



Healthwatch Hampshire

Enter and View visit to Westacre Nursing Home

16th July 2026

Contents

-1
- About Healthwatch Hampshire3
- About our visit3
- Background.....4
- What we did.....4
- About the Home.....5
- The external and internal environment.....5
- What residents and relatives told us8
- What staff told us.....11
- Summary12
- Recommendations 13
- Provider response..... 14
- Thank you..... 14
- About this report..... 14

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About Healthwatch Hampshire

Healthwatch Hampshire are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care. Our sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to amplify their voice. We focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed. We work to get services right for the future.

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. This report is an example of how your views are shared.

Healthwatch Hampshire is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across the country. We cover the Hampshire local authority area.

About our visit

Address

Westacre Nursing Home
Sleepers Hill
Winchester
Hampshire
SO22 4NE

Date and time of our visit

Thursday 16th July 2026
10:30 to 12:30

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.

Enter and View visits are carried out by our authorised representatives who have received training and been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Healthwatch Hampshire Authorised Representatives

Rachel Hill
Lucy Beale
Sayda de Maurier
Liz Butterfield

Background

Healthwatch Hampshire carried out an Enter and View visit to Westacre Nursing Home on 16 July 2026. The purpose of the visit was to observe the quality of the environment, speak with residents, relatives and staff, and understand people's experiences of living and working within the service. We also reviewed access to healthcare, activities, food and drink provision, staffing, and opportunities for residents to exercise choice and maintain independence. The visit took place shortly after a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection had been undertaken at the home, which we had not been previously made aware of. Staff told us they were awaiting the outcome of the inspection at the time of our visit. Prior to the recent CQC inspection visit, the home had not had an inspection since 2021 when it was rated as 'requires improvement' and we wanted to visit to see what improvements had been made since. On the day of the visit, several residents were on a day trip to a local museum, which meant that there were significantly fewer residents we could speak with.

What we did

- Ahead of our visit we liaised with the Deputy Manager so the staff were expecting us
- Our visit had been advertised within the home so residents, family, friends and staff were aware.
- On the day we met with residents, family and friends, care staff and management.
- Observations were made throughout the visit. This included resident and staff interactions, accessibility measures in place and the general appearance of the home.

This report was then formulated from those observations and conversations.

Who we spoke to

During the visit, we spoke to:

- **Lynne Seymour**- Registered Manager
- **Dean Brown**- Deputy Manager
- **Staff** – three members
- **Residents**- seven residents
- **Family and friends**- one daughter

About the Home

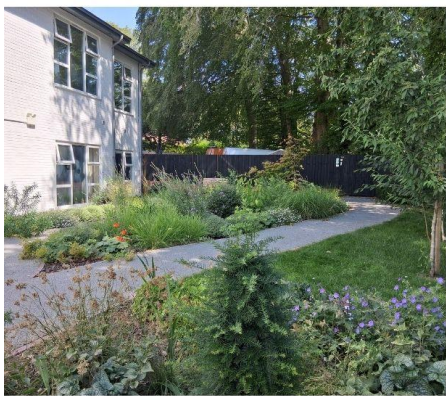
Westacre Nursing Home is registered to provide nursing care for up to 55 residents and was supporting 42 residents at the time of our visit, which the managers said they considered to be at capacity. The home primarily supports people living with dementia or delirium, although it also supports residents with other care needs, including learning disabilities. Residents are funded through a mixture of private and local authority arrangements, including Discharge to Assess pathways. Most admissions come directly from hospital.

The home employs approximately 50 staff and is managed by a long-standing management team who have worked at Westacre for around six years. Managers told us they had focused on improving governance processes, staffing stability and the environment since joining the service. Recent improvements include the development of a dementia-friendly garden and building work to increase bedroom capacity. The home has close links with St Clements GP Surgery, and a GP visits every other week, with phone calls on the other weeks. A pharmacist based at the GP surgery supports medication reviews either in person or by phone.

The external and internal environment

External

The home appeared well maintained externally and provided visitor parking and easy access for visitors. Building works were underway to increase future bedroom capacity, but these did not appear to affect access to the home. A particular strength of the environment was the dementia-friendly garden. The garden included accessible pathways, shaded areas and multiple seating spaces. Relatives told us the space is used for activities and afternoon tea events. Although no residents were observed using the garden during our visit, this may have been due to the hot weather and because some residents were on an outing that day.



Westacre Garden- opened 30th May 2025

Internal

First impressions of the home were positive. The reception area was clean and welcoming, staff were friendly and professional, and information was available for visitors. The home felt calm and relaxed throughout the visit.

Corridors and communal areas were bright, clean and accessible. Signage was clear and there were visual prompts, artwork and orientation aids throughout the building. Bathrooms were spacious and adapted for residents requiring assistance or hoisting equipment. Communal lounges, activity areas, a conservatory and dining spaces provided a range of environments for residents.



Residents' bedrooms appeared clean, tidy and personalised. Bedrooms had televisions, and all rooms included ensuite facilities. Several residents commented on the warm weather and room temperatures, and one room was observed to be around 27 degrees

Celsius. All residents were provided with fans, and plenty of drinks and the home had additional hydration staff working during hot weather.



The home also had a salon, with a hairdresser visiting weekly, and a range of mobility equipment was visible around the building. During the visit we saw a weighing chair in one corridor and people using mobility aids.

During observations, staff interactions were consistently kind, friendly and respectful. Residents appeared well groomed and appropriately dressed. Staff did not appear rushed and the overall atmosphere was calm and supportive.

A noticeable odour was present in some carpeted areas of the home during the visit, although this was less evident elsewhere in the building. Managers explained that refurbishment work to replace some flooring with a more easy-clean and wipeable surface has been taking place gradually and had not yet been completed throughout the home.

We also noted the use of CCTV in corridors. Managers explained that this had been introduced following an incident earlier in the year and also advised that consultation would take place regarding any future use of CCTV in communal areas. One of the rooms on the 1st floor has a sign on the door and inside the room explaining that sound is being recorded. We were informed that this is the only room to have this and that it had been arranged after agreement with the next of kin for a resident who doesn't have capacity.

There were personal and homely touches throughout the building, including artwork, colourful bunting and a religious corner in one lounge area. Staff told us therapy animals visit the home, including alpacas and reptiles.

Staff gave an example of resident involvement in decisions, explaining that one resident had chosen the colour of the bright orange chairs. One television lounge also had an adjoining conservatory that was light and airy and opened onto the garden. The radio was playing in the conservatory during the visit, although it was not clear whether the music had been chosen by staff or residents.

What residents and relatives told us

Residents:

Residents' experiences of living at Westacre were largely positive. Many residents praised staff, describing them as "lovely", "terrific", "fantastic", "very nice" and "helpful". Several residents said staff responded quickly when assistance was needed and reported that call bells were usually answered within a few minutes. Residents generally felt safe living in the home. Survey respondents reported feeling as safe as they wanted to be and said there were sufficient staff available to support them. Residents also described receiving the help they needed with personal care, mobility, drinking and eating.



Food and drink were generally described positively and residents said they were offered choices. One resident mentioned that the food was very 'posh' and not what he was used to, but did say that staff would make him cheese on toast if he asked. Several residents reported that staff would accommodate alternative requests where possible. Drinks were readily available, and residents who needed support reported receiving appropriate assistance.

Many residents described the home as comfortable and welcoming. Residents spoke positively about activities, outings, reading, sewing, watching television and time spent in the garden. One resident rated the home 5 out of 5 and described it as a comfortable place to live with fantastic staff. Another resident said the home was much better than a previous care home they had lived in.

During the visit, some residents were taking part in a minibus trip to Milestones Museum. This meant not all residents were available to speak with, but it provided an example of residents being supported to access community-based activities. However, some residents described challenges. One resident became upset when discussing life in the home and appeared to be struggling with her circumstances. Another resident expressed frustration about restrictions on her independence and reported wanting greater access to fresh air, outdoor exercise and opportunities to make more decisions about her daily life. Some residents also reported limited social contact, although for several this reflected personal choice rather than dissatisfaction. One resident was observed becoming quite upset and asking the staff to take her home, and it was noted that both the Registered Manager and Deputy Manager

responded compassionately and respectfully to her. It was clear that the managers are known and seen by the residents.

Survey responses showed that while most residents were satisfied with the care they received, there remained some mixed feedback around personal choice, social opportunities and how concerns had been resolved. One resident reported that concerns did not always lead to solutions or clear outcomes.

Some residents described Westacre as comfortable and supportive, while also expressing feelings of loss, missing family members, wanting to move closer to relatives, or wishing for greater freedom and access to fresh air. Some residents preferred limited social contact and chose to spend time reading, sewing, watching television or staying in their rooms. Others used the garden or joined occasional activities, and some residents were out on a minibus trip during our visit.

Relatives:

We received feedback from one family member whose relative had been living at Westacre Nursing Home for four months. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The family member described the home as having "changed my life" and explained that they had felt anxious when their relative first moved into the service, but had since become very reassured by the care and support provided.

The family member felt the home was clean and comfortable and said their relative was happy living there. They reported that their relative received the food they liked, had access to drinks when needed, and was able to participate in activities and outings. They also said families were invited to take part in activities where appropriate.

The relative was very satisfied with the quality of care provided and felt there were sufficient staff available to meet residents' needs. They also confirmed that they had been involved in care planning and that their relative was able to access healthcare services, including GP, eyesight, dental and hearing appointments when required. The family member highlighted several aspects of life within the home that helped create a positive and homely atmosphere. These included cocktail afternoons, afternoon tea in the garden, chicks hatching when their relative first moved in, and practical support during hot weather such as ice lollies, sun hats and sun cream for residents.

They particularly valued the continuity of staff and the coordinated approach to care, explaining that healthcare professionals, including the GP and mental health services, were now involved in supporting their relative. They felt the home communicated well and described the support available as connected and responsive to residents' needs.

The family member also described how their relative had now received a medication review after previous difficulty accessing this, and said their relative was receiving support from the mental health team. They reflected that it was sad their relative had needed to become very unwell before accessing the help required, but felt the home had helped connect support around them. The family member also said their relative had got to know other residents and had asked, "where are my friends?" when she could not see them, suggesting that meaningful social connections had developed within the home. The family member rated the home 5 out of 5 overall.

What staff told us

Managers told us they had worked hard to strengthen governance and make improvements since joining Westacre Nursing Home around six years ago. They described recent improvements to the environment, infection control, governance processes and the development of the dementia-friendly garden.

Staffing and workforce

Staff feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Survey respondents had worked at the home for between four and thirteen years and included both care and administrative staff. All staff reported that they enjoyed working at Westacre, with one describing it as having "lovely colleagues" and a "very homely feel".

Managers told us that during the day there are a minimum of two nurses and eight carers on duty, alongside managers, cleaning staff and kitchen staff. At night, staffing consists of one nurse and four carers. Staff said agency staff are used, but not frequently.

Managers said residents are checked at least hourly, and more frequently where residents are unable to use call bells. This was consistent with resident feedback that call bells were generally answered within a few minutes.

All staff who completed questionnaires felt staffing levels were sufficient to meet residents' needs. Two staff said they would recommend the home to friends and family, although one answered 'no' to this question. All rated the service highly, with ratings ranging from between 3 and 4 out of 5, to 5 out of 5.

Staff and managers described Westacre as a calm, caring environment with a stable team. Managers said the home is usually full and had only one staff vacancy at the time of our visit.

Training and communication

Staff reported receiving all relevant training required for their roles and all respondents felt well informed about developments within the service. Staff said they were encouraged to contribute ideas through regular team meetings and felt that suggestions made by staff were listened to and acted upon.

Staff questionnaire responses indicated that residents' needs were clearly recorded, including oral health, sight, hearing and communication needs, although one response indicated that communication needs were not recorded in all cases.

Healthcare and clinical support

All staff reported being very well informed about residents' needs. They described care plans that included information about oral health, hearing, vision and communication needs, together with any equipment or support required.

Staff told us that the home completes a nursing needs assessment for all residents on admission and also completes a FRAX fracture risk calculation, which is reviewed if a resident's risk changes, for example following a fall.

Staff and managers described positive relationships with the local GP surgery and pharmacy team and said residents had regular access to GP support.

Staff described a wide range of activities available to residents, including seaside trips, garden centre visits, cinema outings, pub afternoons, animal therapy visits, reminiscence sessions, exercise activities, live entertainment and one-to-one activities for residents who remain in their bedrooms.



However, staff also highlighted some challenges. They expressed concerns about limited access to physiotherapy services and perceived inequalities in access to therapy and equipment when residents are discharged from hospital to nursing homes compared with other care settings. Staff explained that nursing homes are often required to fund equipment and adaptations needed to keep residents safe.

Staff said the GP does not often refer residents to the falls team, partly because many residents have cognitive impairment and may find it difficult to retain information. The manager said she tries to cover the areas the falls team would usually address where possible.

Summary

Westacre Nursing Home was observed to be a calm, welcoming and largely positive environment. Residents, relatives and staff consistently spoke highly of staff members, describing them as caring, supportive and responsive. Observations during the visit supported this feedback, with positive staff interactions seen throughout the home.

The home demonstrated a number of strengths, including a stable and engaged workforce, strong management leadership, positive resident feedback about food and

care, a well-designed dementia-friendly garden and an environment that was generally clean, comfortable and accessible. Staff described a culture where they felt listened to, informed and involved in service development.

Most residents reported feeling safe, supported and satisfied with the care they received. Family feedback was particularly positive regarding care coordination, communication and quality of life improvements since moving into the home.

A small number of residents expressed concerns regarding independence, access to outdoor exercise, social isolation and how concerns were followed up. Staff also identified challenges relating to access to physiotherapy services and funding for specialist equipment. In addition, a noticeable odour was present in some parts of the home during the visit.

Overall, our findings indicate that Westacre Nursing Home provides caring and responsive support for residents, with many examples of good practice and a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

Recommendations

- Review support options for residents who may be vulnerable to loneliness or social isolation, while recognising and respecting the preferences of residents who choose limited social interaction.
- Continue monitoring temperature management and hydration arrangements during periods of hot weather, particularly in rooms identified by residents as becoming very warm.
- Review odour management arrangements within the home to ensure a consistently pleasant environment throughout all areas.
- Ensure residents are able to shape the menu choices by suggesting their favourites
- Continue to pursue access to appropriate physiotherapy, falls advice and equipment support for residents discharged from hospital to the nursing home.
- Celebrate positive feedback about staff kindness, responsiveness and the calm, welcoming atmosphere of the home.

Provider response

"Thank you to Healthwatch Hampshire for visiting Westacre and for the positive and balanced report. We were pleased to see the caring and supportive atmosphere within the home recognised, along with the hard work and dedication of our staff team. The feedback from residents, relatives and staff means a great deal to us and reflects the culture we have worked hard to develop over the last six years.

We welcome the recommendations and will continue to look at ways to improve the experience of people living at Westacre. We are committed to providing high-quality person-centred care and ensuring Westacre remains a safe, welcoming and homely place for residents, relatives and staff alike."

Lynne Seymour, Westacre Manager

Thank you

We would like to thank the residents, relatives, staff and managers who gave us their time and shared their experiences during our visit.

Thank you also to Westacre Nursing Home for welcoming us, supporting access around the home and being open in conversations with Healthwatch Hampshire.

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 residents, relatives or staff, 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 Hampshire.

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