



have
your
say...

...on the future of The Birches Older Persons Home

Find out more about the consultation process and how you can have your say on the future of The Birches

Find Central Bedfordshire Council online at



www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Why do we consult?

Councillors are responsible for making decisions for the Council. Holding a consultation gives those directly affected by a proposed decision the opportunity to have their say and influence the decision that is made. Those directly affected, community organisations and the general public are encouraged to review the proposals and feedback their opinions and ideas to the Council.

During the consultation process you can request further information, ask questions and request that the Council looks into alternative options that have not been identified.

All comments made during the consultation process are recorded. The Council will publish its response to these comments and this information will be taken into account by Councillors so they can make an informed decision.

What we are consulting on

Central Bedfordshire Council wants the best possible quality of life for all its residents and is committed to developing and improving accommodation with care for older people. The Council owns and operates five care homes which were built several decades ago and which currently no longer meet the expectations of customers and regulators in terms of facilities and accommodation.

So, when better options become available elsewhere, the Council will consult with residents and relatives about the future.

The planned opening of Oak Manor, a new care home in Shefford, along with other good quality care and nursing homes in close proximity to The Birches, mean that the Council can now consider offering alternative and improved accommodation to the residents of this home.

The Council is therefore consulting on the future of The Birches Older Persons Home. Having reviewed a number of options for the future of the home, the Council's preferred option is to offer and arrange accommodation for the existing residents in good quality alternative care homes and then to close The Birches.

If you would like to take part in this or would like more information about what we are proposing for this service please see the information at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations or contact us using the details at the end of this document.

Consultation Timetable

Key Date	Activity
17 th February 2017	Consultation opens
18 th May 2017	Consultation ends
1 st August 2017	Report to Executive for decision
11 th August 2017	Implementation of Executive decision

How we will consult

Everyone can respond to the consultation by reading this factsheet, which has a summary of the proposals, and completing the consultation questionnaire. There is more information in the document 'Options Considered for the Future of The Birches Care Home' which we encourage people to read before responding.

If you have any questions about the options, need more information or would like the Council to consider other ideas these would be welcome. The ways you can contact the Council are explained at the end of this factsheet.

For those people who are most directly affected by the proposal – the people who live at The Birches, their relatives and the staff who work there – we will organise meetings and events to enable everyone who wants, to participate in the consultation.

We will take special care to ensure that the people who live in the home are consulted, without causing distress to those who may have difficulty understanding what is happening. We will discuss this with the people who know the residents best – their relatives and the staff in the home.

For those residents who may need help, we will offer support through advocates provided by POhWER, an independent organisation, who will assist them to ensure that they can express their views.

The consultation activities with residents and relatives will be tailored to individual requirements and the options that will be offered include:

- Meetings held at The Birches for residents, relatives and staff - either in small groups or one to one.
- Meetings held in areas local to relatives for those who find it difficult to get to the home.
- Communications via post or email to residents, relatives and staff to inform them of activities and the progress of the consultation.

In addition, members of the consultation team are available to meet with other individuals and organisations who would like to hear more about the proposals. Our contact details are at the end of this factsheet.

What the proposals are trying to achieve

A number of options in relation to the future of The Birches care home have been considered and evaluated against three important questions. These are:

- Improved quality of accommodation – will the option mean that the current residents of The Birches will be living in homes that have good quality care and meet modern standards of facilities and accommodation?
- Minimal disruption – what degree of disruption to the lives of current residents would result from the option in question and what will the impact of this be on their health and wellbeing?
- Value for money – would the option represent good value for money– both in the short and longer term?

The options we have considered

The Council has considered the following options:

- Doing nothing – continue to run The Birches in its present form.
- Relocating existing residents to better homes and closing The Birches.
- Transferring The Birches to another organisation to run as a going concern.
- Building a new home on the Birches site – moving residents to alternative homes, demolishing the old home and building a new one.
- Running the home down – stopping new admissions to the home but keeping it open for an agreed period of time or until it had no residents.
- Refurbishing the home so that it meets modern standards.

These options are set out in more detail in the document 'Options Considered for the Future of The Birches Care Home'.

How we have evaluated the options

In the table below we have summarised how these options have been evaluated.

Outcomes	Options					
	Do nothing	Relocate to better homes	Sell as going concern	Rebuild	Run down	Re-furbish
Improved quality of accommodation	x	✓	x	✓	x	✓
Minimal disruption	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x
Value for money	x	✓	x	x	x	x

Preferred Option

Having considered these options for the future of The Birches, the Council's preferred option at this stage is to offer and arrange for accommodation in better and alternative care homes for all existing residents. The Council would then close The Birches.

This is the preferred option because:

- Improved quality of accommodation: it enables existing residents to live in care homes that meet modern physical and environmental standards and enable delivery of good quality care.
- Minimal disruption for existing residents: any move would mean some disruption for existing residents, which could have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing. Whilst the preferred option would require existing residents to move, this would only happen once and measures could be put in place to minimise any risks to their health and wellbeing

- Value for money: because the independent care home market is delivering good quality residential care homes in Ivel Valley, significant investment in a care home in this area would not represent value for money to the Council and council tax payers.

Although this is the preferred option we want to hear your views before coming to a decision. This is why the consultation process is so important.

Have your say

We want to know the views of current residents, their relatives and others who have an interest in the future of The Birches Care Home. We also want to understand what the positive and negative impacts will be on individuals and how we might best manage these issues.

A copy of this factsheet and a more detailed briefing document - 'Options Considered for the Future of The Birches Care Home' is available on the web site for the public and hard copies will be available on request.

You can ask us any questions or tell us your view through the methods on the next page. We are particularly keen to get your answers to the following questions:

- What are your views on the Council's preferred option?
- Are there any options that you think are not correctly evaluated?
- Are there any options listed that you think the Council should investigate in more detail?
- Are there any other options that you think the Council should consider that are not in the document?
- Do you have any further comments about the future of the home?
- What could the Council do to minimise the negative impact of any changes on existing residents and their relatives.
- Do you have any other comments about the provision of accommodation for residents at The Birches?

For more information

- Visit our website for more information and complete our online questionnaire:
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations
- Email us at: Consultations@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Write to us at: FREEPOST RSJS GBBZ SRZT (you do not need a stamp)
The Birches Older Persons Home Consultation
Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House, Monks Walk
Chicksands, Shefford
SG17 5TQ

The consultation is open until 18th May 2017

If you need information in alternative formats or languages...

Email	Rebecca.carr@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Telephone	0300 300 6609
Website	www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

Notes

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Central Bedfordshire in contact

Find out more

For more information about this publication, further copies, or a large print copy, get in touch.

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