Building a Better Future: consultation on the future of Heathfield

Background / why we are consulting

Norfolk County Council’s Building a Better Future strategy aims to replace care homes with new Housing with Care schemes and specialist care homes for people with dementia. This was agreed by Norfolk County Council’s Cabinet on 11 October 2010.

This strategy was the result of extensive consultation about the future needs and aspirations of a growing older population. People told us they would prefer to remain living in their own home but, if this was not possible, they would rather live in a Housing with Care scheme than a care home. People also told us that the standard of accommodation in Norfolk County Council’s care homes was not of a standard that older people expected.

In April 2011 Norfolk County Council transferred its 26 care homes and 13 Housing with Care schemes to a new company, NorseCare. They are part of the Norse Group, a company which is wholly owned by Norfolk County Council. NorseCare is able to access funding to help transform the accommodation which is not available to councils.

In line with this strategy NorseCare successfully transferred their care service from a residential care home into a purpose built Housing with Care scheme in Aylsham in 2012. The residents from the care home were supported to move across and the home closed. NorseCare has built a new specialist dementia care home with 88 beds in Gorleston, and residents in three care homes in the Great Yarmouth area moved into the new home in June 2014.

The next stage of the programme now begins in the Norwich area.
To meet the aims of the Building a Better Future strategy in Norwich, NorseCare is building a new care village in Bowthorpe, Norwich which will open in 2016. This will consist of an 80 bed specialist dementia care home and a Housing with Care scheme that has 92 self-contained apartments and includes a shop, café, hairdressers, restaurant and a garden.

NorseCare has also looked at the long term suitability of its existing care homes for current and future residents in accordance with the Building Better Future strategy. In particular NorseCare is now looking at four care homes in Norwich. One of these is Heathfield; the others are Somerley, Philadelphia House and Mountfield.

NorseCare considers that it can better meet the Building a Better Future strategy by moving their services from these four care homes to the new care village in Bowthorpe. This could therefore involve the closure of one or more homes in Norwich, including Heathfield.

Norfolk County Council must agree any of NorseCare’s proposals before they can be implemented. Norfolk County Council and NorseCare are therefore carrying out a consultation together to find out what people think about the proposals before any decision is made.
Options for Heathfield

There are five options for the future of Heathfield.

Option 1 – Close Heathfield and transfer to the new specialist dementia home in the new care village in Bowthorpe, Norwich or to a place in another care home.

Please note: Option 1 is the option that NorseCare prefers.

The dementia care home in the Bowthorpe Care Village will give residents:

- A larger bedroom which meets the specified standards and has en-suite facilities.
- Access to care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Various communal facilities in or close to the scheme that will help people meet and get to know each other, for example it will include a hairdressers, restaurant, shop, café and a garden.
- Access to up-to-date assistive technology to help people keep independent.

NorseCare expects that most of the care staff at Heathfield would transfer to the new home to provide continuity of care for people moving across.

NorseCare thinks that the advantages of this option are:

- The standard of accommodation will meet those set out in the Building Better a Future strategy. Heathfield doesn’t meet these standards, for example en-suite bathrooms. Currently no rooms at Heathfield have en-suite facilities.
- The accommodation will also meet the aspirations of older people in the future which included the option to live in a specialist dementia home or Housing with Care scheme.

NorseCare thinks that the disadvantages of this option are:

- Residents will have to move and some residents may find this unsettling.
- Some families may have a longer journey to visit their relatives.
If people who live at Heathfield did not want to move to the new care home they would be given support to gain a place in another NorseCare residential home or a place in another residential care home in the area.

If it would meet their care needs and it would be appropriate to do so they could be offered a place in the extra care element of the new Housing with Care scheme.

**Option 2 - Do nothing and keep Heathfield as it is**

NorseCare thinks that the advantages of this option are:

- People would not have to move.

NorseCare thinks that the disadvantages of this option are:

- The accommodation does not meet the minimum standard as set out in the Building a Better Future strategy, for example there are no en-suite facilities.
- Residents may have to move in the future as the rooms may be too small to enable the use of specialist equipment.

**Option 3 – Admit no more residents to Heathfield and allow the home to close over a number of years**

NorseCare thinks that the advantages of this option are:

- People would not have to move.

NorseCare thinks that the disadvantages of this option are:

- To close the home over several years could be a negative experience both to residents and staff as resident numbers reduce.
- It would be difficult to retain staff during this process because of the home closing.
- It wouldn’t be cost effective to run and maintain a home that wasn’t fully occupied.
Option 4 – Refurbish Heathfield to Building a Better Future strategy standards

NorseCare thinks that the advantages of this option are:

- It would be a refurbished home that meets improved standards.

NorseCare thinks that the disadvantages of this option are:

- This option would mean a reduction in the number of rooms, requiring people to move in any event.
- It would cause considerable disruption to residents whilst the building work was undertaken. For example, some residents would need to be moved out whilst the building work was completed, or if people remained at the home whilst the work was being undertaken they might not have full use of the home’s facilities.
- As the home would have fewer rooms the cost of delivering the service would increase.
- While work is being undertaken, the home would not meet the aspirations of the Building a Better Future strategy in which people said that they would want larger rooms, more privacy and en-suite bathrooms.

Option 5 - Sell Heathfield to another care home provider

NorseCare thinks that the advantages of this option are:

- People would not have to move.

NorseCare thinks that the disadvantages of this option are:

- The accommodation can’t meet existing needs because the rooms are too small.
- Residents may have to move in the future as the rooms may be too small to enable the use of specialist equipment.
- The accommodation does not meet the minimum standard required, as stated in the Building a Better Future strategy. For example there would be no en-suite facilities.
More information to help you feed back on the proposals

If Heathfield did close, would the residents have to move very far?
The new Dementia Care Home at Bowthorpe is 4.5 miles from Heathfield. The range of other care services in and around the Norwich area means residents should be able to remain living in the area close to friends and relatives if they want to.

If Heathfield did close, how soon would residents need to move?
Heathfield would not close straight away. If the proposal is agreed, it would be closed once the new Bowthorpe scheme has been completed. The expected date is mid-2016. Closer to the time all residents would be individually assessed by Norfolk County Council and they would be offered care and accommodation that meets their needs.

Norfolk County Council has lots of experience in assessing the impact on people of such a move and ensuring that any move is handled carefully and sensitively and that the residents involved are fully supported.

If you need to create more care places why is NorseCare considering closing care homes?
The Building a Better Future strategy means that rather than providing care in residential homes we would like to be able to develop accommodation that people said they wanted, which is housing with care and specialist dementia homes.

If Heathfield was sold to another provider what would happen?
This would mean that NorseCare would no longer run the care home and the staff would be likely to transfer to a new provider.

There is nothing wrong with the accommodation provided at Heathfield so why suggest closing it?
These changes are being proposed to improve the environment and lives of the current residents and older people who will need care in the future. It is also in line with what people have said they want in the long term in Norfolk.
To bring Heathfield up to the same standard that will be available in the new specialist dementia home would mean a reduction in the overall number of places in order to develop en-suite bedrooms. These rooms would be smaller than the new bedrooms and would not have the same level of facilities which would be provided within the Dementia Care Home. These improvements would also involve considerable disruption for residents living at the scheme if work was undertaken.

**Does NorseCare have plans to close any more of its care homes in the county?**
Norfolk County Council’s Building a Better Future strategy sets out the type of accommodation that people said they wanted in the future. NorseCare has been set up to deliver this strategy, however any proposals required to deliver this would be subject to a formal consultation process.

**Who we are consulting**
We are consulting with:

- Residents living at Heathfield
- Relatives of residents living at Heathfield
- All staff working at Heathfield
- Trade unions
- County Councillors
  - Group leaders
  - Local members
  - Adult Social Care Committee
  - Other members
- Norwich City Council
- MPs
- Age UK - local branch
- Alzheimer’s Society
- Norfolk and Waveney NHS Foundation Trust
- Norfolk County Council Assistant Director for Integrated Services (Norwich) and Norwich Head of Integrated Commissioning
- GPs
- Norwich Clinical Commissioning Group
- Local residents
- Staff at other NorseCare homes
- Norfolk Older People’s Forum
How we are consulting

- Through this consultation document.
- We are also holding face to face meetings with current residents and their families.
- We are holding separate meetings with the staff affected by the proposed changes.

When we are consulting

Our consultation starts on 4 June 2015 and will run for 12 weeks until 28 August 2015.

What we want to find out

We are asking for your views on options for the future of Heathfield.

We are particularly interested in your views on NorseCare’s preferred option, which is to close Heathfield and transfer care to the new Care Village in Bowthorpe, Norwich.

However, we want your views on all options and any others that we might not have considered that would help us to achieve the Building a Better Future strategy.

How you can respond to the consultation

You can fill in our online feedback form at: http://surveys.insighttrack.co.uk/carehomesconsultation

You can send back a paper feedback form by popping it in an envelope addressed to:

FREEPOST INSIGHT TRACK

(Please use capital letters and don’t write anything else on the envelope - you do not need to use a stamp)

We need your consultation feedback by 28 August 2015.
How we will feed back to you

In October 2015 we will hold meetings for staff, residents and relatives to tell them the results of the consultation and what has been decided. We will let other interested people know directly by letter or email. We will publicise the results in the local media for the wider audience.

How the final decision will be made

We will feed back the findings of this consultation to the NorseCare Liaison Board. Taking the feedback into account, the NorseCare Liaison Board will then make a recommendation to Norfolk County Council. The Executive Director of Adult Social Services, along with the chair and spokespersons of the Adult Social Care Committee will decide whether or not to accept NorseCare's recommendation.

If NorseCare recommend closing any homes and Norfolk County Council approves the proposal, NorseCare will make the decision to close the homes. NorseCare would then put plans in place to ensure that residents are fully supported throughout the process.

Where you can go for more information

If you are a staff member, resident or relative, meetings are being set up to discuss these options further, otherwise please contact Karen Knight, NorseCare Ltd, tel 01603 894363 or email: contact@norsecare.co.uk
Heathfield consultation – feedback form

Please answer the following questions. If there is not enough space for you to give us your views, please do feel free to write on another piece of paper and attach it. If you currently live in one of the homes and you need support to fill in this survey please call NorseCare on 01603 894366 and we will find someone to help you.

Q1 What do you think of NorseCare’s preferred option – option 1 - Close Heathfield and transfer to the new specialist dementia home in the new care village in Bowthorpe, Norwich or to a place in another care home. How would this option affect you if it went ahead? Please write in the box below:

Q2 Which option do you prefer for the future of Heathfield? Please tick one only:

☐ Option 1 – Close Heathfield and transfer to the new specialist dementia home in the new care village in Bowthorpe, Norwich or to a place in another care home. Please note: This is the option that NorseCare prefer.

☐ Option 2 - Do nothing and keep Heathfield as it is.

☐ Option 3 – Admit no more residents to Heathfield and allow the home to close over a number of years.

☐ Option 4 – Refurbish Heathfield to new Building a Better Future strategy standards.

☐ Option 5 - Sell Heathfield to another care home provider.

☐ Don’t know.
Q3 Please tell us why you said that by writing in the box below:


Q4 Are there any other options that we have not considered for Heathfield that would help us to achieve the Building a Better Future strategy? If yes, please tell us about these by writing in the box below:


Please place a tick against the descriptions that apply to you

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I live at Heathfield</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am supporting someone who lives at Heathfield to respond to this consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have a relative who lives at Heathfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>I work at Heathfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>I live in or around Norwich</td>
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<td>I represent people living in or around Norwich</td>
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I represent older people

I provide health or social care support to older people living in or around Norwich

Other (please state)

About you

At Norfolk County Council we want to make sure that our services are open and accessible and that our consultations are representative of the community we serve. Please help us measure how far we are achieving this by answering the following questions.

Please note: You do not have to give us this information but it will help us if you do. We will keep this information confidential and not use it for any other purpose.

1. How old are you?

2. Are you? (Please tick one box only)

   Male  □   Female  □

3. How would you describe your ethnic background/nationality?

   For example
   White British / Black British

4. What is your first language?
5. Would you describe yourself as having a sensory disability (affecting your sight or hearing), physical disability, learning difficulty or long term illness? Please circle one only.

Yes  /  No

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Important note: under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other legislation, responses to this consultation (including personal information) may be published or disclosed. If you want the information you provide to be treated as confidential, it would be helpful if you could tell us the reason below. Although we can take these into account if we are asked to disclose your information, we can’t promise that we will be able to maintain confidentiality, because of the statutory Code of Practice we are bound by. For example, an automatic request for confidentiality generated by your computer will not, in itself, be regarded as binding on us.

Thank you for your help.

You can fill in our online feedback form at: http://surveys.insighttrack.co.uk/carehomesconsultation

You can send back a paper feedback form to: FREEPOST RSCB-RBGE-ALRZ, Insight Track Ltd., The Glasshouse, Kings Lane, NORWICH, NR1 3PS – You do not need to use a stamp.

We need your consultation feedback by 28 August 2015.

If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 and we will do our best to help.