



Care home life, what it's really like!

## St George's



Date of Healthwatch Sunderland visit:  
26<sup>th</sup> April 2019



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## **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Sunderland would like to acknowledge the support of the residents who allowed us into their home and talked openly and honestly with the team. We would also like to thank those staff members, family and relatives who took time out of their day to answer our questions and give their feedback.



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## 1. Introduction

### What is Healthwatch Sunderland?

Healthwatch Sunderland is the independent local champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

By speaking to Sunderland residents we aim to understand their needs, experiences and concerns of accessing and using local health and social care services. We can then speak out on their behalf to local service providers, focusing on people's concerns about current services and ensuring they are listened to and addressed by those who are running services.

We encourage and work with local services to involve Sunderland residents in the changes to health and social care provision. The ultimate aim is to get things right for the future, with health and social care services which meet the needs of the local community.



*We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work.*

*We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.*





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## 2. Background and rationale

Research carried out in 2016 highlighted that there is a need to provide qualitative information on care homes which goes beyond basic safety standards. It shows that the information needed by people looking for a suitable care home should provide a real sense of what a home may be like to live in.

Since 2017 Healthwatch Sunderland has responded to this need and began carrying out visits to all care homes currently available to older people across Sunderland. The aim is that these visits will be carried out on an annual basis to ensure the findings are current and up to date.

To enable members of the public to make more informed choices when considering which care home to move into for themselves or their relatives, the complete results are available via our website, where you will also find a promotional video which will explain the work fully: [www.healthwatchesunderland.com](http://www.healthwatchesunderland.com).

Professionals and members of the public are also welcome to contact us if they need further information or access to the reports in other formats.

The work is based on 9 indicators which focus specifically on issues of quality, such as how much residents and family can have a say in how the home is run, and whether residents are able to pursue their hobbies etc.

### **The 9 indicators are:**

1. A strong visible management
2. Staff with time and skills to do their jobs
3. Good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing
4. A varied programme of activities
5. Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes
6. Ensuring residents can regularly see health professionals such as GPs, Dentists, Opticians, Chiropodists, Audiologists etc.
7. Accommodate resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs
8. Provide an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used
9. Provide a physical environment which is suitable for the needs of the residents



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### 3. Methodology

The ‘Care home life - What it’s really like!’ visit took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019 and was carried out by Healthwatch Sunderland staff and volunteers who are trained so that they can effectively capture the resident’s experience.

At the visit residents were asked a range of questions via a set questionnaire (see appendix 1). The questions were designed to reflect the objectives of the visit. Observations were made on the physical environment and staff/resident interaction etc.

Staff and relatives were also given questionnaires to complete (see appendix 2, 3, 4 and 5).

We engage with local people on an ongoing basis, encouraging them to share their feedback on their experiences of care homes across Sunderland. Any feedback we received was incorporated into the findings.

## 4. Findings - Summary

The Healthwatch team collated the survey findings we gathered from residents, their family and friends, staff and Managers and our observations made during our visit. The findings have been scored against the nine indicators in terms of the degree which they were met, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A neutral rating indicates both positive and negative feedback, which when averaged results in a neutral score. A summary of this can be found below:

Here is the key which shows the indicator scores



Strongly disagree



Disagree













Neutral



Agree



Strongly agree

1.	A strong visible management	 Strongly agree
2.	Staff with time and skills to do their jobs	Time  Agree      Skills  Strongly agree
3.	Good knowledge of each resident and their changing needs	 Strongly agree
4.	A varied programme of activities	 Strongly agree
5.	Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes	 Strongly agree
6.	Regular access to health professionals	 Strongly agree
7.	Accommodation of resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs	 Agree
8.	An open environment where feedback is actively sought and used	 Strongly agree
9.	Provide a physical environment which is suitable for the needs of the residents	 Strongly agree



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## Findings

St George's Residential Care Home is a purpose built home, located at:

Vigo Lane  
Harraton  
Washington  
NE38 9AH

Telephone: 0191 4191878

Provider: Wellburn Care Homes

Provider's Website: <https://www.wellburncare.co.uk/our-homes/st-georges>

Provider's Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WellburnCare/>

See the latest CQC inspection report here:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-126290416>

The home has the capacity to support 38 residents aged 65 years and over. Residents are supported under the categories of general residential and dementia residential.

25 of the home's bedrooms are en-suite and they currently don't have any double rooms. Residents and their families are actively encouraged to personalise rooms as much as possible.

Pets are not allowed to live at the home but are able to visit and there is no restriction on the type of pet allowed to visit.

The home is located over two floors, both of which have their own lounge and dining areas. The home operates protected mealtime (a period of time when activity is reduced so staff can be available to help serve and supervise meals and assist residents who need help to eat and drink. This time also includes limiting visitors.) However if family members are or have been a family carer and wish to assist with mealtimes with their loved ones, they are more than welcome.

The home currently provides Wi-Fi, which residents and their relatives can access, but doesn't have a hearing loop system in communal areas.

Activities are provided and are available seven days a week and are ran either by the Life Style Coordinator (who is employed five days per week), or the Care Staff.

The home currently has an outside paved area to the rear of the home with tables and chairs and an upstairs balcony area, where residents can also sit out. It is also in the process of having a fenced grassed area developed for residents to use.

During the visit the Healthwatch Team spoke to six residents and received three relative surveys back and four staff, (one Manager, one Senior Carer, one Carer and one Life Style Coordinator).





The results of these surveys are given below:

## Indicator 1 - A strong visible management

The indicator states that the Manager should be visible within the care home, provide good leadership to staff and have the right experience for the job  
**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When asked about the Manager of the home four of the residents were able to name him and two were unable to name him but knew him by sight. When asked by the Healthwatch Team what they thought of him, all residents gave very positive comments. One resident stated; “He always has time to listen, he is a good Manager. I love him to bits and like to give him a hug and a cuddle.”

Relatives were asked by the Healthwatch Team if they could name the Manager and to say a little bit about him. All were able to correctly name him and gave the following comments;

“He is always smiling and very helpful if we need any information. He runs the home very well.”

“David is the best Manager you could have. He is very caring and there for you when needed.”

“Available, keen to be involved, likes to get to know people.”

During the Healthwatch visit the Manager showed the team around, introducing us to residents and having a chat as he went. We also witnessed conversations with resident’s family members, during this time it was clear that he knew the residents and these family members well and all appeared to be relaxed and happy in his company.





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All staff who responded to the survey stated that they feel supported by the Manager of the home. Their comments included;

“I receive support when I require it.”

“I receive good support from my Manager on all matters.”

“I have always received support from my Manager.”

Staff also gave positive comments when asked what their experience was of talking to the Manager when they had a question or wished to raise an issue. Comments included;

“The Manager is always available and very approachable.”

“I have always had a positive experience when needing to speak to my Manager or to raise an issue.”

“OK no problems.”

The Manager was asked what attracted them to their role. The Manager who had been in post for 1 and a half years, informed the Healthwatch Team; “I have worked in the care industry for around 12 years. I had ambitions to be an owner and Manager of my own care home since I started my first role in care which at some point in life I hope to achieve. I have been a registered Manager for the last 5 years and through this time I have enjoyed every single minute of it. I especially enjoy working with residents who are living with dementia. I have learnt a lot of skills and knowledge from my experiences in care over the past 12 years and enjoy cascading these down to Care staff and Team Leaders at St George’s.”

He went on to inform what he enjoys about his role; “I enjoy every little thing I do within my job and enjoy working for a company that values the hard work you put in. They reward staff, who work here at St George’s.”

## **Indicator 2 - Staff with time and skills to do their jobs**

The indicator states that staff should be well trained, motivated and feel they have the resources to do their job properly.

**The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met for staff time and STRONGLY AGREE this was met for staff skills.**

When asked by the Healthwatch Team what they thought of the staff at the home all residents replied very positively. Some of the comments given included;

“All staff get on and the atmosphere is good. The Carers are lovely, some have been at the home for over 20 years. I have been spreading the word whilst in hospital, recommending St George’s as it feels like a home from home.”

“They work very hard to look after you, they are gorgeous. I could ask the staff anything and they are there for you. I get first class care.”



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All residents went on to say that the staff do have the time to stop and chat with them. Some of the comments included;

“Yes they will tell you about their family and listen to you about your family. I like to hear about their children.”

“Yes if you want a chat they will take the time to talk to you.”

Relatives were asked by the Healthwatch Team if they felt that staff had the time to care for their relative. Comments given included;

“Staff have the required skills but sometimes I feel there is insufficient numbers of staff, especially in the evening. Staff do their best with the time they have.”

“Yes the staff are all very friendly and lovely. We feel like we are coming to our second family.”

“I have nothing but admiration for the staff, who are very caring and kind.”

When asked if they feel staff at the home have the skills to care for their family members, all relatives responded positively giving the following comments;

“Yes they have the necessary skills. Generally cheerful and helpful.”

“They do have the skills as far as I am concerned.”

“Yes the staff have very good skills to care for my Mam. I am very happy with all the staff.”

When staff were asked if they have enough time to care for residents, those who completed the survey informed the Healthwatch Team the following;

“All days are different, you sometimes have things occur. But on the whole I feel I always have time.”

“Yes.”

“I wish I had more time to sit with residents.”

All of the staff respondents went on to say that they are encouraged to develop their skills through courses and other career development opportunities.

The Healthwatch Team asked staff what they enjoy about their role. Survey respondents gave the following replies;

“I enjoy looking after the residents.”

“I love spending time with residents and if I am able to make their time in St George’s fun, it makes my time spent here better.”

“I love all parts of my job; caring and interacting with the residents and working alongside my colleagues.”

When the Manager was asked how he ensures that staff have enough time to care for the residents he stated; “I ensure that care staff have enough time with



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residents by ensuring that there is a high level of Care staff available on the floor at all times. I do this by completing a dependency tool for each resident and analysing this. Ensuring the hours calculated are above what our required hours are. I encourage Care staff to spend time with residents and feel that St George's is a home that is not task orientated towards resident's care. Instead time is taken to offer care that this is visible, you can see staff sitting enjoying activities with the residents.”

During the Healthwatch visit the Team witnessed staff on both floors of the home sitting with residents, chatting with them, holding their hands, offering comfort and enjoying activities together.

The Manager went on to inform the Healthwatch Team how he encourages staff to develop their skills. He commented; “I encourage staff to conduct as much training as possible to develop their skills. I also have been attending outside training courses with staff like CAIT (teaches care staff how to better interact with people living with dementia in order to reduce distress) and I am always very enthusiastic about it, in turn all of my staff are keen and eager to complete this training and be involved. I feel it is important that management be involved with care staff and training they attend to show them that I am also keen and eager to learn new skills and develop my knowledge also.”

### **Indicator 3 - Good knowledge of each resident and changing needs**

The indicator states that staff should be familiar with resident's histories and preferences and have processes in place for how to monitor changes in health and wellbeing.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

Residents who spoke to the Healthwatch Team were asked if staff know what they need, what they like and what they dislike. All residents agreed that they do, some of the comments given included;

“Yes they do I have had no problems.”

“Yes they get to know you. Although there are a lot of people they do remember what you like, for example my favourite food and how I like my cuppas and what clothes I like to wear.”

“Yes they do. Things like, I like my cups of tea hot and my TV on with my door closed.”

“Yes they do they help me to pick out my clothes and know what I like.”

When relatives were asked if the staff know their relatives life history, personality and health and care needs well comments given included;

“The staff know everyone and seem to know everything.”

“Most staff are aware of needs, past history and personality.”



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“The staff all have a good knowledge of all the residents.”

When asked if staff at the home notice and respond to changes in their relatives needs and if relatives are informed of any changes, all relatives who responded to the survey stated that they are informed and this is either done in person, or via the telephone.

When the staff were asked how they ensure that they and other team members get to know a residents life history, personality and health and care needs when they first arrive at the home, they informed the Healthwatch Team that they spend time with the resident and their family and friends, they receive information from the team leaders and they read individual care plans. One staff member commented; “I personally go around and introduce myself to all new residents and once I have their life story completed I hand it to the Team Leaders to put into the care plan.”

The Manager added the following; “From the minute an assessment has been undertaken staff are made aware in the handover process that a resident is coming into the service and what room number. The initial assessment of the resident is made available and highlighted in the handover process that all staff are to read and observe before the resident comes to St George’s, which is then signed at the end of the handover process. The initial assessment highlights a resident’s life history, personality and health and care needs. Once the initial assessment is completed it is entered on to our computer system which then generates a care plan for that resident from the details entered in the initial assessment and then is made available for staff to read.”

Staff and the Manager were asked how the information about a resident’s likes/dislikes and their health and care needs are updated as these change and passed on to staff. Survey respondents stated that changes are regularly updated in individual residents care plans and communicated back to staff during the handover process. The Manager added; “St George’s has a computer system and any changes within the residents care needs, likes, dislikes etc. are made on this system. They are then printed out and placed in the resident’s care plan so that staff are aware of this change. St George’s identify all changes in the handover process, which highlights every resident and what their day has been like and which visitors and professionals have visited them.”

#### **Indicator 4 - A varied programme of activities**

The indicator states that care homes should provide a wide range of activities (and ensure residents access these) in the home and support residents in taking part in activities outside the home.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When asked about the activities that are available inside the home, the residents the Healthwatch Team spoke to were able to inform of the activities that are available and what they liked to take part in.



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“I play bingo quite a bit and in the afternoons we play games.”

“There are activity lists up and I used to go to one or two but prefer my own space now and mainly stay in my own room. I like to read and watch quiz programmes on the TV.”

When asked about the activities provided outside of the home many of the residents stated that due to their own individual health they weren't able to go out often. Others mentioned that they went out for walks with staff and they had visited Sunderland Empire Theatre to see a show, which they had enjoyed.

During the Healthwatch visit we witnessed a list of activities available to residents displayed on the residents bedroom walls, which serve as a reminder of what activities are taking place and when. We witnessed a resident being taken on an outing in the homes mini bus with a staff member, and a resident returning, with a staff member, from the local shop where they had been to buy the paper. We also witnessed a lady in the main lounge carrying out an activity with staff support.

The residents went on to tell the Healthwatch Team that if they would like to use the garden they can and some were aware that a new garden area was in the process of being built for them.

When the Healthwatch Team asked relatives what they think about activities available to residents both inside and outside the home, all relatives responded positively. They informed us;

“Activities are very good. My husband is not very good at mixing with people but they play dominoes and take them to the garden centre which is one of my husband's favourite things, so he doesn't miss out.”

“Trips outside the home are generally good.”

“The activities for residents are excellent. Always something to do.”

When asked what encouragement is given to their relative to take part in activities, relatives stated the following;

“They do their best to accommodate everyone.”

“They are encouraged to take part but they prefer the activities outside of the home.”

“The staff always try to encourage and support my Mam. They talk to her and make her feel at ease.”

When asked if their family member is able to continue and enjoy any previous pursuits or hobbies they had before joining the home the Healthwatch Team received the following responses;



**St George's Wellbeing Planner**

**April 2019**

Date	Morning	Afternoon
1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	Coffee @ Clays Garden Centre	Afternoon Tea at the Galleries
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	Sensory Ball Games	Quiz
3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday	Mothers Union Coffee Morning	Aromatherapy, Manicures
4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Dartball	Knitting Group
5 <sup>th</sup> Friday	Easter Crafts	Residents Forum 2pm (have your say)
6 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Beanbag Toss	Crosswords and Word Searches
7 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Church Service at St Georges Church	Lola Therapy Dog, Gents Dominoes
8 <sup>th</sup> Monday	Drop in at St George's Church	Musical Bingo
9 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	Walks Around the Village	Yoga With Pam Snowball
10 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	Colouring In Therapy	Sensory Connections
11 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Creative Minds With Lily	Knitting Group
12 <sup>th</sup> Friday	Flower Arranging	Musical Minds
13 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Dominoes	Board Games
14 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Service at St Georges Church	Lola Therapy Dog, Gents Dominoes
15 <sup>th</sup> Monday	Bus Trip to Durham	Bus Trip to Durham
16 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	Walks Around the Village	Music Quiz
17 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	In House Church Service	Entertainment from Alan Cutler
18 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Dartball	Reminiscing, Knitting Group
19 <sup>th</sup> Friday	Good Friday	Movie Afternoon
20 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Easter Craft Day	Easter Craft Day
21 <sup>st</sup> Sunday	Easter Service at St Georges Church	Easter Raffle Draw and Name the Be
22 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	Aromatherapy	Manicures
23 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	St Georges Day Crafts	Yoga with Pam Snowball
24 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday	Life Stories and Goal Discussions	Knitting Group
25 <sup>th</sup> Thursday	Bus Trip to South Shields	Bus Trip to South Shields
26 <sup>th</sup> Friday	Dominoes	Baking Afternoon, Chinese Takeaway
27 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	Colouring In Therapy	Musical Bingo
28 <sup>th</sup> Sunday	Church Service at St Georges Church	Lola Therapy Dog, Gents Dominoes
29 <sup>th</sup> Monday	Drop in at St George's Church	Aromatherapy, Manicures
30 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	Gardening Morning	Potting and Planting

\*Activities subject to change due to weather / unforeseen circumstances

“My Mam never had any hobbies before she moved into the home. She now seems to be doing colouring in and she gets up to dance with staff and joins in the games.”

“No due to having almost lost their sight.”

“Yes he still does what he wants to do.”

When staff were asked what activities are available to residents inside the home they gave the following examples; crafts, entertainers, painting, games, quizzes, bingo, pet therapy, Yoga, colouring therapy, ball games, virtual reality reminiscing and aromatherapy etc.

Staff added that residents can also access activities

outside the home as the home has access to transport as often as needed to explore activities and trips out for all residents at St George's. Examples of outside activities included trips to the local Age UK centre for activities, walks around the village, swimming, church visits and to trips to the local shops.

The Manager added; “We have an extensive variety of activities offered at St George's which is adapted around resident's choice and preferences and have evidence of this in our residents forum file to indicate that we take all residents views into consideration when we adapt the activities sheet on a monthly basis. We have a high budget to accommodate a lot of activities for all residents at St George's, from very basic to bespoke activities.”

The Lifestyle Coordinator was asked what provision the home makes for those residents who cannot or do not wish to undertake group activities, they stated; “If the activity is able to be taken to the residents room it is, if they wish to take part, this includes aromatherapy, therapy dogs, virtual reality and also chatting. I



try to get round all the residents every day to have a chat. We also have a lady who has sensory lights in her room.”

Staff and management were asked what encouragement and assistance is given to residents so that they can take part in activities. Survey respondents explained that they talk to all residents explaining the activity and encouraging them to take part, especially the group activities. Activities are broken down and simplified for those who may struggle with them and Carers will sit with them and offer practical support and ongoing encouragement.”

The Lifestyle Coordinator was asked by the Healthwatch Team how they ensure that residents have the opportunity to take part in their hobbies and interests. They replied; “I find out what the individual hobbies were at home and encourage them to continue such as; gardening, dominoes, knitting, church group activities and meetings, painting and walking etc.”



When asked the same question by the Healthwatch Team the Manager added; “We have an extensive activities budget that allows us to incorporate the views of residents each month to build the activities we provide around what their wants, needs and preferences are. We also have an interest in resident goals and helping to achieve these goals, for example a resident wanted to learn to swim so we have enrolled the resident in swimming lessons to help the resident learn to swim. We have had residents wishes and preferences involved in all aspects of activities and trips out we provide. Another example of this is we have had a Chinese night as a number of residents stated they wanted to have some Chinese food. This is now a monthly thing as it went down a storm. We have pizza nights and everything that is undertaken by residents are normal day living things and we promote a normal healthy life full of socialising and average everyday things, along with meeting goals of residents which could be seen as out of the ordinary, for example a resident wanted to lead in raising money for her chosen charity, this started in February and we have raised £160. At the end of the year the resident will present this to the Parkinson’s charity in the form of a big cheque.”





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## Indicator 5 - Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes

The indicator states that care homes should offer a good range of meal choices and adequate support to help residents who may struggle to eat and drink including between mealtimes. The social nature of eating should be reflected in how homes organise their dining rooms and accommodate different preferences around mealtimes.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When asked what they think about the food at the home, all residents gave positive responses. Some of the comments included;

“The food is very good. I like curries and we had one yesterday and I was really impressed with it. I am very picky, but there is a lot of choice and its good quality.”

“I get what I want. I don’t like big meals but prefer snacks and drinks.”

“The food is very good especially the sweets.”

“It’s brilliant, lovely, no complaints whatsoever.”

They all added that there was plenty of choice at mealtimes and if they don’t like the options they are given an alternative will be made. When asked by the Healthwatch Team where they ate their meals and if they enjoy mealtimes, the majority of residents stated they eat in the dining room which they enjoy and one lady mentioned it’s a change of scenery.

When asked about the quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes at the home, the majority of relative respondents gave positive comments;

“Quality for everyone is good. If they are fussy like my husband they do their best to please.”

“The quality and choice of food is really good, no complaints whatsoever.”

One relative added that although the food was good they didn’t think it was as good as a couple of years ago.

Relatives added that they were confident that their relative was supported to eat and drink as much as they needed and the home tries to make mealtimes a sociable time by encouraging everyone to sit together in the communal dining area and staff sit and talk to residents.



Downstairs dining area

When staff were asked what they thought of the quality and choice of food, they all replied positively stating there was good quality food and plenty of available choice.

The Manager added how he ensures high standards of quality and choice of food for the residents; “I ensure high standards of quality in relation to the food we provide by encouraging staff to ensure that the residents have a mealtime experience like that of a restaurant. I audit these on a monthly basis ensuring all staff are aware of the standards expected and make them aware of what I am looking for. I feel St George’s offers a variety of food that is adapted around resident’s preferences and feedback is gained to ensure we do this with every meal served.”

The Manager and staff informed the Healthwatch Team that they ensure residents are able to eat and drink at mealtimes as well as outside mealtimes. They stated that a hydration trolley goes round the home three times daily to ensure that residents have the highest level possible of fluid intake and snacks are also provided within these times to ensure residents are having as much food as possible. Residents can also request anything 24/7. The Manager added that the home also has a water machine along with juice that is made available both upstairs and downstairs that residents and staff can access whenever needed.

During the Healthwatch visit the team witnessed residents being offered tea, coffee, juice, homemade cakes, cheese and biscuits and other snacks. One staff member encouraged a resident to take a snack after she initially refused to eat anything and then supported her to eat some cheese and biscuits, which the resident appeared to enjoy.



The Manager added; “Residents are supported and assisted where ever necessary by staff. If residents are not eating or drinking to the level expected, suffering from infections, or have lost weight, we will monitor this closely by placing residents on food and fluid diaries to evidence what has been offered and to monitor any concerns to relay to their GP.”

When the staff and the Manager were asked what choices residents have about what and when they eat and drink, they informed that residents can choose what they would like to eat and are offered a choice of meals either from the menu or they can choose something else. When residents eat is also their choice and although mealtimes are set they can also eat outside of these times. The Manager added; “Residents have the opportunity to have food and fluids whenever they want this. Whether it is day or night St George’s offers a variety of food and drink for residents. There are no restrictions on food, drink and when this is served.”





The staff and the Manager were also asked about the choices residents are offered on where and how they eat and drink. Staff commented that residents are encouraged to come to the dining room at mealtimes but if they wish to eat in the lounge or their own room, it is their choice. The Manager added; “St George’s offer choice and independence in all aspects of the care we provide and where a resident eats and drinks and how they eat and drink is completely down to their personal choice and we will have no restrictions on this. Residents are promoted to experience mealtimes for social stimulation, but if they do not wish to eat in the dining room they can have their meals in their room, in the lounge, or where ever they request.”

To ensure that mealtimes are sociable, staff and the Manager informed that they encourage residents to come to the dining room so that this an experience and time for social stimulation. They also create an environment similar to that of a restaurant and a gathering of friends and family and encourage friends to sit together.



Table menu

### Indicator 6 - Regular access to health professionals (GPs, Dentists, Opticians, Chiropodists, Audiologists etc.)

The indicator states that residents should have the same expectation to be able to promptly see a health professional as they would have when living in their own home.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When asked about visits from healthcare professionals at the home, the residents were able to inform the Healthwatch Team that they had recently seen an Optician, Chiropodists and Dentists. They added that should they need to see a Doctor they just need to mention it to staff who would arrange this for them. One resident also stated that they had changed their GP recently to a GP which is now aligned with the home and recognised that the advantage of this is should they now need to see a doctor they will come straightaway.



All family members who completed the survey stated that their relative has very good access to all healthcare professionals and mentioned that there are visits from GPs, Chiropodists, Physiotherapists, Nurses etc.



Comments included; “The home organises all health care support from all the health professionals, which helps us as we know she is getting all the professional help needed.”

The Healthwatch Team asked staff and the Manager about visits from health professionals at the home. Staff informed that the healthcare professionals visit regularly, some on a weekly or daily basis and the Team Leader will ring the GP as soon as residents requires a visit. The Manager added; “We have visits from all of the above professionals and we have good relationships with all professionals who enter the home. We have recently aligned to a GP surgery and are currently building a relationship with the surgery, who conducts two weekly Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to ensure that the residents within St George’s are in good health along with the Community Nurse Team and any other relevant professionals who can join these MDTs. I feel this is fantastic to ensure we have a good relationship and excellent continuity for our residents at St George’s. We also have a good relationship with the advocate service who have been involved with residents who require an advocate.”



## Indicator 7 - Accommodate resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs

The indicator states that care homes should be set up to meet residents cultural, religious and lifestyle needs as well as their care needs and shouldn't make people feel uncomfortable if they are different or do things differently to other residents. **The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met.**

When asked if there is respect for their religion or culture in the home all residents agreed that this is the case with some mentioning the option to have visits from a church representative or that they can go to church services outside of the home.

Residents went on to tell the Healthwatch team how the home accommodates their lifestyle choices. Comments included;

"I like a bath and staff will take me along. I particularly like one Carer as she doesn't make you feel embarrassed, she has a lovely easy nature. I also get my nails done regularly and my laundry."

"I recently had my nails painted and the hairdresser comes in on a Tuesday for those who wish to have their hair cut and styled."

"The hairdresser lets me know when my hair needs doing and I always get my clothes back from the laundry."

During the Healthwatch visit the team witnessed a care staff member sitting with a lady, doing her nails, which the resident appeared to be enjoying.

None of the relative respondents stated that their relatives had any specific lifestyle, religious or cultural needs but acknowledged that the home would respect and accommodate these if needed.

Relatives went on to inform that the home has visits from a hairdresser once a week which their relatives access and enjoys, and that their relative is always appropriately dressed and clean.



Outside patio area



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When asked if the home's laundry staff are good at getting their relatives clothes back to them, two relatives responded positively and one stated that their clothes aren't always returned.

Staff and the Manager informed the Healthwatch Team about the ways in which the home accommodates residents personal, cultural and lifestyle needs. This includes asking relevant questions during the initial assessment and then incorporating this information in to the care plan on admission, so that all staff are made aware. Examples given of how these have been accommodated included; the community link the home has with St George's Church, who have representatives visit residents who are of faith regularly and one resident of the home who is of Sikh faith and does not speak English, is catered for.

When the Manager was asked by the Healthwatch Team how they ensure that the laundry staff get the resident's own clothes back to them, he stated; "We have a process in which when a resident comes into St George's the resident's list of belongings is printed out and a copy issued to the laundry to ensure they are aware of the clothes that resident has. The laundry staff ensure each resident's clothes are marked to identify them. If there are any which haven't been identified, staff will be aware of who the clothes belong to, because they can access the inventory for that resident."

The Manager informed us of the mechanisms which are in place to ensure that residents are always clean and appropriately dressed; "Team Leaders have a daily walk around that consists of ensuring checks are made on a number of residents and the presentation of those residents. Along with a weekly walk around which I conduct, to ensure all relevant checks have been carried out. I monitor this also on a daily basis when I do observations and look around the home whilst on the floor."

## **Indicator 8 - An open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**

The indicator states that there should be a mechanism in place for residents and relatives to influence what happens in the home, such as a residents and relatives committee. The process for making comments or complaints should be clear and feedback should be welcomed and acted on.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When the residents were asked if they ever get asked if they are happy at the home, the majority replied that they do. Two of the residents went on to say that they are happy at the home. The remaining residents did not answer this question, but this may have been due to their own individual health and capacity. All stated that there isn't anything they would like to change about the home.

When the Healthwatch Team asked the residents what they would do if they ever needed to make a complaint about the home, they stated that they would either speak to a friend, family member, one of the Carers or David the Manager. Some of the comments given included;



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“If I wasn’t happy then I would say something to the Carers, who are easy to talk to, they are just like friends and family.”

“I would go to Dave and he would sort it out for me.”

“I could ask or tell the staff anything. The staff are here for you and they will do anything to help you.”

When asked by the Healthwatch Team if they feel welcome at the home, all relatives who completed the survey agreed that they did. Some of the comments included;

“Very welcome, I love to come here which is every day.”

“Yes I feel like I’m visiting my family at the home. All the staff are friends and always give me and my family a warm welcome.”

Relatives added the ways in which they and their relative could have a say in how the home is ran, this included completing surveys and talking to the Manager. They all stated that should they need to make a complaint about any aspect of the home, management or the staff if they needed to, they would approach and speak with the Manager and they all felt confident that this would be dealt with appropriately.

When staff and the Manager were asked by the Healthwatch Team how residents and their family have a say in how the home is ran, they stated that regular residents and relative meetings take place, the Lifestyle Coordinator conducts a resident’s forum, satisfaction surveys are issued and the Manager or staff can be approached at any point.

The Lifestyle Coordinator added; “We have started a resident forum group at the beginning of every month so that if there are activities the residents want to try or that they are not too keen on, I can put this into place the following month. We also have an activities survey I am currently working on.”

The Manager also added how he promotes feedback; “Along with residents and relatives being able to approach myself with any issues or concerns, I feel that I promote an open door policy and encourage relatives and residents to come and have a chat or express any concerns or issues or ideas.” He went on to explain that any feedback received is acted upon to encourage a culture where residents and relatives can have a say on how the home is ran and complaints are dealt with in a timely manner; “We provide a culture of residents and relatives having a say on how this home is ran, after all this is their home or their loved ones home and should be a big part of what happens within their home.”

Staff explained the ways in which they can have a say in how the home is ran. Some of the comments received included;

“Through regular supervisions. Also our Manager is very approachable and is always keen to listen to ideas to improve how the home is ran.”





“The staff have regular staff meetings where we are encouraged to talk about anything we think could benefit the home and its residents.”

The Manager, when asked the same questions, gave the following response; “Staff have staff meetings every two months to express their views and suggestions, along with supervisions every other month. They can approach myself at any time and I will take on board any feedback, concerns or issues, and address these as soon as possible to ensure we have a culture of a Management Team that listens to everyone involved within the home to provide the best standard of care.”

### **Indicator 9 - Provide a physical environment which is suitable for the needs of the residents**

The indicator states that care homes should be suitable for their resident’s needs. Be comfortable, homely, well maintained with high standards of hygiene.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

When residents were asked if the home is always clean and tidy, all those who the Healthwatch Team spoke to stated that it is, with some commenting that staff come into their rooms on a daily basis to vacuum, tidy and change the towels in their bathroom. They went on to add that the temperature is kept comfortable for them and they can adjust this, by opening and closing the windows throughout the home. One resident mentioned she uses a fan in her room when she gets warm and another resident added that if she mentions to staff she is getting cold whilst sitting in the lounge, staff will go and get her a blanket straight away.



Dementia friendly signage

When relatives were asked if the home is kept to a suitable temperature, of those who completed the survey, two stated that it is and one mentioned that it can be too warm. All relatives agreed that the home is well decorated and well maintained, is a dementia friendly environment and is always kept clean and tidy.

During the Healthwatch Team visit it was witnessed that the home had just been redecorated downstairs, which was clean and bright and liked by the residents.



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Further renovations were ongoing in the home which the Manager explained, this included the garden extension.

When the Manager was asked how he ensures that a comfortable temperature is maintained in resident's rooms and all communal areas, he stated; "I ensure a comfortable temperature is maintained by monitoring all areas within the home on a monthly basis to ensure it is at the correct temperature and if this is not within range adjusting the heating to suit. Audits are carried out on a monthly basis in the health and safety file to promote a comfortable ambient temperature."

He added how he ensures that the building and its contents are well maintained and decorated throughout; "Maintenance is carried out on a weekly basis by the Handy Man who works here three days a week and if decorating is required he would complete this. If there is refurbishment needed I would inform the company or the company would make that decision and send a team in. We have had some recent refurbishment and will be having further refurbishment later this year."

When asked by the Healthwatch Team how he ensures that the home is always hygienic and clean, he stated; "We have a team of Domestic Assistants and a Housekeeper that maintain the cleanliness and ensure that the home is hygienic at all times. Audits are carried out on a monthly basis to ensure that the home is hygienic and clean. Domestic Assistants also complete paperwork on a daily basis to ensure that each area of the home has been cleaned."

The Healthwatch Team asked staff and the Manager in what ways the home is a dementia friendly environment. Those who completed the survey informed that the home has good lighting, flooring is appropriate and not patterned as residents living with dementia see things in a different way. They ensure that they make eating and drinking accessible and easy, they use bright table cloths so that this contrasts with the white plates used. Similarly bright furniture is used in the communal areas and dementia friendly signage is used throughout the home to help provide clarity for residents. The home is kept clutter free and residents are able to access outside activities when accompanied by staff.



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## 5. Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Questions for residents

1. Who is the Manager of the home?
2. What do you think of the Manager?
3. What do you think about the staff here?
4. Do the staff have the time to stop and chat with you?
5. Do the staff know what you need and what you like and don't like? (your daily routines, personality, lifestyle, clothing etc.)
6. What activities are there for you in the home?
7. What activities are there outside the home? (Groups, trips etc.)
8. Is it easy to join in the activities?
9. If you would like to use the garden are you able to?
10. Do you get a chance to do any of the things you used to enjoy before you came here? (i.e. bringing in pets, hobbies, interests etc.)
11. What do you think of the food here?
12. Is there enough choice of what you eat and when you eat?
13. Where do you eat your meals? (Is it your choice to eat there?)
14. Do you enjoy mealtimes? (What do like/dislike about mealtimes?)
15. Have you seen a dentist to check your teeth or an optician to check your eyes or an audiologist to check your hearing recently?
16. What happens if you need to see a doctor or have an appointment at the hospital?
17. Is there respect for your religion or your culture here in your home? e.g. Are you able to wear your own clothes, get your hair/nails done, have a shave, are the laundry staff good at getting your own clothes back to you?
18. Is the home always clean and tidy?
19. What is the temperature like here? Are you ever cold or too warm?
20. Do you get asked what you think about the home or if you are happy?
21. Would you like to change anything about the home? Have you told anyone about this and what happened?
22. What would you do if you wanted to make a complaint about the home?



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## Appendix 2 - Questions for Managers

1. **Have strong, visible management**  
What attracted you to the role of care home Manager/Deputy Manager?  
What do you enjoy about the role?
2. **Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
In what ways do you encourage staff to develop their skills?  
How do you ensure staff have enough time to care for residents?
3. **Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How do you ensure that staff get to know a resident's life history, personality and health and care needs when the resident first arrives?  
How is information about a resident's likes/dislikes and their health and care needs updated as these change and passed on to staff?
4. **Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What activities are available for residents inside and outside the home?  
Does the home have access to its own transport and able to use this for trips and activities outside of the home?  
What encouragement and assistance is given to residents so that they can take part in activities?  
How are residents supported to continue to do the things they used to enjoy before coming into the home i.e. hobbies/interests/pets?
5. **Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
How do you ensure high standards of quality and choice of food?  
What systems are in place to support residents to eat and drink at mealtimes and outside of mealtimes?  
What choices do residents have about what and when they eat and drink?  
What choices do residents have about where and how they eat and drink?  
Does the home have permanent drink stations available to residents?  
In what ways do you ensure that mealtimes are sociable?
6. **Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals**  
Please tell us about visits from all health professionals such as GPs, nurses, dentists, opticians, audiologists, chiropodists or other health care support mechanisms?
7. **Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
How does the home find out about and cater to residents' cultural, religious and lifestyle needs?  
Can you give an example of how these have been accommodated?  
What provision is there for residents to regularly get their hair cut/styled?  
How do you ensure that the laundry staff get the residents own clothes back to them?  
What mechanisms are in place to ensure that residents are always clean and appropriately dressed?
8. **Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
In what ways can residents and their family have a say in how the home is run?  
How do you make use of feedback or complaints from residents and relatives?  
In what ways are staff able to have a say in how the home is run?
9. **A physical environment suitable for the needs of the residents**  
How do you ensure that a comfortable temperature is maintained in resident's rooms and all communal areas?  
How do you ensure the building and its contents are well maintained and decorated throughout?  
How do you ensure that the home is always hygienic and clean?  
In what ways do you make the home a dementia friendly environment?



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## Appendix 3 - Questions for Care Staff

- 1. Have strong, visible management**  
What support do you receive from the Manager?  
What is your experience of talking to the Manager when you want to ask a question or raise an issue?
- 2. Staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
Do you feel you have enough time to care for residents? If no, why?  
Are you encouraged to continue to develop your skills? In what ways?  
What do you enjoy about your job?
- 3. Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How do you ensure that you and other members of your team get to know a resident's life history, personality and health and care needs when the resident first arrives?  
How is information about a resident's tastes and their health and care needs updated as these change and how do you know if there has been changes?
- 4. Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What activities are available for residents inside the home?  
What activities are available for residents outside the home?  
What encouragement and assistance do you give to residents so that they can take part in activities?
- 5. Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
What do you think of the quality and choice of food?  
How do you make sure residents are able to eat and drink at mealtimes as well as outside of mealtimes?  
What choices do residents have about what and when they eat and drink?  
What choices do residents have about where and how they eat and drink?  
In what ways do you try to make mealtimes sociable?
- 6. Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals**  
Please tell us about visits from all health professionals such as GPs, nurses, dentists, audiology, opticians, chiropodists or other health care support mechanisms?
- 7. Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
Can you give an example of how the home caters for resident's religious and cultural needs?
- 8. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
In what ways can residents and their family/friends have a say in how the home is run?  
Can you provide an example of how a resident or their family member has influenced how the home is run?  
How do you, as a member of staff have a say in how the home is run?
- 9. A physical environment suitable for the needs of the residents**  
How is the home made dementia friendly?



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## Appendix 4 - Questions for Activities Coordinator

1. **Have strong, visible management**  
What support do you receive from the Manager?  
What is your experience of talking to the Manager when you want to ask a question or raise an issue?
2. **Staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
Do you feel you have enough time to provide varied activities for residents? If no, why?  
Are you encouraged to continue to develop your skills? In what ways?  
What do you enjoy about your job?
3. **Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How do you ensure that you and other members of your team get to know a resident's life history and personality when they first arrive at the home?
4. **Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What activities are available for residents inside the home?  
What activities are available for residents outside the home?  
What activity provision is made for those residents who cannot or do not wish to undertake group activities?  
What encouragement and assistance do you give to residents so that they can take part in activities?  
How do you ensure that residents have the opportunity to continue to take part in their hobbies and interests?
5. **Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
How are activities tailored to meet a resident's religious and cultural needs?
6. **Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
In what ways can residents and their family/friends have a say in what activities are delivered both inside and outside the home?  
Can you provide an example of how a resident or their family member has influenced the provision of a new activity?  
How are the activities provided evaluated to ensure residents are continuing to enjoy them?  
How do you, as a member of staff have a say in how the home is run?
7. **A physical environment suitable for the needs of the residents**  
How is the home made dementia friendly?



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## Appendix 5 - Questions for Friends and Relatives

1. **Strong visible management**  
Who is the Manager of the home?  
Please tell us a little about the Manager?
2. **Have staff got the time and skills to do their jobs**  
Do you feel the staff have the time to care for your friend/relative? Please explain.  
Do you feel the staff have the skills to care for your friend/relative? Please explain.
3. **Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How well do you think the staff know your friend/relative's life history, personality and health and care needs?  
Does the home notice and respond when your friends/relative's needs change?  
How do they let you know about the changes?
4. **Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What do you think of the activities available for residents inside and outside the home?  
Please tell us how your friend/relative is encouraged and supported to take part in the activities.  
Now they live at the home, is your friend/relative still able to do the things they used to enjoy i.e. hobbies, interests, pets? Please explain.
5. **Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
What do think of the quality and choice of food?  
How confident are you that your friend/relative is supported to eat and drink as much as needed?  
Please tell us how the home ensures that mealtimes are sociable?
6. **Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals**  
Please tell us about your friends/relatives access to health professionals such as GPs, nurses, dentists, opticians, audiologists, chiropodists or other health care support mechanisms?
7. **Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
Does your friend/relative have any specific lifestyle or religious or cultural needs?  
How do you feel the home respects and accommodates these needs?  
What provision is there for your friend/relative to regularly get their hair cut/styled?  
How good are the laundry staff at getting your friends/relatives own clothes back to them?  
Is your friend/relative always clean and appropriately dressed?
8. **Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
Do you feel that you are a welcome participant in the life of the home?  
In what ways can you and/or your friend/relative have a say in how the home is run or give feedback?  
How would you make a complaint about any aspect of the home, management or the staff if you needed to?  
Would you feel confident to make a complaint and do you think it would be acted on appropriately?
9. **A physical environment suitable for the needs of the residents**  
Do you always find the home at a comfortable temperature for residents?  
Is the home always hygienically clean and tidy?  
Is the home always well decorated and well maintained?  
Do you think the home is a dementia friendly environment?



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**DISCLAIMER:**

- The observations made in this report relate only to the visits carried out.
- This report is not representative of all residents' views; it only represents the views of those who were able to contribute within the time available.

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