



Enter and View

Precious Homes

26/06/2025

healthwatch

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2 Introduction

2.1 Details of visit

Name of home	Fenny Mews, Strafford View & Howe Park House Assisted Living.
Service provider	Precious Homes
Date and time	26 th June 2025 9.30am to 4pm
Authorised representative (s)	Helen Browse and Sarah Hibble

2.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Milton Keynes would like to thank the service provider, staff, service users and their families for contributing to this Enter and View visit, notably for their helpfulness, hospitality, and courtesy.

2.3 How we gathered the data

This report is based on our observations and the experiences of the residents, relatives and staff we spoke to on the day of the visit.

3 What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. Enter and 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.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to identify safeguarding issues specifically. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about, they need to inform their lead, who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any staff member wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission, where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

3.1 Purpose of visit

The purpose of this Enter and View programme was to engage with residents, their relatives, or carers, to explore their overall experience of living in Bletchley House Care Home. As well as building a picture of their general experience, we asked about experiences in relation to social isolation and physical activity.

3.2 Strategic drivers

Healthwatch Milton Keynes will be working in partnership with Milton Keynes Council, undertaking joint visits, as well as continuing our independent programme of visits, so that a well-rounded view of the operation of the care home/service can be understood. Healthwatch Milton Keynes will be specifically focusing on the experiences of the services users and their loved ones.

Social isolation and/or loneliness has been recognised as having an impact on people's physical health and emotional wellbeing. COVID 19 increased and intensified loneliness and isolation by the very nature of the way in which we had to manage and reduce the spread of the virus.

It is important to understand the distinction between loneliness and isolation. Age UK defines 'isolation' as separation from social or familial contact, community involvement, or access to services, while 'loneliness' can be understood as an individual's personal, subjective sense of lacking these things. It is therefore possible to be isolated without being lonely, and to be lonely without being isolated. There is a link between poor physical health and increased isolation as loss of mobility, hearing or sight can make it more difficult to engage in activities. It is, therefore, important to explore how residents of care homes in Milton Keynes are able to access physical activity alongside social activity.

Healthwatch Milton Keynes sees the legacy the COVID 19 pandemic has left on both services, and service users alike. We understand that the effects of the pandemic have been long-lasting and there are continuing pressures as well as new pressures on the wider services that support Care Homes. It is our intention to be able to formally report the impacts of these on both services and those who use the services and their loved ones as part of this year's Enter and View Programme.

4 Overall summary

Precious Homes is assisted living for adults with diverse conditions, but the long-term aim is for individuals to become independent. Each of the premises we visited has self-contained 'flats' for each of their residents. Residents living at Precious Homes all have carers, on either a 1:1, 2:1, or 3:1 basis depending on the personalised care plan developed according to individual's needs.

Each of the homes provide support and housing for residents at different stages of independence.

5 Methodology

The visit was prearranged and was undertaken alongside the Council Compliance Team. The visit started at Stratford View, then Fenny Mews, and ended with Howe Park House.

The Authorised Representatives (ARs) arrived at 9.30am and actively engaged with residents between 10:00am and 3.30pm

On arrival the AR(s) introduced themselves to the Manager and the details of the visit were discussed. The ARs checked with the provider whether any individuals should not be approached or were unable to give informed consent. The Manager provided the AR with a thorough tour of the Home and introduced them to staff and residents along the way. The ARs were subsequently afforded access to all parts of the Home for the duration of the visit.

The AR's used a semi-structured conversation approach in meeting residents on a one-to-one basis, mainly in the communal areas. The checklist of conversation topics was based on the pre-agreed themes for the Care Home visits. Additionally, the ARs spent time observing routine activity and the provision of lunch. The ARs recorded the conversations and observations via hand-written notes.

Residents and family members were approached and asked if they would be willing to discuss their experiences. It was made clear to residents that they could withdraw from the conversation at any time.

A total of 5 residents members took part in these conversations.

In respect of demographics: –

Two residents were male, and three residents were female.

The length of stay of residents we spoke to ranged from a few months to almost 10 years.

At the end of the visit, the Manager was verbally briefed on the overall outcome.

6 Summary of findings

6.1 Overview

The last CQC inspection at Fenny Mews & Stratford View gave an Outstanding rating. These two homes are adjacent to each other which allows residents of both to spend time together in the communal area at Stratford View and enjoy the shared garden where there are often activities arranged for residents.

Fenny Mews has six flats, and Stratford View has seven flats; at the time of our visit there was one empty flat in Stratford View but there is a list of potential new residents waiting to take up the space. Some of the residents go to college and/or have parttime jobs. All residents, with assistance, do their own shopping for food, clothing, and they are also supported to prepare their own meals.

Howe Park House is a few miles away, set in large gardens, in a much quieter location, with six residents in one large, converted house. The residents here require more assistance than Stratford or Fenny but are still encouraged to help with meal plans, shopping, and cooking (where appropriate). There are large open outdoor spaces for residents to enjoy, although there is no internal communal area at this site.

6.2 Premises

Fenny Mews and Stratford View are attached properties situated in Bletchley. Set back off a busy road, with easy access to shops, bus routes, and not too far from the railway station making social activity easy for the residents at these two sites. Each of the flats has a wet room, kitchenette, bedroom, and living space. We were invited to see a few of the flats; residents are responsible for keeping them clean and tidy as well as cooking and doing their laundry. Decoration of the flats is also, within reason, the choice of the resident and they can help decorate if they wish. The newest resident is very proud of their flat, furnished by their parents, and they are working hard to maintain it.

- The garden at Fenny Mews is well maintained, small, and neat. One of the residents has a small area that they look after and maintain well.
- Howe Park House Gardens are extensive. We did note that the area behind the main house needs rubbish clearing from it. The area to the front where there are three or four wooden sheds also need a good clear up; broken chairs, bikes, and old doors all need to be sorted and cleared.
- There is no signage on the flats, with corridors mostly bare in Stratford View and Fenny Mews.
- The entrance hall in each of the premises has information boards. Stratford View is hung with artworks made by residents, and the communal area also

has a great artwork made by residents; all comments about how they feel and what makes them whole.



- There was a lingering odour throughout Stratford view; not strong, but not pleasant.
- The vinyl flooring on the stairway and landing, in Stratford View and Fenny Mews, is worn through in many places and need replacing.
- The care provided by staff appeared to be attentive, good, kind, and compassionate, although the cleaning of the Home could do with the same attention.

6.3 Staff interaction and quality of care

One of the residents is trans and we were very disappointed to observe one carer continuously misgendering them. When we brought this up with the carer they tried to pass this off as 'a bit of a joke'. The resident was clearly not happy about this and didn't see any humour in it. Outside of this, staff were great and there are many examples of good care and inclusivity.

Most residents seem very happy; people appear to trust the staff and go to them openly with questions or frustrations. During our visit, staff played board games with residents in the communal space. We observed several residents joining in and discussing plans for the remainder of the day, and who was doing what for their evening meal. It was a good exchange between residents and care staff, relaxed and friendly and very open discussions.

The Manager mentioned that one resident has been diagnosed with dementia, however, we did not see any dementia friendly signage in the home, e.g. on taps, bathroom doors, or in the communal areas.

Residents are free to come and go but need to have a member of staff with them according to their care plan. If they don't adhere to this, it causes issues for the care team. Residents have care plan conversations as part of their routine; medicine checks, doctors' appointments are all part of the weekly/monthly key worker activities.

6.4 Social engagement and activities

Part of the routine is to plan the daily and weekly activities in personal planners. The routines will be very different for each person as some have college to attend, some have part time jobs, and others do not. Part of this routine includes shopping for groceries and planning meals and meal preparation, along with household chores that need to be planned into their social calendar.

- Each resident will have a key worker plus their own one to one carer, these rotate to ensure residents do not get too attached or reliant on any individual carer.
- There are some group activities that are put on to encourage socialising; BBQ's, small group activities in the garden of the homes for family days, birthdays, and Christmas, as many residents don't have relatives they can go to for visits.
- Some of the favourite activities of residents are swimming, cycling, cooking club, dancing with care staff, and even go karting. Some residents prefer to go out for a drive in a car or for a long bus ride.

6.6 Choice

As residents are all 'independent' in these three homes, daily life is very much dictated by individual choice. Some will plan visits to shops, cinema, garden centres, and restaurants, or they may choose to go swimming, bike riding or be taken out for a drive in a car or go on a bus ride.

- Residents' rooms are decorated to their own taste; they can choose their own furniture if they wish and decorate as they choose. The only consideration is that everything meets with safety standards.
- All residents wear their own clothes and are responsible for their own laundry.
- Residents have their own wet rooms, and they can shower when they choose although gentle reminders are given if necessary.
- Interpreters are engaged where required and staff are encouraged to learn basic phrases to engage with any residents who are not English speaking.

7 Recommendations

Overall, this was a positive visit, however we do have a few recommendations following our visit.

- Consider upgrading the flooring on the stairwell and landing in Stratford View and Fenny mews. the current flooring is showing significant signs of wear and tear and is unsafe.
- Provide LGBT+ awareness training for all staff. It is not acceptable for care staff to purposely misgender, or otherwise discriminate against, LGBT+ people.
- Milton Keynes is working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly City, look at ways of introducing Dementia friendly signage to both Stratford view and Fenny Mews.
- Howe Park House has extensive grounds but these need to be made safe from discarded rubbish and unsafe discarded items.

7.1 Examples of Best Practice

Residents generally feel safe, genuinely trust, and have no concerns about raising issues, good or bad.

8 Service provider response

Thank you very much for the report, there are some lovely comments within it, and I look forward to sharing the final version with the people we support, staff and their families.

In response to some of the less positive observations and recommendations, please see below my responses:

- *Consider upgrading the flooring on the stairwell and landing in Stratford View and Fenny mews. the current flooring is showing significant signs of wear and tear and is unsafe.*

Precious provides care and support to individuals in their own homes; we do not provide housing. Each person holds their own tenancy agreement with a social landlord.

We had requested new flooring last year, and following your recent visit, submitted an urgent request for this to be actioned. A flooring contractor attended last week to carry out an assessment, and we have been informed that they are now awaiting a quote. We will continue to follow this up, however, it is important to note that Precious does not have control over the housing or maintenance decisions.

- *Provide LGBT+ awareness training for all staff. It is not acceptable for care staff to purposely misgender, or otherwise discriminate against, LGBT+ people.*

All staff have access to the company's 'Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging' policy, and the individual has a clear, person-centred support plan in place which outlines how they should be supported, including their gender identity and choices.

We also provide LGBTQ+ information for staff, along with easy-read versions for the people we support, all available through our shared resource library.

I was extremely disappointed to learn of this incident and want to reassure you that I have taken formal action to address it with the staff involved. In addition, I have submitted a request to our Learning and Development team to deliver LGBTQ+ training to all staff to strengthen understanding in this area. This topic will also be discussed in upcoming team meetings and individual staff supervisions to reinforce expectations and promote inclusive practice.

- *Milton Keynes is working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly City, look at ways of introducing Dementia friendly signage to both Stratford view and Fenny Mews.*

All of our staff have received training and guidance on Dementia, including a bespoke Dementia training package specifically tailored to support this individual, whose primary diagnosis are Autism and Down Syndrome. These unique support needs were carefully considered in collaboration with the MK Council Community Learning Disability Nurse. Additionally, the MKC Admiral Nursing Team delivered Dementia training sessions to our staff.

We appreciate your suggestion regarding the use of Dementia friendly signage and will take this on board. We would like to clarify that this is not a care home setting, and this individual is the only person we currently support who has a Dementia diagnosis. The individual is supported daily in their own flat, which includes appropriate visual aids and has been carefully adapted to meet their health and sensory needs. These adjustments have been made with input from Occupational Therapy, Psychology, and Positive Behaviour Support teams.

- *Howe Park House has extensive grounds but these need to be made safe from discarded rubbish and unsafe discarded items*

Since your visit, we have reported the issue to the landlord and added as much waste as possible to the current skip. We have requested its collection and the delivery of a replacement skip. Additionally, we have discussed the environmental recommendations regarding the wooden sheds with the landlord and there is a plan to remove these in September. We will continue to follow this up as needed.

It was a pleasure having you visit; I know all the people we support, myself and staff really enjoyed talking with you. Please let me know if you have any questions or require any further information.

