



Could you care?

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme



Could you care?

Harrow Council's Shared Lives Scheme

Harrow Council's Shared Lives Scheme recruits carers to offer care and support to adults who struggle to manage on their own or are unable to look after themselves without the help of others. Shared Lives supports:

- adults aged 18 or over who may have a learning disability or physical disability
- adults with mental health problems
- older people who may be frail (physically or mentally), socially isolated and/or unable to care for themselves effectively.

Shared Lives carers offer individual care and support to adults to enable them to be happy, achieve their potential and develop/retain a degree of independence. In return, you receive a huge amount of job satisfaction knowing you are supporting people to lead happy, healthy and enjoyable lives.

To become a Shared Lives carer you must be selected, assessed, vetted, trained and approved by Harrow Council Shared Lives Scheme.

If approved as a Shared Lives carer we will match your skills, commitment and circumstances with adults who require Shared Lives placements.

Who can become a carer?

There is no 'typical' Shared Lives carer and Harrow Council welcomes applications from all ethnic and social backgrounds.

You could be single, living together, married, divorced or separated, heterosexual or gay and you could have children (of any age) living with you.

You could be working full time, part time or unemployed - it doesn't matter to us as we need carers to look after adults with all sorts of different needs who require different levels of support.

You can own or rent your home as long as you've got a spare bedroom that an adult in your care can have sole use of while sharing other family rooms.

It's useful if you've got previous experience of caring or working with vulnerable adults but this is not essential as we will provide training to help you develop the skills to need to provide care and support effectively.



Although you don't need a specific qualification to apply to become a Shared Lives carer, you must be:

- over the age of 18
- in good general health so that you can provide a high standard of support for an adult in your care. There are some medical conditions which would prevent you from becoming a carer but we will contact your GP in the early stage of your application to check that there is nothing of concern in your recent health history which might cause concern.
- patient, positive, enthusiastic, friendly and have a person-centred approach
- committed, reliable and caring
- able to respect the rights and dignity of adults with a disability.
- flexible and able to get along with other people.
- able to support people to become more independent by helping them gain practical skills and encouraging them to develop socially.

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Adult safeguarding

Adults who need care are often quite vulnerable and it is essential that we take care to protect them from the possibility of harm or abuse.

As part of the application process, we will carry out a series of checks including contacting the Disclosure and Barring Service. We will not accept you as a carer if you, or anyone living with you, have been convicted of physical or sexual abuse or if there is anything in your history which might be considered a risk to an adult in your care. Other previous convictions will not automatically prevent you from becoming a carer as we will consider the nature of the offence and the length of time passed.

What types of care are there?

Harrow Council offers a number of opportunities for potential Shared Lives carers from supporting adults on a long-term or short-term/respite basis, to providing daytime support, kinship support or emergency care for people who may need immediate support due to a family or personal crisis. If you decide to apply to become a carer you will need to think about which type of care would suit your lifestyle best:

Long term carers

Long-Term carers offer family based support and care to adults for between 5 and 10 years. The main role of a long-term carer is to give the adults in their care the support they need to develop the confidence and skills to achieve their potential and live as independently as they can. Usually the care is provided in the carer's own home with adults having sole use of their own room but expected to share facilities with the rest of the family. To become a long term carer you must be able to provide accommodation that meets both the standards of the Harrow Council's Shared Lives Scheme and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and treat the person as a member of your own family.



Short term breaks/respice

Some carers provide the same sort of care and support as long-term carers but on a short-term basis.

This gives family members and long term Shared Lives Carers to have a break from their caring role or the opportunity to have a holiday. The break can be anything from one night to a few weeks and may be a regular planned event or a 'one off'.

Respite carers can choose how much time they wish to commit to the Shared Lives Scheme.

Daytime support

Some carers provide support to a person for a few hours a day based from their homes to allow full-time carers to have time off from caring during the day. These carers play an active role in encouraging the adult to participate in different practical and social activities and offer them personal support to help them be part of their local community. Day carers can choose how many days they wish to provide care each week.

Kinship support

Kinship Support carers provide support to someone living in their own home. The support is like a family member or friend popping in to make sure an individual is managing OK and to help them keep as independent as possible. For some of the people we support they may be ready to move on from a family setting into their own place, the kinship support helps with them to do this.

Emergency care

Some Shared Lives carers offer to provide emergency care for people who require immediate support due to a family or personal crisis. A generous financial allowance is provided on a monthly basis. The amount varies depending on how much care is required and the individual's level of need.

Could you care?

The application process

Stage one – the application form

The application form will ask you to provide information about yourself and your family as well as supplying details of one employer reference and two personal references who should be people who know you well but who are not related to you. By completing the application form you are giving your consent for us to complete the necessary checks and enquiries.

Stage two- references and checks

To verify your suitability as a potential carer, we will conduct a number of personal checks on you. These include:

- Contacting your local council to see if they know you.
- A disclosure and barring service check on you and any all adult members of your household. This will include information about any criminal convictions or cautions.
- A health check. We will contact your GP to ask them if there is any medical reason why you should not be a Shared Lives Carer
- Taking up the two personal character references which you identified in your application form. As well as asking them to provide a written reference, we will organise to visit them in person.

Stage three – the induction training

All potential carers will be expected to attend 5 x 2 hour training sessions over a period of 5 weeks. This will give all potential carers a real insight into:-

- The expectations of the scheme
- Roles and responsibilities of a Shared Lives Carer
- Hearing from other local Shared Lives Carers
- Meeting people receiving support from the scheme
- Keeping people safe
- Meet the Harrow Shared Lives Team

It also enables the Harrow Shared Lives Scheme to get to know you which will help with the matching process later on.

Stage four – the assessment process

- A Shared Lives worker will regularly visit your home to meet with you to collect information about all members of your household and your experience and skills in relation to being a carer.
- Your Shared Lives worker will organise for you to attend a preparatory training programme which covers the responsibilities of being an approved carer.
- At the end of the assessment process, the Shared Lives Worker will, in consultation with you write a report about your skills, the type of person you are and who you might be able to care for.
- The assessment process generally takes 12 weeks, although this may take longer depending on your personal circumstances.

Stage five – the approval panel

The Shared Lives Worker will present their assessment report and make recommendations to a panel which will make the final decision on your approval as a Shared Lives carer. The Shared Lives Panel is made up of representatives from the council's adult services department, local health services and other organisations. You will be notified of their decision in 5 working days.

If you are approved there may be a gap until an adult is matched with you as we try to ensure that the adult's needs correspond as much as possible with what you can offer and your family's lifestyle.

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Support for Carers

As a Shared Lives carer it's important that you feel valued and don't feel you're on your own in providing the support and care that is needed. Harrow Council's Shared Lives Scheme offers a range of support for Shared Lives carers including the following.

The Shared Lives Worker

The Shared Lives Worker is your main source of support. They will keep in touch with you and will visit you on a regular basis to see how things are going with you and the person that you are caring for. As well as providing you with support to help you deal with any issues that arise, the Shared Lives Worker will carry out regular reviews of the placement, make sure that your carer's fees are paid and make arrangements for you to have a break from caring.

Training and development

You will receive initial training on all aspects of care to help prepare you for your role as a carer. Once you've been approved we will also provide you with regular training and will discuss any additional training needs you have at your annual Carer's Review, identifying suitable professional development opportunities as they arise.

The adult's social worker

The adult you look after has their own social worker who arranges day activities and transport for them (if required). They can also give you practical advice and support.

24 Hour Advice and Support

If you have concerns and need to discuss something immediately you can contact the Shared Lives Worker or the Social Work Team responsible for the adult you look after. If they are unavailable (outside office hours) you can contact the Emergency Duty Team for advice and support.

Financial support

Harrow Council's Shared Lives Scheme will pay you for each adult you support. This is a generous allowance based on what type of support you are providing. In addition a financial contribution is made by the adult you look after which covers their food and utilities.

Carers must be registered as self-employed for tax and National Insurance purposes and the carer's fee must be declared. The Shared Lives Worker will guide you through the tax procedures and discuss insurance arrangements.

Equipment

We will pay for any special equipment needed to support and care for the adult you are looking after.

Carers' support meetings

There will be regular support meetings at which you will be able to meet other carers and share experiences. Occasionally we will invite speakers along to talk about subjects of particular interest to the group.

Review meeting

We will invite you to any reviews held about the person you care for and will expect you to provide information regarding the placement and any issues which may have arisen.



Things to consider before applying

Providing a home to an adult who need support is not a decision you can make in isolation as it will have an impact on the dynamics of those living in your house, your family and friends and your lifestyle. Before making a decision you should consider:

Other people living in your house

If you've got a partner you must consider their wishes as you will both need to be committed to providing support for an adult in your care.

If you've got children, it's important to take into account their feelings and how they'll react to someone else living in their home who will change the patterns of the household. You will need to discuss the potential implications with your children and explain that although the adult who may live with you will require your attention and support you will still make time for them. It's also vital to both the adult in your care and the other people living with you that they are involved and share a family experience.

Your support network – friends and family

Supporting someone in your own home may affect your relationship with your wider family and friends so make sure you let them know in advance that you're intending to apply to become a Shared Lives carer.

Your normal routine

Caring for someone in your own home is obviously going to change you and your family's normal routines, particularly when the person first comes to stay with you.

To make the transition as smooth and comfortable as possible you will need to encourage your family to be flexible, patient and understanding to allow people to settle in.

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How are adults matched with carers?

Stage 1:

The first stage involves sharing confidential information about the adult with your family and telling the adult about you. If everyone is happy to proceed, we can arrange an introduction you get to know each other before either party makes a commitment.

Stage 2:

The initial introduction might involve meeting up to having tea together, spending a day together, then gradually progressing to overnight, weekend or a week long stay. For long-term placements a 4 – 12 week trial period might be suggested.

Stage 3: Making the decision

Following the trial period all parties will have to decide if they want to go ahead with the placement. Without everyone's agreement, the placement will not go ahead.

What if placement doesn't work out?

It is unusual for matches to fail but very rarely placements don't work out. If either you or the person you're caring for is unhappy, it's in everyone's interest to alternative arrangements.

How can I find out more?

If you feel that you have something to offer and would like to apply please fill the [application form attached at the bottom](#) and send it to us at sharedlives@harrow.gov.uk alternative contact us on 07547952714.

When we receive your completed application, the Shared Lives Worker will contact you to make arrangements to assess you as a potential carer.

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Harrow
Council

Tel. No. 075479552714

Email: sharedlives@harrow.gov.uk

Please tell us how you heard about the Harrow Shared Lives Scheme.

What appealed to you about the scheme?

Do you have a job, if so what do you do and what hours do you work?

Do you have a spare room in your home? This will be essential if you are providing long term support or respite.

Are you interested in providing long term care, respite, day support or kinship support?

Can you tell us a little bit more about yourself this can include your hobbies and interests, experience, cultural, religious, friends and family etc.. if you want to use additional paper please do.

**Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Initial Enquiry Form for
Prospective Carers.**

Date of Enquiry: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Telephone Numbers:

Home: _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____ Email Address _____

Please fill in the information above and answer the questions on the opposite page.
Once complete, please send it back to: sharedlives@harrow.gov.uk

We will be in touch within the next two weeks of receiving this form.

Best Wishes

Ewa Kus
Harrow Shared Lives Manager

