

Enter & View Report

Elmstead Care Home, 14th May 2025



Contents

	Page
1.Visit Background	3
2.Information About the Service	4
3.Summary of Findings	6
4.Residents' and Families' Feedback	12
5.Staff and Management Feedback	14
6.Recommendations	17
7.Glossary of Terms	19
8.Distribution and Comment	20

Visit Details	
Service Visited	Elmstead Care Home
Registered Manager	Emma Staples
Date & Time of Visit	Wednesday 14 th May 2025, 11:00 – 14:30
Status of Visit	Announced
Authorised Representatives	Orla Penruddocke, Graham Powell and Margaret Kalu
Lead Representative	Reedinah Johnson

1. Visit Background

1.1. What is Enter & View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake and report on 'Enter & View' (E&V) visits.

Mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the visits enable trained Authorised Representatives (ARs) to visit health and care services such as care homes, hospitals, GP practices, dental surgeries and pharmacies.

E&V visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but can also be made 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 gain an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter & View Report', shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators, outlines what is working well, and makes recommendations on what could work better. All reports are available to view on our website.

1.1.2 Safeguarding

E&V visits are not intended to identify specific safeguarding issues. If safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with safeguarding policies. If at any time an AR observes anything about which they feel uncomfortable they inform their lead, who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

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.

1.2 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed during this specific visit. It is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed on the day.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bromley would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this E&V visit to take place. We would also like to thank our ARs who assisted us in conducting the visit and putting together this report.

2. Information About the Service

2.1 Elmstead Care Home

Elmstead Care Home is situated in Chislehurst, Bromley. The home is operated by Bupa UK.

2.2 Ratings

The CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. It ensures that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourages services to improve.

An inspection was unannounced and carried out in September 2021. The service was inspected and rated "Good". CQC carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the

Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of their regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the home was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008. As part of CQC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were looking at the preparedness of the service in preventing or managing an infection outbreak, and to identify good practice that can be shared with other services.

The inspection found that Elmstead Care Home provided a safe, caring, and well-managed environment where people were protected from harm and supported to lead fulfilling lives. Risks were regularly reviewed, medicines and infection control were managed safely, and there were enough well-trained staff to meet individual needs. People were treated with kindness and respect, supported to make choices, and encouraged to maintain independence and relationships. The care was highly personalised, with outstanding responsiveness to people's diverse needs and preferences, including innovative activities and strong partnerships with professionals. The service had a positive culture, effective leadership, and robust systems for managing concerns and continuous improvement.

2.3 Residents

Elmstead Care home is a forty-bed residential care home split across three households: Attlee, Churchill and Lloyd George.

Residents are aged 55+. At the time of the visit, 26 residents were diagnosed with dementia and 34 had an additional long term health condition (LTC).

2.4 Staff

The home has 66 permanent staff led by a general manager. The home does not employ agency staff but occasionally uses bank staff*.

*Bank staff, also known as agency staff, are healthcare professionals who work on a temporary or flexible basis to fill staffing gaps in healthcare settings. They are not directly employed by the organization but are contracted through a staff bank or agency.

3. Summary of Findings

The E&V visit was carried out on Wednesday 14th May 2025; four E&V ARs were present. It was announced and planned in partnership with the home. In preparation, we shared with the manager a poster announcing the E&V, to display in communal areas, and questionnaires explaining the purpose of the visit in further detail and seeking feedback

3.1 Entry and General Accessibility

Notes

The building is positioned away from the main street. There is parking available at the front as well as the back of the building.

Inside the main entrance, there is a small collection of books accompanied by a welcoming note that reads, "Please help yourself to a book or two."

What works well?

- Easily accessible by public transport
- Off street parking
- Logbook for visitors to sign in and out
- Hand sanitiser available at the entrance
- Wheelchair friendly and lifts available
- Notice board which included HWB E&V poster
- Keypad at entrance.

What could be improved?

- No designated ambulance area.

3.2 General Environment

Notes

At the reception, there is a small, comfortable seating area for visitors. A large noticeboard nearby displays upcoming events at the home, greetings cards from friends and family, the home's registration certificate, Bupa updates, a dementia-friendly digital clock and calendar, and a Healthwatch Bromley Enter and View poster.

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is mounted on the wall, clearly visible and easily accessible in case of emergency. There is also a wall nook featuring a box of Quality Street chocolates, a selection of board games, and a display board highlighting the day's activity.

The home features a mix of brown wooden flooring and beige carpet throughout. The walls are painted in a soft grey tone, complimented by white hand railings for support and contrast. Corridors are decorated with a variety of paintings, adding colour and character to the space.

The home is split across three households. "Lloyd George" has 13 bedrooms and is designed to care for people who are physically frail and living with mild cognitive impairment or early dementia. 'Churchill' comprises 12 bedrooms and 'Attlee' has 15 bedrooms – both are designed to care for people living with an advanced dementia diagnosis.

Each household features its own kitchen and dining area, complete with dining tables and chairs. These spaces are bright and airy, benefiting from an abundance of natural light that creates a pleasant and welcoming atmosphere.

Communal areas are furnished with comfortable armchairs, thoughtfully arranged to encourage social interaction, with a large TV mounted on the wall for shared viewing and entertainment.

Small sitting areas with comfortable armchairs and plenty of natural light from windows are located throughout the home, providing welcoming spaces for residents and their relatives to relax and spend time together.

The home features a pub-style lounge with a functional bar, offering a relaxed and sociable setting for residents. The lounge includes a TV and games such as dominoes, darts, and cards. A selection of soft drinks and alcoholic beverages is available, with staff remaining mindful of residents' medications. A call button alarm is also in place.

There is a main hall used for larger activities and parties, which can be booked for special family occasions.

The main garden area is safely accessible by ramp to all residents. The summerhouse, creatively transformed into a seaside-themed space by an Elmstead staff member, with bright blue and white furnishings, is a popular feature among residents. The garden also features a fenced fishpond and raised flower bed, cared for by residents. A small slide is available in the garden area for visiting children to enjoy.

A smaller paved area is located to the side of the building, furnished with tables and chairs. The gate leading to the road is secured with a coded padlock for safety. Another patio area overlooks a grassy space and the main road, and is equipped with tables, chairs, and parasols. During the visit, a bingo activity was taking place in this area, with residents enjoying ice lollies and appearing to be fully engaged and cheerful.

Residents' bedrooms are designed to resemble house front doors, each clearly numbered. The colours are chosen by the residents themselves, creating a personalised touch. Some doors display the resident's name and photos, while others feature a memory box filled with familiar and meaningful items. All bedrooms are equipped with a wash basin, commode, chair, and chest of drawers, unless residents choose to use their own. Windows have security latches for safety, and some residents have their own TVs. Residents are encouraged to personalise their rooms to reflect their individual tastes and preferences.

The bathrooms are clean and well-maintained, with toilet seats and light switches designed in contrasting colours to the walls. Each bathroom is equipped with a hoist to support residents with mobility needs, and emergency alarm buttons are positioned within easy reach of the toilet, to promote safety.

What works well?

- Easily accessible, suitably adapted toilets equipped with emergency buttons
- Dementia friendly clocks and calendars used in the home
- Suggestion box and a "Review Us" poster available near main entrance
- Corridors are wide enough for wheelchair access.

What could be improved?

- Main garden is on a slope. At the time of our visit, the home was waiting to receive a quotation to design flatter surfaces.

3.3 Safety and visiting

Notes

At the time of the visit, there were no restrictions on visiting. Clear fire exit signs and visible fire extinguishers were present, and emergency evacuation sledges were available at the top of all staircases.

Keypads are installed at both the top and bottom of the stairs to control access and enhance safety.

The home does not require prior notification before visits. There are no set visiting hours; visitors are welcome at any time.

What works well?

- Fire alarms, tested weekly
- Security latches on all windows
- Emergency alarm buttons reachable from residents' beds
- Call screen installed in the corridor, displaying the room from which an alarm has been triggered.
- Sensor mats on 85% of beds
- Crash mats for residents who need them
- All doors, including cupboards, securely locked
- Clean and well organised kitchen
- Hand sanitiser available throughout the home
- Clinical room kept locked.

What could be improved?

- Trip hazard from external door to medium patio area where the floor is slightly raised.

3.4 Activities and Personal Involvement

Notes

Management emphasised the team's commitment to providing person-centred activities tailored to residents' individual needs. They acknowledged that not all activities are appropriate for everyone, particularly for residents living with dementia or long-term health conditions. The weekly activity schedule is displayed on notice boards throughout the home and published in the home's monthly newsletter. The daily programme is also displayed on a dry-wipe board in the communal area, keeping residents informed about planned activities and events.

In the main corridor, a large noticeboard displays the key themes and significant historical events of the month, offering residents engaging and informative content.

A "Dates for Your Diary" board is on display, showcasing the week's activities and events, along with key highlights for the month.

Activities differ daily and include:

- Quiz
- Gardening
- Bingo and games
- Arts and crafts
- Exercise class
- Movies
- Reminiscence day
- Disco
- Themed events (e.g. VE Day).

Hairdressing services are available every Wednesday, with the salon accommodating up to four residents at a time. This also serves as a social opportunity for residents to engage and connect with one another.

There are two resident cats and a dog, who add to the homely atmosphere and go home each day with a staff member.

The manager stated that the home is currently unable to offer outings for residents due to limited resources.

What works well?

- A range of activities to engage residents and keep them active
- Activities clearly displayed on a white board in main corridor
- Activities folder in the conservatory
- Sensory space designed for Namaste care*.

What could be improved

- Activities schedule on notice board is displayed in small fonts making it difficult to read for some people.
- The home is unable to offer outings due to limited resources.

*Namaste care is a person-centred, holistic approach to care for individuals with advanced dementia, focusing on their emotional and physical needs to improve their quality of life. It is often implemented in care homes and involves creating a calming and comfortable environment, providing sensory stimulation, and engaging residents in meaningful activities.

3.5 Diet and Cultural Practices

Notes

The daily menu is clearly displayed on the kitchen wall in each household, allowing residents to see the meal options available each day.

All meals are freshly prepared and based on a standardised menu used across all Bupa care homes. Each food trolley includes a comment book for residents to share their feedback, and a monthly resident-led food committee actively contributes to discussions around meal options and preferences. Tea, coffee, fresh fruit, and light snacks are available throughout the day in the satellite kitchens. Alternative meal options are provided for residents who prefer something different from the main menu. After the kitchen closes at 17:30, residents can choose from lighter options such as sandwiches or jacket potatoes.

What works well?

- Residents can choose what they would like to eat every day
- Daily menu is displayed by entrance of dining area
- Drinks and snacks (fruit and crisps) available in the satellite kitchens
- Drinks and snacks are available in the home's pub

- Variety of food (e.g. beef and onion pie, chicken enchiladas, watercress soup, broccoli and crispy bacon pasta, and vegetarian sausage and mash, roast dinner, meat or vegetable curry).

What could be improved?

- The font used on the menu is small and may be difficult for some residents to read.

3.6 Feedback and Complaints

Notes

There is one brightly designed suggestion box at reception, as well as a poster inviting people to write a review on www.carehome.co.uk and Google reviews. The home conducts a residents' meeting every two months, discussing different topics such as activities, food choices, and care received.

What works well?

- Comment box in reception
- Comment folder on each food trolley
- A "Review Us" via carehome.co.uk poster at main entrance
- A customer feedback board "You said, we did".

What could be improved?

- We found no potential areas for improvement.

4. Residents' and Families' Feedback

Feedback was gathered from 12 residents and ten family members, covering a range of topics such as the quality of care, food choices, activities and personal development, access to healthcare, social opportunities, safety, and communication within the home. Overall, responses were positive, with residents and their families expressing satisfaction with the care at Elmstead Care Home. Residents reported feeling safe and well looked after and appreciated being involved in decisions about the activities offered.

Family members gave positive feedback about the support they receive from local health and care services, including GPs, dentists, and pharmacies. They expressed confidence that their relatives are receiving high-quality personal care, including help with washing, hairdressing, and chiropody.

All family members reported that they are kept regularly informed about any concerns related to their loved ones, including incidents such as falls, changes in health, or updates to care plans. When asked whether they felt residents were safe in the home—such as being reassured by visitor ID checks and clear evacuation procedures—every respondent answered "yes" on the questionnaire.

Family and Friends' Selected Comments

"Home treats mum as if she is a person."

"My mum is very happy here; I can't thank the staff enough."

"The staff are excellent."

"Dad is well cared for; he is eating well and seems to be happy where he is."

Residents' Selected Comments

"The food is appetising."

"Clean, homely environment with kind staff."

"There are plenty of activities to do in the home."

"Management takes the time to listen to any remarks or concerns"

"I am happy here."

5. Staff & Management Feedback

Feedback forms were submitted by 10 staff members and one member of the management team.

5.1 Staffing

Notes

Of the 11 staff members we spoke to, nine have been more than four years, one for 1–3 years and one for less than 12 months. Long standing members of staff have been there for 10 – 20 years.

The staff room is furnished with comfortable chairs, a table, microwave, fridge, and lockers. Shifts range in length—six, eight, or 12 hours. A six-hour shift includes a 30-minute break and an additional 15-minute break.

When asked, all staff said that they are satisfied with the opportunities they have to support residents, and there are clear procedures for raising a safeguarding issue.

Training

The five-day induction consists of two days of shadowing and three days of classroom-based training. New staff members are encouraged to shadow a partner for as many shifts as they wish. Training covers Bupa care standards, dementia care, and basic observation skills. Additional training and courses can be requested through the Bupa Learn app.

All staff completing the questionnaire were asked about their interest in additional training opportunities; three would like to receive additional training in dementia care and one said they would like to do a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2.

Breaks

All staff who responded indicated that they receive adequate breaks during their shifts. They expressed satisfaction with the handover process and felt that they have the necessary opportunities and resources to provide effective support to residents.

Management

Staff reported having a positive rapport with the manager, with everyone spoken to during the visit stating that they feel listened to and supported when raising concerns or seeking advice.

What works well?

- Staff feel listened to if they raise any concerns/questions
- Staff are happy with the way handover between shifts is organised.

What could be improved?

- Three staff members said they would like to receive more training in dementia, and one said they would like to do NVQ Level 2.

5.2 Selected Comments from Staff

"Everyone is treated with dignity and respect. My grandfather lives in the home."

"The residents are all treated with dignity and respect."

"Staff at Elmstead provide person centred care based on information received from the person or their family."

"Overall, very good."

5.3 Management

Notes

Overall, the registered manager expressed satisfaction with the quality of care and support delivered to residents.

Diet

The home adheres to a Bupa set menu, with all residents receiving a needs assessment upon admission to allow for individual adjustments. Specific dietary requirements, such as gluten-free, lactose intolerant and vegetarian diets, are accommodated. While a weekly menu is established, alternative meal options are available at mealtimes to cater to personal preferences. After the kitchen closes at 17:30, residents can choose sandwiches or jacket potatoes if they would like additional food.

Residents have the opportunity to contribute to menu planning through a monthly food committee meeting. A feedback folder is available on every food trolley during mealtimes for residents to share their comments.

Jugs of water and squash are available in all kitchens. Only residents identified as being at risk of dehydration or infection are placed on fluid monitoring.

The home manager introduced the innovation of serving the main meal in the evening, which has helped residents settle more comfortably overnight and shown evidence of weight gain. This approach has since been adopted by other Bupa homes.

Quality of care

We visited the home during very hot weather, however despite no air conditioning, the temperature was comfortably cool. There are plenty of windows throughout the building allow for good ventilation and fresh air. During colder weather, extra blankets are provided if necessary.

Laundry services and ironing are done within the home. The home has its in-house hairdressing salon, and a private chiropodist attends every 6-8 weeks. An optician visits annually and as needed.

Safety

The manager confirmed that all staff wear uniforms and ID badges and are fully knowledgeable about the evacuation procedures, including how to assist residents who may require support in an emergency.

The manager reported that staff, residents, and visitors possess the knowledge and skills needed to handle safeguarding issues and are all aware of the process for making a complaint.

Activities

Residents are encouraged to mix and socialise. New residents are introduced and sometimes paired with residents who have similar hobbies and interests. There are no residents with English as an Additional Language (EAL); if needed support would be provided. The home also supports residents with diverse cultural or sexual identities. For example, the home planned an activity for a Nepalese resident and organised a visit from Gurkhas* to teach the home about Nepalese culture.

Residents can contact religious support if they wish. Elmstead Baptist church attends the home to conduct a service on special occasions, such as Easter or Christmas, and a local Catholic priest visits on request.

Community Services

The manager expressed satisfaction with the level of support residents receive from other local health and care services. A GP from Bromleag Care Practice comes every two weeks, and district nurses attend every day for some residents.

COVID-19 infection prevention measures

The manager confirmed that standard infection control protocols continue to be followed, with hand sanitiser dispensers and wipes available throughout the premises.

Staff

All new staff have an induction programme of five days that includes three days' classroom-based learning, and two days shadowing. Additional training courses can be requested, and more training courses are available on the My Bupa app.

The manager said they are currently satisfied with the level of staffing. There are currently 66 staff members, without the use of agency staff. Some staff members have been with the home for more than ten years; the manager for 21 years.

*A member of a Nepalese fighting force, renowned for their bravery and combat skills.

6. Recommendations

Healthwatch Bromley would like to thank Elmstead Care Home for their support in arranging our E&V visit. Based on the analysis of feedback obtained, we have made recommendations which prioritise safety and wellbeing.

6.1 Entry and general accessibility

6.1.1. There was no designated ambulance area.

We recommend establishing a clearly marked ambulance zone to provide easy and efficient access for emergency vehicles.

6.2 General Environment

6.2.1. Main garden is on a slope. At the time of our visit, the home was waiting to receive a quotation to design flatter surfaces.

We recommend redesigning the garden surface to create a flatter, safer area for residents. The home is currently awaiting a quotation to progress this work.

6.3 Safety and visiting

6.3.1. Trip hazard from external door to medium patio area where the floor is slightly raised.

We recommend addressing the uneven flooring to reduce the risk of trips and improve safety for residents and visitors.

6.4 Activities and personal involvement

6.4.1. Activities schedule on notice board is displayed in small fonts making it potentially difficult to read.

We recommend increasing the font size to improve readability for residents and visitors.

6.4.2 The home is unable to offer outings due to limited resources.

We recommend partnering with other local Bupa care homes to share access to a minibus or transport services. Additionally, building links with local volunteer groups or community organisations may provide further support in organising and delivering outings, making such activities more feasible and sustainable.

6.5 Diet and cultural practices

6.5.1. The font used on the menu is small and may be difficult for some residents to read.

We recommend using a larger, clearer font to make the menu easier to read for all residents.

6.6 Staffing

6.6.1. Three staff members said they would like to receive more training in dementia, and one said they would like to do NVQ Level 2.

We advise the management team to assess the current training programme and identify opportunities for staff to take courses that will help with their career progression and further enhance the quality of care provided at Elmstead Care Home.

8. Glossary of Terms

AED	Automated External Defibrillator
AR	Authorised Representative
CQC	Care Quality Commission
EAL	English as Additional Language
E&V	Enter and View
ID	Identification
LA	Local Authority
LTC	Long-term condition
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification

Cover photo by Jsme Mila

9. Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the public and shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences of health and care services, please contact us.

Healthwatch Bromley, The Albany, Douglas Way, SE8 4AG 2LB

Telephone: 020 388 60752

Email: info@healthwatchbromley.co.uk

Website: www.healthwatchbromley.co.uk



The Albany
Douglas Way
London
SE8 4AG

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 & Recommendation Response Form

Report sent to

Emma Staples

Date sent

09/07/2025

Report title

Enter & View Report

Response

(If there is a nil response please provide an explanation for this within the statutory 20 days)

Date of response provided

30/07/2025

Please outline your general response to the report including what you are currently doing to address some of the issues identified.

I am happy with the report thank you, but could you change the piece on page 5 (explanation about bank staff). The are employed by Bupa and not an agency. They are all our staff that prefer not to have set hour contracts so that they can work when it suits them and us.

Recommendation 1

Please outline what actions and/or improvements you will undertake as a result of the report's findings and recommendations. If not applicable, please state this and provide a brief explanation of the reasons.

Bupa recognised contractor has been out today to quote for marking out an ambulance bay in the front of the home.

Recommendation 2

The garden is on a slope and we have plans to flatten the grass area next year. The slope is DDA compliant and meets the safety standards. Residents are escorted down the slope if they are deemed to have compromised mobility.

Recommendation 3

Floor slightly raised. Residents are escorted to this area and the metal bar which joints the paving to the carpet is at a safe level for wheelchairs and zimmer frames to pass over.

Recommendation 4

Activities schedule has been printed in larger print and a whiteboard is being used to display daily events. A sister home is currently trialling a shared minibs which we are hoping to be part of in the very near future.

Add recommendations if
there are more than 4.

The staff go through the menus with the residents every day to get their food orders but we have printed slightly larger menus for those that may require it.

Person First Dementia Second training has gone out to all staff since the visit and the lovely lady has signed up for her NVQ - NVQ's have been on hold and re-opened on 21/07/2025.

Signed
Name
Position



Emma Staples
Home Manager