

## A short guide to Shared Care Scotland & our work

### Introduction

At Shared Care Scotland we aim to be the leading organisation on short breaks and respite care for unpaid carers in Scotland. As an independent charity and one of Scotland's national carer organisations we occupy a unique position that sees us work with national and local government, the third sector, short break providers, research establishments, and with carers, to help fulfil our vision:

*“that everyone who receives support or provides unpaid care can live a full and satisfying life, with the assistance they need to take regular, quality breaks from the everyday demands of their caring routines.”*

This short paper aims to give an overview of the work that we do and why.

### Why are breaks important?

Being able to access regular breaks is vital for unpaid carers to ensure their health and wellbeing. Breaks can help alleviate the physical and emotional demands of caring, and when provided in a way which meets the needs of the carer and the cared for person, can help sustain the caring relationship too, avoiding the need for crisis support.

### What is a carer?

An unpaid carer is someone of any age who provides care and support to a family member, partner, relative, friend or neighbour. The people they care for may be affected by disability, physical or mental health issues, frailty, substance misuse or some other condition, and cannot manage some aspects of their life without help and support. Some carers care intensively while others care for shorter periods and while some caring roles are short, there are also many life-long carers too.

### What does Shared Care Scotland do?

To advance short breaks in Scotland we work across several areas and offer a variety of services.

At a national level we contribute to the **development of policy and best practice**, working with Scottish Government and with Scottish local authorities. We also carry out and contribute to **research** so that we have the best evidence possible on what works for short breaks for carers.

We provide **information and advice** to organisations working to support carers, and to carers themselves. We do this through our telephone enquiry service and our online directory of more than 400 short breaks services.

We operate the **Short Breaks Fund** on behalf of Scottish Government, giving grants to third sector organisations that support unpaid carers to take a break.

### Shared Care Scotland

Unit 2, Dunfermline Business Centre, Izatt Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife, KY11 3BZ  
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We also deliver the **Respitivity programme** which sees the hospitality, leisure and tourism industry come together with carer organisations to deliver breaks for carers when they need it most.

Where can I find more information?

More detailed information on all the work that we do can be found on our website at [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk), or by calling our office on 01383 622462.

For a full, detailed guide to our activities, see our Service Catalogue: [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/service-catalogue/](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/resources/service-catalogue/)

## A short guide to the Short Breaks Fund

### Introduction

The Short Breaks Fund provides grants to third sector organisations that support unpaid carers to take a break from their caring role.

The fund aims to increase the range and availability of short breaks across Scotland, allowing more carers to take the right break at the right time.

The Scottish Government currently funds the Short Breaks Fund on a rolling annual basis.

The Short Breaks Fund was established in 2010. To date, we have granted more than £17.5 million to organisations across Scotland, supporting the delivery of more than 80,000 carer breaks.

You can find out more about previously funded projects on our reporting website:

[www.shortbreakstories.org.uk](http://www.shortbreakstories.org.uk)

### Our funding programmes

The Short Breaks Fund has four funding programmes. Shared Care Scotland operates:

- Better Breaks
- Creative Breaks
- Time to Live

### Better Breaks

The Better Breaks programme provides 12-month grants to third sector organisations to develop and deliver short breaks projects and services for **children and young people with disabilities (aged 20 and under)**, and their **carers** (adult and/or young carers).

The Better Breaks programme funds a wide range of short breaks projects and activities including holiday activity programmes, after school clubs, sports coaching, and youth groups. The activities can be for children and young people with disabilities, for their carers, or for families to enjoy together.

Better Breaks usually opens for applications in the Autumn of each year for activities planned to start in Spring of the following year.

### Creative Breaks

The Creative Breaks programme provides 12-month grants to third sector organisations to develop and deliver short breaks projects and services for **carers of adults (aged 21 and over)**, **young carers** (caring for children or adults), and the people they care for.

The Creative Breaks programme funds a wide range of short breaks projects and activities including breaks away, days out, and/or shorter, regular activities. The activities can be for carers, for cared-for people, or for carers and the people they care for to enjoy together.

Creative Breaks usually opens for applications in the Spring of each year for activities starting in the following Autumn.

### Time to Live

The Time to Live programme provides 12-month grants to carers organisations to deliver micro grants schemes for **carers of adults (aged 21 years and over)**, and **young carers** (caring for children or adults). These Time to Live projects enable carers to access funds and support to help them take short breaks that meet their needs.

Time to Live grants are awarded to one delivery partner in each local authority area in Scotland. Shared Care Scotland invites the relevant agency - usually a carers centre - to apply, and as such, this is not an open competition for funding.

Carers can find their local Time to Live project on our funding directory for carers available at [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/fundingbreaks](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/fundingbreaks)

### Support for grant holders

The Short Breaks Fund team is here to help. Our aim is to support funded organisations to deliver the best possible outcomes for carers and the people they care for. We can provide support in several different ways:

- Resources and toolkits – free to download from our website.
- Pre-application support including phone-in sessions, workshops and webinars.
- 1-to-1 support for funded organisations.
- Learning exchange events and workshops.

### More information

For more information on the Short Breaks Fund, including details on how to apply, please visit our website:

[www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/shortbreaksfund/](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/shortbreaksfund/)

Or call 01383 622462 and ask to speak to a member of the Short Breaks Fund team.

## A short guide to Respitality

Respitality (Respite + Hospitality) is a concept that originated in the USA in the mid 1980's by the Cerebral Palsy Association. They encouraged hotels to gift short breaks to full time unpaid carers. It is still active in the USA, Canada and New Zealand, however Scotland arguably now has the most prominent Respitality presence.

Shared Care Scotland began discussions with the hospitality sector about Respitality as early as 2008 but it was 2014 before we were able to launch a pilot project. Fife Carers Centre agreed to come on board to the 'test the water' and, following a launch at the Fairmont Hotel in St Andrews, four hospitality establishments signed up to become involved. Around this time the Scottish Government agreed to fund a part-time development post to help expand Respitality to other areas. The first year of funding was shared between the Carers Policy and Tourism divisions of Scottish Government which further illustrated the potential for Respitality to generate new and novel relationships and partnership working. To help with the expansion of Respitality, in 2022 the Scottish Government provided us with funding to recruit an additional Respitality support post.

Our vision is that Respitality becomes an established, successful, and Scotland-wide programme that adds to an expanding menu of short break options available to unpaid carers.

Respitality has been developed in Scotland using a social franchise<sup>1</sup> model to support delivery. The role of Shared Care Scotland is to provide quality assurance and administrative systems, as well as practical support. Shared Care Scotland also acts as an agent in connecting local carers organisations to the hospitality sector across the country, while handing over a degree of flexibility and control to the local carers' organisations. This allows Respitality to be moulded around the capacity of their organisation and the needs of the carers they support.

Respitality is needed because caring for someone else, even those you love, can be mentally and physically tiring. Breaks from routine are vital for unpaid carers' mental and physical health. Due to financial and care concerns, and limited time to even think about organising a break, unpaid carers need help to access a break that is right for them. The aim of Respitality is to connect carer organisations with hospitality, tourism and leisure businesses which will provide unpaid carers of all ages across the country with vital short break opportunities from their routine when they need it most.

### More information

To find out more about Respitality visit our website:

[www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/respitality/](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/respitality/)