

# Enter and View Report

## Applegarth Care Home



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# About Applegarth

Applegarth Care Home is a privately owned, 20 bed residential care facility, situated near Maidenhead. Respite care is also offered in addition to long term stays.

All the rooms are en-suite and the home boasts a 'beautiful garden' which is utilised by residents. The home is close to local shops.

Applegarth Care Home is registered with the Cinnamon Trust, allowing residents to keep their pets (by arrangement only).

The CQC rated Applegarth Care Home as 'Good' in June 2019.

## Process to enter and view visits

As part of its statutory role to recognise good practice and identify potential improvement in health and social care services, Healthwatch has a legal power to Enter & View services. The information gathered during Enter & View visits is reported on, shared, and used to shape recommendations.

This report presents Healthwatch Slough's observations and comments based on interaction with Applegarth Care Home between September and November 2020.

The visits to the care home on 17th September were performed virtually by two staff members, with a tour given by the Manager.

Regular emails were exchanged with the Manager, sharing updates of events and day to day operations.

## Findings of enter and view

By talking to staff, residents, and family members, in addition to our own observations, we can present a wide-ranging set of intelligence, providing a comprehensive sense of the nature of Applegarth Care Home.

We offer our independent perspective which we hope provides a useful source of feedback to the provider on what we think they are doing well and where some improvements may be made.

# Environment and Ambience

- ☘ All rooms were very bright with natural light.
- ☘ All bedrooms visited looked orderly, homely, and comfortable, with personal touches obvious.
- ☘ Planted flowers provided a colourful reception at the front of the house.
- ☘ Fresh flowers were in the reception areas, staff and residents mentioned that there was a soft fragrance of lemon Dettol.
- ☘ Hand sanitisers were readily accessible.
- ☘ The lounge was very homely with fruits and refreshments presented on the coffee table.
- ☘ Old fashioned music was playing in the background, along with old fashioned ornaments on the walls.
- ☘ On display were various artwork from local schools, in addition to pieces that the residents had taken part in. One example was the Poppy 100-year celebration (picture on the right)

Overall, we found the atmosphere homely, clean and orderly.



# Staff and interactions

Applegarth Care Home has high staff retention, and the manager seems keen to impress a good staff morale. Since the manager took position in June 2019, agency staff are no longer used. There is an employee of the month scheme and all staff continued working during the 1st lockdown in March. The manager describes the team as 'magnificent and passionate'.

A 'hydration station' is in place for staff to help themselves and a familial sense of camaraderie seems to have been established.

The manager has been particularly praised for her reassurance and level of organisation during the first COVID lockdown, whilst the manager has in turn praised the staff for their commitment - rewarding them with personalised keyrings.

👉 The atmosphere is great, all the staff get on and work as a team. 👈

👉 I love it here, it's one of the best care homes I've ever worked in. It's like a family... There's a lot of training and support [and]...I feel cared for within the care home. 👈

👉 We all get along, it's nice. There's always going to be a good atmosphere, it's not just the staff, it's everybody and the residents are all having a laugh. 👈



# Opportunities and experiences

Applegarth Care Home has an activity coordinator who organises different activities for the residents to engage in. An activity board is displayed, which is updated monthly - although this can be subject to changes on the day.

Activities range from exercises, gardening to organised 'vintage parties' and quizzes. Residents are currently engaging with the 'summer house' project and are part of the decision process in terms of the name and colour scheme of the house. Regular updates of the development are shown to the residents, to keep them feeling part of the process.

## Connection with residents family and friends

Covid -19 restrictions meant that Applegarth, along with all other care homes, had to look to other methods of engagement with resident's family and friends, when face to face visits were not possible.

Facebook has been used to showcase what has been happening in the home and to connect with those relatives who can't visit. During lockdown, relatives were able to come to the windows, with Skype and Facetime calls becoming common place.

Applegarth has opened its garden for visits by relatives, with the appropriate covid safety measures taken. Plans for a summer house at the back of the garden are underway in order to facilitate visits during the winter months.

## Connecting with the wider community

There seems to be a good connection with the local schools, and before lockdown, the Activities Coordinator told how children would come in and sing for the residents. Pictures, letters and postcards that have been sent in through local schools such as Eton and Beechwood adorn the walls.

Before COVID, there were trips to animal farms, skittle lanes and rose gardens in order to keep the residents active and engaged.

Although currently unable to visit in person, the Jehovah Witnesses provide virtual bible stories for the residents every Friday and the local Vicar visits once a month.

# Feedback from residents

- 👤 I'm happy living here. Content. I look forward to food. Sometimes you lose your hunger, but you don't go hungry. It's tasty. 🗨️
- 👤 Laundry could be improved. When laundry returns you get mystery prizes. 🗨️
- 👤 It's absolutely lovely, they are so kind and helpful, I'm very happy here.... There's nothing I could improve....I feel comfortable speaking up.... 🗨️

# Feedback from relatives and friends of residents

- 👤 The care is brilliant. The staff are all brilliant, all attitude towards family members and residents are great. Grounds are well kept. We get an update at least once a month by email....We would recommend for 100% 🗨️
- 👤 ....nothing is too much trouble to make [my relative] feel at home. She's very happy....she's changed so much for the better since she's been there. 🗨️
- 👤 Overall, it's been a very positive experience. It's like a home from home, she's improved since she's been here. We thought it would be continuous decline. It's not been a complete reversal but definitely a reversal. 🗨️



# Evaluation of the home

Applegarth Care Home provides a homely, familial environment in which to care for the 20 residents, some of which have dementia.

There seems to be high level of satisfaction amongst staff and as such, staff retention is good. The Manager appears to have the well-being of staff and residents alike at the forefront, and consequently improvements have been made since being appointed to the role. Particular praise was given that the staff trusted in the management to guide them through Covid restrictions and that they felt supported at all times.

👉 Thank you so much for your regular updates. They are much appreciated. And thank you also for taking such good care of the residents. I recently spoke to my Mum and she was happy, and I can tell that she is being well looked after. 👈



# Providers Response

I was delighted with the opportunity for residents to speak about their experiences of care and daily life in a care home as we always strive to work well and do our utmost to improve the experience for our residents and their prospective of our services. Healthwatch enabled residents to have their voices heard and to guide us in the right direction to continue to do well and go that extra mile. I would recommend Healthwatch to other providers in Health and Care services and would like to send our thanks for their help and the opportunity to showcase our wonderful home.



## Contact Us

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