

Family Centre Site Locations Report

Summary

There are currently 35 children's centres and 2 satellite sites across Buckinghamshire. This report sets out the proposed site locations for 16 family centres (at retained children's centre sites) and proposals for closing 19 children's centres (and 2 satellite sites) and their future use.

The annexes at the end of this report include:

- A – Site choice rationale
- B – Maps of proposed family centre locations
- C – Alternative use for buildings proposed to be closed as children's centres

The Family Centre Network

1. As part of the Council's proposed service delivery model, services would be delivered from 16 buildings across the county, as well as through online and telephone services, and individual support delivered at family homes or at other community venues. The overall number of fixed delivery sites is proposed to ensure localised delivery and reach across the county.
2. All family centre sites are proposed to be retained children's centre buildings in order to ensure a continuing focus on the delivery of early years provision, as well as widening the use of the building for the benefit of families with older children. The family centres would continue to operate as the locations for the Council's children's centres with continuing registration of use with the Department for Education (DfE), and in accordance with all statutory requirements.
3. Currently, the existing children's centre buildings are in many cases under-utilised and are not cost-effective to maintain. Efficiencies from a reduction in the running costs of buildings means that more funding is available for service delivery.

New site location considerations

4. The Council has considered how best to meet its statutory obligations in relation to the selection of sites for retained children's centres and service delivery.
5. In particular, attention has been made to follow the relevant requirements under the following sets of guidance:
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, DfE¹
 - Statutory guidance on children's centres 2013, DfE²
 - Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services 2013, DfE.³
6. In line with the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 Statutory Guidance, the factors used as the basis for site consideration included evidence on the needs of different localities (as published in a research report), which were informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The service design model and types of services to be delivered at family centres is also informed by consideration of evidence on the effectiveness of current services (as set out in an options appraisal).
7. To meet the Council's statutory duty to ensure sufficient children's centres within the area, as set out in the statutory guidance on children's centres 2013, consideration has been given in particular to:
 - The accessibility of children's centres and their services, taking into account the distance and the availability of transport.
 - The evidence in regard to each children's centre with a presumption against closure, unless the Council has the supporting evidence to demonstrate that the most disadvantaged would not be adversely affected.
8. The Council has also given consideration to the need to meet its statutory obligation to ensure sufficient high quality early years provision across Buckinghamshire.
9. A range of factors have informed the proposals regarding which children's centre buildings to be retained and used as family centres. These include:

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf

2

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678913/childrens_centre_stat_guidance_april-2013.pdf

3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_-_stat_guidance.pdf

- a) **The views of the public and partners**—See consultation report provided by BMG Research, Appendix 1 of the Cabinet papers.
- b) **Overall need levels by area**—The identified need of children and families for additional support was considered based upon the analysis set out in the research report for this review (see background papers). This research report identified composite needs based on a range of five risk factors:
- Domestic Violence
 - Assault
 - Mental Health
 - Neglect
 - Substance Misuse
- c) **Population density**—At least one family centre is proposed in each of the three largest towns in the county: Aylesbury, Wycombe and Amersham. One of these centres per town will be called family centre plus sites and deliver services five days a week with drop-in access.
- d) **Coverage and reach across Buckinghamshire**—Buckinghamshire is a rural county which means that not all towns are within easy travel distance for rural communities. Enabling broad coverage of children’s centres across the county was a key consideration.
- e) **Practical building considerations**—Consideration was given to the suitability of the building for a wide-range of family activities, the size of the venue and access. In addition, the potential for the building to be used by partners, particularly health, has been considered to improve joint working.
- f) **The effectiveness of current children’s centres**—Evidence on the impact of potential closures has been considered from a range of sources including considering data on the current use and reach of the buildings (as published in the Council’s research report), as well as consultation responses.
- g) **The potential for sites to be used for wider early years provision**—The Council has had preliminary discussions with site owners and other interested parties to test the viability of children’s centre buildings being used to help meet the Council’s statutory responsibility to ensure sufficiency of early years provision where they might be closed formally as children’s centres.

Family Centre Plus Sites

10. Out of the 16 family centre locations identified, the Council is committed to ensuring that three of these sites deliver extra services to meet needs. At these family centre plus sites families will be able to access drop-in support five days a week, as well as a wide variety of family support, including joint health delivery. From September 2019 the initial intended location of the family centre plus sites will be:
- Mapledean, High Wycombe
 - Newtown, Chesham
 - Southcourt, Aylesbury
11. The exact range and configuration of services delivered at the family centres will be developed as part of the implementation planning with local community engagement.
12. As part of the service design model it is intended that the advertised programmes will change to meet local needs over time, including which of the family centres will host the drop-in access. A key consideration for the drop-in access will be to ensure that this is provided in the most accessible centres in areas of high population density.

Staff office locations

13. The Family Support Service staffing will be structured to operate three area-based teams: Aylesbury Vale; Wycombe and Chiltern/South Bucks. Staff will operate flexibility to work across these areas to respond to need. Three area office bases are intended to operate from the following sites: Elmhurst Family Centre (Aylesbury Vale Area); Castlefield/Hamilton Road (Wycombe area); and from Chiltern District Council offices (Chiltern/South Bucks).

Alternative uses of children's centre sites

14. 19 children's centres are proposed for closure as designated children's centres registered with the DfE. Whilst these buildings would no longer be used as formally designated children's centres, the Council is proposing that they continue to be used for the benefit of families with children 0-5 and wider community benefit.
15. As part of the consultation process, the Council asked for views on possible alternative uses of buildings. More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents agreed with the Council's aim that children's centre buildings proposed for closure should continue to be used for community benefit, particularly early years provision.

16. During the consultation process preliminary discussions took place between the Council and relevant site owners/leaseholders to identify alternative uses for those sites where the Council either owns the building or is a leaseholder.

17. A key consideration in these discussions has been to ensure that where a DfE SureStart grant was provided that the building continues to be utilised for early years majority usage to meet the grant conditions.

18. Following these discussions the types of use proposed for the 19 children’s centre sites are:

- a. School sites—additional nursery/pre-school places (8)
- b. School sites—continuing early years provision e.g. baby & toddler groups, health clinics, and wider school and or community use (4)
- c. Library sites—continuing early years provision as above. (3)
- d. Community sites—continuing early years provision as above (2)
- e. Centres to be closed where there was no fixed address so no building (2)

Proposed future use of children’s centres

Area	Retention	Closure & alternative use
Aylesbury Vale	Aylesbury (Southcourt) Children’s Centre Early Years Excellence Hub (Elmhurst) Aylesbury (Berryfields: Quarrendon) Children’s Centre Wing Children’s Centre Buckingham Children’s Centre	Aylesbury (South West) Children’s Centre Aylesbury (Oakfield and Bedgrove) Children’s Centre (Broughton) Early Years Excellence Hub (Bearbrook) Children’s Centre Waddesdon & Whitchurch Children’s Centre Haddenham Children’s Centre Wendover Children’s Centre Ivinghoe & Pitstone Children’s Centre Steeple Claydon Children’s Centre
Wycombe	Mapledean Children’s Centre (Wycombe Abbey) High Wycombe (Castfield) Wycombe (Hampden Way) Children’s Centre Wycombe (Disraeli) Children’s Centre Marlow Children’s Centre Risborough Children’s Centre	Wycombe (East) Children’s Centre (Micklefield: Ash Hill) Wycombe (Millbrook) Children’s Centre Hamilton Rd Children’s Centre (High Wycombe Terriers & Amersham Hill) Stokenchurch & Hambleden Valley Children’s Centre Hazlemere & Loudwater Children’s Centre Wooburn Green & Bourne End Children’s Centre
Chilterns & South Bucks	Newtown Children’s Centre Amersham Children’s Centre Burnham Children’s Centre Beaconsfield Children’s Centre	The Chalfonts Children’s Centre Prestwood & Missenden Children’s Centre Farnham Children’s Centre Denham & Gerrards Cross Children’s

	The Ivers Children's Centre	Centre Chesham (Waterside) Children's Centre
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Annex A: Rationale for Site Proposals

Note: Shaded cells indicate children's centres proposed for retention. Non-shaded centres are those existing children's centres which are proposed for closure. This means that the County Council would de-designate these buildings as children's centres with the DfE. However, this does not mean that the buildings would be empty (see Annex C for alternative uses).

Aylesbury Vale Delivery Sites

There are five family centre sites proposed in the Aylesbury Vale district area overall: three in the Aylesbury town centre area, and two in surrounding villages to maximise accessibility in rural communities.

The Aylesbury town centre area has a high population density and significant composite early help need levels in comparison to other areas in Buckinghamshire. It will also see the largest housing growth in the surrounding areas. Consideration has been given to ensure a good geographical coverage of centres across the town centre, as well as across the whole of the Aylesbury Vale district area to meet local needs.

	Centre Name	Rationale for decision
1	Aylesbury (Southcourt) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrounding areas have high rates of composite needs for early help services. The building is large enough to enable a wide-range of service provision and staff use, and it is in a good location for public transport and car access.
2	Early Years Excellence Hub (Elmhurst) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrounding areas have high rates of composite needs for early help services.
3	Aylesbury (Berryfields: Quarrenden) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surrounding areas have high rates of composite needs for early help services. Situated in an area of housing growth with the population of 0-19 forecast to rise.
4	Wing Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situated in the centre of an isolated area of relative high composite need for early help services. This location provides greater accessibility to a family centre for residents in the rural surrounding areas.
5	Buckingham Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buckingham town centre is an area of high relative need for early help services. It is also the largest town within the north Buckinghamshire area with the best transportation access for service users.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Buckingham Children’s Centre is proposed for retention based upon the needs within the area. However, through the consultation process service users and stakeholder organisations highlighted the limitations of the current building which is a room within the Grenville school site. The current location and size means that whilst it can continue to be used as a children’s centre for early years provision other venues in the town may need to be used for wider family service delivery. • In the longer-term the Council will be looking to explore other possible alternative venues for a fixed family centre (and children’s centre) within the Buckingham town centre to improve accessibility for families.
6	Aylesbury (South West) Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst this is a registered children’s centre with the DfE there is no fixed delivery site. • Services are currently delivered by Spurgeons, on behalf of the Council, through offering a programme of activities across a cluster of children’s centres. • Health provision will continue unaffected in the area as they do not use a current children’s centre building. • Residents living in this area have good access to alternative children’s centres in Aylesbury town.
7	Aylesbury (Oakfield and Bedgrove) Children’s Centre (Broughton)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Aylesbury town centre area the Council has identified three children’s centres to retain to meet the needs of town residents. • The sites identified for retention have higher levels of need compared to this site.
8	Early Years Excellence Hub (Bearbrook) Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This site is close to the proposed retained Southcourt Children’s Centre so this was discounted in order to ensure good geographical spread across Aylesbury town.
9	Steeple Claydon Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
10	Waddesdon & Whitchurch Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children’s centre is located in a property owned by Waddesdon Parish Council which is leased to the County Council. The parish council are keen to continue with a range of early years delivery from their site including widening access so that childminders can use the space. • Given the community-led desire to use the space to meet early years needs in the community the Council is proposing this site for formal closure as a children’s centre.
11	Haddenham Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
12	Wendover Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in comparison to sites proposed for retention. • Identified need in the area for additional nursery provision. The Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of early years provision and this site has been identified as being suitable to help meet this need and duty.
13	Ivinghoe & Pitstone Children’s Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in comparison to sites proposed for retention. • Identified need in the area for additional nursery provision. • The Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of early years provision and this site has been identified as being suitable to help meet this need and duty.

Wycombe Delivery Sites

There are six family centres proposed in the Wycombe district area overall: four in the town area and two in the surrounding areas to maximise travel accessibility.

The Wycombe town area has a high population density and significant composite early help need levels in comparison to other areas in Buckinghamshire.

Given the need levels of the town population four family centres are proposed overall in High Wycombe. Consideration has been given to their best location to ensure geographical coverage across the town as well as respond best to local needs.

	Centre Name	Rationale for decision
14	Mapledean Children's Centre (Wycombe Abbey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively high composite need for early help services in surrounding areas. The building provides a large and high quality space for the delivery of a wide range of services/activities.
15	High Wycombe (Castlefield) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively high composite need for early help services in surrounding areas. The building provides a large and high quality space for the delivery of a wide range of services/activities.
16	Wycombe (Hampden Way) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This site was originally proposed in the Council's consultation for closure and is now proposed for retention. Consultation feedback highlighted the desirability of a wider geographical spread of children's centres across the Wycombe town area. It is located in an area of high composite early help need in the surrounding area.
17	Wycombe (Disraeli) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This site was originally proposed in the Council's consultation for closure and is now proposed for retention. Consultation feedback highlighted the relative high levels of usage, reach and need levels in the surrounding area.
18	Marlow Children's Centre (Foxes Piece)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining a children's centre in Marlow helps to ensure a good geographical coverage of centres across Buckinghamshire to maximise their accessibility to residents.
19	Risborough Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retaining a children's centre in Risborough helps to ensure a good geographical coverage of centres across Buckinghamshire to maximise their accessibility to residents.
20	Wycombe (East) Children's Centre (Micklefield: Ash Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wycombe East is an area of high composite need for early help services. This site is proposed for closure as the building space is small – one room. The size limits the usage of the space currently and health partners deliver from alternative sites in the area. Residents will be able to access services from Hampden Way Family Centre, as well as continuing

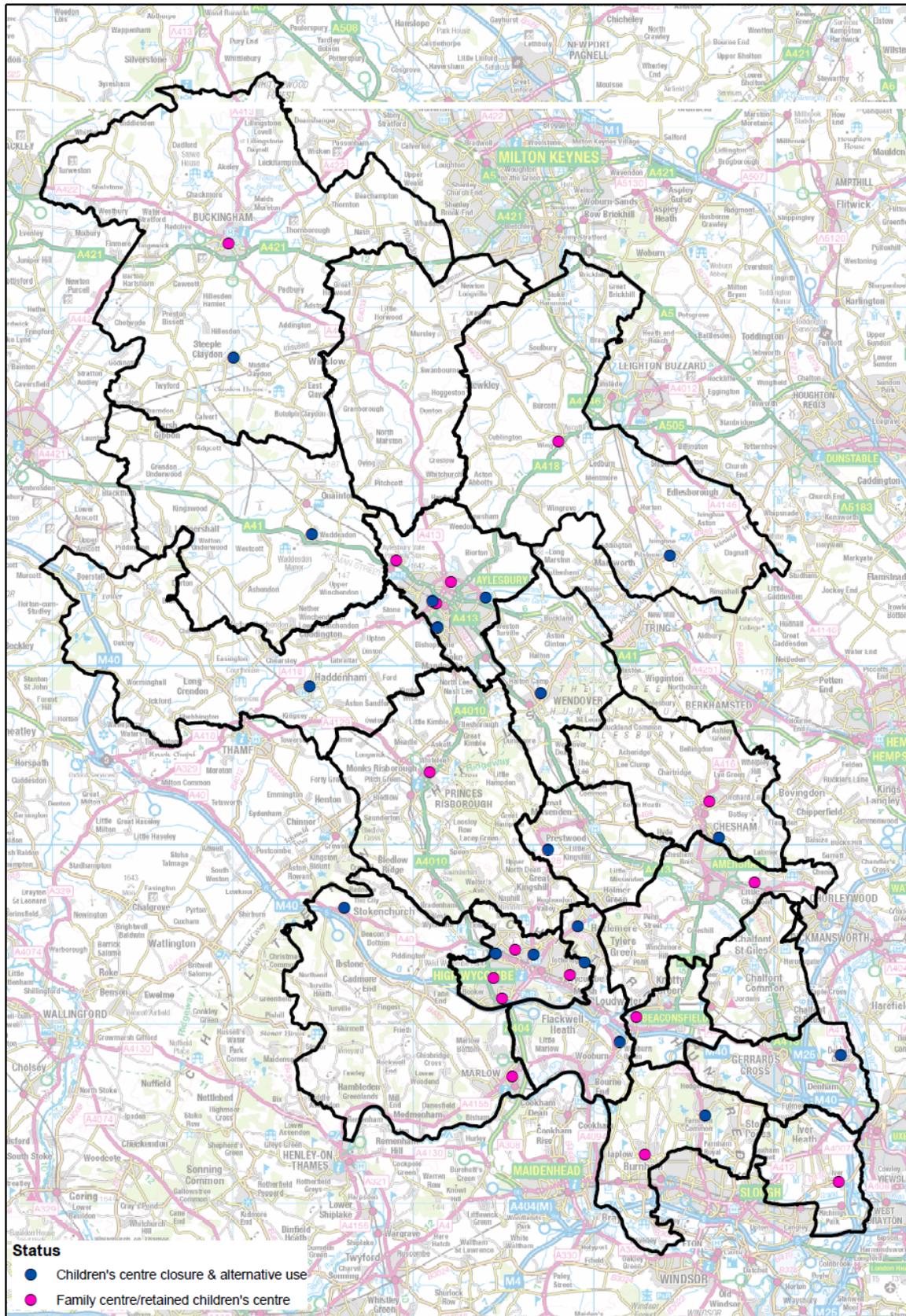
		health provision in the area which is unaffected.
21	Wycombe (Millbrook) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively lower levels of composite early help need in immediate surrounding areas, as well as user numbers in comparison to those sites proposed for retention in Wycombe town area. • In addition, the school has responded that their intention is to continue to ensure that the building space is available for continuing use for early years provision and health use.
22	Hamilton Rd Children's Centre (High Wycombe Terriers & Amersham Hill)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower levels of composite early help need in immediate surrounding areas, as well as user numbers in comparison to those sites proposed for retention in Wycombe town area.
23	Stokenchurch & Hambleden Valley Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
24	Hazlemere & Loudwater Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
25	Wooburn Green & Bourne End Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
<p>Note: There are two satellite sites to children's centres which are also proposed for alternative use. The first site is a satellite to Marlow Children's Centre at Sandygate Road, Marlow Infant School and proposed for nursery or school use.</p> <p>The second is a satellite site to Stokenchurch & Hambleden Valley Children's Centre at Lane End Primary School and the school is committed to continuing to use the space for early year provision including health delivery.</p>		

Chiltern & South Buckinghamshire Sites

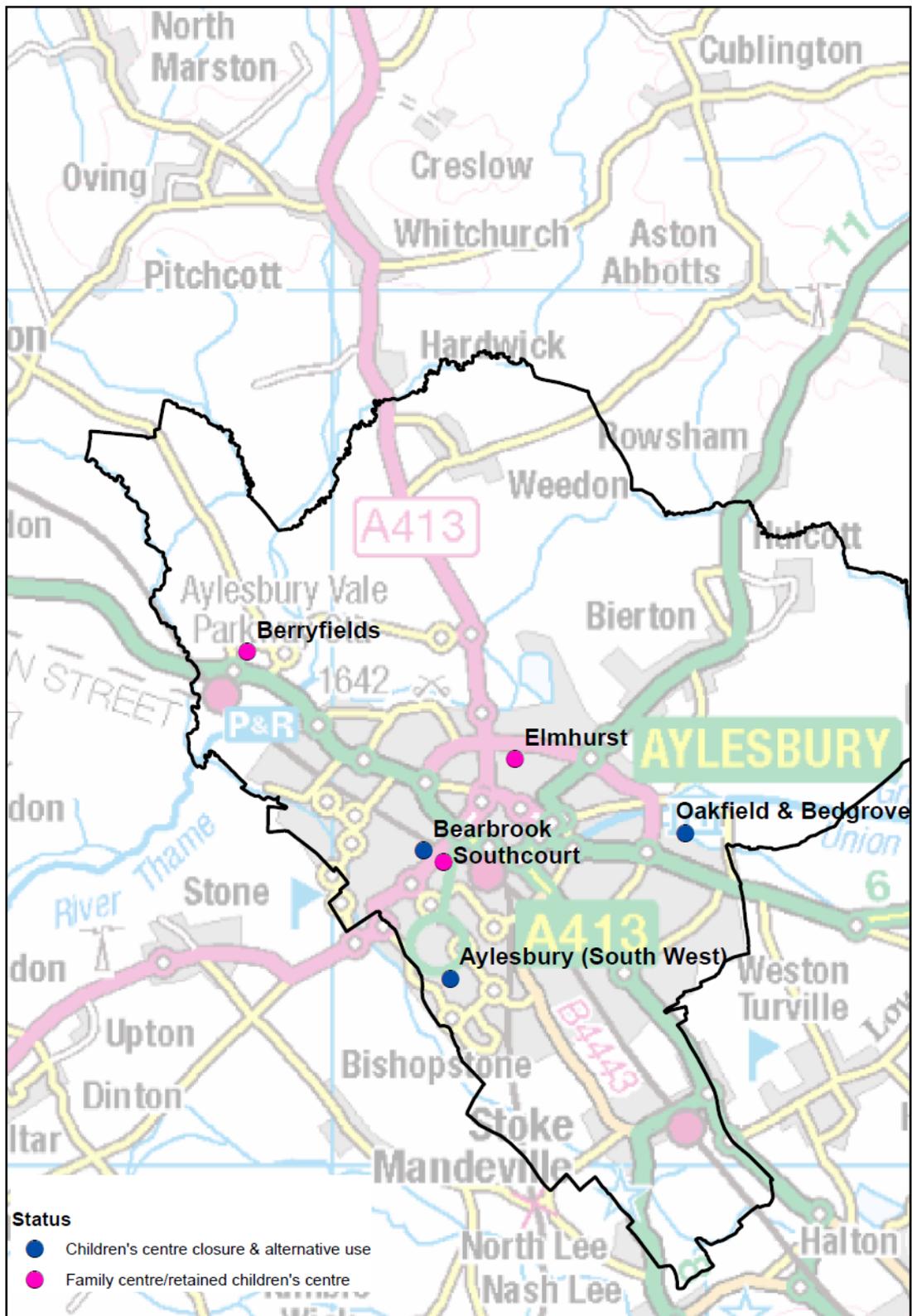
Five family centres are proposed across the Chiltern and South Bucks district areas overall. The area is relatively rural with a low population density overall. Particular regard was therefore given to ensuring a sufficient geographical coverage of centres to ensure accessibility, recognising the limited public transport between areas.

	Centre Name	Rationale for decision
26	Newtown Children's Centre (Chesham)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in Chesham town area which is an area of relatively high composite early help need. • Out of the two centres in Chesham it has a significantly higher number of users and reach.
27	Amersham Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in an area with a large 0-19 population in the surrounding areas. • Amersham in population terms is the fourth largest town after Aylesbury, Wycombe and Chesham.
28	Burnham Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in and close to isolated areas of high composite need for early help services. • This location ensures a geographical coverage in the far south of the county, to maximise the accessibility of family centres to residents in rural isolated areas.
29	Beaconsfield Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated near to isolated areas of high composite need for early help services.
30	The Ivers Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in an area of high composite early help need in the surrounding area. • This location ensures a geographical coverage in the far south of the county, to maximise the accessibility of family centres to residents in an area with limited public transportation to alternative centres.
31	The Chalfonts Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention. • Whilst this is a registered children's centre with the DfE there is no fixed delivery site. • Services are currently delivered by Action for Children, on behalf of the Council, through offering a programme of activities across a cluster of children's centres with the centre hub at Beaconsfield children's centre (proposed for retention). • Health provision will continue unaffected in the area as they do not use a specific children's centre building. • Residents living in this area have good access to a family centre at Beaconsfield.
32	Prestwood & Missenden Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
33	Farnham Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
34	Denham & Gerrards Cross Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower level of composite early help need in surrounding area in comparison to sites proposed for retention.
35	Chesham (Waterside) Children's Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in Chesham town area which is an area of relatively high composite early help need. In comparison to Newtown children's centre, this site is in a relatively lower area of need with lower numbers of users and reach.

Annex B – Proposed Family Centres across Buckinghamshire



Aylesbury Town: Detailed View



Annex C: Alternative uses proposed for children’s centre’s proposed for closure

Children’s Centre	Type of location	Tenure	Future use—Outcome of preliminary engagement
Aylesbury Vale District Sites			
Aylesbury (South West) Children’s Centre	n/a	n/a	n/a – no fixed address.
Aylesbury (Oakfield and Bedgrove) Children’s Centre (Broughton)	School	Freehold	Additional pre-school places. The pre-school on the site is oversubscribed and there is an identified need for more early years places in the area.
Early Years Excellence Hub (Bearbrook) Children’s Centre	School	Freehold	Additional pre-school places. The pre-school on the site is oversubscribed and there is an identified need for more early years places in the area.
Steeple Claydon Children’s Centre	School	Freehold	The school has confirmed its intention to use the space to support continuing early years provision, including use of the building for health clinic delivery.
Waddesdon & Whitchurch Children’s Centre	Parish Council	Leasehold	Waddesdon Parish Council would like to take back the management of this space for continuing early years provision, including use by childminding groups and wrap around early years care.
Haddenham Children’s Centre	Library	Leasehold	The children’s centre operates from the community library there is no separate building. The library would like to utilise the space for continuing community benefit and children’s library.
Wendover Children’s Centre	School campus	Freehold	Nursery provision. There is an identified need in the area and suitable standalone site for full-time day care provision.
Ivinghoe & Pitstone Children’s Centre	School	Leasehold	Additional pre-school places. The pre-school on the site is oversubscribed and there is an identified need for more early years places in the area.

Wycombe District Area Sites			
Wycombe (East) Children's Centre (Micklefield: Ash Hill)	School	Freehold	The school is interested in exploring expanded nursery provision and the Council's officers are working with the school to help create a business plan.
Wycombe (Millbrook) Children's Centre	School	Freehold	The school would continue to use the space to provide early years provision through a programme of activities.
Hamilton Rd Children's Centre (High Wycombe Terriers & Amersham Hill)	Council stand-alone site	Freehold	The Council's Early Help Service intends to retain the first floor for staff office space and the ground floor for nursery provision.
Stokenchurch & Hambleden Valley Children's Centre	Private – Owned by Scouts	Leasehold	The Council would look to sub-lease to a nursery provider to meet the need for additional places in the area.
Hazlemere & Loudwater Children's Centre	Library	Freehold	The library would take on responsibility for the building and will continue to offer early years use and health provision.
Wooburn Green & Bourne End Children's Centre	School	Freehold	The school would take over the running of the building for continuing early years use and health provision.
Sandygate site at Marlow Infant School (satellite site to Marlow children's centre)	School	Freehold	The nursery on school site would use for extended space or school use for early years.
Lane End site at Lane End Primary School (satellite site to Stokenchurch & Hambleden Valley Children's Centre)	School	Freehold	The school would use the space for continuing early years services and continued health provision.
Chiltern and South Bucks Sites			
The Chalfonts Children's Centre	n/a	n/a	n/a – no fixed address.
Prestwood & Missenden Children's Centre	Holy Trinity Church	Leasehold	The Holy Trinity Church would take on the running on the building and continue to use the space for early years provision, including through continuing health provision delivery on site.
Farnham Children's Centre	Community Library	Freehold	The library would take on responsibility for the building and will continue to offer early years use and health provision.
Denham & Gerrards Cross Children's Centre	School	Freehold	The school would take on the running of the building and continue to use the space for continuing early years provision, including health

			service delivery and the potential for family support delivery and sensory space.
Chesham (Waterside) Children's Centre	School	Leasehold	The Academy Trust intends to use this space as office space for its headquarters.