

Connors House Stakeholder Meeting
Thursday 30th July 2026, 3pm – 3.30pm
MS Teams Meeting

Agencies and Services in Attendees
KCC, UAS Children's Service
CCC, Councillors
Kent Police
CCC, Housing and Community
CCC, Community Safety

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

Updates
A KCC representative attended the meeting and provided an update supported by a short presentation. It was reported that the children at Connors House are enjoying helping to maintain and care for the garden, which has been a positive and engaging activity. Current occupancy at Connors House stands at 21 children. During July, a total of 27 children have been accommodated at the service, with 6 National Transfer Scheme (NTS) moves taking place during this period. Children continue to engage well with staff and activities. There has been one isolation case at Connors House; however, test results were returned clear, and there have been no further concerns. There have been no safeguarding concerns reported. Staff noted that the children have continued to demonstrate courtesy, respect, and cooperation within the home. Monthly safeguarding meetings continue to be held in partnership with Kent Police, and Connors House expressed its gratitude for the ongoing support and positive working relationship. Connors House recently welcomed a visit from KCC Cabinet Members. The visit was described as very positive, with visitors expressing appreciation for the support, care, and opportunities being provided to the children living at the home. An update was also provided on a recent UASC Service meeting, during which a number of service updates and developments were shared with attendees.
Education
A KCC representative reported that the children are continuing to engage positively with education and are keen to develop their English language skills. Recent learning topics have included British values, voting, and basic numeracy, with children showing a good level of interest and participation. Connors House continues to deliver its Independent Living Programme (ILP), which supports children in developing practical life skills to prepare them for greater independence. Areas covered within the programme include cooking, completing forms, using public transport, role-play scenarios, financial literacy, money management, and budgeting. Children participating in cooking sessions are provided with a budget of £6 per day to purchase ingredients and prepare their own meals. A wide variety of activities continue to be available to children residing at Connors House. The gardening project remains popular, with children helping to grow tomatoes, runner beans, kale, and sunflowers. Other activities currently on offer include football at King's School, swimming, gym visits, community walks, trips to the Pie Factory, and boxing sessions.

A CCC representative asked for clarification regarding the £6 budget allocated for independent cooking activities.

A KCC representative explained that the £6 allowance is intended to cover breakfast, lunch, and dinner for one day. It was acknowledged that the budget can be challenging at times, and children are encouraged to pool resources and work together to maximise what can be achieved within the available budget.

A CCC representative commented that this appeared to be a positive approach and agreed that pooling resources was a good idea.

A CCC Housing representative then enquired about the current average length of stay for children at Connors House.

In response, a KCC representative advised that there has been a noticeable increase in the speed of National Transfer Scheme (NTS) moves. Historically, children would remain at Connors House for an average of 10.5 days before an NTS move took place; however, this has now reduced significantly, with children typically moving on within 2 to 4 days on average.

Continued updates

A CCC Housing representative requested a breakdown of the nationalities of the children currently residing at Connors House.

A KCC representative advised that the children at Connors House come from a diverse range of backgrounds, including Afghan, Sudanese, Somali, Albanian, Kuwaiti and Egyptian nationalities.

A CCC representative informed attendees of a demonstration planned to take place in Maidstone on **15 August** and asked whether Connors House was aware of the event and appropriately prepared.

In response, a KCC representative explained that a recent flash demonstration had occurred locally. The event arose and dispersed very quickly, and no issues or incidents were reported.

Representatives from CCC and Kent Police discussed the legal framework surrounding demonstrations and protests, together with the practical considerations involved in policing such events and maintaining community safety.

A KCC representative outlined the lockdown procedures in place at Connors House, explaining that lockdown protocols are implemented immediately should any risk or threat be identified. It was noted that the children are not being exposed to the protests and that Connors House works closely with Kent Police. Staff reported feeling well supported, with Kent Police providing ongoing guidance and assistance whenever required.

AOB

A KCC representative asked the group whether they would like to arrange and book in a few meeting dates in advance.

A Kent Police representative suggested that consideration be given to holding the meetings every other month.

A KCC representative then asked the other representatives for their views on this approach.

A CCC representative commented that Connors House is running smoothly and confirmed they would be happy to move to bi-monthly meetings. It was suggested that, should anything pressing arise between meetings, an additional meeting could be pencilled in as needed. The CCC representative also confirmed they would prefer meeting dates to be booked in advance.

Both CCC Housing and CCC Community Safety representatives confirmed that they were happy for future meeting dates to be arranged in advance and supported moving to a bi-monthly meeting schedule.

A KCC representative advised that they would discuss the proposal with senior managers to seek approval for the meetings to proceed on this basis.

A KCC representative also expressed their appreciation for the support provided to Connors House and thanked partner agencies for their ongoing collaboration and assistance.