinations and were registered with a GP, with local health services providing excellent support. One young person was currently isolating due to chickenpox. Connors House staff were monitoring the situation closely and providing appropriate support.
Safety plans
A KCC representative discussed the support provided to young people who are subject to safety plans, noting that some may be potential victims of human trafficking. These young people are receiving all necessary support and safeguarding interventions. It was explained that staffing ratios are adjusted where required to meet the needs of young people on safety plans and to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Connors House continues to work closely with Kent Police, including the preparation of pre-emptive missing person reports, intelligence sharing, and participation in weekly multi-agency meetings. Regular communication is also maintained with the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), who is looking to visit Connors House on a regular basis to engage with and provide support to the young people.
Education
A KCC representative explained that the young people at Connors House are engaging well with education, developing independent skills ready for their NTS moves. Lots of interest in the curriculum, local interests, English

culture, how to complete forms and how to book GP appointments

Safeguarding

A KCC representative advised that monthly meetings are held with Kent Police to discuss safeguarding matters and share relevant information.

It was noted that there had been concerns regarding potential protests; however, these did not take place.

A CCC representative asked for clarification regarding the protests that had been referenced.

A Kent Police representative explained that they were aware of the reported threats of protests and had determined that the information had been generated by artificial intelligence. They confirmed that Kent Police routinely monitor social media activity and encouraged Connors House staff to contact them if any concerns arise. Kent Police also committed to contacting Connors House should they identify any issues requiring attention.

A KCC representative added that regular lockdown drills are carried out with the young people to ensure they are familiar with the procedures and know how to respond appropriately in the event of an incident.

Activities

A KCC representative outlined the ongoing work being undertaken to develop young people's independent living skills. This includes preparing meals and shopping within a £6 budget. Due to the pace of National Transfer Scheme (NTS) moves, cooking sessions are currently taking place twice a week. Young people are also supported to develop confidence in using public transport, including purchasing tickets and travelling independently.

Refugee Week

A KCC representative spoke about attending a conference at Canterbury Cathedral as part of Refugee Week. Young people were supported to participate in a range of activities celebrating different cultures and backgrounds. It was noted that the young people had shown a genuine interest in learning about and appreciating other cultures. They are also learning about life in England, which has been a positive and enriching experience to observe.

The representative also highlighted Connors House's gardening project, where young people have been actively involved in watering and caring for plants.

A variety of regular physical activities are available to young people, including football sessions at King's School, swimming, gym memberships, local walks to Samphire Hoe, visits to the Pie Factory where they can meet other unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), and sessions at Olympia Boxing.

A CCC representative thanked the group for the update and mentioned a contact within the Retired Forces who may be interested in attending the centre in connection with Poppy Day. They advised that they would make contact.

A KCC representative welcomed the opportunity to engage with members of the Retired Forces through community meetings at the centre. They also highlighted a recent educational visit to Dover Castle, which had been a particularly enriching experience for the young people.

A different CCC representative thanked the KCC representative for the detailed update and expressed interest in hearing about the safety plans and the close partnership working with Kent Police. They asked what support was available to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing at Connors House.

In response, a KCC representative explained that young people often arrive having experienced significant trauma, and while the nature of their stay may limit opportunities for in-depth therapeutic work, staff provide ongoing emotional support and ensure that any concerns are appropriately shared with receiving local authorities. Support includes the provision of sleep packs for those experiencing difficulties sleeping, emotional reassurance, and encouraging the development of basic English language skills to help young people build friendships and connections within Connors House. It was acknowledged that while some young people arrive appearing resilient,

others may be fearful and withdrawn; however, over time many begin to gain confidence, engage more fully, and start to heal and integrate into their new communities.

A CCC representative thanked the KCC representative for the detailed explanation and asked for further information about the contents of the sleep packs.

A KCC representative explained that the sleep packs contain items such as earplugs and lavender bags to help promote relaxation and improve sleep. It was also noted that staff work with young people to establish healthy routines, as many initially have disrupted sleep patterns and may sleep during the day and remain awake at night.

A CCC representative thanked the KCC representative for the explanation.

A Kent Police representative spoke of if there is any safeguarding please escalate to a Senior Manager, nothing specific to contribute this time.

A KCC representative thanked everyone for taking the time to join the meeting. Minutes will be shared in due course.