



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE
IN EPSOM AND EWELL
PROPOSED CLOSURE OF MENCAP
HOME IN THE PARADE, EPSOM
24th JANUARY 2005**

KEY ISSUE

This report updates the committee on the current position following the decision by MENCAP to close a registered care home, 28 The Parade, Epsom.

SUMMARY

28 The Parade is an eight-bedded residential care home with five existing residents. MENCAP are not able to continue with the existing number of voids and are seeking to reconfigure their services to meet current and future needs.

The closure of a care home is a sensitive matter and the purpose of this report is to highlight some of the issues and discussions that have taken place between MENCAP and Adults and Community Care to safeguard the interests of existing residents.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to:

- i) Note the discussions that have taken place concerning the future of 28 The Parade, Epsom; and
- ii) Recommend Adults and Community Care continue to negotiate with MENCAP to ensure that the needs of existing residents are appropriately met.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 28 The Parade is an eight-bed residential care home for people with a learning disability. It is currently occupied by five residents and therefore has carried three vacancies for some time.
- 1.2 In October 2004 MENCAP announced its intention to close the home as it was no longer able to sustain the level of voids. The possibility of developing the accommodation for “supported living” for people with a learning disability was to be explored. MENCAP are of the view that three of the residents will be able to transfer into the newly designated scheme. The implication is that two of the residents will need to be found alternative accommodation or, indeed, all five in the event of the redevelopment not taking place.
- 1.3 MENCAP is one of a number of independent providers who contract with the Council to provide care for people with a learning disability. In Mid Surrey, 188 people are supported in residential accommodation.
- 1.4 Within the locality there are an above average number of people with a learning disability which is the legacy of the long stay hospitals. Modernisation of services has been taking place for some time with a range of partners including the Primary Care Trust and Surrey Oaklands.
- 1.5 Although a relatively high number of people are in care homes, many more people (around 300 in Mid Surrey) are maintained at home, an increasing proportion with older relatives.
- 1.6 It is the responsibility of Adults and Community Care to support all people with a learning disability who have eligible needs. The aim is to maximise people’s independence and promote the objectives set out in the “Valuing People” white paper. In this context, supporting people where individuals hold their own tenancy agreement is regarded as a less restrictive accommodation option than residential care. Increasingly residential care is required for people with complex and specialist needs.
- 1.7 Services for people with learning disabilities are commissioned on the basis of each person’s assessed needs. The social care market in Surrey, however, is acknowledged to be extremely challenging, reflecting high costs and relatively low levels of government funding. Nevertheless, the procurement of services is based on the principles of best value regardless of provider, whether this is in house, charitable as in the case of MENCAP, or a private organisation.

2. ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

- 2.1 MENCAP is a national organisation that has a number of establishments within Surrey. Discussions have taken place with the County Council for several years and particularly in the west where a number of homes have been reconfigured to ensure that they meet existing and future needs. Some have been developed as supported living units and others provide for people with higher care needs.
- 2.2 Approximately 12 months ago discussions took place between Adults and Community Care and MENCAP concerning the funding of residential care homes in the east of the County. The voids at 28 The Parade was raised as an issue and as a consequence Adults and Community Care care managers asked five people who were assessed as needing residential care to consider The Parade as an option. In the event, by June of last year, two people had actively been supported to pursue this option, one was considered by MENCAP to have needs beyond their capability and the other was offered a place in an alternative MENCAP home. The Council did agree to above inflation fee increases for two of the existing residents. It was, however, recognised that voids in such a small home presented MENCAP with a difficult situation.
- 2.3 Following the decision to close in October, Adults and Community Care undertook to organise community care assessments with each of the residents. This involves collaboration with a range of colleagues, including Health, and MENCAP agreed to extend the deadline set originally for January to the end of the financial year. Assessments are ongoing and draft reports will be discussed with each of the families early next month.
- 2.4 In the meantime, MENCAP have confirmed it is their intention to proceed with closure of 28 The Parade and if possible redevelop the accommodation as two supported living flats, one of which could be made available to those existing residents assessed to be suitable. It is also understood that MENCAP will be meeting all the families concerned and go through their proposals with them.
- 2.5 It is the intention of Adults and Community Care to continue to work closely with MENCAP as they seek to reconfigure their services. At the same time every effort will be made to ensure that appropriate provision is available for existing residents in accordance with their community care assessments.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The concerns expressed by relatives are understood and the closure of any home is a difficult and sensitive matter. It is the responsibility of Adults and Community Care to ensure that appropriate services are available for people with eligible needs. The provision of such services is via the social care market where providers are continually being required to develop their facilities to meet rising standards and changing needs. Underpinning these decisions, there is a clear requirement to ensure financial viability.

Report By:

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER:	Guy Hall
TELEPHONE NUMBER:	01372 832946
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century, March 2001