

Enter and View – Visit Report

Name of establishment: Christ Church Court,
13a St Albans Road, Harlesden,
London NW10 8UQ
Managed by The Salvation Army Housing
Association
Tel. **0800 970 6363**
Email info@saha.org.uk

Staff employed: Housing Officer: Rafiat Lawal
Rafiat.lawal@saha.org.uk
Head of Housing Services: Stephen Bate
stephen.bate@saha.org.uk

Date of visit: 11 January 2019

Healthwatch Brent

Authorised representatives: Ibrahim Ali [Projects Officer Healthwatch Brent]
Mary Evans & Margaret Oyemade
[Healthwatch Brent Volunteers]

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

Scheme consists of 21 flats over three floors with two lifts and intercom access. Each property has its own bedroom, lounge, kitchen and bathroom. The flats also have storage heating and double glazing. The ground floor flats have a patio door leading onto the communal garden. There is car parking at the front of the scheme. There is no Housing Scheme Manager on site, however, there is Housing Officer providing generic service to promote independent living for those residents requiring the service.

A Housing Officer provides support to Residents; facilities also include a Careline alarm service, lift, stair lift, laundry room, and a garden.

The property is located within walking distance of local amenities such as the post office, and it is within 1 mile of town centre.

The property is classified as 55+ accommodation and classed as a general needs accommodation.

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 institutions. The Enter & View visits aimed to cover various aspects of life in the sheltered home, such as psychological & social well-being, care planning, complaints, and staff/workforce. The residents interviewed were from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Care Planning

Brent Council nominates new tenants after they undergo an initial assessment. After receiving the referral, the Salvation Army Housing Association will conduct a viewing with the potential resident and a pre Tenant Assessment is done. The property is not intended for new residents with high care needs. The Housing Officer said, "If the risk is minimal and the new tenant will not be too vulnerable, we will accept them. If during the tenancy a resident becomes very vulnerable, social services will be engaged so as to assess if the property is still suitable for them."

Care plans are in place only for tenants that require them and are organised by Social Services. The Housing Officer stated that there were no issues when residents are discharged from hospital such as returning home late or dehydration. According to the Housing Officer all tenants have their own GP.

When interviewed, Tenants said they were very clear about their Care Plans and the support offered. Care workers were said to arrive twice a day and performed personal care duties and some light cleaning duties. Tenants stated that they cooked for themselves and some used on-line shopping regularly. Tenant with a Care Plan in place did not mention any issues with their Care Plan or Care Agency.

One Tenant, who had recently suffered from a stroke, who did not have a Care Plan, said she was not satisfied with her GP and Physiotherapist. The Tenant was originally registered with a GP in Kensington. She said, "The recovery Team came to visit me every day; but once I changed doctors and registered with one in Brent they would not refer me to Physiotherapy or to a gym. - because they said I looked healthy." The Tenant said that when she suffered a stroke, no staff from the Housing Association contacted her.

Emergency cords, found in all the rooms and bathrooms, are available and are connected to a 24 hour emergency helpline system.

Manager and Staff

Christ Church Court does not have an on-site Scheme Manger, but a Housing Officer regularly visits the property. The current Housing Officer has been in place for a short period. The role of the Housing Office is generic, and has no housing support attached to the housing provision. The Housing Officer stated that she received all the mandatory training courses in Food Hygiene, Mental Health Awareness, Dementia Care, Moving and Handling, Safeguarding, Whistle blowing Policy and Fire Safety.

Meetings between the Housing Officer and the residents are conducted every quarter. Currently there is no Tenant representative. However, Tenants knew how to make a complaint and contact the Housing Officer if they needed to. Tenant it would be beneficial if the Housing Support Manager visited more often, so they could discuss issues as they arise.

Tenants said that cleaners do their best.

Psychological Well-being

The positive aspects of living in sheltered accommodation found on this visit agreed with the review literature (Roos, et al. 2016) [1]: residents appreciated privacy, independence, participating in decision making, being in a safe & secure environment, and being able to maintain links with family and friends. However, Tenants were very concerned with several safety issues:

1. A working CCTV camera was not in place at the front door. A 'decoy' CCTV camera was in place which was not operational.
2. Homeless people sleeping in the front doorway.
3. Intruders accessing the building - with the possibility of drug or alcohol use
4. Rubbish being dumped directly outside the front of the building and lack of recycle bins - either by tenants or neighbours.

All Tenants questioned were concerned about safety. It was the primary issue which they wanted addressed. Intruders wait outside the building and access the building when someone come either enters or exits the property. Tenants stated that they have called the police several and nothing has been done so far. One Tenant said, "The police told us to take down the enclosure outside the front door, and we have told the Housing Support Manager."

Each of the above points were discussed with the Housing Officer during the visit. The outcomes were as follow:

- a) New operating CCTV cameras have been approve, and a work ordered has been raised. A phone line has been ordered which will allow the property to be monitored remotely.
- b) Homeless people sleeping in the front door way will be monitored by the CCTV and police will be notified.
- c) Intruders will be prevented by new CCTV monitoring system which will have security lights from the front door to the end of the parking area.
- d) The new CCTV system will be able to show who is dumping rubbish outside the building and action will be taken against people responsible.

Activities are not part of the service provided by the Housing Association. The premises are within a short walking distance from local amenities and within 1 mile of the town centre. Some of the tenants attend the neighbouring Church.

Engagement with Relatives/Residents/ Carers

Residents' were aware of how to complain. The Housing Support Manager arranges quarterly residents meeting. One family carer stated he was happy with the home. Those tenants that used the services of a Care Agency appeared to be satisfied with the service provided. One Tenant said they had recommended the Home to a relative and that they had moved in.

Compliments/Complaints/Incidents

In general, residents seem to be happy with living in the Scheme, but they were very concerned about security issues, anti-social behaviour, and the dumping of rubbish immediately outside the front of the building. Residents have reported anti-social behaviour to the police.

According to the Brent Council website [<https://www.brent.gov.uk/your-community/crime-and-community-safety/antisocial-behaviour/>] anti-social behaviour is anything which causes you alarm, harassment or distress. This might include: Harassment and intimidation, Disorderly behaviour, Street drinking, Drug dealing and substance misuse, and Prostitution.

The Housing Officer requested that Healthwatch Brent Enter & View Report be passed on to the relevant department in Brent Council such as the Safer Neighbourhood Team - so that more could be done about the anti-social behaviour problem affecting the Scheme and the neighbourhood in general – i.e., the dumping of rubbish, rough sleeping, and disorderly behaviour.

Recommendations for the Salvation Army Housing Association

Tenants' main complaints were centred on the anti-social behaviour issues. These have been discussed with the Housing Officer.

- New CCTV camera system be installed so that anti-social behaviour can be monitored
- The Housing Officer scheduled more frequent visits while the CCTV cameras are being put in place - so as to reassure the tenants that action is being taken

Responses from the Salvation Army Housing Association

- The Salvation Army Housing Association has raised a work order so that CCTV cameras and security lights can be installed
- The CCTV installation will be attached to an extra service which means it will be monitored 24/7 with a speech module that the operatives can ask people who are not supposed to be there to move on.
- The Housing Officer has request that the final Healthwatch Brent Enter & View Report be sent to Brent Council's Safer Neighbourhood Team
- There are recycling bins at Christ Church Court, the fly tipping is mainly done due to irresponsible waste disposal either by tenants or by outsiders due to the area being open.
- The bins will be moved into the bin shed and the CCTV should assist us in better managing the area.
- The security lights has been improved in the front and the shelter area by the front of the block, this is now well lighted so the area is no longer dark.
- We are also exploring the installing a gate to secure the building with both pedestrian and car access.

References: Jenny & Imogen Blood, Support Housing for Older People in the UK, Josphe Rowntree Foundation, December 2012. Roos, et al.