

Enter and View Report

**Royal Court Residential Home, Royal
Court, Hoyland, Barnsley, S74 9RP**

July 2026



Introduction

What is an Enter and View visit?

Healthwatch Barnsley has powers to carry out what we describe as 'Enter and View' visits. These are visits to health and social care settings which help us in our role as the independent local champion for health and social care. Enter and View visits are carried out by small teams of trained members of our staff and volunteers to observe a health and social care service at work, for example at a GP practice, a care home, or a hospital. We only visit services that are publicly funded, e.g. through the NHS or via local authorities. What happens during an Enter and View visit? During an Enter and View visit we talk to people using the service, whether patients or residents, and to friends and relatives where appropriate. We also speak to staff to find out where they think the service is working well, and where it could be improved. We also observe the service. We write up our observations and the feedback we receive and publish it as a report. Our report is sent to the provider of the service, as well as to regulators such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the local authority, and NHS commissioners when appropriate. If there are recommendations in the report, the service provider is asked for a response, which we later publish online alongside the Enter and View report. Our visits give us a 'snapshot' of a service. We are always grateful for feedback from residents, relatives and other visitors to be able to get a fuller picture. You can leave feedback via telephone on 01226 320106, or email hello@healthwatchbarnsley.org.uk. Alternatively, you can contact us via: www.healthwatchbarnsley.org.uk/have-your-say

Details of the Enter and View Visit:

Name of the service visited: Royal Court Residential Home

Address: Royal Court, Hoyland, Barnsley, S74 9RP

The Date of the Enter and View Visit: 8 July 2026

The members of the Healthwatch Enter and View Team that undertook the visit were:

- Chloe Webster – Community Voice Officer
- Amanda Howard – Community Voice Officer
- Claire Wilcockson – Volunteer and Local Advisory Group Member
- Samuel Ibekwe – Community Voice Officer (Observer)

This was an **announced** visit. We would like to thank **Royal Court** staff and residents for facilitating the visit and for taking the time to talk to us.

About the Service

Background

Royal Court is a residential care home located in Hoyland, Barnsley. They provide residential care to adults over and under the age of 65, some who may have dementia. Currently most residents do have a dementia diagnosis and there are varied levels of mobility. The care home can accommodate up to 44 residents at any one time and at the time of our visit there were 44 residents.

The entrance is accessible and welcoming. There is a signing in book for visitors and a good display of information in the reception area, including a wall where all staff photos, names and job titles are displayed. To gain entry to the home there is a doorbell that was answered by the manager. This led to an area which was sectioned off from the residents' areas, containing the manager's office, an admin office and a clean and tidy visitor toilet. Entry to the resident's area is via an electronically locked door using a keypad. The code is regularly changed and not given to anyone other than staff. The home has an overall CQC rating as Good.

We were greeted on arrival by the Registered Manager Louise, who welcomed us through and ensured we signed the visitor's log.

Discussion with the Manager

Louise has been the Registered Manager for just over 2 years and had previously managed another residential home within Barnsley. Louise is also the manager of Hoyland Hall and splits her time equally between both. Louise took the role of manager when the care home had received an inadequate CQC inspection and was at the risk of being deregistered. Louise worked with the owner and assistant manager to greatly improve the home and was able to then be reinspected by the CQC where they were awarded Good.

The home has 44 ensuite bedrooms and currently has 44 residents. They do not have double rooms; they do have a married couple residing there currently with their own individual rooms and this has always worked better with people having their own space. Vacancies are usually filled quickly due to word of mouth from people who have had or have relatives residing there, because of this they have a waiting list.

The accommodation is a purpose-built residential home, with an open layout and wide doorways, all on one level. During the day there are 2 senior carers

(1 lead and one 2nd) and 8 carers, including one that is solely one to one support for a resident. The assistant manager, Reese, assists with the morning medication and the 2nd senior does the teatime medication. The evening shift is covered by 1 senior, 3 carers and a one-to-one carer. There is also a twilight shift 7 – 11 for an extra carer who helps with settling down and medication. An agency is very occasionally used but it is always the same carer who is sent. Holiday/sickness cover is provided by carers picking up extra shifts, which works well. Staff will arrange cover between themselves and confirm this with management. There is incentive to cover shift with a £1 per hour uplift for planned cover and £2 for unplanned.

Rooms are returned to a blank canvas when they become vacant. New residents are then asked how they would like their room to be decorated. Most choose to personalise their room by displaying their own photographs, although rooms will be painted if requested. Residents are also encouraged to bring in their own furniture to make their room feel more homely.

Staff turnover is not considered to be an issue. Two members of staff recently left for personal reasons, but both have indicated that they plan to return. Many members of the team have worked at the home for a number of years, including the assistant manager, who has been in post for four years, and the administrator, Linda, who has worked at the home for 30 years. There are also opportunities for career progression, with staff moving into new roles, such as the kitchen lead, who was previously employed as a carer.

Louise explained that the new area manager has provided significant support in helping to improve the home. Prior to this, there had been a lack of management support, outdated values, and inadequate care planning processes. The new area manager visits the home weekly and is described as being supportive and actively involved in driving improvements.

All new staff are provided with an induction booklet to complete and have access to a comprehensive range of training. This includes end-of-life care, tissue viability, diabetes care, moving and handling, and basic life support. Training is delivered both in-house and by external training providers.

Catering is provided in-house. Approximately eight residents require modified diets, and meals are adapted to meet their individual dietary needs. Staff receive training in the management of choking incidents to ensure residents can eat safely.

Residents are offered a choice of two main meal options each day, although alternative meals will be prepared if requested. Jacket potatoes and salads are always available for residents who prefer these options. The kitchen team actively seeks feedback from residents about the menu and takes their preferences into account when planning meals. A popular feature is the in-house "Fish and Chip Friday," with modified versions of the meal provided for residents requiring texture-modified diets and other dietary needs.

Meal times are protected to promote a calm dining environment and discourage large groups of visitors in communal areas during these times. However, family members are welcome to support residents during meals, including assisting with feeding where appropriate or sitting with their relatives in the lounge while they eat.

Residents' weight is monitored using the Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool (MUST), and referrals are made to the dietitian whenever the assessment indicates they are required. The dietitian has consistently been responsive, ensuring residents receive timely nutritional support.

For residents requiring nutritional supplements, the kitchen team has demonstrated excellent innovation by creating fortified mousses and jellies. These provide an effective alternative to nutritional drinks, which are not always suitable for individuals with swallowing difficulties (dysphagia). This person-centred approach helps residents meet their nutritional needs while ensuring their food and drink remain safe and appropriate for their swallowing ability.

The home has previously used Cudworth Dental Practice, however, they have recently changed their policy on providing home visits. Louise is currently looking for a new dental provider who can offer a full domiciliary service to meet residents' needs.

Optician appointments are arranged through Eyecare on Call using their online portal. This has been working really well, and residents' glasses arrive clearly labelled, making it easy to ensure they are given to the correct person.

The service uses Medwins Pharmacy and Louise has built a good working relationship with the team. They are very responsive and, if needed, can deliver medication twice a day to ensure residents receive it promptly.

On the rare occasions that medication is required outside of Medwins' opening hours, the service uses the local Cohens Pharmacy to make sure residents can access any urgent medication they need.

They currently have residents who vape, they are both deemed as having capacity, so after a risk assessment was carried out it was agreed that they would be allowed to do this within their own rooms. Smoking is not permitted within the home for residents or staff. Alcohol is monitored and assessed on an individual basis.

Hospital admissions and discharges

There is a positive working relationship between Right Care Barnsley, the Hospital Discharge Team and the staff at Royal Court. The home has asked that, wherever possible, discharges and new placements after 6pm are kept to a minimum, as arriving later in the evening can be unsettling for the person moving in and may also disturb other residents. While it is recognised that delays, such as transport issues, can sometimes make this unavoidable, the reduced staffing levels at night mean there is less support available for both the new arrival and existing residents. Residents returning to Royal Court are, of course, welcomed back to their home at any time.

Louise has recently worked with the transport service to clarify the circumstances in which transport can and cannot be used. Since these arrangements were clarified, accessing transport has been working well, helping residents get to appointments when needed.

Visiting

There are no set times for visiting, there are protected mealtimes in place, and friends and families are encouraged to visit and take part in activities with residents. Families are also able to accompany their loved ones on the trips arranged by the Activities Coordinator.

Establishing residents' interests and activities

The home has an Activities Coordinator who works four days a week and will also come in at weekends when special events are planned. Staff told us she is very well liked by the residents. During our visit, she was leading a group painting activity, with residents appearing engaged and enjoying themselves.

She spends time talking to residents and their families to find out what activities they would enjoy, as well as learning about residents' previous hobbies, interests and jobs so that activities can be tailored to them. For residents who prefer not to join group sessions, she offers one-to-one activities based on their individual preferences, such as board games, painting or simply spending time chatting together.

The home also organises themed events and outings. Residents recently enjoyed a sports day featuring nostalgic games, which was very well received. They also arrange day trips, with the most recent visit being to Wigfield Farm, and they are hoping to organise a trip to the seaside next.

There is an activities board, so residents know what is happening on the day, they have 2 planned activities per day. This also had a list of residents' birthdays. There is a folder in the entrance area with photos of activities residents have taken part in over the past year.

There is an unused conservatory that the home is currently refurbishing to create a sensory room for residents. Once completed, this will provide a calm, comfortable space that residents can use for relaxation and sensory stimulation.

Food

All food is freshly prepared on site daily. Residents are given 2 options and if they would rather have something else, they are offered alternatives including jacket potato, salad and sandwiches.

Residents' belongings

Residents are encouraged to have name tags in their clothing to prevent the wrong person getting the laundry back, the only clothing items that occasionally get mixed up tend to be men's socks as they are all so similar in style and colour. The laundry is managed in-house and the same person who does this will also take residents clothing back to their rooms to put away.

Glasses are marked with the resident's names, dentures have had names etched into them before, but this depends on the dentist and is not universal.

Our observations

On arrival we entered the car park, there are clearly marked bays for the home and the neighbouring bungalows, to ensure you do not park in the wrong place. We then made our way into the reception area which was bright and open and houses lots of information. There is a window into the Admin Office and a signing in book for all visitors. We were greeted by Louise who asked us to sign in and gave us a tour of the building.

The communal areas are decorated in neutral colours and there is plenty of light. Most of the communal areas are open plan and flow into each other. The corridors are wide and plenty of room for carers to assist residents when moving around. The atmosphere was relaxed and positive, staff and residents were calm and smiling and said hello to us.

Fire exits are clearly visible and there are various notices around the walls. There are a staff appreciation board and a suggestion box.

Bedrooms

Residents have their names and keyworkers name on the door to their bedroom. Inside the bedrooms are spacious and family are encouraged to bring in photographs and other memorabilia to personalise the room. Residents are also able to bring in their own furniture and soft furnishings. All rooms have an ensuite bathroom. When a room becomes vacant it set back to neutral and a new resident will be asked how they would like it decorated.

Dining room

The dining area is very bright and airy and is linked to the communal sitting area. There is plenty of space to help residents mobilise using walking aids. The tables are set out in groups of 4 so residents can sit with each other. There is a menu board on the wall.

Lounge

The lounges and dining room feel bright, airy and open plan, creating a welcoming environment. There are two larger lounge areas, both with televisions and a variety of seating options. There is also plenty of clear floor space, allowing residents to move around safely.

A smaller lounge is located just off the dining area, where a painting activity was taking place during our visit. This room also has a television and a range of seating, providing residents with a quieter, more relaxed space if they prefer a smaller setting.

Other communal areas

There is a conservatory which is currently unused and will soon be transformed into a sensory area. They are looking at how to make this a comfortable temperature for both hot and cold weather.

Feedback from residents, relatives, and staff.

Family members

We were unable to speak to family members in person on our visit to the home but we were provided with contact information for six other family members who were happy to speak to us but were unable to make it on the day.

We spoke to a family member who reported that her relative will have been a resident at Royal Court Care Home for two years by November 2026 and is very settled and happy at the home. She stated that she has no issues with the care home, feels able to approach management when needed, and described having a very good relationship with Louise. She also said there was nothing she would like to change, adding that the home is doing an excellent job.

Another family member reported that his relative will have been a resident at Royal Court Care Home for one year by November 2026 and is now settled and happy, although this was not the case at the beginning. He raised an issue around meals, explaining that his mother does not eat well and requires meal replacement drinks, which he provides, and that a family member visits every evening to help feed her. However, he felt this issue was specific to his mother rather than a fault of the care home. He also said management are very approachable and agreed that the home is doing an excellent job, although he noted that staff shortages are a wider issue beyond the home's control.

We spoke to one family member whose Mum was a resident at Royal Court. She said her mum had been there for just over a year. It took some time for her to settle in as she didn't want to go into a care home, however now she has settled and really enjoys it there. Several family members visit her regularly both in the care home and to take her out in the community, however they say she is always happy to return, and they never have any issues with her not wanting to go back to the home. She said her mother views the staff as family; "the staff are ever so good with her and really care". All the family are relieved that she has settled in so well and enjoying it. She said on her mother's birthday, "the staff made a real fuss of her". They arranged for a singer to come in, and they put on a buffet for her and her family to enjoy. Most of her relatives visited and the other residents joined in. "It was a brilliant afternoon".

Family also like that the care home has different communal areas so that they can have some privacy when they visit.

She said that the management are very approachable and always keep family well updated and involved in all her decisions, "any little thing and they call to discuss it". Family feel reassured that they always know what's going on and have a say in her care and feel they could discuss any issues. She said the only issue they have had was her mother's glasses going missing, so she had to arrange a replacement pair with the opticians, which unfortunately took some time. However, later, the original pair were found.

She said her mum needed one to one care at night; however she has improved whilst being there and that is now being removed. Due to this she asked if her mum could be moved to a bedroom closer to the 'hub' and more central to the home (as her room was further away in a quieter area) and the staff are planning to do this as there is a closer room coming available. She also said that although her mum doesn't eat a great deal, she has managed to put some weight on there. She said she enjoys the food, and if there is something she doesn't like she will tell them and they will make her a different meal of her choosing. She said her mum even asks for seconds sometimes.

She said the activities at the home are varied and her mum likes to play bingo, have a 'sing-song', help with the garden and enjoyed the recent petting zoo which visited the home and community trip to Wigfield farm.

We spoke to another resident's wife on the telephone, and this is what she told us:

My husband has been at Royal Court for around 4 years. He has Alzheimer's and before this I was caring for him at home. He was only supposed to be going in for a week's respite while I went on holiday. I looked around for a care home for respite and I liked what I had seen of Royal Court.

Unfortunately, just before I was going on holiday, I had a fall and my injuries meant I would struggle at home so went to stay with my sister who has a bungalow. My husband was already at Royal Court for his respite. It had been becoming more dangerous trying to look after him at home so with him already being at Royal Court it was decided he would stay there.

I am really happy with the level of care he receives and can talk to staff about any concerns, which they will always deal with. Louise and Reese are both really helpful. My husband can be really awkward, but they are good at speaking to him, especially Reese.

Food is alright from what I have seen, my husband used to eat anything before his diagnosis but now will say he doesn't like things, but he still eats them.

He doesn't like to get involved in activities but before he went to Royal Court, he was always happy to spend time alone, he had an allotment and would be here alone a lot of the time. I have seen the activities they do though and they look brilliant. They will always try to encourage him to join in.

I don't really think there's anything I would want to change, the bathrooms (ensuite) are a bit dated, but they are ok.

My husband was there for a bit before Louise started as manager. Since she started it has been miles better, 100% better. All staff are very friendly to us when we visit and when I sit in the lounge, I see them with the residents, and they are always lovely to them.

We spoke with the son in law of a resident who had sadly passed away in between the visit and the report being created.

My mother-in-law was a resident at Royal Court for around 18 months. Initially, she went in for a short stay, but she eventually became a permanent resident. As a family, we chose Royal Court because her granddaughter worked there. There wasn't a space available at first, but the home was able to move her there as soon as a bed became available.

We were always extremely happy with the level of care, respect and dignity that she received. There were a couple of situations that we raised during her stay, but they couldn't have handled them any better. Any concerns were dealt with professionally and compassionately, and we always felt listened to.

The care staff were wonderful throughout. They genuinely cared about her and were always asking after her, even when she was in hospital. Towards the end of her life, she had a lot of difficulties with food, but the staff were brilliant at adapting her meals to meet her needs and ensure she was as comfortable as possible.

I honestly can't praise the staff enough or fault them in any way. Over the last few weeks of her life, our family virtually lived at the home so we could spend as much time as possible with her. The staff were incredibly supportive, regularly bringing us drinks and checking that we were okay.

Throughout her time at Royal Court, she was always treated with kindness, dignity and respect, and the same care was shown to our family. We are 100% happy with the care she received and will always be grateful to the staff for the compassion and support they gave both her and us.

Royal Court staff

We spoke to a Senior Carer who said she has been here around 2 years and joined just after Louise (Manager).

She came from Woodlands care home after it closed down, as did some of the residents there so she already knew some of the residents who moved across at the same time. The staff uniforms are colour coded so it is clear to see the different roles. The staff carry work mobiles on them with software with all the resident's information and support needs on, so they can quickly check things or make notes easily and can also contact other colleagues around the building quickly. She said the management were really good and supportive and she got on with the other staff.

She said she found the staffing numbers work well (2 Senior care staff and 8 other members of staff) and the majority of time there is enough time to sit with residents and engage with them rather than just completing tasks. There are regular staff meetings where staff can give suggestions of any changes or improvements. She feels management listen and implement any suggestions and they can try out new things.

We also spoke with the Activities Coordinator. She said the home has changed and improved a lot after Louise starting, both physically with redecorating and how it is run.

She runs a variety of activities such as having singers in, arts and crafts, bingo, discos, bag and cupcake decorating and toddler mornings which is a favourite with the residents. They have also had animals into the home such as therapy ponies and guinea pigs. She also takes residents on visits outside of the home once a week, such as to the local cafes, shops and Wigfield farm.

Between activities during the day, she helps other staff if needed or speaks with residents both in the communal areas and privately in their rooms and also offers to do activities in their rooms if they would prefer. She said she could describe her role as a "wellbeing coordinator" rather than just activities, as she also checks in on residents' wellbeing and tries to be whatever that person needs that day – a laugh, a cry, a hug. Some residents don't have family or visitors, so she tries to be that for them.

She said the resident's favourite thing about the home would probably be the food – especially the well-stocked snack trolley – and the visits to the community. She also said that residents often say that they appreciate that the staff have a sense of humour. Some members of staff have had their family come into the home when they have needed residential care, and she said she would be happy to have her family live in this care home if they ever needed. She said everything is done well and everyone is respected.

Royal Court resident

We spoke to a male resident in his room.

He said he has been there around 7 years – he came from Woodlands care home when that closed. He has a wife who lives nearby and visits regularly. His mobility is limited to his bed so he stays in his room. He said the care home has improved a lot since he joined. "It'll never be home, but it's good".

He likes the staff and thinks they're good, saying "most seniors are brilliant". He really likes that the staff have a good sense of humour, he thinks that's important. The staff always visit him in his room and talk to him. And he said the management are good and are "approachable" if he needs anything.

He said the food is good and varied, and that "there's always been a good chef" in the time he has been there. He also said, "you can ask for things to be added to the menu and then it's added".

He said the services are good and he really liked the chiropodist. He noted that as a lot of the residents here have dementia, he doesn't feel he can communicate with them.

He said there is no restriction on how you can decorate your room, however when he first moved in his phone went missing. It was found and returned to him – another resident had moved it. Due to that he didn't want to bring other items in in case it happened again.

We also spoke to a female resident. She has been a resident here for nearly 2 years and said, "it's smashing here".

She said she likes to stay in her room a lot but she does get a bit bored sometimes. She said that the staff do offer her to have her meals in the dining room or to take part in activities, but she prefers not to. She prefers her own space and to watch TV in her room.

She said she doesn't like to see the other residents who have dementia as she feels she can't have a conversation with them and it makes her feel sad.

She has reduced mobility and she uses a Sara Steady Etac with staff support to move out of her chair. She has 3 daughters who alternate visiting, so she has regular visitors. They have helped her decorate her room (which looked homey and settled in). She has a mini fridge for cold drinks.

She said the staff are always available if she needs anything and get her everything she asks for, but they don't pester her – which she appreciates. "The staff are great – you can have a laugh with them".

Summary and recommendations

Summary

Overall, we found Royal Court to be a friendly, welcoming care home where residents are supported by a caring and committed staff team. Since the current Registered Manager took over, the home has made significant improvements, achieving a Good CQC rating and creating a positive culture for both residents and staff. The home was clean, bright and well maintained, with residents encouraged to personalise their rooms and make them feel like home. Staff appeared relaxed and approachable, knew the residents well and were seen treating them with kindness and respect. There was also a strong focus on providing person-centred care, with good access to healthcare professionals, varied activities, and flexible meal options to meet residents' individual needs.

The feedback we received from residents, relatives and staff was overwhelmingly positive. Families told us they were happy with the care their loved ones receive, felt well informed and involved in decisions, and described the management team as approachable and supportive. Residents spoke positively about the staff, food and activities, while staff said they felt valued and listened to. Although a few small issues were mentioned, such as finding a new dentist that offers home visits and the occasional mix-up with personal belongings, these were being addressed and did not take away from the overall positive experience. Overall, Royal Court came across as a caring home where people feel safe, respected and well looked after.

Recommendations

We make the following recommendations:

- While residents are generally very happy, some en-suite facilities were noted to be outdated. The provider should review the maintenance and refurbishment schedule for resident en-suites to ensure they remain modern, safe, and fit for purpose.
- A minor issue was raised regarding residents' spectacles occasionally going missing. It is recommended that the service reviews its processes for labelling, tracking, and safely storing personal items like glasses, ensuring staff are prompted during daily care routines to check that these items are safely accounted for.

Positives and good practice

We found during our visit to Royal Court examples of positive and good practice, which included but were not limited to:

- Secure entry and reception area not leading straight to residents' areas.
- Wide corridors and plenty of open space to support residents with limited mobility who use aids
- Names of keyworkers on residents' rooms
- Kitchen staff knowledge around residents' needs and their proactive approach to creating new dishes to meet these.
- A varied programme of group and one-to-one activities, alongside regular outings and themed events.
- Residents are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms, choose how they spend their day, and are offered flexible meal choices and activities that reflect their interests, preferences and individual needs.
- Great relationship with outside services, optician, GP, pharmacy.
- Although improvements have already been made, still assessing where this can continue with the sensory room being the next project

Response from Royal Court Care Home

We were 100% happy with the visit. We felt fully informed at every stage, with clear communication before, during, and after the visit. All staff were exceptionally friendly, approachable, and respectful, which made the whole experience comfortable and reassuring. There is absolutely nothing we would change for future visits — everything was handled perfectly.

Appendix

Healthwatch Barnsley – Powers to Enter and View Services

Healthwatch Barnsley was established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and came into being in April 2013. We work to give local residents a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided. We enable people to share their views and concerns about local health and social care services, helping build a picture of where services are doing well, and where they can be improved. Enter and View visits are undertaken in accordance with the remit of Healthwatch Barnsley and assist us in carrying out our statutory functions under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Enter and View visits are not designed to be full inspections, audits or an investigation of the service, rather they are an opportunity for us to get a better understanding of the service by seeing it in action and by talking to staff and service users.

We aim to identify and share good practice wherever possible. However, if during a visit we identify any aspects of a service that it has serious concerns about, then these concerns are referred to the appropriate regulator or commissioners of the service for investigation or rectification. Any safeguarding issues identified will be referred to the Local Authority for investigation. Addressing issues of a less serious nature may be done directly with the service provider. For more information about Healthwatch Barnsley, please visit our website www.healthwatchbarnsley.org.uk or contact us using the details at the end of this report



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**Committed
to quality**

At Healthwatch Barnsley, we aim to provide the best service to our community and to make the greatest difference to local people.

To help us be the best we can be, every three years we undertake a comprehensive assessment of our work using a tool called the Quality Framework.

This helps us to understand what we are doing well and where we might need to improve.