

Shared Lives

Statement of Purpose 2011



What is Shared Lives?

Some people in our community need a bit more support to be able to live an ordinary, everyday life and make the choices they want. Often they are supported by family carers to do this and these carers also need support.

Shared Lives is a way of providing support to people who need help to keep as independent as possible and lead a full and active life.

Shared Lives helps many people, including people with learning disabilities, mental health needs, physical disabilities and older people.

Shared Lives works by matching the person needing support with a Shared Lives carer recruited from the community who can give them the support they need.



It is a flexible and unique arrangement that fits with the life of the Shared Lives carer and meets the person's individual needs.

Shared Lives provides three different kinds of support:

Long term – people live with Shared Lives carers as part of their household

Short break care – provide vital support to people and their family carers

Home based care – provides sessions that give people a choice to do the things they want



Long term support – This is an option where a person can live with an approved Shared Lives carer in the Shared Lives carer's home. They become part of the carer's household and take part in all aspects of family life. This works because the person is matched to a Shared Lives carer who is trained to provide the care and support they need.

Through the Kirklees Council Shared Lives scheme, a person can live with another family, a couple or a single person in their home. Shared Lives carers come from a range of different backgrounds.

If you live in a Shared Lives placement you will have your own bedroom and share the other rooms and facilities in the house. Your Shared Lives carer will provide you with the care and support you need.

You can also share everyday life with the other people living in the house, for

example, eating together, shopping, going to the cinema and going on holiday. You can spend time with the Shared Lives carer's family and friends as well as with your own friends and relatives.

The Shared Lives carer gets paid an allowance to support you and will help you to develop your skills, independence, social life and confidence.

If you feel this might be good for you and suit your needs then ask your social worker or contact Gateway to care for more information.

Short break care – A short break is time apart from your family carer. It can be an overnight stay, a weekend or a holiday. It will give you a wide range of experiences and help you to widen your circle of friends. Short breaks also give your family carers an opportunity to do what they want to do and have a break from caring.

Home based care – Daytime and evening sessions can be used to give you more choice and the chance to do the things you want. Home based sessions can take place in your home, your Shared Lives carer's home or out in the community, depending on what you need.



Shared Lives can:

- give you independence, life skills and new interests away from family carers in a different environment
- provide an opportunity to live with a Shared Lives carer who will provide the support you need
- prepare you for more independent living
- provide family carers with a regular break from caring
- provide support to your family during an emergency and offer reassurance that you are cared for and looked after during this time
- provide you with the opportunity to meet new people.

The Shared Lives team are experienced workers who provide support to everyone who uses the service and the Shared Lives carers.

Assessment and contact details can be found on the back cover.

Application, training and support

All Shared Lives carers go through a thorough recruitment and approval process which includes training, checks and references. The scheme is registered and inspected by the Care Quality Commission. This is a guarantee to families that we work to National Care Standards.

Shared Lives carers are paid an allowance for the support they provide.

We do checks to make sure that Shared Lives carers will provide a safe and secure environment.

Shared Lives carers continue to receive ongoing advice, support and training from the Shared Lives scheme and the standard of the care that they provide is reviewed regularly. Feedback from the people using the service is very important to us.



Matching

During the recruitment and approval process we learn about our Shared Lives carers' lifestyles, and the type of support they can give.

When we receive your assessment and application for Shared Lives, we will match you with a Shared Lives carer who can meet your needs and who shares your interests. You and your family carers will have the opportunity to meet the Shared Lives carer as often as necessary, to give you the opportunity to decide if the carer is right for you.

We will review the arrangements regularly to make sure things are running smoothly and make any changes needed.



Money matters

Shared Lives carers are not employed, but are paid an allowance for the service they provide. The allowance covers their costs, as well as providing an element of reward.

Long term placements

When you live in Shared Lives households you will pay something towards the cost of your board and rent as agreed with your Shared Lives carer. This is set according to the Department of Work and Pensions guidance.

The remainder of your income is used for your other expenses, for example daytime activities, clothing, personal items savings and holidays etc.

You can be supported with your finances and budgeting as much or a little as you would like.

Short breaks

Your contribution towards the short break will depend on your income and is calculated by Kirklees Council. The cost of staying with a Shared Lives carer is the same as a residential care short stay.

Home based sessions

You may be required to contribute towards your Shared Lives support, for example outings in the community. You will agree where you will go with your Shared Lives carer, and will be expected to pay for your own drinks and snacks etc.

Tracey – there's no place like home

Tracey is a bubbly young woman with a learning disability. Until March last year she lived with another Shared Lives carer. When her carer made the decision to retire Kirklees Council helped to match Tracey to another suitable carer.

Deborah became involved with Shared Lives a few years ago after seeing some information about the scheme. She has always worked in learning disability services and said: "I saw Shared Lives as a great way to help and support someone in a homely situation."

Deborah was approved as a carer and Tracey is the first person she has been matched with.

The Shared Lives scheme will always look for the best possible match for both you and the carer.

Tracey visited Deborah several times at her home a few months before moving in to make sure that they would be a good match for each other.

Deborah lives in Huddersfield and ideally Tracey wanted to stay in Dewsbury where her friends live. Deborah said: "We have helped her build new friends and networks here and make sure she still sees a lot of her friends in Dewsbury. And now she knows more people than me! When we go to the supermarket there will always be someone that Tracey knows. It sometimes takes a lot of time to get the shopping done."

Deborah and Tracey get on really well at home. Deborah said: "Tracey is such a people person. She always has a 'hello' and a big smile for everybody she speaks to."

But it's a two-way thing. She helps me too and looks after me. In a morning she'll check that I have everything that I need for the day."

Deborah has a real sense of achievement knowing that she is helping Tracey live her life the way she wants to.

Tracey says: "I'm able to do lots of things. In the house we do jigsaws or go out to the pictures as well as bowling! We also go walking with the dog, Alfie."

Deborah added: "You need patience and it can be hard work. But we also have a lot of fun."



Being a Shared Lives carer can fit into your life in many ways.

You might provide an overnight break, a weekend or even just a few hours of company to someone.

Everyone has different amounts of time to give and we can match the time you have with someone who will value your support.

To become a Shared Lives carer you don't need to be an expert. You just need to care.



For further information on becoming a Shared Lives carer:
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