

## Location, Location ...

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A key factor when looking for any property is location. Are you looking for a town or country property and what services do you want to be near? These considerations are just as important when you are looking for retirement property as at any other stage in your life.

You may not be interested in the nearby schools or nurseries any more but access to a doctor's practice, public transport, shops and entertainment all need to be considered; especially if, as time goes on, you are less able or willing to drive. That is why Oak Retirement is specialising in developing extra-care retirement property in urban areas close to the services that people most need to use as they get older. For example, at Honeybourne Gate in Cheltenham our owners will have easy access to Tescos, Waitrose, the railway station, bus routes and all the entertainment and retail opportunities offered by Cheltenham Town Centre.

An alternative to an urban location is to look for a retirement village most of which are in rural settings. Retirement villages have their merits too and they are popular with people who are looking for quiet and to escape the Town but they are usually more remote from entertainment venues, retail centres and public transport so you need to be sure that adequate alternatives are available on-site to meet your needs.

Many people look for retirement property that is not too far away from their current home so that they can maintain contact with the friends and networks they have already built up. Some people move to be nearer to their family, perhaps so they can spend more time with their grandchildren. Whatever your motivation, it's always worth getting a map out and checking the location of the services you need and access to public transport links.

Extra-care developments, wherever they are, are designed to help you maintain your independence but a key part of independence is being able to get out and about. As time goes on, of course, you might find travelling more tiring and your family will have to visit you more often than you visit them but if you have chosen a retirement location that is convenient for buses and trains or only a taxi drive from the cinema, art galleries, museums, theatres, hospitals and shops then you won't be always dependent on others or reliant on keeping your car.

***Stephen Ladyman***