



# Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset

## Virtual visit to Newbridge Towers Care Home

Virtual Visits on 2.2.2021 and 24.2.2021

### Authorised volunteer representatives

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Details of visit

Details of visit:	
Service Address	Newbridge Towers Residential Care Home
Service Provider	Miltas Ltd
Date and Time	2.2.2021 / 24/2/2021
Authorised Representatives	Annette Sparkes Joanna Parker Catherine Shaw
Contact details	Newbridge Towers Residential Care Home 169 Newbridge Hill Bath BA1 3PX

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch would like to thank the Activities Co-ordinator Mariyam Yasmin for her help in assistance in setting up a virtual visit to Newbridge Towers Residential Care Home.

## 1.3 Purpose of the visit

The aim of the virtual visit is to capture residents lived experience of life in the Care Home during the Covid -19 Lockdown from the March 2020 lockdown to date (Two lockdowns during the spring and autumn of 2020 and currently in the third lockdown in February 2021).

## 1.4 How this links with Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset strategy

Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset have been unable to undertake Enter and View visits to care homes during the Covid 19 pandemic and have chosen to undertake a virtual visit to the care home to hear residents lived experience of the pandemic from their perspective

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Planning

Discussion took place at the Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset Executive Board Meeting on 25.11.2020 and it was agreed that Healthwatch would undertake a virtual visit to a care home to talk with residents about their experience of lockdown during the Covid 19 pandemic. At the Volunteer Support Group on 13.1.2021 the volunteers were asked if they would like to take part in a virtual visit to a care home. Healthwatch shared the questions that had been previously used by Healthwatch Swindon with volunteers for agreement. The Volunteer Support Officer phoned the care home and spoke with activities co-ordinator at the end of January 2021 and arranged for zoom calls to be made to the care home.

### 2.2 How was practice observed?

Volunteers had shared the questions previously used and agreed to use these as a template for discussion with residents.

**Questions agreed as prompts by Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset:**

- How has the resident kept in touch with people outside of the care home?
- What have you been feeling without having visitors?
- The roadmap out of lockdown says that from 8 March residents will be able to have a regular named visitor, residents and the visitor will be able to hold hands but not kiss or hug. Are you looking forward to having a visitor again?
- Whether or not they have received their Covid-19 vaccination and whether they had any side effects?
- What activities have they been doing and what do they like to do?
- Whether or not they feel they have received enough support throughout the period of the pandemic?

Two volunteers would attend and each would ask questions and keep notes to write up later.

### 2.3 How were findings recorded?

Volunteer notes were shared with the Volunteer Support Officer who compiled the report.



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### 2.4 About the service

Newbridge Towers Care Home in Bath has 20 single rooms, some of which are en-suite, the rooms have TV points and residents are able to have their own telephone and pets. There is also a lounge with a large screen television. Home cooked food is provided. There are (usually) a lot of activities available with people invited to perform in the Care Home and young people are involved in some of the activities. Residents may stay registered with their GP or be registered with the Home GP. A hairdresser and Chiropodist visit the Care Home.

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## 3 Findings

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### Executive summary

- One resident had found staff wearing PPE hard at first
- The Activities Co-ordinator had cut residents hair during the lockdown

### 3.1 Visit on 2.2.2021 to speak with one resident on the first call

The two volunteers introduced themselves and explained the purpose of the call. The resident confirmed that he understood and agreed for notes to be taken and shared.

#### Conversation

The resident is one of three brothers. His father was in the Diplomatic Core and attended various boarding schools overseas in his early life. More recently he was living with his Mother who has a flat in Keynsham.

The resident has been living at Newbridge Towers for approximately 18 months. Before lockdown 1 he enjoyed going out for meals at the Premier Inn and Wetherspoons. He used to visit his mother regularly and had regular visits from Chris one of his brothers. He feels disappointed about not being able to go out. The resident understands a little about Covid although he doesn't read newspapers or watch the TV news very often.

The resident has been having visits from his brother. He meets him at the front door or in the summer was able to sit in the garden. His brother brings things like DVDs, sweets and crisps when he visits which the resident enjoys. The brother doesn't wear a mask but keeps his distance so the resident is able to understand him and stay safe. The resident phones his mother daily and can't wait to be able to visit her after lockdown

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Due to his disability the resident doesn't interact very much with the other resident's although he says he gets on well with them. The resident prefers one to one activities and the staff facilitate this by things like baking sessions. The resident is very much looking forward to pizza making tomorrow. The resident gets on well with the staff and they have been amazing going above and beyond to encourage his activities. The Activities Coordinator Mariyam is providing pineapple for the pizza tomorrow and one of the night staff has brought in some DVDs for the resident to watch. The resident has been out in the garden but doesn't go out at the moment because it is muddy and he doesn't like to get mud on his shoes.

During the last summer the residents enjoyed a Covid Tea Party when a vocalist and two violinists came to entertain the residents. There is a TV room which is available for all residents but the resident prefers to stay in his room to watch DVDs. There are an equal number of male and female residents living in the home, which appears to be a happy and relaxed environment with very caring and supportive staff.

The resident says that he is happy in the home. He gets on well with Tony the chef and appreciates the choice of meals each day. Apparently they are always offered two choices for each meal and he knows exactly what he has ordered for each meal.

The resident has been supported by the staff throughout the pandemic. Mariyam has cut his hair and he was taken to the dentist when he broke a tooth.

The resident has had his COVID Vaccination and says that he feels safer now that he has had it. Once Lockdown3 is completed he would like to travel to California, visit his mother and be able to go out for meals again.

The resident was thanked for speaking to us before the Zoom call ended.

### 3.2 Second Visit on 24.2.2021

Four residents agreed to talk to us.

Mariyam set up the TV and the zoom meeting was held on the larger screen so that the four residents could see and engage in the conversation.

A Healthwatch volunteer gave a brief explanation about the role of Healthwatch Bath and North East Somerset in listening to what the residents have to say about their experience of lockdown due to the COVID pandemic.

#### Conversation

**Resident 1:** has family who live in Somerton and she 'WhatsApp' calls her daughter regularly. When her son calls she can see him through the window at the care home.

**Resident 2:** misses going out, he misses trips to Weston Super Mare and the opportunity to go to a football match. Mike has been on walks and Catherine asked if he could go on walks outside the care home boundaries and Mariyam explained

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that residents can go on walks unaided, some residents need to have a care assistant with them if they need assistance in case of falls.

**Resident 3:** had not liked the staff wearing masks at first, but has got used to this and has had to wear a mask herself to a hospital appointment.

Catherine asked about residents sitting close together and Mariyam explained that the care home is working as one household where everyone can mix without mask. All care home staff wear PPE, masks, aprons and gloves.

The residents have a range of activities including reminiscence sessions, baking where residents are baking a birthday cake, playing games and listening to music. Resident 3 likes singing, but the others were unsure.

Catherine asked how they have been coping in lockdown and whether the changes coming on the 8 March, where they will be able to have a named visitor will make a difference, all agreed it was something to look forward to. Mariyam explained that the named visitors will call at the back door all will be issued PPE (mask, apron and gloves) to wear and be tested, there is a half hour wait for the result and if it is clear they will be taken to meet the resident in their room.

The Healthwatch volunteer asked about hair cutting as the hairdresser has not been able to call. Resident 2 has cut his own hair and Mariyam has become the hair dresser to other resident's. There is a lot of call on Mariyam's time; she helps as a carer when needed and tries to make sure there are enough activities happening.

Most residents had the first vaccine on 21 January, which were given by the GP. Resident 4 had her vaccine the morning of the visit. The Healthwatch volunteer asked if they have a date for the second vaccine but they do not know yet when that will be. Most had no side effects but resident 2 said he had had a slight headache after the vaccine. Residents agreed they felt safer after having the vaccine.

Earlier in the pandemic there had been a false positive test at the care home and all residents were isolated in their own room for seven days. Residents described this as a "nightmare".

The Healthwatch volunteer asked if they keep up to date with what is going on outside the care home, resident 2 said he watches the news but finds it depressing. All agreed they are looking forward to the light at the end of the tunnel and are staying positive and cheerful and appreciate how they have been supported at the care home.

## 4 Conclusion

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### Conclusion of the virtual visit to speak to one resident on 2.2.2021

It was a successful call and gave a good insight into how one resident is coping with the current pandemic. It also demonstrated good practice being observed in the home, with tailored activities, choice of meals and support with daily needs such as dentistry and haircuts.

### Conclusion of the virtual visit to speak with residents on 24.2.2021

The conversation did not flow as easily as a face-to-face conversation and the residents were assisted by the activities co-ordinator to engage in the conversation, there was a difficulty in hearing residents and the screen kept freezing which eventually led to the conversation ending.

The picture painted by the residents was that this last lockdown was harder. At the beginning of the pandemic last spring, residents were able to use the garden and had garden tea parties and concerts. They were clearly well supported by caring members of staff and there is a positive attitude, with residents and staff looking forward to some normality returning.

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## 5 Recommendations

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This was a unique opportunity to test out a Zoom conversation with a group of care home residents and it is hoped to extend this project if possible to other Care Homes in Bath and North East Somerset to build up a picture of how the residents and staff are coping in these difficult times.

### Disclaimer

- This report relates only to a specific visit (a point in time)
- This report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available.)

