

Struan Lodge Care Home Service

2 Ben-Corrum Brae
Dunoon
PA23 8HU

Telephone: 01369 703 936

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 February 2026

Service provided by:
Argyll and Bute Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003373

Service no:
CS2003000452

About the service

Struan Lodge is a residential care home for older people in Dunoon. It is registered with the Care Inspectorate to support up to 12 people, including one place for temporary respite. At the time of this inspection, 11 people were living in the home. The provider is Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.

The home is arranged over two floors, accessible by a lift. All bedrooms have en-suite facilities, and there is a large, enclosed garden.

About the inspection

We carried out an unannounced inspection from 24 to 26 February between 08:30 and 18:15.

One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed previous inspection reports, registration and complaints information and information from the service.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with five people using the service, and four family members
- spoke with seven staff and management
- spoke with one visiting professional
- reviewed survey responses from one person using the service, seven staff members, four family members and five visiting professionals
- observed practice over two days
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People experienced warm, compassionate and personalised care from staff who knew them well.
- Staff identified changes in people's health early, and worked well with health professionals to keep people well.
- Strong teamwork and stable staffing led to consistent care and positive relationships for people.
- The environment supported people's independence, though improvements to décor and electrical work remained part of an improvement plan.

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
How good is our setting?	4 - 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 evaluated this key question as very good, because we found significant strengths in how the service supported people's health and wellbeing. These strengths had a clear and positive impact on people's outcomes.

People experienced care from staff who knew them well, and treated them with warmth and kindness. We saw staff take time to offer support in a calm, unhurried way. Staff used quieter moments to chat with people, listen to them and offer clear choices about their care. This supported people's dignity, choice and sense of control. Staff included people who did not communicate verbally in all parts of daily life. They spoke with them in meaningful ways throughout the day, and helped them take part in activities suited to their needs. Families and friends spoke highly of the care their loved ones received, one person said the team "Treated my uncle like a king," while another said staff "Went above and beyond - an amazing, professional, loving and caring team." Staff knew people very well, and everyone we spoke with described each person's life story, routines, preferences and communication style in detail. This gave us confidence that staff understood people's needs, and were providing personalised care that reflected what mattered to them.

Staff supported people's health proactively by following safe care practices and working closely with health professionals. Staff used health assessments and monitoring tools effectively to identify concerns, and they contacted GPs and nurses without delay to make sure people received timely advice and treatment. Nurses and other visiting professionals told us the home was consistently proactive in seeking early support for people. Medication support was safe and well-managed. Staff administered medication in a calm and confident way, audit systems were in place to identify errors and training remained up to date. Taken together, this meant people received timely, well-coordinated health support.

People experienced very good support with eating and drinking. The mealtimes we observed were calm, welcoming and well-staffed, which allowed people to receive support at a pace that suited them. Staff encouraged people to choose what they wanted to eat and when, rather than following a set routine. For example, one person chose to enjoy a cooked breakfast later in the morning, and staff supported this warmly as part of their usual routine. Kitchen staff knew people well, followed dietary guidance closely and used clear instructions from speech and language specialists, to support safe eating and drinking. These approaches meant people enjoyed mealtimes safely, and in a way that reflected their own choices and a sense of home.

The home had a lively, welcoming atmosphere, and people had regular opportunities to take part in meaningful activities. Although there was no dedicated activity worker, staff supported a varied programme that included singalongs, visits from nursery children and community events. People spoke warmly about open days, art workshops and individual outings that helped them stay connected with their interests. Relatives were greeted warmly, and people told us they felt supported to maintain relationships that mattered to them. The newly developed community garden was a particular strength, bringing volunteers, university partners and local groups into the home. These approaches helped people stay active, connected and involved in daily life.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, because we found significant strengths in staffing arrangements and team working. These strengths had a clear and positive impact on people's outcomes.

People experienced care from a stable and knowledgeable staff team, and the team's consistent and kind approach was a clear strength of the service. Staff knew people well, and this allowed them to anticipate individual needs naturally and offer personalised support. All family members spoke very highly of staff. Someone told us, "All the staff are excellent and a joy, nothing is too much trouble," while another advised, "The staff team do a wonderful job, first class team." At the time of inspection, the service had not used agency staff for several years, instead relying on bank staff who knew people well to provide cover when needed. This supported consistent care relationships for people.

Staffing levels supported safe and unhurried care. The service used an up to date staffing dependency tool that matched what we saw in practice. Staffing levels had recently increased as more people moved into the home, meaning extra staff were available at busy times, such as lunch and dinner. Small key working groups led by senior carers, meant people were supported by staff who knew them well. Staff also had enough time between shifts to hand information over clearly, which helped with good communication. Importantly, staff also had time to chat with people, share light moments and offer relaxed support. This strengthened relationships and added to the warm, homely atmosphere.

Teamwork across the service was very strong and contributed to the warm atmosphere in the home. Staff spoke with pride about their work and described a team that encouraged, respected and celebrated each other. Survey responses and our discussions with staff confirmed this supportive team culture. The manager was highly visible throughout the home, regularly checking in with people, staff and visitors and modelling strong leadership by actively helping out. Staff from all roles contributed to the homely atmosphere, with maintenance staff joining activities and kitchen volunteers taking time to speak with people during meals. These approaches helped build a lively and welcoming environment for people.

How good is our setting?**4 - Good**

We evaluated this key question as good, because we saw several strengths in the environment that supported positive outcomes for people. These strengths clearly outweighed the areas that needed improvement.

The environment supported people to move around freely and spend time in spaces that suited their needs and preferences. The layout gave people a choice of busy or quieter communal areas. The main lounge and dining room were social and lively, while the smaller lounge offered privacy, a different TV option or a quieter place to eat. Bedrooms were spacious and all had en-suite facilities. People personalised their rooms with belongings that mattered to them, which helped create a homely feel. Staff used technology in a personalised way to support people's safety, such as personal alarms and bed or door sensors when needed. The community garden had been developed with accessibility and dementia friendly features in mind, including accessible paths. This provided a stimulating outdoor space for people to enjoy, especially in good weather.

The home felt warm, clean and fresh. Staff had well-established housekeeping routines, and worked hard to maintain high standards of cleanliness. This helped keep people as safe as possible from infection. Some areas of the internal décor required significant improvement. The service had made good efforts with smaller enhancements, such as painting and adding soft furnishings.

However, at the time of inspection several areas still had worn carpets and peeling wallpaper. We have made an area for improvement to support progress with refurbishing the décor, and creating an environment that better supports people's wellbeing and dignity. (See area for improvement 1).

The service supported people to feel informed and involved in their home environment. Clear signage showing mealtimes, communal areas and who was on duty helped people and families move around the home. The service demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting people's choice and ownership of the environment. Staff described the home as, "People's home first and their workplace second." People were actively involved in decisions through meetings, such as choosing the dining room colour and taking part in ongoing focus group discussions. As a result, people experienced a sense of control and belonging within their home.

Maintenance was managed well, with regular checks and prompt action on repairs. This helped keep the home safe and comfortable. Electrical work was ongoing following a recent safety check, which identified several improvements. The service had completed most actions, but some were still outstanding. The provider should ensure that electrical improvements are carried out. (See area for improvement 2).

Areas for improvement

1. To support people's wellbeing and comfort, the provider should improve the internal décor of the service. This should include, but not be limited to, addressing worn flooring and older wallpaper.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment." (HSCS 5.24).

2. To keep people safe, the provider should complete all outstanding electrical safety works.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state, "My environment is secure and safe." (HSCS 5.19).

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
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

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