



The purpose of this guide is to provide more detailed information to prospective Shared Lives carers on the application, approval and matching processes and also details the support you will receive.

### What are the aims and objectives of the service?

Run by Bristol City Council, the Shared Lives service aims to provide care, support and accommodation to adults with learning difficulties, physical disabilities, mental health problems, older people, younger adults transitioning to adult services, people with dementia and other vulnerable adults.

Bristol Shared Lives is for people (referred to in this document as “service users”) aged 18 years and over regardless of background, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or HIV status.

The service differs from conventional services as the service user usually lives within the carer’s home. Shared Lives homes can only have a maximum of three service users living there at any one time.

As a Shared Lives carer you will provide care and support to service users. In turn the Shared Lives team in Bristol City Council will support you in your caring role.

### What kinds of services will I be expected to provide as a Shared Lives carer?

As a Bristol Shared Lives carer, you could offer:

- Long-term live-in support within your home, supporting up to three individuals to develop or maintain their independence. The length of the placement depends on the individual and their needs.
- Short-term live-in support within your home, providing short breaks for up to three individuals. Typically this might be during weekends.
- Support during the day from your home, which might include specific activities at home or trips out during the daytime.
- Emergency Placements – where a person needing care is experiencing breakdown of their usual care and support e.g. where their usual carer is unable to care for them due to an emergency such as a family bereavement.

### What sort of things might I be expected to do as a Shared Lives carer?

- Involve service users in your family life and community, including anything from doing the gardening together to going to a festival.
- Encourage and support service users to be as independent as possible, whether this is helping them to manage their personal care, use public transport, do the shopping or prepare their own meals.
- Support service users to attend GP appointments and take their medication.
- Help service users to manage their own money, including their benefits.
- Write brief notes on the support provided to service users, including any milestones they have reached or any setbacks they have experienced, to assist with social work reviews.
- Attend social work reviews.

## How much will I be paid?

As a Shared Lives carer, you will be self-employed. The amount you will be paid is dependent on the type of placement and the level of need the individual you support has.

For short breaks this is currently £50 per night.

For long-term placements, there are three bandings proportionate to the level of need of the service user, with £350 per week for those at a lower-level of need, £450 per week for moderate needs, and £650 per week for higher needs.

Day support is paid at an hourly rate, which ranges from £7.50 per hour and £10 per hour, and is dependent on the number of individuals supported together and their needs.

## How will I be assessed?

In order to ensure that you are a suitable to become a Shared Lives carer, you will be allocated a Shared Lives officer, who will guide and support you through the assessment process. They will:

- Visit your home to ensure it is suitable and safe.
- Give you an application form to complete. Upon receipt of the completed application form, they will check references and Disclosure & Barring Service (formerly Criminal Record Bureau check) and request a medical report from your GP.
- Arrange any necessary training and accompany you on some courses in order to assess you while you receive training.
- After this, the Shared Lives officer will compile a report on you which goes to the Approval Panel.



## What is the Approval Panel?

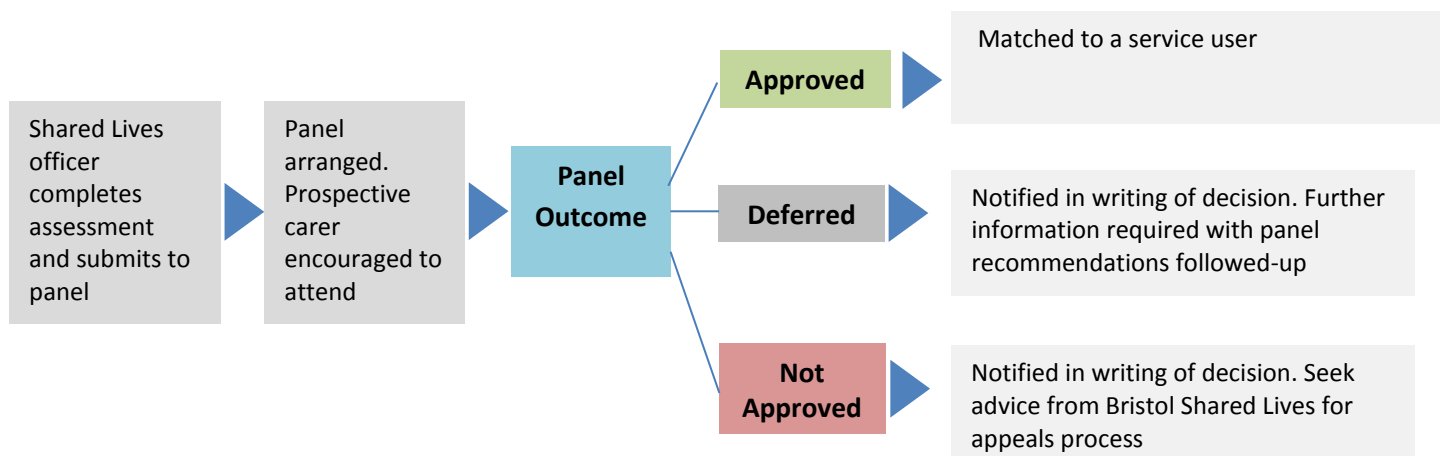
The Approval Panel are a group of approximately 4 experienced professionals, including social workers, who meet approximately every month and are responsible for the approval of Shared Lives Carers.

You will be given the opportunity to attend the panel meeting, if you wish. The Approval Panel decision will be made from the assessment report and feedback from the Shared Lives workers. The Approval Panel will have specific criteria on which to base their decision as to whether a carer can be approved or not.

If you wish to appeal against a Panel decision, then there is a procedure to follow and the Shared Lives Service will support you in this.



The following diagram illustrates the possible outcomes of the Approval Panel:



## Once approved, how am I matched to a service user?

Social Services send the details of people who need care and support to the Bristol Shared Lives team. The team then looks at the service user's needs and tries to match them with the carer with the most compatible personality, skills and attributes. Bristol Shared Lives will ensure through its matching and introduction processes that the placement will work for both of you and will only go ahead if you are both happy with it. The matching process can be halted at any time without any criticism or blame.

Once a referral has been matched to a potential carer and if the carer agrees to continue with the matching process:

1. The service user is first visited by a Shared Lives officer.
2. Following this, an initial visit for the carer and the service user to meet is arranged by Bristol Shared Lives, preferably in the carer's home.
3. In order to achieve a good match, we give time for people to get to know each other properly. We do this by organising tea visits, overnight stays, weekend stays and week trials as required to build the relationship between service user and carer.
4. Once funding is agreed and both the carer and service user are happy, the placement can commence.

It is vital to get the match right, therefore the time it takes to agree an individual match may vary.

## Emergency Placements

In the case of an emergency placement, it may not be possible to follow the above matching process. However, the Shared Lives Service will ensure that the carer has access to as much information about the service user as possible.

## Will I be monitored?

To ensure that Shared Lives homes provide a good standard of care and support, each Shared Lives home receives a 3-monthly monitoring visit from their allocated Shared Lives officer, who will provide you with regular one-to-one support.

Whilst Care Quality Commission (CQC) does not inspect individual homes, the Bristol Shared Lives service is inspected by CQC and as part of this process, CQC will meet with a number of carers and service users to find out how they feel about the support they get from Bristol Shared Lives.

Each placement is also reviewed annually by your dedicated Shared Lives officer.

## What ongoing training will I receive?

Once approved as a Shared Lives carer, you will be expected to attend all Shared Lives mandatory training. These courses vary in length, but training is free to Shared Lives carers. Newly-approved carers who can provide evidence that they have recently completed any of the above courses will not be expected to attend again.

## What other ongoing support will I receive?

Your allocated Shared Lives officer will continue to support you after you have been approved as a carer. They will make contact with you once every 6 to 8 weeks and visit several times a year. You can contact any member of the team during office hours (see back page).

During these visits, you will have the opportunity to discuss:

- Learning & development needs
- Health & safety
- Equalities issues
- Comments & complaints
- Accidents/incidents
- Premises
- Personal issues
- Any other support needs
- Developments within Shared Lives (e.g. policy updates, etc.)
- Any concerns.



We are also happy to offer support with paperwork, service user finances and benefits and attending reviews.

We will put you in touch with other Shared Lives carers and include you in our supportive local network of Bristol carers. We will arrange and pay for carer's insurance.

We will also pay for your membership of Shared Lives Plus, the charity supporting Shared Lives carers nationwide. The benefits of membership include:

- High quality information, guidance, and legal support available 24/7
- Prompt and effective support, in confidence, from experienced professionals
- Opportunities to have your say and influence the care community, or submit comments and suggestions on a national level.
- Access to more training, events, newsletters and other resources.

There is also an out-of-hours Emergency Duty Service that covers evenings and weekends.

## Contact details

**Emergency Duty Team: 01454 615165**

**Care Direct: 0117 922 2700**

**If you require any further information, please contact Bristol Shared Lives:**

**Telephone 0117 903 6680**

**Mon - Thu 9am to 5pm**

**Fri - 9am to 4.30pm**

**Email: [sharedlives@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:sharedlives@bristol.gov.uk)**

**Web: [www.bristol.gov.uk/sharedlives](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sharedlives)**



**‘Shared Lives, great rewards’**