



Towy Castle Care Home



Towy Castle Residential Home, Uplands, Carmarthen, SA32 8DY



01267234594



www.towycastle.co.uk

Date(s) of inspection visit(s): The inspection visits for this service took place between 05/09/2025 and 08/09/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Carmarthen Care Limited
Care Type:	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Provision for:	Care home for adults - with personal care
Registered places:	61
Main language(s):	Welsh and English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture, or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:



Well-being

Good



Care & Support

Good



Environment

Excellent



Leadership & Management

Excellent

Summary:

Towy Castle is a residential home for adults. It is located midway between Carmarthen and Kidwelly. It provides care and support to people who are frail and unable to live independently. Some people who have made Towy Castle their home, are living with dementia.

People experience good well-being outcomes because of the care and support they receive from a dedicated staff team and who are led by an experienced and well-regarded manager.

Care and support is good because of the relationships they have with those caring for them. Care workers and other members of the team are suitably trained, supervised and feel enthusiastic about their work. Care is not rushed and care workers know people and those important to them well. Comprehensive care and support plans help inform and drive care and there are opportunities to develop this further to ensure individualised and person-centred care,

The environment is excellent. It is clean and well maintained due to the high standards of upkeep and hygiene. The service is welcoming and the grounds and views complement the internal areas.

There are examples of excellent leadership and management, with a motivated staff team being effectively led by a respected manager. These are supported by a senior leadership team who set the values of the service, placing quality at the centre.

Findings:



Well-being

Good

People who have made Towy Castle their home are treated with dignity and respect. Interactions are friendly and warm with care workers showing a genuine wish to provide good standards of care and support.

There are opportunities for people to engage with each other and staff in Welsh if they wish to. A large number of staff and individuals are Welsh speaking and signage is bilingual. The provider has agreed to consider making more information available in Welsh, namely the menus and also to remind people that other information can be made available in Welsh also. During the inspection we observed and overheard care workers talking freely in Welsh with people and one member of the team has recently been recognised for their contribution to people's care using the Welsh language.

People are safe and protected from abuse, harm and neglect. People told us they feel safe in the service and the experienced maintenance worker ensures the property is suitably maintained. There are meetings where people are encouraged to talk about aspects of the service and anything they would like changed as well as how they feel about their care and support. Relatives have a high level of confidence in the service with one saying the decision for the individual to move into Towy Castle was "*definitely*" the right one, describing the staff as "*absolutely brilliant*"

The physical environment contributes to people's well-being. The two dementia care units are completed and furnished to a very high standard and the rest of the service retains some original features which includes large windows to take best advantage of the exceptional views.



People receive good quality care and support which meets their needs. The service is currently moving to an electronic records system and hopes to have this completed in the coming months. Some people and those important to them are involved in the care planning process. A helpful “This is Me” document is available for many people and in some instances, relatives have contributed to these, offering a wealth of information about the individual and what and who matters to them. There are care plans for a range of areas including personal care; medication and nutrition. Because of the move to an electronic system, records were not always easy to navigate but the manager is confident this will be resolved imminently. The manager is keen to make sure the records enable care workers to enter person centred information as well as the very important information about personal care, sleep and nutrition. The service has signed up to ‘Gwen am Byth’ which is a National Programme to improve oral health and hygiene for older people. Some assessments have been completed and care workers recognise the importance of good oral health. However, some improvements can be made in this area.

There are some opportunities for people to do things they enjoy. A television screen in the reception area shows people happily engaged in activities that have taken place and a relative commented on how they enjoy looking at the Facebook page to see how individuals spend their time. Some people feel there is enough going on in the service and said how they particularly enjoy the singing and the children’s visits. They told us *“There is always something going on”* but another person said *“There’s not much to do”*. The activities are a mixture of group and individual ones. Activity records are kept separate to the care records. They show people have taken part in a range of activities including music, spending time with family and friends and physical activities. The provider should consider how the activities workers utilise the care and support plans to consider people’s needs and wishes and also document the outcomes of activities. The provider is asked to consider how more time for engagement and activities could be made for people living in the dementia care units.

Care workers and other members of staff who make up the team are highly regarded by people and their relatives. One individual told us *“I get spoilt ... everyone is a friend... they do an excellent job”* and a relative was equally complimentary, telling us *“X feels very loved, very cared for. The carers are just so kind”*. We saw some friendly and supportive interactions throughout the inspection which shows a rapport has been built. Care workers speak fondly about the people they support and demonstrate a good understanding of how to show respect and have regard for people’s dignity.

There are enough staff on duty overall. Whilst there are busy times, care workers are not rushed in their work, with people’s individual care taking as long as necessary. The atmosphere in the service is calm and well organised. Care workers are allocated to work in specific areas of the service which means they get to know people well.

People's physical health needs are met. Care workers are trained in safe Moving & Handling and they have the equipment they need to assist people to mobilise safely. Care workers can recognise signs of pressure damage and they have the equipment they need to use if a person is assessed as being at risk. Care records show repositioning is regularly carried out. A podiatrist visits regularly. People's weight is monitored and one person who is having meal supplements has seen an increase in their weight. One relative said efforts have been made for an individual's weight to be reduced as it was affecting their mobility but would still like to see less high calorie food offered.

There is an understanding of the importance of good nutrition. Meals are mostly made using fresh ingredients and the catering staff are satisfied with the quality of ingredients. The menu shows people are offered a choice of main meal and alternatives are available if requested. A relative told us how they are involved in choosing an individual's meals with them. People are encouraged to use the dining room and we saw these are well used. One person said they were assisted to the dining room earlier than they would like but understood the reasons for this and the need for care workers to assist a number of people. People's views of the meals is generally very positive with the meals being described as "OK" "very nice" and "excellent". Special diets are catered for and special events celebrated.

The kitchen has been awarded the maximum score of five by the Food Standards Agency and it is well equipped. Food cupboards are well stocked.

People are protected from harm and abuse. There is a comprehensive policy document and staff have completed training in safeguarding vulnerable adults. All staff spoken with demonstrated a good understanding of how to recognise signs of abuse and of their responsibilities to report any concerns. They are confident the manager would take the actions necessary to safeguard people. Everyone we spoke with feels safe in the service. Each door has a sensor alarm to alert care workers if a person gets up during the night and may need some assistance.

People's medication is safely managed. Comprehensive audits are carried out which show a very high level of compliance. Medication charts looked at show people receive their medication as prescribed and we saw people being supported with their medication in a patient and unhurried way.

People's risk of infection is minimised because the service provider promotes good hygiene practices. Care workers use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to minimise the risk of infection. And they have adequate stocks of gloves and aprons. The housekeeping team have the products they need to maintain good hygiene and the laundry has the facilities to wash clothes and bedding at the correct temperature.



Environment

Excellent

People live in an exceptional environment that meets their needs. Accommodation is over two floors and a lift and stair lift is available to make sure people can safely mobilise between floors. The service is divided up into three smaller units. The two smaller units for people living with dementia are decorated to a very high standard. Rooms and communal areas are light and airy and corridors are free of clutter. Bedrooms all have ensuite facilities. Some rooms have attractive views over the countryside and have been personalised with items of furniture, photographs and ornaments. Curtains are well fitted and made of heavy material meaning they keep out the light and contribute to good sleep.

The residential unit has two main lounge areas as well as a sunroom and dining room. These are all clean and comfortable. There are plans to decorate the unit to the same standard as the rest of the service.

Consideration is given to safety, with the thoughtful use of coded door entry and exits. The reception area is welcoming and visitors are required to sign in using a visitors' book which makes sure staff know who is in the service at all times. There is a well-equipped hairdressing salon as well as a cafe which, during the inspection, was being well used by people and their visitors.

At the last inspection, there were plans to relocate the laundry and this work has been completed. There is a separate entrance and exit to promote good hygiene and infection prevention and control. A dedicated laundry worker looks after people's clothes which are returned to people ironed and in a timely manner. One relative described the laundry service as "*marvellous*"

The grounds are extensive and well maintained. The maintenance worker is experienced and motivated and plans their work to make best use of their time and to ensure repairs are carried out promptly. Comprehensive records are maintained to demonstrate checks are carried out on services and equipment.

Standards of cleanliness throughout are very high with one relative describing the service as "*spotless*". The housekeeping staff take pride in their work and feel part of the team, recognising their important role in people's overall care and support.

The kitchen has been awarded the maximum score of five by the Food Standards Agency. Catering staff have the equipment they need and cupboards are well stocked.



People are well supported because the provider has some highly effective organisational arrangements, governance and oversight to ensure smooth operations and high quality care. There are a range of audits and checks completed to monitor quality. These identify good practice and show where any improvements are needed. The audits show very high levels of compliance and satisfaction. The Quality of Care report is comprehensive and demonstrates the views of people and staff are considered. The Responsible Individual (RI) is very visible within the service and their interactions with staff demonstrate a rapport and familiarity. They have good oversight and are exceptionally proud of the service.

There was a change of ownership and leadership since the last inspection and most people spoken to think the high standards achieved by the previous provider have remained. Some care workers think some things have improved with better communication and organisation. There is clear evidence of ways the service is keeping people informed through the use of social media as well as a helpful newsletter.

The provider celebrates the achievements of staff through various initiatives. There are plans to introduce an employee of the month and during the inspection, a staff member was being recognised for being a finalist in a National Award.

People are supported by staff with the necessary expertise, skills and qualifications to meet people's care and support needs. People and their relatives think care workers are skilled and the training matrix shows training is almost completely up to date. There is a mix of face to face and on line training and care workers feel they have the training they need to safely and effectively carry out their duties. Training is offered in a range of areas including Equality & Diversity, Infection Control and First Aid.

Care workers feel they have a voice. They feel able to raise any ideas and/or concerns and are confident of getting a helpful and timely response. Care workers spoke about how receptive the manager is to and feedback and describe her as "*very approachable*". The matrix shows most supervisions are up to date and care workers are confident they get good, balanced feedback on their work to help with their professional development.

Recruitment processes are robust. Staff files are easy to navigate and contain the information needed. They contain evidence of a thorough interview and induction. Files are stored securely.

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.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

Mae'r adroddiad hwn hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

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