

Connaught Court Care Home
Enter and View Report
August 2026

Contents

Background	2
Details of the visit to Connaught Court Care Home	3
Summary	3
About this visit	5
Findings	6
Environment	6
Accommodation	7
Quality of life	8
General happiness	8
Food and drink	9
Activities	10
Contact with friends and family	12
Quality of care	13
Residents and relatives	13
Staff	15
Safety and staffing levels	15
Health Checks	16
Raising concerns and issues	17
Other comments	18
Staff feedback	19
Friends of Connaught Court	21
Additional information	22
Overall ratings	22

Background

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch York is the independent champion for people using local health and care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share these views with the people who have the power to make a difference.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake Enter and View visits. Our team of authorised representatives conduct Enter and View visits to local health and social care services to find out how services are being run and make recommendations for improvement. Healthwatch Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies.

Connaught Court Care Home



Details of the visit to Connaught Court care home

Service address	Connaught Court, St Oswalds Road, Fulford, York YO10 4FA
Service provider	Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution Care Company (RMBI)
Date	11 June 2026
CQC rating	Outstanding (January 2023)
Care home manager	Marinda Aydinalp
Contact number	01904 626238

Summary

Purpose of the report

In this report, we summarise the findings from our visit of 11 June 2026. We also share the feedback received through survey responses collected before and after the visit.

Purpose of the visit

- To visit and gather views of the residents, their relatives and friends and staff about the services and care provided.
- To observe the care being provided for the residents and their interaction with staff and their surroundings.

General information

Connaught Court is a care home owned and managed by the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution (RMBI) Care Company. It offers residential, nursing and residential dementia care services for older people, based on separate units. Connaught Court has bedrooms with en-suite facilities in six units. These are called Viking (nursing); Knavesmire (early-mid dementia); Fred Crosland house (early – mid dementia); Ebor (enhanced dementia); Yorvik (residential) and Fairfax (residential) with overall accommodation space for 94 residents. The units providing dementia care are on the ground floor.

There was a good mix of male and female residents with 88 residents and two planned admissions when we visited. Residents are aged between 69 – 105. We were told Connaught Court currently has seven residents over 100 years old.

Most current admissions are people over the age of 90 who are often very frail. Admissions are generally based on family links to the Freemasons. We were told some recent admissions haven't required those links.

Key findings

At the time of our visit, we found that Connaught Court was operating to an excellent standard of care. These findings were based on our observations and reflect the general happiness of residents, family and friends of residents and staff members.



Positive feedback

- The staff are all extremely friendly and knew about residents' needs, likes and dislikes. Our volunteers saw a lot of staff. Everyone we spoke to said there are plenty of staff at all times.
- The staff are very respectful. They all wore name badges and talked to residents by name. Many of the staff have worked at the home for a number of years.
- There is a lot of information about activities, with monthly information sheets around the home, including print outs in residents' rooms. The residents who commented said that staff talk to them about what is happening. Everyone was happy with what was available, including one-to-one sessions for residents as appropriate.
- All the residents looked clean and well cared for and there were positive comments about laundry, which is done on site.
- The décor is good, the lounges felt comfortable and homely and the dining rooms are very well-appointed with matching tables and chairs, tablecloths, cloth napkins and drinking glasses.
- The home is extremely clean.

- There are GP practice visits twice a week, regular optician visits and the home has good links with local dentists.
- There is a regular hairdresser service.
- “We’re not a care home, just a home with care” (quote from senior manager.)



Recommended areas for improvement

We did not have many areas for improvement. The ones noted were:

- Reconsider the meal portion sizes for some residents. There were consistent messages about, “too much food on my plate” and “I hate waste”.
- Make sure people with diabetes are provided with appropriate food.
- Consider opening the pop-up shop more frequently.
- Be aware of specific residents’ wishes to watch sport on TV.
- Make sure family / friends are invited to care plan meetings and know how to access the GP, dentist and optician support as needed.
- Note where family members have a lasting power of attorney for a relative’s health and welfare.
- Continue to consider accessibility and inclusion within the activities programme

About this visit

This was an announced Enter and View visit arranged in advance with the care home manager. The purpose of the visit was to capture the experience of life and care within a care home environment and to observe the standards of working practice. We did this by observing the interactions between staff and residents, observing their surroundings and speaking to residents to understand their experiences. We asked relatives and friends and staff members to provide their experience and views of the care home through a survey. Copies of the survey were available in the care home before and after our visit and staff circulated links to the online survey.

On the day, four Healthwatch York authorised representatives conducted observations and talked to residents, their family and friends and staff members. We spoke directly to a few residents and some family members, who

shared their thoughts and experiences using a survey focused on quality of life and care in the home to guide the conversations. Some of the residents have dementia or other cognitive issues and were not able to answer all our questions. However, in those instances, we had more general conversations to understand their experiences of living at Connaught Court.

In addition, 35 family and friends of residents responded to our survey with their views. We also heard from 21 members of staff who work in the home via a survey.

Not all respondents provided answers to every question and some respondents preferred not to answer all questions.

Findings

Environment

On initial observation of the care home, our authorised representatives found the building to be in a very good state of repair. The building is purpose-built, and consists of a number of separate buildings all joined by internal corridors. The main part was built in 1971 but had a later extension built (Fred Crosland house). The buildings have been well maintained and were clean and tidy. The home is easily located and accessed by car with car parking to the front and side. The home is close to a bus route between Fulford and York centre.

Connaught Court has extensive well-maintained mature grounds and gardens covering a large area. There are discrete seating areas and patios with plenty of outdoor garden furniture and adequate shade. The secure garden areas enable residents to spend time outside safely. We noted some outdoor tables set up for all weather board games. There was also a heated summerhouse in the grounds which is used throughout the year. Residents were able to use some greenhouses and they can help in the garden and often sit outside in warm weather.

The home is accessed via a front door. This is locked with a buzzer to access. Once rung, the buzzer was answered very quickly by a welcoming reception staff member. All staff were professional, friendly and kind, and volunteers noted the busy reception area with residents and staff interacting.

The reception area had a signing in book, information boards with photos of staff and details of their roles. There were printed weekly activity programmes and a copy of that day's menu. A beverage area provided free hot and cold

drinks and homemade snacks for residents and visitors. The reception area was being used by residents as a social place.

Accommodation

All 94 rooms are ensuite, all with a toilet and some rooms contain a shower and toilet. There are also separate toilets on the main corridors for staff and visitors. All the common rooms (lounges and dining rooms) and toilets are well signed. All toilets are easily accessible and we noted male and female toilets near the reception area that had automatic push button door openings to make it easy for wheelchair users.

There is a large lounge and separate dining room close to the reception area. The décor in the lounges is excellent with a variety of seating, wallpaper and pictures. Corridor walls have a handrail which has good colour contrast with the walls. The corridors are wide enough for easy access and on the walls were photographs and pictures.

Each of the six units is well signed and each has private access with baffle locks for the dementia units. Each unit has its own dining and lounge area. All residents' rooms have the name of the resident and a number on the door; some had a photograph of the resident. The dementia unit bedrooms have external memory boxes for small items/pictures to enable residents to identify their room by their personal possessions. The bedroom doors are designed so they can be opened inwards or outwards to make sure staff can get into the room in all circumstances.

All residents' rooms we saw had high ceilings which makes them feel spacious. The rooms are well furnished with a profiling bed, wardrobe, sideboard, chair, curtains. Some residents had their own possessions and pictures. Residents can bring their own furniture. We also saw rooms with fridges. Each had a lockable medication cabinet for residents' medication to enable a personalised medication service. We were told controlled drugs are stored centrally in locked cabinets.

We noted separate bathrooms with either a raising bath or walk in shower. We also noted a bathroom and at least one bedroom with ceiling tracking for hoists.

The décor in the lounges is good and they are comfortable and homely. The dining rooms are very well-appointed with matching tables and chairs, tablecloths, cloth napkins and drinking glasses.

Residents can sit in the lounge or dining rooms at any time; there are also small seating areas in corridors that people can use if they want to have a quieter place to sit or to meet relatives. Relatives are also welcome to visit residents in their rooms.

We noted a number of additional facilities offered by the home. These included a library with hundreds of books, a dedicated sensory stimulation room with textile walls, light tubes, coloured wires, coloured lighting, seating and bird sounds (Namaste room). We were also told about the reminiscence caravan in the grounds.

Connaught Court has a chapel with seating for up to 60 people. It offers multi-denominational services with links to Fulford Church. Evensong services are held monthly. Two staff members had got married in the chapel. There is also a dedicated music room; a music therapist visits weekly, which is helpful to support the management of people with behaviours of distress.

There is also a pop-up shop open fortnightly on a Tuesday.

Cleanliness and hygiene

Our representatives noted that the care home was exceptionally clean, with no unpleasant smells. Domestic housekeeping staff are employed alongside laundry staff.

Quality of life

General happiness

We asked residents what they liked about living at Connaught Court. They said:

- "There's not a bad penny amongst them." (resident talking about staff)
- Any complaints? – "NO!" (resident)
- Are you happy here? "Oh, entirely." (resident)
- "The home is very welcoming."
- "The staff are fabulous."



Food and drink

Residents and relatives were asked to share their views on food and drink at Connaught Court. Our representatives observed the lunchtime meal in the main dining room.

All the food is cooked on the premises by one head chef supported by the hospitality team. There are three choices for main course including one vegetarian option and one main pudding. There is a wide range of alternatives for the main course and pudding including salad, fresh fruit, ice-cream and yoghurt.

Connaught Court caters for a range of special diets including vegan, gluten free and pureed meals. Wine is served to those residents that want it and coffee or tea is served after lunch.

Residents have a choice of eating in the dining room or in their rooms. Everyone we saw who needed help received it in a kind and friendly manner.

Drinks and snacks are brought around each of the units in the morning and afternoon. There is a well-stocked food and beverage area close to the reception. Everyone we spoke to said they had enough to eat and drink.

Residents' comments about the food were generally positive included:

- "I like the food here, the meals are very good."
- "I like to eat in my own room and the food is brought to me four times a day."
- "I have a choice which I can make at the dining table."
- "I need a gluten free diet and I get it."
- "I can ask staff to bring drinks and snacks to my room."
- "I'm never hungry, the food is excellent."
- "There's always lots of extras if needed."
- "If anything, the portion size is too much for me."
- "The food is good but if anything the portion size is too generous and I hate waste!"

All the family members/friends who responded to the survey said that the food was good most of the time, that their friend/family member gets enough to eat and the home caters for special diets.

Family members commented:

- "We haven't been there at main meal times but mum gets nice snacks and a lot of choice at breakfast."
- "Fabulous food."
- "No complaints at all about the food. When dad was alive, he came over to eat with mum and enjoyed it."
- "There's a good choice which dad gets to choose."
- "Mum has dementia and can't verbalise what she wants. She seems happy eating in the dining room (Fred Crosland Centre). She eats very well and enjoys her food. The staff understand what she likes."
- "The sandwiches served in the evening don't always look appetising. My father likes plain sandwiches without mayonnaise and these don't always get offered."
- "Mum is diabetic and I'm not sure she gets offered a special diet."

We also asked about drinks. Most residents and family members said drinks were always available. One family member/friend felt that drinks could be offered more often. One other relative raised a concern about the offer of juices rather than water as they felt this wasn't healthy. They also said they thought he was offered more biscuits than was good for him.

Activities

Residents were asked if they spend their time doing things they value and enjoy. Relatives and staff were asked if residents have regular access to activities in the home.

Connaught Court has three activities coordinators. There is a range of activities inside and outside the home. The home has a minibus to take people on trips and many entertainers regularly visit. When we were talking to residents about what they enjoyed, they mentioned film nights, carpet bowls, gardening, quizzes and concerts.

The home produces a monthly Activity Programme in written form which is delivered to each resident's room and advertised on noticeboards.

Regular activities include – bingo, quizzes, keep fit, films, songs of praise, book club, hand and nail care, Musical Moments, yoga and meditation, carpet bowls, gardening, art club and more. In addition, there are one off activities and the home organises a resident/staff pantomime at Christmas and recently held a summer serenade event – an afternoon of live music and refreshments. They have also had visits from a miniature horse and an opportunity for residents to meet frogs and salamanders. While we were there, we observed a music afternoon with a local organist with 40 residents and visitors attending.

We asked friends and family and staff about activities. Of the 34 family and friend respondents, 19 said that there were always things for residents to do and 15 that there were sometimes things for their relative/friend to do. All but one of the respondents said they were invited to take part in activities.

Respondents said:

- “My Mum attends all the activities and enjoys the garden when the weather is good.”
- “There’s a good selection of activities on offer.”
- “There is a variety of entertainment.”
- “Dad has choices to do what he wishes with assistance as needed.”
- “Dad enjoys the books we bought in for him and he enjoys playing dominoes with other residents.”

We also noted a number of negative comments from relatives and friends about the activities and residents’ involvement. It appears that not everyone has equal access to the activities on offer:

- “The outside excursions and walks in the garden are not always available due to the staff ratios.”
- “When outside the home, accessibility is a real issue.”
- “Carers need to be prompted to tend to personal needs such as removing facial hair and cutting finger nails.”
- “Mum is interested in visiting the pop-up shop but it is rarely open or staff aren’t available to take her.”
- “I sometimes think dad doesn’t have the option of watching sport on TV that he would have chosen.”
- “Some staff aren’t as engaged as others to support people with activities.”
- “I think the staff on Ebor unit (dementia unit) could easily replicate showing the old films shown by the activity coordinators and this should be offered more frequently.”
- “I’d like to see more games such as throwing and skittles on the Ebor unit.”

- “I’d like to see more opportunity for staff to spend time reading to my dad and playing games with him.”
- “Dad enjoys watching sport on TV but I’m not sure he gets much opportunity.”

Staff explained and commented about the activities happening at Connaught Court including:

- “We offer a wide variety of activities such as films, music, live music, animal visits, art classes, gardening, carpet bowls, yoga, quizzes, bus trips out to various places and themed days (including themed meals).”
- “Activities are on every day.”
- “There is a comprehensive activity programme with evening and weekend concerts. We provide specialist musical therapy for residents (some with dementia and Parkinson’s) who we feel will benefit from this type of engagement.”

Contact with friends and family

Residents and their relatives were asked about their contact.

All family and friend respondents said that they can visit their friends or relatives when they want. A number mentioned that they always get a friendly welcome. All the residents who talked about relatives or friends visiting said they can visit at any time.



Comments from family and friends included:

- “I’m always made to feel very welcome.”
- “It’s always a very welcoming environment.”
- “The staff never make you feel awkward no matter what time you visit.”

We also noted a weekly invitation to visitors to join the staff on one of the residential units for tea, nibbles and chat as a way of enabling direct informal contact. This is held on Sundays at 3pm.

We were made aware of the quarterly Connaught Connect newsletter.

Quality of care

We were told there is a residents' committee made up of seven residents who meet once a month. Details of committee membership and contact details are published on the residents' noticeboard. The home has an open-door policy and the management team will respond to concerns as they occur. We were told by residents and relatives that issues they had identified were resolved immediately. Nearly everyone was very happy with the approach taken by staff to manage concerns with lots of positive comments about 'positive and swift' responses made constructively in an open and honest manner.

Residents and relatives

Family and friends were asked whether they felt they/their relative was well cared for. We also observed whether residents looked well cared for during our visit.

Throughout our visit, all the residents we saw and met looked well cared for. The residents we spoke to said they could have a shower or bath when they wanted. Where appropriate, they choose the clothes they wear and their clothes are clean. They are laundered and ironed on site. Clothing is labelled by the laundry staff team and this reduces the chance of clothing going missing.

Thirty-five family and friends responded to the question, "How satisfied are you with the care your relative / friend receives" with 30 being very satisfied, four being somewhat satisfied and one person being somewhat dissatisfied.



"I'm so happy the way my husband is being looked after".



Other comments included:

- "Mum's comfortable and well looked after."
- "The staff are brilliant. If I have issues or concerns they listen to me and do what they can to help make things better."
- Manager has resolved most of my issues but there were other issues unresolved due to the mixed quality of staff and their understanding of my father's care needs."
- "I am satisfied this is the best care available in the area. However, I'm disappointed by the inconsistent level of care provided through agency staff."

We also wanted to know whether residents feel like they need additional help with anything, such as help to eat or drink, and if they receive enough help.

All the residents we spoke to said they get the help they need. Residents mentioned that there are always staff around and they can ask for assistance. Residents have a bell in their room. All the residents said staff come quickly when they ask for help. Due to limited time, we were not able to observe how residents on the dementia unit get help when needed.

We were told about the use of technology, the Bide Box, being trialled in three rooms at Connaught Court. It is designed to communicate with residents during the night as way of reducing falls. The box is triggered by light and motion which activates a pre-recorded personalised voice from the box to provide a reassuring message while staff are alerted on the call system (www.getbide.com).

Relatives and friends were asked if they contribute to individual care plans.

Of the 35 people who responded, 18 said they had contributed, and 17 said they had not or did not know about care plans. A number of people said they had been asked to be part of care plan reviews.



“We had a really thorough care plan meeting.”
“I feel management were receptive when I initiated discussions about care plans.”



Other comments were less positive:

- “I can only recall one time in three years being proactively invited to be involved.”
- “I would prefer for care plan meetings to be regular every six months and that family/friends are informed if any major changes are made.”
- “It didn’t seem that the care plan was regularly used by the care team at certain points in the three years dad was there.”

Staff comments about being informed.

Twenty-one staff responded to our survey question about being informed about residents’ needs. Twelve felt very informed and seven felt somewhat informed. Two staff felt somewhat uninformed. Staff talked about detailed personal care plans being accessible on the electronic care system.



"Kept informed verbally as well as via care plans, etc. We are very well informed about each resident from the day they are admitted."



Staff

We wanted to know what residents and family/friends think of staff.

All the interactions we saw between staff and residents were very positive. Staff do not wear uniforms but all wore name badges and appropriate protective clothing. We observed staff calling the residents by their name. All the residents we spoke to were complimentary about the staff as were most of the relatives and friends. We also noted how privacy is maintained especially at night and were shown notices on some bedroom doors indicating 'Do not disturb between 9pm – 7am'.



"The staff at Connaught Court are brilliant."
"If I have any issues/concerns the staff listen to me and do what they can to make things better."



Safety and staffing levels

Residents, relatives, and staff were asked whether they feel there are enough staff, and we asked the residents if they felt safe in the home.

All the residents we spoke to said they feel safe. The majority of the 35 family and friends who responded said they felt their relative or friend was safe at Connaught Court but two people were unsure. The majority (26) of the 35 family and friends who responded thought there are enough staff. Four people said there weren't enough staff and five people were unsure.

- "I think the home is very understaffed."
- "I do not feel the staffing ratios always reflect the individual needs of residents on Ebor."
- "When challenges happen with residents it can take one or two staff away from caring for the other residents leaving one member of staff. This seems insufficient given the vulnerability of the residents."
- "I have complained about personal care being delivered late, such as after lunch."

- “I felt uneasy when my father was assaulted by another resident. I was able to talk to management about this and could see they were trying to address the problem. The regular staff did a great job but we were let down when there weren’t enough staff.”

The manager told us that Connaught Court is fully staffed with 136 staff. They have a multi-cultural workforce and some sponsored international workers. Most staff live locally but some travel in from Selby and Leeds. A number of staff are partners of soldiers from Imphal Barracks, also in Fulford.

The manager holds an informal weekly session where staff members can meet her in private.

The staffing is made up of the manager; deputy manager; business relationship manager; two operations managers (catering and housekeeping); training manager; facilities manager; assistant facilities manager; clinical nurse manager (vacant); dementia lead (vacant); three activities coordinators; team leaders/nurse; senior carers and carers. There are 12 night staff (one qualified nurse, four team leaders and seven carers)

Newly employed staff go through a one week in-person induction (in-house) and two weeks buddying before working on their own.

The home operates its own team of Bank staff providing cover for sickness and holidays. There is a low staff turnover reported.

Most of the 20 staff respondents said they felt the home has enough staff (80%). Four staff felt there weren’t enough staff. Staff comments included:

- “Some areas seem to struggle.”
- “I think the home is well staffed.”
- There seems to be sufficient housekeeping and catering staff as the place is spotless and the catering plentiful and well managed.”
- “The housekeeping team is good and support each other.”
- “Seniors and team leaders support management with staffing issues.”

Health Checks

We asked residents and friends/family if they are able to access relevant health checks.

Either a GP or an advanced care practitioner from the local surgery visit twice a week. An optician visits every six weeks and the home has links with a dentist for routine care. A chiropodist visits every six to eight weeks. The home also has access to an NHS physiotherapist and speech and language specialists. Many

family members take their relatives to appointments and said that care home staff will help if needed. The home operates a telemedicine service through a contract arrangement. This is used as a back-up for nursing staff on duty. It provides online contact with GPs for advice and guidance using a camera for visual observations.

End of life care is provided when necessary. This includes support for relatives i.e. meals and accommodation if there is a spare room.

Comments included:

- "I'm concerned mum is charged £17 per hour for a wheelchair taxi to take her to the dentist or hospital."
- "I would prefer for mum to have remained with her original GP practice."
- "Health checks are a relatively poor aspect of my father's care but the GP/nurse and chiropody access are excellent. I'm not aware of dental and hearing checks."
- "We take mum to the dentist, optician and hearing tests as I'm not sure they're available in the home."
- "I think it's important that family members with a lasting power of Attorney should be treated as equal partners with medical staff and openly involved in discussions with the GP were possible."
- Taking dad ourselves to the dentist was extremely disruptive because of his dementia."

Raising concerns and issues

We wanted to know if residents, family and friends had any concerns about the service, would they know what to do.

All the residents who commented said they would talk to staff members or the unit manager if there were any issues and some mentioned talking to the home manager or deputy manager. Family members and friends said similar. None were concerned about raising issues and felt they would be listened to and issues addressed as soon as possible. However, most people said there had been no issues.



"I visit regularly and feel I always have the opportunity to talk directly with members of the staff and the management team."



Other comments

We gave residents and family/friends the opportunity to add any other comments.

Residents said:

- "It's very nice. You get to see all the shows [entertainment in the home]. Family live near and visit regularly."
- "It's a happy place with lovely staff."
- "I am able to live as I did at home."
- "I enjoy the company of the residents and staff as living alone after my wife died was very lonely."
- "I enjoy being with company and feeling safe."
- "I don't have to worry anymore about getting older."

Family members/friends added:

- "The home is outstanding and I would be very happy living here."
- "The staff at Connaught Court are fantastic and provide a truly exemplary care service."
- "My Mum is extremely happy living there and is well looked after."
- "Good care home that is always clean and tidy with friendly staff."
- "My husband is excellently cared for in a place he regards as his safe home."
- "Connaught Court provides a wonderful caring environment in which dad is thriving."
- "The care is excellent."
- "Special mention to Bimala who's always helpful and to Claire on reception. Kris the deputy manager always makes us feel welcome and valued."
- "Connaught Court is a kind and caring place. I know the carers will contact me if anything is wrong."
- "I would like the care staff to try harder to converse with the more disabled residents and not just to plonk them in front of the TV."
- "My only negative comment would be trying to contact carers after office hours/evenings."
- "As a family we feel dad is well cared for and included in decision making around his care."
- "My mother has dementia and had injuries after a fall. Nothing is too much trouble for the care and nursing staff."

- “The home hosted my mother’s 90th birthday party (25 family guests). They did a brilliant job, being kind and considerate. We all had a special celebration, especially mother.”
- “My relative moved to Connaught Court when her former home closed suddenly. She has been made most welcome and I feel she is well cared for. Most importantly she likes it very much and is happy and safe.”

Our care home assessors also summarised their impression of Connaught Court:

- “If I was to go into care, I cannot think of anywhere better to receive care and feel ‘at home’. The managers and whole organisation are exemplary. I would feel confident I would retain my dignity as well as having easy access to GP, chiropody and hairdressing services and a good choice of activities in a pleasant environment.”
- “I personally think the manager and deputy have done/are doing such a great job here. The management of staff, residents, visitors, volunteers, etc is all very smooth and logical. They are taking residents’, staff and visitors’ opinions into account and acting on that too. It is very clear how much the management staff prioritise and care for residents and staff. I have no concerns about management style and the way in which the staff care for the residents.”

Staff feedback

How do they feel?

We asked staff about working in the care home.

Twenty-one staff members completed the survey across a variety of roles and every one said they enjoy working at Connaught Court. Comments included:

- “I’ve been at Connaught Court for five years and I love my job, staff and management.”
- “It’s a lovely place to work and all the staff do their best to provide a safe, comfortable home for the residents.”
- “There’s a conducive environment.”
- “It’s very diverse. I enjoy looking after our residents, they are my second family. Working here has made me a better professional person.”
- “I have worked in various roles at Connaught Court and enjoyed them all. It’s a very friendly and happy place to work.”
- “There’s good teamwork, strong management and excellent training opportunities.”

- “I’ve only been here a short time but I’ve been made to feel very welcome. It’s a kind, caring and respectful environment.”

When we asked about things that could make the working environment better most respondents couldn’t think of anything and reiterated what a good place it is to work. Those that mentioned something, suggested holding a few more team activities and regular staff feedback sessions. There were also comments about having more structured meal times for residents; increasing pay for bank holiday working; paid break times; and a comment about leadership styles changing depending on who was on duty.

All staff respondents felt they were offered relevant training to do their job. Comments included having good access to statutory and non-mandatory courses and opportunities to gain qualifications. Someone said a lot of training is online and they wanted more face-to-face training. Other comments suggested training in care plan writing and care plan audits.

Most staff (13) said they are always kept informed about any changes at the home. Six said they sometimes were kept informed and two staff said they weren’t informed. We were told about the daily ‘flash’ meeting held at 11.30am in the library for senior staff members from each unit to meet the management team. This is held to ensure everyone gets updated with the same information. Staff members also commented there is good communication and they were encouraged to ask questions and were given active feedback.

Other staff members said:

- “Suggestions I make are regularly acted upon by management and I do feel heard by the manager. I feel I make a positive contribution to the running of the home.”
- “My feedback is always listened to and taken into consideration by management and positive changes are made when needed.”

All but one staff respondents said they would recommend Connaught Court to friends and family. Comments included:

- “I would be happy for my family member to live at Connaught Court.”
- “I know she would be cared for well and she’d have the option of taking advantage of all the activities.”
- “I would always refer my friends and family. It’s a lovely home.”

We asked staff if they were well informed about the residents likes and dislikes, food and drink requirements and hobbies and interests. Nineteen of 21 staff

responding were either very informed or somewhat informed. Two staff said they were somewhat uninformed. Staff comments included:

- “All the information is accessible on our care system if I need to find out anything that I don’t already know.”
- “We are very well informed about the residents the day they join and when we are dealing with them the first time.”
- “We are always well informed about changes taking place.”
- “I am encouraged to spend time chatting with residents.”
- “Some residents don’t want to share too much information about themselves.”

When we asked staff if there was anything else they wanted to tell us, they said:

- “It’s a lovely place to work.”
- “Staff genuinely care for the residents and each other.”
- “Our residents are the best! I have genuine affection for all of them.”
- “Working at Connaught Court has been a very positive and rewarding experience. The management team are supportive, communication is excellent and staff are always kept informed and listened to.”
- “The home provides a friendly, respectful and professional working environment where both staff and residents are valued.”
- “I have worked a long time in many care homes and Connaught Court is the most wonderful home I have ever worked in.”
- “I read the CQC reports on the home before I applied for the job. In my experience to date, it lives up to the ‘excellent’ ratings it achieved.”
- “I am stressed about the potential sale of the home.” (see below)

Friends of Connaught Court

The Friends of Connaught Court is a separate charitable organisation made up of Freemasons. It was established to provide extra comfort and a range of social, leisure and entertainment activities for residents.

The friends donate an annual sum for the provision of regular entertainments for the residents; providing funds for one-off items such as televisions, computers, sound systems, specialist furniture, garden furniture and a range of other items as required. All these items are provided with a view of enhancing the wellbeing of the residents of Connaught Court. In addition, the Association has provided a new specially designed mini-bus for the use of the residents.

Members of the Association give their time to assist in driving the mini-bus, alongside counselling and befriending the residents and providing the pop-up shop. All monies raised by the Association, with the exception of minimal administration costs, support the residents of Connaught Court.

Additional Information

We were told by the Manager of the home that Connaught Court is potentially to be sold by the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution. It is one of 16 homes owned by the Institution, all of which are currently being advertised for sale. We noted a number of concerns about the potential sale expressed by residents, staff and family and friends.

Overall rating

We asked residents and family and friends of residents how they would rate the home out of 5 (with 5 being the best).

Family and friends: (4.7 out of 5)



Staff: (4.6 out of 5)



Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch York Enter and View team would like to thank the manager, deputy manager, staff, friends and families of residents, and residents for welcoming us to the care home, and for sharing their views with us. Thanks also to our dedicated volunteers who helped support this Enter and View visit.



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