

The Birches Care Home Service

Comrie Road
Crieff
PH7 4BJ

Telephone: 01764 653 297

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 March 2025

Service provided by:
HC-One Limited

Service provider number:
SP2011011682

Service no:
CS2011300781

About the service

The Birches is a residential care home located in the Perthshire town of Crieff and is owned and run by HC One Limited. The home is close to local amenities and public transport. The Birches is registered to provide care for up to 31 older people.

The Birches is a traditional period building with a purpose-built extension. The home is located over two floors. Each floor has communal living spaces which includes a lounge and dining room. The service also benefits from a hair salon, activity room and quiet room. All bedrooms are single occupancy and have en-suite toilet facilities.

At the time of inspection, 30 people were living in the home.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 March 2025. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with seven people using the service and six of their families;
- spoke with staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents;
- spoke with one visiting professionals.

Key messages

- People received kind, caring and compassionate support.
- People's health needs were supported well.
- Activities within the home were very good.
- Staff worked well together and were responsive to people's needs.
- Staffing arrangements for the service were working well.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

| | |
|--|---------------|
| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Care reflected the values of dignity and respect. We saw kind and caring interactions between staff and the people they support. Staff clearly knew people well, and this enriched the lives of people experiencing care. People praised the care they received from staff and told us they were happy living there. One person told us, "Staff are friendly and nice, they look after me well", and a family member told us "staff are all lovely, they treat my mother like they would treat their own grandparents". People and their families reported that people felt safe and secure in a home where they felt included and valued. One person told us "They treat us as people and respect us, they are so respectful", and another told us "it's my home, I feel safe here".

People were able to choose how to spend their day. The provision of activities within the home was very good. Life stories were developed to ensure activities were tailored to people's needs and preferences. There had been a range of activities and opportunities that people enjoyed, this included baking, quizzes, and crafts. Activities staff were motivated and enthusiastic. A folder in people's rooms contained photographs of activities people had undertaken. This helped to inform families of what their loved ones had been doing and provided a talking point during visits.

Links with the local community were very good. People had access to a minibus to undertake outings within the community. We heard of examples of people accessing local cafes, visiting places of interest, and contributing to community projects. People also had the opportunity to participate in regular activities and visits to other care homes within the town. Intergenerational links with a local nursery, primary and high school promoted social connections between people of different ages. This promoted friendships and reduced feelings of isolation.

The service was responsive to changes in people's health needs and sought the right support at the right time. People's health needs were being met with well-established links with healthcare professionals. External professionals spoke positively about the relationships they had with the service. Appropriate referrals had been made when people required specialist treatment.

People's health was regularly monitored. This included people's skin condition, weight, and mobility. This promoted people's health and ensured that any changes were identified and responded to quickly.

People had personal plans, which included good detail around people's life stories, choices, preferences and indicated their desired support outcomes.

Legal documentation was in place to ensure people were protected and their rights were upheld. The service had consent forms in place which were signed by the appropriate person should any restrictions be in place. This helped ensure people's human rights were recognised and promoted.

People benefited from homecooked, varied, and well-balanced diet. We observed that people enjoyed their meals in a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere. People reported they really enjoyed their food, and this supported their nutritional intake. All people regardless of diet type were provided choices using show plates. A menu was on display at the entrance to the dining room and we suggested that this could be produced in easy read format for people with sensory and cognitive needs. People told us that if they did

not like the food that an alternative would be provided. This meant people's dietary and hydration needs were being met.

The service was using risk assessments to minimise the risk of falls. This meant the service had good oversight of falls and measures that were in place to protect people and manage risk. People who required walking aids had these in reach at all times. This helped them to mobilise safely.

Medication was managed well. The service had a medication policy in place and regular audits took place. This meant people were receiving their medication as prescribed.

People who were approaching end of life received compassionate, dignified, and respectful care. Anticipatory care plans were in place, this ensured people's specific wishes and preferences regarding their care were known, should their condition deteriorate. Memorial services had been held within the home which supported families to celebrate their loved one's life.

The service did not have infection control measures in place for aerosol generating procedures which could put people at risk of infection. We sign posted the service to the National Infection Prevention and Control Manual (NIPCM) Scotland. The manager acted upon this at the time of the inspection.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Staff were welcoming, warm, and worked hard to support people. Morale was very good, and staff felt happy at their work and were passionate about caring for people. People benefitted from staff who knew their needs, and this meant people could be confident in their care. People were not rushed, and staff took time to support them.

People were being cared for by a regular, consistent staff team. This provided a high level of stability for people. Staff were aware of their role and the leadership roles within the home. Care was being given in accordance with the core values of dignity and respect.

Staff worked well together in a supportive and respectful manner that helped create a positive team spirit. There was a whole team approach. We observed staff who were not involved in direct care had meaningful relationships with people. This sense of togetherness provided a pleasant and positive atmosphere for the people experiencing care.

The manager was supportive, and visible. The leadership team supported wellbeing of staff by recognising staff performance and encouraging activities to enhance staff morale such as employee of the month and a monthly staff appreciation day. This had an impact on delivery of care as the staff team was stable and people benefited from a happy and motivated team.

The service followed safer recruitment guidance. This helped keep people safe. People living in the service contributed to the recruitment process by showing candidates around the home. This meant people felt involved in the recruitment of new staff and had a say in who was supporting them.

Staffing levels were appropriate at the time of our inspection. However, we found staff were not always

visible on the upper floor of the building. The manager should consider the deployment of staff to ensure staff are available and responsive to people's needs.

Rota planning was done in advance. A dependency tool helped to inform the staffing arrangements for the service. This meant staff had time to provide care and support and engage in meaningful interactions with people. The service displayed a summary of the staffing levels within the home. This provided information and reassurance to people and their families.

Daily meetings took place which were attended by care and ancillary staff. This meant that the manager and staff had a clear oversight of the daily plans and needs of the home.

People experiencing care could be confident that staff were trained and competent. Records were in place evidencing staff had accessed a wide range of training appropriate to their role. The management team had good oversight of the training.

Staff champions had been appointed who led and supported the development of staff learning across a variety of different topics, for example, infection control and prevention and dementia care. This allowed sharing of knowledge and skills within the team.

Staff reported feeling supported in their role. Systems were in place to support staff development which included supervision sessions and observation of practice. This helped ensure a competent and confident workforce. Staff we spoke to were happy working within the service.

Occasionally, issues were raised regarding staff performance, and we could see these were managed effectively.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

| | |
|--|---------------|
| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 5 - Very Good |
| 1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support | 5 - Very Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 5 - Very Good |
| 3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together | 5 - Very Good |

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.