

Healthwatch Kent Report : Care Home Series

Bridge Haven Care Home, Bridge

May 2018

Across the country, Independent Age has been working with Healthwatch to explore what people are looking for when choosing a care home.

They have identified 10 key indicators that they feel make a good Care Home, for example, they highlight important areas of dignity and choice such as residents being able to continue their hobbies and have an input into the running of the home.

Many Healthwatches already use the Independent Age indicators when visiting Care Homes and we have decided to adopt this approach here in Kent.

We have visited 24 Care Homes in total in recent months, two per District. It was important to us that we visited a range of homes from every area in Kent. Although we selected them at random we did check with the Care Quality Commission, Kent County Council and the seven Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure we didn't clash with any visits they already had planned.

This report details the findings from Bridge Haven care home. We have already published a report which summarises the findings from all our visits. We have of course shared our findings with the Care Home but also the Care Quality Commission, Kent County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups as each of them have a role to play in inspecting and commissioning care homes in Kent.

We will be following up with each home to check their progress against our recommendations and will publish an Impact report within six months' time.

If you have an experience of a Care Home in Kent that you wish to share with us (good or bad) do get in touch. Call our freephone Helpline on 0808 801 0102 or complete a feedback form on our website www.healthwatchkent.co.uk

Steve Inett

Chief Executive, Healthwatch Kent

What were we trying to achieve?

Using the 10 key indicators, as set out by Independent Age, we wanted to talk to Care Home residents and staff about their experiences of living and working in the home.

How did we go about it?

We visited Bridge Haven Care Home on 10th January 2018. **Our authorised visitors were Lyn and John Gallimore.** During our visit we spoke to two residents, two families, two members of staff and the manager

We were seeking to answer the following statements.

A good care home should.....

1. Have a registered manager in post.
 2. Have a stable workforce
 3. Have staff who have the right skills to do their jobs.
 4. Have enough staff on duty during the day and night
 5. Be clear about how they will be able to meet residents' needs both now and, in the future,
 6. Offer meaningful activity and enjoyment to suit all tastes
 7. Enable residents to see a GP or other health professionals like a dentist, optician or chiropodist, whenever they need to
 8. Accommodate your cultural and lifestyle needs
 9. Show that they're always looking to improve
 10. Provide nutritious food, plenty of fluids and a pleasant environment for meals
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Overview: What did we find?

The home

- is in a rural setting in the village of Bridge near Canterbury and was very welcoming
- provides care and support for older people living with dementia
- is a residential home
- was clean, light and airy and well decorated
- has a maximum capacity of 53 will mainly single occupancy rooms
- had 34 residents at the time of our visit
- is privately owned by Avante Care and Support a CIC
- has accommodation on one level and two identical units each with its own dining and lounge areas
- has begun a programme of refurbishment of several rooms as more residents are expected to be transferred from a home which is closing in Faversham

The home had their last CQC inspection on 20th June 2017. The overall rating was 'Good' for being effective, caring and responsive they were marked as 'Requires Improvement' for being safe and well-led and in other areas for. Click on the link to see the latest CQC report <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-128267675?referer=widget3>

This is what we found

A good care home should...

1. **Have a registered manager in post.** The registered manager is the most important staff member in a care home - and the one responsible for ensuring quality standards and residents' needs are met. They should be visible within the care home, provide good leadership to staff, have relevant experience of the health and care system and qualifications to help them do their job.

The staffing consists of a registered **manager**, deputy manager, two team leaders who are senior health care workers and six care workers. The current manager has been in post a few months at the time of our visit. Prior to their appointment, the home had experienced some problems. The current manager told us they are good with the residents and they are willing to spend time with an individual. She talks to staff, including the agency staff, to see what and how they feel. The manager told us she has a high

expectation of how the staff present themselves both verbally and visually, for example a younger care worker described a resident as “chilling” which she felt was not an appropriate comment.

Both **staff** told us that the manager was “*approachable*” and had an “*open door policy*” and provided “*full support*”.

One **family** commented that the Manager was much more approachable than previous managers, and it was good to have someone more understanding, and who is recruiting more staff. **One family** commented that the manager is “*very approachable and is more concerned than the previous ones with all of us*”, and “*since she came there are more carers about*”. One **family** felt there has been a big improvement since the manager arrived. They told us that previously there were more agency than full time staff.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 2. Have a stable workforce.** Care homes with knowledgeable, experienced staff who get to know residents can make the difference between an institution and a home. Where turnover of staff is very high, these qualities can be lost. It may also be a sign that staff are not happy working in the home.

The **manager** told us that most of the staff are long standing, although staff turnover was quite high under the previous management, and a lot left with the previous manager. Many have changed roles from care to domestic staff as they have got older. In addition to care and domestic staff the workforce also comprises maintenance, reception and kitchen staff.

Staff we spoke to said that they were very happy with their job. Recruitment was currently taking place.

Family members noted that the manager shares what she is thinking and treats staff with respect.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 3. Have staff who have the right skills to do their jobs.** Well-informed, skilled staff who are valued and developed as employees are vital to a smooth-running care home. All care homes should have a clear, comprehensive training scheme to ensure staff have the knowledge they need.

The **manager** told us that the company that owns the home, Avante Care and Support, have their own internal training programme for Continued Professional Development. This starts with a four-day induction course resulting in a care certificate. Staff can request a course to address their own need and interests. There is very focussed training on Deprivation of Liberty with refresher courses offered, and there are opportunities for self-development within the Avante organisation through role supervision and appraisal systems.

One family said that *“at times agency staff could benefit with extra training”*



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 4. Have enough staff on duty during the day and night.** Many homes have a lower proportion of staff on during the night, but if the ratio falls too low - at any time of day - response times can be too slow.

The **manager** told us that during the day there are two team leaders on duty and nine care workers. At night the shift comprises of one team manager and four care workers.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

5. **Be clear about how they will be able to meet residents' needs both now and in the future.** Many residents will develop more care needs as they get older - particularly if they have a condition like dementia. It is vital that homes can spot changes to their health and respond appropriately - consulting other health professionals where necessary - to provide the right level of care and prevent residents from having to move again.

The **manager** told us that a residents' forum is held regularly, and the minutes displayed for anyone to refer to.

It was difficult to get a true picture from talking to **residents**, as most suffered from dementia, but those we spoke to were happy that they were well cared for and their needs were met socially, mentally and physically. They are able to bring their own things from home. The home didn't have a sensory room but one room had been set up as a cinema and often screen savers are shown of fish tanks or other sensory images.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

6. **Offer meaningful activity and enjoyment to suit all tastes.** Care homes should not be boring places - they should offer an interesting range of activities and entertainment that match the tastes and preferences of their residents, including individual activities. Homes should take steps to stop residents from becoming isolated or lonely while respecting their privacy and choice.

The **manager** told us that a wide range of structured activities was offered. The home tried to provide something for everyone and cater for those who like one to one interaction as well as group activity. The **residents** can go for a walk whenever they wish providing a carer is available to go with them, and this can include going shopping. **Family** members often volunteer to help with this

kind of activity. Bingo is held once a week, run by a relative, and reflexology is offered. There is an onsite hair dresser one or two days a week. A music morning is held weekly which mostly consists of singing with some movement, but also residents who are musicians are encouraged to play. The home has its own bar and pub which serves some alcohol at set times, and the men particularly enjoy meeting in there over a glass of beer and playing card games. The outdoor café is open during the summer for residents and their families.

Local school children visit the home, and engagement with young people is encouraged, especially where it can support the school's curriculum. For example a forties themed garden party was held and residents were happy to reminisce. There is a children's play area by the onsite resident's café. People come in and run a reading group each week which is very popular.

The lounge areas could be arranged in a variety of different ways to provide a mixture of formal and casual seating. The gardens provide spacious outdoor areas where residents can sit or take responsibility for light garden work. One resident had access directly from his room to a part of the garden which he and his partner maintained.

Pets are welcome to visit by arrangement, and the home has two pets of its own: a cat who lives totally in the reception area so that it doesn't cause a hazard by getting under people's feet, and the second being a bearded dragon, much loved by the residents who chose it because they felt they "weren't children anymore who needed fluffy, furry things". One of the residents is visited daily by her pet dog who is beloved by all.

One family felt that the activities were "*acceptable*" and one said they were "*satisfactory, but improvements always welcome*" although they did say their relative had difficulty participating.



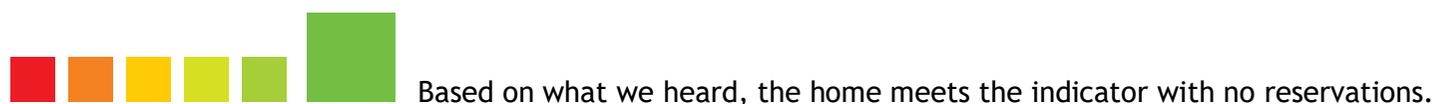
Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

7. Enable residents to see a GP or other health professionals like a dentist, optician or chiropodist, whenever they need to.

Residents should have the same expectation to be able to promptly see a health professional as they would have when living in their own home. Care homes should be able to explain the relationship they have with their local NHS services - does a GP visit regularly?

Can they call a GP out in an emergency? How easy is it for residents to see a dentist, optician, chiropodist or physiotherapist, either for a check-up or in an emergency?

A GP holds a surgery once each week at the home and the district nurse team attend to do dressings, administer drugs and provide end of life care as required. A dentist, optician and chiropodist attend weekly.

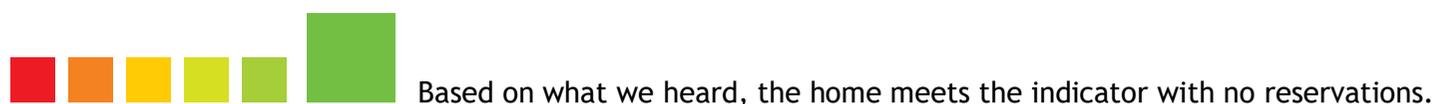


8. **Accommodate your cultural and lifestyle needs.** Care homes should be set up to meet your cultural and lifestyle needs as well as your care needs and shouldn't make you feel uncomfortable if you do things differently to other residents. They should also be proactive in finding out what your needs are, so that they can accommodate them.

A Minister comes on site to take a weekly service and most residents attend. Residents can also attend the village church should they wish.

Two **staff** members said that they had set up an area in the cinema as a quiet area for prayer or reflection in case residents wanted to use it.

Residents are consulted about their care and end of life wishes.



9. **Show that they're always looking to improve.** You should be able to find out what current residents, their families and friends think about the home. The care home should be happy to help you do this - for example, by putting you in touch with a residents and relatives group or allowing you to speak to residents and visitors in private. They should also have support in place for people who wish to make a complaint any time, and there should be a healthy culture of challenge and feedback between residents, relatives and staff.

The **manager** told us that **relatives** are always welcome in the home and are fund raising for a sensory projector.

One family told us: “*although overall the CQC inspection was critical and the home needed improvement, they were persuaded by the comments that the home was caring*”. They have been pleased with their relative’s treatment. They had no complaints and thought the staff were “*excellent*” The weakness was with agency staff.

One family commented that their relative was much happier now after being in two homes previously and can’t fault the home. “*If our relative is ill, they call me, and the doctor if necessary, so we know that they are being cared for*”. They also said the residents seem to get on well with each other and are very friendly. Both families knew how to make a complaint.

The **manager** had advertised our visit so that families and staff who wished to speak to us could do so. The forms had been received and distributed prior to our arrival, and residents were encouraged to speak to us.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

10. **Provide nutritious food, plenty of fluids and a pleasant environment for meals**

There is a choice for food and it is “*generally good*”. A menu with pictorial representation of the food on offer is displayed on the wall beside the serving hatch. The food is well presented and cooked on the premises.

Both **families** said it was “*excellent*” and thought that meal times were sociable, although one family didn’t think their relative was supported to eat and drink enough.

One **staff** member said that *“the cook will make whatever the resident like if they don’t like what is on the menu”*.
Another **staff** member said *“we try to encourage residents to eat together and we eat with them too”*.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations

What have we recommended?

- Continue to provide a welcoming and caring environment for your residents.
- Continue the drive to recruit suitable, efficient and effective staff.
- Build on, and maintain, the support of relatives.

Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to the findings on the day stated at the beginning of this report. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all staff, residents, family and friends, only an account of what was contributed and observed during our visit on that day.

Healthwatch Kent

Healthwatch Kent is the independent voice for local people in Kent.

We gather and represent people’s views about any health and social care service in Kent.

Our role is to understand what matters most to people and to use that information to influence providers and commissioners to change the way services are designed and developed.

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