

Care home checklist



Helping you to make
the right choice



***Age UK is the new force combining
Age Concern and Help the Aged.
With almost 120 years of combined
history to draw on, we are bringing
together our talents, services and
solutions to do more to enrich the
lives of people in later life.***


***The Age UK family includes
Age Cymru, Age NI and Age Scotland.***

Age UK is the new force combining

AGE and **HELP THE AGED** **WE WILL**
Concern

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Introduction

Choosing a care home is one of the important decisions you can make. After all, you want to be sure that your new home offers everything you need and is a place you will be happy to live in. Finding out as much as you can about a home will help you to make an informed choice.

Everyone has different ideas about what they want from where they live. What is especially important to you? This handy guide contains some of the questions that you might want to ask, with space on each page for your comments and a separate page for you to note down any other questions of your own.

Remember that if you're not happy with something, you can ask the home for an explanation.

For more information and advice about looking for a care home, see our free guide *Care homes* and our free factsheet *Finding care home accommodation*.

Location and building

Q Where is the home?

A Mellor near Marple

Q Will visitors be able to get there easily?

A Yes it's on the main road and lots of parking

Q Are there transport links near by?

A Yes a bus stops at the front door

Q Are facilities such as shops, pubs, parks and places of worship within easy reach?

A Very good pubs and no need for parks

Q How accessible is the home?

A Very easy the home is only small

Q Will it be easy for you to enter and leave the building, and move between rooms and floors?

A It's very easy and there's always staff about

Q How good is the wheelchair access?

A **Good from all doors**

Q Is there a lift?

A **Yes there is a stair lift**

Q Does the home feel clean and inviting?

A **It is very homely and friendly**

Q Are there any unpleasant smells?

A **No everywhere smells very pleasant**

Q Do the rooms feel hot and stuffy or cold and draughty?

A **All the rooms are warm and pleasant**

Q Is there a relaxed and friendly atmosphere?

A **It feels just like home**

Q Will you feel comfortable chatting and socialising in the home's public areas?

A **Everyone who lives here get on very well**

Q Are chairs arranged in groups or round the edges of the rooms?

A **All the furniture suits the size of the home**

Q Is there a quiet living room for reading, as well as one with a television?

A **Yes**

Pros

Mellor Nook is only small so it's very easy to find your way around. It is an old converted farm house in the countryside. Mellor Nook feels less like a care home than any other home we've seen it's a quaint cottage.

The standards of hygiene are excellent because of the small size of the home.

Cons

Mellor Nook is a converted farm house and because of that it is quite small unlike larger homes and hospitals. Mellor Village is a rural community and as such things like supermarkets, cinemas, and the bustle of a town centre is not very easily accessible.

Day-to-day life

Q Are there telephone facilities you can use in private?

A **Yes and a private phone can be put in your room**

Q Can you access the internet, either in your room or on a shared computer?

A **Yes Internet access is available through out**

Q Are books and newspapers available?

A **Yes delivered daily**

Q Does a mobile library visit?

A **It can on request but we have a good library**

Q Does the home arrange outings to the shops, entertainment venues or places of worship?

A **Yes we have our own Minibus**

Q Are there any physical activities such as exercise groups or gardening?

A **The activities co-ordinator does this**

Q How will you be told about upcoming events?

A **We all get told in person**

Q Are you encouraged to stay active and do as much as you can for yourself?

A **The activities lady keeps us moving**

Q Are external doors kept locked?

A **Yes but only from the outside**

Q Can you go outside for fresh air when you want to?

A **Yes they just ask that we let them know**

Q Are you allowed to make choices about your daily routine?

A **Basically we can do just what we please**

Q Will you be able to get up and go to bed when you want?

A **Yes just whenever we want**

Q Can you choose which clothes to wear each day?

A **Yes and the staff help if we need it**

Q Are there any restrictions on visiting times or numbers of visitors?

A **Just when we're having out meals**

Q Where can you spend time with your visitors?

A **Anywhere we like**

Q Are there facilities for visitors to stay overnight?

A **No the home is just big enough for us**

Q Are young children welcome?

A **Yes we enjoy young visitors**

Q Is the home right for your cultural and religious needs?

A **The home tries to provide what we need**

Q Are there members of staff who speak your language?

A **At this time the staff only speak English**

Q Can the home meet your dietary needs?

A **Yes they make a real effort**

Q Are there other residents from a similar background to you?

A **Most of them are local people**

Q Is there a choice of food, and when and where it can be eaten?

A **Yes each day we have different menu choices**

Q How are special diets catered for?

A **The makes us anything special we need**

Q Can you prepare food and drink for yourself?

A **No the staff do it all for us**

Q Do existing residents enjoy the food and can you try it?

A **Yes everyone looks forward to meal times**

Q Are details of the complaints procedure readily available?

A **Yes we got them on admission and a copy is in the room**

Q Are you encouraged to give feedback?

A **We have residents meetings and we can say anything at any time**

Q Is there a residents' committee?

A **No not as such there's only 13 of us**

Q Do you have access to advocacy services?

A **Yes through a social worker**

Pros

Mellor Nook is just like living at home but with the reassurance that people are always on hand to help and to remind me to do the little day to day things I might forget

We can choose if we do the things on offer or not sometimes I just want peace and quiet other time I want to get involved in what's going on

Cons

We wish we could have lived here when we were more able to enjoy the countryside long walks without aches and pains.

Your care needs

Q Is the home registered to provide the level of care you need?

A They are registered for personal care of the elderly

Q Do the other residents seem to have a similar level of need to you?

A Some people need quite a lot of care

Q What will happen if your needs change or increase?

A With Doctors/Nurses support unless we need specialist care

Q Does the home have bathing facilities that meet your needs?

A Yes with a lift

Q If you need help with bathing, who will provide this?

A The staff always assist us

Q Can you choose how often you have a bath or shower?

A Yes they are very accommodating

Q Are toilets available in all parts of the home?

A We are never a few steps from a loo

Q Are they equipped with handrails and other mobility aids?

A All the loos are higher to make it easier

Q Are you helped to the toilet when you need to go, if necessary?

A Staff are always on hand to help if we need it

Q When are incontinence pads and catheters used?

A Eleanor and Jim sort this out for us

Q Do you have your own GP and access to other health services such as opticians and dentists?

A Yes but the local doctors visit regularly

Q Who decides when a check-up is needed?

A We all have our say

Q How will the home let friends and family know if you are taken ill?

A Jim and Eleanor are in constant contact

Q How many staff are employed per resident?

A 13 residents 14 care staff 3 ancillary

Q How are they trained?

A All staff at Mellor Nook have a level of training

Q Is there a manager on duty at all times?

A Jim, Eleanor or Jean are on call 24/7

Q What is the turnover of staff?

A May be 1 or 2 per year

Pros

Eleanor and Jim are very much on top of our care needs, nothing is too much trouble and the doctors and district nurses visit regularly

We know all the staff and they immediately recognise when we are not feeling ourselves

Cons

Contracts and fees

Q Can you see a copy of the home's brochure?

A Yes and a website

Q Can you see copies of recent Care Quality Commission (or equivalent in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland – see pages 26–28 for details) inspection reports?

A Yes in the home and on Mellor Nook Website

Q Can you see a copy of the home's contract/ written conditions?

A Yes we get a copy when we came in

Q What are the home's fees?

A Jim and Eleanor told us the price when we enquired

Q Is it clear how the fees are structured and calculated?

A Yes one price all in

Q How are NHS nursing care payments accounted for in the fee structure?

A Mellor Nook does not provide nursing care

Q How are fees collected?

A Fees are usually paid by standing order

Q Do self-funding and local-authority-assisted residents pay the same rates?

A Yes Mellor Nook do not discriminate

Q Is a top-up payment required for local-authority-assisted residents?

A Yes

Q Are extra items not covered by the basic fees clearly identified and accounted for?

A Newspaper, Chiropodist and Hairdresser

Q What arrangements are there for handling your personal money?

A Mellor nook tries not to be involved in people's personal finances

Q How are your valuables kept secure?

A There is a safe in all rooms

Q What are the notice conditions in the contract?

A Mellor Nook is very flexible so care is continues

Q Are any fees payable after a resident's death and how quickly does the room need to be cleared out?

A There is no time limit but payment continues until the room is vacated

Q Any other questions (see page 22)

A

Pros

Mellor Nook is only small so arrangements can be made to suit all parties involved.

Jim and Eleanor can be very flexible with all details of the stay at Mellor Nook

Cons

Additional notes

Useful organisations

Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online. Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK/Age Concern* near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65

65 www.ageuk.org.uk

In Wales, contact

Age Cymru: 0800 169 65

65 www.agecymru.org.uk

In Scotland, contact

Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732

www.agescotland.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact

Age NI: 0808 808 7575

www.ageni.org.uk

* Many local Age Concerns are changing their name to Age UK.

Care Quality Commission

Responsible for regulating social care services in England. You can read online or request copies of their inspection reports on care homes and home care agencies.

Citigate

Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 4PA

Tel: 03000 61 61 61

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

www.cqc.org.uk

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)

Regulatory body for social care in Wales.

4–5 Charnwood Court

Heol Billingsley

Parc Nantgarw

Nantgarw CF15 7QZ

Tel: 01443 848450

Email: cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk

www.cssiw.org.uk

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)

Duties include regulating and inspecting nursing and residential care homes in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 028 9051 7500

www.rqia.org.uk

Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care

Regulatory body for social and health care in Scotland.

Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee DD1 4NY

Tel: 0845 603 0890

Email: enquiries@carecommission.com

www.carecommission.com

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Age UK Advice

0800 169 65 65

www.ageuk.org.uk

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