

The state of the nation



Elyssia is supported by her Shared Lives carers Caroline and Tyrone, along with their son and daughter in law, Samantha and John in South East Wales.

Shared Lives care in Wales 2023-24

Key Messages

Shared Lives is a unique form of social care based on the simple but transformative power of human relationships. In Shared Lives, a young person (18+ in Wales) or adult who needs support is matched with a Shared Lives carer, by their local Shared Lives scheme. Together, they share home, family and community life. The seven Care Inspectorate Wales regulated schemes offer live-in, short break or day support, with a chosen Shared Lives carer ¹.

In a challenging climate of financial constraints and pressure on social care, Shared Lives in Wales is growing; with the number of people supported increasing since last year. Schemes continue to develop their offer of flexible, person-led day support and short breaks, as well as provide innovative and award-winning care to those living with dementia, learning disabilities or with a mental health need.



Raymond, West Wales Shared Lives ▲

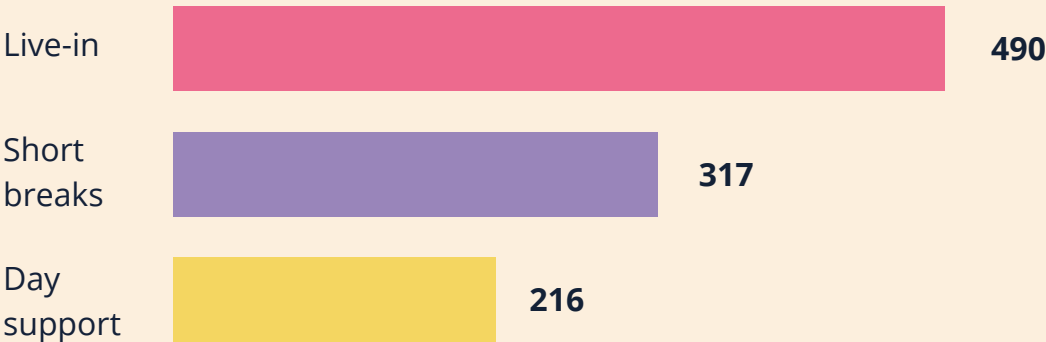
Supported people

The number of people supported by Shared Lives in Wales increased by **12%** to **1011** since last year, even though numbers across the UK decreased slightly. This rise demonstrates the innovative approach of schemes and support for Shared Lives in Wales despite the pressures on the social care sector.

Two services in Wales featured in the top **10** across the UK for growth in number of people supported, with an increase of **42%** and **37%**.

490 people accessed live-in support, **317** received short breaks and **216** benefited from day support. An increase in day support and short break arrangements was a continuing trend in Wales, with one scheme in Wales having provided day support to the greatest number of people in the UK.

Types of support drawn on in Wales



¹ At time of receiving data there were 7 schemes in Wales which all contributed to this report.

62% of people supported in Shared Lives live with a learning disability or profound and multiple learning difficulties, **17%** with dementia or a support need related to older age and **15%** with a mental health need. This contrasts with the wider UK sector, where only **5%** of the people supported live with dementia/ or an older age support need and **7%** with a mental health need. This demonstrates the diverse and varied support offered in Wales by Shared Lives schemes.

69% of people supported in Shared Lives were aged **25-64**, **16%** were aged **18-24** and **15%** **65** or over.

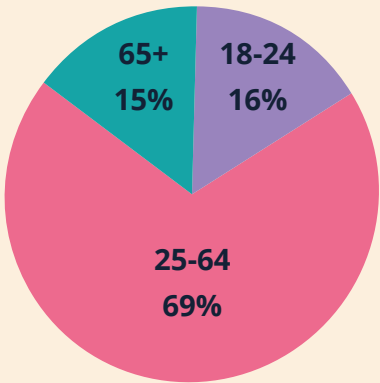
Shared Lives carers

Whilst the number of supported people has grown in the past year, the number of Shared Lives carers has decreased from **852** to **670**. This contrasts with the wider UK sector where more carers are supporting fewer people, possibly due to increasingly complex or inappropriate referrals. This issue could be less prevalent in Wales.

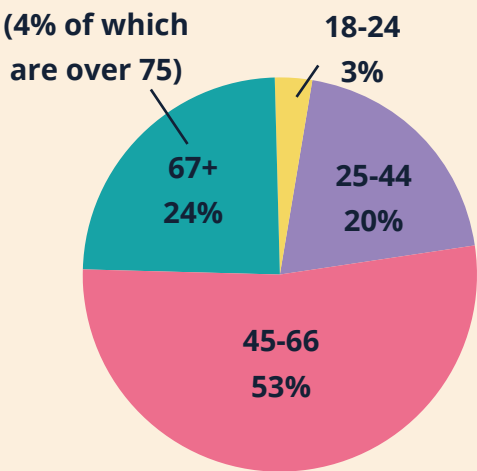
Over half (**53%**) of Shared Lives carers in Wales were aged **45-66**. **3%** were aged **18-24**, **20%** aged **25-44** with the remaining **24%** aged over **67** (including **4%** aged **75** or older).

From the data received, **462** Shared Lives carers offered live-in support, **220** provided short breaks and **166** delivered day support.

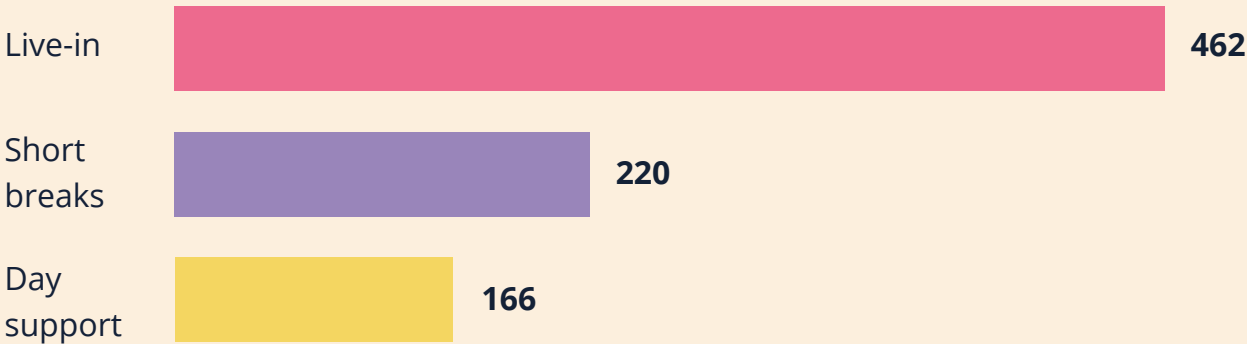
Age of people supported by Shared Lives in Wales



Age of Shared Lives carers in Wales



Type of support provided by Shared Lives carers in Wales



Shared Lives staff

The number of Shared Lives scheme staff was **83**, with the vast majority working on a full-time basis. Less than **10%** of scheme staff worked part time. This is an increase of **1** worker across Wales, reflecting a stable workforce.



Elena, West Wales Shared Lives



Shared Lives Plus Ambassador Catherine and her Shared Lives carer Liz at the Royal Garden Party

For more information about Shared Lives in the UK and Shared Lives Plus check out our [UK state of sector for 2023-2024](#)

To find out what Shared Lives can do for you, please contact us:

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Our lives get better
when they're shared

