

# **Riverside Care Complex**

Enter and View Report 2025

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## Background

### What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch York is the independent champion for people using local health and care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share these views with the people who have the power to make a difference.

### What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake Enter and View visits. Our team of authorised representatives (volunteers) conduct Enter and View visits to local health and social care services to find out how services are being run and make recommendations for improvement. Healthwatch Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies.

Riverside Care Complex



## Details of the visit to Riverside Care Complex

Service address	A1079, Kexby, York, YO41 5LD
Service provider	Sure Healthcare Ltd
Date	23 January 2025
CQC rating	Good
Care home proprietor	Gemma Ixer
Contact number	01759 388223

## Summary

### Purpose of the report

In this report, we summarise the findings from our visit of 23 January 2025. We also share the feedback received in survey responses collected before and after the visit.

### Purpose of the visit

- To visit and gather views of the residents, their relatives and friends and staff about the services and care provided.
- To observe the care environment, the care being provided for residents and their interaction with staff and their surroundings.

### General information

Riverside Care Complex offers residential care services for older people, including people with dementia. There are two units on the site. Derwent House offers care and support for older people, including those with long term conditions. It has 32 single bedrooms with, at the time of our visit, 24 residents. Riverview Lodge provides care for people with dementia. This has 29 single rooms and two double rooms and, at the time of our visit, 27 residents. Generally, residents from each home don't mix, apart from complex-wide, big events.

### Key findings

At the time of our visit, we found that Riverside Care Complex was operating to a good standard. These findings were based on our observations and reflect the general happiness of residents, and the views of residents, their family members and staff members.



## Positive feedback

- The staff members seemed to enjoy their roles and interacted very well with residents.
- The staff showed very good care for residents, knew their names and supported them effectively.
- The environment was good. It was clean, spacious and communal areas had a good variety of seating.
- Corridors were wide and generally there was signage. The use of words and images in Riverview Lodge was very positive.
- The weekly newsletter was very good and worked for residents who could read the information, including about forthcoming activities. Staff ensured that residents who could not access the newsletter know what is happening.
- The activities coordinator (working two days a week) has arranged a variety of activities within the home, including those for people with mobility issues.



## Recommended areas for improvement

Our volunteers were generally very impressed with the complex. However, there were some things they felt could be done to improve the environment:

- Revise the signage in Derwent House to make sure it has a combination of words and images (for lounge, toilets etc.) and to make sure it is at an appropriate height to be easily seen by wheelchair users.

- Rearrange seating in communal areas, where possible, to enable small groups to interact.
- Continue to ask residents about activities they would like to see, including chair-based exercise and art/crafts to see if it is possible to introduce these and utilise some of the residents' skills to run them.
- Make sure that all residents are treated the same with regards to meals. This would mean that everyone who changes their mind about their choice of meal, when the food is being served, will be offered an alternative if possible.

## About this visit

This was an announced Enter and View visit arranged in advance with the care home proprietor. The purpose of this visit was to capture the experience of life and care within a care home environment and to observe the standards of working practice. We did this by observing the interactions between staff and residents, observing their surroundings and speaking to residents to understand their experiences. We asked relatives and friends and staff members to provide their experience and views of the care home through a survey. Copies of the survey were available in the care home before and after our visit.

On the day, four Healthwatch York authorised representatives conducted observations and talked to residents, their family and friends and staff members. We spoke to 10 Riverside Care Complex residents, four in Derwent House and six in Riverview Lodge. Conversations with some residents in Riverside Lodge were difficult due to their dementia. Those residents who were able to share their thoughts and experiences responded to questions focused on quality of life and care in the home. We also spoke to two family members who were visiting their relative.

In addition, seven staff members responded to our survey with their views.

Not all respondents provided answers to every question and some respondents preferred not to answer all questions.

# Findings

## Environment

On the initial observation of the care home, all our authorised representatives found the buildings to be in a good state of repair with some refurbishment carried out and more planned. The two units, Derwent House and Riverview Lodge, were joined by one reception area and there is good signage. While one view from both units is to a busy main road, the other is the opposite and has views across surrounding countryside. The Complex has gardens which residents can use with seating provided. They are enclosed by fencing and gates. There is a sensory garden and they are developing a vegetable plot. Residents of Riverview Lodge need staff support to go into the gardens as there is a coded entrance/exit. Residents can help with gardening if they are able.

The home was easy to locate and there is a good-sized car park which had free spaces when we visited. There are bus stops close by.

The reception area was accessed by a locked door with a code for staff. Reception staff opened the door as soon as our volunteers arrived. The reception staff were friendly and welcoming and our volunteers had a positive first impression. The reception area was large and there were staff photos on a noticeboard as well as a noticeboard with information about regular and one-off activities. Leaflets, including one about a forthcoming Chinese New Year celebration day, were available.

From the reception area there are entrances to the two units. The external and internal doors are locked and can only be operated by staff members to ensure the safety of the residents, including those with dementia.

At this point our volunteers split into teams of two, with one team visiting Derwent House and the other focusing on Riverview Lodge.

## Accommodation

In each home residential care is provided on two floors. As above, Derwent House provides care for older people, including those with long term conditions. Riverview Lodge is a dementia community. The information below will provide separate feedback on both units.

## **Derwent House**

As well as residents' bedrooms, there is a lounge adjoining a conservatory. There is a separate dining room, which felt sparsely decorated in contrast with the lounge which felt cosy with pictures, posters and signs. The entrance area flooring was laminate so the area was a little echoey.

The lounge and conservatory areas were welcoming. There were a good variety of comfortable chairs around the perimeter of the lounge. Residents were seen to be sitting comfortably with foot stools and small tables interspersed. There was a largish television on the middle wall which was on, but not loud. A drinks station in the lounge provided access to water and hot drinks. The conservatory was a quieter area where residents could go with their visitors.

The corridors were wide and allowed two people with walking aids or wheelchair users to pass easily. The signage was OK, but could have include pictures and been placed at a height appropriate for wheelchair users.

Residents' rooms were numbered and each door had a frame with the person's name in.

## **Riverview Lodge**

The décor was clean, there were rails on the walls and the colour was a good contrast. The floor was laminate. There was good signage, with pictures and words, although one volunteer felt that it could be larger to make it easier to see.

The quiet reading areas have comfortable chairs, some with and some without arms and at different heights. Bariatric chairs could be provided if needed. The lounge area was clearly defined into seating and dining. Communal rooms were spacious with resident-centred activities and stimulation observed in both the upstairs and downstairs lounges. There is an additional room near the reception area which could be used as a quieter room or somewhere for residents to meet their family if they did not want to use other communal areas or their room.

The doors for residents' rooms had their names on and were different colours so they were easy to identify.

## **Cleanliness and hygiene**

Our representatives noted that overall, the care home was very clean, with no unpleasant smells.



# Quality of life

## General happiness

**We asked residents what they liked about living at Riverside Care Complex. They said:**

“I like the company, care and food. I would rather be at home but know I can’t manage that.”

“I want to stay.”

“I feel independent, but part of the family.”

“It’s brilliant, I love living here. It is wonderful. I was in another care home before but I am much happier here.”

“Very happy here. I have found it to be wonderful. I have made lots of friends here. People are friendly. I look forward to seeing people at breakfast.”

Of the six residents who responded to our question of how satisfied they felt with the quality of care, five said very satisfied and one they were quite satisfied.



## Food and drink

**Residents and relatives were asked to share their views on food and drink at Riverside Care Complex. Our representatives also observed a mealtime in the home.**

The home uses Apetito, a company that provides meals to hospitals, care homes, schools and others, to help cater for the residents. Meals arrives chilled for final preparation in the care home. There was a menu on each table with two clear choices for main courses and pudding. Derwent House residents were asked to select food the day before. Residents with dementia in Riverview Lodge were shown choices on a small plate to make it easier to choose what they wanted.

Residents had a choice of where to eat, with staff taking food on trays to people in their rooms. Staff were available to help people with their meals.

The residents our representatives spoke to praised the food. However, when sitting with residents at lunch time, one representative noticed that while many said the food was very nice, others did not eat a lot. "One resident changed his mind about his main meal and wanted the other choice, however he was told there wasn't any of the other choice available. I then observed others getting the alternative choice and being offered more." (This issue was raised with the manager at the end of the visit).

There were drinks stations in communal areas in Derwent House where residents could help themselves to cold drinks. In both units, staff did drinks rounds in addition to drinks provided with meals and would provide drinks if requested. Residents we spoke to said they looked forward to the afternoon tea round at 3pm when cake is served!

Residents said:

- "It is very good. You choose the day before. They cater for requirements, eg poached egg rather than chicken for Sunday lunch."
- "I eat in the dining room. The food is good and I like not having to cook."
- "Lovely food - too much really."
- "We eat in the dining room. We choose what we want the day before. Staff help cut up food."
- "Delicious food and good choice. There is a menu every day."

Family members added: "He enjoys the food and eats everything. He is never hungry - and he was a picky eater. There are plenty of drinks and snacks available."

## Activities

**Residents were asked if they spend their time doing things they value and enjoy.**

There is an activity coordinator working two days a week. There is a weekly newsletter, The Riverside Reader, for residents outlining some of the activities that have happened and planned activities. Staff also shared information about activities with residents.

Representatives visiting Riverview Lodge saw games, books, videos, music, and art available as well as a skittles and ball games on one floor and a throwing game with

rings on another. In Derwent House, our representatives found an activity called Riverside Airlines based on armchair travelling. This activity focuses on a range of different countries and cities, offering information and sensory experiences, quizzes, dancing and a variety of foods related to each place. There was a Chinese day planned to celebrate Chinese New Year. Staff mentioned that residents can get their nails done and there are 'pamper days'.

The home has good contacts with local churches and minsters come to visit residents.

We asked the residents about doing things they enjoy and activities at the home. They said:



- "Went out into the garden last week a couple of times."
- "I like singing, acting, watching TV, and I help in the garden."
- "Staff take me to visit a friend in the other part of the care home."
- "Singers come in – one last week. We play skittles, but no bingo! No trips out."
- "I haven't been bored! I can keep myself busy. I sew and knit. I am trying to do more activities here."
- "I would like to do paintings ... I would like to do chair exercises, art classes or crafts. There are activities in the afternoon."



## Contact with friends and family

### Residents and their relatives were asked about their contact.

All the residents we spoke to had friends or family who visited or stayed in touch by phone call or letter.

Residents said:

- "My children visit."
- "My wife and daughter and two friends visit. My daughter is going to bring the dog for a visit."
- "Daughters visit and I use my smart phone to skype, send texts and talk to my daughters."
- "My niece visits weekly. They bring the phone to me if I get a call."



# Quality of care

## Residents and relatives

### We also observed whether residents looked well cared for during our visit.

Throughout our visit, all the residents we saw and met looked well dressed and cared for. The residents we spoke to said they could have a shower or bath when they wanted. They all choose the clothes they wear and their clothes are clean. Most clothes are marked with the resident's name. One resident's niece chooses to wash their clothes.

The family members we spoke to agreed:



"He is always clean and well presented."



### We also wanted to know whether residents feel like they need additional help with anything, such as help to eat or drink, and if they receive enough help.

All the residents we spoke to said staff provide the help they need and they can always ask if they require assistance.

## Staff

### We asked what residents and family/friends think of staff.

All our representatives came away impressed by the staff and their interactions with residents. They said: "From what I saw the staff seemed happy at work and were respectful and kind to the residents. I liked the fact there was a good gender balance in both residents and staff." Another added: "Staff seemed friendly and helpful and there were plenty of them about."

Residents were equally complimentary in our conversations with them:



"Can't fault any of them."

"Very nice, very good. They call me by my name. Very helpful."

"The staff are lovely, chatty and friendly. They are respectful.

They always make time for me."



“They are wonderfully friendly. Nothing is too much trouble. They work extremely hard. I think the staff are stretched and they could do with more. But I feel looked after.”

## **Safety and staff levels**

**Residents, relatives, and staff were asked whether they feel there are enough staff, and we asked the residents if they felt safe in the home.**

All the residents we spoke to said they feel safe. As above, some residents felt there could be more staff and that the home is short staffed at times.

In feedback from seven staff, four staff members said there were enough staff and three said there are not enough staff. One person commented that more staff are needed on the residential unit.

Our representatives felt there were plenty of staff on their visit.

## **Health checks**

**We asked residents and friends/family if they had been able to access relevant health checks.**

Residents and family members mentioned that there had been GP visits and one resident said she had seen the optician.

The manager confirmed that a GP visits every week. At other times staff have access to Immedicare, a system where a laptop is used by a member of staff to enable a healthcare professional to see the resident who needs medical support. External opticians and dentists visit and for hearing issues residents go to the audiology team at the hospital.

## Raising concerns and issues

### Residents, family, and friends

**We wanted to know if they had any concerns about the service, would they know what to do.**

The residents had different ways of raising concerns. Some said they would shout if they needed to raise anything. Others that they would talk to staff including senior carers, manager or key worker.

### Other comments

**We gave residents and family/friends the opportunity to add any other comments.**

Residents and family members said:

- “It is peace of mind for all us now that dad is here. We are satisfied.”
- “I am happy and satisfied here – but I would rather be in my own home.”
- “Can’t fault it here. Everything is perfect. I have no complaints.”

The care home assessors also summarised their impression of Riverside Care Complex:

- “Very positive. I would be happy to recommend it to a friend or relative.”
- “Felt fairly positive about it, especially what I saw of staff interaction with residents.”
- “From what I saw, the staff seemed happy at work and were respectful and kind to the residents. I liked the fact there was a good gender balance in both residents and staff.”
- “I felt the home was providing good quality care for the residents living there. There seemed to be a range of activities on offer and the lunchtime meal was tasty, fresh looking and hot when delivered. Staff seemed friendly and helpful and there were plenty of them about.”

## Staff feedback

### How do they feel?

#### We asked staff about working in the care home.

We heard from seven staff who completed the survey. We did not speak to any staff members who were working when we visited. Six of the seven said they enjoy working at Riverside.

Six out of seven staff respondents said they receive enough training and the other person was not sure. Four staff members felt they were informed about changes at the care home all the time, two were made aware some of the time and one said they were not informed. When asked what happened to staff feedback, comments included:

- “Senior staff members look into things and report back any changes.”
- “They take what I’ve said and look into it.”
- “Management are always willing to listen and help staff.”

When we asked if staff members would recommend the care home, six respondents said yes and one no. In terms of a rating out of five, three respondents gave five stars, three four stars and one gave two stars. One of the staff members who gave four stars added: “... there is always room for improvement.”

## Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch York Enter and View team would like to thank the proprietor, manager, staff, friends and families of residents, and residents for letting us access the care home, and for sharing their views with us. Thanks also to our dedicated volunteers who helped support this Enter and View visit.



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