

Press Release
4 September 2013

Give people with dementia a break

Larkfield Library is holding a drop-in and information session for people interested in opening their homes and providing support to people living with Dementia.

Most people will have heard of foster carers for [children](#), but Kent County Council is now looking for paid host carers to offer short breaks, long term stay and day support for people with Dementia.

The new initiative, part of the council's Shared Lives scheme, gives people with dementia the opportunity to be supported in a family setting, to develop real and lasting new relationships and be part of their local community. This gives the individual and their [families](#) a real choice and an alternative to residential care.

A session is being held on Monday 16 September between 10.30am and 2.30pm at Larkfield Library where people will be able to talk to someone from the Shared Lives team about what is involved in caring for someone living with dementia.

Graham Gibbens, KCC cabinet member adult social care and public health, said: "People living with dementia benefit from a familiar, home environment and the Shared Lives scheme offers a positive alternative to residential care.

"The service is tailor-made to the needs of the individual and it is vital that there is a good relationship with their host carer, so we need people from all sorts of backgrounds. We believe that care in a family environment can really boost the well-being and quality of life for people living with dementia as well as help them stay part of the community.

"Becoming a host carer is a rewarding career which can make a huge difference to the lives of vulnerable adults in Kent."

Working as a Shared Lives host carer means more flexibility than a traditional 9 to 5 job, it is a challenging and rewarding

career which fits in with [your lifestyle](#) and is based within your own home.

KCC is looking for people from all sorts of backgrounds and cultures and single people, couples and families are all welcome and will receive [payment](#) for the support they provide. No formal qualifications are required but applicants should have an interest in helping vulnerable adults, be motivated, committed, and reliable, have a spare room and time to give to another person. Host carers will receive [training](#) and ongoing support.

To find out more about becoming a Shared Lives carer, call 01233 652401 or visit www.kent.gov.uk/sharedlives.

Notes to editors,

* Larkfield Library, Martin Square, Larkfield, ME20 6QW.