



BARCHESTER

Celebrating life

Selecting Your Ideal Care Home



Our guide to helping you find the right care home for
you and your loved one.

Choosing your ideal care home

There's a lot to consider when choosing a care home, so we've created this useful guide designed to help you to ask the right questions, and support you in selecting the ideal home for your loved one.

Use the space below to note the details of the homes you visit. Throughout the booklet, use the corresponding boxes next to each item to note your experience and the offering at each home. This will help you to identify a home that's right for you and your loved one.

Care Home 1:

Date of visit:

Contact name:

Contact number:

Care Home 2:

Date of visit:

Contact name:

Contact number:

Care Home 3:

Date of visit:

Contact name:

Contact number:

Asking the right questions

Here you'll find useful questions to consider and ask when visiting a care home. The checklist on the following page highlights the key areas to think about when deciding what's best for your loved one.

Before visiting

The right home should offer the expert care your loved one needs, and reflect what's important to them, in a convenient location for family and friends to visit. You can start by researching your local care homes online, reviewing care ratings from regulators and looking at review scores on google and carehome.co.uk to see what other people have experienced.

How many homes should I visit?

We suggest visiting between 3-5 care homes that offers the type of care and support you need in a suitable location. Comparing multiple homes can help you better understand what feels right for you.

When should I visit a care home?

You are welcome to visit at any time to experience what life is like in the home, but it's helpful to book an appointment before visiting to ensure key members of the team are available to meet with you.

Who should I meet when visiting?

We strongly recommend meeting the General Manager as part of your visit, as they will be the person leading the team caring for your loved one. It's also helpful to meet the Head of Department for the care your loved one requires, along with members of the care and/or nursing team to get a better feel of the home.

How do I know the care needs of my loved one?

When considering care it can be difficult to know where to begin. You should be asked questions around why you are looking for care for your loved one, what a usual day at the moment looks like for them and what's important to them. From there, you can be supported to understand what type of care you need. You can also request a care needs assessment from the adult social services department at your local council and as part of our admissions process, what follows your enquiry and visit to the home is a personalised pre admission assessment. This only take place if you are happy to do so and is the best way to understand if we or a home nearby can support your needs.

First impressions

Your initial view of the home and how you're welcomed can have a lasting impact on your thoughts about the home and whether it's right for your loved one.

1 2 3

- Is the exterior of the home presentable?
- If you booked an appointment in advance, were the home expecting you?
- Are the team welcoming and friendly?
- Have refreshments been offered?
- Do you feel the person is empathetic when discussing your needs?
- Are the team knowledgeable when answering your questions?
- Is the home well-presented?
- Do the living spaces seem comfortable and inviting?

The team

A caring and capable team is not only important for your loved one's health and well-being, but is also a great support to family and friends.

- Have you been introduced to the General Manager during your visit?
- Have you met experienced team members during your visit?
- Have you been informed of the ways the home keeps relatives up to date? (e.g. relatives meetings, newsletters, Facebook page)
- Are teams engaging well with residents?
- Can you see residents being treated with privacy, dignity and respect?

Personalised care

Reassurance that your loved one will be well-cared for is so important. It's not just about the care provided but how everyday life will be lived, including how the team strives to improve well-being and quality of life.

- Do team members take time to understand your loved one's life history, their achievements, the people who are closest to them and their likes and dislikes?
- If needed, does the home provide suitable equipment and facilities to support your loved ones' care needs? (e.g. electrically operated beds, wheelchairs, hoists?)
- Are residents given the opportunity to make decisions about their daily life?
- Are residents and families encouraged to be involved in decisions about care, including regular reviews of their care plan?
- Does the home work closely with professionals such as dentists, opticians, and therapists to provide the relevant care required?



Looking for specialised dementia care

If your loved one is living with dementia, they may require specialised care and support in a dementia-friendly environment with trained teams that recognise the types of dementia and understand the person and their feelings. If you are looking for specialist dementia care, there are some additional things to consider when selecting your ideal care home:

- Does the home have a dedicated and secure dementia-friendly environment?
- Do all team members receive specialist dementia training?
- Does the home support residents to maintain their independence where possible? (e.g. themed corridors to assist with orientation and alleviate anxiety, different colour bathroom doors for easy identification, and opportunity to continue everyday tasks such as setting the table)
- Are activities in the home readily available and dementia-friendly?
- Are there opportunities for sensory engagement that improve well-being and aid relaxation? (e.g. light projecting games, sensory rooms and robotic pets)
- Is contrasting crockery available to support residents with cognitive impairment?
- Is there a supportive dining experience that isn't rushed and aids nutritional well-being?
- Do team members show plated food options so residents can indicate their choice?
- Is cutlery-free food available for those who may need it?
- Are residents supported to maintain hydration throughout the day?

Environment

Feeling comfortable and at home in your surroundings is important.

- Are there a variety of living spaces to choose from? (e.g. lounges, quiet rooms, dining rooms, outside sitting areas)
- Is the home clean and free from odour?
- Do the living spaces encourage socialisation as well as quiet relaxation?
- Is the home easy to navigate with clear signage, theming, handrails and places to rest along the way?
- Does the home offer facilities to support well-being? (e.g. beauty salon, spa bathroom)
- Does the home have safety measures in place? (e.g. call bell systems)
- Are the bedrooms tastefully decorated?
- Is bedroom furniture included? (e.g. bed, wardrobe, storage)
- Are residents encouraged to personalise their bedrooms with their own belongings?
- Does the home have a process to manage resident laundry services effectively?



Life enriching experiences

It's reassuring to know that your loved one is supported to continue to do the things they've always loved, and has opportunity to enjoy new experiences.

- Does the home take the time to understand residents' interests and hobbies to encourage them to continue doing what they enjoy? (e.g. attending the bowls club, a church service or a weekly visit to the pub)
- Does the home organise a range of meaningful activities each week that reflect residents' needs and interests?
- Are one-to-one and group activities provided?
- Are regular trips out of the home arranged to local places of interest and to suit resident preferences?
- Does the home invite a range of professional entertainers and groups of interest to the home?
- Do residents have opportunities to join virtual events that bring new experiences to them?
- Does the home provide technology for entertainment and to keep families connected? (e.g Smart TVs, digital tablets for games and video calls)
- Is there regular opportunity for residents to exercise?
- Are special events celebrated? (e.g. birthdays, anniversaries and cultural days)
- Are residents able to help with every day activities if they wish? (e.g gardening or folding the laundry)
- Are residents' cultural and religious beliefs supported?
- Are visitors welcome to join activities?

Dining experience

A choice of food that is as delicious as it is nutritious is important to your loved one's health and well-being, coupled with a dining experience that is enjoyable.

- Do the chefs meet residents to discuss their preferences?
- Does the home cater to dietary requirements including modified diets?
- Are residents offered a choice of seasonal menus each day?
- Are dishes freshly prepared on-site by trained chefs?
- Are drinks and home-made snacks available at any time, including during the night?
- Can residents choose where to eat, whether it be in the dining room or in their own room?
- Is today's menu on display?
- Are visitors welcome to dine with their loved one?
- Can the home accommodate a special/private dining experience for family celebrations?



Garden and outdoor spaces

Gardens can offer so many things – a spot to relax, a place to socialise, and for green-fingered residents, a chance to enjoy independence and continue doing the things they love.

- Are the gardens/outdoor space well-maintained?
- Is there a choice of outdoor seating for residents and families to relax and socialise?
- Are the gardens/outdoor spaces accessible?
- Are the gardens/outdoor spaces used for activities, exercise and events?
- Are the gardens/outdoor spaces designed with safety in mind? (e.g enclosed or fenced)
- Are the garden paths wide and suitable for wheelchairs?
- Are there opportunities for residents to participate in activities? (e.g planting bulbs, seeds, growing fruit and vegetables)
- If you are considering a room on the ground floor, does the home have bedrooms with direct access to the gardens?

Fees

It's always important to take fees and any additional costs into account when selecting a home for a loved one.

- Have you been informed what the weekly fee is? Please use the notes page to add the details
- Is there a deposit to pay? If so, how much?
- Do you need to provide information about how care will be funded?
- Are there any additional costs? (e.g. for hairdressing, chiropody, staff accompaniment to medical appointments)

For further information about the funding options available when considering moving into a care home, please visit [Barchester.com/help-and-advice](https://www.barchester.com/help-and-advice) and see our 'Paying to live in care home' guide.



BARCHESTER

Celebrating life

www.barchester.com