



Commissioning better care with Shared Lives Plus

Transforming Shared Lives
development and growth
through consultancy support

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The case for Shared Lives

Shared Lives is a real example of what the future of good social care looks like. It builds relationships, belonging and purpose within local communities.

Shared Lives schemes bring people who need support, together with Shared Lives carers, to share homes, lives, and community connections, so everyone has the chance to live where they feel they belong.

Despite its proven cost-effectiveness and ability to improve people's lives, Shared Lives accounts for only 1% of long-term adult social care in the UK – indicating significant untapped potential for growth and impact.



Good outcomes for less

Relational, high-quality support

Shared Lives offers deeply personalised, relationship-centred care within family and community settings. It is consistently recognised by the CQC and other care regulators across the UK as one of the highest quality forms of social care.



Cost-effective and sustainable

Shared Lives can generate **£12,000–£26,000** in savings per person, per year, while improving quality of life and long-term outcomes.



Supported across central government

Shared Lives is recommended in the Conservative Government's People at the Heart of Care White Paper and supported by Labour as part of 'home first' principles that help people remain independent for longer.



Backed by local government

Shared Lives is fully endorsed by the Local Government Association (LGA) and ADASS. Partners in Care and Health commissioned Shared Lives Plus to develop national guidance outlining six building blocks for the growth of Shared Lives.



Six building blocks for growing a robust Shared Lives service

1

Joined-up working with local leaders

2

Effective partnerships with relevant teams and individuals

3

Social workers who are familiar with Shared Lives approaches

4

A high-performing, effective Shared Lives team

5

Well-supported Shared Lives carers

6

Ongoing Shared Lives carer recruitment

The challenges of making change under pressure

We understand the broader pressures that the sector is facing:

- **Financial pressures** on services are at an all time high, with councils under unprecedented strain in delivering adult social care, with demand rising sharply as people live longer, often with more complex needs.
- **Public expectations around quality, choice and personalisation** continue to grow, all key aspects of nationwide legislation and guidance which local authorities should be upholding to remain compliant.
- **Time and workforce pressures** result in persistent challenges around the recruitment and retention of social care teams, subsequently leading to less continuity for the people receiving support. This instability can undermine outcomes, increase safeguarding risks and place further pressure on commissioning teams.
- **Limited options for person-centred commissioning.** Residential placements, supported living and short-term crisis services can be costly and inflexible, and do not always deliver the independence, community connection or wellbeing that people want. Services are designed around buildings and contracts rather than relationships and community assets.



We understand the common challenges to developing Shared Lives:

- **A different approach to commissioning:** Commissioning Shared Lives often requires rethinking local strategic planning and redirecting resources towards flexible, community-based options such as Shared Lives and the range of ways it can be drawn upon.
- **An invest to save approach:** Introducing new commissioning arrangements and funding into Shared Lives often requires an invest to save approach, alongside the capacity and time to scale sustainably and to maintain a high quality service, which can then deliver strong outcomes and long-term savings.
- **Overcoming historical perceptions:** Historical dependency on large-scale provisions has led to lower awareness and understanding of Shared Lives, including the different ways the model can be used, can be low across health and social care, made harder by high social care staff turnover. This can slow local development without dedicated support and system-wide engagement.



How investing in your Shared Lives service meets your challenges

Shared Lives offers a practical, proven way to respond to these challenges. It provides personalised, community-based support that delivers strong outcomes in wellbeing, independence and safety.

Shared Lives can generate substantial savings per person, per year, while improving quality of life. Most importantly, it aligns closely with council priorities around prevention, choice and community connection - helping people live good lives, not just receive care.

A high-quality, cost-effective option with significant room for growth

Across the UK, Shared Lives is at the forefront of demonstrating what good social care can look like - and its potential is unlimited. It has the potential to expand in a range of ways, always offering better care and support and offering substantial savings.

Adaptable, truly person-centred across health and social care systems

The Shared Lives model can flex to local need, offering live-in arrangements, day support and short breaks. It supports people with a wide range of needs, working with health, social care and voluntary sector partners - including those living with dementia, mental ill health or requiring support at points of crisis - as well as adults seeking to build independence in a family and community setting.

Choice and control

Shared Lives enables people to have more choice and control over their care and support, centred on helping people to lead independent and fulfilling lives, whilst embedded in communities in a place that people call home.

A strong option for transitions and care leavers

For young adults moving into adulthood, Shared Lives provides a stable, nurturing, home-based environment. It is increasingly recognised as a vital option within transitions planning across children and adult social care pathways.

“ It made me feel like I could be my own individual person, I’ve never had that before, it opened up a lot in my life. ”

Gracie, part of Shared Lives in Rotherham and one of our Care Leaver Ambassadors

“ People should be living in a family basis where they can – there is lots of untapped potential. Shared Lives Plus coming in was timely and gave a kick start to transformation. Showing the art of the possible and providing an evidence base for us to build on. ”

Hilary Hall, Corporate Director for Community Wellbeing (DASS).

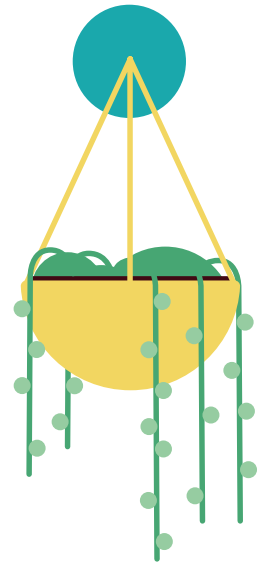
Our consultancy team has designed a targeted support offer that directly responds to these issues - helping you overcome barriers and achieve sustainable, measurable growth.

Strategic Advice

Shared Lives Plus' consultancy offer

Shared Lives Plus is the UK membership and support charity for Shared Lives and has a vision for a kinder, stronger society built on sharing our lives and our homes. We help build communities where everyone lives a full life, regardless of the support they need. We do this by growing Shared Lives care with the right structures in place to support and guide people who want to share their lives and their homes.

Shared Lives Plus has a well-established, proven and evidence-informed approach to supporting the development of Shared Lives. This is through our Strategic Advice service.



Our support meets you where you are in your Shared Lives journey, helping you and your organisation overcome barriers and achieve sustainable growth with measurable outcomes.

Unlike generic consultancy agencies, we are the only organisation in the UK providing a comprehensive range of support specifically designed for Shared Lives schemes to establish, diversify and grow, backed up by our up-to-date research, data, membership support, best practice and expertise.

Work with us towards a brighter future where people drawing on social care flourish.



A trusted partner to local authorities

Our latest data shows that over the past two years, we have supported **more than 53 councils**, helping them to plan, review, grow and improve Shared Lives provision.

Experts in Shared Lives care

For over 30 years Shared Lives Plus has been championing Shared Lives as a model of social care, developing technical legal, social care, employment and housing expertise and knowledge alongside a best practice framework for schemes. Our consultancy team work alongside our core membership experts to ensure that your processes and working practices are robust and vibrant.

Collaborative, system-wide support

We work closely with councils, Integrated Care Systems, Shared Lives schemes, housing partners, the voluntary and community sector, and the NHS to build sustainable, joined-up models of support.

Available across all four UK nations

We strengthen and scale Shared Lives in the context of each nation's health and social care systems, regulatory and legislative frameworks.



The three key areas of our consultancy offer

Our team includes a broad spectrum of specialised skills and expertise, drawing on an informed Shared Lives evidence base, including data analysis, research, Shared Lives carer and scheme recruitment, transformation and improvement, and project management, providing rapid or longer-term partnership support that fits your local needs and requirements.

Our menu of support is flexible: once you decide which key area to focus on, you can choose whether to commission the whole package, or parts of it, depending on your priorities and stage of development.

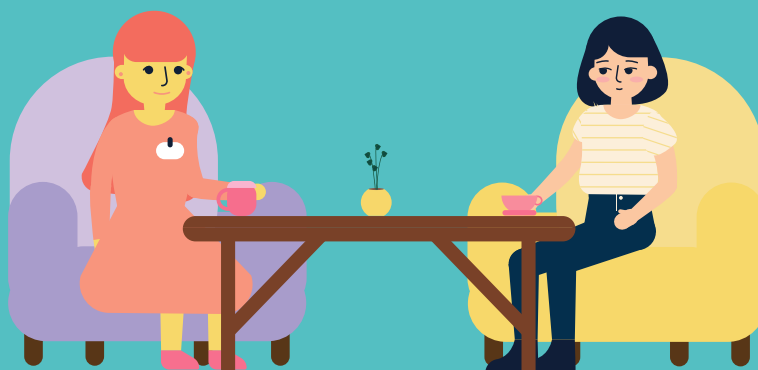
Establish

Grow

Diversify

“ [There’s been] measurable growth in carers and people supported across all pillars, showing tangible outcomes. ”

Senior leader, South Yorkshire



Establish

There are around **150** Shared Lives schemes across the UK, but there are some areas where Shared Lives is still not an available option.

The 'establish' package

We can support you to make the case for a Shared Lives scheme and determine the operational steps to establish it in your area.

Choose your option

We will support you to identify the best commissioning and delivery option for Shared Lives in your area, by carrying out a thorough options appraisal.

Build your case

We will co-develop an evidence and cost-based case for establishing Shared Lives, specific to your local area potential and challenges.

Develop your plan

We will work across teams to produce a strategic plan for establishing and embedding a new Shared Lives offer in your area.



Grow

Shared Lives is expanding steadily across the UK, but there is significant untapped potential for growth across Shared Lives support.

The 'grow' package

We provide expert support to help you build strong foundations for growth, overcome common barriers, and apply proven good practice.

Grow your foundations

We will help you to build the right foundations for Shared Lives growth, by identifying scheme improvements, developing the right culture and practical systems, and the adoption of sector innovations.

Define your vision

We will support you to define a clear direction and plan for Shared Lives, by co-producing a vision and strategy for growing Shared Lives in your area with local people and teams.

Build your case

Drawing on local data and national insights, we will support you to develop a robust cost and outcomes case for local investment and growth.



Grow your profile

Building on 'what works', we will raise the profile and awareness of Shared Lives in your organisation and beyond, by training your local teams, developing Shared Lives 'champions', and planning communications and marketing activities.

Attract and keep Shared Lives carers

We will support you to co-develop a targeted strategy and campaign for carer recruitment, developing impactful messaging, channels and tactics and embedding approaches that supports retention, such as carer training and role development.



Diversify

Adults with a learning disability are the single largest demographic group drawing on Shared Lives, however there is an increasing diversity in how Shared Lives can provide support in other areas for:

- People with mental ill health
- People living with dementia
- Young care experienced people
- Crisis prevention and hospital step-down
- Unpaid carer breaks
- Parents with a learning disability

The 'diversify' package

Diversifying Shared Lives involves a range of considerations that our team of experts can support with.

Define your vision and approach

We will work alongside you to develop your strategic vision and implementation plan for diversifying your Shared Lives offer to more people in your area.

Develop pathways and partnerships

We will provide the capacity and expertise to enhance partnership working across teams and your local system, developing new processes and pathways into Shared Lives.

Attract and upskill your carers

We will support you to design a set of targeted recruitment activities to upskill and attract the right Shared Lives carers, aligned to your diversification ambitions.



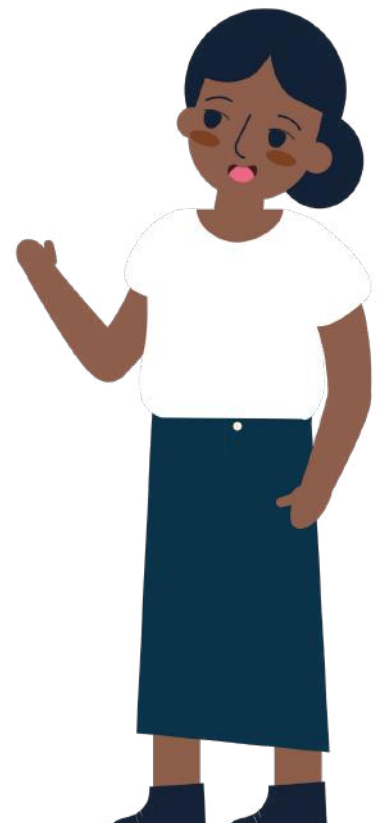
Birmingham City Council partnered with Shared Lives Plus to deliver a major Shared Lives project using investment from the Accelerating Reform Fund. This project demonstrates how partnership working and targeted investment can rapidly build capacity, awareness, and digital improvement across local Shared Lives schemes.

Project aims

- Increase awareness and understanding of Shared Lives across the council and its partners, including housing teams
- Build capacity and expertise within the Shared Lives team to strengthen community engagement and co-production with carers and people supported
- Grow the number of new Shared Lives carers
- Streamline and improve digital processes for working with carers

Shared Lives Plus supported the council to:

- Develop a citywide recruitment campaign to attract new carers, especially in areas with fewer Shared Lives arrangements
- Deliver training for social workers and create Shared Lives champions to encourage more high-quality referrals
- Produce an options appraisal for a new digital system to manage and monitor carers



Project impact and legacy

The project recruited **23 new Shared Lives carers** and raised awareness of Shared Lives among social workers.



The support we have had from Shared Lives Plus has been second to none. It enabled us to work at pace and to implement good practice from other areas. The passion that these colleagues have for Shared Lives is evident through all interactions with them.

Caroline Naven, Head of Transformation for Adult Social Care, Birmingham City Council

Tailored marketing materials, aligned to target growth areas

Birmingham City Council | shared lives plus | Scan me to apply: [QR Code]

Are you able to provide care to an individual in your home, around your current Job? Become a Shared Lives carer"

- Enhance the life of someone in need of support by offering either long term, short term (respite) or day support, around your current job
- Work around your own availability
- Support someone from home, no need to lose time or money commuting
- Receive a fee around £450-£562 (equivalent of £23,400 - £29,224 p/a if full time)

We are looking to increase our Bi/Multi Lingual carers in the team and would love to hear from you if you speak more than one language.

Support someone in your home offering either Respite (short stay), Day Service or Long Term arrangement. This is the perfect opportunity to 'give back' while working flexibility at home in your free time.

sharedlives@birmingham.gov.uk | 0121 464 3164

Would you like to live flexibly supporting someone from home? | Birmingham City Council

Fees Between £220 - £510 a week with tax breaks*
*Depending on support needs and care model

Shared Lives carers could give a helping hand to someone getting dressed, getting to doctors' appointments, making friends, cooking together or voting for favorite dancers on Strictly!

We work with our communities' strengths and kindness. We match people who can offer a helping hand and care, to people who need support to live fulfilling and ordinary lives. The Care Quality Commission rates Shared Lives as the safest and best quality form of social care, year after year - 96% schemes were rated good or outstanding (2018).

We match people who are right for each other, based on their interests, lifestyles and their personalities so that visiting or living with a Shared Lives carer truly feels like home. The outcomes for people who visit or live with a Shared Lives carer are extraordinary!

- 90% of people felt Shared Lives improved their social life and made it easier to have friends
- 94% of people have more choice in their daily life
- 82% of people said their physical and emotional health had improved
- 85% of people felt more involved with their community

Accelerating Reform Funding led to the development of a consortium of the councils across South Yorkshire, including Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley. The project focused on developing an ICB wide strategic recruitment campaign, enhancing practice and processes in relation to Shared Lives referrals and expanding the Shared Lives local offer for young people moving into adulthood, people with mental ill health, dementia and unpaid carer support.

Project aims

- Grow and expand Shared Lives to more people
- Grow awareness and understanding of Shared Lives
- Establish opportunities for cross system collaboration
- Work together to tackle opportunities and challenges

Early scoping and scheme capacity building

- Identified need for further ongoing investment
- Identified the need for wider partnership working to enable scheme growth
- Developed a clearer strategic vision and buy in

Developing the local building blocks

- In-depth scheme reviews
 - Carer recruitment approach audited
 - Local action plans developed to support improvement and growth
-

Awareness raising and partnership building

- Regional cross South Yorkshire event held
- Bringing first hand stories of Shared Lives impact to cross system partners
- Enabled cross system collaboration - the consortium continue to meet regularly to share learning, insights and support
- More informed social work teams improving quality of referrals
- Galvanised engagement from senior council and ICB leaders

Defined a sustainable plan for the coming years

- Partnerships formed across NHS, council, VCS
- Awareness and understanding of the model increased
- Schemes secured additional funding for capacity building in teams
- Developed local Shared Lives champions and trained social work practitioners

Project impact and legacy

Growth in eight months across South Yorkshire:

15 new Shared Lives carers recruited

37 new people supported in Shared Lives

Tailored marketing materials, aligned to target growth areas

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council   Scan me to apply: 



- Do you have a spare room at home to offer support to an individual?
- Are you looking for a way to support someone around your family life, while making a positive difference to someone's life?
- Could you offer flexible support from home, helping someone build valuable life skills?

————— If so, becoming a Shared Lives carer could be for you! —————

Offering long stay (live in), short break (respite) or day support (flexible days), you could help give someone back their independence while supporting them flexibly at home in your free time.

You will be fully supported with training and a network of carers and scheme workers. You will receive a fee of between £100 - £750 a week depending on arrangement type (equivalent of up to £39,000 per annum if full time).

 sharedlives@rotherham.gov.uk  01709 334948
 www.rotherham.gov.uk/homepage/465/shared-lives

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council   Scan me to apply: 



- Do you have experience working with older people, people with dementia and people with physical health needs?
- Could you provide support flexibly at home for an older person, someone with dementia or someone who has recently been discharged from hospital?
- Enhance the life of someone by offering either long term or short term (respite) support, around your current job. All you need is room in your heart and home!
- Receive a fee of between £100 - £750 a week depending on arrangement type (equivalent of up to £39,000 per annum if full time).

Shared Lives allows the opportunity for you to offer support from your own home. We are looking for people with a background in working with older people, dementia or physical disabilities to offer long term or short break (respite support) as a Shared Lives carer. All you need is some experience in this area, a spare room and the desire to enhance someone's life. This can be done full time or around your current job when is suitable for you. There are also day support options with no need for a spare room.

 sharedlives@rotherham.gov.uk  01709 334948
 www.rotherham.gov.uk/homepage/465/shared-lives



Package costs

Our consultancy offer is fully tailored to your needs, with flexible support packages based on a competitive day rate. We collaborate with you to clarify your goals and shape a bespoke programme of support, providing an initial indicative fee that we refine together to ensure the best value.

Shared Lives Plus has really, really helped us. At a higher level, we are now much more visible with strategic colleagues. Shared Lives is part of the transformation agenda and is much better known across social work teams.

Ginnie Jacques, Herefordshire Shared Lives scheme manager



Interested? What to do next

Let's explore how Shared Lives could save you money, increase capacity, and improve outcomes.



consultancy@sharedlivesplus.org.uk



Shared Lives Plus – our mission

Shared Lives Plus' modelling shows that, with targeted investment, the sector could expand to support **6,089 additional people with a learning disability by 2030**. To deliver our vision and grow the sector, we have five key objectives:

1

Enable Shared Lives to diversify, strengthen and grow

We work with schemes, local authorities and commissioners to expand high-quality Shared Lives options, ensuring more people can benefit from personalised, community-based support.

2

Influence national policy and shape public understanding

We champion Shared Lives and Homeshare at a national level - highlighting its impact, promoting best practice, and supporting local areas to align with emerging policy priorities.

3

Deliver high-quality support to Shared Lives schemes and carers

We provide expert guidance, resources and consultancy to help local schemes operate safely, sustainably and effectively, enabling Shared Lives carers to deliver outstanding support.

4

Develop, test and scale innovative models of Shared Lives

We work with local areas to co-design and evaluate new approaches - helping commissioners introduce tried-and-tested innovations that meet local need.

5

Build an inclusive, high-performing organisation

We invest in the skills, diversity and capability of our people so that commissioners receive reliable, expert and forward-thinking support.

“ I have been involved in Shared Lives for 30 years, and I can honestly say this is the most exciting and forward-thinking it has ever been. That’s largely because of the Shared Lives Plus team and the way they bring schemes together. ”

Shared Lives scheme worker, Shropshire



Our lives get better when they're shared

**Work with the leading experts in
Shared Lives care**

 www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk

 consultancy@sharedlivesplus.org.uk

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Reg Charity Number (Scotland) SC042742

Reg Charity Number (England and Wales) 1095562