

Harrow Shared Lives Scheme Policy & Procedure No. 11

Contact with Family and Friends

People in Shared Lives (SL) arrangements have the opportunity to live an ordinary life in their community. This includes being able to maintain and develop personal and family relationships in ways that they wish.

How will this happen?

Before starting any Shared Lives arrangements SL Carers receive general information and training about people's rights and how to support people in their daily lives.

Your SL Carers will also be given information about your particular needs and wishes and a copy of your Service User Plan. This will tell them about the relevant friendships and relationships you already have, whether you require support to maintain or develop them and, if so, the ways you would like your SL Carer to provide this support. For example this could be support with:

- making or receiving phone calls
- remembering or making arrangements for meeting up with someone
- remembering birthdays and/or shopping for cards or presents
- attending social and/or cultural and/or religious events that you wish to take part in

If you are staying in the SL Carer's home your friends and relatives will be welcome to telephone and/or visit. Your SL Carer will respect your choices and privacy in relation to these and, as happens with most families, you will also be expected to act reasonably and with consideration for other people in the household. (There is more information about house rules and individual responsibilities in your Placement Agreement.)

If there are particular people you do not wish to see or have contact with, your SL Carer will support you in making informed choices about this and in exercising your rights. There is more information about this in our policy on Making Choices and Decisions.

There is more information about how SL Carers can support you in developing new contacts and friendships in the community in our policy on Safe Friendships and Relationships. They may also act to safeguard you from abuse or exploitation, if necessary, which is explained in our policy on Safeguarding against Abuse and Neglect.

See these other policies and procedures and documents for further information on:

- Standards of conduct and practice
- Making choices and decisions
- Communication
- Joint working and information sharing
- Training and development
- Daily life and inclusion in the community
- Cultural and religious customs
- Safe friendships and relationships
- Safeguarding against abuse and neglect
- Service User Plan
- Individual planning, monitoring and review
- Placement Agreement