

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Detailed below are answers to many questions that have previously been asked. This is not an exhaustive list and will be added to over time.

The Property

- Q. Can I make internal alterations?
- A. Often yes. Permission must be sought from Middleton Hall for any structural alteration.
- Q. How does the parking on site work?
- A. Each apartment has a dedicated parking space in the car park. Extra visitors parking is available in the main car park.
- Q. I currently live in a detached property. Will I hear noise from my neighbours?
- A. All apartments have high levels of insulation, double glazed windows and walls are well sound proofed.

The Price

- Q. What is included in the price?
- A. Please see the individual sales details, key facts sheets and purchaser information for full details of properties available.

The Community

- Q. Middleton Hall is part of an Integrated Retirement Community – what does that mean?
- A. Integrated Retirement Communities are designed to offer older people the opportunity to live independently in their own home as part of a wider community. You live in your own apartment in Middleton Woods which is linked to a wide range of amenities and activities at Middleton Hall that are designed to support the well-being of people living here.

Care

- Q. If I need a greater level of support or care in the future, do I get preferential treatment for a place at Middleton Hall?
- A. Yes – all existing residents automatically get priority on the waiting list. We also keep a short stay suite in Middleton Grove that residents can book on a short term basis.

Re-sales

- Q. If I decide to move from Middleton Woods, how do I sell my property?
- A. Middleton Hall have extensive knowledge of the Retirement Village industry and so are generally best placed to sell your property. If you choose Middleton Hall to sell the property for you, we currently charge commission of 2% plus VAT. If you subsequently appoint an additional agency, on a joint agency basis, then our commission of 2% plus VAT will still apply, plus any fees charged by the external estate agent, regardless of who sells the property.

If you do not appoint Middleton Hall and choose to appoint an external agent to sell your property, Middleton Hall will not charge any fee in connection with the sale.

- Q. Do you have a buy back scheme?
- A. No. However, in circumstances where someone wanted to sell quickly and we were in a position to be able to do so, we would informally look at doing so.

Living in the property

- Q. How does the heating work?
- A. Each apartment is fitted with a heat exchange boiler for both hot water and heating.

Services

- Q. Can I have a pet?
- A. Yes, on the ground floor – subject to Middleton Hall's assessment. We make sure that any pet will not disturb other residents or wildlife.
- Q. Can I bring my own cleaner?
- A. Yes. You can also book a cleaning service from Middleton Hall.
- Q. What transport is available if I don't drive?
- A. Middleton Hall runs regular shopping trips in our minibus to Darlington and Yarm including stops at supermarkets. This is included in the service charge. There is also a bus service to Darlington from the rear entrances to Middleton Hall and a train that runs from Middleton St George (Dinsdale Station, 1.4 miles) to Darlington station and Middlesbrough station. There are also local taxi companies.
- Q. What happens if I need help in an emergency?
- A. Each property has an emergency call system that will automatically contact Middleton Hall 24 hours a day. Residents can have a neck pendant or wrist band which will work immediately outside their property. We recommend that everyone uses one of these for peace of mind.

- Q. If I am on my own, will anyone check on me?
- A. The emergency call system has an automated system by motion sensor (PIR) fitted that can be programmed to tell us if someone has not got up in the morning, for example. This can be activated on request.
- Q. Is there a fire alarm?
- A. Yes. Each apartment has a smoke detector fitted that will sound inside and a fire alarm to notify Middleton Hall via the call system in the event of smoke or fire. Occasionally burnt toast might set this off, but we will call you to check you know your toast is ready!
- Q. Do I need an aerial and can I have Sky TV?
- A. There is a communal aerial and satellite dish fitted. You will need your own subscription for Sky.
- Q. Do I have to get a window cleaner?
- A. No. External window cleaning is included in the service charge.
- Q. Will I have a telephone line?
- A. You will need to apply for your own telephone service.
- Q. Is there a good mobile phone coverage?
- A. It is possible to use a mobile phone in Middleton Woods and throughout most of Middleton Hall. Please check our postcode (DL2 1HQ) for the specific coverage with your provider.
- Q. Do I arrange my own broadband?
- A. Yes, alongside your phone line you will need to have your own broadband package in your apartment. Alternatively, there is Wi-Fi in Middleton Hall.
- Q. What happens if I am taken ill?
- A. Middleton Hall offers different types of residential care services. In the unfortunate event that you require care due to recovery from illness, accident or a hospital stay, Middleton Grove has a guest suite that can be booked for short stays. This facility is charged according to needs.
- Q. What kind of temporary or one off support can I have?
- A. We do not currently offer care packages for residents in Middleton Woods. There are a number of local home (or domiciliary) care agencies that can provide this service. A list is available from Reception or see the Care Quality Commission web site for details where inspection reports are available.
- Q. What do I do if I have a complaint?
- A. We would encourage you to speak to a manager first, there is a full complaints procedure on display within Middleton Hall, your information guide as well as a link on this website.

- Q. Are there restrictions on how I can personalise my patio/balcony/garden area?
- A. A sensible amount of garden furniture, pot plants and a bird feeder would be considered, for any other items please ask first.

Lease

- Q. Are there any restrictions in the lease?
- A. The main restriction is that at least one of the purchasers needs to be 55 years or older. Middleton Hall also expects prospective purchasers to demonstrate their financial ability to buy the property and pay the service charge. We will also carry out a health assessment to ensure all residents are able to live independently, that we are aware of any health issues and know who to contact in an emergency.
- Q. Can I have lodger?
- A. Subject to approval from Middleton Hall. There are schemes running for younger people to provide help around the house in return for free lodging and we would obviously approve this as a means of someone continuing to live independently.
- Q. Can I have family and friends to stay?
- A. Yes. There are no restrictions. We ask that you let Reception know when you have visitors staying overnight for security purposes.
- Q. Can they use Middleton Hall facilities including Middleton Spa?
- A. Yes. We have guest fees for using Middleton Spa and sessions when guests can use the pool/gym (over 18 years only).
- Q. I play the piano – is it ok if I practice at home?
- A. At least during the day, it should be! We might suggest that you discuss with your neighbours and choose an appropriate room and time if you play any instrument loudly, but in our experience, we would expect your music practice should not disturb your neighbours!

Running costs

- Q. Is the service charge reduced if there is just one person living in the property?
- A. No. We have found that the vast majority of service charge costs are dependent on the number of properties not the number of people living in them.
- Q. What if I don't use Middleton Spa?
- A. You still have membership automatically and this does entitle you to other forms of exercise and advice from our Living Well team.
- Q. How much is the council tax?
- A. It will depend on the apartment. Darlington Borough Council has assessed each property individually. Please see the Key Facts Document for individual properties.

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