



Enter and View Belong

Semi Announced Visit

25th February 2025



What is Enter and View?

Part of Healthwatch Warrington's remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Warrington Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows 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 that we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand. Healthwatch Warrington's 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 Warrington's Safeguarding Policy, the Service Manager will be informed, and the visit will end. The local authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

Details of the Visit

Details of Visit	
Service Address	Belong Loushers Lane, Warrington, WA4 6RX
Date and Time	25 th February 2025 1:30 PM – 3.30 PM
Authorised Representatives undertaking the visit	Lisa Fidler Norman Holding Jim Sinnott Kathy Yates

Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Warrington would like to thank the Registered Manager, staff and all the residents for their co-operation during our visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit on 25th February 2025. The report does not claim to represent the views of all service users, only those who contributed during the visit.

Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with the Manager of Belong Care Home, Care Quality Commission (CQC), Healthwatch England and other partners. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Warrington website.

Healthwatch Warrington's details

Address:

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Healthwatch principles

Healthwatch Warrington's Enter and View programme is linked to the eight principles of Healthwatch, and questions are asked around each one.

- 1. A healthy environment:** Right to live in an environment that promotes positive health and wellbeing.

- 2. Essential Services:** Right to a set of preventative, treatment and care services provided to a high standard to prevent patients reaching crisis.
- 3. Access:** Right to access services on an equal basis with others without fear of discrimination or harassment when I need them in a way that works for me and my family.
- 4. A safe, dignified and quality service:** Right to high quality, safe, confidential services that treat me with dignity, compassion, and respect.
- 5. Information and education:** Right to clear and accurate information that I can use to make decisions about health and care treatment. I want the right to education about how to take care of myself and about what I am entitled to in the health and social care system.
- 6. Choice:** Right to choose from a range of high-quality services, products and providers within health and social care.
- 7. Being listened to:** Right to have my concerns and views listened to and acted upon. I want the right to be supported in taking action if I am not satisfied with the service I have received.
- 8. Being involved:** To be treated as an equal partner in determining my own health and wellbeing. I want the right to be involved in decisions that affect my life and those affecting services in my local community.

Purpose of the visit

The visit was semi announced and was part of the ongoing work programme of Healthwatch Warrington.

Details of the service

Belong is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing and/or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement, dependent on their registration with us. Belong Care Home is a care home with nursing care.

Provider Service and Staff

Belong has 72 beds (at the time of the visit all 72 were occupied). There are 6 households, each with 12 suites.

Olivia Wilkinson is registered manager; Olivia has been in post for 2 years having previously worked at Belong Atherton as Team Leader. She is supported by Barry Devine the General Manager.

The home has a multitude of staff including:

- Registered Manager
- General Manager
- Front of House Manager
- Village Nurse Manager
- Nurses
- Household Team Leaders
- Household support team
- Household senior support
- Household Catering and Bistro Team Manager
- Household Catering Team
- Bistro Team
- Administration team
- Reception team
- Maintenance team
- Hair Salon Team
- Housekeeping Team
- Experience Day Coordinator
- Exercise Specialist

Results of the Visit:

Residents voice:



Provider Response to resident voice:

We are really happy that the person you spoke with feels safe, settled and treated with respect. It's really important to us that everybody feels safe within their own home, they are able to relax in comfort and enjoy the food they love.

Each of the six households in Belong have their own team of colleagues; the number of staff on each household is planned to make sure we can safely meet people's assessed needs, including being able to help people with their meals in a timely way. At any time during the day, we do not plan to have any less than

three staff supporting the twelve people on each household.

We have had some new colleagues join us recently. New colleagues have a thorough four-day induction program with our specialist trainer. Following this they shadow more experienced colleagues, have a buddy who is an experienced member of staff and have regular check in sessions with their line manager. This helps to ensure new staff have the knowledge and skills they need. During the induction new staff get to know people and we make sure they learn about people's food preferences as much as possible.

We want people to be enabled to be as independent as possible and those who wish can have a key to their own room; to lock it when they are not using it.

Anything that people report to us is responded to. We work in partnership with people, their relatives and friends and partnership organisations to help ensure we respond and find solutions together in the most effective way.

Relatives voice:

Staff Voice:

"I have worked here for 10 years and have stayed because I like working here".



First impressions

Belong had good signage that was easy to see from the road. The car park was almost at full capacity on arrival, ARs (authorised representatives) were informed that there is an overflow car park further down the road and that there was training being held on the day of our visit which was impacting the availability of car park spaces for visitors.

The outdoor surroundings were clean, tidy and litter free. The entrance was flat making it accessible for wheelchair access. The reception area was clean, bright and welcoming with a neutral smell. ARs were welcomed on entry by Gail, the home receptionist. We were asked to present our identity badges and to sign in using an electronic device.

The home was warm, clean and well decorated with a welcoming feel and atmosphere.

Well Lead

We were welcomed initially by Gail the home receptionist and then greeted by the enthusiastic registered manager Olivia Wilkinson. Olivia led the tour of the home for ARs. Staff were friendly, welcoming and actively interacting with residents. Staff dress casually and staff do not wear name badges, Olivia said this is to foster a less clinical and more homely experience for residents and visitors, she also mentioned that when inducting new residents, they try to

introduce as many staff members as possible so that residents and family members are familiar with staff names. However, this could pose difficulties for residents with dementia for example, as they may find it difficult to recall names. Additionally, due to this ARs were not always aware of who was a staff member, particularly in communal areas where the public can use facilities. ARs did not see a staff photo board which may also help visitors to identify staff. In addition to online and practical mandatory training, all staff complete dementia training.

Belong has links with several local colleges and provide regular student placements in health and social care training.

ARs were informed that agency staff are minimal, and they always endeavour to use the same agency. Olivia also stated that agency staff are provided with training prior to starting work in Belong.

Staff that ARs spoke to stated that they are well supported by managers, receive training as required and enjoy working in the home. Staff also stated that there was little turnover of staff as they felt listened to and valued. ARs were informed that there are several quarterly team and management meetings.

The household design of the home creates an intimate, homely feel, there was a good number of staff supporting residents in each household.

The home has an Experience Day Co-ordinator who designs a full schedule of activities.

Access to Services

At Belong the majority of residents choose to be registered with Stockton Heath Medical Centre.

Belong stated that they cannot source a dentist who will provide regular domiciliary visits for residents unable to leave the nursing home, this is a national issue. If a resident needs dental care, a referral is made to Bridgewater Community Healthcare. Some residents remain registered with their own dentist. Staff complete oral health training as part of their e-learning. Opticians attend Belong on an annual basis.

Residents have access to an onsite hairdressing salon which is open 4 days a week, a therapy room which offers nail treatments, massage and other beauty treatments, these services are also accessible by the public. Other facilities include an onsite exercise room, internet café and activity room. The home has a bistro which is accessible to all, including the public and offers a range of food and beverages.

There are large meeting rooms onsite which have a multi purposed role, catering for staff training, team meetings and Carer/relative meetings but can also be booked by other organisations who require a meeting room.

Belong offers a spacious guest suite that can be used for respite care however it is often utilised for people's family members to remain close to their loved ones during difficult times or if they are visiting from a distance away.

Safe

The building was secure with signage visible at the entrance to the car park. The home is secure with a signing in system for all visitors and security fobs for all resident areas.

There were visible fire alarms throughout the building which were well signed, and fire alarm boards in each household. Throughout the building there are alarm panels which are visual and include an audible emergency alarm which relays to the kitchen/staff station in each of the six households within the facility. Kitchen/staff stations were prominent in each household.

All floors are accessible via lift or stairs.

All bedrooms are fitted with assistive technology which can be adapted to each person's needs. This enables staff to be alerted quickly when a person needs help or support in line with their care plan. This helps people remain safe and can help prevent falls.

Bathrooms were well equipped; they have alarms and safe lifting equipment in place, some toilet seats are dementia friendly as they are in a contrasting colour however others were not and were all white in colour. Bathrooms and shower rooms were pictorially well signed.

Corridors are wide and were free from obstructions and trip hazards. Handrails are installed in wood on one side of the hallway throughout, which contrasts with the walls.

Kitchens are provided in each unit with hydration available. There was no food or utensils left on tables. Dining tables were cleared when not in use, they are used for activities and general resident get togethers in between mealtimes. Kitchen worktops and sinks were a little cluttered. All kitchen areas were equipped with fire blankets.

Lounge and dining areas had a variety of chair styles and sizes available to accommodate all residents. The exercise room is always controlled by a qualified member of staff.

There are extensive outside areas with a variety of surfaces, grass, hardstanding, flower beds available to the residents. Upper floors have outside balcony spaces which are controlled by the staff. Area's outside are monitored by CCTV.

Care plans are kept electronically and reviewed regularly.

Caring

Staff were observed speaking and interacting with residents and using their preferred name. There appeared to be an excellent relationship between residents and staff. Each resident had their own care plan which is discussed with them and relatives on a regular basis. Care plans are held electronically. There are adequate staff available for the residents, both day and night. Each household has its own team leader.

Noise levels observed were appropriate throughout the facility and residents stated that they are generally not disturbed by noise. Rooms and communal areas are well decorated and bright, painted areas and carpets are dementia friendly and lighting levels were appropriate.

Each area had an activities board with monthly planned activities. Each kitchen/staff station had an information board with up-to-date information.

ARs did not observe a 'you said, we did' board, A 'you said, we did' board helps the home illustrate that they are listening to residents and family members and implementing changes based upon feedback.

Responsive

The home has an Experience Day Co-ordinator who provides activities for the residents to participate in. Some examples of activities on offer include:

- Music therapy sessions
- Craft
- Dementia café (held once a month and open to the public).
- Games
- Therapy animal visits
- Exercise classes
- Walks in the local area

- Visits to various locations such as garden centres, churches.

Activity programmes are changed seasonally. Events are arranged for special days and event posters are circulated in the locality to inform people of the events which are open to the public. Residents were observed enjoying a session in the activity room, the room included a bar and a jukebox which Louise the activity co-ordinator said the residents enjoy and favourite songs can be streamed.

ARs briefly met Pam, a Music Therapist who visits the home each Tuesday. Olivia said, "it's so positive and stimulating for residents, they love it".

At present there is difficulty in providing trips away from the home due to a lack of transport provision by the local authority. The home is currently fund raising for the provision of a minibus.

The home has an onsite and fully equipped hairdressing salon which is also open to the public 4 days a week. There is a separate therapy room which delivers beauty treatments such as nail treatments and massage, again this is open to the public. The home has regular relative/resident meetings to allow for feedback.

The home has an Exercise Studio ran by Aaron, Exercise Specialist. This facility has a great selection of exercise equipment and a large TV screen to play songs or watch programmes whilst exercising. Regular exercise schedules have been created for residents who wish and can participate. Opposite the Exercise room was an Internet Café which residents can utilise.

Rooms are well equipped and well decorated; residents are encouraged to personalise their rooms if they wish. There are large, faced clocks in all households which are dementia friendly, smaller digital clocks with the month and date are also in each area. Each household has a TV sitting area with sofas and chairs, resident rooms also have a TV.

Staff that spoke to ARs stated that they were given appropriate mandatory training and development training was also available. They felt their roles were fulfilling and they like working in the home.

Food

The residents spoken to were happy with the food quality and the amounts provided. The menus seen on the day of our visit were limited in choice at lunch and dinner. A range of drinks were available.

Special occasions are catered for, and relatives are always welcome at these events.

The menus for the week (observed by ARS) provided limited selection daily, particularly for the evening meal. Residents are able to order food from the onsite Bistro if the menu options aren't suitable. The home has residents from various nationalities and their food requirements are catered for. The onsite bistro is open to the public all day and provides a range of meals and drinks with a variety of choices. ARs spoke to Nicky the Catering Manager. Nicky explained that the menu is on a 4-week rotation and SALT assessments are carried out as required for residents with swallowing difficulties and dysphagia. The menu is produced in both written and pictorial form and the catering team are flexible and always cater to resident's dietary needs and personal preferences.

The main dining areas throughout the home were clean, bright and formed part of the lounge areas. Tables were clear and utensils stored safely. Hydration was readily available to residents and visitors.

Special occasions are well catered for, and relatives are always welcome.

Effective

The building design provides 6 distinct resident areas which are named households. There are 18 separate apartments for independent living and one room with an ensuite available for respite care. The building was clean, well decorated and well maintained. Lighting levels are good throughout the building. Signage throughout the building is good.

The bathrooms observed were large and had room for wheelchair access. They were clean, had hoists fitted and an alarm. There was one bathroom that was being used to store wheelchairs.

Clocks throughout the resident areas were dementia friendly.

Each household has a laundry room for personal items, and the home has a larger laundry room used for larger items, these are operated by trained staff.

Conclusion

In summary, during our visit Belong provided a welcoming and stimulating environment for its residents with well-maintained facilities. There is a diverse range of engaging activities available to residents which promote well-being and cater to the residents' individual needs and preferences.

Despite its size, Belong have managed to provide a quite intimate, small home feel with a six-individual household arrangement.

During our visit staff displayed warmth, professionalism, and a genuine dedication to providing high-quality care. Low staff turnover indicates a supportive and fulfilling workplace culture.

Recommendations

Recommendations made from findings

1	Please display the Healthwatch Warrington poster in the reception area, which will offer an independent choice for the patients to feedback.
2	We recommend that all staff members wear a name badge.
3	We recommend more choice presented to residents at mealtimes on the menu provided to residents.
4	We recommend you implement a 'You said- we did' board to illustrate changes made based upon feedback.
5	We recommend that all toilet seats are a contrasting colour to ensure they are all dementia friendly.

Provider Response

We would like to thank our colleagues from Healthwatch for their visit and report. We really enjoyed welcoming them and spending time with them. It was a great opportunity to demonstrate Belong's household model; and it was also beneficial to have the support and different perspectives of visiting professionals.

Key to the information in this report is our model. The care village runs as six independent households; each household is home for a maximum of 12 people. Every household has its own team and team leader; this fosters people developing closer relationships with those who care for them. The village operates like a cluster of six mini care homes. This design is important in enabling us to achieve some of our key aims.

One of our key aims is to create a supportive environment. The household model allows us to do this. Each household is small, manageable for people, intimate and homely. They are tastefully decorated in a similar manner to how people decorate their homes. They provide a domestic style home, which evidence demonstrates helps many people relax. Each person's room is built around an open lounge, diner and kitchen, with minimal corridors.

The village has a main commercial kitchen, which supports six, fully functional domestic style kitchens. One on each household. This means people have nearby a domestic style kitchen which they will recognise. Colleagues can support people to make drinks, get involved in some meal preparation and help to tidy up if they choose. People can see and smell cooking taking place. The household kitchens are well stocked and never close. People can decide to have food and snacks of their choice at any time of day or night.

Another aim is that we create a place where every member of our community belongs, feels comfortable and contributes to the best possible environment within the care village. The core of the village is a lively and dynamic place, where people living in the village, their friends and family along with members of the public can interact and mix in a safe space. We are happy the Healthwatch visit found the range of activities, our gym, salon and our on-site bistro a positive experience for all.

We are community focused and since our Healthwatch visit have invested in a minibus which will enable us to explore new opportunities with people. It's great timing, just in time for summer!

Our model and facilities, complement our stunning staff team and enables them to deliver nurturing care and support within a community that is homely, relaxed and vibrant.

The comment is finished but I missed of – I would like to thank you and your team for your hard work and for your visit. We hope you come back soon to see us at Belong.

Until then our best wishes

Barry, Olivia and all the team at Belong



healthwatch

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