

I've got a question....



Q. Who will be with me?

A. Two members of staff will be with you at the point of birth. This may be two midwives, or a midwife and a maternity support worker. Parking nearby your property needs to be available.

Q. What if we need to go to hospital?

A. We will call an ambulance and transfer to the hospital. If needed, an ambulance can be called as a Level 1 response which puts you as the highest priority call. The midwives with you are trained to provide emergency care for both you and your baby while you wait for an ambulance.

Q. Will there be a lot of mess?

A. No! You will need to provide plastic sheets, towels, and puppy pads to cover your floors. We will help clear up and take all clinical waste away with us in special bins.

Q. What pain relief options can I have at home?

A. We are able to provide Entonox (gas and air) and Morphine. You can hire a birth pool if you are thinking of a water birth. Other coping mechanisms include paracetamol, TENS machine, hypnobirthing.

Q. What about my other children during the birth?

A. We are happy to have children in the house. It is your preference on how much or little involvement they have. We do ask that you have childcare pre-arranged just in case you need to be transferred to the hospital.

Q. When can I be referred to the homebirth team?

A. You can be referred at any point in your pregnancy, but the earlier we hear from you the more you can get to know your midwife and benefit from the continuity model of care.

Need more information?

To be referred to the team, email us directly or contact your community midwife who can refer you.

Email: rbft.homebirthteam@nhs.net

NHS England have produced leaflets with more information and research on place of birth for those having your first baby and those who have had a baby before.

Having your first baby:



If you have had a baby before:



For more information, homebirth stories, and to meet the team, follow us on social media!

Instagram: @RBHHomebirthTeam

Facebook: @Royal Berkshire Maternity:
Homebirth Team

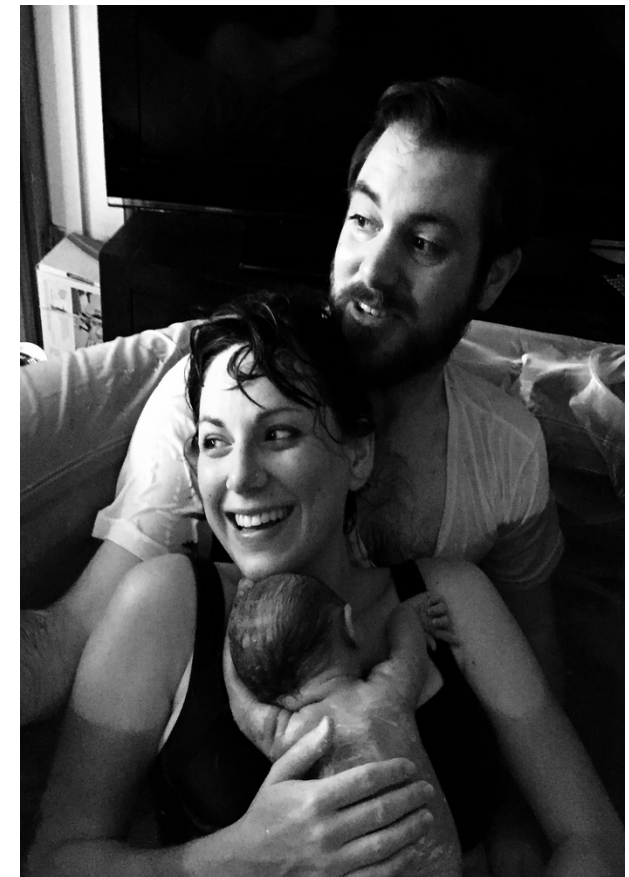
To find out more about our Trust visit
<https://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/services-and-departments/maternity>

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

RBFT Homebirth Team, October 2025
Next review due: October 2027



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust



**Have you
considered a
homebirth?**



Congratulations on your pregnancy and a warm *hello* from the RBH Homebirth Team!

Who we are and what we do?

We are a small team of specialist midwives and maternity support workers, supporting women across Berkshire and surrounding local areas to birth their babies at home. We have been established since April 2017.

We provide a 'case-loading' model of care, which means each midwife cares for a small caseload of 20-40 women and we provide your antenatal, labour and postnatal care.

Our ethos is about providing holistic, women-centred care, helping women birth their babies safely at home, and supporting families as they transition to parenthood.



Is homebirth right for you?

A homebirth is suitable if you are:

- 37-42 weeks of pregnancy
- Having one baby in your current pregnancy
- If this is baby number 1-5 for you
- If you are generally fit and well and your current pregnancy or previous pregnancies have been largely uncomplicated
- If you have had a previous vaginal birth (including with assistance from instruments), your chance of a vaginal birth this time is greater than 95%.

<https://www.nhs.uk/pregnancy/labour-and-birth/preparing-for-the-birth/where-to-give-birth-the-options/>

If you don't meet the criteria, please ask your community midwife who can arrange for you to have a conversation with a consultant obstetrician or consultant midwife. They will explore your reasons for wanting a homebirth and work with you to make a safe plan for your care.

What are the benefits of homebirth?

- Your own environment can feel more calm and relaxed.
- You can have birth partners and family members present.
- You have access to your own facilities.
- Women overall experience shorter labours at home.
- Cared for by a case-loading team of midwives.

Why choose homebirth?

A Lancet review compared the outcomes for over 500,000 low risk women who began labour planning to give birth at home with those who planned to birth in hospital. They found that, overall, those who planned to give birth at home were less likely to experience any of the intrapartum interventions studied.

Low risk women having their second or subsequent baby and planning for a homebirth were;

- 40% less likely to have a caesarean section
- 50% less likely to have an operative vaginal birth (forceps or ventouse)
- 70% less likely to have an epidural
- 55% less likely to have an episiotomy
- 75% less maternal infections
- 40% less likely to have a 3rd or 4th degree tear
- 60% less likely to require induction of labour with oxytocin
- 30% less likely to have a postpartum haemorrhage

Low risk women having their first baby and planning for a homebirth were;

- 30% less likely to have a caesarean section
- 25% less likely to have an operative vaginal birth (forceps or ventouse)
- 50% less likely to have an epidural
- 25% less likely to have an episiotomy
- 35% less likely to require induction of labour with oxytocin

Reitsma et al (2020) Maternal outcomes and birth interventions among women who begin labour intending to give birth at home compared to women of low obstetrical risk who intend to give birth in hospital: A systematic review and meta-analyses. eClinicalMedicine: 21(100319).