

Shared Lives South West- Brief History



In 2019, Shared Lives South West received the coveted rating of 'Outstanding' by the CQC (Care Quality Commission). A national recognition of excellence. In the same year, the charity signed a contract with Somerset County Council that significantly increased the size and scope of the organisation. Today, Shared Lives South West supports over 300 individuals with the help of 270 specially trained carers across Cornwall, Devon and Somerset.

But where did it all begin?

Travel back just 20 years and the idea of having this type of care available in the Southwest really was just a concept. The charity was founded in 2004 by Devon County Council. It spearheaded their mission to introduce progressive 'adult placement' (now known as Shared Lives) services to the region. The service launched with just 49 carers supporting 109 people.

The organisation has since gone from strength to strength. The 2011 re-branding from the name 'SWAPS' (South West Adult Placement Scheme) to Shared Lives South West made the focus of the organisation clearer.

The Shared Lives model offers a community-based, person-centred alternative to traditional forms of care. In Shared Lives schemes, the carer welcomes the individual with support needs into their own homes to live as part of a family.

Shared Lives South West operates as an independent charity and is now the sole provider of Shared Lives services across Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Plymouth, and Torbay. The charity works under contracts with local authorities and employs Shared Lives Coordinators to ensure effective matching between carers and those in need of support.

A Brief History

Innovation is important to Shared Lives South West. The charity is the first Shared Lives provider to have a dedicated Funding and Benefits team, ensuring individuals receive the correct financial support. Behind the scenes, office staff benefit from flexible working hours, training opportunities and well-being support, making the charity a sought-after employer in the region.

Shared Lives South West continues to explore new opportunities for growth while maintaining its core mission: providing long-term placements and short breaks for people who need support in a nurturing, family-oriented environment.

Today...

Shared Lives South West remains one of the largest Shared Lives schemes in the country, with a focus on empowering individuals to live fulfilling, independent lives. The organisation is led by a dedicated team and supported by a strong governance structure, continually striving to improve and expand its services to meet the evolving needs of the communities it serves

