



## About Us

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Healthwatch Leeds is here to help local people get the best out of their local health and care services by bringing their voice to those who plan and deliver services in Leeds.



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### Summary

We visited Spring Gardens Care Home following a report published by the CQC rating the home as requiring improvement in four out of five areas. We were also made aware of a number of concerns, specifically in relation to activities and involvement of residents and relatives in relation to the day to day running of the home.

### Key Findings

Based upon what the people we spoke to on the day of the visit told us, we have no major concerns about the care and support given to residents at Spring Gardens Care Home.

The residents and relatives we spoke to expressed overall satisfaction with the care and staff attitude. However while in the home, we observed some interactions where residents were not treated with dignity and respect. We identified concerns around the lack of regular and varied activities for residents and the evident lack of use of the activities room.

The outside areas, especially the garden and patio areas are overgrown and unkempt and not currently in a

state that is pleasant or suitable for resident use.

The exterior fascia's of the building are in need of repair and renovation and the internal décor of the building is tired and requires redecoration throughout.

There was a distinct odour in the main lounge and conservatory area on the day of the visit.

Most of the people we spoke to thought that residents are not involved in the planning of activities at the home, however nobody felt this was a concern for them.

During the visit we saw no evidence of formal mechanisms by which residents and relatives are able to give their views and feedback on any issues or concerns that they may have. Since then the manager has told us about that there is an open surgery every Tuesday morning where anyone can talk through issues with the manager.



### Background

Spring Gardens Care Home is a Leeds City Council Care Home located in the Otley area of Leeds. It provides personal care and support for up to 30 older people. At the time of the visit the home was providing care for 26 residents aged between 72 and 100. The home is based over 2 floors and each floor is split into 2 wings. None of the rooms are en-suite and each wing has 2 toilets and a bathroom. Many people have commodes in their rooms.

There is a large open plan lounge area when entering the building which has several smaller seating areas. There is also a small conservatory on the ground floor which looks out onto the garden area. There are a number of additional lounges and communal seating areas on each floor which can be used by residents and relatives.

### Why we did it

Spring Gardens was inspected in September 2015 by the CQC and the home was rated as requiring improvement in four out of the five domains that the CQC rates. These were

safety, effectiveness, responsive to people's needs, and leadership. We were also made aware of other concerns about the state of the building and lack of activities taking place at the home.

Following these concerns a decision was made by Healthwatch Leeds to carry out an enter and view visit to the home to speak to residents and relatives and find out about their experiences of the care that they receive.

### What we did

Healthwatch Leeds staff and 2 volunteers visited Spring Gardens for 2 hours from 2pm - 4pm on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016. We met with the Manager to discuss details of the home and some aspects of the CQC inspection. We spoke with around 10 residents and relatives about their experiences of daily life and care at the home. We also took time to observe the environment.



## What we found

### Environment

*We spent time observing the general environment of the home and had a look around all the communal areas on both floors as well as spending time in the main lounge and conservatory.*

The outside of the building did not give a welcoming first impression, as the fascia's were worn and the area was not well maintained. Some efforts had been made to improve the appearance using potted plants and benches outside the main entrance. There was no clear, visible signage outside the care home to identify the building. There was an old faded sign when approaching the building but this could be easily missed and was only seen by one of the three people carrying out the enter and view visit on the day.

There was a distinct odour of urine upon entering the home. This odour was particularly prevalent throughout the main lounge area and the conservatory but was less obvious in the corridors and smaller lounge

areas.

The communal areas were clean and tidy and the bathrooms that we checked appeared to have been recently cleaned and there were no concerns. The décor was observed to be tired and dated and the building would benefit from redecoration throughout. There was an activities room that appeared to be used as a storage room and we were advised by the manager that work was underway to bring this room back into use as an activities room.

We noted that many of the bedroom doors were open even though there were no residents in the rooms. One resident told us that they thought it was the rule to leave doors open. We were advised by the manager that doors are not required to be open and residents have a choice whether to leave their doors open. All residents are also able to lock their door should they wish to do so.

There was a large garden outside however this was very overgrown and not in use. It was also uneven which made parts of it difficult to access. There were a couple of patio areas with patio doors leading out to them



from the conservatory and main lounge area.

The patio areas were untidy and unkempt and not presently suitable for residents to use. The patio area outside the conservatory contained a bird feeding table and we witnessed squirrels and birds in this area during the visit. However we also observed a rodent on the patio area and the presence of bird feed seemed to be attracting rodents. This was raised with and witnessed by the manager of the home who said that pest control would be contacted immediately.

We were told by the manager that the patio area outside the main lounge is available for residents use. The manager also advised us that work is in progress to make that patio area a nicer environment for residents and transform it into a space with plants and flowers for people to sit out in.

We were also told that Otley in Bloom have agreed to come and do some work in the garden to tidy it up and do some planting.

### Daily Life

*We asked residents to let us know what daily life was like for them at Spring Gardens.*

There was a positive response from everyone that we spoke to about daily life at the home with all saying that it was good or ok living there. Some people commented that they felt safe and well looked after and most were quite happy and content to be there. Comments made by some residents indicated that they were happy with the care and support they were getting. People commented that it was 'ok' and they were pensioners and felt they had to make do.

### Activities

*The Care Quality Commission report said that there was a lack of activities on offer and people lacked stimulation.*

We were given a copy of a 4 week activity timetable that has just been introduced at the home. We saw no evidence of this timetable being displayed on any of the noticeboards in the main lounge. The activity timetable included a range of activities

such as board games, film nights and bingo. We were also shown an activities book containing some photographs and information on previous activities.

We were told by the manager that resident's personal preferences, which are contained in their care plans, are incorporated into planning the activity timetable. We were also told that the residents are taken out for a trip every 6 weeks and this is to a range of places chosen by the residents, however we saw no information displayed about upcoming trips or outings.

There is no activities co-ordinator, however this role is taken on by one of the care workers who plans, co-ordinates and runs many of the activities.

During our visit there was an activity taking place in the main lounge area which involved music and singing and was led by a member of staff. We observed a group of residents taking part in this activity and others sat separately who did not wish to take part. During the course of the visit the

activity did get quite noisy, however most of the residents remained in the main lounge even if they were not taking part in the activity.

The residents that we spoke to gave a mixed response about the activities on offer. Most mentioned taking part in some activities but many couldn't say how often and regular they were. Others felt that there was not a lot to do and some mentioned that the singing activity was the first one they had taken part in.

One resident mentioned feeling bored at times. Some people we spoke to expressed a concern that access to activities could be limited for residents with additional support needs.

The majority of people we spoke to felt that activities took place when advertised. Some residents we spoke to did comment that they weren't aware of when activities are meant to take place and had not seen a timetable.

The majority of people we spoke to didn't feel that they had a say in the activities that took place. However



some did comment that they could ask for something if they wanted and they felt it would be listened to while others said they were happy for the staff to decide what activities to put on. One person mentioned a residents meeting where you could have a say about activities and other issues and these would then be taken on board.

There was a mixed response about who people would speak to if they were not happy about anything and this included the manager, senior staff or any member of the staff team.

### Care and Help

*We asked questions around general help, privacy and dignity.*

Most people felt staff were available to help them when they needed help. We did hear a view that it was not easy to talk to the staff and they were not always helpful.

Overall the feedback around care and help was positive and people felt that staff took the time to talk to them, respected their privacy and treated them with dignity and respect. People commented that they had flexibility about when to get up and go to bed

and what they wanted to do during the day, with one comment that a resident was made to get up too early.

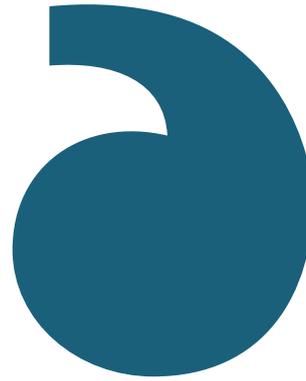
We observed interactions between staff and residents. We felt that residents were not always treated with dignity during our observation. However none of the residents that we spoke to expressed any concerns about the way that they were treated or spoken to by staff.

### General Feedback

*We asked if there were any changes the residents or relatives would like to make*

Most people that we spoke to were completely satisfied with the care and support that they received at Spring Gardens. Some commented that it was ok and what they expected and they had to make do as they were living there now.

Almost everybody we spoke to said they would not change anything about the care and help that they received.



### Our recommendations

Following the visit and in light of the findings we would make the following recommendations:

- A full review of activities to be undertaken incorporating feedback from relatives and residents. Following this a full and regular activity programme to be developed and this to be reviewed on a regular basis.
- Activity timetables to clearly indicate the date, time and place where the activity will take place and to be displayed and advertised on the noticeboards and copies to be made available to the residents.
- The activities room to be brought back into use and used to provide quieter alternative activities away from the main lounge.
- Consideration to be given to having a dedicated activities co-ordinator.
- The outside of the building to be repaired and renovated to give a positive and welcoming feel and clear signage to be put up.
- The interior of the building to be redecorated throughout and carpets to be replaced.
- The outside patio and garden areas to be cleaned and cleared and brought back into safe use for residents. Following this the garden to be maintained so it can continue to be used for residents.
- The cleaning regime to be reviewed in order to address the odour of urine in the communal areas.
- The manager and staff team to review their approach to the dignity and respect of residents and identify common values.



### Next Steps

This report and its findings will be shared with Spring Gardens Care Home as well as service commissioners and the Care Quality Commission.

The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Leeds website.

### Acknowledgements

This report has been written by Sharanjit Boughan - Community Project Worker at Healthwatch Leeds, in collaboration with Tay Babbage (Senior Administrator) and Anna Chippindale (Healthwatch Volunteer).

*We would like to thank the Manager and staff at Spring Gardens for their welcome on the day and for the information they shared with us. We would also like to thank the residents and relatives for taking the time to speak with us on the day of our visit.*



**Healthwatch Leeds**  
Ground Floor, Unit 8, Gemini Park, Sheepscar Way,  
Leeds, West Yorkshire  
Tel 0113 898 0035  
[info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchleeds.co.uk)  
[www.healthwatchleeds.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchleeds.co.uk)