

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Enter & View Report

# Forest View Care Home

Care Home Series 2014-2015

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Sheila Macdonald  
Elektra Dimitriou

March 2015

## Visit details

<i>Service address</i>	<i>Forest View Care Home, 45 Upper Walthamstow Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4PZ</i>
<i>Service Provider</i>	<i>Mr A Cork, Mrs N Heath</i>
<i>Service description</i>	<i>Forest View provides care for older people, particularly those living with dementia</i>
<i>Number of residents</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Reason for visit</i>	<i>Part of programme. This is one of a series of visits to older people living in care homes in Waltham Forest. This programme is to introduce our Enter &amp; View representatives and develop their role. We wanted to talk with older people about their experience of living in care homes. We looked at 4 areas - meals, activities, staff responses and complaints</i>
<i>Status of visit</i>	<i>Announced</i>
<i>Date of visit</i>	<i>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015</i>
<i>Authorised Reps</i>	<i>Sheila Macdonald, Elektra Demitriou</i>
<i>Declarations of interest</i>	<i>One of the reps recognised a resident and had a brief conversation with him.</i>

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Waltham Forest would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their co- operation and hospitality in hosting this visit. We welcome all contributions to this Enter and View programme.

## Enter & View

Enter & View is a statutory power conferred upon Healthwatch by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It gives Authorized Representatives of Healthwatch Waltham Forest the right to enter and observe publically-funded health and social care services in the borough. Enter & View visits are visits and not inspections. Enter & View visits are used to get a lay perspective on the service concerned and are an opportunity for service users to talk about their experiences with the service. This takes place in the communal areas of the home, as our visits preclude talking to people on their own in their private rooms. A report of each visit is produced which includes any recommendations for change or improvement arising from the visit. This is shared with the service prior to publication. All Healthwatch Waltham Forest Authorized Representatives undergo training and background checks before joining the Enter & View programme.

**Disclaimer:** This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the service users, visitors and staff who contributed to the report on that date.

## Summary of the visit

We visited from 12pm - 1.45 pm on a weekday. We found the owner, manager and other staff to be pleasant and open to this visit and thank them and residents for their co-operation with our observation. We enjoyed friendly greetings and farewells from a mix of staff and residents.

2 enter & view representatives visited and we looked at 4 areas:

- *catering, activities, staff responsiveness and complaints*

## Description of facility and overview of findings

This home caters for up to 24 older people and has a specialism in caring for those with dementia. They do not provide nursing care but there is end of life care. At the time of our visit one resident was in hospital, another being cared for in the Home receiving palliative care. Forest View is in a converted residential property. On entering, we observed a wide hallway with a tiled floor which has been freshly-decorated as part of a general programme of refurbishment. There are paintings on the walls. On the right is the living room, with dining room opposite; this is where nearly all the communal life is lived. The manager's office is directly off the hall where she is able to be at the centre of what is happening. One hallway leads to the kitchen and there is a noticeboard here. Details about this are noted later. Most bedrooms are on the first floor but some are on the ground floor. We passed a few rooms on the way to the small, quiet second living room. Decoration is neutral and clean and there were fresh flowers in the living room. Residents have a photo and their name on their doors.

## Observations

### Catering

We observed lunch being served during our visit. Most residents eat in the dining room, at group tables. On this date, there were two groups, one gentleman at another table and three people sitting separately in chairs with trolley tables. In the living room opposite, a further 5 residents were eating and we saw one lady being supported to eat in the small living room. This lady experiences a lot of shouting behaviour which gets worse when she is with the others, so she generally eats alone. Two or three more residents were served lunch in their rooms as they were very ill; one is now receiving end of life care.

The atmosphere during lunch was convivial, sociable and we could hear laughing and snatches of singing. Music played in the background in both rooms. Residents appeared to have good appetites and most could eat unaided. Those needing assistance were supported variously by the manager, owner, activities worker and care staff.

Lunch consisted of a choice of mild chicken curry, cheesy pasta with potatoes, carrots and swede, but no green vegetable. Pudding was Eve's Pudding, with custard or ice cream or fruit. We noticed those who did not want this choice being offered alternatives: an omelette, a yogurt. All had a drink served. Medication is given at 9am, 5pm and before bed.

The dining room has the day's menu displayed on a white board on the wall, as is the day, date and weather on another. Lunch took about an hour and a half, between people being seated, served and finishing their food. Residents appeared generally alert and relaxed, with no sign of anxious or noisy behaviour which might be associated with a group mostly diagnosed with dementia.

### **Activities**

The activities co-ordinator comes from Monday to Friday from 10am to 3pm. She told us that her auntie used to live here. Her background is in theatre and she said that they 'sing all the time'. The activities for today included armchair exercises, bean bags and a quiz. We observed a few moments of the bean bag game after lunch in the living room; residents took turns to throw the bags into a coloured soft mat with numbers on it. Several were participating and enjoying this. The co-ordinator told us that their favourites were crosswords, armchair basketball and anything involving a discussion. Despite the dementia, it appears that they enjoy word games very much.

There were books and videos in the living room, where the TV was on throughout the visit but without sound. They identified the actor on screen but we did not observe how the decision was made to leave it on. There are no up to date library books and it appears that the mobile service no longer calls.

In this Home there is no activities room but a full resources cupboard. A hairdresser calls weekly, the chiropodist every 3 months and a priest comes weekly to give communion. One gentleman goes out to the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturdays.

Outside there is a pleasant garden which wraps around the back of the Home. There is a large lawn and curved raised bed. The manager told us that in summer residents very much enjoy being outside around the table, and they put up gazebos.

### **Staff responsiveness**

The relationship between staff and residents at this Home is clearly extremely well-established, trusting and often affectionate. There have never been agency staff and many have worked at Forest View for many years, providing stability and consistency for their residents, particularly the manager who has been there for 30 years. As residents moved away from the lunch tables, we saw several instances of

them being guided gently and spoken to softly as they went to other rooms and the toilets. District nurses visit twice daily to administer insulin injections. The Home owner is usually present, and both she and the manager see themselves as very 'hands-on' and involved with every aspect of daily care.

One resident was distressed and unclear where she was going. She stopped to talk to me and said she was waiting for her husband although much else was unclear. The manager told me that this lady suffers from manic depression and had seen the psychiatrist the previous day.

A couple of residents were described as 'lovely' by the owner and activities worker, and several were happy to talk with us. However they were unable to tell us anything clear about their life in the Home.

One gentleman came to chat animatedly with us; he was not able to be very coherent but was clearly in good spirits, welcoming us and hoping we would have a good time. One rep realised that she had known him many years ago when he ran a horse stables in Leyton; she chatted with him and he did appear to remember the connection.

There were no relatives or friends visiting at the time of this visit although they were expecting one gentleman later who visits his wife daily.

Outings planned this year include to Paradise Park, Lloyds Music Hall, Broadway Theatre; there will again be tea dances.

An indication of the positive relationship between residents and the Home is that, in the garden, there are the buried ashes of four people who have died there. There are ornaments and a rose bush to mark their places. The manager told me that one gentleman had specifically requested this in his Will, against the wishes of his family, saying that he was a Londoner, and this was his home, where he wanted to stay.

### **Complaints**

During our chats with residents over lunch, they were positive about the food, and about who they talked to at the Home, but were not able to engage with us about what happens if they are unhappy about something.

The manager informed us that they had never received a complaint.

On the noticeboard, we observed a copy of the complaints procedure, greeting cards, a reminder about the next Forum and the February newsletter. The Forum takes place monthly (next one is March 19) at a time decided on the day; this

depends on what else residents are doing and when they are ready. This is an informal discussion which may be about food, an outing or planned activity.

The newsletter included welcomes to 3 new residents with their photos. It noted a Service User Group which happened on 29 January.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This is a small care home, and we were impressed with the warmth and knowledge developed about residents over many years. It clearly has the atmosphere of people's home and we observed much positive interaction. We liked the absence of noticeboards in the entrance hall as this made it feel more homely. The physical environment was pleasant and being renovated, although as it is quite small, the communal spaces are limited and can appear quite crowded. As some residents eat their meals in the living room, this may mean that they do not move around a great deal when the garden cannot be used. It may be helpful to consider creating a different space, such as a sensory room, in the second living room.

### **Recommendations:**

1. We think it would be useful and interesting to visit other care homes where provision for those living with dementia includes specific, sensory spaces. These can include whole rooms, or points of interest, such as wall displays.
2. Similarly, we suggest that there may be more use to be made of the garden which residents clearly enjoy, by creating some small spaces for people to grow their own flowers or herbs; advice on edible and sensory gardens is now widely available, such as from Capel Manor Gardens in Enfield.
3. As the books available are now rather limited, we suggest that the mobile library service is contacted to see if they can reinstate visits and encourage the use of texts with pictures which may also be stimulating and enjoyable.

### **Service provider response**

1. One of our recommendations was to have sensory space, we currently do not have the facilities to make a sensory room but we will be making a sensory wall for the residents. This will be started straight away.
2. The second recommendation was to creating spaces for flowers and herbs in the garden, we have asked our gardener to get some flowers and he will be planting them soon, also the manager has now currently purchased some herbs for the residents to maintain.

3. Finally we will contact the mobile library to see if we can arrange visits, also we will be talking to our activities coordinator about doing visits to the library with the more abled residents when the weather is good.

Thank you again for your recommendations.

Janet Eaton

Manager of Forest View Care Home

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences of this or any other care home in the borough please contact us.

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