

**SureStart**



Nottinghamshire  
County Council



North Nottinghamshire  
COLLEGE

# Worksop North East, North West and North Children's Centre Community Consultation – Main Report

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July 2007

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## Main Report

### 1 Background to the Research

- In line with the government's current initiative to introduce Sure Start Children's Centres into communities which fall within the top 20% and 30% of disadvantaged wards nationally, Nottinghamshire was given the go-ahead for 21 centres to be completed by March 2006, with 3 more to be started in Round One, but completed in Round Two by March 2007. A further 25 have followed in Round Two, and will be completed by March 2008.
- Within Worksop North, North East and North West, in line with the rest of Bassetlaw district, Nottinghamshire County Council have entered into a "commissioned accountable body" arrangement with North Nottinghamshire College, for the development and delivery of Sure Start Children's Centres services.
- Children's Centres are intended to provide services and support to children, aged from 0-5 years, their parents and carers, based on partnerships between statutory, voluntary and private organisations and the local authority. Partnership with local parents and their early involvement in planning of Children's Centres is an essential part of the ethos of the Children's Centres programme.
- It is the government's policy to develop Children's Centres within partnerships. Some may be based on a 'strong link' partnership, bringing together existing facilities (e.g. neighbourhood nursery, primary schools, family centre, library, health centre, community centre). Some may involve a new building, creating a one-stop centre attached to or on a school site. Even with a new 'one stop building', there will be a need for sound partnerships with other providers throughout the area.
- All Children's Centres areas will have child care available for 50 weeks a year, 8am – 6pm offering care integrated with education, for children aged 0-5 years.
- Children's Centres are built on the successful practice of Sure Start Local Programmes, which have now all been integrated into the Children's Centres programme.
- Depending on the variable position in childcare, education and other support in local communities, parents/carers and other residents are likely to have different experiences, and therefore will have variable views and feelings about the advent of a Children's Centre in their community.
- Understanding the views of both users and providers, who may be affected in the short and longer term by the implementation of the programme, is vital to ensure that the rollout of Children's Centres is successful and well received within communities.
- Central to the development of Children's Centres is parental involvement and participation in the planning, delivery, evaluation, management and governance of the centres, as appropriate structures emerge.
- Development of the Children's Centres is for families with children under 5; the centres have the potential for wider community use however and could develop into 'community centres for children' serving a wider age-range and incorporating, for example, after school care, holiday clubs etc in partnership with the Extending Services In and Around Schools programme.

- The Worksop North East, North West and North consultation was conducted in an inclusive manner, to enable any parent, worker or member of the community who wished to take part in the consultation to do so. The team aimed to comply with equal opportunities policies and principles throughout the consultation.
- Where possible, “hard-to-reach” families have been included, where service providers or other agencies were able to give contact details and encourage participation.

## 2 Aims and Objectives of the consultation

- Overall Aims:
  - to find out parents’ and carers’ views and opinions of existing services on offer for families and young children in their area and how best their requirements can be met in the future with the development of Children’s Centres;
  - to involve community members and partners in planning together to develop the optimal Children’s Centre services for the community.

Specific objectives are:

- i. To identify current provision of child care, education, health services, family support, leisure facilities and other services relevant to young children and their families, through existing sources where these exist, such as Children’s Information Service (CIS), databases or local knowledge
- ii. To identify gaps in the current provision of these services through the involvement and knowledge of service providers, and through discussion with local parents and the community
- iii. To determine which known services on offer are used by parents/carers
- iv. To determine levels of use of services amongst local parents/carers
- v. To gather information on how parents/carers rate the current services used and to seek views on how service delivery could be improved locally
- vi. To understand the likely take-up amongst local parents/carers of the proposed Children’s Centre
- vii. To determine an appropriate mechanism for receiving and disseminating information from different local groups
- viii. To identify local anxieties/perceptions/expectations and potential problems for a new Children’s Centre amongst parents/carers and partners
- ix. To establish appropriate benchmarks for future research and evaluation
- x. To conduct communications with parents in such a way that future involvement and participation in Children’s Centres is encouraged and promoted
- xi. To use the information gathered in the consultation to help create the delivery plan

### 3 Methodology

- The consultation consisted of face-to-face interviews with parents, through completion of a questionnaire; a questionnaire distributed to local service providers and key stakeholders, who were also invited to include a list of services in the area; three focus groups (one in each area in Worksop covered by the consultation) with parents recruited via the questionnaire. Parents at the focus groups also completed a mapping exercise of local services.
- The areas of Worksop covered by this consultation were Worksop NE (Prospect), Worksop North (Gateford) and Worksop NW (Sandy Lane and Rhodesia).

#### 3.1 Partners' Questionnaire

- Partners, key stakeholders and service providers were informed about the planned consultation in Worksop North East, North West and North at a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> May at Redlands School Table Tennis Centre. The partners' questionnaire was handed out to all who attended to complete at the meeting or return by 18<sup>th</sup> May 2007. In addition it was sent to partners who did not attend the meeting and to pre-school playgroups, day-care providers and registered childminders in the area.
- A mapping exercise was included as part of this questionnaire, asking for details of any services of which they were aware for the under 5s and their parents, in the Worksop North East, North West and North area, which includes Gateford, Prospect, Sandy Lane and Rhodesia areas, with times and contact details. It was used to develop a map of services available in the area to identify any service provision gaps or overlaps and to help identify locations for interviewing parents.
- The opportunity to give contact details was given on the questionnaire so that the team could make contact in the future; most respondents completed this section.

#### 3.2 Parent's Questionnaire

- The initial phase of the consultation with parents consisted of interviews with parents. It was planned to include:
    - Parents/carers with children under 8 years of age at local schools
    - Parents/carers who are users of local toddler groups and other sessions for parents and young children eg baby clinics, library sessions
    - Parents/carers living locally
  - Interviews were conducted on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2007. The venues were:
    - Rhodesia and Sandy Lane
      - Haggonfields Infant School and Nursery
      - Redlands Primary School and Nursery
      - Sandy Lane area
      - Kidzone
      - Town centre in vicinity of Newgate Health Centre
- Additionally, questionnaires were left for staff at the Albion Family Centre to complete with parents. Interviewers returned to St Anne's primary school later in the week since there were insufficient interviewers on the day to effectively cover all schools at peak times. Interviews were not conducted at Norbridge Primary School and

Nursery, or at Newgate Health Centre because permission to do so was not granted.

- Gateford and Prospect
  - Gateford Park Primary School
  - St John's Primary School
  - Prospect Hill Infant School and Nursery
  - Prospect Playgroup
  - Thievesdale parents and toddler session
  - Roman's Rest play centre
- Questionnaires were also completed by A1 Housing with their tenants from the area, and by staff with parents from North Notts College Nursery, Treetops Nursery and Westbourne House Nursery.
- Interviewers were recruited from the Partners' meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. They included workers from the Children's Centre central team and from Prospect Kilton Children's Centre, staff from Redlands School and St John's School, parents and four professional interviewers. Including the researchers, twenty interviewers were interviewing on that day for at least part of the day. A briefing session was held the day prior to interviewing parents for those who had not taken part in a Children's Centre consultation before, to familiarise interviewers with the questionnaire, address issues such as confidentiality and possible low literacy levels amongst some parents when interviewing, and to give an opportunity to clarify any questions arising.
- The questionnaire included an incentive prize draw for a gift voucher, and an invitation to take part in the planned focus groups. Contact details were taken where given, with permission for inclusion on the Children's Centre database for future contact, but this sheet was kept separate from the completed questionnaire to preserve confidentiality.

### 3.3 Focus Groups

- Because there are four distinct areas covered by this consultation, to have only one focus group would not have elicited sufficient information about local needs in each area. It was therefore decided to conduct a focus group in each of the four areas (Rhodesia, Sandy Lane, Prospect and Gateford) to ensure that all were fully represented in the qualitative research.
- Respondents for the focus groups were recruited from the contact sheet of the parent's questionnaire, from those who said they would be interested in taking part. Overall, 55% of parents were interested in attending a focus group.
- Parents who had definitely or possibly agreed to come along to the focus groups were contacted by telephone if possible to confirm whether they should do so, although tight timescales, incorrect telephone numbers or lack of a contact phone number sometimes prevented this. Those with children under five were given priority, and we tried to include a good spread of use of the various schools and GP surgeries.
- Nottinghamshire County Council provided a free crèche for the children of those parents wishing to use it and a £10 Argos gift voucher was given as a thank-you.

## Worksop North East, North West, North

- A letter confirming venue, time details, crèche requirements and incentive was sent to parents beforehand and they were contacted the day before the group to remind them to come.
- Ten parents agreed to come along to the Gateford focus group at Prospect Kilton Children's Centre on 8<sup>th</sup> June between 9.15am and 11am. A further three parents were invited by letter because they were not contactable by telephone. The day prior to the group two parents were no longer able to come. Six parents came on the day, including two dads. None of those 3 parents invited by letter alone came to the focus group.
- Six parents agreed to come along to the Prospect focus group at Kilton Children's Centre on 8<sup>th</sup> June between 1.15pm and 2.45pm. A further five who were only invited by letter were not able come along. In order to boost numbers, all were invited to bring a friend who lived in the area and had young children. The day before the group each respondent was telephoned again as a reminder to attend. At this point, five of the six parents still planned to come. In actuality, four of the invited parents attended, bringing two friends, making six in total. None of those who were not contactable by telephone attended.
- Only seven leads were available for Rhodesia. Five of these parents agreed to come to the focus group at Haggonfields Primary School on 11<sup>th</sup> June between 9.30am-11am. A further two parents were invited by letter. All five parents who committed to come attended the focus group, along with a further three parents who were dropping their children at Nursery. Two of these were only able to stay for half an hour of the group.
- Eight parents agreed to come to the Sandy Lane area focus group at St John's Church Hall on 11<sup>th</sup> June at 1.15pm-2.45pm. A further eight parents were invited by letter or a combination of answer-phone messages and letter because they were not contactable by telephone. The day before the group, two parents were no longer able to come. However, on the day, only two parents attended the group. None of those who were not directly contactable by telephone attended.
- A mapping exercise was completed as part of each focus group to gather knowledge about existing services for them and their children in the area.
- As part of the introduction to the groups, a local Sure Start Centre worker gave an explanation about Children's Centres. This enabled the groups to have a wider understanding of the concept of Children's Centres before the discussion started.

## 4 Observations on the Samples

### 4.1 Parent's Questionnaire

- 160 interviews were completed with parents/carers at the various interviewing points.
- 140 respondents (87%) were female and 20 (13%) were male.
- 32% of respondents were aged under 29, while 51% were between 30 and 39. 16% were aged over 40.
- 77% of those interviewed had at least one child under the age of 5 in the household. 47% had just one child in this age group, with 19% having two and 4% having three.
- The total number of children aged under five in families interviewed was 153.
- Nine parents (6%) reported that they were currently expecting a baby.
- 67% of those interviewed had one or more children aged between 5 and 16 years of age. 34% had one child in this age range, 18% had two and 7% had three or more.
- The total number of children aged five or over in families interviewed was 157.
- Seven respondents had one or more children aged 16 plus in their household.
- Between them, respondents had 320 children of all ages; the number of families with one child was 30, 74 families had two children, whilst 25 families had three children. Five families had four children, seven families had five children and two families had six children in the household. Five said they had no children living in their household (although they might have been five of the nine expecting a baby) and twelve did not reply to this question.
- Of the 160 interviews completed, the 148 who answered this question had an average number of 2.0 children per household.
- While only 30% of respondents were working full time, 39% were working part time and only 3% described themselves as unemployed. A third (34%) said they were a parent/carer, 3% said they were a grandparent and one person was another relative or friend.
- Three-quarters (74%) were either married or partnered, while 18% described themselves as single.
- 78% of households had two adults aged over 18 living together in the household, while 18% lived in households with only one adult. Just 2% reported having three or more adults in the household. The average was 1.9 people in the household aged 18+.
- 99% of respondents described themselves as white, while 1% were of mixed race.
- All except two respondents' postcodes fell into S80 or S81.

## 4.2 Partners' Questionnaire

- 17 completed questionnaires were received from service providers in the Worksop North East, North West and North area, all of which gave contact details.
- As the table below shows, responses were from a range of partners, including those involved in pre-school care and early years' education, those with an interest in adult education and employment, and support organisations for families.

**Table 1 – Partners' disciplines**

Discipline	No of responses
Nursery	3
Children's Centre/PLA <sup>1</sup>	3
Childminding	2
Education	2
Councillors	1
Family Centre	1
Housing	1
Community	1
Job Centre Plus	1
CIS <sup>2</sup>	1
Toddler group	1
TOTAL	17

- The roles of service-providers are shown below.

**Table 2 – Partners' roles**

PLA development manager
PLA development co-ordinator
Registered Childminder x2
Children's Centre co-ordinator
Community development worker
County Councillor
Nursery proprietor
Nursery manager (x2)
Family learning co-ordinator
Family Centre manager
Customer services (housing)
Information officer
Lone parent adviser (Job Centre Plus)
Acting head teacher
Toddler group leader

- The respondents varied in the length of time in their current roles, from six months to 23 years. In total they had 86 years of experience, with an average of five years each.

<sup>1</sup> Pre-school Learning Alliance

<sup>2</sup> Children's Information Service

### 4.3 Focus Groups

#### 4.3.1 Gateford (Worksop North)

- Four mothers and two fathers attended this focus group, totalling six participants.
- Between them, they had 19 children, nine of whom were aged five and under.
- Three had two children, two had three and one had seven children.
- All were from two-parent families. Both fathers were working full time, juggling childcare with their partners. One mother was self-employed with her partner, relying on her sister to share childcare. Another mother worked as a childminder and one was on maternity leave. One mother did not do paid work.

#### 4.3.2 Prospect (Worksop North East)

- Six mothers attended this group.
- Between them they had twelve children, seven of whom were aged five or under.
- Two had three children, two had two children and two had one child.
- All except one had no live-in partner. Two were working part time school hours, two were training to be NVQ3 teaching assistants, and two were not working although one was looking for part time employment.

#### 4.3.3 Rhodesia (Worksop North West)

- Eight mothers attended this group.
- Between them they had 19 children, nine of whom were aged five or under.
- Three mothers had three children, one had four, two had two children and two had one child.
- Five of the eight had a partner. Two of the mothers worked part time

#### 4.3.4 Sandy Lane (Worksop North West)

- Just two mothers attended this focus group.
- One had two children aged 2 and 8 and worked part time, juggling childcare with her partner.
- The other had three children, one of whom was under five, and also worked part time, using a local day nursery for childcare.

## Main Findings

### 5 Parent's Questionnaire

- A total of 160 questionnaires were completed well, in excess of the target of 100. Given that there were around 884 under fives in the area, and 153 under fives lived in the families of respondents, the research reached a respectable 18% of this population. In terms of coverage of area, this breaks down to 18% in Worksop NE (Prospect), 11% in Worksop North (Gateford) and 16% in Worksop NW (Sandy Lane and Rhodesia). Remaining parents of whom there were 39 came from the surrounding area – Kilton, St Anne's, Town Centre or Manton. This perhaps reflects the trend in the area for travelling to services (because local services are often not available), so children at one school can come from a wide area across Worksop, although it is not known where these people were interviewed.
- Three-quarters (76%) of respondents said they had heard about Sure Start. A fifth (19%) had not heard of it and 5% were not sure.
- Awareness of Sure Start was lower among men than women, although more than half of men had heard of it (55%)<sup>3</sup> but did not differ significantly by age, marital status or location.
- Over a third (38%) of respondents were aware of the proposed Children's Centre to be developed in their area, although only 19% of Sandy Lane residents were aware.

#### 5.1 Services Ever Used

- All respondents were asked which local services they had ever used, using a showcard (see Appendix 2). Their responses are shown in Table 3 below, ranked by number of mentions. Responses are shown for all respondents, and for the four residential locations affected by new Children's Centre services.
- Shaded cells represent a significant difference from the total for all respondents.
- Care must be taken when numbers responding are low, as these may not typically reflect the views of all local people in this sub-group (eg we only spoke to 17 people living in Rhodesia and 22 people from Prospect).
- Health services were most often reported as being used by at least seven in ten respondents, with the notable exception of antenatal classes, used by less than half (46%).
- The Children's Library Service was used by 60%, and a Nursery in a school was used by 53%, rising to 77% of those in Prospect.
- Family members (46%) were the most commonly used childcare after nursery in a school, whilst 35% used a pre-school playgroup, 31% used a day nursery and 29% relied on friends for childcare. Day nursery use was higher in Gateford, at 44%. Registered childminders were used by 13% of parents.
- After-school clubs were used by 14% and breakfast clubs by 13%.
- Job Centres were mentioned by 20%, rising to 31% of those aged under 29.
- 14% had used Speech Therapists, while 13% had used Further Education.

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<sup>3</sup> Care must be taken in interpretation because of small base sizes. (Men n=20)

- 12% of parents said they had had a home visit, while 10% had accessed a breast feeding group.
- All other services were used by less than 10% of parents overall.

**Table 3 – services ever used**

Service	% ever used service (N = 160)	Home address			
		Gateford N = 55	Rhodesia N=17	Sandy Lane N = 27	Prospect N = 22
	%	%	%	%	%
GP Practice	88	95	76	81	95
Health Visitors	77	75	76	78	82
Midwife	74	65	82	70	91
Children's Library Service	60	69	65	67	41
Nursery in a school	53	45	59	48	77
Antenatal sessions	46	45	59	52	32
Family member	46	47	35	63	36
Toddler group	44	51	53	41	41
Pre-school playgroup	35	44	29	41	23
Day nursery	31	44	24	15	27
Friends	29	31	24	33	23
Job Centres	20	18	35	26	5
After school club	14	16	6	7	9
Speech therapists	14	15	12	15	18
Breakfast club	13	20	6	7	-
Further education	13	20	18	4	9
Registered childminder	13	20	12	4	5
Home visits	12	15	-	11	9
Breast feeding group	10	13	12	4	9
Story time sessions	9	7	12	15	5
Children's Information Service	9	13	6	4	5
Crèche	8	11	6	4	9
Toy library	7	4	12	11	-
Dietician/nutritionist	6	4	-	7	9
Family Centre	5	2	-	4	5
Parenting advice and guidance	4	2	12	7	-
Home safety equipment	3	2	6	4	-
Independent school	3	2	12 <sup>4</sup>	-	-
Homestart	1	-	-	4	-

Shaded cells represent a significant difference from the total for all respondents.

<sup>4</sup> Can be explained by presence of a church school in area, which parents may perceive as 'independent'.

## 5.2 Usefulness of Services

- Respondents were then asked how useful they had found each of the services they had used.
- Responses are shown in Table 4 for each of the services mentioned, listed by amount of use to correspond with Table 3 above.

**Table 4 – usefulness of service**

Service	Numbers using service	Very useful	Quite useful	Not useful/not at all useful	Average score*
		%	%	%	
Toy library	11	82	9	-	4.9
Family member	74	91	1	-	4.8
Nursery in a school	84	83	11	2	4.7
Friends	47	83	9	6	4.7
Day nursery	50	68	14	6	4.5
GP Practice	141	59	25	4	4.4
Midwife	119	70	15	6	4.4
Children's Library Service	96	63	21	5	4.4
Toddler group	70	57	27	5	4.4
Pre-school playgroup	56	61	20	4	4.4
After school club	22	64	23	5	4.4
Crèche	13	62	15	-	4.4
Further education	21	57	24	10	4.3
Breakfast club	20	55	30	5	4.3
Health Visitors	123	50	19	12	4.1
Speech therapists	22	64	5	9	4.1
Home visits	19	58	11	11	4.1
Antenatal sessions	74	49	19	10	4.0
Breast feeding group	16	50	19	19	3.9
Story time sessions	14	43	21	7	3.9
Dietician/nutritionist	10	40	30	10	3.9
Registered childminder	21	38	19	14	3.8
Children's Information Service	14	36	14	7	3.8
Job Centres	32	28	13	19	3.5
Family Centre	8	75	13	13	4.4
Parenting advice and guidance	6	83	17	-	4.8
Independent school	5	40	-	20	3.5
Home safety equipment	4	100	-	-	5.0
Homestart	2	100	-	-	5.0
Welfare rights session	0				

\* Of those giving a response, excluding 'Don't know/no response', average = mean score where 5 = very useful, 4 = quite useful, 3 = neither, 2 = not useful, 1 = not at all useful

- The average (mean) score indicates the level of usefulness found by respondents. The closeness to 5.0 indicates the level of satisfaction. However, care must be taken where numbers using the service are low, as resulting percentages are not necessarily representative of the views of all. We have therefore commented only on services used by ten or more respondents, and on sub-groups eg those aged 30-39, where 50 or more respondents overall have used the service and where the sub-group comprises 10 or more respondents.
- Amongst those services used by ten or more respondents, most useful were the toy library (scoring 4.9) and family member for childcare (scoring 4.8), although those aged over 40 found a family member to be less useful than others, perhaps because of aging parents being less able to help out. 91% of all parents found a family member to be very useful, compared with 67% of parents aged over 40.
- The nursery in a school and the support of friends were both rated very useful, with a score of 4.7 overall, whilst the day nursery attracted a score of 4.5.
- Several services were rated 4.4, one of which was the children's library service, with 63% rating it as very useful overall. However, this rose to 74% among those aged 30-39, whilst only 25% of parents aged over 40 felt it was very useful.
- Further Education was rated at 4.3, along with Breakfast Club, but 83% of parents aged 30-39 rated Further Education as very useful (compared with 57% overall).
- Lowest rated services used by 10 or more of those we interviewed were Job Centres (3.5), Children's Information Service (3.8) and registered childminders (3.8).
- There were no other significant differences by sub-group.

### 5.3 Reasons given for services mentioned as being not useful

- If respondents rated any service as not useful or not very useful (codes 1 or 2) they were asked why this was. The response to this question was low (41 people responded in total), reflecting the generally high level of satisfaction with available services.
- The Health Visitor service received the most mentions, but this should be considered in the context of this being one of the most commonly used services.

**Table 5 – reasons why service not useful (where more than two mentions)**

Type of comment	Number of comments*
Health visitor poor/not needed/unreliable	10
No Benefit/not helpful/not very good	6
Problems with midwife	5
Toddler group not friendly/not constructive	2
Job Centre - no one to talk to /computers not people	2
Other	10
Don't know/No response	9

\* Some respondents made more than one comment  
(For full comments see Appendix 5)

- 'Other' comments were single comments about individual services and are not detailed here because they would be unrepresentative of the views of most users.

5.4 Child-friendliness of Services

- Respondents were asked how child-friendly they had found each of the services they had used.
- These are listed in Table 6 below by ranking of average score.

**Table 6 – child-friendliness of service**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Numbers using service</b>	<b>Very child-friendly</b>	<b>Quite child-friendly</b>	<b>Not child-friendly/not at all child-friendly</b>	<b>Average score*</b>
		%	%	%	
Family member	74	85	5	1	4.9
Toy library	11	64	18	-	4.8
Nursery in a school	84	82	7	4	4.7
Day nursery	50	80	14	4	4.7
Crèche	13	69	31	-	4.7
Toddler group	70	79	6	4	4.6
Pre-school playgroup	56	77	11	4	4.6
Dietician/nutritionist	10	40	30	-	4.6
Children's Library Service	96	64	15	4	4.5
Friends	47	74	6	6	4.5
After school club	22	64	32	5	4.5
Speech therapists	22	73	9	5	4.5
Story time sessions	14	64	21	7	4.4
Health Visitors	123	56	21	8	4.3
Midwife	119	61	14	8	4.3
Breakfast club	20	50	30	5	4.3
Home visits	19	63	11	11	4.3
Breast feeding group	16	50	19	13	4.0
GP Practice	141	41	24	14	3.9
Registered childminder	21	52	10	24	3.8
Antenatal sessions	74	35	15	18	3.6
Further Education	21	19	10	34	2.9
Children's Information Service	14	21	7	35	2.9
Job Centres	32	13	6	44	2.5
Family Centre	8	75	13	13	4.4
Parenting advice and guidance	6	33	17	-	4.3
Independent school	5	60	-	40	3.4
Home safety equipment	4	75	-	-	5.0
Homestart	2	100	-	-	5.0
Welfare rights session	0	-	-	-	-

\* Of those giving a response, excluding 'Don't knows/no response', average = mean score where 5 = very useful, 4 = quite useful, 3 = neither, 2 = not useful, 1 = not at all useful

- This time, closeness to 5.0 indicates child-friendliness. Once again, where base numbers are low, they cannot be seen to reflect the views of all parent/carer users. We therefore have not commented where users numbered less than 10.
- Around half of the services we asked about scored 4.0 or above, showing a high level of child-friendliness with these services.
- Services ranked as most child-friendly were family member (4.9) and toy library (4.8). Nursery in schools, day nursery and crèche were all rated equally highly at 4.7.
- Least child-friendly were Job Centres (2.5), Children’s Information Service and Further Education (both rated 2.9).
- There were no significant differences by sub-group.

#### 5.5 Reasons given for services mentioned as being not child friendly

- Where respondents said a service was not very or not at all child-friendly, they were asked why this was.
- 23 respondents commented. The type of comment is shown in Table 7, with most comments relating to not having a play area or toys to amuse children.

**Table 7 – reasons why service not child-friendly**

Type of comment	Number of comments
Not child-friendly/No toys/No play area	13
Not appropriate/Not suitable for children/nothing for them to do	9
No facilities for children/No childcare	4
Not helpful/no interest/no patience with child	3
CIS for adults only	3
No facilities for older siblings/nothing for them to do when taking younger children	2
Childminder – unsuitable setting/safety issues	2
Other	4
Don't know/No response	20

- Other comments were specifically about individual services so are not included here, but are available in Appendix 5.

#### 5.6 Comparisons of usefulness and child-friendliness

- Matching the average scores of respondents’ views of parent and child’s needs gives the results shown in Table 8.
- A plus score in the ‘difference’ column indicates that a service was rated as more useful than child-friendly, while a minus score indicates that a service was rated as more child-friendly than useful.
- Scores with a difference of 0.2 points or more (and rated by ten or more respondents) are shown in bold.
- The following were all rated as more child-friendly than useful: Dietician/nutritionist, story time sessions, Speech Therapists and crèche. Toddler group, home visits, Health Visitors, day nursery and pre-school

playgroup were also rated as a little more child-friendly than useful (at -0.2 difference).

- Further Education was rated as far more useful than child-friendly, along with and Job Centres, the Children’s Information Service, GP practice and antenatal sessions. Friends were rated as a little more useful than child-friendly (at 0.2 difference)

**Table 8 – comparison of parents and child average (mean) scores**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Average score usefulness</b>	<b>Average score child-friendliness</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Further education	4.3	2.9	<b>1.4</b>
Job Centres	3.5	2.5	<b>1.0</b>
Children’s Information Service	3.8	2.9	<b>0.9</b>
GP Practice	4.4	3.9	<b>0.5</b>
Antenatal sessions	4.0	3.6	<b>0.4</b>
Friends	4.7	4.5	<b>0.2</b>
Midwife	4.4	4.3	0.1
Toy library	4.9	4.8	0.1
Registered childminder	3.8	3.8	0.0
Nursery in a school	4.7	4.7	0.0
Breakfast club	4.3	4.3	0.0
After school club	4.4	4.5	-0.1
Breast feeding group	3.9	4.0	-0.1
Children’s Library Service	4.4	4.5	-0.1
Family member	4.8	4.9	-0.1
Toddler group	4.4	4.6	<b>-0.2</b>
Home visits	4.1	4.3	<b>-0.2</b>
Health Visitors	4.1	4.3	<b>-0.2</b>
Day nursery	4.5	4.7	<b>-0.2</b>
Pre-school playgroup	4.4	4.6	<b>-0.2</b>
Crèche	4.4	4.7	<b>-0.3</b>
Speech therapists	4.1	4.5	<b>-0.4</b>
Story time sessions	3.9	4.4	<b>-0.5</b>
Dietician/nutritionist	3.9	4.6	<b>-0.7</b>
Family Centre	4.4	4.4	0.0
Parenting advice and guidance	4.8	4.3	0.5
Independent school	3.5	3.4	0.1
Home safety equipment	5.0	5.0	0.0
Homestart	5.0	5.0	0.0
Welfare rights session	-	-	-

### 5.7 Most helpful service to parent

- Respondents were asked which service they had used was most helpful to them as a parent. Table 9 shows those mentioned in frequency order.
- The most helpful services were the midwife (mentioned by 14%), nursery in schools and family member (both mentioned by 13%). The GP was rated as most helpful by 11% and the Health Visitor by 9%.

**Table 9 – single service most helpful to parent – all respondents**

<b>Service <u>most</u> helpful to parent</b>	<b>% mentions all respondents (N= 160)</b>
	<b>%</b>
Midwife	14
Nursery in a school	13
Family member	13
GP practice	11
Health Visitors	9
Day nursery	8
Toddler group	4
Pre-school playgroup	3
Children's library service	3
Registered childminder	2
Friends	2
Breakfast club	2
Antenatal sessions	2
After school club	2
Toy library	1
Speech therapists	1
Independent school	1
Homestart	1
Home visits	1
Family Centre	1
Crèche	1
Children's Information Service	1
Don't know/No response	10

- The analysis above is based on all respondents and is therefore biased towards services with high numbers of users, and against more specialist services with fewer users. Therefore another analysis was undertaken to reduce the bias by calculating the percentage of **users for each service** who saw this service as their most helpful service. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 10 below.
- So we had the five most helpful services in the **all respondent** analysis above:
  - Midwife
  - Nursery in a school
  - Family member
  - GP practice
  - Health Visitor
- Compared with the five most helpful services in the **user** analysis below:
  - Homestart
  - Family member
  - Nursery in a school
  - Family Centre
  - Day nursery

**Table 10 – single service most helpful to parent – service users**

<b>Service <u>most</u> helpful to parent</b>	<b>Number of users of service</b>	<b>Number of mentions as <b>most</b> helpful</b>	<b>Percent of users rating most helpful</b>
			%
Homestart	2	1	50
Family member	74	21	28
Nursery in a school	84	21	25
Family Centre	8	2	25
Day nursery	50	12	24
Independent school	5	1	20
Midwife	119	23	19
Breakfast club	20	3	15
Registered childminder	21	3	14
Children's Information Service	14	2	14
After school club	22	3	14
GP practice	141	17	12
Health Visitors	123	14	11
Toy library	11	1	9
Toddler group	70	6	9
Speech therapists	22	2	9
Crèche	13	1	8
Pre-school playgroup	56	4	7
Friends	47	3	6
Home visits	19	1	5
Children's library service	96	5	5
Antenatal sessions	74	3	4

- Table 11 below summarises how the position of the perceived parent-helpfulness of the services changes between the two analyses.
- In this case Homestart, the Family Centre, independent school<sup>5</sup>, Children's Information Service and Breakfast Club all move to a higher position on helpfulness because 15% or more of their users (albeit a small number of respondents) chose them as the most helpful service. With the exception of the school, these might therefore be considered to be helpful emerging services that are not yet used by a large number of parents.
- Antenatal sessions, children's library service, pre-school playgroup, friends, toddler group, GP practice and Health Visitors, all traditional services used by a relatively large number of respondents, drop to lower relative positions. This is an indicator that there is scope for these services to increase their perceived parent-helpfulness amongst users.

<sup>5</sup> NB this is likely to be the local church school which parents perceive as 'independent'

**Table 11 – helpfulness of the services for parents – changes in rank position**

	Relative position on helpfulness: <b>All Respondents</b>	Relative position on helpfulness: <b>Users Only</b>	Change in rank position
Homestart	15	1	14
Family Centre	15	3	12
Independent school	15	6	9
Children’s Information Service	15	9	6
Breakfast club	10	8	2
Toy library	15	14	1
Speech therapists	15	14	1
Registered childminder	10	9	1
Day nursery	6	5	1
After school club	10	9	1
Family member	2	2	0
Nursery in a school	2	3	-1
Crèche	15	17	-2
Home visits	15	20	-5
Midwife	1	7	-6
Toddler group	7	14	-7
Health Visitors	5	13	-8
GP practice	4	12	-8
Friends	10	19	-9
Pre-school playgroup	8	18	-10
Children’s library service	8	20	-12
Antenatal sessions	10	22	-12

### 5.8 Most helpful service to your child/children

- Respondents were then asked which service they had used was most helpful to their child. Table 12 shows those mentioned in frequency order.
- Most helpful services for children were nursery in a school, day nursery, GP practice, pre-school playgroup, toddler group and Health Visitor; a combination of childcare, early education and health services.

**Table 12 – single service most helpful to child – all respondents**

<b>Service <u>most</u> helpful to child</b>	<b>% mentions all respondents (N= 112)</b>
	<b>%</b>
Nursery in a school	25
Day nursery	12
GP Practice	8
Pre-school playgroup	7
Toddler group	6
Health Visitors	6
Family member	6
Children's Library Service	5
Speech therapists	3
Registered childminder	3
Midwife	3
Toy library	1
Independent school	1
Homestart	1
Friends	1
Family centre	1
Dietician/nutritionist	1
Crèche	1
Breastfeeding group	1
Breakfast club	1
After school club	1
Don't know/No response	11

- As with services most helpful for parents, we then repeated the analysis to remove the bias created in the usefulness ratings by high numbers of users. This analysis reduces the bias by calculating the percentage of **users for each service** who saw this service as their most helpful service. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 13 below.
- So we had the seven most helpful services in the **all respondent** analysis above:
  - Nursery in a school
  - Day nursery
  - GP practice
  - Pre-school playgroup
  - Toddler group
  - Health Visitor
  - Family member
- Compared with the five most helpful services in the **user** analysis below:
  - Homestart
  - Nursery in a school
  - Day nursery
  - Family Centre
  - Pre-school playgroup

**Table 13 – single service most helpful to child – service users**

<b>Service <u>most</u> helpful to Child</b>	<b>Number of users of service</b>	<b>Number of mentions as <b>most</b> helpful</b>	<b>Percent of users rating most helpful</b>
			%
Homestart	2	1	50
Nursery in a school	84	40	48
Day nursery	50	19	38
Family Centre	8	2	25
Pre-school playgroup	56	11	20
Independent school	5	1	20
Registered childminder	21	4	19
Speech therapists	22	4	18
Crèche	13	2	15
Toddler group	70	10	14
Family member	74	9	12
Dietician/nutritionist	10	1	10
Breakfast club	20	2	10
Toy library	11	1	9
GP Practice	141	13	9
After school club	22	2	9
Children's Library Service	96	8	8
Health Visitors	123	9	7
Breastfeeding group	16	1	6
Friends	47	2	4
Midwife	119	4	3

- Table 14 below summarises how the position of the perceived child-helpfulness of the services changes between the two analyses.
- In this case Homestart, the Family Centre and independent school move to a higher position on child-helpfulness because 20% or more of their respective users (albeit a small number of respondents) chose them as the most helpful service for their child. Homestart and the Family Centre can be considered to be helpful emerging services that are not yet used by a large number of parents in this area.
- Health Visitors, midwife, GP practice and children's library service, all used by a relatively large number of respondents, drop to much lower relative positions. This indicates that there is scope for these services to increase their perceived child-helpfulness amongst users.
- In contrast, the dietician and breakfast club hold their places, showing that their child-helpfulness is really valued, regardless of user numbers.

**Table 14 – helpfulness of the services for children – changes in rank position**

	Relative position on helpfulness: <b>All Respondents</b>	Relative position on helpfulness: <b>Users Only</b>	Change in rank position
Homestart	12	1	11
Family Centre	12	4	8
Independent school	12	5	7
Crèche	12	9	3
Registered childminder	9	7	2
Speech therapists	9	8	1
Dietician/nutritionist	12	12	0
Breakfast club	12	12	0
Pre-school playgroup	4	5	-1
Nursery in a school	1	2	-1
Day nursery	2	3	-1
Toy library	12	14	-2
After school club	12	14	-2
Toddler group	5	10	-5
Family member	5	11	-6
Breastfeeding group	12	19	-7
Friends	12	20	-8
Children's Library Service	8	17	-9
GP Practice	3	14	-11
Midwife	9	21	-12
Health Visitors	5	18	-13

5.9 Help to use services more often

- A list of suggestions that might help parents to use services more often was shown to respondents (see Showcard 2, Appendix 2). They were asked which of those listed would help them most.
- Table 15 shows responses by area and by all respondents. 28% of all respondents felt that different times would help them use services more often, while 24% thought better public transport would help, and 23% would use services more often if they were at a more local venue.
- Other options of childcare, price and someone to go with were felt to be helpful for 12% -15% of all respondents.
- Gateford residents had a similar pattern of responses to that found overall, although 40% said that different times of events would help, 29% would appreciate a more local venue, and 25% think better public transport would help.
- In Rhodesia, a more local venue and childcare were important for 35%, followed by better price (29%), and then better public transport and different times (24% each).
- For the Sandy Lane area, better public transport was top priority at 22%, followed by different times (19%) and then a more local venue and someone to go with (15% each). However, parents in this area were least likely to say anything would make a difference, with 41% saying nothing would help them use services more often.
- A third of parents in Prospect (32%) said different times of events would make a difference, and 23% thought more childcare would help. Only 18% think that better public transport would help them to use services more often, and only 14% think that a more local venue would make a difference. A third (32%) say nothing would help them to use services more often.

**Table 15 – Help to use services more often**

Suggestion	Total N=160	Gateford N=55	Rhodesia N=17	Sandy Lane N=27	Prospect N=22
	%	%	%	%	%
Different times of events	28	40	24	19	32
Better public transport	24	25	24	22	18
More local venue	23	29	35	15	14
Childcare	15	15	35	7	23
Better price	14	16	29	4	14
Someone to go with	12	11	12	15	5
None	28	18	18	41	32

5.10 Preferences in receiving information

- Respondents were also asked (using Showcard 3) how they would like to receive information about services for themselves and their children. In addition to the preferences for all respondents, Table 16 shows the preferences of each area.
- For all locations except Rhodesia where an information sheet was the favourite with over half of respondents, the preferred way of receiving information was via a newsletter.
- An article in the local paper was second favourite overall and for Gateford. For Rhodesia, second favourite was a newsletter, and for Sandy Lane and Prospect, a flyer was second choice.

**Table 16 – receipt of information**

Information	Total N=160	Gateford N=55	Rhodesia N=17	Sandy Lane N=27	Prospect N=22
	%	%	%	%	%
Newsletter	65	67	47	74	59
Article in local paper	36	47	41	15	18
Flyer/information sheet	29	24	53	22	32
Word of mouth (friends/family/other parents)	24	20	18	15	27
Via email/website	19	20	24	7	9
Information session at nursery/clinic/sure start	18	22	29	15	9
Word of mouth (Health Visitor /nursery staff/GP)	17	20	18	11	14
None	1	2	-	-	-

### 5.11 Three things Worksop NE, NW, North needs

- When asked what three things Worksop NE, NW, North needs to make it better for parents with young children, respondents came up with a list of suggestions as shown in Table 17 overleaf.
- The most frequently suggested ideas focused on play space – better/cleaner/playgrounds and parks (34% overall) and play areas (27%). This was a top mention in all areas.
- In Gateford, as well as parks and play areas, a community centre (18%), more childcare (15%) and more parent and baby or toddler groups (11%) were all requested by several of those interviewed.
- For Rhodesia, an indoor play-space was top priority (24%), along with activities for older children (18%) and before and after school activities (18%). A better playground was mentioned by 18% of parents, while 12% asked for better play areas. 12% also asked for better facilities for small children, for more local access to health services such as the Health Visitor, for more affordable activities and for more policing.
- Parents in the Sandy Lane area asked for better parks (37%) and play areas (28%) along with more affordable activities (19%) and activities for older children (11%).
- In Prospect, demand was for a playground (32%), play areas (23%), before and after school activities (14%) and an indoor play area for the younger children (14%).
- Requested improvements to the park and to facilities for older children, while outside the remit of Children' Centres, indicate the impact of lack of facilities for older children on those with very young children.

**Table 17 – suggestions to make area better for parents with young children**

Suggestion	Total N = 160	Gateford N=55	Rhodesia N=17	Sandy Lane N=27	Prospect N=22
	%	%	%	%	%
Better/Safer/Cleaner Playground/Park	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>
Outdoor/more/better play areas/somewhere to play/more activities	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>
More child care/childminders/nurseries/Crèche	9	<b>15</b>	6	-	-
More cheap/affordable facilities/activities	9	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	9
Before and after school activities/clubs	8	7	<b>18</b>	4	<b>14</b>
Indoor/Safe/Soft play area	7	-	<b>24</b>	4	<b>14</b>
Youth club/Activities for older children/teenagers	7	6	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	9
Mother & Baby/Toddler Groups/Playgroups/Toddler activities	6	<b>11</b>	6	4	-
Swimming Pool/Leisure Facilities/Sports Facilities	6	7	6	4	-
Village Hall/community centre	6	<b>18</b>	-	-	-
More/better buses/Better transport	5	9	-	-	-
More/Better facilities for smaller children	5	4	<b>12</b>	-	5
Clean up drugs/litter/dog mess/youths hanging around	4	5	-	4	9
More policing	4	-	<b>12</b>	-	5
Road safety/speed bumps/School Crossing Patrol etc	3	4	6	-	5
Clinic/doctor/health visitor/midwife	3	6	<b>12</b>	-	-
More/better information	3	2	6	4	-
Family entertainment/ pub/somewhere to eat with children	2	-	-	4	-
Public toilets/baby changing facilities	1	2	-	-	-
Holiday activities/care for children	1	-	6	-	5
Drop in sessions/drop in centre	1	2	-	4	-
Activities for all ages of kids	1	2	-	-	5
Activities for dads	1	2	-	4	-
Other	19	26	12	11	5
Don't know/No response	12	-	-	22	32

\* Respondents could make more than one suggestion so totals don't add to 100%

#### 5.12 Thoughts on the arrival of the Children's Centre

- Respondents were asked if they had anything else to say about the Children's Centre, from what they had heard so far.
- 62% did not have anything to add but 16% expressed enthusiasm about the arrival of the Centre, with comments such as, "good idea", "great", "brilliant" and "excellent".
- Six percent commented that they had heard nothing, or that more publicity was needed.

## 6 Partners' questionnaire

- Partners' anonymised responses are shown in full at Appendix 6. Any comments made by the author of the report below reflect these responses.

### 6.1 Current problems

Q1. What do you think are the current problems, or gaps in current services, for parents and young families in Worksop North East, North West and North?

- Partners identified a number of key issues for the area including a lack of play opportunities, particularly for the under 3s.

*"Play opportunities for under 3s."*

- Affordable childcare was perceived by some to be an issue, particularly affordable respite day care and sufficient places in school nurseries

*"Lack of respite day care that is affordable to the most vulnerable families."*

*"The only provision I see lacking are places in local authority (school based) nurseries for 3-5 year olds."*

- Lack of information, or poorly communicated information, was also mentioned by some as a current problem for the area, both for parents and themselves.

*"The problem seems to me to be introducing the parent/carer to the relevant provision. Communicating the information."*

*"There is a gap in my information about toddler groups which I am looking to address."*

- There were also a few local issues for individual areas:

*"The Gateford estates and the 'Lakes' estate have been built with no community facilities whatsoever. There is no focus for the locality, few residents or parents' groups, except when crises arise."*

*"Sandy Lane is a very disadvantaged area. There is one playgroup at St Johns Church but it is not well attended from people in the area. There are quite a number of Polish migrant workers in the area."*

### 6.2 Possible Changes

Q2. In what way do you think the advent of the Children's Centre will change the way services are delivered in Worksop North East, North West and North?

- The partners were almost unanimous in anticipating that one of the key changes will be greater coordination of services, through a central focal point, making services easier for parents to access.

*“Hopefully more coordinated and more accessible”*

*“Joining up services – link in to other services to support families across the board with a local base.”*

*“Easier access and diverse facilities”.*

### 6.3 Biggest Challenge

Q3. What do you think is going to be the biggest challenge locally in developing the Children’s Centre in Worksop North East, North West and North?

- Partners identified two main challenges for developing Children’s Centre services in the area. The first was the large geographical area that is involved, particularly in providing services to both Sandy Lane and Rhodesia.

*“Large area to cover geographically.”*

*“If Sandy Lane and Rhodesia are together making services accessible to both areas.”*

- The second main challenge is involving parents, particularly hard to reach or vulnerable families.

*“Motivation and interest of parents.”*

*“Parental involvement – parents have busy lives.”*

*“Accessing hard to reach families in areas of all these wards will be difficult. Ways will have to be developed to encourage families to use the facilities and to make the facilities welcoming and accessible.”*

### 6.4 Effectiveness of Meetings

Q4. If workers from different settings / services have regular meetings to discuss local issues, how useful are these? Are parents invited to these? [Please indicate how often these are held, if at all]

- There is very little evidence of mechanisms to promote partnership working in the area. There are meetings that are open to the community such as the Sandy Lane Forum Meeting, but few attend. There are meetings of groups of service providers such as registered childminders. There are also opportunities for parents to meet with individual service providers, such as Housing or schools. Some partners commented that it would be a good idea to be more inclusive of parents.

*“Parents are invited but few attend. Sitting around a table can be very daunting for some.”*

*“There are surgeries for residents with the housing manager.”*

*“There are bi-monthly meetings but parents are not currently invited – I think it would be a good idea.”*

## 6.5 Partners' Priorities

Q5. What are your top three priorities for developing services or facilities or resources for parents and young children in Worksop North East, North West and North?

- The most commonly mentioned priority that had not been specifically raised earlier in the partners' responses was the need for more outdoor play facilities and better maintained parks for children. The majority of partners mentioned this as one of their priorities, echoing the views of parents.

*“Playgrounds and open spaces”*

*“Parks and green spaces could be better maintained.”*

- Second most often mentioned priority was for locally provided quality activities for young children.

*“Activities for under 5s that are within easy access.”*

*“Quality play experiences to attend and stay with children.”*

- Other common themes included:

- Family learning and parenting education opportunities
- Accessible healthcare and childcare
- Community facilities to provide somewhere for groups to meet

*“Access to relevant family learning opportunities.”*

*“More accessible healthcare and support.”*

*“Community hall to hold toddler groups etc.”*

## 7 Focus Groups

- The discussion guide used in the focus groups will be found in Appendix 4. This included areas which reflected the main sections of the parent's questionnaire:
  - Knowledge of services in the area
  - Strengths and weaknesses of current services
  - Gaps in current provision
  - Good things to come from the arrival of the Children's Centre
  - Areas for improvement in the local area
- Focus group respondents were initially invited to undertake a mapping exercise, to gather information about services and activities in the area. This can be seen in Appendix 7. The mapping is based on knowledge of parents and partners. Parents were aware of toddler groups in their immediate area, and occasionally in other areas.
- Each focus group is reported separately.

### 7.1 Gateford focus group

- Parents were aware of parent and toddler sessions at the Romans Rest pub, although they were not sure whether they ran every morning, since some had turned up to find it closed. This is quite a long way for some of them as it is on the edge of Gateford. There is no outside space for them to play.
- Parents talked about Puddleducks pre-school at the Balmoral Centre every morning.
- Some parents in the group considered the cost of Treetops nursery at £30 a day to be out of their reach, especially if they had more than one child, as they were not working and not in receipt of working tax credits.
- There is also a crèche at Gateford Primary School.
- Services have to be accessed by car. There is no bus service through Gateford and the only service in walking distance is Romans Rest. Parents would like to have more local services.

*"We want walking distance things as well. To get your kids in and out of car seats all the time is just hell."*

*"We've just got one car and the wife uses it for work and I've found it really hard because there are no convenient activities at all – it's just getting everywhere. Everywhere there was [activities] I had to travel [to]."*

- Parents from Gateford use Redlands Nursery, parents and tots sessions at Carlton Scout hut on a Tuesday morning and Thievesdale Parents and Tots Group. They are aware of the services the Albion Centre runs, such as courses with a crèche. However, they feel that local services are very limited.

*"For the size of Worksop there is not a lot."*

- There are no parks suitable for small children in walking distance. There is a park planned but parents don't feel it will be easily accessible to all.

*"There is one across Raymoth Lane but it's for older children."*

- Parents also identified a lack of a community building in which to hold clubs and activities and wondered if this was something the Children's Centre might be able to provide. They also mentioned that there was no breakfast club at Gateford school although there were after school facilities at Norbridge school and Claremont House [Day Nursery]. Another concern was the speed of local traffic, making it unsafe for children to walk. None were aware of the services on offer at Prospect Kilton Children's Centre.
- Parents would like to have holiday activities for children that link the different ages, so giving them a complete break, rather than being left to entertain one or other of their children.

*"Somewhere you can put all the kids and there is something for all of them. Its having a total break isn't it."*

*"It seems to cater for one set of children like the baby and then you've got to find somewhere for the 10 year old – especially when the school holidays come."*

- A central information source for Worksop would be very useful, perhaps in the form of a newsletter.

*"You don't just want it for individual centres. It would be nice if you got something that was dedicated to the whole Worksop area, like a timetable."*

*"If I had all that information I had by the time I had my second child by just experiencing, I could have given my first child that much more."*

- Another suggestion was for courses that fit around shift work, perhaps that they can drop in and out of.

*"They all think you can come at a certain time once a week every week while if you are on shift work I can't do a course. Something I could drop in to. I'd like to improve my IT skills but there isn't a course I can do around work."*

- Parents use either Larwood or Newgate Street Health Centres and are fairly happy with them on the whole, although they expressed concerns about the proximity of the play area in the reception at Larwood to the door, and frustration at the difficulty in parking at Larwood. One parent had given up attending baby clinics because of this. They like the idea of having access to Midwives and Health Visitors at the Children's Centre, particularly a drop-in session with stay and play alongside.

*"I tended to avoid the baby weighing. I couldn't get parked and if I could I couldn't get the kids out of the car."*

*"It is difficult accessing health visitors when they are out on visits and you have to leave a message, so you end up phoning the NHS Direct thing."*

- Other services they would like a Children's Centre to provide are structured activities for young children, and a dads' support worker (ideally male). They were a little unhappy that there would be no daycare built as part of this Children's Centre, since there is already sufficient provision in Worksop. Local families were concerned about the cost of day nurseries, which suggests they are not aware of working tax credit and other forms of financial support.

*"Something a bit more structured for the ones that are not yet at school, during the day because they are knackered by the time school's out."*

*"Advice, a lot of men are proud and wont ask for help but it would be nice to have someone to speak to."*

- They also suggested putting information about Children's Centres in Bounty Packs and including more information for dads in them.

## 7.2 Prospect Focus Group

- Parents' chief concern in this group was the lack of activities for older children. They felt that the under fives were better catered for on the whole, with playgroups at Thievesdale and Larwood. There is no after school club or breakfast club at the Prospect Hill infant school although there is a once a week breakfast club at the junior school and also some one hour after school activities.
- Childcare is limited to registered childminders, and parents perceive that there is a shortage of good registered childminders in this area. This is unfortunate as there are actually 33 registered child minders in Worksop.
- Healthcare is not an issue in this area as they are very local to the hospital and there is a GP surgery nearby at Larwood. They are confident that their child will be seen quickly in an emergency.
- A chief concern of parents is for a nice park for their children. There is a local park, but parents complain that it is full of litter, needles and dog mess. There has been some research carried out through Prospect Kilton Children's Centre and also with children in schools which has shown demand is for a supervised play area or at least with CCTV to protect it from vandalism and drug users.

*"We need one that is decent."*

- A lot of parents are on a tight budget and cannot afford the price of activities for their children.

*"When you are a mum and you are not working they come round with these football coaching sessions but is it £10 a day and it's a lot of money, I can't afford to do it."*

*"There's a lot my kids don't go on because there's three of them."*

- As in Gateford, parents would like activities that cater for all ages. For example, having activities for parents and very young children in the little pool while older children take part in the supervised watersplash in the big pool.

*“Why can’t the Leisure Centre do activities that combine all of the ages at the same time because it is a fair old hike up Wingfield Avenue.”*

### 7.3 Rhodesia Focus Group

- Facilities in the village are very limited. Children can attend Haggonfields Nursery from age 3 and there is a toddler group in the village hall on Tuesday mornings. There are two outreach youth workers working with some of the older children, football training and dancing classes for older children at the chapel, and a mobile library visits the village.

*“It really is very poor.”*

*“If your kids are old enough to go into football there is training.”*

- For health care, villagers must go to Larwood or Worksop, which is inconvenient at best, and very difficult if having to travel with small children by bus. Health Visitors do come out to the village for home visits.

*“It is a nightmare if you can’t drive into Larwood because you’ve got to go into town on one bus then from town on another bus unless you get a taxi.”*

- Parents complain that there is nothing for the under 5s, not even a park. There is a green space but has no play equipment on it and it is kept locked. Parents feel that the Parish Council are protecting the interests of older people in the village and are not interested in ensuring there are facilities for children of any age.

*“It is never open, there are no swings. You are allowed to go play football on it if you put two jumpers as your goal. There is somebody who has the key to open it but it is never open.”*

- In terms of holiday activities, there are activities for older children in town, but in addition to having to get there, they are considered expensive at £10 per child per day.
- Parents in the village have become used to having few facilities and are somewhat sceptical that things are going to change with the imminent arrival of a Children’s Centre on their school site. However, they did manage to come up with a wish list of things they would like.
- They liked the idea of having a drop-in session with access to a Health Visitor or Midwife.

*“It’s ideal to have something like that because without it you are having to travel into town all the time.”*

- Since there are few opportunities to leave young children in a playgroup or crèche before they start Nursery, parents would like to have this facility, since they feel it eases the transition to nursery.

*“It is just nice to have that in-between group that is not pre-school or Foundation. It is a little practice and I really think it lulled children into nursery – if it was only just one or two mornings a week or something like that.”*

- Mums would like something to do for themselves. North Notts College had run a series of taster days which had been well-received. The children enjoyed the crèche and the parents enjoyed meeting with each other and trying something new.

*“They were buzzing because they were, ‘Come on, we are going to crèche’, and we were having a cup of tea laughing at disastrous results.”*

- Other suggestions were for dance classes for younger children, and for a holiday playscheme on the school site. This had been tried in the past but while the children were keen to support it, insufficient parents came forward to help run it to make it viable for future years.

#### 7.4 Sandy Lane focus group

- Parents were aware of the Sunshine Day Nursery, the playgroup at the Salvation Army on a Monday, St Anne’s playgroup on Tuesday morning and the Crossing Community Church playgroup in town every two weeks on a Friday. The parent who used it thought the Salvation Army playgroup was particularly good because they always offered a craft activity. They were not aware of Children’s Centres prior to the research.

*“It [the Salvation Army playgroup] is really nice, not very big. They always have some arts and crafts and it is really good value for money there as well at £1.50.”*

- The parent from St Anne’s complained that there was very little to do locally. As with Gateford, they had built houses without putting in any infrastructure in terms of community facilities, and there is no bus service so residents must rely on cars.

*“Where we live there is nothing there – all they have done is build houses.”*

- Trying to find out what is going on is particularly difficult. They tend to rely on word of mouth, and would appreciate more formalized information on what is happening where.

*“It is trying to find out where things are on. I have got a list of playgroups that are available because you get them from the Health Visitors. You hear really from word of mouth. But it is hard trying to find out things like the Tumble Tots – when and where they are on. You want to know where things are.”*

- The summer holidays are a particularly difficult time to entertain little ones because a lot of the provision closes for the holidays, and what provision there is tends to fill up with older children.

*“If you go to places like Charlie Chalk there are a lot of older kids there.”*

- In terms of health services, whilst the Health Centre is good and they can always have their children seen quickly in an emergency, they feel that they would like a more informal service for asking about minor childhood ailments, such as a drop-in with a Health Visitor. They don't want to feel like they are wasting GP time.

*“I always feel like I go to the doctors and I think I'm wasting their time. If there was somewhere you could go and just see a nurse or something and they would be able to put your mind at rest that it is just a heat rash or something instead of having to make an appointment at the doctors.”*

- As with other areas, parks came in for criticism. At St Annes, older children tend to stay on the equipment, making it impossible for those with young children to access it, particularly in the holidays. This highlights the need for more activities for older children and teenagers. There is no park near the Sandy Lane area at all, although there are green spaces where equipment could be sited.

*“They've got a new park and it is a nice park but when it gets to the holidays it is just besieged with teenagers and you can't get near anything so I think there is a need for something for the older children to do.”*

*“If there was a park around here I would be tempted to take him for half an hour before picking up from school at Redlands.”*

- Parents also liked the idea of short courses with a crèche. One had been disappointed that she could not take part in the taster course at Rhodesia, since she was working and would like courses to be offered on a range of days. They also mentioned that it would be good to have a shoppers crèche in Worksop, since it was difficult to access shops with young children in tow.

*“It gets him out of the house and mixing with other children and it gets me out of the house and talking to other mums.”*

*“People dragging children around, there has never been any facilities like that in Worksop. It is easier to go to Meadowhall.”*

## 8 Key messages for the future

- The interviews with parents, the focus groups and input from the partners show a high level of agreement about the needs of parents and young children in Worksop North East, North West and North for the future.

These include:

- More playgrounds, parks and open spaces for children to play
  - Activities for older children
  - Holiday activities for all children
  - More up-to-date information about services and activities across the area
  - Raised awareness of existing services across the area
  - Better access to health services for all, particularly those not close to the Health centres
  - Increased provision of relevant services for families with young children in the area, particularly organised activities for mums and tots up to age 3 and for parents of under 1's
  - Adult education classes with crèche offered at different times
  - A drop-in centre where parents can meet and where they can access Health Visitors
  - The co-ordination of service providers and improved partnership working to deliver services.
- While the consultation necessarily had its limitations, due to lack of time and resource, the results are still felt to be representative of the community; it was always seen as a first conversation to provide a basis with which to build the future Children's Centre services in Worksop North East, North West and North.
  - There is the need to assure parents and partners that the Children's Centre is sustainable and that the involvement of all parties is crucial in its success, as well as allowing parents to take ownership of the Children's Centre, to be jointly engaged with professionals in the provision of services for them and their families.
  - This consultation and the planned feedback session on 11<sup>th</sup> September are the starting points from which services for children under 5 and their families will develop. There is every reason to think from responses that parents will become involved, so that the Children's Centre becomes their service, rather than something delivered to them.

## 9 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Parents' Questionnaire

Appendix 2 – Showcards

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire for Service Providers / Partners

Appendix 4 – Discussion Guide for Sure Start Children's Centres Focus Groups

Appendix 5 – 'Other' Responses from Parents' Questionnaire

Appendix 6 – Responses from Partners and Service Providers

Appendix 7 – Mapping exercise: Current Services in Worksop North East, North West and North from parents and partners