

Living Well Plan Guidance Notes





Guidance Notes

What is a Living Well Plan?

A Living Well Plan is a document all about you. It contains information that you feel is important and that you would want others to know if they were supporting you with decisions in the future, should you be unable to be part of making those choices.

You can work through the Plan on your own, with a person you trust to help you, or one of our experienced volunteer advocates.

The Living Well Plan is a record that can be completed on-line, or downloaded, printed and completed in paper copy. You can choose which parts of the plan you want to include and in what order you would like them to be presented. No two Living Well Plans will ever look the same.

Your plan should not be influenced by the views of others. If you do not feel your close personal network can help you without influencing you, please ask for support from an advocate.

Once you have picked the areas you would like in your Plan, you can refer to the prompts for these areas. These prompts are designed to help you to start thinking about what information you might like to include. Remember this is your Plan so do what feels comfortable for you, change anything in the Plan to make it your own, even the titles.



How do I complete a Living Well Plan?

It is important to use language which you would usually use and make the contents personal to you, when creating your Living Well Plan.

You may want to use it in the future to look back through or reassure yourself you have put in the things which are important to you.

Pictures, photos, voice records and written words, or symbols will all help, particularly if they mean something to you. It is always lovely to hear someone sharing their memories with a picture to help us understand, and it becomes easier to share. You may also find it reassuring in the future to hear yourself talking about something that feels familiar.

Your Living Well Plan will be as individual as you are. Some people may choose to collect pieces of information together into a box or some other collection place and take time to reminisce, or think about the significance of them. Other people may need to create a list, or just go with what comes to them at the time.

There is no right or wrong way to create your Living Well Plan, just as long as you feel comfortable that it is about you; take your time and include all that is important to you. Remember you can change or update it at anytime, so if it feels right put it in, you can always take it out later!



Is the Living Well Plan a formal document?

When you have completed the sections that you would like in your Living Well Plan, you can put them in any order. If you would like to, include an index page it may help you and others to know where each section is.

The Living Well Plan may never be finished. We all change, as do our wishes, tastes and choices and it can be updated as we experience more of life.

The Living Well Plan will enable you to make sure your voice is heard in any future decision making processes. This is why it is important you make sure you include all that is important to you in your plan, and change it when things change for you.

You can ask that a particular course of action is taken in the future, some of these requests can be formally recorded and you can tell people through your Living Well Plan where these documents are stored. Although this does not guarantee that decisions in the future will be as you would wish, it will ensure that your voice is heard during the decision making process.

Formal decisions for the future should still be considered through formal processes like your Will, Advanced Decision Making/ Living Will and Lasting Power of Attorney.



Advice and prompts by section

Front page:

1. Consider the use of photos, colours and other personalised editing to represent your taste.
2. Written records, voice records, borders, patterns, pictures, poetry can all be used particularly if you are completing your Living Well Plan electronically.
3. Art or photographs can be added throughout to customise the plan.

This is what is important to me now:

1. You may want to include people who are important to you, or pets that you take care of.
2. What are your hobbies and interests?
3. What jobs have you done or currently do?
4. Consider including whether spiritual beliefs or religion is important to you.
5. What foods do you enjoy?

This is what a good day looks like to me:

1. What would be the makings of the best day ever – where would you go, what would you do?
2. Consider your morning / bedtime routine:
 - Are you a slow riser/early to bed?
 - Do you bath early and settle to bed with a book?
 - Do you like a cup of something in bed or prefer to have a drink before bed?
 - Do you like your light on/off, door open/closed?
3. Would you prefer a shower or a bath?
 - What products would you like to be used?
 - Do you have breakfast before a shower or after?
4. Do you like to read the morning paper?
5. Do you enjoy a morning walk, what help's you relax?



6. Do you like tea or coffee or neither? How do you like your drinks, strong, hot, weak and milky?
7. How do you like your meal?
 - Main meal in the evening or at lunchtime?
 - What foods do you most enjoy?
 - Consider how you like your food cooked – for example a steak medium, rare or well done?
 - Do you enjoy a glass of wine or beer?
8. How about your appearance?
 - Do you like to get your hair done?
 - Consider the types of clothing you like to wear.
9. What do you like to do?
 - Nature walks, shopping, theatre, eating out, pub, spending time with people who are important to you, TV and radio.
10. Is there anything that you particularly don't like – spiders, being touched, smells? Are you happy for your pets to sit on your bed or lick you?

These are the activities I enjoy taking part in:

1. Are there any groups that you attend regularly?
2. What activities do you enjoy when at home?
3. If you live in a care home, do you take part in activities that are on offer and what are they?
4. Are there any activities that you would like to do that aren't offered in your care home?
5. Are there any activities that you would not want to take part in, what is it about them that you don't enjoy?

This is what I wish for my future:

1. What would you like to happen in the future? This could be where you would like to live or what you would like considered if you have to move into residential care.



2. It could include people you want to be involved in certain areas of your life. It can give guidance about things you consider important to you for the future.
3. It may be that you want one person to have Lasting Power of Attorney, but have another told if you are unwell and that you would like them to represent your day to day living decisions?

These are my daily living routines and preferences: * you may wish to refer to the prompts under 'This is what a good day looks like to me'

1. What days do you like to do your washing and cleaning?
2. Is it important to you to keep in contact with people? How do you like to do this?
3. Does it interest you to keep up to date with the news in your community as well as the world?
4. How does your medication system work?
 - Does the local chemist keep your prescriptions filled up?
 - When do you take your medication?
 - Does someone collect your prescriptions for you?
5. Consider including meal time routines.
 - What do you usually make?
 - Do you regularly go to, or share a meal with friends/family?
 - Do you enjoy a light breakfast, or perhaps eat little and often?
 - When do you prefer to eat your cooked meal?
 - Do you like to have something to eat or drink before bed, or when in bed?
6. Think about if you prefer a bath or shower.
 - Perhaps you enjoy a shower in the morning and a bath in the evening.
 - How do you like to prepare for your bath/shower?
7. Consider your bedtime routine.
 - How do you like the door to be left?
 - Maybe you like a light left on or the curtains left open.
 - What sort of bedding do you prefer? If you get hot easily perhaps you like to have a sheet rather than a duvet?



- Think about how you like your pillows or how many you like to have.
8. When doing your shopping, attending clubs or appointments, do you like to use public transport or do you have a friend / family member that takes you?

This is my past:

1. You may want to think about the family you grew up in
 - Pets that you had
 - A house or garden you enjoyed spending time in as a child
 - Were there any family traditions that you took part in?
2. Where you grew up? Did you marry, have children? Where do you consider home to have been?
3. Have you lived in any other countries?
 - Is English your first language?
 - Have you travelled significantly?
 - Were you raised in a home with dual language?
4. Did you enjoy school?
5. Did your family have a car?
6. Was there an event that had a significant impact on you?
 - The war
 - Travel
 - Loss of a loved one?
 - You might like to consider friends/ family members, music, films and TV stars that influenced you.
7. What work did you do?
 - Was it enjoyable?
 - What did your partner do?
8. Are there any places that had significant meaning to you, a place you holidayed every year?

This is my view on advanced decisions or Living Wills:

1. You can change the content of this document to suit your preferences.
If you have already made a Living Will or an Advanced Decision you may



want to say in this section where that document is held, stored, or who has it.

2. When it has been completed and witnessed you may want to take a copy to your GP, ask them to scan it into your notes so that there is a record of your wishes.
3. Here are some useful links where you can find more information, advice and templates on how to create an Advanced Decision or Living Will.
 - https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/info/20032/legal_and_financial/130/lasting_power_of_attorney
 - http://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/en-gb/factsheets/fs72_advance_decisions_advance_statements_and_living_wills_fcs.pdf?dtrk=true
 - <http://www.nhs.uk/Planners/end-of-life-care/Pages/advance-decision-to-refuse-treatment.aspx>

These are my end of life wishes:

1. You could consider how you would like to be treated when you are dying and who you may want with you.
2. Who you would like to be involved with the decision making process at this time?
3. You may want to think about where you would like to die.
4. You may want to consider what you would like to happen after your death and at your funeral.

How I feel about my health:

1. You may want to think about your physical health and how this impacts on you. Consider any strategies you use to manage on a day-to-day basis.
2. You may want others to know how it is for you – for example if you are living with memory loss or dementia, what helps you each day.
3. How do you feel about your health? Is it easy or difficult to talk with others about it?



Travelling well...an extract from my plan:

1. You might like to insert an up-to-date photo on this page of yourself.
2. Details about your medication and other extracts from the sections in this plan that you think would be helpful to others at a glance.
3. Any regular commitments you have that may need to be rearranged in an emergency or during a short term break from your usual routine.

Phrases and expressions:

1. You may want to include any expressions or phrases that have meaning to you. We all have family sayings that mean things to us that others may not understand.

What would I like to happen in an emergency?

1. Who would you like to be contacted?
2. If you have to go and stay somewhere overnight, do you have anywhere that you have considered?
3. Do you have family members or pets that need taking care of?

Important legal information:

1. You may want to consider giving details of your Lasting Power of Attorney, your Will (with executor details) or Advanced Decisions, if you have them.
2. Where is the information registered – for example which solicitor firm, or Doctors.
3. You may want to say who your next of kin is and think about any other formal or legal papers which you may want others to know about in the future.
4. You may want to include information about your utilities providers and how they can be contacted if things need to be changed or cancelled.



My moods / emotions (what makes me tick?)

1. Think about what makes you feel angry, sad or happy? Is there a certain topic, famous person, politician that makes you angry when you watch them on the television or perhaps you love them and listening to them makes you feel good for the rest of the day?
2. Do you like things done in a certain way or order- if it wasn't done that way how would it make you feel?
3. Are there certain places or people that you want to avoid, because they can trigger a bad memory for you?

Significant achievements in my life:

1. You may want to think about marriage, children, buying your first home, reaching a big milestone birthday or anniversary with a loved one.
2. Maybe you did something that everyone else around you thought was impossible for you to do.
3. Perhaps you received a decoration during the war or participated in notable campaigns.
4. Maybe you did a lot for others in the local community; this could include raising funds to help others live more independently.

Final page:

It is important that you sign this declaration, if you wish for Swan to be able to support you, to represent your wishes/ decisions or represent you when you are unable to do so yourself.

This is a record of your wishes and preferences that need to be understood and considered if any decisions are being made on your behalf. Swan can store an electronic copy of your Living Well Plan and you can ask a relative or friend to store a paper or electronic copy for you. If you find in the future that your address will be changing, you can contact the DAS team by phone or email to keep us updated (details can be found at the back of your Living Well Plan) or alternatively you can fill in the change of address form included in your Living Well Plan and send it back to us in the stamped addressed envelope provided.



By signing the declaration you are giving permission for Swan Advocacy to present this information to those who are making decisions about your life when you are unable to do so yourself.

Should you wish, you are also agreeing that this information can be shared with health and social care workers.

Feedback and Evaluation:

We will be reviewing and responding to feedback during our development of this important area of work. We will contact all people who indicate they are willing to give us feedback and help to shape improvements to the Living Well Plan, these guidance notes and any other area of work connected with developing our Dementia Advocacy Service.

You can become involved in our evaluation and feedback by joining a focus group, completing an evaluation questionnaire, or alternatively just telling us about your experience.

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