



Shared sites – the way to make Children's Centres sustainable

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About United for All Ages

United for All Ages is a social enterprise bringing older and younger people together to create a stronger Britain. We work with local authorities, health trusts, housing associations and community organisations to promote shared sites, shared caring, shared interests across generations and a Britain for all ages.

❖ Join our network at www.unitedforallages.com

Numerous government funded-sponsored reviews.....



Graham Allen – on early intervention

Frank Field - on social mobility

Dame Clare Tickell – on the early years

Eileen Munro – on child protection

All recommend the need to do things differently

The magnitude of issues facing local authorities

- ❖ Funding for Sure Start no longer ring-fenced
- ❖ 'Wrapped up' in the Early Intervention Grant
- ❖ Much reduced budgets – 30% grant cut
- ❖ Pressure to find substantial staff efficiencies
- ❖ Competing priorities

All of the above and more.....

coupled with historically 'siloed' departmental policies and budgets

Where there's a will, there's a way



- ❖ Local authorities need to rethink how they deliver an early offer of help to families in need
- ❖ Improve the way children's centres, schools, statutory services and partners in the private and voluntary sector work together
- ❖ Buy-in needed from senior officers and most importantly members, as well as Health and Schools
- ❖ The will to pool budgets, resources and think laterally



How to make it happen

- ❖ Determine need in locality – families and the community
- ❖ What already works, what doesn't, have services been evaluated to evidence outcomes and more importantly, impact?
- ❖ Match staffing resources in locality to need
- ❖ Add value through partnership working
- ❖ Negotiate ownership/responsibility of centres
- ❖ Cost menu of services



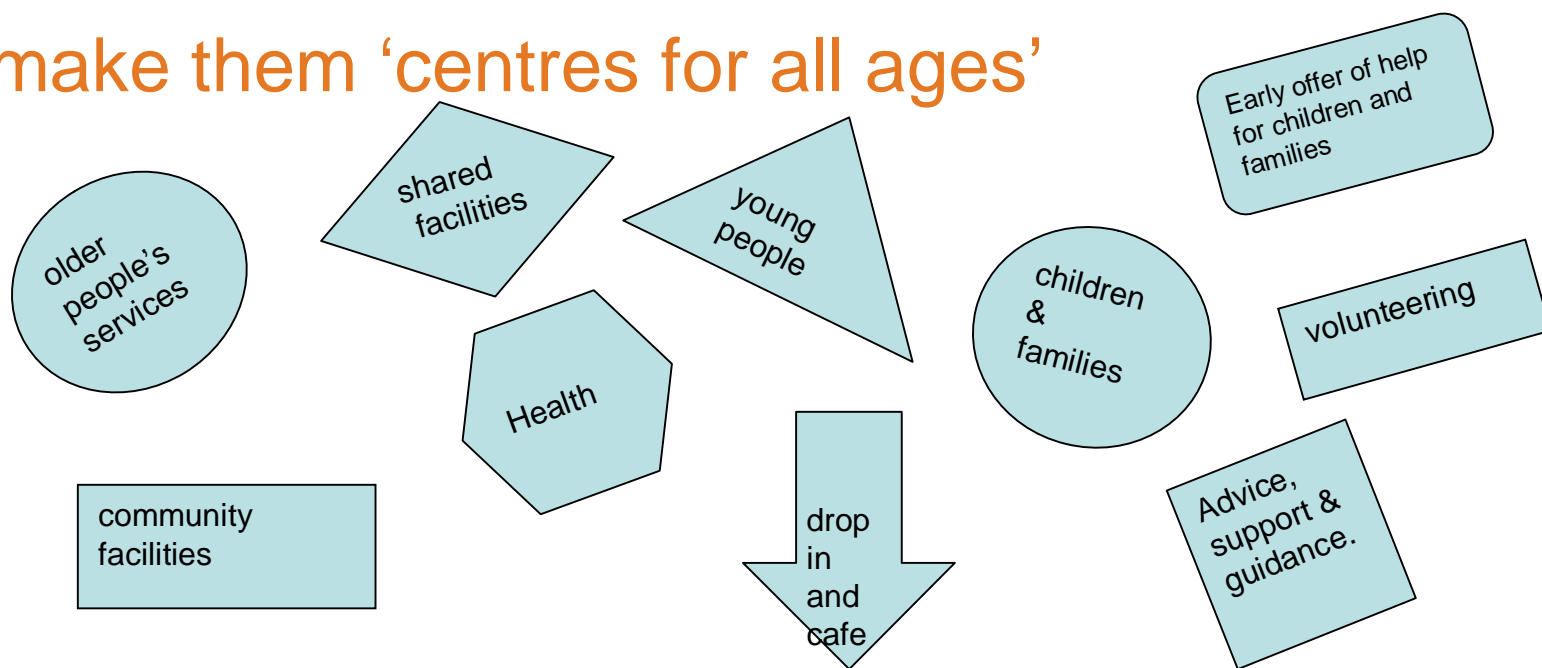
Opportunities – economic and social benefits

- ❖ Shared management and maintenance of buildings
- ❖ Co-location of services, children, youth and adult, libraries and health
- ❖ Shared resources, staffing and equipment
- ❖ Broaden the reach – the whole community
- ❖ A 24/7 facility?

The future of children's centres



Children's centres provide easy access to health services, family support etc for children aged 0-5 and parents.....but could offer so much more to make them 'centres for all ages'



Radical rethink before it's too late



The Centre for Social Justice has echoed our concerns; services such as children's centres are threatened because too little thought has been given to the value they offer and the outcomes.

The cuts may seem easier to make but this ignores the long-term consequences.

The coalition government has not set out clear priorities – access to children's centres will become a postcode lottery.

A final thought.....



Summary



The closure of children's centres is not inevitable...where there's a will, there's a way to make them sustainable and deliver services in communities that meet the needs of all!

For more ideas, help and ways of persuasion, contact:

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