



Lower Lodge



Swansea



01792584007



<https://www.communitylives.co.uk/>

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

7 & 8 April 2025

08/04/2025, 07/04/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Community Lives Consortium
Care Type:	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Provision for:	Provision for learning disability, Provision for mental health, Care home for adults - with personal care
Registered places:	3
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	This service anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use the service.

Ratings:



Well-being

Excellent



Care & Support

Good



Environment

Good



Leadership & Management

Excellent

Summary:

Lower Lodge Care Home is a respite care service for adults in a quiet rural area a short distance from local shops and facilities. The home is an established two storey property located on the edge of Cadle Woodlands, Swansea with accommodation for up to 3 people. There is also a day service on this site. A number of individuals who receive a service at Lower Lodge also attend this service.

People and their relatives are very happy with the care and support provided at the service. They live in a comfortable, welcoming and homely environment which is warm, clean and suitable to meet their needs.

At this inspection we found people's well-being was excellent and the care and support people receive support them to achieve good well-being outcomes. Leadership and management of the service is excellent because positive actions of the management and staff team ensure people achieve excellent outcomes.

Findings:



Well-being

Excellent

People are happy and do the things that make them happy. Families of people are very happy and confirmed they are offered choices in making everyday decisions. They are included and involved in activities and arranged events as much as they want to be. Staff provide activities and visit people in their rooms and communal areas to provide company and have a chat. 'All About me' information records people's past, their likes, dislikes and preferences. Families of people told us they get on well with staff and commented "*I feel very confident they (staff) know my relative very well and know how to care for him*". Care workers complete documentation to inform regular reviews and where possible these are completed with the individual.

People are protected from harm and neglect. Care staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about people they support. The provider ensures staff receive training in protecting vulnerable adults and has policies and procedures in place to support this. Personal plans and risk assessments are in place and mostly reviewed regularly. Families told us they feel their relative is safe in the home. Care workers are recruited safely and there are systems in place to ensure the premises are secure to keep people safe.

People are supported to maintain and sustain existing relationships with family, friends and important people in their lives as far as possible. This is facilitated by staff who respect these relationships and the importance they hold in people's lives. The service provider ensures staff receive training in matching and compatibility for staff to have the necessary skills and access to technology to support this. The manager told us about efforts made to try support a friendship with use of technology such as "Facetime" and trying to book people to have their stays at the service at the same time. The service provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and cultural needs of people and is working towards a bi-lingual service. The service makes available documentation in the language of their choice and there is usage of bi-lingual signage in the home. The service also celebrates Welsh events such as St. Davids Day and other sporting and cultural events.

All staff have excellent understanding of safety, weighing risks and rewards to promote overall well-being and involvement in the community. Records show that staff are supported with positive risk taking training. This underpins their knowledge of creative ways in which to support people, whilst balancing safety with the outcome the person wants to achieve. We observed pictures of several people undertaking activities with support from staff at the service. A relative commented "*the staff support my relative to do whatever he wants*".



Care & Support

Good

People receive the quality of care and support they need to achieve their personal outcomes. They are well supported with personal plans and risk assessments that reflect their needs. A sample of personal plans viewed contain detailed information regarding personal interests, likes and dislikes. We saw that personal plans are developed following discussions with people and their family. Personal plans and risk assessments are accurate and mostly regularly reviewed in consultation with people wherever possible. Referrals for advice and professional help regarding health services are sought as needed.

People can do the things that matter to them when they want to. We saw there are a range of activities available which are meaningful to people. People told us they enjoy taking part in a variety of activities including swimming, golf, tennis, hill walking and attending clubs. People meet regularly either individually or in the communal lounge with staff to plan future things they would like to do.

People are protected from abuse and neglect. Policies and procedures have been reviewed to make sure they are up to date but we discussed with the manager the need to ensure they reference the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Care workers are aware these are in place to guide them and are supported by management. Staff have completed safeguarding training relevant to their roles.

People's medications are stored and administered safely in line with statutory and non-statutory guidance. There are safe procedures for accepting incoming, returning, storing, and administering medication. Fully trained staff administer people's medication. There is a medication policy in place.

Policy, procedure and application of hygienic practices are in place to reduce risks of cross-infection. Staff demonstrate an understanding of infection control and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff wear appropriate PPE and follow correct procedures. The service has sufficient stocks. Effective oversight and auditing of infection control measures are in place. The service is clean and tidy. Staff maintain appropriate standards of hygiene.



Environment

Good

The accommodation is comfortable, well-maintained and decorated in a homely and welcoming style. On the day of the inspection, we found the home to be a calm and relaxing environment. The home is in a good state of repair with a few remedial repair tasks needed which the manager stated was in the process of being addressed. The service provider identifies areas of wear and tear around the home and reports to the landlord who makes repairs where needed. The service is clutter free. On the day of the inspection, people using the service were out attending day service. We viewed bedrooms at the service which were clean and tidy but lacking in character and discussed with the manager the need to make these more personalised. Records show good systems are in place to monitor the decoration and repair of all rooms, facilities and furnishings, and timely action is taken to address issues as they arise.

People can be confident the service provider identifies and mitigates risks to health and safety. There is a system in place for monitoring and auditing of health and safety. This is managed by the locality management with support from the manager at the service, under the guidance of the Responsible Individual (RI). Routine health and safety checks for fire safety, water safety and equipment are completed, and records show required maintenance, safety and servicing checks for gas, and electrical systems are all up to date. The sample of four bedrooms viewed had facilities and equipment that is suitable for the individuals. Cleaning had taken place around the building throughout our visit and we found all areas were clean and tidy. People access the home through a securely locked door and visitors must sign in and provide identification. The home has a food hygiene rating of 5 (the highest rating attainable).

There are secure outdoor garden areas that can be accessed independently and/or with support if required. The service provider has developed the front garden with areas of interest such as a raised vegetable bed, seating and tables as well as therapeutic and sensory areas. However, we discussed with the manager this area and the perimeter fencing would benefit from updating to ensure the safety and security of individuals while outside.



Leadership & Management

Excellent

People can feel confident the service provider has very strong systems for governance and oversight of the service in place. There are systems for assessment, care planning, monitoring, and review to enable people to achieve their personal outcomes. The service is provided in line with the objectives of the Statement of Purpose and Guide to the Service, which are regularly reviewed. Records show the RI visits the home at least twice per year to complete the statutory visits and meet with people and staff.

The provider uses comprehensive audits of all aspects of the service to monitor practices. They complete highly detailed analysis of audit findings and take action as a result to promote and uphold high standards of care quality, resulting in highly effective and sustainable improvements for people. The quality of care review report is detailed and completed as required to a very high standard. We saw evidence the RI has oversight of the service, and the service management team conduct a robust quality assurance system to ensure quality care is delivered.

The service provider has comprehensive oversight of the financial arrangements and investment in the service. The RI assured us the service is financially sustainable to support people to be safe and achieve their personal outcomes. The RI told us of investment such as *“CLC’s Organisational Development Plan has 7 themes to maximise wellbeing of people.... Coaching has been provided to RM ensuring she provides quality outcome plans”*.

Extensive staff recruitment pre-employment checks are completed prior to employment commencing. Staff are registered with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator. New staff receive an in depth induction including shadowing more experienced staff and this was confirmed by staff we spoke with. Care staff have the knowledge, competency, skills and qualifications to provide the levels of care and support required to enable people to achieve their personal outcomes.

There is very strong support and development for staff with supervision, appraisal and training in place. Care staff told us they feel valued and supported by the manager. There are enough staff on duty to safely support and care for people. Records show the team in place has undergone a recent change in personnel with a mixture of experienced and new staff available, and this was seen during our inspection. Many of the staff we spoke with describe management as caring and supportive. This was reflected in records we saw and compliments from families.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

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