

Enter & View Report

Bristol Court Revisit

Healthwatch Hounslow
October 2022



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Introduction

Who are Healthwatch Hounslow?

Healthwatch Hounslow is your local Health and Social Care champion. From Feltham to Chiswick and everywhere in between, we make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback **to improve** care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake 'Enter and View' visits.

Mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2013, the visits enable trained Healthwatch staff and volunteers (Authorised Representatives) to visit health and care services – such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacies.



Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but equally they can occur when services have a good reputation.

During the visits we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families and carers. We also engage with management and staff. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlines what has worked well, and gives recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our website.

Safeguarding

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 safeguarding policies. If, at any time, an Authorised Representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

Disclaimer

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

Limitations

While the Healthwatch Hounslow Authorised Representatives receive Enter & View training, they are not qualified medical or care professionals and are only able to give a 'lay-man's' interpretation of their observations and interviews. Furthermore, where English is not a first language for some of the staff or residents, it is possible that some words or sentences were not fully communicated.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hounslow would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank our Authorised Representatives, who assisted us in conducting the visit and putting together this report.

Executive Summary

Reason for the visit

The primary driver for the Enter & View visit was as a follow-up on progress of previous recommendations from a visit in June 2021. Hounslow Council also indicated that there were some concerns around lack of activities, low staff morale and the housing team being in flux.

Previous Healthwatch Hounslow Enter & View visits

We had previously visited the home in June 2021. A number of recommendations were made on:

- Personal care
- Environment
- Complaints processes and administration
- Activities
- Meals
- Staff: Training and breaks

Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View re-visit which took place on 11 October 2022 between 10:00am and 2:00pm and conducted by five Healthwatch Hounslow staff and Authorised Representatives. Bristol Court kindly shared a poster giving advanced notice to staff, residents and friends and family of our visit – allowing some staff to complete the survey online and residents to contact us to express their wish to talk to us.

The visit consisted of the following components:

- An initial introduction to the housing scheme with the Registered Manager
- A tour of the external and internal premises
- Interviews with residents, housing manager, staff and family members
- A debrief with the manager to highlight any immediate concerns, if applicable

In total we spoke to:

- 13 Residents
- 3 Friends/family
- 1 London Care Registered Manager
- 1 Housing Manger
- 15 Care Staff (London Care)

Visit Details



External photos of the premises taken by Authorised Representatives.

Type	Details
Service Visited	Bristol Court Extra Care Housing United Drive, Feltham, TW14 9AG
Latest CQC Score	<u>Good (Nov 2021)</u>
Registered Manager	Edward Amisshah (London Care)
Type of service	Purpose built “extra care housing” where residents have their own self-contained flat and front door with personal care and support services available (depending on the care package).
Number of residents	Bristol Court has 94 flats the time of the visit.
Date and time of visit	11 October 2022, 10:00am to 2:00pm
Status of visit	Announced
Enter & View Authorised Representatives	Francis Ogbe, Yves Delmotte, Princess Penny Cook, Samreen Nawshin
Lead Authorised Representative	Viviane Walker
Healthwatch Hounslow contact details	Healthwatch Hounslow 45 St Mary’s Road Ealing W5 5RG Tel: 020 3603 2438 Email: info@healthwatchhounslow.co.uk

What we found & recommendations

Our visit focused on our previous recommendations but also looked at the current extra care housing scheme operation. Key findings were:

Increase and Widen the Range of Activities

While activities do take place, there is room to improve the range of activities to accommodate the range of interests and abilities of residents. Activities should include Physical, Creative, Social and Mental topics. Recommendations from friends and family included: evening activities for younger residents, yoga, gardening, technology activities and day trips.

Increase and Improve Resident / Staff Relationships

Where there is not regular continuity of care staff, it would be helpful if residents had opportunities to get to know staff better. Perhaps a 'Meet the Staff' booklet and/or social events (e.g. coffee mornings) introducing staff by name, interests and languages spoken might help break down barriers.

Clarification of what 'Extra Care' means for Residents and Bristol Court Responsibilities

Some residents believed they should be getting more 'care' – a clear understanding what 'extra care' is compared to 'care', is vital for residents' understanding of the care they receive. Furthermore, a clear list of what Bristol Court and London Borough of Hounslow responsibilities are might mitigate some complaints.

Restaurant Menus being Accurate

It was noted that the dishes offered are not always reflected on the published daily Restaurant menu, causing distress for some residents who need to know in advance what meals are available.

Improve General Understanding of Complaints Procedure

There is still room to improve the systems of how to make a complaint, who to go to and to have a final solution – even if the complaint is seemingly small but may be a big issue to the resident.

Continuous Training in Dementia and Autism Awareness

It was noted by staff and family that increased training around dementia and autism were important. Bristol Court had already started in person training on these topics and this should continue.

Increase Council's Maintenance Response & Consider In-House Handyman

Maintenance and repair delays remain an issue and we recommend greater advocacy of residents being prioritised and an in-house handyman.

1. Results – Overview of Revisit

This section provides more details on observations, interviews and follow-up on specific recommendations from a previous visit.



Observations

The Authorised Representatives were given a tour of Bristol Court, both external and internal at the beginning of the visit. A checklist was used to help gather comprehensive insights and each area has been summarised.

Bristol Court is a modern purpose-built building providing extra care housing, arranged over two floors with 94 flats.

Outside and Entrance

Bristol Court is situated in a mostly residential area, set back from the main road. There are nearby bus stops and the home is about a 10 minute walk from Feltham town centre. There were not many shops in the immediate vicinity. There was also a large car park, disabled access ramp and bay for an ambulance.

The building is a pleasant modern-looking building. There is a secure entry system. At the entrance, Covid information is displayed, there is hand sanitiser, and a visitors book. Due to a recent bedbug outbreak in the communal areas, there was no seating in the hallway whilst the furniture was being treated. The hallways were decorated with paintings. There were no activity notices on the walls.

Bristol Court has three impressive, well-kept floral gardens that are attractive to look at in the courtyard. There were large sunflowers, a pergola and raised beds. However, the Registered Manager noted that the garden areas are not particularly used by the residents but did add that he is working on funding for a sensory garden for residents to make it more engaging.

Bristol Court has three large communal rooms that looked ideal for classes and activities. Unfortunately on the day of our visit a bedbug outbreak had seen two of the rooms quarantined, the other room was being used for Covid-booster vaccinations.

There were hand sanitiser throughout the building, at the end of each corridor on every floor. Masks were also available in the reception area.

We noticed staff, managers and residents generally had a positive manner with each other. General staff morale was positive from our observations.

Interviews

As well as reviewing recommendations from last year, the Healthwatch Hounslow team looked at wider areas to help get the full picture.

General Overview

Most residents considered the scheme clean and staff helpful. Support from care staff was considered generally to be positive or neutral.

General Overview



Safety

12 of the 13 residents spoken to felt that the Extra Care Home was safe, with residents noting the use of security fobs for accessing the different areas. However, one person who did not feel safe said that ‘anyone can walk up and down’ and reported that it was possible for anyone to enter and that their flat had been broken into some time ago and that they still did not feel safe.

Housing

There were some complaints about the maintenance and repairs to housing, with 8 of the 13 residents feeling that this was a particular issue. The Housing Manager explained that when her team receive housing-related complaints, they reported them straight away to London Borough of Hounslow (LBH) but these were not always dealt with immediately by the LBH housing and maintenance teams. This is likely due to wider issues in the borough regarding demand for their services and their prioritisation systems. This matter was a concern previously and the topic is expanded further on page 22 of this report.

Interviews

Homeliness

When we spoke to residents about how homely the housing was, eight of the eleven (72%) who answered said that it was, while three had reservations.

“It feels like I’m on holiday.” Resident

“No, it feels like a hospital but I wish it could feel homely.” Resident

“It will be homely when they get the chairs back downstairs, as there was a bedbug outbreak and they had to take them away.” Resident

“I feel like I’m living somewhere that’s not mine. I don’t really like the people here – but I’m used to being by myself. Sometimes I meet nice people here.”

One resident who needed two carers, felt uncomfortable when they both spoke in their own language in front of them. We would encourage management to stress the importance to all staff of not alienating a resident by speaking a different language in their own home, even if it is just about folding sheets – to a resident this could be perceived as a remark about them personally.

Another resident felt that staff were too nosy about their guests visiting them. While it may be that staff are seeking to ensure the safety of vulnerable residents, from the residents’ perspective it is their home and privacy and the team might need to be more aware of feelings of this nature, finding the right balance in approach for each individual and/or seek to explain this aspect in the residents’ information folder and elsewhere. This might allow residents to take a kinder view towards this nosiness.

While residents have their own flats which they can personalise, many have vulnerabilities that prevent them from going out regularly, therefore they feel the building as a whole should be an extension of their home. When the communal areas come out of quarantine, this would be an opportunity to develop stronger connections between residents and staff.

Post Covid Sentiments

Residents did not notice a huge change in their care during Covid, other than the fact that some staff had left. On a positive note, residents did not particularly feel that Covid had put them off socialising and going outside. However, two of the three family members did note increased depression and isolation as a result of the lockdowns and Covid.

Interviews

General Feelings about Care

When asked if they felt listened to by care staff, 7 of the 12 residents said yes, while the others said only a bit of the time. When it came to being involved in making decisions about their care, only 2 of the residents felt they were not involved,, with one noting that decisions were made by the doctors and social care.

**“A lot of them don’t listen to what I ask...they will carry on and ignore my suggestions”
Resident**

Nearly all the residents spoken to said they had a key worker but one resident was upset that their preferred care worker had been transferred away and replaced with someone they no longer got on well with.

Clarification of ‘Extra Care’ Definition

Three residents were quite strong to express they didn’t feel they were getting ‘extra care’ – their expectation is perhaps that they want more 1:1 care whereas the Extra Care Housing provision has a lighter touch than a care home. The aim is to support independent living rather than to have 100% care support on their daily living. Establishing clear management of expectations is important to new and current residents.

“There is no extra care. Carers only come during their scheduled hours and some want to get off early. There can be more assistance or support of extra care provided which is the whole purpose.” Resident

“When I press [the button] no one comes which they had said they would and this has happened several times. Even if they come they come very late, at least an hour later so there is no extra assistance.”

As seen later in this report, the mixed understanding of what ‘extra care means’ can effect residents’ experiences. The Registered Manager gave some background that when the Scheme was first opened, it was not at full capacity and those residents’ received much more 1:1 care beyond the requirement of their care packages. He explained that now the Scheme is fully operational and residents are receiving their normal care packages, the perception for some of them is that they are now receiving reduced care.

2. Results – Review of the Original Visit Recommendations

This section provides follow-up comments on specific recommendations from our previous visit.



Follow-up on Recommendations

The main focus of the visit was to review if and how recommendations from our 2021 Enter and View were progressing.

The recommendations were based on different areas of service.

Personal Care

1. Competence and Training

2021 Issue: there were some younger carers who have inadequate training and experience leading to ineffective engagement.

2021 Recommendation: provide opportunities for younger carers to shadow, share responsibilities, carry out targeted supervision/interventions, or topical sessions with experienced and senior colleagues.

2022 Findings: The first point of training for all Care Workers is their Induction. The majority of the Care Workers reported their Induction was about one week typically comprising of 3 days training and 2 days shadowing. 94% (n.15) of those asked felt that they were supported during their Induction. One Care Worker did note that the person they had shadowed was not very helpful leaving them unsure of their job at first. A second member of staff had felt their Induction was only sufficient due to their previous experience in the care sector.

As well as training during the Induction, Bristol Court provides ongoing training. Topics include: personal care, learning difficulties, medication, moving and handling, record keeping, health and safety, safeguarding, epilepsy, patient safety, dementia, infection control, equality and diversity, access to care plans and food safety. A lot of the training can be completed on their work phones which monitors their completion. 94% (n.15) of staff felt that they had enough training to do their job well, however two Care Workers did note that they would like more dementia training.

In terms of reaching out to the care managers for support, the response was mixed. Some felt happy to ask them for help while one person noted that the Care Managers are all in one room and not very welcoming or proactive in supporting them.

From a residents perspective, we heard a couple of examples of where a member of staff had lacked common sense but these were in the minority. One resident felt that staff had been very professional and well-trained when Bristol Court first opened but the use of agency staff during Covid-19 had reduced the quality of support during that period.

1. Competence and Training (continued)

When speaking to family members, one parent felt that staff did not have enough training with regards to learning difficulties. Another would like staff to encourage their family member to get back into a routine and be better at looking after themselves.

"I am not sure they are all trained with autism." Parent

"Do feel like staff don't have enough training regarding those with learning difficulties especially as my [relative] presents as normal until talking to him." Parent

In response, the Registered Manager explain how new Care Workers receive one week Induction training and 2 days shadowing, are allocated a Buddy (like a mentor) and ongoing training which is monitored on the system. New staff get an 'Onboarding Passport' which monitors the Induction process after the first week, month and first few months. The Care Managers monitor that staff have completed each stage of the Induction.

As well as online training, staff were also offered outsourced training: on 29th September 2022 a group of 9 staff attended Learning Disability training, with a further session planned for a second group. He also noted that they are working with the Alzheimer's Society for help with dementia training.

Staff meetings can also be a useful tool for discussing issues, sharing best practice and strengthening work relationships. However a small number of staff noted that apart from a recent meeting about medication, no further meetings had taken place in a while.

The Registered Manager explained how after having to rely heavily on agency staff during the Covid-19 pandemic, he was pleased to say that since July 2022 he had not needed any agency staff which should improve overall care for residents.

2022 Conclusion: Bristol Court has a good training plan and monitoring system for new and current staff and has identified the need for in-person training for some topics such as dementia. The recommendation has been almost fully implemented and we recommend this continues, along with training in other high-need areas such as Autism and Mental Health. Bristol Court had at the time eliminated the use of agency staff which should also translate into better trained and familiar care staff for residents.

3. Choice in staff

2021 Issue: staff and residents not getting along and residents feel unable to change Care Worker

2021 Recommendation: act on preferences by taking rota system for staff allocation into account.

2022 Findings: Residents provided a mixed response about whether they could request to change Care Worker if they were not getting along. Four residents said they were unable to change Care Staff despite requesting it.

“I can keep telling someone [about wanting to change Care Worker] but the same staff would stay working with me.” Resident.

“I don’t complain because the staff are very good.” Resident

The Registered Manager’s response was they encouraged residents to “give it time” with new Care Workers to build a relationship. He also explained due to the nature of shifts and many staff working different hours, on a practical basis it was not easy to allocate a resident’s ‘favourite Care Worker’ – however, they did keep this in mind where they could. The new staff monitoring system allowed him to track how much a resident has the same Care Worker visiting and that it is something that he monitors. He said that for the sector, Bristol Court were doing quite well.

From our conversations with residents and family, the inconsistency of care staff was a particular problem for residents with autism and for those requiring intimate care as they require established relationships that take time. To have someone new entering a home all the time was increasing anxiety.

2022 Conclusion:

The management team indicated that they do make an effort to place the same care workers as much as possible, but due to varying shift lengths and rotas, this is not easily done. This recommendation has been partially implemented. Where possible, we would suggest prioritising placing the same workers with those requiring intimate care and/or those with neurodivergent traits that make forming new relationships difficult. New staff should be introduced to residents and time allowed for a relationship to develop.

4. Quality of Care: Correct time allocation of care

2021 Issue: Carers are often ‘in a rush’ and operate at a ‘basic level’ resulting in inadequate levels of personal care – particularly for the most vulnerable.

2021 Recommendation: start with a simple “how are you today” conversation and basic check on welfare. A clear route to report unsupported needs should also be available for residents and families .

2022 Findings: When residents were asked whether they felt care staff spent enough time supporting them, some were positive although two residents felt that they did not receive enough time.

“Carers only come during their scheduled hours and some want to get off early.” Resident

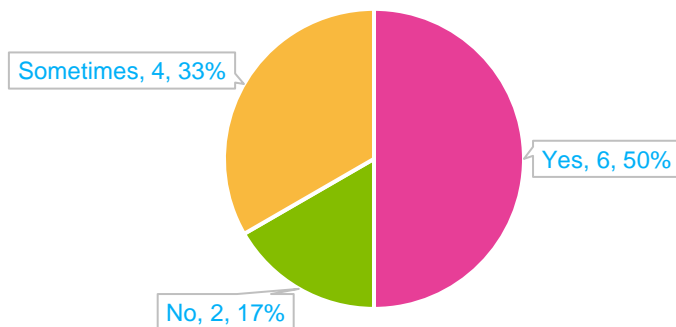
“Generally, they should stay the full time. However, they want to end early and their tone is not inviting which prevents one from asking further.” Resident

“Sometimes they do and sometimes they don’t stay the full expected time.” Resident

“No, they rush everyone, not just me, it feels like they do it to everyone.” Resident

“Yes [Care Workers stay the full time] – that’s never really an issue.” Resident

Question for Resident: Do care staff spend enough time supporting you with your care and support needs and do they stay the full length of time expected?



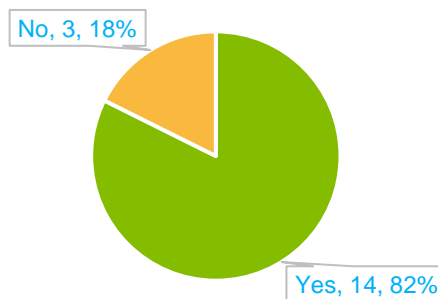
The three friends/family members were not entirely sure if enough time is provided by care staff and could not confirm either way but one family member commented:

“Sometimes, they just do the basics and go away, and do not spend enough time getting to know the resident and talking to them.” Family member

4. Quality of Care: Correct time allocation of care (continued)

When discussing whether they were able to give enough time to residents, Care Staff talked about it largely being dependent on the resident and situation for that day. As a standard, depending on a resident’s needs, they are allocated a 30 minute or 60 minute visit. But Care Staff noted that sometimes service users need more than an hour and that their mood and co-operation can affect the time needed. In one case, a Care Worker noted that when one of their resident’s requests a shower, as they are a little slow, the Care Worker has to sometimes give up their break. Another Care Worker in a similar situation said that they were able to request more time in similar circumstances.

Question for Care Staff: Do you have sufficient time allocated to your care calls to deliver good, personalised care?



The Registered Manager showed the Authorised Representative his new care staff monitoring software. This, he explained, had improved his ability to check that staff were giving each resident enough time. He explained that each Care Worker used a work mobile phone for logging in and out of each visit – showing him how long a care worker was with a resident and what they did. If Care Workers are cutting short their visits, he is alerted on the monitoring system. The Registered Manager explained how since the new system had been installed, he was able to accurately monitor if Care Staff were fulfilling their duties or not.

2022 Conclusion: The new monitoring software will likely have improved Care Staff’s ability to correctly allocate time to residents and so we can see that the recommendation has partially been implemented. There appears to be a risk that the ‘human’ element of care work is being stretched by the practicalities of the job – a continued awareness that residents not just a box to tick on a rota and continual efforts to build bonds is important to help improve the carer/client relationship.

5. Carer lateness, short visits and inconvenient timings

2021 Issue: care staff may arrive late, in some cases at inconvenient or inappropriate times but residents were not notified.

2021 Recommendation: for situations of late staff immediate communication to the office, and to the residents in a recognised manner.

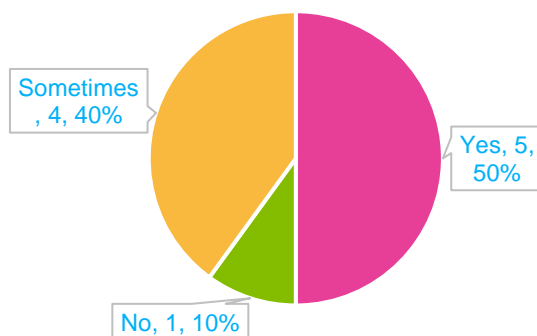
2022 Findings: The vast majority of residents felt that Care Workers either did arrive on time or were mainly on time with only one resident feeling that they did not.

But a small number of residents felt that sometimes their visits were cut short:

“Generally, they should stay full time, however, they want to end early and their tone is not inviting which prevents one from asking further.” Resident.

“No, they rush everyone, not just me, it feels like they do that to everyone.” Resident

Question for Residents: Do your Care Workers arrive when expected?



Both Care Staff and Management explained that Care Staff could arrive between a window of 30 minutes early or 30 minutes late and residents seemed aware of this. One resident noted that his double care workers did not always show at the same time which was difficult as he is bed-bound while another resident noted that his allocated times had changed without him being informed.

The Registered Manager explained that the new Care Staff Monitoring Software installed in September 2022 had greatly improved punctuality and if a Care Worker misses an appointment or is running late, he can see straight-away on the system and ask them what happened.

2022 Conclusion: The new systems allow the management team to have a much clearer overview on whether Care Staff are on time or running late – and can act accordingly by deploying other staff. While the data might show that staff are acting in a timely fashion and fulfilling their duties on time, residents do not have access to this. Therefore, we would encourage staff to indicate to residents that they have arrived on-time/late but will give them their fully allotted timed. Overall, this recommendation was partially implemented.

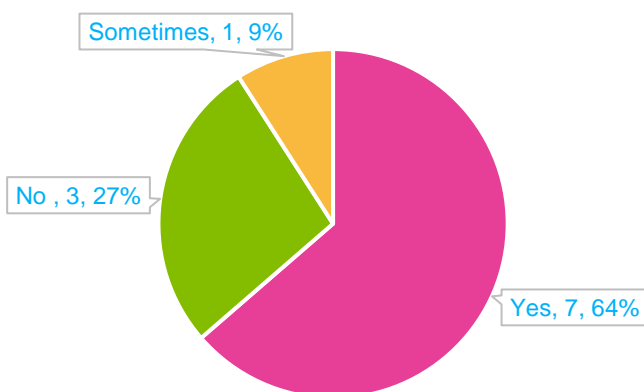
6. Dignity and Awareness of personal space

2021 Issue: staff can sometimes be insensitive towards personal needs or spaces

2021 Recommendation: use buzzword, or badge, as a reminder to staffs that they are in the residents' personal space.

2022 Findings: Most residents felt that their privacy was respected with the exception of three. Discouragingly, one resident remarked how their Care Worker[s] would leave the curtains or the front door open when they are caring for the resident leaving them exposed to other residents.

Question for Residents: Do you feel staff respect your privacy?



100% (n. 13) of Care Workers felt that they and other staff respected residents' privacy however there was a mixed response about what had been done to remind staff recently. Three Care Workers added that dignity and privacy were mentioned at every meeting and regularly on handovers. Two Care Workers felt that no recent update had been made on the topic.

The Care Home manager was very open about this subject, saying that in the past, staff may have been overfamiliar with residents and entered rooms in the same way that a close relative might. He explained that staff had received training about this and were frequently reminded.

2022 Conclusion: Care Staff felt that they respected residents' privacy and most residents supported this notion. However, we did note one case with the windows being open where this was not the case. Last year's recommendation has been partially fulfilled.

7. Consistency of carers

2021 Issue: frequently changing carers each day causing stress for residents.

2021 Recommendation: Allocate the same carers day-to-day, thus minimising opportunities to build mutual relationships and trust.



Stock photo of care staff

2022 Findings: Residents noted that their Care Workers continue to change frequently which remained a source of discontentment for some, particularly those requiring intimate care or with learning difficulties. One resident noted that while the afternoon shift carer is different, the organisation tries to set the same carer to come at least twice [a week]. A family member noted that constantly changing staff was particularly difficult for their son with autism.

“The care staff are lovely – but there has been a huge changeover with constant new staff. My son does not like this as he is autistic and finds it very difficult to have a constant stream of new staff who do not know him, and this makes him annoyed and upset He like to know who is visiting him, and it is very difficult to find this out much of the time.” Relative

“They should have set staff and set carers. Not change everyday.” Resident

To help reduce the impact of changing carers, some Care Workers noted that they are constantly reviewing care plans, watching and keeping records on their work phones. If a resident complains about pain or their mood is different, this is written in their notes and the senior care assistant is informed.

The Registered Manager also explained how residents now have a Key Worker, who is the same person and provides a minimum 1 hour per week support in addition to the daily care from carers. These “Weekly Wellbeing Checks” provide an opportunity for a consistent relationship and for wellbeing to be monitored.

2022 Conclusion: The new management software allows the Registered Manager to monitor how often residents see the same Care Worker and attempts are made to allocate the same staff. However, residents are still saying that this remains an issue. This recommendation has been partially implemented and we would strongly recommend prioritising those with special needs and/or intimate care to have the same Care Staff as much as possible. Furthermore, where there are unavoidable changes in staff, more effort should be made to help familiarise Care Staff and residents with one another.

Environment

8. Maintenance Delays

2021 Issue: Lengthy maintenance delays e.g. bathrooms, faulty heating not repaired, internet etc.

2021 Recommendation: For maintenance related requests, perhaps allocation of 'job numbers' with a process for checking on completion could assist.

2022 Findings: The issues of repairs and maintenance continues to be a source of contention for residents, however, the Registered Manager and Housing Manger explained that unfortunately, such matters were out of their hands and the responsibility of the council maintenance teams. The Housing Manager explained that when residents notified her team of maintenance issues, they then report these issues immediately to the London Borough of Hounslow, who prioritise and repairs can take days or weeks. She did note that some of the property management aspects were being transferred and might give her team a little more control.

While London Care do not have control over the maintenance and repairs of the building, we have listed the comments from residents and family members to highlight how the delays affect them:

"In the first 10 months, the shower was getting either extremely hot or cold. It wasn't getting fixed until my daughter intervened...the bathroom is still freezing cold."

Resident

"Not happy with Hounslow housing with repairs. There was some issue with the toilet that wasn't fixed for 2 weeks." Resident

"There has been an ongoing issue that I have been having in my son's bathroom...his shower head is 6 months old with brown stains there and on the wall." Family member

"Not happy with Hounslow housing and repairs. There are some issues with the toilet that wasn't fixed for 2 weeks." Resident

"[Bristol Court needs to:]..fix the equipment, shower, heating etc." Resident

2022 Conclusion: Lengthy maintenance delays remains an issue for vulnerable residents. If they are not already, the housing team should be vocalising for the Council to act more quickly on repairs and maintenance. As there are over 90 flats, an in-house handyman might be more appropriate for repairs and fixtures. As this was an issue in our previous visit, it remains in need of further progress.

9. Lack of bells outside rooms

2021 Issue: Lack of bells outside of rooms presents a risk.

2021 Recommendation: consultation with residents to resolve the issue: of not having call bells on the general grounds which deters some from going out often.

2022 Findings & Conclusion: The Registered Manager explained that there are call bells in communal areas – but he considered the housing scheme no to be a care home and necessarily require them. The Housing Manager added that residents have the option to pay for pendants which link to LinkLine which gives some extra independence and sense of safety. Most residents asked considered Bristol Court safe. The recommendation was not progressed for the reasons described.

Complaints processes and administration

10. Making a complaint

2021 Issue: Residents are unaware of how to formally make a complaint. The complaints process is inaccessible and residents not hearing back or having to chase progress on outcomes of their complaints.

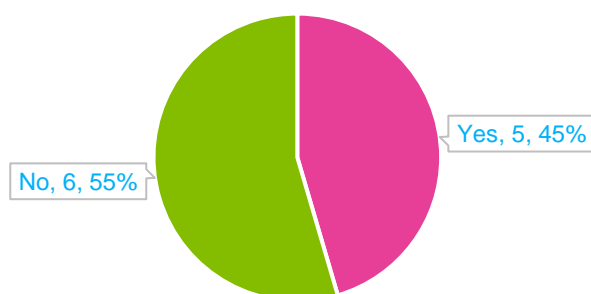


2021 Recommendation: Residents should have a clear policy and process to enable services to act on individual issues, and also detect and learn from wider trends. Any complaints process should not exclude people, so if a verbal process is not available, it should be. Complaints should be formally numbered with a clear process in place to ensure that they are actioned within a reasonable time frame.

2022 Findings:

When asked if they were aware of the process to make a complaint, six residents said 'no' compared to five saying, 'yes'.

Question to Residents: Are you aware of the process how to make a complaint?



10. Making a complaint (continued)

Residents noted that if they wanted to make a complaint, they might go to the reception area, talk to a manager or talk to a Care Worker to pass it on.

Some Care Staff noted that residents could email, phone, go to the office or speak to them. There was a mixed response to how they thought a resident might make a housing (e.g. maintenance) complaint and whether it was their responsibility to help or not:

“It is hard to contact housing. I do not think that it is clear or easy because the staff for housing might not be available, and I do not think that residents have direct phone numbers.” Care Worker

“We will explain to them that they need to speak with housing and if they are not able to, I personally will leave the feedback with housing on their behalf.” Care Worker

“In regard to housing, the residents have to contact the housing office, it has nothing to do with us.” Care Worker

The Housing Manger noted that the Key Workers (who visit weekly) can discuss issues/complaints with tenants at these meetings. Residents can also complain from their home or go to the reception area. Typically, the route would be to complain to the Housing Officer in reception or to Care Workers who can report on their behalf.

The Registered Manager explained that there is a clear process for dealing with complaints, which are categorised into Level 1 or Level 2 and monitored. Friends and family also have the opportunity to complain. He noted that some residents complain about things that Bristol Court have no control over. He noted that there is an EasyRead version of the complaints procedure which is in every residents’ folder. He also explained that complaints are logged and they give priority to those which are deemed genuine. He noted that complaints are monitored to see if they are followed up on but that they are prioritised. The risk is that this format runs the risk that it is management who decides if a complaint is genuine or not.

2022 Conclusion:

The topic of making complaints can be a challenge for Bristol Court, as complaints relating to maintenance and food are considered by London Care as out of their hands, so it can appear that some complaints are not being resolved. There is also the added difficulty in that differing expectations on what ‘extra care housing’ involves can mean that some complaints might be considered outside the remit of London Care, but still get logged. As discussed elsewhere, a clear definition of what ‘extra care housing’ entails and who is responsible for what may help residents have confidence in the complaints process. We would hope London Care and the housing team would advocate for residents when it comes to maintenance delays and meals.

10. Making a complaint (continued)

Furthermore, complaints are subjective to the individual and what might be considered a small matter could in fact to that person be of importance to their wellbeing.

Bristol Court do have systems in place for complaints being recorded and acted on. Although the original recommendation has been partially implemented. one problem is that what a resident might deem an 'issue' is not necessarily deemed so by Bristol Court. As such, it is vital for Bristol Court to be explicit about what they are responsible for and what they are not responsible for and to identify any gaps.

Activities

11. Lack of awareness and/or availability and encouragement of activities

2021 Issue: A lack of awareness of any activities happening/minimal activities

2021 Recommendation: Need to get residents out and about, and actively circulate the information on activities.

2022 Findings: There was a very mixed response when residents were asked about activities, with five residents noting that they were unaware of activities and three noting that they were aware. Four residents felt that since Covid there had been a reduction in activities. Some residents said that they were encouraged to take part in activities while others do not.

Those who did not attend activities gave a variety of reasons from physical inability or frailty, the current activities being of little interest to them and in three cases, residents were bed-bound and unable to participate.

"I get tired very easily and have difficulties walking." Resident

"Depends on how I am feeling and my muscles because I have a lot of spasms."
Resident

"I feel like I'd miss my routine if I participated so I don't like to attend." Resident

"I didn't fancy them [activities] at all." Resident

"Many are bed-bound so it would be nice to have more activities." Resident

One resident remarked on the lack activities outside of Bristol Court premises:

"I'd like a bit more freedom – and things to do like day trips and outings etc. I'd even pay for them, if they were cheap." Resident

11. Lack of awareness and/or availability and encouragement of activities (continued)

The three friends/family who we spoke to all said there were not enough activities, with two of them concerned that there were not enough activities for younger residents or activities in the evening when they are around.

“No, there is not enough going on. They have coffee mornings but there could be more interests and activities.” Family member

“They get leaflets about activities but my son is not here due to going to college.” Family member

“No. More evening activities to be more inclusive. The younger residents do not seem to be catered for at all. The activities could be expanded so e.g. the games room could be used by residents and their visitors. Planned walks perhaps, cooking, films, music for the younger people.. A gym room? Yoga / karate / art in the evenings, gardening, trips to local places..”

Suggestions from friends and family:



Example images of activities

The Authorised Representatives sensed loneliness and isolation amongst some residents. Perhaps exacerbated from Covid-19. Activities, be them Social, Physical, Creative, Mental amongst others, in extra care housing are important for giving structure, independence, socialisation, health improvements, confidence and generally ‘knowing your neighbours’ which garners trust and homeliness.

II. Lack of awareness and/or availability and encouragement of activities (continued)

When we spoke to the Registered Manager, he was very open and honest that the level of activities was not (on the day of the visit) at the level he hoped for. He noted that a recent bedbug outbreak in the lounges had meant the rooms had been closed for two months so they had been unable to run activities and anticipated a few complaints about it. We have concerns that 2+ months is a long time to resolve a simple bedbug issue, particularly as it denied access and activities to residents. There are three garden areas at Bristol Court and wonder whether outdoor activities might have been an option, particularly over August and September.

However, the Registered Manager explained how they were reaching out to the Salvation Army, Age UK and Alzheimer's society to support with specialist activities. He also noted that they have created a new schedule with lots of Coffee Chats – as lots of residents do not necessarily want big group activities and are happy with small coffee mornings. To help tackle isolation, particularly with their housebound residents, they have a new scheme where instead of activities, a dedicated Key Worker who visits once a week to listen to residents' needs and understand the residents' concerns.

The Housing team also have responsibility for activities, and the new Housing Manager was in her first week in the job. She confirmed that Bristol Court has scope to improve the range of activities and informed us that her team is currently running consultations with residents regarding which activities they want to.

They do have group meetings but noted that attendance rates have been low. Looking forward, the Housing Manager supported the Registered Manager that they wanted to run more Coffee Mornings. She also wants to create a Housing Newsletter to help keep residents in the loop and a Community Board in the entrance area so everyone can see what's planned – as well as information on staff contact numbers, volunteering and visits into town etc.

2022 Conclusion: The Bristol Court management team are aware that they can improve on the variety and quantity of activities provided. Unfortunately for residents, this means that since our last visit in June 2021, there does not appear to be a noticeable improvement. While it is unfortunate that our visit coincided with the communal rooms being out of order, we would have hoped that alternative arrangements could have been made such as outdoor activities, off-site activities, and/or simply activities that do not require chairs. Activities are vital for the health and wellbeing of residents who do not have the structure that work/education might provide. On a specific note, family members noted a need for evening activities for younger residents. The initial recommendation still stands.

12. Dissatisfaction with meals

2021 Issue: There were some complaints about meals

2021 Recommendation: Meals could be more nutritious, of a better quality, greater quantity, cooked more often with more choice.

2022 Findings: . The general feedback from residents still remained quite negative – with a number of complaints relating to the meals never reflecting what is on the menu, there being little choice. One resident noted that the only reason he went to the restaurant was to get out of his room and meet people. When asked about the food residents said:

“It [the food] fluctuates. Food was dreadful and frozen initially. Then it got better and then bad again. It hugely varies but is fine most of the time and yes, they give you a choice.” Resident

“I enjoy the food. I look forward t it.” Resident

“it’s never what it says its going to be on the menu – especially the alternative choice is never what its meant to be.” Resident

“Food isn’t good, no choice.” Resident

“Rubbish. They give us a menu but they don’t stick to it half the time.” Resident

Meals are provided by another contractor over which Bristol Court / London Care have no control. Given that the restaurant and food contractors are in the Bristol Court building, we would have expected the staff to raise residents’ concerns more than appears to have been done.

2022 Conclusion: The quality and choice of meals remains an issue for some residents, although others had noted a slight improvement. It is vital that the menu reflects the actual meals as this is a source of anxiety for some residents, particularly those with learning difficulties or autism. Although London Care are not the food contractor holder, they could show more attention to residents’ concerns. This recommendation has not been fully implemented and the management should actively raise these concerns with the meal contract holder to achieve improvements to the service.

13. Hand sanitiser stations are not wheelchair accessible

2021 Issue: It was noted that hand sanitiser stations are not wheelchair accessible.

2021 Recommendation: Make them accessible to wheelchairs.

2022 Findings & Conclusion: We found the hand sanitiser stations on the walls to be wheelchair accessible. This recommendation has been fully implemented.

14. Need for longer staff breaks

2021 Issue: staff breaks were only 20 minutes for a 7-8 hour shift.

2021 Recommendation: Given the intensity of care work, a consultation with staff to ensure that breaks are adequate and meet general expectations.

2022 Findings: When staff were asked if they receive adequate breaks, 57% (n.8) responded that they did. However, three Care Workers noted that their 20 minute break was sometimes interrupted with care calls.

“You get your break but there are some calls that overlap with your break time, – but there are some breaks between calls sometimes so it doesn’t bother me too much.”
Care Worker

“It is not enough all the time, sometimes you do not have the full time because you might have a call at the time that you’re having a break.” Care Worker

The Registered Manager noted that 20 minutes was within H&S requirements, and that the software allowed him to monitor and see that everyone was taking enough time for their breaks. It also allows him to re-allocate staff and schedules if a visit has over-run.

2022 Conclusion: Bristol Court staff 20 minute breaks (for shifts over 6 hours) appear to be aligned with the minimum legal requirements and industry standard. However, legally, this should be an uninterrupted 20 minute break and it appears this is sometimes not the case. Given the focus and physical demands of care work, we continue to consider that breaks should be adequate and do not consider this recommendation fully implemented.

3. Conclusion

This section provides conclusions on the general observations and recommendations



Conclusion

On the day we visited Bristol Court, we found residents living in safe conditions with friendly staff at all levels. Our timing coincided with an bedbug outbreak with some communal areas quarantined as well as a change in Housing Staff which had negatively impacted the provision of communal activities. A 2+ month closure of communal living spaces and therefore activities is unacceptable given how important it is for residents' wellbeing. Bedbug awareness for staff and residents is important to minimise the risk of future outbreaks.

The management team were aware that reduced activities was an issue, and were using the 'downtime' of the communal space to understand better what sort of activities residents would like to see. While we advocate consulting residents, we also advocate implementation. A dedicated weekly key worker was assigned to each resident to really listen to residents' needs, to fully understand their concerns and what would improve their wellbeing. The Registered Manager showed us an Activity Schedule and some residents gave positive feedback on activities. However, other residents had a desire for more interesting activities and family members noted a preference for more activities for younger people in the evening.

The topic of meals and maintenance were contentious issues for some residents, which, although London Care and the Housing team are not the direct contractors, it ought to be their role to raise and act on residents' concerns, especially as they have such an impact on wellbeing. The Bristol Court management team should be discussing with LBH that they are receiving the standard of response on issues and raising these concerns rather than seemingly accepting little can be done - with these issues they should be acting on behalf of residents to obtain a better service.

The new staff monitoring system addressed many of the issues raised around Care Staff not giving enough time and being late for calls. The new software also allows management to track whether there is continuity of care staff for residents. While the software may provide the data, While the Registered Manager was able to show they were performing above average for the industry, he explained that not all staff are full-time and that always having the same care staff was difficult. We noted that those with higher neurodivergent needs and/or requiring more intimate care would benefit from being prioritised with a consistent care worker. A small number of residents also noted that they did not feel that they could change care staff where they did not feel they got along. If different care staff are going to be assigned, it is essential that some work is put into building the relationship.



Contact Us

If you would like to discuss this report or our work, please get in touch


www.healthwatchhounslow.co.uk

020 3603 2438

info@healthwatchhounslow.co.uk

Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013]

Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

Report sent to	Viviane Walker
Date sent	10/01/23
Report title	
	Response (If there is a nil response, please provide na explanation for this within the statutory 20 days)
Date of response provided	
1. Please outline your general response to the report and what you are currently doing to address some of the issues identified?	A good report identifying the three areas and a collective responsibilities of each area in the scheme to support our residents. We are glad that most of the recommendations from 2021 were met and will accept the recommendations made from the 2022 report to enhance the services we provide.
2. Please outline what actions you will undertake as a result of the report's findings and recommendations.	Increase and Widen the range of Activities: Since the survey / report, the bedbug issues have been controlled and all lounges now open. We are working with Community Champions and Organisations (Alzheimer's Society, Age UK, LBH Community Access Service, Employment and Trail buddies Scheme, LBH Adult Education Services, One Hounslow, Feltham Community Police, Tesco, Asda just name a few) to widen the activities we offer at BC. Our partners in Housing have installed notice boards in three main areas where we have displayed weekly activities in advance. This is also shared in the newsletters. We are using our keyworker sessions with residents to inform the activities we provide.  Weekly Planner Updated.xlsx Increase and Improve Resident / Staff relationships: We are fortunate and proud to have a fully staffed scheme of care workers. We are using our keyworker sessions, practice pathways and orientation to introduce our care workers to residents to improve continuity. Our rostering system is also being used to ensure a good cohort of same care workers work with specific residents in LD, Gen and Dementia needs.

Clarification of what 'Extra Care' means for Residents and Bristol Court Responsibilities:

This an ongoing development that we are working with all stakeholders – Social Workers, Housing Management Team, GP, District Nurses, Residents and their families and using all opportunities to explore and give a clearer understanding of Extra Care. Such opportunities are through annual reviews of care packages, regular monthly liaison meeting with Social Workers, Housing Management Team, Commissioners, GP, Family, Residents and all stakeholders. We hold monthly surgeries with all residents in addition to a group meeting with all three partners (Housing, London Care and Catering) present to address any complaints. Our partners – Housing and Catering also holds monthly meetings to address any issues our residents may have. London Care have a scheduled Voice of the Customer (Resident) quality assurance visit / telephone call and the report is used to evaluate the services we provide. A copy of our complaints policy is resident's folders in their flats and we will continue to use our keyworker sessions to improve this recommendation.

Improve General Understanding of Complaints Procedure:

See above

Continuous Training in Dementia and Autism:

We will continue to build on these training given at Induction with stand-alone specialist training to all care workers. The stand-alone training has been completed with core workers working in these specific areas of the scheme and with the newly recruited staff, we will ensure they all enhance their training from Induction with the stand-alone training.

Signed

Name


Position

Healthwatch was established in 2013 in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Within this legislation [Arrangements to be made by relevant bodies in respect of local Healthwatch Organisations Directions 2013]

Healthwatch has a right to a reply within 20 working days to Reports and Recommendations submitted by Local Healthwatch to a service provider.

Report sent to	Viviane Walker
Date sent	06/01/2023
Report title	Healthwatch Hounslow Enter & View Report
	Response (If there is a nil response, please provide na explanation for this within the statutory 20 days)
Date of response provided	06/01/2023
3. Please outline your general response to the report and what you are currently doing to address some of the issues identified?	<p>Increase and Widen the Range of Activities</p> <p>Since the report has been issued, we have been looking into providing different ranges of activities. Our job is to promote tenant lead activities and to encourage independence. We have –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Held meetings with tenants asking them what social activities they would like to see. - We have run different social activities from Arts & Crafts, Games afternoon, Chair exercises, Karaoke afternoons, Christmas activities – Decorating the Christmas trees Christmas Party – with entertainer. - Tenants have been welcomed to hold celebrations in the communal lounges so they can have more guests. We have had birthday parties as well as an engagement. - A member of staff will also participate in activities so that we can offer support and guidance if need be. - We have put up notice boards and produce a monthly newsletter informing tenants of the following: social activities, building maintenance, useful contact numbers for all departments, general info. - We are encouraging our tenants to get more involved in writing something for the newsletter. E.g., a poem, favourite recipe etc. - We are still developing our range of activities, and this will be ongoing, as tenants’ ideas change. We are also in contact with other voluntary groups that can support with gardening and technology. Hopefully will be planning day trips out in the summer if that’s what the tenants request. <p>Increase and Improve Resident / Staff Relationships</p> <p>We at HMT work in partnership with the care providers and the catering team. We have regular communication between use all, so that we can provide a tenant lead service. The HMT Team have –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employed a new Extra Care Manager (Interim) - Employed an additional Senior Extra Care Officer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have ensured daily visibility by having the Extra Care Manager and Senior Extra Care officer working from the concierge desk. As a result, enquiries are addressed quicker. - Staff visibility has also improved our relationship with our tenants. - We have published our direct contact numbers and other useful telephone numbers on our noticeboards and via our newsletter. - Several tenants have passed comment that they find HMT very supportive and involved in helping them to sort out any housing issues or concerns they may have. <p>Increase Council’s Maintenance Response & Consider In-House Handyman</p> <p>HMT encourage and empower independence for tenants and will assist in making calls to the repairs/heating team service. We also –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the necessary referrals to the Handyman service. - Help tenants to understand the repairs process and time frames and what classifies as an emergency – offering reassurance where needed - Hold tenants’ meetings where we have discussed the maintenance service and given tenants an opportunity to feedback. - Notify tenants when repairs are taking place in communal areas via letter, newsletter, noticeboard updates - HMT have also been encouraging tenants to recycle more. Which has led to several tenants passing comment that they feel like they are doing their bit for the environment.
<p>4. Please outline what actions you will undertake as a result of the report’s findings and recommendations.</p>	<p><i>We recommend listing the recommendations given in the report and giving your comments where applicable.</i></p>

Signed	
Name	Mary-Ann Carr
Position	Interim/Extra Care Housing Manager