BRIDGEHEAD | SOCIAL CARE

A BRIDGEHEAD SOCIAL CARE REPORT · AUGUST 2024

SOCIAL MEDIA POWER LIST 2024

TOP 20 MID-SIZE CARE HOME GROUPS

Ranked on social media reach, engagement and content quality

FIELDWORK & ANALYSIS: AUGUST 2024

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CONTENTS

1. **About Bridgehead Social Care** 01
2. **Overview and Key Findings** 02
3. **Introduction** 05
    - Social Media in Social Care
    - Social Media Platforms
        - Total Users
        - Demographics
4. **The Applications of Social Media in Adult Social Care** 11
5. **Results and Analysis: Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups 2024** 14
    - Followers by Platform
    - Followers by Care Group
    - Followers by Individual Care Home
    - Followers by Group Account
6. **Group Accounts vs. Individual Home Accounts** 29

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.

We help care homes, both large and small, to drive their self-funding occupancy rates. Our support covers marketing campaigns, public relations, media coverage, reputation management, social media, and SEO.

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/social-care. 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.

Last year, we produced a series of reports investigating the use of social media among the country's leading care home groups. Following the success of this research, we have decided to publish a second series of reports, updating our analysis to include those groups – and their homes – at the forefront of care provision in 2024.

In this, the second in the series, 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 2024. We construct a 'power list' of runners and riders among some of the leading care groups and each of their respective homes, unveiling the raw statistics behind their social media use, uncovering which platforms they use most prominently, and assessing what precisely they use these platforms for.

Our research has uncovered some interesting trends. First, the growing use of LinkedIn as a tool employed by mid-size care groups across the country. In our 2023 report, we found that LinkedIn accounted for around 12 per cent of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups' combined followers. In this report, however, we reveal that this figure has risen significantly, accounting this year for 20 per cent – or one-fifth – of the combined following total.

As a result, the number of Facebook followers of these groups has declined in proportion, though not in number. The most commonly used platform among these groups, its overall percentage fell from 60 per cent to 56 per cent, though its total figure rose from 137,000 to 153,000.

It was X (Twitter) which has suffered the biggest fall in both proportion and followers since our 2023 investigation. Last year, it provided 20 per cent of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups figures, with a tally of 45,500. This year, it has fallen in number to 35,700 and in proportion to just 13 per cent.

The total Instagram following of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Homes has risen moderately from 19,400 to 30,400.

A detailed exploration of these findings is offered in the analysis that follows.

To lay the groundwork in our understanding, though, it's important to first understand the nature of social media platforms themselves. As with last year's reports, we look at five of the most popular and relevant social media platforms to the adult social care sector: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok.

We explore which are growing in size and influence, and which are not. Within our analysis, we also consider the implications of the age demographics of each platform's userbase.

Using this information, we then identify the most appropriate platforms for social media use in the sector, exploring the most effective applications of each, including in community-building, marketing, reputation management, and domestic and overseas recruitment.

We then reveal the raw statistics behind the social media use of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups.

After analysing our results, we turn our attention to the relative merits of group versus 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

By platform

Since 2019, and of the five social media channels analysed in this study, **TikTok** has enjoyed both the largest numerical **and** the largest proportional increase in user numbers.

The app has increased from around 5 million active users in 2019 to more than **23 million** in 2023.

Each of the three largest platforms **(Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn)** have risen by **around 11 million** between 2019 and 2023, with Instagram witnessing the highest proportional growth **(47 per cent).**

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

In the **25-34** age category Facebook was beaten by **LinkedIn,** which has an estimated **18 million** users in the age group.

KEY FINDINGS

By Care Group

The groups and their respective care homes had a combined total of **275,113 followers** across the five platforms.

Facebook followers constituted **56 per cent** of this figure. LinkedIn accounted for **20 per cent**, X for around **13 per cent,** and Instagram for **11 per cent.**

Carebase (41,460) was the clearest statistical outlier in total follower statistics, with a combined total across all platforms around **10,000 followers** higher than its closest competitor.

Carebase's statistics were fuelled by a significant **X (Twitter) following (20,050)** - the highest of all groups.

Berkley Care Group had the highest number of **Facebook followers (26,100)** across its group and home accounts.

Future Care Group had the highest number of **Instagram followers (16,670).**

Cumnor Hill House, belonging to the Berkley Care Group, topped the individual homes leaderboard, with **7,300 followers,** all of which came from **Facebook.**

Carebase topped the list of most-followed individual group accounts with **17,147 followers.** The vast majority of these **(15,700)** came from **X (Twitter).**

3. INTRODUCTION

Social Media in Social Care

Effective engagement between care groups and their respective stakeholders is important to their successful operation and function. In the past, 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 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, is also 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. Across platforms care groups use social media to celebrate staff development and achievement.

This, in turn, supports recruitment by promoting the opportunities that groups offer, as well as the culture that they promote. It highlights their understanding of the importance of employee recognition and wellbeing to their target audience.

Facebook, alongside platforms such as LinkedIn, is proving an invaluable resource to help care groups address the significant recruitment challenges they face.

Social media platforms, particularly X, Facebook, and LinkedIn, are also proving to be invaluable campaigning tools. They 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, rising operating costs, and social care stigma, to key audiences.

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 previous 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.

Major organisations, such as Skills for Care, now offer guidance and 'top tips' for how care providers can use social media. They include advice, for example, to look out for awareness days, to "be visual", and to remember hashtags.

The page, and others like it that have sprung up in recent years, is testament to the increasing popularity of social media as a tool in the social care sector.

Given the continued 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.

Major organisations, such as Skills for Care, now offer guidance and 'top tips' for how care providers can use social media.

Users by platform

To use social media effectively in the adult social care sector, understanding the underlying statistics behind their wider use is crucial.

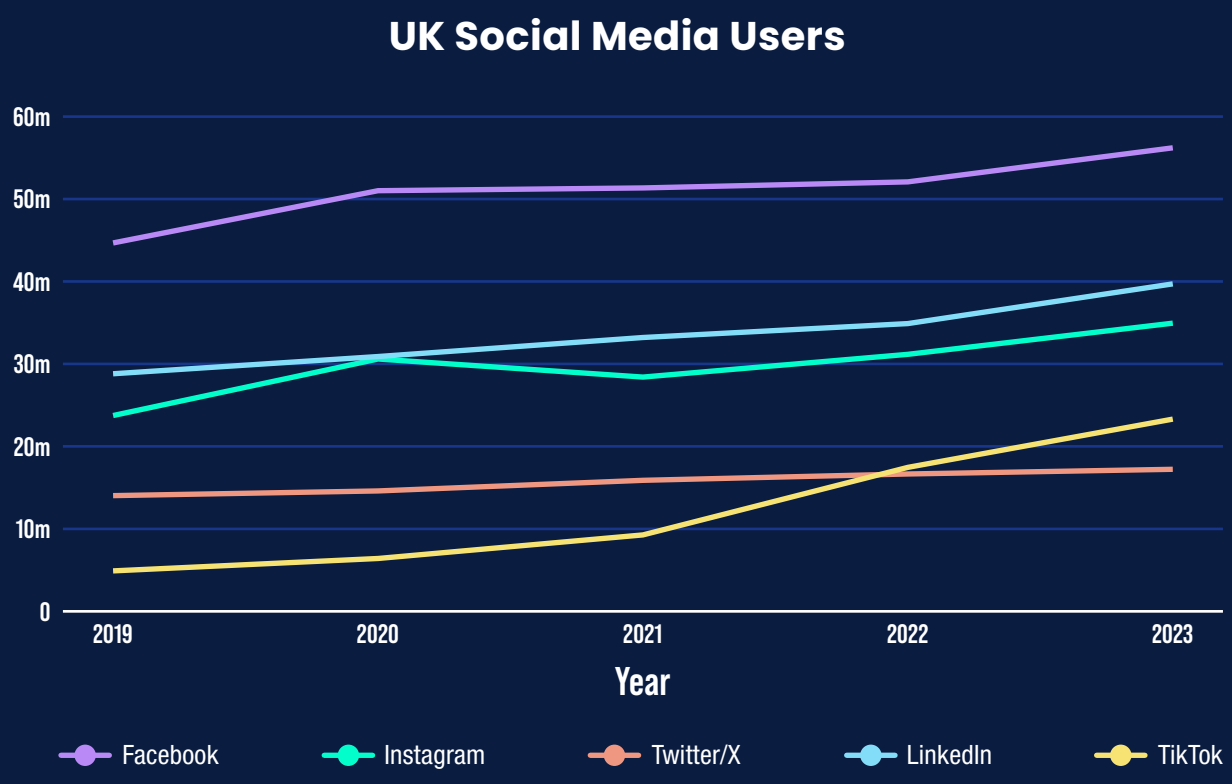

Chart 1

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 reveals that, since 2019, TikTok has enjoyed the largest growth in terms of user numbers, increasing from around 5 million to more than 23 million in four years.

Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram have seen steady increases in user figures, each rising by around 11 million since 2019. Interestingly, Instagram has seen the largest proportional growth, increasing by around 47 per cent between 2019 and 2023.

1 Sources: Facebook (NapoleonCat), Twitter (Statista), Instagram (NapoleonCat), LinkedIn (NapoleonCat), TikTok (Ofcom data, reported in The Sun, MSN, GB News).

Facebook and LinkedIn use has risen by 25 and 37 per cent respectively in the period.

Facebook's continued growth comes despite a common misperception of the platform being outdated and used predominantly by older generations.

Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram have seen a steady increase in user figures, each rising by around 11 million since 2019.

The chart also reveals that, over the last few years, Instagram and LinkedIn have grown in relative parallel, though it seems likely in the next five years that LinkedIn will take a wider lead given its higher growth rate.

X's user base has also risen since 2019, though at a far less significant rate than its competitors. While estimates suggest its userbase is likely to continue to grow, its annual percentage increases are anticipated to decline from around 5 per cent between 2022 and 2023 to less than one per cent between 2027 and 2028, per Statista.

As noted, though, with a user growth rate of more than 400 per cent since 2019, TikTok – the newest entrant to the social media market – has seen by far the largest increase in volume of users (18,000,000).

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Demographics

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

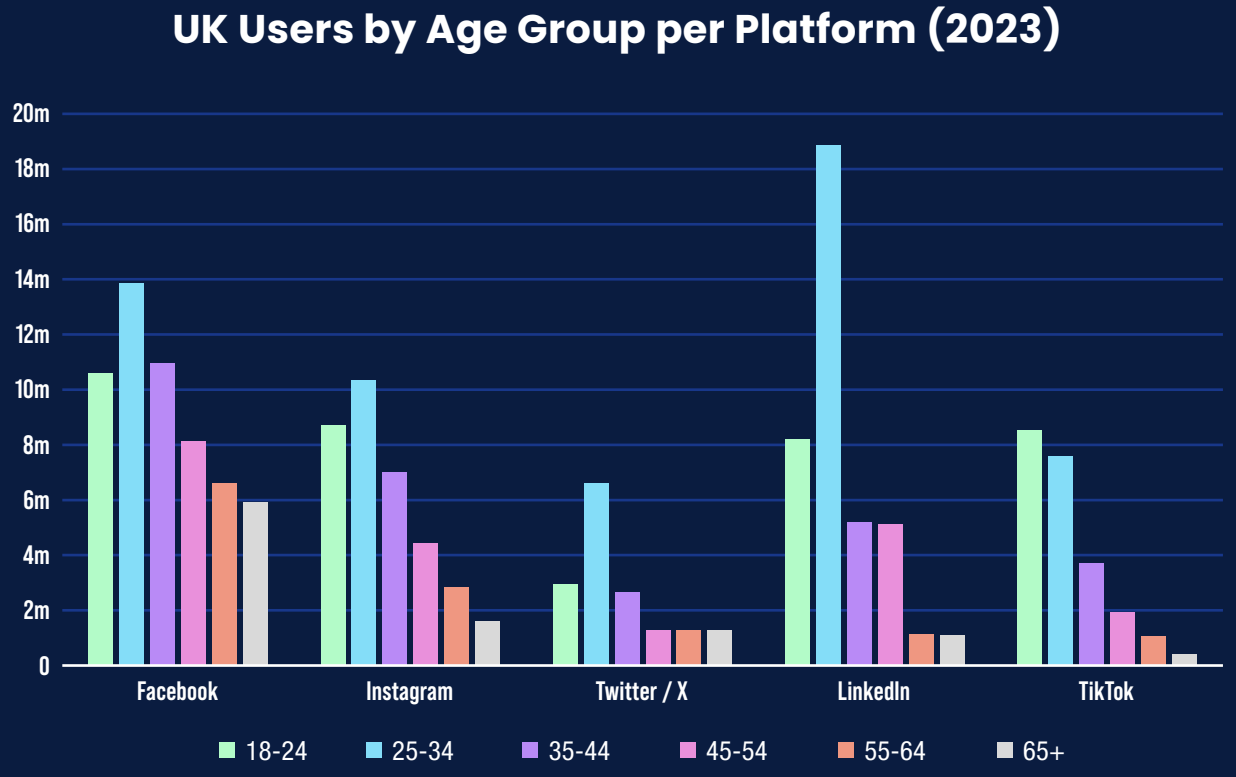


Chart 2

Chart 2[2] reveals that Facebook has the largest number of users across all age ranges apart from those aged between 25 and 34.

It is no surprise, therefore, that Facebook proves consistently to be the preferred platform for care groups and their homes.

2 Compiled using various data sources. Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn were populated using 2024 user data from NapoleonCat. In the case of LinkedIn, all those aged over 55 were grouped in one category as well as those 35 to 54. 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, specific UK user data by age group is unavailable. Instead, the share of each platform's global userbase by age grouping (Twitter: WhatsTheBigData 2024) were applied to the total number of UK users (Statista). However, as with LinkedIn, inconsistencies in age groupings existed. Where these occurred the user numbers were divided evenly across the corresponding groups. The TikTok age breakdown was calculated by dividing the overall UK figure by the global age breakdowns (Oberlo, accessed May 2024) to get a rough indication of the likely figures.

It dominates particularly among those aged 45 and above. In the over-65s category, it has more than three-and-a-half times as many followers (5,927,000) as its closest competitor, Instagram (1,607,000).

Despite its popularity with older demographics, the platform still enjoys a significant audience among younger people. Like LinkedIn, Instagram, and X, Facebook's largest user base is among those aged between 25-34.

LinkedIn's usership among those aged 25-34, numbering more than 18 million, is significantly higher than the other platforms, reflecting its popularity among young professionals. Its use among those aged 55 and over is particularly low.

Like LinkedIn, Instagram, and X, Facebook's largest user base is among those aged between 25-34.

Facebook and Instagram both share a relatively similar age distribution among their users: highest among 25-34 year olds, followed by 18-24 year olds and 35-44 year olds.

TikTok's relatively recent entry and expansion is reflected in its younger user profile. 18- to 24-year-olds make up its largest user share, standing at more than eight million. As the platform continues to surge in popularity, it is likely that its relevance to the social care sector, particularly from a marketing and recruitment perspective, will become more significant. This suggests a clear opportunity for those social care providers looking to get ahead of their competitors to establish and develop their presence on the platform early.

As TikTok continues to surge in popularity it is likely that the platforms relevance to the adult social care sector will become more significant.

The applications of social media in adult social care

Recruitment

With the social care sector facing a chronic skills shortage, and potential future repercussions after a government crackdown on care worker visa rules, care providers are turning to more innovative tools to drive recruitment and reduce their reliance on agency staff. Social media, particularly in the form of Facebook and LinkedIn, is currently at forefront of this effort. Our research found that mid-sized care groups were fairly active in using social media for recruitment – certainly more so than smaller care groups.

Facebook is the site 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. 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.

Care South offers a good example of this method, having a designated account titled "Care South Careers", which now boasts more than 2,600 followers. The account shares details daily of career opportunities within the group, ranging from Head Chef to Night Care Support Assistants.

> **Facebook and LinkedIn are currently at forefront of efforts to use innovative tools to tackle staff shortages.**

Our analysis has also found that LinkedIn is a popular platform from which to share recruitment opportunities among care groups, though it is traditionally used by care providers to recruit for more senior roles. While many advertise roles in straightforward posts, the online professional network also 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 a means by which to engage with passive candidates. Premium features also allow InMail messaging as well as information on who has viewed job advertisements.

Berkley Care Group, for example, often uses LinkedIn to advertise a variety of roles, including General Managers, Activity Co-ordinators, and Hospitality Managers.

Recruitment is not exclusive to Facebook and LinkedIn, however. 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.

Though not yet prominent among mid-size care groups, with less than 50 followers across the Top 20, others of a larger size have begun to pioneer its use for recruitment, for example HC-One, who featured on Carehome.co.uk's 2023 Top 20 Large Sized Care Groups list.

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 in engaging local communities, prospective residents, their families, and job applicants. This can be achieved by sharing positive stories about staff, showcasing events taking place, and highlighting 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 lengthy, personable posts, though LinkedIn is increasingly becoming a platform for these also.

Though not yet prominent among the mid-sized care groups in this analysis, TikTok is an emerging platform being used to attract new staff and advertise care vacancies among younger people

Ultimately, Facebook, LinkedIn, X, Instagram, and TikTok can all be used to market care groups and their homes, but there are key considerations that come with it. These include including developing marketing objectives, identifying your target audience and effectively managing your 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, X, Instagram, and TikTok allow followers or interested parties to directly message accounts.

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 in recruitment, retention, and funding amidst the backdrop of an ageing population.

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 X 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. Internal industry campaigns such as #CelebratingSocialCare can be observed in the social media activity of care groups, and are useful in raising awareness of different aspects of – and individuals within – the care sector.

While the level of background noise and online chatter has undeniably 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.

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

Using carehome.co.uk's Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups 2024, 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, X, LinkedIn and TikTok. All figures are of July 2024.

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 275,113 followers. The chart below breaks down the total followings of each of the top twenty care home groups.

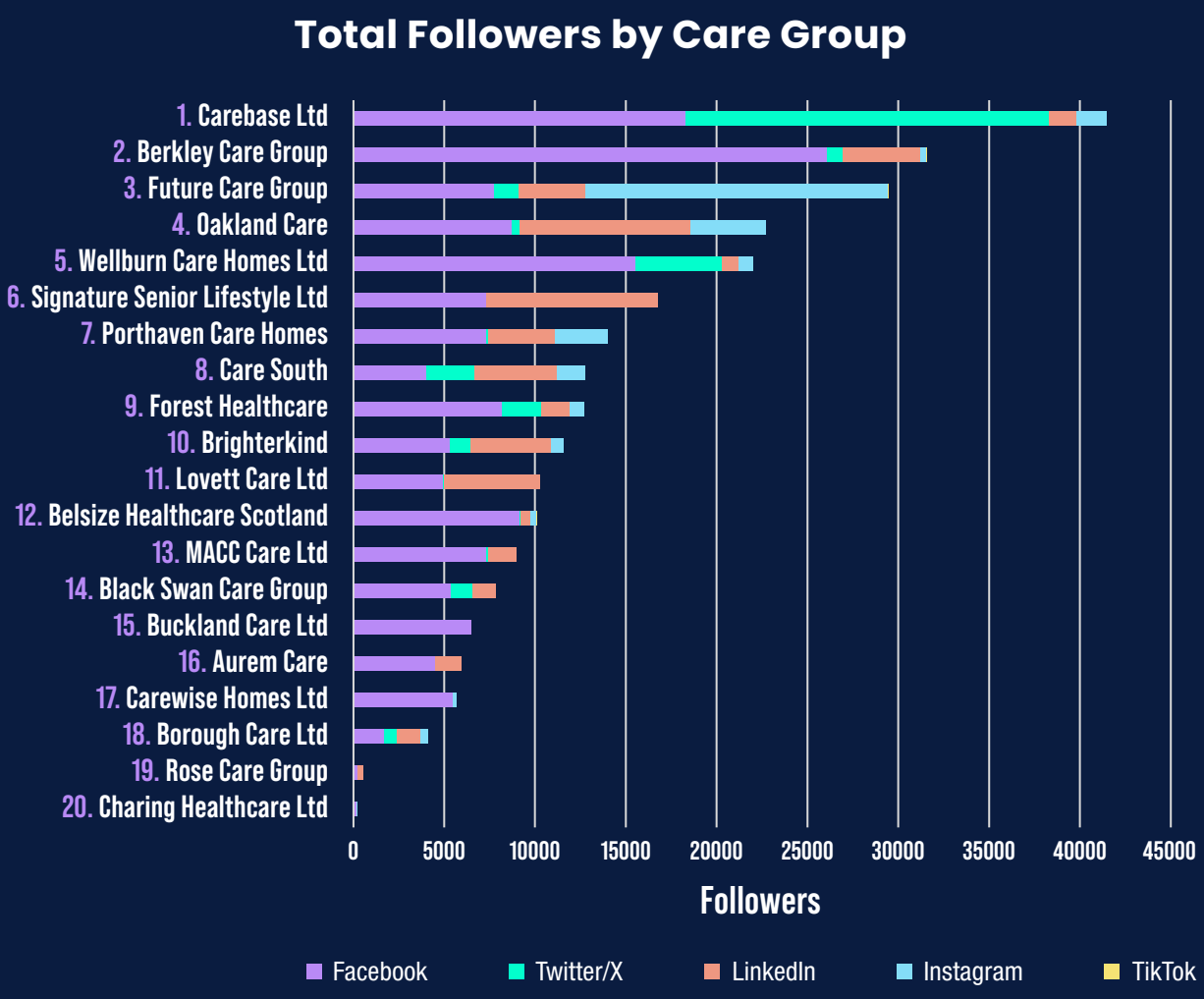


Chart 3

It was Carebase that stood at the top of the rankings for social media followers of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups, with a total of 41,460 followers. X (Twitter) followers accounted for half of this total, with the remainder made up largely of Facebook followers, though a small number from LinkedIn and Instagram did feature.

It should be noted that Carebase appears to no longer use its X account, despite its significant following. The last activity on its group-specific account was in 2019, which is also the case for a number of its individual care home accounts. It appears that, instead, the group has prioritised the use of Facebook. Carebase's overall Facebook following has increased by around ten per cent since 2023, the year of our previous investigation.

Berkley Care Group ranked second in our Social Media Power List, with 31,500 followers. The vast majority (83 per cent) of this figure came from Facebook, and the remainder largely from LinkedIn. The group boasts the highest number of Facebook followers (26,100) of all the top twenty groups included in this analysis. Berkley's overall following figures have increased by around 11 per cent in the last year.

Future Care Group's third-place ranking was interesting given its follower make-up. Unlike many other groups where Facebook dominated as a proportion, Future Care Group's most successful social media platform was Instagram, providing nearly 60 per cent (16,700) of its 29,500 total.

Social Media Platforms as Proportions

Chart 4 explores the breakdown, by platform, of the followings of the Top 20 Mid-Sized Care Groups. It reveals that approximately 56 per cent (153,902) of the overall follower count came from Facebook, 20 per cent (54,985) from LinkedIn, 13 percent (35,724) from X (Twitter), around ten per cent (30,386) from Instagram, and less than one per cent (45) from TikTok.

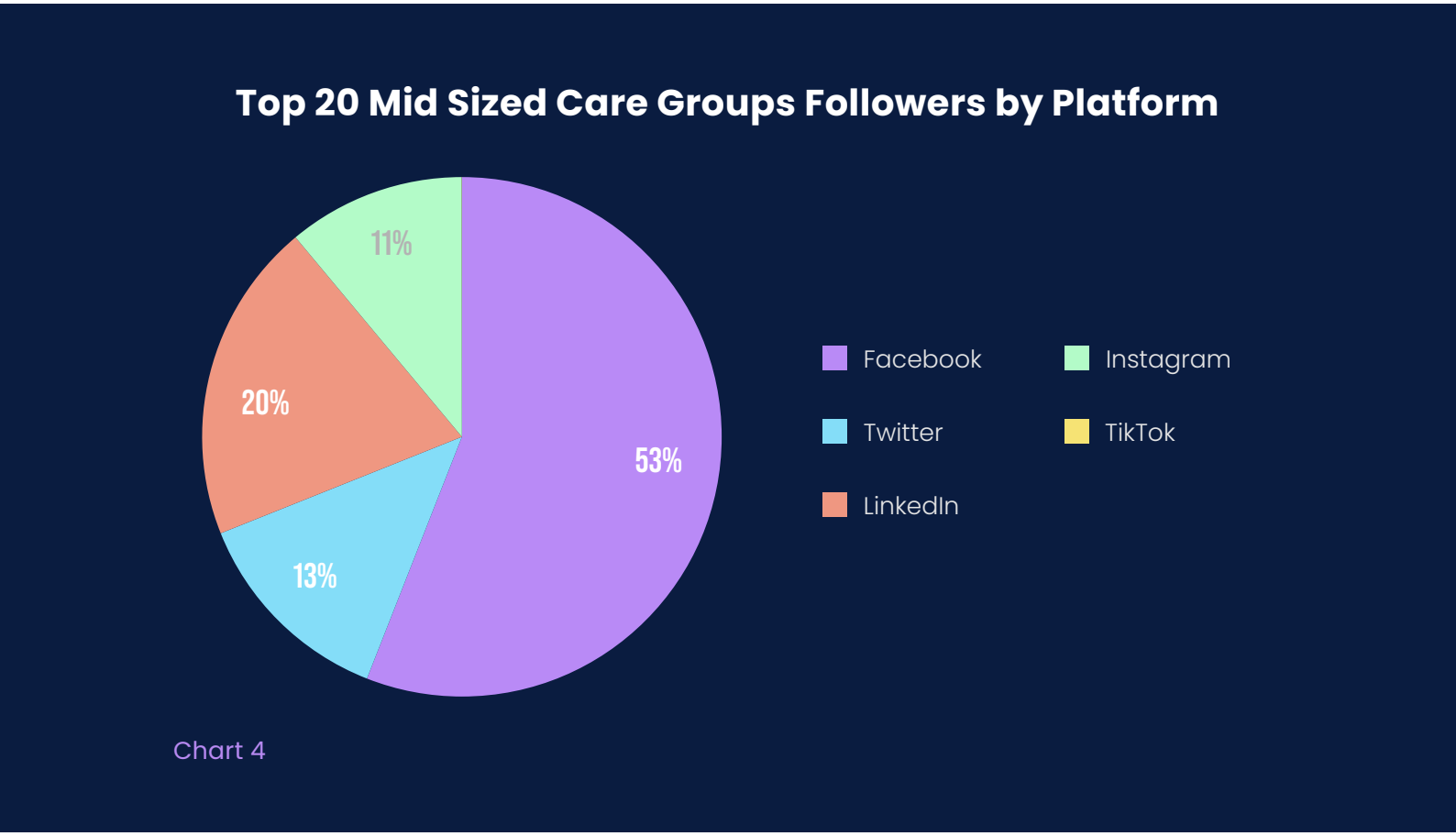


Chart 4

The dominance of Facebook is unsurprising given the relative size of its userbase and the age profile of its users, combined with the platform's suitability for sharing personal, more in-depth posts featuring images.

The Facebook figures represent an increase of more than 17,000 when compared with the figures of the 2022 Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups, whose statistics we analysed last year.

As a percentage, this represents an around ten per cent increase.

The median total Facebook following of these groups – all of which had at least one Facebook account across their group and homes - was 6,890. The chart below reveals how the proportion of followers from each social media platform has changed since our last report:

Overall Followers by Platform: 2024 vs 2023 Report

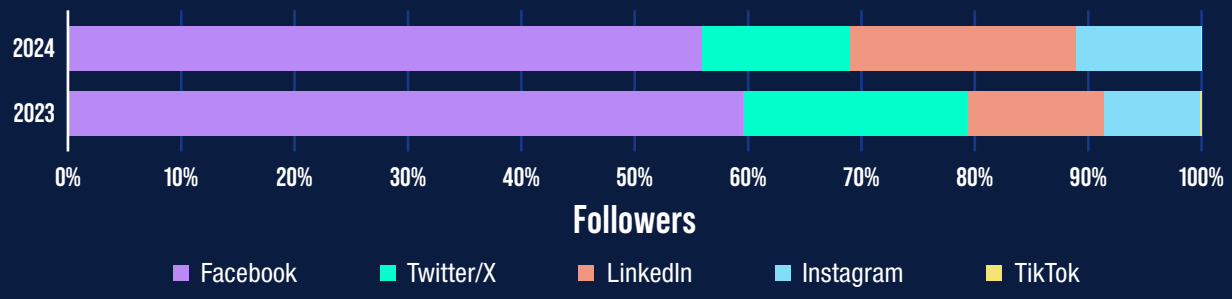


Chart 5

Beyond Facebook, it is LinkedIn which appears to have surged in popularity among care groups over the past year. As noted previously, in our 2023 report it accounted for just 12 per cent of total followers among care groups, while in 2024 it represented 20 per cent. LinkedIn's actual figures have risen by 99 per cent compared to 2023, from 27,700 to 54,900.

Though a full picture of LinkedIn's growth is difficult to paint given the changes to the groups that are featured on the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups list, looking at the examples of groups analysed in our previous report can provide useful insight into the increasing prominence of the platform. Two of these are Berkley Care Group and Porthaven Care Homes. In the former, the follower count has risen by 85 per cent in the last year, while in the latter it has risen by more than 105 per cent.

That said, however, the LinkedIn followings of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups varies significantly. At the highest end of the spectrum lay Signature Senior Lifestyle, with 9,410 followers, closely followed by Oakland Care with 9,360. Both groups use LinkedIn to share a variety of posts, including highlighting big occasions marked across their homes, advertising vacancies, celebrating new recruits, offering helpful tips and advice for care provision, and marking major industry dates such as Carers Week and Good Care Month.

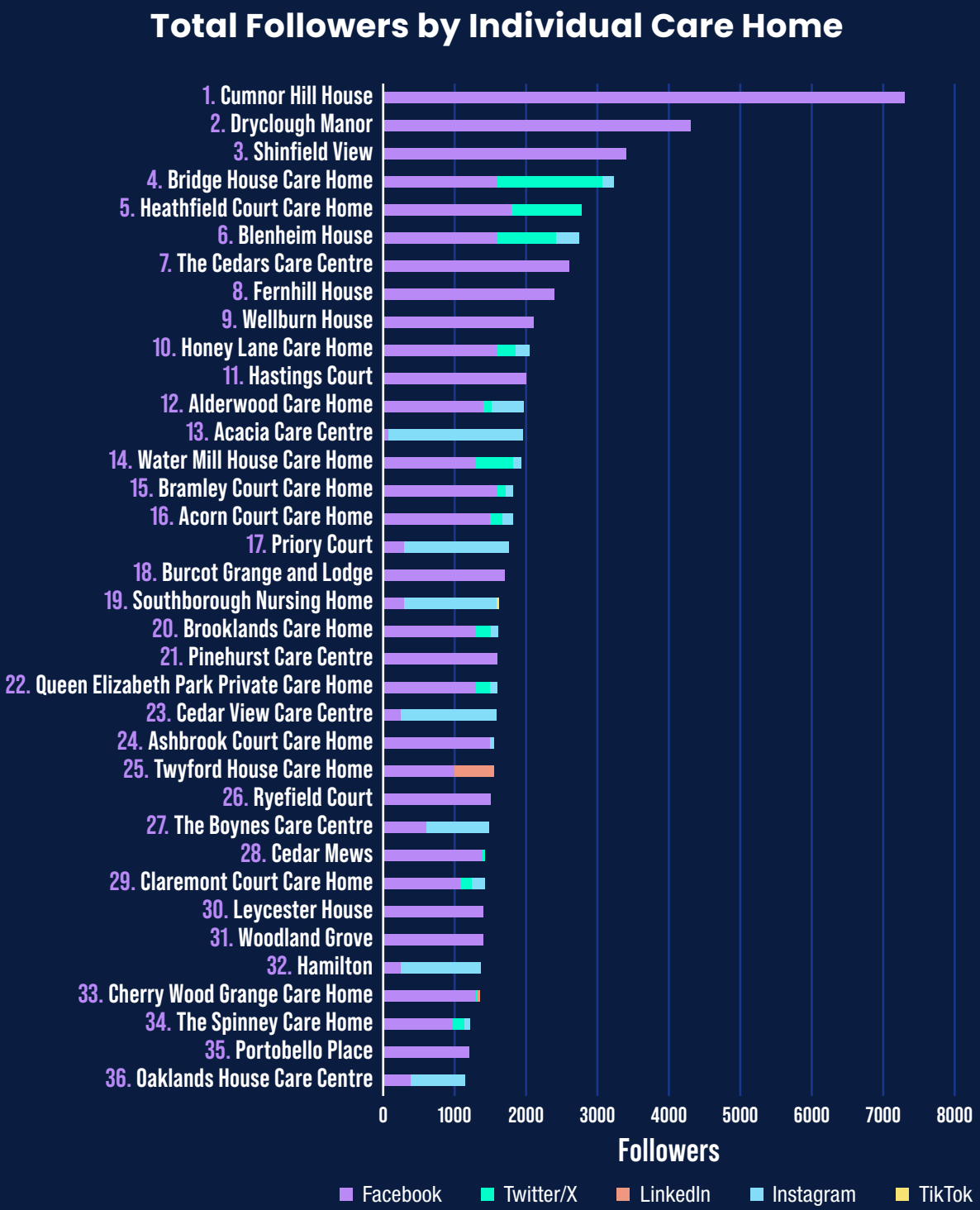
The average following of the medium-sized groups who used LinkedIn was around 3,500. Just three care groups did not have an account.

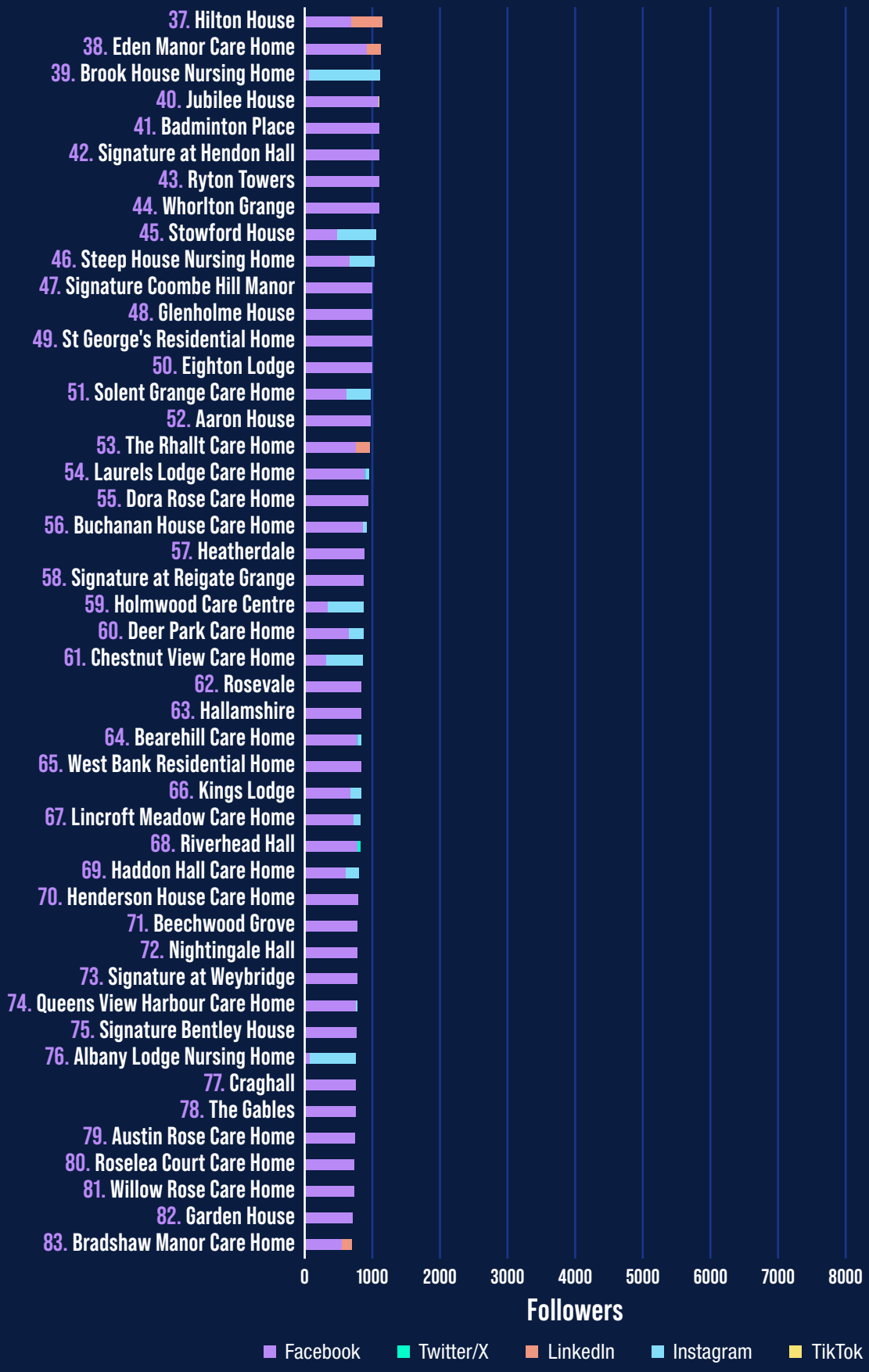
The figures for X have declined as a proportion of the care groups' overall followings, yet even with such a decline its figures are highly skewed by the following of Carebase, which accounts for almost three-fifths of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups' total. Removing them from the equation, the average followings of the groups that do have X accounts stands at around 1,630. Exactly half (10) of the care groups did not have an account on X at all.

Instagram followings have risen modestly since last year's investigation, increasing from 19,400 to 30,386. As with X, however, much of this figure is fuelled by the following of the Future Care Group, which, tallying more than 16,600, provided more than half of the overall follower count. That said, the majority (12) of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Home Groups had an Instagram account in one form or another.

Breakdown by Home

Chart 6 breaks our analysis down further by comparing the social media presence of individual homes on our list.




37. Hilton House
38. Eden Manor Care Home
39. Brook House Nursing Home
40. Jubilee House
41. Badminton Place
42. Signature at Hendon Hall
43. Ryton Towers
44. Whorlton Grange
45. Stowford House
46. Steep House Nursing Home
47. Signature Coombe Hill Manor
48. Glenholme House
49. St George's Residential Home
50. Eighton Lodge
51. Solent Grange Care Home
52. Aaron House
53. The Rhallt Care Home
54. Laurels Lodge Care Home
55. Dora Rose Care Home
56. Buchanan House Care Home
57. Heatherdale
58. Signature at Reigate Grange
59. Holmwood Care Centre
60. Deer Park Care Home
61. Chestnut View Care Home
62. Rosevale
63. Hallamshire
64. Bearehill Care Home
65. West Bank Residential Home
66. Kings Lodge
67. Lincroft Meadow Care Home
68. Riverhead Hall
69. Haddon Hall Care Home
70. Henderson House Care Home
71. Beechwood Grove
72. Nightingale Hall
73. Signature at Weybridge
74. Queens View Harbour Care Home
75. Signature Bentley House
76. Albany Lodge Nursing Home
77. Craghall
78. The Gables
79. Austin Rose Care Home
80. Roselea Court Care Home
81. Willow Rose Care Home
82. Garden House
83. Bradshaw Manor Care Home
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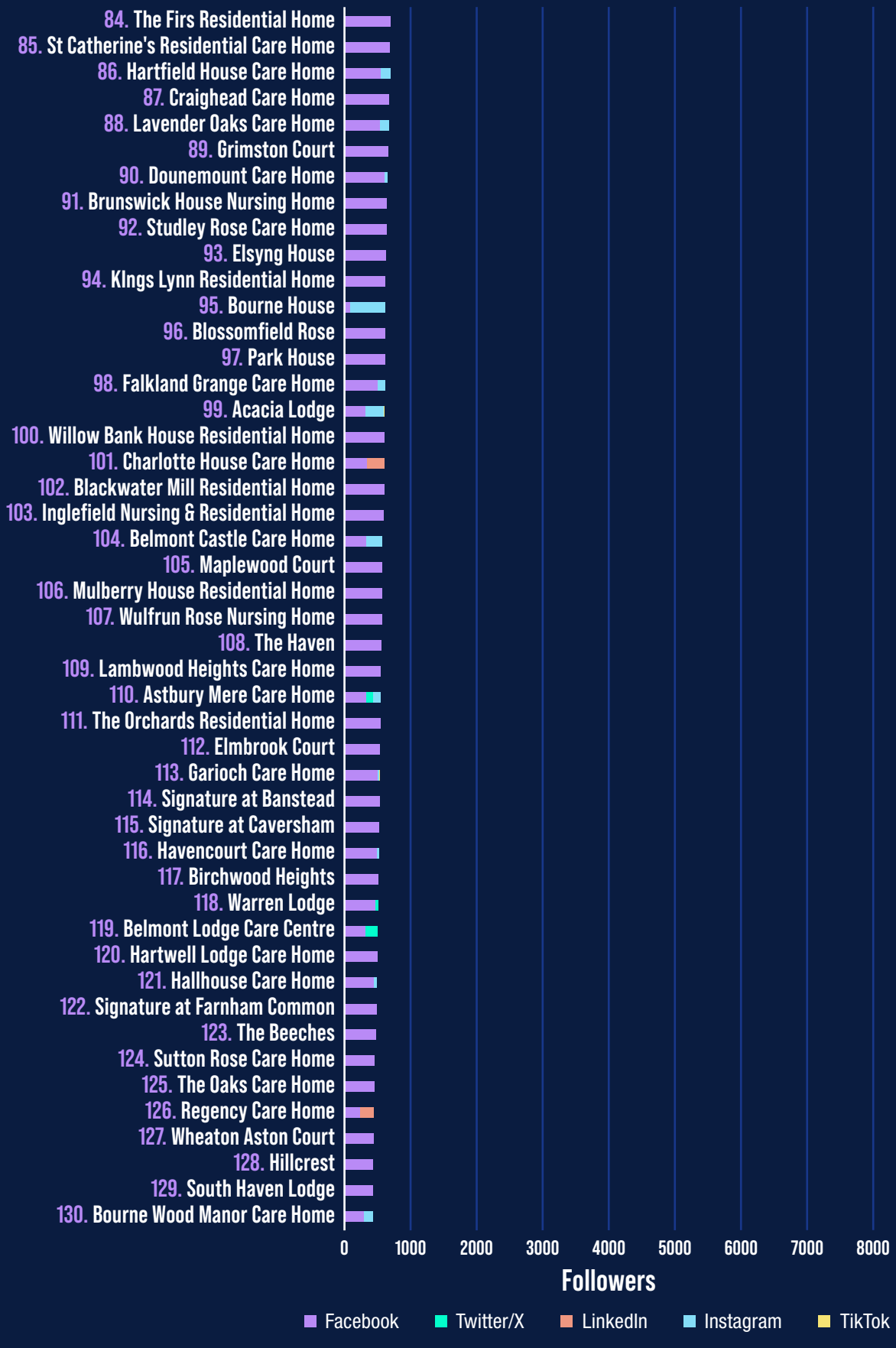
LinkedIn
Instagram
TikTok


84. The Firs Residential Home
85. St Catherine's Residential Care Home
86. Hartfield House Care Home
87. Craighead Care Home
88. Lavender Oaks Care Home
89. Grimston Court
90. Dounemount Care Home
91. Brunswick House Nursing Home
92. Studley Rose Care Home
93. Elsyng House
94. Klngs Lynn Residential Home
95. Bourne House
96. Blossomfield Rose
97. Park House
98. Falkland Grange Care Home
99. Acacia Lodge
100. Willow Bank House Residential Home
101. Charlotte House Care Home
102. Blackwater Mill Residential Home
103. Inglefield Nursing & Residential Home
104. Belmont Castle Care Home
105. Maplewood Court
106. Mulberry House Residential Home
107. Wulfrun Rose Nursing Home
108. The Haven
109. Lambwood Heights Care Home
110. Astbury Mere Care Home
111. The Orchards Residential Home
112. Elmbrook Court
113. Garioch Care Home
114. Signature at Banstead
115. Signature at Caversham
116. Havencourt Care Home
117. Birchwood Heights
118. Warren Lodge
119. Belmont Lodge Care Centre
120. Hartwell Lodge Care Home
121. Hallhouse Care Home
122. Signature at Farnham Common
123. The Beeches
124. Sutton Rose Care Home
125. The Oaks Care Home
126. Regency Care Home
127. Wheaton Aston Court
128. Hillcrest
129. South Haven Lodge
130. Bourne Wood Manor Care Home
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3000
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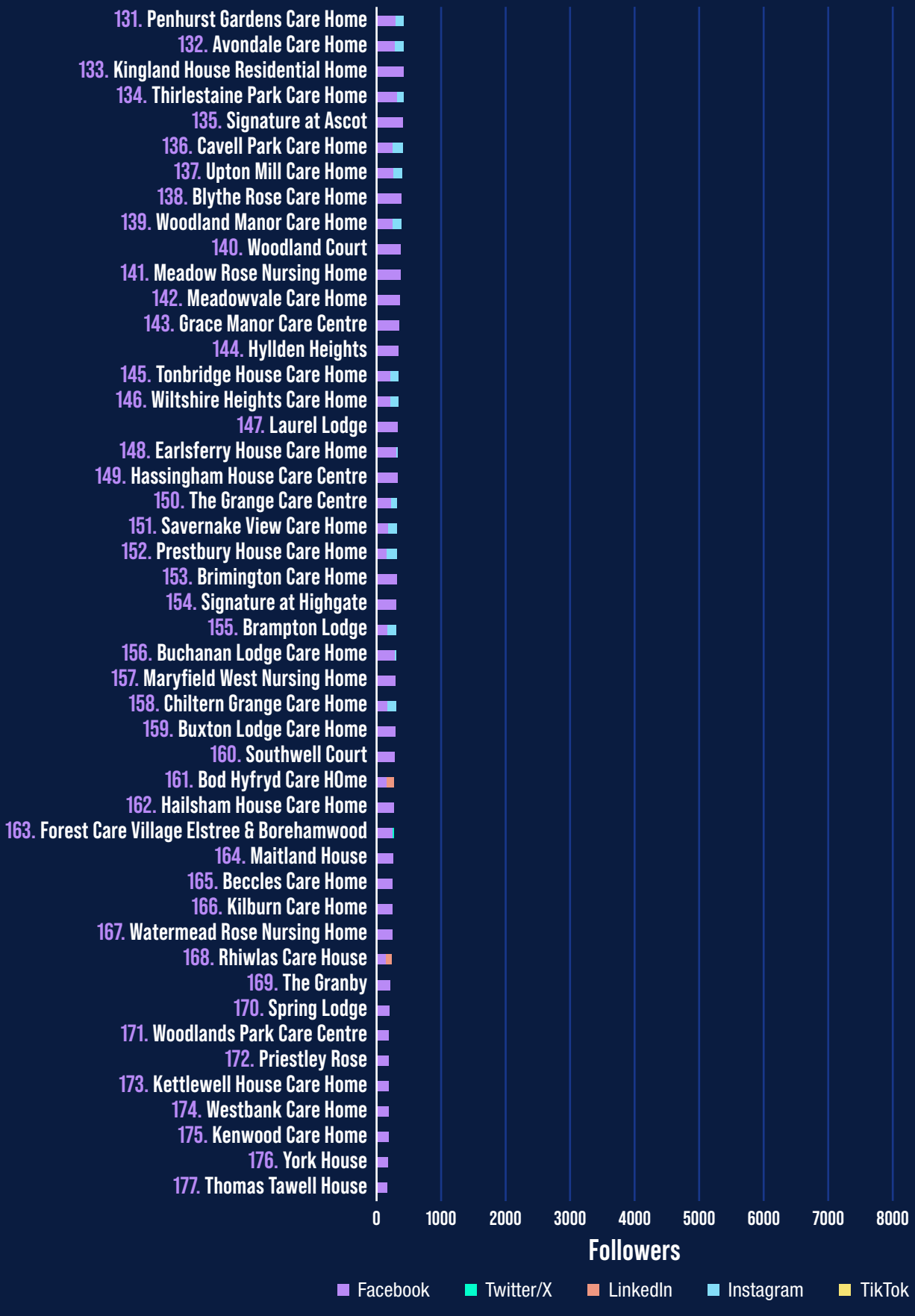
5000
6000
7000
8000
Followers
Facebook
Twitter/X
LinkedIn
Instagram
TikTok


131. Penhurst Gardens Care Home
132. Avondale Care Home
133. Kingland House Residential Home
134. Thirlestaine Park Care Home
135. Signature at Ascot
136. Cavell Park Care Home
137. Upton Mill Care Home
138. Blythe Rose Care Home
139. Woodland Manor Care Home
140. Woodland Court
141. Meadow Rose Nursing Home
142. Meadowvale Care Home
143. Grace Manor Care Centre
144. Hyllden Heights
145. Tonbridge House Care Home
146. Wiltshire Heights Care Home
147. Laurel Lodge
148. Earlsferry House Care Home
149. Hassingham House Care Centre
150. The Grange Care Centre
151. Savernake View Care Home
152. Prestbury House Care Home
153. Brimington Care Home
154. Signature at Highgate
155. Brampton Lodge
156. Buchanan Lodge Care Home
157. Maryfield West Nursing Home
158. Chiltern Grange Care Home
159. Buxton Lodge Care Home
160. Southwell Court
161. Bod Hyfryd Care HOme
162. Hailsham House Care Home
163. Forest Care Village Elstree & Borehamwood
164. Maitland House
165. Beccles Care Home
166. Kilburn Care Home
167. Watermead Rose Nursing Home
168. Rhiwlas Care House
169. The Granby
170. Spring Lodge
171. Woodlands Park Care Centre
172. Priestley Rose
173. Kettlewell House Care Home
174. Westbank Care Home
175. Kenwood Care Home
176. York House
177. Thomas Tawell House
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Followers
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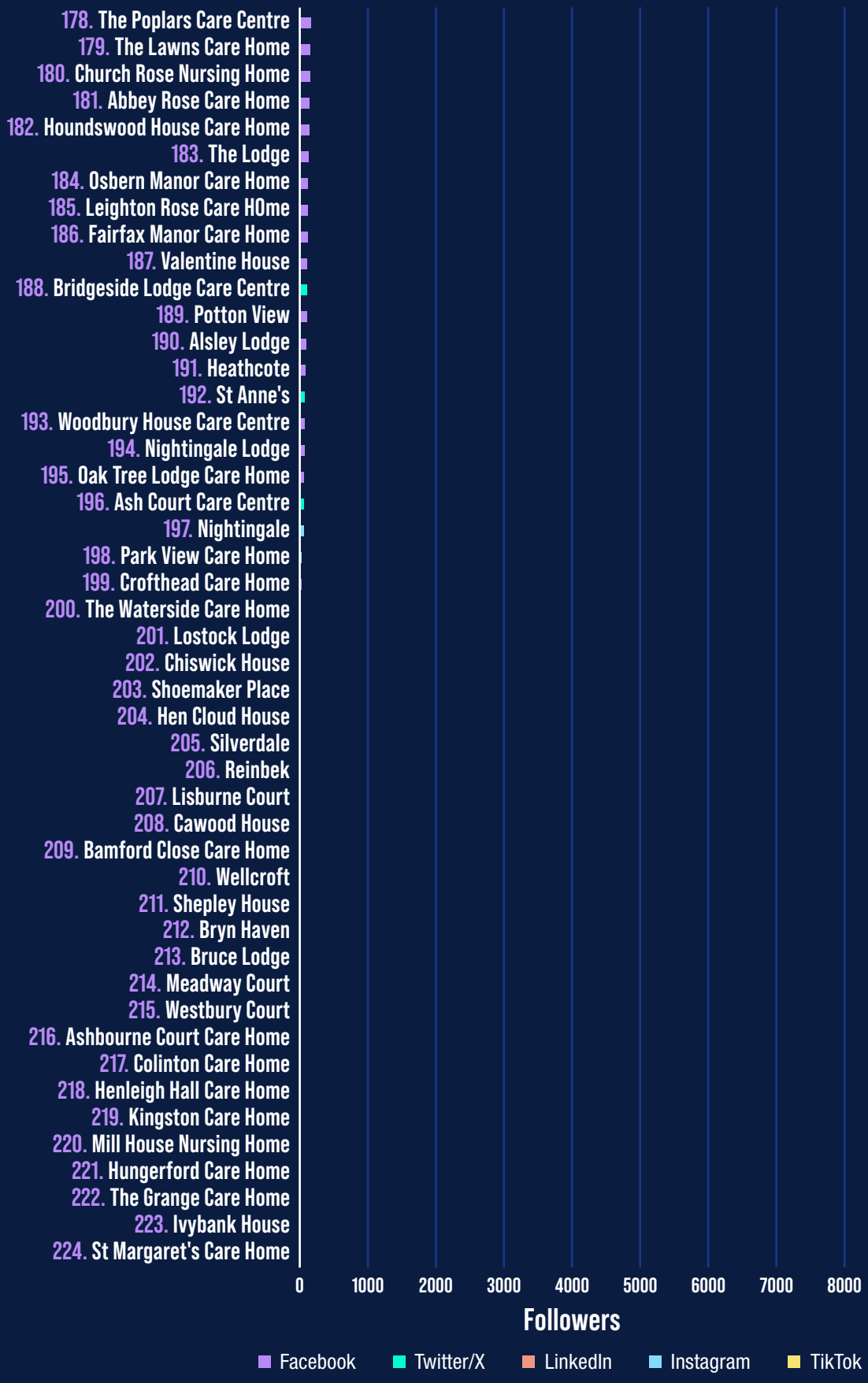
178. The Poplars Care Centre
179. The Lawns Care Home
180. Church Rose Nursing Home
181. Abbey Rose Care Home
182. Houndswood House Care Home
183. The Lodge
184. Osbern Manor Care Home
185. Leighton Rose Care HOme
186. Fairfax Manor Care Home
187. Valentine House
188. Bridgeside Lodge Care Centre
189. Potton View
190. Alsley Lodge
191. Heathcote
192. St Anne's
193. Woodbury House Care Centre
194. Nightingale Lodge
195. Oak Tree Lodge Care Home
196. Ash Court Care Centre
197. Nightingale
198. Park View Care Home
199. Crofthead Care Home
200. The Waterside Care Home
201. Lostock Lodge
202. Chiswick House
203. Shoemaker Place
204. Hen Cloud House
205. Silverdale
206. Reinbek
207. Lisburne Court
208. Cawood House
209. Bamford Close Care Home
210. Wellcroft
211. Shepley House
212. Bryn Haven
213. Bruce Lodge
214. Meadway Court
215. Westbury Court
216. Ashbourne Court Care Home
217. Colinton Care Home
218. Henleigh Hall Care Home
219. Kingston Care Home
220. Mill House Nursing Home
221. Hungerford Care Home
222. The Grange Care Home
223. Ivybank House
224. St Margaret's Care Home
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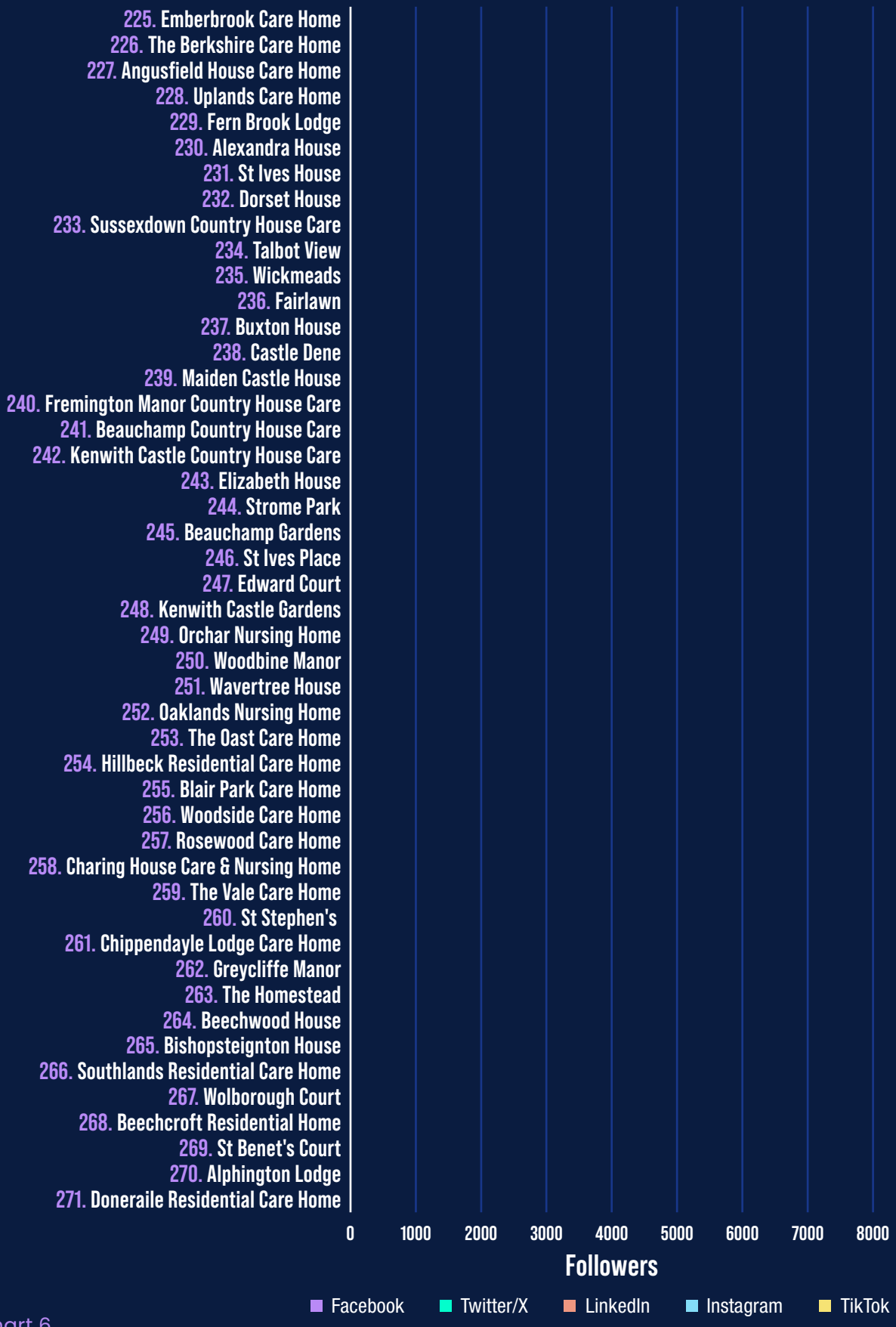
225. Emberbrook Care Home
226. The Berkshire Care Home
227. Angusfield House Care Home
228. Uplands Care Home
229. Fern Brook Lodge
230. Alexandra House
231. St Ives House
232. Dorset House
233. Sussexdown Country House Care
234. Talbot View
235. Wickmeads
236. Fairlawn
237. Buxton House
238. Castle Dene
239. Maiden Castle House
240. Fremington Manor Country House Care
241. Beauchamp Country House Care
242. Kenwith Castle Country House Care
243. Elizabeth House
244. Strome Park
245. Beauchamp Gardens
246. St Ives Place
247. Edward Court
248. Kenwith Castle Gardens
249. Orchar Nursing Home
250. Woodbine Manor
251. Wavertree House
252. Oaklands Nursing Home
253. The Oast Care Home
254. Hillbeck Residential Care Home
255. Blair Park Care Home
256. Woodside Care Home
257. Rosewood Care Home
258. Charing House Care & Nursing Home
259. The Vale Care Home
260. St Stephen's
261. Chippendayle Lodge Care Home
262. Greycliffe Manor
263. The Homestead
264. Beechwood House
265. Bishopsteignton House
266. Southlands Residential Care Home
267. Wolborough Court
268. Beechcroft Residential Home
269. St Benet's Court
270. Alphington Lodge
271. Doneraile Residential Care Home
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Followers
Facebook
Twitter/X
LinkedIn
Instagram
TikTok

Chart 6

It is Cumnor Hill House Care Home, belonging to the Berkley Care Group, which dominates. With 7,300 followers – entirely coming through Facebook, the home records more than double the follower count of the home in second place.

Cumnor Hill House uses Facebook in a variety of ways. It celebrates resident birthdays, shares images from trips, events and other special visits to the home. It also uses the platform to inform followers of upcoming activities, while also showcasing and celebrating members of the team in care campaigns such as CarersWeek.

Given its success in our rankings this year across both overall and individual home followings, we wanted to talk to those at Berkley Care Group who are behind their social media success.

Case Study: Berkley Care

We sat down with Kat Clayton, Berkley's Sales and Marketing Director. Here's what she told us about their relationship with social media:

At Berkley care Group, we are delighted to be recognised in the 2024 Social Media Power List for having the second highest number of followers across our accounts, as well as the highest following of all individual homes at Cumnor Hill House.

We are grateful for the recognition of our commitment to using social media as a platform to showcase the exceptional standards of care and vibrant community life across our homes.

We have found that social media channels, particularly our home's Facebook accounts, are a great tool for highlighting the unique, luxury experience we offer to our residents. From sharing moments of joy and celebration to promoting our bespoke activities and state-of-the-art facilities, social media helps us convey the quality and dedication embedded in our care philosophy.

We believe that transparency and open communication are crucial elements in care. By sharing the everyday goings on in each of our homes we hope to offer peace of mind to prospective residents and their families.

We keep both informed and involved in their loved ones' lives while highlighting our involvement in local initiatives and the active roles our homes play within their respective communities.

We also enjoy using these platforms to share the stories and celebrate the achievements of our fantastic staff team, who are the bedrock of Berkley Care.

Retaining second place in the medium-sized Social Media Power List this year is a testament to the dedication of our team, who are consistently striving to enhance our residents' experiences and maintain our position at the forefront of the care home sector. We are especially happy with the growth our social media has undergone in the past year: particularly on LinkedIn, where our following has grown by more than 85 per cent.

We look forward to continuing to build our social media presence while sharing the Berkley story with our followers.

- Kat Clayton,
Sales and Marketing Director, Berkley Care

In second place in our individual home rankings came Dryclough Manor, which recorded 4,300 followers, again exclusively from Facebook. The exact same was the case with third placed Shinfield View, another home belonging to the Berkley Care Group, which had 3,400 followers. Both Dryclough and Shinfield use social media in a similar way to Cumnor Hill House, sharing images and details of events and celebrations in the home.

Bridge House Care Home, part of the Carebase group, ranked in fourth place with 3,230 followers. It reflected a more diverse use of social media platforms compared with those in first, second and third - its following divided across three platforms: Facebook, X, and Instagram.

In fifth and sixth place, both with around 2,750 followers, came Heathfield Court Care Home, belonging to Carebase, and Blenheim House, again part of the Berkley Care Group.

One home that appears worth pointing out is the Acacia Care Centre, which ranks in twelfth place on our list with just under 2,000 followers. The home is part of the Future Care Group. Its social media usage is interesting given the dominance of Instagram as a source of its followers, providing more than 95 per cent of its overall figure, tallying 1,880. In fact, despite ranking in twelfth place overall, Acacia proves the home with the highest Instagram following of all of those included in our analysis.

A large number of care homes belonging to the Top 20 Mid-Sized Care Home Groups lack any social media presence at all. The figure stands 70 homes, or approximately a quarter of the total. As will be explained in later pages, in many of these cases this is a result of a care group having one social media account under its group name, as opposed to individual ones for each home.

But what exactly do these group accounts look like?

Breakdown by Group Account

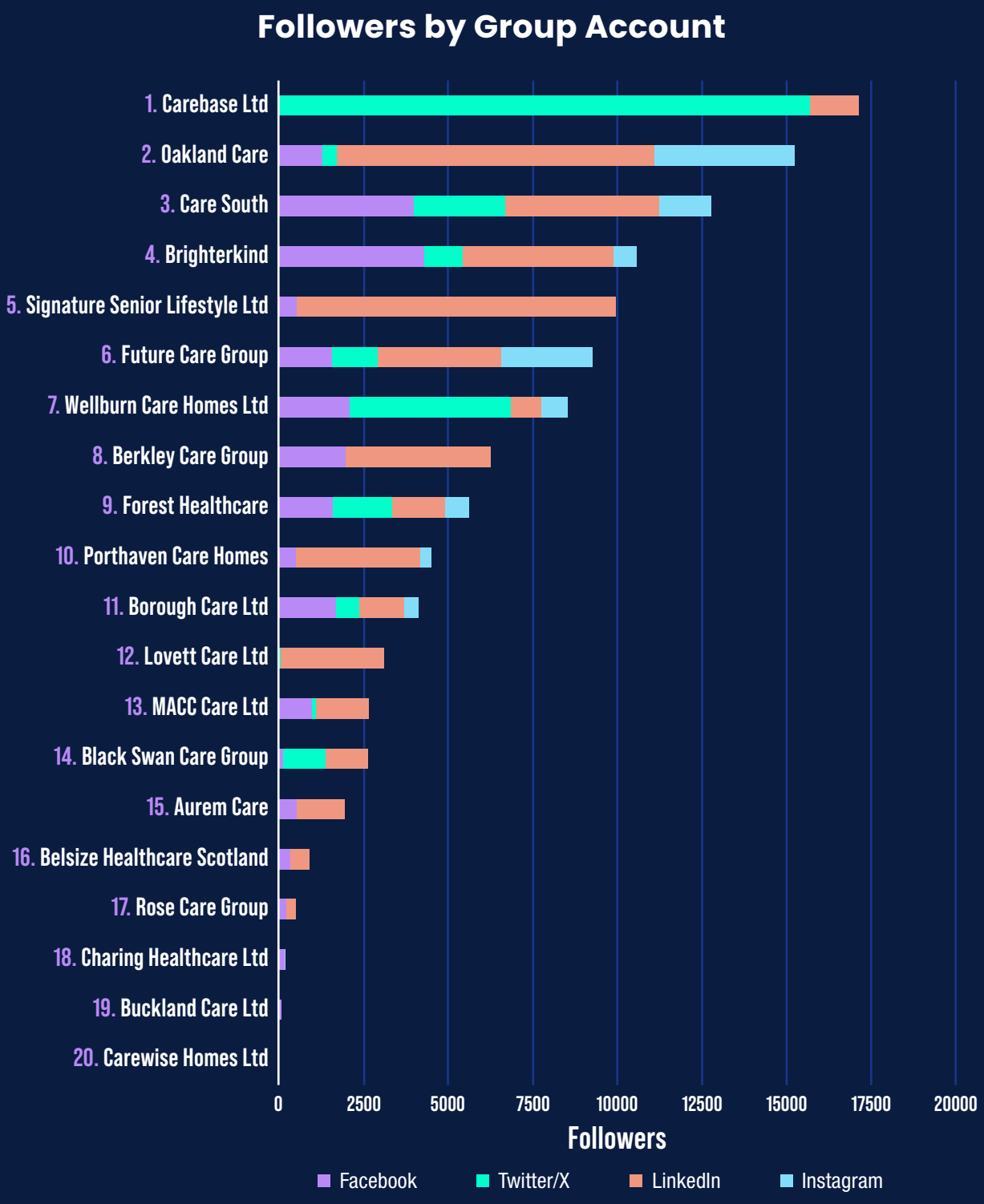

Chart 7

The overall social media following of group-specific accounts totalled 116,100, or just over 40 per cent of the total following of the Top 20 Mid-size Care Groups.

The group with the most followers on its group-specific account was Carebase. The majority of their 17,000 followers came from X (Twitter).

Following closely behind was Oakland Care, who boasted an impressive 15,250 followers. Oakland's diverse approach to social media use is worth noting, with significant followings on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, as well as a smaller following on X (Twitter). LinkedIn did prove most dominant, however, providing more than 9,300 followers to their overall tally. The group posts daily across all four platforms on which they have accounts, sharing images of celebrations, special guests, and updating followers with details of upcoming events and developments across its homes.

Care South, in third place, reflected a similar but slightly more evenly-split divide in their use of social media platforms, with significant followings across Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn tallying approximately 12,800. Even on Instagram, its least-followed account of all, it still had a following of more than 1,500.

In fourth place came Brighterkind (since merged into the Four Seasons Healthcare Group social media). This group had just under 11,000 followers exhibiting an even split between both Facebook and LinkedIn, with smaller accounts on both Twitter and Instagram.

Signature Senior Lifestyle's followers, which brought them into fifth place, came almost entirely from LinkedIn.

Just one care group, Carewise Homes, lacked a general 'group' social media account. Carewise had fairly inconsistent social media use among its homes, though one of them, Dryclough Manor, had an impressive 4,300 followers on its Facebook account.

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 one may think, it is heavily influenced by the number of homes within your group, coupled with the dynamics between your homes. Below we set out some of the key factors to consider in making decisions about social media in your care group.

Dispersion

Operating several different accounts can slow your audience growth rate, as engagement on posts and follower numbers become 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. Single group accounts can be a more efficient use of staff resources, avoiding spending too much time switching 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 groupwide account, you would be publishing content that may not be specific 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.

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.

Two good examples of this fusion would be Forest Healthcare and the Oakland Care. In the former, its group accounts account for around 41 per cent of followers across all media, and in the latter group accounts account for around two-thirds. Both combine the corporate and local blend that a hybrid method can facilitate.

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

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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