



**Buckinghamshire  
Adult's Short  
Breaks Strategy  
2018 - 2022**

October 2018



***Short Breaks  
for adults  
(18 years +)  
with care and  
support needs***



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## 1.

### Introduction 1.1

### What this strategy is about

This strategy sets out our vision for short breaks. Our vision is to help vulnerable adults to live more independent lives and to support carers with their caring responsibilities.

The strategy focuses on how short breaks can help the cared-for person to live at home. We also know how important carers are so this strategy is as much to support them as the individual with needs.

We need to ensure our services are used well. We will target resources at those who need support the most. This will be done through suitable criteria and regular reviews.

This strategy applies to vulnerable adults aged 18 years and over but has been developed alongside the Children's Short Breaks Strategy. This will help children move smoothly from children's services to adult services.

## 1.2

### Why this strategy is needed

There are six key reasons why we need a strategy. These are to make sure:

- a plan is in place for how we will approach short breaks
- people can access a wide range of short-breaks
- we provide services that are value for money
- we can meet both current and future need
- the money we have for short breaks is spent where it is most needed
- people using short breaks are treated fairly and consistently

Short breaks in Buckinghamshire need modernising. We will set out plans for the offer and provision in future consultation exercises.

Currently there is no one approach to adult short breaks in place across the county. Personal care packages do not always reflect best practice in helping people stay independent. They can also lack:

- sustainable and equitable offers of support
- co-ordination
- suitable community alternatives
- specialist support

This has resulted in inconsistent provision and the use of expensive out of area placements.

Substantial population growth is expected in the area. People will live longer and have more complex disabilities. Short breaks provision will need to meet the diverse needs of the cared for and carer. The opportunity for the public, independent and

voluntary sectors to provide short breaks is great. Our commissioners will work across all sectors to grow a sustainable market that offers choice.

A short breaks strategy will give us:

- the principles we need to shape future policies and service models
- the clarity around what a short break is and who can use them
- the vision to see what is possible based on individual needs
- a better sense of how diverse short breaks can be

### **1.3 Research**

To produce this strategy we have taken into account:

- any laws about support for service users and carers
- forecasted future data
- best practice research
- information and feedback from carers and service users

It is crucial for us to build on this and co-produce ideas with people who have had experience of care and support services.

### **1.4 Objectives**

The purpose of the Adult's Short Breaks strategy is to:

- support vulnerable adults to develop independence, learn new skills, make new friends and reduce loneliness
- support carers with their caring responsibilities
- involve vulnerable adults and their families with decisions
- be certain staff are qualified and skilled to deliver services
- make sure services are safe and high quality
- provide short breaks that meet the needs of carers and vulnerable adults
- provide the right mix of universal, targeted and specialist support
- make sure access to short breaks is fair and priority is given to those in most need
- improve the quality of short breaks and achieve good value for money
- help people to try new things, be innovative and achieve good outcomes

Different people will have different views about which of these objectives are the most important. However, they all contribute to achieving good outcomes for vulnerable adults and their carers.

### **1.5 Our vision**

*'To make the best use of the resources available to help the people of Buckinghamshire lead fulfilled lives.'*

This strategy supports the Council's Strategic Plan 2017-2020 by:

- safeguarding our vulnerable
- meeting opportunities and building self-reliance

## 2. Buckinghamshire Adult Short Breaks Service

### 2.1 What short breaks can be

Short breaks are for people who are normally cared for in their own home. This could be a family member or friend who is not paid for their caring tasks. Short breaks benefit both service users and carers. Carers can get a break from their caring responsibilities and the service user can have a fulfilling break without the carer.

**2.2 Universal short breaks** are activities in the community that anyone can use. For example leisure centres, community centres, faith groups and voluntary organisations and general access Council services. The organisation which provides the activity may charge. Other activities may be free.

Universal short breaks can include Active Bucks, Carers Bucks support groups, Waddesdon Wednesday Club, Flackwell Heath Day Service, Simply Walks and Men in Sheds.

**2.3 Targeted short breaks** are usually activities that have been designed to meet the needs of a specific group of people. For example older people, or people with dementia or autism. They are often funded by grants from the Council or the NHS. They include things like cafes, support groups and luncheon clubs. The organisation which provides the activity may charge. Other activities may be free.

Targeted short breaks can include Carers Bucks, Alheimers Society Café, Age UK Befriending Service, Community Impact Bucks Gardening, Dosti Womens Club and Movers and Shakers.

**2.4 Eligibility based short breaks** are for people who have care and support needs which cannot be met by other types of short break. The person with care needs or their carer will also be eligible for support. The person with social care needs will usually have a financial assessment. They may need to pay towards the cost of the break. If eligible for financial support, people will have the choice of taking a Direct Payment. With a Direct Payment they can buy the support that suits them best.

Eligibility based short breaks may include:

- Support in the persons own home from a temporary care worker.
- A short break away from home (not necessarily overnight) for the carer. This gives the carer a break from their caring role. For example Shared Lives, Day Opportunities.
- A temporary stay in a care home or other supported environment.
- Overnight residential short breaks - these will only be for people with the most complex needs that cannot be met within a community context.
- Unplanned or emergency care which may be required when the usual carer is unavailable at short-notice.

## 2.5

### Improving access to universal short breaks

Access to universal services should always be the first option. Many vulnerable adults cannot use universal services because they are not accessible. Increased support to universal services will improve access. This will help adults with support needs to take part in activities alongside other adults in their communities. This will improve outcomes and decrease social isolation.

## 2.6

### Complex needs and challenging behaviour

Adults with specific, complex and/or challenging behaviour will still need targeted and specialist short breaks. But they should also have more opportunity to take part in universal services alongside these.

## 2.7

### What is NOT a short break

Some types of care are confused with short breaks. The list below are not short breaks:

- When a carer or personal assistant goes on holiday and temporary cover is required. Service users should use their Personal Budget to buy temporary cover.
- When a medically fit person is discharged from hospital into a residential unit because their home is not suitable. This is a **short stay**.
- When a medically **unfit** person is discharged into a step down bed or rehabilitation bed. This is **NHS provision**.
- Short-term residential care where there is no carer. For example:
  - when a person's house may need a major adaptation
  - when a care worker may be absent for a period of time.

## 3.

### Stakeholder engagement and consultation

### 3.1

Initial engagement activities were held in August 2017. The future direction of Adult Social Care Services (including short breaks) was outlined. Disabled adults and their carers had the opportunity to hear about the new programme of work.

We know co-creation is critical to achieving our vision. We will keep working with people who have personal experience or knowledge of the services and communities that support them. To do this we will:

- provide appropriate opportunities for people to have their say and design services with us
- be clear about why we are asking people to get involved
- be clear about what they are being asked to give their views on
- let them know how their views have been taken into account
- formally consult with services users when there is a significant change to a service they use
- publicly publish any results or decisions

## **3.2 How our consultation has shaped our strategy**

A six week consultation took place between June and August 2018. There were 117 responses. These showed broad support for the principles set out in this strategy.

Over 64% of responders were unpaid carers or family members, and over a third were currently in receipt of some form of short break.

The consultation responses highlighted:

- The role of short breaks in supporting carers is incredibly important.
- Short breaks need to deliver a range of outcomes. This includes developing independence, learning new skills, making new friends and reducing loneliness all linked to the specific needs of adults using the service.
- There is strong support for access to short breaks to be fair and priority given to those in greatest need. Over 90% of respondees said this was important or very important.
- Quality and safety are really important to service users and carers. Over 93% said this was important or very important to them.
- People have a limited understanding of the term 'short break', meaning clarity around the extent of activities available is needed.

Consultation feedback has been used to develop the final version of this strategy. It will also be used to inform future service delivery and policy.

## **4. Delivering our vision**

The Adult Short Break strategy aims to use the following principles and guidance:

### **4.1 Outcomes based approach**

We want short breaks to deliver the best outcomes for vulnerable adults and their carers. We will focus on the strengths and abilities of each person, looking at what they can do and what matters to them. By focusing on each adult, we can tailor activities to individual need, to help develop their skills and promote independence. Individual needs should be reviewed regularly to allow for any changes to support.

### **4.2 Meeting individual need in a fair and consistent way**

We will use Care Advice Buckinghamshire ([www.careadvicebuckinghamshire.org](http://www.careadvicebuckinghamshire.org)) and the Buckinghamshire Family Information Service ([www.bucksfamilyinfo.org](http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org)) to provide information and guidance on:

- short breaks
- access and eligibility, including to provision funded through Continuing Healthcare

To make sure resources reach those in most need we will:

- Improve access to community alternatives offered to all people. This will be done by identifying training and support needs for providers. This will help those with disabilities to take part
- Provide support proportionate to the needs of each person focusing on helping people to live independently. We will offer short term interventions to regain skills and provide help where people require long term support.
- Ensure short breaks are calculated in a fair and open way. We will take into account that short breaks will have different levels of importance to people depending on their abilities, circumstances and current expectations.
- Where the need for specialist short breaks has been identified use a multidisciplinary panel to agree requests. We will take into account other support being accessed and highlight other provision that supports the carer (and the cared for too).

### **4.3 Sustainable models of support**

We aim to work with partners who can provide services that are flexible and can change as needed over the coming years. This will ensure those who need support can access it when they need it. We aim to develop a wider, more inclusive offer for adults with a disability. This includes activities that in the past might not have been accessible.

This could include:

- building informal networks of support to provide practical help, using volunteers and befriending schemes
- understanding that everyone has a place in ensuring the future and sustainability of short break services in county, however much or little they may use them
- sharing knowledge and expertise about what is available and what works when supporting disabled adults and their families
- use of local, community buildings so families do not have to travel far and can link with other provisions

### **4.4 Improved transition to adulthood**

As a child approaches the transition to adult services, it can be an anxious time for both the child and their family.

For children 14 years and older, the Transitions Team works with Children's Social Care. They identify which young people could be eligible for either adult social care or continuing health care services at 18 and those who will get support through universal services. They will work with the young people and their carers to ensure a smooth transition.

Providing young people and their families with easy to read information is vital. This will be provided through the Local Offer ([www.bucksfamilyinfo.org](http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org)). This information will include:

- Developing independence
- Life skills
- Accessing further education
- Accessing volunteering opportunities
- Housing and transport

#### **4.5 Working together**

We want to use co-production with children, young people, parents and carers to develop and review our short breaks offer

Some of the ways we will do this are:

- co-production in implementing contracts and transitioning to new contracts
- establishing a Carer Advisory Group for short breaks for carers to give us feedback on the service and highlight possible changes
- collaboration in service and contract reviews for new short break services

#### **4.6 Financial assessment**

Where appropriate, service users will be financially assessed to see whether or not they will need to contribute towards the cost of their care. Charges are only a contribution and no one pays more than they can afford. More detail on charging can be found in the following links:

- [Charging Policy for Non-Residential Services](#)
- [Choice and Top Up Policy](#)
- [Direct Payment Policy](#)
- [Assessing and Supporting Your Needs](#)

#### **4.7 Travel assistance**

The provision of transport relevant to care and support needs will be considered where appropriate following assessment. Individual transport needs will be detailed in the service user's support plan. It is expected that the service user, together with family members or friends, would usually make their own arrangements for transport. If this is not possible, or if specialist transport is needed, the decision to provide and fund transport will be subject to the relevant health or social care policy and guidance. In the exceptional circumstance where transport is provided by the Council, the cost would be included in the final budget figure and would be subject to the Council's charging policy.

## **5. National context**

### **5.1 The Care Act 2014**

The Care Act 2014 brings together and builds upon a range of previous legislation around care and support into one new law. It came into effect in England from the 1st April 2015.

The Act focuses on individual wellbeing and looks at preventing dependence on public services. It focuses on helping people to draw on their strengths as well as support they have available from both personal and community networks - rather than becoming dependent on the long term care and support of health and social care.

Promoting wellbeing is not always about statutory services meeting needs directly. The concept of meeting needs recognises that modern care and support can be provided in any number of ways, with new models emerging all the time. This is different from the previous legislation which focuses primarily on traditional models of residential and domiciliary care

The Care Act is designed to work in partnership with the Children and Families Act 2014, which applies to 0 to 25 year old children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. In combination, the two Acts enable areas to prepare children and young people for adulthood from the earliest possible stage, including their transition to adult services.

The Care Act has also strengthened support for carers who are assessed as having eligible needs and emphasises the importance of short breaks. More information about the [Care Act can be found here](#).

### **5.2 National research**

Research shows that quality short breaks can improve life chances for disabled adults by helping them and their families to achieve the following:

- better established peer groups and friendships
- increased enjoyment and achievement
- improved connections with local community
- improved physical health, emotional health and well-being
- more sustainable caring arrangements and improved quality of family life
- improved communication, confidence and self-esteem
- increased knowledge about where to access advice and support when they need it most
- increased co-production, choice and control

'A Review of Respite and Short Break Provision For Adult Carers of Adults in the Highland Partnership Areas' supports the positive impact that is made:

- *‘Carers – in their caring role – are not users of services; they are providing care. The support people receive as carers through respite does not make them service users – rather this support is seen as that which that enables them to continue to provide care (or to disengage from caring) and to have a life alongside caring.’*

*‘Although respite is seen as a service for the carer, access to this service is through an assessment of the cared-for person. It is as though there is an unwritten assumption that the obtaining of a break from caring through provision of the respite service in and of itself is the sole outcome for carers. Where other outcomes are achieved, it is the case that this often relies on the serendipitous and the incidental rather than on being intentionally designed into provision via conversations with carers. This then leaves unexamined much else that could be accomplished through discussing a range of possible outcomes for carers via an effective Carers Support Plan.’*

Anne McDonald and Donald McLeod 2016

## **6. Local context**

### **6.1 Buckinghamshire Council’s Strategic Plan 2017-2020**

This sets out the key aims and priorities for the Buckinghamshire Council which are to safeguard our vulnerable, create opportunities and build self-reliance.

In line with the principles of the Care Act 2014, The Council will continue to support those who require specialist short break services, but also ensure that they significantly increase the opportunities for people to be appropriately cared for in their own home with the assistance of family or other informal support systems. In this way, many more people should be able to stay in their own homes for longer, preventing the need for institutional based care.

### **6.2 Strategic Vision for Carers in Buckinghamshire 2016 - 2019 (BCC and Bucks CCGs)**

Although evidence tell us that many carers find their roles rewarding and positive, there is also good evidence that caring can have a negative impact on the carer’s physical and emotional wellbeing. The ‘Strategic Vision for Carers in Buckinghamshire 2016 – 2019’ sets out our four point commitment to improving quality of life for carers:

- support, value and recognise carers as equal partners in care
- support and give carers confidence to have a life of their own outside of caring
- involve carers in planning and shaping services
- recognise that carers need flexible and responsive support

### 6.3 'Better Lives 2018 – 2021'

'Better Lives' explains our strategy for improving adult social care services now and creating services which are sustainable for the future residents of Buckinghamshire.

The strategy outlines how the Council, working with partners within the voluntary and community sector, will make it easier for people to take care of themselves, improve their own lives and remain independent for as long as possible. The strategy is based on three levels of support:

- Living independently
- Regaining independence
- Living with support

These can be seen in the diagrams below. The focus is on helping people to gain or regain the skills they need to live independently. This is done by supporting them in the short term and expecting that wherever possible people will support themselves in the longer term. We know that this approach can prevent longer term needs from developing and helps to meet people's needs in a way which centres on them. It delivers the outcomes that they want to achieve, and results in a better quality of life.

## How it works now



### Living with support

Many people have long-term, service-directed support.

### Regaining independence

Short-term services create dependency rather than helping people to maintain or regain independence.

### Living independently

People helping themselves to stay well and live independent, fulfilled lives.

## How it should work in the future

### Living independently

The majority of people will help themselves to stay well and live independent, fulfilled lives.

### Regaining independence

Services provide short-term support to help people maintain or regain control over their lives.

### Living with support

Personalised social care support created with people and their families.



**6.4** The strategy for short breaks and the new programme of work is aligned with the vision and values set out by the Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group. [Buckinghamshire CCG Vision and Values](#)

## **7. Market and demographic research**

### **7.1 People with a learning disability and/or autism**

Short breaks are crucial for people with a learning disability or autism who have behaviours that challenge. They can help them to remain at home.

Analysis of local data shows that there is a growing need for services and support for individuals with a learning disability who have behaviours that challenge.

There is a lack of access to suitable opportunities and specialist support. This has often resulted in the need for expensive out of area placements. This is something that the strategy would help to rebalance.

The national Transforming Care Programme sets out priorities which have been used to agree aims locally. This includes the importance of supporting carers and families of people whose behaviours challenge. This can be done by using suitable and varied short breaks which include overnight respite. Research shows that:

- There are around 5,870 adults (aged 18-64 years) with a learning disability currently living in Buckinghamshire. (Emerson and Hatton, 2004)
- The number of working age adults with a learning disability in Buckinghamshire is expected to increase overall by approximately 2% by 2033. (PANSI 2017)
- Approximately 910 (16%) have complex and multiple needs relating to their learning disability which resulted in the provision of a health and/or social care service in 2015/16. (NHS Digital ASCOF 2016)
- The number of people with more complex needs relating to their learning disability is expected to increase by 37%. (NHS Digital ASCOF 2016)
- The number of people with a learning disability aged 65 years and over is anticipated to increase by 55% by 2033. (PANSI 2017)

### **7.2 Growth in the older population**

Substantial population growth is expected in Buckinghamshire. The population over the age of 65 years is increasing. The Council's approach to short breaks provision needs to meet the needs of carers and the cared for.

- There are an estimated 100,400 adults aged over 65 years living in Buckinghamshire. (PANSI 2017)
- Around 14,200 of these are over the age of 85 years. (PANSI 2017)
- It is estimated that 40,724 have some form of long term health and/or social care service need. (PANSI 2017)
- The number of later life age adults in Buckinghamshire is expected to increase overall by approximately 34% by 2030. The number of people with more complex needs relating to their age is expected to increase by approximately 44%. (PANSI 2017)
- National models suggest growth in the need for social care services of 3.2% per year. (NHS Digital ASCOF 2016)

### **7.3 Council funded short breaks**

- 324 people were in receipt of Council funded short breaks in 2017/18.
- 89 of the 324 service users accessed respite via a direct payment. 59 also accessed a day service provision.
- The number of hours of unpaid care to a partner, family member or other person over the age of 65 is projected to raise by 31% by 2030.
- Buckinghamshire will continue to be a place of growth over the next five years. Alongside this is the pressure of increasing financial constraints. These make it essential to analyse, plan and deliver cost effective services.

### **7.4 Implementation, Monitoring and Review**

Delivery of this strategy would be monitored by the Council and CCG. These two organisations commission funded short breaks in Buckinghamshire. This will be done by checking if we have been able to achieve the objectives and outcomes set out in this strategy.

We will use information from different sources to measure this. This will include feedback from individuals and their carers, information from our partners and information gathered as part of contract monitoring.

The strategy will be reviewed every year by a multi-agency group.