Enter and View Report
Acorn Hollow

Care Home	Acorn Hollow
Contact Details:	419 Manchester Road Lostock Gralam Northwich CW9 7QA
Tel	01606 45603
Date of Visit:	16th January 2020
Time of Visit:	1pm

Healthwatch Cheshire Authorised Representatives:
David Crosthwaite and Jem Davies

Staff Present: Manager – Rachel Astles

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Cheshire (HWC) is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across England established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. HWC represents the consumer voice of those using local health and social services and trades as both Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West.

The statutory requirements of all local Healthwatch include an 'Enter and View' responsibility to visit any publicly funded adult health and social care services. Enter and View visits may be conducted if providers invite this, if HWC receive information of concern about a service and/or equally when consistently positive feedback about services is presented. In this way we can learn about and share examples of the limitations and strengths of services visited from the perspective of people who experience the services first hand.

Visits conducted are followed by the publication of formal reports where findings of good practice and recommendations to improve the service are made.

Contact Details: Healthwatch Cheshire, Sension House, Denton Drive, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 7LU. Tel: 0300 323 0006.

1. Description & Nature of Service

Details of home (Some details taken from Carehomeuk)

Acorn Hollow offers plenty of spaces in which to relax, dine, exercise, socialise and be creative, including a pretty landscaped garden, a dedicated activities and entertainment room, and a hairdressing salon. The garden, which is looked after by some of the residents, is a favorite spot for having a catch up with friends and family. All bright, comfortable bedrooms – some with garden views – and living areas are accessible by wheelchair.

Group: HC-One

Person in charge: Rachel Astles (Home Manager)

Local Authority / Social Services: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Type of Service: Care Home with nursing – Privately Owned , Registered for a maximum of 48 Service Users

Registered Care Categories*: Old Age

Specialist Care Categories: Cancer Care • Colitis & Crohn's Disease • Epilepsy • Hearing Impairment • Orthopaedic • Parkinson's Disease • Speech Impairment • Stroke • Visual Impairment

Admission Information: Ages 65+.

Languages Spoken by Staff (other than English): Tagalog

Single Rooms: 48

Rooms with ensuite WC: 48

Facilities & Services: Palliative Care • Respite Care • Pets by arrangement • Smoking not permitted • Near Public Transport • Minibus or other transport • Lift • Wheelchair access • Gardens for residents • Residents Kitchenette • Television point in own room • Residents Internet Access

Latest CQC Report – Rated as GOOD

2. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cheshire would like to thank the service provider, care home manager, residents, visitors and staff for their contributions to this Enter and View visit.

3. Disclaimer

This report relates to findings gathered on a specific date of visiting the service as set out above. Consequently, the report is not suggested to be a fully representative portrayal of the experiences of all the residents and/or staff and/or family members/friends but does provide an account of what was observed and presented to Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives at the time of the visit.

4. Purpose of the Visit

- To enable Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives to see for themselves how the service is being provided in terms of quality of life and quality of care principles
- To capture the views and experiences of residents, family members/friends and staff
- To consider the practical experience of family/friends when visiting the service in terms of access, parking and other visitor facilities
- To identify areas of resident satisfaction, good practice within the service and any areas felt to be in need of improvement
- To enable Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives to observe how the service delivers on the statements it advertises on its website

5. Introduction/Orientation to Service

A modern clean and tidy looking building with car parking provision for a number of vehicles including blue badge holders. Hanging baskets to decorate and maintained garden areas to both front and rear.
Access is via a shared drive way off the main road. Excellent signage indicating presence.
Located near to bus routes.
There are shops close by as well as a community centre and local fish and chip shop.
Residents are allowed free access to leave the home to visit elsewhere but obviously dependent on level of care required.

6. Methodology

Representatives were equipped with various tools to aid the gathering of information. The following techniques were used by the Representatives:

- Direct observation of interactions between staff and residents
- Participant observation within therapeutic/social activities where appropriate
- Assessing the suitability of the environment in which the service operates in supporting the needs of the residents
- Observing the delivery and quality of care provided
- Talking to residents, visitors and staff (where appropriate and available) about their thoughts and feelings regarding the service provided
- Observing the quality and adequacy of access, parking and other facilities for visitors.

7. Summary of Key Findings

The Authorised Representatives attended the Care Home and gained entry via the call button at the secured front door. This gave access to a small vestibule area containing information on the home, certificates and feedback stations. There was also information regarding Healthwatch Cheshire on display.
The Representatives were greeted by the Home Manager Rachel Astles, who informed them that there was an internal inspection being carried out by her company but she was happy to sit, discuss, then show the Representatives around the home.
The Representatives were informed by Rachel that she had been at the home for 14 months as the manager and really enjoys her role. If she is not on site then the Clinical Lead
Nurse becomes the person in charge.
The capacity of the home is 48 residents and at the time of the visit it had reached full capacity.
Staff levels are constant with nine staff on duty during the day and five at night, this is supplemented by other (care staff). If the Home is likely to have a staff shortage through sickness then this is addressed through agency work.

8. Detailed Findings

8.1 Location, external appearance, ease of access, signage, parking

The home is located off the busy Manchester Road leading towards Northwich or Knutsford. The home is well sign posted and has a shared drive with its sister care home Avondale which provides dementia care.
The driveway is clean and free of obstruction. The car park is at the front and side of the 2 storey building. On the day of the visit the car park was busy with visitors to the home.

8.2 Initial impressions (from a visitor's perspective on entering the home)

Welcoming reception area with seating provided, there is a booking in process for visitors and this is strictly adhered to with staff challenging visitors if they are not recognised. The home was busy when the Representatives booked in with residents involved with games and reading.

8.3 Facilities for and involvement with family/friends

The home has a monthly residents meeting which is also open to family members.
This meeting used to be quarterly but the Manager wanted more involvement from the residents so made it a regular meeting.

Whilst at the Home the representatives observed some residents and relatives playing Monopoly. We were told that this is a daily occurrence.

One of the family members stated ""I come and see my husband every day, not because I worry I just miss him at home. All the staff are lovely and I come and have my dinner with him."

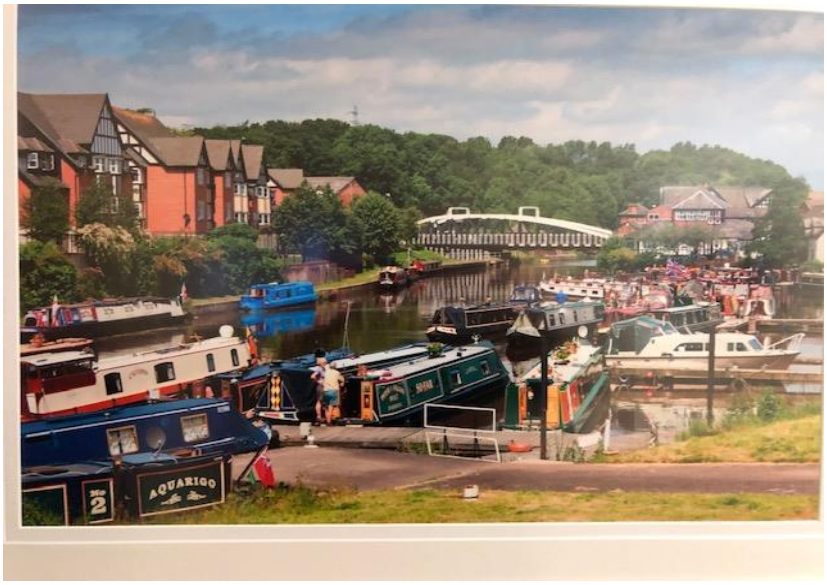
Family members are able to visit at any time and can have meals with their relatives at the home.

If needed the family member can stay over night especially if end of life is the concern. In the summer the garden is a popular venue for residents and family members to share.

8.4 Internal physical environment

8.4.1 Décor, Lighting, heating, furnishing & floor coverings

The Home benefits from plenty of natural light with large windows in the lounge and café/restaurant areas. Artificial light is also used to provide a comfortable setting. The heating on the day of the visit was set at a pleasant temperature. The representatives were informed that the Home was to undergo a total refurbishment, yet the standard of furniture was all good with a variety of chairs for all needs. Tables, and carpets were of good quality and other than the carpet on the stairs which showed signs of wear the Home is of a good standard.
On the walls of the hallways and throughout are pictures of the local area adding to a homely feeling for residents to see their local area.



8.4.2 Freshness, cleanliness/hygiene & cross infection measures

The location was clean to a high standard. The representatives had arrived just after lunch time, all the tables had been cleaned and prepared for the evening meal. Corridors were clean and clear of any obstructions.

Hand sanitisers were apparent throughout the building.

The lift area was very clean, as was the lift. Signs indicating how to use the lift were clear and readable.

There is a laundry room that operates seven days a week; it houses separate sections to ensure that residents clothing does not get lost or placed into the wrong room.

Residents are able to assist with the laundry carrying out tasks such as the folding. This provides the sense of involvement and runs throughout the home where residents assist with tea making or organising games.

8.4.3 Suitability of design to meet needs of residents

Residents are able to have a choice of wall colours, as well as include their own possessions which is important to add to the home from home feeling that is achieved.
The home is a two storey building so people with less mobility are tended to be situated on the ground floor. There are hand rails on every corridor to assist mobility. There is also a lift in operation kept very clean again allowing access to both floors.
Bathrooms have showers and baths with aids available to assist getting in and out. Portable equipment is stored without causing obstruction.

There are a number of lounge areas on both floors consisting of televisions and comfortable seating. The lounge upstairs is often used as the games room and religious services are also held there.

8.5 Staff support skills & interaction

8.5.1 Staff appearance/presentation

The staff all wore name badges and uniforms. All were presented in a professional manner. The staff were all enthusiastic and approachable indeed they made themselves known to the representatives and were happy to engage. They offered to make a cup of tea and where possible chat about how they enjoy working at the home.

8.5.2 Affording dignity and respect/Approach to care giving

Staff were observed to speaking to a number of residents, they knew the first names and used them. On one occasion staff were talking to a resident and when another resident required assistance they politely excused themselves and then made their way to the other resident to deal with them. What was nice to see was that when they had finished the task they returned to the previous resident

and carried on the conversation. This evidenced a sense of being respected and valued and the resident was clearly happy with this.
We also saw a member of staff sitting by the bedside of one resident, who was feeling unwell, chatting and stroking their hand.

8.5.3 Effective communications – alternative systems and accessible information

There are a number of systems in use within the building. There is the computerised feedback system as well as comment books and cards. A hearing system is available and reading books for the hard of sight.

8.6 Physical Welfare

8.6.1 Appearance, dress & hygiene

The residents were all observed to be clean and dressed in their own clothing, those in their room were on their beds but again dressed.
The home provides both bath and shower, with aids such as hoists to assist. The home likes to have the residents bath at least once a week although everyone is showered daily.
The home has its own hair salon which caters for all sexes and nails are also cared for.
Photograph provided by Carehomeuk.

8.6.2 Nutrition/mealtimes and hydration

The home follows the MUST care system of nutrition and diet. Residents are provided with a weekly menu but meals are able to be adapted to individual tastes.

Tables are laid prior to meal times and residents are encouraged to mix and socialise.

The rooms are bright and welcoming and the food is served from a counter within the café or restaurant adding to a homely feel which is encouraged. Menus are varied and provide choice.

The café area looks similar to a home kitchen and allows residents to make their own cup of tea/coffee or family and friends to do so, creating a nice atmosphere.

8.6.3 Support with general & specialist health needs/Maximising mobility & sensory capacities

The corridors are wide and able to accommodate people passing each other with trolleys and hoists. There are hoists and lifts within the bathroom areas and the ones shown were on electrical charging at the time of the visit. All had PAT tested labels.

The representatives where informed that when it comes to care, care plans, medicine administration and risk assessments (MAR) are reviewed on a regular basis.

MAR = weekly
Care Plan = monthly

All the above reviews are also based on the needs of the resident so can be reviewed more often than above if needed. Residents and families are involved with quality care and plans.

The local GP from Dane Bridge attends on a regular basis and the community dentist situated at Winsford is the dentist assisting the home.

8.7 Social, emotional and cultural welfare

8.7. 1 Personalisation & personal possessions

Residents are able to have their own possessions as previously stated. It was noted by the representatives that a number of residents had budgerigars in their rooms and other residents commented how nice it was to hear the bird song.

The manager was asked if dogs or other pets would be allowed and they were informed that although there isn't a demand for any at present other pets would be considered depending on allergy and risk assessment.

Residents had in their room, pictures, radios, flowers and televisions which gave the sense that this was that person's room. On the door is the person's name and also a picture of them.

8.7.2 Choice, control & identity

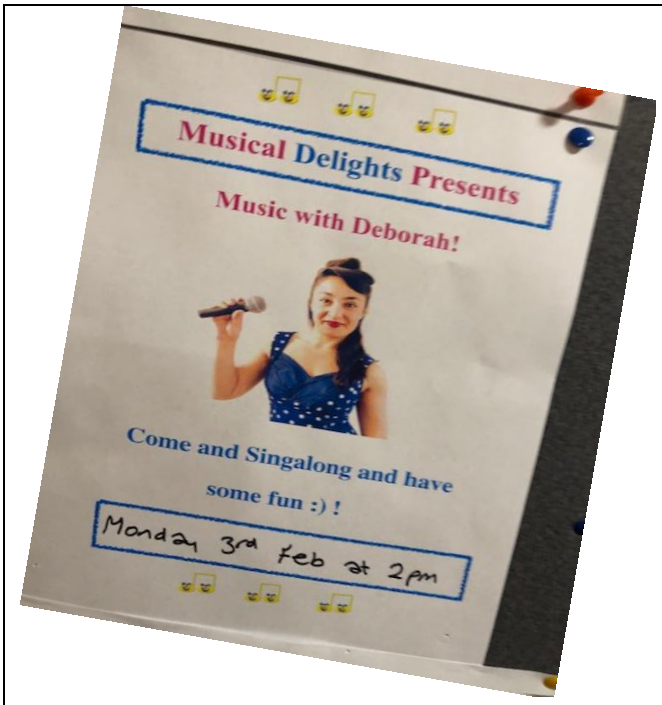
Residents have the choice to be involved as much as they want depending on their care needs. The home through its staff, manager and Activity Coordinator endeavours to ensure all are involved either in group or one to one.
People can look after their own finances and the manager ensures that if this is happening records are kept of any spending. The preference is that money belonging to residents is held securely within the safe.

8.7.3 Feeling safe and able to raise concerns/complaints

Throughout the building there are feedback consoles situated on the wall at a height suitable to all including people in wheel chairs. These allow complaints or concerns to be recorded.
The manager also has a complaints process as does the company's web site. Comment cards are available as well as Share Your View cards from Healthwatch Cheshire. Residents have access to the manager or person in charge throughout the day or night.
The home also operates a residents and families meeting which has now developed into a once of month meeting, previously it used to be every quarter but the Home values feedback and wants its residents to be involved.

8.7.4 Structured and unstructured activities/stimulation

The home benefits from the employment of an activities coordinator who works from 9-5.30pm. All residents are encouraged to engage with a large number of activities and for those who prefer one to one sessions this can also be accommodated. There is also a mini bus which is used for trips such as Blackpool and the local area. There are often themed activities with invited entertainers, similar to the musical event advertised. The Activities Coordinator also showed us a 'memorabilia box' which was sensory and included smells from yester year such as carbolic soap.



8.7.5 Cultural, religious/spiritual needs

On the day the representatives visited a catholic service had been held and as they were leaving another group from the Methodist Church were attending. All religions are served and the home makes use of its transport to ensure people's religious views and wishes are met in attending services outside of the home.

8.7.6 Gardens – maintenance & design/suitability for use/enjoyment

On the day of the visit the weather conditions were not good with high winds and rain. The gardens were smart and cared for and there is a large rear garden with a smoking shed for smokers. There is also games equipment for days when weather is improved. The gardens are accessible from double doors allowing access for all. The grounds are flat so all have the opportunity to make use.

The picture below is from the provider's website; the gardens are in the same condition, however on the day of the visit the weather was torrential rain and winds.

9. Observations

9.1 Elements of observed/reported good practice

- Staff dealing with residents in a professional but friendly manner. Using first names and talking to rather than at the person.
- Willingness of staff to engage with representatives indicating how long they have been at the home and why they enjoy the role.
- Family members being able to spend time and engage in games and activities.
- Families allowed to join resident for meals.

9.2 Other observations / findings of note applicable

Some of the comments received from residents and family members:

"I had cottage pie for my lunch, it was very nice, I think the food is very good, there's always something I like."

“I come and see my husband every day, not because I worry, I just miss him at home. All the staff are lovely and I come and have my dinner with him."

"I'm happy here, they do their best for me, there's always something going on"

Residents were seen just popping into the manager’s office and having a brew and a chat. We were told this happens daily.

One of the residents had celebrated a birthday and a banner had been placed across their door as well as birthday cards within their room.

10. Comparisons
10.1 Comparisons of observations against providers website
Acorn Hollow is part of the HC One Group but does have a website of its own. The website is clear, concise and easy to navigate. It contains all the necessary information regarding the care home.
10.2 Comparisons with previous Healthwatch visit (s) where applicable
Previously visited in 2018. The homely feel mentioned in the visit of 2018 still exists.
11. Recommendations
Consider the use of the Facebook page 'Care Home Activity Coordinators' to share good practice and obtain new ideas for meaningful activities.

Feedback from Provider of Service
Were you happy with the arrangements/requests prior to the visit? *Yes.* *Thank you for your feedback, it was a pleasure to have the opportunity to show you our home and for you to meet our residents, staff and visitors. We appreciate your comments regarding the kind and dignified care offered to our residents.*