

Engagement (Enter and View) Visit Report - Brambles Care Home

Service Address: Birchfield Road, Redditch B97 4LX

CQC Registered Provider: Sanctuary Care Property Ltd

CQC Registered Manager: Mrs Margaret Hook

Date and Time of Visit: Thursday 29th January, 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

HWW Contact: Margaret Reilly

Authorised Representatives: Alan Richens, Lizzie Roberston, Janet Stephen,
Mike Vials & Margaret Reilly

Report approved by HWW: 8th May 2015



Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Worcestershire would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff at Brambles Care Home who gave us a warm welcome and spent time talking to us about their experiences of living, visiting or working at the home. Thanks also to everyone who gave us their views by returning the questionnaires

Particular thanks to the manager of Brambles for helping us to arrange the visit, showing us round and providing relevant information that had been requested by Healthwatch Worcestershire.

Our report relates to findings that were observed or were contributed in response to our visit. It is not therefore a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, carers and staff; only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Our findings need to be viewed in the context that some of the residents may have illnesses or disabilities, including a dementia related illness, which may have an impact on what they have said to us. We took account of this during our visit.

1. What is Enter and View?

One of the legal powers of Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW) is to carry out Enter and View visits.

HWW authorised representatives carry out these visits to publicly funded 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 homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

It is important to emphasise that Enter and View is NOT an inspection, it is an engagement activity. We do not have access to individual care plans or other confidential information. Enter and View is a way that Healthwatch Worcestershire can find out people's views and see for ourselves how services are provided.

2. What was this Enter and View visit about?

Healthwatch Worcestershire has a business priority of “Improving the Quality of Adult Social Care.”

One of the ways that we are doing this is by undertaking a series of visits to adult residential and nursing home settings. We understand that all of these settings provide some level of publicly funded care.

The purpose of the visits are to:

- Understand how residents in these settings are being provided with meaningful activities that support their health and well-being.
- Identify examples of good practice

Meaningful Activity is “that in which one is engaged that which holds meaning and value for us engages our time, attention and environment”¹

Meaningful activity includes physical, social and leisure activities that are tailored to the person's needs and preferences. Meaningful activity may involve structured activities (e.g. arts and crafts, quizzes, discussion groups, music etc.), but as important can be people being involved to the level of their ability in activities of daily living (e.g. helping in the day to day running of the home) and

¹ Perrin, T. May, H. and Anderson, E. Wellbeing in Dementia

brief moments (butterfly moments) of connection, engagement and activity that are meaningful to the person concerned².

Statistics from the Alzheimer's Society show that 80 per cent of people living in care homes have a form of dementia or severe memory problems. The Worcestershire Residential Dementia Service Standard³ is used by Worcestershire County Council and the three Clinical Commissioning Groups. The aim is to promote care that is person-centred. Person-centred care considers the whole person; taking into account each individual's unique qualities, abilities, interests, preferences and needs, rather than focusing on their illness or on abilities they may have lost. Person-centred care also means treating residents with dignity and respect⁴. The Standard covers a range of areas, including meaningful occupation and a dementia specific environment. It is not a requirement for providers in Worcestershire to meet the Standard.

HWW Authorised representatives received, prior to the visits taking place, introductory training in meaningful activity (some of the content was based on the Worcestershire Residential Dementia Service Standard) and also on understanding people living with dementia, this included content on meaningful activity for people living with dementia.

3. How did we carry out this Enter and View visit?

Brambles provides accommodation and personal care for a maximum of 64 people, some of whom may have dementia related illnesses. Brambles, along with other care homes, was selected for the visit simply on the basis of various criteria such as achieving a mixture of large and small homes, those that provide nursing care and those that do not, achieving a geographical spread across the County and a mixture of large and smaller providers. It was not selected on the basis of past or present performance. Brambles is working towards the Worcestershire Residential Dementia Service Standard, but did not have this at the time of our visit.

This was an announced Enter and View visit. We met with the manager prior to the visit to explain about Enter and View, and what we intended to do, this was confirmed in a letter. We asked Brambles to let people know we were coming and provided posters and a short questionnaire for residents or visitors to return if they were unable to meet with us on the day.

Prior to the visit we developed structured questions relating to meaningful activity and observation sheets to record what we saw. We developed prompts, based on the Residential Dementia Care Standard and our training, to help us to interpret our observations about meaningful activities.

² Adapted from SCIE guide 15, *Choice and Control, Living well through activity in care homes: the toolkit* (College of Occupational Therapists) and expert consensus]

³ This is based on the 50 Point Checklist authored by David Sheard in 'Inspiring, leadership matters in dementia care' (2008), published by Alzheimers Society.

⁴ Alzheimers Society

Brambles provided us in advance with the names of people who had mental capacity and had given their informed consent to talking with us. We also asked for and were given information about activities provided at Brambles.

Brambles is organised over three floors - Hawthorn (for people with higher levels of needs), and Blackthorn and Briars (for people with low to medium levels of need). Two members of our team were based mainly in the communal lounge/dining area of Blackthorn. There were up to fourteen residents in this area over the time of our visit. Two other team members were based in communal lounge/dining area of Hawthorn. There were up to ten residents in this area over the course of our visit.

The visit was informal. We had structured conversations with nine residents who had given consent, and spoke informally with other residents who were present. We also spoke with one visitor. Survey forms were returned by twelve residents and three relatives of people living at Brambles. We had structured conversations with the Manager and Activities Coordinator and informal conversations with three members of staff.

We also gathered information through observation, involving the authorised representatives observing what was going on and noting what we saw.

We explained to everyone who we were and what we were doing where appropriate.

Brambles were given an opportunity to comment on the draft of this report and provide a response before it was published - please see Section 6 for Brambles response to our recommendations.

4. What were the main things we found out?

- We observed staff interacting in a positive, caring and relaxed manner with residents.
- Residents told us when we spoke to them and through their replies to the questionnaire that staff had asked them about their interests and what they like to do, and that they were happy with the activities provided.
- We were sent the weekly activities programme for Blackthorn and Briar combined and a separate programme for Hawthorn. This shows a varied programme of activities available morning, afternoon and evening from Sunday - Saturday
- At the time of our visit there were two vacancies for Activity Coordinators in Briar and Hawthorn
- During our visit we saw meaningful activity taking place in both Blackthorn and Hawthorn
- The Activities Coordinator told us how they change activities to meet individual needs
- There were lots of resources available at Brambles to support meaningful activity. We did not see the residents helping themselves to these
- Brambles uses volunteers and works with The Princes Trust to support meaningful activity. They also have links with local churches and schools

5. Our findings and recommendations

Interaction between staff and residents

We observed interactions with residents as staff came and went.

We observed staff interacting in a positive, caring and relaxed manner with residents.

Most residents we spoke to said staff knew their likes and dislikes. Five residents who returned the survey commented that they were happy with their care and the staff.

One resident we spoke to told us that staff did not always speak kindly to residents. We did not observe this on our visit.

We did not observe a great deal of conversation between residents, or of staff sitting and chatting to or simply being with residents on a one to one basis. Where we did see this we have recorded it below.

Activities

Residents told us when we spoke to them and through their replies to the questionnaire that staff had asked them about their interests and what they like to do. Residents told us that staff helped people to participate in activities if they wanted to, but not all residents wanted to be involved in group activities. Most of the residents we spoke to said that they were happy with

the activities available at Brambles, and this was echoed by all of the residents who returned the questionnaires.

The three relatives who responded to the survey told us that their relatives mainly stayed in bed or in their rooms due to illness. All the relatives said that staff regularly interacted and chatted with their relatives, but one mentioned that “mum would appreciate more one to one but staffing doesn’t always permit”

At the time of our visit Brambles employed one Activities Co-ordinator 07:30 - 17.30 Monday - Friday, another member of staff also spent time working on activities. We were told that they are working across all the floors, but the Activities Coordinator is primarily based in Blackthorn. At the time of our visit there were two vacancies for Activities Coordinators, one each for Briar and Hawthorn.

We were sent the weekly activities programme for Blackthorn and Briar combined and a separate programme for Hawthorn. This shows a varied programme of activities available morning, afternoon and evening every day of the week. We were told that two external entertainers come in per month and there are two trips out per month. The activities plan included some times each day for the Activities Coordinator to spend with residents who mostly stay in their rooms. Evening activity involved chatting with staff and watching the news and soaps on TV.

We were told that residents from any of the floors were welcome to join any of the activities, and we saw that some residents from Hawthorn had joined in the bingo that took place in Blackthorn.

Each resident has a sheet in their room setting out menu choices and what activities are available each day.

We were told that all activities are subject to change as they are resident led and that residents meetings are held on each floor (as well as a whole home meeting every quarter) where activities are discussed.

Blackthorn

During our visit we saw that seven residents were engaged with a game of bingo in the dining area. We observed that staff and volunteers supported residents to take part in the game, which they appeared to enjoy. Whilst the bingo was going on one of the residents took on the “quiz master” role with residents who remained in the lounge area. 3 other residents seemed to be engaged in this activity. One other person was knitting. A couple of residents had their eyes closed. Later in our visit there was music in the lounge area. Four of the seven residents in the lounge were singing along and tapping their feet.

One resident told us that she would prefer to listen to classical music, but she “does not get this”. Another resident told us that they liked to chat, but sit next to a resident who is deaf, and there is no one on their other side.

Hawthorn

At the start of our visit there were eight residents sitting in the lounge, six of whom were asleep. Music was playing. In the dining area one resident had a visitor. Another resident was doing a jigsaw with a member of staff, the resident commented that the pieces were small and difficult to see. There were also coloured pens and a colouring book out on a dining table. Although a resident was holding a pen they did not appear to be using it or engaging with the resources available. Later two more residents returned from playing bingo (there was some conversation about this), and a number of residents woke up. We saw staff frequently checking if residents were OK and comfortable. We saw one member of staff looking at a history book with a resident. A couple of residents were involved in a ball game with members of staff. This particularly engaged one resident, and led to conversation about them previously being a darts champion, staff fetched a small trophy from their room to remind them. Later a number of the residents, encouraged and joined by staff, were singing along to music that was playing. Although there was chatting and conversation between staff and residents, not every resident in Hawthorn was engaged in a meaningful activity during our visit.

We noticed that care staff were called in and out of the lounge to assist with residents elsewhere. We also observed that some of the staff were doing what looked to be admin / paperwork in both Hawthorn and Blackthorn lounges.

We spoke with one resident who generally stays in their room, they told us very clearly that this is their choice. Staff had invited them to do things, but respect their wishes when they choose not to. This resident appreciated being served, at their request, a whisky nightcap by staff.

We asked the Manager and Activities Coordinator how activities were changed to suit each individual's needs, and in particular the needs of residents living with dementia. We were told that there are life story books in resident's room. We were told that one to one sessions are used to try lots of options until the persons likes and dislikes are understood. We were given specific examples of where residents choices had been supported, e.g. for an alcoholic drink in the evenings and enabling a resident to use computers and other means to be self sufficient

The Manager told us that information about activities is included in care plans, which are updated daily with information about what the person had joined in. In Hawthorn there is a Cardex system which contains information about what each resident likes to do, so it can be used by all staff, although during our visit we did not observe this being used.

We asked the Manager about training for staff on providing activities for people living with dementia and were told that care staff had recently received training in "butterfly moments" from Dementia Care Matters. The Manager also planned to introduce monthly workshops where staff could share information and training.

Involving residents in the day to day running of Brambles

We were told that residents who choose to be are involved in a variety of ways with the running of the home. We saw residents being asked to fold napkins for the tables. A resident told us in the questionnaire that they take the post daily to the post box, sweep up and help to keep the area tidy. A couple of residents mentioned keeping their own rooms tidy. One resident told us

they did their own internet banking and are self-sufficient. We were told that one of the residents feeds the birds in the lounges on each of the floors, whilst another is responsible for putting food on the outside bird tables. We were told that other residents like to get involved in tasks like handing round biscuits and dusting.

HWW recommendations **Brambles could -**

- Reassure themselves that individual residents across each floor who choose to engage in meaningful activity are able to do so on either a one to one or group basis
- Reassure themselves that sufficient meaningful activities are available on all floors when the Activities Coordinator is not available and at weekends
- Consider how they could enable staff to spend more time interacting with residents, either in the lounges or in residents' rooms
- Consider how the choice of music in Blackthorn and elsewhere could be extended, or alternatively personalised (perhaps through the use of MP3 players) so that individual choices can be accommodated
- Consider how seating arrangements can encourage conversation and engagement between residents

Resources and environment

There were lots of pictures up around Brambles, and clear, pictorial room signage.

In Blackthorn we saw a large bag full of different types of equipment to support meaningful activity (we noticed skittles, cowboy hats, feathers, games) as well as books, TV, music centre, CD/DVDs. There were birds and a fish tank in the lounge area, and a bird table outside.

In Hawthorne we saw magazines and books, coloured pens, jigsaw, wedding clothes on display, carry cot and dolls and various games. There were also birds in Hawthorn. One of the residents in the lounge area had a doll on their lap, but we did not observe them engaging with it during our visit

Brambles also has a ginger cat, which we saw by the entrance and in one of the lounge areas.

We did not observe residents helping themselves to the resources available.

We also saw a room dedicated to hairdressing, with sinks and hair dryers, where residents can go to have their hair done.

HWW recommendations **Brambles could consider -**

- Whether existing resources could be made more easily available for residents to choose to use them, (for example by putting them closer to residents) or appropriately introduced to individuals more frequently, particularly residents living with dementia who are not engaging in the more organised activities

Involvement of relatives and the local community

We were told that during the summer residents frequently use the garden area.

We were told that Brambles has links with a local vicar and lay preachers, who come into the home. We were told that there are links with Walkwood Middle School, but there is not a lot of involvement with local facilities or clubs.

We were told that three people regularly volunteer at Brambles.

We were told that the Princes Trust were planning a week long programme of activities to start the week following our visit, involving 14 young people.

6. Service provider response to HWW recommendations

Thank you for your Report and constructive feedback.

Response to your report.

The only factual inaccuracy was that some residents' have story books in their rooms but not all, this will be one of my aims for 2015.

Improvements since your visit

- We have recently achieved our WCC Dementia standards, which we are delighted about.
- I have recruited 2 activity co-ordinators with different skills to provide additional support with activities during the week and weekend
- Another volunteer has also been appointed to spend more time for people who spend most of their time in their room.
- Shifts to incorporate more time for staff to spend with resident's

What action we will be taking

- Story books in all rooms
- Garden to be developed, helping to create a meaningful area for the resident's.
- To buy MP3 players for residents.
- To make resources easily available for resident's

We appreciate your recommendations and will continue to work with all agencies to provide a good service and meaningful experience for our resident's.