

# Living Ambitions Edinburgh and the Lothians Housing Support Service

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Unannounced

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**Service provided by:**  
Living Ambitions Ltd

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## About the service

Living Ambitions Edinburgh and the Lothians is registered to provide a housing support and care at home service. The service supports people with a range of complex needs including autism, acquired brain injuries, physical disabilities, mental health issues and learning disabilities. The provider is Living Ambitions Limited which is part of the Lifeways Group of Companies.

The service aims to "provide high quality, person centred support that promotes the achievement of individualised goals and positive outcomes, and values the input of the person in receipt of support, in the assessment, planning, delivery, monitoring and review of their personalised support."

The service assists people with a range of needs to live independently and safely in their own home. People are supported to access social, leisure, educational and employment opportunities and activities. The service comprises of a senior service manager, a service manager, team leaders and support workers.

The service currently provides care and support to 17 people in their own homes across both the south and north east areas of Edinburgh. Eleven people receive a 24 hour care and support service and six people receive a visiting support service.

We carried out an inspection of Living Ambitions Edinburgh and the Lothians using virtual technology.

We used the Health and Social Care Standards to review the quality of care for people. These can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/>

We evaluated the service based on key areas that are vital to the support and wellbeing of people experiencing care. We also looked at infection prevention and control practices with reference to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

## What people told us

We spoke with six people experiencing care using virtual technology, eight family representatives and five stakeholders from health and community based services who are involved in the support of the people using Living Ambitions Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Feedback was generally positive. People commented:-

"the staff seem to know her well and her keyworker is proactive in trying to help have as much independence as possible"

"the keyworkers are excellent"

"they know her routines - staff are on the ball and seem well trained"

"she interacts well with the staff and because they work so closely with her, the staff know how she is feeling and can interpret her body language and movements well"

"the team leader and the service manager have always been quick to answer questions and provide information when asked"

"he is well looked after and happy"

"I feel happy, safe and secure here".

## 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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good
How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	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?

**4 - Good**

People experiencing care and support from the service had a positive experience. People told us how much they valued the support they received and the positive impact this has had on their lives. Staff interactions with people experiencing care and support were warm and caring and staff spoke positively about their role in improving people's lives. New staff members were introduced to the people they would be supporting slowly to allow time for relationships and trust to be established.

Support plans were person centred and easy to follow. Plans were detailed with emphasis placed on areas specific to each person's support needs. Staff used different approaches with different people tailored to how people wanted to be communicated with. People told us they were comfortable with the staff allocated to support them, felt they were trained to a high level and were professional in their approach.

Due to restrictions in place with the COVID-19 pandemic, many activities people would normally attend had been suspended. People told us they missed these activities and relatives agreed that the current situation is challenging. The service had put in place a range of activities for people to do at home and where permitted, in their local community. Staff had time built into their day to ensure activities could take place with the people they were supporting. People spoke positively of their time spent with staff and staff displayed good knowledge of the likes, dislikes and interests of each person they supported. One relative confirmed:-

"they know what he likes and what he doesn't... all his needs are met".

Relatives had input into how people would be cared for and supported. They confirmed that throughout the pandemic the service has supported continued contact with their family members. Other professionals were also involved in people's care and support to ensure good health related outcomes including social workers, dieticians and occupational therapists. Healthy eating was promoted and people spoke enthusiastically about the positive impact this has had on their lives. COVID-19 specific support plans were in place. These were pictorial to help people understand the risks and limits to freedoms associated with the pandemic.

## How good is our leadership?

**5 - Very Good**

Quality assurance systems were very clearly in place and at the heart of how the service operated. Managers had responsibility for workbooks which pulled together all aspects of quality assurance. Improvement plans for the service were very good and complaints records were kept with clear evidence showing how issues were resolved. We suggested that quality assurance could be further improved by delegating tasks to support staff.

Team meetings for the overall service took place on a monthly basis and covered a range of topics including PPE compliance, discussions around changes to COVID-19 guidance and reflecting on incidents that had happened in the service. Each part of the service also had their own monthly team meeting which was more focussed on people experiencing care and support and their routines and activities. This provided a time for reflection, sharing practice and identifying where improvements could be made in how people were supported.

Managers and team leaders met regularly to discuss supervision, staff competencies, goals for the year ahead, rotas and COVID-19 updates. Managers interactions with staff were positive and staff informed us that managers were responsive and supportive.

A monthly document summarising events of the past month was produced by the service. This singled out staff for exceptional performance, evidenced good news stories and activities that had taken place and reflected what had and hadn't gone well in the service. This transparent approach evidences a strong commitment from the service to quality assurance and improvement which enhanced the lives of the people the service supports.

## How good is our staff team?

**4 - Good**

The recruitment of new staff was carried out in a safe manner with systems in place to reduce risks to people being supported. Induction processes were robust with emphasis on training and ensuring staff felt equipped to start supporting people effectively. Staff confirmed that they felt equipped to do their job to the best of their ability. Some staff had a good knowledge of the Health and Social Care Standards which underpinned their practice but we informed the service there was still further work to be done in this area to raise awareness with the whole staff team.

All staff were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and many had undertaken qualifications relevant to their post. All staff had undertaken autism awareness, mental health awareness and administration of medication training which were all vital to their roles. There was an issue with training records as not all courses undertaken by staff were noted on reports. The service agreed to take forward and try to resolve the problem with recording in this area.

Appraisal processes were in place and we saw clear links to the personal development of staff. Supervision took place regularly in line with organisational policy. Staff felt supported and encouraged by the process of supervision and we saw evidence of staff being able to influence the direction of the service through supervision. Staff showed good knowledge of how to escalate any issues regarding people's care and support. Staff spoke very positively of their work. One staff member told us:-

"I'm proud of the team that we have. We're different but we all have the same goal of supporting people".

### How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

Support plans were comprehensive and assessments were clearly linked with outcomes. One person we spoke to told us they had identified weight loss as a goal they wanted to achieve during a review. How this would be achieved was clearly documented in her support plan through healthy eating and increased activity. This outcome had been achieved and the person being supported told us how proud this had made her feel and of the positive impact it has had on her health and wellbeing.

Staff displayed a good level of knowledge regarding who was involved in people's support. Feedback from relatives and an audit of reviews meeting minutes evidenced that relatives and other professionals were involved in formulating support plans and reviewing people's support. We suggested a greater level of input from people experiencing care and support with the support planning process.

Risk assessments were in place and were specific to each person's care and support needs. We informed the service that these could be presented in a better format to facilitate involvement from people experiencing care and support. Although assessments were being reviewed, there was inconsistency in the timescales for review. We asked the service to adopt a more streamlined approach to the review of assessments.

People kept diaries to evidence their outcomes, goals and achievements. Entries were completed daily and reviewed every month which clearly showed people where they had made progress. People could reflect on what had worked with their support, what had not worked and what could be better. People spoke with enthusiasm about this process and how rewarding it was to meet their goals.

### How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4 - Good

To assess how the service had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic we sought assurance that infection prevention and control practices were safe for both people experiencing care and for staff. We found the service to be operating at a good level with strengths outweighing any areas where improvements could be made.

Staff displayed knowledge regarding safer infection prevention and control practices. Staff could tell us what items of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should be used for different tasks and our observations evidenced that this knowledge was put into practice. Staff wore fluid resistant surgical masks at all times and managers carried out PPE compliance audits. Clinical waste bins were available in some parts of the service and where these were not available, staff knew how to dispose of used PPE safely and in line with guidance.

Staff hand hygiene was good and staff also supported people experiencing care and support to clean their hands at appropriate intervals. Staff were fully aware of potential COVID-19 symptoms to look for in people in an effort to minimise risk should the infection enter the service. Temperature checks were in place for staff arriving at work and the service is fully compliant with testing requirements.

The service had clear guidance for staff covering all aspects related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Guidance specifically for people experiencing care and support has been created to help people understand the pandemic and the restrictions being placed on them. Staff told us about the role they play in keeping people's homes clean and the purpose of using different products. Frequently touched points were given additional attention and this process was documented. Commenting on cleanliness, one relative told us:

"the place is spotless".

Staff wore their own clothes to work and were fully responsible for the safe laundering of their clothes. We asked the service to provide guidance for staff on how to achieve safe laundering.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to care for and support people	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	4 - Good
How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
7.2 Infection prevention and control practices are safe for people experiencing care and staff	4 - Good

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