

Ivy lodge Care Home
Enter and View Report 2025

August 2025

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Background

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch York is the independent champion for people using local health and care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share these views with the people who have the power to make a difference.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake Enter and View visits. Our team of authorised representatives carry out visits to local health and social care services to find out how services are being run and make recommendations for improvement if needed. Healthwatch Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies.

Ivy lodge Care Home



Details of the visit to Ivy Lodge care home

Service address	Ivy Lodge, Briergate, Haxby YO32 3YP
Service provider	Ivy Lodge Care Ltd.
Date	18 July 2025
CQC rating	Good (Outstanding for Caring) 21 June 2022)

Care home manager	Lisa Walbridge
Contact number	01904 760629

Summary

Purpose of the report

In this report, we summarise the findings from our visit to Ivy Lodge of 18 July 2025. We also summarise the feedback shared through survey responses collected before and after the visit.

Purpose of the visit

- To visit and gather views of the residents, their relatives and friends and staff about the services and care provided.
- To observe the care being provided for the residents and their interaction with staff and their surroundings.

General information

Ivy Lodge care home is family owned by Ivy Lodge Care Limited. It offers residential care services for older people. The home is situated in a quiet residential area of Haxby; the main building was originally an Edwardian farmhouse. The entrance from Briergate is well signed and access to the home is through the car park for staff and visitors. A large gate can be shut across the drive for security, but this is open during the day to allow free access.

The level entrance area was welcoming with seating, garden planting and colourful flowerpots and baskets. Visitors waiting at the front door can alert staff using a clearly visible doorbell. The home has two floors of accommodation with 33 single bedrooms (28 with en-suite facilities). There are 10 bedrooms on the first floor accessed via stairs or a lift. There were 31 residents at the time of our visit.

Key findings

At the time of our visit, we found that Ivy Lodge care home was operating to a very good standard. These findings were based on our observations and reflect the general happiness of residents, family and friends of residents and staff members. It was interesting to note that staff mainly came from the Haxby area and the manager had been in post for a number of years.



Positive feedback

- The building is very well maintained. It is clean with a large sitting room divided into two areas, a dining room and narrow, uncluttered corridors.
- Staff welcomed us quickly. We saw plenty of staff around, many interacting positively with the residents. We were impressed with the staff we saw. There was excellent feedback from residents and family members about the staff.
- We liked the fact sunscreen was available for residents' use (it was hot and sunny at the time of our visit).
- Information about the week's activities was available for residents to see. The home employs an activities coordinator and activities were happening during our visit.
- Activities included trips out to places of interest based on residents' requests.
- There is a regular weekly visit from healthcare professionals from a local GP practice.
- There were fresh flowers in the communal lounges and dining areas.



Recommended areas for improvement

We did not have many recommendations for improvement. We were all happy with what we saw in the care home and its staff when we visited. This

is reflected in the feedback from residents and their family members. Our recommendations are:

- When refurbishing the corridors consider the use of different floor coverings.
- Consider replacing faded wall picture prints.

About this visit

This was an announced Enter and View visit arranged in advance with the care home manager. The purpose of this visit was to capture the experience of life and care within a care home environment and to observe the standards of working practice. We did this by observing the interactions between staff and residents, observing their surroundings and speaking to residents to understand their experiences. We asked relatives and friends and staff members to provide their experience and views of the care home through a survey. Copies of the survey were available in the care home before and after our visit, Ivy Lodge staff sent links to staff and families/friends and posters with a link/QR code were provided.

On the day, four Healthwatch York authorised representatives made observations and talked to residents, their family and friends and staff members. We spoke at length to eight residents, who shared their thoughts and experiences using a survey focused on quality of life and care in the home to guide the conversations.

We also heard from 22 family/friends of residents and 21 members of staff who completed targeted surveys.

Not all respondents provided answers to every question and some respondents preferred not to answer all questions.

Findings

Environment

The home was relatively easy to find. There is a bus stop fairly close to the home. It has a reasonably-sized car park which was full when we visited due to work vans being onsite. It was possible to park for free on the street nearby. There is space for bicycle parking.

The care home has a small front and side garden, which is very well maintained, with a good range of garden furniture for residents. There were a number of colourful pots of flowers and hanging baskets which added to the ambience. Residents mentioned that they could go out into the garden when they wanted and enjoyed sitting in the sun.

The small entrance/reception area was accessed by a lockable front door. There is a bell in case no-one is at reception. There were fresh flowers in the entrance and there is a public toilet. The reception we received from staff was extremely warm and welcoming.

Next to the reception area is a lounge sitting area and dining room and the main kitchen is nearby. Both sitting areas are bright and airy with large windows and one of the rooms had a working television. The entrance area leads to the corridor for residents' rooms, a small lounge, lift and staircase. We did not use the lift so cannot report whether the controls 'speak' to you.

Accommodation

Residential care is provided on both floors for up to 33 residents in total. Ten of the bedrooms are on the first floor. Twenty-eight rooms have en-suite facilities of a wash basin and toilet. Those rooms without facilities are close to toilet facilities. The layout of the home is based on a central two-storey house with a ground floor extension.

The décor on both floors is similar and well maintained. Recent refurbishment works to upgrade fire doors meant doors and woodwork needed to be redecorated. There were a number of themed photographs/pictures in the lounges, dining room and along the narrow corridor. Some of the picture prints looked faded. Each resident's room has the first name of the resident and the number on the door. Finding your way around may be challenging for some residents and was an issue for our volunteers. Staff mentioned it can be confusing until you've got used to the layout. We understand that residents are encouraged to use the facilities in any of the communal rooms especially for different activities.

Coffee tables and chairs provided an opportunity for conversations between residents. There were clocks in the TV lounge and main sitting room.

The lounges have a good range of seating, which is positioned to encourage conversation. Seats were of different colours and heights and all had arms.

All the bedrooms we saw are a good size with ensuite toilet and wash basin. Each room was heated with a radiator. Bedrooms are provided with a television and furniture but residents can bring their own furniture and belongings. Many residents had photos and other personal belongings in their rooms. There is WiFi available throughout the home.

Cleanliness and hygiene

Our representatives noted that overall, the care home was very clean, with no unpleasant smells. We observed some corridor carpets were worn in places due to regular use.

Quality of life

General happiness

We asked residents and family/friends what they liked about living at Ivy Lodge. Residents said:

- 'Lots of activities, always something to do'.
- 'Staff bend over backwards to make sure everything is right'.
- 'Staff would do anything for you'.
- 'Oh yes, I'm happy with the food'.
- 'It's very nice.'
- 'The staff are great. I have a good laugh with all of them'.
- 'Never had such nice birthdays since I came here'.
- 'I've done a lot of things here that I've never done before'.
- 'I like it here. I've made friends'.
- 'I've no complaints about the comfort here'.

All 22 family members completing the survey said Ivy Lodge was clean and comfortable and that residents were being well looked after. Comments included:

- 'Carers are very attentive to mum'.
- 'We are kept informed of any changes including medication, trips to hospital and visits to the GP'.
- 'Care is very personal, kind and thorough'.
- 'My dad always tells me how lovely they (the staff) are and says "not a single bad one!".
- 'There is a genuine caring attitude here that is aware of individual needs and preferences'.



Food and drink

Residents and relatives were asked to share their views on food and drink at Ivy Lodge. Our representatives also observed a mealtime in the home.

All the food is prepared from fresh ingredients on site. There is one head chef who coordinates the menus and food preparation and kitchen assistants focus on meal preparation and making cakes, etc. We were told breakfasts consisted of toast, cereal and cooked items. Drinks and snacks are served mid-morning and afternoon. There was also evidence of jugs of squash in each resident's room. The main meal is at lunchtime with a choice of two main courses and soup and hot pudding. At teatime there is one main option as well as sandwiches and soup. For supper, sandwiches are available as well as cake and biscuits.

Most residents ate lunch in the main dining room. We noted there were only 28 places set for meals as some residents chose to eat their meals in their own rooms. Relatives consistently said the food is good most of the time with plenty to eat and lots of choice including for special diets.

Residents and family members said:

- 'Carers are very good at trying to encourage mum to eat if she is not so well'.
- 'I can tell you my mum is happy with the food'.
- 'The food is always of the highest quality'.
- 'My mother looks forward to every meal'.
- 'There's always an alternative, so enough choice'.
- 'Dad always says how good the food is and that he likes that he can choose what he fancies'.
- 'My mum is a very fussy eater but she has put on weight since moving there'.
- 'Mum can choose to eat in her room or dining room'.
- 'Val in the kitchen is great – she tries to cater for all idiosyncrasies.'

All 22 family members surveyed were complimentary about the meals including the quantity, quality and choices, with comments such as, 'there are lovely sounding dishes

on the menu'; 'there's lots of snacks with variety of fresh drinks including wine at times'; 'fresh fruit is also available'.

We wanted to know whether residents feel like they need additional help with anything, such as help to eat or drink, and if they receive enough help.

We noticed staff helping some residents at lunch time. All the residents we spoke to said they do not need help. But they said that if someone did, the staff are always there to help.

Activities

Residents were asked if they spend their time doing things they value and enjoy. Relatives and staff were asked if residents have regular access to activities in the home.

Information about the week's activities was displayed in the entrance area. The home employs an activities coordinator and activities were going on in the home during our visit. We were told residents are asked what activities they would like to do. We also found evidence of trips out, with residents telling volunteers of the different places they had visited. There were photographs of cakes baked by the cook to celebrate special occasions including birthdays. The care home was organising a Summer Fair in August with tombola, raffle and stalls with proceeds going to support the activities and local charities. There are visits from friends of the Roman Catholic church which is close by and trips are organised to visit the church. We discussed visits by local schools but this doesn't seem to happen at present.

We learned about a lot of activities by looking at the information sheets, talking to residents and their family and friends and from our staff survey. Residents can learn about activities via the regularly updated information sheets. There are occasional celebration events including resident birthdays, Christmas and Easter events and theme nights alongside visits from external entertainers. There was a singer entertaining the residents in the afternoon when we visited. We also met a volunteer who comes in weekly to help with the knit and natter group. Staff were encouraging residents to join in appropriate activities.

Activities we heard about included:

- Trips to shops, the pub, garden centres and places of interest
- Dancing to music
- Listening to classical music

- Singing
- Arts and crafts
- Dominoes
- Scrabble
- Knit and natter
- Board games
- Painting
- Indoor bowls
- Bingo
- External entertainers
- Chair exercises and exercise to music
- Summer and Christmas fairs

We asked the residents about doing things they enjoy and activities at the home. They said:

- 'I like drawing and painting'.
- 'I get visitors every day'.
- 'I've done a lot of things here I've never done before'.
- 'I've enjoyed the trips to Beningbrough Hall and Burnby Hall. It brought the memories back'.
- 'There's such a good assortment of activities'.

Staff also commented on the range of activities, complimenting the activity coordinator and owners of the home. One staff member said, 'Management and owners always listen to suggestions and have acted if able to'.

Contact with friends and family

Residents and their relatives were asked about their contact.

All the residents we spoke to said they can stay in touch with relatives and friends and family and friends can visit at any time and go into the residents' rooms or meet them in one of the lounges.

Residents said:

- 'My family and friend visit regularly.'
- 'Family visit when they can.'
- 'I have my iPad to contact family.'
- 'I don't go out anymore but my family visit.'
- 'I have a mobile – I'm able to ring my family.'



Quality of care

We observed whether residents looked well cared for during our visit and asked residents if they were able to get up and go to bed when they wanted and if they were able to bath or shower with help, if needed.

Throughout our visit, all the residents we saw and met looked very well cared for and well dressed. Those we spoke to said they could have a shower or bath when they wanted – and help is given if needed. We were told there is a system in place to ensure all residents' preferences around bathing is met and people told us they were happy with the arrangements. Residents said they can choose the clothes they wear and there is a good laundry system. We saw staff returning laundry to people's own rooms and carefully putting the clothes away.



"The laundry service is excellent. It's clean and ironed and hung up in the wardrobe."



It is worth noting that the owners and senior management team organise an annual Quality Assurance survey about Ivy Lodge and publish a report. The one we read, which was on public display, was from 2023–24.

Staff

We asked what residents thought of staff, observed interactions between residents and staff and asked staff how well informed they are about the residents they look after.

All the residents and family members we spoke to were very complementary about the staff.

- 'They are cheerful'.

- 'They would do anything for you'.
- 'Staff are very good; they care for you'.
- 'I have a good laugh with all the staff'.
- 'Very good, they're very kind and caring.'
- 'Staff will bend over backwards to make sure everything is right'.
- 'All the staff are nice'.
- 'Staff are respectful and always ask first before doing anything'.
- 'Staff are friendly'.
- 'There is a genuine caring attitude here, where staff are aware of individual needs and preferences.'



The staff are always helpful; nothing is ever too much trouble.



All 22 family and friends said they were very satisfied with the care given and most said they had contributed in some way to their relative's care plan. Comments included, 'Everyone is very friendly and helpful to mum and us when we visit. There is never a problem if we want to talk to the seniors if we're concerned about anything'.

Other comments included:

- 'As a family we feel our mother is cared for extremely well'.
- 'I feel confident that my mother is in safe hands'.
- 'An excellent care home; all the staff are friendly and everyone is kind and compassionate'.
- 'Care could not be better; or staff more kind'.
- 'My dad loves it and is so happy there'.
- 'We can relax and know my dad is looked after to an exceptionally high standard of care'.
- 'Mum is very well cared for. All the staff are helpful and caring'.
- 'I don't think it would be an exaggeration to say Ivy Lodge has extended the length and quality of mum's life in the last three years'.

We asked staff how well informed they are about residents' likes and dislikes and what information is included in residents' care plans. Eighteen staff

members we heard from said they were very well informed and one somewhat informed through handovers and care plans. Comments included, 'As a senior I'm up to date on all needs which I share with the care team' and 'It's part of my role to discuss (care planning) with new residents on arrival and pass the information on. I also monitor their progress and make changes as we go along'.

We asked if information about residents' oral health, sight and hearing needs are included in their care plans. Nineteen staff said this information is included in detail.

Safety and staff levels

Residents, relatives, and staff were asked whether they feel there are enough staff, and we asked the residents if they felt safe in the home.

All the residents we spoke to said they feel very safe living at Ivy Lodge. Most residents said they feel there are enough staff and our representatives felt there were enough staff when we visited. The majority of residents said they were very satisfied with the overall quality of care and one resident said they were quite satisfied. No-one was dissatisfied.



'I came for two weeks and stayed for seven years!'



We asked staff members about staffing levels. Of 19 respondents 14 felt there were enough staff and five staff felt there weren't enough staff at times. The issues seemed to arise when staff were off sick or on leave. We understand that the home doesn't need to use agency staff but used existing staff to cover where they could. We were told that management staff help when needed where there is a problem covering shifts due to last minute illness or holidays. Every effort is made to get the shift covered by care staff where possible.

Health Checks

We asked residents if they are able to access relevant health checks.

Healthcare professionals including the doctor from the local surgery (Haxby Group) visit on a weekly basis.

Residents have to travel outside the home to visit the dentist. An optician (Specsavers) visits the home for anyone who doesn't want to leave the home. Relatives will take residents to the dentist or to outpatient appointments, but if that is not possible, staff will accompany them.

- 'If I need to see the doctor it can be organised quickly'.
- 'I can see the doctor when I need to'.
- 'The District Nurse sees me regularly'.
- 'The staff would get help if I felt poorly'.
- 'The GP comes regularly; if I have a chest infection'.
- 'I go out of the home for opticians and dentist'.
- 'I go into York when I need to see my optician'.
- "The staff help with hearing aids and batteries when needed'.

Raising concerns and issues

Residents, family, and friends

We wanted to know if they had any concerns about the service, would they know what to do.

Initially if residents needed immediate help, they said they would use the buzzer in their room or shout for help. In terms of raising concerns some would talk to family and some would talk directly to staff.



'I can push the buzzer in my room at night'.
'I'd talk to staff if I had problems'.
There's a 'pull' in the toilet if I need help'.
'I use the buzzer. Staff come quickly'.
'Yes, I can talk to any of the staff'.



Additionally, a relative said, 'There are regular opportunities to provide feedback and I have done so in confidence'.

Other comments

We gave residents and family/friends the opportunity to add any other comments.

Residents said:

- 'No complaints about the comfort here'.
- 'I'm very satisfied with the care I get'.
- 'We have meetings with the owner and senior staff every now and again – that's good'.

Family and friends said:

- 'It's a fantastic residential home'.
- 'Mum and the family think the care home does a very good job'.
- 'The staff are very kind and mum is content'.
- 'Ivy Lodge seems to be very well run and is a caring home'.
- 'We are contacted by phone or email when there is anything we need to know'.

The care home assessors also summarised their impression of Ivy lodge

- 'Ivy Lodge is clean and smart. The staff I spoke to and met were polite and seemed happy in their work.'
- 'Aesthetically, the building is easy on the eye. It's rather like a hotel in communal areas.'
- 'I felt the staff were kind and respectful to residents. They create a serene atmosphere and seem gentle in their interactions.'
- 'There are no raised voices. I feel that residents appeared happy enough with what is provided for them.'

Staff feedback

How do they feel?

We asked staff about working in the care home.

Staff mentioned that they enjoyed working at Ivy Lodge. There were lots of positive comments such as, 'It's a lovely home to work at'. Others mentioned the calm atmosphere and the fact that colleagues were friendly. Overall staff felt happy working at Ivy Lodge although one staff member said: 'Workload too much, never time to talk to residents. Same amount of residents less staff – morale low'. Another staff member said she had left to work in another care home but had returned when she realised her mistake, saying: 'I returned because Ivy Lodge cannot be beaten for the care we provide and also the calming atmosphere within the home which reflects on residents and staff wellbeing'.

All staff respondents said they would recommend the care home to others. We then asked what could improve the working experience and/or the person's experience at work. Most people didn't comment or said that there wasn't anything to improve. Other comments included:



'More fans in residents' rooms for hot days and in the communal areas.'

'Training with dementia.'

'Listen to the staff when we put forward ideas. We work on the floor and know what does and doesn't work.'



All staff said they are offered all the training they need to do their job. We asked if staff feel informed about any changes. Eleven respondents said they are fully informed, six that they are sometimes informed and two that they don't feel informed.

Comments included:

- 'Management always listen to any feedback I give, and act upon it if necessary.'
- 'When the shift pattern changed, my wishes were acknowledged and a compromise was reached.'
- 'Management and owners always listen to suggestions and have acted if able to.'
- 'I feel like I have a voice.'

Overall rating

We asked 22 residents and family and friends of residents how they would rate the home out of 5 (with 5 being the best).

Residents: (5/5)



Friends and family: (5/5)



Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch York Enter and View team would like to thank the owners, manager, staff, friends and families of residents, and residents for letting us access the care home, and for sharing their views with us. Thanks also to our dedicated volunteers who helped support this Enter and View visit.



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