

# Your guide

to choosing where to give birth

# to your baby



# Who is this information for?

This information is for all women who have booked for maternity care within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

During your appointments, your midwife, and sometimes a doctor (obstetrician), will discuss your health and the health of your baby with you. You will be able to use this information to help you make decisions about where you would like to have your baby.

Together with your midwife, doctor and anyone else who is involved in your care you can choose where you would like to have your baby. You can decide what feels right for you based on your personal circumstances and information provided about the benefits and risks of the available options.

These discussions will take place throughout your maternity care. You can change your plans about where to have your baby at any stage if your pregnancy changes or if you change your mind.

Planning where to have your baby is an important decision. Evidence shows that giving birth in the UK is generally very safe. This information has been developed to answer some of the questions you may have about the options available locally. You can use this guide by yourself, with your family and with your midwife or doctor to help you to make this decision.

## **More information on choosing where to have your baby is available here:**

A recent study researched the safety of birth places of women with straightforward pregnancies who are at 'low risk' of complications. The findings can be found at: [www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/birthplace](http://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/birthplace)

Which: [www.which.co.uk/birthchoice](http://www.which.co.uk/birthchoice)

Further Information on your right to choose your birth setting: [www.birtherights.org.uk/factsheets/choice-of-place-of-birth/](http://www.birtherights.org.uk/factsheets/choice-of-place-of-birth/)



# What choices do I have about where to give birth?

Within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire you are able to choose to have your baby in the following settings:

**At home:** You will be cared for by a midwife at home where you feel safe and familiar. A second midwife will be there for the birth of your baby.

**Midwife-led Care Settings:** You will be cared for by a midwife in the Sanctuary Birth Centre at Queen's Medical Centre (QMC) or City Hospital (which are alongside the Maternity Units) or within Sherwood Birthing Unit at King's Mill Hospital.

**Maternity Unit:** You will be cared for by a midwife and a doctor as needed on the Labour Suite at QMC, City Hospital or King's Mill Hospital (sometimes called Obstetric Units or Labour Wards).

At your first appointment (sometimes called a 'booking' appointment) your midwife will explain that you can choose to give birth at home, in a midwife-led care setting or within a hospital Maternity Unit.

Don't worry; at the start of your pregnancy you just need to decide which Maternity Unit you wish to book with as this may determine where you will have your ultrasound scans. As your pregnancy progresses and you gain more of a feeling for how healthy you and the baby are, you can consider which setting you would like to have your baby in.

Your midwife will discuss the options available in your local area but, if you want to travel further afield, you are able to choose any maternity service you wish. Further information is available at the end of this guide.



# Birth in midwife-led care settings

Until recently nearly all women gave birth in hospital (sometimes called obstetric units or Labour Wards). We now know that this is not an ideal setting for all women. If you and your baby are healthy, you are unlikely to develop a problem and you have not had a caesarean before, you may want to consider having your baby in a midwife-led care setting. This could be at home, at the Sanctuary Birth Centre at QMC or City Hospital or within Sherwood Birthing Unit at King's Mill Hospital.

Birth is generally very safe for women and their babies who are at low risk of complications. Evidence suggests that healthy women and their babies are as safe in midwife-led units as they are in Maternity Units (obstetric units or Labour Wards).

Home birth is also safe when women, who are at low risk of complications, are planning a second, third or fourth birth at home. The chance of the baby being injured, seriously ill or dying during or just after birth is a little higher if a first birth is planned at home. The numbers of babies affected is very small, but this is still an important consideration.

More information on healthy, low-risk women having their first and next babies is available here:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/where-can-i-give-birth/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/where-can-i-give-birth/)

**1st baby:** [assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/NHSE-your-choice-where-to-have-baby-first-baby-sept2018.pdf](https://assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/NHSE-your-choice-where-to-have-baby-first-baby-sept2018.pdf)

**Subsequent babies:** [assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/NHSE-your-choice-where-to-have-baby-baby-before-sept2018.pdf](https://assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/NHSE-your-choice-where-to-have-baby-baby-before-sept2018.pdf)



# Birth in a Maternity Unit

You may be advised to have your baby in a Maternity Unit (Obstetric unit or Labour Ward) where you will have access to care from specialist midwives, doctors and the wider team. Specialist equipment to monitor you (i.e. wireless CTG monitoring) or your baby will be available if needed. Some of the conditions which may mean birth in a Maternity Unit would be recommended for you are listed below. The list does not include everything, and your midwife or doctor will discuss this further with you if needed. Birthing pools are also available.

**Current pregnancy:** Twin or triplet pregnancy, pregnancy related (gestational) diabetes, placenta is too low-lying (placenta praevia), breech pregnancy, high blood pressure, high BMI (35 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or more), pregnancy lasts less than 37 weeks or more than 42 weeks (including induction of labour), baby is very small, anaemia (low iron levels), too much or too little water (amniotic fluid) around the baby, active infections including group B streptococcus, where antibiotics in labour are recommended.

**Previous pregnancies and births:** Previous caesarean, post-partum haemorrhage (bleeding) which required additional treatment or a blood transfusion, eclampsia, retained placenta, previous shoulder dystocia (when it is difficult to deliver baby's shoulders), previous stillbirth.

**Long term medical conditions:** Diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, history of high blood pressure or stroke, asthma, cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, clotting or bleeding disorders, hyperthyroid, current infections (for example HIV, hepatitis B or C, toxoplasmosis), liver disease, epilepsy, mental health conditions requiring inpatient care.

More information on pregnancy conditions and medical conditions which may impact upon your pregnancy is available here:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/?tabname=impregnant](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/?tabname=impregnant)

**Sherwood Forest Hospitals Foundation Trust website:**  
[www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity/](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity/)

**Nottingham University Hospitals Trust website:**  
[www.nuh.nhs.uk/maternity](http://www.nuh.nhs.uk/maternity)



# Home birth in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

A home birth allows you to labour and give birth to your baby in a familiar, relaxing and private environment. You will receive one-to-one care from a midwife in your own home and will have two midwives present for the birth. You can choose who and how many birth partners you want around you. After the birth, you can get into your own bed to relax and enjoy the first precious moments with your new baby.

You are particularly suitable for a home birth if you have had a problem-free pregnancy, you labour naturally after 37 weeks of pregnancy and you are not having your first baby.

If it is your 2nd, 3rd or 4th baby and you are not at risk of developing problems during labour, home birth is safe for you and your baby. If it is your 1st baby there is a small increased risk to your baby compared to birthing at the Sanctuary Birth Centre or on the Maternity Unit (obstetric unit or Labour Ward).

Research suggests that planning a home birth means you are more likely to have a normal birth without interventions such as forceps or ventouse (suction cup), even if you need to be transferred into hospital.

You can choose to have your baby at home regardless of which Maternity Unit you book with for your maternity care.

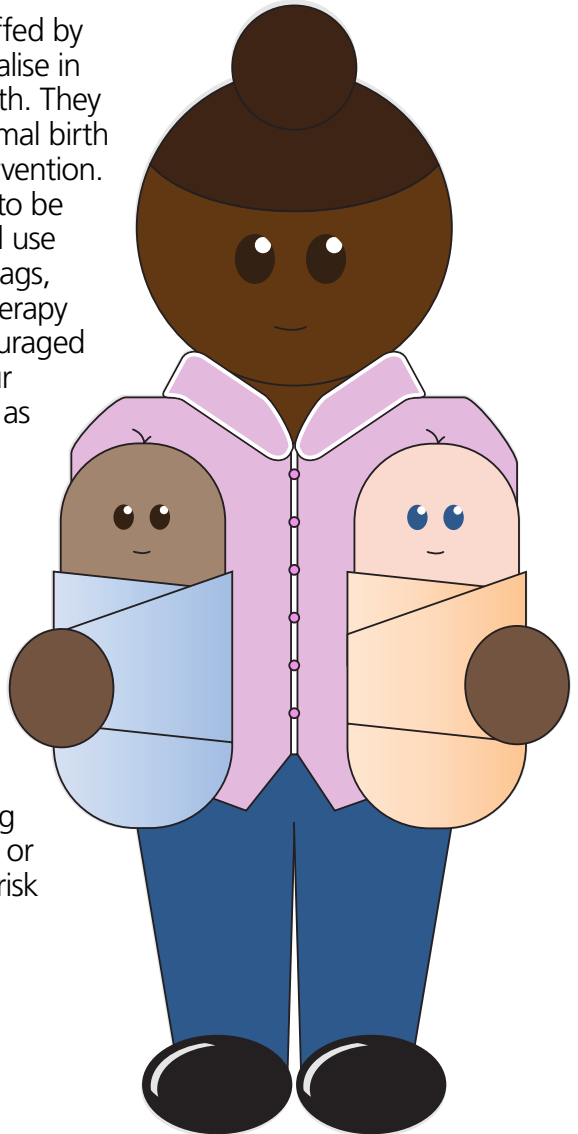


# Midwife-led care settings in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

There is a four bedded Birth Centre at each of the two Nottingham University Hospitals sites. These are the Sanctuary Birth Centres and are located next to the main Maternity Units. You are also able to receive midwife-led care at Sherwood Birthing Unit which will be delivered within the Maternity Unit. These settings aim to create a calm, comfortable and homely atmosphere.

Midwife-led care settings are staffed by experienced midwives who specialise in promoting active, natural childbirth. They are committed to promoting normal birth and minimising unnecessary intervention. They will actively encourage you to be upright and mobile and make full use of the equipment such as bean bags, birthing balls and mats. Aromatherapy and water birth is positively encouraged to help you cope with your labour without regional pain relief (such as an epidural) which can limit your ability to move about.

If you have had a problem-free pregnancy you will be suitable to labour and give birth to your baby within a midwife-led care setting. For healthy women and babies, planning to birth in a midwife-led care setting is associated with a higher rate of normal birth compared to birthing in a Maternity Unit (obstetric unit or Labour Ward) with no increased risk to your baby.





**Maternity Unit:** QMC/City Hospital or at Sherwood Birthing Unit

If you have a medical condition or have had any problems during your pregnancy you may be recommended to have your baby in a Maternity Unit (obstetric unit or Labour Ward). Maternity Units provide access to closer monitoring for you and your baby during your labour and the birth should you need it.

Sherwood Birthing Unit, within King's Mill Hospital and the Labour Suites at QMC and City Hospital, provide a 24 hour maternity service, including midwife, obstetric, anaesthetic and neonatal care.

All of the Maternity Units have private birthing rooms with access to aromatherapy, birthing pools and active birth equipment, including beanbags, birthing balls and mats. The midwives will help and encourage you to use these even if you and your baby are being more closely monitored as it is helpful for you to remain mobile and upright. There are operating theatres attached to the Maternity Units as well as an anaesthetist on call 24 hours a day.

If you are planning to have a Caesarean Section you will go to theatre to have your baby.



# Making your midwife aware of where you would like to have your baby

Your midwife will discuss your choice of birth setting with you at your booking appointment and whenever you want to following this.

At Nottingham University Hospitals Trust your choice of birth setting will be identified using one of the following stickers on the front of your hand held records.



At Sherwood Forest Hospitals Foundation Trust your choice of birth setting will be documented on the front of your maternity records using one of the stickers below.



# Maternity Units in bordering counties

## Chesterfield

Chesterfield Birth Centre (consultant-led), Chesterfield Royal Hospital

Chesterfield Birth Centre (midwife-led), Chesterfield Royal Hospital

## Derby

Derby Birth Centre at Royal Derby Hospital

The Labour Ward at Royal Derby Hospital

## Kettering

The Labour Ward,  
Kettering General  
Hospital

## Leicester

Meadows Birth Centre,  
Leicester General  
Hospital

The Delivery Suite,  
Leicester General Hospital

Orchard Birth Centre,  
Leicester Royal Infirmary

The Delivery Suite, Leicester  
Royal Infirmary

## Lincoln

The Labour Ward, Lincoln County  
Hospital

## Melton Mowbray

St Mary's Birth Centre, St Mary's  
Hospital, Melton Mowbray

## Northampton

Barratt Birth Centre, Northampton General Hospital

Sturtridge (Labour Ward), Northampton General Hospital

## Worksop

Maternity Unit, Bassetlaw Hospital, Blyth Road, Worksop,  
Nottinghamshire, S81 0BD

