BRIDGEHEAD | SOCIAL CARE

A BRIDGEHEAD SOCIAL CARE REPORT · JULY 2023

SOCIAL MEDIA POWER LIST 2023

TOP 20 MID-SIZED CARE HOME GROUPS

Ranked on social media reach, engagement and content quality

TOP 20 CARE HOME GROUP AWARD 2023 carehome.co.uk

FIELDWORK & ANALYSIS: JULY 2023

BRIDGEHEAD COMMUNICATIONS LTD
BRIDGEHEADCOMMUNICATIONS.COM

CONTENTS

1. **About Bridgehead Social Care** 01

2. **Overview and Key Findings** 02

3. **Introduction** 04

   Social Media in Social Care

   Return on investment

   Users by platform

   Demographics

   The applications of social media
   in adult social care

4. **Results and Analysis** 11

   Followers by Platform

   Mid-size Care Home Groups 2023 – Social Media Power Lists
   - Groups and Homes Combined
   - Individual Care Homes
   - Individual Care Groups

5. **Group Accounts vs. Individual Home Accounts** 19

ABOUT BRIDGEHEAD SOCIAL CARE

A division of Bridgehead Communications, Bridgehead Social Care is a specialist marketing, public relations, and political communications consultancy focused exclusively on the adult social care sector.

Our expert team includes former national print and broadcast journalists as well as senior policy advisers with an in-depth understanding of the adult social care landscape.

Our clients and the services they require are broad. They include care bodies looking to rebrand or market themselves more effectively; providers seeking to raise the profile of their care service provision through both digital and traditional media; those seeking to navigate a hostile media environment; as well as individuals and organisations looking to have their voice and opinions heard among key sector decision makers.

For more information, please visit our website: www.bridgeheadcommunications.com
or contact us directly on:

Telephone: +44 (0)203 4888 963
Email: contact@bridgeheadcommunications.com

Yours faithfully,

William Walter,
Managing Director,
Bridgehead Communications

Our core services include:

- Marketing & Content Production
- Profile Promotion
- Crisis Communication & Reputation Management
- Regulatory & Political Engagement
- Campaign Management

2. OVERVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

Social media is an increasingly important mechanism to support stakeholder engagement in the social care sector.

In this, the second in a series of reports, we examine the use and applications of social media in the adult social care sector. Using carehome.co.uk's list of Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups 2023, we construct a 'power list' of runners and riders among some of the leading care groups and each of their respective homes. We examine how they use social media, what platforms they use, for what, and how effective they are at growing their audiences.

But, to lay the groundwork in our understanding, it's important to first understand the social media platforms themselves. We look at five of the most popular and relevant social media platforms to the adult social care sector: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. We explore which are growing in influence and which are not. We also research the age demographics of their users.

We then use this information to identify the most appropriate platforms for common applications of social media for the sector, from domestic and overseas recruitment to community and stakeholder engagement.

After analysing our results, we turn our attention to the relative merits of group verses individual care home social media accounts to help you determine which is likely to be most effective for your group or home's needs.

KEY FINDINGS

Since 2018, and of the five social media channels analysed in this study, **LinkedIn** and **Facebook** have enjoyed the largest growth in terms of user numbers

TikTok has seen the **largest proportional increase** in its volume of users.

Facebook has the **largest number of users** across all age ranges apart from those aged 13-17 and those aged 25-34.

TikTok is likely to play an **increasingly significant** role in the adult social care's social media strategy over the next two decades.

KEY FINDINGS

The groups and their respective care homes had a combined total of **229,921** followers across the five platforms.

Facebook followers accounted for **60 per cent** of the groups and homes social media accounts.

Carebase (40,166) and, to a lesser extent **Berkley Care Group (28,323)**, were clear outliers in the combined group and home rankings.

Carebase has a significant Twitter following **(20,405)**, which it uses to showcase group and staff achievement as well as for recruitment. However, the account has been inactive for four years.

Berkley Care Group has the largest collective Facebook following **(24,700)**.

Future Care Group has the largest collective following among the groups on Instagram **(10,591).**

Cumnor Hill House tops the individual homes leader board due to its large Facebook following **(7,300).**

3. INTRODUCTION

Social Media in Social Care

Effective engagement between care groups and their respective stakeholders is important to their successful operation and function.

However, as The Guardian observed in 2014, for various reasons the social care sector has historically been cautious with digital tools. This culture has now changed. Social media and its various platforms are becoming an increasingly important mechanism to support stakeholder engagement in the social care sector.

For example, as well as being a social networking platform, Facebook is a popular business development and marketing tool through which care groups and their homes can showcase the quality of their service offering, activities, and events to both existing and prospective care-receivers and their families.

Facebook, alongside platforms such as LinkedIn and TikTok, are proving an invaluable resource to help care groups address the significant recruitment challenges they face, particularly in the post-COVID environment. Used effectively, social media is helping groups to connect directly with applicants from the UK and overseas, driving up application rates, reducing their dependency on agency staff, and lowering costs.

Social media is also a useful tool for boosting staff morale as it can promote staff development and achievement. This, in turn, supports recruitment by promoting the opportunities for development that groups offer and highlights their understanding of the importance of employee recognition to prospective employees.

Social media platforms, particularly Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, are also proving to be invaluable campaigning tools to allow care groups and those working within the sector to raise awareness of challenges affecting the industry among policymakers, the media, and the public. The role of social media in amplifying the sector's voice became particularly apparent during the pandemic. Since then, it has allowed the industry to highlight other issues, including the recruitment crisis and rising operating costs to key audiences.

The role of social media in amplifying the sector's voice became particularly apparent during the pandemic.

Return on investment

Robust evidence quantifying the positive return on investment of social media in the social care sector is limited. Despite this, we can draw some insight from the findings of research into social media's applications in the healthcare sector.

One US study published in 2014, for example, concluded that healthcare organisations were able to significantly increase their visibility and brand recognition using social media.

Of those consumers surveyed for the study, 57 per cent felt that a brand's presence on social media positively influenced their choice to use that organisation's services. Similarly, 12.5 per cent of the healthcare organisations surveyed reported that they had attracted new patients through social media.

Given the subsequent growth in UK-based users of social media platforms (Chart 1) it seems reasonable to assume that the dividends from the effective use of social media have also multiplied.

Users by platform

To use social media effectively in the adult social care sector, understanding how many users each platform has, as well as the demographics of those users, is crucial.

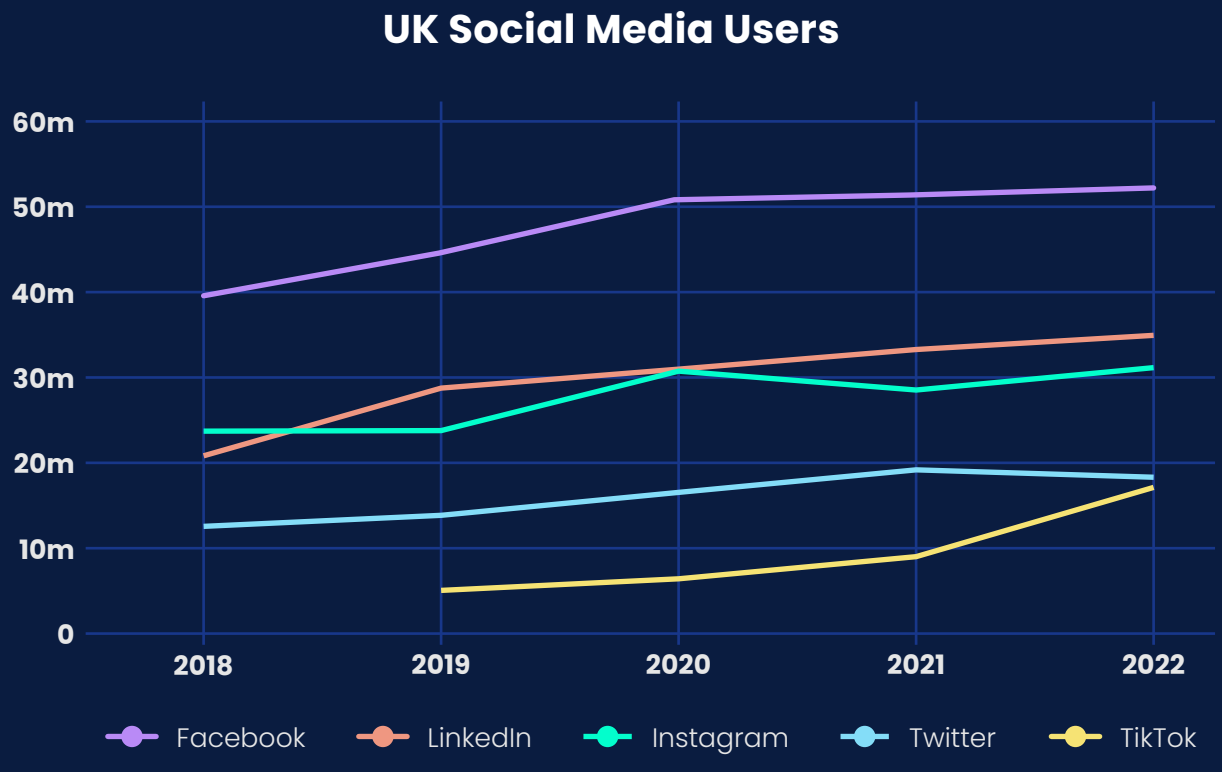


Chart 1

Chart 1[1] shows the growth in the number of UK users for the five most commonly used social media platforms in the social care sector. It shows how, since 2018, LinkedIn and Facebook have enjoyed the largest growth in terms of user numbers, with LinkedIn acquiring an additional 13,900,000 users and Facebook 12,465,200 over the past five years. This equates to an increase of 66 per cent and 31 per cent respectively.

Facebook's growth comes despite a common misperception of the platform being outdated and used predominantly by older generations, although it should be noted that the platform's growth rate has slowed since 2020.

However, with a user growth rate of 246 per cent in users since 2019, TikTok – the newest entrant to the social media market – has seen growth by far the largest proportional increase in its volume of users (12,100,100 users).

Since 2018, LinkedIn and Facebook have enjoyed the largest growth in terms of user numbers

The chart reveals how, since 2018, LinkedIn (34.9 million) has usurped Instagram (31.2 million) to become the second-highest ranked in terms of its number of UK users.

Twitter's user base has increased since 2018, hitting a peak in 2021 of 19.05 million users.

However, this figure has fallen to 18.4 million in 2022. It's predicted that the platform will have lost one million users globally by 2025[2]. The impact of Elon Musk's takeover and new direction remains to be seen.

Also of interest is the relative growth volatility of Instagram users. While, overall, the platform's number of users has increased from 2018 to 2022, the platform has seen periods of decline in its user numbers.

Perhaps most significant is the emergence of video sharing platform, TikTok, which launched in the UK in 2017 and now boasts 17.5 million users. From 2021-2022 the platform saw a 32 per cent increase in its number of users – more than any other platform.

With a user growth rate of 246 per cent in users since 2019, TikTok – the newest entrant to the social media market – has seen growth by far the largest proportional increase in its volume of users

1 Sources: Facebook (NapoleonCat, The Last Hurdle), Twitter (Rose McGrory, The Last Hurdle, CyberCrew, Statista), Instagram (NapoleonCat, The Last Hurdle), LinkedIn (Napolean Cat, The Last Hurdle), TikTok (Net Imperative, Statista, Digimind).

2 InsiderIntelligence

UK Users by age group per platform (2022)

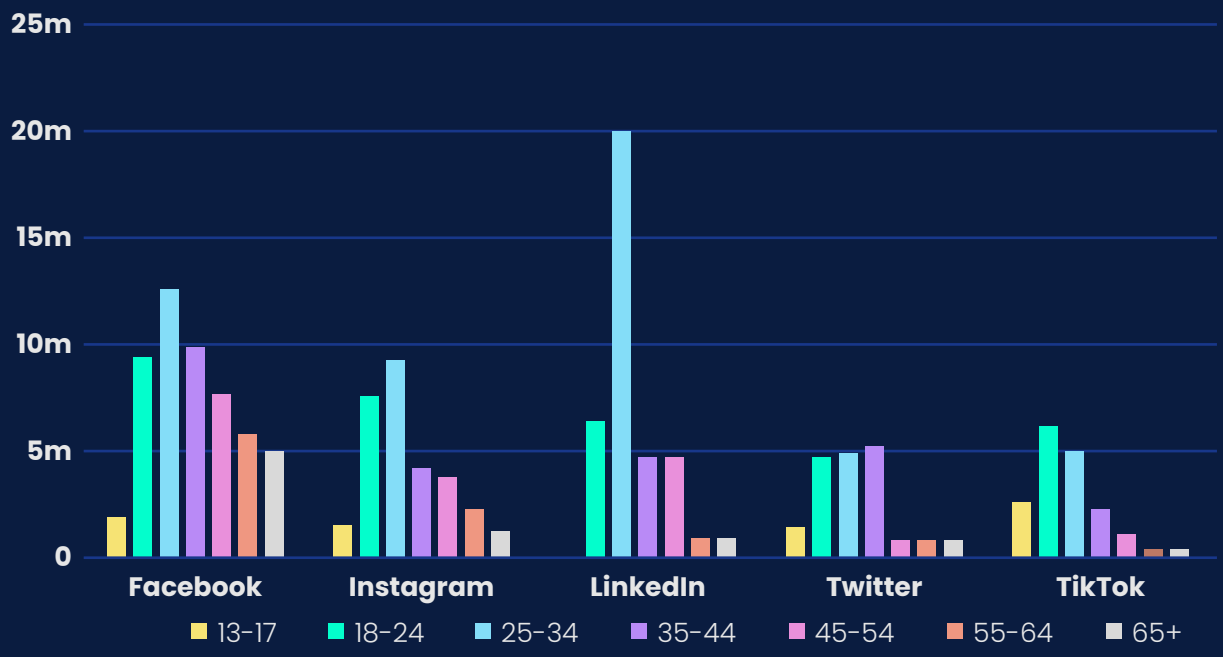


Chart 2

Demographics

But it is not just the size of the prospective audience that informs the relevant applications of the various social media platforms. Other factors, particularly age are also key. Chart 2 breaks down each platform's UK user base by age grouping[3].

Chart 2 shows how Facebook has the largest number of users across all age ranges apart from those aged 13-17 and those aged 25-34. It also dominates the over 65 user base with over four times the number users (5,000,000) compared to its next closest rival in that age category, Instagram (1,138,800). Despite its popularity with older demographics, the platform still enjoys a significant audience among younger people. Like LinkedIn and Instagram, Facebook's largest user base is among those aged between 25-34.

This reflects the widespread use of the internet via the smartphone among this age group. LinkedIn's proportion of users aged 25-34 is significantly higher than the other platforms reflecting its popularity among young professionals.

Facebook and Instagram both share a similar age distribution among their users. Both owned by Mark Zuckerberg's Meta, this could in part be a reflection of interconnectivity between the two platforms and the comparative ease with which users can setup sister accounts.

Facebook dominates the over 65 user base with over four times the number of users (5,000,000) of its next closest rival in that age category, Instagram (1,138,800).

3 Compiled using various data sources. Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn were populated using December 2022 user data from NapoleonCat. In the case of LinkedIn, all those aged over 55 were grouped in one category. To overcome this, we divided the userbase evenly over the 55-64 and 65+ groupings to give readers a rough indication of likely demographic. Similarly, in the case of Twitter and TikTok, specific UK user data by age group is unavailable. Instead, the share of each platform's global userbase by age grouping (Twitter: BusinessofApps 2022, TikTik: BusinessofApps 2021) were applied to the total number of UK users (Twitter: Statista January 2022, TikTok: DigiMind 2022). However, as with LinkedIn, inconsistencies in age groupings existed. Where these occurred the user numbers were divided evenly across the corresponding groups.

TikTok's recent launch is reflected in its younger user profile. Its largest share of users are those aged 13-17 years old, of which there are over 2.5m users in the UK. As these users become older the platform's relevance to the adult social care sector, particularly from a recruitment perspective will become even more significant. This suggests a clear opportunity for those social care providers looking to get ahead of their competitors, particularly in terms of recruitment, by establishing and developing their presence on the platform early.

TikTok's relevance to the adult social care sector, particularly from a recruitment perspective will become even more significant.

The applications of social media in adult social care

Recruitment

With the social care sector facing a chronic skills shortage, care providers are turning to more innovative tools to drive recruitment and reduce their reliance on agency staff. Facebook and LinkedIn are currently at the leading edge of this effort.

Facebook is most often used to recruit for more junior care positions. The platform offers several advantages. It often boasts high levels of engagement among communities local to care homes, as reflected in its user demographics explored in chart 2. Secondly, the platform's sophisticated advertising interface allows care homes to target recruitment ads accurately, whether it be locally, regionally, nationally, or even internationally.

Increasingly, as recruitment via social media becomes more sophisticated, care groups and their homes are creating dedicated '[care group or home name] - jobs' accounts for their recruitment campaigns. These are easy to access and readily appear in search results.

As recruitment via social media becomes more sophisticated, care groups and their homes are creating dedicated '[care group or home name] - jobs' accounts for their recruitment campaigns.

Right at Home Mid Hampshire offers a good example of the use of social media as a method of recruitment. The use of the hashtags #CareGivers and #BeHappy, and its posting in a social care recruitment group, has boosted the post's exposure and engagement among a relevant audience.

LinkedIn is traditionally used by care providers to recruit for more senior roles. The online professional network enables employers to post roles via the platform's dedicated jobs portal through which applicants can apply for roles directly.

The sophisticated nature of the platform offers recruiters a more precise means of targeting candidates; the ability to showcase their care group and homes; and engage with passive candidates. Premium features also allow InMail messaging as well as information on who has viewed job ads. The Easy Apply function, used in this advert by *The Good Care Company* for a Care Manager role, also makes it easier to drive up application rates.

Recruitment is not exclusive to Facebook and LinkedIn. The use of Instagram hashtags such as #adultsocialcarejobs are also being used by care homes and recruiters to connect with younger audiences to promote vacancies.

Similarly, and as previously discussed, TikTok is an emerging platform being used to attract new staff and advertise care vacancies among younger people.

HC-One is a great example of a care group pioneering the use of TikTok for recruitment.

TikTok is an emerging platform being used to attract new staff and advertise care vacancies among younger people.

Awareness and Marketing

Social media is also a powerful marketing tool through which care groups and their homes can build awareness of the positive work they do and the services they provide. This is particularly useful for engaging local communities, prospective residents, their families, and job applicants. This can be achieved by sharing positive stories about staff, events taking place, new additions to your home's facilities or projects your home has been involved in.

Facebook is often the most effective social media platform for sharing these stories as it allows for more lengthy personable posts.

Facebook Neighbourhoods, piloted in parts of the US and Canada last year and predicted to come to the UK, allows people over the age of 18 to share their interests and characteristics with those in their local neighbourhoods, including community groups. The service offers user recommendations based in their local community tailored to their needs. The new service will potentially offer care homes a new portal to reach prospective residents and their families.

Ultimately, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok can all be used to market care groups and their homes, but key considerations are marketing objectives, target audience and brand identity.

Interaction and Enquiries

Social media platforms also enable prospective employees, residents, and their families to correspond directly with homes with any questions or queries they may have. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok allow followers or interested parties to directly message accounts.

Be warned, though, these features can be a double-edged sword. Failure to monitor and respond in a timely manner to incoming queries can have a detrimental impact on your brand and reputation.

Policy Engagement and Campaigning

The adult social care sector is an ever-evolving industry that is being forced to embrace the advent of new technologies while also facing significant challenges such as Covid-19 and the current energy crisis.

The effective use of social media is giving the industry a platform to campaign on key issues that it previously has not had. Platforms like Twitter allow for far-reaching posts that enable care groups to engage in sector discussions with policymakers and journalists like never before.

Hashtags and handles mean care groups and their leaders can participate in conversations with key influencers in real-time.

While the level of background noise and online chatter has undoubtedly increased, there is little doubt that, used effectively, social media has given corners of the sector a voice that they never had before.

They are also able to hear perspectives from other quarters of the industry that they may have otherwise been oblivious to.

This can only be a positive contribution towards debate and decision-making. This Twitter poll by *Politics Polls,* for example, demonstrates a crude example of the bridge between care groups, the public, and Westminster surrounding the social care debate. A more effective example can be observed by viewing the latest #socialcare tweets on Twitter.

The effective use of social media is giving the industry a platform to campaign on key issues that it previously has not had.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the second of a series of reports, we seek to examine the use and applications of social media in the adult social care sector.

Using carehome.co.uk's Top 20 Mid-sized Care Home Groups 2023 list, we collated the number of followers for each care group and their respective homes on each of the five major social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and TikTok. All figures are as of July 2023.

Followers by Platform

Our analysis found that in total, across all five platforms, the groups and their respective care homes had a combined total of 229,921 followers.

Chart 3 breaks these followers down by platform.

It reveals that 60 per cent (136,912) were made up of Facebook followers, 20 per cent (45,533) were from Twitter, 12 per cent (27,682) from LinkedIn, 8 per cent (19,396) from Instagram, and less than one per cent (394) from TikTok.

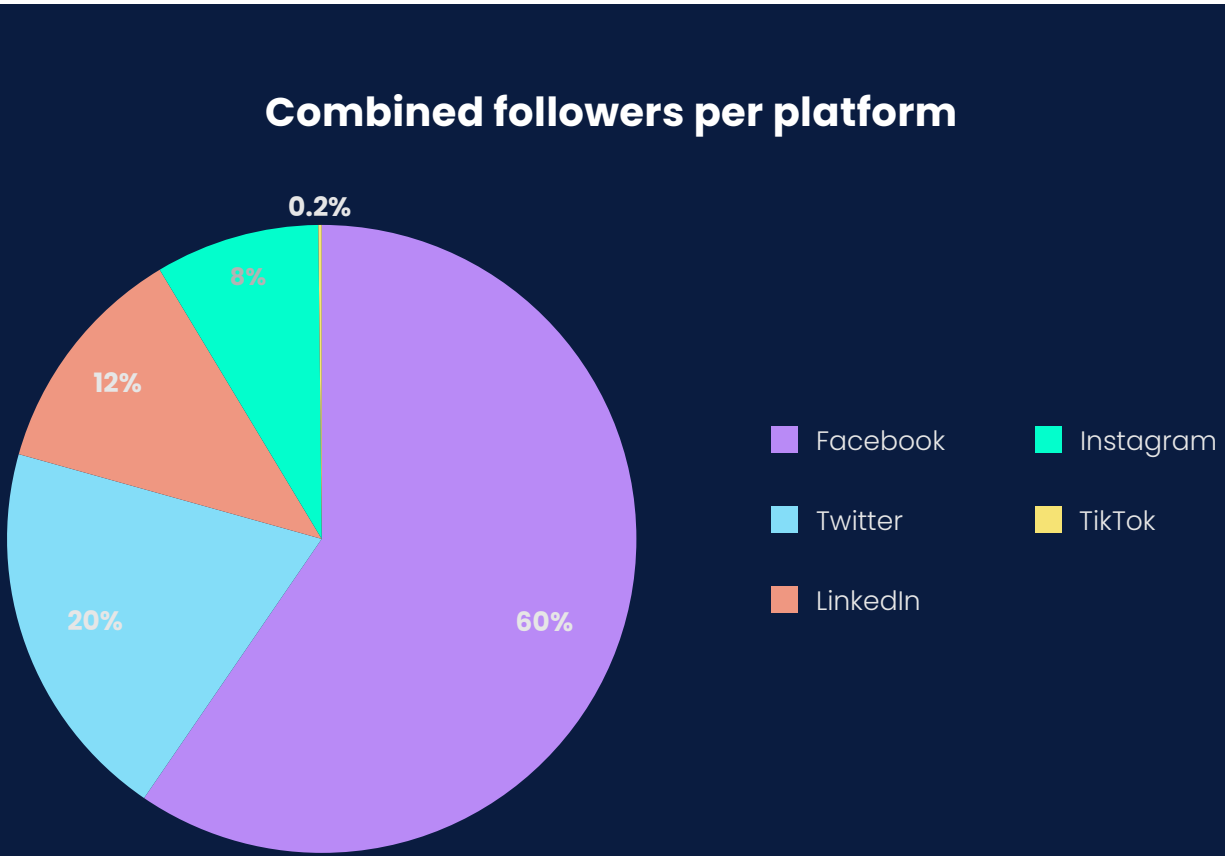


Chart 3

Chart 4 below aggregates the social media following of each care group and their respective homes by social media platform. It shows that Carebase (40,166) and, to a lesser extent, Berkley Care Group (28,323) are clear outliers.

The former has almost double the combined follower count of third ranked Future Care Group (21,014).

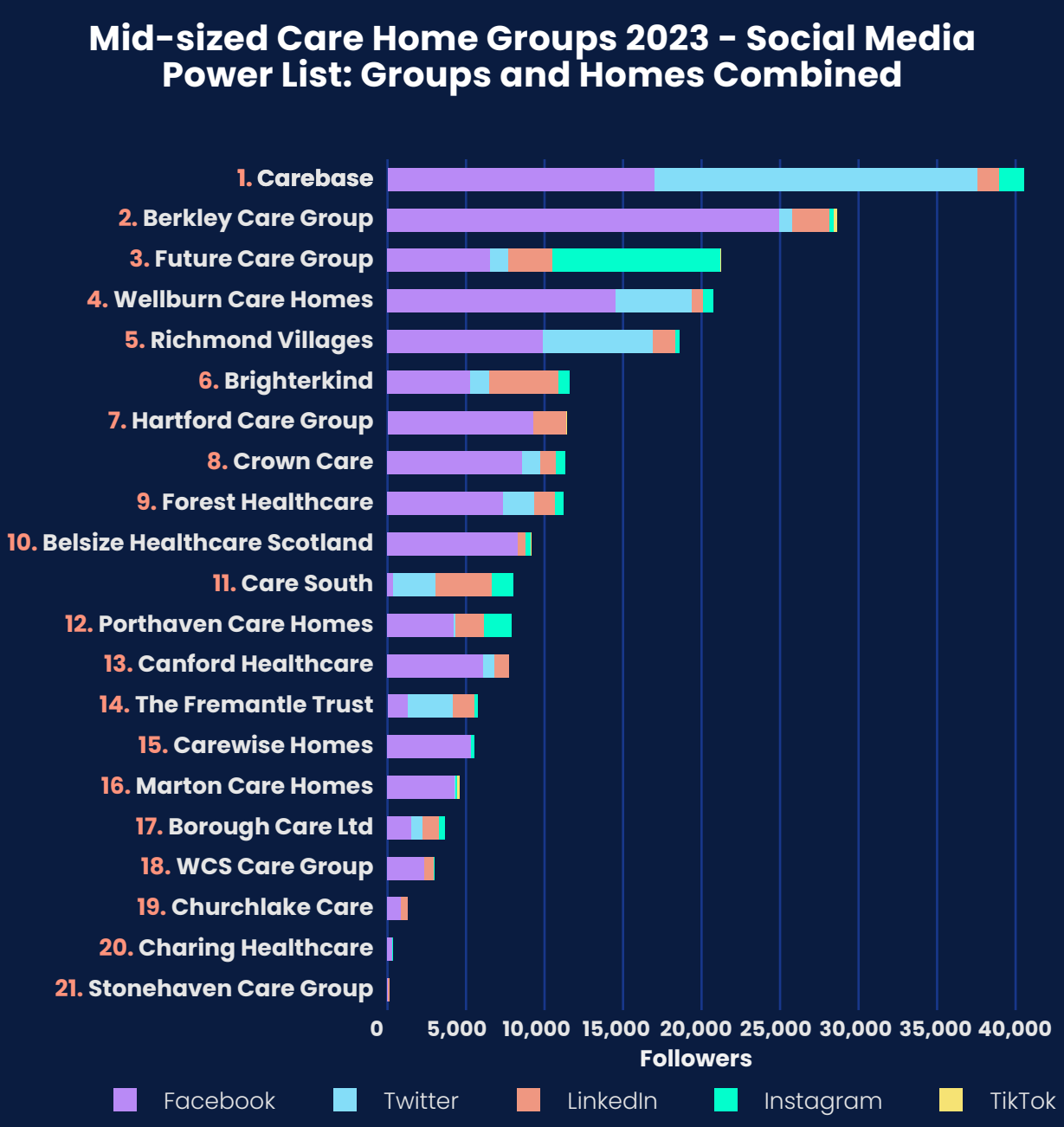


Chart 4

The chart again emphasises how Facebook is the social media platform of choice among both groups and their homes (further highlighted in chart 5).

However, compared to its peers, Carebase has a notable Twitter following (20,405) which it uses to showcase group and staff achievement as well as for recruitment. Despite its large following, the group has not posted on its main Twitter account since 2019.

The group's individual home's use their Facebook accounts much more frequently. Photos of events and birthday celebrations, hosted by the homes, are often posted daily.

Berkley Care Group has the largest Facebook following (24,700).

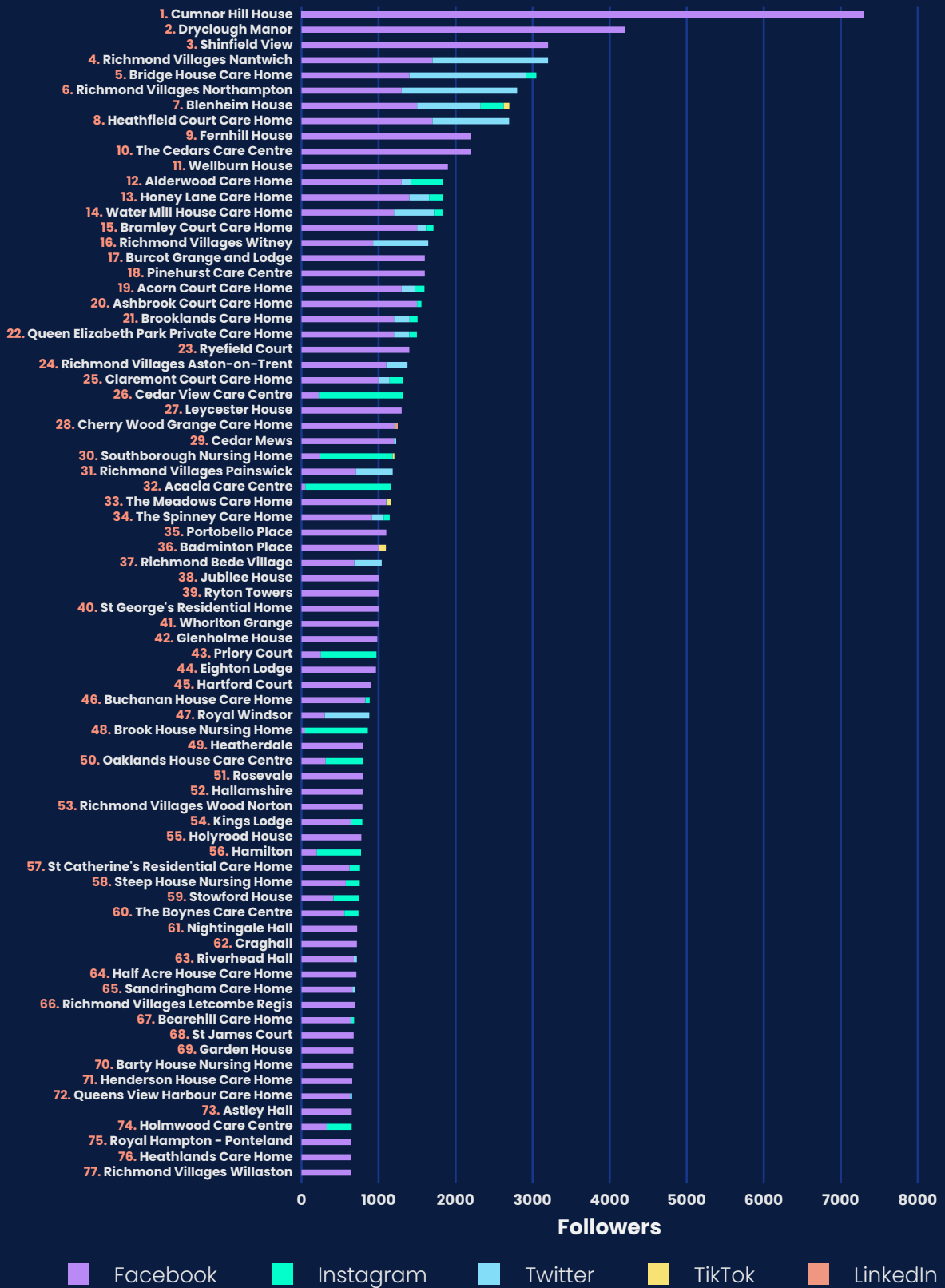
Their group page and their homes' individual pages all have a high follower presence as well as frequent posting of events and milestones.

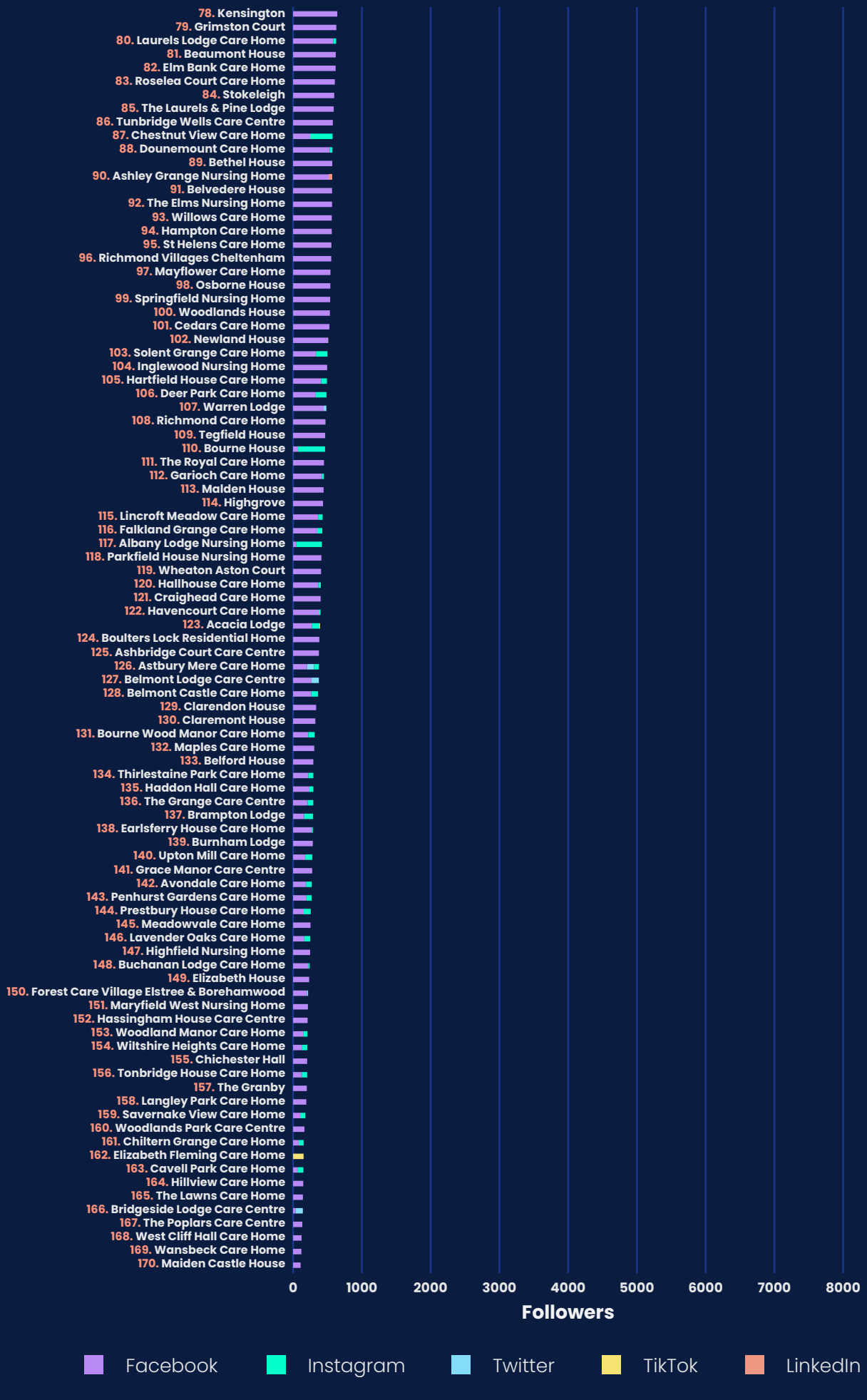
Future Care Group has the largest collective following among the groups on Instagram (10,591). The group and its associated homes use the platform almost exclusively to celebrate activities and events taking place within its homes.

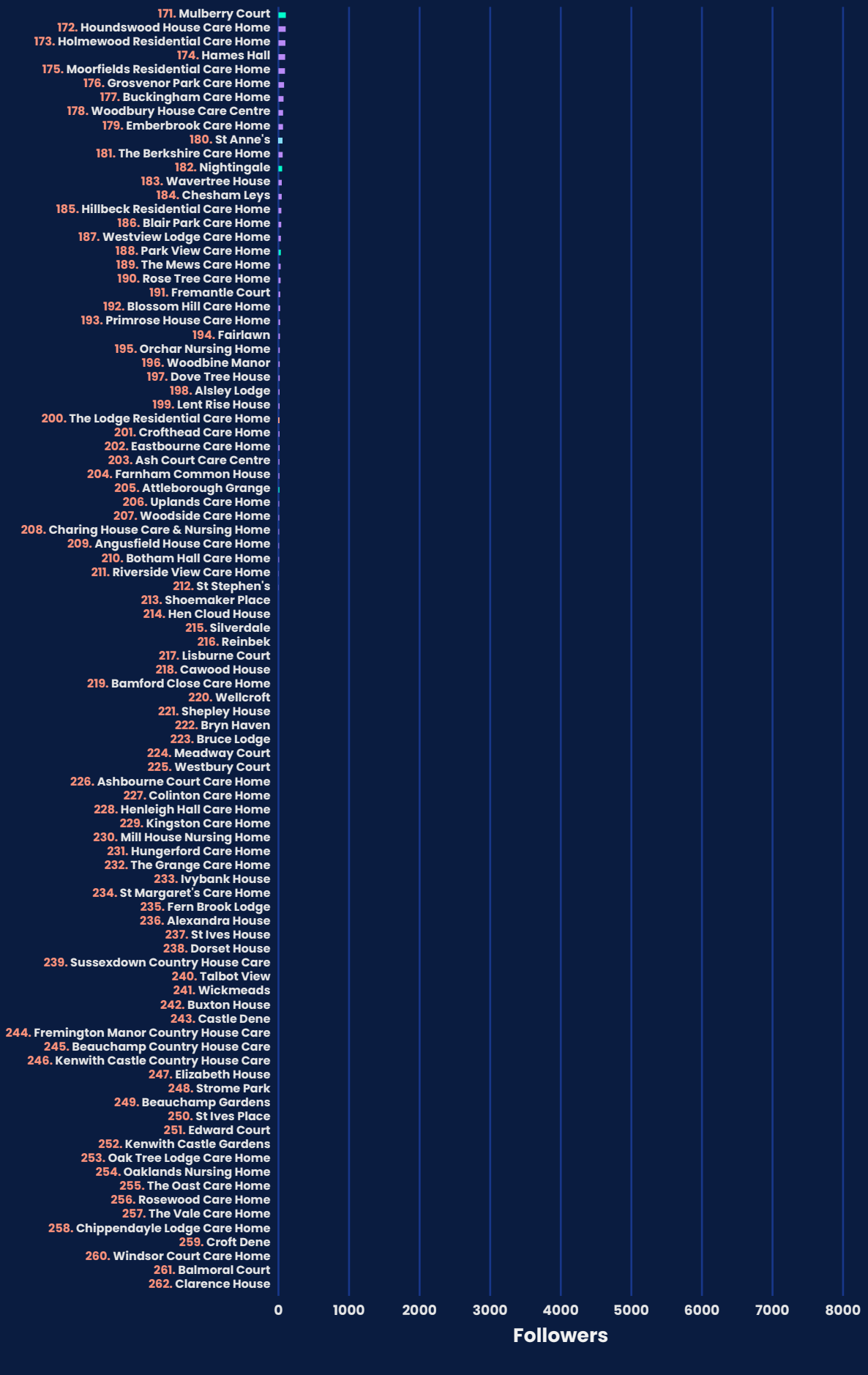
Also of interest is that the group Stonehaven Care Group and their homes have very little social media.

Compared to its peers, Carebase has a notable Twitter following (20,405) which it uses to showcase group and staff achievement as well as for recruitment.

Mid-sized Care Home Groups 2022 - Social Media Power List: Individual Care Homes




78. Kensington
79. Grimston Court
80. Laurels Lodge Care Home
81. Beaumont House
82. Elm Bank Care Home
83. Roselea Court Care Home
84. Stokeleigh
85. The Laurels & Pine Lodge
86. Tunbridge Wells Care Centre
87. Chestnut View Care Home
88. Dounemount Care Home
89. Bethel House
90. Ashley Grange Nursing Home
91. Belvedere House
92. The Elms Nursing Home
93. Willows Care Home
94. Hampton Care Home
95. St Helens Care Home
96. Richmond Villages Cheltenham
97. Mayflower Care Home
98. Osborne House
99. Springfield Nursing Home
100. Woodlands House
101. Cedars Care Home
102. Newland House
103. Solent Grange Care Home
104. Inglewood Nursing Home
105. Hartfield House Care Home
106. Deer Park Care Home
107. Warren Lodge
108. Richmond Care Home
109. Tegfield House
110. Bourne House
111. The Royal Care Home
112. Garioch Care Home
113. Malden House
114. Highgrove
115. Lincroft Meadow Care Home
116. Falkland Grange Care Home
117. Albany Lodge Nursing Home
118. Parkfield House Nursing Home
119. Wheaton Aston Court
120. Hallhouse Care Home
121. Craighead Care Home
122. Havencourt Care Home
123. Acacia Lodge
124. Boulters Lock Residential Home
125. Ashbridge Court Care Centre
126. Astbury Mere Care Home
127. Belmont Lodge Care Centre
128. Belmont Castle Care Home
129. Clarendon House
130. Claremont House
131. Bourne Wood Manor Care Home
132. Maples Care Home
133. Belford House
134. Thirlestaine Park Care Home
135. Haddon Hall Care Home
136. The Grange Care Centre
137. Brampton Lodge
138. Earlsferry House Care Home
139. Burnham Lodge
140. Upton Mill Care Home
141. Grace Manor Care Centre
142. Avondale Care Home
143. Penhurst Gardens Care Home
144. Prestbury House Care Home
145. Meadowvale Care Home
146. Lavender Oaks Care Home
147. Highfield Nursing Home
148. Buchanan Lodge Care Home
149. Elizabeth House
150. Forest Care Village Elstree & Borehamwood
151. Maryfield West Nursing Home
152. Hassingham House Care Centre
153. Woodland Manor Care Home
154. Wiltshire Heights Care Home
155. Chichester Hall
156. Tonbridge House Care Home
157. The Granby
158. Langley Park Care Home
159. Savernake View Care Home
160. Woodlands Park Care Centre
161. Chiltern Grange Care Home
162. Elizabeth Fleming Care Home
163. Cavell Park Care Home
164. Hillview Care Home
165. The Lawns Care Home
166. Bridgeside Lodge Care Centre
167. The Poplars Care Centre
168. West Cliff Hall Care Home
169. Wansbeck Care Home
170. Maiden Castle House
0
1000
2000
3000
4000
5000
6000
7000
8000
Followers
Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
TikTok
LinkedIn


171. Mulberry Court
172. Houndswood House Care Home
173. Holmewood Residential Care Home
174. Hames Hall
175. Moorfields Residential Care Home
176. Grosvenor Park Care Home
177. Buckingham Care Home
178. Woodbury House Care Centre
179. Emberbrook Care Home
180. St Anne's
181. The Berkshire Care Home
182. Nightingale
183. Wavertree House
184. Chesham Leys
185. Hillbeck Residential Care Home
186. Blair Park Care Home
187. Westview Lodge Care Home
188. Park View Care Home
189. The Mews Care Home
190. Rose Tree Care Home
191. Fremantle Court
192. Blossom Hill Care Home
193. Primrose House Care Home
194. Fairlawn
195. Orchar Nursing Home
196. Woodbine Manor
197. Dove Tree House
198. Alsley Lodge
199. Lent Rise House
200. The Lodge Residential Care Home
201. Crofthead Care Home
202. Eastbourne Care Home
203. Ash Court Care Centre
204. Farnham Common House
205. Attleborough Grange
206. Uplands Care Home
207. Woodside Care Home
208. Charing House Care & Nursing Home
209. Angusfield House Care Home
210. Botham Hall Care Home
211. Riverside View Care Home
212. St Stephen's
213. Shoemaker Place
214. Hen Cloud House
215. Silverdale
216. Reinbek
217. Lisburne Court
218. Cawood House
219. Bamford Close Care Home
220. Wellcroft
221. Shepley House
222. Bryn Haven
223. Bruce Lodge
224. Meadway Court
225. Westbury Court
226. Ashbourne Court Care Home
227. Colinton Care Home
228. Henleigh Hall Care Home
229. Kingston Care Home
230. Mill House Nursing Home
231. Hungerford Care Home
232. The Grange Care Home
233. Ivybank House
234. St Margaret's Care Home
235. Fern Brook Lodge
236. Alexandra House
237. St Ives House
238. Dorset House
239. Sussexdown Country House Care
240. Talbot View
241. Wickmeads
242. Buxton House
243. Castle Dene
244. Fremington Manor Country House Care
245. Beauchamp Country House Care
246. Kenwith Castle Country House Care
247. Elizabeth House
248. Strome Park
249. Beauchamp Gardens
250. St Ives Place
251. Edward Court
252. Kenwith Castle Gardens
253. Oak Tree Lodge Care Home
254. Oaklands Nursing Home
255. The Oast Care Home
256. Rosewood Care Home
257. The Vale Care Home
258. Chippendayle Lodge Care Home
259. Croft Dene
260. Windsor Court Care Home
261. Balmoral Court
262. Clarence House
0
1000
2000
3000
4000
5000
6000
7000
8000
Followers
Facebook
Instagram
Twitter
TikTok
LinkedIn

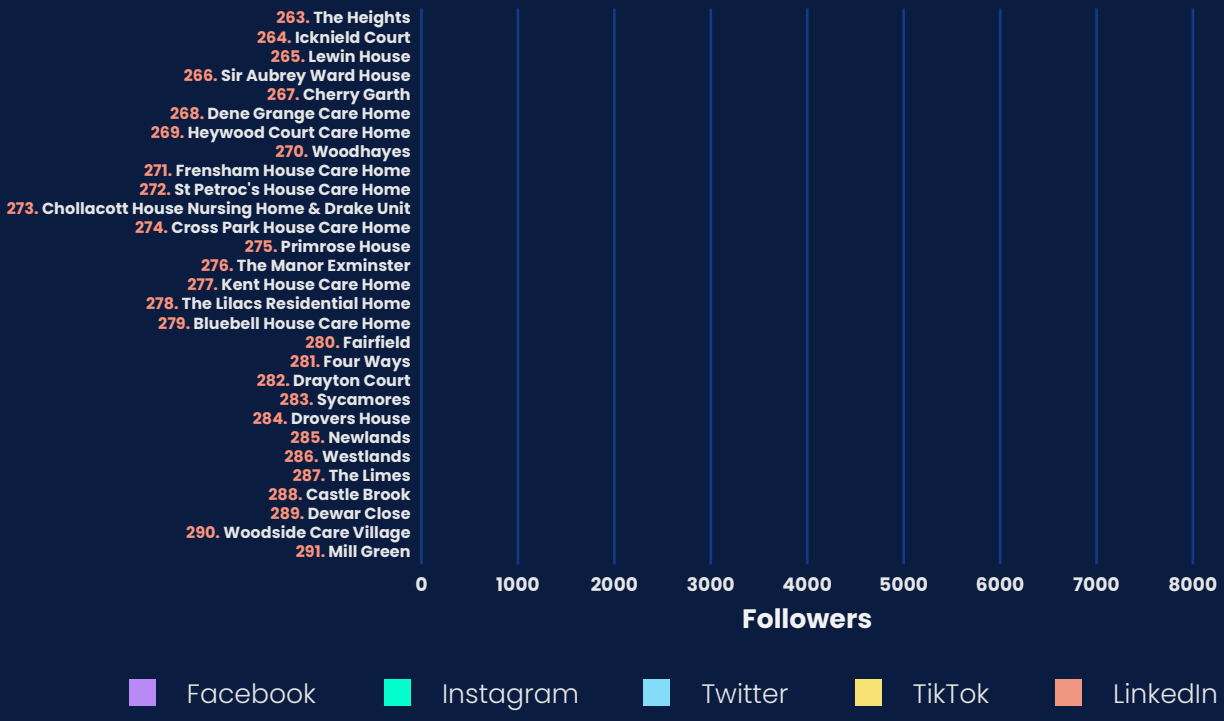


Chart 5

Chart 5 breaks our analysis down further by comparing social media accounts to those of individual homes.

Berkley Care Group's, Cumnor Hill House, tops the graph with the highest number of followers (7,300) for individual care homes.

Like many of the other homes, all of these are made up of Facebook followers.

Roughly every one to two days, sometimes multiple times a day, the home will post photos and updates of their residents taking part in a wide range of engaging and stimulating activities.

Chart 6 displays individual care groups social media following. In comparison to individual care homes, care groups use a variety of platforms.

Not only is Facebook utilised, but many of the groups have a large following on Twitter and LinkedIn.

Mid-size Care Home Groups 2023 - Social Media Power List: Individual Care Groups

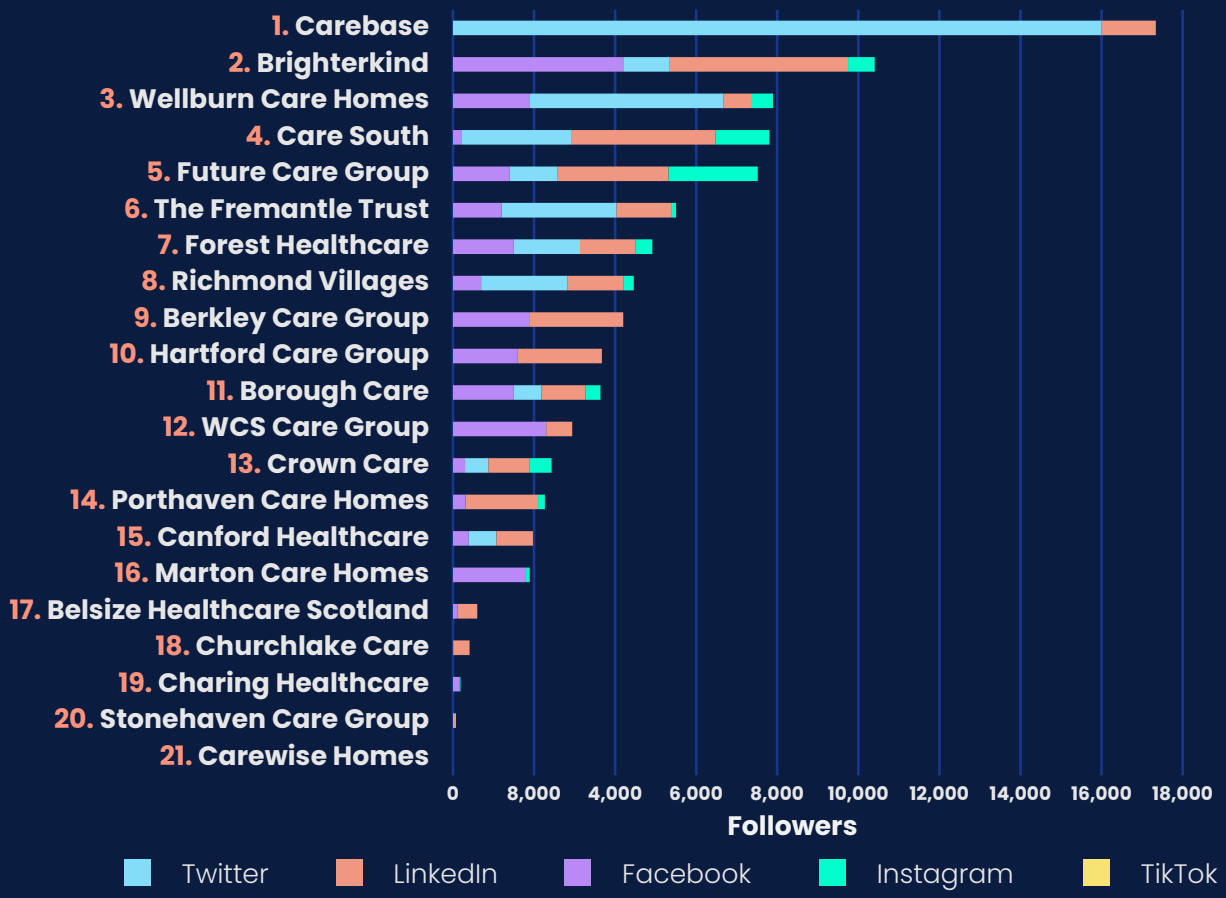


Chart 6

Carebase's Twitter following (16,000) leads the graph, however, as previously stated the group has not posted on the site since 2019.

Brighterkind boasts the largest LinkedIn following among the groups (4,399) as they share regular event updates for their homes as well as job vacancy advertisements. Their Facebook following is also the largest among the groups (4,200), where regular photos of their staff and residents are shared.

Welburn Care Homes has the largest Twitter following after Carebase (4,778). They also share updates from their homes, but their posting is more irregular than other homes, ranging from every other day to monthly.

Charts 5 and 6 show that individual care homes tend to concentrate their efforts on Facebook whilst care groups utilise various platforms. This makes sense given the resources available to the group rather than the homes.

The homes can focus their social media sharing to one platform (usually Facebook) and the overarching group can promote their homes to different audiences. Also, many of the individual homes, as can be seen from chart 5, have no social media presence at all.

The Grange Care Centre, for example, enjoys just over 210 followers on Facebook. Yet, its overarching group, Forest Healthcare, has over 1500 followers. A part of this differential can be accounted for by their relative potential audiences. The Grange Care Centre has a much smaller potential audience compared to Forest Healthcare.

This raises the question of whether the focus should be on promoting your group as a whole, or to risk dispersing your following amongst individual home accounts.

From our analysis, the best example of the positive impact of operating one group account is Borough Care. Borough Care uses one overarching social media account across Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram for all 12 of their homes. They use Facebook regularly, sometimes including multiple posts a day of activities from all of their homes. Their LinkedIn is similarly used for sharing news from their homes, but also offers a place to leave reviews and for prospective staff to engage with their career's hub.

Yet, it is important to note that for groups with larger numbers of homes under their management, it can also be beneficial to establish individual identities for your homes if they are scattered throughout the country.

In the next section we outline what you need to consider when determining whether a one-size-fits-all group account or an array of individual and tailored home accounts will best suit your care group.

Individual care homes tend to concentrate their efforts on Facebook whilst care groups utilise various platforms.

5. GROUP ACCOUNTS VS. INDIVIDUAL HOME ACCOUNTS

The decision to use group social media accounts, individual home accounts, or a hybrid model is not as clear cut as you may think and is heavily influenced by the number of homes within your group as well as the dynamics between your homes. Below we set out some of the key factors to consider.

Dispersion

Operating several different accounts can slow your rate of audience growth as engagement on posts and follower numbers becomes dependent on the amount of effort individual managers and social media personnel put into each home's account.

Time

It is also a question of managing resources. If your social media presence will be managed by one individual on a part-time basis then single group accounts can be a more efficient use of their resources rather than having to switch between home accounts to publish individual, tailored content.

Consistency of Brand and Messaging

Having group accounts makes it easier to ensure consistency of brand and messaging, optimising the effectiveness of social media marketing campaigns.

Promotion

Importantly, operating as one group account allows you to promote positive stories and innovations as one cohesive brand, allowing each home to enjoy access to a wider user base, following, and access to a larger resource of positive news and events. This means that a home will benefit from the same exposure and followers as the others in your group. The risk, however, is that your larger potential audience becomes less targeted and less relevant to each individual home.

Benefits of Individual Accounts

More targeted and tailored

Individual group accounts offer care homes a degree of flexibility when publishing content tailored specifically to their target local audience. With a group-wide account, you would be publishing content that may be inappropriate to certain prospective customers.

Reduced reputational risk

While one overarching group account is good for brand awareness and promotion, there are risks that individual accounts can mitigate. Having one group account can increase the chance of your brand's reputation being negatively impacted by an incident that may otherwise be easier to contain with siloed social media accounts.

Your homes are unique

If your homes are scattered across the country, or indeed countries, and operate in local communities, then a more granular and bottom-up approach to running their social media is likely to produce better results. People may not want to consume everything your group has to offer, just what is relevant to them and their needs.

After all, it is those who run your homes on the ground who know this local community the best and will arguably be more aware of events that occur in it, as well as its needs. This knowledge is invaluable to ensuring that your individual homes remain connected to their communities, and localised accounts can ensure these connections are in real-time.

Offering advice

People enjoy personability, being able to contact who they need directly, and receiving a response quickly. A top-down approach to managing queries or complaints can appear as inauthentic, and it can slow down the process of dealing with them.

Having an individual account for each of your homes' identities can mean that people in their respective communities who use or wish to use your service can have their queries and concerns addressed in a more personal manner, improving the reputation of your homes in their communities. After all, these are their potential residents.

Having one group account can increase the chance of your brand's reputation being negatively impacted by an incident that may otherwise be easier to contain with siloed social media accounts.

Striking a balance

Often the most effective approach for care groups is to employ a hybrid model employing the use of both group and individual home accounts. It is important, though, to create a recognisable and uniform brand using your own logo but applying it equally and uniformly to all the respective homes with social media channels that you manage.

A good example of a group that uses this technique is Berkley Care Group. While each of Berkley's homes uses its individual home logo in its profile picture, it uses both the home's and the group's logo in each cover photo. This ensures it enjoys the localism that having individual home accounts allows for, while also having a consistency of branding across the group.

Often the most effective approach for care groups is to employ a hybrid model employing the use of both group and individual home accounts.

BRIDGEHEAD | SOCIAL CARE

If you would like to discuss how we can help you,
please contact us by phone or by email:

contact@bridgeheadcommunications.com

Our 24-hour number:
+44 (0)203 4888 963