

## Update on Podiatry Services move from Foster Street clinic

### Background to the move

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust has been providing podiatry services at premises in Foster Street, Maidstone, for in excess of 20 years. However, our patients and colleagues recognised the building was showing its age and no longer met the accessibility requirements needed to make it easy for everyone to access our services.

The entrance to the building was via a steep slope, with the nearest parking limited to 30 minutes and only one disabled parking space / patient parking on site. The clinic is near a bus route but the stops are not near the building, meaning patients need to walk up or down hill on a busy road.

We therefore started to explore more suitable premises for our Maidstone patients in May 2022.

### Alternative sites

We identified two alternative sites from which we could run our podiatry services: Coxheath clinic and the Churchill Centre at the Royal British Legion Village, Preston Hall in Barming.

There is parking available at the Coxheath clinic. If using public transport, the site can be reached by a direct bus from Maidstone, which runs every 30 minutes and the bus stop is approximately five minutes' walk from the clinic.

The Churchill Centre can be reached via bus from Snodland to Maidstone, running every 15 minutes. The bus stops at Preston Hall and the bus stop is approximately 10 minutes' walk to the clinic. There is parking available at the Churchill Centre. Podiatric surgery is only available at the Churchill Centre, as it is more convenient for accessing x-ray facilities at Maidstone hospital.

We invited patients to choose the site which was most convenient for them for their ongoing care.

### Engagement with patients

We wrote to all podiatry patients identified as registered with a West Kent GP or having attended Foster Street. The letter explained why we were moving sites, along with local transport information and an invitation to choose which site would be most convenient to them. Contact details were also provided in case of any queries.

We also published a news article on our [website](#) and sent communications via the ICB stakeholder bulletin.

Several thousand letters were sent and we received three queries. Two of these were easily resolved following a discussion about transport. One patient who lived almost adjacent to Foster Street and only wanted to use his mobility scooter to come to clinic was unhappy with the move to the two alternative sites and despite contacting him personally and discussing transport options they decided that they would find an alternative solution to managing their footcare.

### The move

We moved our services in September 2022. The treatment rooms at both sites were refurbished to provide a comfortable, fully equipped environment. The move was uneventful and service delivery has successfully continued at Coxheath and the Churchill Centre, with minor disruption at the time of moving. No subsequent complaints about clinic locations have been received and we have continued to be able to provide our patients in west Kent with excellent podiatric care.

**Chair John Goulston Chief Executive Mairead McCormick**

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