



Date: Wednesday, 3 March 2021

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING

Contact: Tim Ward, Committee Officer
Tel: 01743 257713
Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk

PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)

The confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 10 December 2020 and the 27 January 2021. (**Minutes to Follow**)

Contact Tim Ward Tel: 01743 257713

7 Short Breaks to Provide Respite for All Age Carers (Pages 9 - 34)

Report of the Director of Children's Services is the follow

Contact Karen Bradshaw, Tel: 01743 254201

9 Exempt Minutea (Pages 35 - 38)

To consider the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 30th September 2020.
[To follow]

Contact Amanda Holyoak Tel 01743 257714

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PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2020

2.00 - 3.30 pm in the THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING - PLEASE USE THE LINK ON THE AGENDA TO LISTEN TO THE MEETING

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman)

Councillors Roy Aldcroft, Ruth Houghton, Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch and Kevin Pardy

62 Apologies and Substitutions

62.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Cecilia Motley and Kevin Turley and from Sian Lines (Hereford Diocese).

62.2 There were no substitutions

63 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

63.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made.

64 Minutes

64.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the People Overview Committee held on 30 September 2020 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

65 Public Question Time

65.1 There were no public questions received

66 Members' Question Time

65.1 There were no Members questions.

67 Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership

67.1 Members received the report of the Executive Director Children's Services, and the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner which set out details of the work of the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership.

67.2 The Chair reminded Members that in previous years it had been a legal requirement that the Committee receive the annual report of the Children's

Safeguarding Board but that this had ended in 2018, and that the Board had become part of the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership alongside the Keeping Adults Safe in Shropshire Board and the Community Safety Partnership.

- 67.3 The Statutory Safeguarding Business Manager advised Members that the Partnership gave an opportunity for cross cutting issues to be considered in a much more joined up way and that the structure of the Partnership was based on the strategic priorities that had been identified.
- 67.4 In response to a question the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner advised Members that the abuse of vulnerable adults by others such as in a care setting was monitored through the Assurance and Performance Group.
- 67.5 In response to a question regarding funding for domestic abuse services the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner agreed to provide figures outside of the meeting.
- 67.6 In response to a question regarding intelligence and data sharing the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner advised that this had improved with the closer working that the Partnership allowed, and work was ongoing to get full datasets developed.
- 67.7 The Chair of the Partnership commented that Elected Members provided a link with their local community and could have a dialogue within the community that they represent.
- 67.8 In response to a question regarding how the Partnership had strengthened work around child exploitation the Partnership Chair explained that there was a dedicated multi agency group within the Partnership which covered all aspects of criminal exploitation and that there was a great deal of work done with Partners as well.
- 67.9 In relation to a question around raising public awareness of child neglect the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner stated that the subject was a high priority in neglect group, and that a campaign was being planned around ensuring professionals recognise what neglect is, ensuring parents were aware of what neglectful behaviour is and ensuring that children are able to recognise what neglect is so that they can see when it is happening to themselves or their friends. The Director of Children's Services advised that the Council was raising awareness of the issue of neglect through the Step up Shropshire Campaign and was asking senior managers to look at the contribution their service could make to identifying cases of neglect. She added that there would also be some work around reminding Elected Members of their role.
- 67.10 In response to a question as to whether the Partnership had contributed to more efficient working the Statutory Safeguarding Business Partner confirmed that more use of virtual meetings through the Covid pandemic had meant more engagement with partners and that there had been a reduction in duplication as previously each part of the Partnership would have held meetings which were now covered by one meeting within the Partnership.

67.11 In response to a question regarding how the Council's Digital transformation programme had supported the work of the Partnership the Director of Children's Services stated that the introduction of the Liquid Logic system had improved the management of and that feedback from social workers was that is much easier to use than the previous system. She added that the wider investment within the digital transformation programme had really proved worthwhile given the new ways of working during the current pandemic.

67.12 The Chair thanked Officer for their presentation.

67.13 RESOLVED:

That the People Overview Committee note and accept the content of the report

68 Chairs's Update

68.1 The Director of Children's Services updated members on work with schools during the pandemic. She advised that regular dialogues took place with schools with regards to any issues, and these had been fed back to the DfE during weekly meetings. She advised the meeting that DfE had advised that schools could close one day early for the Christmas Break should they wish, and that some schools in Shropshire would be taking advantage of this.

68.2 The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that school attendance during the pandemic had been good, current attendance being 92% which was above the national average.

68.3 The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that all secondary schools and about half of primary schools had been subject to a covid outbreak but that this had not lead to any school closing completely, but had been dealt with by the sending home of "class bubbles".

68.4 The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that schools had incurred extra costs during the pandemic for such things as increased staffing, extra costs involved with additional cleaning and increased heating costs arising from advice to keep windows open to improve ventilation.

68.5 In respect of a question regarding the recruitment and retention of child social workers the Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that whilst there was still some reliance on agency works the overall situation had improved.

68.6 In response to a question as to whether the council's commitment to supply meals to those in receipt of free school meals over the Christmas break would extend to the additional period of closure the Director of Children's Services advised the

meeting that if schools decided to take advantage of the additional 1 days closure it would remain their responsibility.

69 Work Programme

69.1 Members received the report of the overview and scrutiny officer which set out the People Overview Committee’s proposed work programme until May 2021.

69.2 It was agreed that the item on Community Safety Partnership and exploitation, should be removed from the work programme.

69.3 A Member asked whether the subject of child poverty in the county could be discussed.

70 Date of next Meeting

70.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the People Overview Committee would be held on Wednesday 27th January 2021 at 10.00am

71 Exclusion of Press and Public

72 Exempt Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021

10.00 - 11.10 am Virtual meeting held via Microsoft Teams Live

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman), Kevin Turley (Vice-Chair), Roy Aldcroft, Ruth Houghton, Christian Lea, Cecilia Motley and Kevin Pardy

73 Apologies and Substitutions

73.1 Apologies for absence were received from Sian Lines (Hereford Diocese)

74 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

74.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest

74.2 Councillor Ruth Houghton advised the Committee that she was the trustee of a charity which provided services to adults with learning difficulties in Shropshire.

75 Minutes

75.1 The Chair advised the Committee that the minutes were not available and would be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

76 Public Question Time

76.1 There were no public questions.

77 Members' Question Time

77.1 There were no questions from Members.

78 Preparing for Adulthood - supporting the transition from children's to adult's services

78.1 Members received the report of the Service Manager Adult Services and the Director of Children's Services which provided an overview of how the Council identified children and young people who may continue to need some social support once they reach adulthood, ensured a steady transition to adult social care services, and provided life skills to children and young people as they leave care.

78.2 Members were advised of two pilot projects that the Council was taking part in:

a) Pilot Project – Disabled Children’s Team and Preparing for Adulthood Team (PFA)

- looking at how the Council can prepare young people with SEND for adulthood at an earlier stage in their life
- Looking at ways to improve joint working between children’s and adult services and other partner organisations
- Looking at ways of identifying and overcoming barriers to a positive transition
- Looking at different models of service delivery

b) Pilot Project – Case Management and PFA

- Project centred around children with issues with their mental health looking at similar topics as the previous case study.

78.3 Members were advised that the PFA team were also looking at the way they worked going forward, adapting best practice from other councils and the results of the pilots.

78.4 In response to a question regarding workload, Members were advised that this varies from year to year but that the number was increasing due to the fact that teams were starting to work with different age ranges.

78.5 In response to a question regarding how different departments were working together, Members were advised that collaboration between partners was much better but that it was continually assessed and there was constant dialogue in order that the best outcomes were achieved.

78.6 In response to a question regarding support for employment, Members were advised that officers worked closely with Enable and also the colleges to identify opportunities, and that prior to the Covid pandemic work had been carried out within Council departments to identify potential work experience opportunities.

78.7 In response to a question, members were advised that best practice was shared through various network and also using the experience of social workers that had worked for other authorities

78.8 Members thanked Officers for the presentation and for all the work that was being done.

78.9 **RESOLVED:**

That the People Overview Committee: -

- Notes the work of the Preparing for Adulthood team in supporting young people.
- Request that a report setting out the findings of the 2 pilot projects be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

79 Supporting Young People into Housing

- 79.1 Members received the report of the Housing Services Manager which set out the current work being undertaken by Housing Services regarding children and young people who were in housing need.
- 79.2 Members were advised that following a previous scrutiny meeting where it had been recognised that there was need for dedicated support for young people in housing need, a full time Children and Young Person Coordinator had been appointed whose role was to work with all individuals who come through the service who are aged 16 to 25 years of age, many of whom were also supported by Shropshire Council's Leaving Care Team, and that this support covered a range of tasks included support in joining Shropshire HomePoint, assistance with supports/semi supported living and assistance with accessing Discretionary Housing Payments and other support.
- 79.3 In response to a question regarding the availability of suitable accommodation, the Housing Services Manager commented that there was a lack of 1-bedroom properties but the Council was working with developers and social landlords to improve this, and added that Officers attended the Social Housing Forum where this matter was discussed.
- 79.4 In response to a query, the Housing Services Manager agreed to update members of the number of young people currently classed as homeless.
- 79.5 In response to a question the Housing Services Manager confirmed that the recommendations made at the meeting of the Scrutiny Panel on 18 July 2018 had been implemented.
- 79.6 The Chair thanks Officers for their presentation.
- 79.7 **RESOLVED:**

That the People Overview Committee:

- Notes the work of the council in supporting young people to move into suitable accommodation
- Receives an update on the supply of one bed housing at a future meeting

80 Work Programme

- 80.1 Members received the report of the Scrutiny Officer which set out the People Overview Committee's proposed work programme until May 2021.
- 80.2 Members confirmed that they wished the item on short breaks for respite care to cover all services that were available.
- 80.3 Members confirmed that they wished the item on drug and alcohol services to cover the services provided to adults too, rather than just covering those services for young people.

80.4 RESOLVED:

That the Committee

- agree the proposed committee work programme attached as appendix 1 subject to the points raised.
- note the current task and finish groups attached as appendix 2

The Chair advised that the exempt minutes would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee

81 Exclusion of Press and Public

82 Exempt Minutes

Signed (Chairman)

Date:



<u>Committee and Date</u>
People Overview Committee
3 March 2021

<u>Item</u>
<u>Public</u>

Short breaks to provide respite for all age carers

Responsible officers

Karen Bradshaw

Executive Director Children's Services

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Tanya Miles

Executive Director Adult Services

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1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides an overview of the respite care that Shropshire Council offers, funds and commissions for carers of children, young people and adults.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the People Overview Committee:

- notes the report and
- identify specific topics that it wishes to consider in more detail at a future meeting.

3.0 Opportunities and risks

3.1 Providing short breaks for children and young people most in need is an effective way of working towards the goal of keeping children in their families. This may ultimately prevent family breakdown which may result in the need to accommodate children in expensive provision.

4.0 Financial assessment

4.1 Short breaks for disabled children

For foster carers offering short breaks to disabled children, one short break carer may provide care for up to three to four families over a rolling month. This may prevent a child requiring the provision of short break care in a specialist disability short break home, which would be significantly more expensive than a short break foster placement.

The number of disabled children in Shropshire is rising consistently. Accordingly, the demand on local authority resources for support is rising and is forecast to continue to rise. Planning to ensure the council continues to provide good support to these children and their families should take into account this growth in demand.

Current annual budgeted spend for respite for parent carers of disabled children is as follows:

- Overnight residential (used by approximately 60-70 families) £939,500
- Community access (used by approximately 140 families) £369,792
- Early help short breaks (used by approximately 500 families) £170,000
- Personal budgets for personal assistants, specific nursing care and childminding £395,963
- Foster care providing short breaks for disabled children (used by 2 families) £22,000

4.2 **Adults services respite commissioning**

Please see paragraph 8.2.4 for annual placement costs. The provision and availability of respite placements offers a preventative saving to Adult Social Care's purchasing budget. The ability to offer regular and effective respite placements to our informal carers in turn enables them to continue to provide the main care to their loved ones for longer as they are able to access regular breaks, which prevent the needs for these individuals to be placed permanently in alternative accommodation which would come at a much higher cost. All individuals can choose where they live and the respite break means being able to remain living at home with their care provided by their loved ones is able to continue to be a choice they can make.

5.0 **Report**

5.1 Shropshire Council provides a variety of opportunities for children, young people and adults to take a short break, providing respite to the people who care for them. This report will cover respite care that the council provides or commissions for:

- children with a disability
- looked after children
- children in need or subject to a Section 47 child protection enquiry
- adults with a learning difficulty, mental health condition or autism.

5.2 The legal and policy framework under which Short Breaks are provided is as follows:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 (aka Short Breaks Regulations) requires local authorities to provide breaks from caring to assist parents and others who care for children with a short break from their caring responsibilities and to produce and review a Short Break Statement; (Please see **appendix 1** for Shropshire's statement.)
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 requires a Local authority to provide to a disabled child a short break when necessary to meet that child's needs

- The Children and Families Act 2014 seeks to ensure that children, young people and families are at the centre of decision making. It requires Local Authorities to offer families the choice of having a personal budget to better enable them to have more control over the services they use.
- Equality Act 2010
- NHS Act 2006 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012)
- Care Act 2014 (in relation to transition to adult social care)

6.0 Children with a disability

6.1 Children with disabilities make up 6% of the looked after population. Having a child with a disability can bring challenges and difficulties that other families do not face. This can be particularly at times of transition, such as when a child is starting or changing school, or when a young person is preparing for adult life. Providing short breaks for these children, to provide respite for their parents and carers serves two purposes. As well as giving parents a break to attend to other matters, for example being able to focus on the needs of their other children, the break also provides the child with enrichment, new experiences and the opportunity to explore a degree of independence from their family.

6.2 The short breaks for disabled children, either provided directly by the council or commissioned through other providers, are a range of leisure activities, specifically designed to support carers and their disabled children and young people up to their 18th birthday.

The range of Shropshire short breaks is wide to ensure that it can sufficiently meet a wide range of children's disability, age and family circumstances. Some short breaks might involve a child or young person joining a group activity. Others might be supported individually such as by a personal assistant. Short breaks can take place after school, at the weekend, during school holidays or overnight. They can provide activities such as after school clubs, weekend activities, sports, youth groups, drama groups, holiday clubs and overnight stays with a short break foster carer or in a residential home. For example, breaks in a residential home take place at Bradbury House in Shrewsbury, where Action for Children are commissioned by the council to provide the care. Action for Children are also commissioned to help young people access activities in the community.

Some short breaks might also involve assistance in the home in the evening, at weekends or during the school holidays. Regardless of which type of short break is accessed, they all provide respite for carers.

6.3 As well as planned activities, the council also recruits foster carers who specifically provide short breaks in their home. Shropshire currently only has one foster carer who is approved to provide short breaks for disabled children. In recent years, the number of carers has been higher, however some of these

have chosen to resign from fostering or retire from fostering. There is currently a live social media campaign to recruit more short break foster carers.

- 6.4 Direct payments allow parents and young people greater choice flexibility and control, to employ their own workers at times convenient to them and in the way they wish, to provide an individual service to meet their need and provide a short break. Direct Payments are available if a child or young person is disabled and aged 16 or over or is a carer or parent aged 16 or over for a child with disabilities.

Direct payments can also be made to a willing and appropriate person on a disabled person's behalf if they lack the mental capacity to agree to and manage Direct Payments themselves.

Direct payments can be used to employ a Personal Assistant (PA)

- To take the young person/child into the community to access an activity, support inclusion, going to a club etc;
- To work with the child directly within the home, to give parents and siblings a break;
- To stay overnight to give respite to parents;
- Or a registered childminder or child home carer (for children aged under 8).

Direct payments can also be spent on

- Using an approved agency to provide direct care to meet your child/family's needs;
- After school clubs and holiday play schemes for your disabled child;
- Residential overnight breaks for your disabled child;
- By agreement with the team manager for direct payments, any service which meets assessed need for a short break.

- 6.5 Please see **appendix 1** for a detailed guide to the short breaks offered to families and professionals who support or care for a disabled child.

7.0 **Looked after children**

- 7.1 For those children already looked after, there will be some situations where there is a need to provide a 'foster break' for a child and their carers to prevent a family breakdown. The foster breaks policy for Shropshire is very clear that for the vast majority of looked after children, time spent away from their foster family may be detrimental to the emotional well-being of children. We encourage all our carers to take their children away with them on holidays so they can experience the enjoyment of a holiday with the rest of their household. Most foster carers in Shropshire do take their foster children with them on family holidays.

- 7.2 For some looked after children, where a foster break is in their best interests, local in-house arrangements are usually made with other experienced carers.

There are some foster carers who prefer to provide this short-term care arrangement and for others they may use a vacant foster care bed to provide foster breaks for children most in need. Some of these arrangements can be ongoing and some are provided in response to a presenting need at the time.

- 7.3 For some looked after children, time spent in other foster families can be difficult, either due to their presenting needs or due to the lack of available carers who will be able to offer what this child or children need. In these situations, some Looked after children will be able to access Havenbrook, Shropshire's short break home. Havenbrook can offer up to four short breaks at any one time for either a three-day break or a four-day break. There are over 80 children registered with Havenbrook who receive some form of short break and outreach support from the outreach service. The children and young people accessing short breaks can be children subject to a sect.17 Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan, Early Help plan or looked after children.
- 7.4 In addition to offering planned short breaks, Havenbrook are also instrumental in providing crisis placements where children have experienced a placement or family breakdown. Over recent years, these crisis placements have been provided for more Looked after children than ever before, with Havenbrook often caring for young people where we have been unable to provide an alternative residential provision.

There are very few provisions like Havenbrook available elsewhere. Other Local Authorities have previously been to visit Havenbrook to learn from our experience and to look at setting up their own short break homes.

- 7.5 Shropshire has an ongoing recruitment campaign for new foster carers. The service successfully introduced a new fee and allowance policy 2 years ago which means that foster carers now receive competitive rates when choosing to foster for Shropshire. From the period from the 1st April 2020, Shropshire has recruited 11 new fostering households, offering more than 15 new placements for children and young people. However, during this time, we also lost carers due to ill-health, resignations, retirement and one carer moving to foster to a private agency. Shropshire actively seeks to recruit new fostering households on an ongoing basis. Shropshire foster carers benefit from competitive rates of pay, robust training and support offer, buddy scheme and access to the support of Shropshire's Foster Care Association.

8.0 Adult Social Care

- 8.1 Adult Social Care Services are currently supporting 673 adults with a learning disability aged 18-65. Of those supported, 44 are living independently, 205 are in their own tenancies in Supported Living Services, 282 are living with family or friends (informal carers). Figure 1 below provides a full breakdown of current settled accommodation status.

There is also a smaller cohort of individuals living in residential homes, either short term whilst they are looking for a more suitable and long term home, in residential colleges or in long term residential placements.

As 60% individuals we support are not living with family and friends, there is less need for commissioned respite for these individuals.

Settled Accommodation Status

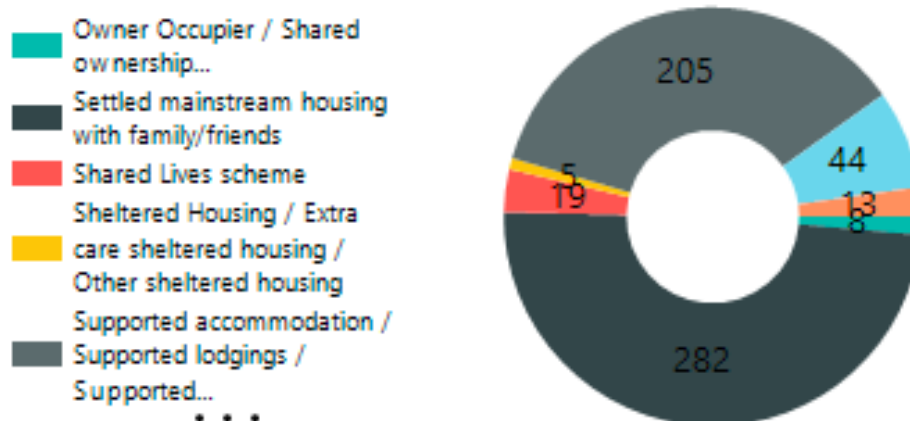


Figure 1: Settled accommodation status of adults with a learning disability supported by Adult Social Care

8.2 Current respite offer

Adult social care currently commissions two types of respite for adults:

8.2.1 Residential respite service, Barleyfield House

Barleyfield House is a respite facility registered for five beds with the Care Quality Commission, which currently provides a service to 36 individuals.

Many of the individuals and their families have been accessing the service for years, in some cases longer than 15 years, and have developed routines with their respite. There is also a cohort of people who use the service and continue to use the council day services during their stay. Due to the impact of the pandemic a number of these scheduled respite breaks have been delayed as families have been choosing not to send their loved ones due to the associated risks.

8.2.2 Shared Lives respite

In addition to Barleyfield House, respite support is also commissioned through our Shared Lives contract provided by Bethphage (an existing CQC registered supported living provider).

Shared Lives offers people an alternative and highly flexible form of respite, care or support using the Shared Lives carer's home as a resource. Shared Lives

arrangements are set up and supported by Shared Lives schemes and the care and accommodation people receive is provided by individuals, couples or families in the local community. Individuals and their Shared Lives carers enjoy shared activities and life experiences.

All individuals supported on a permanent basis who live with Shared Lives carers are also entitled to two weeks' respite. Those supported just for respite live at home with their families with their respite entitlement ranging from 14 to 56 nights per year. Shared Lives respite placements are currently offered by 25 different shared lives households and the numbers are increasing, there are currently five applications in process for shared lives carers who would like to offer respite.

In order to ensure the success of the respite placement a matching process takes place, information is gathered about the individual needing the respite, with their involvement, and about the Shared Lives carers. This information is then used to work out which Shared Lives carers will suit the person and begin the considered and planned steps of introductions as part of the matching process. This information is also used to recruit new Shared Lives carers to specifically meet the needs of the person.

Currently the Shared Lives services offers respite to 33 individuals with a learning disability, though access to these respite placements have been reduced in the past 12 months due to the impact of the pandemic, as with Barleyfield House.

8.2.3 In addition to commissioned respite placements, Adult Social Care also purchases spot respite placement for those who have specific needs, or where there is no capacity in the commissioned services. We have also been working with some of our block residential learning disability services who, when there is a vacancy in their residential schemes, have agreed to offer these beds as respite beds. We currently have four of these respite placements available.

8.2.4 **Direct Payments**

Direct payments are one way a individual can manage their personal budget, letting them arrange and pay for social care support instead of Shropshire Council arranging services for them. Direct payments offer greater flexibility, choice and control, so individuals can be as independent as possible. The Direct Payment is to buy care and support as detailed in an individual's support plan and can only be spent in this way. This may include using the direct payment to purchase respite care, this may be in the form of a break away from their family home with the support of their paid carer, or they may choose to make alternative respite arrangements with a private care provider.

8.2.5 Commissioned respite service annual costs are as follows:

Service	Annual cost
Barleyfield	£425,547
Shared Lives	£49,121
Spot Purchased respite	£41,597

8.3 Future plans for respite

Adult Social care supports a number of individuals living in their own accommodation, either independently or supported, which reduces the need for respite placements. However it is recognised that there is also a need to consider future planning for a number of individuals living with their families, even though they are able to access commissioned respite. The diagram below in figure 2 demonstrates the age ranges of the families and friends continuing to provide support to individuals in their family home.

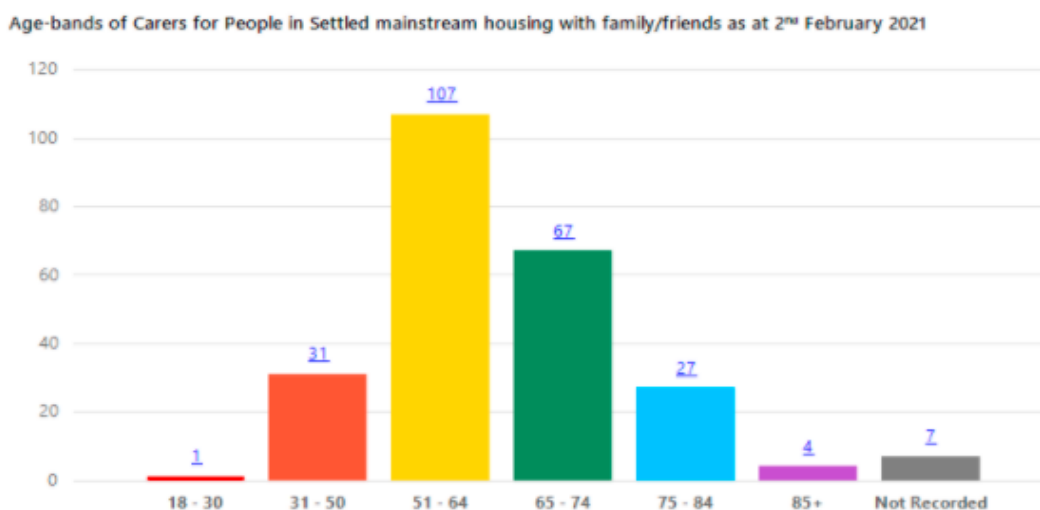


Figure 2: Age bands of carers for people in settled mainstream housing with friends or family

As you will see for the above, there are 94 informal carers looking after loved ones at home who are over the age of 64, and it is recognised, that, although a number of these families will be accessing respite services, there is an anxiety amongst some of these family carers around who will support their loved ones if they are no longer able to.

In response to this in 2019, Adult Social Care's engagement lead facilitated some carers' engagement sessions. These focused on future planning for carers, looked at what supported living means, how the individuals will be supported and the level of continued support that the families would be able to provide, but also be offered themselves. These sessions were well received and as a result some of the informal carers who attended the sessions began working with their social

care practitioners to look at the future planning and possible move on for their loved ones.

We would like to reinstate these sessions later in the year and reach out to more of the informal carers who still have their loved ones with a learning disability living at home with them, so that they are aware of the support and options available to them in the future.

In addition to this, we are working closely with our Preparing for Adulthood team and Shropshire’s Parent and Carers Council (PACC) to look at the move on for young adults with a learning disability aged 16-25. Where these individuals have already been in residential college placements, the move from here to supported living is generally a smoother one.

For individuals looking to move out of the family home for the first time, this can be extremely daunting for them and their families. Therefore we are hoping to trial a ‘Stepping Stones’ project, which will allow individual to have a ‘trial run’ at living together and having a tenancy, whilst receiving 24 hour support from a care provider. The aim is that this will be a joint project with University of Chester Shrewsbury Centre, and we have already had a number of productive meetings. However this project in the very early stages of development.

Adult Social Care has a robust offer of accommodation and support to individuals with a learning disability, but recognises the need to continue to work with families to identify any service gaps and ensure that the right services are available to support individuals at the right time and in the right place for them and their families, to ensure that individuals are able to have choice and maximise their independence as much as they are able, whilst preventing carer breakdown.

<p>List of background papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)</p>
<p>Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)</p> <p>Portfolio Holder – Adult Social Services and Climate Change Portfolio Holder – Children’s Services</p>
<p>Local Member</p> <p>All</p>

Appendices

Shropshire Council Short Breaks Service Statement



Short Breaks Service Statement

For families and professionals who support or care for a child or young person aged 0 to 18th birthday, who has a disability and lives in Shropshire.



Welcome to Shropshire's Short Breaks Service Statement!

This statement is for families and professionals who support or care for a disabled child, aged 0 to 18th birthday, living in the local authority area of Shropshire.

It explains

- What Short Breaks for disabled children and young people are,
- What kind of breaks are available,
- Who can have this type of Short Break and
- How to access a Short Break.

The statement is part of our *SEND Local Offer*. The SEND Local Offer describes all the support available for Shropshire families who have a child with special educational needs and / or a disability. You can see more information about our SEND Local Offer on page 14.

This statement is an update and includes improvements resulting from feedback gathered from a survey in December 2017. The original statement was produced in consultation with parents, Shropshire's Parent and Carer Council (PACC) and the voluntary sector.

A copy of this statement can be found at

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/short-breaks-statement/>

Legal framework used in this statement:

Breaks For Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011

Care Act 2014

Children Act 1989

Children and Young Persons Act 2008

Children and Families Act 2014

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970

Equality Act 2010

Contact and further information

- Shropshire Local Offer shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/
- Short Breaks <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/>
- **Telephone 0345 678 9063**

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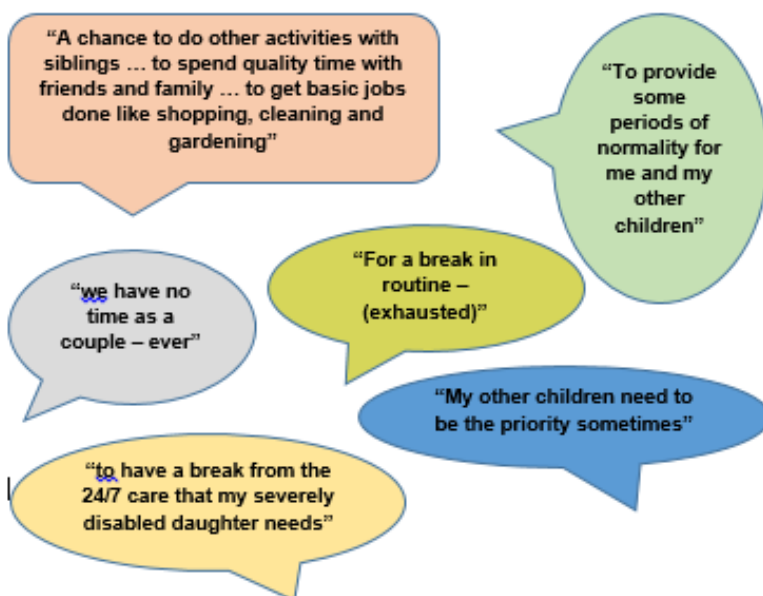
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Why might a family need support?

All families need support at some time in their life. Having a child with a disability can bring challenges and difficulties that other families do not face. This can be particularly at times of transition, such as when a child is starting or changing school, or when a young person is preparing for adult life.

We know that asking for help or advice can sometimes be difficult. Whatever you are feeling or experiencing, the chances are that someone else has been through it, too.

We want to offer the right service at the right time. This means that we want to offer parents early help to challenges. We are keen to understand the needs of a family and help them to get the right support or advice for the family as a whole. This could be through Short Breaks or a range of other services and support.



“For some parents the provision of short breaks simply means the difference between being able to cope with their disabled child, and not being able to cope.”

Contact and further information

- Shropshire Local Offer shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/
- Short Breaks <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/>
- Telephone 0345 678 9063

What are Short Breaks for disabled children?

Short breaks are a range of leisure activities, specifically designed to support disabled children and young people up to their 18th birthday.

The range of Shropshire Short Breaks is wide. We understand that all families are different and need different levels of support and different types of Short Breaks dependent on their child's disability, age and family circumstances.

Some Short Breaks might involve a child or young person joining a group activity. Others might be supported individually such as by a personal assistant.

Short breaks can take place after school, at the weekend, during school holidays or overnight. They can provide activities such as after school clubs, weekend activities, sports, youth groups, drama groups, holiday clubs and overnight stays with a short break foster carer or in a residential home.

Some Short Breaks might also involve assistance in the home in the evening, at weekends or during the school holidays.



Short Breaks aim to give:

- Parents and carers a break from caring;
- Children and young people the chance to try new activities, socialise, make friends;
- A chance to take part in activities that help the child's development;
- A choice and a range of activities;
- Siblings, parents and carers quality time to spend together that they would not otherwise have;
- Opportunities for siblings to be able to join their brother or sister in some short break activities;
- A positive experience for every member of the family.

Contact and further information

- Shropshire Local Offer shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/
- Short Breaks <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/>
- Telephone 0345 678 9063

Providers of Short Break services

Most of the Short Breaks providers in Shropshire are charities or small businesses who are experienced and skilled in supporting disabled children. Others are voluntary organisations.

They are all required to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Parents told us they want providers:

“with well trained staff”

“who are responsive to any new training needs”

“where staff build good quality relationships with both the child and the family”

Shropshire Council includes these requirements in their contracts with providers. The council ensures that providers meet these requirements through our procurement and contract monitoring process.

Types of Short Breaks, eligibility and access

Short Breaks are solely available for children and young people with a disability. Disabilities can vary widely in terms of their nature and severity. Our definition for disability is guided by legislation.

1) The Short Breaks Regulation 2011, refer to “A child who is disabled (defined by the regulations as ‘blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed’). “

2) The Equality Act 2010, refers to disability as having a “physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.”

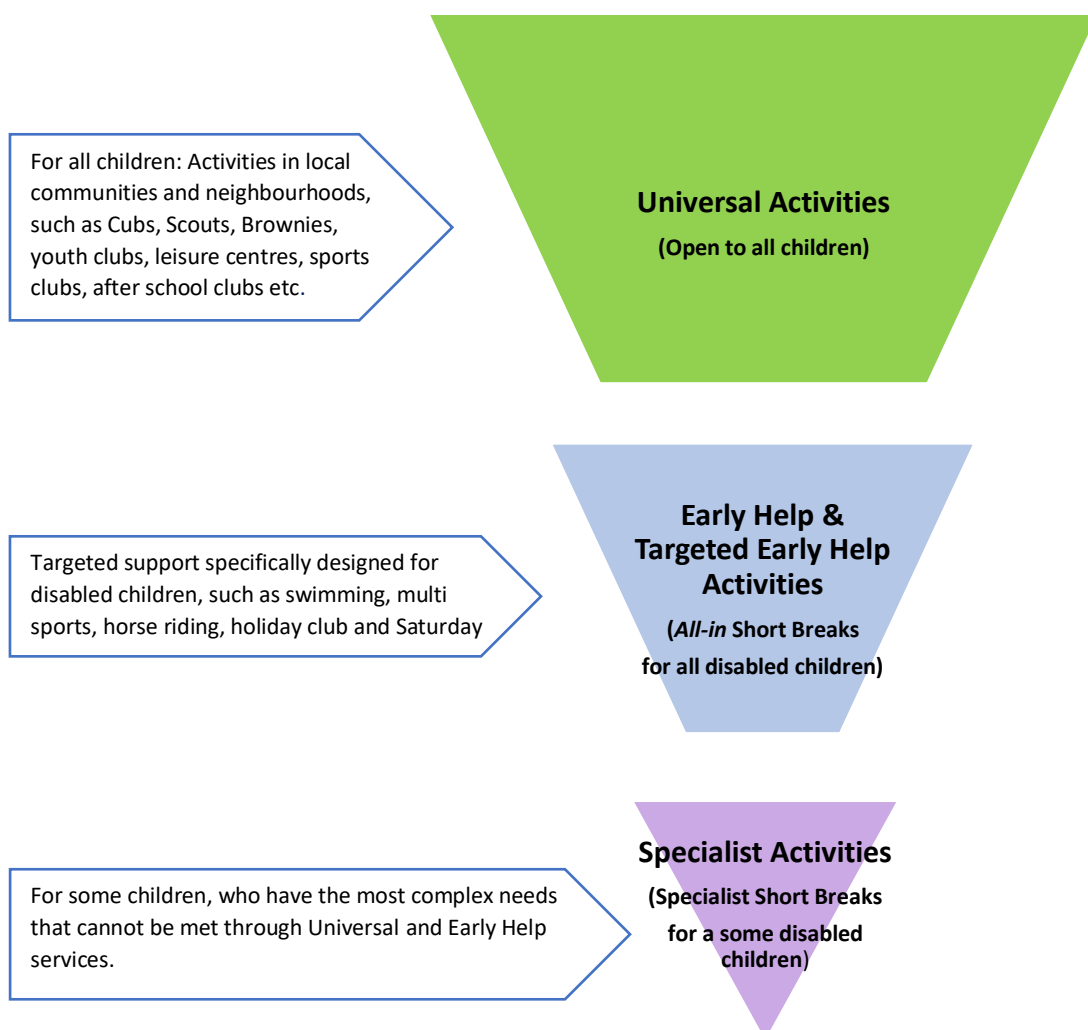
This may include a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children who have moderately to severely challenging behaviour as a result of their learning

disability or autism. It also includes children who have complex needs and who may have palliative, life-limiting or a life-threatening condition.

Universal, Targeted (All-in) and Specialist Activities.

The council wants to offer the right service at the right time

Not all children and families will need the same level of short breaks: some will need more than others because of the impact of their child's disability; some families may need more support because of their individual family circumstances.



Universal Services

(Open to all children)

Universal activities (sometimes also called 'mainstream activities') are community based activities that are open to everyone and may be able to support children with disabilities. For example youth clubs, leisure centres, after school clubs, dance, drama, arts, brownies, cubs etc. Many families with a disabled child access these type of activities successfully once the provider has understood from parents or carers how to meet their child's needs.

All universal services have a duty to respond to the Equality Act 2010 by ensuring their services are accessible to disabled children and young people.

Some universal services may offer concessions to disabled children and their carers. To find out whether the service you would like to access offers concessions you should ask the service directly.

Occasionally a child's needs are such that the service is not able to accommodate them. If your family is in this situation then you may be able to access our Early Help and Targeted Early Help 'All In' service described below.

For activities in your community: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/things-to-do/>

Support is also offered with equipment and adaptations at home through the Occupational Therapy Team. Children's occupational therapists assess children and their parents/carers for equipment and occasionally adaptations. For further information <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/> or telephone 0345 678 9044.

Early Help and Targeted Early Help Services

(All-in Short Breaks – open to all disabled children)



All-in Short Breaks are part of our Early Help services. They are available to families when universal services are not able to meet the needs of their disabled children.

All-in Short Breaks are different from universal services because they are specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities. A range of activities are available such as youth clubs, holiday schemes, swimming, horse riding, cycling, forest school, drama, football and also a log cabin for overnight stays.

Further information on All-in is available at

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/all-in-programme/>

For more information on our Early Help services

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/early-help/>

Telephone 0345 678 9063

Eligibility criteria for All-in Short Breaks

- Children and young people up to their 18th birthday,
- Living in the Shropshire Council area,
- With a disability that prevents them from accessing universal services without additional support.

Access to All-in Short Breaks

Accessing All-in Short Breaks **does not** require an Early Help or social worker assessment. However, it requires that

- A child meets the eligibility criteria defined above.
- A child becomes a member of All-in

By becoming a member of All-in, we can ensure that our Short Breaks reach the right families, children and young people. We can also ensure that each child is safe and their well-being is planned for.

The All-in programme can be seen on our Local Offer website

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/all-in-programme/>

A parent / carer can apply for a child's membership by clicking 'register' at the bottom of the above webpage.

Once the membership application is received, it will be checked to ensure that the child or young person is eligible. We will contact the family if we are unsure about anything in the application, need further information or we feel there may other services more suitable for the family.

Once registration for All-in has been agreed, we will send the family a membership card. Families can then book activities from the All-in programme, by contacting the activity provider directly.

We keep a register of all the families who join All-in. We use this register to get in touch with families, to monitor take up and to plan future Short breaks.

If a child is not eligible for Short Breaks, we will contact the family and advise them of our decision.

Further information on All-in is available at

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/all-in-programme/>

Telephone 0345 678 9063

Specialist Services

(Specialist Short Breaks for some disabled children)

Some children's needs cannot be met by universal activities or by targeted All-in Short Breaks. They may need more support. This could be because the child has:

- A severe learning disability
- A severe physical disability
- Profound multiple disabilities
- Severe sensory impairment
- Complex and severe health problems

We may sometimes support children with less severe disabilities if:

- A parent has a disability or chronic illness,
- The impact on the family is severe,
- A sibling also has moderate or severe disabilities.

A range of Specialist Short Breaks are available such as specialist after school clubs, Family Based Shared Care, outreach, childminding, overnight care or Direct Payments*.

* Direct Payments are a type of personal budget, where a family purchase services themselves. For further information about Personal Budgets and Direct Payments, click on shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/education/education-health-and-care-plans/personal-budgets/ or telephone: 0345 678 9063.

Eligibility criteria and access to Specialist Short Breaks

Eligibility is determined through an assessment by a social worker. The assessment involves gathering information from the family and sometimes other professionals that the family is involved with. It takes into account and considers;

- The complexity and severity of the disability,
- Family circumstances,
- Other issues affecting the whole family,

The assessment takes account of all this information using a person centred approach as each family's circumstances and needs are unique.

The time it takes to complete an assessment can vary depending on the family circumstances, whether other professionals need to be involved and the complexity and range of information that has to be gathered to support the assessment.

If assessed as eligible, the assessment leads to an allocation of individually tailored support to meet the assessed needs. The support will be designed to improve specific outcomes for the child and family.

If a child is not eligible for Specialist Short Breaks, we will contact the family and advise them of our decision. Where appropriate, the family may be referred to universal activities or All-in Short Breaks.

Accessing the Right Service at the Right Time is Shropshire's multi-agency guidance on social care threshold criteria. It is a tool for practitioners working with children to ensure that the needs of all children, young people and families are being recognised and met.

You can see the guidance via this link:

westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/assets/clients/6/Shropshire%20Downloads/Threshold%20document%20-%20Accessing%20the%20right%20service%20at%20the%20right%20time.pdf

Families who are eligible for Specialist Short Breaks are also eligible for All-in. We add their details to the All-in register. We use this register to get in touch with families, to monitor take up and to plan future Short breaks.

Further information is available at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/disabled-childrens-team/>

Telephone 0345 678 9063

Participation fund

The participation fund is a small fund, which is part of our All-in offer. It is managed by the council's Disabled Children's Team. It is designed to enable a child or young person with a disability to attend another local activity that can be considered a 'Short Break'.

The Participation Fund can help to make local universal services more accessible to children with disabilities. For example, it may be used to

- Purchase of specialist equipment for local clubs and groups
- Pay for additional hours of existing support workers/teachers
- Training of staff or volunteers to gain appropriate skills or qualifications
- Fund attendance at an activity

Further information is available at <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/the-participation-fund/>

Telephone: 0345 678 9063

Transport

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to Short Break activities, unless agreed as part of a child's Social Care plan.

Where transport is provided for 'All In' activities this will be made clear by the provider when opportunities are advertised.

Shropshire Council provide a concessionary travel scheme offering free or reduced travel.

More information can be found by following this link:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/concessionary-travel/>

Preparation for Adulthood

All children need to be prepared for adult life. Parents tell us that Short Breaks can play an essential role in developing young people's independence and confidence.

Support for transition arrangements starts at an early age. Some of the short break activities are specifically designed to give disabled young people the opportunity to develop skills for future independence. These may contribute to the 'preparing for adulthood' outcomes of independent living, inclusion in the community and maintaining health.

Parent carers in Shropshire are clear that short breaks should play an important role in supporting their children towards independence and adulthood. They want these service to provide opportunities for their children to spend time away from the family network, to develop new skills and confidence. (PACC, 2016)

Further information is available at

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/preparing-for-transition-into-adulthood/>

Cost of Short Breaks

Shropshire Council and Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group fund Early Help and Specialist Short Break activities in Shropshire. This funding, along with the organisations own fundraising activities, enables providers to offer subsidised places for disabled children and young people, ensuring parents and carers do not pay more than a non-disabled child accessing a similar type of service.

Some Short Breaks require families to pay a place booking fee or make a small contribution to costs. If this applies, then providers will make families aware of this in advance.

How we plan and review Short Break services

Before we can plan Short Break services, we need to understand how many children in our area have a disability and the nature of their disability. We also need to know what types of activities are popular with families. We get this information from a number of sources. These include:

- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or Statements of Educational Need
- Information about *SEND Support* in schools
- Our register for disabled children: this is made up of our All-in register and our voluntary 'Record of Children with Additional Needs'
- Social worker assessments
- Feedback from children, young people and their families

- Feedback from Short Breaks providers, service reviews and information events
- Regional and national research reports.
- Statistical information from Census data

We also consider the resources we have and the requirements of local and national government strategies.

We also work with parent representatives, such as Shropshire's Parent Carer Council (PACC) and other organisations during the commissioning, planning and delivery of Short Break services.

For example:

- Parents told us that some children prefer half day activities in holidays. We included this preference when we commissioned the holiday scheme.
- Parents told us that there should be some Short Breaks for older young people, so that they can develop specific independence skills. We included this preference when we re-commissioned overnight Short Breaks.

We review services throughout the year.

Short Break providers have to prove their suitability through a formal application process. We only appoint providers who meet our and families' requirements. Once we have appointed them, they have to send us regular information about how they are performing. When it is appropriate, we visit activities and observe how they are working.

The SEND Local Offer

Our SEND Local Offer is a website which provides information about support and services in Shropshire, relevant to parent carers of children/young people with Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) and to young people with SEND.

It includes information about our Short Break activities and providers.

It also includes information about pre-school settings, health, education and social care services.

Knowing what services are available and how to access them gives parents and young people more choice and therefore more control over what support is right for them.

The SEND Local Offer also describes the processes and pathways families may come across to help inform them when making decisions about their child's future.



Further information can be found at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/>

Telephone: 0345 678 9063

Getting involved

We welcome feedback from parents and young people about our Short Breaks offer.

When we plan Short Breaks, we value the involvement of parents, carers, children, young people and professionals. Our aim is to work together to find ways to better meet the needs and improve outcomes for children and young people with disabilities.

We have already used this approach in developing our Short Break programme and this will continue to be important to us.

If you would be interested in participating in any consultation groups or by offering to give specific feedback on our services as requested please contact us at shortbreaks@shropshire.gov.uk.

Reviewing our Short Breaks Statement

This statement was published on 15 November 2017 and updated in March resulting from feedback gathered from a survey in December 2017.

It will be revised on an annual basis or in response to any new development.

If you spot any mistakes or have suggestions for improvements to the statement, please contact us via our Local Offer website.

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/>

Contact and further information

- Shropshire Local Offer shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/
- Short Breaks <https://shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/social-care/short-breaks/>
- Telephone **0345 678 9063**

What parents and carers say about Short Breaks



"Thank you for pushing the boundaries which means we try new things - if they can do it so can we!"



"It's brilliant to have a club like this where they can be themselves and make new friends."

"They really look forward to activities and feel that they belong. It is the only out of school activity they go to so is so important."



"It's great! The club can provide so many opportunities that we can't. "



"It's so good to find a club my son fits in to. he has tried many sports clubs but none of them were prepared for his severe learning disability."



"He LOVED it! he LOVED everything about it! We are truly grateful for this opportunity. "



"The sessions have really improved his concentration. i have seen him more engaged in the sessions and at home."

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