shared lives plus

Are you leaving care and looking for:

- Somewhere to call home
- Acceptance
- Stable relationships
- Further support

Shared Lives could be the fit for you!

A new kind of home for your next chapter

Leaving care can feel like a big step. Moving into adult life takes time and you don't have to do it alone.

Shared Lives is here to help you move forward, your way.

It's about living with someone who supports you, listens to you, and helps you build the life you want.

It's a home and a relationship that grows with you. Shared Lives allows you to take your time, building a trusting support network to move into adulthood with you.

"The thing that has helped me the most is knowing that I have people I can rely on and people that I can trust. That's the most important thing that has changed my life with Shared Lives."

Gracie

Meet Vicky, Katie and Gracie – young people with experience of care who are a part of Shared Lives. They talk about the difference it has made in their lives and relationships:

Find out more about Shared Lives for young care experienced people:

What Shared Lives means

With Shared Lives you could:

- Live full time with an approved carer
- Access day support
- Stay for short breaks with a carer

In Shared Lives you:

- Make your own choices
- Get help when you need it
- Feel part of a home, not just being looked after

You are in control of your own life, including your family routines and how you spend your money. Experiencing freedom your way

Hear from Gracie:

“My independence has grown, and I’ve become a different person. My confidence has grown.”
Victoria

Listen to some Shared Lives carers talking about their role:

Explore what a Shared Lives arrangement looks like in this video:

How it works

Here's what usually happens:

Your social worker or personal adviser (pa) (called a pathway coordinator or Throughcare worker in Scotland) refers you to your local Shared Lives Scheme, or the one in the area where you want to live.

You meet your local Shared Lives team and you can be supported if you'd like to do this.

They get to know you - what you like, need, and hope for.

You're matched with a Shared Lives carer who fits you (and you fit them).

You visit, get to know each other, and decide if it feels right. This could include overnight stays and this phase can be really quick or happen over months, whatever is right for you.

You move in when you're ready.

You'll always have a say in what happens next.

Learning a little bit more about the matching process:

In a Shared Lives home, you usually pay rent (about £120 a week) and housekeeping (about £60 a week for food and utilities). These costs are normally covered by your benefits, and your social worker or personal advisor (pathway coordinator or Throughcare worker in Scotland) will help set this up.

You pay for your own personal items, transport, and any subscriptions you choose. Household bills are covered by the carer, and shared activities or food costs are agreed between you and your carer. For example, if you and your Shared Lives carer choose to do something together, like eating at a restaurant you both want to visit, you would share the cost between you.

“The main thing for me has been the relationships. It is something I lacked in life, and I thought I couldn’t have that because I've never felt deserving of relationships.”

Gracie

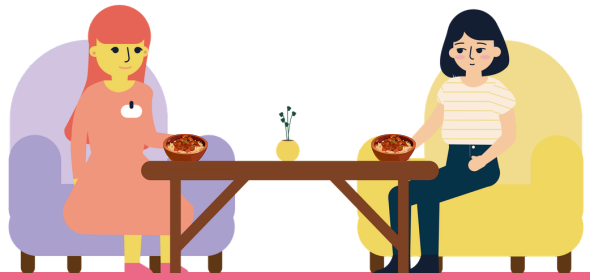
”It will give you all the support you might need if you are struggling in life.”

Victoria

What makes it different

It’s not about rules and rotas - it’s about real life.

You’ll have a home where you’re part of family life:



sharing meals

learning skills

and being included in the local community as much as you like.

Your Shared Lives carer is trained and supported to help you have the support you need, so you both get help when you need it.

Your next steps

If Shared Lives sounds like something for you:

- **Talk to your social worker or personal adviser (pathway coordinator or throughcare worker in Scotland)**

- **Find out about Shared Lives in your area and you can contact them directly if you like. Your Shared Lives carer is trained and supported to help you have the support you need, so you both get help when you need it.**

- **Visit the Shared Lives Plus website for more information**

Every Shared Lives story is unique – because every person is.

FAQs

Who will continue to support me?

You'll have a Shared Lives worker who checks in regularly to make sure you're happy and settled. They'll also work with your social worker/ care manager or personal advisor (pathway coordinator or Throughcare worker in Scotland) to make sure you have what you need.

How long can I stay in Shared Lives?

There's no time limit – you can stay for as long as it feels right for you. Some people stay for a few months; others make it their home forever.

What are my rights in Shared Lives?

You have the same rights as anyone else living in their own home – including privacy, independence, and choice. Your Shared Lives team will help you make sure you get all the benefits and entitlements you're due.

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding means keeping you safe. Shared Lives takes this very seriously, and your local team will always listen and act if something doesn't feel right. In Scotland, this is called adult support and protection.

Where else can I get support?

National charity 'Become' supports care experienced young people at every stage. They offer an advice line, help with accessing education or employment, and act as a one-stop shop for all things related to care support.

Who Cares? Scotland are a membership organisation for care experienced people in Scotland, offering support (including with finances, housing and your rights), signposting and opportunities to meet others with similar experiences.

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) can help young people in Northern Ireland learn all they need to know about moving on from care.

Voices from Care Cymru (VFCC) is a charity in Wales for care- experienced young people. VFCC offer advice, counselling as well as supporting young people to move towards adulthood.

Words explained

Approved carer: A Shared Lives approved carer is someone who has been assessed, trained and approved by a Shared Lives scheme to provide support. This means they are safe to provide support within their own home.

Shared Lives scheme: You and your carer would be part of your local Shared Lives scheme. They would be responsible for supporting you to match with a carer and to continue to support the relationship.

Shared Lives arrangement: (sometimes called a partnership) is the agreed support relationship between your carer and you. Sometimes people call this a placement.

Matching: Matching is the process of carefully pairing you and a Shared Lives carer. Being careful to look at needs, personality, lifestyle, culture, interests and support requirements.

Care leaver: A care leaver is a young person who has been looked after by a local authority and is transitioning, or has transitioned, into adulthood. Care leavers are entitled to specific legal rights and ongoing support.

Personal advisor (pa): A personal advisor, throughcare Worker or pathway coordinator is a professional assigned to support a care leaver, usually from age 16 through to at least 21 (and up to 25 if requested). They help organise support, review pathway plans and make sure your voice is heard.

Pathway plan: is a legal document that sets out how you will be supported into adulthood. It covers areas such as housing, education, health, finances, relationships and emotional wellbeing.

Transition: refers to the gradual process of moving from children's services to adult services. In Shared Lives, transition is seen as a journey rather than a single event at age 18.

Safeguarding: refers to protecting your right to live safely, free from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Safeguarding adults aims to balance protection with independence.

Our lives get better when they're shared

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