

The state of the nation: Shared Lives care in Scotland 2021-22



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Introduction

“We are establishing what will be Scotland’s most northerly Shared Lives scheme here in Shetland. Shared Lives will bring significant benefits to Shetland by improving quality of life through community based meaningful relationships and establishing wider connections. The dignity of choice and control over whom supports you and how you wish to spend your time will bring an exciting additional choice to those who access support. Developing Shared Lives in Scotland will bring the shift in balance of care that the Christie & Feeley reports have recommended.”

Jane Haswell, Shetland Community Connections.

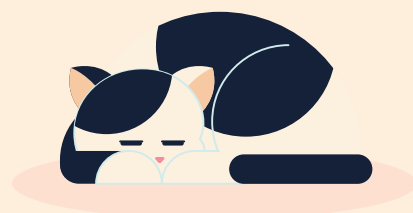
The Shared Lives sector in Scotland has had a positive year. The contraction in services during the pandemic has been reversed, services have re-opened, processes adapted, more Shared Lives carers recruited, and there are plans for more growth.

The resilience of Shared Lives carers has shone through as they continued to provide support to vulnerable people, even as other services fall away.

The data in this report paints a picture of a small, resourceful and, above all, resilient Shared Lives sector rooted in bespoke, person-centred care. It shows that Shared Lives remains strong, even in the face of recent challenges, and that it still has significant scope for growth with investment and support. The data shows that short-break and day-support services have gone most of the way to re-opening,

but the narrative behind the data is that interventions are happening later, with smaller packages of care being available for people.

Shared Lives schemes have adopted creative approaches to enable Shared Lives carers to continue their support, many recruitment and assessment processes have moved online, support has been delivered outside and online, support groups are now more digitally active than ever before. Changes that were forced upon the sector have altered practice permanently and made the sector more flexible and resilient.



What is Shared Lives?

Our members are Shared Lives schemes and carers who deliver care to those in need of support. In Shared Lives, adults who need support, move in with or visit an approved Shared Lives carer. They're matched by a Care Inspectorate-regulated scheme and share family and community life. Carers are paid professionals, receiving an allowance rather than hourly rate, allowing people to share lives and support without clock watching, combining personalised and professional care.

Combining personalised and professional care, Shared Lives deliberately blurs the distinction between care, support, and family life. People thrive in this authentic, loving environment, and the outcomes are often transformative. It is a cost effective and highly personalised alternative to residential and other forms of care. It offers people needing support a model of social care that is based on relationships, sharing family and community life, supported by health and social care partnerships to enable people to flourish.

Key messages

- The re-opening of services in Scotland following the pandemic has continued to accelerate with an 82% increase in the numbers of people supported this year. This is 80% of the people supported pre-pandemic and we expect that in the coming year that the sector will pass the pre-pandemic levels of support.
- The total number of people supported during this year was 572. This includes, for the first time, data from a long existing scheme in Glasgow.
- Of the people supported, 15% receive help due to dementia or a need associated with old age, 47% because they live with autism or a learning disability, 3% because they live with mental ill-health, and 35% were transitioning from the care system.
- There are 519 Shared lives carers providing support in Scotland, associated with 15 Shared Lives schemes. The schemes employ 37 staff to support the Shared Lives arrangements.
- There is some anecdotal evidence that in some areas, as people start to receive services again following the pandemic, that the packages of support are smaller than previously.
- The most recent Care Inspectorate reports show that 40% of schemes received a grade of 6 (Excellent), 33% received 5 (Very Good) and 27% received 4 (Good) for the care and support they deliver. No scheme was graded lower than "Good".
- Shared Lives remains a highly cost-effective form of adult social care. An independent review found that Shared Lives resulted in an average saving of between £8k and £30k per annum, depending on the person's support needs and local alternative services.



Garry is the perfect host! - Aberdeenshire Shared Lives

With dedication, hard work and a supportive Shared Lives Carer, Garry has achieved his goal - and hosted the perfect tea party!

Garry, who has a learning disability, lives with his sister and enjoys short breaks and day support with Shared Lives Carer Joyce. When Garry was looking for a challenge, Aberdeenshire Shared Lives suggested he work towards a Focus Certificate in Independent Living.

Garry was apprehensive but soon realised it might be a good idea. "I will take my time. There's no right or wrong, I'm loving it" said Garry.

With the support of Joyce and his sister, Garry worked through the modules; cooking a meal, using the washing machine and iron, tidying his room, setting up and clearing after meals.

Garry chose to hold a tea party to use these new skills. He was the perfect host; sending invites, making food and setting the table. Garry greeted his guests warmly and served them hot drinks. There were even virtual guests, though they missed the delicious cakes!



Garry's work and commitment paid off and in July 2022 Garry was presented with his certificate at a Shared Lives event surrounded by congratulating friends.

Support Worker Wendy says "Garry has discovered his individuality. He wants challenge which in turn boosts his self-esteem. Congratulations Garry!"





People Supported within Shared Lives

There were 572 people supported within Shared Lives from April 2021 – March 2022.

- **7%** live with Autism
- **19%** live with Dementia or have a need support associated with old age
- **40%** have a Learning Disability
- **3%** live with Mental Ill Health
- **30%** are transitioning from the care system

People with support needs associated with a learning disability continue to be the largest single group supported by Shared Lives. However, Shared Lives is flexible and can accommodate people with a wide range of needs. We strongly believe that local authorities and Shared Lives schemes have the capacity to expand to support diverse cohorts of people who could benefit from

the transformative and flexible support of Shared Lives care. This includes support needs associated with an acquired brain injury, sensory impairment, mental ill health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, and hospital discharge. In particular, there is potential to diversify Shared Lives to support people with needs associated with older age and dementia.

“The possibilities in local communities”

“At a time when many were feeling isolated and uncertain about accessing services following lockdown restrictions, Aberdeenshire Shared Lives brought people together. Their Walking Adventure Groups opened people’s eyes to the possibilities in their community for friendship, support and life choices.

“At these fortnightly walking adventures groups, Shared Lives Carers and families formed friendships and matches whilst learning about the community, heritage and wildlife.

“With support, many gained confidence in using public transport after a period of staying at home. One group member now travels to his Shared Lives Carer’s home for day support using a dial-a-bus service, extending his support network and opening up new opportunities.

“Visiting your local community is really important for developing your independence skills. One gentleman with

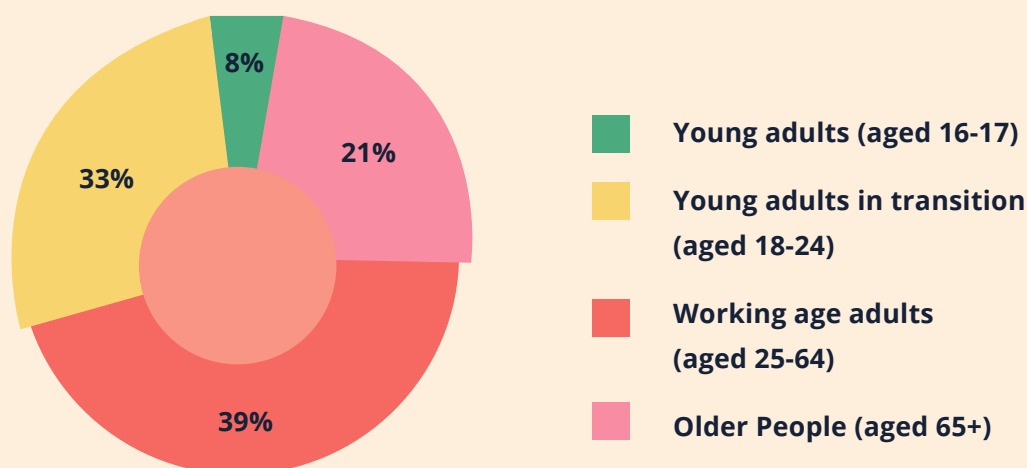
a visual impairment has learnt how to navigate around his village and another with a learning disability visits the barber independently from his long-term Shared Lives carer.

“A John Muir Award is being worked towards, with the walking group discovering the local wildlife and contributing wildflowers to their community. The groups are well known in their area, they are invited to events and have a real sense of pride in their community and their own value as citizens. One adventurer was empowered to make an informed life choice and applied to live in one of the areas explored.

“While lockdown restrictions are hopefully in the past these groups continue to empower, build on strengths, bring choice and opportunities, all whilst preventing isolation in this rural area.”

- Nicola Watson – Shared Lives Development Officer

Age of people supported





The strength and resilience of relationships in Shared Lives

When the pandemic put day support on hold in Moray, Anna was at risk of her mental health deteriorating. But her Shared Lives Carer Catherine didn't let that happen—the longstanding, trusting relationship they had built up over the years supported Anna through this time.

Anna and Catherine used to meet once a week for day support at Catherine's home and bonded over their love of sewing, but when the pandemic put services on hold Anna found losing this tough. Anna had experienced mental ill health previously and became more isolated and anxious.

Catherine recognised that Anna was struggling and arranged regular online contact for the two to talk as they could not meet face to face. When services restarted, Anna wasn't ready to meet indoors, so they met in Anna's garden instead. Over time Anna became more comfortable and

the pair started to walk together in the community. Changes in Anna's health mean they no longer sew together but the pair enjoy gardening, which gives Anna a real sense of achievement.

Because of their close relationship, Catherine recognised that Anna needed professional support and worked with Anna to arrange and maintain this. With Catherine's help Anna is now attending appointments, shopping, visiting Catherine's home and, at times, meeting in Anna's home. Anna's confidence has slowly grown and she is looking after her own wellbeing.

“When Anna wasn't ready to meet with others, she let Catherine in because of the strength and resilience of their relationship. Professional support was needed, arranged and is still in place.”

- Diane McLeary, Moray Shared Lives

Starting a Shared Lives Scheme during a pandemic

"In March 2020 we began a new contract to establish a Shared Lives service in the Scottish Borders. But within a few weeks our new team had to adapt to face the challenges of Covid and the restrictions that followed" says Marissa Speed from Cornerstone Shared Lives.

"We introduced Shared Lives to the carers via phone calls or virtually. We completed virtual tours of homes. Our carers found this less daunting than a formal meeting as it took place in their own space and meant that the supported person could be included as they wished.

"As restrictions eased we progressed to garden visits and walk-and-talk sessions, moving through the assessment process in a relaxed way, ensuring everyone's safety."

"I enjoyed the walk-and-talk sessions, it's easier to talk about the 'difficult' stuff whilst walking out in the fresh air, less formal but getting the same outcome." - Shared Lives carer

"We also arranged virtual celebrations for Shared Lives week, online coffee mornings and Christmas get-togethers for our families," Says Marissa.

"All of our assessment panels have been online. We will continue this as it allows us to bring in expertise from all over the country.

"Carers' forums are also online, bringing together those from different areas. We bring in speakers and deliver training. Recently a carer who had transitioned from fostering to Shared Lives was able to positively support another carer just starting on this same journey.

"We have definitely made many positive and creative changes to how we work and engage with one another for the better."

**- Marissa Speed,
Cornerstone Shared Lives Service**



Quality and safety

Shared Lives schemes received high grades from the Care Inspectorate for their care and support, higher than any other part of the care sector. 35% of schemes received a 6 (Excellent), 43% received a 5 (Very Good), and the remaining 22% received a 4 (Good) in their most recent inspections.

Our My Shared Life outcomes measuring tool, gathered from people supported by a Shared Lives carer, reports that they feel part of a family, have an improved social life, more friends and are involved in their community thanks to their Shared Lives carers. They have more control over choices they make and have improved mental and physical health.

We can support you

Shared Lives Plus has more than 35 years' experience of supporting local authorities and schemes to grow to their potential.

We can help with:

- Needs analysis
- Cost benefit analysis
- Business cases and options appraisal
- Implementation planning
- Commissioning strategies and plans
- Coproduction
- Recruitment strategies
- Audience insight
- Communications and marketing strategies, and practical support
- Training of social workers in the benefits of Shared Lives

If you would like support to grow or develop a Shared Lives scheme please contact:

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

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