

Findings of a dementia audit: Lakeside Residential Home, Reading

Where: Lakeside Residential Home, 25 Whiteknights Road, Reading, RG6 7BY

When: 3 August 2018

Why: Healthwatch Reading is visiting all care homes in Reading and gathering residents' views. In addition, we are using a national audit tool during a separate 'walk-around' of six care homes to see how the environment has been adapted to specifically support people with dementia.

How: Healthwatch Reading visited at a pre-agreed time with the care home and then made observations for each of the seven themes used in the audit tool. Lakeside's manager, Candice O'Neil joined Healthwatch Reading for the audit 'walkaround' and answered any questions as they came up.

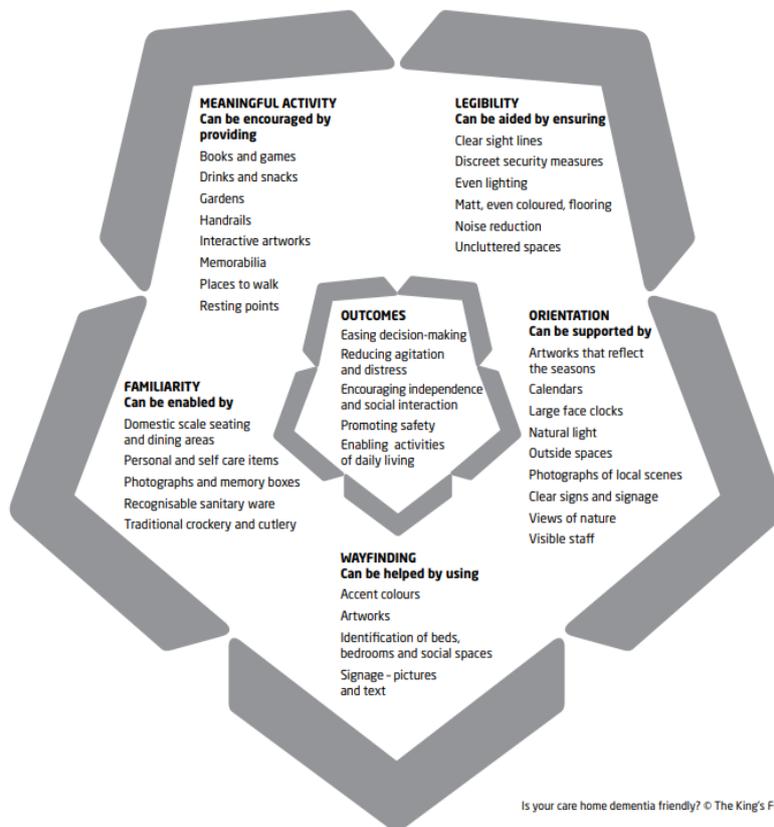
Main findings*: Overall, we concluded that Lakeside is a dementia-friendly environment which displays many positive adaptations. We believe the care home could be even better if they make some extra changes to colour contrast and signage in some areas of the home.

**Our findings relate only to the date of the visit and changes may have happened since then. Prospective clients (and/or relatives) are advised to carry out their own visit to a care home before making final decisions on whether they feel the care home is suitable for their needs.*



About the audit tool

Healthwatch Reading used an assessment tool called *Is Your Care Home Dementia Friendly?* It was developed by the national charity and research body, The King's Fund, as part of its Enhancing the Healing Environment programme, in 2014.



The tool is designed to be used during a walkaround of a care home. It is split into seven sections that ask up to 10 questions each, which should be scored from 1 (barely met) to 5 (totally met). A person can carry out the audit alone, but the King's Fund recommends it is done jointly with others involved in the person's care and/or life to ensure various views are considered and discussed.

Scores can be added up at the end of the exercise and used by

care homes to identify areas for improvement and/or make a case for extra investment, or by commissioners to compare different care homes in an area, according to the King's Fund.

How we used the audit tool

The audit visits are the second stage of a Healthwatch Reading project on the experience of care home residents across Reading. This firstly involved visiting all residential and nursing homes across the borough to collect residents' views about their daily life. Individual visit reports with care home managers' responses have been published on our website.

This second part of our project aims to look in more detail at the environment of dementia-specialist care homes. This would help us to understand if Reading is 'a place where people can live well with dementia' - one of the priorities of the *Reading Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020*.

Care homes voluntarily agreed to let us visit and carry out the audit and, in many cases, managers joined us for the exercise. We focused on observations and discussions about the seven themes rather than on scoring by numbers.

Lakeside audit findings:

1. Does the environment promote meaningful interaction and purposeful activity between people who live in the care home, their families and staff?

We found the care home:

- feels welcoming with a big sign that is visible from the street and the doorbell and entry phone is easy to use
- gives a good first impression and looks tidy and well maintained
- has arranged communal spaces and chairs in small clusters to encourage conversations
- created dedicated spaces for residents to enjoy group work or read
- has involved residents in choosing a wallpaper scene for a feature wall in one of the communal spaces and is planning a second one for another floor of the home

2. Does the environment promote well-being?

We found:

- there is good use of natural lights, in the bedrooms and communal spaces; the home has large low windows that let natural light in but also offer views to the lake across
- the level of light can be adjusted in the bedrooms, all the light switches have been contrasted so that they stand out so residents can see them, and all the residents' bedrooms have blackout blinds installed
- there is independent access to space outdoors, with lots of shade in the garden, a summer house and colourful non-toxic plants are dotted around in the garden with raised flowering beds.

3. Does the environment encourage eating and drinking?

We found:

- residents have access to cold drinks and snacks
- there is a relative's cafe, where relatives can make tea for themselves and their loved one
- the crockery has a blue and red rim to make it more easily seen by residents and some special crockery at the home is bright orange
- the dining rooms are divided into sections and there is enough space to assist residents who need help when eating and drinking
- the home has changed its menu so there are now pictures of each dish on the menu and residents can choose where they have their meals.

4. Does the environment promote mobility?

We found:

- there is a lot of space for independent walking both inside and out
- the flooring is in the process of being changed into plain carpets
- there are photographs and wall displays for residents to stop and look at, including some displays that residents produced themselves during activities
- on the dementia floors of the care home, residents do not use lifts on their own and are assisted by care home staff
- the garden has raised flower beds and a circular pathway to help residents return to the start
- all walls are painted plain with a light colour on top and a darker colour on the bottom, with no strong patterns
- there are wooden handrails along the corridors
- there is no seating along the corridors that could cause an obstruction in the limited space.

5. Does the environment promote continence and personal hygiene?

We found:

- residents en-suite bathrooms have signs and large pictures on them
- the toilet seats are in a contrast colour to ensure they can be more easily seen by residents
- taps are clearly marked hot and cold
- there is enough room in the toilets for staff to assist when needed
- the sensor light stays on long enough to give people time to complete toileting and washing.

6. Does the environment promote orientation?

We found:

- doors from communal spaces have transparent panels to help show which room you are entering
- the care home has removed patterned wallpaper and painted walls in neutral colours as part of a decorating refurbishment; when this is complete signage will be put up on walls
- signage for toilets located in the corridor is not fully visible from communal areas
- toilet doors are not painted in their own distinctive colour
- residents' bedrooms are all personalised with their picture on the outside of the door, and their rooms contain photographs and other personal objects to help it feel like their own space
- clocks in the communal area were too small, but the manager said after the redecoration, they will put up a big clock which also shows the date
- there are no mirrors on the dementia floors.

7. Does the environment promote calm, safety and security?

We found:

- all communal spaces are clutter free
- the noise of the main door ringing or buzzing has been disconnected from the dementia floors, to ensure background noise is kept to a minimum
- all phones are located in the office, and if staff leave their station they always take their phones with them so residents near reception will not be disturbed with the ringing of the phones
- all the residents have control of what they watch and listen to
- exit doors are clearly labelled, as well as 'staff only' areas
- there are no dedicated facilities for relatives to use when a resident is receiving end-of-life care - the manager said that in the past relatives have stayed in vacant rooms
- all hazardous liquids and solids are locked away, out of reach.

Areas for improvement

- Paint the toilet doors in a single distinctive colour
- Have bigger signage with words and picture on toilet doors so that residents can visibly see

The King's Fund tool states: 'Not being able to find the toilet provokes anxiety and using the same signs and door colours to denote all toilets will help people find them more easily.'

Response from Lakeside:

'The audit was useful. Improvements have been made.'

Acknowledgements and other information

Healthwatch Reading thanks the manager for welcoming us for an additional visit to carry out this dementia audit. Our findings relate to how we observed the care home on the date of the visit and the care home may have made changes/improvements since this date. Good practice guidance suggests that prospective residents and/or families carry out their own visits to a care home before making a final decision.

Healthwatch Reading is an independent charity with some statutory powers. We can take your feedback in confidence, help you make complaints, and refer serious concerns to other agencies. Contact us on 0118 937 2295 if you do not have internet access and would like help accessing any online information referenced in this report.