

Aspen Lodge Stakeholder Meeting
Friday 28th August 2026 at 11:00am
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
Sholden Parish Council
Kent Police
DDC, Asylum and Resettlement

Kent County Council (KCC) – Dover District Council (DDC) - Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UAS Children)

Welcome
A KCC representative welcome everyone to the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves.
Home Update
A KCC representative said that since the previous meeting, 26 children have arrived and 24 have left the home. As anticipated, this has been one of the busiest periods, with numbers remaining in line with forecasts. Operations have run smoothly overall, and the team at Aspen Lodge have managed several challenging situations effectively. There have been no complaints or enquiries from members of the public, and concerns raised at the previous meeting have since subsided. The children appear to be settling well into the community, with no significant incidents reported. There has been no involvement from Kent Police, particularly concerning the children. A representative from Parish Sholden Council confirmed that they had not received any complaints or issues from the public brought to their attention.
Community Involvement
A KCC representative asked if any of the attendees had contacts within the local community with whom Aspen Lodge could connect, with a view to engage with local activities. A representative from Parish Sholden Council recommended getting in touch with the local Scout HQ as it is situated near Aspen Lodge. The contact details were confirmed. A KCC representative confirmed that this would be of interest. As the children usually stay at the home for only a short time, Aspen Lodge would contact the group to explore any suitable opportunities. A representative from Kent Police asked how long the children normally stay at Aspen Lodge for. A KCC representative stated that the children generally stay at Aspen Lodge for around two weeks, although a small number remain longer; for example, one child recently stayed for nearly a month. Across the UASC service, the average stay is approximately 9.2 days. This short turnaround is necessary, particularly during the summer, when demand for residential placements is especially high. A representative from Kent Police recommended contacting the Dover District Council Inspire project although it takes place over several weeks and requires a financial contribution from the child's guardian. The Kent Police representative suggested contacting the project, as it offers a wide range of activities. A KCC representative confirmed that the team at Aspen Lodge would look into this, especially for any activities which were on the larger side. A DDC Asylum and Resettlement representative informed the meeting that a colleague had spoken with another home manager previously, and it was agreed that the Inspire project would not be suitable for children in the USAC

service. It was noted that it would be unfair for a child to begin an activity and then be moved away. Instead, local groups such as gardening clubs and Scouts may offer activities that children can join on a flexible basis. A representative from the DDC Asylum and Resettlement team said that they would contact the KCC representative with details of local community development officers. That way, if there are any activities or events in the local area, the community development officers can contact Aspen Lodge.

Any Other Business

A KCC representative said that they would be contacting the Sholden Primary School situated next door to Aspen Lodge to ensure that following meetings would be scheduled for during term time so that a representative from the school would be able to attend.