



Enter and View

Belle Vue

January 2026

healthwatch

Contents

Contents.....	1
Introduction.....	2
What is Enter and View?	3
Overall summary.....	5
Methodology	6
Summary of findings	7
Recommendations	11
Service provider response.....	13

Introduction

2.1 Details of visit

Name of home	Belle View
Service provider	Optimal Living
Date and time	16th Jan 2026 - Time 1.30pm-3:30pm
Authorised representative (s)	Patricia Lattimer, Philip Turner, Sandra Gouldbourne Maureen Matthews

Belle Vue Care Home

Belle Vue is situated in a pleasant residential area, near public transport, and within walking distance of Luton town centre. The home accommodates people with a learning disability, Autism or sensory impairment by providing a safe and secure residential home where residents can learn and develop.

The home is spacious with eight single bedrooms, the attractive garden is paved with raised flower beds and is well secluded for privacy and comfort. Most bedrooms have their own vanity washbasin, TV, shaver points and lockable facilities.

Staff at Belle View are fully trained and provide a supportive environment where residents can learn skills that are necessary for them to achieve their maximum level of independence.

2.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Luton would like to thank the service provider, staff, service users and their families for contributing to this Enter and View visit, notably for their helpfulness, hospitality, and courtesy.

2.3 How we gathered the data

This report is based on our observations and the experiences of the residents, relatives and staff we spoke to on the day of the visit.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch 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, optometrists, 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 we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first-hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to identify safeguarding issues specifically. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about, they need to inform their lead, who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any staff member wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission, where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

3.1 Purpose of visit

The aim of the project is to understand and report on the experiences of residents in selected Luton living in supported living, residential and nursing homes and day centres, their relatives, supporters and staff.

3.2 Strategic drivers

This visit was part of Healthwatch Luton's wider work to hear from underrepresented groups using community based care and support services. Belle View is a residential home for adults with learning disabilities and additional needs, and the visit was designed to gather insight directly from service users, staff and management about their experience of care and support.

Healthwatch Luton has previously gathered feedback from people in inpatient and residential settings and is now expanding this work into daytime provision for people with learning disabilities. Given the ongoing need for more inclusive, personalised and accessible services, this visit offered valuable insight into how well current provision meets people's needs.

This visit also supports our commitment to ensuring that people whose voices are less often heard, including those with learning disabilities, are given the opportunity to share their views and help shape services.

Overall summary

Healthwatch Luton carried out an Enter and View visit to Belle Vue Care Home on **16 January 2026**. The visit was **partially announced** and was undertaken as part of Healthwatch Luton's statutory role to listen to the experiences of people using health and social care services.

Belle Vue Care Home provides **residential care for adults with learning disabilities and autism**. During the visit, Healthwatch Luton spoke with **five residents** and **three members of staff**, and observed the general environment and interactions within the home. **Ayobami** was the person in charge on the day.

Overall, the home presented as **clean, welcoming and well-maintained**, with both the external and internal environment recorded as being in **very good** condition. The atmosphere was calm, and residents appeared comfortable within the setting. There were clear signs of personalisation, including **resident photographs** and **information displays**, and it was noted that residents had been informed of the visit and encouraged to speak with the Healthwatch Luton team. The home also benefits from an outdoor area with seating (including a BBQ area), supporting opportunities for social time and activities.

Feedback from residents was **largely positive**. Residents described staff in reassuring terms, with one stating that staff "**listen to us**". Residents also indicated that they **felt safe** living at the home. Experiences of meals were positive, with residents commenting that food was "**really good**" and that "**food looks lovely**". Residents described having choice around daily living, including where they preferred to spend their time and where they ate their meals.

Residents and staff also referred to a range of activities and engagement opportunities, including **exercise, music, television**, and community or external support (including support to attend appointments). Staff feedback reflected a team that is supportive and focused on meeting residents' needs, including supporting access to healthcare and maintaining training, with one staff member noting that "**training is up to date**".

In summary, the overall impression from this visit was of a **friendly and inclusive service**, with a homely environment and positive relationships between residents and staff. The evidence gathered suggests residents are supported to feel safe, maintain choice in day-to-day living, and access activities and support in line with their needs and preferences.

Methodology

The Enter and View visit to Belle Vue Care Home took place on **16 January 2026**, between **13:30 and 15:30**. The visit was **partially announced**, with the provider informed in advance that a visit would take place, although the specific date and time were not disclosed.

The visit was conducted by Authorised Representatives from Healthwatch Luton: **Patricia Lattimer, Philip Turner, Sandra Gouldbourne** and **Maureen Matthews**.

On arrival, the team introduced themselves and explained the purpose of the visit. The person in charge on the day was **Ayobami**, who facilitated access to the home and supported the team during the visit. The registered manager was not present.

The Authorised Representatives were given access to communal areas of the home and observed the general environment, interactions between residents and staff, and day-to-day routines. A structured observation checklist was used to record environmental factors, accessibility, signage, cleanliness and overall atmosphere.

Feedback was gathered using written questionnaires and informal conversations. Residents were approached sensitively and informed that participation was voluntary. It was explained that they could decline to answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Support was provided where required to enable residents to complete questionnaires.

In total:

Five residents participated in providing feedback.

Three members of staff provided feedback.

Residents spoken to were adults with learning disabilities and/or autism living at the home. No relatives were present during the visit.

All feedback has been anonymised and reflects the experiences and observations gathered on the day of the visit only.

Summary of findings

6.1 Overview

Belle Vue Care Home is a residential service operated by Optimal Living, providing accommodation and support for adults with learning disabilities and autism. The home is located on New Bedford Road in Luton, within a residential area and in walking distance of local amenities and public transport links.

The property comprises eight single bedrooms and communal living spaces, including lounge and dining areas. The home also benefits from an enclosed outdoor area with seating, providing residents with access to outdoor space in a safe and private environment.

On the day of the visit, the service was operating as usual. The person in charge was Ayobami, as the registered manager was not present. Residents were observed moving freely around communal areas, and the overall atmosphere was calm and welcoming.

The home appeared clean and well maintained throughout. Displays within the home included residents' photographs and activity schedules, contributing to a personalised and homely environment. Residents had been informed of the Healthwatch visit in advance and were encouraged to speak openly with the visiting team.

Based on observations and feedback gathered during the visit, Belle Vue presented as an inclusive residential setting focused on supporting residents' independence, wellbeing and daily living needs.

6.2 Premises

The external condition of Belle Vue Care Home was observed to be in **very good** condition. The building appeared well maintained and appropriately presented within its residential setting. Roadside parking was available at the time of the visit.

Internally, the home was also recorded as being in **very good** condition on arrival. The environment was clean, light and well organised, with no unpleasant

odours or visible hazards identified during the visit. Communal areas were spacious and allowed residents to move freely. Residents were observed using shared spaces comfortably.

Accessibility appeared appropriate for residents' needs. Signage within the home was clear, and essential information, including complaints information, was displayed. Hand sanitising facilities were visible, and general health and safety measures appeared to be in place. Fire exits were clearly marked.

The home benefits from communal lounge and dining areas, as well as private bedrooms. Residents were observed spending time both in communal spaces and in their rooms, reflecting flexibility in how they choose to use the environment.

Personalisation was evident throughout the home. Residents' photographs were displayed, and individual activity schedules were visible, reinforcing a person-centred approach. The outdoor area includes seating and space suitable for social gatherings, which provides an additional area for residents to relax and engage in activities.

Overall, the premises presented as a clean, safe and homely environment that supports both shared living and individual privacy.

6.3 Staff interaction and quality of care

During the visit, interactions between staff and residents were observed to be calm and respectful. Staff were described as friendly and approachable, and residents appeared comfortable engaging with them.

Residents who provided feedback spoke positively about the support they receive. One resident commented, "*They listen to us,*" reflecting a sense that their views are acknowledged. Residents indicated that they feel safe living at the home, and no safeguarding concerns were raised during the visit.

Staff reported that residents are supported to access healthcare services when required, including GP and hospital appointments. Residents also confirmed that they receive support when attending external appointments. This suggests appropriate oversight of residents' health and wellbeing.

Care planning processes were described as supportive, with residents indicating that staff assist them with daily living needs and routines. Staff feedback indicated that training is maintained, with one staff member stating that training is *“up to date.”* Staff also described a positive team environment.

During the visit, some residents were observed spending time in their bedrooms, while others were present in communal areas. Residents reported that they are able to choose how they spend their time within the home. The overall atmosphere remained calm and settled throughout the visit.

Overall, the evidence gathered suggests that residents feel supported and safe, and that staff interactions are characterised by a respectful and reassuring approach.

6.4 Social engagement and activities

Residents who participated in the visit referred to a range of activities available both within the home and externally. Activities mentioned included exercise sessions, listening to music, watching television, bingo and attending day centre provision. Some residents also referred to attending appointments and community-based activities with staff support.

During the visit, communal areas were in use, and residents were observed spending time in shared spaces. The home displayed activity schedules, including individualised plans, indicating that activities are structured and tailored to residents' needs and preferences.

Residents described opportunities for social interaction within the home. One resident noted that residents “all chat with residents,” suggesting that communal engagement forms part of daily life. The presence of an outdoor seating area further supports opportunities for social time, particularly in suitable weather.

Some residents were observed spending time in their bedrooms. Residents indicated that they could choose how they spend their time, including whether to participate in communal activities or remain in private spaces. No concerns were raised by residents regarding a lack of activity provision.

Family contact was also referenced by residents, with some noting regular visits at weekends and ongoing communication with relatives. This supports continued connection with family and external networks.

Overall, the evidence gathered suggests that Belle View provides opportunities for both structured and informal engagement, allowing residents flexibility in how they participate in daily activities.

6.5 Dining Experience

Residents who provided feedback were generally positive about the food provided at Belle View. One resident described the meals as “really good with a really good choice of options,” while another commented that the “food looks lovely.” These comments indicate overall satisfaction with both quality and variety.

Residents reported that they can choose where they eat. Some residents prefer to eat in communal areas, while others choose to eat in their bedrooms. This flexibility reflects a domestic-style approach rather than a structured dining arrangement.

Where assistance with eating is required, residents indicated that staff provide support. No concerns were raised regarding portion sizes, dietary needs or access to drinks.

The dining areas appeared clean and appropriately arranged. The overall impression from resident feedback and observation is that meal provision forms part of everyday living within the home, with residents supported to exercise choice in a way that aligns with their preferences.

6.6 Choice

Feedback gathered during the visit suggests that residents at Belle Vue Care Home are supported to exercise choice in their daily lives. Residents indicated that they could make decisions about how they spend their time, including whether to participate in communal activities or remain in their bedrooms.

Flexibility was also evident in relation to meals, with residents reporting that they may choose where they eat. This reflects a home environment that accommodates individual preference.

Residents described being involved in aspects of their care and daily routines. Support from staff was reported as responsive, with residents indicating that staff listen to them and provide assistance when needed. One resident’s

comment, "They listen to us," reflects a perception that their views are acknowledged.

Family contact and visits were also referenced, with residents describing regular communication and visits at weekends. This suggests that residents are supported to maintain relationships beyond the home.

Overall, the evidence indicates that residents are able to exercise personal choice within the structure of residential care, with flexibility evident in daily routines and social engagement.

Recommendations

Belle View Care Home presented as a welcoming and inclusive service, with positive feedback from residents and staff. The following recommendations are offered to support continued development and enhancement of existing good practice.

1. Consider strengthening the visibility of structured activity planning.

While residents referred to a range of activities, including exercise, music and day centre attendance, ensuring that structured activity planning is clearly visible and consistently communicated may further enhance residents' awareness of available opportunities.

Suggested review: within 6 months.

2. Continue to support balanced use of communal spaces and social engagement.

Residents were observed spending time both in communal areas and in their bedrooms, reflecting personal choice. Continued encouragement of inclusive communal engagement may help to further promote social interaction and shared experiences within the home.

Suggested review: within 6 months.

7.1 Examples of Best Practice

The following areas of good practice were identified during the Enter and View visit to Belle Vue Care Home:

Welcoming and Inclusive Environment:

The home presented as clean, well maintained and homely. Residents were informed of the visit in advance and encouraged to speak with Healthwatch Luton representatives. The atmosphere observed during the visit was calm and friendly, contributing to a reassuring environment.

Positive Staff-Resident Relationships:

Residents described staff as supportive and responsive. One resident commented, "They listen to us," reflecting a perception that their views are acknowledged. Interactions observed during the visit were respectful and relaxed.

Promotion of Choice in Daily Living:

Residents reported being able to choose how they spend their time and where they eat their meals. The flexibility observed within daily routines supports personal preference while maintaining appropriate levels of care and supervision.

Opportunities for Activity and Community Engagement:

Residents referred to a range of activities, including exercise, music, bingo and attendance at day centre provision. The display of activity schedules and access to outdoor seating areas further supports engagement and social interaction.

Maintenance of Family Connections:

Residents described ongoing contact with family members, including weekend visits. This supports emotional wellbeing and continuity of relationships outside the home.

Service provider response

Thank you very much for visiting us on the 16th January 2026 and for taking the time to provide such thoughtful and constructive feedback. We truly value your input and the opportunity to reflect on our practice.

In relation to the first recommendation regarding strengthening the visibility of the structured activity programme, I am proud to say that most of the people using the service are able to recall their daily structured activities. Each person has their individual weekly activity planner displayed on the notice board in the hallway, with a copy also available in their bedroom. In addition, we have a yearly activities planner also displayed in the hallway, outlining weekly and monthly activities planned throughout the year to ensure everyone has a clear and consistent information. That said, we very much welcome this recommendation and will bring it to our next residents meeting. At that meeting, we will ask the people using the service to explore whether they are happy with the information provided to them in relation to their structured activities, or if there are any changes or improvements, they would like us to consider. The service will act in line with the feedback received and make any necessary adjustments, if required.

Furthermore, in line with your second recommendation, we will continue to encourage and support a balanced approach to the use of communal spaces and opportunities for social engagement, fostering positive social interaction and shared experiences within the home while continuing to respect each person's individual choice and preferences as this is first and foremost each person's home.

Thank you once again for your guidance and support. We look forward to continuing to develop and strengthen our service in line with the feedback provided.

