# A Day in the life of a Lifestyle Coordinator

WELLBURN CARE HOMES

## In Collaboration with Mindful Care

At the heart of every care home is the role of the Lifestyle Coordinator, ensuring residents live fulfilled and meaningful lives through activities, engagement, and genuine connection. It's a role that requires creativity, patience, and compassion—and the right training makes all the difference. We spoke with Nicola, a Lifestyle Coordinator with Wellburn Care Homes, to hear more about her day-to-day work, the challenges and rewards of her role, and how Mindful Care's training has helped her build confidence and develop new skills to better support residents.

Nicola (left) pictured with resident Mable (right) visiting their partner charity Ouseburn Farm to feed the lambs.

**Tell us a little about yourself – what are your hobbies and interests?**

*"I've always been passionate about the arts and spending time with family. I love to read, and going to the theatre—especially to see musicals—is one of my favourite pastimes. Holidays in the UK with my sister are also something I really enjoy."*

**What does a typical day look like?**

*"No two days are the same in my role. Every day begins with a handover and documentation, but after that, the day can take many different directions. We run regular activities on a weekly or monthly basis, but we also stay flexible. If the weather is good, we adapt and take advantage of it; if a resident expresses a particular interest, we try to follow that too. It could be a short interaction or a longer activity, but the goal is always to bring enjoyment and engagement."*

***What was the best part of your day?***

*"The best part of my day is simple—making people smile or helping them achieve something they didn't think possible. Those moments make all the juggling worthwhile."*

**What do you believe a 'whole home approach' is?**

*"A whole home approach means everyone is working in the same way to ensure consistency of care. It's about truly knowing each resident, so they are always treated and supported in the way that's right for them."*

**What do you believe person-centred care is?**

*"For me, person-centred care is about truly knowing someone—not just on the surface, but in all the little details that matter. It's how they like their tea, whether they prefer ketchup, what toiletries they use, what clothes they like to wear, what they enjoy on TV, and how they want to spend their time. If it matters to them, then it matters to me."*

**How do you build trust and rapport with the people you support?**

*"I've found that building trust often starts with something small, like a smile or a kind word. Patience and respect are key, as is taking time to really listen and show genuine interest. Sometimes, it means hearing a story as though it's the first time—even if you've heard it many times before."*

***What are the challenges you face in your role and how do you handle them?***

*The role comes with its challenges—planning activities, preparing resources, documenting everything (sometimes in multiple formats), and making sure everyone feels included. It's a juggling act, and while it's not always possible to please everyone, I try to take it step by step. One of my wishes for the future of care is a better balance between the people we care for and the paperwork. Documentation is vital, but it shouldn't come at the cost of missing real moments with residents."*

> *"Mindful Care has been instrumental in my development. The training courses have not only built my confidence but also given me practical knowledge that makes a real difference every day."*

**How have Mindful Care supported your learning?**

"Mindful Care has been instrumental in my development. The training courses have not only built my confidence but also given me practical knowledge that makes a real difference every day. Sometimes it's a small tip that changes the way I approach something; other times, it's a bigger revelation that transforms how I think and act."

**Can you give an example of how you've applied the learning you've gained from Mindful Care?**

*"The Brain Changes course, in particular, was a turning point. It helped me understand behaviours that might once have seemed confusing—for example, why someone who never swore before might suddenly start using strong language. It gave me the insight to respond with empathy instead of frustration.*

*Another key lesson was learning that it can take up to eight seconds for someone with dementia to process what I've said. That knowledge completely changed how I communicate. By using shorter sentences and allowing more time for a response, I've eased a lot of stress for both residents and myself. I've also learned how changes in vision and perception affect people as dementia progresses, and how small adjustments can make a big difference. These insights don't just help me—they allow me to support families and colleagues by sharing what I've learned"*

**What is your one wish for the future of care?**

*"If I could change one thing, it would be finding a better balance between care and documentation. At the moment, the rule is: if it's not written down, it didn't happen. This emphasis on paperwork sometimes overshadows the person in front of us. We risk missing out on meaningful moments because we're too busy writing them down. I hope the future of care shifts towards allowing more space for human connection, without losing the necessary record-keeping."*

**Nicola's story highlights the impact that the right training and support can have, not only on her own confidence but also on the quality of life for the residents she cares for.**