

healthwatch

Sandwell

**Enter & View visit
Report
Tendercare Oldbury
March 2026**



Introduction

Healthwatch Sandwell (HWS) is the independent voice of the public in health and social care in Sandwell. We collect feedback from the public in Sandwell about their experiences of using health and social care services and use that feedback to work with service providers and commissioners to find ways to improve services.

What is Enter & View

Part of HWS remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. HWS Authorised Representatives (AR) will conduct 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 (2012) allow 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, opticians, optometrist, 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 Sandwell Enter and View visits are not specifically intended to identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Sandwell Safeguarding Policy, the service manager will be informed, and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

Background

HWS Enter and View Programme 2025/26

Taking into consideration the rationale and criteria for visits, the Enter and View programme for 2025/26 will visit:

- **Care homes that support people with dementia**
- **Hospital wards who care for people with dementia when staying in hospital**

We will engage with people with dementia, family/friends and staff who provide care. We will seek to find out about:

- **Healthy Environment** – The right to live in surroundings that support health and wellbeing.
- **Essential Services** – Access to high-quality preventative, treatment, and care services to avoid crisis.

- **Access** – Equal access to services without discrimination, tailored to individual and family needs.
- **Safe, Dignified, Quality Services** – Services that are safe, confidential, and delivered with dignity and respect.
- **Information and Education** – Clear, accurate information and education to support informed decisions and self-care.
- **Choice** – The right to choose from a range of high-quality services and providers.
- **Being Listened To** – The right to have concerns and views heard and acted upon.
- **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.



The programme will provide a report of the visits. The report will be shared with providers, regulators, the local authority, and NHS commissioners and quality assurers, the public, Healthwatch England and any other relevant partners based on what was found during the visits. They will be published on all our social media platforms.

This programme will explore the impact of dementia within care home and hospital settings.

Sandwell’s Dementia Strategy (2019–2025) outlines a comprehensive approach to supporting individuals with dementia and their carers.

The borough is working toward becoming a Dementia Friendly Community, with a focus on personalised care, better-trained staff, and clearer service pathways.

On this occasion, we conducted an Enter and View visit to explore the experiences of elderly residents living with dementia at **Tendercare**.

Tendercare (Tendercare Home Ltd)

Tendercare is situated at 237–239 Oldbury Road, Rowley Regis, B65 0PP. The home offers forty-two single rooms and two companion/couple rooms, with thirty-two rooms providing en-suite facilities. Tendercare supports adults aged sixty-five and over, including those living with dementia.

Referrals to the home can be made through Social Services, Direct payments, or private arrangements.

Tendercare is one of three care homes within the group, all based across the West Midlands. The home received an overall **'Good'** rating from the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)** on **21 October 2021**.

Our Report

This report presents the observations and insights obtained during the Enter and View visit conducted on 16th February 2026. The findings represent the perspectives of those who shared their views with us during the visit and should not be considered reflective of all individuals within the service. We anticipate that the recommendations provided will contribute to strengthening service delivery and improving outcomes for the people who use the service.

The visit was undertaken by HWS Authorised Representatives (AR):
Helen Bennett and Amritpal Randhawa

Methodology

During the visit ARs engaged in conversations with residents, their relatives and staff members using a structured set of questions, these focused on two key areas.



Service User Experience

Including feedback on care provided by staff, accessibility of the building, availability of information, and suggestions for service improvement.



Staff Responsiveness to Individual Needs

Exploring how staff address communication needs of service users with impairments, manage anti-social behaviour from service users or relatives, support individuals wishing to raise concerns or complaints, and gather suggestions for enhancing service delivery.

In addition to these discussions, representatives carried out environmental observations both internally and externally. These included assessments of:

- Signage
- Accessibility
- Lighting
- Refreshments
- Cleanliness
- Parking and transport options

Participation was entirely voluntary, and the team respected the wishes of those who chose not to engage.

Findings

Healthy Environment

Tendercare is located on a busy main road. The exterior of the building was clean, tidy, and appeared to be well maintained. On-site parking is limited; however, there is ample parking available along the main road.

The main entrance to the home includes a spacious, covered porch area, with a 'What's On' display board mounted on the wall. Potted green foliage and colourful flowers enhanced the entrance. Secure locks were fitted to the front door, with a call bell system in place for controlled access. CCTV cameras were also observed on the exterior of the building.

The reception area was spacious, well maintained, and appeared clean and tidy. Noticeboards displayed all relevant information, including the CQC certificate, Fire Safety Information, and the Infection Control Audit from November 2025 (in which Tendercare achieved 97% as assessed by the Sandwell IPC team).

A notice stating No photos of residents without written consent was also observed, reflecting good safeguarding practice

We were warmly welcomed by the Registered Manager who invited us to sign the visitors' book.

Internal Environment

The manager advised that Tendercare is registered to accommodate forty-six residents, including two double rooms. Not all bedrooms have en-suite facilities. The accommodation is arranged over two floors, with the upstairs rooms designated for residents who require minimal support. The home is currently occupied by forty-one residents.

The manager escorted us to a dining area where we could sit and talk. The environment was bright and colourful, with plenty of artwork displayed on the walls. The lighting was good, and the room temperature was comfortable. She explained that the building comprises of the original structure, with a large extension added later to provide a more spacious environment.



While we were talking, three members of staff walked through to the main lounge area dressed in inflatable animal costumes. They put on sing-along music and encouraged the residents to dance and join in.

It was truly heart-warming to see the residents enjoying themselves, singing and dancing. Those who chose to remain seated were happily clapping along and joining in with the singing. The activity was very interactive and inclusive, ensuring everyone was involved in some way.

There were two dining areas, both beautifully decorated with vibrant colours, murals, and a memorabilia wall. The tables were neatly laid in preparation for lunchtime, and the flooring appeared to be of good quality. A large, colourful menu board was also visible, offering a wide selection of hot and cold meal options for breakfast, lunch, tea, and supper.

Some residents shared:

Residents shared:

“The food is really good here and well cooked”

“I have lived here for 3 years and there is a good choice of food”

Observations

A noticeboard displayed the names of the staff on duty for that day.

Between the dining rooms and the large communal lounge, there was a small alcove furnished with large, comfortable chairs. A bookshelf containing a wide selection of books and a fish tank were also situated in this space. The manager explained that this area is designated for residents to read religious literature and enjoy some quiet time.

The communal lounge was very spacious, providing plenty of room for residents to move around safely. The chairs were observed to be clean and in good condition. A large wall-mounted television was in place, with no trailing wires visible. The lounge featured a glass-style roof, allowing an abundance of natural light to fill the space.



On the day of the visit the room was decorated with a Valentines Day theme, with numerous hearts, flowers and bunting displayed throughout.

Both dining rooms and the lounge contained a range of colourful, visually stimulating objects, including silk flowers, butterflies, fairy lights, and various pieces of artwork. There were also items designed for sensory engagement that residents could touch and feel.

Making paper butterflies can engage the residents in multiple meaningful ways by combining creativity, sensory stimulation, cognitive challenge, and emotional connection.

The outdoor area to the rear of the home was accessible through locked patio doors. It appeared to be clean and well maintained. A large, grassed area was available, accessible via a ramp with a handrail. Tables and chairs were provided for residents' use.

There were raised wooden flower beds and a feature wall dedicated to the Royal Family, displaying numerous photographs and memorabilia.

A resident shared:

"If the weather is nice, I like to go into the garden"

The corridors were spacious and well lit, with sturdy and secure wall-mounted handrails. The décor and flooring were of good quality. The stairs were clean and free from clutter. There were also two glass-fronted lifts, which the manager explained could accommodate two people.

In the corridor, there was a wall dedicated to promoting dignity displaying photographs, quotes, and visual prompts. This type of display is particularly beneficial for people living with dementia, as it provides clear, meaningful cues and reinforces positive values in an accessible and engaging way.

The communal bathrooms and toilets were clean and tidy, with gloves, aprons, hand sanitiser, and face masks visibly available and well stocked. Both doors were clearly labelled with names and pictorial signs to support orientation for all residents.

The manager informed us that the bedrooms at Tendercare vary in size. One room we observed was spacious, clean, and well presented. It was decorated in the resident's chosen colours and personalised with their own possessions, creating a homely and comfortable environment.

We were also informed that televisions can be provided if required.

The en-suite was clean, and the commode featured a coloured seat to support visual contrast. Accessibility was provided via a sliding door, which displayed a luminous pictorial sign to aid easy navigation at nighttime. The windows were fitted with secure locks.

In another bedroom we visited, the resident had chosen to bring her own double bed from home for added personal comfort. The manager explained that they always try to accommodate residents' wishes wherever possible.

It was noted that the rooms were numbered but no names, something that was under construction we were informed.



During our visit, we observed a resident asking the manager if the heating in her room could be adjusted as it was too warm. The manager responded promptly and requested the maintenance staff to address the issue immediately.

Essential services

- The manager informed us that all care plan documentation is recorded on the Person-Centred Software (PCS) system. In addition, all staff carry mobile devices, which they use to record daily actions and updates for each resident.
- We observed a staff member updating information on a handheld device.
- The manager informed us that Regis Medical Centre is the GP practice responsible for the residential unit. They provide weekly home visits.
- Sharma Pharmacy is responsible for providing and delivering the required medication.
- We observed the medication trolley was locked and stored appropriately
- Bhandal Dentists provide home visits, I Care is used for optical services, and Specsavers delivers the service for hearing aids.
- We were advised that physiotherapists, district nurses, and the SALT team attend the home on an as-needed basis. Chiropody services, both NHS and private, are provided bi-monthly. In addition, a hairdresser visits the home every 2–3 weeks.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Physical Accessibility

During the visit, we observed that residents using wheelchairs and walking frames were able to move around the home with ease, receiving support from care staff when required.

The home included accessible features such as handrails throughout the corridors, ramps to the outdoor areas, and two lifts providing access to the first floor.



Evacuation mats were clean, clearly visible, and appropriately positioned, and fire extinguishers were correctly located. Both the stairs and lifts were clean, and all fire exits were clearly marked, helping to maintain a safe and inclusive environment.

Support for Learning Disabilities

We were informed that not all staff supporting residents with learning disabilities had completed the required training.

The manager confirmed that the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism, as required under the Health and Care Act 2022, has not been delivered to all staff currently working at the home.

Ethnic Diversity and Language Support

We were informed that residents who speak English as a second language are supported by care staff who are fluent in the relevant languages. Pictorial aids are also used to enhance communication, and Google Translate is utilised when needed.

We advised the manager that translator service or language line could offer additional support and is readily accessible in the local area.

Information & Education

During our tour of the home, we observed several noticeboards and information displays throughout the premises. These included: CQC certificate, food hygiene rating, fire safety information, infection control, and details of daily activities.

In the dining area, a large colourful menu board was also on display. Additionally, a 'Thank-you' board featured cards and messages from residents' relatives.

Choice

At Tendercare, we were informed that residents may choose to have their meals in the dining room, on a rising table in the lounge, or in their own room if they prefer.

Residents have the option to get up a little later, as breakfast is served until 11.00am.

One resident told us

"I have breakfast in my room and go to the dining room for lunch"

Other residents told us

"food is brilliant and we get a choice"

"the meals are good, well cooked"

A relative told us:

"My parent has only been living here for about six or seven weeks, but everything so far has been really reassuring.

I chose this home after visiting myself, and I remember feeling that the staff were warm and welcoming as soon as I walked through the door.

The home has been brilliant overall. We're able to visit whenever we like, except during mealtimes, as those are protected.

My parent seems happy and settled, which means a lot to us as a family".

At Tendercare, relatives are welcome to visit in the morning, afternoon, or evening. They are kindly asked not to visit during mealtimes, as these are protected times to ensure a calm and comfortable dining experience for residents.

For those residents receiving palliative care, families can visit at any time.

A resident shared:

"I had no choice, but I am happy with the accommodation"

The manager explained that residents can choose to have their clothes washed and labelled by the care staff. However, some residents prefer for their family members to take care of their laundry instead.

A resident shared:

"Sometimes I don't get some things back but on the whole it's ok"

Safe, dignified quality Care

The residential unit was found to be safe, with windows and doors fitted with appropriate secure locking systems and fire exits clearly marked. Fire extinguishers, along with the Evac mat and chair, were clean and stored safely. We were also informed that the fire alarm is tested on a weekly basis.

The radiators were fitted with decorative covers, and all communal areas were monitored by CCTV. The CCTV feed was visible on screen in the office.

Throughout our visit, we observed both the management team and all care staff engaging with and supporting the residents in a warm, caring, and attentive manner. Staff were seen speaking with residents, helping, and serving lunch in a respectful and supportive way.

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Residents shared:

"Staff treat me well; they are all nice"

"The manager Gail, goes above and beyond"

"The staff are very engaging, nothing is too much trouble for them, I can ask them anything"

"Staff are brilliant, they do activities like singing"

"Nice bunch of residents, I feel safe here"

"I am really well looked after"

The manager informed us that three residents were being monitored due to external safeguarding concerns. No additional information or discussion was provided regarding this matter

Activities

The home currently does not have an activity coordinator; however, from our observations of staff engagement and communication with residents, there was still plenty taking place.

- All staff and management work together to provide daily activities and ensure residents remain stimulated and involved.
- The daily activities listed on the noticeboard include sing-along karaoke, quizzes, bingo, and “paint my nails.”
- We were informed that tribute acts, such as Elvis, Buddy Holly, and Tom Jones, visit the home. These performers are familiar and relatable to the residents, providing enjoyable entertainment.
- The home also hosts an annual “Drag Queen” party, and we were shown photos and a video from the event.
- We were informed that evening entertainment is offered on certain nights, and relatives are invited to join in and take part.

A resident shared:

“I join in some activities but like to be in my own room and watch sport, I sometimes join in the evening activities”

Currently, there are no day trips planned, the home does not have its own minibus.

Listened to and being Involved

The residents we spoke with told us that they feel listened to and that staff consistently offer support whenever it is needed. When they have a question or need assistance, staff listen attentively and are always helpful.

They also shared that if they do not like the food being served, the cook is happy to prepare an alternative option for them.

We observed a resident requesting for the temperature in their room to be adjusted, and this was addressed immediately.

Resident meetings are held regularly, and one of the main topics discussed is often changes to meal choices. Relative meetings take place every two to three months, and relatives actively attend these sessions.

Complaints

The manager informed us that all complaints are taken very seriously and that the appropriate procedures are always followed and recorded on the system.

We were informed that Feedback Forms are available for anyone who wishes to use them; however, we did not see the forms during our visit.

The manager informed us that feedback from both residents and their relatives is highly valued, carefully considered, and used to help improve the quality of care and services within the home.

Staffing

Gail, the Registered Manager, has 24 years of experience in the care sector. She began her career as a care worker in various homes. Gail has a warm and positive personality, demonstrating genuine passion for her role and a strong sense of commitment.

She places great importance on transparency, dedication, and compassion in her work.

Her team consists of two deputy managers, five healthcare assistants on the morning shift, five on the afternoon shift, and three on night duty. In addition, there is one cook (with the role shared between two staff members), domestic staff, and a maintenance operative.

Shift patterns vary (7am–10pm, 7am–3pm, or 8am–8pm), which helps maintain continuity of care for residents.

There is currently no activity coordinator or administrative support in place. All staff contribute to delivering activities, which we observed during our visit. Gail and her deputy managers share the administrative responsibilities.

We were informed that no agency staff are used.

One staff member told us that:

"I like working here, I can't fault it, we are like one big family"

Another member of staff commented:

"I have worked here for a long time; it is an open and honest company."

Training and Development

Quality Standards:

All care staff are up to date with current quality care standards, ensuring consistent and safe practices across the service.

Induction Programme:

New staff undergo a 3–4-week induction programme alongside work-based learning and e-modules. Essential topics covered – Dignity in Care, Distress Management, Safeguarding, Manual Handling, Fire safety training. All new staff complete work shadowing.

New staff serve a probation period of 6 months.

A staff member explained that:

“All training is now completed online”, They added that Gail ensures everyone stays up to date with their required training”



In addition to the permanent care staff, we also observed that Tendercare provides trainee placement opportunities for students. We were informed that these students come from colleges in Dudley, Halesowen, and Birmingham.

The manager explained that she had been extremely impressed with one of the trainees and subsequently offered them a permanent position.

A staff member commented that:

“trainees are “a tremendous help to the team and are always eager to learn.

It was a pleasant surprise to see that the home provides a learning environment suitable for accommodating students.

A conversation took place with one of the students who had been on their placement for 2 months, they work 6 hours per week.

They described the home as friendly and welcoming. When asked about their induction, they said they received a good introduction to the role and felt well supported throughout. They explained that they had two mentors assigned to them—the manager and a senior carer.

When asked about their understanding of safeguarding, there was some hesitation, and their knowledge appeared to be limited.

This was fed back to the manager, who explained that she would ensure the student receives the necessary safeguarding information and support.

Team Communication

Handover Briefings: The registered manager meets with her deputy managers each day to discuss any updates, concerns, or operational matters. This ensures consistent oversight and prompt response to emerging issues.

Regular Meetings: The manager informed us that the home has set up a WhatsApp group for all staff, ensuring everyone is kept up to date with regular information and any matters that need discussion. In addition, the manager has implemented a “Read and Sign” system to make sure staff are aware of and acknowledge any updates or changes to policies.

- Staff receive annual appraisals, which was confirmed by the members of staff we spoke with.
- Staff are invited to nominate who they feel should receive the Employee of the Month award, and a poster promoting this was visibly displayed on the wall.

Support from Head Office

The manager informed us that she feels supported by company management.

A staff member informed us:

“they were well supported and were encouraged to share ideas”

Summary

During our visit to Tendercare, the atmosphere was warm, welcoming, and distinctly homely. The areas accessible to us were clean, comfortable, and arranged in a manner that supported residents’ daily living.

Communal spaces were thoughtfully decorated, and the presence of memorabilia offered meaningful reminders that appeared to support residents’ sense of familiarity and wellbeing.

From our observations, staff interactions were consistently friendly, respectful, and attentive. Staff demonstrated a strong understanding of each resident’s individual needs and responded promptly and compassionately whenever support was required.

There was a clear sense of rapport between management, staff, and residents, which contributed to an environment characterised by care, dignity, and reassurance. Overall, Tendercare provides excellent standards of care and promotes residents' wellbeing effectively.

Recommendations

The Registered Manager and Head Office of Tendercare should consider the following actions:

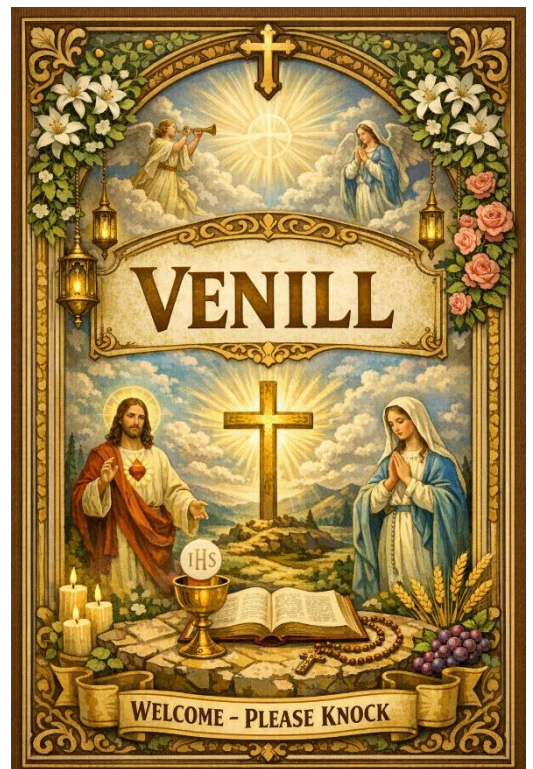
- Reviewing the use of pictorial signage on residents' doors to further support familiarity and orientation.
- Ensuring all staff complete the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism.
- Ensure that all placement trainees undertake safeguarding training as part of their induction and placement requirements.

Provider Feedback

Thank you so much for this I am truly grateful for your comments, I love it in fact.

I don't have family meetings but communicate with them through WhatsApp of all events and anything about their loved ones, they all have my personal number. I gave staff the safeguarding policy and also, the Oliver McGowan training is now mandatory on our online ecert training.

I also have done door signs for my residents who wander which I have attached.



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