

Council will have to spend more than £1 million bringing two care homes up to standard

More than £1 million will be required in order to bring two care homes transferred back to the council from a private provider up to scratch.

Repairs and upgrades required at Castlegreen and North Merchiston care homes were discovered after operator Four Seasons withdrew from its contract.

No new residents will be admitted until they are “deemed appropriate for admissions,” it was confirmed by the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP), which has taken over the running of both homes.

It is understood the council was unable to find alternative providers after the company walked away last year, with the transfer of 142 staff and 88 residents to the local authority completed in March.

A report states that works estimated at £1,137,000 have been identified in the two homes to improve them to meet building regulation and Care Inspectorate standards, including maintenance to fences, balconies and ceilings damaged by water, as well as fire safety upgrades and an audit of ventilation equipment.

Inspections deemed that jobs totalling £380,000 will have to

be carried out in the next 12 months.

Subsidiary of Four Seasons, Tamaris Scotland, did not respond to an initial claim for the value of the works plus an additional £30,000. The council then took court action last month and an agreed sum of around £87,000 has since been paid by the operator.

Castlegreen and North Merchiston care homes – located at Greendykes Road and Watson Crescent respectively – have a combined capacity of 120 residents.

A report said: “Employees have indicated that they are delighted with the improved terms and conditions and they are also keen to note the improvements for residents.

“Of particular note are: better food quality; residents’ bedding is better quality and more comfortable; and new window blinds allow much more privacy.

“EHSCP have been working closely with the Community Payback Workers team, who have assisted with the outdoor space of the homes and have re-erected the fence in Castlegreen which colleagues and residents have appreciated.”

‘Lack of entertainment and worn furnishings’

Since 2017 Castlegreen has mostly received ‘adequate’ ratings across all areas following Care Inspectorate visits.

An inspection report from 2022 noted there were ‘lack of activities, outings and entertainment’.

It said residents claimed the choice and quality of food provided needed to improve and ‘decoration was needed and furnishings were worn’.

In addition the report said there were ‘gaps in recording of

daily charts for personal care, oral healthcare and positional changes when a frail person is in bed’.

It added: “The environment needs to continue to improve with well-maintained premises, furnishings and equipment so that people feel comfortable and live in a homely setting.”

by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter.

