



**INFORMATION FOR CARERS**

## SHARED LIVES

**"Ordinary living supported by extra-ordinary people"**

Our Shared Lives scheme recruits and supports carers that can offer a home to adults with learning disabilities. This gives the client the chance to live in an ordinary household and enjoy life within the community. In some cases, this can be the first time that the clients are able to experience this.

The role of St. Anne's within the Scheme is to recruit carers, match them with the right client and provide ongoing support and training. We currently support 70 Shared Lives arrangements across the Leeds area.

St Anne's Shared Lives is registered as a Shared Lives service with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), under The Health and Social Care Act 2008. The Scheme is inspected by the CQC on an annual basis. The last inspection was held in May 2018 where the scheme was rated as "Good". A copy of the full report can be found here: [St Anne's Community Services - Shared Lives \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications-and-reports/inspections-and-approvals/inspection-reports/2018/may/st-anne-community-services-shared-lives).





## OUR CLIENTS

### What is a learning disability?

A learning disability is something that affects a person's ability to learn. This means a person with a learning disability has a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information or to learn new skills. They also have a reduced ability to cope independently which starts before adulthood and has lasting effects on development.



### What support needs do the clients have?

It's important to be aware that there are a range of different learning disabilities which have different impacts on different individuals. Consequently, the support needs of our clients are many and varied. Possible needs that clients may have include help or prompting with personal care, assistance in becoming more independent and support in communicating and living within the community.

### What sort of lives do they lead?

Again, the lives that the clients lead will depend on the individual and the needs they have. Some clients are independent enough to have or seek employment, and others will attend day services or college. There are a number of provisions within Leeds for adults with learning disabilities, and the Scheme project workers can help you to work with various services and find the ones that are right for your client.

The ethos of the Scheme is to take into account the individual needs of each client and enable them to become as independent as possible

## OUR CARERS

### What sort of people become carers?

Carers are members of the public who have offered their time and support to individuals who require it.

They can be married, single, they might or might not have children.

We welcome carers from all communities, backgrounds and ages, and aim to have a Scheme that's fully representative of all the diversity in Leeds.

The diversity is what makes Shared Lives so successful. Key qualities in Shared Lives carers are:

- A good sense of humour
- Plenty of patience and empathy
- An ability to face everyday challenges head on
- Willingness to share their lives and homes

### What do I need?

Being a SL carer is not just about offering a person a room in your house. The person you care for will need to feel that they belong in your home and are treated like a member of your family. This means caring about them, creating a space for them in your family, offering them stability, including them in family activities and keeping them safe.

Shared Lives carers provide practical support in terms of board and lodging, but it's also important that you're prepared to support and help the person matched with you to lead a normal life in the community. You will be expected to treat the person matched with you with respect and dignity and support them to express their views and make their own choices and decisions. Also, you will respect their right to confidentiality, identify any change in their needs and bring those changes to the attention of your Project Worker.

### How long will I be a carer for?

Our Shared Lives arrangements are long term, but we appreciate that people's lives change. In addition, the client may decide that they are ready to live more independently or that a different arrangement may suit them better. We ask carers to commit to providing care for at least a number of years, and that at least three months notice is given if you do want to move on to allow a comfortable transition to take place.





## LIFE AS A SHARED LIVES CARER

### What happens after the client moves in?

Once a client moves in, you'll start to get used to living together and learn how best you can support them and their needs. Whilst it's important for clients to be sharing your life, equally you will be sharing theirs and so there may be things you need to facilitate that don't fit into your normal schedule. There will be a certain amount of adapting to be done on both sides and your project worker will assist you with this

### How will the scheme support me

Shared Lives carers receive ongoing support and training including:

- Allocated Shared Lives worker
- Regular visits and support
- Shared Lives meetings
- Social events with other Shared Lives carers
- Support as part of a registered service
- Monitoring support and reviews
- Pre and post approval training, including Learning Disabilities Awareness, First Aid, Safeguarding Adults and Working in a Person Centred Way

All carers are encouraged to develop a support network with other Shared Lives carers



### How will the scheme support me

All carers are entitled to 30 nights of respite a year. This will be arranged through your project worker

### What do I get paid?

Carer fees are agreed on a case by case basis. The amount you will receive will depend on the individual needs of each client. As well as carer's fees, you will receive payment for food and board, which in total will be at least £370 a week tax free.

Please note that all Shared Lives carers are self-employed rather than employees of the Scheme

## LIFE AS A SHARED LIVES CARER

### Jennifer and Joan

Joan is a 60 year old woman with a learning disability. She has lived in the community throughout her life and has been cared for by her son and daughter in law. However, her son and daughter in law now have children of their own and are struggling to provide the care that Joan needs. Jennifer is a divorced 47 year old mother of two children who are still living at home. She is working in a care home but has found it increasingly paperwork driven and impersonal. She has friends that are currently carers with St. Anne's Shared Lives and thinks it may be a way for her to continue caring in an environment that suits her better whilst continuing part time hours with her current employer. Jennifer undergoes the approval process and is accepted. After careful consideration, the Scheme matched her and Joan, and after a two week period of introductions, Joan moves in.

Joan settles in well to the family atmosphere in Jennifer's home. Jennifer supports Joan to continue attending the services she currently enjoys within her local area. She also identifies that Joan enjoys making the most of her appearance, and supports her to visit a salon once a week to get her hair and nails done. Jennifer is able to continue her employment, which fits around Joan's schedule.

Throughout the placement, Joan has grown in confidence. She has felt more able to say what she thinks and her physical health has improved. Jennifer has found the experience of being a Shared Lives carer very rewarding, and has recently made modifications to her home in the hopes of being approved to care for a second person.

### Colin, Mark and Gary

Colin and Mark are a retired couple in their early sixties. Colin has had a successful career working as an engineer and Mark was a policeman. Although neither of them have any previous caring experience, they are looking for a rewarding new opportunity and are interested in helping a vulnerable adult.

Gary is a 21 year old man with a mild learning disability. He is keen to live independently in the future, but at the moment he requires support with his day to day living and some decision making. He is also vulnerable to financial abuse from some of his friends and family.

Colin and Mark decide to apply for St. Anne's Shared Lives. Their application is successful and they are matched with Gary.

Colin and Mark help Gary to gain living skills such as cooking and managing money. They also support his ambition to learn to drive and help him to see his friends and family whilst keeping him safe from abuse. Gary has now gained employment in a local supermarket and is in a stable relationship. He is hoping to move in with his partner in the future and Colin and Mark are fully supportive of this. Colin and Mark have found it extremely rewarding to see Gary increasing his independence and confidence. They hope to remain in contact with him once he moves on, and will be keen to help another client in a similar way.



## HOW WILL I BE MATCHED WITH A CLIENT

What do you think about when you match carers and clients

Matching carers with the right person is one of the most important parts of our job. We will discuss with you what you think will be right for you, for example, the age, gender and degree of disability the client may have. We will also consider factors such as personal interests and lifestyle, and of course the sort of household the client wants to live in. Because it's so important to get this right, it can take some time to find the right client for our carers once they are approved.

What happens once I have been matched

Once a suitable match has been identified, we'll arrange introductions so that you and the client have a chance to get to know each other before either party commits to the Shared Lives arrangement. There will always be at least one overnight visit, and ideally a number of weekend visits as well, so that both you and the client can feel confident in agreeing to the arrangement. Once the client moves in, there will also be a three month introductory period at the start of the arrangement.



## HOW DO I BECOME A SHARED LIVES CARER?

If you've decided that you'd like to become a Shared Lives carer, the first thing to do is pick up the phone and let us know. The Scheme manager and one of our project workers will then visit you to talk through the Scheme and find out about you and your home.

### How the approval process works

Once you've applied, we'll start the approval process. As you'll be caring for a vulnerable adult in your home, becoming a Shared Lives carer is a role of great responsibility, and the approval process will normally take a number of months. We'll need to do a number of checks and get a range of references from people like your employer and your GP as well as people who know you personally.

### What you need to do

As well as providing us with suitable referees, you will need to meet with your project worker regularly and complete induction training. You will also need to supply proof of your identity.

### Next steps

Once our assessment is complete, we'll compile a report that will go to our panel. They will review the report, talk to your project worker and decide whether to recommend your approval as a carer on the Scheme. Final approval will be given by St. Anne's Chief Operating Officer. Please note that you will have the opportunity to comment on the report before it goes to panel.

### Panel information

The panel is made up of professionals within the Shared Lives and caring community, members of the St. Anne's board and Shared Lives carers





St. Anne's Community Services (St. Anne's) is one of the north's leading person-centred charities.

We are a not-for-profit organisation of over 1600 staff, which has been developing and providing services for people with: learning disabilities, mental health problems, homelessness, and people with drug or alcohol problems since 1971.

We are proud to provide quality care and support to enable people to lead fulfilled lives.



**Our vision:**  
**"A life without limits  
for the people we  
support"**

## WHO TO CONTACT

If you would like to talk to somebody about this scheme, or you want to proceed with your application, please contact:

Shared Lives Team

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