



Enter and View Report

**Brook House
Announced**

What is Enter and View

Part of Healthwatch Bedford Borough's remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Bedford Borough Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation so that we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Bedford Borough's Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Bedford Borough's Safeguarding Policy, the Service Manager will be informed, and the visit will end. The local authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

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Provider details

Details of Visit	
Registered Manager	Belinda Kemp
Service Address	72 High Street, Risely, Bedford MK44 1DT
Service type	Residential Care Home
Date and Time	26/06/2024, 14:00pm
Authorised Representatives undertaking the visit	Gloria Chukwuji and Patricia Merayo-Garces

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bedford Borough would like to thank the Home Manager, staff and all the residents for their cooperation during our visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit on 26 June 2024. The report does not claim to represent the views of all service users, only those who contributed during the visit.

Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with the Manager of Brook House Residential Home, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Bedford Borough website.

Healthwatch Bedford Borough details

Address:
21-23 Gadsby Street
Bedford
MK40 3HP

Website: www.healthwatchbedfordborough.co.uk
Telephone: 01234 638678

Healthwatch principles

Healthwatch Bedford Borough's Enter and View programme is linked to the eight principles of Healthwatch, and questions are asked around each one.

1. **A healthy environment:** Right to live in an environment that promotes positive health and wellbeing.
2. **Essential Services:** Right to a set of preventative, treatment and care services provided to a high standard to prevent patients' reaching crisis.
3. **Access:** Right to access services on an equal basis with others without fear of discrimination or harassment, when I need them in a way that works for me and my family
4. **A safe, dignified and quality services:** Right to high quality, safe, confidential services that treat me with dignity, compassion and respect.
5. **Information and education:** Right to clear and accurate information that I can use to make decisions about health and care treatment. I want the right to education about how to take care of myself and about what I am entitled to in the health and social care system.
6. **Choice:** Right to choose from a range of high-quality services, products and providers within health and social care
7. **Being listened to:** Right to have my concerns and views listened to and acted upon. I want the right to be supported in taking action if I am not satisfied with the service I have received.
8. **Being involved:** To be treated as an equal partner in determining my own health and wellbeing. I want the right to be involved in decisions that affect my life and those affecting services in my local community.

Purpose of the visit

The visit was announced and was part of the ongoing work programme of Healthwatch Bedford Borough.

What we did

The Authorised Representatives (ARs) arrived at the building at 13:55pm and met with a member of staff outside granted access to the building. The ARs were welcomed by the member of staff and asked to sign in on the visitors book. They were then directed to the Manager's office, where they met with the Acting Manager of the home, as the Manager was on leave.

The ARs met with the Acting Manager, who explained that she has been with the home for 7 years and has progressed from being a cleaner, a cook, a carer and now an Acting Manager.

Findings:

Environment

External

Brook House is a residential home on the high street in Risely, a small rural parish in Bedford Borough. Brook House is easily accessible, and there is visible signage outside the building. There is no CCTV. Part of the external environment is well-kept, while some parts need some maintenance.

Internal

On entering the home there was a nice chair where visitors could sit down and sign the visitor's book. To the left of the entrance is a lounge with access to the kitchen, and to the right is the visitor's toilet. Some of the residents were resting or playing Bingo in the lounge and they were rewarded with treats. The ARs were directed to the Manager's office where they had a chat with members of staff.

Essential services

The ARs had a discussion with the Acting Manager, who explained that she feels quite confident in her role and her confidence has increased over time. She stated that she started as a cleaner and has now progressed to the role of an Acting Manager. She also said she has a level 3 diploma in social care

and has done all her mandatory training which has helped her in carrying out her role effectively.

The Acting Manager explained to the ARs that the care planning process for new residents involves gathering detailed information from the doctors, social workers and family or relatives. They then put this information together into a document, making note of their previous medications. This document is stored on the Care Management System (CMS). Each resident has their care plan stored on the system and a printed version kept in their books. The Acting Manager and some of the staff also explained that the care plans are usually updated when the needs of the residents change.

When asked about being confident in their roles, the staff at Brook House said they feel confident having received the necessary training to make them effective in their roles. However, some of the staff said they would be happy to receive additional training. The staff expressed that they love spending time with the residents. The Activity Coordinator stated that she wished she had all the time in the world to spend with the residents, as she does various activities with them.

The Acting Manager explained to the ARs that the house has a capacity of 19 rooms but currently has 16 residents. The residents are residing at Brook House for dementia care and support. The home has 23 staff members who work across a 2-week rota. Amongst the members of staff are 19 carers and 4 other members of staff. The home runs a day and night shift system, which runs from 08:00 am to 2:00 pm and 2:00 pm to 10:00 pm. During the night shift there are 2 members of staff working from 10:00 pm to 08:00 am.

Access

The Acting Manager explained that the residents are registered with a GP and gave an instance that one of their residents' family's said they wanted her to take her medication every other day and not as prescribed. However, she was waiting for the doctors' instructions before she could act. She said irrespective of how the family feels, she is going to follow the protocol and will not change the direction unless instructed by the doctor. The home has an Activity Coordinator who works Monday to Friday. She helps them with different activities, from card games to bingo, and sometimes takes residents for a walk in the park. However, she explained that she would love to take more of the residents for outdoor activities, like the zoo and other fun places if not for the broken down van. She explained that for now, she can only take two residents with her as the vehicle available can only accommodate two passengers at a time.

Safe, dignified and quality services.

Brook House, being a dementia home, means that in terms of communicating with the residents, the ARs were limited. The residents the ARs spoke to said they *feel safe and happy* in the home. One of the residents specifically said, **“it is basically a good home and staff are brilliant”**. One of the residents said they have been in the home for over a year whilst the other residents the ARs spoke to said they could not remember how long they have been living at Brook House.

Information

The ARs spoke with some of the staff, who all affirmed that they are confident in their roles and have received all the mandatory training to make them effective in their role. The ARs found that there was limited supervision with the staff, as most of them said they did not have any supervision. Meanwhile, others said they were supervised once every 3 months.

Choice

Most of the residents that interacted with the ARs said they had choice, of food, drinks and other things, while one of the residents said, **“Sometimes we have a bit of isolation.”**

Being listened to.

The staff reported that they felt confident to raise any concern whenever there was one. The Acting Manager said if she had any concern to raise, she would go to the Manager above her. The residents also affirmed that they felt confident to raise any issue of concern to the staff or the Acting Manager.

Being involved

The Acting Manager explained to the ARs that all the residents are involved in the planning of the house through their families, as the residents are dementia patients. She explained that they hand out surveys every 2-3 months to the residents. These surveys, she said, are very illustrative with pictures and bold letters containing six questions pertaining to the decoration of the house, food and drink options, staff meeting their needs, activity

programmes, how they felt about their living environment and any other comments the residents and their family's wished to make. The responses are gathered and used to plan the home's day-to-day running.

Current challenges for the home

The Acting Manager explained that one of the challenges of the home is that it is being sold now, even though it does not reduce the quality of care delivered. Another concern raised was staffing. One of the staff mentioned that they are always short-staffed and wished they had an adequate number of staff. Again, another member of staff raised concerns about the minivan used for outdoor activities, commenting that she wished it would be fixed so she could take a reasonable number of residents for outdoor activities.

The residents said they were happy in the home and could not think of anything that needed changing or improving.

Recommendations

Provider feedback

Belinda Kemp, Acting Manager, Brook House

Thank you, we are still in the process of being sold.

No other concerns currently,

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of the residents.

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Consider having staff supervision at regular intervals as this is a vital component in the development of the staff and effective running of the home.