

Lead Member Report for Health and Well Being Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel – September 15th 2025

Adult social Care

Newton House update

B&NES families who draw on care and support at Newton House came together on 18th July to share their experience and hear from the working group looking at options for future building-based respite services. The meeting was attended by 4 parents, managers from Dimensions and council officers, who recognized the value of continuing to regularly meet together to take this work forward.

Key themes from the discussion:

- Updated the group on the contract changes coming up in 2026 and a strategic piece of work to review current services and develop a Learning Disability, Autism, and Neurodiversity framework. This is a significant undertaking, encompassing community support, day support, and supported living services. Respite care is also part of this broader initiative.
- Recognized the importance of a well-planned and well-communicated transition from current arrangements to new ones. Acknowledged the role of social care practitioners in planning together with individuals and their families and confirmed ways to contact relevant practitioners.
- At the service level, the council and providers will continue to work together to ensure the market can meet the needs of B&NES individuals and families. The group agreed that sufficient time must be allowed for the transition from current to new arrangements. This includes giving individuals and families time to get to know new staff teams, buildings, or locations and to develop new routines as necessary following contract changes.
- Discussed the importance of long-term planning, including understanding future housing needs for individuals and families. By working together, we can ensure that the B&NES Local Plan reflects the housing needs of individual and families. Up to date information about the Local Plan can be found here:
<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/local-plan>

This update has been shared with all families who use Newton House support. The working group will continue its work on the all-age respite and all families will be invited to take part, with more opportunities for engagement opening in the autumn.

Community Support Recommissioning update

Recommissioning of community support services is progressing as planned. Several tenders were evaluated in August, with more evaluations happening in September, with good level of engagement from health and social care practitioners and carers, as relevant for each service. We are on time to finalise contract awards by the end of September. A communication strategy is being updated, and procurement outcomes will be communicated later in the autumn.

Carers EQIA

Work on delivering the improvements agreed in the Carers strategy is progressing across several areas, such as increasing number of people identifying as carers and improving

quality and timeliness of information and advice given to carers. An EQIA has been produced to support the delivery of the strategy. The assessment has been submitted for publication and will be published here: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/equality-impact-assessments> This assessment will be reviewed and updated at key points in strategy delivery.

Regulated services – Community Resource Centres & Extra Care Housing

Adult Regulated Services include the two Community Resource Centres and 5 Extra Care Schemes across B&NES. The 5 Extra Care schemes remain rated as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the 2 Care Homes are rated overall as 'requires improvement' but with good in key areas such as 'caring' and 'responsive'. Extra Care was last inspected by CQC in July 2022, followed by Combe Lea in October 2022.

CQC conducted an unannounced inspection of Cleeve Court in July following a 'test and learn' approach with an expert by experience as part of the inspection team. The inspection concentrated on the domains of Safe and Well Led as these were rated as requires improvement in the previous inspection. As part of the inspection methodology the service has worked with the Lead Inspector to develop an action plan, and this has been updated and reviewed with the Lead Inspector in early August. It is expected that the inspection report will not be available until mid-late September from CQC.

Regular Quality Assurance visits have been undertaken by the commissioning team at Combe Lea and Cleeve Court care homes in July and August. Actions identified through the quality assurance visit have been translated to a service improvement plan which is monitored by commissioners alongside the Registered Manager and Head of Service.

A new Registered Manager for Cleeve Court has been appointed and will commence in post on 17th September 2025. Two staff have received long service recognition within the service for 25 years and 40 years of service.

Combe Lea received a compliment from the wife of a respite gentleman who has now gone home; *'We cannot thank everyone enough, not just for your kindness and caring to him but to the whole family, I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending Combe Lea wholeheartedly.'*

In August a gentleman who had lived at Greenacres for 17 years moved out to live with his brother and upon leaving his home in Extra Care wrote a poem for the care staff called 'Greenacres Carers' to give thanks for all that they had done for him in his time living in the service.

Visits – Suzanne Westhead and I visited both Cleeve Court and Combe Lea during August and were delighted to meet staff, residents and some visiting relatives. Since taking these regulated services back in house in 2020, B&NES has invested significantly in both staff and infrastructure and I was struck by the many improvements since I last visited. Both homes are clearly offering high quality, person centred care in a comfortable and homely environment and staff are committed to ensuring that residents live fulfilling lives for the time that they are

there. Combe Lea has now fully embedded the new electronic record system, Cleeve Court is still in the process transitioning to the new system.

Public Health

Cool Spaces

With our Summer's becoming warmer, Public Health and Sustainable Communities have worked with partners to ensure residents' can access cool spaces. Companies and community organisations in Bath and North East Somerset who could provide a cool indoor space for residents to rest on hot days and shelter from the sun are being encouraged to register on a new [Indoor Cool Spaces Directory](#). Each Indoor Cool Space provider will agree to certain facilities being available such as toilets and drinking water, and will sign up to the Cool Spaces Charter which guarantees visitors respect, dignity and a warm welcome. An online map and directory has also been developed so that residents can look up where their nearest cool space is. This includes indoor spaces and outside shaded areas.

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing

A new online free testing service has been rolled out for chlamydia and gonorrhoea, our two most prevalent sexually transmitted infections in under 25s. The online service, delivered by SH:24, is available to all women under the age of 25 living in Bath and North East Somerset.

Drug and alcohol services

The council's commissioned community drug and alcohol service Turning Point launched the Recovery and Dependency Service on 1st July. This specific service is for all adult males on probation residing in Bath & North East Somerset. It allows enhanced joint working with probation, a first appointment within two weeks of referral and shared approach to intervention plans and a planned exit strategy after completion.

Update on Be Well B&NES

Be Well B&NES (BWB) is a whole systems health improvement framework for Bath and North East Somerset which has four core aims: Good food for all; Living free from harms of tobacco, drugs and alcohol; Good emotional wellbeing for all; Achievable active lifestyles

Recent activity has focused on establishing programme governance with a central multi-agency Steering Group, technical health improvement workstreams, two networks and planning for ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The Children's BWB Network is prioritising implementation of the educational attainment gap action plan over the next two years. Capacity has been identified to support the BWB Community Network to engage further and listen to communities within Twerton and Whiteway to capture, on an ongoing basis, feedback around assets, needs and health improvement more widely. Other recent activity includes starting work to update the physical activity action plan. The final priority action is to develop a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure

measurement of progress of BE Well B&NES and evaluation of impact on intended health improvement outcomes.

Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF)

The Summer Activate Your Holidays programme has been offering families enriching activities alongside a free hot meal. This year, we've expanded our SEND provision through specialist local providers Recreate and Nova, and improved communication to families about how children with SEND can be supported to access mainstream activities where appropriate (45% of children and young people accessing the Easter HAF programme had additional needs).

The Easter HAF programme received positive feedback and successfully reached 607 unique* participants (which is 13% of eligible children and in line with the national average). This included 115 children and young people with additional vulnerabilities, such as those with child protection plans, children in need, Ukrainian refugees, and individuals experiencing poor mental health. To maximise the 15% non-FSM allocation, we have continued to promote referral opportunities through children's services staff, elective home education families, and local providers via the Children and Young People's Network.

The programme continues to prioritise strengthening local partnerships and has also reached out to secondary aged pupils to hear about any participation barriers prior to confirming the summer activities as participation of teenagers is historically lower both locally and nationally.

In August the Government announced a £600 million extension to the HAF programme for a further three years, which is good news. Local authorities are awaiting confirmation of their individual funding allocations.

*Unique – In B&NES, a central booking system is used, meaning a child may attend multiple HAF provisions but is only counted once in participation data.

Alison Born- Cabinet Lead Adult Services and public Health