



This section outlines how to attract, develop and retain a skilled care workforce through values-based recruitment, personalised induction, local knowledge, ongoing support and meaningful roles that promote long-term engagement and community-based care.

Be Caring presents a progressive model for building a skilled, motivated and values-led workforce. Recruitment prioritises empathy, resilience and a genuine commitment to care, with no requirement for prior experience. Induction is inclusive and consistent, combining classroom learning, shadowing and eLearning to suit varied learning styles.

Training is paid, responsive and continuously evolving. Staff receive tailored support through digital knowledge assessments, one-to-one coaching and client-specific sessions. Internally employed trainers deliver high-quality, bespoke development and career progression is actively encouraged.

Neighbourhood-based working and strong community links reduce travel stress and improve continuity of care. Staff are supported through onboarding calls, wellbeing checks and celebratory events that strengthen connections and morale. This integrated approach enhances retention and ensures carers feel valued and empowered.

By adopting similar principles, providers and their commissioners can strengthen workforce culture, improve care outcomes and build sustainable local services.

This section is split into the following topics:

Attracting and embedding the workforce

- attracting the workforce
- recruiting the workforce
- onboarding and inducting
- growing skills
- giving the role meaning
- knowing the neighbourhood.

Developing and retaining the workforce

- above and beyond
- supporting the workforce
- meaningful work, lasting commitment
- valued pay and conditions.

Key decisions, key learning and advice, recommendations

“Be Caring are not the first company I’ve used, but they are the one I like the most. With the other companies, not all the carers were as friendly or as well trained. I think other care providers should look at how Be Caring train their carers because it works.”

David Airton, Be Caring client

“They understand Martin’s complex needs - autism, cerebral palsy, heart defects - and they treat him with dignity. They know when he wants a cuddle, when he’s being cheeky and when he’s not feeling well. That kind of understanding doesn’t come from a manual - it comes from care.”

Vickie Grant, mother of Martin Grant, Be Caring client



Attracting the workforce

“Be Caring had a lot of things to go off - social media, website, everything. That’s what attracted me. Other companies didn’t have that.”

Ellie Layden, Care Worker, Be Caring

Be Caring has earned a strong reputation in the social care sector by cultivating a culture rooted in transparency, values-led practice and genuine support for its workforce.

A key reason many join the organisation is its visible public presence. Unlike many care providers, Be Caring maintains an engaging website and active social media channels that clearly communicate its mission, values and daily operations, giving prospective staff a real sense of what to expect. Word-of-mouth referrals are also common, with many staff joining after hearing positive feedback from friends or family. These endorsements often highlight the supportive environment, career progression and respectful treatment of employees.

This visibility is backed by a commitment to ethical practice and staff wellbeing. As a social enterprise, Be Caring reinvests profits to enhance conditions for both carers and people, appealing to those who seek purposeful, community-focused work.

Be Caring’s reputation for ethical care, internal development and strong relationships makes it a standout employer. Its values-led approach and visible presence continue to attract individuals seeking meaningful roles in social care.

Recruiting the workforce

“When they interview, they look for that special thing that makes a true carer. These carers believe in their job; they’re not just doing it for the money.”

David Airton, Be Caring client

At Be Caring, recruitment is a strategic, values-led process that goes far beyond filling vacancies. It’s designed to attract individuals who embody empathy, reliability and a genuine desire to make a difference, regardless of their formal qualifications or previous experience.

From the first interaction, candidates are welcomed into a culture of inclusivity, transparency and long-term development. Recruiters, often with frontline experience, build trust through authentic conversations and tailored support, ensuring applicants feel confident and aligned with Be Caring’s ethos. Recruitment focuses on character and lived experience over formal qualifications, helping to build a workforce that reflects the communities it serves.

The recruitment journey is deeply personal and community focused. Candidates are matched with people and delivery routes that suit their circumstances, including transport needs and childcare responsibilities. Walking routes and local scheduling make roles accessible to non-drivers, while partnerships with organisations like Barnardo’s and Winnovation help reach underrepresented groups. Internal referrals and collaborations with colleges and job centres further expand the talent pool.

Transparent communication ensures candidates make informed decisions. Interviews explore values and potential, while onboarding includes wellbeing checks and clear pathways for progression. This approach attracts those seeking not just a job, but a meaningful career.

Be Caring’s recruitment builds a compassionate, committed workforce by valuing people over credentials.

Onboarding and inducting

“New carers get 7 full days of induction, plus another two days of eLearning, as well as shadowing support and refreshers. Competencies are checked every three months.”

Courtney Cave, Care Co-ordinator – Newcastle, Be Caring

“They’ve been properly trained and they’re still continuing their training. It works better because they’re not just learning tasks - they’re learning Martin. They’re learning how to read his body language, how to respond to his moods and how to keep his routine steady.”

Vickie Grant, mother of Martin Grant, Be Caring client

Be Caring’s onboarding is a thoughtfully designed journey that begins before day one and continues well into the first months of employment. Early contact from recruitment officers and trainers builds trust and reduces anxiety, setting a positive tone for induction.

Training is consistent across the organisation, combining classroom sessions, eLearning and hands-on activities tailored to different learning styles. Topics include safeguarding, dementia awareness and basic life support, with interactive methods that deepen understanding. A midweek shadowing day offers real-world insight, helping new carers assess their fit for the role, while mentorship continues beyond induction, with experienced carers guiding new staff through early visits. This creates real-world readiness and emotional support during the critical early stages.

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Technology training ensures confidence in using digital tools central to care delivery. Staff also meet office teams early on, helping build relationships and clarify support channels. Follow-up calls and flexible scheduling reinforce wellbeing and retention, ensuring new starters feel supported and valued.

Feedback is actively sought and used to refine the process. By prioritising empathy, structure and support, Be Caring ensures every new starter is equipped to thrive and make a meaningful impact from day one.

Growing skills and building careers

“We build careers by investing in people - through training, coaching and progression opportunities.”

Stacey Clarkson, Assistant Director of Operations / Registered Manager,
Leeds, Be Caring

From induction onward, staff are welcomed into a culture that prioritises learning, confidence-building and personal empowerment. Development is continuous, beginning with structured training and evolving through personalised support and meaningful relationships.

Internal progression is actively encouraged, with many office staff having started in frontline roles. A £300 development bonus and tailored job descriptions help staff transition into new opportunities aligned with their strengths. Progression is supported through bonuses, internal promotions and flexible roles that reflect individual aspirations and circumstances.

Formal qualifications, including Level 2 and 3 diplomas, are offered when funding allows and bespoke training is provided for complex care needs. Digital tools help identify knowledge gaps and guide targeted support. Be Caring is also working toward becoming an accredited training centre to expand in-house learning.

Quarterly coaching sessions create safe spaces for reflection, ambition and tailored support. Development isn't limited to career moves, experienced carers are supported to mentor others and deepen their expertise. By blending structure, flexibility and heart, Be Caring builds a skilled, loyal workforce ready to deliver exceptional care.

Be Caring's approach to career development aligns with the [Care Workforce Pathway](#) - a national framework introduced in January 2024 that defines the skills and values across eight adult social care roles to support progression and improve care quality.

Be Caring's career development approach closely aligns with the [Care Workforce Pathway](#), a national framework introduced in January 2024 to support progression and improve care quality. Staff receive fully funded induction and values-based training, supporting entry into the sector.

Specialist training in dementia, autism, and reablement builds expertise for advanced positions. Regular refresher and mandatory training ensure compliance and continued professional development. Training in wellbeing checks and proactive care supports autonomy and prepares staff for lead roles. Team-based learning and reflective practice foster collaboration and readiness for roles such as care co-ordinator or mentor. This structured, values-led approach ensures care delivery is consistent, proactive and aligned with national standards.

Giving the role meaning

“We train carers to support lives, not just tasks and routines - adding real value to every visit.”

Claire Douglas, Training Development Lead, Be Caring

“Be Caring employ carers who are great at the social aspects of the role. If you want to be independent, a lot of elderly people do not have many visitors, so having somebody to talk to is a vital thing and can really make somebody’s day.”

David Airton, Be Caring client

At Be Caring, the role of a care worker is a vocation rooted in empathy, dignity and connection.

The organisation’s outcomes-focused approach empowers staff to promote and deliver meaningful support that enables people to live the lives they choose. Care workers help people gain confidence, reconnect with hobbies and feel socially included, always guided by what matters most to the individual.

The ‘Outcomes champions programme’ trains carers to adopt a strengths-based mindset, exploring goals covering independence, home, community and wellbeing. Deep, trusting relationships are built over time, allowing carers to notice changes and respond sensitively. Open conversations shape personalised care plans that reflect each client’s values.

Be Caring’s neighbourhood model supports quality time with people, while digital systems enhance communication and visibility. Care workers also help people overcome barriers to digital inclusion, boosting independence and connection.

Their insights inform service development, reinforcing their role as professionals shaping lives, not just delivering tasks.

Knowing the neighbourhood

“Being local means that you know the community. It’s easier to build trust and support people in familiar surroundings.”

Poppy Mason, Care Worker, Be Caring

“No other company has done what Be Caring has for us. It’s not just care - it’s community.”

Vickie Grant, mother of Martin Grant, Be Caring client

Be Caring’s neighbourhood-based model is central to its delivery of personalised, high-quality care.

By assigning carers to small, local geographic patches, the organisation establishes further trust, continuity and deeper relationships between staff and people. Care workers often work within walking distance of their homes, reducing travel time and making roles more accessible, especially for non-drivers. Routes are planned to minimise travel and support work-life balance, helping carers maintain wellbeing while delivering consistent care.

This proximity enables carers to build consistent, long-term relationships and understand the cultural and social context of those they support. Familiarity with the area helps carers anticipate needs and engage people in meaningful, community-based activities. Recruitment focuses on sourcing staff where possible from local communities, with tailored support in areas like Sheffield to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Scheduling teams ensure flexibility, adapting routes to changing circumstances. Care workers feel a strong sense of pride and belonging, knowing they’re making a difference in their own neighbourhoods. This approach enhances wellbeing, supports inclusivity and strengthens the quality of care delivered.

Above and Beyond

“Seeing someone go from needing full support to being independent again is the most rewarding part of the job.”

Freda Addo, Care Co-ordinator – Leeds, Be Caring

Be Caring’s Above and Beyond programme empowers care workers to deliver responsive, person-centred support that extends beyond standard care plans. Rooted in trust, flexibility and emotional intelligence, it enables staff to act on real-time observations - such as revisiting a client who seemed low or supporting someone to attend a community event. The focus is not on doing more, but on doing what matters most to each individual.

Care workers identify opportunities to enhance wellbeing, confirm appropriateness with office teams, and utilise their time to have maximum impact. Actions are logged via contact notes or QR code scans, ensuring transparency and learning. Training and supervision help embed this culture, equipping staff to act safely and record outcomes.

Recognition through regular communications, thank you messages and Above and Beyond Awards reinforces professional pride. Commissioners and partners are engaged through shared data and regular meetings, helping build trust and demonstrate impact. The approach improves wellbeing, supports fair working conditions, and strengthens relationships across the care ecosystem.

Supporting the workforce

“Support is proactive, personalised and embedded in everyday practice. We actually listen. That’s the greatest way to manage workloads and wellbeing.”

Billie Ransome, Operations Manager, North East, Be Caring

Recognising the emotional and physical demands of care work, Be Caring has built a comprehensive framework that promotes wellbeing, connection and empowerment from day one.

Structured supervision and quarterly 'Be Supported' (regular one-to-one reviews for colleagues) sessions provide regular, paid one-to-one time for carers to reflect, raise concerns and explore development goals. These conversations focus on wellbeing as much as performance, ensuring staff feel heard and valued. Peer support is fostered through small, local teams and bi-annual events like Coffee and Cake, which create informal spaces for connection and shared experience.

Office teams maintain an open-door policy and offer emotional support after challenging calls, reinforcing a culture of care and responsiveness. Flexibility is deeply embedded in Be Caring's operational model, with rotas tailored to suit individual circumstances such as childcare, transport and availability. A 24/7 on-call system ensures staff always have access to support, reinforcing a culture of safety and responsiveness.

Staff voices actively shape organisational decisions. Through regular surveys, digital feedback platforms and representative meetings with leadership, care workers are empowered to influence change. This open dialogue is matched by tailored training, proactive wellbeing checks and a culture of listening, ensuring every team member feels respected, supported and equipped to thrive in their role.

Meaningful work, lasting commitment

“Retention comes from meaningful work, strong relationships and a culture of respect. Carers stay because they feel valued, supported and proud of what they do.”

Poppy Mason, Care Worker, Be Caring

“They care about their clients and their staff. My son’s carer has won awards, been on national TV and even gives speeches in London. That shows how much they invest in people. They even helped train staff from another service so Martin could have proper respite. That’s going above and beyond.”

Vickie Grant, mother of Martin Grant, Be Caring client

Retaining a skilled, compassionate workforce is a challenge Be Caring meets with purpose, connection and growth. Rather than relying on surface-level incentives, the organisation creates roles carers want to stay in because they know their work and the impact it has matters.

Be Caring’s outcomes-focused model empowers carers to build meaningful relationships and support people in achieving personal goals. This sense of purpose is reinforced through recognition initiatives like ‘Be Proud’ events, celebrating values-driven care and long service. Career development is actively supported, with internal progression, flexible job roles and mentoring opportunities helping staff grow in ways that suit their strengths and aspirations.

Flexible rotas and understanding management help carers balance work with personal commitments, contributing to a culture of trust and belonging. Care workers describe colleagues as “like family,” supported by open-door policies, regular check-ins and staff-led feedback channels. Financial fairness through block-pay ensures carers are compensated for their full shift, reducing stress and enhancing stability.

Despite their new approach leading to better retention rates measured by length of service, Be Caring acknowledges that when changing the operating model and ways of working, other providers should be prepared to see rates fall temporarily. Some existing staff may initially resist changes, particularly those who preferred the less transparent way of reporting shorter calls, but this is likely to be a short-term blip as the new model embeds.

As a social enterprise, Be Caring reinvests profits into staff wellbeing and service quality, aligning personal values with organisational purpose. This thoughtful, values-led approach creates pride, loyalty and long-term commitment across the workforce.

Valued pay and conditions

“We get paid for every minute we spend with clients, even extra time. That makes us feel valued.”

Courtney Cave, Care Co-ordinator – Newcastle, Be Caring

Be Caring’s approach to pay and working conditions is rooted in fairness, transparency and respect, key to retaining a motivated and resilient workforce.

Be Caring compensates care workers for their full shift, including travel time, gaps between visits and emergencies. This model reduces stress and allows carers to focus on quality care without worrying about lost income. Paid mileage is offered to both drivers and cyclists, supporting inclusivity and helping make roles accessible to a wider range of people.

Rotas are stable and predictable, with two-week rolling schedules and permanent call allocations that support work-life balance. Flexibility is built into scheduling, with carers supported to balance work and personal commitments. Staff feedback shapes rota planning, training delivery and wellbeing programmes, ensuring that operational decisions reflect lived experience.

Recognition initiatives, development bonuses and long-service awards further affirm staff contributions. This values-led approach ensures care workers feel secure, respected and proud of their work, making care a sustainable and rewarding career.



Key decisions

“The model works because it’s realistic. Carers have achievable rotas, citizens get the right care, and providers see real gaps to optimise.”

Paul Bickerton, Head of Commissioning, Care Homes, Homecare and Quality, Manchester Local Care Organisation

- Adopting values-based recruitment focused on character and empathy over experience, ensuring new hires aligned with Be Caring’s ethos and were motivated by making a meaningful difference.
- Building strong local partnerships with colleges, job centres and community groups to attract candidates from the community and offer guaranteed interviews and tailored support.
- Introducing a structured onboarding programme with three follow-up wellbeing calls, ensuring new starters felt supported, listened to and settled during their first 12 weeks.
- Standardising induction training for all staff, regardless of experience, to ensure consistency, embed values and provide practical, classroom-based learning alongside eLearning modules.
- Implementing a neighbourhood prime provider model, paying carers for their full shift including travel and gaps, removing financial stress and enabling focus on quality care.
- Embedding a neighbourhood model of care, assigning carers to small, local areas to reduce travel, improve continuity and strengthen relationships with people and community services.
- Creating responsive, personalised training pathways, including digital knowledge assessments and bespoke sessions based on individual learning needs and client-specific challenges.
- Promoting internal career progression, offering development bonuses, flexible job roles and regular one-to-one sessions to support aspirations and retain talent within the organisation.



Key learning

“There are only so many care workers in the city - it’s how you harness those workers to best effect, which is what we did.”

Paul Higginbottom, Service Manager, Sheffield City Council

Be Caring’s workforce development highlights the impact of values-based recruitment, prioritising empathy and reliability over experience. Structured onboarding, including wellbeing calls and shadowing, helps new starters feel confident and connected, while standardised induction ensures consistency across all experience levels.

Paid training, digital assessments and tailored learning reinforce staff value and support responsive development. Neighbourhood-based rotas and full block-pay reduce stress and improve continuity of care. Staff feel respected, fairly compensated and empowered. Regular feedback, peer support and recognition events like ‘Coffee and Cake’ and ‘Be Proud’ build morale. The message is clear: listen, invest and create a culture of respect.

Recommendations for providers

A checklist of practical recommendations and resources to help providers to adapt and adopt similar informed by this building block section.

Recommendations for commissioners

A checklist of practical recommendations for commissioners to help adopt some or all of the approach used by Be Caring’s commissioners.