

# CARE HOME FRIENDS CHARTER

We treat care home residents with dignity and respect, viewing them as unique individuals with intrinsic value and worth.

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 are asked to sign up to our Charter.*

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

*Matthew 25:40 The Message*



*Improving the lives of  
care home residents  
one person at a time*

**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 adopted their local care home and offer trained volunteers to spend time with residents we could make a huge difference in the lives of the some of the oldest and frailest people in our nation.



### Interested in finding out more?

Email: [jen@embracingage.org.uk](mailto:jen@embracingage.org.uk)

Website: [www.carehomefriends.org.uk](http://www.carehomefriends.org.uk)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/carehomefriends](http://www.facebook.com/carehomefriends)

*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 by 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 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 and friendship.

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 Champion and 2 or 3 volunteers. We will help and support you every step of the way by providing:

- training for your Champion and volunteers
- a comprehensive Tool Kit giving detailed guidance on every step of the process
- policies and procedures to run the project in a manner that evokes confidence from Care Home Managers
- simple and effective tools for monitoring and evaluating the project
- a Facebook group to connect, ask questions and share ideas
- support from our national co-ordinator



## What is the cost?

It costs approximately £250 to set up each project, which includes training for the Champion and volunteers, and all the resources and support you'll need.

As a charity, we rely on the generosity of donors and funders. We invite each church to contribute £250 towards the cost of setting up each project, but if your church is unable to make a contribution we are happy to freely give our time and our resources to help you.