Changes to TRACS Day Service

We want to know what you think
Hello

We want to tell you about changes to TRACS in Longfield.

You might need some help with this document.

The government has told us that we need to look at how we run our day services.

This is part of a government White Paper called ‘Valuing People Now.’

This means we need to make sure people with learning disabilities have the best services possible to lead a full and meaningful life.

We are now looking at developing TRACS, to give a wider range of community based activities.

To do this properly we need to ask people what they think of this. This is called a consultation.

We would like to hear from:
- everyone who uses the service
- parents and carers
- people who might like to use the service in the future
- other services and colleagues including health and education.
Why the change?

For some time now everyone at TRACS has been working hard to be more involved in the local community.

They have made some really good links with community groups in Dartford.

Because of this the TRACS building is not being used as much. Some days only eight people are there.

As TRACS is based in Longfield, the service has had to rely on mini buses to get to and from the building. This makes getting to community activities more difficult.

Also it can mean that some people are on the vehicles for up to three hours a day.

In line with Valuing People Now we are looking at all our services, helping them to become more community based, using buildings that are also used by other members of the local community, and that are easy to get to.

In other areas across Kent this has been very successful and has given people lots of new opportunities.
The TRACS building is leased, which means we pay rent to be in the building. This ends in December 2013.

As we have other community facilities in Dartford we would like to take the opportunity to move the service to a different place.

What will the new service look like?

The new service will provide support for people to use facilities that are local to where they live. This will help people access a wider range of activities across the Dartford area.

The service will continue to be provided by the existing staff who know everyone well.

We will make sure any new staff will be fully trained.

We want to make sure that what is offered by TRACS is what people want and need.

Instead of being based in Longfield, TRACS will be based in Dartford as we have found the following exciting facilities.
The Bridge Learning and Community Campus

The Bridge was completed in 2010 and is used everyday by both TRACS and Yew Tree.

People enjoy using the Bridge because it has easy access to Fast Track buses, has many sporting activities and a fully accessible kitchen for cooking.

It has a meeting space and a sensory room where people can relax and get away from busy Dartford.

2 Essex Road, Dartford

2 Essex Road is a Kent County Council (KCC) owned building in Dartford that is close to shops, buses and the train station as well as the town centre.

It is in a quiet road but it is central, allowing us to do lots of different activities.

We are about to start building work that will change the way it looks and feels. It will open it up for more use, as well as making it a bright welcoming space.

We also want to make sure people with learning disabilities and staff get involved in choosing things such as the new kitchen, the colours and the furniture.
It has enough space for people to meet up and plan the things they want to do in town. It will also be good as a place for small group or individual activities such as cooking. Added to this it will provide a place where people can get away from busy Dartford if needed.

It also has good office space that will let staff and managers be in the centre of things.

**Lowfield Street**

KCC has for a long time been looking at the new plans for Lowfield Street and agreed to a new community hub being built there.

We have asked for a hub near the new Tesco because it will be within easy reach of the Leisure Centre, Adult Education as well as the town itself.

If it goes ahead it will be a building that we share with other services such as occupational therapy but where we have three meeting areas including a kitchen where everyone can cook and eat.

Also, we want to make sure that there are facilities that meet the needs of people with complex disabilities and so this new town centre hub will also have a Changing Place, with a hoist and changing bed.
Dartford Library

We are also talking with Dartford Library, and have said we would invest some money in the building to help make it better for people with disabilities.

In return we have asked for TRACS to be able to use it as another town centre community hub.

All the proposed new community hubs are in Dartford Town Centre and are a short distance from each other.

By putting time and money into these hubs we will make sure there is a good mix of equipment and facilities, so that we are able to meet the needs of both current and future TRACS Service Users.

This way everyone will still have the chance to get together, but also have easier access to trains and buses and a wide range of activities across the Dartford area.

We also think that it might open up more opportunities in the evenings and weekends.
This is what it might look like

Lowfield Street

2 Essex Road

Library

Shops

Swimming

Job Centre

The Bridge

Fast track bus
What happens next?

We have planned that this consultation will take three months, as we want to make sure that as many people as possible are included.

There will be a range of ways for people to get involved and tell us what they think, including:

- service user meetings and one to one meetings – with the support of Advocacy
- information events
- a questionnaire that will be available online and at these meetings.

This means that you will have lots of chances to give your ideas and views before the consultation ends on the 13th August.

After this we will bring all these different responses together in a report that will be published in early October.
Questions and answers

We have tried to answer some questions you might have.

Will I still get the same level of service?

• Yes
  The changes will affect where activities take place and will open up more opportunities.

  We do not aim to reduce the service people receive, instead we aim to make it much more person centred.

Where will the new service be?

• Because we know where people live, we have used this to find places that are both central and easy to get to and so we found places in Dartford. The main office will be based at 2 Essex Road.

How will this new service be better?

• A new community based service will be more flexible and person centred and it will open up more opportunities.

• Planning the service around your views will mean we develop what is wanted, and by working with local community groups and developing community hubs we will make the service more inclusive.
What will this mean for the staff?

- The service will continue to be provided by the existing staff team.
- The whole team will be able to use 2 Essex Road for their main office and management support and will continue to have access to a full training programme.

How will the new service promote safety?

- For some time now we have been using a variety of community facilities and so have already put in place systems.
- We have also been working with local community organisations to raise awareness and encourage good practice.

How will transport needs be met?

- It is our aim to develop a service that is more accessible, and as happens now, your care manager will discuss any needs on an individual basis.
Get in touch

If you have further questions or comments you will be able to share these in the following ways:

- Consultation meetings and events

- Completing the questionnaire

- Website: www.kent.gov.uk/learningdisability

- Email: GoodDayProgramme@kent.gov.uk

If you would like this questionnaire available in an alternative format or another language, please contact us on 08458 247 100.