

CARE HOME FRIENDS CHARTER

We treat care home residents with dignity and respect, valuing them as unique individuals created and loved by God.

We value the hard work and commitment of care home staff, and recognise the unique role relatives play in the life of a loved one living in a care home.

We recognise and appreciate the dedication of volunteers and support them in their role as a care home friend.

We understand the importance of safeguarding vulnerable adults and follow stringent safeguarding policies and procedures.

We are committed to evaluating the effectiveness of our work through regular feedback from residents, volunteers and care home staff.

In all our activity we seek to protect and promote the good reputation of Care Home Friends.

All churches starting a Care Home Friends project need to sign up to our Charter.

Jesus said

“Whatever you did for someone overlooked and ignored, that was me - you did it for me.”

Matthew 25:40 The Message



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An Embracing Age project

Embracing Age is a Christian Charity registered in England and Wales, dedicated to improving the lives of older people.

Registered charity no. 1160400



CARE HOME FRIENDS

Befriending and Connecting

Displaying God's unconditional love to the oldest and frailest in our communities.

Care home residents are some of the most overlooked and ignored people in society. Research suggests they are twice as likely to feel severely lonely as older people living in the community. Care home residents do not choose their living companions, and frailty, dementia, hearing loss and other sensory impairment can hinder the building of meaningful relationships. One resident described it as,

“being alone in a crowd”.

We believe it is time for the church to rise up and remember the overlooked and ignored in a practical way. There are about 17,500 care homes in the UK and over 50,000 churches. If each church were to adopt their local care home and offer trained volunteers to spend time and build friendship with residents we could make a huge difference in the lives of the some of the oldest and frailest people in our nation.



Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone.

Psalm 71v9

What do Care Home Friends do?

Trained volunteers improve the quality of life of care home residents through spending time and building friendship with them. This could involve simply chatting, reading aloud, doing a crossword with a resident, helping with IT skills, playing a game like Scrabble, doing gardening with a resident or accompanying them on a walk. The list is endless, as each resident will have different likes and interests.



What we don't do

We don't run church services in care homes, as often this is already being provided. When you initially approach a care home manager they may say that they already have a church connection, but this is usually related to either running a service or specific pastoral visits. It's important to make the distinction about the work we do which is all about companionship. However, if you already run a service in a care home this is a good starting point for Care Home Friends as you have an existing relationship with the care home manager.

How we will help

Care Home Friends is an easy project to start. All you need is a co-ordinator and 2 or 3 more volunteers. We will help and support you every step of the way by:

- training your co-ordinator to recruit, train and support volunteers.
- providing a Tool Kit giving detailed guidance on every step of the process
- providing policies and procedures to run the project in a manner that evokes confidence from Care Home Managers.
- providing simple and effective tools for monitoring & evaluating the project.
- providing an online forum for project co-ordinators to connect and share ideas.



What is the cost?

We seek to be generously openhanded in providing all the help, training and resources, but there are still costs involved for the local church:

- Travel to a training day for co-ordinators
- DBS checks for volunteers

We are a charity that relies on the generosity of donors and funders. Each new Care Home Friends project costs us about £250 to set up. If your church would like to make a donation according to your means it would be gratefully received, but we are also happy to freely give.