

Children's Centres consultation 2016

Results of the 'Proposed changes to
Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex'
consultation (survey)

Live: 11th February – 10th April 2016

12th May 2016

Table of contents

Table of contents	2
Executive summary	5
Background	5
Key findings	5
Qualitative findings	7
Introduction	8
Consultation background	8
Overall interest in the survey – response rate	8
Survey structure	8
Structure of the report	9
Results	10
Q1: 'Are you responding primarily as a...' - The perspective from which views are provided	10
Q2: 'Do you currently use Children's Centre services or activities?'	11
Q3: 'Which District do you live in?'	11
Q4: 'Which quadrant would you like to comment on?'	12
North Essex Children's Centres – Colchester and Tendring	15
Q5.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'	15
Q5.2: 'In North Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:	16
• Greenstead Children's Centre, Colchester	16
• Sydney House Children's Centre, Clacton-on-Sea	16
To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'	16
Q5.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?	18
Q5.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'	22
Mid Essex Children's Centres – Maldon, Chelmsford, Braintree	24
Q6.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'	24
Q6.2: 'In Mid Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:	25
• Carousel Children's Centre, Braintree	25
• Chelmsford Central Children's Centre, Chelmsford	25
• Maldon Children's Centre, Maldon	25
To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'	25
Q6.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?	27
Q6.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'	32
South Essex Children's Centres – Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford	34
Q7.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'	34
Q7.2: 'In South Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:	35
• Fryerns Farm Children's Centre, Basildon	35

• Larchwood Children's Centre, Pilgrims Hatch	35
• Little Handprints Children's Centre, Thundersley	35
• The Oak Tree Children's Centre, Rayleigh.....	35
To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?	35
Q7.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?	37
Q7.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'	41
West Essex Children's Centres – Uttlesford, Epping Forest, Harlow	43
Q8.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'	43
Q8.2: 'In West Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:.....	44
• Brambles Children's Centre, Epping	44
• Little Goslings Children's Centre, Great Dunmow	44
• Treehouse Children's Centre, Harlow	44
To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?	44
Q8.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?	46
Q8.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'	51
Comparison between all quadrants	53
Main proposal – for there to be one Family Hub per district	53
Proposal regarding individual Family Hub locations	54
Alternative Family Hub locations	55
Q9: Opening hours - 'Thinking about the Family Hub you are most likely to use, when would you prefer it to be open?'	58
Q10: 'To what extent do you agree with the proposal that the opening times for the Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites will be based on what local families say works best for them?'	60
Q11: Support and services – 'We are keen to encourage and enable the local community and parents/carers to run their own activities and social events for local children, young people and their families. We propose to do that by making available space in buildings we own or lease. To what extent do you agree with this proposal?'	62
Q11b: 'If you disagree with our proposal to make space available for the local community and parents/carers to run their own activities, please tell us why?'	64
Q12: 'If space was made available for the local community and parents/carers to run activities for other families, how interested would you be in running a group in your area?'	67
Q13: 'Do you have any other comments about our proposals?'	69
Content of comments suggests that the proposals were interpreted in different ways by different people	69
Analysis of open-ended comments	71
'Public transport is not easy for all families to use, and not all families have cars'	74
'Just knowing I have that professional support with people I know and trust is great' ...	76
'These centres are vital to each individual community'	78
'Children's centres do a brilliant job'	79
'I made some valuable friends who I remain friends with now and are an amazing support network, without the centre we would never have met'	80
'I don't know what I would have done without the Children's centres'	81

'Many mums I know don't drive and struggle to get the bus, therefore they would miss out on the groups'	82
'I worry that a Family Hub has far too outreaching aspirations and covers too wide a demographic'	84
'The concept of integrating all child services into multifunctional hubs is a very good one. But you must ensure that ALL can access these services.'	85
'Good idea in principle, but...'	86
'It needs explaining clearer so we know how it could affect us'	88
'Being a parent is a really tough job and can be isolating if these centres aren't available'	90
'How can we run groups when we have our own children to look after?'	91
'The use of the library is very poor for a matter of privacy, space and accessibility'	91
'Shorter hours and less buildings make for less staff so loss of jobs and loss of expertise'	92
'Many of the questions in this survey are leading ones. Wanting to do something and being able to do it are two different things. In answering some of the questions we cannot avoid giving a different impression from the one we want to.'	93
Summary of qualitative analysis	94
Joining a reference group	95
Additional input into the consultation	96
Final remarks	96
Diversity and Equality	97
Age	97
Gender	97
Marital status	98
Ethnicity	99
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?	100
Religion/Faith	100
Sexual Orientation	101
Appendix 1	103
Appendix 2	106
Appendix 3	109
Appendix 4	112
Appendix 5	115
Appendix 6	117

Executive summary

Background

- The 'Proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex' consultation survey was open from Monday 11th February until Sunday 10th April 2016.
- The survey was accessed by 3,015 respondents. Approximately 2,100 completed it.
- Over the consultation period, the online survey was 'clicked on' more than 16,000 times.
- The majority of respondents (73.7%) were parents/expectant parents/carers; 18.6% were professionals. 'Other' respondents included for example young people, grandparents, councillors, volunteers and the general public.
- Almost 80% of respondents are current users of Children's centres services or activities.
- Most respondents came from Chelmsford, Basildon, Harlow and Colchester. Least respondents came from Maldon and Brentwood. Although most respondents came from Mid Essex, followed by South Essex, views have been obtained from all Essex quadrants.
- Respondents showed their level of agreement and disagreement with the proposals in terms of individual Essex quadrants. The majority commented on one quadrant only.
- The views were generally consistent across all quadrants.
- At the end of the questionnaire, 533 individuals signed up to be added to the reference group list, interested in being further involved. The majority of these were women, aged between 20 and 39 years. They came from all over Essex.
- The majority of respondents were women (89.4%), aged between 20 – 39 years (69.1%). Almost 70% were married and 31.4% were pregnant or on maternity leave.
- They were predominantly White British (86.9%), heterosexual (90.2%) and Christian (47%) or with no religion (40.9%). 91.8% had no disability.

Key findings

Main proposal, i.e. one Family Hub per district

- The majority of respondents across all districts have disagreed with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub per district, supported by a network of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and Family Hub Outreach Sites (Essex average: 81.9%; lowest: South – 76.1%; highest: Mid – 84.8%).
- Agreement with the proposal was generally low across all districts. With the exception of South, where 17.2% of respondents agreed, generally only around one eighth of respondents agreed with the proposal. Agreement was the strongest among professionals.

Individual Family Hub location proposals; alternatives

- The majority of respondents across all districts have disagreed with the proposed individual Family Hub locations. However, the disagreement was lower than with the

main proposal. While 81.9% disagreed with the main proposals, 69.3% of respondents disagreed with the actual locations proposed.

- More than 70% of respondents who disagreed with the proposed locations provided suggestions for which other current Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs in their districts. Many indicated that there should be more than one Family Hub in each district – they called for additional Family Hubs.
- Just under a quarter of all respondents agreed with the proposed Family Hub locations. Agreement was the strongest in the Mid (26.6%) and the weakest in the North (21%).
- Professionals were the most likely to agree with the proposed locations of the Family Hubs. More than 30% agreed.
- The areas specifically calling for additional Family Hubs were:
 - Harwich (North)
 - South Woodham Ferrers (Mid)
 - Witham (Mid)
 - Canvey Island (South)
 - Wickford (South)
 - Epping Forest (West)
 - Uttlesford (West)
- Respondents suggested several changes in the locations of Family Hubs within their districts. These were:
 - Chelmsford West CC – instead of Chelmsford Central CC
 - Northlands Park CC – instead of Fryerns Farm CC
 - Meadows CC – instead of Treehouse CC
 - Sunrise CC or Hazelwood CC – instead of Brambles
 - Saffron Walden or Stansted – in addition to, or instead of Little Goslings CC
- Only a minority of respondents suggested locations in their communities that were not already known to Essex County Council. This suggests there is limited potential to deliver services from locations other than existing Children's centres buildings.

Opening hours

- In terms of opening hours for Family Hubs, respondents gave a clear preference for:
 - 5 days per week, with the same opening hours every day (28.2%)
 - 6 days per week, with varied opening hours (21.8%)

This suggests a preference for a regular service, although some would also welcome some flexibility.
- There were some slight quadrant variations: in the South and West quadrants, preference was for the same opening hours over five days. North had a larger preference for a six days a week, with varied opening hours. In the Mid, respondents showed a similar preference for both options.
- Almost half of respondents agreed that the opening times for the Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites should be based on what local families say works best for them. Professionals were the most likely to agree with the proposal (54.6%). For both professionals and parents, more of them agreed with the proposal than those who disagreed.

Parents running their own groups/activities

- Views on the proposal to make space available in buildings ECC owns or leases for parents to run their own activities was split almost evenly - 46.7% of respondents agreed while 45% disagreed.
- The most frequent reasons for disagreeing with parents running their own activities were: concern over the qualification of the people running these activities; not knowing who was running these activities and concern over the safety of the children.
- More than a quarter of parents show a certain level of interest in running groups in their areas. Still, the results indicate reluctance among parents to run their own activities. More than a third (36.6%) clearly stated that they were not interested at all, with further third 'not being very interested'.

Qualitative findings

- At the end of the survey, 1,450 respondents provided additional comments.
- Given the amount of comments regarding the general disagreement with the Family Hub concept (36% of respondents), it could be argued that respondents have not necessarily considered the proposals beyond the fact that the current number of Children's Centres is to be reduced to twelve Family Hubs. With limited detail on which to imagine what the changes may mean for them, respondents were reluctant to agree with the proposals at this moment in time.
- Most frequently mentioned – and thus the overarching - theme was:
 - Disagreement with the proposals, concern over closures, call to keep arrangement as is (36% of respondents)
- Subsequent themes expanded on why respondents tended to disagree. Most of them were intertwined in the comments. These themes were (in order of importance):
 - Accessibility – difficulty or inability getting to proposed Family Hubs due to distance, inability to drive, poor transport links, cost etc.
 - Fear of losing the support currently provided by Children's centres – access to professional help, support and courses
 - Importance of 'local' sites and services
 - Satisfaction with current Children's centres – services and staff
 - Fear of no longer being able to create own support networks in their communities – Children's centres facilitating development of friendships with other parents
 - Children's centres being of a vital importance, a 'life line'
- Almost 100 respondents requested more information regarding the proposals. Some called for greater consultation with certain groups. Together with the 533 individuals who wished to get involved in the detailed planning of the new delivery model, this implies there is a strong desire to cooperate with Essex County Council on realignment or detail of these proposals.

Introduction

Consultation background

The survey for the Children's centres consultation was live from Monday 11th February 2016 until early morning of Sunday 10th April 2016.

The survey was available:

- Online – this was accessible via its dedicated consultation page on Essex Insight (www.essexinsight.org.uk) as well as a direct web link
- On paper – printed copies of the survey were delivered to individual Children's centres across Essex approximately three weeks after the launch of the online survey. In the meantime, some Children's centres were provided with a pdf version that they could print out themselves¹.

The surveys were identical².

Overall interest in the survey – response rate

The survey was accessed by **3,015 respondents**. These were the respondents who completed the compulsory 'screening' questions at the beginning of the questionnaire. As such, these 3,015 respondents are referred to as 'survey start total' throughout this report.

Subsequent questions were not compulsory. Thus, the response rate across different questions varies. It also decreased as the survey progressed. **Approximately 2,100 respondents completed the survey to its end.**

Please note that over the consultation period, the online survey was 'clicked on' 16,189 times. This would suggest a considerable interest in the survey. However, the majority of these 'clicks' did not materialise into actual completion of the survey, i.e. people did not progress beyond the introduction page.

The reason for the large number of 'clicks' compared to the actual number of people who filled out the survey is unknown (apart from some possibly being 'tests' to see that the survey was functioning). No assumptions should be made about what these 'clicks' could mean and should not be interpreted as a potential agreement with the proposals made in the consultation.

Survey structure

The survey began with several compulsory 'screening' questions (for example about the respondent 'type' and the district they came from).

Next, respondents were asked to select which of the four Essex quadrants they wished to comment on. They could comment on as many as they wished. (However, the majority commented on one quadrant only, this being the one they lived in.) The online version of the

¹ Only around 80 surveys completed on paper were received in total. These were inputted into the online version. Paper surveys received after Wednesday 13th April 2016 could not be taken into account. It was made clear on all consultation surveys that responses had to be received by 10th April 2016.

² While in the online survey, respondents were directed to specific questions based on their answers, in the paper version, all questions (even those not applicable to them) were visible. Respondents were instructed to continue to, or ignore, certain questions. Still, some respondents answered questions which would have not appeared to them in an online version. To allow for consistent analysis, some of these comments had to be 'moved' into the general comments section (Q13), however, none of the opinions were removed.

survey automatically navigated them to the appropriate questions. These included their level of agreement and disagreement with several proposals, including for there to be one Family Hub in each district and the specific locations of the proposed Family Hubs. Respondents could provide their own suggestions via two open-ended questions (for each quadrant).

After having answered questions about selected quadrants (questions were consistent across all quadrants), respondents progressed onto more general questions about their preferences for opening hours and their views on making spaces available for parents to run their own activities.

The survey concluded with an open-ended question for any other comments. This question generated 1,450 comments and proved the most challenging when analysing the results. The content of these comments indicated that a large proportion of respondents were not entirely clear on what the proposals meant for them. It could be argued that focus remained primarily on the reduction of Children's centres to twelve Family Hubs.

Overall, the survey comprised of approximately 20 questions.

Structure of the report

The report is structured in a chronological order, following the structure of the survey. Each question will be examined in turn and where possible, results are also split by respondent type and quadrant.

After exploring results for each of the four Essex quadrants separately, these are also presented together, giving an all-Essex overview.

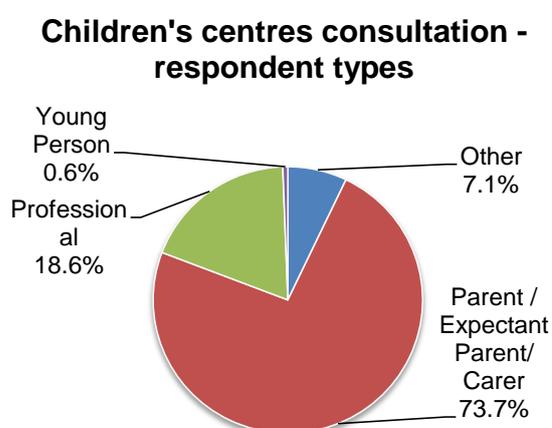
Qualitative findings coming from the 1,450 comments are presented towards the end of the report.

The text is supplemented by detailed data tables, charts presenting the data in a visual format, several maps and most importantly, verbatim quotes from respondents. These have been placed into coloured boxes to separate them from the text.

Results

Q1: 'Are you responding primarily as a...' - The perspective from which views are provided

Q1: Respondent type	Freq	%
Parent / Expectant Parent/ Carer	2222	73.7
Professional	560	18.6
Young Person	19	0.6
Other	214	7.1
Survey start total	3015	100



The survey was started by 3,015 respondents. The majority were parents/expectant parents/carers (referred to throughout the report as 'parents') (73.7%) and less than a fifth (18.6%) were professionals.

The rest comprised young people³ and those selecting the 'other' category.

Due to the small number of young person respondents, these were combined with 'other' in all subsequent analysis, and are referred to as 'other + YP'.

Please note that there was no clear definition regarding what the 'professional' category was to cover. When the survey was designed, an assumption was made this would include those working within Children's centres and similar early years settings. However, it was up to the respondent to select the category they felt they fitted. As such, some overlaps developed.

Some of those selecting 'other' further defined the perspective from which they were providing their views. These included:

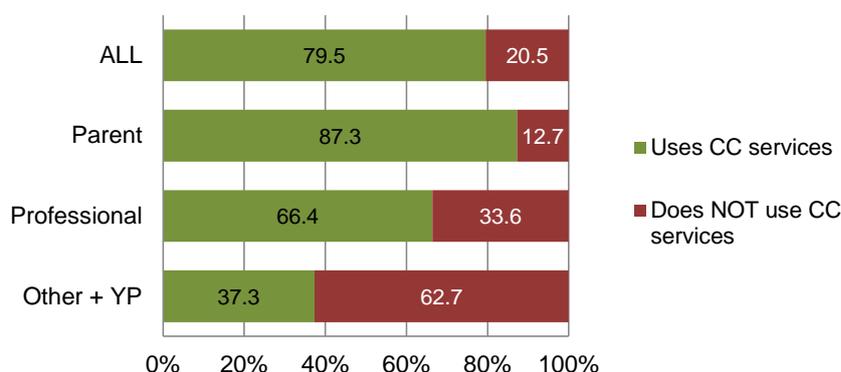
- Grandparents – these were the most frequent
- Councillors (from borough, district and parish councils)
- Residents/citizens/tax payers/voters – who sometimes described themselves as 'interested', 'concerned' and similar
- Providers
- Volunteers
- Voluntary organisations representatives, trustees
- School governors
- Other professionals
- Retired professionals, such as teacher, journalist, probation officer

³ All 19 young respondents were aged over 16 years.

Q2: 'Do you currently use Children's Centre services or activities?'

Q2	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	2398	79.5	1939	87.3	372	66.4	87	37.3
No	617	20.5	283	12.7	188	33.6	146	62.7
Total	3015	100	2222	100	560	100	233	100

Q2: Usage of Children's centres services - by respondent type



Almost 80% of survey respondents are current users of Children's centres services or activities.

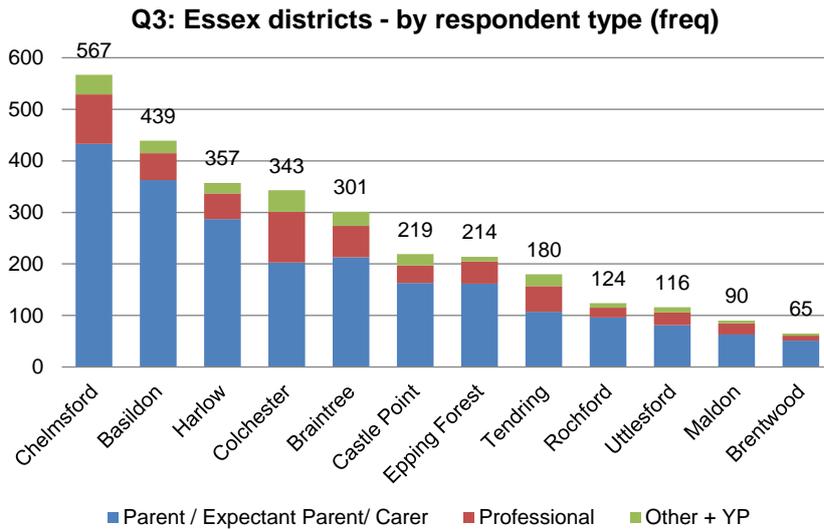
However, this varies across the different respondent groups.

Parents/expectant parents/carers are the most frequent users of Children's centres – more than 87% use them. More than 66% of professionals use

Children's centres. However, only around 37% of 'other' respondents (such as grandparents, councillors and others, as outlined within Q1), together with younger respondents, are current users of Children's centres.

Q3: 'Which District do you live in?'

Q3: District	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Basildon	439	14.6	363	16.3	52	9.3	24	10.3
Braintree	301	10	213	9.6	61	10.9	27	11.6
Brentwood	65	2.2	51	2.3	10	1.8	4	1.7
Castle Point	219	7.3	163	7.3	34	6.1	22	9.4
Chelmsford	567	18.8	433	19.5	96	17.1	38	16.3
Colchester	343	11.4	203	9.1	98	17.5	42	18.0
Epping Forest	214	7.1	162	7.3	43	7.7	9	3.9
Harlow	357	11.8	287	12.9	50	8.9	20	8.6
Maldon	90	3	63	2.8	22	3.9	5	2.1
Rochford	124	4.1	96	4.3	19	3.4	9	3.9
Tendring	180	6	107	4.8	50	8.9	23	9.9
Uttlesford	116	3.8	81	3.6	25	4.5	10	4.3
Total	3015	100	2222	100	560	100	233	100

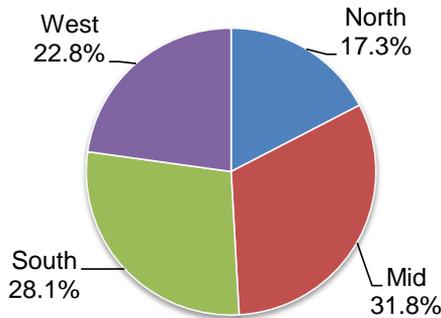


Most respondents came from Chelmsford, followed by Basildon, Harlow and Colchester. Each of these districts represents a different Essex quadrant.

Least respondents came from Maldon and Brentwood.

The largest proportions of parent respondents came from Chelmsford, Basildon and Harlow. The largest proportions of professional

Response rate from each Essex quadrant (%)



respondents came from Chelmsford and Colchester. The same applied to other + YP.

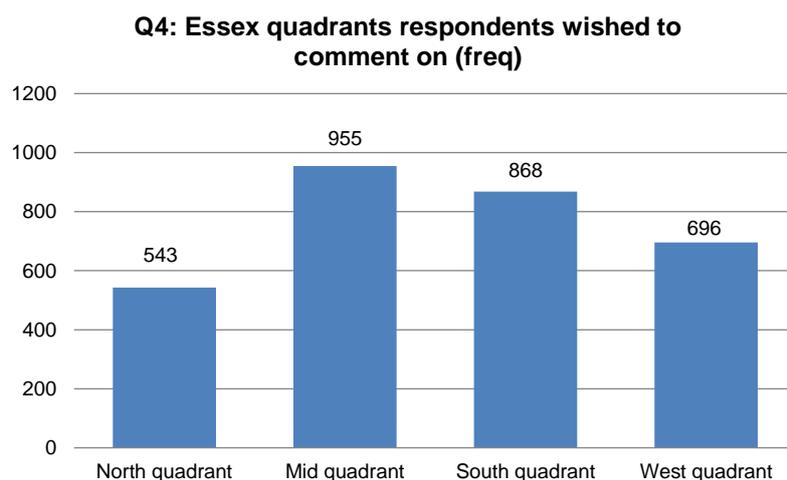
Although most respondents came from Mid Essex, followed by South Essex, views have been obtained from all Essex quadrants.

Q4: 'Which quadrant would you like to comment on?'

In order to make the respondents' views more localised, they were asked to specify their level of agreement with the proposals in terms of individual Essex quadrants.

Respondents could comment on as many quadrants as they wished, however the majority (98.3%) wished to comment on one quadrant only – please see table at the end of this section.

Q4: Which quadrant do you want to comment on?			No. of respondents per quadrant	
Quadrant	Districts included	Freq	Freq	%
North	Colchester and Tendring	543	523	17.3
Mid	Maldon, Chelmsford, Braintree	955	958	31.8
South	Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford	868	847	28.1
West	Uttlesford, Epping Forest, Harlow	696	687	22.8
Total		3062	3015	100



Mid Essex was the quadrant most respondents wanted to comment on. North Essex had the least respondents. This is generally reflective of the number of respondents resident in each of the quadrants.

The table below shows that the majority of respondents wanted to comment on one quadrant only, this being the quadrant they live in.

Only a minority (less than 2%) wished to express their views regarding the proposals for more than one quadrant.

As such, an assumption can be made that the respondents' views are not being double counted. They provide an accurate and valid representation of the respondents' level of agreement/disagreement with the proposals made.

No. of quadrants wanting to comment on	Freq	%
Wanting to comment on 1 quadrant only	2921	98.3
Wanting to comment on 2 quadrants	31	1.0
Wanting to comment on 3 quadrants	5	0.2
Wanting to comment on all 4 quadrants	16	0.5
Total	2973	100
<i>Missing (i.e. respondents who dropped out)</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	<i>-</i>

Proposals for Children's centre buildings from April 2017

Question 4 was a compulsory question, i.e. respondents had to select at least one option to be navigated to the relevant set of questions. For example, if one wished to comment on North only, they were not shown proposals for Mid, South or West. However, the questions were asked in the same manner to allow for comparisons between quadrants.

The overall proposal for service delivery sites was the same in all sections and respondents were asked to express their level of agreement with this proposal:

Service Delivery Sites

*We are proposing that each District has one **Family Hub**. This will be supported by a range of local **Family Hub Delivery Sites** and other **Family Hub Outreach Sites**.*

***Family Hubs** will be open for **50 hours a week** to deliver a range of support services and activities as well as co-ordinating all of the support and services for families with children from pregnancy up to the age of 19.*

***Family Hub Delivery Sites** will offer services for **20 – 30 hours a week**, including weekends, allowing people working with children and families to work in one place.*

***Family Hub Outreach Sites** will offer face to face Information, Advice and Guidance and some service delivery between Monday - Friday.*

Subsequently, they were informed of the locations of the proposed Family Hubs in the quadrant and asked for their level of agreement.

Finally, they could make suggestions for alternative sites.

Detailed information regarding the proposals was available in a separate consultation document. In the online survey, relevant information for each quadrant (i.e. a map and a table showing the proposals) was repeated before the actual questions. Those completing paper questionnaires were given references to appropriate pages in the Consultation document.

North Essex Children's Centres – Colchester and Tendring

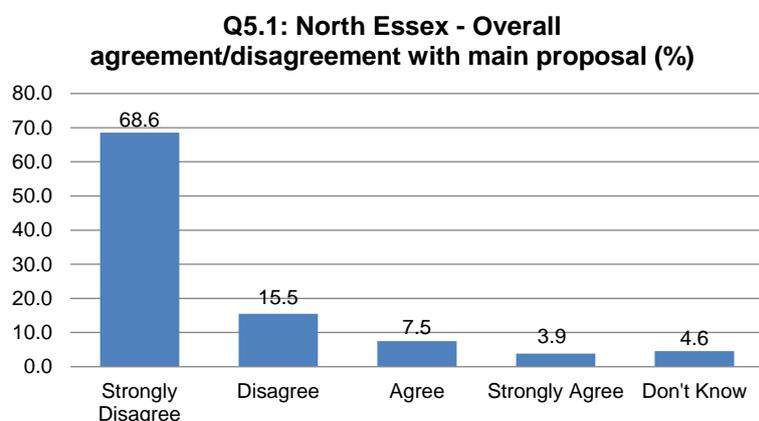
Please note that percentages are calculated based on the response to each individual question. Although in Q4 543 individuals wished to comment on the North quadrant, only 439 provided their views for Q5.1 (and as such, 439 is used as the denominator), 456 for Q5.2 etc. Around 100 individuals did not answer any of the questions.

Respondents to this section of the survey are referred to as 'North quadrant respondents'.

Given the general feedback from the respondents, results are presented in the order from Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree to Don't know (i.e. reversed order to the one in the actual survey).

Q5.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'

Q5.1: Main proposal - North	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	301	68.6	196	75.7	73	57.5	32	60.4
Disagree	68	15.5	34	13.1	24	18.9	10	18.9
Agree	33	7.5	14	5.4	15	11.8	4	7.5
Strongly Agree	17	3.9	7	2.7	7	5.5	3	5.7
Don't Know	20	4.6	8	3.1	8	6.3	4	7.5
Total question response	439	100	259	100	127	100	53	100
Total for 'North' section	543							
Missing (from total on Q4)	104							



More than two thirds of North quadrant respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites.

Overall disagreement was felt the most strongly by parents (88.8%), followed by other +

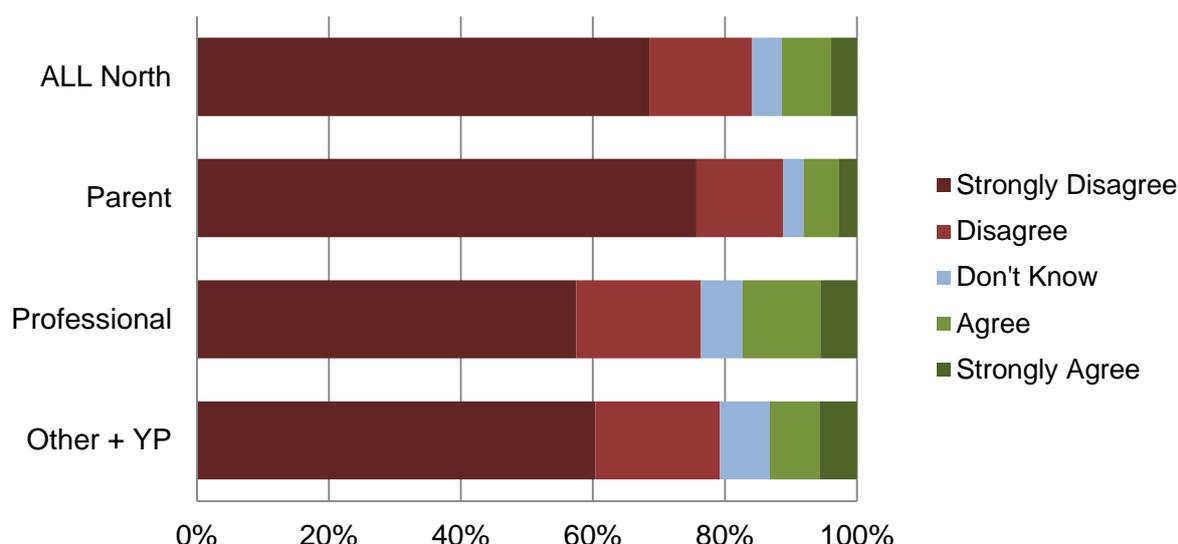
YP (79.3%) and professionals (76.4%).

Agreement with the proposal was the highest among professionals – 17.3% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'.

Percentages of those who 'didn't know' were quite low, ranging from 3.1% (parents) to 7.5% (other + YP).

Please see graph below for visual representation of this data.

Q5.1: North Essex - Agreement/disagreement with main proposal - by respondent type



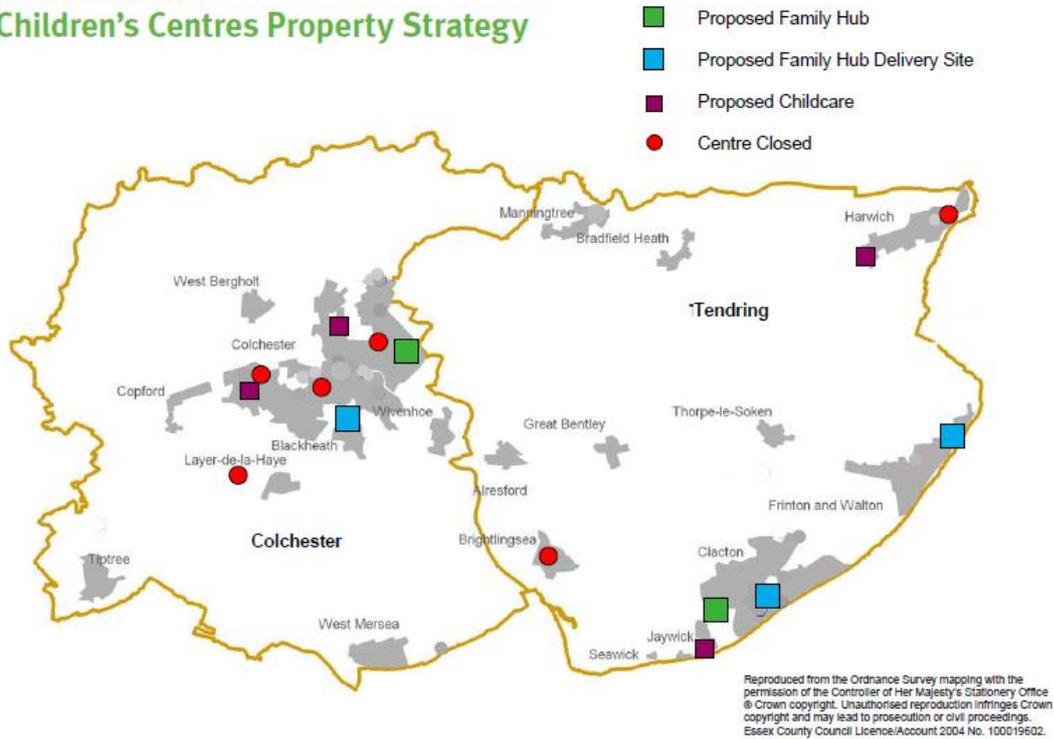
Q5.2: 'In North Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:

- Greenstead Children's Centre, Colchester
- Sydney House Children's Centre, Clacton-on-Sea

To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'

Q5.2a: Proposed Family Hub locations - North	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	252	55.0	169	63.3	61	45.2	22	39.3
Disagree	76	16.6	37	13.9	25	18.5	14	25.0
Agree	69	15.1	33	12.4	28	20.7	8	14.3
Strongly Agree	27	5.9	10	3.7	10	7.4	7	12.5
Don't Know	34	7.4	18	6.7	11	8.1	5	8.9
Total question response	458	100	267	100	135	100	56	100
<i>Total for 'North' section</i>	543							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	85							

NORTH ESSEX Children's Centres Property Strategy



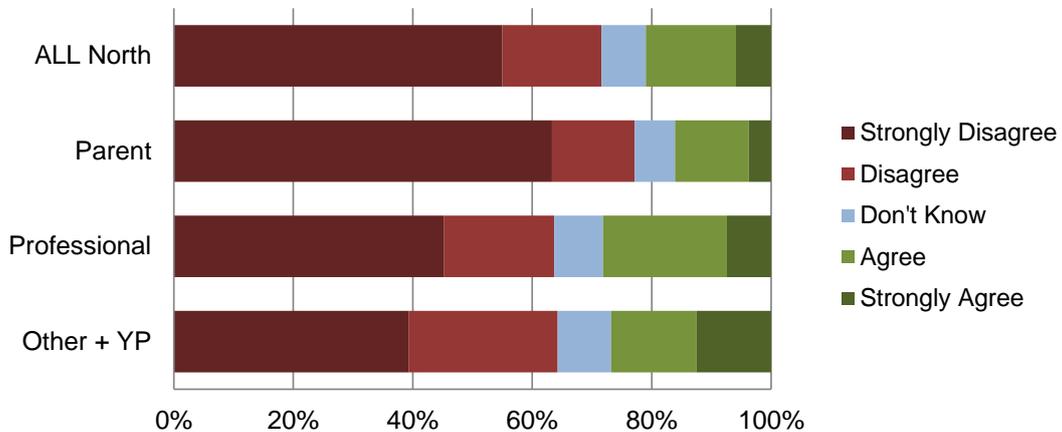
More than half (55%) of all North respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposals for Greenstead CC and Sydney House CC becoming the Family Hubs in Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea respectively.

Disagreement was the highest among parents (77.2%), followed by other + YP (64.3%). Professionals disagreed the least (63.7%).

Agreement was the highest among professionals – 28.1% of them 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the proposed Family Hub locations. 26.8% of other + YP also agreed with the proposed locations.

This data is visually presented in the chart below.

Q5.2: North Essex - Agreement/disagreement with proposed Family Hub locations - by respondent type



Q5.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?

Those who disagreed with the proposed Family Hubs were encouraged to suggest which other current Children's centre site should become the Family Hub.

221 respondents (out of 328 who disagreed) provided a suggestion, which represents approximately 67% of those disagreeing providing a suggestion for an alternative location for a Family Hub. Multiple suggestions could be provided in a single comment⁴.

There were some reservations in terms of Greenstead Children's centre – that it has 'a long history of being less attended' than other centres, it being too small to be able to accommodate activities and it not being central enough for some (one person claimed they would need to take three buses to get to Greenstead).

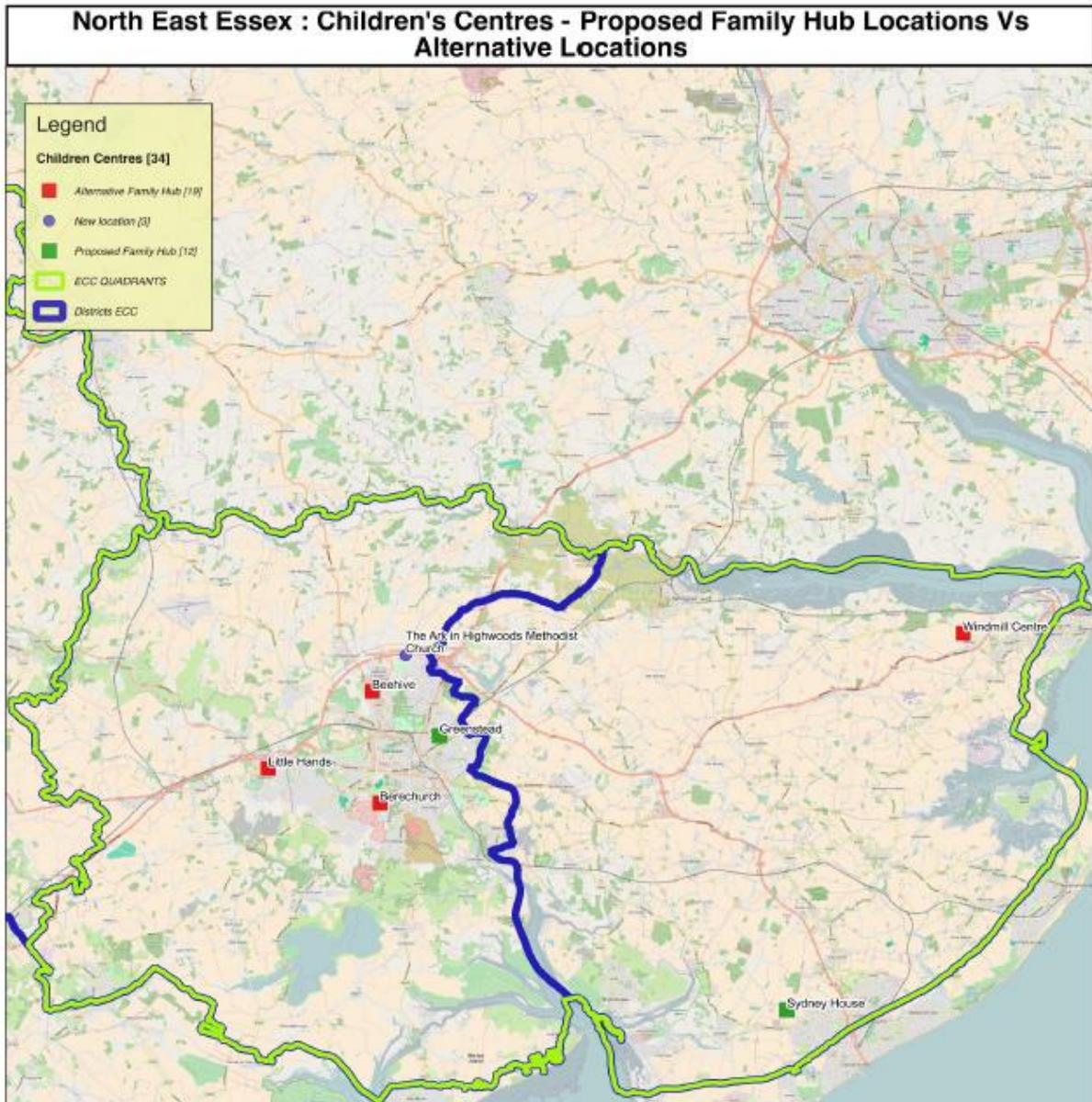
However, respondents did not necessarily disagree with Greenstead and Sydney House, but called for additional Family Hubs to be placed in areas such as Harwich and Stanway.

Overall, the most popular alternative Family Hubs would be:

- Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL
- Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG
- Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN
- Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT

These locations are shown on the map below, highlighted in red. Currently proposed Family Hub locations are in green.

⁴ All comments regarding alternative Family Hub locations were coded according to the locations they mentioned. A single comment could be coded multiple times.



The most frequent suggestions (mentioned more than 5 times) are listed in the table below. Please note it is a shortened version of a full list of suggestions, which is available in Appendix 1. However, other locations were suggested too few times to be considered as a feasible alternative.

Please note that Jaywick has not been mentioned much, however several respondents highlighted Jaywick as an area of concern as part of Q13, pointing out that due to its nature, it may not be unexpected if a lack of views is received from there.

Q5.2b: Respondent views on alternative Family Hub locations – North	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
<i>Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.</i>	50	15.9	22.6
Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL	47	15.0	21.3
<i>Should be more than one hub per district</i>	24	7.6	10.9

Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG	22	7.0	10.0
Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN	19	6.1	8.6
Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT	17	5.4	7.7
<i>Issues with (public) transport</i>	15	4.8	6.8
Colchester/town centre	13	4.1	5.9
Harwich	9	2.9	4.1
St Anne's and Castle CC, CO4 3DH	8	2.5	3.6
Discovery CC, Colchester, CO3 9BE	8	2.5	3.6
Shrub End CC, Colchester, CO2 9BG	7	2.2	3.2
New Town CC, CO2 7RY	6	1.9	2.7
Colne CC, Brightlingsea, CO7 0AQ	6	1.9	2.7
Total responses	314		
Total respondents/comments	221		

General views

Almost a quarter of respondents (22.6%) specifically expressed disagreement with the Family Hub approach. Some claimed that all centres should remain open, however others argued that two Family Hubs were not enough for the area. They particularly highlighted that Children's centres offer a local service, which is easily accessible to all those in need. Access in terms of transport was often mentioned – parents with children on tight budgets, may not own a car and rely on public transport, which was described as expensive and unreliable. Respondents reflected on difficulties of travelling with buggies and small children on public transport. As such, the proposed locations were seen as too far for people from rural parts of the districts to travel to, thus 'isolating people in certain areas'. Overall, the proposal was seen as taking away well-used (and often already oversubscribed) and 'invaluable' services and making children and parents miss out on opportunities to network with other children, parents and professionals.

'I think the current children centre sites are wonderful. They are so well used and staffed by knowledgeable and approachable staff. I think the closure of these centres and replacing them with just one family hub is a ridiculous idea and not at all designed to support families but just be a cost saving measure. It angers me that in the closure of these invaluable sites is being wrapped up as an improvement. I think many families would fall in between the gaps the closure of the children's centres would open up and make those families that are already vulnerable even more so.' (Parent, Colchester)

'I don't agree that one large family hub is the way forward. Local should mean local, I wonder how many of you would be able to take two or three young children across town to visit a family hub? Many families who need your support are not in the position to own a car, bus travel is expensive and difficult with buggies and babies and moving support to one area means parents don't get to build up the natural support networks that come with meeting other parents local to themselves. In my opinion this is a badly thought out cost cutting exercise.' (Professional, Colchester)

'I don't agree with the idea of family hubs. The bus services in rural areas are already dire and likely to get worse. People with the most need are unlikely to be able to access regional hubs. Children's centres have moved into areas that had thriving toddler groups, these groups had their membership poached by children's centres. Now children's centres are moving out and there will be nowhere for families to meet up for advice and the chance to socialise.' (Parent, Tendring)

'All the centres in Tendring are as important as each other and have different areas of deprivation.' (Professional, Tendring)

'I disagree because the property strategy should not lead the policy on children's centres. Families will not know what a hub is and will not be able to travel long distances to access services. Early intervention is based on a non-stigmatising pattern of local universal services where staff get to know their community and build trust.' (Professional, Colchester)

Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Respondents from Harwich argued that they are an isolated community which is 'often at the bottom of the pile for support' and would be very negatively impacted if the Windmill Centre was to close. Parents value and use the current service, appreciate the support and opportunities to meet others in a similar situation. Proposed Family Hubs in Clacton and Colchester were described as inaccessible for the Harwich community. Clacton is too far for parents to travel by public transport – in terms of transport reliability, distance/time as well as the cost. As one respondent claimed: 'If you close the Windmill Centre you are basically ignoring the needs of Harwich residents'.

'Living and working with children in Harwich I feel it is extremely important that the facilities remain open here. This is an incredibly deprived area that has a lot of families who need to have the support. There is a huge majority of families on low incomes in this area, which is only increasing with a new development of social housing being built as well as several big housing developments in the pipeline. People cannot always afford to travel to Clacton or Colchester to access support nor does the current level of public transport allow for this anyway. We have a second class public transport system, not enough doctors and schools that do not have enough places. We are often at the bottom of the pile for support in this area and taking away this service would be hugely detrimental to the growth and development of every child in this area.' (Professional, Tendring)

'I think that a lot of families, especially families with disabled parents/children, that are currently based in Harwich, will be unable to access services in Colchester and Clacton. I think that services (not just outreach) should remain in place in this area.' (Professional, Tendring)

'I think due to Tendring being a rural district with limited transport as well as areas of poverty, there needs to be a family hub in both Harwich and Clacton. Harwich is an isolated town, with many families without their own transport. To travel to Clacton by bus would take over an hour. Even by car it takes 40 minutes. This means that an area that already lacks services, will lose a vital service in providing support for both parents and children. More and more families are being moved into the area by other councils, and without the support of surestart run groups, they will be further isolated. There are very few parent run groups in the town with the majority of families attending surestart run ones. Without the support of those groups, I myself would have further suffered with post-natal depression when I had my youngest son. I had 2 year old, new baby and had just moved to the area. Knowing I has somewhere to go where I could meet other parents and the children could play and let of steam was vital to both my emotional and physical health. I would not have been able to travel 40 minutes by car on those days.' (Parent, Tendring)

Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Little Hands in Stanway was often mentioned in combination with the Discovery Centre. Little Hands was described as a 'very popular' and well used site, which has good transport links and other amenities close by (school fields). It was seen as well placed for the community living on that side of Colchester, who would otherwise struggle getting to Greenstead.

'Little hands in Stanway. You have a good existing centre with excellent transport links. The centre has use of school fields and is close to reasonable amenities. Greenstead is a difficult place to get to in Colchester and would deter lots from driving across the difficult end of town, traffic wise.' (Parent, Colchester)

'(...) If you compare the Greenstead site to Little hands for example, this is a well sized centred and is utilised well by its local community. Groups held at little hands are always full and popular. As a

Health visitor myself, we work very closely with children centres and run groups at the centre including are baby clinics. Closing all these sites will ultimately lead to confusion for parents especially if you are using alternative buildings everywhere. Families know where the children centres are and the majority in Colchester are used well. I believe having more venues providing outreach work will complicate things further.' (Professional, Colchester)

Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN (proposed to become a Delivery Site) & Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

These locations were described as 'lovely purpose built buildings' with sufficient space for all and close to other local amenities (school, transport links).

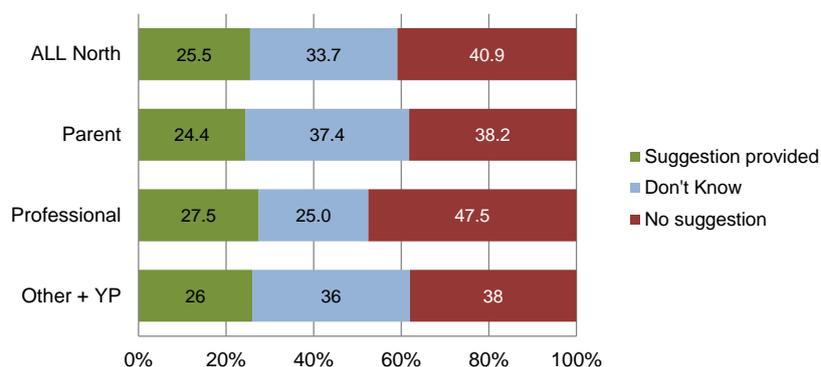
'I do not have an overall best suggestion, as this would be different for many people, but I know that the Beehive Centre at Queen Boudica school caters to many parents in the area, many of whom do not drive, and that Greenstead will be too far away. I drive, and I would not go that far.' (Parent, Colchester)

'I would like to see beehive Children centre become a family hub as it is ideally suited to meet families situated on a school site and supported by other professionals from Health, Speech and language, family Support, Adult community learning. There are robust links with local schools and preschool an staff have made positive links within the rural community. This I feel will be overlooked in the proposed approach, and will miss the opportunity to provide early intervention and preventative support for those rural families as well as the families in the reach area in Colchester.' (Other, Chelmsford)

Q5.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'

Q5.3: Respondent ideas on alternative locations - North	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	106	25.5	60	24.4	33	27.5	13	26
No	170	40.9	94	38.2	57	47.5	19	38
Don't Know	140	33.7	92	37.4	30	25.0	18	36
Total question response	416	100	246	100	120	100	50	100
Total for 'North' section	543							
Missing (from total on Q4)	127							

Q5.3: North Essex - Alternative site suggestions - by respondent type



In addition to respondents' views on what existing Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs instead of the those proposed by ECC, respondents could also

suggest any other locations in their local communities that could be suitable and that ECC might not as yet be aware of (i.e. 'other buildings or locations which are not already listed in the Consultation document').

The majority of North respondents had either no suggestions (40.9%) or 'didn't know' (33.7%). Almost half of professionals (47.5%) proposed no alternatives.

Around a quarter (25.5%) claimed to have a suggestion for an alternative location; 102 out of 106 individuals proceeded to do so. However, upon greater analysis of the data, the most frequent suggestions were about existing Children's centres, i.e. locations that were listed in the Consultation document. They were also almost identical to those already put forward in Q5.2b.

The only 'new' suggestion was The Ark in Highwoods Methodist Church in Colchester, mentioned by seven individuals. This is depicted by a blue circle on the earlier map.

For a full list of suggestions, please see Appendix 1. A shortened version of the list is presented below.

Q5.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – North	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
Other	17	14.7	16.7
Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL	14	12.1	13.7
Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG	11	9.5	10.8
The Ark, Highwoods Methodist Church, Jack Andrews Drive, Highwoods, Colchester, C04 9FF	7	6.0	6.9
St Anne's and Castle CC, CO4 3DH	5	4.3	4.9
Total responses	116	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	102		

Mid Essex Children's Centres – Maldon, Chelmsford, Braintree

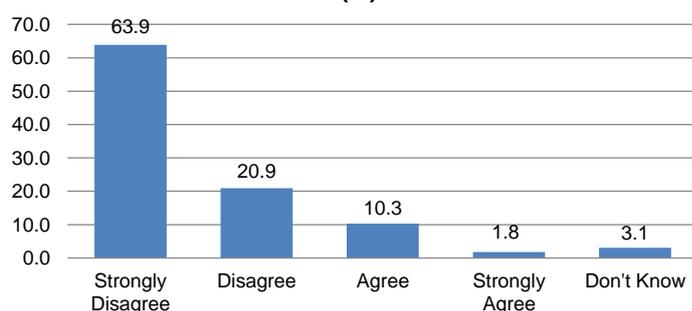
Please note that percentages are calculated based on the response to each individual question. Although in Q4 955 individuals wished to comment on the Mid quadrant, only 717 provided their views for Q6.1 (and as such, 717 is used as the denominator), 774 for Q6.2 etc. The attrition rate was often more than 200 individuals per question.

Respondents to this section of the survey are referred to as 'Mid quadrant respondents'.

Q6.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'

Q6.1: Main proposal – Mid	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	458	63.9	347	63.7	75	61.0	36	73.5
Disagree	150	20.9	120	22.0	22	17.9	8	16.3
Agree	74	10.3	52	9.5	18	14.6	4	8.2
Strongly Agree	13	1.8	8	1.5	5	4.1	0	0.0
Don't Know	22	3.1	18	3.3	3	2.4	1	2.0
Total question response	717	100	545	100	123	100	49	100
Total for 'Mid' section	955							
Missing (from total on Q4)	238							

Q6.1: Mid Essex - Overall agreement/disagreement with main proposal (%)



Almost two thirds (63.9%) of Mid quadrant respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites.

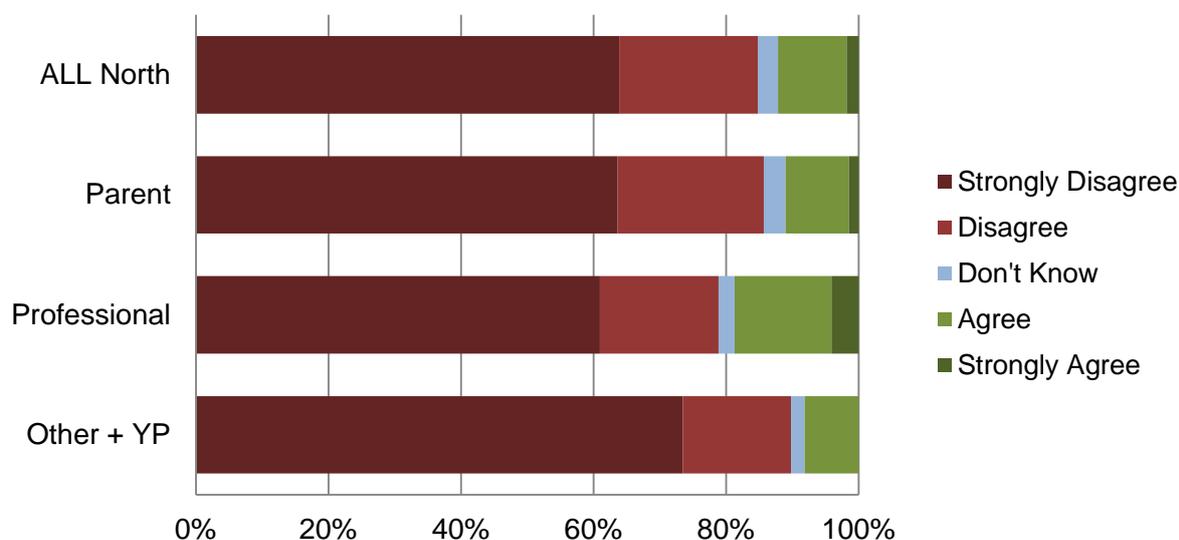
Overall disagreement was felt the most strongly by other + YP (89.8%), followed by parents (85.7%) and professionals (78.9%).

Agreement with the proposal was the highest among professionals – 18.7% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'. Please note that agreement was rarely 'strong'.

Percentages of those who 'didn't know' were quite low, ranging from 2% (other + YP) to 3.3% (parents).

This data is visually presented in the chart below.

Q6.1: Mid Essex - Agreement/disagreement with main proposal - by respondent type



Q6.2: 'In Mid Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:

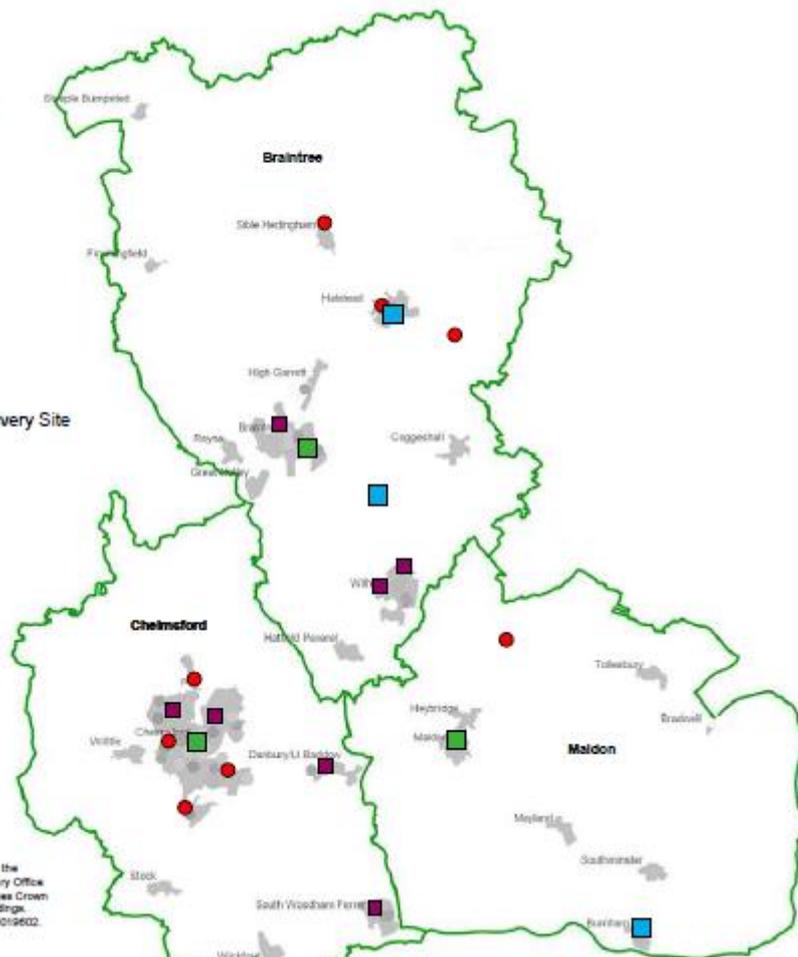
- Carousel Children's Centre, Braintree
- Chelmsford Central Children's Centre, Chelmsford
- Maldon Children's Centre, Maldon

To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'

Q6.2a: Proposed Family Hub locations – Mid	ALL		Parent		Professiona I		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	397	51.3	306	52.3	59	43.7	32	59.3
Disagree	120	15.5	88	15.0	20	14.8	12	22.2
Agree	176	22.7	132	22.6	37	27.4	7	13.0
Strongly Agree	30	3.9	22	3.8	8	5.9	0	0.0
Don't Know	51	6.6	37	6.3	11	8.1	3	5.6
Total question response	774	100	585	100	135	100	54	100
<i>Total for 'Mid' section</i>	955							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	181							

MID ESSEX Children's Centres Property Strategy

- Proposed Family Hub
- Proposed Family Hub Delivery Site
- Proposed Childcare
- Centre Closed



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More than half (51.3%) of all Mid respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposals for Carousel CC, Chelmsford Central CC and Maldon CC becoming the Family Hubs in Braintree, Chelmsford and Maldon respectively.

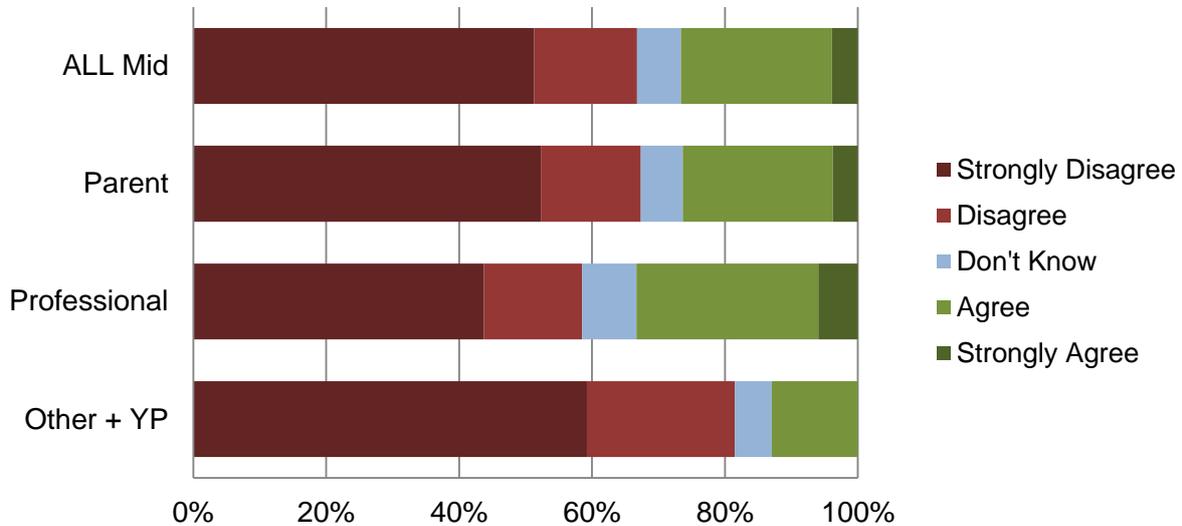
Disagreement was the highest among other + YP (81.5%⁵), followed by parents (67.4%). Professionals disagreed the least (58.5%).

Agreement was the highest among professionals – exactly a third of them 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the proposed Family Hub locations. 26.3% of parents – more than a quarter of them - also agreed with the proposed locations.

This data is visually presented in the chart below.

⁵ However, please note that the number of other +YP respondents is considerably lower when compared to the others.

Q6.2: Mid Essex - Agreement/disagreement with proposed Family Hub locations - by respondent type



Q6.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?

Those who disagreed with the proposed Family Hubs were encouraged to suggest which other current Children's centre site should become the Family Hub.

383 Mid respondents (out of 517 who disagreed) provided a suggestion, which represents 74% of those disagreeing providing a suggestion for an alternative location for a Family Hub. Multiple suggestions could be provided in a single comment.

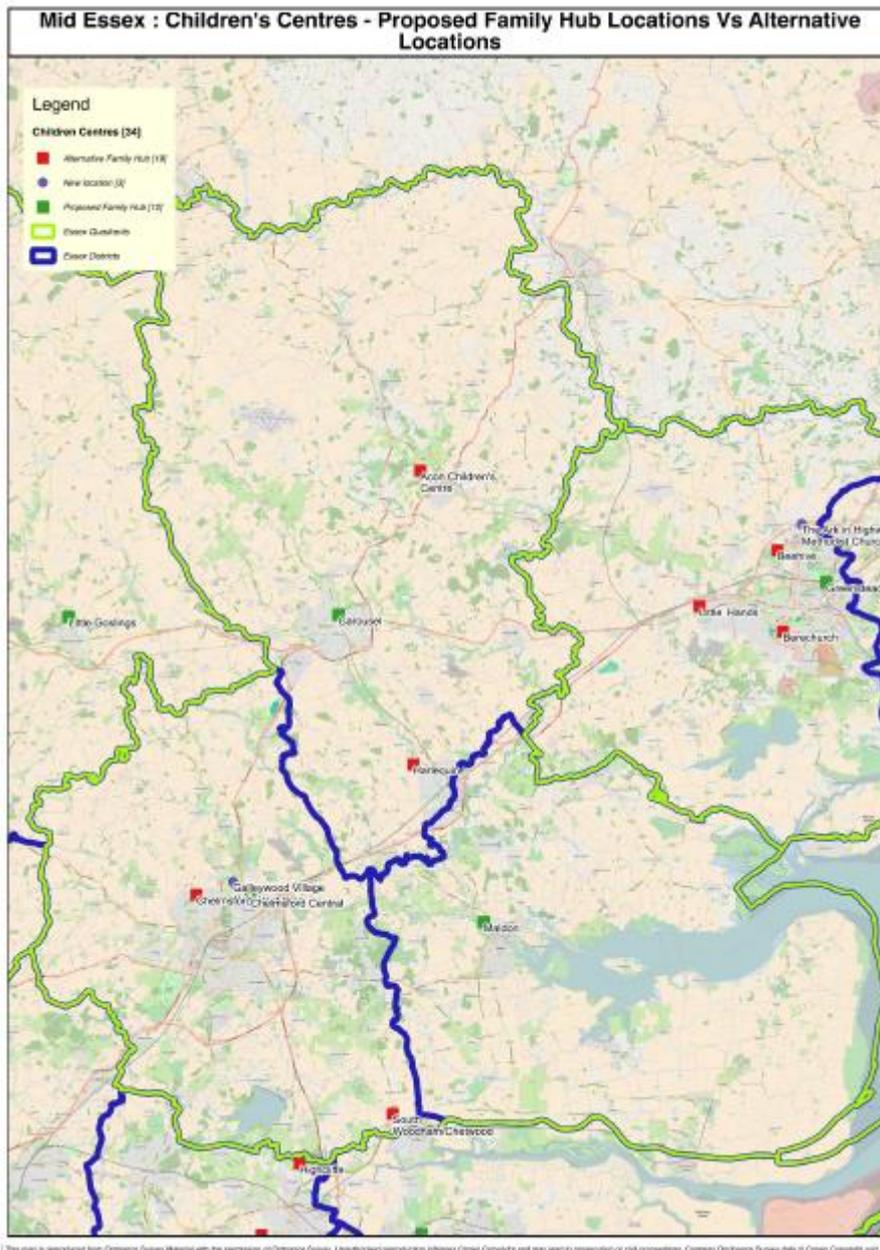
Clearly the most popular alternative Family Hub, mentioned 97 times, would be:

- South Woodham/Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX

Other popular alternative Family Hubs were:

- Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ – instead of Chelmsford Central
- Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH
- Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA

These locations are shown on the map below, highlighted in red. Currently proposed Family Hub locations are in green.



The most frequent suggestions (mentioned more than 5 times) are listed in the table below. Please note it is a shortened version of a full list of suggestions, which is available in Appendix 2. However, other locations were suggested too few times to be considered as a feasible alternative.

Q6.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – Mid	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
South Woodham/Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX	97	18.8	25.3
<i>Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.</i>	96	18.6	25.1
<i>Other</i>	64	12.4	16.7
Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ	34	6.6	8.9
<i>Parking comments</i>	29	5.6	7.6
Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH	28	5.4	7.3

<i>Issues with (public) transport</i>	27	5.2	7.0
Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA	22	4.3	5.7
<i>Concerns with libraries</i>	20	3.9	5.2
Bumblebee CC, Danbury, CM3 3QZ	13	2.5	3.4
Perryfields CC, Chelmsford, CM1 7PP	13	2.5	3.4
Witham - unspecified	12	2.3	3.1
<i>Not enough hubs</i>	10	1.9	2.6
Roundabout CC, Witham, CM8 2NJ	7	1.4	1.8
Silver End CC, CM8 3RQ	7	1.4	1.8
[Valley CC], Earls Colne, CO6 2RH	7	1.4	1.8
Seesaw CC, Braintree, CM7 5UL	5	1.0	1.3
Total responses	516	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	383		

General views

A large number of comments covered several more general, but key themes relating to the proposals. As in the case of North Essex, a quarter of respondents (to Q6.2b) disagreed with the concept of Family Hubs as a whole. Access difficulties were mentioned the most frequently, claiming that the proposals are 'discriminating those unable to drive'. Apart from arguments about services needing to be local to address possible isolation, some expressed the belief that more than one Family Hub per district is needed to be able to meet demand. Others called for arrangements to stay as they currently are.

'I disagree with the outreach sites and would like to see more delivery sites. Our current children's centre in the village which is solely responsible for preventing my wife getting post natal depression after the birth of our son because after a c section she couldn't leave the village and the help and support she received there along with meeting other parents was a lifesaver.' (Parent, Braintree)

'I do not agree with family hub model. Having delivered services in various locations some services are not appropriate for a hub model. Children centres offer a safe appropriate venue which are welcoming and private if needs be. Parents with babies entering buildings with youths on site is not always safe or welcoming when experiencing mental health issues. To answer the question if moving to hub models there should be one in each town.' (Professional, Braintree)

'This question is very poorly draughted; it assumes support for the proposed changes. Poor families need these centres within easy reach. From here Chelmsford is served by a very poor bus service that run 3 times an hour, Maldon can only be reached by changing bus at Danbury making a visit a whole day trip. Neither is supported, the very essence of family support is 'localism'.' (Grandparent, Chelmsford)

Parking issues

Access in terms of public transport and parking facilities were mentioned very frequently. Public transport was described as too costly, unreliable, not frequent enough (respondents from South Woodham Ferrers especially highlighted the difficulty of getting to Chelmsford; Maldon was also described as not easy to access) and difficult to travel on with buggies and small children. In terms of the proposed Family Hub locations, lack of sufficient and free parking was of considerable concern. This was the case especially for the Chelmsford Central Children's Centre, located at Chelmsford Library. Respondents mentioned the lack of loading bays, the difficulty of using a multi-storey carpark, as well as the cost. Respondents also stated that the library venue is not the most suitable for delivering the service – in terms of sharing the space with very different users, as well as being too small.

Chelmsford West was often proposed as a suitable alternative, which is large enough and has sufficient parking.

'When attending the sites it is valuable to have a short safe distance between parking and the centre especially if trying to manage a toddler and a baby. I haven't used the centre in Chelmsford as trying to find family friendly parking is very difficult. Therefore would suggest one of the centres with most accessible parking.' (Parent, Maldon)

'Galleywood or Larkrise. Far easier to get to and parking is free and available right outside and more so at Christmas and school holidays as the city is a nightmare. In the middle of the city you pay to park, no children's parking bays, busy all the time and also it's not walking distance for most so it's a massive task to try and get children on and out of the car and walk from the car parks to the centre!' (Parent, Chelmsford)

South Woodham/Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Chetwood Children's Centre in South Woodham Ferrers is described as an 'essential' service for a large and still growing town with a large number of young families and the surrounding villages. Respondents alluded to limited facilities in South Woodham Ferrers, but mostly poor transport links, with no direct bus routes to Braintree and Maldon. As such, access to the proposed Family Hubs in Chelmsford and Maldon become difficult and several respondents mentioned they would be unable to use these facilities if Chetwood Children's centre was to close. The services at Chetwood Children's centre were complimented on repeatedly.

'Chetwood Children's Centre as it is a secure site with parking that has many multi-purpose rooms and outdoor space and it is designed specifically for small children but can be adapted for older children or users. There is a lot of equipment allowing for soft play and music sessions, cooking clubs etc. There is also office space for work professionals. The town also has good transport links with bus routes and a train station. Maldon's centre is based in a library, it is smaller with fewer resources and its transport links are poor.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'In a town with poor transport links (a train every hour and a bus every 40 minutes is considered poor by most people's standards) moreover, a town with little more than a supermarket and a Costa Coffee by way of entertainment, to close Chetwood children's centre and move it 40 minutes away by bus to Chelmsford would be a terrible decision and one that further isolates mothers of this town.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'It is essential that the new town of South Woodham Ferrers with its population of a large proportion of young families maintains its children's centre; I and my various healthcare groups work in close cooperation with our Town's GPs, midwives, community nurses and health visitors and know how many families with children in this Town and its immediate surroundings need and use the children's centre, its facilities and support. The social and community cost of closing this centre overall will far outweigh savings to an individual budget. We must take joined up health and social care thinking and spending decisions.' (Other – Chair of a group, Chelmsford)

Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ (and Perryfields CC) (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Chelmsford West Children's Centre has been mentioned several times in combination with Perryfields Children's Centre. Both being purpose-built, they are seen as larger and offering better facilities than the proposed library site. They are also seen as accessible, having appropriate parking facilities and already being located in the areas where the services are needed the most. Respondents have reservations against using a library as a Family Hub, thus Chelmsford West is proposed as an alternative to Chelmsford Central.

Criticisms of Chelmsford Central Children's Centre were often about being placed within a library, which otherwise performs a different function. Apart from not necessarily offering

parents and young children a 'safe' and 'discrete' space (for private conversations), the space itself is seen as insufficient in terms of size as well as lacking necessary facilities. Parking in the area is a large concern – in terms of access as well as cost.

'Chelmsford West Children's Centre should become the Hub, as it is in Melbourne which is the area in Chelmsford which has the highest level of need. If Chelmsford Central Library was to be used, suitable office space and delivery space would need to be arranged, as there is currently only a 2 person office for the Children's Centre in that library. It is costly for professionals, parents and staff to park in the town Centre and many families would not be able to afford this.' (Professional, Chelmsford)

'Dixon avenue? The problem with using the library is that services already have to close during the school holidays when the library wants the space for their own activities. Children under 5 don't cease to exist or stop needing activities just because schools are closed.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'I don't have a suggestion, I just disagree with the whole plan, particularly combining them with libraries. The sort of services, including discretion and emotional support that the children's centres provide just cannot be provided in an otherwise public forum. Also as a user of libraries, I don't want to lose space and peace and quiet, to children's centres.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'The Chelmsford Central.....it's in the middle of the town centre, location is not ideal his means having to come in to the city centre....no parking, having to pay for parking. It's part of a really big library which it not really the most ideal place for babies and toddlers making noise unless you are having a complete separate section for them but I doubt this is the case as you are not going to spend additional money upgrading the space you can use. Plus it will be now open for 50 hours from 5 hours per week this is going to make the library site extremely busy! I cannot comment on the Braintree and Maldon as I have never been to them.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH (currently proposed to close, with Halstead Community Resource Centre becoming a Family Hub Delivery Site)

Respondents argued that the current proposals 'fail North Essex' and that Family Hubs should be located in all larger towns, including Halstead and Witham. Access difficulties were mentioned the most often.

Should be more than one [Family Hub]- Closing the current activity centres in the smaller towns (Halstead in my case) will prevent a number of parents from taking their children to these at all (including my wife) as most families only have 1 car, which the other parent has in order to get to work. Parent, Braintree

The Halstead Acorn centre is a great help to the poorer and less able people in Halstead. It would be difficult for them to get to Braintree. I work for the foodbank and the staff at acorn know their users well and know when they need to be referred to us. Professional, Braintree

Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

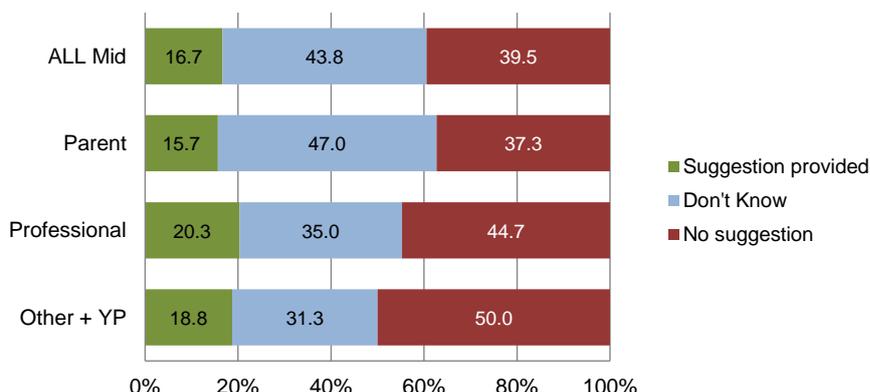
Respondents called for at least one venue in Witham to be retained – Harlequin or Roundabout. As in the case of Chelmsford, delivering services from the local library does not appear as a welcome proposal – it being a public space, parents are concerned over the safety of their child. Accessibility was the main reason for requesting more facilities in Witham.

'I think Braintree, Maldon and Chelmsford should stay but the harlequin centre should stay as a family hub for Witham as it is a rapidly growing community and there are many parents in Witham who do not drive and could not afford to take public transport to the hubs for activities. Unless designated space is being allowed at the library fir groups and activities, but I cannot see how it could provide the sane facilities as the harlequin centre.' (Parent, Braintree)

Q6.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'

Q5.3: Respondent ideas on alternative locations – Mid	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	118	16.7	84	15.7	25	20.3	9	19
No	279	39.5	200	37.3	55	44.7	24	50
Don't Know	310	43.8	252	47.0	43	35.0	15	31
Total question response	707	100	536	100	123	100	48	100
<i>Total for 'Mid' section</i>	955							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	248							

Q6.3: Mid Essex - Alternative site suggestions - by respondent type



In addition to respondents' views on what existing Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs instead of the those proposed by ECC, respondents could also suggest any other locations in their local communities that could be suitable and that ECC might not as yet be aware of (i.e.

'other buildings or locations which are not already listed in the Consultation document').

The majority of Mid respondents had either no suggestions (39.5%) or 'didn't know' (43.8%). Just under 45% of professionals (44.7%) proposed no alternatives.

Only around a sixth (16.7%) claimed to have a suggestion for an alternative location; 115 out of 118 individuals proceeded to do so. However, upon greater analysis of the data, the most frequent suggestions were about existing Children's centres, i.e. locations that were listed in the Consultation document. They were also almost identical to those already put forward in Q6.2b. 'Other' suggestions were usually about retaining services in the current format, or suggestions for using local village halls or GP surgeries (for baby weighing).

The only 'new' suggestion was Galleywood Village Hall, mentioned by five individuals. This is depicted by a blue circle on the earlier map.

For a full list of suggestions, please see Appendix 2. A shortened version of the list is presented below.

Q6.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – Mid	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
<i>Other</i>	23	15.6	20.0
Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX	22	15.0	19.1
Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA	10	6.8	8.7
Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ	7	4.8	6.1
Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH	6	4.1	5.2
Perryfields CC, Chelmsford, CM1 7PP	5	3.4	4.3
Keene Hall/G'wood Village Hall, Galleywood, CM2 8PT	5	3.4	4.3
Total responses	147	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	115		

South Essex Children's Centres – Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford

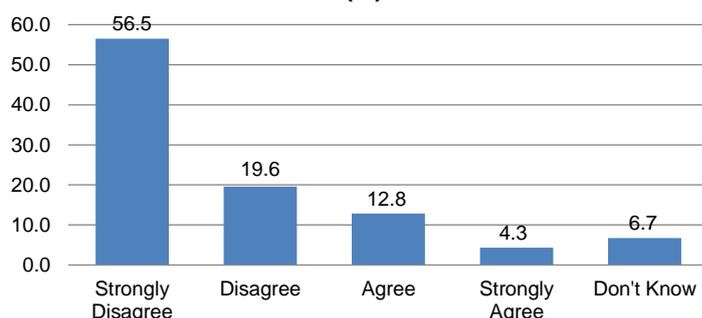
Please note that percentages are calculated based on the response to each individual question. Although in Q4 868 individuals wished to comment on the South quadrant, only 623 provided their views for Q7.1 (and as such, 623 is used as the denominator), 669 for Q7.2 etc. The attrition rate was more than 200 individuals per question.

Respondents to this section of the survey are referred to as 'South quadrant respondents'.

Q7.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'

Q7.1: Main proposal – South	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	352	56.5	281	57.0	52	58.4	19	46.3
Disagree	122	19.6	96	19.5	15	16.9	11	26.8
Agree	80	12.8	57	11.6	17	19.1	6	14.6
Strongly Agree	27	4.3	23	4.7	3	3.4	1	2.4
Don't Know	42	6.7	36	7.3	2	2.2	4	9.8
Total question response	623	100	493	100	89	100	41	100
Total for 'South' section	868							
Missing (from total on Q4)	245							

Q7.1: South Essex - Overall agreement/disagreement with main proposal (%)



More than half of South quadrant respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites.

Overall disagreement was felt the most strongly by parents (76.5%) followed by professionals (75.3%) and other + YP (73.2%). However, levels of disagreement were fairly equal among all three groups of

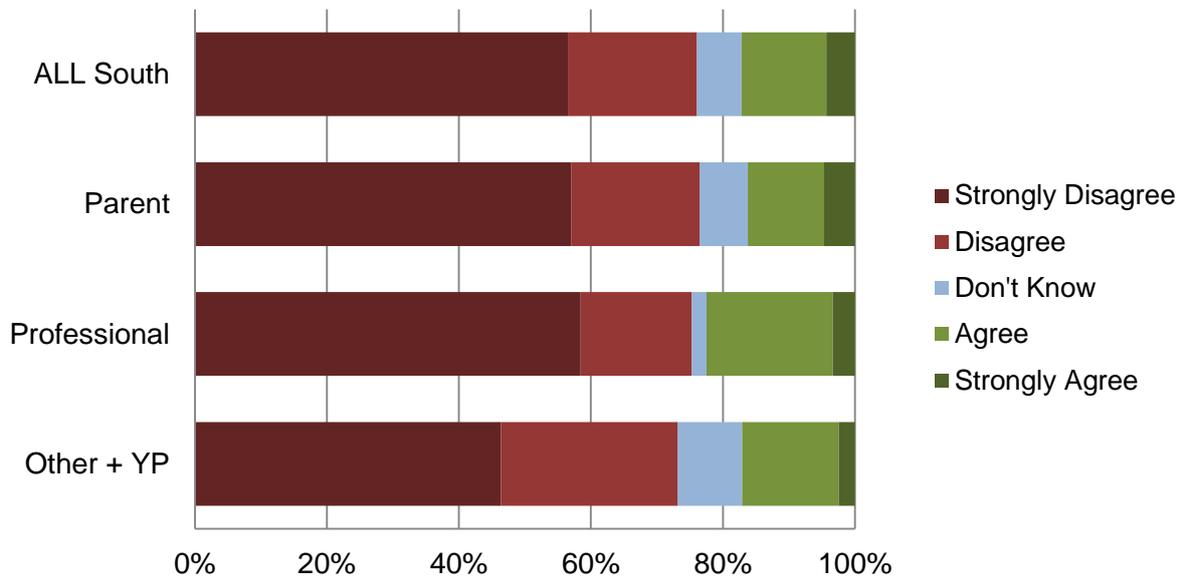
respondents. Furthermore, compared to the other quadrants, disagreement with the proposals was the lowest in the South – 76.1% compared to more than 82.5% for all other quadrants.

Agreement with the proposal was the highest among professionals – 22.5% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'.

Percentages of those who 'didn't know' were higher than they were for the other quadrants. Although only 2.2% of South professionals 'didn't know', more than 7% and almost 10% of other + YP were unable to express their opinion about the proposal made.

Please see graph below for visual representation of this data.

Q7.1: South Essex - Agreement/disagreement with main proposal - by respondent type



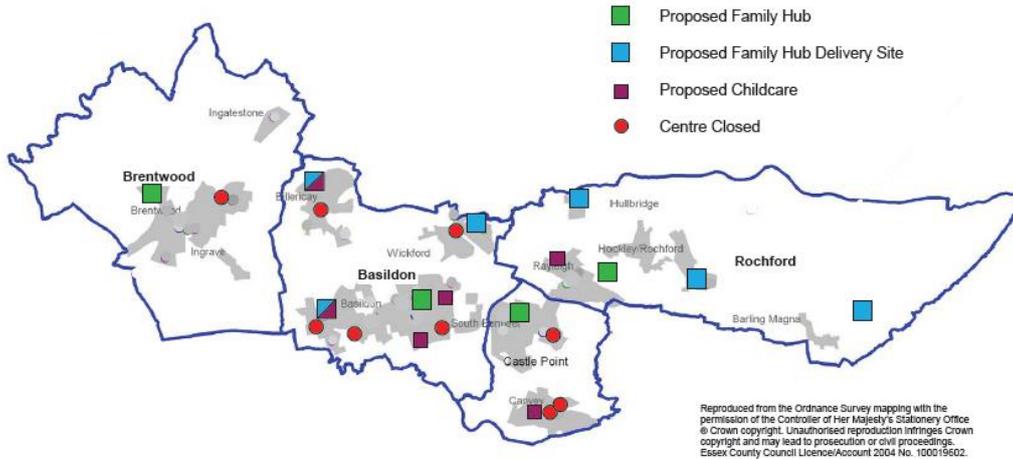
Q7.2: 'In South Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:

- Fryerns Farm Children's Centre, Basildon
- Larchwood Children's Centre, Pilgrims Hatch
- Little Handprints Children's Centre, Thundersley
- The Oak Tree Children's Centre, Rayleigh

To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'

Q7.2a: Proposed Family Hub locations – South	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	370	55.3	288	54.9	55	55.6	27	60.0
Disagree	98	14.6	75	14.3	15	15.2	8	17.8
Agree	102	15.2	80	15.2	16	16.2	6	13.3
Strongly Agree	52	7.8	42	8.0	8	8.1	2	4.4
Don't Know	47	7.0	40	7.6	5	5.1	2	4.4
Total question response	669	100	525	100	99	100	45	100
<i>Total for 'South' section</i>	868							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	199							

SOUTH ESSEX
Children's Centres Property Strategy



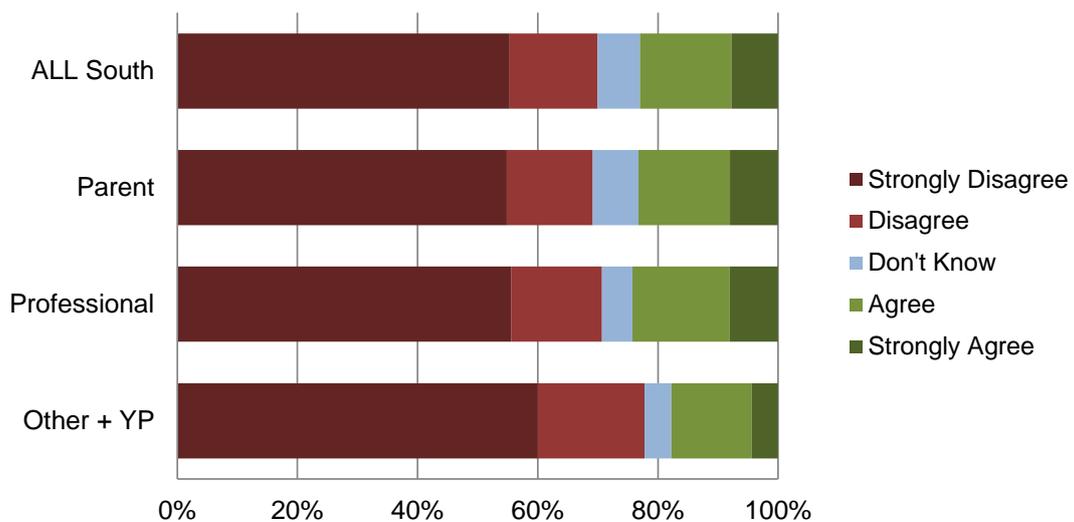
More than half (55%) of all respondents strongly disagreed with the proposals for Fryerns Farm CC, Larchwood CC, Little Handprints CC and The Oak Tree CC becoming the Family Hubs in Basildon, Pilgrims Hatch, Thundersley and Rayleigh respectively.

Disagreement was the highest among other + YP (77.8%⁶), followed by professionals (70.7%). Parents disagreed the least (69.1%) – when compared to the other quadrants, this is the only occurrence where parents had lower levels of disagreement with proposals than the professionals’

Agreement with the proposed Family Hub locations was almost the same among the professionals (24.2%) and parents (23.2%) – this is the only quadrant where the agreement between these two groups was similar.

This data is visually presented in the chart below.

Q7.2: South Essex - Agreement/disagreement with proposed Family Hub locations - by respondent type



⁶ However, please note that the number of other +YP respondents is considerably lower when compared to the others.

Q7.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?

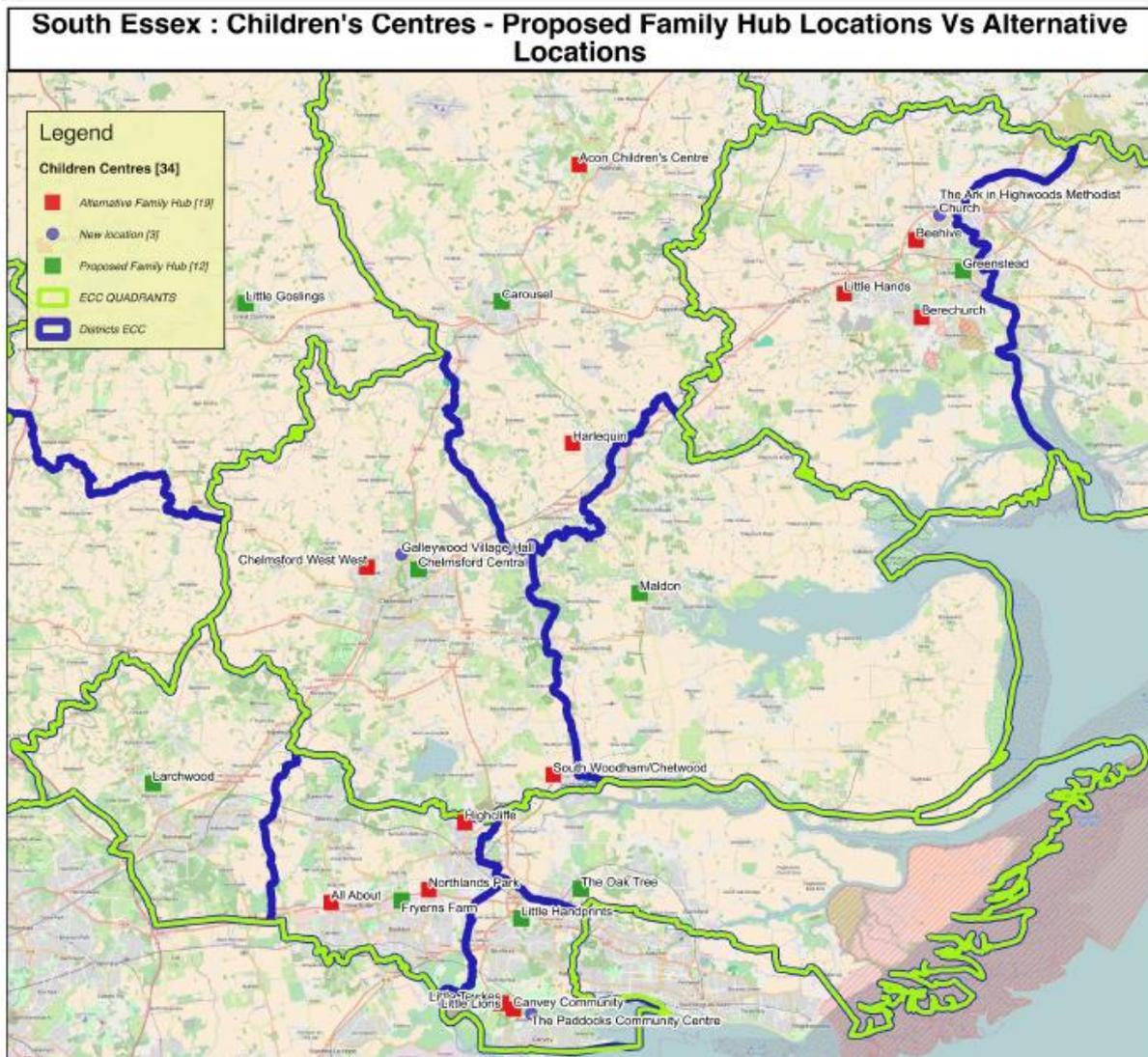
Those who disagreed with the proposed Family Hubs were encouraged to suggest which other current Children's centre site should become the Family Hub.

353 respondents (out of 468 who disagreed) provided a suggestion, which represents 75.4% of those disagreeing providing a suggestion for an alternative location for a Family Hub. Multiple suggestions could be provided in a single comment.

The most popular alternative Family Hubs would be:

- Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU (or one Family Hub anywhere on Canvey Island)
- Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX
- Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX
- All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX

These locations are shown on the map below, highlighted in red. Currently proposed Family Hub locations are in green.



Compared to North and Mid, South respondents listed a wide variety of locations they would prefer as (probably 'additional') Family Hubs. All suggestions above received more than thirty 'votes' each, which points to a certain level of agreement among the respondents.

The most frequent suggestions (mentioned more than 5 times) are listed in the table below. Please note it is a shortened version of a full list of suggestions, which is available in Appendix 3.

Q7.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – South	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
<i>Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.</i>	62	14.6	17.6
Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	52	12.3	14.7
Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX	50	11.8	14.2
Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX	46	10.8	13.0
Canvey Island - one Hub in general needed	32	7.5	9.1
All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX	31	7.3	8.8
<i>Other comment</i>	25	5.9	7.1
<i>Issues with (public) transport</i>	16	3.8	4.5
Wishing Well CC, Rochford, SS4 1QF	15	3.5	4.2
Sunnyside CC, Billericay, CM12 0GH	15	3.5	4.2
The Triangle CC, Wickford, SS12 0AQ	9	2.1	2.5
Billericay CC, Billericay, CM12 9AB	9	2.1	2.5
Kaleidoscope CC, Basildon, SS16 4NF	8	1.9	2.3
Cherry Tree Children's Centre, The Knightsway Centre, 32a Knights Way, Brentwood CM13 2AZ	6	1.4	1.7
Ladybird CC, Rayleigh, SS6 9EH	6	1.4	1.7
Canvey community CC, Canvey Island, SS8 9HG	6	1.4	1.7
Little Tewkes CC, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	5	1.2	1.4
Total responses	424	100	
Total respondents/comments	353		

General views

As the case in the North and Mid quadrants, many respondents disagreed with the concept of Family Hubs. Areas such as Wickford and Canvey Island were described as 'losing out'. Reasons for disagreement were the same, for example, children's centres needing to be a local and accessible service where social networks can be formed. Difficulties of getting to the actual locations were mentioned frequently. Again, respondents called for the current arrangement to be retained.

'Basildon is a large area and there is currently a variety of children's centres to support families. By creating one there will be limited space for families. Childcare places will be limited even if they are open for more hours. In addition it is not local enough for several families particularly those unable to travel.' (Parent Basildon)

'There should be one in each area. I would only go to Canvey Island. I do not drive and having to travel by bus/train to get to a hub is not an easy option to just being able to walk down the road now. I think it's a terrible idea. Or at least really give a detailed description on which and where each site will be a what I will still be able to do at my local centre. Which seems to be going from 3 to 1 which is shocking!' (Parent, Castle Point)

'I don't think so many should be closed. Queues for babies services at the Brentwood hubs are already long and I haven't been able to join any groups as they are all fully booked and I've been on the waiting list a year! My baby is nearly 1 so he has missed out and your plans will make these resources even more limited. I am lucky that I am financially secure and so have been able to pay for private sessions but many are not as fortunate and I think less resources mean exactly that - less resources!!!! The proposals seem like they are trying to sugar coat as the data is not easy to decipher but this should not happen! I will be happy to speak with anyone to support solutions to (I assume funding cuts) but this is not a good idea. Once gone they will not come back.' (Parent, Brentwood)

Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

The majority of calls for having Little Lions Children's Centre as an additional Family Hub to those already proposed were based on the geographical isolation of Canvey Island and the resultant disadvantage for the local community. Respondents highlighted the difficulties of accessing services off the island, with many not having access to a car and there being no direct routes to the proposed Family Hubs in other locations. Little Lions is described as a popular and well-used centre that already supports the most deprived area of Canvey and thus would be a considerable loss to the area.

However, Canvey Island residents appear open in terms of which of the current three children's centres (Little Lions CC, Little Tewkes CC or Canvey Community CC) should stay open, as long as at least one does. The proposed Family Hub Outreach Site is viewed as insufficient for the local needs. Overall, more than 80 respondents made a strong call for an additional Family Hub for Canvey Island.

'Canvey Island is an independent island that requires its own centre, having sites off of Canvey makes them inaccessible for people that live on Canvey which means you are taking away vital support advice which new parents/carers rely on !! People that are not yet parents do not understand how much these centres are a god send to Canvey parents and moving off Canvey causes a huge disadvantage for new parents now and In the future on top of us that it will currently affect! The little lions children centre on Canvey is our main centre which could be the family Hub site for us!! Or potential buildings not currently occupied here on the island?' (Parent, Castle Point)

'I think there should be a family Hub kept on Canvey, at little lions. This is a large area of deprivation and A small plan of outreach within Thorney Bay is not enough! Canvey needs its own hub, expecting target/vulnerable families to travel to Thundersley (2 bus journeys) is completely unrealistic!' (Professional, Castle Point)

'Little Lions Children Centre is in the most deprived area of Canvey and is used by families and referred to by professionals to encourage families in need to access groups and individual support. The transport system from Canvey is restricted and many of the(in Need) families do not have access to a car.' (Professional, Castle Point)

'Canvey Island requires its own family hub for local residents to access services and support. Canvey is a classed low income area and with the pressure of families on local caravan park Thorney Bay, plus the high level of mums with post-natal depression there has been good support links made to the children's centre. Providing their services are better advertised (which currently not the case) there will be a bigger influx in parents accessing. A lot of Canvey residents do not drive and Thundersley hub will be inaccessible to them. i am recently trained as a volunteer for parent supporter at parents first who have just had funding to provide support for pregnant mums and families who would really benefit from helping these families to access and support a centre. Without a Canvey base this would prove very difficult to help mums gain independent support also. The centres ARE needed here - but require better staff and be based outreach in the community as well as in a centre.' (Parent, Castle Point)

Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Respondents listed a number of strong arguments why Northlands Park Children's Centre in Basildon should be used as a Family Hub instead of Fryerns Farm.

These include:

- Purpose-built multi-agency building, with the potential to house other agencies
- Large enough facility with the potential to evolve further; already has a large variety of rooms, including private rooms for private consultations
- Able to better cope with demand (vs. Fryerns Farm viewed as too small and in a poor state of repair)
- Sensory room and other equipment already available and highly valued by the community
- Opportunities to be used by the community at weekends
- Good accessibility – in terms of public transport as well as parking facilities
- Has existing links with the local schools etc.

Overall, Northlands Park Children's Centre was viewed as offering a better alternative to Fryerns Farm.

'Fryerns Farm Children Centre in Basildon is a great venue, but is far too small for a Family Hub, as there are only two rooms available. I would suggest that the Basildon Family Hub was Northlands Park Children's Centre, as this is a far bigger venue, and therefore would be able to cope better with the number of families in the area. There are plenty of rooms for giving advice and support to families, as well as still having a crèche, activity rooms and sensory room for the children, all available and in use at the same time.' (Parent, Basildon)

'For Basildon I think Northlands Park should be seriously considered. It is a large building and a main site which is open for 50 hours each week with the potential to evolve more easily into a Family Hub than the proposed Fryerns Farm which is currently only a delivery site open for 15 hours each week.' (Other - Advisory Board Chair, Basildon)

'I think that Northlands should be a better choice of family hub as it is already a busy centre full of families attending for baby sessions, parenting programmes, baby weighing, blood spots, speech and language drop in, blood tests for pregnant mums to be, the sensory room. The relationship we have between the surrounding pre-school, schools and nurseries is great and we work very closely with the health visitors. The building is much bigger and more friendly and inviting to parents. There is a nice big area in the reception for mums to wait for sessions. It is used daily for outside agencies for meetings and courses with projector facilities. It is a much more attractive and purpose built building for a family hub with lots of rooms you would be able to talk to parents to privately.' (Professional, Basildon)

Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX (currently proposed to become a Family Hub Delivery Site)

Highcliffe Children's Centre is a highly-valued children's centre in Wickford and several respondents claimed they would be 'lost' without it. Although the proposal is not to close the centre entirely, the proposed reduced hours are not viewed as sufficient to meet demand. Respondents would welcome an additional Family Hub in Wickford, it being Highcliffe or Triangle, otherwise accessing alternative sites would be difficult. Highcliffe is described as a venue with high security and in close proximity to a park, thus further enhancing children's learning.

'Anywhere in Wickford. We will have an additional 400 family homes here thanks to all the new developments and no facilities easily accessible for new parents. Public transport is not a great way of getting around with a young child. Other passengers can be intimidating and on occasion abusive.' (Parent, Basildon)

'I think the Wickford children's centre should remain open for the times it already is. There is limited parking that would become so congested if it was open for the limited times you are suggesting. We also receive amazing support from this centre as a parent, along with excellent classes and learning and it would be a massive loss to our community for you to reduce the hours so significantly!!!' (Parent, Basildon)

'Highcliffe in Wickford should be kept open! It's built for purpose, a good location for children (next to the park!) and easily accessible for people living in the Wickford/Crays hill/Billericay area. There are a lot of vulnerable groups living in these areas and I doubt many people would take the bus or the train to Rayleigh or Basildon to access these valuable services.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX (currently proposed to become a Family Hub Delivery Site and a childcare opportunity)

All About Children's Centre (or already mentioned Northlands Park) is proposed as another alternative to Fryerns Farm. All About staff are highly commended.

In addition to arguments that Fryerns Farm is in a poor state of repair, is underused and is difficult to access, several respondents commented on its proximity to other facilities which can be viewed as intimidating (probation centre).

'I would like 'All about' to become the main hub for Basildon. Fryerns farm is a horrible location to take my child and I'm aware that there is a social care centre nearby, which is intimidating.' (Parent, Basildon)

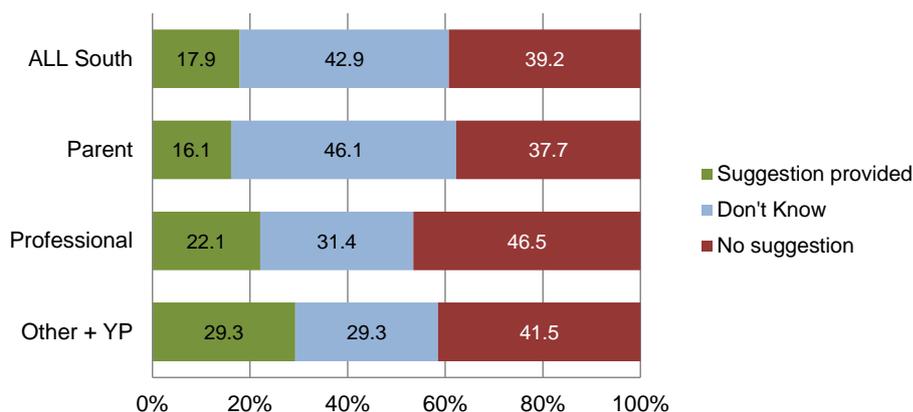
'The All About centre, on the grounds of James Hornsby school or Northlands park have very good set-ups. They have sufficient parking, good transport links, good facilities - meeting rooms, crèche, play areas, etc. I see no benefit in wasting vast amounts of money on a restructure which will ultimately reduce the usability of the whole service. I for one would no longer be able to access the children's centre and it has been unbelievable valuable to me and my children. I am very very sad and disappointed by the proposed plans.' (Parent, Basildon)

'I think the all about centre is best suited. The staff there are second to none!' (Young Person, Basildon)

Q7.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'

Q7.3: Respondent ideas on alternative locations – South	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	108	17.9	77	16.1	19	22.1	12	29
No	237	39.2	180	37.7	40	46.5	17	41
Don't Know	259	42.9	220	46.1	27	31.4	12	29
Total question response	604	100	477	100	86	100	41	100
Total for 'South' section	868							
Missing (from total on Q4)	264							

Q7.3: South Essex - Alternative site suggestions - by respondent type



In addition to respondents' views on what existing Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs instead of the those proposed by ECC, respondents could also suggest any other locations in their local communities that could be suitable and that ECC

might not as yet be aware of (i.e. 'other buildings or locations which are not already listed in the Consultation document').

The majority of South respondents had either no suggestions (39.2%) or 'didn't know' (42.9%). Almost half of professionals (46.5%) proposed no alternatives.

Around 18% claimed to have a suggestion for an alternative location; 102 out of 108 individuals proceeded to do so.

The 'top' suggestion was the Paddocks Community Centre, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA, mentioned by 24 individuals. This was the only site currently 'unknown' to ECC – the remainder of suggestions featured existing Children's centres, which were also mentioned in Q7.2b. This is depicted by a blue circle on the earlier map.

For a full list of suggestions, please see Appendix 3. A shortened version of the list is presented below.

Q7.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – South	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
The Paddocks Community Centre, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA	24	20.2	23.5
Other	11	9.2	10.8
All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX	8	6.7	7.8
Cherry Tree Children's Centre, The Knightsway Centre, 32a Knights Way, Brentwood CM13 2AZ	8	6.7	7.8
Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX	6	5.0	5.9
Total responses	119	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	102		

West Essex Children's Centres – Uttlesford, Epping Forest, Harlow

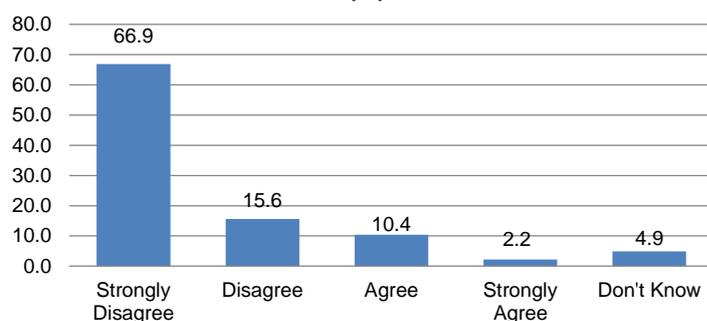
Please note that percentages are calculated based on the response to each individual question. Although in Q4 696 individuals wished to comment on the West quadrant, only 550 provided their views for Q8.1 (and as such, 550 is used as the denominator), 596 for Q8.2 etc. The attrition rate was more than 100 individuals per question.

Respondents to this section of the survey are referred to as 'West quadrant respondents'.

Q8.1: 'To what extent do you agree with this proposal (i.e. one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites)?'

Q8.1: Main proposal – West	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	368	66.9	305	70.1	45	54.2	18	56.3
Disagree	86	15.6	67	15.4	13	15.7	6	18.8
Agree	57	10.4	41	9.4	15	18.1	1	3.1
Strongly Agree	12	2.2	6	1.4	3	3.6	3	9.4
Don't Know	27	4.9	16	3.7	7	8.4	4	12.5
Total question response	550	100	435	100	83	100	32	100
Total for 'West' section	696							
Missing (from total on Q4)	146							

Q8.1: West Essex - Overall agreement/disagreement with main proposal (%)



Just over two thirds of West quadrant respondents 'strongly disagreed' with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub in each district, supported by a range of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites.

Overall disagreement was felt the most strongly by parents (85.5%), followed by other + YP (75%). Professionals disagreed considerably less compared to the

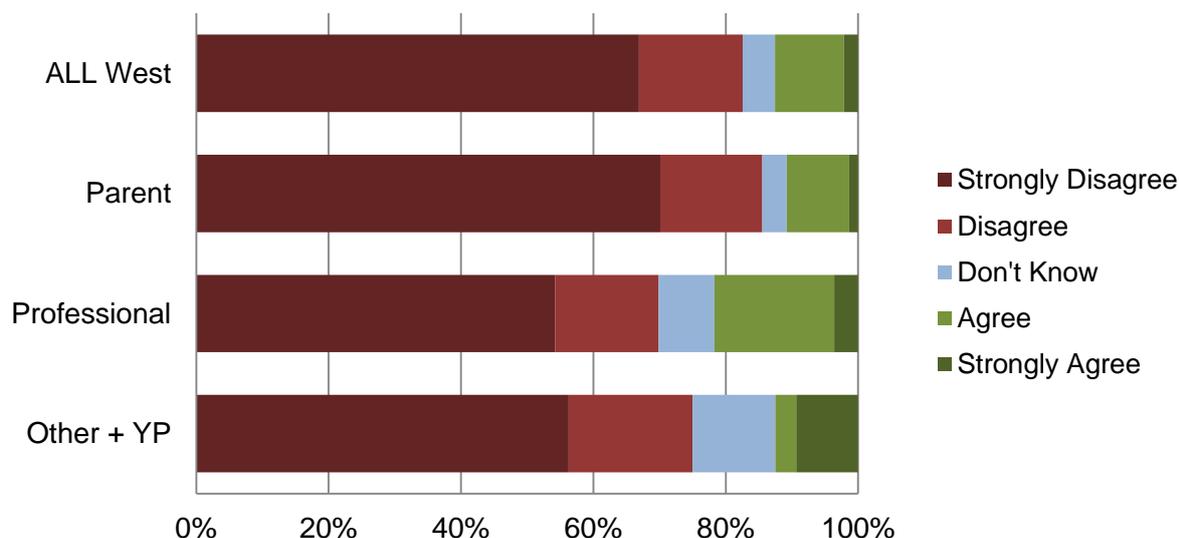
other groups – 69.9%.

Agreement with the proposal was the highest among professionals – 21.7% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed'. This is approximately 10% more than for the other two groups.

Percentages of those who 'didn't know' were higher than in other quadrants – 8.4% of professionals 'didn't know', which was more than parents who 'didn't know'.

Please see graph below for visual representation of this data.

Q8.1: West Essex - Agreement/disagreement with main proposal - by respondent type



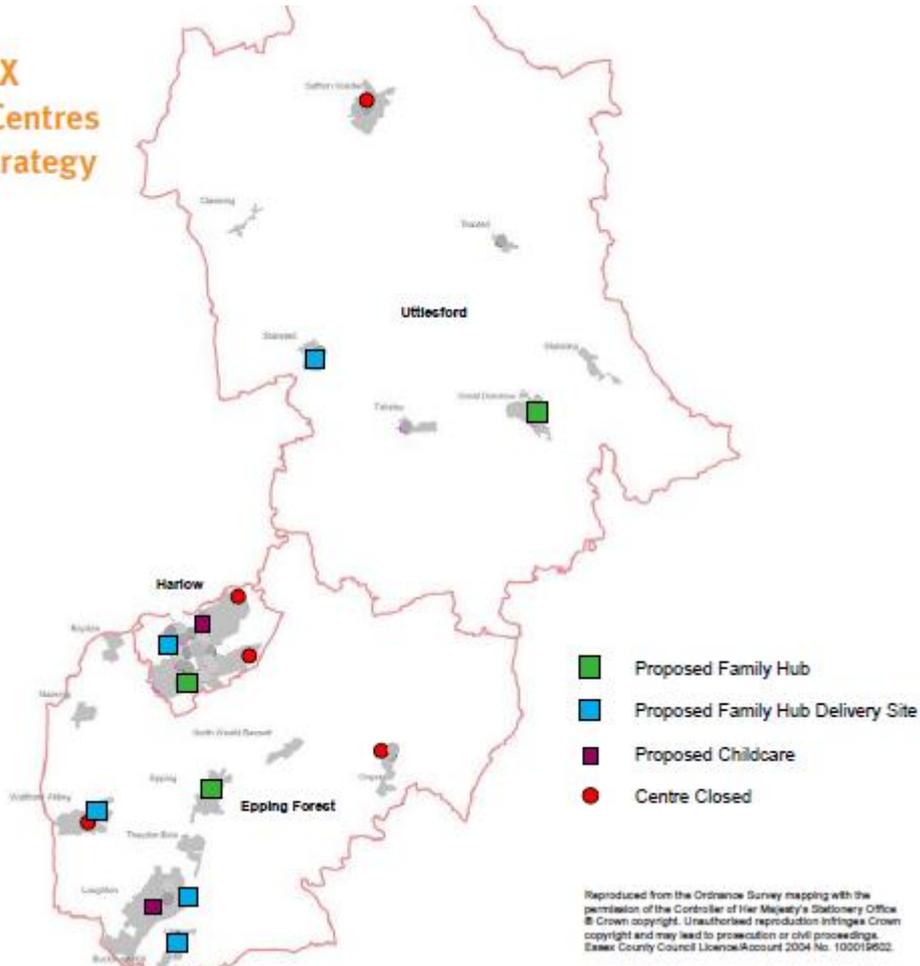
Q8.2: 'In West Essex, your proposed Family Hubs will be:

- Brambles Children's Centre, Epping
- Little Goslings Children's Centre, Great Dunmow
- Treehouse Children's Centre, Harlow

To what extent do you agree with the proposed location of the Family Hub in this district?'

Q8.2a: Proposed Family Hub locations – West	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	319	53.5	266	57.6	32	33.3	21	55.3
Disagree	92	15.4	60	13.0	24	25.0	8	21.1
Agree	118	19.8	89	19.3	27	28.1	2	5.3
Strongly Agree	30	5.0	23	5.0	7	7.3	0	0.0
Don't Know	37	6.2	24	5.2	6	6.3	7	18.4
Total question response	596	100	462	100	96	100	38	100
<i>Total for 'West' section</i>	696							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	100							

**WEST ESSEX
Children's Centres
Property Strategy**



More than half (53.5%) of all West respondents ‘strongly disagreed’ with the proposals for Brambles CC, Little Goslings CC and Treehouse CC becoming the Family Hubs in Epping, Great Dunmow and Harlow respectively.

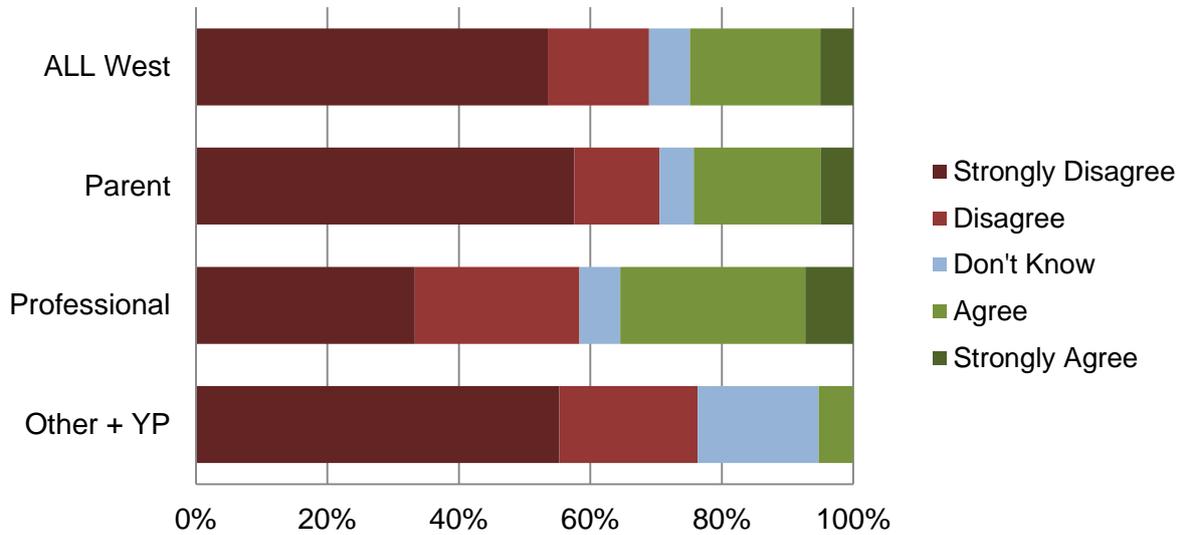
Disagreement was the highest among other + YP (76.3%⁷), followed by parents (70.6%).

Agreement was the highest among professionals – more than a third (35.4%) of them ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with the proposed Family Hub locations. Almost a quarter of parents (24.2%) also agreed.

This data is visually presented in the chart below.

⁷ However, please note that the number of other +YP respondents is considerably lower when compared to the others.

Q8.2: West Essex - Agreement/disagreement with proposed Family Hub locations - by respondent type



Q8.2b: If you disagree, which current Children's Centre site do you think should become the Family Hub?

Those who disagreed with the proposed Family Hubs were encouraged to suggest which other current Children's centre site should become the Family Hub.

285 respondents (out of 411 who disagreed) provided a suggestion, which represents approximately 69% of those disagreeing providing a suggestion for an alternative location for a Family Hub. Multiple suggestions could be provided in a single comment.

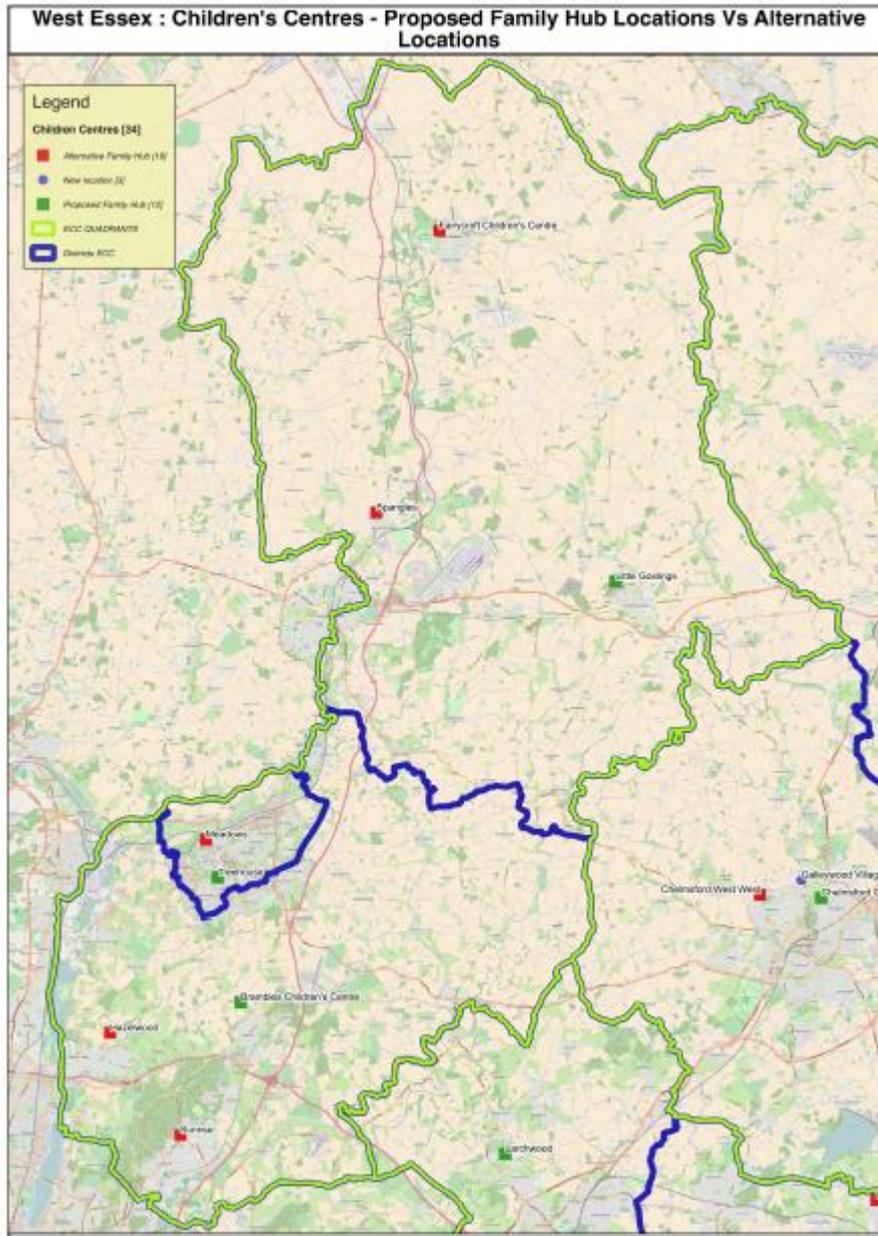
The most popular alternative Family Hubs would be:

- Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL
- Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE
- Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL
- Spangles CC, Stansted, CM24 8LR
- Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND

These locations are shown on the map below, highlighted in red. Currently proposed Family Hub locations are in green.

West respondents have generally suggested alternatives to the currently proposed Family Hub locations, which they believe are not always the most suitable. Respondents have reservations to Brambles Children's Centre in Epping, which is apparently small, has poor facilities for buggies, limited parking and is already located within an 'affluent' area rather than one of real need. Harlow was seen as too large and growing to have one Family Hub only. Furthermore, some mentioned that the Family Hub as well as Family Hub Delivery Site are both to be located in West Harlow – ideally, they call for an additional Family Hub, or a greater spread of services, so they are located both in West and East Harlow. Many alluded to travel difficulties across Harlow – either by car (and related parking problems) or by public transport (multiple buses, or need for a taxi).

West Essex is described as a dispersed area of towns and villages, with limited transport links and related access issues, and thus greater need for a more localised service, covering areas such as Loughton, Waltham Abbey, Saffron Walden and others.



The most frequent suggestions (mentioned more than 5 times) are listed in the table below. Please note it is a shortened version of a full list of suggestions, which is available in Appendix 4. However, other locations were suggested too few times to be considered as a feasible alternative.

Q8.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – West	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
<i>Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.</i>	69	18.0	24.2
<i>Other</i>	54	14.1	18.9
Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL	47	12.3	16.5
Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE	39	10.2	13.7
Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL	33	8.6	11.6

<i>Public transport issues and comments</i>	29	7.6	10.2
Spangles CC, Stansted, CM24 8LR	22	5.7	7.7
Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND	18	4.7	6.3
Need more than one hub per District	18	4.7	6.3
Little Oaks CC, Loughton, IG10 3TD	9	2.3	3.2
Burnt Mill CC, Harlow, CM20 2NR	9	2.3	3.2
<i>Parking comments</i>	8	2.1	2.8
Treehouse CC, Harlow, CM18 7NG	7	1.8	2.5
Potter Street CC, Harlow, CM17 9EU	6	1.6	2.1
Abbeywood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL	5	1.3	1.8
Total responses	383	100	
Total respondents/comments	285		

General views

Most comments related to the dislike of the Family Hub concept and the wish for things to stay as they are (both 'Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.' and 'Other'). In addition to the points already raised by respondents from other quadrants, West respondents also highlighted the variety of activities that take place at Children's centres, for example parenting classes, dance classes, play groups etc., that may be lost as part of the 'consolidation'. Several also believe that the service will be stretched too thinly.

'To keep them all open having different times throughout the day to cater everyone's needs, Having just one in Harlow is going to be so busy and over loaded, families will end up getting turned away from any activities going on because of overcrowding, teenagers support times can be after 3pm onwards etc., there is not the room in any of the centres to fit all people's needs in at once anyway, a lot of my friends don't drive or hubby is using the car for work, people can't get to one centre! I've used the buses in Harlow for a year when I had no car with 2 children under 3, many times I was told by the bus driver I need to get the next bus because my double pram was too big!!! I couldn't afford to buy a smaller one to use on the buses. For me getting to the Tree House centre I'll need to get on two buses, I'd like to add I use the centres about 3-4 times a week!' (Parent, Harlow)

'This question assumes I agree with the closures. Why do they have to become family hubs at all? The provision has already been cut in our area. There are families in need who will not now be able to access the groups, support and facilities that the centres provide which are now closing. There are plenty of childcare centres, but there are not enough centres which can provide adult education courses, such as those on parenting, budgeting, cooking... and groups which are free to attend with both my 4 year old and 2 year old. Many families like mine will feel the loss of our local Surestart centre. Where will new mothers be able to go to a breastfeeding group? Little Buddies CC closed and one of the venues that now offers a group is Buckhurst Hill library. This has an automatic door that opens from inside right onto the street. Is this a suitable venue for a family to go with small children?? Please reconsider this initiative.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'Local centres offer a service to families who are not able to access centralised services. vulnerable women will not travel 6miles to disclose domestic violence. Families struggling to pay bills will not be able to get across town to seek help to sort their debts.' (Professional, Harlow)

'Many families without their own transport will find it very difficult to access the Dunmow hub. Public transport between Saffron Walden and Dunmow is very limited and for families in the surrounding villages it would be a logistical nightmare. Stansted might be better in that it has a rail link as well as bus services but it still would preclude some families. The family Hub idea is good in principle but I don't think it will work practice in a district so large as Uttlesford which has so many small and medium sized population centres' (Other, Uttlesford)

There needs to be a full-service Children's Centre within 30 mins walk, or 15 mins public transport, of most families. In practice I think this means there should be a 'Family Hub' in Loughton, in Epping, in Waltham Abbey, as well as additional sites in each of those towns offering services at least some

days a week. A Children's Centre not in the same town will effectively be inaccessible to new parents, who are not particularly mobile, and who will not be willing to travel significant distances for this kind of service. Those people who particularly need the help of Children's Centres are those who do not have access to private cars. People want access to services within walking distance - not in some neighbouring town. You might as well not have a service at all, if it will be a minimum 20 minute drive away.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL (currently proposed to become a Family Hub Delivery Site)

Respondents show a clear preference for the Meadows Children's Centre in Harlow to become a Family Hub instead of the proposed Treehouse Children's Centre. Almost without exception, respondents highlight Meadows' proximity to town as well as easier accessibility using public transport and walking. Many highlight its larger size, too. Treehouse is viewed as more difficult to access, with many respondents saying they would have to get two buses to get there.

'A family hub should be easily accessible - there are very few transport links to Treehouse in Harlow I would prefer the children's centres to stay as they are but if they do get moved over to hubs think of those who don't drive surely the meadows or burnt mill would be better as these are both walkable from the town.' (Parent, Harlow)

'The Meadows children's centre as it is central in the town enabling easier access for families although I feel The Tree House Children's Centre is the better centre in regards to facilities.' (Parent, Harlow)

'The Meadow as it closest to the town centre so families that don't drive can get one bus and walk.' (Professional, Harlow)

Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE (currently proposed to close and become a childcare opportunity)

Respondents argued there should be more than one Family Hub in the Epping Forest district – Sunrise Children's Centre in Loughton was proposed the most, followed by Hazelwood Children's Centre in Waltham Abbey. These were viewed as better alternatives to the currently proposed Brambles Children's Centre in Epping. That one was described as very difficult to get to and thus potentially not catering for the areas of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Debden.

Sunrise Children's Centre is described as more central in the Epping Forest district and generally having better transport links than Epping (highlighted by multiple respondents). Some also mentioned better facilities and parking.

'Either Sunrise Children's Centre or Little Oaks in Loughton/Debden. The nearest proposed family hub to me would be in Epping. However, I don't drive and there is only a bus every hour so going to Epping isn't at all feasible. I don't think a hub in Epping would serve well the Loughton/Buckhurst Hill community as it would be too far and cost money to travel to. In addition, my little boy is on the autistic spectrum and would find the travel too stressful.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'Sunrise is more centrally located for Epping Forest. Brambles has no public parking and what parking exists is expensive and distant.' (Professional, Epping Forest)

'There should be more than one to cater for the whole district. In addition to Epping there should be one in Loughton Chigwell, Waltham Abbey and Ongar. Commuting to Epping for many would prove very difficult. As a new mother and as Loughton Foodbank Project Manager I understand the difficulties parents have to get to places when they are on low income or have other financial crisis. The proposals set out by ECC will fuel more problems for local people and create less of a community.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'There should be two Family Hubs in the Epping Forest district; Hazelwood in Waltham Abbey and

Sunrise in Loughton. These are the two new build sites, which were originally strategically placed in key SOAs in the district.' (Professional, Epping Forest)

Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL (currently proposed to become a Family Hub Delivery Site)

Hazelwood Children's Centre was indicated as second alternative to Brambles (Sunrise being the preferred option). Hazelwood was proposed mostly in terms of providing facilities for Waltham Abbey residents – a 'highly populated' and 'deprived' area - again mostly due to accessibility.

'I feel that the Children's Centre in Epping becoming the main hub will be very difficult for many parents because Epping is small and has very limited parking. On a market day it is impossible to park and parking is not free - parents will struggle to park to access the children's centre. It can be difficult to access at the moment because of parking. The proposed changes would see everyone in the Epping Forest District trying to access at various times and it would become ridiculous trying to park and all of the parents and prams using the building. This is one reason that local children's centres work well as they are LOCAL. I can walk to my children centre - Hazelwood Children's Centre - which was vital for me to get out and about after having my baby and after having dealt with ante-natal depression and anxiety. I would have not had the confidence to drive out to Epping Forest and struggle to park and walk back to the Centre. Also for those post-caesarean and other complications this would be impossible in the early weeks. I hope that the local centres that are becoming delivery sites can still offer the majority of important services and opportunities for mums and babies to come together to support parents' mental health and well-being.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'Waltham abbey has always been a deprived area with very little or no child friendly facilities. Hazel wood children's centre has provided excellent services and support to families in need of support. Why would an area like this be considered unworthy of a familiar hub, when Harlow has a wealth of facilities and Epping isn't exactly a needy area. A number of families hazel wood helps would probably not have access to their own transport or the money to drag their children to activities out of the area. I see you have proposed hazel wood as a delivery site, but we also loose abbey wood. Why is Waltham abbey always the poor relation in west Essex? I have used the centre since 2008 for various playgroups and now dance lessons. My children along with many others could not continue with their dance lessons, which will be devastating to them. They allow children to keep fit and more importantly boost their confidence. It would be a huge loss to the community!' (Parent, Epping Forest)

Spangles CC, Stansted, CM24 8LR (currently proposed to become a Family Hub Delivery Site)

Spangles Children's Centre in Stansted was recommended mostly due to its location within Uttlesford and the difficulty of accessing the proposed Family Hubs elsewhere in the quadrant. It was suggested due to its accessibility, size as well as parking facilities.

'Living in Stansted it will be extremely difficult to get to any of these sites. Brambles and Little Goslings are in sites with no easy transport links. Spangles in Stansted is easily accessible to people in the area, and a lot of people use it from the surrounding villages.' (Parent, Uttlesford)

'I live in Stansted. There is no direct public connection between Dunmow and Stansted. Epping is miles away. Harlow is very expensive to get to. I loved being at Spangles as a new mum and it really helped me to remain sane. I provided a community feel and liked being lots on offer in terms of groups etc.' (Parent, Uttlesford)

Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND (currently proposed close, with a Outreach Site being available in Saffron Walden library)

Accessing proposed Family Hubs is a recurring theme across comments. Providing services at current centres in Saffron Walden or Stansted would be welcome by Uttlesford

communities. A concern has been raised over the suitability of a library for delivering certain services, such as breastfeeding support.

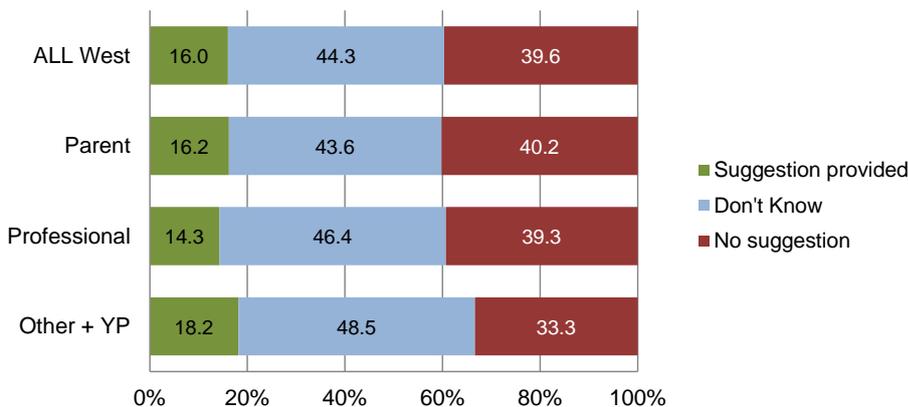
'Not easily accessible from all other areas of Uttlesford, poor public transport links Saffron Walden or Stansted would be more appropriate for Uttlesford.' (Professional, Uttlesford)

'Great Dunmow is 25 mins drive from Saffron Walden, what about families who don't drive? A hub within the library in SW is totally inappropriate and is seriously letting down families especially new mothers. What will happen to breast feeding support? Wholly inappropriate to consider a corner of the library as an alternative. Very disappointed.' (Parent, Uttlesford)

Q8.3: 'Can you suggest any other buildings or locations that you think we should consider for delivering services which are not already listed in the Consultation document?'

Q8.3: Respondent ideas on alternative locations – West	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Yes	85	16.0	67	16.2	12	14.3	6	18
No	210	39.6	166	40.2	33	39.3	11	33
Don't Know	235	44.3	180	43.6	39	46.4	16	48
Total question response	530	100	413	100	84	100	33	100
<i>Total for 'West' section</i>	696							
<i>Missing (from total on Q4)</i>	166							

Q8.3: West Essex - Alternative site suggestions - by respondent type



In addition to respondents' views on what existing Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs instead of the those proposed by ECC, respondents could also suggest any other locations in their local communities that could be suitable and that ECC might not as yet be

aware of (i.e. 'other buildings or locations which are not already listed in the Consultation document').

The majority of North respondents had either no suggestions (39.6%) or 'didn't know' (44.3%). Almost 40% of professionals proposed no alternatives.

Just 16% claimed to have a suggestion for an alternative location; 83 out of 85 individuals proceeded to do so. However, upon greater analysis of the data, the most frequent suggestions were about existing Children's centres, i.e. locations that were listed in the Consultation document. They were not necessarily the same ones as those put forward in Q8.2b, however the number of people suggesting them were low.

'New' suggestions referred to church halls, schools and community centres in general; mentioned by seven individuals.

For a full list of suggestions, please see Appendix 4. A shortened version of the list is presented below.

Q8.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – West	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
SHORTENED TABLE			
<i>Other</i>	13	12.9	15.7
ABC CC, Old Harlow, CM17 0AT	9	8.9	10.8
Burnt Mill CC, Harlow, CM20 2NR	8	7.9	9.6
Potter Street CC, Harlow, CM17 9EU	7	6.9	8.4
Church Halls, Schools, Community Centres and other non-specific locations	7	6.9	8.4
Loughton Library, IG10 1HD	6	5.9	7.2
Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE	5	5.0	6.0
Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL	5	5.0	6.0
Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND	5	5.0	6.0
Total responses	101	100	
Total respondents/comments	83		

Comparison between all quadrants

The following section provides a comparison of the results between the four Essex districts. Apart from some localised nuances, the results are generally consistent across the whole of Essex.

Please note that disagreement is calculated based on those respondents selecting 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree', while agreement on those selecting 'agree' and 'strongly agree'.

Main proposal – for there to be one Family Hub per district

Disagreement

	% disagreement with main proposal ('disagree' + 'strongly disagree')				
	North	Mid	South	West	Essex average
ALL	84.1	84.8	76.1	82.5	81.9
Parent	88.8	85.7	76.5	85.5	84.1
Professional	76.4	78.9	75.3	69.9	75.1
Other + YP	79.2	89.8	73.2	75	79.3

Overall, the majority of respondents across all districts have disagreed with the proposal for there to be one Family Hub per district, supported by a network of local Family Hub Delivery Sites and Family Hub Outreach Sites.

Respondents from the South were the least to disagree. Still, more than three quarters of South respondents disagreed.

Disagreement was the strongest among parents in the North and other + YP in the Mid.

Agreement

	% agreement with main proposal ('agree' + 'strongly agree')				
	North	Mid	South	West	Essex average
ALL	11.4	12.1	17.2	12.5	13.3
Parent	8.1	11.0	16.2	10.8	11.5
Professional	17.3	18.7	22.5	21.7	20.0
Other + YP	13.2	8.2	17.1	12.5	12.7

Agreement with the proposal was generally low across all districts. With the exception of South, where 17.2% of respondents agreed, generally only around one eighth of respondents agreed with the proposal.

Agreement was generally the strongest among professionals. Professionals from the South and West agreed with the proposals more than professionals from North and Mid.

Proposal regarding individual Family Hub locations

Disagreement

	% disagreement with proposed Family Hub locations ('disagree' + 'strongly disagree')				
	North	Mid	South	West	Essex average
ALL	71.6	66.8	70.0	69.0	69.3
Parent	77.2	67.4	69.1	70.6	71.1
Professional	63.7	58.5	70.7	58.3	62.8
Other + YP	64.3	81.5	77.8	76.3	75.0

Overall, the majority of respondents across all districts have disagreed with the proposed individual Family Hub locations. However, the disagreement was lower than with the main proposal. While 81.9% disagreed with the main proposals, 69.3% of respondents disagreed with the actual locations proposed.

Respondents from the Mid disagreed the least. Otherwise, the level of disagreement was similar across all quadrants.

Other + YP were the most likely to disagree with the proposed locations.

Agreement

	% agreement with proposed Family Hub locations ('agree' + 'strongly agree')				
	North	Mid	South	West	Essex average
ALL	21.0	26.6	23.0	24.8	23.9
Parent	16.1	26.3	23.2	24.2	22.5
Professional	28.1	33.3	24.2	35.4	30.3
Other + YP	26.8	13.0	17.8	5.3	15.7

Just under a quarter of all respondents agreed with the proposed Family Hub locations. Agreement was the strongest in the Mid (26.6%) and the weakest in the North (21%).

Professionals were the most likely to agree with the proposed locations of the Family Hubs. More than 30% agreed.

Professionals from the West and Mid agreed with the locations the most.

Alternative Family Hub locations

More than 70% of respondents who disagreed with the proposed Family Hub locations provided suggestions for which other current Children's centres could be used as Family Hubs in their districts instead. The table below shows the numbers of people who provided a suggestion, as well as their percentage.

Quadrant	No. of respondents who disagreed with proposed Family Hub location (Q5.2; 6.2; 7.2; 8.2)	No. of respondents who made a suggestion regarding an alternative Family Hub location (Q5.2b; 6.2b; 7.2b; 8.2b)	% of respondents who disagreed and made a suggestion
North	328	221	67.3%
Mid	517	383	74.1%
South	468	353	75.4%
West	411	285	69.3%
Essex average			71.5%

However, despite the high level of disagreement, the comments gave the impression that respondents primarily disagreed with the idea of decreasing the number of Family Hub locations to twelve, rather than the actual proposed locations. As such, respondents from certain locations put forward multiple arguments for why they would need a Family Hub in their locality, too. As such, respondents are primarily calling for additional Family Hubs to those proposed by ECC.

The areas which call for additional Family Hubs are:

- Harwich (North)
- South Woodham Ferrers (Mid)
- Witham (Mid)
- Canvey Island (South)
- Wickford (South) – Family Hub, or increase of hours in the proposed Delivery Site
- Epping Forest (West) – Loughton / Waltham Abbey
- Uttlesford (West) – Saffron Walden / Stansted

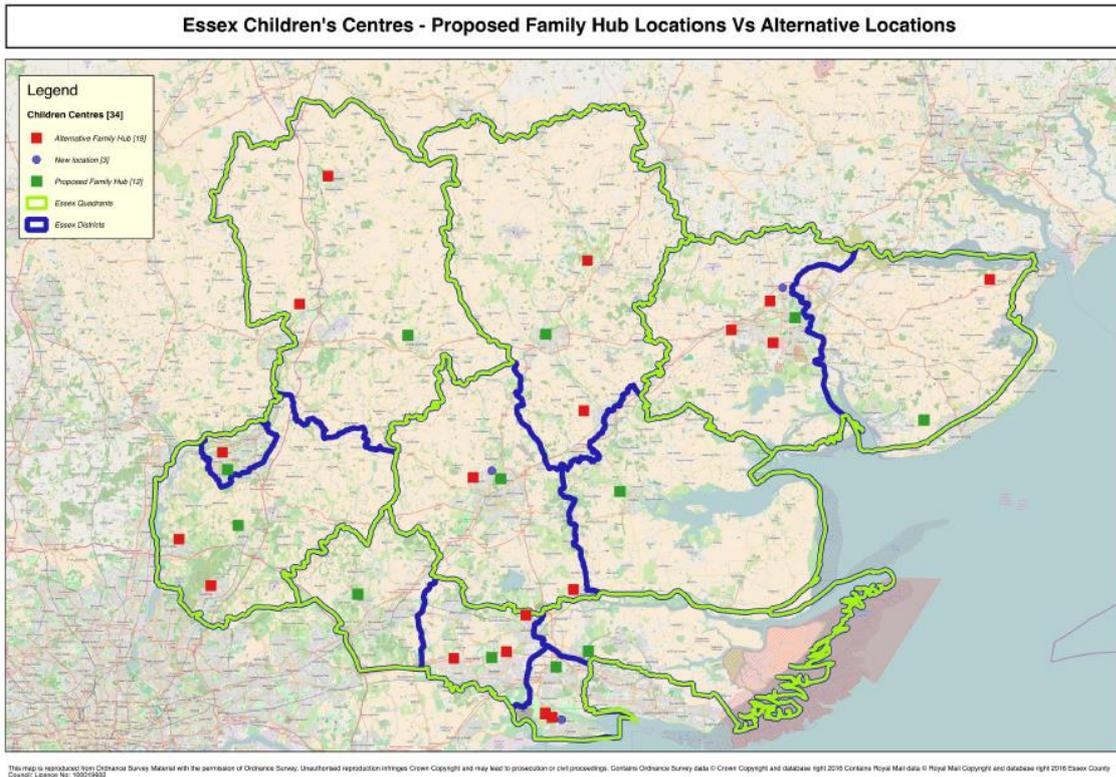
There are several Family Hubs that respondents believe are not the most suitable, be it for their locations (and thus accessibility) or facilities available at them, and thus proposed alternatives.

These were:

- Chelmsford West CC – instead of Chelmsford Central CC
- Northlands Park CC – instead of Fryerns Farm CC
- Meadows CC – instead of Treehouse CC
- Sunrise CC or Hazelwood CC – instead of Brambles
- Saffron Walden or Stansted – in addition to, or instead of Little Goslings CC

The table and map below show the proposed Family Hub locations for each district, together with alternative proposals made by the respondents. A small number of 'new' locations in the community were also mentioned.

North	Mid
Proposed sites:	Proposed sites:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Greenstead Children's Centre, Colchester</i> • <i>Sydney House Children's Centre, Clacton-on-Sea</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Carousel Children's Centre, Braintree</i> • <i>Chelmsford Central Children's Centre, Chelmsford</i> • <i>Maldon Children's Centre, Maldon</i>
Respondents' suggestions for sites:	Respondents' suggestions for sites:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL • Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG • Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN • Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT <p>'New' alternative location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ark in Highwoods Methodist Church in Colchester (n = 7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Woodham/Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX • Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ • Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH • Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA <p>'New' alternative location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Galleywood Village Hall, CM1 7PP (n = 5)
South	West
Proposed sites:	Proposed sites:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fryerns Farm Children's Centre, Basildon</i> • <i>Larchwood Children's Centre, Pilgrims Hatch</i> • <i>Little Handprints Children's Centre, Thundersley</i> • <i>The Oak Tree Children's Centre, Rayleigh</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brambles Children's Centre, Epping</i> • <i>Little Goslings Children's Centre, Great Dunmow</i> • <i>Treehouse Children's Centre, Harlow</i>
Respondents' suggestions for sites:	Respondents' suggestions for sites:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU • Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX • Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX • All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX <p>'New' alternative location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Paddocks Community Centre, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA (n = 24) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL • Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE • Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL • Spangles CC, Stansted, CM24 8LR • Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND <p>'New' alternative location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Halls, Schools, Community Centres and other non-specific locations (n = 7)



Suggestions regarding any other buildings or locations that ECC could consider for delivering services which were not already listed in the Consultation document were very limited. Less than a quarter of respondents (to the particular question for each quadrant) made a comment and if so, it was usually about existing Children's Centres sites. The only most frequently mentioned alternative site was The Paddocks Community Centre on Canvey Island (mentioned by 24 respondents).

This suggests there is limited potential to deliver services from locations other than existing Children's centres buildings. All suggestions are listed in the appendices, however, many were mentioned on less than five occasions, which would suggest that already proposed locations offer a more suitable option.

Q9: Opening hours - 'Thinking about the Family Hub you are most likely to use, when would you prefer it to be open?'

By respondent type

Q9: Family Hub opening hours / respondent	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Five days a week - with the same opening hours every day	529	28.2	408	28.8	91	26.6	30	25.9
Five days a week - with varied opening hours	199	10.6	141	10.0	50	14.6	8	6.9
Six days a week - with the same opening hours every day	326	17.4	261	18.4	51	14.9	14	12.1
Six days a week - with varied opening hours	408	21.8	286	20.2	91	26.6	31	26.7
Seven days a week - same opening hours every day	184	9.8	149	10.5	20	5.8	15	12.9
Seven days a week - with varied opening hours	229	12.2	172	12.1	39	11.4	18	15.5
Total question response	1875	100	1417	100	342	100	116	100
Missing	1140							
Survey start total	3015							

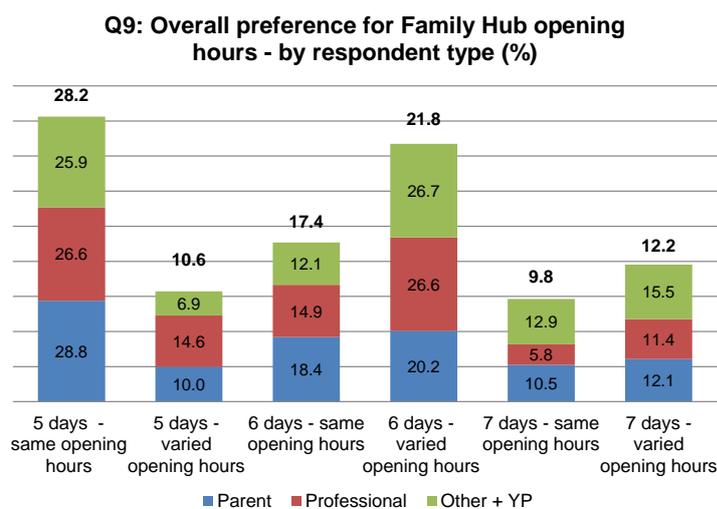
From the six opening hour options, two were clearly the most popular:

- Five days a week – with the same opening hours every day (28.2%)
- Six days a week - with varied opening hours (21.8%)

The third most popular option was six days a week with the same opening hours every day.

This suggests that respondents appear to prefer a regular service. On the other hand, some would also welcome the flexibility offered by a six day service with varied opening hours.

The results suggest that from the range of options, respondents do not have a particular preference for a seven day service.

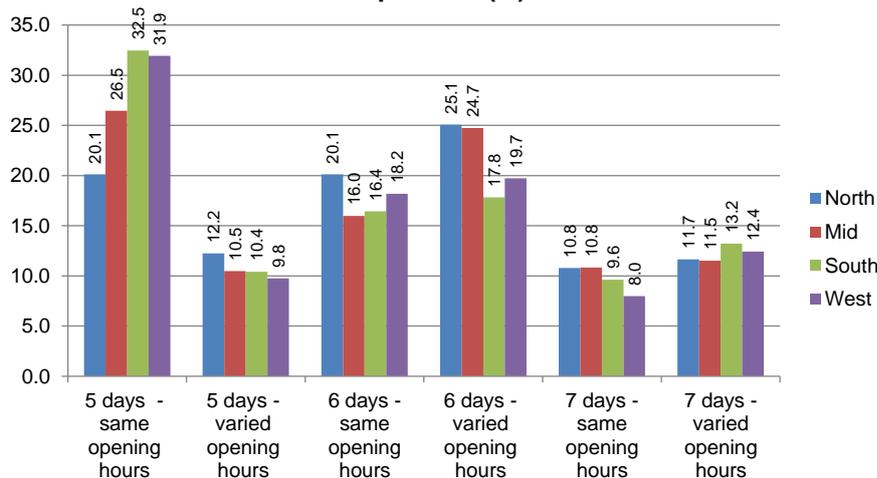


The pattern was the same across all respondent types. Parents would prefer a 5 day service with the same opening times over a six day service with varied opening hours, while professionals rated both options the same.

By quadrant

Q9: Family Hub opening hours / quadrant	ALL		North		Mid		South		West	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Five days a week - with the same opening hours every day	529	28.2	69	20.1	154	26.5	162	32.5	144	31.9
Five days a week - with varied opening hours	199	10.6	42	12.2	61	10.5	52	10.4	44	9.8
Six days a week - with the same opening hours every day	326	17.4	69	20.1	93	16.0	82	16.4	82	18.2
Six days a week - with varied opening hours	408	21.8	86	25.1	144	24.7	89	17.8	89	19.7
Seven days a week - same opening hours every day	184	9.8	37	10.8	63	10.8	48	9.6	36	8.0
Seven days a week - with varied opening hours	229	12.2	40	11.7	67	11.5	66	13.2	56	12.4
Total question response	1875	100	343	100	582	100	499	100	451	100
Missing	1140									
Survey start total	3015									

Q9: Preference for Family Hub opening hours - by quadrant (%)



When looking at preferences for Family Hub opening times across the four quadrants, there are some slight variations. These are described below. However, overall, the South and West quadrants showed a clear preference for the same opening hours over five days. North had a larger preference for a six days a week, with

varied opening hours. In the Mid, respondents showed a similar preference for both options.

North:

In the North quadrant, six days a week with varied opening hours was the most preferred option (25.1% of North respondents). Five days a week and six days a week, both with the same opening hours every day, came as an equal second preference.

Mid:

In the Mid quadrant, five days a week with the same opening hours was the most preferred option (26.5% of Mid respondents), followed by six days a week with varied opening hours as second (24.7%).

South:

In the South quadrant, five days a week with the same opening hours was by far the most preferred option (32.5% of South respondents). Six days a week with varied opening hours came second, however only 17.8% preferred this option – almost 15% less than the first option. Six days with the same opening hours was third in place, with 16.4%.

West:

The pattern in the West was along the same lines as in the South.

In the West quadrant, five days a week with the same opening hours was by far the most preferred option (31.9% of West respondents). Six days a week with varied opening hours came second, however only 19.7% preferred this option – around 12% less than the first option. Six days with the same opening hours was third in place, with 18.2%.

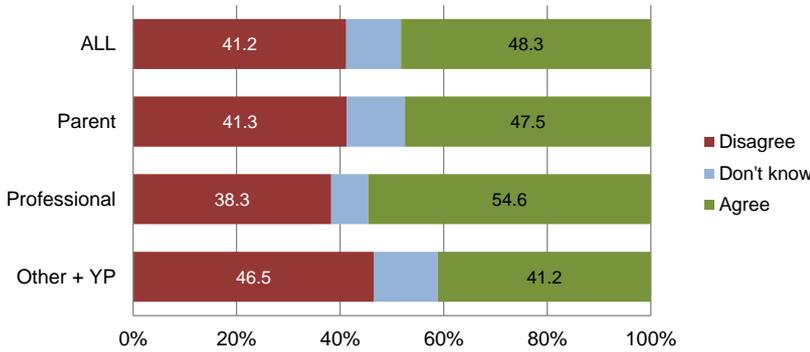
Q10: 'To what extent do you agree with the proposal that the opening times for the Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites will be based on what local families say works best for them?'

By respondent type

Q10: Delivery Sites opening hours / respond	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	572	25.8	428	25.9	91	23.2	53	31.2
Disagree	339	15.3	254	15.4	59	15.1	26	15.3
Agree	835	37.7	605	36.6	175	44.6	55	32.4
Strongly Agree	233	10.5	179	10.8	39	9.9	15	8.8
Don't Know	234	10.6	185	11.2	28	7.1	21	12.4
Total question response	2213	100	1651	100	392	100	170	100
<i>Missing</i>	802							
<i>Survey start total</i>	3015							

Overall, almost half of respondents (48.3%) 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the proposal that the opening times for the Family Hub Delivery Sites and other Family Hub Outreach Sites will be based on what local families say works best for them. More than 37% agreed with the proposal.

Q10: Agreement/disagreement with Family Hub Delivery Sites/Outreach Sites opening hours - by respondent type

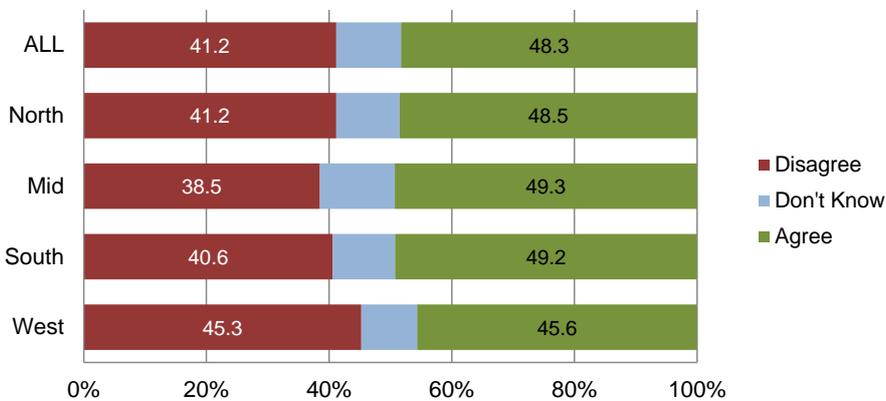


Professionals were the most likely to agree with the proposal (54.6%). For both professionals and parents, more of them agreed with the proposal than those who disagreed.

By quadrant

Q10: Delivery Sites opening hours / respond	ALL		North		Mid		South		West	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	572	25.8	109	26.7	165	23.7	142	24.4	156	29.5
Disagree	339	15.3	59	14.5	103	14.8	94	16.2	83	15.7
Agree	835	37.7	156	38.2	276	39.7	214	36.8	189	35.8
Strongly Agree	233	10.5	42	10.3	67	9.6	72	12.4	52	9.8
Don't Know	234	10.6	42	10.3	85	12.2	59	10.2	48	9.1
Total question response	2213	100	408	100	696	100	581	100	528	100
<i>Missing</i>	802									
<i>Survey start total</i>	3015									

Q10: Agreement/disagreement with Family Hub Delivery Sites/Outreach Sites opening hours - quadrant

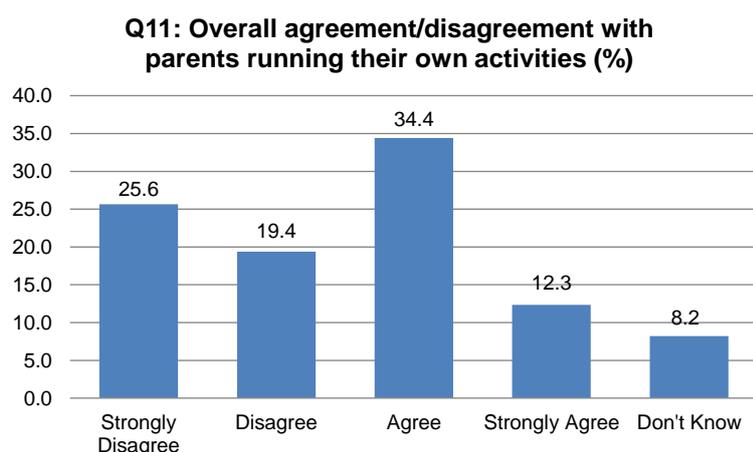


Across all quadrants, more respondents agreed with the proposals than disagreed. Proportions were similar across the quadrants, too. Only in the West, agreement and disagreement was almost equal.

Q11: Support and services – ‘We are keen to encourage and enable the local community and parents/carers to run their own activities and social events for local children, young people and their families. We propose to do that by making available space in buildings we own or lease. To what extent do you agree with this proposal?’

By respondent type

Q11a: Parents running own activities/ respondent	ALL		Parent		Professional		Other + YP	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	565	25.6	444	27.1	83	21.1	38	22.6
Disagree	427	19.4	300	18.3	91	23.1	36	21.4
Agree	758	34.4	547	33.3	159	40.4	52	31.0
Strongly Agree	272	12.3	206	12.6	43	10.9	23	13.7
Don't Know	181	8.2	144	8.8	18	4.6	19	11.3
Total question response	2203	100	1641	100	394	100	168	100
<i>Missing</i>	812							
<i>Survey start total</i>	3015							



More than a third of respondents (34.4%) agreed with the proposals to make space available in buildings ECC owns or leases for parents to run their own activities. Further 12.3% strongly agreed. As such, 46.7% agreed with the proposal overall.

On the contrary, the percentage of those who disagreed with the proposals was very close to those who

agreed (45% disagreed).

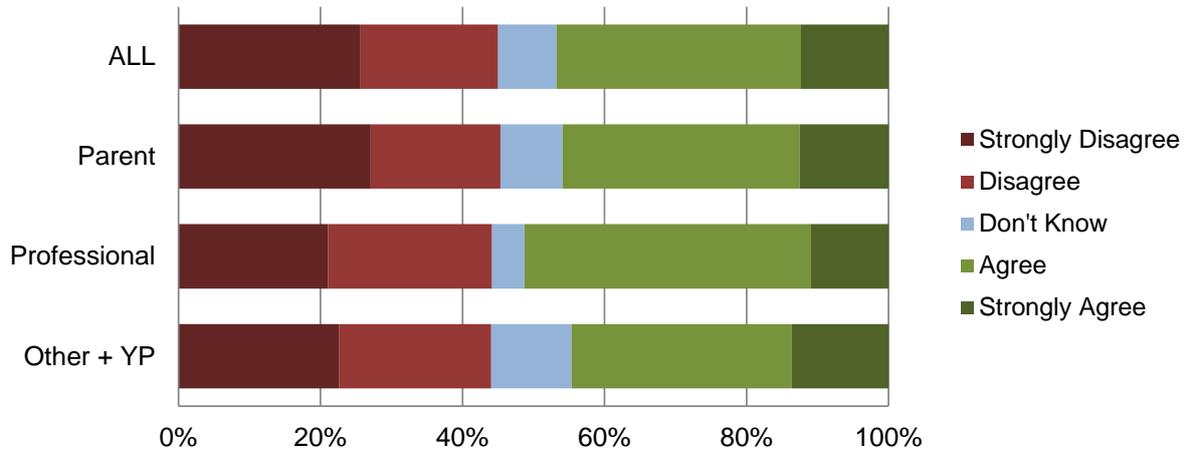
There were some slight variations between the different respondent types:

- More professionals agreed (51.3%) with the proposal than disagreed (44.2%).
- Only slightly more parents agreed (45.9%) than disagreed (45.3%).
- Only slightly more other + YP agreed (44.6%) than disagreed (44%).

Overall, the agreement and disagreement with the proposal is almost equal in general and across all respondent types. Only professionals were more likely to agree with the proposals.

Please see graph below for visual representation of this data.

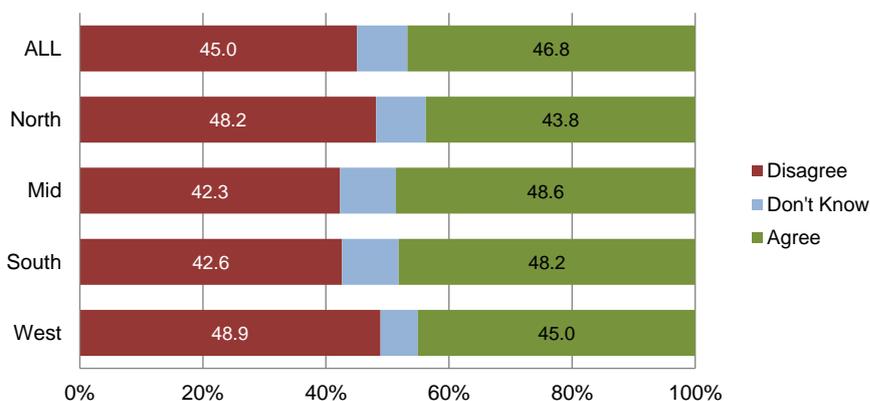
Q11: Agreement/disagreement with parents running their own activities - by respondent type



By quadrant

Q11a: Parents running own activities/ quadrant	ALL		North		Mid		South		West	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Strongly Disagree	565	25.6	106	25.9	170	24.5	135	23.5	154	29.4
Disagree	427	19.4	91	22.2	124	17.8	110	19.1	102	19.5
Agree	758	34.4	131	32.0	257	37.0	199	34.6	171	32.6
Strongly Agree	272	12.3	48	11.7	81	11.7	78	13.6	65	12.4
Don't Know	181	8.2	33	8.1	63	9.1	53	9.2	32	6.1
Total question response	2203	100	409	100	695	100	575	100	524	100
<i>Missing</i>	812									
<i>Survey start total</i>	3015									

Q11: Agreement/disagreement with parents running their own activities - by quadrant



In terms of quadrants, agreement appeared to be the strongest in the Mid and the South, while disagreement appeared to be the strongest in the West and the North. Around 8% of respondents were undecided ('didn't know').

Q11b: 'If you disagree with our proposal to make space available for the local community and parents/carers to run their own activities, please tell us why?'

Question 11b was visible only to those respondents who selected 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' in the previous question (Q11). 929 out of the 992 respondents (93.6%) provided a view for why they disagreed with the proposal of parents running their own activities.

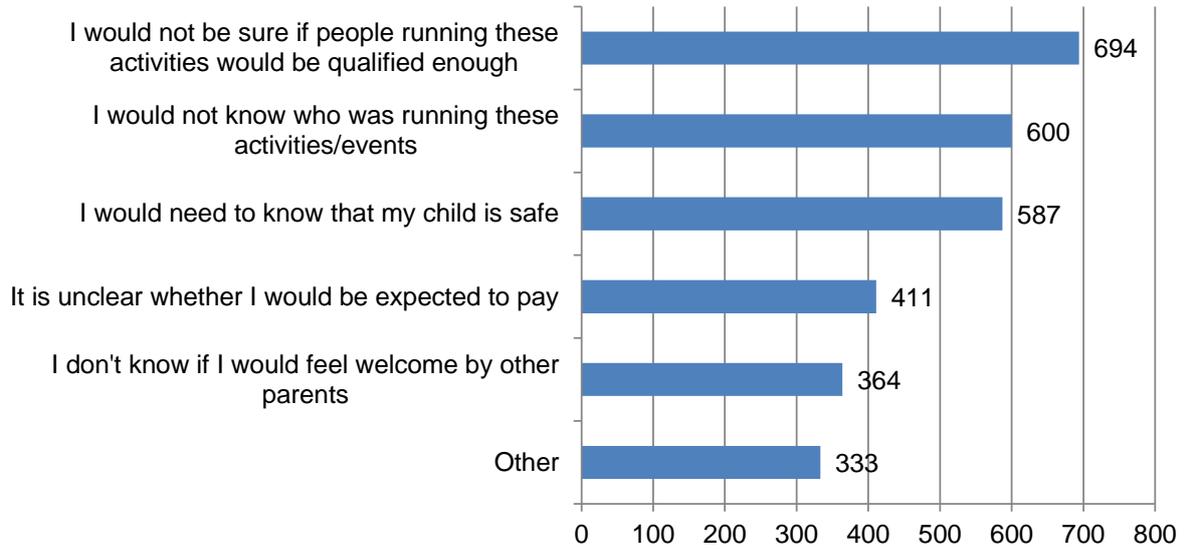
They could select as many as they wished from the five options below, as well as use a free text box to write other reasons.

- i. I would not know who was running these activities and events
- ii. I would not be sure if people running these activities would be qualified enough
- iii. I would need to know my child is safe
- iv. I don't know whether I would feel welcome by other parents
- v. It is unclear whether I would be expected to pay to attend the activity
- vi. Other – please specify.

Q11b: Reasons for disagreeing with parents running own activities	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
I would not be sure if people running these activities would be qualified enough	694	23.2	74.7
I would not know who was running these activities/events	600	20.1	64.6
I would need to know that my child is safe	587	19.6	63.2
It is unclear whether I would be expected to pay	411	13.8	44.2
I don't know if I would feel welcome by other parents	364	12.2	39.2
Other	333	11.1	35.8
Total responses	2989	100	
Total number of respondents to Q12	929		
Missing (based on response to Q11a)	63		
<u>Please note:</u>			
<i>% of responses</i> – respondents could select as many options as they wanted, therefore the number of responses is far greater than the number of people who actually responded to this question. To calculate the % of responses, 2,989 (i.e. the number of opinions raised) was used as the denominator.			
<i>% of respondents</i> – the number of respondents to Q11b, i.e. 929, was used as the denominator. Data in this column will not add up to 100%. Please read the data in the following way, for example: 74.7% of respondents would not be sure if people running the activities were qualified enough. 64.6% would also not know who was running these activities, etc.			

Of the five pre-populated options, the main concern respondents had with the proposals was uncertainty that the people running activities would be qualified enough (as indicated by almost 75% of respondents to this question). This was closely followed by a potential lack of knowledge of who would be running these activities (64.6% of respondents) and concerns over child safety (63.2% of respondents). A full breakdown is provided in the chart below.

Q11b: Reasons for disagreement with parents running their own activities (freq)

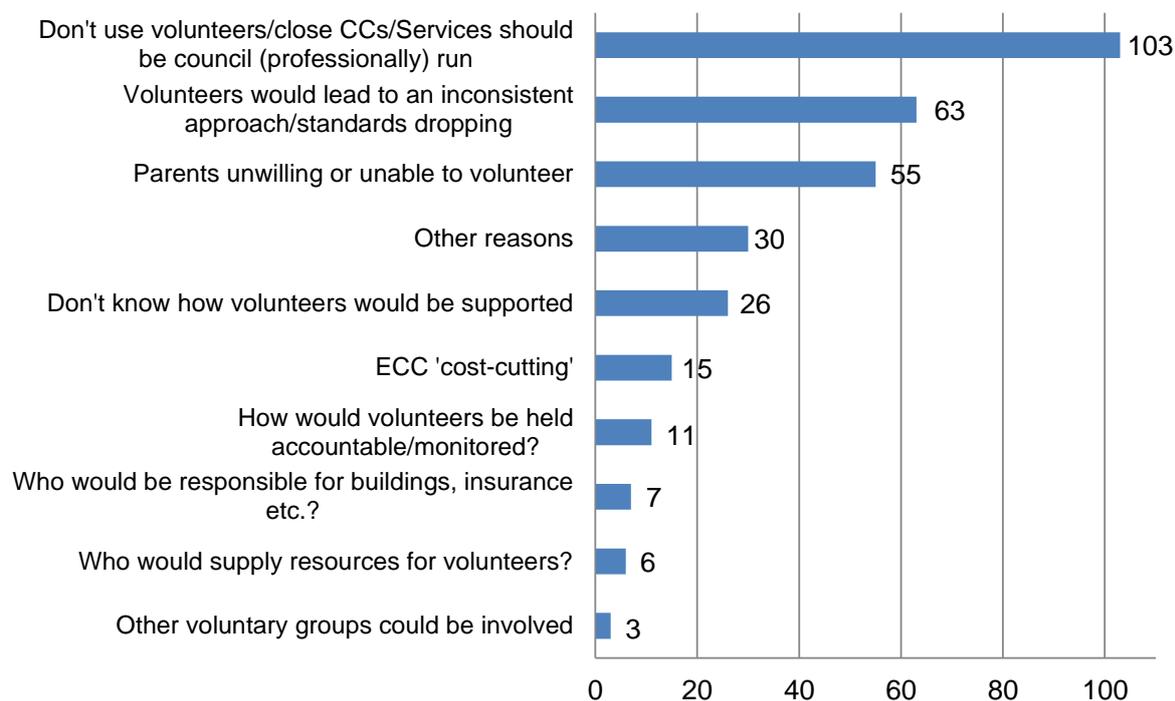


Over a third (35.8%) of respondents to this question provided other reasons as to why they were opposed to this proposal, aside from the pre-populated options provided. The responses to this option were categorised into ten themes.

The most frequently occurring response was that the current service works well, and that the service should be professionally run and/or not replaced with volunteers (indicated in 103 comments). This was followed by the assertion that services and activities on offer would not be up to standard, sustainable or consistent if run by volunteers (63 comments) and that parents would be unwilling or unable to volunteer due to lack of time or confidence (55 comments). Other reasons for disagreement included concerns over how volunteers would be supported when running their own activities, in particular how volunteers would be made accountable and how activities would be monitored. Of concern was also potential confusion over who would be responsible for insurance and the upkeep of premises and where resources to support volunteers would come from.

A full breakdown is provided in the chart below.

Q11b: Further ('other') reasons for disagreeing with parents running their own activities (freq)



Many comments articulated a mix of these concerns. Responses which best represent the key messages from these responses can be found below. Please note that views along the same lines were also provided as part of Q13.

'When parents run groups on a voluntary basis the service is never sustainable. Parents move on as their children grow and are often not replaced. I can see that this is a cost cutting exercise for the council, but it never works long term. I understand that the council will want its staff to focus on targeted families and leave the parents to run the universal groups, but this is a mistake. Having staff at all groups ensures that problems that develop within families are noticed early.' (Parent, Basildon)

'This is a council way of not paying for activities for children, the standards and value of these activities would be completely unregulated and all the responsibility on the parents, this is very poor service for children, especially those in need of support.' (Parent, Maldon)

'Organising extra activities for our children and the community is not what families often have time to do, this is why we rely on a central organisation to help coordinate these events for us.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'If groups were to be delivered by parents they would need to have suitable knowledge of how to plan suitable age appropriate and safe sessions and activities, ability to carry out risk assessments, know what to do if there is an accident or safeguarding concern, have in place insurance and DBS checks and ensure the suitability of anyone responsible for leading sessions. Also who would be responsible for monitoring the standards of sessions. Another consideration is the age of children of the parent delivering the session as previous parent led sessions within the children's centres have highlighted that the parent does not have the capacity to run a session and provide adequate attention to their own child making it unfair on the child. Would they just be sit around and chat session for the parents or would there be specific outcomes to meet, would the children benefit from activities that would stimulate and encourage their development using EYFS to support early stages of development. I'm sure anyone who has the extensive knowledge to put these type of sessions into practice would likely be in employment already or looking for employment in the near future and finding someone suitable who can be available regularly and long term would not be an easy feat.' (Professional, Tendring)

'I have been involved with groups that have been run by groups of parents, this was with CC support

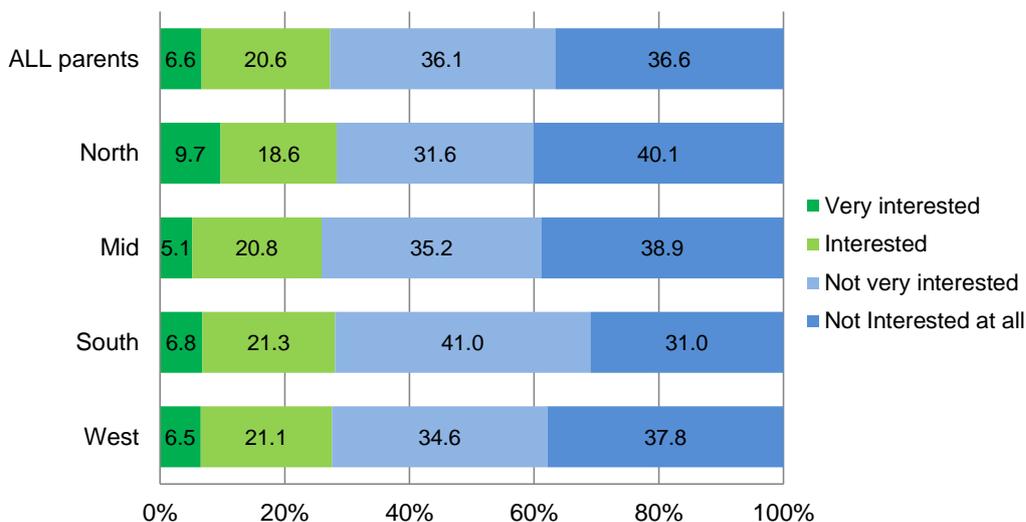
and using their insurance etc. Concerns are that these people are not and are not given opportunities to 'train' in safeguarding, first aid and that they have enough knowledge in supporting others and sign posting to appropriate services. Are Essex proposing to provide adequate training????' (Professional, Epping Forest)

'I think this is a great idea in principle. But from experience and taking part in Building community capacity project myself, it is very difficult to the local community involved and take on that responsibility. Yes some areas have achieved this but a lot haven't. Finding a building is very difficult as most want to charge for this, Also resources for the groups such as toys do not come free.' (Professional, Colchester)

Q12: 'If space was made available for the local community and parents/carers to run activities for other families, how interested would you be in running a group in your area?' (question for parents only)

Q12: Parents' interest in running activities	ALL parents		North		Mid		South		West	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Very interested	107	6.6	24	9.7	27	5.1	30	6.8	26	6.5
Interested	333	20.6	46	18.6	109	20.8	94	21.3	84	21.1
Not very interested	582	36.1	78	31.6	185	35.2	181	41.0	138	34.6
Not interested at all	591	36.6	99	40.1	204	38.9	137	31.0	151	37.8
Total question response	1613	100	247	100	525	100	442	100	399	100
Missing	609									
Total 'parents'	2222									

Q12: Parents' interest in running their own activities - by quadrant



1,613 parents responded to this question.

Around a fifth of them (20.6%) would be 'interested' and further 6.6% 'very interested' in running their own activities for other families, if space was made available to them.

Still, the results indicate reluctance among parents to run their own activities. More than a third (36.6%) clearly stated that they were not interested at all, with further third 'not being very interested'. Some of the reasons for this have already been explored.

The results are similar across all quadrants. Parents from the North and South show slightly greater interest (both more than 28%). On the contrary, parents in the Mid appear least interested in running their own activities.

Still, the results show that more than a quarter of parents show a certain level of interest and thus, there is the potential to involve them more.

However, as suggested earlier, they would likely need support.

Q13: 'Do you have any other comments about our proposals?'

At the end of the survey, respondents were given free space to share any thoughts they may have regarding the proposals. 1,450 used this opportunity. Comments ranged from several sentences to entire paragraphs. However, before moving onto their content, it needs to be noted that:

Content of comments suggests that the proposals were interpreted in different ways by different people

The content of many of the comments, as well as the suggestions respondents made in terms of alternative Family Hub locations, strongly suggest that the proposals were interpreted in different ways by different people, and usually not in the way that was intended by Essex County Council.

The key message that most respondents appeared to pick up on was the reduction of the children's centres to twelve Family Hubs and thus the assumption that other locations will be closed and no longer providing services. This appeared to create a certain mind set which probably influenced the content of the comments.

The 32-page Consultation document outlined the proposals in general as well as for individual quadrants. Several references were made to the fact that 'support and services will still be available locally' (p. 9) and for example that exact locations Family Hub Outreach Sites will be decided on later based on conversations with residents (p. 10) – see extracts from the Document below. Although being open about certain points not being 'decided on' yet, respondents' comments imply that without this detail, they did not know how they would be impacted and thus were uncertain about how to respond to the proposals.

Whilst we are proposing to reduce the number of **Registered Children's Centres**, support and services **will still be available locally** through a combination of **Family Hub Delivery Sites** and a number of **Family Hub Outreach Sites** where families can get help and advice in a much more accessible and flexible way, offered through a range of local buildings.

Family Hub Outreach Sites

Family Hub Outreach Sites will provide opportunities for face to face Information, Advice and Guidance and might include your local library or similar community buildings. We are not going to decide on these locations until we have had a proper conversation with you about what buildings and locations would make the best Outreach Sites in your area.

We have made space available in 19 local Libraries across Essex that can be used for Outreach **but if these locations are not right we will work with you to identify more suitable options**. The number of Outreach locations could increase or decrease based on what families say. The services delivered from the **Family Hub Outreach Sites** might also change in response to what is needed locally.

Furthermore, a graphic such as the one below (p. 9) may have drawn attention to the reduction in the number of Children's centres, overshadowing the reasoning behind the proposal, as well as the provision via Family Hub Delivery Sites and Outreach Sites.



There is also a possibility that some respondents had not actually read the Consultation document. Only a very small number of questionnaires were completed on paper, which could suggest that the majority of respondents had not seen a paper version of the Consultation document and thus relied on the electronic version only. This had to be opened via an external link. Respondents were advised to have the Consultation document open while completing the questionnaire, however there is no way of knowing how often this actually happened.

With consultations there is always the possibility of respondents not reading the entire consultation document in detail, and so it is beneficial for the introduction to a questionnaire to give a summary of the key proposals as well as the reasoning behind them. On this occasion, this meant giving the message that despite the decreased number of registered Children's centres, support will still be available locally. The decision to replace this introduction with a much shortened version (Appendix 5) meant this message was diluted.

Along with the negative media attention that the consultation received and the resultant petition that called for keeping the status quo, this may have had an impact on how the messages of the consultation were received.

Overall, given the amount of comments regarding the general disagreement with the Family Hub concept (as already identified by quantitative data, too), it could be argued that respondents have not necessarily considered the proposals beyond the fact that the current number of Children's Centres is to be reduced to twelve Family Hubs. Almost a hundred respondents specifically commented on not being entirely clear what the proposals 'meant for them' and ideally wanting to understand them better in order to make a more informed decision. Without more clarity, and thus based on their current understanding, they were reluctant to agree with the proposals at this moment in time.

This needs to be kept in mind when examining the results.

Analysis of open-ended comments

There were 1,450 comments in total.

These were coded against a list of 41 themes⁸ (full list of codes is in Appendix 6).

Each comment was coded against all the themes which were relevant. The majority of comments were given between two to four codes. As such, the 'number of responses' is almost four-times higher than the number of comments.

In the order from highest to lowest, the table below lists all codes. It shows the following:

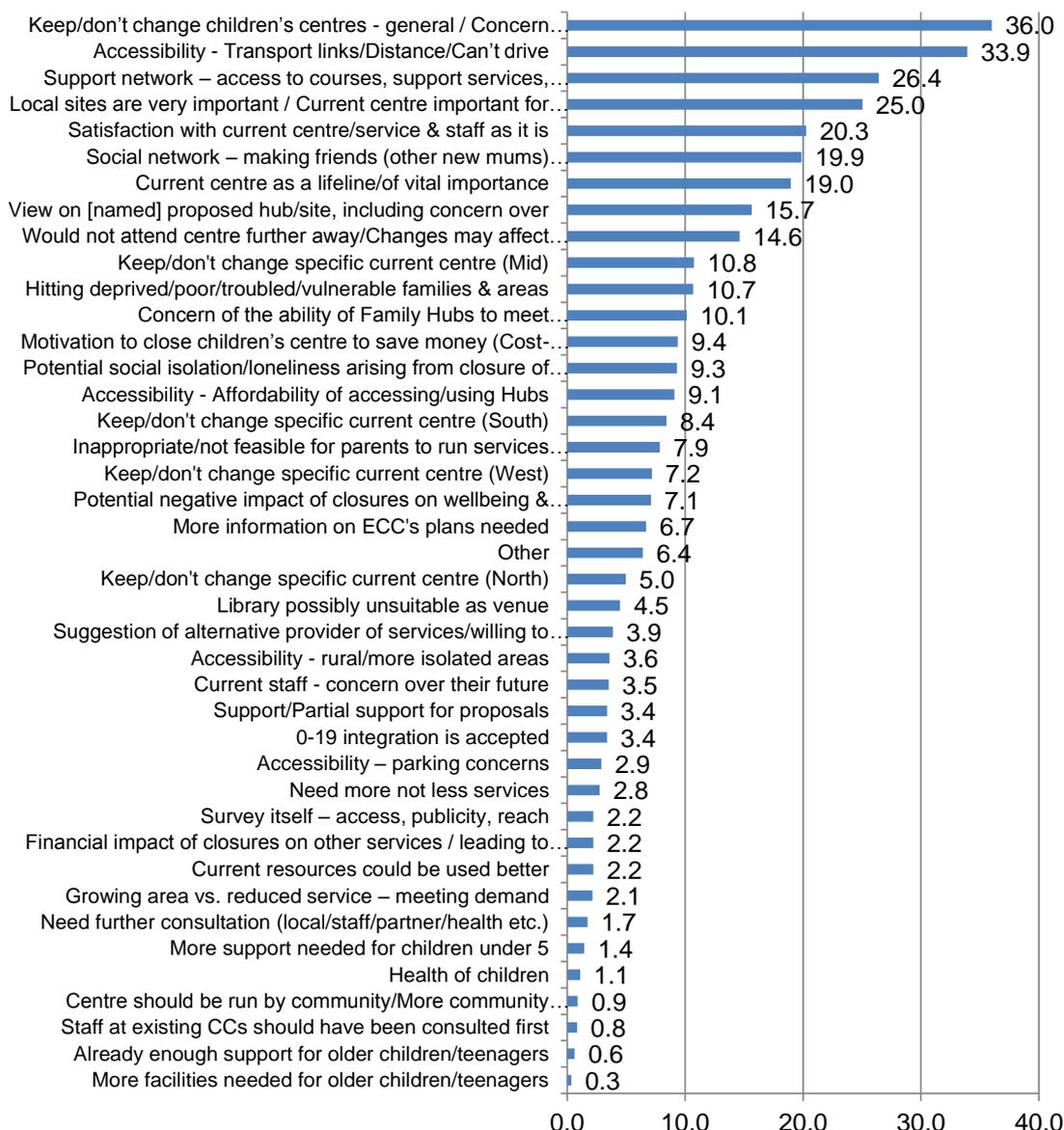
- Frequency (no. of responses) – the number of times the particular theme was mentioned. Please note this is not the same as the number of comments. There were 1,450 comments in total (which is also the same as the number of respondents, as each of these respondents left one comment), but since each could be coded against multiple theme, there were 5,254 'responses'.
- % of respondents – this refers to the percentage of respondents who made a comment about the particular theme, from the total number of people (respondents) who provided a comment (n = 1,450). As such, this gives an indication of the proportion of respondents this theme was important to. This figure will be the one referred to the most in the subsequent text.
- % of responses – denominator used is the total number of responses, i.e. 5,254.

Q13: 'Any other comments' themes	Freq (no. of responses)	% of respondents	% of responses
Keep/don't change children's centres - general / Concern over closures – don't close them	522	36.0	9.9
Accessibility - Transport links/Distance/Can't drive	492	33.9	9.4
Support network – access to courses, support services, professionals	383	26.4	7.3
Local sites are very important / Current centre important for community / It should be a local service (impact of closure on community)	363	25.0	6.9
Satisfaction with current centre/service & staff as it is	294	20.3	5.6
Social network – making friends (other new mums) (community resilience – long-term friends)	288	19.9	5.5
Current centre as a lifeline/of vital importance	275	19.0	5.2
View on [named] proposed hub/site, including concern over	227	15.7	4.3
Would not attend centre further away/Changes may affect attendance/stop people accessing services	212	14.6	4.0
Keep/don't change specific current centre (Mid)	156	10.8	3.0
Hitting deprived/poor/troubled/vulnerable families & areas	155	10.7	3.0
Concern of the ability of Family Hubs to meet demand/potential overcrowding (doubts/unhappy over	147	10.1	2.8
0-19 integration)			
Motivation to close children's centre to save money	136	9.4	2.6

⁸ Coding framework was developed by three analysts who agreed the suitability of the codes. All coding was performed by one person (Organisational Intelligence Analyst) and as such, coding has been applied in a consistent manner (intra-coder reliability). Subsequent analysis was done by a different analyst.

(Cost-cutting)			
Potential social isolation/loneliness arising from closure of centre	135	9.3	2.6
Accessibility - Affordability of accessing/using Hubs	132	9.1	2.5
Keep/don't change specific current centre (South)	122	8.4	2.3
Inappropriate/not feasible for parents to run services (issues with parents running groups)	114	7.9	2.2
Keep/don't change specific current centre (West)	104	7.2	2.0
Potential negative impact of closures on wellbeing & mental health	103	7.1	2.0
More information on ECC's plans needed	97	6.7	1.8
Other	93	6.4	1.8
Keep/don't change specific current centre (North)	72	5.0	1.4
Library possibly unsuitable as venue	65	4.5	1.2
Suggestion of alternative provider of services/willing to offer services – opportunity for joint working	56	3.9	1.1
Accessibility - rural/more isolated areas	52	3.6	1.0
Current staff - concern over their future	51	3.5	1.0
0-19 integration is accepted	49	3.4	0.9
Support/Partial support for proposals	49	3.4	0.9
Accessibility – parking concerns	42	2.9	0.8
Need more not less services	40	2.8	0.8
Current resources could be used better	32	2.2	0.6
Financial impact of closures on other services / leading to later, more costly, interventions	32	2.2	0.6
Survey itself – access, publicity, reach	32	2.2	0.6
Growing area vs. reduced service – meeting demand	31	2.1	0.6
Need further consultation (local/staff/partner/health etc.)	25	1.7	0.5
More support needed for children under 5	21	1.4	0.4
Health of children	16	1.1	0.3
Centre should be run by community/More community involvement	13	0.9	0.2
Staff at existing CCs should have been consulted first	12	0.8	0.2
Already enough support for older children/teenagers	9	0.6	0.2
More facilities needed for older children/teenagers	5	0.3	0.1
Total responses	5254		100
Total respondents / comments	1450		

Q13: 'Any other comment' themes (% of respondents/comments)



Concerns over closures and calls for retaining Children's centres was the overarching theme, mentioned by 36% of respondents. It was specifically mentioned in 522 out of the 1,450 comments.

The most frequent themes correspond highly with those already discussed as part of the analysis for questions 5.2b, 6.2b, 7.2b and 8.2b (respondents' suggestions for alternative locations for Family Hubs). This is particularly true for the general disagreement with the Family Hub concept, i.e. there being only one Family Hub per district. This theme came out strongly in all four quadrants⁹.

In addition to this, Q13 generated a wealth of information from the respondents, highlighting a variety of important points. The majority of these provide greater context around why the

⁹ This suggests that without the knowledge of there being a general open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, respondents used the first open-ended question as an opportunity to make their general opinion known.

Children's centres are important and what difficulties users believe they would experience if the service was reduced to the extent they believe it will be.

Please note that many of the themes are very closely intertwined (especially the most frequent ones) and thus cannot be easily separated into 'neat' sections. The quotes selected to convey the story in the words of the respondents often point to several issues at once. Due to this, exact numbers of respondents raising specific points cannot be provided. However, the table above gives an indication of the proportion of respondents who raised the more over-arching themes.

Apart from the two quotes below, which exemplify comments showcasing general disagreement, the analysis will focus on the subsequent themes, which will be explored in more detail.

'I don't agree with the proposal to close the children's centres. The plans for family hubs are sketchy at best and at worst unrealistic and poorly conceived. The centres provide a valuable part of society and the staff are knowledgeable, friendly and passionate about helping families and children. If you take these away you pave the way for more social care referrals and ultimately more families will be in crisis without key early intervention practice in place.' (Professional, Braintree)

'I have not agreed with the potential services you propose within the hubs due to my extremely strong view that these hubs should not replace the existing children's centres. I hope that the people who have made this decision actually read these comments and listen to the views of the people you suggest you are supporting. Imagine removing all local GPS and putting them all in one big surgery out of the way that you have to drive to. Imagine suggesting that all the schools should close and putting a single giant school out of the way. These ideas would devalue community, dilute the sense of security and support that people feel when the services are delivered within their own area by people who know the area, remove people from their communities and therefore anonymise their stories. You are proposing to do this very thing to children's centres. The lifeblood of many parents with young children. If this goes through then congratulations for all of the disjointed support, isolation of vulnerable individuals, job losses for already underpaid hard working and dedicated staff and further degradation of community services. I live in Laindon. If you close our centres soon the only thing left here will be houses. I am truly disappointed that you are even considering this travesty. Please listen and do not make this mistake.' (Parent, Basildon)

'Public transport is not easy for all families to use, and not all families have cars'

Themes:	Accessibility - Transport links/Distance/Can't drive Accessibility - Affordability of accessing/using Hubs, Accessibility – parking concerns, Accessibility - rural/more isolated areas)
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Being able to access the proposed individual Family Hub locations was of the greatest concern to the respondents. A third of comments (33.9%) mentioned this, bringing up issues such as public transport, lack of access to own transport, inability to drive, the distance that would need to be travelled and cost.

The general view was that families would experience great difficulties in accessing Family Hubs; for some this would become 'impossible' resulting in not accessing the services at all. Parents as well as professionals highlighted that the most vulnerable families – i.e. the target audience for the service – would suffer the most, as they are the most likely not to have access to a car and may also lack the funds to use public transport, and as such would be 'excluded' more than others.

Public transport was mentioned repeatedly. Proposed Family Hub locations were often commented on in terms of their accessibility (or lack of) via public transport, as already

covered in earlier sections of this report. Transport may be unreliable, not frequent enough, costly, too complicated and not reaching certain areas at all. This was the case for rural or more distant communities with little direct links. Many respondents explained how they would need to catch two buses to get to a Family Hub. Others reflected on the difficulties of traveling with buggies and smaller children – if there is a buggy on a bus already, they are denied access and have to wait for the next bus. Fellow passengers sometimes show lack of understanding and small children may find longer journeys difficult. Overall, respondents point to the overall inconvenience and stress of travelling using public transport and thus highlight the importance of a local service, where they are able to reach a Children's centre easily, ideally on foot. These are especially important to families where parents or children have impairments of any kind.

Certain areas of Essex were particularly highlighted for their 'poor' transport links (for example Uttlesford, Epping Forest, Tendring, notably Harwich, travelling across Harlow, South Woodham Ferrers, Canvey Island). In these cases, respondents tended to suggest alternative locations with 'better' transport links.

'Not driving' was frequently mentioned, it either being due to not having a car, health reasons (female respondents reflected on not being able to drive after having a Caesarean), or not being able to drive. Several mothers highlighted that despite having one car in the family, this was being used by the partner during the day. Even those able to drive mentioned that travelling with a small child is difficult and not having somewhere to park causes further stress. As such, proposed Family Hub locations within town centres (Chelmsford especially) were not necessarily favoured because of parking difficulties – in terms of availability as well as cost. For certain individuals, availability of parking was important.

The time involved travelling to a Family Hub was mentioned, too. Several respondents explained how travelling could end up 'taking up a considerable part of the day', which is not a favoured option compared to having a facility much closer at the moment.

Respondents repeatedly brought up the issue of affordability alongside accessibility concerns. This was mostly in terms of cost of transport, however some respondents generally claimed they would not be able to pay for many of the services otherwise provided by Children's centres. Some specifically highlighted that being on maternity leave, they find themselves in stretched financial situations, where resources cannot be spent on additional travel.

*'Closing Beehive centre in North Colchester leaves a large and rapidly growing community without any local provision. For all sorts of reasons **not everyone can drive or travel long distances to access support**. Particularly, it is important to consider the needs of disabled parents. By removing community based support you further isolate these parents when they are the ones who need the most support. I am reg. Blind and being able to access support from health visitors from a location at the end of my road empowered me to be independent and confident as a parent. If I had to travel further, unless it was on a straight forward bus route I would have to ask someone else to take me or I would more likely just not go and be completely disengaged from the whole service provision. And would not benefit the wellbeing of my family.'* (Parent, Colchester)

*'I am very concerned that **Jaywick and Harwich** will lose their facilities due to the **poor access to services in Clacton and Walton**. I fear that Jaywick Parents will not accept outreach services and will disengage potentially leading to problems not being picked up. I am also concerned about mixing the age groups, the needs of babies and toddlers are very different to those of adolescents. Staffing at the current centres are trained in early years and not older children.'* (Other – councillor; Colchester)

*'You are taking centres away from troubled **families and those in huge poverty**. You will be isolating many families that won't be able to access the main hub for help or would even struggle to have credit on their phone to contact the centres. I agree that some more services need to be run in the community but every area needs an easy accessible place to go.'* (Parent, Braintree)

*'The proposal document emphasises how ECC will be improving the service overall, but in reality it will be a reduction in service in those areas where public transport is limited. The much improved proposed facilities in the Family Hubs **will only be available to those families who have adequate transport at their disposal**. If you are truly 'local' to these facilities, then it will be a much improved service. **If you are relatively remote, as much of Tendring is, then it is a closure of service**. It is not sufficient to declare that bus services may be operated by private companies and not under the control of District Councils, when they may be the only service available. The loss of the Delivery Sites will be a shameful withdrawal of the Government promise to support the Sure Start programme. I understand the difficult budgetary controls that ECC has to work around, but don't take us for fools when extolling the virtues of the proposal. It will be a massive reduction in service, certainly for Tendring. Say it as it is and don't play party politics with the lives of the resident families who will be without the very service that you are 'improving!'* (Other - Community Hall trustee, Tendring)

*'Closing Hazelwood children's centre in Waltham abbey which is an easily accessible site in a highly populated area. It's used by a lot of parents and **moving sites to Harlow and Epping is not practical and would involve traveling and an added impact on traffic and road use**. For people who don't drive public transport is not reliable or frequent enough. This children centre should extend its hours and services offered.'* (Parent, Epping Forest)

*'There seems to be a complete lack of support in the Harwich and Dovercourt area. **The nearest Family Hubs are over half an hour away by car and even longer by public transport**. I would personally not travel in my car and pay parking in these towns with young children in tow. As a secondary teacher in this area, I see families everyday who would benefit from continued support in their home town rather where it is easily accessible. I'm guessing that those who could do with your support the most do not have the spare time or money to be making such a journey.'* (Parent, Tendring)

*'I think the family hub in Thundersley is a good proposal but then **people on Canvey island would be very isolated** I feel. I myself am a first time mum and moved to Canvey when my little boy was 8 weeks old. I went to the children's centre and felt amazingly welcome and the people who run the groups are very helpful. If there was only one place in Thundersley I would never have gone. **I don't drive so getting there would sometimes be a problem, getting on the bus, especially when money is tight**. I can walk to Little lions and have a nice warm welcoming atmosphere to have some conversation with other mums let my little boy play with other children and have help with any questions I have. If little lions wasn't there I would feel very isolated.'* (Parent, Castle Point)

'Just knowing I have that professional support with people I know and trust is great'

Theme: Support network – access to courses, support services, professionals

More than a quarter of all respondents (26.4%) repeatedly pointed out the great benefit they derive from accessing professional support via Children's centres. They listed the variety of groups and other activities that are available and the variety of skills they gained, such as baby massage, first aid etc. They highlight the benefits for the child, such as interaction with other children and gaining new skills. Respondents greatly value these services and the fact they are free, realising they often would not have been able to benefit from them otherwise.

Comments from professionals demonstrate a great passion for working with families as well as knowledge of the challenges faced by families in specific areas. Again, they highlight the importance of being easily accessible to provide professional and non-judgmental support. This tended to relate to the proposal about making spaces available for parents to run their own activities – professionals are sceptical over the suitability as well as feasibility of this, highlighting that in this setting, parents want professional support and the knowledge that through informal regular 'monitoring', the professional may identify potential developmental issues the parent may not be aware of, as well as safeguarding concerns. Some

professionals also expressed disappointment and believe their knowledge, experience and effort already put in is not being sufficiently recognised by the proposals made.

*'I feel that this is a really bad idea. I am a young parent that does not drive. It will cost me a fortune to get to Braintree every time there is a group on for my son. I live in Witham. Currently, I attend Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and **this is providing a great start to my son's life**. If I have to travel I would probably attend one group a week which then my week is not fulfilled with activities for my son. **The centres provide me with good advice and assistance when needed**. These are my lifeline. I really do not know what I would do without the centres if they close. I enjoy the company that the groups bring to me and enjoy making/meeting new friends. Overall, I really do not know what I would do without them.'* (Parent, Braintree)

*'It's disgusting, after many years of training and implementing practices that fall within Ofsted and Early Years Education that you are taking these services away from the community! I have experienced first-hand all the good the Children's centres have done for Waltham Abbey, Loughton and surrounding areas! All the support & education, **the way we have turned around families lives for the better. Spotted problems early on that could be solved before out of hand. Provided a safe place for people to turn to**. Post-natal depression support, breastfeeding support, first aid classes, food education, early years education...so many good things which in those years to such a high standard have helped and supported so many people in the community!! And you are going to ruin all that good work by dedicated staff who care! It makes my stomach turn that you will ruin all that good work and hard earned trust.'* (Other, Epping Forest)

*'As a professional from a different service, we have strong links to the Children's Centres and they are a vital part of many families' lives. Many parents ask us to put them in touch with groups and activities that are run by these **centres which have a professional approach by well qualified staff who always make families feel welcome**. It would be a real loss for the local population to not have access to as many of these sites in future.'*
(Professional, Tendring)

*'The Northlands Park Children's Centre offers a wide range of activities and classes to cover for all ages and also different days and times to suite parents, they also offer a weighing service which runs along classes always there to answer questions and offer support. The Centre is amazing and so are all the staff running this place, I am always made to feel welcome and they go above and beyond to hell in any way they can. **This is great for the Children's development with all the classes they run so Children are constantly stimulated and they provide a wide range of learning** from Babies to older Children. **It is also nice for the parents** to come along and meet other parents making this sociable so you feel good about yourself and give you a great feeling of wellbeing. This Centre offers such a range for everyone and all of this is free so this gives everyone the opportunity to come along as not everyone can afford places and soft play areas that charge such a lot of money per session or day etc. I have also done a Baby massage course through here which again wouldn't be possible if you had to pay as these courses are very expensive. I am currently on a First Aid 4 week course through Northlands which again is free of charge also providing a crèche for the little ones which is of great importance when looking after a Baby/ Child again this wouldn't be possible if I had to pay for this course outside of here. All the staff here do a outstanding job for everyone and everything works well, I feel closing this Building with your proposal of changing this would be completely devastating and would ruin what is already in place which works fine.'* (Parent, Basildon)

*'The early intervention work is a necessary part of what the children's centre do, previous years have seen parents running their own groups but this can lead to isolation because of being judged by other parents. **A wealth of knowledge that the workers role model to parents is a very important part of the work being done in the centres and this in turn leads to safe and happy children and families**. Why send the wheel backwards when the families were left to their own devices, the children's centres provide a safe and caring environment for children to explore their world and for parents to feel supported and welcomed.'* (Professional, Basildon)

*'I started the PEEP baby group in Lawford when my little boy was 6 weeks. It was the first outing I had made since having him and I've found it invaluable ever since. **I've been able to get professional support when my wee boy had colic** and was able to access a baby massage course through them. Just knowing I have that professional support with people I know and trust is great - the weekly*

topics we cover has also been of great help. The support from the other parents has also been amazing - getting to know the other ladies and babies and to have regular discussions about everything makes me feel less isolated. I'm new to the area and the fact the other parents are local means I've made more friends in the area, as has my son. If this group was further away such as Harwich/Clacton or Colchester I wouldn't go as it's just so far especially on little or no sleep! I love the fact the group is local.' (Parent, Tendring)

'These centres are vital to each individual community'

Theme: Local sites are very important / Current centre important for community / It should be a local service (impact of closure on community)

A quarter of respondents highlighted the importance of having local services and their importance for their communities. This was mostly related to accessibility (or the lack of it in terms of getting to proposed Family Hub locations) and the ability to form networks with people in their own communities. Respondents from more rural areas pointed out that proposed Family Hubs are to be located in larger towns or more greatly populated areas, creating barriers for smaller communities.

*'The proposals seem designed to isolate families. You say you want to reduce isolation and stop little problems becoming large ones but this is the opposite of what will happen if parents have to travel so far to access services. **People want to create a community IN their local community not miles away. If you don't drive you cannot access these services as you propose. Being able to nip in to your local children's centre** (everyone learns when they are open so limited opening hours are not an issue - and our local one already offers occasional weekend opening) **is easy and seems friendly.** Going to another town is a mission and impersonal. In a family hub setting the staff won't know anything about what is local to YOU only what is local to their centre. They won't know you, or I'm sure care as they will be overwhelmed with too many families to deal with. Different areas need different services even in microcosm - Braintree is a very different place to Earls Colne for example. The benefit of services not being run by parents is that they are neutral - everyone is welcome, no cliques as found in most parent and child groups. No particular agenda to be pushed. These plans show contempt for local families, particularly for mothers who tend to be the main childcare. They are a total false economy. If you want to cause GPs more work for postnatal depression you are going the right way about it. Well done for making me feel like my daughter and I are not valued citizens of the county.'* (Parent, Braintree)

*'Totally wrong, as a new parent I would never have accessed one town centre children's centre, can you appreciate how hard it is to leave the house with your first new born let alone travel on a bus there? **Walking to your local centre makes much more sense you make friends with other parents and children in your local area that they will go to school with.** You have common factors living in the same area, how would people park in the city centre there are problems with traffic and parking as it is, how would there be enough adequate parent and child parking spaces.'* (Parent, Chelmsford)

'I feel that the removal of vital centres within walking distance will result in isolation for many families and loneliness is one of the worst situations to be in when you have a young family.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

*'I know the centres, especially Canvey/castle point are a life line for many parents. Many don't drive so they would be unable to make it to other centres, these centres are so valuable and important to parents and families. **Closing them would be a real blow to the community.**'* (Parent, Castle Point)

*'Services in Harlow have already been cut, with hardworking and committed people taking pay cuts from an already low base, or indeed volunteering. There is a limit to how much the Council can cut back and put the onus on very busy parents. Parents of all levels of affluence need support with their children, and affluent parents deserve some support given their high levels of tax contribution, and **less affluent parents need local services that they can reach without a car and without having***

to pay. *The current proposals cut the town in half and are a step too far.* (Parent, Harlow)

*(...) Children's Centres or Family Hubs as you now want to call them shouldn't just be for families who have problems and issues which I feel is what you have focused on. **They should be somewhere for people to meet other local families. When I had my baby my local Children's Centre was a lifeline for me. Without it I don't think I would have left the house** with my baby as I was too nervous and unconfident. My local Children's Centre was somewhere I could go that was friendly, relaxed and I could talk to other Mums. Not many places are welcoming to new Mums. I used to look forward to going to Baby Beginnings every week, sometimes it was the only time I would leave the house. I felt very down & suffered from depression after my first child and I honestly don't think I could have got through that without having somewhere to go like my LOCAL children's centre & the people I met there. I suggest you think very long and hard before you close any local Children's Centres. These places really are a lifeline for Mum's and are so much more than somewhere to take our children to be weighed and to take our children to play. They can make a big difference to a Mum or Dad's mental and emotional health. My Children's Centre is well use and busy every time I go there. I really don't think closing it is the answer.* (Parent, Colchester)

*'If this proposal reduces access to services and information that is invaluable when you are the most vulnerable as a first time mum then I cannot support it. Closing sites reduces access for those that are unable to drive or have limited income to pay for travel. **Having small sites within communities and estates makes it much more accessible for people to walk to and receive the invaluable service** that is currently available. Having only become aware of the children's centre since having my first child I don't think I would have got through the first 12 weeks without it and I see myself as a well-educated, career driven woman.'* (Parent, Chelmsford)

*'All the documents refer to parents but increasingly there are many grandparents like myself looking after children, from a few hours to most of the week, who also need support. The Windmill centre has been a godsend to our family. My granddaughter's parents work in London, in low-paid jobs, and so we needed to make connections with young children for my one-year old charge to make friends with. This is not easy as a grandparent as we have not had the opportunity to attend the ante- and post-natal classes in which the mothers make friends and contacts. We also need a range of age-appropriate toys and activities for the children to play with and revision and guidance in the current thinking about development stages etc. All this has been available at the wonderful Windmill centre and the activities offered by the team in other venues in Harwich and Dovercourt. **What families need is LOCAL facilities. Tending is one of the worst areas for public transport and getting to any centre not in the Harwich, Dovercourt, Ramsey area would be a nightmare, long, and expensive.** Moving facilities away is not family-friendly. If you must centralise administrative work, then fine, but the play centres are not a luxury but a necessity to those of us in small homes with small, or non-existent, incomes. Advice you can get over a phone but support and advice with a disruptive child in tow and nothing to keep them amused, as is the proposal for using the library, is a crazy notion! (...) I really don't know where I would have gone with my granddaughter if the centre had not been there - not good for either of us. About a third of the attendees at the groups I go to are grandparents in the same situation, we need somewhere local to go to for play services and support.'* (Other - Grandparent, Tending)

'Children's centres do a brilliant job'

Theme: Satisfaction with current centre/service & staff as it is (+ Keep/don't change specific current centre (Mid) (South) (West) (North))

A fifth of comments (20.3%) described how highly-valued the current Children's centres are. These were both general comments or comments highlighting the work of specific Children's centres across all quadrants (most frequently for Mid and South, followed by West and North – generally corresponding with the response rates for these quadrants).

Respondents described Children's centres as popular, well-used (sometimes even 'packed out') and welcoming, providing a safe and accessible environment and being 'a valuable part of society'. Many complemented the work of the staff, who were seen as friendly and welcoming, knowledgeable, passionate and supportive. Multiple times concerns over the future of staff were raised. Standard of service was seen as high, with well thought-out and planned classes, which respondents found useful and generally important for the development of their child as well as their own knowledge and confidence. Many listed the variety of classes they benefited from, including weaning, first aid, under 1's playtime, the incredible years, weigh-in clinic, breastfeeding support and others. The service is viewed as targeting the families that need them the most, signposting them and providing care and support which many respondents would feel 'lost without'.

Overall, the high satisfaction respondents feel with current Children's centres provides greater context to the large amount of concerns over the loss of the current provision. Many respondents view Children's centres as their 'lifeline'.

'The sessions and courses run by the children's centres offer SO much more than what is available at other community sessions. They offer a source of support and advice that cannot be gained from other community sessions/parent led sessions and they are accessible to all as they do not charge. It also relies on the sessions being smaller, more frequent and with less people - 1 large session once a week will not offer nearly so much help/support as 2 smaller sessions in a week even if on paper the same number of people attend. I have used several of the children's centres regularly for activities and courses and found them absolutely invaluable. Please do not underestimate the help, guidance and support they offer to parents and carers.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'Children's centre have helped me so much these past 18 months I can talk to the staff about most things, courses I've been on with 2 of my children, the referrals they've put through for my eldest speech therapy, as they noticed a problem with him.... If it wasn't for these guys I don't know what I'd do! I suffer from depression and it helps me get out.' (Parent, Braintree)

'I think it is wrong that they are proposing to close the children's centre down. Many mums I know don't drive and struggle to get the bus, therefore they would miss out on the groups. The [named] children's centre is a very very busy centre all those mums would really miss the help and support from that group. I've been to a few arranged groups that mums do and I hated them, because the atmosphere was different, I didn't feel part of the group, especially as I am a younger mum, there was no organisation to it, no activities. I really found it hard when my baby was younger and I felt terrible with baby blues and my baby didn't sleep, I would have got postnatal depression if it wasn't for the children's centre, the help, the advice, the group of relaxed mums, the ladies running the group made me so welcome. The government may think they are cutting back, but i would have got depressed and my health would have gone down, causing more stress on the NHS and money. I feel many mums feel the same. My baby loves the groups and the advice of treasure baskets as it helps with the babies development has helped a lot, baby massage helped my baby sleep, baby weaning group is helping me and my baby through weaning. I would have wanted more help from my health visitor had I not had advice and support from others mums at the group and the centres centre. I cannot describe the help the children's centres have been to us as a family. It has help with my baby's development, my health, which is nice for my partner to come home from work and have a happy family. It is fantastic, please don't close the centres down, it is such a support for parents!' (Parent, Colchester)

'I made some valuable friends who I remain friends with now and are an amazing support network, without the centre we would never have met'

Theme: **Social network – making friends (other new mums)
(community resilience – long-term friends)**

Almost a fifth of respondents (19.9%) mentioned the value of meeting other parents while attending activities at their local Children's centres and forming long-term friendships with

them. Parents reflected on the challenges of becoming a parent and the resulting loss of confidence and feeling of isolation. As such, they have a greater need to meet new people and make friends in their local areas, forming their own support networks. Many respondents claimed this would not be possible if attending a Family Hub further away, as they would not necessarily meet people local to them, which would enable them to meet independently, too. There is also concern that demand for services will increase at the Family Hubs, which will make forming relationships with staff and other parents more difficult.

*'The children centre has been an absolute god send for me as a new mum it gave me the confidence to leave the house I felt very supported by them pre and post pregnancy they did a home visit and new me as soon as I went in. **I made a number of new mum friends there who gave me great support I don't feel i would have been such a good mum and had such a good relationship with my child without them.** They gave me the confidence to join groups and socialise me and my baby. This helped my confidence my emotions my wellbeing and my relationship with my child. I feel I may have suffered from anxiety and depression if this resource was not available. I feel the sites are already very busy and at capacity and **wonder what the impact will be on cutting these centres on what they can offer new mums and what the emotional and physical availability the staff will have with these cuts to give to us new mums.** It was the personal touches of staff knowing who I was and having the time to come and speak to me that helped me to feel confident as a new mum and welcomed at the centres and build trust with them. please do not cut this invaluable resource!'*
(Parent, Basildon)

*'I currently use the children's centre as a place to go with my child to access different groups eg messy play, baby music and baby sensory. I have found these invaluable since having my child as **they have enabled me to meet other parents, gain support and provide a friendly safe environment to bond with my child.** The centre is currently close to my house and easily accessible but I am concerned that once it closes I would have to drive to another hub that is not close by and also **have concerns that although there will be services eg health visitors, there will no longer be local groups which I would be able to attend and therefore will no longer be meeting other parents in the community local to me.** Being a new parent is hard and I only met people local to the area through baby groups at the children's centre, it was great meeting others and we have formed strong friendships. I would be sad if this no longer happens due to the fact there are no local groups. My local centre would be a delivery site. I think there needs to be more information provided about specific devices which will be available in the hubs and delivery sites.'* (Parent, Basildon)

*'It would be very much a shame to lose the local services within walking reach as a lot of mothers don't drive/ have access to a car if they share cars with partners. I had such great support in the early days with my daughter from the centre at kings road- we had a new parent course and massage classes - **I met many local mums there whom I've kept in contact with and can meet easily. I doubt this would be the same if I met people less locally.** Also it would be more challenging to get to in the first place and for some new mums the prospect of going far with a new baby is stressful!'*
(Parent, Chelmsford)

'I don't know what I would have done without the Children's centres'

Theme: Current centre as a lifeline/of vital importance

As already implied in previous sections, for almost a fifth of respondents (19%), Children's centres are of vital importance, often referred to as a 'lifeline'. Respondents often reflected on the 'transition, stresses, strains and joys of becoming a parent', and thus the importance of the professional as well as social support provided by the centres, leading to better health and wellbeing. Many of these comments conclude with the request to retain the specific local sites, as they would not be able to attend centres further away.

'I am reliant on the Children's Centre, I am a single mum on benefits and new to the area so have few friends the groups are the only reason I leave the house and without them I'd hate to think how miserable mine and my children's life would be! If the proposals expand the groups and give more focus on those like me that NEED the centres then I am all for it, but if they restrict an already very limited service further **you will literally be taking away a lifeline for so many of us.** We need more groups, afternoon groups, age appropriate groups, and groups for older parents like myself not just young mums. There should be more parent courses on how to parent and more health focus for mums and kids, I always said a group exercise where you can bring the kids and have them play while you work out would be amazing or buggy got or something, but overall I'm in favour of expanding services not shutting them down because there are people like me who would be completely lost without them.' (Parent, Tendring)

*'I am so sad to hear that you are proposing to close the children's centre in Saffron Walden. This children's centre helped me overcome my postnatal depression, I was really struggling looking after my daughter and since I didn't have family nearby nor friends who have had children themselves. **The staff and activities that they held at the centre helped me build my confidence and gave me the best gift long-term friends.** I am so gutted to hear the news about the centre as I was hoping to return once my second baby in born!'* (Parent, Uttlesford)

*'I think as a child minder the sure start centres are invaluable. **The amount of support and time the staff put into supporting families and children is priceless.** Such a shame that you are thinking of limiting these opportunities for families who may be put off travelling to family hubs!!!'* (Professional, Braintree)

*'Children's Centres provide valuable support for a wide range of families. Despite the views of some councillors, they DO NOT just work with families from deprived backgrounds. Any family can experience domestic violence, a child with disabilities, have post-natal depression, have a child who doesn't sleep so need support with this etc. **The whole idea of CC's is to provide early intervention - this saves money in the long term.** This is so short sighted. How can CC's services be provided in libraries? These are not spaces for confidentiality and how can safeguarding be assured? The centres are life-lines for families. They are cantered on the under-fives whereas hubs will be for 0-19. All age groups of children have different needs. How can this be provided under one roof with less money.'* (Professional, Colchester)

'Many mums I know don't drive and struggle to get the bus, therefore they would miss out on the groups'

Themes: **Would not attend centre further away/Changes may affect attendance/stop people accessing services**
Hitting deprived/poor/troubled/vulnerable families & areas
Financial impact of closures on other services/leading to later, more costly, interventions

Accessibility has already been mentioned as of vital importance. This closely links with the 212 comments which made a specific reference to the possible negative impact of the inability to access Family Hubs on attendance. Many highlighted they may not be able to access the Family Hub closest to them. Further 155 comments highlighted that the most deprived and vulnerable families would be impacted the strongest, resulting in isolation and potential problems not being identified early enough. More than 30 respondents claimed that rather than early intervention/prevention, this would lead to increased cost by putting greater demand on other services. Health visitors, mental health services, GPs, NHS, A&E admissions, social care and schools were mentioned as some of the examples. Other reasons for potential reduced attendance may be overcrowding in Family Hubs (for example due to greater demand for specific sessions) and concern over children's safety.

As such, respondents were often against the closure of specific Children's centres located in areas of increased deprivation. Some of these have already been highlighted in the analysis of questions 5.2b, 6.2b, 7.2b and 8.2b.

*'Changes need to be considered carefully as those families that need the support and services the most are not going to fill in this questionnaire. Nor are they likely to speak up for their individual needs, needs that the current amount of children's centres and staff provide. **Reducing the number of sites will directly reduce the access to families. Where's the logic in that? I believe that you will be putting barriers up for support getting to the hard to reach families**, those that the children's centres have worked so hard to reach over current years.'* (Parent, Maldon)

*'How will parents deliver sessions from local children's Centre when you will be turning these buildings in to child care? Services such as incredible years, talk with me, speech and language appointments, brighter futures, loan parent appointments with job centre plus, first aid, new parents groups, weaning breastfeeding, core group meeting, mental health support group and domestic abuse **programmes are currently run from one of the centres (extremely vulnerable families attend) this centre is proposed to be turned into child care facilities so what will happen to these services and these vulnerable families?** The service does need to change to a 0-19 service however the services do work together to deliver sessions and provide support to families. There are no local community buildings that would offer a child friendly environment and running a course requires space for parents a children.'* (Professional, Braintree)

*'The children's centres have to take time, effort and money to establish themselves as a vital part of their local communities, you now plan to remove these very local sites. Over 75% of the families in my school access children centre services, many do this because it is so local. **I think you will see a huge drop off of 'customers' as they will struggle to physically access the new hubs.** What a shame to see services reduced when the need for these services is increasing.'* (Professional, Chelmsford)

*'**Closing all centres in Harwich will mean for some they will no longer be able to attend groups. A lot of parents in Harwich do not drive and with limited public transport will not be able to travel to groups.** Also young vulnerable mums may not have the finances or confidence to travel. I am an older mum, financially secure with own transport but have no desire to travel out of town for baby groups. Harwich is a deprived area and seems most services are being withdrawn where really they should be increased to help the community. Throughout your policy you have stated that you will provide services where people need them, however this is exactly the opposite result if this proposal goes ahead. Harwich needs help and support not thrown away and dumped.'* (Parent, Tendring)

*'**We would stop using the fabulous facilities currently offered.** We could not travel to the main hub each time. We would therefore stop using this resource. This would dramatically affect the wellbeing of the child as he gets so much benefit from using the centre.'* (Parent, Epping Forest)

*'My local children's centre is burnt mill in Harlow. I use it because it is within walking distance. I would not walk to either the meadows or treehouse and I would not get 2 buses to get to them either. You will essentially be excluding those are not within walking distance who don't drive from using these centres. **As it's likely that it's the poorer families who don't drive you'll move away even further from reaching your target groups.**'* (Parent, Harlow)

*'I don't know how you can think reducing the amount of children's centres is a cost effective approach, you are doing an injustice to the children in this area. I have already seen first-hand what happens when children's centres are closed/ reorganised and it is really sad (they are basically left with nothing). Not everyone has a car or mean to be able to pay to get to services that are further away so end up not going, this in turn is detrimental not only to their child's social/ mental development but also to the parent/ carers, this often the only time they get to go out and see other parents. These centres are so important in other ways for example parent education on diet, weaning, dental care and health, home safety, first aid to name but just a few. It's a false economy. **The money you think you are saving by reducing getting/ rid if these centres services will come back to haunt you in the form of increased childhood obesity, increased emergency department admissions and increased dental appointment 2nd to poor dental hygiene (...)**'* (Parent, Colchester)

'I worry that a Family Hub has far too outreaching aspirations and covers too wide a demographic'

Theme: Concern of the ability of Family Hubs to meet demand/potential overcrowding (doubts/unhappy over 0-19 integration)

Many respondents (around 10%) voiced the concern that due to the reduction to twelve Family Hubs across Essex, the demand for services will concentrate into these areas and thus lead to 'overcrowding'. Respondents doubt demand will be met – in terms of the activities being offered (and possibly not being able to attend as often as desired due to high demand; and in extreme cases not being able to attend at all), as well as the size of individual locations. As some of the responses to questions 5.2b, 6.2b., 7.2b and 8.2b indicated, some of the proposed locations for Family Hubs are viewed as too small and respondents recommended other 'more suitable' locations.

There is concern whether the Family Hubs will be able to house all the agencies which should come together as part of the plans for 0-19 integration. Some stated that the 0-19 age range covers too wide a demographic to be able to deliver targeted or effective support. Each of the age groups is described as having different needs and it not necessarily being suitable to mix children and young people of such diverse ages. Professionals highlighted that they may be qualified for working with certain age groups only. Although perhaps being somewhat stereotypical, some respondents stated they would not wish their small children mixing with older children and teenagers, who 'could be a bad influence'. Several argued that there is already enough support, or at least more options, for school-aged children elsewhere, or that they should be supported by their school for example. Overall, some believe that 'some things are best kept separated'.

'Children's centre staff promote activities appropriate for the developmental stage of the children attending. I do not understand how proposals would be able to cater from 0-19...after all, school key stages are not organised together in this way. 0-19 is simply too wide a spread for support to be meaningful and effective.' (Parent, Braintree)

'If the proposal does go ahead then less sessions still need to be run, they will however be even more popular as there will only be 1 centre running them rather than a few. So I am worried that this will decrease the likelihood that other parents will be able to attend these sessions. We also attend baby time every week. This session is vital to mothers and their babies and has enabled my son and I to meet other mothers and babies. The staff are also on hand to discuss anything etc. Again I am concerned that if the proposal goes ahead then this session will not run or be oversubscribed and simply too busy which will change the relaxed and friendly atmosphere.' (Parent, Harlow)

*'Not enough provision in the Loughton / Buckhurst Hill area if Sunrise was to close - Already serving 1850 children aged under 5 who will be merged with the 6 - 19 aged children and **sharing a 20/30 hour site at Little Oaks which will only allow one agency at a time to be working as only the one room. At least 10 other agencies use the Sunrise site to provide services for the wider community - this includes Social Care contact visits, ADAS, Safer Places, Health Visitors - Weigh and Play and the Development Checks, NELFT, Essex ASD workshops (12 week evening programme), Essex Pre-school Learning Community training and meetings, PSLA Child minder training and meetings. This will restrict their ability to deliver services 0 - 19 if no alternatives are offered.'*** (Professional, Epping Forest)

*'As a mother of 2 pre-school age children who makes great use of the local children's centre and delivery site, I am very unhappy about the proposal in general. **School age children presumably get support and access to services from their schools.** I thought this was the reason the government brought the children's centres into being in the 1990s.....to provide services for PRE SCHOOL*

children. I'm not sure how happy I would be taking my pre-school children to a centre where teenagers up to the age of 19 were going.....would this not mean exposing babies and toddlers (and also primary school age children) to a facility with a youth club type atmosphere?? Maybe I'm not quite understanding the proposal correctly, but all I can say is that over the last 3 years I have enjoyed using a facility where i can openly talk with other mothers about baby related issues, breastfeed freely, and not worry about anything. I feel very lucky to have had the use of such a facility and it's just such a shame. I don't think that parents of pre-school children will be as happy to use a centre where youths are using the same facility.....i have nothing against youths per se, but I think they should be getting support and access to services from their school.' (Parent, Rochford)

*'From an existing staffing point of view, I am concerned that **Family Support Workers that are currently trained and qualified in working with families with children under the age of 5, who would now be expected to work with 0-19.** With children's centre buildings closing, staff would need to work out of the boot of their car to transport resources for various activities (with some staff who do not drive or have access to a vehicle). From an Admin/Welcomer point of view how would confidential files/registration forms be stored if permanent space wasn't available in the library/church hall/community centre. Finally, with all these changes and budget concerns, would existing staff be required to apply for their own jobs again (as in 2012) - jobs that some staff have been doing extremely successfully for many years. This was stress taken to its highest level for staff as whilst preparing for an interview, was still expected to deliver the usual high quality services within the children's centres. As a member of staff in a very dedicated team working in a very busy and successful centre, we embrace change on a regular basis. However, my concerns are that the proposed changes will be difficult to take on board - too much too quickly if not drip fed in the beginning.'* (Other, Harlow)

*'I agree that it would be useful for the services proposed to work more within joint community buildings however I do not feel that reducing the availability and access to services would be a positive move, also consideration needs to be made of how the very wide age range can be facilitated as **the needs of babies and young children compared with teenagers would vary considerably** therefore what would actually be available for the families to attend and what would be the purpose of families coming into the hub/delivery sites, would they just become information centres and no longer provide places where families can come along, build relationships with staff, and feel safe to share their issues, worries and concerns, meet with other parents to reduce isolation, gain ideas and support their child's early development. I think when offering out a consultation paper like this there needs to be more information about what the service would look like not just where things will be located and opening times.'* (Professional, Tendring)

'The concept of integrating all child services into multifunctional hubs is a very good one. But you must ensure that ALL can access these services.'

Theme: 0-19 integration is accepted

Around 50 comments were supportive of the 0-19 integration, some respondents even called it 'excellent'. However, some limitations or points needing greater consideration were usually mentioned alongside. Respondents wish for the needs for all groups to be given equal attention and realise that broadening the service may mean that there is 'less' available for all and support may also become more difficult to access. Many considered the practicalities of this integration in terms of facilities as well as opening hours. Some asked where these services would be based and how they would fit given the reduction in buildings. Professionals tended to be relatively favourable, however there usually was a 'but', as demonstrated by the quotes below.

'I think it is a positive step forward for Children's centres to work more with partner agencies ranging services from 0-19 but we need suitable safe buildings to do so. In order for us to offer services at a high standard and meet the data and reports requests of Barnardo's and Essex County Council staff need time and a suitable working environment. We have already reduced our office space and are relying on hot desking.' (Professional, Colchester)

'Consideration needs to be given to the practicality of services being offered from multiple sites, and the availability of equipment where it is needed. Staff travel needs to be provisioned for where necessary. I think centralisation of the existing services sounds very sensible, enabling families to transition to the area of service they need without being caught in the paperwork, and this will require partnership working across the current separate teams. With services being provided for a wider range of age groups, the hubs and delivery sites need to be provisioned to enable all groups to feel safe and secure when using the shared spaces e.g. young baby groups using the space alongside teenage groups, neither group should feel compromised.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'I support the aspiration of joined up services for 0 -19s designed around families' needs based on early intervention principles. It will be important to ensure the allocation of resources across the age group reflect the importance of the first 1000 days of a child's life.' (Professional, Colchester)

'Extending the age group is great but I think trying to cater for this larger age group at less places for few hours will not benefit anyone. The under 5's will end up suffering and the service will not be fit for purpose for any age group.' (Parent, Basildon)

'We have contacted one of our partner agencies based within the Council offices, Homestart. The increase in hours to 50 for the Maldon Hub (including weekends which were not previously covered) is welcomed. Providers are in general agreement that it would be a good thing to integrate the 0-19 services going forward. However:-The Maldon hub is very small and currently little more than an administrative hub so would need more space to become a more welcoming environment for parents as a drop in. (...) There are no plans to integrate the pre-birth sexual health and contraceptive services. This needs to happen for a true integration of services to take place.in summary, whilst the increase in the hub hours at Maldon are welcome, there are concerns about the impact on the more rural areas of our district.' (Other, Maldon)

'In principal this appears a good idea to have all services together. The only disadvantages are if the group's set up for families are then so big that the benefits currently gained from small groups would not be so. Some parents find larger groups intimidating and may be less likely to access and ask for help.' (Parent, Colchester)

'I like the fact the service now extends to 19 years old as I have a 7 year old as well and at the moment am seeking medical help with his bedwetting. It is reassuring to know that parents' can turn to Sure Start throughout a child's life, particularly the teenage years as a lot of families have quarrels during this time.' (Parent, Braintree)

'Good idea in principle, but...'

**Theme: Support/Partial support for proposals
(Suggestion of alternative provider of services/willing to offer services – opportunity for joint working)**

Around 10% of respondents showed some support for the proposals. One of the benefits highlighted was the potential longer opening hours, which could include weekends. However, support for the proposals was combined with some scepticism over how this was going to work out in practice. Those in favour recognised the value of a joined-up and streamlined service, but highlighted the need to work in partnership effectively. While 'centralisation' may be recognised as a better use of resources, professionals show concern

over how much support they will be able to provide and whether this will reach the most vulnerable families. From the parents' point of view, there appears to be an expectation for the centre to be ideally located in the area most local to them. This points back to accessibility, which was mentioned as the key reason why the proposals may 'not make sense'.

These comments also indicated a certain recognition that cost savings are likely to be made through the proposals. On the contrary, around 10% of respondents also described the proposals as a 'money saving exercise' (this theme will not be explored further as many of the earlier quotes already showed this).

There were some suggestions among the comments on how available space could be used or what services respondents would like to run, but do not have the facilities for them (and thus would be interested). These included baby singing classes, a play group for bereaved parents and siblings and mother and toddler groups. Some respondents would just like to 'help out'. Some liked the idea for buildings to become available for alternative use. However, rather than generalising, these comments warrant a more detailed consideration by the decision makers.

'I love the idea of everyone working together and being based in one central location so that information can easily be shared. Much better. Currently many of our parents get very confused and it can take them a long time to access the support they need. I also like the idea of extended hours. However, the maths don't add up. This is a proposal that will mean a cut in services. In ne Essex you are removing 11 centres and replacing them with 6. That means that parents will be further from support. The map shows that the support will be clustered around Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea with large areas with no easy access. This is great idea in theory but needs to be funded properly to be effective. Please do not skimp on this and depend on the goodwill of volunteers. You owe it to the families of Essex to fund this properly. In school we see the effect of poor support all too often. Use this as an opportunity to get it right.' (Professional, Colchester)

'This concept would be a better use of venues. It would need to co-ordinated with the voluntary sector.' (Professional, Tendring)

'I find the idea generally good as access outside of normal school hours would benefit working families. The prospect of integrated care would be beneficial as it can be confusing trying to find the help you need with so many different points of contact. However the delivery proposal would make this unworkable for most families. The proposed family hub sites are not within reasonable distance for those living on Canvey. I myself would have to take my 3 children on 2 buses in order to get there.' (Parent, Castle Point)

'Over the past few years there have been considerable cuts in children's centre services. Constant change results in confusion and those more at risk falling through the net. It would be a breath of fresh air if all services joined up and actually delivered what was needed.' (Parent, Basildon)

'I think it is a good idea to have all services under one roof and allowing others to use the space too. I am in agreement that 0-19 is a great idea and maybe there will be more joined up thinking and communication and working together a cross the ages and professionals. I feel having centres open for drop ins on a Saturday or sessions is great for working parents.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

*'I strongly believe that the Children Centre's need to do more outreach work because some families find it very difficult to go to the different centre's in the Braintree area. Outreach workers have been very creative in using our new school hall which can be divided to make it smaller for families of pre-school children to share a fun experience with activities and meet the staff. There should be more of this happening. Also it is quite difficult for some families to get medical help regarding head lice, rashes, speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and development issues. **Some parents would benefit from an easier access to these services.** Understanding immunization and the importance of this. Ear and eyesight checks are another area where having Health under one roof would benefit families. School's do a lot to identify some of these issues but we are not medically trained! I think these new proposals will have a positive effect on families in Braintree.'* (Professional,

Braintree)

'Your survey is too wordy to answer with simple yes/no. There are aspects of the proposals that I am in agreement with but many that I am not. All services should be professionally led/vetted, not left to untrained parents. Trained parents would be ok. I am really concerned about lack of support for low income families who may find it difficult to get to the available centres. It's fine if you have resources (car, money for fares) but not if you don't.' (Parent, Maldon)

*'On paper the proposals seem reasonable but I believe there should be a **review after 6 months to a year** to determine how successful they are in providing support to families in the locality.'* (Parent, Basildon)

'I think if space was made for community based charity services such as Home-Start or Carer services who have their own insurance to support pop up community activities then this would be a good solution at a low cost. They are also supported by local volunteers who gain skills and qualification which help them to find jobs. I think if parents delivered the sessions they may become cliquy and rule out the hard to reach families a charity like Home-Start would support access and have the skills and insurance to provide this service.' (Parent, Colchester)

'We run a play group for bereaved parents and siblings. The group supports many local parents who have experienced stillbirth or neonatal loss. We have lost our current venue and are hoping to be running now from a children's centre in Chelmsford from June. If they close we would once again become homeless though would be extremely interested in renting space. This group is run entirely by bereaved parent volunteers so money would always be an issue.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

'It needs explaining clearer so we know how it could affect us'

Theme: More information on ECC's plans needed

97 comments specifically related to respondents wanting more information about the proposals and what they 'meant for them'. More information was called in terms of the following areas:

- Practicalities of how the new arrangement will work (for parents as well as professionals)
- New 'childcare opportunities' – what specifically will these be (e.g. Preschool/nursery/crèche type setting?)
- Expectations in terms of parents running their own activities
- A clear explanation of the differences between the different types of centres (Family Hub vs. Delivery Site vs. Outreach Site)
- Support, services and groups to be provided – will they still be available and in which locations?; e.g. baby weigh-ins, breastfeeding support
- Opening hours and days of delivery sites
- Impact on SEND provision
- What will happen to the 'empty' buildings?
- What will happen with the resources currently kept at different locations?

'I find this whole consultation very vague. There is not enough information on what actually the centres will provide. The staff at the children's centre are no wiser either. I find this disgraceful. What even more is disturbing it that you made the consultations during school runs and evenings which are during dinner time and bedtime. I can't help feeling that this was an attempt to scupper objections to the consultation.' (Parent, Braintree)

'I have found this quite difficult to complete. It does not seem that much will change from what is currently on offer in my area - except that one delivery site will close and possibly open as childcare (I

am not entirely sure what that means?) Making it clearer to compare what is currently on offer and explaining the difference would make it much easier to answer these questions.' (Parent, Rochford)

'A key issue with this consultation document is that it does not provide sufficient information to make an informed decision. It is not clear to many families what the practical day-to-day implications of this centralisation process will be. Will current children's centre activities still be available to families? Will those families be able to access those activities locally or will they have to travel to family hubs? What is the difference between a hub, a delivery site and an outreach centre in practical terms? The document is overly focused on the logistical issues of centralisation but **does not provide parents with clear enough information on what these changes will actually mean to them.** The document explains that family hubs will offer activities and services, whilst delivery sites and outreach sites will just offer services. Yet what practically counts as an activity, and what counts as a service is never defined. The answer to a simple practical question such as 'will my weekly baby group still be running, and where?' cannot be reasonably inferred from the information given. **This understandably leads to anxiety about the proposals and a desire to retain the current, known structure.** (...) The impression given by the consultation document and the consultation questionnaire is that these proposals are already agreed, and what matters is the details of how they will be implemented, not if they should be implemented. The document appears rushed with poor sentence construction (...). This is an important document to many families in Essex and lack of care in its production does not fill them with confidence, or demonstrate a desire to properly inform.' (Parent, Braintree)

'Not enough information on what will remain and what will go. How many of the current services/groups will be available in the new hubs. Where will the hubs/out reach centres be in the rural areas? More information is required to make an informed decision. As it stands there does not seem enough information on what will happen in the areas that does not have a children's centre so I cannot agree with the proposal.' (Parent, Colchester)

'I am sceptical that the Family Hub model will be a real improvement for parents and children's life and not just a way to justify the local budget cuts. The evidence which underpins your proposals is not clear to me. Where is this evidence? Was Family Hub model implemented anywhere so far? Or is just another experiment?! Thank you.' (Parent, Castle Point)

'I am concerned at the proposals the locations of the outreach sites. Whilst using libraries for outreach services can be good, I feel it would discourage families that really need support from attending, as they would be concerned at causing disruption to the library due to a crying baby, or curious toddlers. If outreach sites were within existing children's centre delivery sites, or health centres, there may be better engagement with parents especially those with more than one child, as the space available would better accommodate pushchairs and children. Another concern is whether partners such as Health Visitors and midwives would continue to engage so well if they had to deliver their services from outreach sites such as libraries which have no clinical provisions. If they only offered services from the Family Hub, then this would not be reaching their client group effectively as many have wards / neighbourhoods they cover which are not close to the Family Hub. What will happen to other services that are currently offered from Main sites and delivery sites that would close under this consultation? I am specifically thinking of the Consultant Obstetrician that offers appointment to women with high risk pregnancies at Harlequin in Witham. Or the new birth hearing screening, or the immunisation catch ups that take place at other centres? These were put in to Children's Centres to reduce footfall in clinical settings such as hospitals and increase take up of services.' (Parent, Maldon)

'The difficulty in responding to this questionnaire is the difficulty of knowing whether the proposals will in fact represent a cut in or watering down of the services currently available. Many families with young children are uncertain whether these changes mean that less will be available for them and it is unclear what improvement in provision is there for those with Special Needs - which are not extensive now. I think that the benefits need to be spelled out more clearly. There is clearly a suspicion around that these proposals are dressed up to conceal cuts.' (Other - Retired professional and School Governor, Epping Forest)

'I'm a professional and I'm struggling to fully understand what happens to health visitors and school nurses in this proposal - so not sure this is going to be understood by the general public responding.' (Professional, Colchester)

'Being a parent is a really tough job and can be isolating if these centres aren't available'

Theme: Potential social isolation/loneliness arising from closure of centre; Potential negative impact of closures on wellbeing & mental health

Almost 10% of respondents made a specific reference to the closures of Children's centres resulting in social isolation and loneliness, while further 7% also mentioned a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing (please note that the same respondents may have mentioned both and thus these percentages are not to be added up). These negative impacts have already been alluded to in many of the quotes within this report, as well as in the theme around Children's centres facilitating the development of social networks. Respondents repeatedly highlight how they met 'other mums' and made new friends through the Children's centres, which would not have happened otherwise. Many highlight the isolation and stress parenthood brings, loss of confidence, post-natal depression, not wanting to be judged by others, anxiety, generally feeling nervous and other mental health problems. Children's centres are seen as preventing these issues from escalating. In several cases respondents specifically highlighted the health benefits children derive from attending Children's centres.

*'I think it's disgusting that every time there is cuts to be made old Harlow loses again slowly but surely all places for children to go that have **families like mine that struggle with anxiety everyday are being more and more isolated due to places being closed** I feel that old Harlow centre should be left to run to support us and maybe close some in Harlow as there is more of the same and would work better so in my opinion leave old Harlow with something for the kids a paddling pool is not enough and as for the Norman booth centre refusing kids and pregnant women using toilet facilities also disgusting need portable loos during times open I'm ready to support my local centre fully from now till the end and will do all I can to stop you shutting it down i have only just got my daughter to feel settle taking her baby to the ABC centre as **she has anxiety issues which is hard to do even our GP has seen a change in her for the better if you close it I fear she will go back to staying at home** please take this seriously when thinking of shutting the centre I'm free and willing to share my story to help as is my daughter for once listen to what we want not what suits you.'* (Parent, Harlow)

*'I have 2 children, and I work 3 jobs (I've also suffered with depression) I have very little time to do much else. But I hope that what is being proposed benefits parents and carers as sometimes it is the only time they interact with others so for them to have regular times and places to go is **very important especially to those that suffer from mental health as its hard enough just getting out of the door.**'* (Parent, Tendring)

*'These Children's Centres are a lifeline for some parents. It is essential for parents to be able to access groups, support services and to interact with other parents in the area. Without this interaction **parents can become isolated, lonely, depressed.** I feel very strongly that I have benefitted greatly from being able to access these centres and groups and do now know what I would have done on my own without such support.'* (Parent, Colchester)

'I'm concerned that during the early days/weeks/months mother will become very isolated without near facilities. I'm concerned that cases of postnatal depression will increase.' (Parent, Rochford)

*'**My son is ASD**, and uses the Wickford centre weekly with his childminder, **it is the only form of 'mass' social integration he gets**, as he would struggle with preschool, let alone getting a place to work around my work hours. The thought of him losing this session and support, the group that has helped him SO much, and disrupting his routine, terrifies me; it's not fair on him, it's not fair on other SEN children, and it's not fair on the mothers in Wickford who don't drive or have much money, who rely on the centre for essential support and socialising.'* (Parent, Basildon)

'How can we run groups when we have our own children to look after?'

Theme: Inappropriate/not feasible for parents to run services (issues with parents running groups)

114 respondents specifically commented on why they would not want to, or why it would not be appropriate for parents to run their own activities. Most of the reasons have already been explored as part of Q11b, where more than 300 respondents provided additional comments. In addition to this, certain respondents claimed that groups run by parents can sometimes feel 'cliquey'.

'Mums with young kids need groups put on for them (1-2 pound charge for snack/craft fine). They are too sleep deprived and already doing a full time plus job without running the groups themselves. this is why children centre and church/faith groups work so well. Start trying to get mums to run thing and with draw services, you are going to have lots of isolated mums, who really could have benefitted from the great services and support we have had from Halstead, Sible Headingham and Earls Colne.' (Parent, Braintree)

*'I believe the Family Hub model integrating services for families and children is, in principle, a good idea, however the proposal simply does not offer sufficient venues and very little clarity about what the service will look like for families and current professionals already delivering these valuable services. **If parents want to run groups** I am not sure why the local authority needs to support this in preference to the local authority offering professional guidance and support to facilitate peer support groups for parents. These peer support groups, delivered in a safe and equable manner already lead to independent community peer groups forming - particularly via social media. Evidence shows the peer support groups then go onto to make their own arrangements to meet up in public child friendly places such as play venues, the zoo etc. I cannot see why the local authority sees it as a priority in times of austerity in preference to timely, professional led early intervention.'* (Professional, Colchester)

*'I do not think it should be down to the town you live in whether or not there is children's centre support. All families regardless of wealth, employment, education etc. should have the option to go to the centres to gain support and use the services. **I think the services are well run by knowledgeable staff.** The groups could become out of control and 'cliquey' if they are run by parents and there wouldn't be weaning, first aid, massage or speech and language courses anymore because no-one would be qualified to run them.'* (Parent, Chelmsford)

'The use of the library is very poor for a matter of privacy, space and accessibility'

Theme: Library possibly unsuitable as venue

Libraries are not always seen as suitable venues for delivering certain services. They do not necessarily offer the privacy needed for certain conversations (domestic abuse, mental health), support (breastfeeding advice), in terms of providing a safe environment for the children as well as having the facilities needed. Additionally, many are aware of other users of the library, i.e. the general public using the library for accessing books. There are also concerns over the actual space available in libraries, as well as libraries being 'precious' over their space. It was highlighted that some people are reluctant to use libraries for a variety of reasons and that these are often the most vulnerable, who 'shy away' from such a place. Lack of parking in specific locations has already been mentioned.

'I don't like the idea of having group in the library; that is a quiet place where children can learn how to treat books etc., not to play with playdough! How do you expect to deliver breastfeeding group there?' (Parent, Braintree)

'The breastfeeding counsellors who volunteered at Sunrise Children's Centre have helped me to successfully feed both my babies. I worry that such a vital support service would not be available to other local mums. Epping is too far to travel, especially with no car or if you are exhausted (as most new mums are!). I also wonder if the library could be used for such activities? The libraries in Loughton and Debden are both accessible by public transport and it would be great if there was a dedicated area for under 5s and for activities such as breastfeeding support.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'One slight concern over the proposed location for the central hub. The library is good on the one hand because of its central location and ease of access. However, it is still a library and I would want reassurance as an adult borrower and someone who regularly uses the library for research and work that it will not be overrun by children and will remain, primarily, a library.' (Parent, Chelmsford)

*'It is unacceptable to not have a Canvey Island hub and to merely add an Outreach centre into the library unless they were to have their own private room. **Parents have a lot of sometimes private or confidential needs and problems and don't want to discuss these in public where lots of other people are and they also want to feel secure.** The library is not a good place for toddlers with automatic doors providing (far too) easy access to outside and parents need to know that their children are safe and secure whilst talking to people. You are also eliminating the social aspect where Mums can meet and talk.'* (Parent, Castle Point)

'Your proposal to run activities and services in other buildings seems to overlook the fact that children's centres are perfectly designed for what is needed. For example, at Harlequin, there is a meeting room with attached garden, with coffee and tea making facilities, a fully equipped toilet with changing area/potty/trainer seat etc., and a crèche library there is one disabled toilet under lock and key, and one staff toilet one upstairs. Neither is particularly well located for toddlers in desperate need of a wee. Nor is there coffee and tea making facilities. While perhaps safety gates could be put in and toys bought, these other facilities are really important in attracting new parents along and making them feel comfortable/provided for. A parent will simply not go somewhere which does not make their hard job easier. That's a fact. And if you are going to use community halls, you need to consider whether they need updating and adjusting too. Some are old and unwelcoming. On the other hand, you should consider some church facilities.' (Parent, Braintree)

'Shorter hours and less buildings make for less staff so loss of jobs and loss of expertise'

Theme: Current staff - concern over their future; Staff at existing CCs should have been consulted first

The work of Children's centres staff has been highly commended. Not surprisingly, around 50 respondents specifically expressed concern over the future of current staff. Many are convinced of the loss of jobs and expertise. Some of these interpret this as letting down the community as well as the staff, who have put a lot of effort into building trusting relationships and supporting families in their local communities. Alternatively, remaining staff will be 'stretched' to provide the 0-19 service, with this service no longer being sufficient and professional, as not all may be qualified to support all age groups.

At the same time, several respondents (mostly professionals) expressed disappointment that they were not informed of the proposals before the consultation went live.

'It is still not totally clear what will happen to the current staff in children's centres and it seems all professionals are just moving under one roof which how will the space accommodate each field without overcrowding. Seems another idea to cut staff and funding as the professionals will end up more over worked covering all areas of other professionals' workload.' (Parent, Epping Forest)

'As a Health Visitor I do not currently work evenings or weekends and I do not want to work evenings or weekends. The majority of health visitors have young families and changing their hours could force many out of the profession due to childcare issues.' (Professional, Basildon)

'Having read the plan I disagree with comments about children centre staff being unable to meet families and deliver services due to covering centres. This issue was addressed with the reduction in hours 2 years ago. Staff are now free to go out into the community and deliver what is needed. Further cuts will just make this harder as a local base to store equipment, private rooms to consult with parents and have desk space for admin duties is vital to continue the amazing professional work.' (Professional, Braintree)

*'Your proposals are terrible and always based on cutting money and not actually what local families would like. People are so fed up with things changing all the time that they don't respond. What you are proposing is not in the best interest of the families but is all about money. **What will happen with the partners that are already using the building that you wish to close and community is happy with using.** Not only will you be letting the community down but you will also be letting all the staff down that have worked hard to build these relationships, support families and worked hard to achieve your targets/ KPIs and results.'* (Professional, Castle Point)

*'I think that the children are the future and it is about early intervention to give these children the best opportunity in life. So to cut more children's centres to save money is crazy, we have helped and supported so many families and got them on the right paths to break that circle. **Us workers who work with the families down here on the ground REALLY know what is like for these families and we do the most work and the hardest work!***' (Professional, Basildon)

'They need careful management so you don't lose all the good work that is currently being undertaken. I don't think there is a need to dictate the opening hours as this should be down to each local community to work out with the provider what is needed and how that can be managed within the budget. There only needs to be a minimum opening hours offer as it's not about the building but the services delivered within the community as a whole. I would prefer all the main sites and delivery sites to remain open but appreciate budget constraints make this difficult. However, the existing children's centres could have been asked for their views on how this might have been possible. I also feel the children's centre staff should have seen these proposals before the general public.' (Professional, Maldon)

'Many of the questions in this survey are leading ones. Wanting to do something and being able to do it are two different things. In answering some of the questions we cannot avoid giving a different impression from the one we want to.'

**Themes: Survey itself – access, publicity, reach
Need further consultation (local/staff/partner/health etc.)**

Over 30 respondents commented on the actual consultation questionnaire. Some felt the questionnaire was biased and did not give them enough opportunities to express their views, while others believe the decision is 'already a done deal' and the consultation a 'tick box exercise'. Some felt the survey was not promoted sufficiently or that the family events arranged to accompany this were held at times that clashed with school runs or dinner time/bedtime. Several shared the belief that those most impacted by the proposals are unlikely to have responded at all. Respondents expressed hope that their responses will be 'seriously considered'. Other comments called for the proposals to be re-thought. Responses often linked with the theme 'More information on ECC's plans needed'.

The analysis has focused mainly on overarching themes which have come out strongly. However, a large number of comments were long and contained lots of detail on how specific individuals, services, as well as already developed arrangements and partnerships may be negatively impacted by the proposals. This suggests that greater understanding of the impact of the proposals on individual sites is needed. More than 20 respondents specifically highlighted the need for further consultation with specific groups, such as members of staff, health visitors (especially those working in more isolated/rural areas), users in specific areas and others. A couple suggested the decision makers to visit some of the sessions to experience them first-hand.

*'The whole idea of making the consultation at this stage be online also shows that the people in charge are out of touch with the people who need the services. **Many of the people who need them will not have taken part in the consultation as they do not have the required facilities, or the patience and skill to read through your documents and reply to them, so please do not take poor response as lack of interest or need** - I am writing as a representative of many people. I pray and plead that you will keep the Windmill Centre open and develop it for more family activities - with its special sensory room, playrooms, meeting rooms, gardens and situated right on the edge of the countryside and footpaths it could be even more marvellous and attractive to more families. It is a far more suitable venue than the library, which is a very adult-orientated building and distributor of garbage boxes now. There is simply no comparison - how could anyone think it would be an alternative venue?!' (Other - Grandparent, Tendring)*

*'Changes need to be considered carefully as **those families that need the support and services the most are not going to fill in this questionnaire**. Nor are they likely to speak up for their individual needs, needs that the current amount of children's centres and staff provide.'* (Parent, Maldon)

'This seems an extremely biased questionnaire. You are basically forcing cuts and surrounding it in fluffy language. Please make it clear exactly what you are proposing.' (Parent, Colchester)

'The questions in this survey appear to presume a decision has already been made to close some children's centres and make the one left a family hub and remaining one a delivery site in Harlow (treehouse and meadows). There are no questions about whether we oppose the closure of local children's centres or what could be done re improvements to them. Hence I don't think this survey will really represent the views of those responding. The results will only be reflective of the questions asked.' (Parent, Harlow)

'Timings of sessions would have to be very carefully thought out to allow school runs and getting to/from centres to tie in with this. There is no event for parents in Chelmsford to attend to ask questions (page 28 of document). No mention of this consultation questionnaire anywhere I have seen in the widespread media or reporting of these changes. So how are people meant to voice an opinion if they do not know where to look....' (Parent, Chelmsford)

*'**This questionnaire has lots of technical jargon, and I'm amazed that you think the average person understands** and is able to respond on 'hubs', 'delivery centres', 'outreach'. By using complicated terminology, it is made as difficult as possible for anyone to object, and most who use the service would give up. I think that centralising services benefits only those near the centre, as services are used by people local to the service. Those not near a centre will simply miss out on the service, or pay to get to it, which is really unfair.'* (Parent, Colchester)

Summary of qualitative analysis

As many of the quotes demonstrate, respondents tended to mention a variety of issues that were closely interconnected.

Being able to access Family Hubs was of greatest concern. If unable to physically get to them, respondents would miss out on the vital support of these centres, be it the support provided by professionals, or the social support resulting from meeting others in a similar

situation. Many argue that Children's centres need to remain a local service – if not placed in individual communities, people will not be able to access them and with those the most disadvantaged being impacted the most. Furthermore, the social networks between new parents would not be fostered sufficiently, as they would be unlikely to see each other out of organised groups. Children's centres were often described as being key part of the community. With increased difficulties of accessing services, some believe they would access them less, or not at all, resulting in isolation, potential mental health problems (many female respondents reflected on suffering with post-natal depression) and other problems impacting on the whole family. Many claim those already vulnerable would become even more disengaged.



Joining a reference group

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked whether they would you like to join a reference group or get more involved in the detailed planning for the new delivery model of the Integrated Pre-Birth to 19 Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Offer.

533 individuals signed up to be added to the reference group list.

The majority of these were women, aged between 30 – 39 (52%) and 20 – 29 (24%).

They came from all over Essex.

The most represented districts were Chelmsford, Harlow, Colchester and Basildon.

The least represented districts were Rochford, Maldon, Brentwood and Uttlesford.

Additional input into the consultation

During the consultation period, Essex County Council received approximately fifteen responses in a 'letter' format, usually from other councils within Essex, but some very concerned citizens, too. These letters ranged in length but some were over six pages long.

These letters were considered by Commissioners and their team during a meeting in May 2016, alongside the results captured in this report. In many instances they repeated the messages captured in this report. However, they were also more forward-looking and contained information and suggestions for practical next steps to be taken forward. Thus, using the same coding framework as in Q13 was not appropriate.

The Children and Young People's Plan Consultation took place at approximately the same time as the one around this one. Around ten respondents from the CYPP consultation provided some views concerning the proposals around Children's centres/Family Hubs. All these views were in line with those already reported here and provided no additional detail.

Final remarks

The results presented in this report strongly suggest that the majority of respondents disagree with the proposals for the number of Children's centres to be reduced to twelve across Essex, with one in each district. They fear they will lose access to the local support that is so highly valued by them. Several respondents specifically pointed out that the Consultation document had not provided sufficient detail regarding Family Hub Delivery Sites and Family Hub Outreach Sites necessary to be able to better understand how the proposals may impact on individuals. As such, majority of respondents were reluctant to agree with the proposals.

The majority of respondents highlighted how important these Children's centres are to families. As such, their comments provide a wealth of information with considerable detail and thus indications on what alternative options could be considered for individual areas.

In questions 5.2b – 8.2b, respondents provided multiple suggestions on additional or alternative Family Hub locations, thus giving first indications of areas of greatest concern. Respondents often called for re-consideration of the proposals.

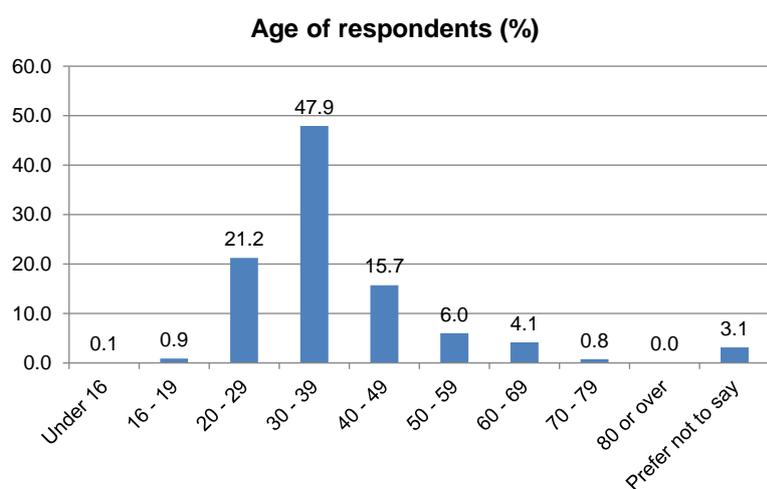
The analysis in this report is fairly high-level, however more specific and detailed analysis is recommended in order to consider alternative options in more detail, if the decision is taken to alter the current proposals.

Diversity and Equality

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to provide their demographic information. This was voluntary.

Age

Age	Frequency	%
Under 16	2	0.1
16 - 19	19	0.9
20 - 29	446	21.2
30 - 39	1006	47.9
40 - 49	330	15.7
50 - 59	126	6.0
60 - 69	87	4.1
70 - 79	16	0.8
80 or over	1	0.0
Prefer not to say	66	3.1
Question total	2099	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>916</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

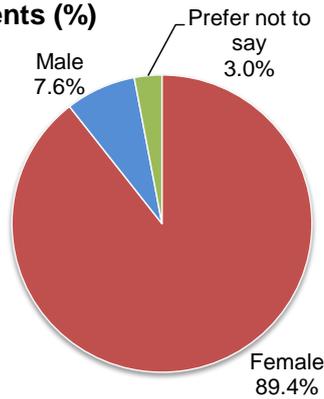


Almost half of respondents (47.5%) were aged between 30 – 39 years. The second most represented age group was 20 – 29 years (21.2%) and third 40 – 49 years (15.7%).

Gender

Gender	Frequency	%
Female	1870	89.4
Male	159	7.6
Prefer not to say	62	3.0
Question total	2091	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>924</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

Gender of respondents (%)

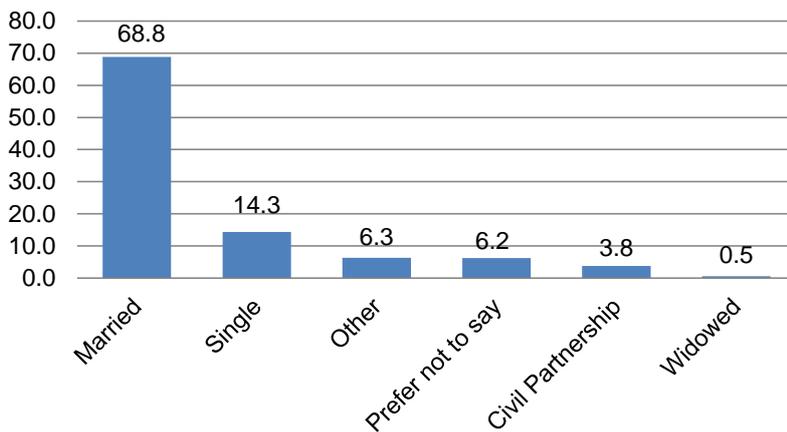


The majority of respondents were women.

Marital status

Status	Frequency	%
Married	1414	68.8
Single	294	14.3
Other	130	6.3
Prefer not to say	127	6.2
Civil Partnership	78	3.8
Widowed	11	0.5
Question total	2054	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>961</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

Status of respondents (%)



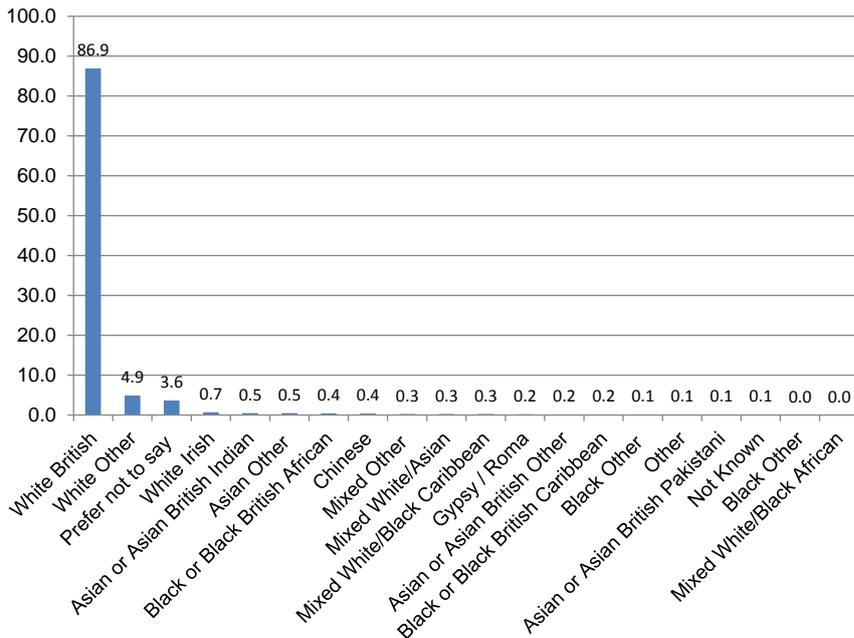
Almost 70% of respondents were married, followed by almost 15% who were single. 'Other' was the third most represented group. Most of these people were unmarried but co-habiting couples.

Status - other	Frequency	%
Cohabiting / living together with a partner	78	60.0
In a relationship / engaged / common law	34	26.2
Divorced	15	11.5
Separated	3	2.3
Question total	130	100

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency	%
White British	1812	86.9
White Other	102	4.9
Prefer not to say	76	3.6
White Irish	15	0.7
Asian or Asian British Indian	10	0.5
Asian Other	10	0.5
Black or Black British African	9	0.4
Chinese	8	0.4
Mixed Other	6	0.3
Mixed White/Asian	6	0.3
Mixed White/Black Caribbean	6	0.3
Gypsy / Roma	5	0.2
Asian or Asian British Other	4	0.2
Black or Black British Caribbean	4	0.2
Black Other	3	0.1
Other	3	0.1
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	2	0.1
Not Known	2	0.1
Black Other	1	0.0
Mixed White/Black African	1	0.0
Question total	2085	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>930</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

Ethnicity of respondents (%)

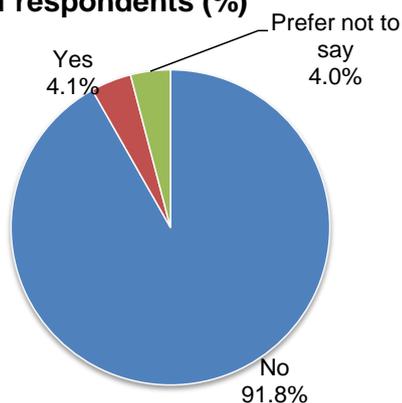


The majority of respondents were White British, with several 'White Others'. 3.6% of respondents did not wish to disclose their ethnicity. In terms of 'other', there was a Hispanic, Latin and South American respondent (one of each).

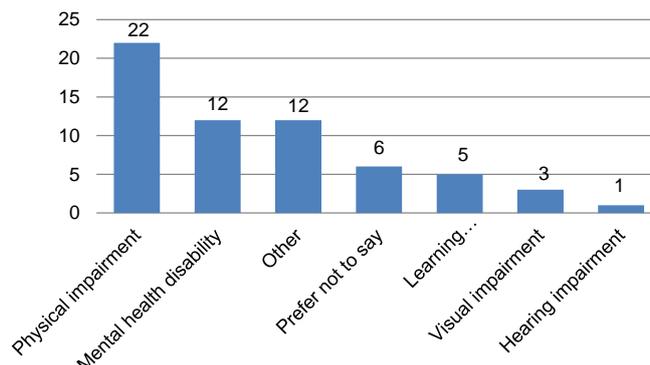
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Disability	Frequency	%
No	1890	91.8
Yes	85	4.1
Prefer not to say	83	4.0
Question total	2058	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>957</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

Disability of respondents (%)



Types of disability of respondents (freq)



The majority of respondents did not have a disability. From those who did (4.1%), most had a physical impairment (22 individuals), followed by those with a mental health disability (12 individuals).

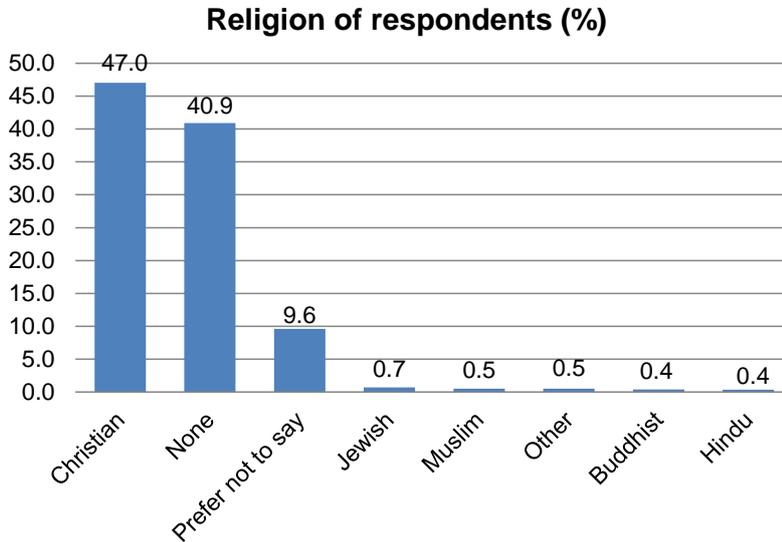
If you said yes, please select all that apply:

Types of disability (sub-question)	Frequency
Physical impairment	22
Mental health disability	12
Other	12
Prefer not to say	6
Learning difficulties/disabilities	5
Visual impairment	3
Hearing impairment	1
Question total	61

Religion/Faith

Religion / Faith	Frequency	%
Christian	937	47.0
None	815	40.9
Prefer not to say	191	9.6
Jewish	14	0.7
Muslim	10	0.5
Other	10	0.5

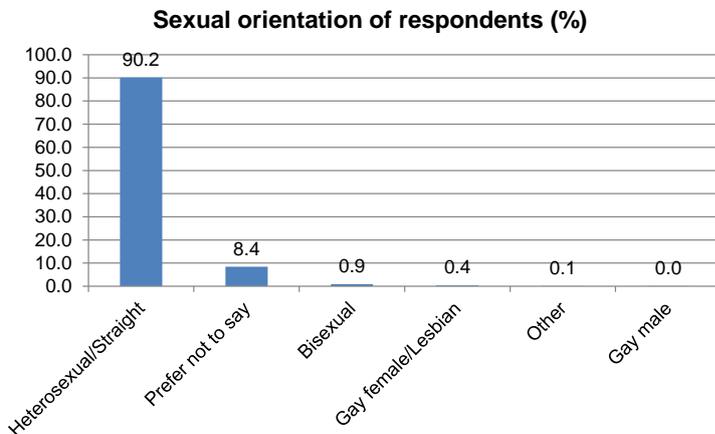
Buddhist	8	0.4
Hindu	7	0.4
Question total	1992	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>1023</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	



Almost half of respondents were Christian, followed by more than 40% with no religion. There were very small numbers of respondents of the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and other faiths.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation	Frequency	%
Heterosexual/Straight	1837	90.2
Prefer not to say	171	8.4
Bisexual	18	0.9
Gay female/Lesbian	8	0.4
Other	2	0.1
Gay male	1	0.0
Question total	2037	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>978</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

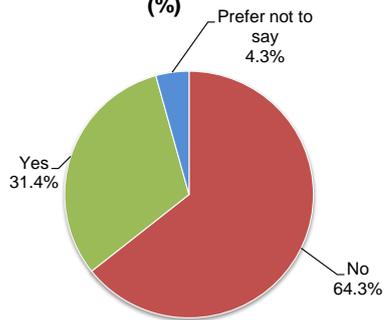


The majority of respondents were heterosexual. Only a small number of respondents had a different sexual orientation.

Pregnancy and maternity

Pregnancy and maternity	Frequency	%
No	1329	64.3
Yes	648	31.4
Prefer not to say	89	4.3
Question total	2066	100
<i>Missing</i>	<i>949</i>	
<i>Survey start total</i>	<i>3015</i>	

Pregnancy/maternity of respondents (%)



Although the majority of respondents were not pregnant, almost a third were.

Appendix 1

Q5.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – North	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.	50	15.9	22.6
Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL	47	15.0	21.3
Other comments	45	14.3	20.4
Should be more than one hub per district	24	7.6	10.9
Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG	22	7.0	10.0
Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN	19	6.1	8.6
Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT	17	5.4	7.7
Issues with (public) transport	15	4.8	6.8
Colchester/town centre	13	4.1	5.9
Harwich	9	2.9	4.1
St Annes and Castle CC, CO4 3DH	8	2.5	3.6
Discovery CC, Colchester, CO3 9BE	8	2.5	3.6
Shrub End CC, Colchester, CO2 9BG	7	2.2	3.2
New Town CC, CO2 7RY	6	1.9	2.7
Colne CC, Brightlingsea, CO7 0AQ	6	1.9	2.7
St James CC, Oxford Road, Clacton, CO15 3TB	4	1.3	1.8
Hemmington House, Jaywick, CO15 2EX	3	1.0	1.4
Sydney House CC, Clacton, CO16 7AG	3	1.0	1.4
Clacton	2	0.6	0.9
Rainbow CC, Walton, CO14 8AW	2	0.6	0.9
Harwich Library, CO12 3JT	1	0.3	0.5
The Ark, Highwoods Methodist Church, Jack Andrews Drive, Highwoods, Colchester, C04 9FF	1	0.3	0.5
Prettygate	1	0.3	0.5
Greenstead Children's Centre, CO4 3QE	1	0.3	0.5
Total responses	314	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	221		

Q5.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – North	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
Other	17	14.7	16.7
Windmill Centre, Harwich, CO12 5EL	14	12.1	13.7
Little Hands CC, Stanway, CO3 0QG	11	9.5	10.8
The Ark, Highwoods Methodist Church, Jack Andrews Drive, Highwoods, Colchester, CO4 9FF	7	6.0	6.9
St Annes and Castle CC, CO4 3DH	5	4.3	4.9
Beehive CC, Colchester, CO4 5XT	3	2.6	2.9
Shrub End CC [Community Centre], CO2 9BG	3	2.6	2.9
Harwich hospital, 419 Main Rd, Harwich CO12 4EX	3	2.6	2.9
Resource Centre, Brooklands Gardens, Jaywick, Clacton-on-Sea CO15 2JP	3	2.6	2.9
West Wing Youth Centre, Harwich Centre, Main Road, Dovercourt, CO12 4AH	3	2.6	2.9
Discovery CC, Colchester, CO3 9BE	2	1.7	2.0
Bluebell Centre, Jack Andrew's Drive, Highwoods, Colchester, CO4 9YN	2	1.7	2.0
Colchester library, Trinity Square, Colchester, CO1 1JB	2	1.7	2.0
St Nicholas Hall, Stour Rd, Harwich, Essex CO12 3HS	2	1.7	2.0
Berechurch CC, Monkwick, Colchester, CO2 8NN	2	1.7	2.0
Tiptree Community Centre, 1a Caxton Close, Tiptree, CO5 0HA	2	1.7	2.0
First site gallery, Lewis Gardens, High St, Colchester CO1 1JH	2	1.7	2.0
Colne CC, YMCA Hall, Brightlingsea, CO7 0AQ	2	1.7	2.0
Colchester town centre	2	1.7	2.0
Colchester - former garrison/army sites	2	1.7	2.0
Tendring (North and South) - unspecified	2	1.7	2.0
Clacton Coastal Academy, CO15 3JL	1	0.9	1.0
Hemmington House CC, Jaywick, CO15 2EX	1	0.9	1.0
Jaywick - unspecified	1	0.9	1.0
Montgomery Infants Shool, Colchester, CO2 9QG	1	0.9	1.0
Elim church hall, Clematis Way, Colchester CO4 3PY	1	0.9	1.0
New Town CC, Colchester, CO2 7RY	1	0.9	1.0
Old school site (St John's Green), Colchester town centre	1	0.9	1.0
Colchester community centres	1	0.9	1.0
The Adult Community Learning College and Vibe Youth Centre, Main Road, CO12 4AJ	1	0.9	1.0
Harwich Town Children's Centres, CO12 3NS &	1	0.9	1.0

CO12 3HS			
Harwich Library, CO12 3JT	1	0.9	1.0
Tollgate Development	1	0.9	1.0
Northern Gateway	1	0.9	1.0
Jungle Adventure, Stanway, CO3 0LE	1	0.9	1.0
St Noah's nursey, Harwich, CO12 3NS	1	0.9	1.0
Old co-op building in Colchester	1	0.9	1.0
Mistley Clinic, Manningtree, CO11 1ER	1	0.9	1.0
Mistley Church Hall, Mistley, CO11 1ER	1	0.9	1.0
Venture Centre 2000, Lawford, CO11 2JE	1	0.9	1.0
Furze hill hall, Mistley, Manningtree CO11 1HS	1	0.9	1.0
Colchester town hall, CO1 1PJ	1	0.9	1.0
Colchester - general/unspecified	1	0.9	1.0
North Colchester - unspecified	1	0.9	1.0
Brightlingsea - unspecified	1	0.9	1.0
Harwich - unspecified	1	0.9	1.0
Total responses	116	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	102		

Appendix 2

Q6.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – Mid	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
South Woodham/Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX	97	18.8	25.3
Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.	96	18.6	25.1
Other	64	12.4	16.7
Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ	34	6.6	8.9
Parking comments	29	5.6	7.6
Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH	28	5.4	7.3
Issues with (public) transport	27	5.2	7.0
Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA	22	4.3	5.7
Concerns with libraries	20	3.9	5.2
Bumblebee CC, Danbury, CM3 3QZ	13	2.5	3.4
Perryfields CC, Chelmsford, CM1 7PP	13	2.5	3.4
Witham - unspecified	12	2.3	3.1
Not enough hubs	10	1.9	2.6
Roundabout CC, Witham, CM8 2NJ	7	1.4	1.8
Silver End CC, CM8 3RQ	7	1.4	1.8
[Valley CC], Earls Colne, CO6 2RH	7	1.4	1.8
Seesaw CC, Braintree, CM7 5UL	5	1.0	1.3
Rural isolation	5	1.0	1.3
Carousel CC, Braintree, CM7 3QZ	4	0.8	1.0
Larkrise CC, Gt Baddow, CM2 9UB	3	0.6	0.8
Rainbow CC, Sible Hedingham, CO9 3QH	3	0.6	0.8
Dengie CC, Burnham-on-Crouch, CM0 8QB	2	0.4	0.5
Springfield, Chelmsford - unspecified	2	0.4	0.5
Galleywood CC, CM2 8PU	2	0.4	0.5
Bicknacre - unspecified	1	0.2	0.3
Chelmsford Central CC, Chelmsford Library, CM1 1LH	1	0.2	0.3
Maldon Library, Carmelite House, CM9 5FW	1	0.2	0.3
Maldon - unspecified	1	0.2	0.3
Total responses	516	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	383		

Q6.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – Mid	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
Other	23	15.6	20.0
Chetwood CC, SWF, CM3 5ZX	22	15.0	19.1
Harlequin CC, Witham, CM8 1NA	10	6.8	8.7
Chelmsford West CC, Dixon Avenue, CM1 2AQ	7	4.8	6.1
Acorn CC, Halstead, CO9 1JH	6	4.1	5.2
Perryfields CC, Chelmsford, CM1 7PP	5	3.4	4.3
Keene Hall/G'wood Village Hall, Galleywood, CM2 8PT	5	3.4	4.3
See Saw CC, Braintree, CM7 5UL	3	2.0	2.6
Bumblebee CC, Danbury, CM3 4NQ	3	2.0	2.6
SWF Health Centre, CM3 5BF	3	2.0	2.6
SWF - Village Hall, CM3 5PL	3	2.0	2.6
Witham High Street & unspecified	3	2.0	2.6
Rainbow CC, Sible Hedingham, Halstead, CO9 3QH	2	1.4	1.7
Silver End CC, CM8 3RQ	2	1.4	1.7
Braintree Library, Fairfield Rd, Braintree CM7 3YL	2	1.4	1.7
Shire Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1EH	2	1.4	1.7
Danbury Sports Centre/Cricket Club, Danbury, CM3 4NQ	2	1.4	1.7
Springfield Parish Centre/Library, St Augustine's Way, Chelmsford CM1 6GX	2	1.4	1.7
Yellow Rock Road CC, Gt Totham, CM9 8PN	2	1.4	1.7
Roxwell memorial hall, CM1 4NU	2	1.4	1.7
SWF - library, CM3 5JU	2	1.4	1.7
Champions Manor Hall, SWF, CM3 5LJ	2	1.4	1.7
Community Centres/Leisure Centres - unspecified	2	1.4	1.7
Carousel CC, Braintree, CM7 3QZ	1	0.7	0.9
Beeches CC, Beeches Close, Chelmsford, CM1 2SB	1	0.7	0.9
Old St Peter's School Site, Melbourne, Chelmsford, CM1 2BL	1	0.7	0.9
Chelmer Village Church Hall, CM2 6RF	1	0.7	0.9
Danbury Medical Centre, Danbury, CM3 4QA	1	0.7	0.9
Parkside [youth] Centre, Witham, CM8 2BH	1	0.7	0.9
St Johns Church, Danbury, CM3 4NG	1	0.7	0.9
Danbury Mission, Danbury, CM3 4QL	1	0.7	0.9
Danbury Village Hall, CM3 4NQ	1	0.7	0.9
URC Hall, Little Baddow Road, Danbury, CM3 4NS	1	0.7	0.9
Trent Road Church, Chelmsford, CM1 2LQ	1	0.7	0.9
Chelmsford library, CM1 1LH	1	0.7	0.9
Writtle village hall, The Green, Writtle, CM1 3DU	1	0.7	0.9
Larkrise CC, Gt Baddow, CM2 9UB	1	0.7	0.9

Gt baddow Library, CM2 7HH	1	0.7	0.9
Writtle Wick [Family Centre], CM1 2JB	1	0.7	0.9
Woodcroft Nursery, Chelmsford, CM2 9UB	1	0.7	0.9
Tanglewood nursery school, CM1 2DX	1	0.7	0.9
Great Leighs village hall, CM3 1NH	1	0.7	0.9
The Walthams village halls	1	0.7	0.9
Old Play Centre building, Halstead	1	0.7	0.9
Halstead - unspecified	1	0.7	0.9
Parkside community hub, Melbourne Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2DX.	1	0.7	0.9
South Woodham Ferrers - unspecified	1	0.7	0.9
Old GP surgery (closed down) - SWF (no address)	1	0.7	0.9
William de Ferrers centre, SWF	1	0.7	0.9
Silver End Village Hall, CM8 3RQ	1	0.7	0.9
Proposed new community centre building in Halstead	1	0.7	0.9
Mid family centre, County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1YS	1	0.7	0.9
Longmeads House, Redwood Drive, Writtle, CM1 3LY	1	0.7	0.9
Baptist Church, Earls Colne, CO6 2LR	1	0.7	0.9
Maldon Activity Centre	1	0.7	0.9
Total responses	147	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	115		

Appendix 3

Q7.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – South	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.	62	14.6	17.6
Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	52	12.3	14.7
Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX	50	11.8	14.2
Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX	46	10.8	13.0
Canvey Island - one Hub in general needed	32	7.5	9.1
All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX	31	7.3	8.8
Other comment	25	5.9	7.1
Issues with (public) transport	16	3.8	4.5
Wishing Well CC, Rochford, SS4 1QF	15	3.5	4.2
Sunnyside CC, Billericay, CM12 0GH	15	3.5	4.2
The Triangle CC, Wickford, SS12 0AQ	9	2.1	2.5
Billericay CC, Billericay, CM12 9AB	9	2.1	2.5
Kaleidoscope CC, Basildon, SS16 4NF	8	1.9	2.3
Cherry Tree Children's Centre, The Knightsway Centre, 32a Knights Way, Brentwood CM13 2AZ	6	1.4	1.7
Ladybird CC, Rayleigh, SS6 9EH	6	1.4	1.7
Canvey community CC, Canvey Island, SS8 9HG	6	1.4	1.7
Little Tewkes CC, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	5	1.2	1.4
Not sure/none	5	1.2	1.4
Little Acorns CC, Benfleet, SS7 2SU	4	0.9	1.1
Starbright CC, Pitsea, SS13 3DU	4	0.9	1.1
Cherrydown CC, Basildon, SS16 5AT	3	0.7	0.8
Fryerns Farm CC, Basildon, SS14 2EQ	3	0.7	0.8
Other suggestion (no address)	3	0.7	0.8
The Paddocks Community Centre, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA	2	0.5	0.6
Basildon - unspecified/town centre	2	0.5	0.6
Shenfield Library, CM15 8NJ	2	0.5	0.6
Closer to Southend/Wakering - unspecified	1	0.2	0.3
The Limes CC, Laindon, SS16 6AQ	1	0.2	0.3
Willow CC, Hullbridge, SS5 6ND	1	0.2	0.3
Total responses	424	100	
Total respondents/comments	353		

Q7.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – West	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
The Paddocks Community Centre, Canvey Island, SS8 0JA	24	20.2	23.5
Other	11	9.2	10.8
All About CC, Laindon, SS15 5NX	8	6.7	7.8
Cherry Tree Children's Centre, The Knightsway Centre, 32a Knights Way, Brentwood CM13 2AZ	8	6.7	7.8
Northlands Park CC, Basildon, SS13 1QX	6	5.0	5.9
Little Lions CC, Northwick Park, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	4	3.4	3.9
Canvey Community Centre, Resource Centre, Little Gypps, Canvey, SS8 9HG	3	2.5	2.9
Hutton Community Centre, CM13 1LP	3	2.5	2.9
Shenfield Library/Sunshine CC, CM15 8NJ	3	2.5	2.9
Basildon - unspecified	2	1.7	2.0
Billericay - unspecified	2	1.7	2.0
Sunnyside CC, Billericay, CM12 0GH	2	1.7	2.0
Billericay Methodist Church, CM12 9DT	2	1.7	2.0
Wickford Community Centre, SS12 9NR	2	1.7	2.0
Highcliffe CC, Wickford, SS11 8JX	2	1.7	2.0
Little Tewkes CC, Canvey Island, SS8 9SU	2	1.7	2.0
The Limes Childrens Centre, Laindon, SS16 6AQ	2	1.7	2.0
Pitsea - unspecified [possibly Starbright CC, Pitsea, SS13 3DU]	2	1.7	2.0
Schools or pre-schools - unspecified	2	1.7	2.0
Roundacre Youth Centre, Laindon, SS15 5UL	2	1.7	2.0
King Edward Hall, Laindon, SS15 6HL	2	1.7	2.0
Canvey Island - unspecified	2	1.7	2.0
New Laindon Centre	2	1.7	2.0
Ashleigh Resource Centre/Wellbeing Hub, Whitmore Way, Basildon SS1 2NN	1	0.8	1.0
Billericay Library	1	0.8	1.0
Billericay CC, Billericay, CM12 9AB	1	0.8	1.0
Billericay Baptist Church - unspecified (3 sites)	1	0.8	1.0
Town Hall [Brentwood?] - unspecified	1	0.8	1.0
Cherrydown CC building, Basildon, SS16 5AT	1	0.8	1.0
Wishing Well CC, Rochford, SS4 1QF	1	0.8	1.0
Hockley Clinic, SS5 4AR	1	0.8	1.0
Old Police Station, South Street, Rochford	1	0.8	1.0
Hadleigh Hall [in John Burrows Sports Ground], SS7 2NA	1	0.8	1.0
The Knights Way Community Centre, Brentwood, CM13 2AZ	1	0.8	1.0
Vange Health Centre, Southview Rd, Basildon SS16 4HD	1	0.8	1.0
Benfleet Clinic, SS7 5AD	1	0.8	1.0

Brentwood Library, CM14 4BP	1	0.8	1.0
Canvey Island Library, SS8 7RB	1	0.8	1.0
Ingatestone library, CM4 9EU	1	0.8	1.0
Hadleigh Clinic, Benfleet SS7 2QL	1	0.8	1.0
The Place, Pitsea Leisure Centre, Pitsea Centre, Basildon SS13 3DU	1	0.8	1.0
James Hornsby School, Leinster Rd, Basildon SS15 5NX	1	0.8	1.0
Leigh Beck Junior School, SS8 7TD	1	0.8	1.0
Citizens Advice Bureau	1	0.8	1.0
Existing site in Billericay	0	0.0	0.0
Total responses	119	100.0	
Total respondents/comments	102		

Appendix 4

Q8.2b: Respondents views on alternative Family Hub locations – West	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
<i>Disagree with hub/all centres should be open etc.</i>	69	18.0	24.2
<i>Other</i>	54	14.1	18.9
Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL	47	12.3	16.5
Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE	39	10.2	13.7
Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL	33	8.6	11.6
<i>Public transport issues and comments</i>	29	7.6	10.2
Spangles CC, Stansted, CM24 8LR	22	5.7	7.7
Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND	18	4.7	6.3
Need more than one hub per District	18	4.7	6.3
Little Oaks CC, Loughton, IG10 3TD	9	2.3	3.2
Burnt Mill CC, Harlow, CM20 2NR	9	2.3	3.2
<i>Parking comments</i>	8	2.1	2.8
Treehouse CC, Harlow, CM18 7NG	7	1.8	2.5
Potter Street CC, Harlow, CM17 9EU	6	1.6	2.1
Abbeywood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 1EL	5	1.3	1.8
ABC CC, Old Harlow, CM17 0AT	4	1.0	1.4
Waltham Abbey Library	2	0.5	0.7
True Stars CC, Chigwell, IG7 5LP	1	0.3	0.4
Little Stars CC, Ongar, CM5 0FF	1	0.3	0.4
Anuerin Bevan Centre, Harlow, CM17 0AT	1	0.3	0.4
Little Goslings CC, Great Dunmow, CM6 1AZ	1	0.3	0.4
Total responses	383	100	
Total respondents/comments	285		

Q8.3: Respondents ideas on alternative locations – West	Freq	% of responses	% of respondents
FULL TABLE			
Other	13	12.9	15.7
ABC CC, Old Harlow, CM17 0AT	9	8.9	10.8
Burnt Mill CC, Harlow, CM20 2NR	8	7.9	9.6
Potter Street CC, Harlow, CM17 9EU	7	6.9	8.4
Church Halls, Schools, Community Centres and other non-specific locations	7	6.9	8.4
Loughton Library, IG10 1HD	6	5.9	7.2
Sunrise CC, Loughton, IG10 3HE	5	5.0	6.0
Hazelwood CC, Waltham Abbey, EN9 3EL	5	5.0	6.0
Fairycroft CC, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ND	5	5.0	6.0
Rectory Lane Health Centre, Loughton, IG10 3RU	3	3.0	3.6
Harlow Library, CM20 1HA	3	3.0	3.6
[F. Nightingale] Child Development Centre, Church Langley, CM17 9TG	2	2.0	2.4
Buckhurst Way Clinic, Buckhurst Hill IG9 6HP	2	2.0	2.4
Waltham Abbey Sports Centre, Broomstickhall Road Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 1LF	1	1.0	1.2
Abbeywood Scout Hut, Waltham Abbey	1	1.0	1.2
Central Waltham Abbey - unspecified	1	1.0	1.2
Little Oaks CC, Loughton, IG10 3TD	1	1.0	1.2
Meadows CC, Harlow, CM19 4DL	1	1.0	1.2
Wollard Centre, Loughton Way, Buckhurst Hill, Essex IG9 6AD	1	1.0	1.2
Roding Valley Hall, IG9 6LN	1	1.0	1.2
Buckhurst Hill - unspecified	1	1.0	1.2
Harlow social/community sites - unspecified	1	1.0	1.2
Restore Community Centre, 68 The Broadway, Loughton IG10 3ST	1	1.0	1.2
Epping Forest Community Church, Grosvenor Drive, Loughton IG10 2LG	1	1.0	1.2
Ongar youth Building, Ongar Campus,, The Gables, Ongar CM5 0GA	1	1.0	1.2
Old Passmores School site - no address	1	1.0	1.2
Loughton (vacant) post office - no address	1	1.0	1.2
North Weald Library, CM16 6BZ	1	1.0	1.2
Harlow Leisurezone, Second Ave, Harlow, Second CM20 3DT	1	1.0	1.2
Murray Hall, Loughton, IG10 3SB	1	1.0	1.2
Saffron Walden [Lord Butler] Leisure Centre, Saffron Walden CB11 3EG	1	1.0	1.2
Borders Lane Youth Centre, Loughton IG10 3SB	1	1.0	1.2
Trinity Church, Mannock Drive, Loughton IG10 2JD	1	1.0	1.2

Sunflower [day and nursery?] Centre, Harlow, CM19 5RD	1	1.0	1.2
Old school site, St John's Road, Epping	1	1.0	1.2
St Giles Hall, Nazeing, EN9 2JL	1	1.0	1.2
Saffron Waldon Town Hall	1	1.0	1.2
Harlow Youth Club	1	1.0	1.2
Kingsmoor House, Harlow	1	1.0	1.2
Total responses	101	100	
Total respondents/comments	83		

Appendix 5

Introduction to the questionnaire

Your opportunity to let us know what you think Proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex

Consultation Questionnaire

Introduction

Essex County Council is seeking your views on our proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex.

We are proposing to provide a more integrated health, wellbeing and family support service for families and children from pre-birth until the age of 19.

A part of the plan includes looking at the future of Sure Start Children's Centres. Under the proposals, Children's Centres would become Family Hubs from 2017.

It is proposed that Family Hubs, one in each district in Essex, would be open more of the time, including weekends. Family Hubs would be supported by a range of local centres also offering services, but open when people need them most.

Our proposals and reasons for them are explained in detail in the '**Proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex**' consultation document, which is provided alongside this questionnaire. You will need to refer to the consultation document while completing the questionnaire.

Please complete the questionnaire as honestly as you can, your views are important to us.

By completing the questionnaire, you agree for your feedback to be used to inform the final delivery model for the Integrated Pre-Birth to 19 Health, Wellbeing and Family Support Offer, to go live from April 2017, and other work related to this service. Your responses will be treated in strictest confidence and will remain anonymous. Your participation is voluntary.

Please respond by **10th April 2016**.

Thank you for your help.

Once the consultation finishes, results will be shared at www.essexinsight.org.uk. We anticipate this will be in summer 2016.

How do I respond to the consultation?

You can complete the Children's Centres Consultation 2016 questionnaire, either online or on paper.

Online - You can complete the questionnaire online by following this link:
<http://surveys.essexinsight.org.uk/childrenscentresconsultation2016>

Paper – Please fill out this paper questionnaire. You will need to refer to the 'Proposed changes to Sure Start Children's Centres in Essex' consultation document while completing it.

Please return your completed questionnaire to your local Children's Centre or post it directly to **Early Years and Childcare, Essex County Council, E2 County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM11QH. Please post it as soon as possible as any responses received after 10th April 2016 will not be accepted.**

Appendix 6

Codes applied for the analysis of Q13.

1. View on [named] proposed hub/site, including concern over
2. Keep/don't change specific current centre (Mid)
3. Keep/don't change specific current centre (North)
4. Keep/don't change specific current centre (West)
5. Keep/don't change specific current centre (South)
6. Keep/don't change children's centres - general / Concern over closures – don't close them
7. Need more not less services
8. Satisfaction with current centre/service & staff as it is
9. Local sites are very important / Current centre important for community / It should be a local service (impact of closure on community)
10. Current centre as a lifeline/of vital importance
11. Hitting deprived/poor/troubled/vulnerable families & areas
12. Support network – access to courses, support services, professionals
13. Social network – making friends (other new mums) (community resilience – long-term friends)
14. Would not attend centre further away/Changes may affect attendance/stop people accessing services
15. Accessibility - Affordability of accessing/using Hubs
16. Accessibility - rural/more isolated areas
17. Accessibility – parking concerns
18. Accessibility - Transport links/Distance/Can't drive
19. Potential social isolation/loneliness arising from closure of centre
20. Potential negative impact of closures on wellbeing & mental health
21. Health of children
22. Inappropriate/not feasible for parents to run services (issues with parents running groups)
23. Centre should be run by community/More community involvement
24. Motivation to close children's centre to save money (Cost-cutting)
25. Concern of the ability of Family Hubs to meet demand/potential overcrowding (doubts/unhappy over 0-19 integration)
26. 0-19 integration is accepted
27. Library possibly unsuitable as venue
28. Current resources could be used better
29. Financial impact of closures on other services / leading to later, more costly, interventions
30. Growing area vs. reduced service – meeting demand
31. More support needed for children under 5
32. More facilities needed for older children/teenagers
33. Already enough support for older children/teenagers
34. Suggestion of alternative provider of services/willing to offer services – opportunity for joint working
35. More information on ECC's plans needed

- 36. Staff at existing CCs should have been consulted first
- 37. Need further consultation (local/staff/partner/health etc.)
- 38. Current staff - concern over their future
- 39. Survey itself – access, publicity, reach
- 40. Support/Partial support for proposals
- 41. Other

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