

Our lives get better when they're shared

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

85% of people felt more involved with their community 94% of people have more choice in their daily life

82% of people said their physical and emotional health had improved

*[My Shared Life UK outcomes tracker, 2018](#).

How does Shared Lives work?

Everybody is unique, and we have trained and approved Shared Lives carers who could be the right match with different people – whatever level of support they need. It could suit someone leaving hospital, living with mental ill health, learning or physical disabilities, an older person, living with dementia, or a young person from fostering. Give us a call to find out about available Shared Lives carers and if you're not sure if it could be the right support – it will save you time!

Shared Lives carers open up their home and family life to someone for:

- One or two days a week.
- Overnight stays to offer respite for family carers.
- For a few weeks, months or for many years.

Shared Lives carers give a helping hand with getting dressed, making friends, voting on Strictly and pursuing social interests, going to the doctors, and enjoying life together.

Contact us and start your sharedlifetoday:

sharedlives@birmingham.gov.uk



Relationships which change lives

“From the start Maxine was interested in getting to know me. I felt more welcome.”

That’s Michelle’s take on living with Maxine, a Shared Lives carer, who was determined that Michelle, 23, would become part of her family and flourish as a person.

But it doesn’t mean being at home all the time. Since leaving school, Michelle has taken courses and often goes out with friends, dancing and swimming. One of her biggest passions is wrestling, which her and her dad go to watch live:

“Now, I’ve got a good relationship with my dad. He thinks Shared Lives has helped me.”

Michelle adds, “I do more things for myself. I’ve got more confident with travel and getting about. My personality has changed so much – though I can still have my moments!”

Maxine explains, “I don’t expect us to be in each other’s faces all the time, but I wanted Michelle to feel like a part of the family.”

Next steps:

The good, bad and the indifferent!

We need as many quirky details about the personalities, preferences and support needs of the person you're working with, so that we can give carers a realistic idea of who they could support.

Getting to know each other

Based on your information, we will choose Shared Lives carers who could fit the bill. We introduce everyone, first with a social worker, then with longer visits, or overnight stays, so that both citizen and carer can see if they click. If you're not sure if it's for the long-term, a respite or short break might be a good way

to start. If the social worker is available to support visits to a potential carer's home, our flexible and bespoke service can take as little as two to six weeks, depending on what's right for the person.

In an emergency

We can work with you to find a Shared Lives carer who is able to help, if you know the person already and can share as much information as possible.

Checks and details

Next, everyone plans the financial, medical and practical arrangements so that the person, Shared Lives carer, their family, friends and social worker are confident the match will last.

A better life

Shared Lives may take a little longer to start, but the extraordinary and fulfilling lives for the person and their carer, means that in the long run, it will reduce demand on health and social care services – and create better lives for everyone.