



Enter and View Report
Apsley Court

February 2016

Enter and View Report

Details of visit

Service address:

Apsley Court

**100 Wellington Road, St Mary
Cray, Kent, BR5 4AQ**

Service Provider:

London Borough of Bromley

Date

Monday 8th February 2016

Time

14.00 - 16.30

Authorised

Representatives:

**P. Todd, S. Ghosh and S.
Stickings**

Contact details:

020 8315 1927

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

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 experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives to



observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential Extra Care Schemes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists 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 - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham visited Apsley Court on Monday 8th February 2016. The aim of the visit was to engage with tenants of the Extra Care Scheme to understand their experience and give service users the chance to voice their opinions regarding the care they receive and the environment in which they live.

Strategic drivers

Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham identified the Extra Care Units in the borough for visits as these will be retendered in 2016. There are six facilities in the borough and as a result of our community engagement, we have been made aware of some concerns over the pricing structure, the lack of activities and engagement within the Extra Care Scheme.

Methodology

The Extra Care Scheme was informed of our visit a month in advance and our initial questions were answered by the manager. Three trained Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham Authorised Representatives (ARs) participated in this piece of work, observing the Extra Care Scheme informally, interacting in a casual manner with tenants. They wore ID at all times and used an observational tool kit and checklist to chart their findings. The Healthwatch Bromley and Lewisham team interviewed tenants in the communal areas and did not enter tenants rooms.

The Healthwatch team ensured that the respect and dignity of all tenants was respected at all times during the visit.

At the start of the visit the Enter & View lead met with the manager before speaking to the staff and tenants, to agree our approach. Tenants were asked for feedback and were advised that they had the option to decline our request.

The care provider is the London Borough of Bromley.

Apsley Court

Apsley Court is one of six Extra Care Units in Bromley. The building contains both retirement/sheltered housing and Extra Care Housing within its 38 flats, there are 12 sheltered tenants. The facility provides on-site care staff and has a community alarm service, lift, stair lift(s), lounge area, dining room, laundry, guest facilities, garden, conservatory, hairdressing salon.

The Visit

The Authorised Representatives engaged with 7 tenants during the visit and 3 members of staff. During the visit the Healthwatch team observed the environment of the Extra Care Scheme, staff and their interaction with the tenants. In addition we completed questionnaires taking the views of the tenants. There were a couple of tenants who really engaging and very supportive of others who were in the activities area. There was a lot of good banter between the tenants and they were enjoying being together.

We observed two tenants going out to do some local shopping while we were at Apsley Court.

Staff

During the two hour visit we observed staff interacting with the tenants, they were supportive and friendly. Two members of staff made afternoon tea/coffee for the tenants and interacted during this experience. One tenant in a wheelchair was given support by the staff and the manager also made a point of engaging with him and the other tenants.

The Staff feedback forms were positive and all have received the appropriate training and support. The manager has an open door policy and the staff that we spoke to and questionnaires indicate that the team are motivated.

The Manager was very much in evidence and has an open door policy. As the Manager's office is near to the entrance she is able to see people entering the building and during the visit we observed her interacting with visitor. We also saw good interaction between the manager and a group of tenants, they were laughing & joking and the Manager made a particular effort to understand a tenants whose speech was unclear.

Feedback from the tenants was that staff were either kind or helpful.

The staff questionnaires were in the main very positive but staff turnover and the volume of work was mentioned as a concern.

Care Support

80% of the tenants that we engaged with said that they were happy with their care package and support. Two commented that regular discussions with the staff enable them to get the support they need on a flexible basis. If they are feeling unwell they get sufficient support to make their life easier.

Quote "It takes me time to get dressed but I am helped by the staff and they don't rush me".

Quote "I was feeling poorly and one of my carers spent some of her own time looking after me".

Activities

The current activities consist of a weekly bingo session which is run by a tenants every Tuesday, tea afternoons and other special occasion events which are supported and run by the staff. There are facilities to listen to music, games are available in the lounge areas. The Healthwatch team did not see any newspapers or magazines available in the lounge area.

A hairdressing service is provided on a Thursday and this used by most (70%) of the tenants that we engaged with during the visit.

General comments

- The Extra Care Scheme was good in terms of temperature, cleanliness and odour. However the general appearance décor was tired and requires some updating.
- Our visit was advertised using the posters supplied by Healthwatch.
- An increased effort to provide stimulation is recommended.
- The general observation was that the tenants seemed happy in their environment and enjoyed the interaction with each other.
- The main theme that came up was the need for more activities. While relatives visit the impression given by the tenants was that this is quite infrequent.

Recommendations for Action

1. **Activities & Engagement** - The main activity at Apsley Court is the weekly bingo sessions which the residents really enjoy. This is run by one of the tenants and is the highlight of most weeks. Other activities run by staff include themed events for special occasions such as Easter, Summer Festivals and Christmas. It is appreciated that the Extra Care Scheme no longer has an activities coordinator. Healthwatch would recommend that more encouragement is given to the residents to have regular meetings in the lounge or activity areas. It is also recommended that Apsley Court encourages family members or volunteers to run some activities for the tenants. Suggestions given to the manager included some public speakers, board game sessions, discussion groups on current affairs, travel, music etc. and a weekly quiz.

Note: Manager's comment

Previously, Apsley Court had an activities organiser who was shared between 4 schemes. Our role as the Care provider means our emphasis is on the delivery of care. We do not have supporting people funding anymore which is what was used for everything under the heading of activities, so now there is a funding issue. I am of the understanding that activities are more the responsibility of the Landlords now that we do not have this funding.

2. **The interior** - The décor is tired and needs redecoration in the activities room and main reception. There were two other nice lounge areas that were comfortable and bright but these were not used by tenants during our visit.

3. **Non-Extra Care Tenants** - The Extra Care Scheme is split between Extra Care Tenants and those outside the scheme (there are 12 sheltered tenants). During the visit there was little interaction between them and despite the efforts of the management team and this is potentially a missed opportunity. We were advised that half of the sheltered tenants regularly attend the tea club and functions and further two come to the regular tenants meetings which are organised by the Landlords representative on site. In addition two sheltered tenants go shopping with Extra Care tenants and two get involved in organising/assisting with activities. Two ECH tenants families also assist with activities.

It is recommended that both sheltered and Extra Care tenants do get together more frequently but it is appreciated that there is no activities coordinator.

Apsley Court Response

The following points were raised in response to this report:-

- We are not funded to resource regular activities.
- The property is getting a full décor within the next couple of weeks, inside and out c/o the Landlord A2 Dominion.
- The Landlords Rep. on site has secured an adoption scheme with BT, whereby they have already been and painted fences, planted shrubs, supplied potted plants/shrubs and organised a tea for all the tenants.
- They will be coming again shortly to expand on the previous improvements and provide a tea and organise a quiz.