

Diamond House Feedback

March 2024

In March 2024 we visited Diamond House Care Home to speak with the people who live there about their experience with the home. This visit formed part of our targeted engagement of visiting care homes around Norfolk to learn more about people's experiences. At the end of all these visits, a summary report will be produced.

Diamond House is part of Larchwood Care Homes and is situated in the heart of Downham Market. The home provides accommodation support and care for up to 42 people, some living with dementia.

From this visit we received some reviews from residents, and we also spoke to members of staff. The reviews have an average star rating of **4.6** out of five.

Healthwatch Norfolk Officers who visited Diamond House noted:

On arrival we were given a tour of the building, including a bright and airy main lounge, a smaller quieter lounge, dining areas and a spacious vacant bedroom on the ground floor. On the first floor we were shown further social spaces. Each bedroom is ensuite and all rooms are redecorated in readiness for a new resident.

There is a secure garden area with outdoor furniture and staff told us there will soon be raised beds in place to allow residents to grow their own flowers and vegetables.

During our visit residents and staff mentioned the variety and frequency of activities provided for residents. They all praised the work of the activity coordinator who had made many changes to the activities schedule over the last few months. Some of the activities mentioned to Healthwatch Norfolk officers included crafts, themed mealtimes, games, visiting

singers and regular spa days with music, scented mist diffuser, foot spas and leg massage.

We were also told about visits from local primary school children who arrange quizzes for the residents.

We found the communal areas and bedrooms to be consistently clean and bright. The staff we met were professional kind and interacted well with the residents.



Overall residents seemed happy in their home and spoke highly of the staff and enjoyed the food.

A Facebook page has recently been set up to share all the activities with family members and the local community. This provided a record of all the activities we heard about during our visit.

The reviews are displayed in the table below and can be found on our website www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk.

ID	Title	Review	Rating
235275	Lots going on	We organise lots of different activities for the residents including camel racing, bingo, giant whackamole, spa days and visits to town. We try to include everyone and there is always something new happening.	5
235236	I can't imagine working anywhere else	I'm a carer at Diamond House. I've been here two and a half years. I love the residents, even with the hard work. There are just all sorts of little things you can do for them. The staff are like one big, happy family. We're always singing and dancing! I can't think of anything that I would want to improve. Any time I need to alter my shifts, they accommodate that. I love it here. I was offered another job but I thought "I can't leave this place". Bringing in the activities co-ordinator is the best thing that has happened here. I can't imagine working anywhere else.	5

235235	Every department helps the other	<p>I've been here three years. I suffered from blackouts when I first arrived, but I've progressed. We always get things done together. We have an activities lady who is fabulous. From the day she came in there has been so many choices of activities. One activity caused so much laughter I think it could be heard for miles! We try to do as much as possible together. In the garden we are going to decide what we want in the new raised beds. We are quite proud of our garden. The food we get is fine. I have never been a big eater but I enjoy what I eat. I always tell the staff when I like the food. I say to them, "you can give us that again!" We have great fun on music day. We call the man who visits, "Mr Music". We do have serious times too. There are people here who are ill and we always take that into account. We try to help them and it's good to give something back. I love my room and I try to keep it tidy. The girls are fabulous. You should see my room after they've finished! We have rabbits in and we love that, especially when they wake up and realise us humans are around! We even had a pony visit us and the pony went up in the lift! Every department helps the other and there is always someone around to help. When I had a fall recently the girls were so good and didn't leave my side.</p>	5
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235309	I enjoy the activities and going out	<p>I enjoy living here because you get your washing done and your food prepared. The laundry people are very good. The food is good, it's just food, I think they cater for my preferences okay and if you want an extra piece of pie you get it and you can always choose from two options. I think for the amount of people they have to deal with they do a good job. I like all the activities. We have a new activities lady who organises lots of things. Sometimes she brings her rabbits in and we can hold them. I also like the quizzes. We get a letter or a sheet which tells us about all the activities coming up. I really enjoy the activities and going out. The activity lady is getting a trip to town organised for us. My room is good and I can arrange bits as I like.</p> <p>I don't really like that we mix with the residents who have dementia. If the care was separated I think they would get better care and it would be better for us to. I also wish it was easier to open the windows when you want. Some don't open and some only open a little bit.</p>	5
235318	So many good activities	<p>The activity lady, Ali organises so many good activities. Yesterday we played a game with peanut butter on bread and tried to get the bouncing balls to stick. It was a great laugh. Ali also brings a little shop with things we can buy. Sometimes we have horse racing on the tv so we can bet and we also have visits from some of the local primary school children on a Friday. We have quizzes with them. I like to listen to the piano on the tablet and I enjoy all the activities really. We miss Ali when she is on holiday. We also have a ginger cat, not a real one but one that looks real. Sometimes it's a bit noisy at bedtime but I usually sleep okay. I like reading and I would like more books to read.</p>	5

235268	The level of care feels good.	<p>I enjoy working as a carer. I like being with the residents and I like to help make the home a happy place. I think it's a good work environment and the staff ratios have always been good. However if dependency levels are high you can't always give as much time and care as you would like. As much one to one time with the residents as you would like is not always possible. This can be frustrating. At the moment though it feels quite good. The staff are all good friends and we communicate well. I think it feels homely here and the level of care is good. It's like a family.</p> <p>I have said I would rate my experience at 4 out of 5 but it's nearly 5 out of 5.</p>	4
235237	The Care Co-ordinator has made a huge impact	<p>I've worked here as a carer for just over a year. The best thing about working here is the other staff and of course the residents. Having consistent management would definitely be an improvement. Having that structure makes a huge difference. You need to know who to go to with issues and if you don't know, that impacts everything. The residents pick up on the tension that is sometimes felt here. I do think that it is a weird mix of dementia and non. It doesn't really work. Some residents are louder than others and that can affect other residents. Sometimes it bums in seats rather than managing needs. Staffing is managed based on the number of residents and that doesn't always work. On paper the ratio is right but if we are doubling up on care there aren't always enough staff to keep an eye on other residents. The Care Co-ordinator has made a huge impact. It affects our residents ability to love more. Our senior staff aren't always supported in their roles. We do get training but it's mostly online and that doesn't suit some staff members.</p>	3