

My Home Matters



Name

Introduction to My Home Matters

Home is such an important place for us all - without a home we can feel lost or insecure, with it we can have a place of refuge and comfort. And our home contains so many memories, objects, relationships that contribute to our sense of who we are.

As we age, our needs change and living independently can become more challenging. This may be due to changes in our physical mobility. It may be because we are now alone and feeling isolated and or lonely. Maybe people who are important to us have moved far away.

Faced with a potential move, there are a range of dilemmas -

- where should I move to?
- what should I take?
- what do I want to take?
- how do I want to live this next stage of my life?

When we are living in the later stages of our lives, these are important questions to address if we are not to live with regrets. And if we are living with memory loss, it's important that we have the chance to make decisions for ourselves rather than leaving them to others, however well meaning they are. Living with memory loss can also affect our sense of identity and contribute to a lack of confidence in oneself. Having a diagnosis of dementia makes it even more important to have a sense of control over decision making.

Moving home is known to be one of the most stressful experiences that we have to face, so it makes sense to try to do some preparation for this whilst we can. This is what My Home Matters (MHM) is about.

The booklet that we have created is for you to fill out in your own way with your own thoughts. It has been designed so that you can interpret the chapters or headings as you wish. Guidance accompanies each page with explanatory notes and suggestions to help you have ideas.

This is your MHM. It belongs to you. It contains your memories, your wishes and hopes. You might find that other people contradict your memory of some events. If this is the case, remember that your memories are the important ones here. This is your booklet. And you have the right to decide what is important to you. And what goes into this booklet.

This workbook is for older people who

- may be facing a potential move away from home
- are finding that their needs have changed and the current home is not so suitable any more
- have relatives or friends who are suggesting that 'it's time for a move'
- want to think about what is important to them
- are thinking about housing options
- have someone who is helping them think about the future

Format of My Home Matters

This booklet can be completed either digitally or as a paper copy. Or both! There is no time limit to its completion and can continue as work in progress for as long as people want to take over it.

There are headed templates that correspond to the topic and some blank pages to give space for additional notes. The template boxes are expandable to allow for individual inclusions. How the finished product looks is entirely up to the author! Photographs or pictures may be included as well

as words. This may help trigger memories for people living with memory loss or dementia. Visual images can be a more powerful aide-memoire than words at times. Be as creative as you dare!

The booklet has been designed so that you can pick and choose which issues you want to address. You may wish to work through every section, in which case, you may feel there is some repetition. If this is so, just do what makes sense to you. There's no right or wrong way to do it! Also, the suggested activities may or may not appeal to you, so again, there's nothing prescriptive about them. Try them if they seem useful to you.

In order to personalise the booklet, you may wish to insert your own picture on the front page. You can do this using the template provided.

Guidance pages accompany each topic. They contain prompts, questions and activities to help engage with the topics. Near the end of the guidance document is a page with more ideas for generating memories and thoughts which can be adapted for any topic. And no doubt you'll think of your own too!

[My Home Matters & Beyond the Front Door](#)

If you are interested in knowing more about the origins of this project, please follow this link: <https://tinyurl.com/586pye9p>

[Acknowledgements](#)

This workbook and associated materials have been co-produced with Penny Redwood at Vision for Dementia. We would like to thank Penny to her support and input into this project.

My Home Matters

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Part 1: Preparing for a move

Taking the first step towards moving home can sometimes be daunting, especially if the topic is contentious, unwelcome or anxiety provoking. But you may be reading this because you positively want to plan ahead, or because you're excited about a new direction of travel in your life.

Whatever has prompted this voyage of discovery, we hope that it proves to be useful, enlightening and also fun!

Part 1 contains the following sections which are designed to start you on your journey:

1. What makes a place home for me
2. Where home is
3. Important places
4. Things I'm attached to
5. People who are important to me

1. What makes a place home for me

You might like to start with this page to help you think about what home means to you. It's an opportunity for you to ponder on those attachments and feelings that you have when you think about 'home'.

Emotional attachment to home can be very strong and home can mean different things to different people. We often put a lot of effort into creating a home to be somewhere that is 'me' or 'us'. As Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* said 'There's no place like home'.

We must not forget, though, that sometimes the place that we live in is not comfortable or suitable. That may always have been the case. Or it may be more recent, perhaps because you're on your own now as your partner has died or moved to a care home. It may no longer suit you because you are less mobile nowadays. It could be due to unhappy or painful things that have happened there.

Some prompts

Below is a list to prompt your thoughts about what makes a place feel like home:

- your favourite room
- objects, people and memories that you are attached to
- events
- things you've done here
- things you've made here
- décor: wallpaper? Colour schemes? Kitchen?
- self expression - what have you done to make the place feel like home?
- furniture
- autonomy - you expect to make the decisions in your own home
- having a view; what you look out onto
- warmth, heating
- good light so that you can see well enough
- having your 'things' around that you like to do e.g. crosswords, hobbies, crafts, albums for reminiscence, music player
- your garden, balcony or patio
- being part of activities in your neighbourhood
- knowing people who live nearby

It might be worth thinking about whether you also have any 'pet hates'. For example, things that you would find intolerable to live with.

Questions

What makes you feel comfortable at home?

What makes you feel safe at home?

Are there people who make the place feel like 'home'?

What memories are attached to your home?

What's happened here in your home?

What 'things' make this place home?

Do you have a garden? Have you grown things you're proud of here?

What is important to you about your garden?

What do you enjoy doing in your home?

Do you have pieces of furniture that you're particularly attached to?

What about pictures or photographs that mean a lot to you?

Do you have any views from your windows that you love (or hate)?

Activity

Place some paper and pens on a table where you can sit comfortably.

If you have crayons or felt tips you may want to use different colours for different things.

Take a seat at the table (you can also do this sitting down in an armchair if that's more comfortable).

Close your eyes and relax by taking some deep breaths.

Draw or write down the first thing that comes into your mind when you think of 'home'. Put this in the centre of the page. Then continue with other images that come into your mind. Don't put things down just because you feel that you ought to. You're doing this for you! You may decide to do certain things in a particular colour.

When you feel you have come to a standstill, prop the paper up where you can see it.

Now use the picture to reflect on what you have come up with. One way of doing this is to imagine the house is a good friend. Tell your friend how you feel about what you have done. Then swap places and 'become' the house. Do you have anything to say back to you?

If this feels too strange or wacky you can just reflect on what you've come up with by writing things down.

You can repeat this exercise with parts of your home or with objects in your home.

Stop when you feel exhausted or you've had enough!

See template T1 What makes a place home for me

2. Where home is

We often identify ourselves as coming from a particular place. This may be the place where you were born, where you spent your childhood or where you live now. There may be several places that are important to you, some of which have been home to you. Some people have more than one place that they call home.

Home is more than bricks and mortar! Expand your thinking so that you're not just thinking about housing.

Some prompts

You may consider home to be

- where you live now
- a previous address
- a house, flat, apartment, caravan or mobile home
- someone else's home
- your parents' home
- a town, village, city, county or district
- a country
- a room in a home
- where you were born
- where you were brought up
- your community

Where home isn't

There may be places where you have lived that you wouldn't describe as home e.g. temporary lodgings, staying with a friend or relative. It's important to recognise this so that other people who may read your booklet understand your views. Other people might make assumptions on your behalf.

Whenever we are reminiscing, there is always the chance that uncomfortable or upsetting memories have surfaced. If that is true for you, talking to someone else may be of help. Who could you talk to about these feelings? If you feel that you have no-one close enough, turn to the **Resources section**. At the end there are organisations who you could talk to if you wish.

Questions

Where do you call 'home'? Is this more than one place?

What makes that place feel like home?

Where were you brought up?

Do you think of your childhood home as 'home' still?

Is 'home' a country? A town? A village?

Where do you feel you belong?

Have you ever found your 'dream home'? Where was it?

Is there a place that you feel particularly attached to? What makes you say that?

Is there a place that you've 'done up' and been happy with?
Have you lived anywhere that didn't feel like home?
Did marriage provide you with your own new home?
Which homes did you raise your family in?

Activities

1. Make yourself comfy, maybe with a cuppa. Have a means of recording your thoughts - this could be

- pen/pencil and paper
- recorder e.g. if you have a smart phone
- laptop/tablet/ipad

Let your mind wander over places that you have felt comfortable in. Places where fun or enjoyable events have taken place. You are likely to come up with lots of memories. Jot them down! Would you call these places 'home'? Can you say what makes you describe them like this?

2. Find a photograph of somewhere where you have lived. Allow your mind to wander over events, people, contents of the place, maybe dates. What do you remember? Was it 'home'? What do you feel?

3. Take the opportunity to reminisce or chat with someone (e.g. friend, grandchild, daughter), about places you have lived. Maybe make notes, or ask them to, so that you can follow this up if you want to.

4. Is there any music that you associate with particular places? Play some and see what memories are triggered.

5. If you have more than one place that you call 'home', you may like to make some notes in relation to what home means to you. You may have been born or brought up in one country, and have moved since to another.

Knowing your attachment to other places could be helpful for anyone who is supporting you through a transition.

However, exploring these issues might be painful for you, especially if you felt under pressure or were forced into making a move. You may be worried about what's happening 'back home'. If this is true you might think about what support you need if you want to address these issues.

See template T2 Where home is

3. Important places

In the previous section you thought about places that you would call 'home'.

This section gives you an opportunity to think about other places that have been or remain important to you. They may be places that you consider to be 'essential life support'. They may be places where you meet friends, where you shop, where you relax or that you find useful. Perhaps there are significant places where you used to go but can't any more.

This is especially important to think about if you are considering a move.

Some prompts

These places might be

- a Post Office
- your doctor, clinic or hospital
- a local club
- place of worship
- a local group you are part of
- having a local bus stop and local transport
- local amenities e.g. library, shop, church
- a park, waterfront or piece of countryside
- having a room for the grandchildren to stay
- for entertainment
- for leisure time e.g. classes, hobbies and interests
- where you can't get to at the moment e.g. daughter's home
- somewhere peaceful

You might also want to note down any places with painful memories attached to them. There may be places that you never want to see again or places that you do not want to be reminded of. You need to decide whether you want to disclose the reasons for these feelings on paper or keep them private.

Questions

Which places do you (or did you) depend on for everyday purchases?

What do you consider to be useful local places?

Are there places that you used to go to, but can't any more?

Are there places you go to every day?

Is there a church or place of worship that you need to get to?

Where do you go to meet friends?

Where do you meet up with others who share your interests?

Do you use the local library?

Do you depend on public transport (e.g. bus, train)? Are there places that you need to get to?

Where can you find space and quiet?

What do you need space in your home for?

Activity

1. Sit somewhere comfortable where you can have a good think. Let your mind wander over places where you have lived. Places where you have felt comfortable. As places pop into your head, try to get as good a picture in your head as you can. Give yourself permission to conjure up memories.

What is important about these places? Happy or sad memories? Comfort? Security? People who were there? This may help others to understand their importance.

If you like painting or drawing, could you paint or draw a particular place?

Do you have any photos? If you don't have photos of a particular place, could you (or someone else) download a picture from the internet?

2. If you are facing up to a move at the moment, give some thought to what space you want or need. Think about the things that you want to take with you. Think about what you want to do in your new home. You will have another chance to think about what these things are in the **'Things I am attached to' section** (Section 4).

If painful or difficult memories have been raised during this exercise, is there anyone who you can talk to? If you have no-one that you want to talk to or would prefer not, look in the **Resources section** (Section 18) in Part 3 for organisations to chat to. Sharing pain with another can help to release feelings.

See template T3 Important places

4. Things I'm attached to

This section is for you to think about objects and possessions that are important to you that you may have gathered over the years.

Our homes are full of objects that we have collected over time. Some have been gifts. Some have been things that we bought because we liked the look of them or perhaps they represented something important to us at the time. There will be things that are connected with your interests and hobbies. Some things may represent your cultural identity or your religion. This could end up being a very long list!

What we have in our home expresses our sense of who we are. Being able to see things that we're attached to or see pictures of them can jog our memories and help us reminisce. When we move, having familiar things around us can help us move on from the loss of the old to establishing our new home.

Some prompts

Use the list below to help you identify your important attachments.

- Objects e.g. presents the kids brought back from school trips or things they have made; holiday purchases; jewellery; ornaments; games
- Furniture – are there special memories attached to any of your furniture?
- People – presents from particular people; photo albums; letters, postcards. Think about colleagues, friends, family and neighbours
- Memories - what has happened at home that you want to remember? Think about childhood, childbirth, family life, setting up home
- Pictures - any that remind you of a place, a holiday or a person, perhaps a picture that a friend painted for you
- Photos and albums– family, friends, colleagues, neighbours, holidays, trips from home, the garden,
- Household objects e.g. a vase, teapots, mugs, cups and saucer, biscuit tin, tea set
- Books e.g. favourite novels or poetry; picture or coffee table books; children's books;
- Music – records, tapes, CDs, sheet music

Questions

Do you like a lot of 'stuff' around – a bit of a 'hoarder' – or do you like clear and tidy spaces?

Are walls for hanging special pictures on? Which ones?

Do you enjoying planning how to develop a home?

Are there things that you need to have to support you to do the things you like doing?

At a practical level, what do you need?

At a symbolic level, what do you need? (e.g. photos, presents from the family, inherited furniture, favourite jewellery)

How important is music to you? What music do you like? You may need to identify specific genres, musicians or composers

Activities

1. Check out each room in your house. You have spent time and thought in how each room looks. There may also be spaces which contain 'useful things' e.g. a cupboard,] or utility room. If you can sit or lie down (if it's your bedroom for example) for a while, do so. Give yourself contemplation time. Take time to think about what is important to you in this room. Why is it important? What memories are attached? Or is it something that you value for its usefulness?
2. Do any smells come to mind? Are there things that you like to touch?
3. How about colour coding things as to their importance? You could choose a colour specifically for those things that you cannot bear to be parted from.
4. You may like to add photos of some of them to your MHM booklet.

Downsizing (see Section 13 'Downsizing and decluttering')

Not easy especially if you're a hoarder!

Disposing of things that we are attached to can be quite distressing or painful. We attach strong memories and emotions to objects and they may have vivid associations with people or past events. Once you have settled on what to take with you, think about what to do with the things you're not taking.

Are there other people who would appreciate them? Relatives, friends?

Could you sell anything so that you could have the money or donate it to a charity?

Give to a charity shop so that someone else can make use to them?

Perhaps you could take photographs of them in situ so that you have the pleasure of memories.

5. People who are important to me

This section gives you an opportunity to think about people that are important to you. Connections with people are so important to most of us.

They may be people who are:

- family or relatives
- friends
- neighbours
- ex-partners
- colleagues or people you used to work with
- local people e.g the postman, milkman or people you meet up with at a club
- paid carers or nurses
- you might want to include pets too

Questions and prompts

For each person, you may like to note:

- How you currently keep in touch
- Do you want to keep in touch with this person in the future?
- How often?
- What sort of contact do you want?
- Is there a particular reason for keeping in touch with them?
- Would you prefer to have no contact?

You may like to include photos of these people. Or maybe you have artistic skills and could draw or paint them!

Activity

1. Sometimes writing things down helps to work things out. To help you work out who is important to you and why, you could write them a letter. You could tell them why you want to remain in touch with them when you move. You might also tell some people why you don't want to maintain contact.

This isn't a letter intended for you to send or for them to read - it's just a creative way to help you tease out what is important to you about this person.

See template T4 Things I'm attached to

Part 2: Facing up to a move

Introduction

If you are undertaking this section after the other pages you will have already done a lot of thinking about what is important to you. Hopefully it has been helpful in reminding you of what is most important to you about your home.

It may have also made you feel sad about leaving your home and setting up another. This can be especially true if other people have initiated the conversation about moving. You may feel under pressure to move, but don't feel ready to yourself. If you would find it helpful talking your concerns through with someone independent - see links **Support with distress or sadness** in the **Resources section**.

Moving from your home is a significant life change and is likely to involve leaving behind an important part of your life. Thinking through some of the issues that you are facing can help you with this big adjustment and make it a bit less painful. Having a positive attitude or at least recognising where there are positives can make us more resilient to change.

This section allows you to think through your thoughts and feelings about having to make a move. Each part gives you an opportunity to think through different aspects and practicalities of the transition ahead. It is aimed at supporting you to think through decisions and undertake some advanced planning.

This section includes:

6. Exploring my relationship with my home
7. Triggers for moving home
8. Exploring what I need from 'home'
9. Where I want to see out my days
10. Making a home together
11. Moving in to someone else's home
12. Making a new home
13. Downsizing and de-cluttering
14. Choosing where to live

6. Exploring my relationship with my home

If you have undertaken sections in Part 1 you may feel that you do not need these following sections, but they are aimed to complement what has gone before. Choose which suits you best and ignore any issue that is irrelevant to you.

In undertaking previous pages you will have no doubt thought about 'home' being a place of comfort, safety, memories, warmth, rootedness and so on. You may have also thought about things that have been painful or unhappy. Life tends to be a mixture of pleasure and pain and spending a lot of time at home provides plenty of opportunity for things to go wrong as well as wonderful life affirming events.

Potential issues arising in relation to where I live

- What are the difficulties that people have identified for me?
- Could these issues be addressed in a different way? (e.g. an assessment by a professional such as a Social Worker or Occupational Therapist)
- What are the risks people are worried about? Could these be addressed without having to move?
- You may have strengths that could be helpful, supportive or interesting for others. Think about whether this move might enable you to contribute something to others

Questions

- Do you feel you are in control of this situation?
- Where are you going to move?
- Are you looking to move closer to family?
- Could you downsize your belongings?
- Have you thought about your health?
- Are you being realistic?
- Are you moving into a retirement home?
- In 10/20 years time, where would you like to be living?
- Try to think about the positive things that can come out of this move. What brings you hope? Comfort? New opportunities?
- Do you know anyone else who has had to face this situation? Can you talk with them about it?
- Are there other people you would like to discuss this with? Think about your circle of support - people you know who could support you, who you could talk things through with. These people could be part of your social networks, neighbours, family, friends, carers, people from church, choir or other community group, your hairdresser. Think about what sort of support each person could offer you.

Activities

Take some time to think about what brings you delight or pleasure in your home. Don't think about things that you feel you ought to do, but try to focus on things that you look forward to doing or get pleasure from. What is it that makes them so pleasurable?

Then make a note of them to help you remember.

It may be that you can't do some or all of these things if you move. Try to think of a substitute activity. Is there another way of achieving that pleasure? Would photos help?

1. Nurturing your soul

If you are spiritually inclined you may want to focus on what home contributes to your sense of spiritual wellbeing. What helps you feel alive or provides inspiration, stimulation and peace?

Take an opportunity to sit somewhere comfortable where you feel relaxed. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. Then ask yourself 'What would a home for my soul be like?' Give yourself permission to let your imagination run wild. Explore this through your senses - in your mind's eye, walk through it, smell it, touch it. Where does it take you? If you enjoy doing this, draw your fantasy. Or make notes so that you remember what you have come up with.

2. If you are feeling pain or grief about moving, this may be because the move has been enforced and is against your wishes. Something some people have tried and found helpful is to build a small simple place of memories in a quiet part of a room (e.g. your bedroom). You can place photos or small objects there that represent memories of your last home or part of your life. You could add a small vase of flowers. When it feels right for you, you can give yourself permission to spend some time there allowing yourself to understand your feelings and think about them in your own private space. Having the opportunity to express your feelings can help you move on to this new part of your life.

3. Take photographs (or ask someone else to do this) of important places in your home so that you can keep those memories with you.

4. Make a special scrap book, memory box, video or collage of important items.

See template T6 Exploring my relationship with home

7. Triggers for moving home

You may have strong feelings about where you want to live and how you want to live in later life. Or perhaps you haven't given a great deal of thought about it until now. If this is the case, has something prompted you to do so?

It could be:

- Illness or an accident
- An unpleasant event at home such as a burglary or a burst pipe
- Pressure from family or friends
- Dissatisfaction with your neighbourhood
- Realizing that your current home may not be suitable or manageable as you get older

If you feel under pressure to make a move you may feel sad, angry, upset or indignant.

It is worth taking the opportunity to reflect on what is prompting you to think about or face up to moving. How you are feeling at the moment about where you live is likely to affect how you feel about your current situation and whether it needs to change.

This section complements Section 14 'Choosing where to live' as both sections address reasons why you may be facing a move.

Questions

Are there things that are bothering you about the place where you live now? If so, what are they?

Things that could be bothering you might include:

- too much clutter
- the place is too big
- upkeep of your home
- you no longer feel safe here
- people are suggesting that you should move
- it no longer suits you
- it's difficult to get around now
- it's not near enough to the people that you love or want to be close to
- painful memories
- poor transport links

Why are you making this move?

Have you been able to organise your home as you wanted? Or has someone else taken care of that? How do you feel about that?

Are there things that have stopped you organising your home as you would like it?

Can you organize things better at home so that you don't have to move, for example some grab rails or a stair-lift, or fitting more secure locks and a house alarm? See '**Living safe and well at home**' in **Resources section** (Section 18) for organisations who could help you stay at home more safely.

Are you worried about the financial implications of a move? (Look in the '**Thinking ahead for a possible move**' in the **Resources section** (Section 18) for organisations that could help you with this)

Who could help you with making decisions?
Who might not be helpful with making decisions?

See template T7 Triggers for moving home

8. Exploring what I need from 'home'

Your home is an expression of yourself. It is also a place where you need to feel comfortable and safe and there may be practical reasons why that is not the case for you now.

So, this section gives you an opportunity to think about the practicalities of where you have been living or still are living and how it is meeting your day to day needs.

This is an opportunity to think more deeply about whether your current home is meeting your psychological and emotional needs. For example, do you feel safe, comfortable, content and connected here? Do you have privacy?

Questions

You will have addressed some of these questions if you completed Part 1

How do you feel about where you live right now?

What suits you about living here?

What is less convenient now about living here?

Can you identify any risks about living here now? Do other people see other risks?

What do you need space for and how much?

What do you need to have around you in your home? (see Part 1)

Activities

1. If you haven't yet moved, reflect on where you live now.

Does this place feel like home? Try to identify the things that make it feel like home.

Is there another place that felt like home?

Where was it? Was it your home? Or your parents' or grandparents' home?

Are there places in that home that were important to you?

If you think back to your childhood, did you have special place? For example a comfy chair that you liked to curl up in, your bed, a hideaway in the garden. What does this say about what is important to you now if you move?

2. Sit somewhere comfy and close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths and let yourself relax.

Imagine yourself walking somewhere where you feel relaxed and happy. It's a lovely day, the birds are singing, the flowers nodding and the air is full of sweet scents. Imagine where you would feel at home and what this would look like. Allow yourself to be imaginative and don't get hooked on realities like whether you can afford it or not.

When you feel you have explored it enough, make a note or draw a picture to remind yourself. Has this given you any insights into what you need in relation to a new home?

Useful resources

Alzheimer's Society: Living alone tinyurl.com/5n88p568

Dementia UK: Making the home safe and comfortable for a person with dementia tinyurl.com/ydj8rcd2

See also the **Resources section** (Section 18) for more support

See *template T8 Exploring what I need from home*

9. Where I want to see out my days

Have you thought about where your final home should be? If you have looked at the end of life planning part of **'Choosing where to live'** (Section 14), you will have given thought to this issue. However, we are not all comfortable with thinking about our future, particularly in relation to the end of life. Like most people, you may be hoping to see out your days in your present home. However, none of us knows what is around the corner and things might change that make it really difficult for this wish to come true.

It is worth considering the benefits to planning for the future or at least thinking about 'what if?'

See **'Choosing where to live'** (Section 14) for information, guidance and templates regarding making decisions about later life.

Questions

- do you have strong feelings about how you intend you live your later years?
- do you know what support you can have in your current home?
- have you got enough information about whether this home could be adapted sufficiently?
- do you know enough about end of life care in your area?
- how do you feel about living in a place where you have to share accommodation (but have your own room)?
- if you have a life-limiting condition, do you know enough about its progression and prognosis?

Activity

1. Settle yourself comfortably. Imagine getting older.

Here are some things you could think about:

- comforts that you could benefit from
- practical things that you could need
- pleasure
- support and care needs
- connections that you want to keep

2. Reflect upon other people you know and the decisions that they've made about later life care and where to live. Think about the pros and cons of their decisions for both themselves and for others close to them. Does any of this help you think about your own life?

Resources

See the final section **'Where to find support and help'** for links to websites that you might find useful.

See template T9 Where I want to see out my days

10. Making a new home together

If you are facing a move with someone you already share a home with - probably your partner, husband or wife – setting up a new home together can raise contentious issues, as you may well have discovered already! If you are moving to live with someone else – a partner, a family member or a friend – the move can be even more complicated; we explore this in ‘**Moving into someone else’s home**’ (Section 11)

Creating and setting up a home together requires negotiation and compromise as you may both have different ideas about what is important to you, including the type of property or living arrangement you each prefer.. You may have different practical, emotional and social needs too.

We all have our personal preferences about the various elements of what a home is. The look of the home may be important, or perhaps you have different ideas about space, furnishings, privacy, personal items, a garden or other outdoor space, tidiness or location.

Home is where the self is

Different people have different needs from a home and planning a move may highlight those differences. For example, for some people home is a status symbol and for others just a place of refuge. Home can be an expression of order and beauty or a place of significant memories. Whatever our views, home is where the self is; it can be an expression of who we are, of our self-identity. Moving can make us feel anxious and worried because feeling comfortable is important to us.

Some issues to consider:

- your different needs - emotional, social, physical, practical
- how over time, your relationship with your home may have changed, and whether you both feel this way
- what other significant people think about your move (and whether this matters)
- who makes the decisions about where and how you live and whether you are happy with this arrangement
- sharing space can add strains on a relationship, so think about how much and what sort of space you need
- the longer term and possible health or mobility issues that may arise
- the need for private or personal space in your home
- routines

Questions

- is this an opportunity for you to develop your home to better meet your respective needs?
- are you happy about the way that decisions about your home are made between you? If not, is there another way of making decisions?
- are you clear about what you want from this move?
- are there particular things that you feel are essential for you? Do you both agree on these?
- do you each have important routines that you want to maintain? Or can you compromise on some of these?

Activities

1. Each of you put down on paper in pictures, diagrams or words what your current home means to you. You could use different coloured pens or crayons to indicate what’s important to you to keep and what you are OK to lose. You can do this separately or together and you might want to involve someone whose judgement you trust in this exercise as it has the potential to allow old wounds or differences to resurface.

Then discuss what you’ve both come up with! You may find out things that you never realised be-

fore about the importance of particular attachments. If you feel that this exercise has the potential to sow discord, it may be better to let sleeping dogs lie. However, somehow you will have to make decisions about what to keep and what to let go of and how to allocate space in your new abode.

2. Make a list of what you expect from home in the future - think about things you want to do or happen in your home, for example grandchildren staying, having a garden to nurture or being able to host small meetings. Think about practical matters, e.g. mobility that may change over time.

You could do this individually or together, whichever feels best.

3. Imagine different scenarios and whether they could suit your purpose:

- living in a retirement complex and having other people of your own generation around you
- living in a bungalow
- moving to a new area
- moving close to family members
- moving in with family members
- living close to services and shops or living in the countryside
- sheltered housing *
- extra care housing**
- staying where you are

Does this exercise highlight differences in your individual or shared lifestyles?

* Sheltered housing is housing provided by local authorities and housing providers for older people who wish to remain independent but want to have the security and reassurance of a scheme manager and an alarm call service. Some are rented and others offer the opportunity to buy the property. Schemes differ in their facilities, but many have communal lounges, laundry facilities, lifts, door entry systems and specially adapted facilities

** Extra care housing is similar to sheltered schemes, with a mix of private and communal spaces. However, there is a higher level of care and support offered which is on-site and available 24 hours per day. Extra care housing enables you to retain tenant rights if you are renting and a local authority assessment will determine how much you contribute financially towards your care costs.

See template T10 Making a new home together

11. Moving into someone else's home

Moving into someone else's home can raise mixed feelings for both parties. You may be excited about the prospect of having company and sharing living costs, but worried about how you will get along and deal with day to day matters. You may be moving to live with your family because you need their practical help or support, If so, your family may have mixed feelings about having to share their existing home. Perhaps you are going to share a house with a friend because you both want to reduce your housing costs and do not need such big houses now that your families have moved on. If so, it may be a while since the two of you have spent any significant time together by yourselves. Whatever the reason, the move will require negotiation and compromise and it is important to try to set some ground rules that all parties sign up to before you move in.

Some issues to consider

Will you have your own private space, e.g. a sitting room as well as your bedroom? Is one of the grandchildren giving up their own room for you?

What will the cooking arrangements be – will you be able to do your share if you are able?

Will you be eating together for every meal, just in the evening, or perhaps less often?

Will you be able to make a cuppa or a snack?

Do you have particular routines that are important to you, for example having breakfast in your pyjamas and dressing gown before you get washed and dressed?

Where will you entertain your friends and other visitors?

How much furniture and other possessions will you be able to take with you?

What about pictures, favourite plants or patio pots?

If your room is being decorated before you move in, how much say will you have over the décor and colour scheme?

What are the arrangements for sharing costs or for you to contribute to the household budget?
What will you be expected to pay for yourself?

Do you have the same tastes in music, films, TV or radio programmes? If not, will you be able to do these activities privately?

See template T11 Moving into someone elses home

12. Making a new home

Ideally, making a new home should be exciting and life affirming - planning for the next stage of your life. But so often in later life, the thought of moving can fill us with dread and at a practical level, that's understandable! Taking the opportunity to think through some of the issues using this booklet can hopefully turn dread into something a little less dreadful.

If you have completed previous sections, you will have done a lot of thinking about what is important about home for you, so this section could be a summary for you, a chance to check whether there are other things you want or need to think about.

You may like to look at the **Checklist** in the **Resources section** to see if there are issues that you haven't addressed.

You might also feel that you have covered these issues below in other sections, in which case, ignore it and move on to the activities below.

Questions

Have you thought about home in terms of:

- a place for nurturing you - things that can help you feel warm, cared for, loved, secure, cosy, comfortable
- a place containing positive memories that you want to keep as reminders
- identity and self-esteem
- somewhere that will be physically comfortable
- a place that you can get around in easily
- being near to important places
- the care you need now
- the care that you may need in the future
- getting the help that you might need
- any emergencies that might arise e.g. getting help easily
- social activities
- your cultural needs?

Activities

The senses of home

Our senses change as we get older, so it is worth spending some time thinking about your own senses now. This demands a reflective mood! Sit somewhere comfortable and think of the different senses that you associate with home. Try to identify what they are. What do they remind you of?

- Vision - things you like to see or to look at indoors, through the window or from your garden or balcony. How should pictures or ornaments be displayed? Do they need to be within reach? Is a view outside important to you?

Are you aware of what makes it easier for you to see things? Think about where it's useful having light sources (e.g. lamps, natural light from windows). Are bright colours against a contrasting colour easier to see?

- Touch - are there things that you enjoy the feel of? What are they? What do they remind you of?

Are there things that are very private, but are still important to you? You may need to find a way of recording this secretly - for example writing it on a piece of paper and putting into an envelope marked private and including it with these papers.

Can you identify things that you don't like to touch or things that grate on you?

- Hearing and sounds - has your hearing got worse? Are there things that you're not hearing as well nowadays, but want to be able to? Take a few moments to think about any problems you might be experiencing in terms of hearing. Identifying problems now can lead to solutions in your new home.

Sounds are a very personal thing; there are some sounds that we just love and have a positive effect on us and there are some that are irritating or have unpleasant memories.

Think about what you like listening to: music, stories, poetry, birds, water, people's voices, children playing... there are endless possibilities!

Think, too, about how you like to listen or hear these things - is it:

- by going out to a particular place
- on the radio
- the TV
- on headphones
- having it in the background

Are there ways that you don't enjoy listening to things? For example

- as background noise
- on headphones or earbuds

Taste

If your sense of taste has changed recently or over time, make a note of what the changes are.

This could be useful if, for example, your senses of smell and taste have decreased; there could be a risk of you not being aware of something hazardous (e.g. food that has gone off in the fridge or a gas leak).

Smell

Are there smells that you associate with your home, for example scents from the garden, particular cooking smells or the laundry?

What about other smells that you don't want to be reminded of, perhaps a local factory or farm-yard? Then, think about what smells you'd like to have in your new home. This exercise should help you identify the less obvious characteristics of where you live and what you might want to have in your new home.

See template T12 Making a new home

13. Downsizing and decluttering

Downsizing

Moving from the family home is a huge emotional decision that is likely to be stressful, especially when you've built up fond memories there. It is known to be one of the most traumatic events for many people. Leaving your home and being asked to downsize are exceptionally demanding, especially if you are moving into one room, for example in a care home. Downsizing demands that you not only consider how to reduce the amount of stuff that you have, but you have to face up to what you have invested emotionally and personally in your home, its contents and location.

'It's time to move'

Pressure to move for anyone is daunting - whether it's you feeling that 'It's time' or whether others are saying this to you. Sometimes, we can feel pressured by family who feel that we should move and downsize. Sometimes, such pressure can feel as if we have a moral obligation to move. Sometimes, it's us that wants to move, for example close to family, but for various reasons that won't work.

There is no one solution to such dilemmas, but if you have someone you trust to talk your worries through it can help. If you don't have such person, you could look at the **'Where to find support and help'** section of the **Resources** (Section 18) for someone to speak with. See below for links.

Downsizing is a choice that some people make for a variety of reasons, such as:

- your house is too big to maintain
 - you'd like to cut monthly outgoings
 - you have a spare bedroom or bedrooms which you aren't looking to let
 - your garden is too large to manage
 - you'd like to save money
 - you have mobility issues and are struggling to continue living independently
 - you are living alone and would like to move somewhere that offers companionship
- (list from Which?, 2020)

Advantages of downsizing in later life:

- reduce maintenance costs
- save money through lower energy bills
- more manageable space in the home
- easier to get around indoors
- more manageable garden or outdoor spaces

Disadvantages include

- less space to entertain visitors
- less room for your favourite things
- need to replace furniture to fit the new spaces
- potentially less space, so may entail de-cluttering
- potentially reduced access to outside spaces

Questions

- Why are you considering downsizing? Have you thought through the pros and cons?
- Is it your own idea or decision or someone else's?
- How does the idea of downsizing make you feel?

Activities

1. Why am I downsizing? Make two columns on a sheet of paper. On one side list the reasons why you are considering moving somewhere smaller. On the other side, list what is important to you about where you live now.
2. My 'stuff'. Refer back to the pages that you've completed in this booklet. Reflect on the things that you realise are important to you about 'home'.
3. Either on your own or with someone else, reminisce about your current home. What would you miss if you left here?

Decluttering

If you have completed Section 5, you will have identified things that you're attached to. We all invest meanings and memories in our cherished objects. If we develop dementia or our memory does not serve us so well nowadays, we may not remember the origin of an object but we are likely to recognise our attachment to it. Our possessions can represent and remind us of significant parts of our lives, events, relationships and places. They can provide us with comfort and can be a display of who we are to other people.

So we have to be careful about what we get rid of! We need to be careful about shedding items that with the passage of time become more precious. Possessions can act as a history of our lives; that history can contribute to a sense of who we are, which in turn can give us a handhold to help us feel safe and comfortable.

Connections are so important!

However, we may also have stuff that no longer has the same attachment and is gathering dust which you can't reach. It served a purpose once, but that purpose is long gone (although that doesn't mean we're not still attached to it!).

Activities

1. Pause for a moment and look around you, perhaps taking one room at a time. Jot down those things that are important to you and you feel you don't want to lose. Then make two columns. One column is for things that you want to keep: to touch, to look at, to smell. The second column is for things that you want to remember, but could do so through photographs or other means.
2. 'You may be faced with having to get rid of significant things. Having undertaken the first exercise, you will need to face the pain of knowing that you have too much stuff! Think creatively about how you can hang onto memories without the object (with someone else if this would help) – for example through photographs, relocation of furniture, objects and pictures. Would you like to give someone a second chance to use it if you can't?

3. It may be that you would be very glad to get rid of some things. These may be things that you would like some family members or friends to inherit – make a note of these. Discuss this with them and if they don't want them, this may be disappointing but is not a reason to hang on to them if you have decided you no longer want or need them?
4. If your situation allows it, could you plan or organise a way of moving possessions on in a way that feels good for you? Could this be a time for celebration?

See template T13 Downsizing and decluttering

Support with distress or sadness

Support if painful or troubling memories have surfaced during these exercises may be obtained from:

Alzheimer's Society Support Helpline 0333 150 3456 Calls charged at landline rates

Dementia Talking Point is an online community where anyone who is affected by dementia can receive support from other people also affected by dementia. It's free and open day or night
<https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk>

Age UK Advice line: 0800 678 1602 Freephone
Lines open 8am- 7pm, 365 days a year.
Also, specialist advisors at local Age UK branches
<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area/>

Dementia UK Helpline: 0800 888 6678 Open 9am – 9pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday. Specialist support from Admiral Nurses. Freephone

direct@dementiauk.org

Independent Age Helpline: 0800 319 6789 Freephone

Mind Infoline 0300 123 3393 Information and signposting service. Open 9am-6pm Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays) Phone calls from landlines are charged at local rates. Calls from mobile phones vary according to provider and contract. info@mind.org.uk

Samaritans 116 123 (freephone) Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. jo@samaritans.org Freephone

14. Choosing where to live

You will be reading this page because you are considering or facing a potential move. This may be because other people think that will best for you or perhaps you recognise that your needs have changed and need to think about what to do now.

This section is designed to help you with thinking through your options. However, rather than repeat information that is already available elsewhere, we have developed a list of free resources which will help guide you through the available options.

You may have looked at '[Exploring my relationship with my home](#)' (Section 6) already. If not, you might find it helpful to do so.

Living safe and well at home

Most people want to be able to remain in their own home, but is your home the right place for you now? Or in the future?

Practical things you might like to think about include:

- the size of your current home. Would something smaller be more suitable?
- getting around in your home. How is your mobility? Are stairs becoming a problem?
- affordability. Is the rent a bit much? What about the cost of repairs if you own your home?
- getting out and about. Is it becoming more difficult to get out for shopping?
- your health. Do you have a health condition that is likely to get worse?

Adaptations

There are several guides to help you adapt your home to meet your needs. Look in the **resources section** 'Living safe and well at home'.

There are also organisations that can help you with adapting your home and give you advice about finance.

Age UK 0800 055 6112 (8am - 7pm daily) They can also tell you if they have a local office.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/housing-options/>

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/>

Alzheimer's Society 'Making your home dementia friendly' booklet has a useful checklist of changes. 0800 222 1122 publications@alzheimers.org.uk

AskSARA - helps you find useful advice and products that make daily living easier

0300 999 0004 dlf.org.uk

FirstStop Advice Line 0800377 7070 www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk

Disabled Living Foundation 0300 999 0004 www.dlf.org.uk

List of factsheets: <https://www.dlf.org.uk/content/full-list-factsheets>

Foundations - this website gives information about local Home Improvement agencies and grants available

<https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com>

Health and Housing <https://wwwFOUNDATIONS.uk.com/resources/health-and-housing/>

Living Made Easy Practical advice on daily living equipment 0300 999 0004
<https://www.dlf.org.uk/living-made-easy>

Local Social Services office

Thomas Pocklington Trust Specialist advice for blind and visually impaired people to live independently. Give advice about lighting
020 8995 0880 www.pocklington-trust.org.uk

Care at home

Having some help at home might enable you stay in your own home for longer. This can be particularly helpful for people who have memory loss or dementia. Keeping things the same as far as possible is beneficial for reducing confusion. It can also contribute to keeping you safe.

Finding care at home

Your local Social Services office will be able to provide you with information about this. They will also explain their charging policy. Not everyone will have to contribute towards care costs but this will depend on the policy of your local authority.

You can also contact local care agencies yourself but it is important to assure yourself that they are reputable and reliable. You can visit the Care Quality Commission website (<https://www.cqc.org.uk>) to look at their inspection reports for specific companies. The website also tells you what to expect from a good care service.

Thinking ahead for a possible move

You will find several free guides in the **Resources section** to help you.

There are several options to consider; what could suit you depends very much on your circumstances and your needs. Contacting one of the organisations listed might help you understand your options better. If you have a Social Worker they can help you too.

Housing options include:

- social housing transfers e.g. to a smaller property
- sheltered housing
- extra care housing
- moving in with family
- care homes
- almshouses
- sharing your home- various schemes operate in different parts of the country

<https://homeshareuk.org>

Any move needs thinking through thoroughly if it is to be successful. What might on the surface seem a good idea, might not really meet your needs on deeper reflection. Hence the importance of exploring what you need from 'home'. If you haven't done this already, consider doing it now. (See section 1 on 'What makes a place 'home' for me). The booklet 'Choosing where to live' by Independent Age is very helpful in helping you think about the issues.

Sources of information and advice:

Age UK 0800 055 6112 (8am - 7pm daily)

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/housing-options/>

Citizens Advice Bureau for advice on tenancy and legal issues. Call central number for your local advice centre 0344 411 1444 (Mon-Fri 9-5) <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

FirstStop Advice Line 0800377 7070 www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk

Independent Age Advice Line 0800 319 6789 <https://www.independentage.org>

Local Social Services

End of life planning

This may or may not be something that you want to tackle at the moment. Working out what to do about your housing situation may well be your priority.

However you may want to think about what living with a serious illness might mean for you or your partner. You may want to record your preferences and wishes. By planning ahead, you can have some control over decision making regarding your future care. It can also help you think about where and how you might live.

There are a number of publications available now to help you with advance care planning, listed in the **Resources section**.

You can obtain a template for your Advance Care Plan on the internet. Dementia UK provide one either in paper or downloadable. They also have a 'Planning for your future' leaflet for guidance.

Dementia UK Helpline 0800 888 6678 <https://tinyurl.com/yd2hp9l9>

You may also choose to make a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA). This is a legal document that allows someone to make decisions for you or act on your behalf if you are no longer able to do so. There are 2 types of LPA: Health and Welfare, and Finance and Property. You must make these LPAs whilst you still have the mental capacity to do so.

Below are links for the forms and guidance:

Age UK <https://tinyurl.com/yc8qahxq>

Government website (Office of the Public Guardian):

<https://tinyurl.com/mwbckn8>

<https://publicguardian.blog.gov.uk/category/lpa/>

Alzheimer's Society <https://tinyurl.com/ydhu3lxc>

Hospital discharge

If you are ill at some point and are admitted to hospital, it may be suggested that you move from your current home. This can be a difficult situation. You might feel under pressure to make a big decision but you may not feel well enough to make a decision right now.

You have a right to be involved in planning and making decisions about your care and treatment. You also must be given the chance to manage your own care and treatment. Having a diagnosis of dementia does not justify other people making decisions on your behalf. Under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) it must be assumed that you are able to make your own decisions unless it is proved otherwise.

Age UK Factsheet 37 Hospital Discharge <https://tinyurl.com/yxobg39m> is helpful. This factsheet explains what you should expect from staff who are involved in planning your discharge.

Care home admission

Moving into a care home is probably one of the biggest decisions we have to make about where we live. It is often the last move that we make too. The idea of moving into a care home tends to raise negative connotations.

Moving into a care home often follows a decline in physical and or mental health. Therefore the reasons for this move need to be addressed so that the best possible quality of life can be achieved.

Turning such a move into an opportunity rather than a loss is challenging, but careful planning and preparation can go some way to overcoming apprehension and upheaval.

It is beyond the remit of this booklet to address all the issues involved, however there are a number of helpful factsheets and guidance in the **Resources section** to help you.

A point worth noting is that care home residents do not have tenancy rights.

Relatives and Residents Association: Your rights in a care home

<https://tinyurl.com/ycsdcyvv>

See template T14 Choosing where to live

Part 3: Resources

This section supports the two previous sections with further prompts and activity suggestions, a SWOT analysis and checklist of themes.

The section contains a large number of links to other resources, websites and information that could be of interest and use. There is a lot of very useful information on the internet which could aid your planning.

Included is a section is to enable the person completing this booklet to clarify who the contents can be shared with. It provides an opportunity to have conversations that might otherwise be difficult.

Finally, there are templates which can be downloaded in which answers can be written – either online or on paper. Please use them or not, as you wish.

This section includes:

15. More Ideas to help you think about 'home'

16. SWOT analysis

17. Checklist of themes

18. Where to find support and help

19. Who I'm happy to share this with

Templates for each theme

15. More ideas to help you think about 'home'

This list supplements the prompts, questions and activities that are suggested in each section to help you to generate memories and thoughts. Please adapt any ideas to suit your own purposes. You can write things down, draw pictures or record your thoughts on your phone. Add some ideas! Be as creative as you like!

- take each room at a time. Sit and look round. What is important to you in here? Any memories triggered?
- examine your bookshelves. Anything here of importance?
- did you ever keep a diary? Is it time to have a peek?
- browsing through photograph albums may remind you of times and places that mean a lot to you
- look through the pictures we have online. Does anything here remind of you important 'home' things?
- imagine you've won the Lottery. What do you want to keep in this home? What would you be happy to lose?
- write a letter to yourself about what you love about your home
- ask someone close to you if they have ideas about what is important to you. Only write it down if you're sure they're right!
- listen to music. This can sometimes be a powerful way of evoking our emotions
- drawing, painting, writing stories, poems
- what games did you play in your home? Who joined in?
- reminisce! Be careful though not to go down difficult paths if you're on your own
- think about how creative you've been in making a home
- websites that enable you to record your memories. (Some of these have to be paid for)
- use your senses. If you focus on any of these, do they trigger memories?
- take a wander around your garden (in your imagination if getting there is difficult). What have you planted here? Were you given cuttings or plants by significant others? What is important to you about your garden? Could you press some flowers as keepsakes?

If you are thinking of making a move

would you like photos of your current home?

See template T15 More ideas and notes

16. SWOT analysis

Some people find that using a table such as this below provides a structure to think about a particular issue.

So for example, you could use it to help you tease out what matters to you about:

'Staying put in my home with adaptations';

'Moving to retirement housing';

'Making a decision about whether to move or not'

| | |
|--|---|
| Strengths (what are the positive reasons for doing this?) | Weaknesses (why is this not a good idea?) |
| Opportunities (what could I gain from doing this?) | Threats (what could get in the way of me achieving what I want?) |

17. Checklist of themes

The following themes came from our initial research on which My Home Matters is based. We asked older people and people living with dementia what 'home' meant to them. They came up with the themes below which we have put into a checklist to help you decide whether you have addressed these issues enough.

| Theme | Yes, I've addressed this enough | No, I've not thought about this | I need to think about these issues more |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to people (family, friends, neighbours) - to places (shops, doctor, place of worship, local park) | | | |
| Personalising your home | | | |
| Locality | | | |
| Cultural roots | | | |
| Cultural expectations | | | |
| Privacy | | | |
| Comfort | | | |
| Feeling safe and secure - currently, where you live and what you need so that you can feel safe in your new home | | | |
| Being clear about my housing options | | | |

19. Who I'm happy to share 'My Home Matters' with

You have written down a lot of private and personal information in this booklet. So it's important that you think about who else might read it.

If you find yourself in a situation where other people are encouraging you to move, this list could be very helpful. There may be some information that you want to share with some people and not others.

Use the table to make your list so that you can identify what information you are happy to share

Are there people who you are happy to share it with?

Are there people who you do not want to share it with?

People who you need to think about could include:

- relatives e.g. son, daughter, nephew, niece
- health professionals e.g. your G.P. or nurses if you are in hospital
- social care staff e.g. Social Worker who may be assisting you with a move
- neighbours
- paid carers

| Name of person | Relationship e.g. daughter, social worker | Contact details | Share info in my booklet | Do not share info in my booklet |
|----------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
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19. Where to find support and help

Contents:

- Living safe and well at home
- Thinking ahead for a possible move
- End of life planning
- Reminiscence
- Support with distress and sadness
- Other

Living safe and well at home

Alzheimer's Society:

Alzheimer's Society Making your home dementia friendly

<https://tinyurl.com/y9l53u6m>

Alzheimer's Society (429LP) Using equipment and making adaptations at home

<https://tinyurl.com/2hh9mmfk>

Using technology to help with everyday life (437LP)

<https://tinyurl.com/4n9vcf3y>

Alzheimer's Society Keeping safe at home

<https://tinyurl.com/ymfkmpx6>

Alzheimer's Society Living alone

<https://tinyurl.com/y5u27pz8>

Care and Repair:

Living Safely & Well at Home. A practical guide to improving your home to make it safe and healthier

<https://tinyurl.com/c7xv7u24>

Dementia UK:

Care at home leaflets

<https://tinyurl.com/c7xv7u24>

Making the home dementia friendly and safe

<https://tinyurl.com/yc8hf7fm>

HousingLIN:

Sight Loss, Home and the Environment

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/sight-loss-home-the-built-environment/>

Independent Age:

Independent Age Adapting your home to stay independent

<https://tinyurl.com/y8lvuqpi>

Independent Age Getting help at home

<https://tinyurl.com/ya72h5qt>

Independent Age Home Safety

<https://tinyurl.com/y9kkjr4t>

Independent Age Home security

<https://tinyurl.com/y75zusy7>

Independent Age Sheltered Housing and extra care housing

<https://tinyurl.com/y9eg4xmv>

EAC (Elderly Accommodation Counsel):

How well does your home suit you? HOOP questionnaire for people living in England and Scotland.

<https://hoop.eac.org.uk/hooptool/>

Silverlinks Programme have a number of guides to enable older people with long term health conditions to think through the housing implications of the health condition and make plans accordingly, particularly with regard to future housing needs.

Making your home a better place to live with dementia

<https://tinyurl.com/5yyztvm4>

Making your home a better place to live with a long term condition

<https://tinyurl.com/25wvf88k>

Making your home a better place to live with heart disease

<https://tinyurl.com/24n4zdbe>

Making your home a better place to live with respiratory diseases

<https://tinyurl.com/ytempb9s>

Making your home a better place to live with macular disease

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3p9t4z>

Making your home a better place to live after a stroke

<https://tinyurl.com/5bubtj32>

Making your home a better place to live with arthritis

<https://tinyurl.com/5n6d6v44>

Thinking ahead for a possible move

Age UK:

LifeBook. This is a free booklet where you can write important and useful information about the practical aspects of your life. The booklet gives you the opportunity to organise practical information in one place. It includes contacts, utility services, medical conditions, where you keep documents, final wishes and more.

You can either download or order a paper copy

Age UK 0800 169 8787 Mon-Fri 9-5

<https://tinyurl.com/yye9y8jt>

Alzheimer's Society :

Factsheet 484LP Making decisions and managing difficult situations

<https://tinyurl.com/yam3ark4>

Alzheimer's Society Planning Ahead

<https://tinyurl.com/y777hjsb>

Independent Age Choosing where to live

<https://tinyurl.com/ybcglwy3>

Homeshare UK

Site for exploring potential home shares. <https://homeshareuk.org>

Silverlinks & CarersUK

Thinking ahead: Housing and related care options in later life

<https://tinyurl.com/y7we3m7b>

This workbook and guide also includes a list of other organisations that offer advice and information.

Silverlinks:

Thinking Ahead: Housing, Care & Related Finance in Later Life

<https://tinyurl.com/y7t3qh77>

Workbook designed to help you think ahead; think about your preferences; housing options and where to go for further help

Centre for Ageing Better

Home Truths: Housing options and advice for people in later life (2019)

<https://tinyurl.com/ycyt9mmy>

Elderly Accommodation Counsel:

Housing Options for Older People (HOOP)

Online questionnaire in which you answer questions that are relevant to you and suggestions of options are made

<https://hoop.eac.org.uk/hooptool/>

Alzheimer's Society:

Publications list

<https://tinyurl.com/y7t7gfwn>

Downsizing

Which?:

Why should you downsize?

<https://tinyurl.com/3thxy87y>

Care homes

Alzheimer's Society

factsheet 476LP Care Homes: when is the right time and who decides?

<https://tinyurl.com/yadst4hr>

Alzheimer's Society:

Selecting and moving into a care home

<https://tinyurl.com/ybkltntnr>

Care Choices:

Website for finding care homes

<https://www.carechoices.co.uk>

Dementia UK:

Changes in care: considering a care home for a person with dementia

<https://tinyurl.com/y79srv7j>

Independent Age:

How to find the right care home

<https://tinyurl.com/msac6ezk>

Independent Age:

Settling into a care home

<https://tinyurl.com/yacmhncw>

End of life planning

Alzheimer's Society:

End of life care

<https://tinyurl.com/ybzw8swv>

End of life care – useful organisations

<https://tinyurl.com/ybyooabf>

Dementia UK :

Lasting Power of attorney

<https://tinyurl.com/y23szysh>

Independent Age:

Planning for the end of life

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8f9s7y>

National Council for Palliative Care:

Dying Matters series

Planning ahead:

<https://www.hospiceuk.org/information-and-support>

<https://www.dyingmatters.org/page/planning-ahead>

Making decisions about treatment and advance care planning

<https://www.dyingmatters.org/page/planning-your-future-care>

NHS Dementia:

Dementia and end of life planning

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/palliative-care/>

Reminiscence

Alzheimer's Society:

This is Me

<https://tinyurl.com/2m25pscn>

RecordMeNow app:

<http://recordmenow.org>

Music Mirrors:

<https://www.musicmirrors.co.uk>

Dementia UK:

Life Story Work

<https://www.dementiauk.org/life-story-work/>

Life Story Network/tide

Scroll down list for 'Life Story'

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8mp4jr>

For pictures and images

BBC Reminiscence Archive

This archive provides access to a selection of content from the BBC Archives. To begin, simply select a Theme (such as Sport, Events etc.) or a Decade (1930s, 1940s etc.) and choose whether you wish to have Image, Audio or Video content. The results are randomised each visit, however items can be 'favourited' to return to later.

<https://remarc.bbcrewind.co.uk/#>

Support with distress or sadness

Support if painful or troubling memories have surfaced during these exercises

Alzheimer's Society:

Dementia Connect Support Helpline 0333 150 3456

Dementia Talking Point is an online community where anyone who is affected by dementia can receive support from other people also affected by dementia. It's free and open day or night

<https://forum.alzheimers.org.uk>

Age UK Advice line: 0800 678 1602

Lines open 8am- 7pm, 365 days a year.

Also, specialist advisors at local Age UK branches

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area/>

Dementia UK Helpline: 0800 888 6678 Open 9am – 9pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday. Specialist support from Admiral Nurses.

Independent Age Helpline: 0800 319 6789

Mind Helpline: 0300 123 3393 Open 9am-6pm Monday to Friday (except for bank holidays)
info@mind.org.uk

Samaritans 116 123 (freephone) Open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Tide – together in dementia everyday

Support, campaigning and training for carers of people living with dementia

<https://www.tide.uk.net>

Other

Age UK information guides and factsheets. Information guides are short and easy to digest. Factsheets are longer and more detailed. They are regularly updated.

https://tinyurl.com/_y4e4noby

Templates Section

What makes a place 'home' for me?

My 'pet hates' and things that don't make a place feel like 'home'

Where home is

Where home isn't

Important places

Places that I don't want to be reminded of

Things I'm attached to

People who are important to me

(See also S19 Who I'm happy to share my 'My Home Matters' with)

People who I would prefer not have contact with

Exploring my relationship with my home - issues for me

Triggers for moving home

Exploring what I need from 'home'

Where I want to see out my days

Making a new home together

My needs and preferences

His or her needs and preferences

Moving into someone else's home

What I need, want and hope for from this arrangement

What they need, want and hope for from the arrangement

Making a new home

Summary of issues that are important to me in making a new home

Downsizing and decluttering

Why I'm considering downsizing

How this makes me feel (and can I turn this into something positive?)

Plans for things I need to get rid of (where they could go)

Choosing where to live

Issues that are causing me to consider moving from my home

My options for dealing with these issues and who I could contact about them

More ideas – use this sheet for any notes that you might wish to make

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