

Enter & View Visit Report

Swan Hill House Residential
Home - Shrewsbury

Visit date 11th March 2025
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About Healthwatch Shropshire

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion for local people.

We work to ensure your voice counts when it comes to shaping and improving services. We address inequalities in health and social care; to help make sure everyone gets the services they need. We are a charity.

What is Enter & View

Healthwatch Shropshire gathers information on people's experiences of health and social care services and there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Shropshire to see and hear for us how services are being provided.

These visits are called 'Enter and View', and can be 'announced', 'unannounced' or 'semi-announced'. For 'semi-announced' visits the service provider is told we will visit but not the date or time of the visit.

The responsibility to carry out Enter and View visits was given to Healthwatch in the **Health and Social Care Act 2012**.



Enter and View visits are carried out by a team of specially trained and DBS checked volunteers called Authorised Representatives. They make observations, collect people's views and opinions anonymously and produce a report.

Enter & View visits are not inspections and always have a 'purpose'.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experience of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Details of the visit

Two Healthwatch Authorised Representatives¹ visited Swan Hill House Residential Home in Shrewsbury on 11th March 2025. The visit was semi-announced, meaning that the Head of Care was informed of the visit, but not the specific date or time.

[Swan Hill House Residential Home](#) is a Grade 2 listed Georgian Town House located in Shrewsbury town centre. Accommodation is provided in one adapted building over four floors. There are 28 bedrooms, four bedrooms are for shared occupancy. All rooms are accessible by stairs, stairlift or the lift.

The purpose of the visit was to speak with the residents about:

- their quality of life in the home, particularly in respect of the choices they could make day to day, including routine, food and drink, and activities
- their relationships with staff
- their level of comfort.

We also wanted to hear from visitors and the staff working in the home, and make observations of the care environment, including the staff interaction with the residents.

What we did

In addition to the Head of Care we spoke to six residents, three visitors and two members of staff.

When we arrived, we were welcomed by a staff member who granted us entry via a code through the rear locked gate. We were introduced to the Head of Care who welcomed us and gave us a tour of the home.

¹[Enter and View Volunteers Role PDF \(2\).pdf](#)

Residents were present in the drawing room, dining area, in their own rooms, in the garden and in the reception area talking with staff.

During our visit we spoke to those residents who were happy to talk to us and with consent we asked them

- to share their overall experience of living at Swan Hill Residential care home.
- about their relationship with staff members, and responsiveness to their needs.
- about the environment and comfort of the home
- if, in their experience, complaints and feedback to Management were encouraged and acted upon.

What people told us

The Head of Care

The current Head of care has worked at Swan Hill House Residential Home for three years and has been the Head of Care for one year. They told the visit team that at the time of the visit there were 24 residents, with a maximum of 26 when full.

The Head of Care told us that they promote an environment which can be described as a "Home from Home"; encouraging a "family, relaxed feel". **Person-centred care** (Care that supports the needs of the individual, and their needs) is provided, and visitors are welcomed throughout the day, including being invited to share a meal with residents. Residents and their visitors have open access to staff and the Head of Care if they need it.

The Head of Care told us they are proud of their staff team of 30 carers, shift leaders and seniors. Whilst they "may be overstaffed" they prefer this, so that "residents can continue to receive a person-centred approach". This team have been carefully selected for their skills and dedication to the role.

Two staff members provide support overnight, with the Head of Care on call at all times.

Medication is administered by the senior staff and dispensed via an electronic monitoring system.

Staff receive regular training, which is refreshed annually, and supervision for their role which is tailor made online with the Care Skills Academy and face to face observed training. Staff are encouraged to approach the Head of Care if they need to.

A variety of activities are encouraged inside and outside the home. Situated in the centre of Shrewsbury, the home can arrange "local outings." The Head of Care explained that some of the residents will go out unaccompanied, with their family and friends, or with a member of staff.

The home has an Activity Coordinator who is also the Head Cook. This member of staff is about to leave so there is a plan to replace them with two people to fill the range of duties and responsibilities of these two positions. The Head of Care told us that having a full staff team during the day means that, in their view, residents are well supported and responded to. Overall, the home aims to "encourage and support, not to take over, so that residents can retain their independence and autonomy".

Residents have access to external health professionals. For example, all residents are registered with the local GP practice and other community teams. There is a visiting optician, chiropodist and hairdresser. Residents are accompanied by a staff member to external appointments.

The Residents

Food and drink

A resident said that the choice of food and menu was "excellent."

 "The portions are enough, and the menu meets my dietary needs."

Another resident said that the menu is of "mid-stream English diet" and another would like it to offer more "exotic" choices.

One resident commented that the menu looked good, but they are not very good at eating due to food intolerance. However, they felt that the choices are varied and tasty enough to satisfy their dietary needs.

We heard no complaints about the food, and some said that the Head Cook/Activities Coordinator will be missed when they leave at the end of the month.

Activities

A schedule of activities is offered daily. The activities are shared with residents via the television screen and for residents who are unable to view it, staff members share this with them. Residents enjoy the informal person-centred activities offered and the relevance of the activity which helps with their needs. Although there were no formal activities taking place when we visited, there were puzzles, quizzes, chair-based exercises, live entertainment and bingo scheduled to take place this week.

We heard that some of the residents had recently enjoyed a boat trip on the river and that the garden is a very beautiful and serene area to spend time in on warm days. There are opportunities to get involved in gardening. During our visit, residents were engaged with visitors, in discussion with staff, talking to each other, some were being supported to go out and talking in the garden. People told us that there were a range of activities on offer.

One resident said, "We have physio exercises, tai-chi and singers come in to entertain us. I also like to get out in the garden and the registered manager has said I can help do some gardening."

We also heard that staff spend time with individual residents who are unable to or preferred not to engage with activities being offered. An example of this would be talking to them about their life story or sharing photographs and memories.

 "There are lots of activities offered and I choose which ones I engage in."

One resident who described themselves as a “permanent” resident and said they enjoyed the freedom to go out unaccompanied and with a friend. They would also ask staff to go out with them if they felt that they needed the company.

“I enjoy the location, close to the town centre and near to the quarry, on warmer days I independently go to the quarry and sit by the river”.

The environment

Residents told us that they loved living at Swan Hill saying it has a pleasant and friendly atmosphere.

“You don’t feel like you are in an institution because you’re free to go out and about when you want to”.

Another resident told us that they had been to other homes, and this was the best. Several residents told us that they did not intend to move on from Swan Hill

One resident told us that as a permanent home, Swan hill has “character.” Whilst they like the fact that it retains its original features, they struggle with the décor and “random” pictures of stately figureheads, like Lord Gladstone. Adding they would ideally like the communal areas to be updated. However, they did comment that their own room is decorated to their personal taste.

“I enjoy using the communal areas, there is enough space. Although there are times when residents cannot agree on a TV programme to watch, there are choices, I have a TV in my room”.

Relationships with staff

We heard that support with personal care needs is offered to residents and provided if needed. Some residents told us about simple acts of generosity they had experienced from staff. The residents and carers we spoke to said that staff are friendly and approachable, always available to talk to and the way they speak to the residents is good.

 “Staff are aware of my individual needs and provide very good support”.

One resident told us that they were distressed to witness residents being rude to the staff who respond in a calm, respectful way and commented that their patience is “outstanding.” Due to this resident’s disability, they need a higher level of personal care and support. They are very happy with how this is delivered.

 “I am encouraged to know the staff team.”

We observed the Staff introducing themselves to residents. Name badges are worn by all members of staff. All residents have their own keyworkers

The Visitors

The visitors we spoke to said that they feel welcome and encouraged to spend time at the home and speak to the staff who respond in a very professional and caring manner. Visitors enjoy that there are no restrictions on their visiting.

One family member told us that they were happy with the choices on the menu and their relative was supported during mealtimes. Their relative could not participate in all activities, but was encouraged to join in and they particularly enjoyed the visits from the local Clergy.

The Staff

One member of staff told us they enjoyed being involved with the day-to-day care of the residents. Another member of staff was undergoing training and said they would be happy to apply for a full-time post at Swan Hill once they were qualified.

A staff member who had worked at the home for a few years said they had noticed some significant improvements since this Head of Care joined the team. For example, there is more interaction with residents and their families, and the environment is more homely.

 “The Head of Care has created a big, happy environment. It’s lovely to come to work every day”

We heard that staff recruitment has focussed on skills for the job and suitability for the role. Training opportunities have improved, and staff are supported to communicate with each other via a private WhatsApp group. They are also able to access online training, policies and procedures.

Staff told us they felt well supported, involved and listened to by their seniors, who they find approachable and easy to be around. They have one to one meetings and monthly supervision. The staff we spoke to said they were happy working at Swan Hill.

What we saw

Key observations of the visit team:

- The home smelled clean and pleasant
- The areas of the home seen during the visit were clean and tidy
- Hand gel was present throughout the home
- Residents were appropriately dressed and clothing was clean
- Complaints and compliments collection box was located in the reception area
- There was a noticeboard TV screen in the reception area showing daily notices.
- Apart from the resident’s rooms there are spaces for residents to meet with visitors or spend time away from the other residents.
- The garden was peaceful and provided a tranquil area for residents to enjoy the sunshine.
- Visitors were welcomed by a member of staff, offered drinks and appeared to be happy to be there and knew the person they were talking to by name.

Key findings

- Two staff members provide support overnight, with the Head of Care on call at all times.
- 2 residents commented on the colour and choice of pictures displayed. We observed this to be correct and suggest a more neutral decoration
- Residents, carers and visitors report a positive experience of Swan Hill residential home, in terms of freedom of choice, individual attention to each resident's needs, the comfortable relationships they share with staff and the overall satisfaction of their daily experience.

Recommendations

- The visit team were concerned that 24/7 cover from the Head of Care was not sustainable (e.g. if they are off sick). Consideration to be given to recruiting more staff or training current staff to provide night care support.
- Consider decorating the communal areas to reflect the interests of residents and involving them in the new design (e.g. choice of artwork/photographs)
- Swan Hill should continue to provide this level of satisfaction and comfort to residents/visitors/carers. This is clearly appreciated and well received.

Provider Response

“We are extremely proud of the positive feedback received from our residents, visitors and team members. We are also delighted with the Enter & Visit report overall.

We acknowledge the recommendations provided and are in the process of ensuring these recommendations are met. It is heartwarming to know that our residents are happy within their home and with the care and support provided.

We strive to continue to ensure all our residents, visitors and team members are satisfied and happy at Swan Hill Residential Home.

We have worked hard to make various improvements over the last year and are proud of the care and support we provide but will continue to make further improvements to benefit our residents, visitors and team members.

We also want to thank the Enter & Visit team for their time and suggestions, which assist us to make continued progress. Please note: The draft report is shared with the provider, and they are asked.”


Identified area for improvement	Provider response, including steps to be taken	Who will oversee this?	When will it be completed by?	Progress
<p>The visit team were concerned that 24/7 cover from the Head of Care was not sustainable (e.g., if they are off sick). Consideration to be given to recruiting more staff or training current staff to provide night care support.</p>	<p>To ensure suitable night care support is provided, Senior team members have been allocated to be contacted in the event of the Head of Care not being available. We are also in the process of training a further two team members, who are currently employed as night shift leader team members to move into the role of ‘Night Team Leaders’, this will enable these</p>	<p>Head of Care</p>	<p>30/09/25</p>	<p>Senior staff members have been allocated to support suitable night care support. Training is ongoing to further support via ‘Night Team Leaders’</p>

	team members to take on a more leadership role, to support and maintain suitable night care support.			
Consider decorating the communal areas to reflect the interests of residents and involve residents in the new design (e.g., artwork/photographs)	We are in the process of completing and providing a service user survey in relation to the decor within the communal areas of Swan Hill Residential Home, to gain feedback from service users, in regards to redesigning these areas to meet service users preferences and wishes. Once the surveys have been completed and returned, the surveys will be reviewed and a residents meeting will be held to ensure that all residents are happy with choices before completing redecoration	Head of Care	30/12/25	Ongoing

Please note: The draft report is shared with the provider, and they are asked to fact-check the report, comment on the detail and respond to the recommendations. The provider response is included word for word in the final report. Providers are asked to write as if speaking to the residents and their visitors, avoiding acronyms and jargon.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Shropshire would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff for their time and their contribution to this Enter and View visit and report.



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