



Enter and View report

Elliscombe House Care Home, Wincanton

18 June 2025

Details of the visit

- Elliscombe House is a restored Edwardian house set in the countryside about 3 miles from Wincanton
- The home provides residential, nursing, respite and end of life care
- The home can accommodate a maximum of 35 residents. At the time of our visit 25 people were living there
- Accommodation is provided on the ground and first floors. There is a lift to the first floor
- Residents have their own ensuite bedroom – single and twin rooms are available
- Residents benefit from a well kept, spacious and accessible garden
- The home employs permanent staff and very rarely uses agency staff. Some staff had worked at the home for several years

Purpose of visit/how it was conducted

- This was a planned visit
- The home knew about the visit in advance, so they were expecting us. Our Healthwatch posters were displayed around the home to advertise our visit
- Four Healthwatch representatives carried out the visit
- Information was collected from observations of residents in their day-to-day situations and interviews with staff, residents and relatives
- We spoke to the managing director, manager and deputy manager as well as three other staff. We spoke to six residents and two relatives

Visit overview

Healthwatch carried out this visit following an invitation from the Managing Director at the home.

On the day we were welcomed by the manager who gave us an overview and tour of the home and introduced us to residents and staff.

During our visit we were given open access to move about the home.

We observed morning and early afternoon activities including lunch being served.

At the end of the visit the team met to share their findings and observations and agree any recommendations.

These were then shared, together with our recommendations, with the manager.

Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch Somerset Enter and View team would like to thank the manager and all staff for the friendly welcome, hospitality and unlimited access to the premises and activities.

We appreciate the time they gave to speak to us during their busy day.

Thanks also to the residents and their families who spoke so openly with us.

The photographs used in this report were taken by Healthwatch with the permission of the home.

Key findings

- The Healthwatch team all reported great first impressions of the home
- The environment felt welcoming, calm and organised
- There is a real sense that this is the residents' home. The manager and deputy appear very caring and committed to ensuring each resident is happy and healthy
- Interactions between residents and staff were very personalised; staff know residents well. This was the same for staff interactions with relatives
- Without exception residents told us they feel happy and very safe

Key findings

- The home has good relationships with Millbrook GP surgery at Castle Cary. The home manager told us the surgery is very responsive
- Residents all looked clean and well presented. They appeared to be relaxed and comfortable
- Residents are able to choose when they eat and what they do throughout the day
- Residents have a staff 'buddy' assigned to them
- The manager and deputy were visible and available to talk to staff and residents openly
- We were told 'communication is key'

Observations: physical environment



- The home is set in beautiful countryside with open views across the garden towards fields
- All areas of the home appeared spotlessly clean. There were no unpleasant smells
- We found the home light and airy. It is very well furnished and maintained
- The lounge looks out over the garden
- Residents can choose to go into a quieter area like the dining room or library

Observations: physical environment



- The East lounge is quieter and also looks out over the accessible garden
- There are handrails in corridors
- Communal spaces had dementia friendly colours
- Bedrooms are personalised with residents' photos, pictures and belongings. All bedrooms have a TV and telephone
- There is a staff room and a quiet room for staff on the first floor

Observations: interactions



- Our overall impression is that care is personal and individual – always focussed on the needs of the resident
- Staff are friendly and kind and appear to have time to care
- The morning activity was a visiting musician, so the lounge was busy with residents taking part
- Staff members spend allotted 'emotional support' time each week with their 'buddy' resident
- Staff speak to residents in a lovely manner
- Staff appear quietly supportive and respectful

Observations: staff at the home



- We found the manager and deputy very approachable and amenable. They were visible and available for staff
- Staff told us they receive daily support from the manager and deputy. We observed this during our visit
- There are daily Heads of Department meetings and monthly junior staff meetings
- Staff appear happy and committed to their work. They appear to have time to give to residents' needs
- When new staff are recruited a resident is invited to sit on the interview panel
- There is a staff room where staff can prepare their own food
- We observed posters in the staff room about mandatory training for textured diet and dysphagia
- Health and Safety and safeguarding information was displayed on the staff notice board



What staff told us

“I feel we have enough time to provide the care residents need.”

“This is the resident’s home, we should be led by them.”

“We receive daily support from the manager and deputy.”

“Communication is key.”



Observations: personalised care



- When people come to live at the home a personal biography is created in conjunction with their family
- Residents' rooms are personalised with their own ornaments, photos and belongings
- There is an onsite hairdressing salon
- Residents have choice around the time they get up and the time they go to bed
- One resident brought pictures she had painted – these were displayed by the home

Observations: personalised care



- Each bedroom has its own en-suite bathroom. There is also a spa bathroom onsite
- Residents choose where they eat, most take breakfast in their rooms
- Residents told us they have friends within the home. They often sit and do activities together
- One resident told us she didn't like not having her own kitchen and would like to be able to get herself a hot drink

Residents said:



"The carers are very good. They are compassionate and friendly."

"They ask how I want to be washed and dressed."





What residents told us

“It’s beautiful here. I watch the sun set over the trees”

“I love the staff here”

“I adore the carers, they make this place, especially those from overseas”

“The nurse and carers make me feel safe”

“I like that the staff have time to chat with me”



Observations: food and drink



- Chef is very integral to the home. He is not just in the kitchen but visible around the home to chat to residents
- During our visit Chef delivered a pizza making demonstration. Residents said they could not wait to sample them
- There are individualised meal plans
- Residents can have a glass of wine with their meal
- A trolley is taken round twice daily with all sorts of snacks, drinks, fruit, ice lollies
- Food was well presented and looked appealing. We saw empty plates

Observations: food and drink



- We saw inside the kitchen. There is a white board showing every resident's preferences, allergies and nutrition score
- There is a small bar in the dining room, we thought this was a nice addition
- We observed good staff interaction over lunch. The manager often sits with one resident to subtly encourage eating
- Residents can access drinks and snacks outside of mealtimes just by asking
- Relatives have open access to a drinks station. They can also have meals with their relative

What people told us: food and drink

Residents said:



"A lot of care goes into the meals."

"The breaded prawns were divine."

"Food is good, there's a choice of menu."



Relatives said:



"The food is lovely"

"I often come in for lunch with my relative. I feel very welcome"

"Lots of care goes into the food and presentation"



Observations: activities



- Every morning there is a 'wake up' activity session using bean bags and balls to get residents moving
- The activities schedule is displayed and taken round to residents who can choose whether to get involved
- There is an annual firework display and summer barbecue
- There are monthly visits by Museum to You
- A therapy dog regularly visits

Observations: activities



- Residents are taken out to garden centres via the community bus
- During our visit there was a musician playing and singing. Residents were clearly involved and clapping, tapping or singing along
- Residents had created a VE Day celebration board
- There are regular cooking demonstrations led by the chef. Residents told us how much they like this activity

Observations: access to healthcare



- The home has good relations with Millbrook GP surgery. New residents are registered with them. The home books all necessary appointments
- There is a 3 weekly visit from the pharmacist to check on residents' medications
- A podiatrist visits every 6 weeks
- The home has good links with the physio and occupational therapy team based in the Primary Care Network
- One resident is still based with Wincanton Surgery and feels that access to things like vaccinations and prescriptions can be slower

What relatives told us



- Relatives told us that residents always look clean and well cared for. And that residents are treated with respect and dignity
- Relatives are involved in the admission process and care planning
- Relatives felt they were kept updated and received timely feedback
- There is regular email correspondence with relatives
- The home achieved a maximum score of 10 in a recent review by residents and relatives on Carehome.co.uk

Comments from relatives



"The home is lovely. My relative is very happy here."

"There's a close relationship with staff. I'm impressed with that."

"She always looks clean and cared for."

"I know I can chat to the staff anytime."



Recommendations

- We liked that residents were invited to take part in interviews for new staff. We would recommend this to other providers as good practice
- One resident said they would like to be able to make their own drink. We raised this with the manager who told us there would need to be risk assessments carried out. But that residents need only to ask staff or press their call bell for a hot drink
- We observed there was not a smoking/vaping area for residents. We were told that currently no residents smoked or vaped. But if this changed then an area would be identified
- One resident told us she had to wait for a shower. The manager confirmed showers could be taken on request but residents who needed assistance would have to fit with staff schedules



Provider response

All members of the Healthwatch team were kind and considerate to all staff and residents. They provided useful feedback and information to the management team on the day which has helped with our service improvement initiative. This report reflects a 12-month journey of positive change and improvement within the home. Thank you.

Amy Morgan
Registered Manager



About Healthwatch Somerset

Healthwatch Somerset is the county's health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure that NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to your feedback and use it to improve standards of care.

We're here to listen to your experiences of using local health and care services and to hear about the issues that really matter to you. We are entirely independent and impartial, and anything you share with us is confidential. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice to help you to get the care and support you need.

Healthwatch Somerset is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across the country.

What is Enter and View?

One of the ways we can meet our statutory responsibilities is by using our legal powers to Enter and View health and social care services to see them in action. During these visits we collect evidence of what works well and what could be improved to make people's experiences better. We do this by observing the quality of service, and by talking to people using the service, including patients, residents, carers and relatives.

Enter and View visits are carried out by our authorised representatives who have received training and been DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked. These visits are not part of a formal inspection process or audit.

Our Authorised Representatives were:

- Sheila Burridge
- Mike Welton
- Gill Waldron
- Jane Watson

About this report

This report is an example of how we share people's views, and how we evaluate the evidence we gather and make recommendations to inform positive change, for individual services as well as across the health and care system. We share our reports with those providing the service, regulators, the local authority, NHS commissioners, the public, Healthwatch England and any other relevant partners based on what we find during the visit.

This report relates to this specific visit to the service, at a particular point in time, and is not representative of all service users, only those who contributed. This report is written by the Lead Enter and View 'Authorised Representative' who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Somerset.

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