

**Enter and View Report:**  
**Silk Court**  
**Care Home**

**16 Ivimey St, London E2 6LQ**

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets  
7<sup>th</sup> December 2023

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# 1. Visit Background

| Visit Details                   |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Service Visited:                | Silk Court Care Home   |
| Address:                        | 16 Ivimey St, London E2 6LQ  |
| Service Manager:                | Renae Dixon, Aneesa Khan (Deputy Manager)                              |
| Date & Time of Visit:           | 7 <sup>th</sup> December 2023  |
| Status of Visit:                | Announced  |
| CQC Rating:                     | Overall Good   |
| Date of CQC Report:             | 19 <sup>th</sup> February 2022 (Reviewed on 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2023) |
| Authorised Representatives:     | Mari Tiitinen, Haley Tischler, Luke Welch and Shumaya Akther           |
| Lead Authorised Representative: | Shreya Mandal  |

## What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets is an independent organisation which relies on feedback from the local community regarding their experience using health and social care services across the borough. It is part of a nationwide network of local Healthwatch and a national body, Healthwatch England.

As the local Health and Social Care Champion, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets ensures that your voice is heard by National Health Service (NHS) leaders and local authorities when decisions are made on how services will be delivered and further improved.

## What is Enter and View?

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch 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 be arranged if people tell us there's a problem with a service, but equally, they can also occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

During the visit, we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families, and carers. We also interview management and staff regarding their views of the service provided. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', will be shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlining what has worked well, and give recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our website.

## **Disclaimer**

Please note, this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

## **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets would like to thank Silk Court Care Home, the residents, staff and visitors for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place.

We would also like to forward a thank you to the interns and volunteer who assisted with the Enter and View Visit; Haley Tischler, Luke Welch and Shumaya Akther.

# 2. About This Visit

## Silk Court Care Home

On 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 we visited Silk Court Care Home, located in Bethnal Green, which is provided and ran by the Anchor Hanover Group. The home is registered to look after adults over the age of 65 years old and provides dementia care. At the time of the visit, Silk Court had 47 residents, with the maximum capacity of 51 residents. The home has approximately 55-60 staff members including those who work night shifts.

We were able to interview and receive feedback forms from 18 residents, 27 staff and 6 family and friends.

## CQC Rating

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) are the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourage care services to improve.

At the time of the visit, Silk Court Care Home had received the rating of "Overall Good" across the following criterion: Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led. This was based on a report published 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022, reviewed 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

## Online Feedback

The Carehome.co.uk website contains a total of 68 reviews for Silk Court Care Home, 59 of which rated the care home with a maximum review score of 10 and 9 reviews with a score of 8 out of 10. The reviews dated back to 2016 with numerous mentions of outstanding care and excellent staff. The overwhelming number of positive reviews indicated to us that Silk Court Care home may be exceptional in the quality of service they provide.

## Focus of the Visit

The purpose of conducting the Enter and View Visit to Silk Court Care Home was based on the data sourced from online reviews and discussions with the CQC and London borough of Tower Hamlets Council members. There was an overwhelming positive consensus regarding the quality of care provided by Silk Court Care Home.

The main aim of the visit was to observe how the home operates and how it has achieved a significantly positive sentiment regarding its care. We also wanted to observe if there were any areas of concern or further improvements required. Questionnaires for residents, staff, friends, and family were formulated to gain feedback across categories such as catering, comfort and general care.

# 3. Our Observations

During the visit to Silk Court Care Home, Authorised Representatives were able to have a staff-led tour of the premises, take notes of their observations during the tour and take photographs when appropriate.

There are 11 categories of observation. These categories include Outside and Entrance, Environment, Dementia-Friendly Environment, Safety, Information Displayed, Accessibility, Bedroom, Lounge and Dining Room, Residents, Meals and Staff.

## Outside and Entrance

Silk Court Care Home is located near Bethnal Green, East London. The area is located away from traffic and is accessible via car, bus and tube. There is the Bethnal Green Road Marketplace a short walk away, which can get quite busy, but the surrounding residential area is quiet.

### First Impressions: What has worked well?

- Visitors are required to buzz in at the main entrance to enter a secure reception area. There is a sign-in machine at the reception, which can also be completed by scanning a QR code on your personal device. The reception staff thoroughly check ID before unlocking the doors to enter the premises.
- The main foyer space was well-decorated ahead of Christmas and appeared extremely welcoming.
- There is minimal traffic in the surrounding area, hence there is little to no noise pollution that could disturb residents.



Figure 1: Silk Court was well-decorated ahead of Christmas, the foyer area shown here.

- COVID-19 information and hand sanitisers are readily available throughout the premises.

### What could be improved?

- It was difficult to identify the main entrance when approaching from Bethnal Green Road using Google Maps, which led to the back of the premises. The entrance felt small and not clear from the road, even though the car park appears to be spacious.



## Environment

### What has worked well?

- The general ambience of the care home was homely and welcoming, created by the Christmas decorations and music playing in the background. There was minimal noise, created by the music and some intermittent construction work, but overall quiet and peaceful. Construction work was taking place during an appropriate time. The interior appeared to be clean, tidy, and colourful. The premises was well-lit throughout.

### What could be improved?

- Some wear and tear in paintwork was observed in areas.



*Figure 2. Corridors were spacious and decorated with photos chosen by the residents. Also pictured are contrasting walls and hand railings.*

## Dementia-friendly environment

### What has worked well?

- The floor at the premises contrasted with the wall paint and was not patterned nor shiny. The floor mats were also plain, making them easily recognisable.
- The walls were generally non-vibrant colours like white and grey, with the occasional pop of colour in select communal rooms. All key features such as light switches, door handles, toilet seats, flush handles and rails were contrasting and visible.
- All the signs placed throughout the premises were 4ft off the floor, making them visible at eye-level. Each resident had a special and unique picture of their choice on their room doors. The signage for toilets and bathrooms were consistent with images and large labels for clarity.

### What could be improved?

- No improvements were determined for this category.



Figure 3. Appropriate fire safety information was displayed consistently throughout the premises.

## Safety

### What has worked well?

- Fire Safety protocol was well-maintained. The fire exits were clear and several fire extinguishers were observed throughout the premise. They were accompanied by the Fire Emergency Procedure displayed.
- The corridors were very spacious and generally no obstructions that were hazardous. There was some ongoing construction, but it was well-contained.
- The external doors are locked and need to be opened by staff in the reception or management.

### What could be improved?

- Although contained, the construction works going on within the 1<sup>st</sup> floor could have been closed off more clearly.

## Information Displayed

### What has worked well?

- Activities timetable was present and varied for individuals who may want a different option. There was a residents noticeboard located on ground floor.
- Family and visitors are able to provide feedback online when leaving the building, they are automatically prompted when signing out. There were also feedback posters and surveys posted on noticeboards throughout the premises.
- The internal signage is clear and concise, including posters such as staff information, complaints policy and diversity related. All the information seemed to be up-to-date.

### What could be improved?

- Some noticeboards had posters pinned on top of each other, making it difficult to view all the information clearly. Having posters lying flat on the boards would appear less cluttered and more comprehensible.



## Accessibility

### What has worked well?

- The corridors and toilets were all wide in size, accommodating for those with walking frames and wheelchairs. We observed handrails in corridors which were not disguised with the wall and were contrasting with the wall.
- The toilets were suitably adapted with extra-long handles and with clear directions.
- There were two lifts at the facility and ramps were also provided. One of the lifts was recently refurbished, both seemed to be well-maintained.

### What could be improved?

- No improvements were identified for this category.



Figure 4: Emergency alarm observed in bedrooms located next to the bed.

## Bedroom

### What has worked well?

- Bedrooms were clean and spacious; residents were able to freely personalise and decorate their rooms to their liking. Ensuite facilities were included to ensure privacy for the residents.
- All the emergency alarms installed, including bathroom and next to beds.

### What could be improved?

- Consider installing air conditioning units to further improve ventilation and to allow residents to have better control over the temperature within their bedrooms.
- Some wear and tear were observed next to the emergency alarms in the bedrooms. We would advise Silk Court to fill in areas of the wall to make it smooth and aesthetically pleasing.

## Lounge and dining room.

### What has worked well?

- The chairs in the lounge and dining room are placed in groups of 4 to 5 but individual seats were also available in certain rooms. The TV and radio was observed to be on throughout the duration of the visit as there were residents present who were actively watching.
- Residents could choose from a variety of activity rooms depending on their social preferences – there were social rooms and quiet rooms. One of the social activity rooms featured a ToverTafel, which is an interactive game projector.
- In regard to smoking, the premises is strictly non-smoking and had no designated smoking area due to having no residents that smoke. Staff members were advised to step outside and away from the premises if they wish to smoke.
- There was a garden with safe access which had several benches and chairs where residents could lounge when the weather is warmer. There were plans to set up raised beds where residents could do gardening during warmer months.
- The facility had a good variety books and newspapers, along with WiFi.
- COVID-19 measures were in place like hand sanitisers and masks.

### What could be improved?

- Phones for residents' private use were not observed.



Figure 5: The garden had several benches for residents to lounge on.

# Meals

## What has worked well?

- A four-weekly menu is displayed on noticeboards near the dining area. Residents who have special diets and specific choices or requests are catered for. Staff members were readily available to support residents during mealtimes. There was a dedicated area for residents and visitors to make tea and have snacks, equipped with the necessary appliances.

## What could be improved?

- It was unclear whether residents are offered culturally appropriate dishes if requested.
- No allergen information on display on the menus posted on the wall.
- Implementing the presentation of pictorial menus can be helpful for residents with dementia.

| Monday   | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday  | Saturday  | Sunday   |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| Lunch: Alternative meal choices are always available for today's selection   |   |  |   |   |   |  |
| Sweet Potato Soup<br>Macaroni Cheese & Grilled Tomatoes<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Fresh fruit Salad<br>Bakewell Tart   | Tomato & Basil Soup<br>Fried Egg & Double Cooked Chips<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Eccles Cakes<br>Blackberry & Lemon Fool  | Asparagus Soup<br>Fishcakes & Parsley Sauce With Peas<br>Side Salad<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Spiced Pears & Ice Cream<br>Chocolate Chip Buns  | Cream of Chicken Soup<br>Cheese & Tomato Pizza<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Fruit Flan & Cream<br>Date & Walnut Cake                       | Deep Fried Fish or Poached Fish with Parsley Sauce<br>Fried Eggs<br>Chipped & Creamed Potatoes<br>Musty Peas & Grilled Tomato<br>Chip Chocolate Tart<br>Baked Apple with custard or Cream | Roasted Vegetable Soup<br>Indian Chicken Curry & Rice<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Banana Mousse<br>Victoria Sandwich Cake & Cream   | Roast Loin Of Pork And sauce<br>Roast Chicken<br>Roast & Creamed Potatoes<br>Cauliflower Gratin<br>Broccoli<br>Black Cherry Pie & Custard<br>Fruit Jelly & Cream |
| Evening Meal: Alternative meal choices are always available for today's selection  |   |  |   |   |   |  |
| Braised Beef & Onion Gravy<br>Smoked Haddock & Parsley Sauce<br>Parsley Boiled & Creamed Potatoes<br>New Potatoes<br>Pear and cream<br>Treacle Tart With Custard | Chicken & Bacon Pasta Bake<br>Cauliflower cheese<br>Rice & Creamed Potatoes<br>Courgette Provencal & Julienne of Carrots<br>Apple Pie & Custard<br>Fresh fruit salad with Ice-cream | Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding<br>Spinach, Sweet Potato & Lentil Dhal<br>Roast & Creamed Potatoes<br>Puree of Root Vegetables & Baked Parsnips<br>Rhubarb Crumble & Vanilla Sauce<br>Selection of yogurt | Liver & Bacon Casserole<br>Fish Pie<br>Lyonnaise & Creamed Potatoes<br>Mixed Vegetables & Spinach<br>Rice Pudding<br>Strawberry cheese cake | Broccoli Soup<br>Jacket Potatoes Filled With Tuna Mayonnaise<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Eton Mess<br>Peaches & Cream   | Cumberland Sausage in a Rich Onion Gravy<br>Vegetarian Hot Pot<br>Sauté & Mustard Mash Potatoes<br>Green Bean & Bacon Carrots<br>Bread & Butter Pudding<br>Milk Jelly & Cream | Vegetable Sausage Roll<br>Sausage Roll and Sals<br>Selection of Sandwiches<br>Ice-Cream<br>Strawberry Gateau   |

Figure 6: The four-weekly menu was displayed in all of the dining rooms.





Figure 7. Activities for the residents at Silk Court were varied and accounted for their preferences.

## Residents

### What has worked well?

- Most residents were alert and involved in a variety of activities such as singing, gift-wrapping and watching movies.
- All of the residents were well-presented and were observed wearing Christmas jumpers for the dedicated Christmas Jumper Day.
- Residents with a high dependency were always helped by a member of staff.

### What could be improved?

- Residents were looked after incredibly well so no improvements were identified.

## Staff

### What has worked well?

- Activity coordinator and the deputy manager were very friendly with residents. Some staff members were a bit quieter but observed to be attentive and patient with the residents. Residents were addressed in a caring and respectful manner; help was also provided with going to the toilet, if required.
- Staff were wearing appropriate attire and were observed in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

### What could be improved?

- No areas of improvement were identified. Long-term staff members were providing exceptional care for the residents.

# 4. Interview with Management

During the visit on 07<sup>th</sup> December 2023, we had the opportunity to interview the deputy care home manager of Silk Court Care Home.

We asked a total of 25 questions divided into two sections: Residents and Staff. Within the Residents section, questions are split into the following themes: Food, Hydration and Temperature; Safety and Security; Engagement and Inclusion and Community Services.

## 4.1 Residents: Food, Hydration and Temperature

The Deputy Manager was confident that the dietary requirements of the residents were being met sufficiently; The needs are reviewed on a weekly basis and any updates are made on a dedicated sheet. Residents have a choice from the menu for their meals and in case anything is out of stock, a sheet located outside the dining room is updated accordingly. The four-week menu is made after taste-testing sessions, making sure to take the residents' preferences onboard.

Any residents that require support with eating and drinking are helped according to their person-centred care plans, as some individuals prefer to have their independence. The provision of liquids is monitored via physical Food and Fluid chart. The care home is also currently in the process of transitioning into using digital care plans.

Regarding ventilation and temperature of the care home, the deputy manager said there has been no complaints. During summer, there are cold snack stations put into place and each unit is provided with an air conditioning unit or windows are kept open. Residents are also given time to relax outside in the warm weather.

## 4.2 Residents: Safety and Security

The care home has robust security in which visitors are all required to buzz in at the entrance, after which they are greeted in an enclosed reception space. The visitors are asked for ID and complete the sign-in process on their digital screen. The sign-in system is directly linked to the emergency fire evacuation system. The staff members aim to wear their IDs but in cases where they are not, it is usually due to the quick turnaround. New ID cards are in the process of being manufactured.

All residents with capacity, visitors and staff members are aware of the fire evacuation plans. Residents who do not have the capacity to retain the information due to their condition are assisted by staff. Staff members update the personal evacuation plan for each resident monthly.



In relation to raising a safeguarding concern, all residents with capacity, visitors and staff are aware of the procedure. Staff are assigned an e-learning module and an in-person teaching session which they are required to complete. There is an internal system in place where the actions being taken are noted down to prevent a recurrence. Staff are encouraged to report any issues so that it can be investigated. There are also whistleblowing posters displayed for staff.

The complaints procedure is very similar to raising a safeguarding concern. Silk Court Care Home practices an open-door policy, meaning anyone can bring up any concerns. The senior staff put action plans and reflective practices in place.

### **4.3 Residents: Engagement and inclusion**

To contribute to menu planning, residents are encouraged to participate in food tasting sessions and asked to complete food review forms. The food review forms are checked weekly. Residents have full flexibility in terms of where they can eat – there is a dining room located on every floor for each unit, along with a foyer area. Residents can also have room service if they wish. Their preference is reflected in the residents' care plans.

Similarly, residents can suggest activities for the week and are helped to participate. There is a variety of activities from which the residents can independently choose from on a given day. Staff encourage and support residents to make friends with other residents. Many have their own friends but those who are a bit more apprehensive are given a gentle push, whilst adhering to the safeguarding guidelines.

Provisions are made for residents when English is their second language. For example, a Russian resident who had forgotten English because of their dementia, was assigned a care worker who fluently spoke Russian. Support is also provided to residents with diverse cultural backgrounds and/or sexual identities. The deputy manager shared that they celebrate all festivities and do not scrutinise based on beliefs. Staff are all very respectful of everyone.

Prior to the admission of a resident, their likes and dislikes are recorded on their care plans. This allows staff to be aware of the residents' wider interests and organise appropriate opportunities to visit places such as museums or national parks.

### **4.4 Residents: Community Services**

Silk Court liaises with Bethnal Green Health Centre, Boots Pharmacy Stratford and Community Dental services to provide adequate local health and social care services to their residents. When questioned on their satisfaction with the mentioned services, the deputy manager expressed some discontent. Understandably, due to the nationwide challenges with appointment waiting list, the residents often turn to the private service providers for their healthcare needs.

It was revealed that there has been some friction between Silk Court Care Home and Bethnal Green Health Centre. Letters of Authority were not being processed and emails were not being acknowledged. There is a specific GP allocated to visiting the care home weekly. According to the deputy manager, they often contact the GP to ensure that they would be visiting on the agreed day, as it is

unclear at times. These recurring issues have been escalated with the practice, which concluded in monthly meetings being put into place to discuss and monitor concerns. However, it was shared that the monthly meetings only occurred twice or thrice, after which they stopped responding. It is understood that the issue was not fully resolved, and the service provided fluctuates in quality.

#### **4.5 Staff: Opportunities and Concerns**

At Silk Court Care Home, new staff members must complete mandatory e-learning and are supported by staff. The duration of the induction programme was not clarified. The care home utilises the MyLearning system for their training. Staff are encouraged to view the course dashboard on MyLearning for any courses they would like to participate in and express their interest to the management who can put them on. Some staff members have been able to complete Level 2 Social Care this way.

Staff are monitored and supported in their work via the supervision and performance folder. It consists of notes made during staff one-to-one meetings during which 4 goals are set for them to meet along with objectives. This is reviewed at the end of the year. Each day, staff are asked onsite if they are okay.

At the time of the visit, there were no visitor restrictions at the care. However, Silk Court has things in place in case of any outbreaks and are ready to proceed according to GP advice. The deputy manager expressed that she was satisfied with the level of staffing at Silk Court and in addition, they are also onboarding more bank staff.

The recent most advancement at the care home has been transitioning into using Digital Care Plans. There has been training provided for the system usage. It stores all the data that would be needed for staff and if the CQC were planning a visit. Currently medication is still on a paper-based system, so the team are aiming to digitise that soon.

# 5. Interview with Staff

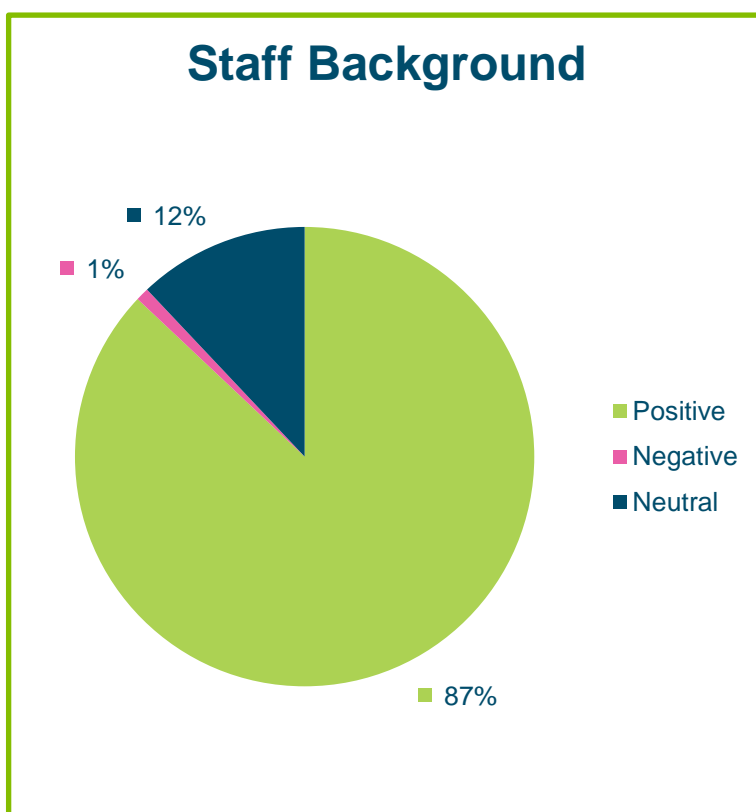
During the visit on 07th December 2023, we had the opportunity to interview an extensive number of staff members, 7 onsite interviews and 20 pre-completed questionnaires. They were all presented the same set of questions.

A total of 25 questions were divided into two sections: Background and Your work with Residents. There are six training and shift related questions in the Background section, and six questions enquiring about opportunities, service access and management in the Your Work with Residents section.

The feedback has been coded based on positive, neutral and negative sentiment to questions asked. Answers that were left blank have not been included whilst “unsure” has been coded as a neutral response.

The results have been presented in pie charts, accompanied with some quotes and commentary on the trends found.

## Questions 1–6: Staff Background



Generally, the majority of staff members had been working at Silk Court Care Home for more than 4 years, based on 60% of the staff feedback received. Notably, 2 staff members have been at the care home for 16 years. The rest of the staff members are evenly split between 1–3 years and under 12 months of working at Silk Court Care Home.

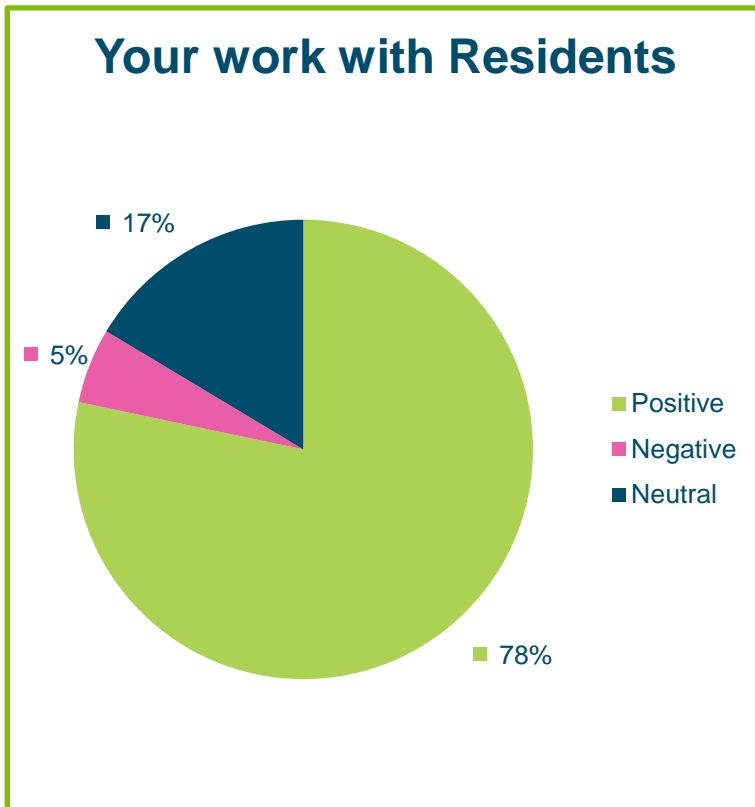
All staff had received an induction into their roles and found it helpful. It was shared that the induction period is 2 weeks long and can last longer if the employee feels as though they require more support.

All staff members have also received training specific to their roles, some examples are Dementia Care related training,

Health and Food Safety, Food Safety and staff are encouraged to make any other suggestions. Due to the good support and the abundance of training provided, staff members feel as though they don't need any other training.

Staff members are all satisfied with the number of breaks they receive during their shifts. The implementation of the digital care plan system has made handover smooth and staff members are satisfied.

## Questions 7-13: Your work with Residents



Staff were enquired about their satisfaction with opportunity to support residents, such as monitoring their health and well-being, helping them engage in communal or individual activities.

90% of the responses were positively agreeing that residents do receive the appropriate support at Silk Court.

Approximately, 11% claimed that residents do face difficulty in accessing community health and social care services – one mentioning that transport can be difficult sometimes as they have to book 1 to 3 days in advance.

There is a clear procedure for raising a safeguarding issue at the care home, as supported by 93% of

the staff. There are signs posted everywhere encouraging individuals to talk to the manager and training is provided on safeguarding which is updated every year. If any issues are observed, it is raised immediately.

Currently, 26% of staff stated that they are aware of issues that may be affecting the residents' welfare, though the majority 74% stated that there were no issues that they were aware of. Some elaborated, sharing that the issue was based with the local authority, delayed Social Care Services, financial support for residents with no relatives or getting personal funding from social services. 33% of staff have had an instance of raising a concern with a member of management and 100% of which had a positive outcome, with staff claiming the issue was dealt with promptly and praising the open-door policy.

# 6. Interview with Residents and Family

During the visit on 07th December 2023, we had the opportunity to interview 18 residents and 6 friends, family and carers. 12 of the questionnaires were completed onsite, while the remaining 12 were pre-completed prior to the visit. They were all presented the same set of questions.

The questionnaire consists of a total of 15 questions, exploring topics such as Communication of Plans, Food, Hydration and Temperature, Social Engagement and Activities, Satisfaction with Health Services and Personal Care and Covid Precautions and Overall Satisfaction.

The feedback has been coded based on positive, neutral and negative sentiment to questions asked. The results have been presented in pie charts, accompanied with some quotes and commentary on the trends found for specific questions. Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer feedback is presented on the Right side.



*Figure 8: Silk Court had numerous noticeboards displayed throughout the premises, all filled with posters and booklets that appeared to be up to date.*



## 6.1 Communication of Plans

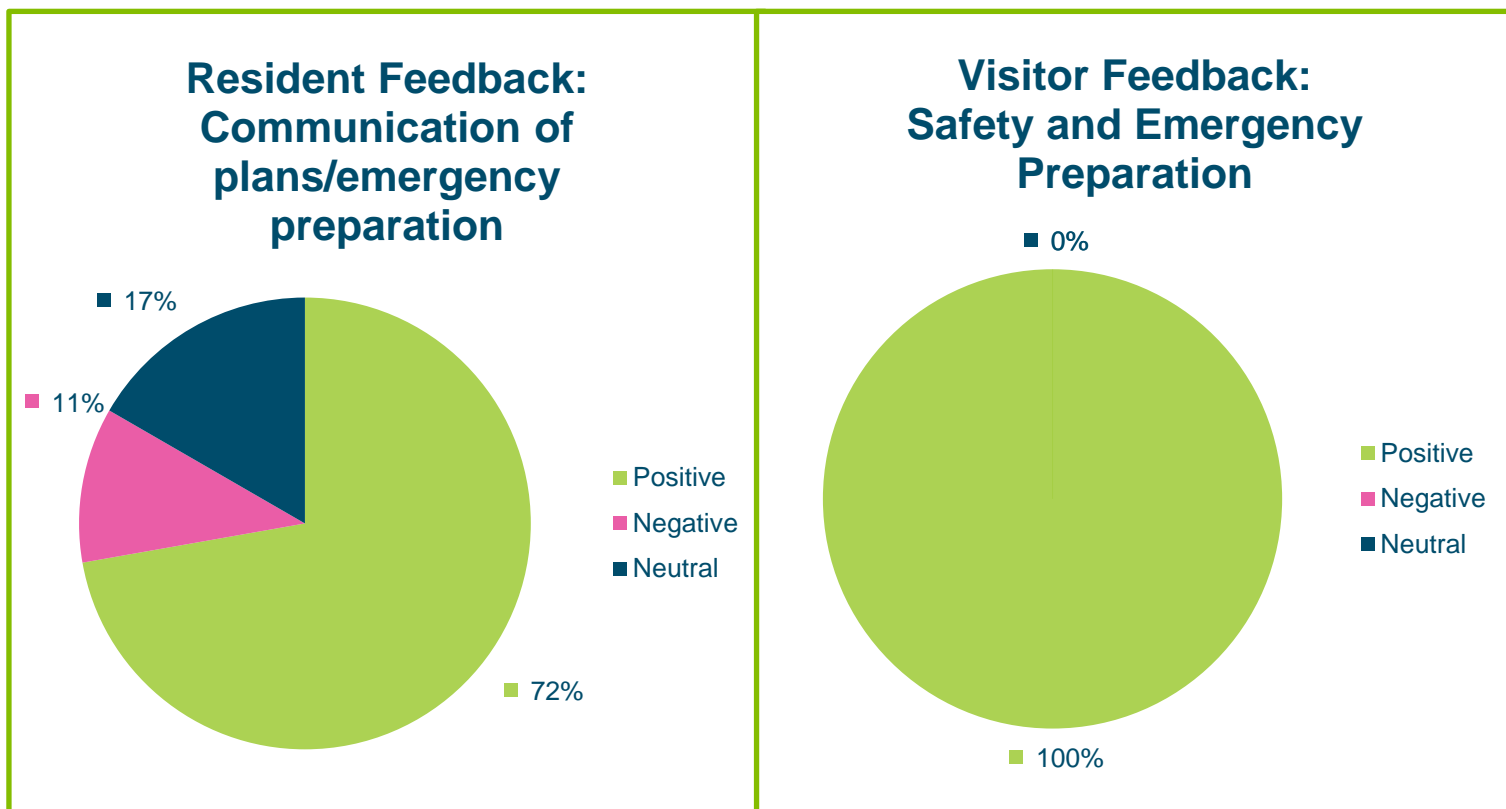


Figure 9: Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer (Visitor) feedback is presented on the Right side.

The general consensus between residents and family members regarding the communication of plans and emergency preparation was positive (residents 72%, family 100%). Residents, family members and alike were appreciative of the clear care plans. They also mentioned that they felt safe due to the strict signing in and out system that is in place.

A few residents (17%) did express that they were not kept informed of any concerns regarding accidents or ill-health and future care plans, but this could be due to their capacity to retain information because of conditions such as dementia.

## 6.2 Food, Hydration and Temperature

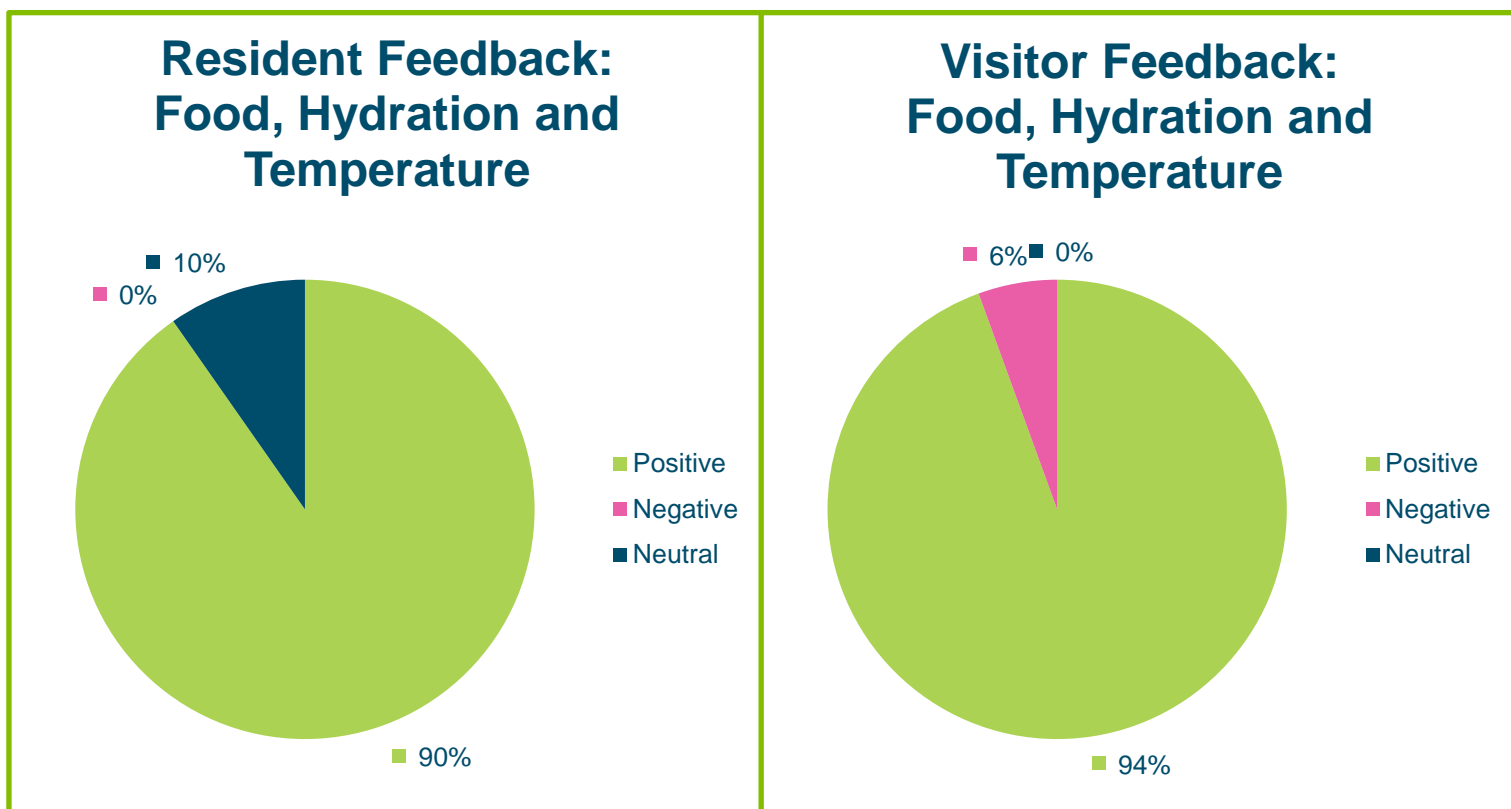


Figure 10: Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer (Visitor) feedback is presented on the Right side.

Majority of residents (90%) and family members (94%) were happy with the food and hydration provided at Silk Court. All of the residents and family were happy with the temperature at the care home, stating that it is warm enough – a few residents even mentioned that the care home can be too warm at times.

## 6.3 Social Engagement and Activities

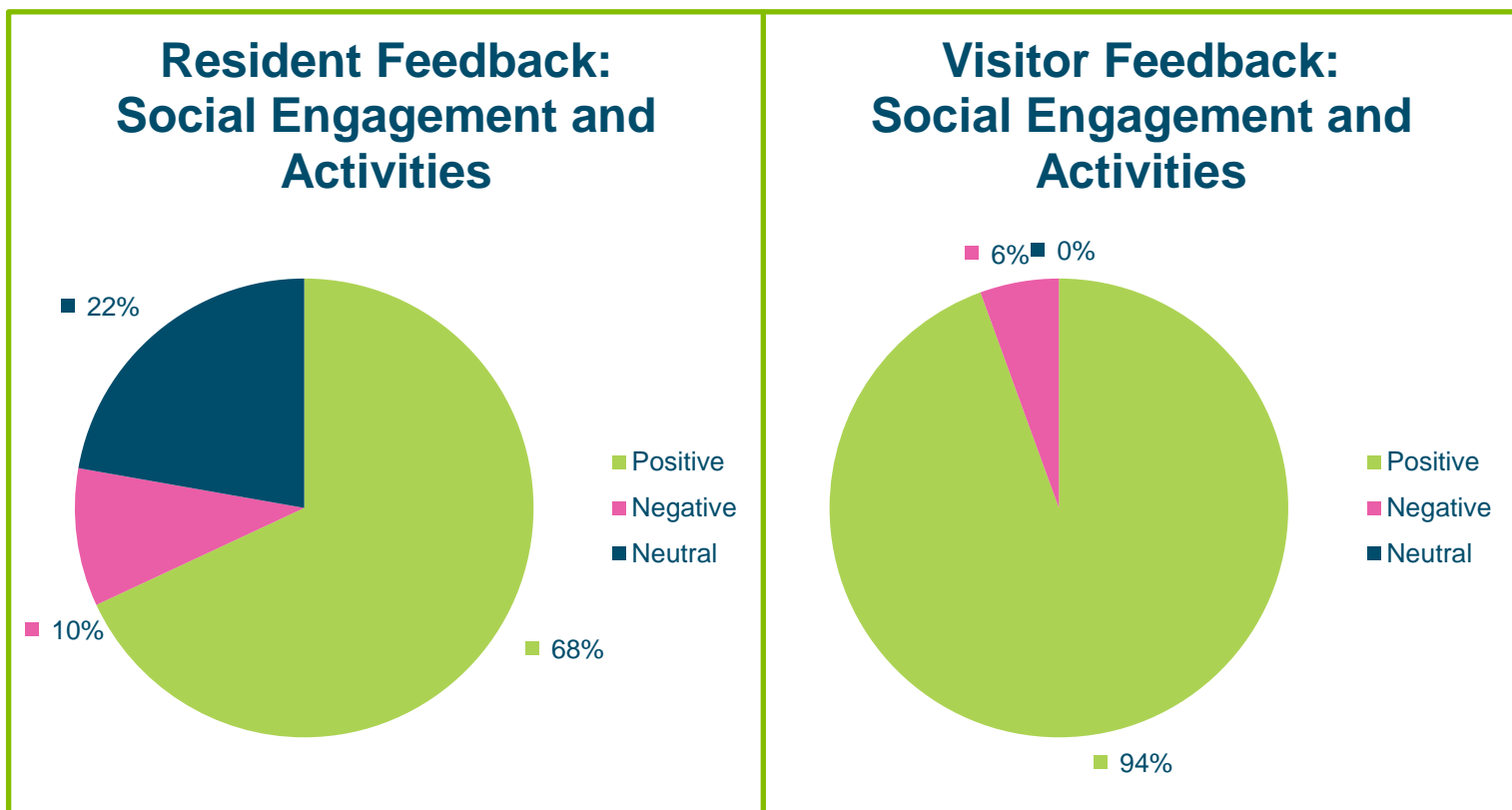


Figure 11: Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer (Visitor) feedback is presented on the Right side.

This section asked residents and family about the social life at Silk Court care home, along with the variation of activities provided.

The general sentiment towards social engagement and activities was positive from both groups (residents 68%, family 94%) – it was highlighted that they enjoyed the experience of trying something new and having the choice of whether they want to participate or not. A few residents had a neutral sentiment towards the activities provided as they would usually choose not to participate due to a lack of interest or mobility restraints.

Many residents had friends or family that frequently visited them, but some mentioned they would like to have more friends. Family members commended the care home on having a variety of entertainers and activities are the care home, all providing a different level of stimulation suitable of all residents.

## 6.4 Satisfaction with Health Services and Personal Care

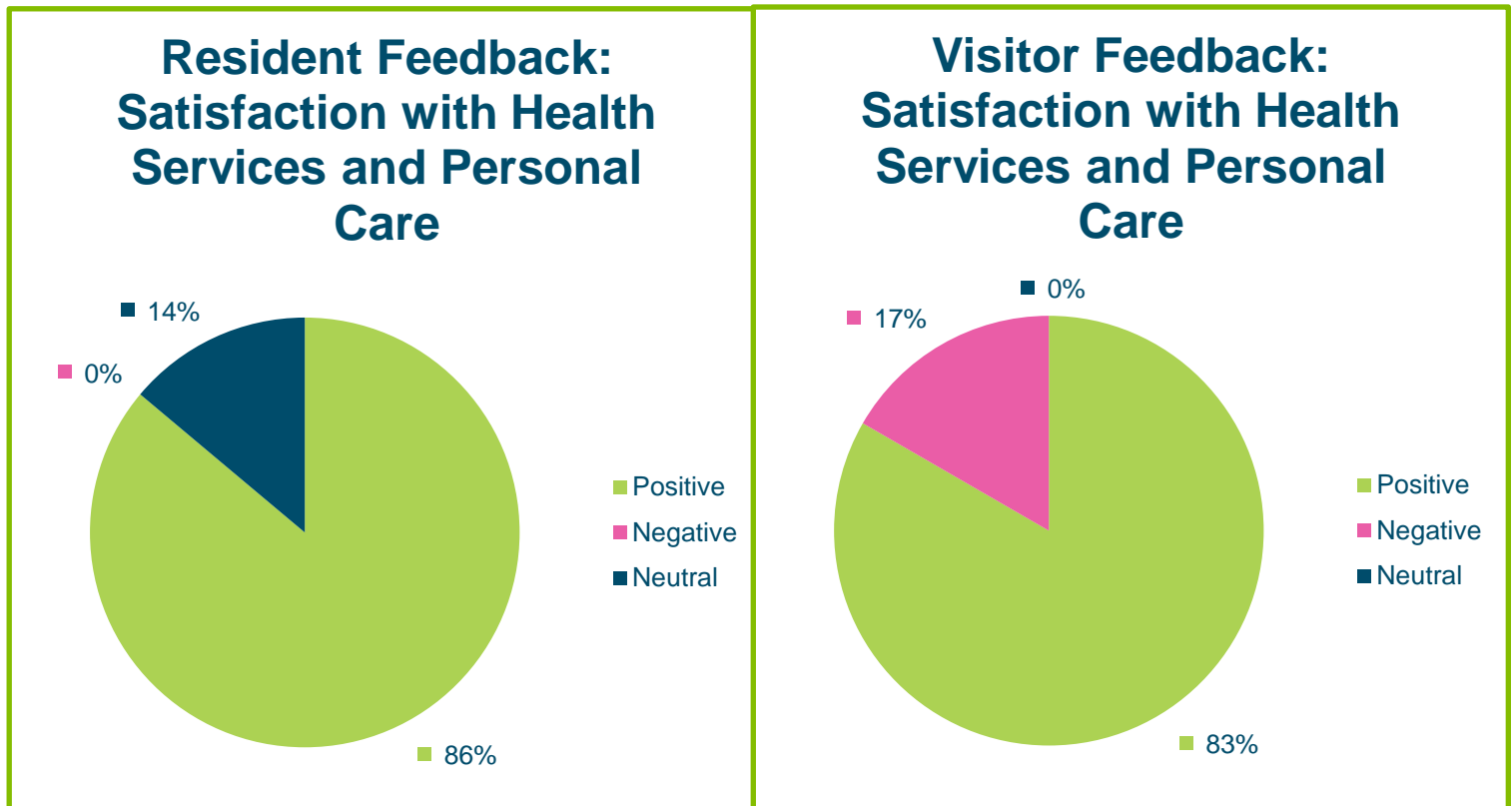


Figure 12: Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer (Visitor) feedback is presented on the Right side.

This section enquired about the level of support residents receive from other local health and social care services such as GPs, dentists and pharmacies. Residents and families were also asked about the quality of the personal care provided. Many residents (86%) were satisfied with the GPs and pharmacies, mentioning that the GP is very reliable.

However, there was mixed feedback regarding dentists, some saying that they had not seen a dentist or have found it difficult to arrange an appointment but others mentioning that they have been able to access the dental service via the care home.

The feedback from family members was overall positive (83%). A similar negative sentiment towards GPs and opticians was expressed. One family member shared that they were unsure whether an optician has ever done an in-house eye-test. All residents and family members were satisfied with the personal care provided, stating that staff are caring and gentle.

## 6.5 COVID-19 Precautions and Overall Satisfaction

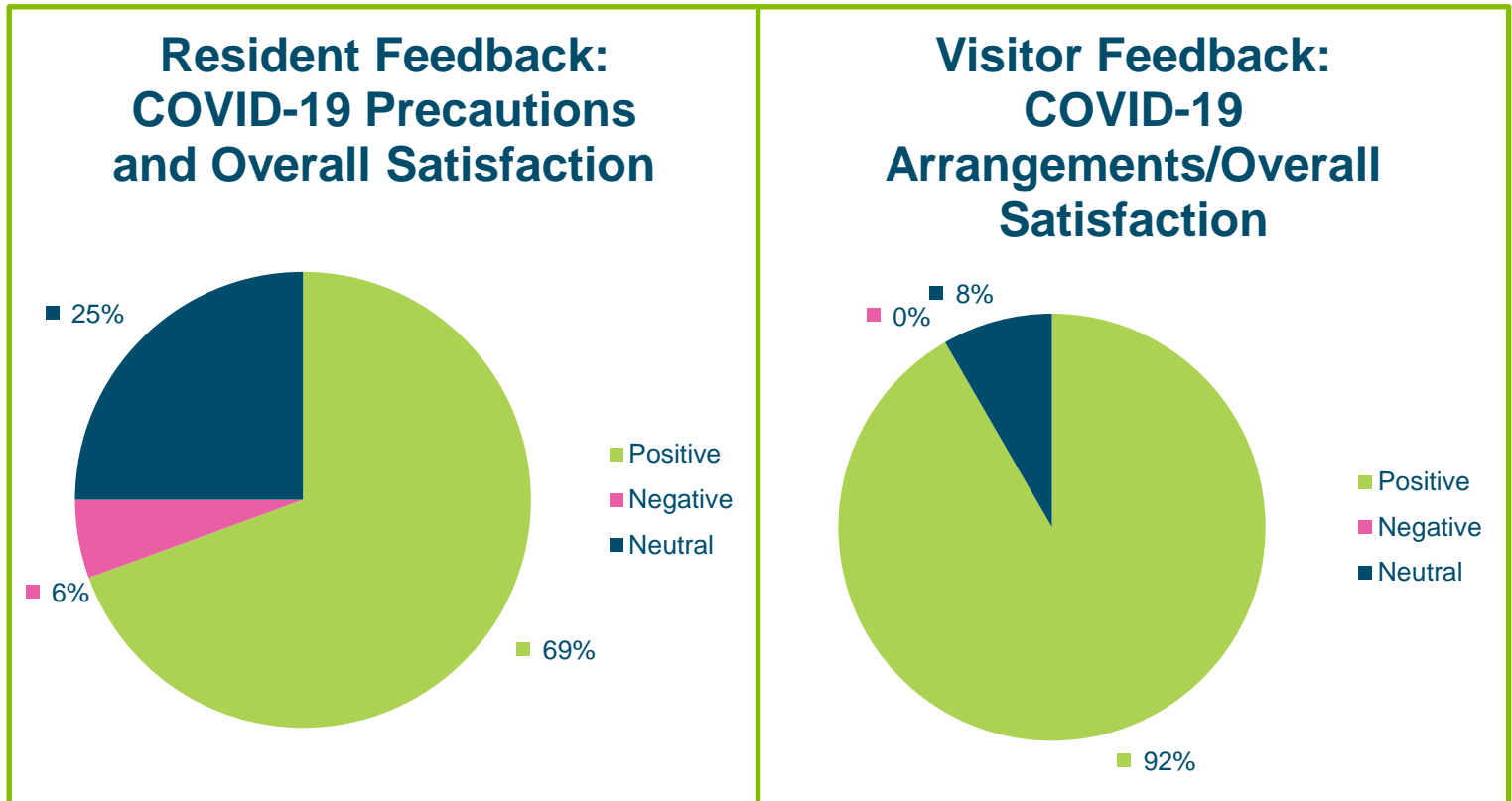


Figure 13: Resident feedback is presented on the Left side and Friends/Family/Carer (Visitor) feedback is presented on the Right side.

All residents and family members were content with the COVID-19 precautionary arrangements in place.

72% of residents and 83% of family members had a positive sentiment towards the services at Silk Court care home, agreeing that they have been treated with dignity and respect.

Residents shared that they felt happy, protected and the staff members are nice but overstretched. Family members shared that staff members are very open and communicative, explaining that they feel like their loved ones are well-cared for, both physically and emotionally, at Silk Court.



# 7. Conclusion

The Healthwatch Tower Hamlets visit to Silk Court Care Home was an overwhelmingly positive experience with only one significant area of improvement identified. Below, we have highlighted positive aspects of the care home visit and have included our recommendations for improvement.

## 7.1 Good Practice

### General Observations:

- The entrance of Silk Court is accessible via both stairs and a ramp, leading to a secure reception area. Visitors are only allowed access to the care home upon verification of identity and completion of the sign-in form. The main foyer area was well-decorated for the festive season. The premises had appropriately bright lighting and good atmosphere.
- Regarding Dementia-Friendly adaptations; All appropriate accommodations for those with dementia were made to the interior decorations and placement of key features such as light switches and door handles. Photo frames on display in corridors were also customised to residents' liking. Corridors are spacious and can accommodate for those in wheelchairs or using walking frames. There were two lifts at the facility, both appearing to be well-maintained.
- Activities timetable was up-to-date and varied so there were appropriate options for all residents. All appropriate information regarding complaints, feedback, staff information and four-weekly menu were observed on the noticeboards.
- The fire safety protocol was well-maintained, with the fire exits and extinguishers clearly labelled and accompanied by the fire emergency procedures.
- Residents' bedrooms were observed to be clean, spacious, and decorated uniquely, based on the residents' preferences. All bedrooms are en-suites, with emergency alarms installed appropriately. The bathrooms included an extra-long handle for stability.
- There were a few lounge rooms and a dining room on each floor, consisting of a TV and radio. Each lounge room had a different activity taking place, split into social or quiet rooms. The care home has a garden with safe access, decorated with benches and chairs for lounging purposes. Residents were observed to be alert and well-dressed.
- Staff members were very friendly and respectful towards the residents, who were addressed in a caring manner. They were also wearing the appropriate attire and PPE where needed.

## Interviews:

- The dietary requirements of the residents are reviewed on a weekly basis and take the residents' preferences onboard. The care home is currently in the process of transitioning into using digital care plans, which would make the monitoring of the Food and Fluid charts easier. Regarding ventilation and temperature, there have been no complaints. Cold snack stations and air conditioning units are put into place during summer. Residents are also encouraged to relax outside in the warm weather.
- Residents who do not have the capacity to retain information about the fire evacuation plan are assisted by staff members. The information is updated for each resident monthly.
- Provisions are made for residents with English as their second language – the care home tries to assign care workers that can speak the respective language of the residents they are allocated. All festivities are celebrated, and staff are all very respectful of everyone.
- At Silk Court Care Home, staff members are encouraged to participate in training courses in addition to the mandatory e-learning that is allocated as a part of their induction. When staff members express their interest, they are supported by management who put them into the courses. There appears to be a healthy dynamic between staff members and the management team, where they are regular one-to-one meetings where goals are reviewed, and well-being is checked daily.
- All the feedback received from staff, residents, families, carers, and friends were predominantly positive – commending the care home on the quality of care provided to the residents, both physically and emotionally.



Figure 14: Festive display located in the foyer within Silk Court.

## 7.2 Recommendations

Some recommendations have been suggested based on the observations and the feedback received during the visit. Overall, there was only one significant area of improvement identified with the other improvements identified being minor.

The Care Home Manager at Silk Court was requested to respond to the following recommendations:

### Community Services for Residents

Regarding the quality of health and care services provided for the Residents at Silk Court Care Home, the Deputy Manager revealed that there has been a strained relation with Bethnal Green Health Centre, elaborated below. Residents and visitors had mixed feedback but explicitly expressed their concern towards dental and opticians' services. Staff expressed their concerns regarding arranging transport for residents.

*It was revealed that there has been some friction between Silk Court Care Home and Bethnal Green Health Centre. Letters of Authority were not being processed and emails were not being acknowledged. There is a specific GP allocated to visiting the care home weekly. According to the deputy manager, they often contact the GP to ensure that they would be visiting on the agreed day, as it is unclear at times.*

*These recurring issues have been escalated with practice, which concluded in monthly meetings put into place to discuss and monitor concerns. However, it was shared that the monthly meetings only occurred twice or thrice, after which they stopped responding. It is understood that the issue was not fully resolved, and the service provided fluctuates in quality.*

*There was mixed feedback regarding dentists, some saying that they had not seen a dentist or have found it difficult to arrange an appointment but others mentioning that they have been able to access the dental service via the care home.*

*The feedback from family members reflected a similar sentiment towards GPs and opticians. One family member shared that they were unsure whether an optician has ever done an in-house eye-test.*

*[Arranging] transport can be difficult sometimes as [the staff] have to book 1 to 3 days in advance.*

- Healthwatch Tower Hamlets recognises that there has been a strain on the NHS and a nationwide crisis with appointment waiting lists, which has been reflected across all health services. However, the friction between Silk Court Care Home and Bethnal Green Health Centre is very concerning as it involves

the residents' access to prescription medication. We advise Silk Court to reach out to the practice manager at Bethnal Green Health Centre to reinstate the monthly meetings to resolve the ongoing issue. Simultaneously, do consider raising the complaint to the North-East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB) and/or the GP Care Group, who would be able to formally investigate the complaint and prevent recurrence in the future.

- Silk Court could consider arranging more frequent visits from dentists and opticians. Regularly asking the residents regarding their oral and ocular health would ensure that their input is taken into account, and they feel listened to.
- In relation to arranging transport for residents, there is a lack of flexibility when utilising contracted transport for short-notice trips. Hence, it is worth comparing the cost of buying the transport in from outside against the cost of providing it in-house. Running an in-house vehicle can have a higher upfront cost but it would provide increased flexibility. Croner-I has an article called "Transport for People Receiving Care: In-depth" that would provide greater insight into the topic.

#### Manager Response:

- 1) Silk Court has been in contact with Bethnal Green Health Centre and are in the process of trying to restart meetings. Emails have been sent to the Practice Manager to arrange this to discuss concerns we have previously addressed. Silk Court are currently awaiting Bethnal Green Health Centre to respond with an agreed day each month. This should help in discussing issues and concerns which can be resolved to provide the best care possible for the customers under our care. Person-centred care and Partnership Working is highly important to achieve the best care possible and Silk Court team thrives in achieving this at all times.
- 2) Opticians- Optician visits are regularly arranged for the customers via Outside Clinic. There has been a recent visit and up to date customers list sent to enable further appointments to be arranged. The Optician comes into the home to support the customers with their visits. NOK are informed of this and can accompany their loved ones should they prefer to.

Dentist- Silk Court does not currently have a visiting Dentist however the team are able to book appointments for customers to see a dentist as appropriate. Oral Care is within each customers care plans as well as Planned Cares via the DCP to ensure customers are being supported in a person-centred way with all aspects of their care needs. The purpose of Planned Cares is so that reminders pop up onto care staff phones to complete these tasks alongside each customers preference.

- 3) Regarding transport for appointments, although transport must be booked 1-3 days in advance, this is something that works for the home and considering the strain on NHS it is understandable for any delays. Private transport would not work due to costing and arranging for drivers and escorts (which would be at a charge) would not be something that can be put into place currently.

## Outside and entrance at Silk Court

*It was difficult to identify the main entrance when approaching from Bethnal Green Road using Google Maps*

*Entrance feels a bit small and not clear from the road, even though the car park appears to be spacious.*

- We recommend Silk Court to consider placing more placards and clearer signage highlighting the direction of the care home's entrance. Understandably, the size of the outside entrance can be difficult to change so clearer signage placed on the walls surrounding the care home would be a tangible improvement.

### Manager Response:

- 1) We advise all visitors coming to the home to type "Entrance – Anchor Silk Court" into their Google Maps. They are also advised the entrance is via Pollard Row. This pinpoints the exact turn into the care home car park and the main entrance, whether driving or by foot.
- 2) Silk Court Management team are in the process of arranging some further signage that can be put around the home to support in locating the Main Entrance from the road.



## Environment & Safety

Generally the environment at the care home was homely and thoughtfully decorated. Safety of the residents, staff and visitors were well accounted for with spacious corridors etc. However, some minor areas of improvement were identified in the paintwork and the construction site within the care home.

*Some wear and tear in paintwork was observed in areas.*

*Some wear and tear were observed next to the emergency alarms in the bedrooms. We would advise Silk Court to fill in areas of the wall to make it smooth and aesthetically pleasing.*

*Although contained, the construction works going on within the 1st floor could have been closed off more clearly.*

- It was discussed that more paintwork was due to be conducted, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets support this and hope that paintwork is refreshed in the respective areas to maintain the exceptional environment of the care home.
- We recommend that construction sites within the care home are closed off more clearly in the future – this could be done by placing a caution tape around the site, so individuals are not stepping over potential trip hazards and are walking around it instead.

### Manager Response:

- 1) Silk Court has discussed the above with the handyman who has gone around and continues to go around the home in regular intervals to ensure a note is made of all paintwork that is required. Paintwork is then refreshed following this. Upon a customer moving out, further refresh of the room is completed as well as full repaints to enable a fresh space for the next customer.
- 2) Jobs are raised in relation to any construction issues that may be required. Advice has been taken regarding works and contractors informed regarding closing the area off in a more appropriate manner, although orange stand-up board was used during the Fire Door Works at the time of the Health Watch visit, to block the area from being used by customers, staff and visitors within the building. A notification was also sent to all customers, relatives, staff etc regarding the works so they are aware.



## Temperature/Ventilation in Bedrooms

It was mentioned numerous times that the care home sometimes gets too warm for residents during winter. During summer, air conditioning units were said to be installed to ensure that the residents do not overheat. It is worth noting that no formal complaints have been made regarding temperature and residents seem generally happy with the matter.

*All of the residents and family were happy with the temperature at the care home, stating that it is warm enough – a few residents even mentioned that the care home can be too warm sometimes.*

- To address this concern, Silk Court could consider permanently installing air conditioning units in bedrooms to further improve ventilation and to allow residents to have better control over the temperature within their bedrooms.

### Manager Response:

- 1) Temperature Thermometers are in every bedroom, corridors, lounge areas, medication room etc throughout the whole care home. This is to ensure the temperature is kept at a good level. Warm/Cold Weather alerts are actioned immediately, and Silk Court has a plan in place on what actions staff are to take during these times. Some examples of this for warm weather are providing adequate fluids for customers, in jugs etc during this time. Extra blankets are provided and heating with thermostats are utilized throughout the home should it get cold. As mentioned above Silk Court has several Air Conditioning units which are also used as well as fans.

## Meals & Activities at Silk Court

Although it was mentioned that all festivities are celebrated at the care home, it was unclear whether residents are also offered culturally appropriate dishes if requested. Additionally, no allergen information posters nor pictorial menus were observed during the visit. Interviews with residents regarding activities provided at Silk Court revealed that a few chose not to participate due to a lack of interest or mobility restraints.

*It was unclear whether residents are offered culturally appropriate dishes if requested.*

*No allergen information on display on the menus posted on the wall.*

*Implementing the presentation of pictorial menus can be helpful for residents with dementia.*

*A few residents had a neutral sentiment towards the activities provided as they would usually choose not to participate due to a lack of interest or mobility restraints.*

- If it has not been implemented, we advise Silk Court Care Home to consider culturally diversifying the meals provided at the care home, depending on the interests of the residents. There is a thorough selection process in place for the four-week menus, which should be commended. This suggestion is specifically referring to day-to-day requests that may be made by residents.
- We strongly advise Silk Court to display informational posters regarding allergens and pictorial menus on noticeboards located in and near the dining room areas.
- The activities provided at Silk Court were observed to be diverse and inclusive but some room for further improvement remains. Although majority of residents were content with the social engagement and activities provided, consider implementing 1-1 sessions between residents and the activities coordinator so activity interests appropriately recorded. Generally, the inclusion of a variety of accessible activities that change occasionally could increase resident engagement.

### Manager Response:

- 1) Silk Court completes taste testing sessions with the customers and their relatives to enable choice. Feedback received is then used in creating the menu's. Customers are asked what they would like to see on the menu and this food is then cooked for the taste testing session. Dependent on the feedback a further food taste testing session can be arranged which further options and then the feedback retrieved is used to implement a menu. Should new customers come to the home or customers want to see something different on the menu on a day-to-day, their preference is taken into account and relevant changes made to the menu as and when required.

- 2) Each kitchenette/dining area on all three units has a clear Allergen Notice poster visible for all. All meals come from the kitchen that is decan from its originally packaging and prepared have an allergen label on them. The is Silk Court also has table menus for the customers to use at each mealtime with large writing for those who may be visually impaired. Silk Court practices show-plating at each mealtime which consists of staff presenting each option on the menu to each and every customer. They are then able to make a choice of what they would like to eat, therefore providing them a visual of what the meal looks like at the time of service.
- 3) Customers preference regarding activities and engagement is followed as per their care plan. Daily activities calendars are followed as well as other engagement throughout the day as some customers prefer listening to music, reading magazines, dominoes game etc, while others may like to take part in group activities. There are resources within the home to cater for all types of preference to ensure customers wellbeing is being promoted. Zest is practiced throughout the home and is done several times each week- this helps promote movement and supports in decreasing the amount of falls that may occur within the home. Planned Cares for activities and engagements are in place in line with the customers preference.



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