

# Co-creating meaningful short breaks for unpaid carers and people living with dementia



Maria Caulfield, Diane Seddon, Sion Williams, and Catrin Hedd Jones

Ageing & Dementia @ Bangor / Dementia Services Development Centre, School of Medical and Health Sciences, Bangor University

Funded by the Wales School for Social Care Research on behalf of the Welsh Government



## SHORT BREAK

A short break is any form of **service or assistance** which enables the carer(s) to have **sufficient and regular periods away** from their caring routines or responsibilities. The purpose is to support the **caring relationship** and promote the **health and well-being** of the carer, the supported person, and other family members affected by the caring situation.

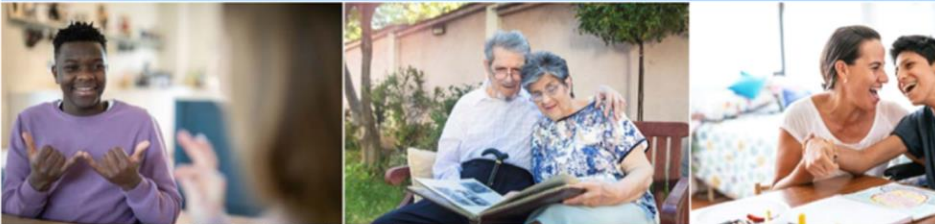
(Shared Care Scotland, 2023)

<https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/about-short-breaks/short-guides/>



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Strategy for unpaid carers



# Welsh Government Strategy for unpaid carers

**Priority one: Identifying and valuing carers** – all carers to be valued and supported to make an informed choice about the care they provide and to access the support they need whilst caring and when the caring role comes to an end.

**Priority two: Providing information, advice and assistance** – it is vital all carers have access to the right information and advice at the right time and in an appropriate format.

**Priority three: Supporting life alongside caring** – all carers must have the opportunity to take breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their own health and well-being and have a life alongside caring.

**Priority four: Supporting carers in education and the workplace** – employers and educational / training settings should be encouraged to adapt their policies and practices, enabling unpaid carers to work and learn alongside their caring role.

## WHAT DOES A SHORT BREAK MEAN AND LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

- a short stay in a care home
- carers' emergency respite care schemes
- communities group activities including peer-to-peer support.
- creative use of direct payments
- Day care centres
- equipment (e.g., green house, garden chairs etc.)
- getting friends and family to help
- gym membership/ computer access/ transport
- homecare from a care support worker/replacement care
- self-funded holidays



Watch Teresa's story on how she uses her direct payments to support her allotment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zV97lZIPgyl>

- Social Care Wales has an online [guide to direct payments](#) on its website.

# CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE SHORT BREAKS

Strong public and policy expectation and aspiration for short breaks that help:

- Restore and sustain individual resilience and personal relationships
- Sustain the physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being of people living with dementia

Strong collaboration with a diversity of sectors: health, leisure, hospitality, environment, arts, nature, exercise.

Building inclusive and connected community: micro-enterprises, community groups and activities.

## WHAT A DIFFERENCE A BREAK MAKES: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF SHORT BREAKS FOR UNPAID CARERS IN WALES



**Older People's Commissioner for Wales:**  
**Comisiynydd Pobl Hŷn Cymru**

## Rethinking Respite for People Affected by Dementia

April 2018

SHARED CARE  
scotland



### Short breaks for carers: a scoping review

September 2019

Diane Seddon and Louise Prendergast

Wales Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research  
School of Health Sciences, Bangor University



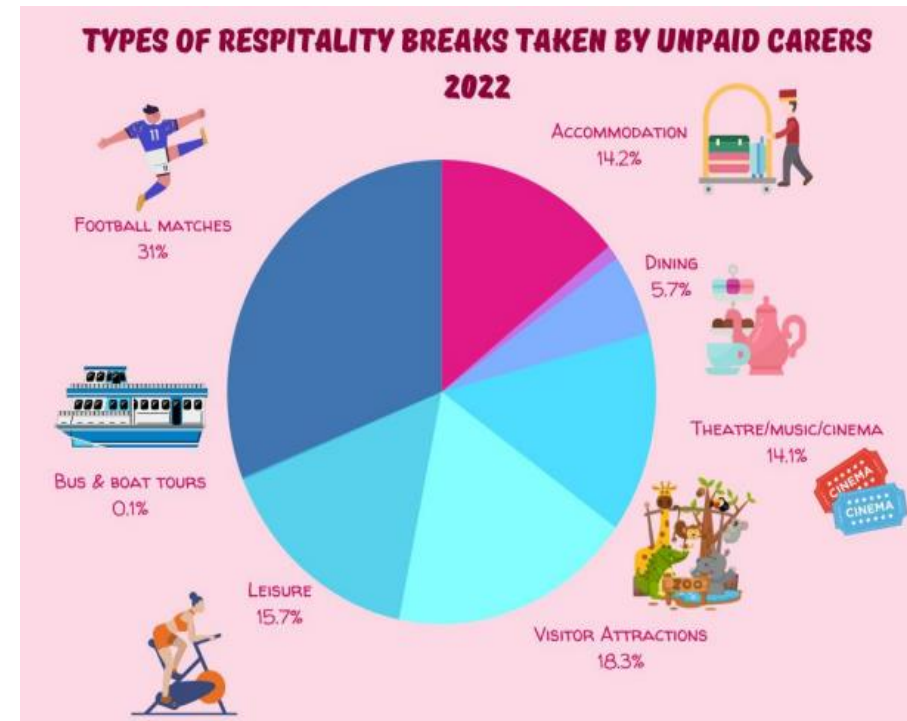
# THE RESPITALITY MODEL IN WALES

The Respitality scheme brings the hospitality, leisure and tourism industry together with carer organizations to offer free breaks to carers.

Welsh Government to explore how the Scottish model of 'respitality' can be introduced in Wales. To develop a 'staycation' network, a 'direct breaks' scheme and a respitality model of support within rural communities.

Respitality in Scotland:

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



# PRINCIPLES THAT CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS A MEANINGFUL BREAK

- **choice** in breaks to reflect what matters most and to align with personal preferences (e.g., option to experience a break together or separately etc);
- have **mutual benefit** for the person with dementia, tailored to their interests, strengths, and capabilities;
- **consistency** of break provider/care staff to establish a trusting caring partnership;
- **flexibility** (i.e., regular provision balanced with a break 'as and when needed');
- ability to **plan** a break in advance;
- **sustainability** of provision so the benefit is cumulative;
- **appropriateness** of break length and frequency

# WHAT FUNDING OPTIONS ARE THERE FOR SHORT BREAKS?

There are four main ways through which people can fund a break:

- Self-funding
- Through support from your local authority
- Through a grant designed to help you access breaks
- Third sector organisations

Turn2us.

Use the Benefits Calculator or Grants Search to find out what help you can get.

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

**How do I get funding support from my local authority?**

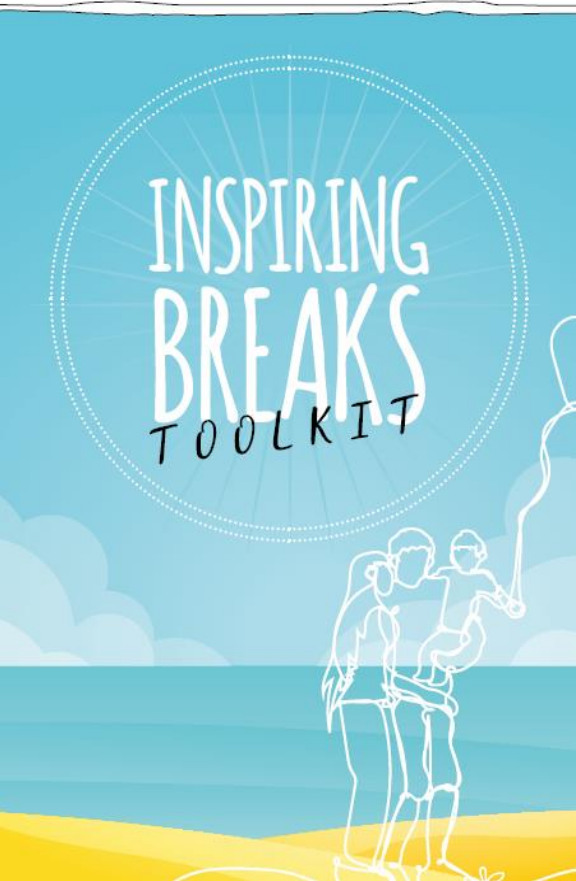
Contact your local carers center or local authority and request a Carer's Assessment.

During an assessment you can discuss:

- how you might balance your caring role with other aspects of your day-to-day life and experience a life alongside caring
- what matters to you and the personal outcomes that you wish to achieve
- if you want to participate in education, training or leisure activities, or paid employment



[https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/media/sasfull2/scs\\_inspiringbreaks\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/media/sasfull2/scs_inspiringbreaks_toolkit.pdf)



## TOOLKITS TO HELP THINK ABOUT HOW YOU CAN EXPERIENCE BREAKS

Helpful websites:

Short break for carers Wales: <https://www.dewis.wales/short-breaks-for-carers>

Amser, Short Breaks Scheme Wales: <https://carers.org/around-the-uk-our-work-in-wales/amser>

Respite care in Wales: <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/help-dementia-care/respice-care-wales>

[https://carers.net.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/TIME\\_OUT\\_Guide-2.pdf](https://carers.net.nz/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/TIME_OUT_Guide-2.pdf)



# LINKS TO WEBSITES

- Shared Care Scotland: <https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/> (leading source of information on short breaks in Scotland)
- Respite in Scotland: [www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/respite](http://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/respite)
- Rethinking Respite for People Affected by Dementia: <https://lx.iriss.org.uk/content/rethinking-respite-people-affected-dementia.html>
- A vision for the future of short breaks for unpaid carers in Wales: <https://carers.org/downloads/wales-pdfs/carers-trust-road-to-respite-report.pdf>
- Rethinking personalised short breaks for unpaid carers during COVID-19 : [https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/media/mnfagllr/iriss\\_rethinkingpersonalisedbreaks\\_fullreport\\_may2022.pdf](https://www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk/media/mnfagllr/iriss_rethinkingpersonalisedbreaks_fullreport_may2022.pdf)