

On Friday 20th June 2014, 3,000 care homes across the UK opened their doors to the public on National Care Home Open Day.

It's part of a wider move to make the sector more transparent and accessible. Many people outside the care sector only see the negative side

National Care Home Open Day: why it matters for everyone in the care sector



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of residential care, and they don't have a clear idea of how care homes operate and the types of care that they provide. What isn't always obvious to the public is that, in care homes up and down the country, the hundreds of thousands of people who work in

care homes are providing high levels of round-the-clock care to our elderly loved ones, day in, day out. Recognising and celebrating this hard work is such an important part of National Care Home Open Day. It gives the public the opportunity to see for themselves the level of care which is available to them and their relatives.

The annual open day is run by a group of leading care providers and associations, and it is aimed at all care homes across the country, both big and small, private providers and those run by local authorities. It is an important event in the care sector's calendar during which care homes encourage the public to visit with the aim of connecting care homes with their local communities and showing local people the excellent services on offer.

Many MPs, MSPs, AMs, Councillors and CQC Inspectors visited care homes throughout National Care Home Open Day to show their support for residents and staff in the care sector, and to lead their communities in coming together



to celebrate the valuable services provided by residential care homes.

To coincide with the FIFA World Cup, this year's National Care Home Open Day had an international flavour, as South Africa and Australia joined in for the first time. Care homes across

the country held a host of 'around the world' activities including themed tea parties with international food, colourful fancy dress parties, and musical entertainment. The highlight of the day was the international Mexican wave, which started in Australia and rippled all the way up to the UK. Care homes videoed their Mexican waves and posted them on the social networking site Twitter, carrying the hashtag '#CareWave'.

The Care Wave was a huge success, with a Thunderclap tweet reaching 127,322 accounts on Twitter and Facebook. Ricky Gervais tweeted the hashtag '#NCHOD' to his 5.84million followers, and Andrea Sutcliffe, Chief Inspector for Adult and Social Care at the Care Quality Commission also used it. Overall, there were over 1,500 tweets just mentioning the hashtag '#NCHOD', which resulted in 8.28million Twitter impressions.

This year's ambassador for National Care Home Open Day was highly respected journalist and broadcaster, Gloria Hunniford, who is a keen supporter of issues that affect older people. She encouraged care homes to be as creative as possible with the activities they put on, and to encourage their local community to visit and perhaps even become volunteers in their local care home. Gloria also appeared on local radio throughout the day, urging the public to visit a care home near them.

Whether it was through visiting a home, the media or social media, this year's National Care Home Open Day reached millions of people across the world, raising awareness of the hard work and dedication of people working in care homes, and demonstrating the great care that is available to our loved ones in our local communities.

Getting their glad rags on



Sanctuary Care homes across the country got dressed up to the nines to take a trip down memory lane on National Care Home Open Day.

Residents and the teams at Sanctuary Care homes hosted an array of 1940s and 1950s themed events, pulling out all the stops to ensure that the day was a real vintage affair.

At Meadows House Residential and Nursing Home in London was visited by Clive Efford, Eltham MP, Des Kelly OBE, Executive Director of the NCF and Steve Wood, Managing Director of Sanctuary Care, for a vintage garden party to celebrate the launch of their new sensory dementia gardens.

At Ivydene Residential and Nursing Home in Ivybridge residents and the team stepped back in time to the rockin' and rollin' 1950s. There was a

musical theme to the day with a juke box and live 1950s entertainment – as well as a fantastic high tea in traditional bone china.

Activities leader Laura Charters, said: "It was absolutely brilliant and the music went down a storm, everyone was up singing and dancing. We are all on such a high from the day!"

Chadwell House Residential Care Home in Chadwell Heath was transformed into a 1940s Lyons Tea House with staff serving afternoon tea dressed as 'nippies' (1940s waitresses), while Wantage Nursing Home in Oxfordshire hosted a toe-tapping vintage tea dance to mark the occasion.

Talented youngsters from Abbey Primary Community School in Leicester treated residents of Asra House Residential Care Home to a special dance performance at the home's 'Old Bollywood Classic' themed day. The

team also wore stunning saris and there was henna hand art, live music and a feast of Indian savouries.

At Breme Residential Care Home in Bromsgrove visitors went down the rabbit hole for a Mad Hatters' Tea Party while at Heathlands Residential Care Home in Pershore, the gardens were transformed into a 1950s seaside resort for a day at the beach. There were sandpits, a puppet show and ice-cream trike, with the Mayor of Pershore Tony Rowley opening the home's new corner shop.

Home manager Anita Fletcher said: "Everybody put so much effort into the day – it was absolutely amazing. Well done to the team for putting on such a wonderful day for our residents."

Heathlands resident Frances Davies, 87, added: "I can't remember when I had such a lovely time – it has been amazing."