Healthwatch Cheshire East Enter and View Report	
Enter and View Visit to	**Acorn Hollow** **419 Manchester Road,** **Lostock Gralam,** **Northwich** **CW9 7QA**
Date and Time	**10th January 2018 arriving at 2.00 p.m.**
Authorised Representatives	**Janet Lomas, Neil Garbett and David Crosthwaite**
Staff Present	**Keeley Hackney – Home Manager**

Background

Healthwatch Cheshire CIC is the consumer champion for health and care services. It works as an umbrella organisation for both Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West. We gather the views of local people and look at information about how well local services are performing. We then use that information to assist residents and communities to be listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor services.

What is Enter & View?
Enter and View is part of the Healthwatch Cheshire CIC programme. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) grants local Healthwatch representatives powers of entry, allowing them to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, dental surgeries and GP practices.

Purpose of the visit

As part of the work plan agenda for this year Healthwatch Cheshire CIC continue their work in observing Nursing and Social Care provision across the area.

This work has the full support of Health and Local Authority commissioners.

With this in mind, throughout the year, we visit a number of establishments with the intention of observing settings from a family perspective and gathering feedback from service users, relatives and staff. This report is based on these observations and conversations had at the time of the visit.

Highlights from the Visit

- A clean, pleasant, warm and welcoming environment for residents
- Pleasant care staff who demonstrate a chatty and happy approach when caring for residents - who appreciate this approach.

General Information

Acorn Hollow is owned and run by HC-One – one of the largest providers of care in the country. Located in the Lostock Gralam suburb of Northwich Acorn Hollow is a purpose built home offering care with nursing and including Respite. The home has 48 single rooms all which are ensuite and arranged over two floors.

In its last inspection by CQC (April 2015) , Acorn Hollow was given an overall grading of Good with categories Safety, Effectiveness, Caring and Responsiveness rated as Good. Leadership was rated as Requiring Improvement.

At the time of our arrival, a visit that was unannounced, the Manager was quite busy although we did meet her later. Staff were welcoming and gave us a quick insight into the layout of the building after which we were able to view the service completely unaccompanied.

Environment

Acorn Hollow is a modern purpose built building. Located in a suburb of Northwich, the home itself is set back slightly from the main Manchester Road and located adjacent to its sister facility Avandale Lodge. To the front of the property, the home has marked parking space bays and landscaped gardens with a small private garden to the rear. At the time of our visit the gardens appeared neatly maintained with close cropped shrubs and bushes.

The property appears in a good state of repair both internally and externally. On arrival we noted that the car park at the front of the building was full and quite busy with a delivery driver struggling to reverse between parked cars.

To the rear a fenced off garden area is also well maintained with a smoking shelter located away from the main building. Cigarette butts were evident on the floor here with many smokers appearing to choose to ignore the boxed ashtrays. There were garden games available – tennis, bowls and even badminton however, there was some work being carried out by contractors so this equipment had been moved and was in a place that could in our opinion have caused a trip hazard.

Entrance to the home is via a wide porch where a key coded door leads to a communal area. The entrance hall porch is clean and neatly laid out with framed displays of important notices such as insurance and food hygiene certificates.
Other Health and Safety notices throughout the home, including instructions on the lift were clear and readable.
A touch-screen monitor system was set up and working just near the entrance for visitors to immediately feedback their experiences of the home.

Representative's first impression of the communal area was that it had very much a 'social' atmosphere with quite a number of relatives visiting loved ones and friends.
On arrival staff asked Representatives if they needed help several times. As other visitors came to the home they were greeted with a smile. Representatives felt that this helped give a warm, welcoming atmosphere to the home.

The reception area is furnished with a variety of chairs and a number of tables of different heights allowing for different types of activity and sitting preferences. One resident was seated in his own specialist chair that could be moved around the home.

Representatives noted a good display of photographs near the entrance demonstrating activities that had taken place at the home.
In addition an activities planner (with pictorial clues to help understanding) was scheduled over a four week period.

Representatives felt the home was clean throughout - all carpets and floors were in good condition with walls and surfaces in good decorative order. There were no unpleasant smells. Overall Representatives thought Acorn Hollow had a very 'homely' feel.

Toilets and bathrooms were spotlessly clean and doors were labelled with dementia friendly picture based signage.

Equipment including that used for lifting in bathroom areas appeared to be clean and well maintained. Portable equipment was stored appropriately without causing any blocks or obstruction to corridors or exits.

Downstairs has two comfortable lounges. Upstairs there is a lounge and quiet seating area. Lounges are equipped with wide screen T.V. and a range of furniture – chairs and tables of different heights and sizes to allow for a range of activity. We noticed that portable tables were stacked neatly and available for anyone who needed one. One lounge was furnished with a piano – in need of a tune. At the time of our visit all lounge areas appeared neat and tidy.

Both a key coded lift and stairs behind key coded doors provide access to the upper floor.

There were analyzed results of a recent residents and visitor feedback survey displayed on upstairs notice board. Representatives felt this was a positive sign of openness in terms of information sharing.

Resident's rooms appeared similar in size but with personalised features. Each room was marked with individual door boxes that included the name of the individual with pictures of showing the interests of the resident and a little about their life (useful when wanting to start a conversation and helpful with those residents that may be in early stages of dementia).

Throughout the home there are plenty of areas to sit and either relax peacefully or have a conversation.

Health and Wellbeing

Dignity and Respect – We observed a lady with a severe disability spoken to and interacted with in a non-demeaning manner. The resident was respected and treated in a respectful manner by staff. Safeguarding posters were clearly displayed on both upstairs and downstairs notice boards.

Food - Dining rooms upstairs and downstairs were laid out for evening meal. We were told that all food is cooked on site from a communal kitchen providing for both Acorn Hollow and Avandale Lodge. Most residents that we spoke to seemed to enjoy the meals and commented on a, ***"Good Choice."*** One resident felt that the food was sometimes presented as, ***"A little cold."***
A menu for the week was displayed and appeared to show a good choice. Another resident, when asked about the food commented that it was, ***"OK"*** and that, ***"Staff are really flexible to suit individual demands such as veggie and gluten free!"*** This comment was endorsed by a visitor who overheard the conversation.
One resident did feel that the Christmas meal wasn't very exciting and that on Christmas Day in the evening, ***"It was very quiet."***

Staffing – We viewed a great sense of community at the home where the residents, staff and visitors were relaxed and informal but respectful.
Staff, whilst carrying out their laundry duties and other tasks, were observed interacting well with residents and in fact – included them in tasks where appropriate.
Staffing levels seemed appropriate for the time of day.

We spoke to a number of staff members who seemed to be very happy in their role at the home. One member of staff, who was new to a caring role, commented that he had felt, ***"Well supported,"*** since starting and that his new job had led to improvements in his wellbeing with improved skills of communicating and interaction.

Representatives were pleased to see that a resident and a visitor had been given official jobs as a 'helper' - raising individual esteem.

Activities – On the day of our visit there seemed a lot going on at the home. Quite a few visitors were meeting up with residents and it was good to see plenty of interaction and conversations going on in both social areas and individual rooms. An entertainer was viewed on site with singing and also leading movement to music for residents. In one of the upstairs rooms what appeared to be a worship service was underway with about twelve residents listening attentively to a lady speaker.

We were told by staff and residents that both visiting entertainers and groups such as school choirs came regularly to the home.

The home has access to an audio library and staff told us that this is well used particularly by residents with eyesight problems..

We were told that a hairdresser visits the home regularly and that a system is in place to make a booking.

As mentioned previously a full and detailed activities programme was displayed near the entrance. Representatives understand, from talking to the residents, that the home plans to install a jukebox – similar to the one in its sister home next door – and residents will be encouraged to pick the music that goes onto it.

We were told that Wi-fi is available for residents to use.

Feedback

Comments received from residents, relatives and visitors.

- ***"I would like more choice at mealtimes sometimes the food is a little boring and basic." - RESIDENT***
- ***"My husband came here after suffering a stroke has been incredibly well looked after – really caring staff who show the greatest of respect for those they care for. Every night I feel confident when I leave to go home knowing that he is being looked after right." - RELATIVE***
- ***"I have now lived here for about eight years. I think the manager is good. If something is wrong I can tell her and it is put right. I can speak up for other residents as well. We have some meetings which is good." - RESIDENT***
- ***"I have been here about five years as I couldn't really live on my own any more. The staff are good here and I can go outside and have a smoke if I want. Sometimes I wish that there was more to do but I read a lot and enjoy talking to folk." - RESIDENT***
- ***"I'm a lot happier here than at that other place. This is more like home to me." - RESIDENT***
- ***"I am happy that my husband is here – it is a good service."- RELATIVE***
- ***"Mum is happy here. She came into the home about six months ago and is now fully settled. At 97 she is still able to have some independence and I feel that the home allows for this. The fact that there are quite a few visitors each day means that there is always something going on. I think that the staff are amazing particularly as they don't get paid that much."- relative***
- ***"Staff here are very good to my mother who is nearing the end of her life."- RELATIVE***
- ***"Visitors come and go here all the time. I stay here most of the day and we all have got to know each other quite well."*** – RELATIVE
- ***"If I ever have an issue I can tell [NAMED MEMBER OF STAFF] or another staff member and it gets sorted." - RESIDENT***
- ***"I have enjoyed my time here, it is much better than the place I was at previously. I feel respected, valued and appreciated." - RESIDENT***
- ***"I love it here – It's brought me back from the brink! My mental wellbeing is much improved and I feel like I have a purpose."- STAFF MEMBER***
- A resident and carer commented to Representatives how well they were looked after. They commented positively on the good relationships with all staff and felt that they can talk with confidence openly with staff about any problems. They reported that staff are really positive and encourage individuals to get involved with activities and helping.
- Two carers commented that occasionally people who are not mobile do have to wait a little to be taken to the toilet as there are not always enough staff to respond immediately when asked.
- One relative reported how staff had worked hard to find out why their relative had not been settling at night and had worked hard to solve the problem.

Suggestions for improvement

- **The home has collected some valuable feedback from residents and visitor surveys. Representatives feel that this is excellent practice and that perhaps the home could make more of this data with a prominent 'You said, We did' display.**

- **Consider residents comments on food temperature**
- **Resident's survey data (displayed in the home) suggests lower scores by resident on 'activity' and 'food' – home should follow this up.**
- **Consider Staff photo- board**
- **Review parking arrangements at front of building.**
- **On site contractors to be fully aware of resident's safety issues.**

Feedback from Provider of Service
We were happy with the visit and felt that Representatives interacted well with residents.