

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Adults and Children’s Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	14 th April 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Respite Care	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: N/A		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Respite care sometimes known as short term breaks is a crucial support system for families and caregivers. They help individuals cared for to stay at home while easing caregiving demands. Respite allows carers to rest and recharge, ensuring their well-being and maintaining the quality of care they provide.
- 1.2 The all-age respite offer within the B&NES area currently consists of respite within the home, in the community, day centres or building based services, and overnight stays outside of the family home.
- 1.3 Recent developments within the market have highlighted the need for a revised offer which has greater flexibility to meet the needs of the residents of B&NES.
- 1.4 In response, we brought forward commissioning work in this area and are reviewing the respite care services in B&NES across all ages to better support families and carers. This report describes the review methodology and updates on progress achieved to date.
- 1.5 It also updates on respite provision at Newton House and the working group set up to develop options for this service beyond 2025.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to:

- 2.1 Consider content of the report and provide comments.
- 2.2 Agree that an update report on the progress of the respite care review, including the needs analysis, is submitted to Panel in June 2025.

3 THE REPORT

What is Respite Care?

- 3.1 Start Well (0–18 years) - Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide respite care, also known as short breaks, to children with disabilities or special needs.
- 3.2 Services provided can include day care, overnight care, and support within the home or in other settings. The aim is to provide flexible and responsive support that meets the individual needs of the child and their family. This includes ensuring that services are accessible, culturally appropriate, and tailored to the specific needs of the child and family.
- 3.3 Live Well and Age Well (18-100+ years) – In addition, the Care Act 2014 outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in providing respite care for adults aged 18-100+.
- 3.4 Services provided can include support in people's home or in the community, Shared Lives support, day care and overnight care or building based respite.

Review of Respite Care

- 3.5 We are reviewing the respite care services in B&NES across all ages to better support families and carers. This review has five stages:

1) Understanding respite care:
Respite care gives carers a break, allowing them to rest and recharge. It is important for everyone to understand how vital this service is.
2) Needs analysis:
We are finding out what carers and those they care for need. This includes understanding their daily challenges and how often they need breaks. We are talking to families and collecting data to see how current needs are being met and what might be needed in the future. We are reviewing what we know about families and people with eligible care act needs.
3) Current services in B&NES:
We are looking at the respite care services currently available in B&NES, both in buildings and in the community. This includes services like Newton House and Base House, which support people with complex needs and help develop independent living skills. Community services like Shared Lives also provide

daytime and overnight support as well as day services, community support and direct payments.

4) Identifying gaps:

We are identifying what is missing in the current respite care services. This includes looking at availability, accessibility, and specific types of care that are not being provided as well as ensuring that people have a range of services to choose from.

5) Exploring options:

We are exploring innovative solutions to meet residents' needs, fill the gaps in respite care services and develop plans to recommission respite care. This includes looking at best practices and learning from other areas.

- 3.6 To date the review team has gathered information about statutory frameworks and requirements, service descriptions and delivery models for respite care. Work to map current provision and collate current needs and demand profile is in progress across three areas of Start Well, Live Well and Age Well. We are gathering data on several areas such as the number of people currently accessing different types of services, predicted future demand for services and identifying any unmet needs.
- 3.7 This information will be correlated with feedback and insight from people using respite care and their carers, social care practitioners, providers, and other stakeholders. Population needs analysis from B&NES Strategic Evidence Base will be used to model future demand for respite care, a necessary step before moving to identifying areas for improvement, gaps, and opportunities to inform development of options for future models of delivery and commissioning.
- 3.8 We have also engaged in discussions with neighbouring local authorities to understand how they commission respite and what has worked well. Initial conversations identified common issues and gaps in respite service models. Other authorities are also reviewing and recommissioning their current models. We will continue to research best practice, identify, and share learning with regional and national commissioning networks to inform this review.

Newton House update

- 3.9 Newton House continues to provide building-based respite for individuals with complex needs. Bookings for 2025 are open and families are taking them up.
- 3.10 Since the January panel, Adult Social Care has communicated with all families either in writing or by telephone. Families have been informed that the respite service at Newton House will remain available for booking for up to one year. B&NES council and Dimensions have worked together to create joint letters to inform the people affected by the service redesign.
- 3.11 A meeting was held on January 29th, 2025, with families who used Newton House for respite. Twenty-two people attended to discuss their concerns with Councillor Born, Suzanne Westhead, Ann Smith, and senior managers from

Dimensions. During that meeting, it was agreed that representatives from the families would work with the council to help develop future options for residential respite for people with complex needs.

- 3.12 It was also agreed that two social care practitioners will work with the seventeen people currently using the service and their families to understand any changes to their needs and to put forward recommendations for support. Of the seventeen individuals, eleven have had a recent assessment or review, and care planning has commenced. The remaining six people identified as requiring a reassessment or review have an allocated worker and the process is progressing. An operational group, which includes brokerage colleagues is in place to jointly review the assessed needs of each person affected and to identify suitable service provision.
- 3.13 Suzanne Westhead invited representatives of families who use Newton House to join a working group to develop options for residential-respite for people with complex needs beyond 2025. The group first met on 10 March, in Guildhall, attended by three carers, Suzanne and two commissioners.
- 3.14 The meeting focused on respite care in B&NES, discussing various aspects of adult social care, difficulties in accessing respite services, especially during the pandemic, and the complexities involved in care arrangements for individuals with complex health needs. Carers shared their experiences and highlighted the importance of communication and collaboration among stakeholders to improve care for individuals with complex needs.
- 3.15 The group also began to explore options for future residential respite services for individuals with complex needs, including continuing current services, council-run options, and tendering for new services, all while stressing the need for thorough needs analysis and flexibility in care provision. The group agreed to meet again at the end of April to consider the draft needs analysis and explore options for the future further. Update on the work of the group has been shared with all families currently using respite care at Newton House.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide respite care, also known as short breaks, to children with disabilities or special needs. This requirement is primarily outlined in the Children Act 1989 and further detailed in the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.
- 4.2 Key requirements include:
- Assessment and Eligibility: Local authorities must assess the needs of the child and their family to determine the appropriate level of support. The assessment should be holistic, considering the child's physical, emotional, and social needs, as well as the impact on the family.
 - Service Provision: Services provided can include day care, overnight care, and support within the home or in other settings. The aim is to provide flexible and responsive support that meets the individual needs of the child and their family. This includes ensuring that services are accessible, culturally appropriate, and tailored to the specific needs of the child and family.

- Promotion of Welfare: The services provided should promote the welfare of the child and support the family in their caring role.

4.3 The Care Act 2014 outlines the responsibilities of local authorities in providing respite care for adults aged 18-100+.

4.4 Key requirements include:

- Assessment of Needs: Local authorities must assess the needs of adults who may require care and support, including their carers. This assessment determines the level and type of respite care needed.
- Duty to Meet Needs: If the assessment identifies eligible needs, the local authority has a duty to meet those needs. This can include providing respite care services such as day care, overnight care, and support within the home.
- Promoting Wellbeing: The Care Act emphasises promoting the wellbeing of individuals receiving care and their carers. This includes considering physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.
- Support for Carers: The Act also recognises the importance of supporting carers, ensuring they have breaks from their caring responsibilities to maintain their own health and wellbeing.

4.5 Review of respite care described in this report is being undertaken under these legal frameworks with due regard to the key statutory requirements.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 Respite care for B&NES residents is being funded by children social care and adult social care budgets. These budgets are subject to the council's service and resource planning process conducted annually.

5.2 Resource implications of providing respite care will be explored and considered at the gaps analysis and options appraisal stages of the review.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue will be undertaken during all stages of the review in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 An equalities impact assessment is being developed informed by the information generated by the review to date. The service is very aware of the importance of delivering equitable services to all those people who have drawn on care and support and their carers.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 At this stage of the review, it is too early to say what impact future models of respite care delivery might have on climate change.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Conducting a strategic review of services required to meet residents' needs forms part of the commissioning cycle of analyse-plan-do-review. Options for future models of delivering respite care will be developed and considered during the later stages of the review.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The review will be informed by feedback and insights from individuals using respite care and carers, social care practitioners, providers and other stakeholders. Engagement and communications plans are being developed and will be updated to reflect requirements at each stage of the review. Focus will be on seeking to develop deep understanding of what good respite care looks like, what works well and what could be improved, what is missing and then using this information and insight to co-design and develop flexible and resilient delivery models.

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	