# Short Breaks Services Statement – Full statement

*Respite is a feeling not a building*

## Background

Unpaid carers are the largest group of providers of care in Scotland and should be recognised as equal partners in providing vital care and support. A carer could be a parent, a partner, a son or daughter, a sister or brother or friend to someone who needs support as a result of their illness (physical or mental illness and substance misuse), condition or disability. Caring for someone can happen very suddenly, sometimes overnight alternatively it may come over many months and years. Although rewarding, looking after someone can affect the physical and emotional wellbeing of the carer and can impact them both financially and socially.

From April 2018, the Carers Act gives all carers the right to an adult carer support plan or a young carer statement. Although there is no duty for the local authority to provide a short break, as part of the support plan or young carer statement they must consider whether support for the carer should take the form of or include a break from caring.

The aim of the statement is to help carers and people with support needs understand:

* What shortbreaks are
* Who can access them
* What shortbreaks are available in Shetland and how to access them

## Purpose

*Shortbreaks – Relaxing time away from caring*

The Carers Act and Self Directed Support Act require local authorities to consider how they can support carers to have a break from their caring role. The purpose of this Short Break Service Statement is to provide information to carers and cared for people so that they:-

* Are aware they can take a break in a range of ways
* Informed about the shortbreaks available
* Have a choice about the support they access
* Identify how they can be supported with a shortbreak that will meet their outcomes

There are different types of breaks available from statutory support to the third sector. We believe it is really important that you have the opportunity to have a break whilst the needs of the person that you care for are being met.

Definition

A short break (sometimes called respite) is a form of support which enables you to have time away from your caring routines or responsibilities.

A short break aims to support your caring relationship and promote your health and wellbeing. Having a break can also help the person you support and other family members affected by the caring situation. The type of short break that is right for you will depend on your own needs and circumstances. Examples of short breaks that may be available include:

* Time with extended family, friends or others in the community
* Holiday or leisure breaks (with or without the person you care for)
* Sports or activity breaks (with or without the person you care for)
* Breaks at day care for the person you care for or a home through the day or overnight (with support from a care at home service) or in a care home
* Specialist play schemes or after school clubs for the child that you care for
* Befriending
* Funding to do something that is important to you that helps you to have a break e.g. relaxation therapies, going out for a meal or to the cinema or getting a magazine subscription
* See Shared Care Scotland’s Short Breaks Directory

## Outcomes

People will have different reasons for needing a break, perhaps they want a life outside their caring role or perhaps they need a break from their caring responsibilities. As part of our carer support plan we will give carers information and discuss with them their personal outcomes and what they think would give them a break from their caring role.

Outcomes may include:-

* Carers having an opportunity to have a life outside their caring role
* Carers feeling better supported
* Improved confidence and morale as a carer
* Increased ability to cope in their caring role
* Reduced social isolation and loneliness
* Improved health and wellbeing
* Reduced likelihood of breakdown and crisis within their caring role

Following the break and as part of their carer support plan review we will discuss with carers if their choice of break has met their particular needs and outcomes.

## Support Available

### Local

In Shetland we can offer different options for people but we would encourage people to think of ways that would enable them to take a break that would meet their needs. Some of the support will require that the cared for person or carer meets the eligibility criteria but other breaks are offered to carers to prevent them reaching crisis. VAS Carers Centre or Social work can have a discussion with you about what may be the right break option for you.

As the definition above describes, taking a shortbeak is about people taking time out from their usual routine. Often the easiest way for people to take breaks is by getting support from their own family and friends. Ensuring that the carers involved with a person have shortbreaks is really important to ensuring that the carer can continue to carry out this caring role.

**Attending groups and activities** – There are a number of different groups and activities in our local communities. It is important to encourage the carer or the cared for person to attend as these provide more sustainable support for the future. Community support helps you and the person you care for build up relationships with people who may be able to offer small amounts of support.

There are also opportunities for cared for people to attend specialist groups. Disability Shetland, Mind Your Head, Alzheimer Scotland and Voluntary Action Shetland all offer a number of groups aimed at people with disabilities, holiday clubs, sibling or young carer group, families support for children with additional support needs, groups for people with dementia, carers and activities encouraging people to have better mental health.

In order to attend an activity a cared for person may need the support of an outreach worker or through personal assistants employed using direct payments. Or there may be opportunities from schemes such as Befriending to help them attend the activity or outing.

**Funding for Leisure breaks** – these are co-ordinated by VAS so that people get the opportunity either through money or a gift to help them have a break away from their usual activity. These are called shortbreak Scheme and Respitality.

**Replacement Care –** we have a number of opportunities provided by the local council and organisations such as Shetland Care Attendant Scheme. These are open to adults and children and offer the chance for the cared for person to be looked after in their own home or in one of the residential homes through either day care or overnight stays. This will require an assessment process to ensure that the cared for person or the carer meets the eligibility.

If you meet the eligibility criteria then you may be offered your shortbreak through self directed support.

**How do carers get a short break?**

In Shetland someone can help you to identify and plan ways of you taking a shortbreak by contacting any of the following:-

* Shetland Islands Council Duty Social Work - 01595 744400
* Voluntary Action Shetland – your local carers centre – 01595 743923 carers@shetland.org
* Or by speaking to the coordinator of the care plan for the person that you care for.

### National

Shared Care Scotland

The Take a Break website

Euan’s Guide

ALISS

For more details about local and national services please look at the our website www.shetlandcarers.org/support/breaks/national-organisations

## Eligibility

Having a support plan will help the local authority decide what level of support the carer is entitled to under eligibility criteria. This criteria looks at the impact the caring role has on the carers quality of life.

## Charging Policy

Charges for support to Carers can be waived if there is a support plan in place.

## Feedback monitoring and Review

The feedback and monitoring of this statement will be undertaken by the Carer Strategy Group. They will ensure that this fits with the local carer strategy and action (which can be found on VAS website)