



**Allington House Enter and View Follow Up  
Report  
November 2019**

## What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch England is the national consumer champion in health and social care. It was set up by the government to ensure that people's views about health and social care services are listened to and fed back to service providers, commissioners and to local and national government with a view to improving services.

Each Local Authority in England has its own Local Healthwatch. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees aims to be a strong local consumer champion working with our partners to support:

- People to shape health and social care delivery.
- People to influence the services they receive personally.
- People to hold services to account.

We achieve this by:

- Listening to people, especially the most vulnerable, to help us understand their experiences and what matters most to them.
- Influencing those who have the power to change services so that they better meet people's needs now and into the future.
- Empowering and informing people to get the most from their health and social care services and encouraging other organisations to do the same.

## What is Enter & View?

Under Healthwatch regulations there is a statutory duty on the providers of publically funded health and social care services to allow Healthwatch authorised representatives to enter their premises.

The role of the Healthwatch authorised representatives is to conduct visits to such services in order to capture the patient/customer experience and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement or to capture best practice which can then be shared.

Enter & View is the opportunity for Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees to:

- Enter publicly funded health and social care premises to see and hear first-hand experiences about the service.
- Observe how the service is delivered, often by using a themed approach.
- Collect the views of service users at the point of service delivery.
- Collect the views of carers and relatives and those of staff members working in the service.
- Observe the nature and quality of services.

- Report to providers, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the Local Authority, Commissioners, Healthwatch England and other relevant agencies.

Enter & View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but equally they can occur when services have a good reputation, so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

It should be noted that Enter & View is not the only way in which information can be obtained. The use of questionnaires, surveys and themed focus groups are other examples of ways in which Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees is able to gather relevant information.

### **The purpose of this follow up report**

In 2018, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees conducted 28 Enter and View visits to care homes across the Borough. The purpose of this work was to determine what it's like to live in a care home in Stockton-on-Tees. Following this a number of recommendations were made to care home managers and providers to help improve the residents, family members and staff experience of the care and service provided.

To view the report and recommendations please follow this link:

[http://www.healthwatchstocktonontees.co.uk/sites/default/files/final\\_report\\_with\\_appendices.pdf](http://www.healthwatchstocktonontees.co.uk/sites/default/files/final_report_with_appendices.pdf)

One of the reasons for this visit, as discussed with managers of the service, was to highlight the improvements that they told us had been put in place since our previous Enter & View visit in 2018.

### **Methodology**

Healthwatch contacted the Registered Manager of Allington House to arrange a suitable date for the follow up Enter and View visit. This was arranged for Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018. On 4<sup>th</sup> October we hand delivered a number of surveys, along with a supply of Freepost envelopes, which the Registered Manager agreed to share with relatives and friends of residents, giving them the opportunity to share their view on the service with Healthwatch. A number of posters were also left at the home in order to make residents, relatives and staff aware of our forthcoming visit. An online link to the survey was also included on the poster. (Appendix 1).

Healthwatch visited the home on the 12<sup>th</sup> November to conduct the follow up Enter and View and to speak to staff, residents and relatives, gathering feedback via surveys, one to one discussions and from observations made on the day.

## Resident Feedback

During the follow up visit, Healthwatch spoke to a total of 8 residents. 5 said that they knew who the current manager of the home was, whilst the other 3 were rather unsure.

When asked 'What do you think of the Manager?' the following responses were received:

"Quite pleasant"

"She's lovely - comes around and asks if you need anything"

"She's alright"

"The Manager's lovely"

"Better than the last one, they get on well with her"

When residents were asked 'What do you think of the staff here?' the following responses were received:

"Very good. No complaints about any staff"

"Some staff are lovely (resident pointed out staff member and said she was "great") Staff help me go outside for a cigarette"

"The staff are lovely 'tip-top' can't fault the place".

"All good including nurses. Get on with all of them"

"They are nice to me"

"The staff are good"

"Lovely, my daughter knows them all"

"Alright"

When residents were asked 'Do the staff have time to stop and chat with you?' a majority of residents said that they did, although there were times when they were very busy. The following responses were received:

"Yes - it may be just in passing or they'll come into my room"

"Sometimes ask for something & have to wait. They have been short staffed"

"Yes, very friendly"

"I like it here - been here a while - yes"

"Yes a little bit because they're busy"

"Not often"

“Don't see much of them, sometimes they stop for a chat at night time”

When residents were asked ‘Do the staff have time to care for you properly taking into account your likes and dislikes?’ 5 residents said ‘yes’ whilst 1 said ‘no’ and 2 residents did not answer the question. The following responses were received:

“Excellent, yes. They are very good”

“Yes. No worries at all”

“No. I have lots of health problems. Not allowed Alcohol now. I have to tell new staff about my health problems”

“I like to go out for a cigarette”. I used to help them clean but they’ve said I can’t do that anymore but I enjoyed doing that”

“I haven’t been here long but for people who’ve been here a long time staff know what they like”

Healthwatch asked residents ‘What sort of things are there for you to do or join in with in the home?’ Some residents told us that the following activities took place: mother and baby/toddler groups come in, singers and entertainers, puppet shows, animal zoo, bingo and painting. Some said there were activities but they chose not to join in, whilst one resident had only recently been admitted to the home said they did not know what activities took place. The following responses were received:

“Not many singers, but puppets, animals, bingo. Children, drawing and doing crafts which the adults join in with. I like to join in with the activities”

“Don’t join in - they keep asking me to join in. Get hair done sometimes”

“Painting and bits”

“TV in the lounge. Games upstairs - I go up when the family comes”

“Entertainers come in, there’s one coming in today”

“Watch TV and get hair and nails done”

“I don’t join in, my choice”

“I have no idea”

Healthwatch also asked residents ‘Is it easy to join in activities, are you helped by the staff if necessary?’ 5 residents said ‘yes’ it was easy to join in and that staff would help if required. 3 residents did not answer this question.

When residents were asked ‘Do the staff help you to go outside of the home on trips or to local services?’ the following responses were received:

“No, but my daughter takes me out in the car”

“No, just with my husband” I go out into the garden”

“Just across the road to the pub”

“Yes, I was taken out to the Forum on Saturday”

When asked “Do staff ever help you to go out into the garden?” the majority of residents said ‘yes’ when the weather is good. One resident told us that they spent most of the summer in the garden, whilst another was observed to be able to access the garden by herself whenever she wanted a cigarette.

Healthwatch asked residents ‘What do you think of the food here?’ All 8 residents told us they were happy with the meals offered to them in the home. The following responses were received:

“Yes, it’s good”

“I enjoy it, it’s tasty”

“I’m diabetic and have a good cooked breakfast, a cuppa for lunch and soup for tea”

“Nice”

“Food is good -eaten and enjoyed”

“Food staff came in and asked me what I wanted for lunch and tea”

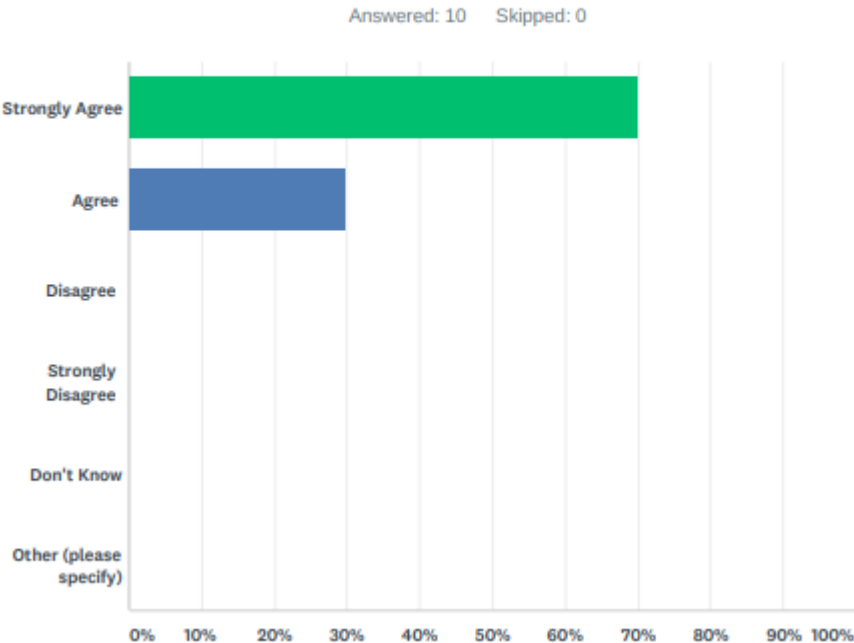
“Yes, all fine”

“Can’t fault the food”

**Relative Feedback**

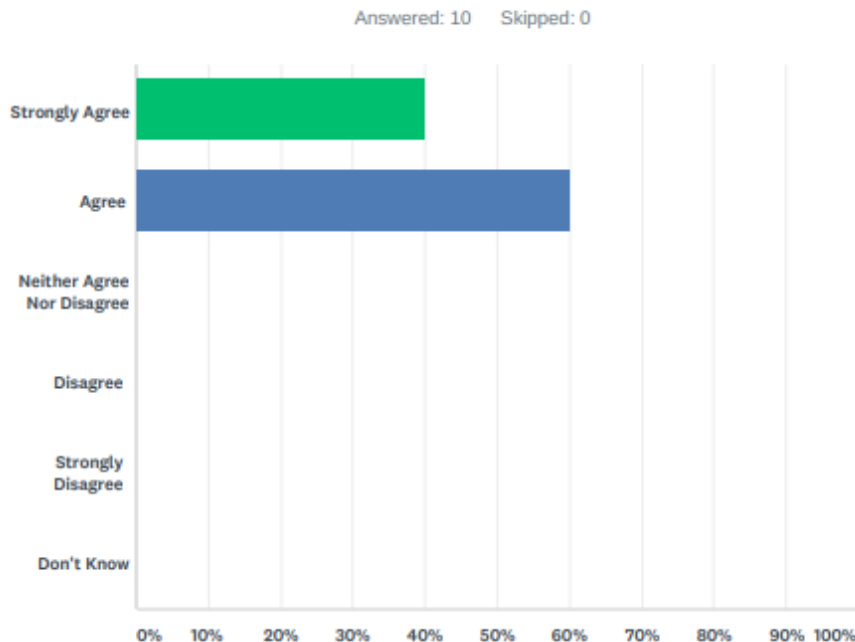
Healthwatch received feedback from 10 relatives of residents living in Allington House. Some of these responses were received on the day of the visit, others were returned by post.

**Q2 The home is managed well, and the Care Home Manager is available to talk about any issues I may have:**



80% of those who commented ‘strongly agreed’ that the home was managed well whilst the other 20% ‘agreed’.

**Q3 The care home staff have the necessary skills to carry out their role:**



All relatives who provided a response either ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that the care home staff had the necessary skills to carry out their role. The following responses were received:

“Staff are great with my Dad and with us as a family”

“They appear most competent when I have been present”

“The staff attend training”

**Question 4** asked if ‘The care home staff have the necessary time to carry out their role and meet the needs of residents?’ The following responses were received:

“Yes they are sometimes busy but they always come back to Dad”

“I think staff would always like more time to finish tasks. However they are good at prioritising their time and I feel people are never left. It’s not a home you walk into and hear buzzers going for long periods”

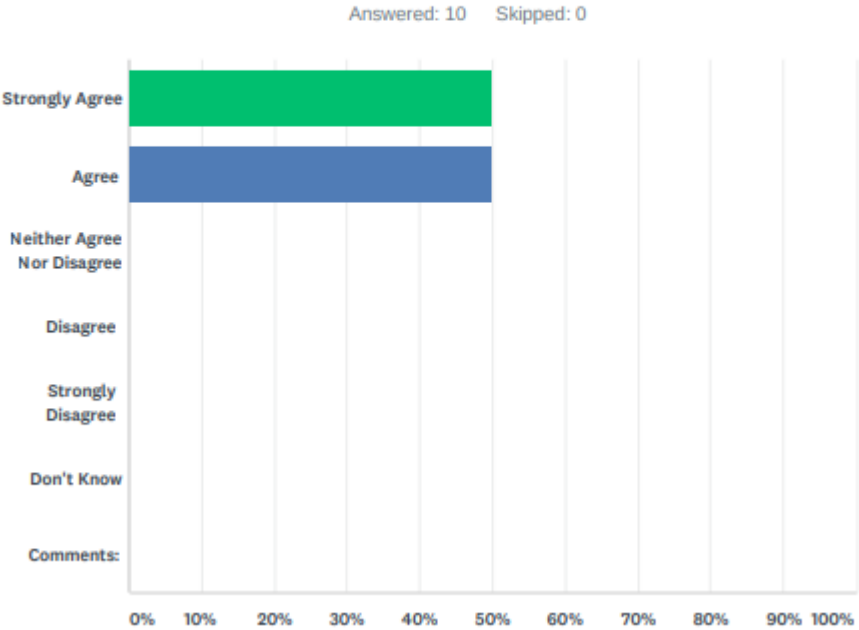
“I do not know if staff have time to carry out their role”

“They do but they are always busy”

“I have noticed the staff are always busy but still very polite and caring”

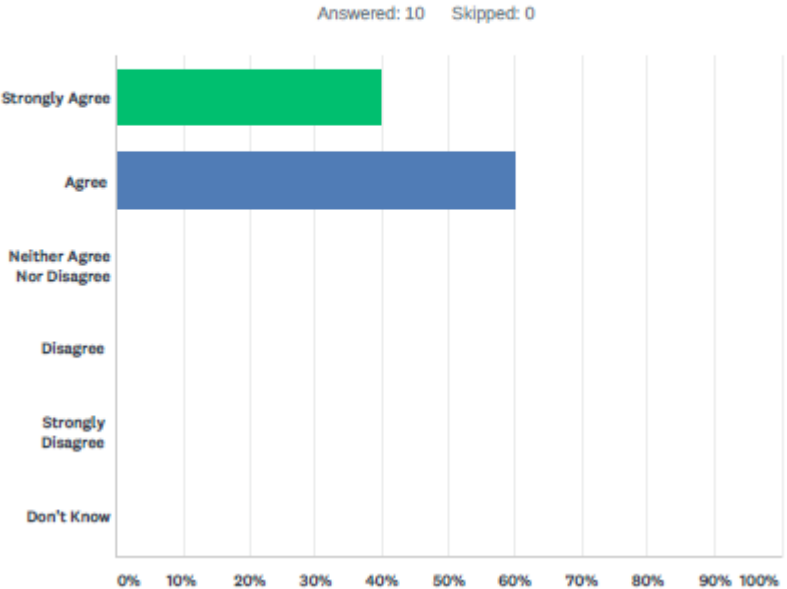
“They act promptly when needed to carry out their role in meeting residents needs”

**Q5 Staff involve residents and, where required, their family and friends in discussions about their care needs and how these may change over time.**



All relatives who responded either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that staff involve residents and, where required, their family and friends in discussions about their care needs and how these may change over time.

**Q6 Residents receive adequate daily stimulation, including 1-1 stimulation tailored to meet the needs of individual residents, and there is a varied programme of activities for residents to enjoy.**





40% of respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and 60% ‘agreed’ that residents received adequate daily stimulation, including 1-1 stimulation tailored to meet the needs of individual residents, and there is a varied programme of activities for residents to enjoy. The following feedback was received:

“Trish is great at the activities”

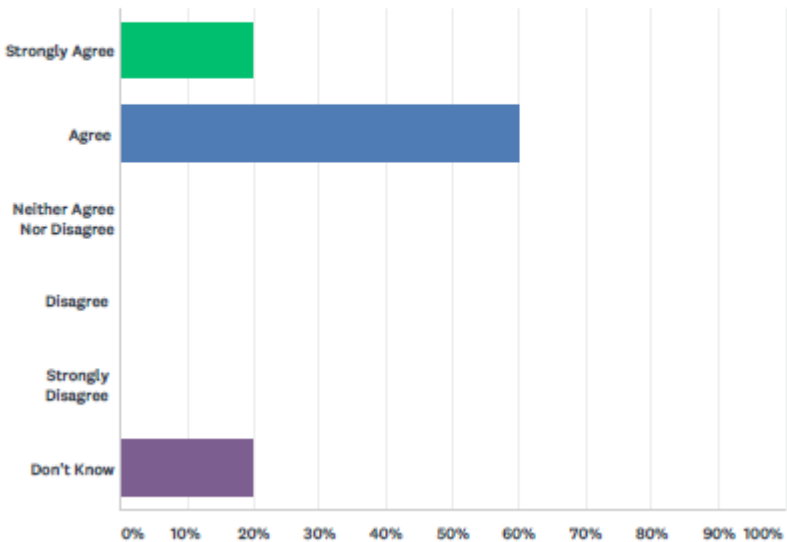
“Would like to see my relative out of bed a little more often”

“I do not know about 1-1 stimulation I have never witnessed this. I have seen group programmes and residents who take part do enjoy themselves”

“Group activities are provided and assistance is given to individuals to be able to participate when required”

**Q7 Staff are able to support the residents to get involved in community activities outside of the care home environment where possible.**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



The majority of those who responded either ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that staff are able to support the residents to get involved in community activities outside of the care home environment where possible. However two relatives did not know whether this was the case. The following responses were received:

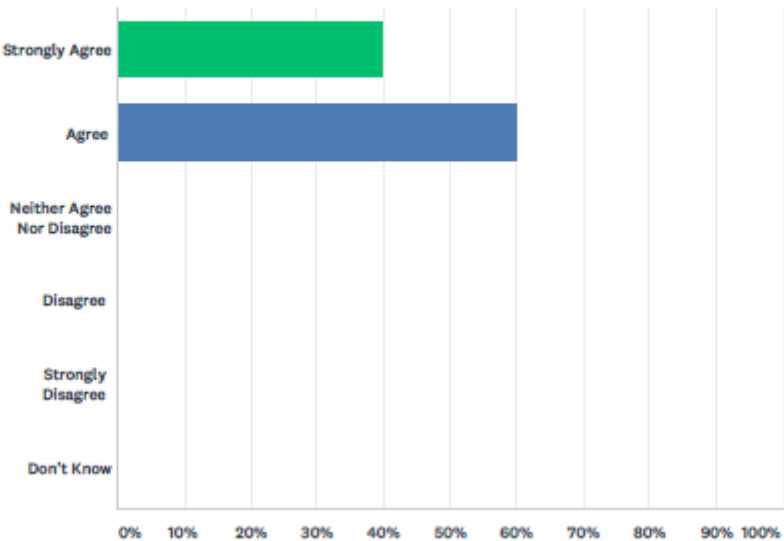
“When they can they will”

“From what I have seen outside visits are arranged by the home”

“You can always see pictures of them outside the home”

**Q8 There is always a choice of meals available and the food is of an acceptable quality.**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

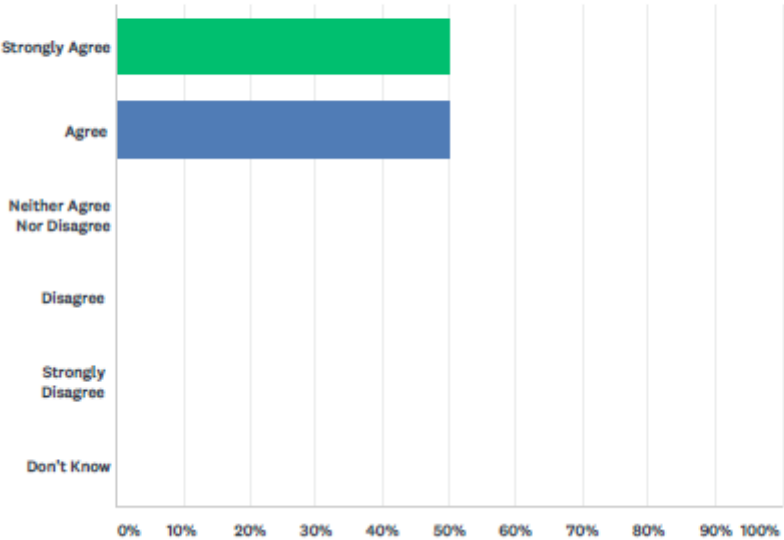


Those who responded were complementary about the meals served in the home, all saying that they either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that there was always a choice of meals available and the food is of an acceptable quality. The following responses were received:

- “Yes, always able to pick something different as well”
- “I wish residents could do more and be encouraged to do more things i.e. butter their own toast and put jam on it if they wanted. And be able to choose their own sandwiches”
- “Food always looks and smells lovely, Mum enjoys her meals”
- “My friend is vegetarian and they attend to her needs”
- “There are always alternatives available”

**Q9 There is regular access to healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, dentists, opticians, chiropodists etc.) as required**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



50% of those who responded said they ‘strongly agree’ and 50% ‘agree’ that there is regular access to healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, dentists, opticians, chiropodists etc.) as required. The following responses were received:

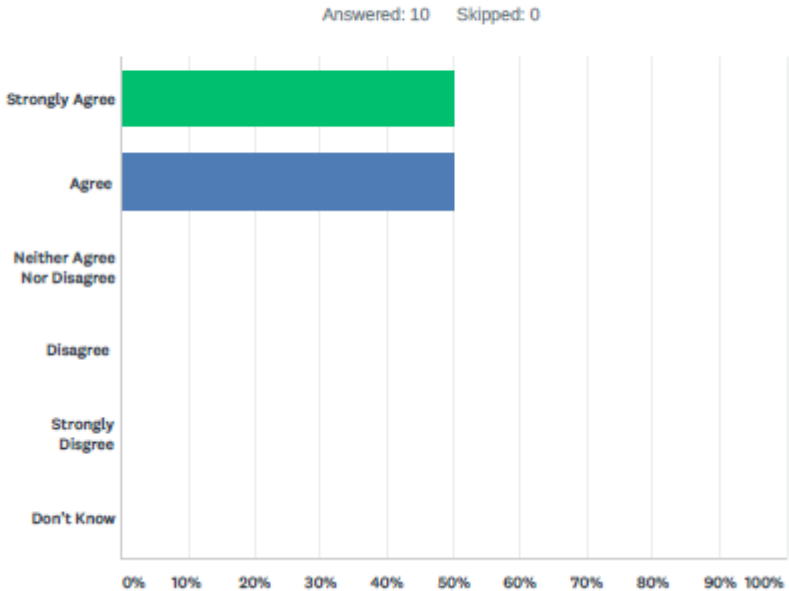
“Yes, the girls will ring doctors or nurses if needed and dentists and opticians visit the home”

“Staff always make sure Mum is safe and well”

“Dentists and chiropodists attend regularly and doctors are consulted when required”

“Staff phone for these immediately if assistance is needed”

**Q10 Care staff listen to residents and relatives and take action based upon feedback received.**



All respondents either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ that care staff listen to residents and relatives and take action based upon feedback received. The following responses were received:

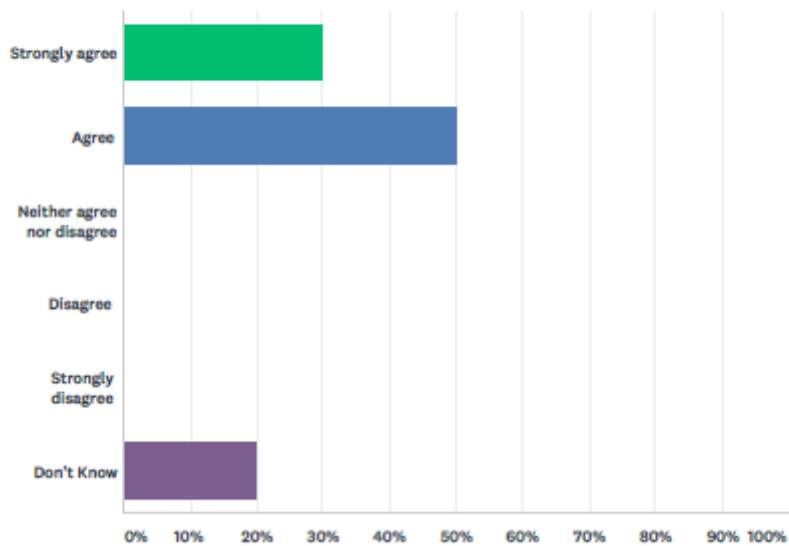
“We have residents and relatives meetings - staff listen”

“My comments have always been taken into account”

“I sometimes think relatives are told what they want to hear”

Q11 There is a clear and understandable complaints procedure which I have been made aware of.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



80% of those who responded either ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agree’ that there is a clear and understandable complaints procedure which they had been made aware of. However 20% of respondents said they did not know about this. One comment was received:

“Yes, it is all over the home”

Question 12 asked ‘Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your (or your friend/relatives) care home experience?’ The following responses were received:

“My family member is very happy at Allington House”

“Everyone's treated the same whether you pay or have council funding”

“All I can say since my Dad went in he's a lot happier, he looks so much better he was always depressed wouldn't talk to anybody but he laughs and jokes with the carers”

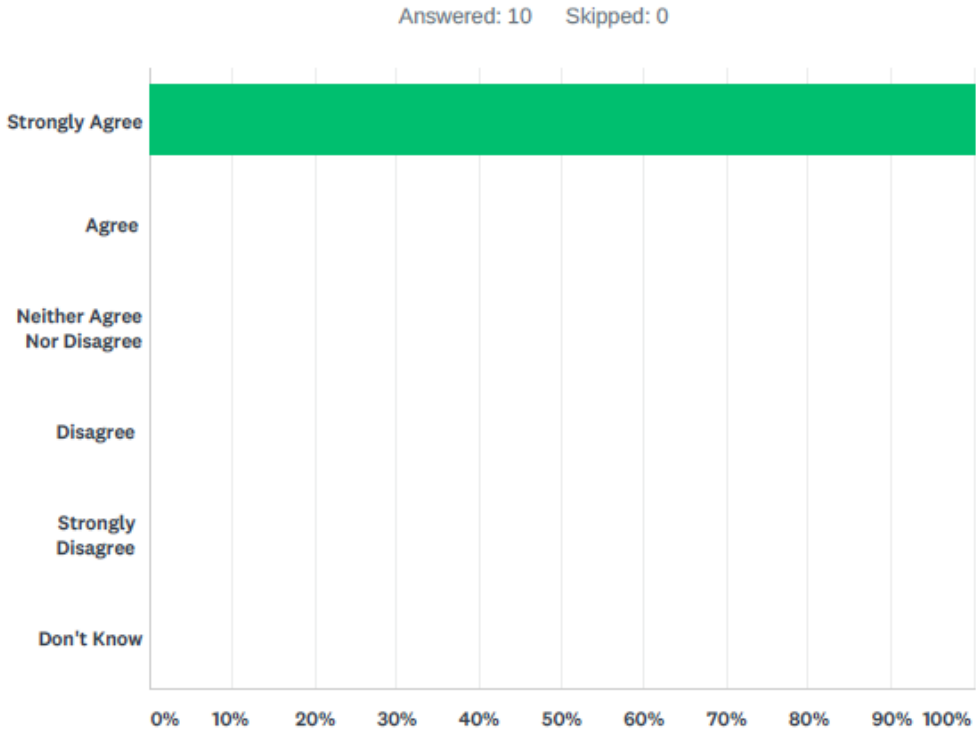
“My family member is happy living in the home”

“I feel the care home is well run and the staff are most helpful and considerate to the patients' needs. The home is very pleasant and clean and the decoration of good order and standard. There have always been plenty of staff on hand whenever I have visited which is usually 3 or 4 times a week”

### Staff Feedback

During the course of the visit Healthwatch spoke to 10 members of staff including the cook and the homes Deputy Manager.

### Q2 You receive good support from the care home manager?



All staff said that they ‘strongly agree’ that they receive good support from the care home manager. The following responses were received:

“If I get stuck for ideas they will always help and support me. They are always helpful”

“Yes, all the time”

“Management will listen. You feel involved and that your opinion matters”

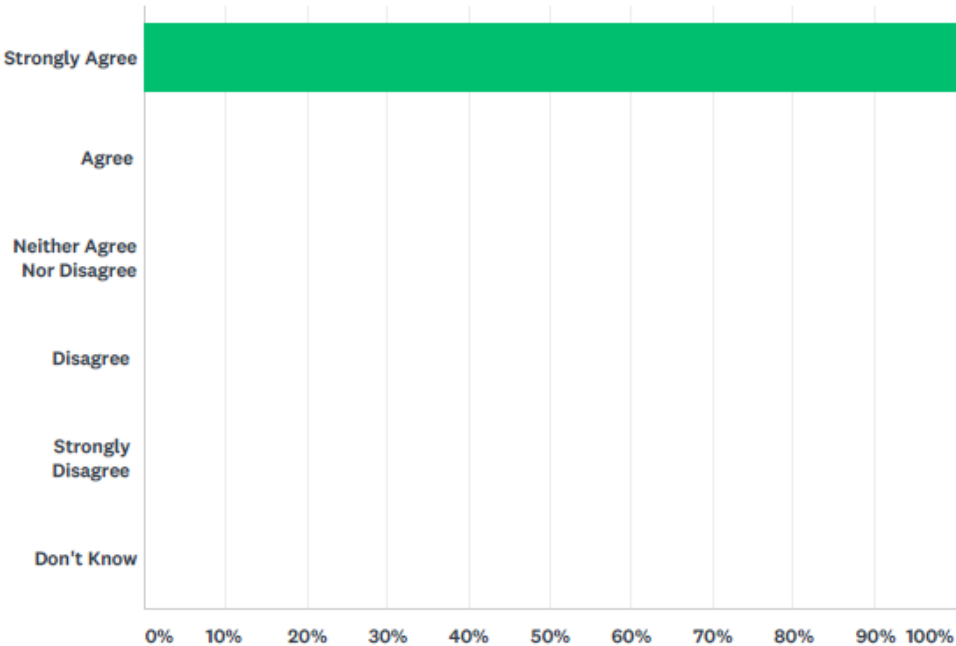
“Very much so from both the manager and the deputy. Always there to help. There is a good atmosphere, it feels like a family”

“Brilliant! Can go and talk to them. Couldn’t work at my last care home”

“The management team are supportive. The manager does not show stress and is very helpful around staff needs”

Q3 You are able to talk to the manager when you want to ask a question or raise an issue?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



All staff said that they ‘strongly agree’ that they are able to talk to the manager when they want to ask a question or raise an issue. The following responses were received:

“Rosters are always done to try and accommodate personal requirements”

“We all get one well together, it is like being part of a family”

“Yes, not a problem”

“The door is always open”

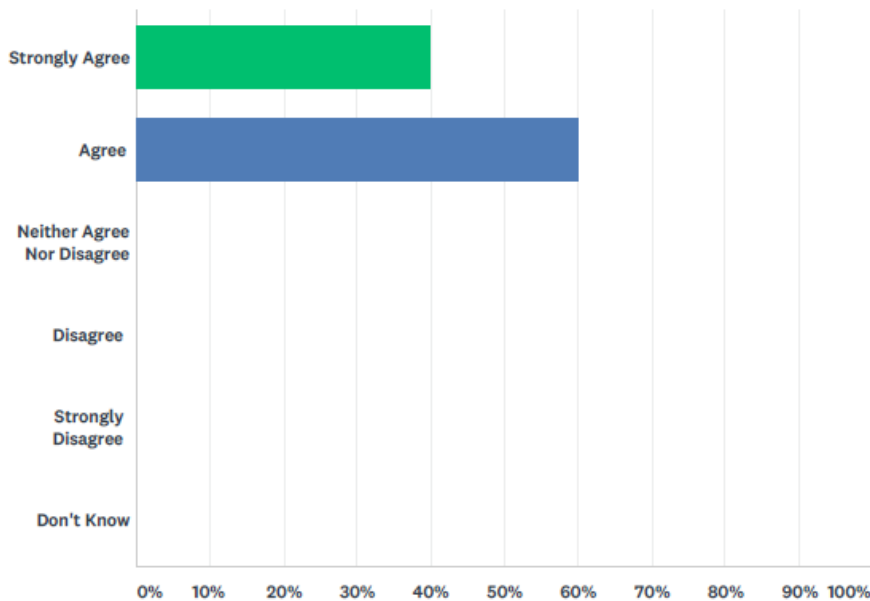
“Without a doubt”

“They are flexible with staff appointments. Can ask for cover and go home early if necessary. Would feel comfortable raising issues if I had a need to do so”

“Yes she is marvellous. Staff are listened to regarding residents and the home”

#### Q4 Do you feel you have enough time to care for residents and meet their needs appropriately?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



All the staff spoken to either 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the question 'Do you feel you have enough time to care for residents and meet their needs appropriately?' The following comments were received:

"Would always like more time but there is always capacity, especially on an afternoon, to sit and just have a chat with residents"

"It can depend a bit upon the time of day and what is happening"

"Sometimes it can get busy but we always have enough staff to meet resident needs"

"We have a good staff team and are able to provide person centred care. I have been here 7 months and we have not needed to use any agency staff during that time. Staff will always try to cover any absences. We feel appreciated"

"Yes, and we have enough back up if we need it. Three carers and one senior on each floor" (for 24 residents)

"Not necessarily having as long to talk to residents as they would like"

"Yes, but it can be busier upstairs. There is more time to spend with residents downstairs. Shifts always covered and we can usually pick up extra shifts if we want them"

"If someone is off sick there will always be a member of staff requested to fill in"

**Question 5** asked staff ‘Have you been adequately trained to do your job and are you encouraged to continue to develop your skills? In what ways?’ The following responses were received:

“Inductions take place for new staff. e- learning and face to face training - sometimes at a sister home. We recently did LGBT+ training with Hart Gables it was very thought provoking and informative. We also did focus on nutrition training, which involved catering staff. They now make fortified biscuits which are very good and we have seen some residents’ gain a bit of weight”

“Yes, I am talking to the training manager about doing some specific training with regard to activities”

“Training is regularly updated, both online and in 1-1 training. We have regular supervision. We have had dementia care training. The senior would arrange specific training if/as required”

“I had a proper induction into the home. We get good support from Lynn the training manager. Specialist training is brought in where required i.e. ICLS, SALT etc.”

“Yes, all the time. There is always training, it's ongoing. We have had training on challenging behaviour and dementia care”

“Mandatory - online. Stockton College for catering training”

“Yes, e- learning and courses. Training is kept up to date”

“Training is completed and I have done my NVQ2. Training is regularly updated. If there is any required training then we are asked to complete this. We are paid for attending training”

**Question 6** asked staff ‘What do you enjoy about your job?’ Lots of very positive comments were received which included:

“Just seeing their faces smiling”

“I love my job. The management, staff, residents. It's like a family. There is a good atmosphere”

“The interaction with residents and making them feel at ease. Some struggle to cope in a care setting and I enjoy helping them to feel comfortable and cared for. I like the fact that we work our own floor, better continuity and helps you better understand the needs of your residents”

“It's all very relaxed and family oriented. I love the residents and staff I work with. A happy home is a nice home”.



“Everything”

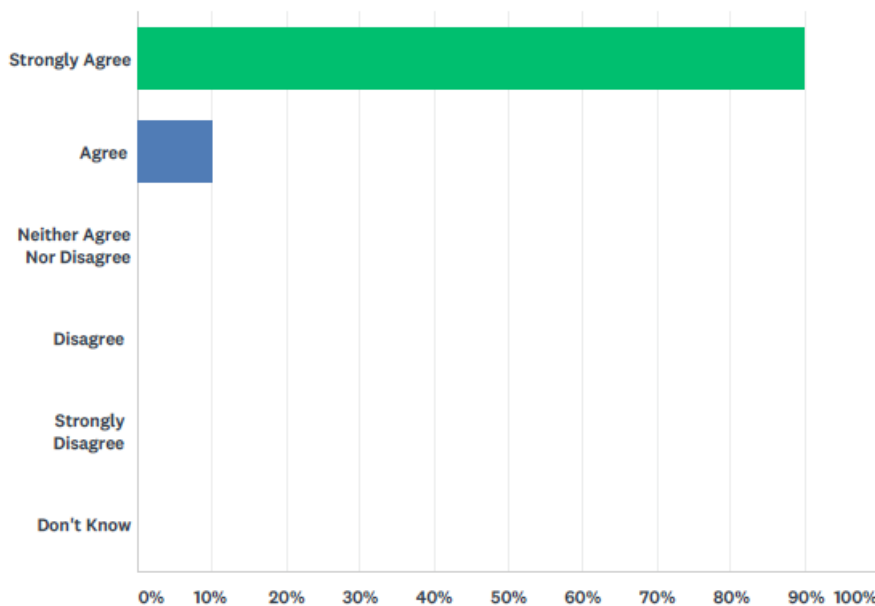
“There is a good working relationship between care staff”

“It is very homely”

“I enjoy my work, particularly the relationships”

**Q7 Residents receive adequate daily stimulation, including 1-1 stimulation, that is personalised to meet the needs of individual residents, and there is a varied programme of events for residents to enjoy?**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



Staff were asked do ‘Residents receive adequate stimulation, including 1-1 stimulation, that is personalised to meet the needs of individual residents, and there is a varied programme of activities for residents to enjoy?’ Almost all said they ‘strongly agree’ whilst one said they ‘agree. The following comments were received:

“Lot's going on”

“Mum's and babies. Mums and toddlers. Staff help residents to do bingo and join in with crafts. One resident doesn't like to join in but likes to go out to do shopping. I take him to Stockton for clothes and to local shops. Staff do some 1-1's chatting doing nails or hand massages etc.”

“We have an activity co-ordinator Monday to Friday. The children come in twice a week. Staff take time to sit and chat with residents - especially on an afternoon when we might have more time”

“One chap is confined to bed and he gets 1-1 hand massages or just a chat which he enjoys. Most group activities are based upstairs and ground floor residents come

up to join us. Those on the ground floor can choose to attend where it would be harder to get those living with dementia to go downstairs”

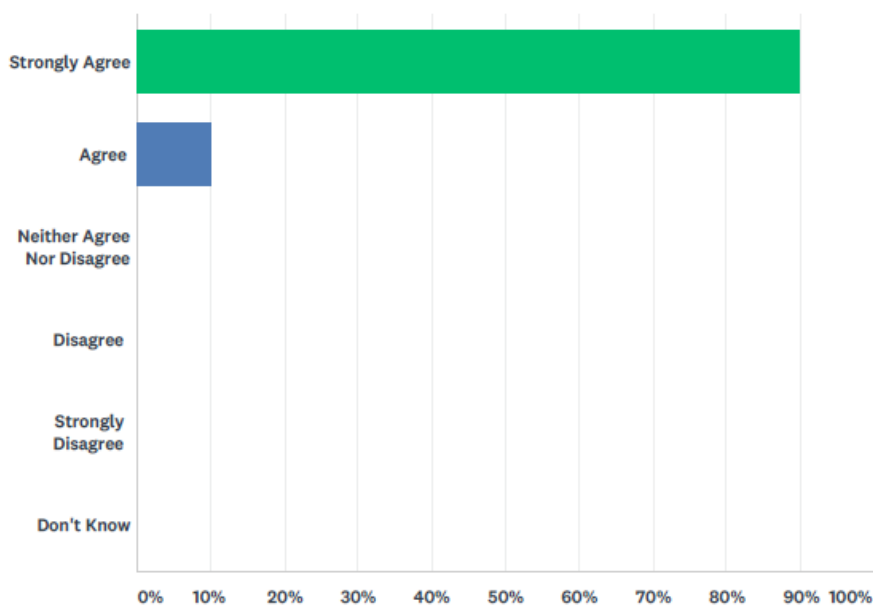
“We have an activity co-ordinator working Monday to Friday. People receive 1-1 support if necessary and she will sit with them in their rooms, perhaps giving a hand massage or just chatting. We have bingo, dominoes, jigsaws, dancing, movie days, and exercises. Staff will sit with people and do some reminiscence work”

“Activities have certainly improved. We have a good activity co-ordinator. Groups of children come into the home twice a week”

“Residents are helped to make things - crafts. Singers, puppet shows, magic. Kids come in from a local nursery. Scrap books are being done”

**Q8 Staff are able to support the residents to get involved in activities or events outside the home, including onto the garden, where possible.**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



Staff were asked if they were able to support the residents to get involved in activities or events outside of the home, including into the garden, where possible. Responses received included:

“Staff try to get people out when they can. One staff member may "float" between floors to provide cover for a short period i.e. when a couple of residents are taken to church”

“One resident goes to the garden by herself, and knows how to use the alarm. Another likes to go down just to sit in the garden room”

“6 or 7 residents go across to the pub for lunch on Thursdays. One staff member will usually be there with them as well as the activity co-ordinator. One resident is

taken out shopping every week. He doesn't like to join in much but enjoys being taken out. One resident likes Elvis and was taken to a show at The Forum. Residents get opportunities to go to the garden. Staff take them down and ground floor staff will bring them back up”

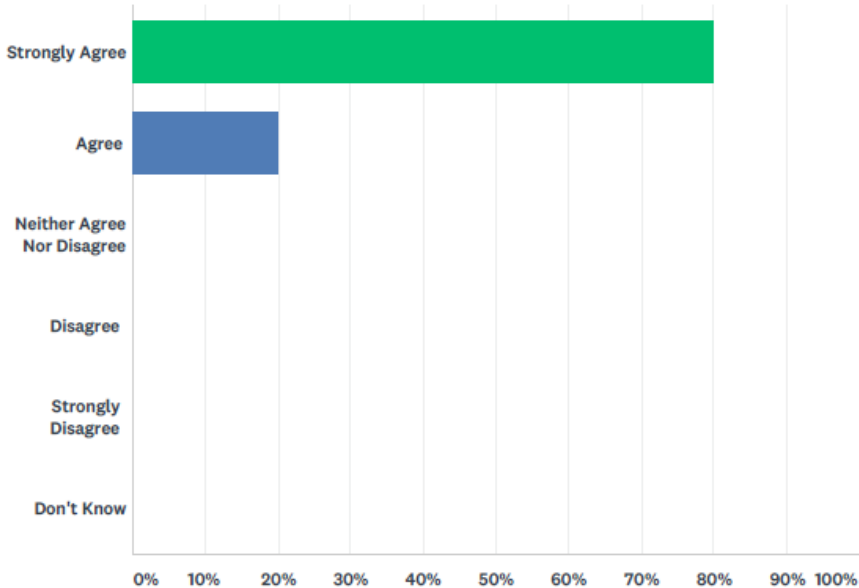
“One resident likes to go to the garden quite often and she will be taken down. Another is taken out to church and one staff member will stay with her”

“One lady is taken out to zumba every week and to a knitting class. We don't have a mini bus but people do get taken out”

“All residents have access to the garden. Residents have been painting stones, helping in the garden, making bird feeders etc. Some residents are taken across to the pub for lunch or a drink”

**Q9 There is always a choice of meals available for the residents and the food is of an acceptable quality.**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



80% of staff told us that they ‘strongly agree’ that there is always a choice of meals available for residents and the food is always of an acceptable quality. The other 20% said that they ‘agree’ with the question. The responses received were:

“The recently provided nutrition training for catering staff has been very beneficial”

“Two choices for lunch and tea. Alternatives provided if required. Vegetarian and softer diets catered for”

“Yes, and there is always a choice. One person has a soft diet and another is a vegetarian”

“There are two choices of main meal and alternatives if required. People choose from a pictorial menu but if they change their mind there is always plenty available. We have a hydration station with drinks and snacks”

“There are always two choices of main meal. Cooked or continental breakfasts. Snacks are available and the tea trolley come around three times a day”

“All prepared in the home by the cook. Cooked from scratch with choices always available. Snacks and drinks are available between meals.

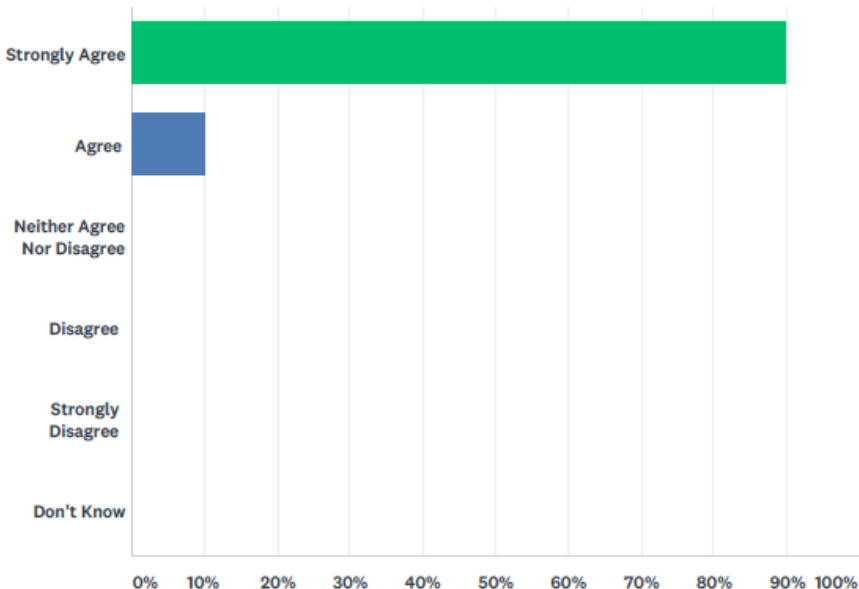
“The food is lovely. Choices are offered and there is always something else if they don't want what's on the menu. Staff can also eat here for £1 a meal”

“I think the food is lovely, although there are mixed views from residents. Choices are available.

“Staff take meals here as well and we have a good relationship with the catering staff”

**Q10 Residents have regular access to healthcare professionals such as GP's, dentists, opticians, chiropoidists as well as social care professionals?**

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



Healthwatch asked do ‘Residents have regular access to healthcare professionals such as GP’s, dentists, opticians, chiropodists as well as social care professionals?’ 90% of staff said that they ‘strongly agree’ whilst another said they ‘agree’ Responses received were:

“Yes, as required”

“Yes, usually arranged by the senior on duty”

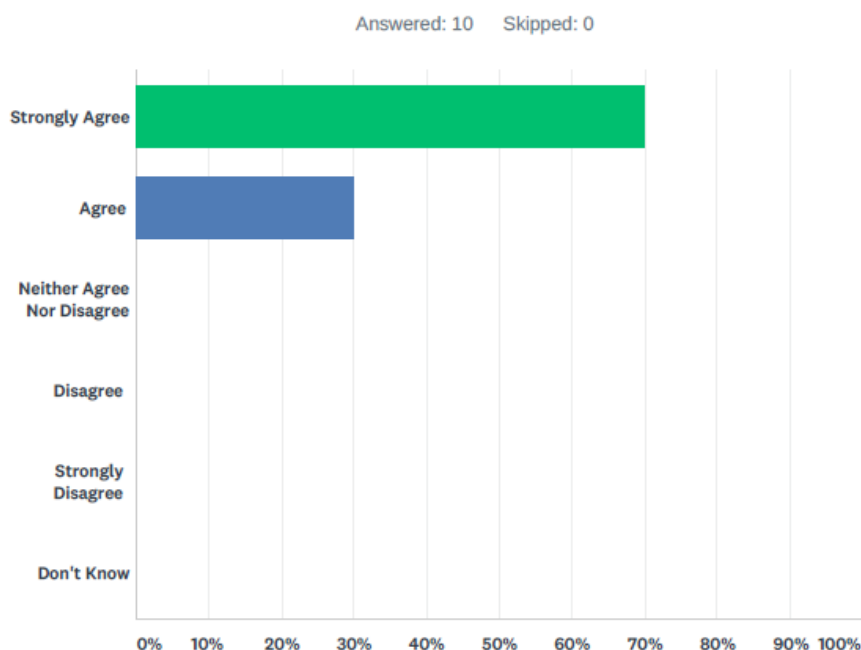
“Full access as required”

“As required. Community matron is the first port of call. Then GP if necessary”

“They are requested to come in as required. A carer would advise the senior”

“Health professionals are called in on a needs basis. Nurses are regularly here”

**Q11 The views of residents and relatives are actively sought and, where appropriate, acted upon?**



All staff spoken to said that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that ‘the views of residents and relatives are actively sought and acted upon’. The following responses were received:

“We do a relatives survey once a year. We hold resident/relative meetings. The last one attracted 8 relatives. There is a board with all the dates for the year and we remind people on Facebook and by e-mail. We tried holding some meetings on an evening but were asked to move them back to day times”

“Resident and relative meetings take place and their views are always taken into consideration”

“We are always chatting to them. Minutes are kept of resident/relative meetings and actions are taken where necessary”

“Resident families often ask for things. The care plan would get updated and staff alerted to any change during handovers. Resident/relative meetings take place and minutes of these are available”

“Very much so. There are meetings for residents and relatives which are reasonably well attended and minutes kept”

“Relatives have visited the kitchen and have passed on their comments”

**Question 12** asked staff ‘Do you feel you can have a say in how the home is run?’ The following responses were received:

“It is an open door policy at the office. Staff supervision take place regularly”

“Yes”

“Always. We work very well as a team”

“We have regular staff meetings but we can also just go to see the Manager or Deputy if we want to say/ask something. Staff had an idea for a bar/cafe and this is being done. Supervision takes place every 6/8 weeks, and senior staff provide this for other care staff”

“Staff have meetings and will feed back to those not present. We suggested a pub/cafe on the first floor and this is now being planned. The manager takes notes and will post minutes, following up suggestions where necessary”

“Attend staff meetings”

“Communication across the home is good”

“Have only been here a few months but have attended one staff meeting. I feel staff are listened to. Minutes of meetings are kept and made available for staff”

**Question 13** asked staff ‘Do you have any other feedback you would like to make about the home?’ The following responses were received:

“Seniors usually carry out care staff supervision but one staff member has asked that management do this with them and this has been accommodated.

”We have a monthly plan of activities. We provide a newsletter full of information and key dates for residents/relatives. Scrap books are being kept as records of what they have done. Some residents have their own and help to update them”

“Activities have improved over the last year. One resident really enjoys going out to zumba class. Some residents are keeping a scrap book, like a timeline of what they have done since they moved in”

“There have been a lot of changes: Planned pub/café. Re-hydration stations. Facebook presence (closed group) - with pictures of residents doing things. Scrap

books- one per floor and some individual resident books. Lots of improvements to decoration.

“Changes visible over the last 12 months. Better team work between floors. Improved morale, a website - Facebook for fund raising etc. Improved activities

Children come in twice a week. We were promised a pay rise if the CQC rating improved but we haven't had this.

“Decoration has improved in the few months I have been here”

“Lots of changes: Activities. Decoration across the home. Facebook - sharing of information and forthcoming events. Staff and residents involved (with resident/families permission,) Scrap books have been introduced”

## Observations

Healthwatch staff were made welcome at the home and discussed our plans for the day with the homes Deputy Manager. Some staff and volunteers went off to gather the views of residents and visiting relatives/friends, whilst others spoke to members of staff. Staff were aware of our visit and were pleasant and helpful throughout the visit. Posters informing people of our visit were seen to be displayed around the home.

The home was seen to be light and airy, although we did notice one unpleasant odour at the end of a corridor. The Deputy Manager was aware of this and there were plans in place to deal with it. Overall there was a very good atmosphere and staff and residents were observed to be interacting appropriately.

Upstairs it was very obvious that a lot of re-decoration has taken place since the last visit in 2018. The home have incorporated a lot of dementia friendly features which will be of benefit to residents. Signage across the home has also been improved, allowing for residents to more easily find their way around. Work stations have been introduced onto the first floor corridor so that staff can monitor residents more appropriately and are also better placed to be able to interact with them.



Dining areas on both floors were bright and airy, with lovely views out of the large windows. Discussions with kitchen staff suggested that the catering team were well motivated and had found the recent training they had received to be most beneficial. The kitchen was well stocked and the cook had access to replacement equipment quickly when repairs/replacements were needed. Hydration stations were observed on both floors, where residents could help themselves to a cold drink or snack.

We observed a clear improvement in the way staff spoke about the operation of the home, including the flexibility of managers to help manage personal appointments etc, wherever possible to do so. Care staff came across as being positive, motivated and enjoying their work.

No specific activities were taking place during our visit, although the hairdresser was present at the time. One gentleman was observed to be at a table in the corridor doing some creative arts. Although activities boards, listing the programme for the week, were in situ on both floors, they did not contain any information. The activity co-ordinator was aware of this and was in the process of updating them.

## Conclusion

This was a very positive visit and it was evident that a lot of work has been done to improve the service since we last visited the home in 2018.

Staff were very positive about the home and about the changes that have taken place. They feel motivated and valued and told us that they work well as a team.



We also received some very positive comments from residents and relatives and overall there were high levels of satisfaction with the service being provided.

Decoration on the first floor has been greatly enhanced by the addition of numerous dementia friendly features. Good use of contrasting colours and improved signage will help residents to find their way around and the various wall murals and points of interest could be used to interact with residents and divert them away from any inappropriate behaviours.

A range of activities are in place, both inside and outside of the home, and there was evidence of these being personalised to meet the needs of individual residents.

Interactions between staff and residents were observed to be positive and staff appeared to have a good recognition and awareness of individual needs. The call/alarm system was less evident than during the last visit and staff seemed to be responding quickly.

The home appears to be proactive about gathering resident and relative feedback and hold regular meetings to allow residents and relatives to share their views, raise any issues and suggest changes to the home. Minutes of these meetings were in place on the notice board in the entrance to the home.

Healthwatch would like to thank resident's relatives and staff members for their co-operation and support on the day of the visit.

## **Recommendations**

1. Notice boards should be free of "clutter" and only display the most important and up to date information.
2. Residents should be encouraged to maintain their independence where appropriate and safe to do so. Staff supervision should be provided if necessary. This includes helping out with small tasks around the home (i.e. helping to lay tables in the dining room etc.).

**The following response has been received from Allington House in respect to this report and the recommendations contained within it:**

" I am really pleased with our report and really glad you and your team could see the improvements. We are going to continue to improve our services and take on advice from outside services and working hard to improve our activities, working with our local community. We are currently advertising another post for activity coordinator to work alongside our current co-ordinator so we can focus on more one to one, for those residents what choose not to join in group activities. We took on board all your recommendations and look forward to seeing you in the future".

Maureen Massey  
Home Manager

Appendix 1

## What is it like to live in Allington House?

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees is a strong independent consumer champion. We are here to make sure your views on local health and social care services are heard.

We want to hear the views of residents, staff, and those who have friends or relatives who live in Allington House.

We will be visiting the home between  
10.00am and 2.30pm on

**TUESDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2019**

We would be pleased to talk to you then

**Alternatively please complete the  
questionnaire available from the home OR  
complete the survey online at**

**[www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/D3VYYDP](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/D3VYYDP)**

**All responses will be completely anonymous**



**healthwatch**  
Stockton-on-Tees