

Shared Lives

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Got room in your heart and home?

London Borough of Waltham Forest
Shared Lives Scheme: Becoming a Carer

Call: **0208-928-8300**
Email: shared.lives@walthamforest.gov.uk
Visit: www.walthamforest.gov.uk



London Borough of Waltham Forest Shared Lives Scheme: Becoming a Carer

Could you or someone you know give a home or offer short term breaks to an adult who needs help with their life?

What is the Scheme about?

In Waltham Forest we believe that vulnerable adults should have the chance to live normal lives in the community. This is what the Shared Lives Scheme aims to achieve. This could be someone with learning disabilities, physical or sensory disabilities, mental health or an older person with dementia.

Anyone can apply to be a Shared Lives carer. We welcome applications from all walks of life. You don't need special skills or qualifications to be a carer; all you need is a spare room and the time, patience, commitment and flexibility to get to know and become involved with an adult with a disability.

What is involved?

As a Shared Lives carer you would be expected to offer both accommodation and support to someone and share your home with them. Carers are expected to involve the adult in the day to day life of their family. They encourage them in their skills and interests, enabling them to lead an independent life, and be part of their local community. This could include:

- Personal care like washing and dressing;
- Emotional support;
- Helping the person you are caring for to manage their money;
- Helping them take their medication;
- Helping them with cooking and cleaning and;
- Encourage them to be independent.

What are the rewards?

As a Shared Lives carer you will:

- Work in a challenging yet highly rewarding environment;
- Be self-employed and work from home;
- Have a regular income while someone is staying with you;
- Not be taxed for most of your income;
- Holiday entitlement;
- Get continuous support and guidance;
- Have regular training, newsletters and support meetings with other Shared Lives carers.

How long is it for?

As a carer on the Shared Lives Scheme you can choose whether you want to provide:

- Long-term accommodation: some adults with a disability are unable to live at home with their families. Others may be keen to leave home as a step towards a more independent life. Living with another family may better suit their needs and interests.
- Short-term care and support: in short term Shared Lives arrangements a person will stay with a Shared Lives carer from one night to several weeks. Short breaks are usually accessed by people using long-term Shared Lives arrangements, to have a break from staying with their main Shared Lives carer.

Could I be a Shared Lives carer?

If you are interested in working at home to help people have more independence, choice and control over their lives, we want to hear from you. Becoming a Shared Lives carer could be for you if you are:

- Patient;
- Committed;
- Willing to give someone the support and care they need;
- Willing to include that person in your everyday life.

How are people matched with Shared Lives carers?

Matching you to the right person or people is the key to successful shared lives relationships. Everyone is different, so we will talk to you to find out things that are important to you and the people living in your home. We will try and find people to suit you and your lifestyle. Before you are matched with someone we will arrange for you to:

- Meet the person and spend time with them;
- Organise for them to stay overnight if you want to help you decide.

Introductions are gradual and sensitively managed in such a way to make sure everyone has the chance to make sure the match is right for them.

What if it isn't working?

If there are problems between you and the person you are caring for then you can discuss these with the manager of the Shared Lives Scheme. Where issues cannot be resolved the agreement can be terminated by you or the person you are caring for with 28 days written notice.

How do I apply?

If you would like to become a Shared Lives carer, please contact the Shared Lives Officer by phone on **0208-928 8300** or email: **shared.lives@walthamforest.gov.uk**

Further information

Shared Lives Plus:
<http://sharedlivesplus.org.uk>

Care Quality Commission
www.cqc.org.uk



shared.lives@walthamforest.gov.uk