



# HOW TO FIND YOUR **PERFECT CARE HOME** **IN HASTINGS**



THE *L* LAURELS

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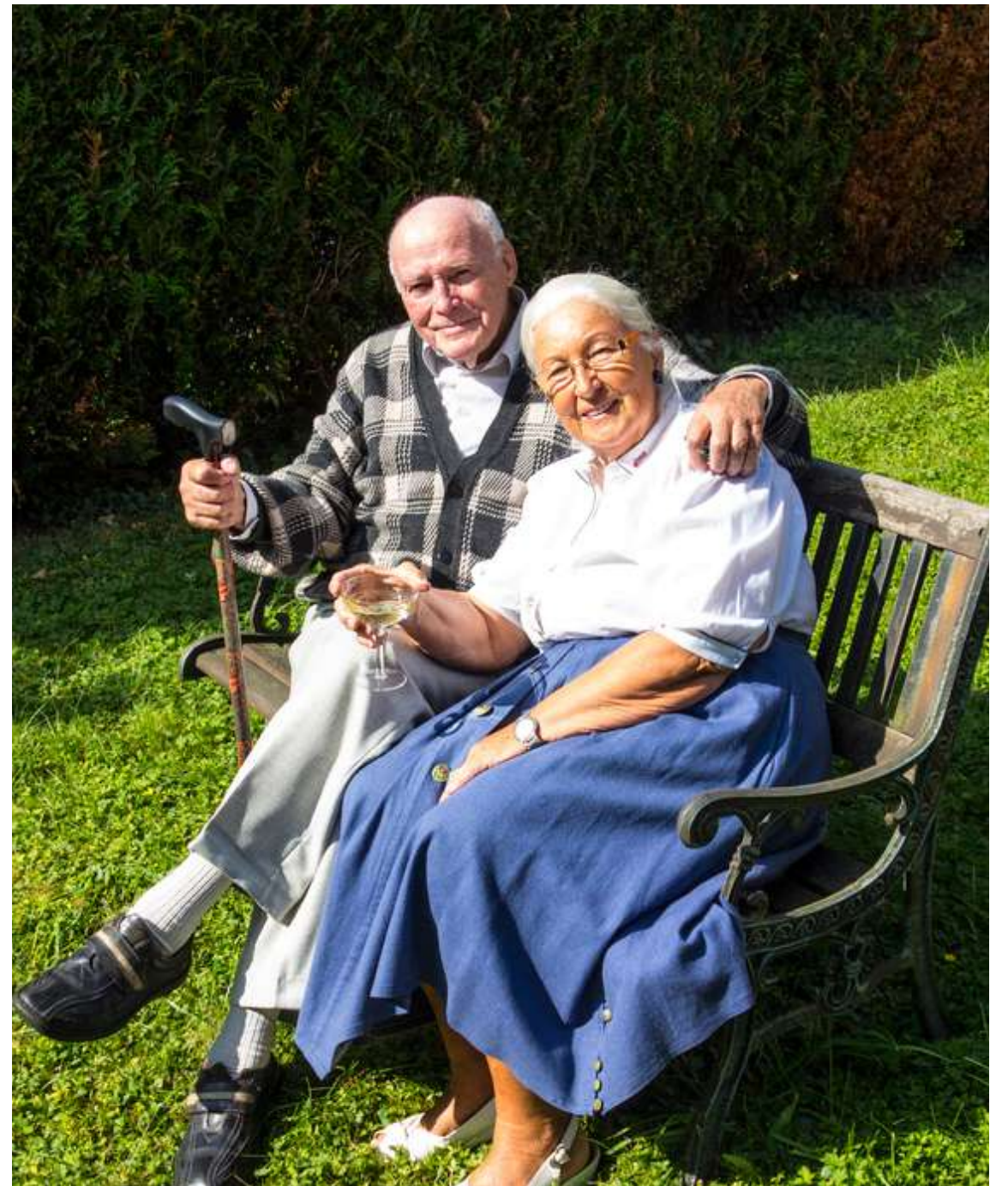
Choosing the right care home is a crucially important decision that can affect the quality of life for you or your loved one for years to come.

So, how do you find a good one?

This guide will show the secrets to choosing a good home. Using this guide can save you lots of wasted time, effort, and money.

More importantly it can help you find a home where your loved one will be happy, safe, cherished, content and avoid ending up miserable and poorly cared for just when they need it most.

So, the first thing you need to know is



## 1. Who To Trust

For a fully independent and professional view of how well a care home does its job, read its report on the Care Quality Commission website ([www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk))

This is an independent government body that regulates and inspects every care home in the country. It breaks down the inspection of the home into 5 different categories with each category being rated individually.

The home is then given an overall rating of 'Outstanding', 'Good', 'Requires Improvement' or 'Inadequate'.

Sometimes homes are very good in most areas but have one or two categories that require improvement. This can move the home's overall rating from 'Good' to 'Requires Improvement'. However, if you like the look of the home and it has been marked down in this way it's still worth visiting and getting a good feel for the home as it may be really good overall.

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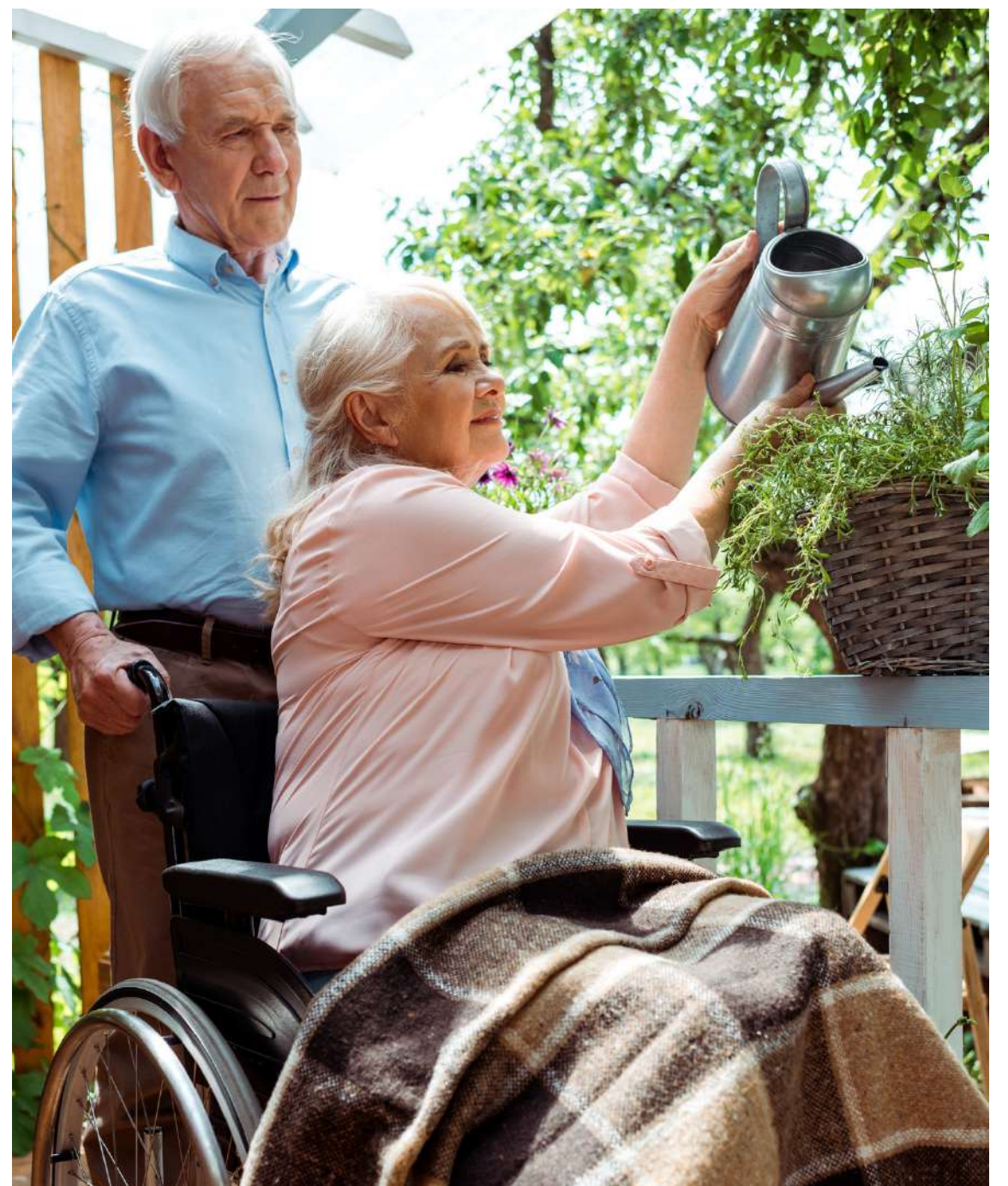
If a home has been given poor ratings in 4 or 5 categories or has an 'Inadequate' overall rating we recommend steering clear as this is usually indicative of poor care standards and inadequate management.

Next you need to:

## 2. Decide What You Want and What's Important To You Before You Start Looking

- Are you independent, mobile and socially active? Or need a high degree of support and care?
- Are you fiercely private or enjoy being with others?
- Do you want a single room or double?
- Do you want an en-suite?
- Do you want to be near family or friends?
- Do You want to be in the countryside or in the middle of the city?
- What facilities might you want the home to provide? Hairdressing, chiropody or going out for example.
- Do you have any special dietary requirements or like certain foods?
- Do you want/need a TV and telephone in your room or are you happy with communal ones?
- Do you want to use your own furniture or bring a pet?
- What sort of budget do you have?
- Will you be paying for the care privately or be funded by the local authority?

It's important to have a clear idea of exactly what you want, so make a list



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of key things that you need before you start looking for suitable homes. This will save a lot of time and help you to quickly identify homes that are unsuitable.

Here's what to do next...

## 3. Where to Find Homes

Once you know exactly what type of things you are looking for in a home it becomes much easier to compile a short list. So now it's time to see what's available that meets your needs.

Firstly ask people who have relatives in homes or who visit them. Family, friends, or health professionals who actually visit homes will be able to give you accurate first-hand impressions.

Make sure you tell them what you are looking for first though so they don't waste time recommending a home that doesn't match your needs.

Next look in your local paper. They often have a monthly focus on care where homes in the area advertise.

Your local council or branch of Age Concern is another good source of homes in your area.

Finally, the internet. If you have internet access this is the best place to find homes as almost all of them will be listed, even if they don't have their own website.

Try to be specific with your search. If you search for 'care homes' you'll get 2,030,000 results which will make finding the home for you a bit difficult! If you're looking for a home in the Hastings area then 'Care Homes in Hastings' will produce much more focused results.

Also try typing in the type of care you need to further refine your search. Do you need general residential care, nursing care, dementia or Alzheimer's care, respite care, or day care? All of these and more are available.



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## 4. How To Evaluate A Care Home From Its Website

Visit the website for the homes you like and make a short list of the two or three best ones. How do you tell which are best? Here are some essential things to look out for.

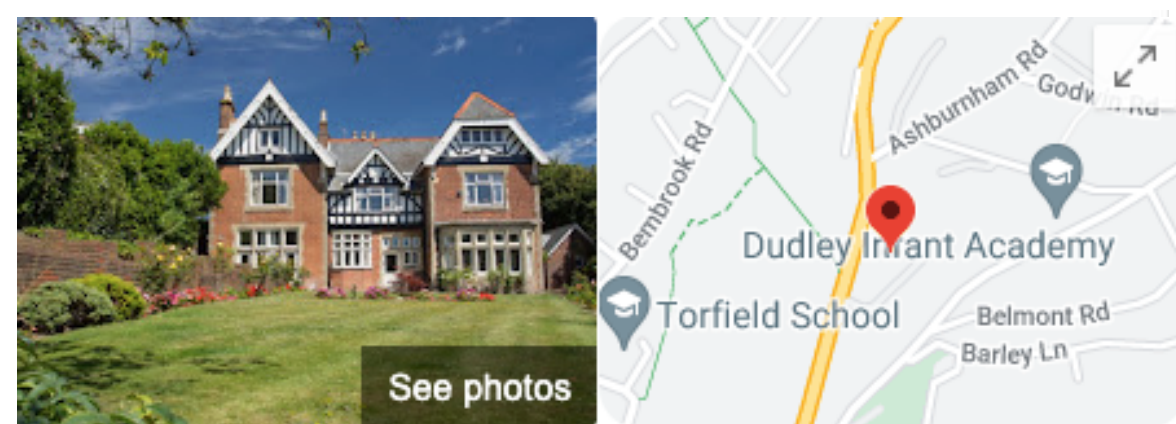
- Pictures. Most good care homes will have invested in getting some professional photographs taken of the home and its facilities. You can get a very good idea of the standards of the home from this.
- News or Blog Section & Facebook page. All good care homes will have lots of activities, events, entertainment and trips taking place throughout the year. Photos and videos of these will usually be posted on the care home's blog, news section and Facebook page so that family members from near and far can see what's happening with their loved one and keep up with news from the home.

Look for lots of these types of pictures containing lots of happy smiling residents. *This is the best evidence you can get of how good a care home is.*

- Reviews and testimonials. As well as the **CQC report**, look for reviews and testimonials of the home from family members and healthcare professionals.

**[www.carehome.co.uk](http://www.carehome.co.uk)** is the UK's largest directory of care homes. They also have a review facility where you, as a family member, can post a review of the care home. **[Click here](#)** to see an example. These are individually verified so the reviews are all genuine. Look for a preview or link to these reviews on the care home's website, then take a good read through them.

Reviews may also be found for the care home on its **[Google Business listing](#)** page which you'll usually find to the right of your screen when you Google the home's name. Please bear in mind these reviews are not verified so anyone can leave one, good or bad. If a review doesn't look genuine or the reviewer has given a star



### The Laurels Nursing & Residential Home



Website

Directions

Save

Call

5.0 ★★★★★ 2 Google reviews

Nursing home in Hastings, England

**Address:** 71 Old London Rd, Hastings TN35 5NB, United Kingdom

**Hours:** Open 24 hours ▾

**Phone:** +44 1424 619028

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rating but left no comment, ignore them.

Read any reviews or testimonials the home may have collected themselves. Video testimonials are the best as they are the most difficult to manipulate or edit.

Finally read the words on the website. Do they talk directly to you about your needs and those of and your loved one? Do they seem to have their residents' best interests at heart? Do they give you all the information you need. If not, move on.

Ok, that's your research done.

Now it's time... to take some action



## 5. Time to Use Your Gut Instincts

Once you have a list of homes you think may be suitable, it's almost time to go and visit them. Before you do, here's another tip that can save a lot of time with wasted visits.

Phone the home before you visit. This is really important because the response you get speaks volumes about it. Use your gut instincts to assess the home. If something just doesn't feel right, it usually isn't.

Here are some pointers to look out for:

- It takes an age for someone to answer - probably understaffed.
- The person answering doesn't speak your language - how will they communicate effectively with you or your loved one? (Incidentally, this is a practical matter not a race issue. If Chinese is your first language you need a home where Chinese is freely spoken.
- Do they ask lots of questions about you and your requirements - Their primary concern should be in finding out whether they can provide what you want and need.

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- Are they warm and welcoming or cold and uninterested - poorly motivated staff aren't likely to provide top quality care. This is a major red flag.
- Do they freely invite you to visit anytime or just by appointment only. This is a tricky one as making an appointment is a professional thing to do. The home can make sure there is someone ready and waiting to take you around, which is very respectful of your time. However, if they seem reluctant to let you visit without an appointment you have to wonder why.
- See what follow up you get after the call. Most well run homes will send you a follow up letter or brochure and perhaps call you back after a few days to see if they can be of further assistance. Be reassured by this. If they are this organised it's likely that the care they provide will be similarly first rate.

Next, possibly the most important bit

## 6. The Acid Test

Once you have your, by now, very short, shortlist of possible homes it's time for a visit. So, do you make an appointment or arrive unannounced?

Well, if you were encouraged to visit anytime when you phoned up, it's safe to make an appointment and this is most respectful of everyone's time.

However, if there was any reluctance to you visiting without making an appointment, make sure you do arrive unannounced. This way you will get a true picture of how the home is really run.

So what should you look for when you arrive?

Here are some checkpoints:

- Tidy well kept frontage of the grounds and building
- Warm, welcoming & courteous greeting
- Clean, tidy, and sweet smelling interior
- Plenty of staff around



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- Private area to discuss your requirements
- Lots of questions to find out all your requirements
- Clear answers to all your own questions
- Clean, tidy well presented rooms
- Clean, tidy toilets and bathing areas
- Happy looking residents who are willing and eager to talk with you

Don't rush. Take your time. Speak to several members of staff and ask existing residents what they think of the place. Observe how members of staff are

with the residents. Is this how you would want yourself or your loved one to be treated?

Ask detailed questions about your life here. For example, what arrangements can be made to see your GP?

Lastly, find out about the fees. What exactly is included and what's not? How often are fees due and what methods of payment are open to you?

And finally...

## 7. The Moment of Truth

Once you have decided on the home you feel is right for you or your loved one it's time to make a commitment. This is a big decision so, before you finally sign on the dotted line, spend at least one day and night at the home to see if there is anything you missed or are really not comfortable with.

If there is, don't be afraid to say so. Your happiness is at stake and you need to be really sure you feel comfortable with your new home.

If all goes well, arrange to move in permanently. However, make this subject to an initial trial period of a couple of weeks where you can still change your mind with no financial consequences, just to be sure.



*We recommend you print out this report and keep it with you as a guide when searching for a care home.*

# This guide was brought to you by: **The Laurels Nursing Home**

An Exclusive Care Home In A Quiet & Secluded Residential Area of Hastings



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**THE LAURELS**

***Call us today to arrange your tour of The Laurels Home***