

# Activities in Care

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When the time comes to choosing a care home for a loved one, families often enquire about activities and engagement in the home. It's important for everyone in life to have something to do, to have something to get up for, to do something they enjoy and care providers have to have understanding that this can be different for each person, and can come in many forms. So getting to understand a person's life history is so important when moving in to a care home; to understand likes, dislikes, things that brought daily enjoyment when living at home, what makes them smile, what passions do they have.

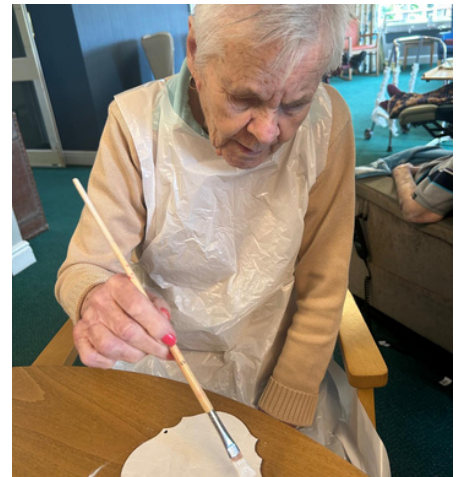
This can then support the care planning before an individual moves in to a new home, as an example if a person moves in and has no interest in an activity such as bingo, when we have a scheduled activity like this we would know to offer an alternative to engage in something more meaningful to them.

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Scheduled activities in care homes play a crucial role in providing entertainment and promoting social interaction. There is value in bringing joy and creating a sense of community within the home environment, especially for individuals who used to venture out into the community but are now unable to do so, these scheduled social activities take on an even more significant role. They serve as a means of bringing the experiences and connections they once had in the community into their new home, ensuring that they continue to feel engaged and connected.

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## Meaningful Activities

Other forms of activity in a care home can be as simple as a task carried out from a previous occupation which can hold the key to creating an environment that truly mirrors the comforts and routines of living in one's own home. Understanding a person's past life and what they used to do engages them in activities that resonate with their daily lives, their personal identities and provide both a sense of purpose and achievement.

I'm sure we've all experienced moments on a cold Sunday afternoon when all we fancy a spot of baking in the kitchen, filling our home with the aroma of a comforting freshly baked sponge cake, or there are those sunny afternoons, when the garden is in need for our care and attention and we want to spend a few hours in the fresh air to tidy up the shrubs. These moments are activities but activities with personal meaning to some, they can evoke emotions, sense of familiarity, a connection to the simple joys of life, and a reminder of the profound satisfaction that can be found in the everyday.





## Identity Through Activity

Our environment is so important and linked to our activities and identity, a person's regular past work, profession, job or principal activity constitutes normal life for many people, so having an environment that is familiar and encouraging activities to help around the home is so important, if someone was a painter before retirement, the maintenance team could encourage some help (under supervision of course), washing up, tidying clothes away is such a large part of a housewife's life, washing the car for anyone that was a taxi driver, these are crucial parts of our identity that shouldn't stop just because you're now living in a care home, there has to be a sense of normalcy and continuity in daily routines and tasks.



## Dementia & Activities

For individuals living with a Dementia, the act of engaging in familiar activities holds unique significance. While the individual may not fully understand or remember the details of what they're doing, the sensory experience itself can be deeply comforting and evocative. The smell of the ingredients if baking, the tactile sensations of mixing and kneading, and the process of creating something tangible can trigger a sense of familiarity and connection to their past. Even though they may not remember baking a cake, these sensory experiences can bring a sense of comfort and reassurance, these senses of familiarity can create a bridge to a world they may have difficulty recalling in words, but can feel the positive or satisfying emotion connected to the activity.

We also look to create scenes and themes within our homes to reflect peoples life histories and experiences, this could be a train station, a greengrocers, plumbing equipment, fabrics and sewing equipment and even piano rooms have all been ideas we have created in recent months.

# Benefits of Activities in Care Homes

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## **Maintaining a Sense of Normalcy**

Catherine House Care Home's household model of care aims to create an environment that closely mirrors the comforts and routines of living in one's own home. Engaging in daily activities helps residents, who are fondly referred to as family members, maintain a sense of emotional security, normalcy and familiarity.



## **Personalised Engagement**

Person-centred activities recognise that every family member is unique with their own life histories, interests and preferences. Care plans are tailored to each individual, each life history, ensuring that they engage in meaningful activities that they genuinely enjoy.



## **Enhancing Self-Worth**

Person-centred activities recognises the intrinsic value of each family member's abilities and contributions. When individuals are encouraged to participate in household activities they enjoy or are capable of, it boosts their self-esteem and self-worth. They feel a sense of accomplishment and purpose.



## **Promoting Independence**

Meaningful activities such as cooking, cleaning, decorating, gardening allow family member's to exercise their independence and autonomy. This not only fosters a sense of self-reliance but also preserves their functional abilities.



## **Building Social Connections**

Activities within a care home can be enjoyed individually or also be a communal experience. Family members can work together on activities like preparing meals, decorating, polishing medals, fostering social interactions and a sense of camaraderie.



## **Physical and Mental Stimulation**

Daily activity often provide both physical and mental stimulation. For instance, gardening can improve motor skills and cognitive function, while cooking involves planning and problem-solving.

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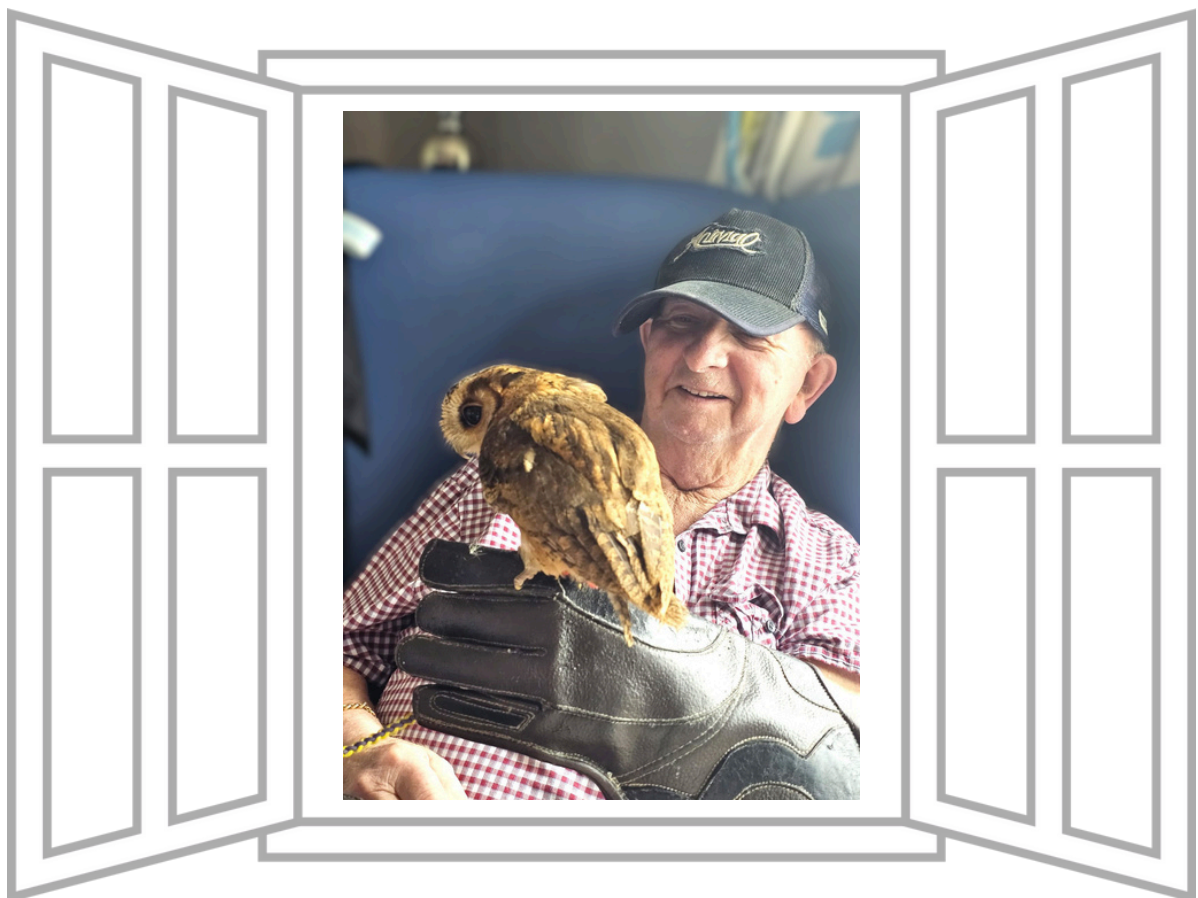
## Diverse, Choice, Person-Centred

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The diversity of activities within a care home is vast and essential for understanding the individuals needing our support, and ensuring that they find meaning in their experiences. Whether its joining in a scheduled bingo game, enjoying a visit from the local llamas or venturing out into the community, each activity contributes to the individual's sense of purpose and fulfilment. This is “person” centred, each activity no matter how seemingly insignificant to others, plays a crucial role in enhancing quality of life.

For those living with a Dementia, engaging in familiar activities can serve as a powerful connection to their past and provide comfort amid memory loss. These activities become a bridge to a world they may struggle to articulate verbally but can still experience through sensory engagement.

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01373 593 192

[support@catherinehousecarehome.com](mailto:support@catherinehousecarehome.com)

[www.catherinehousecarehome.com](http://www.catherinehousecarehome.com)