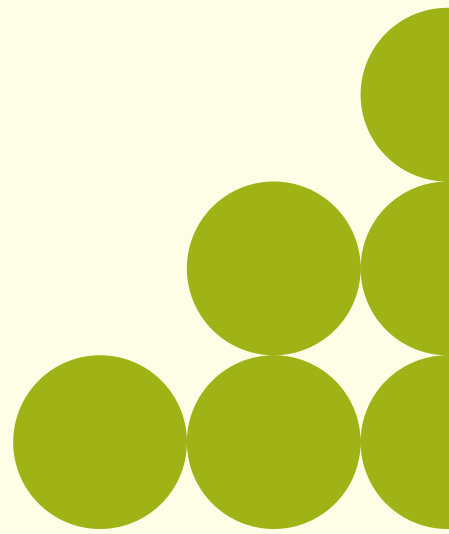
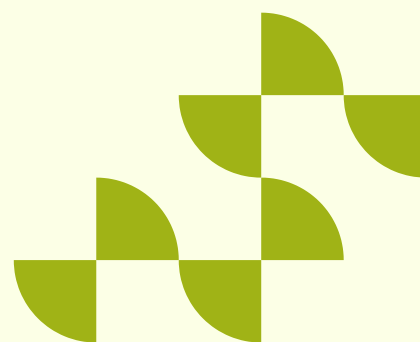


Short Breaks Services Statement



Revised October 2025

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What carers should know about short breaks

West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership wants every carer to feel supported, informed, and empowered. By “carer” we mean those who are looking after a relative or friend at home and are not paid for the support that they provide.

Here’s what we want carers to know about short breaks:

- ❖ Short breaks are available to help carers take time away from their caring role.
- ❖ Breaks can be short or longer, depending on what works best for each individual carer.
- ❖ The break should suit the carer’s needs and their circumstances.
- ❖ Short breaks can benefit both the carer and the person they care for by offering rest and a change of routine
- ❖ Carers will not be charged for taking a short break
- ❖ Support is available to help carer find the suitable break – they don’t need to do it alone.

We support carers in exploring their options and ensuring that their caring responsibilities are balanced with the appropriate support they are entitled to.

Why do we have a Short Breaks Statement?

The law in Scotland is called the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and it states that every local authority must write and share a Short Breaks Services Statement (SBSS)

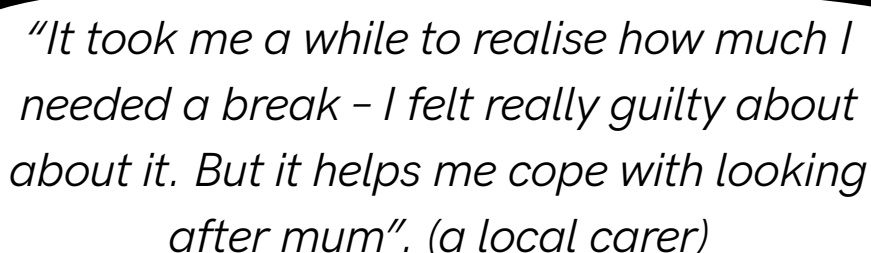
This statement helps carers and those that they are caring for understand:

- ✓ What short breaks are
- ✓ Who can get a short break
- ✓ What short break opportunities and services are available in West Dunbartonshire
- ✓ How to access short breaks
- ✓ Where to find further information, advice and guidance around short breaks

To ensure that a diverse range of perspectives and lived experiences are meaningfully represented, our SBSS was developed collaboratively by the West Dunbartonshire HSCP, Carers of West Dunbartonshire, and carers from across the local area.

WHAT DOES THE SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT DO?

West Dunbartonshire HSCP is committed to ensuring carers feel supported, valued and informed. Through the Short Breaks Services Statement, we aim to empower carers to access the right support at the right time, enhancing wellbeing for both carers and those they care for. The SBSS provides carers with clear, accessible information to help them make informed choices and find the right break to suit their individual needs.



"It took me a while to realise how much I needed a break – I felt really guilty about about it. But it helps me cope with looking after mum". (a local carer)

What is a short break?

Shared Care Scotland describes a short break as: *“Any form of service or assistance which enables carers to have sufficient and regular periods away from their caring routines or responsibilities. It is designed to support the caring relationship and promote the health and wellbeing of the carer, the supported person, and other family members that are affected by the caring situation”*

Short breaks were previously referred to as respite, but the term “short break” is now more widely used, as it better reflects the flexibility and personalised nature of this type of support.

Caring for a relative or friend can be demanding both physically and mentally. Getting a break is therefore a vital part of sustaining caring relationships and promoting wellbeing for both the carer and the person that they are looking after.

Breaks can vary in length—from a few hours during the day to overnight stays—and should be tailored to suit each carer’s individual circumstances.

The aim of the break is to provide carers with meaningful time to rest, recharge, and/or pursue personal interests, while ensuring the person they care for continues to receive the support that they need. There are several ways that short breaks can be arranged, these include:

- ✓ The cared-for person may be looked after and supported away from home, including overnight stays to give the carer a break.
- ✓ A care provider may provide support within the home, allowing the carer to take time out – this is generally referred to as **replacement care**.
- ✓ Alternatively, the carer and the cared-for person may choose to go away together, enjoying a change of environment and shared experience.

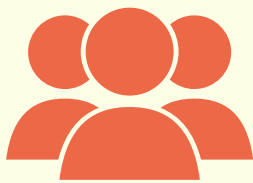


Every caring experience is unique

We understand that no two caring experiences are the same and that each carer's situation is shaped by their own circumstances, relationships, and the needs of the person they care for. We therefore recognise that carers can be impacted very differently.

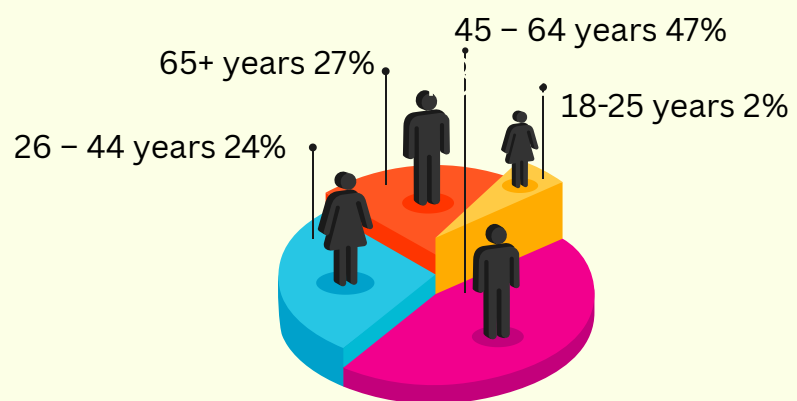
- Some carers provide support for a short or limited period of time.
- Some care for many hours every week.
- Some are managing work alongside their caring responsibilities.
- Some care for more than one person.
- The carer may or may not live with the person they care for.

Most carers step into their caring role because they have an emotional connection and concern for someone close to them—typically this will be family member, friend, or neighbour. The kind of break they need will depend on their own life, responsibilities, and what matters most to them. Recognising this diversity is key to ensuring carers can access the right support, at the right time, in a way that works for them.



In 2024/25, Carers of West Dunbartonshire supported:

- ✓ 1513 female carers
- ✓ 646 male carers
- ✓ 3 transgender carers



Ethnicity
97% white
3% BME



65% of carers supported in 24/25 live with the person they are caring for

Who can get a short break?⁰⁷

West Dunbartonshire HSCP uses eligibility criteria, a framework that was created by the National Carers Organisations. This helps us ensure that those who need it are getting access to the right type and level of support.

We do this by preparing an Adult Carers Support Plan (ACASP) or Young Carers Statement (YCS), in West Dunbartonshire the first point of contact for an ACASP is **Carers of West Dunbartonshire** and **Y Sort It** for a YCS.

Developing the carer's support plan entails having a good conversation with the carer about what their caring role involves and how it is impacting various aspects of their life.

The assessment and support plan will help identify the carer's desired outcomes, including whether a short break would support them in achieving these goals. The level of support they will be able to access is based on their individual level of need.

This approach ensures that support is tailored and proportionate, helping carers access the right help at the right time. It also promotes fairness and transparency in decision-making, while recognising the unique circumstances of each caring relationship.

As part of the support planning process, we will consider:

1. The carer's current circumstances and the pressures of their caring role(s).
2. What are the outcomes that matter to the carer and how could these be realised.
3. Whether these outcomes could be met through existing resources and universal services.
4. If a Self-directed Support (SDS) budget may be required – there is more information about what SDS is on page 08.

More information can be found on the West Dunbartonshire HSCP website - www.wdhscp.org.uk

THE RIGHT TO A BREAK

In the summer of 2025, the Care Reform (Scotland) Act was passed. The Act demonstrates a meaningful step forward in ensuring that carers are afforded the opportunity to take necessary breaks from their caring responsibilities and in ensuring that they are supported to look after their own wellbeing.

We await the publication of statutory guidance and further detail regarding the funding arrangements for the newly established Right to a Break. However, West Dunbartonshire Health and Social Care Partnership remains firmly committed to working with its partners to ensure that carers are supported and that this right is implemented in a way that is meaningful, accessible, and responsive to carers' needs



Self-directed Support

Self-Directed Support (SDS) is a way of giving people more choice and control over the support they receive. It allows individuals—including unpaid carers—to decide how their support is provided and who delivers it.

HOW SDS WORKS FOR CARERS

If you're an unpaid carer and have an Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carer Statement, you may be eligible for a personal budget through SDS. This budget is provided by the HSCP and is based on the impact caring is having on you. It is measured against our eligibility criteria and is linked to the outcomes that are identified in the carer support plan.

THERE ARE FOUR SDS OPTIONS:

1. Direct Payment – The individual receives a budget and is responsible for arranging their own support.
2. Individual Service Fund – The budget is managed by a provider or the HSCP but the individual can choose how it is used.
3. Local Authority Arranged Support – The council arranges services for the individual.
4. Mix of Options – A combination of the above.

ARE CARERS CHARGED FOR SHORT BREAKS?

Carers are exempt from charges when short breaks are arranged specifically to give them a break from their caring role.

In some cases, where support is provided for both the carer and the person they care for (e.g. a joint break), charges may apply to the cared-for person.

These will be discussed and agreed in advance so there are no unexpected costs.

WILL SDS AFFECT BENEFITS?

No, Self-Directed Support (SDS) is not a benefit and does not affect any benefits being claimed, including Carer Support Payment.

SDS funding is provided specifically to support carers with a short break, based on the impact caring is having on them. It is linked directly to the Adult Carer Support Plan and is used solely to help achieve the outcomes identified in the support plan.

More information on Self-directed support can be found at

<https://www.sdsscotland.org.uk/>

What could a Short Break look like?

REPLACEMENT CARE

Replacement care means using a care provider to provide the care and support to the cared for person. Some carers choose to use replacement care to take time away from their caring role.

This type of support can be arranged in different ways, depending on individual needs e.g.

- ✓ A few hours of support per week delivered at home.
- ✓ A planned period of care within a residential setting for the cared-for person, allowing for longer breaks.

Replacement care can offer carers peace of mind, knowing that the person they care for is well supported in their absence. This type of break can be vital for rest, personal time, or simply a change of routine and can be vital in supporting carers maintain their own wellbeing while continuing their caring role.



BREAKS AWAY

Carers can use their budget to arrange a short break, which may include taking the person they care for with them. Breaks can range from a day out to a longer stay away from home, sometimes with support from family or friends. Many carers find that stepping away from daily routines helps them recharge and continue in their caring role with renewed energy.

SHORT COURSES

Investing in short courses can offer carers a regular break from their caring role while also boosting confidence, employability and contributing to life-long learning. Courses might focus on personal interests—cooking, or languages—or formal skills such as bookkeeping or IT.



MEMBERSHIPS & TICKETS

Carers can use their funding to access activities that offer regular short breaks from their caring role.

This might include:

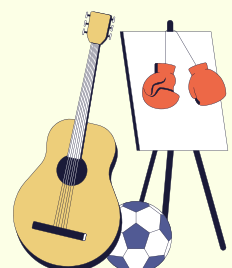
- ✓ Gym memberships
- ✓ Season tickets for football
- ✓ Tickets for events or shows
- ✓ Memberships for golf or tennis clubs
- ✓ Cinema tickets or passes

These activities can provide valuable time for relaxation, enjoyment, and personal wellbeing



HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Spending time on hobbies is a great way for carers to enjoy regular short breaks. Some choose to use their budget to buy materials or equipment for activities like knitting, sewing, gardening, cycling, or fishing. Hobbies can often be done at home and fit around caring responsibilities—and in some cases, they can be enjoyed with the person they care for.



How do I access a Short Break?

Any carer has a legal right to assessment under the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 and we would encourage every carer to have an Adult Carer Support Plan or a Young Carer Statement prepared, depending on their age.

This will help us understand how their caring role impacts their physical health, emotional wellbeing, finances, daily life balance, future plans, employment or education, and their living environment. For more information about support planning, contact:

If you are over 18



Carers
of West
Dunbartonshire

"the place for every carer to turn to"

Contact Us

T: 0141 941 1550

E: clydebankcc@carerswd.org

Address: 41 Kilbowie Road, Clydebank. G81 1BL

Web: <https://carerswd.org/about-us/>

Carers of West Dunbartonshire is the key carers support service for adult carers within West Dunbartonshire. As the "front door" to carer support, they offer a range of services including:

- Information, advice and guidance about being a carer
- Support with Adult Carer Assessment and Support Plans
- Breaks from caring
- Social opportunities and peer support

If you are under 18



Contact Us

T: 0141 941 3308

E: info@ysortit.com

Address: 5 West Thomson Street, Clydebank, G81 3EA

Web: <https://ysortit.com/>

Y Sort It is a youth-led organisation based in Clydebank, West Dunbartonshire. It was established in response to local research highlighting the need for youth-focused services and has grown into a vibrant hub supporting young people aged 8 to 18.

What Y Sort It Offers:

- Young Carers Support Service for carers aged 8–18
- Mentoring for care-experienced young people
- Youth Clubs & Drop-ins across West Dunbartonshire
- Outdoor Activities at their Carbeth hut, the Gillie Dhu

What types of Short Breaks are available?

Not all carers will be eligible for, or may wish to receive, a short break funded by the local authority. For some, it may be more appropriate for their break to be accessed through alternative means—such as third sector provision like Carers of West Dunbartonshire, YSortit, or community-based initiatives that better align with their personal circumstances and preferences.

TIME FOR ME - provides small, personalised grants to eligible carers to support them to have a break. The grant can be used to help fund a short break away from the stresses of everyday life, either with or without the person that they are caring for. If a getaway break is not possible or doesn't appeal to carers - it does not mean they cannot apply. They can still apply for something that allows them to have a break at home. Some examples of awarded grants include spa days, devices, hobby craft materials, walking gear. The project is funded by the Scottish Government's Short Breaks Fund and is delivered locally by Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

RESPITALITY- Respitality is an initiative which offers unpaid carers in Scotland a much needed break through meaningful connections with local hospitality, tourism and leisure businesses who are willing to donate a break free of charge. Respitality is a Scottish Government supported project delivered locally by Carers of West Dunbartonshire and coordinated nationally by Shared Care Scotland.

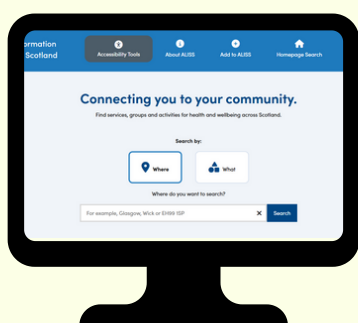
BOX OFFICE - Box Office project offers carers monthly social outings to the cinema, theatre and museums. The project is funded by National Lottery Community Fund and is delivered locally by Carers of West Dunbartonshire. It is one of many social opportunities that Carers of West Dunbartonshire offer to carers.

CARERS LEISURE PASSES - Provides free access to sport and leisure facilities in all West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust venues. Use of the pass gives carers access to swimming, gym and a variety of fitness classes. This project is currently funded by Community Health and Wellbeing Funding, and is run in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Leisure Trust and can be accessed via Carers of West Dunbartonshire.

ANNUAL CARERS BREAKS - Each year Carers of West Dunbartonshire arranges a two night break for up to 15 carers. This is an opportunity for carers to enjoy some time away from their caring responsibilities in the company of other carers. Examples of previous breaks include Beamish Heritage Museum in Durham and a spa break at Crieff Hydro.

OTHER SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES - These include a range of groups, for example the Book Group, the Gardening Group, the Craft Group and the Men's Group. These social opportunities give carers a much needed break and an opportunity to get peer support from fellow carers. More information about these groups can be found at www.carerswd.org or by contacting Carers of West Dunbartonshire on 0141 941 1550.

Useful Contacts



ALISS (A Local Information System for Scotland)

www.aliss.org

ALISS provides access to a wide range of local services, support networks, and resources, including health and wellbeing initiatives, community activities, and carer support, tailored to your area.

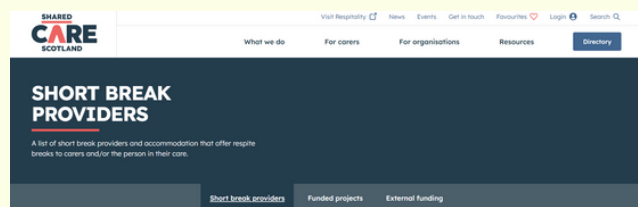


Shared Care Scotland

www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk

Shared Care Scotland is a national charity based in Scotland that works to improve the quality, choice, and availability of short breaks for unpaid carers and the people they support.

The Shared Care Scotland website hosts an **online directory** of short break providers and accommodation that offer respite breaks to carers and/or the person in their care.



Respitality

www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk

Respitality connects carer organisations with businesses in the hospitality, tourism and leisure arena to provide vital breaks from the routine for unpaid carers, of all ages, in Scotland when they need it most.

**West Dunbartonshire
Health & Social Care Partnership**

West Dunbartonshire Health & Social Care Partnership

www.wdhscp.org.uk

West Dunbartonshire HSCP is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of residents. The website listed above provides a comprehensive directory of contact details for all HSCP departments, making it easier to access the support and services.