

Pick a perfect pad for your retirement

A NEW survey from the Retirement Villages Group reveals that the biggest worry for the over-55s is their health, and evidence shows that people live longer, healthier lives in a retirement community.

Here **JANE SLADE**, founder of the retirement property and lifestyle website Retiremove, offers a five-point guide to sourcing the ideal property...

LOCATION

If you are moving to be closer to friends or relatives, remember to choose somewhere near the high street or close to good transport links. Living in the middle of nowhere – unless there is a dedicated shuttle bus – can leave you feeling isolated, especially if you don't drive.

PROPERTY TYPE

Think about your future needs and, depending on your budget, consider one of three main types of accommodation: an apartment with few facilities; sheltered housing, offering extra support if you need it; or a belt-and-braces retirement village with a nursing home on site.

McCarthy & Stone and Churchill tend to offer 'no frills' developments with an owner's lounge and on-site manager, although McCarthy & Stone is building more assisted-living complexes.

Inspired Villages and Audley are more like boutique hotels, with restaurants, gyms and gardens. LifeCare Residences, Retirement Villages and



Richmond Villages include residential nursing homes.

BUY OR RENT

Most properties are still sold leasehold,

but you can also rent. Bridges Fund Management's Birchgrove – 73 apartments for over-65s in Sidcup, South-East London – completes next year with rents from £1,400 a

STYLISH:

Birchgrove in Sidcup will have 73 flats to rent, with kitchens like this, left, from £1,400 a month. Below: Jane Slade



month including utilities. Girlings Retirement Rentals has properties all over Britain with assured tenancies for life. Platinum Skies offers part-buy, part-rent options in the retirement hotspots of Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch, priced from £145,000 for a 50 per cent share.

And Mayfield Villages has launched an affordable scheme of one-and-two bedroom homes in Watford, Hertfordshire, priced from £262,500.

HOBBIES AND FACILITIES

Think about choosing a development where you can pursue your hobbies or take up new ones. Most villages have a choir and a piano.

Retirement Villages' Elmbridge village in Surrey has allotments and 12 greenhouses for gardening enthusiasts, and at Anchor Trust's Bishopstoke Park in Hampshire there is a sensory garden designed to evoke memories. Most are pet friendly but high-end operators such as London-based Elysian Residences will go the extra mile and pet-sit, walk your pooch and even give it wash.

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY

Visit as many developments as you can – they are all different. Most offer a try-before-you-buy service where you can spend a night in a guest suite, meet the owners and explore the area.

Audley offers owners an exchange home-buying service, while McCarthy & Stone has part-exchange and 'moving solutions' schemes to ease the process.

NEW RETIREMENT APARTMENTS FOR SALE

Think it will be expensive? You're in for a pleasant surprise

When you add up the bills you're paying now – and the possible shock of a new boiler or roof – most people find our monthly service charges very reasonable indeed. The majority of our Owners wish they'd decided to make the move years ago and the sooner you decide, the sooner we can help to make it easy! A brand new Churchill apartment is safe, secure, energy efficient and low maintenance, with a Lodge Manager to keep an eye on things and like-minded neighbours.

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or visit: churchillretirement.co.uk



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APARTMENTS FOR SALE Berks Newbury; Bristol Fishponds, Henleaze; Bucks Marlow, Princes Risborough; Cambs Huntingdon; Cornwall Newquay, Penzance, Truro; Devon Torquay; Dorset Bridport, Highcliffe-on-Sea, Shaftesbury; Essex Chelmsford, Frinton-on-Sea; Gloucs Cirencester; Gtr London Eltham; Hants Andover, Lymington, Portswood, Waterlooville; Herts Berkhamsted; Kent Dartford, Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge; Merseyside Formby; Middlesex Pinner; Shropshire Ludlow; Somerset Wells; Surrey Ashted, Camberley, Carshalton, Caterham, Leatherhead, Walton-on-Thames; Sussex Chichester, East Grinstead, East Wittering, Haywards Heath, Littlehampton, Peacehaven; W Midlands Aldridge, Quinton, Shirley; W Yorks Wetherby; Wilts Malmesbury, Salisbury.

Further retirement developments coming soon are available on our website.

[†]Terms and conditions apply see churchillretirement.co.uk/terms-and-conditions for full details.

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