

# Frequently asked questions



Below are some common questions we get asked. If you have any further questions or want to know more information, please get in contact – we are always happy to discuss your specific enquires.

## Who can become a Shared Lives carer?

Our Shared Lives carers come from all walks of life. We are not interested in your status but rather in your skills and capacity to provide the level of care and support people using our service need.

What does matter is that you're over 21 years old and have the space in your home and life to welcome someone into your home. You should have a mature and responsible outlook, plenty of energy and the ability to provide warmth, support, stability and experience of working in a carer role.



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We will consider all applications and will independently without discrimination look at each application.

### **I don't own my home, is that a problem?**

No. You can become a Shared Lives carer if you live in your own home or rent. What matters is that you can provide stability for the person living with you.

### **What if I have pets?**

We know some of the people who use our Shared Lives service love pets. So we would welcome your application. However, dogs must not be on the Dangerous Dog register.

We won't be able to place anyone with you if they have any allergies to animals or are not comfortable around pets.

### **I work full-time; can I still become a Shared Lives carer?**

Yes – however, the type of care you provide will be limited on the hours you work. You may find that short breaks or respite caring would suit you best. We would discuss all options as part of the application process.

### **What if I'm not married?**

We consider all applications whether they are single, married, cohabiting, heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender. What's important is your ability to provide the care needed by the individual.

### **Will I get paid?**

Yes - Shared Lives carers receive financial support to care for older people or people with learning disabilities. A weekly allowance is paid fortnightly to cover day-to-day costs such as food, heating, clothing, washing, wear and tear, activities and so on.

Barnsley's payments are in line with recommendations set out by Shared Lives Plus, the national representative body for Shared Lives carers.

### **I smoke – does that mean I can't become a Shared Lives carer?**

No – it will not affect your application if you smoke. We would ask anyone who does smoke not to do so in the company of the people they are caring for.

## What if I have a past criminal record?

You can still become a Shared Lives carer, however, this is dependent upon the seriousness of the offence, when it occurred, and how you have lived your life since. It is important that you declare any convictions or cautions when you apply.

## Do I need any qualifications?

No. What matters is that you have at least five years' experience or knowledge in either a paid, voluntary or family based or voluntary caring role.

We will always consider the match between your skills, your interests and the interests and needs of the person you maybe caring before placing them with you.

## How long will the application process take?

We aim to complete the process with you in six months from making your application through to approval. This can take longer for reasons such as if we have to wait for checks to be returned or if you need to take some time at any point to consider what becoming a Shared Lives carer will mean to you and your family.

## How often will I be visited by the team?

As a Shared Lives carer we will help you to build up a caseload of service users who we've matched you with. When you have service users living with you we will visit you every six weeks to ensure that all is well, although you can contact us at any time to discuss any issues.

## Can I terminate a placement or end your contract?

Yes - if you are having any problems with a placement you will need to tell us as soon as possible. We will hold a review meeting with you to discuss the matter and come to an agreed decision to best meet your needs and the needs of the person you are caring for.



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