

## Enter and View – Visit Report

Name of establishment: Avonhurst House  
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Staff employed: Manager: Ms Esther Noah

Date of visit: 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2018

Healthwatch authorised representatives: Ibrahim Ali [Volunteers & Projects Officer  
Healthwatch Brent]  
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### Introduction and Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View (E&V) visit undertaken by Healthwatch Brent Volunteers & Enter & View Volunteers, as part of a planned strategy to look at a range of health and social care services within the London Borough of Brent to obtain a better idea of the quality of care provided. Healthwatch E&V representatives have statutory powers to enter Health and Social Care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. The aim is to report the service that is observed, to consider how services may be improved and how good practice can be disseminated.

The Healthwatch Brent team visit the service and record their observations along with the feedback from residents, relatives, carers and staff. They compile a report based on observations and interviews with residents, relatives, carers, and staff and making some recommendations. The Report is sent to the registered Manager for comments or corrections and response to the recommendations. The final version is then sent to interested parties, including the Head Office of the managing organisation, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Adults and Safeguarding Committee, CQC, Brent Council and the public via the Healthwatch website.

**DISCLAIMER:** This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter

and View team on that date, and those who completed and returned questionnaires relating to the visit.

### **General Information**

Avonhurst House is a general sheltered housing scheme in Brondesbury that supports older people to maintain their independence and encourage living as a community.

The online description of Avonhurst House [ <http://www.housingcare.org> ]

- Age exclusive housing
- 40 flats. Built in 1978 and renovated in 2003. Sizes studio, 1 bedroom
- Visiting management staff ( Sheltered Housing Team Leader, Regional Manager Older Persons Services, Activities Co-ordinator), Non-resident management staff and Careline alarm service
- lounge, laundry, garden
- Access to site easy, but less so for less mobile people. Distances: bus stop 100 yards; shop 1 mile(s); post office 1 mile(s); town centre 2 mile(s); GP 500 yards
- Regular social activities. New residents accepted from 55 years of age. Cats only generally accepted, but not to be replaced
- Security entry phone and CCTV
- Tenure(s): Rent (social landlord)

These facilities offer self-contained apartments with an allocated Scheme Manager and Mobile Warden available on site. The scheme has a variety of communal facilities including lounges, dining rooms and garden to support activities.

### **Background**

The main goal of sheltered housing is often to support the residents, especially in the rehabilitation process; preventing unnecessary admissions to hospital or mental health services. Sheltered housing is differentiated from more typical housing by providing group housing with a range of support services such as a Mobile Warden Wardens and Scheme Manger.

The Enter & View visit aimed to cover various aspects of life in the sheltered home, such as psychological & social well-being, care planning, engagement, complaints or compliments, and staff/workforce. Sheltered housing offers the option for residents to maintain their maximum level of independence and dignity in their later years.

The tenants interviewed at the Avonhurst House, around 13 in total, came from various ethnic backgrounds. A significant number were from an Irish background, while some individuals interviewed came from an African or Afro-Caribbean background.

The atmosphere of the premises was lively, with many conversations going on with lots of laughter. The Manager has made efforts to cater for the different cultures of the residents; people seem to mix easily with each other and the atmosphere was very friendly

## **Environment**

The first impression on entering the communal room was of lively conversations going on with lots of laughter. People were sitting in a circle and made room for us to join in. The room was bright, clean and well furnished. The Healthwatch Brent team were provided with tea and coffee while engaging the residents in conversation. There was large, well-kept garden

The Home is located within walking distance of Willesden Green Station, cafes, shops and other amenities.

## **Care Planning**

Of the 40 residents, two were said to have 'special' conditions and it was estimated by the Manager that 5% of the residents have care support with once or twice daily visits from a care assistant. We were informed that risk assessments can be done at any time. If there are signs that the condition of a resident has changed, they are referred to Elders Voice or The Sanctuary. The Manager said, that risk assessments have been performed by Elders Voice and if needed a care package can be put into place if required. Also, residents can be referred to other health services if required. A 'Well Card' system is in place from Monday to Friday. This involves displaying a card on their door which shows they are 'OK' – Resident are encouraged to display the 'Well Card' in the morning and not the night before – other tenants help keep a check on each other and help monitor the card system.

Residents can pull cords in their flat in 4 places – lounge, bathroom, bedroom, and kitchen. There is an Intercom in each flat – if manager does not react in time an alert will go to Careline handset.

The Manager does not have access to the residents care plans, these are kept in the resident's flat. The Manager stated that the residents' health is monitored through observations - "we keep good observations of residents and they make their own appointments, I will make a note of symptoms and I will leave a note for the mobile warden."

Some residents act as volunteers and help others when needed. There was excellent communication between the Manager and residents - an informal network was in place that helps residents keeps an eye on each. If a care assistant does not arrive or is late, the Manager stated that she would immediately contact their line manager.

Residents stated they were able to book appointments with the doctor, opticians, and hearing test easily. Access to these services was not a problem for the residents consulted. Opticians also make

visits to residents at their accommodation. Those residents who had a care plan stated that their care worker arrives on time and that they were aware of how to make a complaint if required.

When a resident is discharged from hospital, the manager will inform their relatives and other residents sometimes assist in checking on them. The Manager also stated that she would ask the hospital to make sure that the residents had some sandwiches on discharge; other residents were encouraged to keep help each other in such situations – two particular residents were very active in volunteer and helping out at the Home.

### **Manager and Staff**

The provision of a mobile Wardens and Scheme Manager is regarded as being an essential feature that distinguishes Sheltered Housing from other types of living accommodation.

The Manager stated that she had received all the mandatory training courses. The Manager is on site from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. There is one scheme Manager and 4 mobile wardens employed at the premises. The Manager has 12 years of experience. The residents stated that they were very pleased with the Manager and that they could approach her about any issues or problems.

Our visit revealed that the Manager's role involved making sure there was good communication between staff, residents and care providers. The Manager's approach was very proactive and hand-on – and could be described as very organised; she said, "I love my paperwork."

Engagement with residents take place in November, with 2 weeks of random surveys and collecting feedback. Also from November 5th to 19th, Network Homes has a road show; where key staff including Management and the Director of Older Peoples services will be directly involved.

The Manager had appropriate skills, with 12yrs of experience. An online training system is used for staff training. The residents praised the Manager and stated, "that she helped with any issues we have."

### **Psychological Well-being**

The residents are close to various services, being located near local shops and transport services. The residents enjoy engaging in a variety of activities such as dominos, exercise, going out as a group. Friday is set aside for a variety of activities in the lounge area.

The residents questioned all said they had access to Sunday Church and regularly attended. Residents cooked their own meals and also enjoyed fish and chips in the lounge every Thursday. This is intended to help increase social mixing between residents. Some residents described going out in groups occasionally. While others described how they enjoyed participated in maintaining the garden.

Residents described visiting friends and relatives, and using the local amenities near the accommodation. Residents made their own appointments with GP's and had no difficulty making these appointments.

The Manager stated that she encourage residents to do a will and arrange their funeral plan. A partnership with Age UK was introduce 8 yrs. ago and where they come at least twice a year.

When asked what could be improved, one resident said he would like to have more Bingo during the winter season.

### **Engagement with Relatives/Residents/ Carers**

Regularly monthly meetings take place, where residents are able to exchange their views with other residents and the Manager. This provides the opportunity to tackle any problems or issues. 5% of the residents had some care assistance. The Manager said they did not have any problems with care assistants not showing up and that residents would contact her if they needed help with such issues.

Of the residents who had care plans, all were happy with the service they received and stated that their care assistant arrived on time. Many residents described being visited by friends and relatives.

### **Compliments/Complaints/Incidents**

The Manager stated that , "If residents have issue, say with cleaner, we can talk to cleaner directly and sort out issue ... they have regular house meetings."

The Home had a complaints procedure with leaflets in place. If a complaint was about a manager there is telephone number people can call. Also there is an incident book where any complaints are logged on to the system

### **Recommendations for Network Homes**

The Healthwatch Team observed a well-managed Scheme, with a pleasant, friendly atmosphere. The Manager is highly organised and efficient, friendly and well-liked by the residents. The administrative systems in place were very impressive.

### **Responses**

The Manager stated that she was happy with the report.