

Evaluation of Short Breaks Scheme Invitation to Tender

1. Introduction

Tenders are invited to undertake an evaluation to assess the impact of the Welsh Government Short Breaks Fund for unpaid carers where Carers Trust Wales have been appointed as the National Co-ordinating body. This document sets out the background and requirements for the research, and details of the tendering process. Tenders are open to researchers attached to academic institutions as well as independent researchers.

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2. Background

Carers Trust Wales

Carers Trust works to transform the lives of unpaid carers across the UK. We partner with our network of local carer organisations to provide funding and support, deliver innovative and evidence-based programmes and raise awareness and influence policy.

Carers Trust Wales delivers practical support and information to carers and to those who work with them including public sector bodies and third sector organisations.

With locally based Network Partners, Carers Trust provides support to carers in their homes through the provision of replacement care, and in the community with information, advice, emotional support, hands on practical help and access to much needed breaks.

Partners in Wales are: Bridgend Carers Centre, Carers Outreach Service, Carers Trust North Wales Crossroads Care Services, Swansea Carers Centre, Carers Trust West Wales Crossroads Care, NEWCIS: Northeast Wales Carers Information Service and Credu.

Unpaid Carers in Wales

A carer is a person of any age who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Unpaid carers need and are entitled to information, advice and assistance from their local authority, have the right to an assessment of their needs and support to meet eligible needs, as laid out in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

There are upwards of 370,000 unpaid carers in Wales. Of these, 30,000 are young carers and young adult carers, under 25 years old.

The need for Respite and Short Breaks for Unpaid Carers

Caring can be a positive and rewarding experience but looking after someone can impact on a person's own health and well-being, finances, education and employment. Many carers report suffering from exhaustion, fatigue, isolation and depression. Not only is this detrimental to the carer, if they reach crisis point and are unable to care, the person they care for requires additional support from an already over-stretched health and social care system.

Previous research has indicated that a significant help for carers would come in the form of respite, or short breaks, to allow the carer to have rest from their caring responsibilities. Not only is this vital for carer well-being, but it also allows them to rest and re-energise, better equipped to continue to undertake their caring role.

Existing research regarding unpaid carers and respite includes:

[carers-trust-road-to-respite-report.pdf](#)

[EM-QAQA210002 1..14 \(sharedcarescotland.org.uk\)](#)

[05615-Shared-Care-Scotland-research-report.pdf \(sharedcarescotland.org.uk\)](#)

3. Overview of Short Breaks Scheme

In response to the above, Welsh Government have provided £9million for a Short Breaks Scheme, to be delivered over three years as follows:

- 2022-2023 - £2million
- 2023-2024 - £3.5million
- 2024-2025 - £3.5million

The creation of this new Short Breaks Scheme for Unpaid Carers is a key Welsh Government Programme for Government commitment and also supports the delivery of Priority 3 in the Strategy for Unpaid Carers:

Supporting life alongside caring – all unpaid carers must have the opportunity to take breaks from their caring role to enable them to maintain their own health and wellbeing and have a life alongside caring.

Development of this new Scheme has been informed by research commissioned by Welsh Government in 2021: *What A Difference a Break Makes: A Vision for the Future of Short Breaks for Unpaid Carers in Wales.* The research sets out 12 key principles for short breaks which underpins the design and delivery of the Short Breaks Scheme and provides a framework for allocation of funding. The 12 principles are detailed at the end of the RPB Guidance in Annex B.

The research importantly provides the following, coproduced definition of what constitutes a short break:

Any break, which strengthens and/or sustains informal caring relationships and enhances the wellbeing of carers and the people they support. This may be achieved through a service, an activity or an item.

Carers Trust Wales have been appointed as national coordinating body for the new Scheme and are putting into place systems for allocation of funding, support for those being funded, carer involvement and representation as well as monitoring and evaluation.

4. Purpose of and Intended Outcomes of the Short Breaks Scheme

The Short Breaks Scheme intends to benefit 30,000 carers across Wales over the next three years through two funding programmes. Overall, the Scheme has the following key aims:

KEY AIMS OF SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

- Increase the availability and accessibility of short breaks
- Provide personalised, flexible and responsive break options
- Prioritise and target short breaks to those who need it most

These are drawn from the 12 Key Principles within the What a Difference a Break Makes research and will underpin allocation of funding.

The Short Breaks Scheme is focussed on **outcomes** for carers and those they care for. The outcomes for the three years of funding (2022-2025) are as follows:

OUTCOMES OF SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

- Carers and those they care for will have improved wellbeing
- Carers will be more resilient and able to sustain the caring relationship
- Regional Partnership Boards and the Third Sector will have increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks to carers

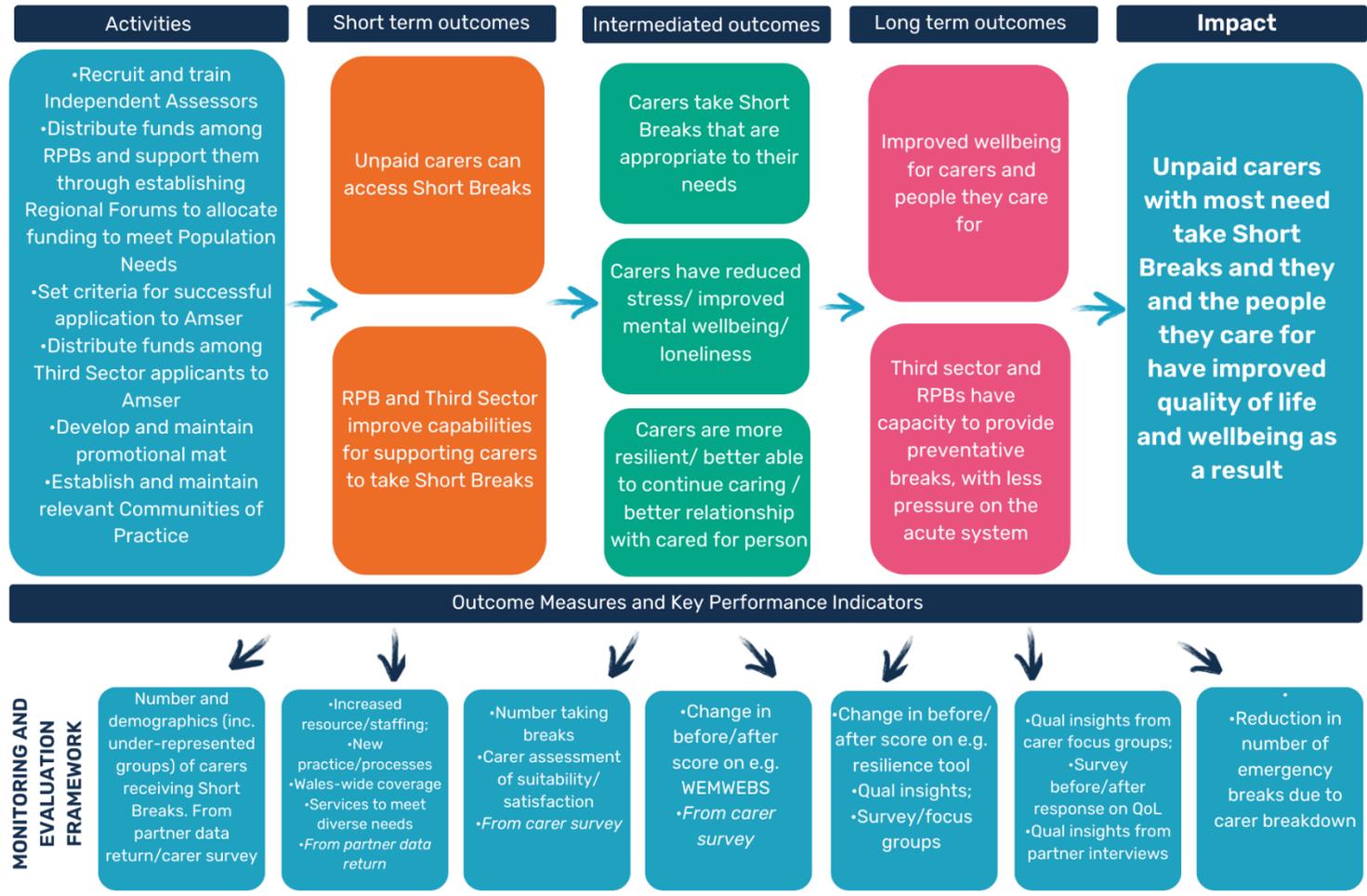
These outcomes have been drawn from the **Theory of Change for the Short Breaks Scheme** - see figure 1.

Figure 1: Theory of Change

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GOFALWYR**
CYMRU

CARERS TRUST
WALES

Theory of Change: Short Breaks Fund



5. Structure of Short Breaks Scheme funding

The Short Breaks Scheme funding will be distributed through two distinct funding programmes:

A. Short Breaks Fund – distributed via Regional Partnership Boards

Regional Partnership Boards will be awarded 40% of total funding annually in 2023-24 and 2024-2025. In the first year (2022-23), the majority of the £2m allocation will be distributed via RPBs. It is anticipated that at least 20% of the funding allocated via RPBs will support initiatives in the third sector.

Due to the short time frame for allocation in 2022-23, RPBs will be able to allocate following immediate receipt of funding, within the parameters of guidance provided by Carers Trust Wales. This guidance is provided in Annex B to this tender document and includes the 12 principles which have guided the scope of the Short Breaks Scheme and funding allocations.

In the funding years 2023-24 and 2024-25, Carers Trust Wales will establish and facilitate Regional Short Breaks Forums, in line with the seven RPB footprints, to guide RPBs' allocation of funding to services under the Short Breaks Fund (SBF). Membership of Regional Forums will include RPB Carer Representatives, unpaid carers, Local Health Board Carer Leads, Social Services, County Voluntary Councils and/or other third sector organisations representing diverse communities.

Regional Forums will be led by the (soon to be recruited) Programme Lead who, drawing on the expertise of Carers Trust's Programmes and Impact Directorate, will be responsible for guiding RPBs to evaluate bids, allocate funding and provide ongoing support and monitoring. These Forums will be a key resource for an Evaluation team.

B. Amser – Third Sector Funding Support

Carers Trust will allocate 60% of the allocated funding to a competitive small grants scheme for third sector organisations across Wales. This national fund, 'Amser: the flexible breaks fund', will respond directly to the 12 Key Principles of 'What a

difference a break makes'. Amser will build and enhance the range of short break options for carers of all ages across Wales, complementing regional provision. Its focus would be to:

- a) Support services with a broad and inclusive definition of short breaks, encouraging new service models in the third sector, including social enterprises and user-led organisations
- b) Support improved long-term wellbeing by delivering breaks that are positive for the carer and cared-for person
- c) Inspire organisations to create innovative and responsive solutions that reflect the diversity of the carer population, such as peer support and community interest breaks in person and online

Applications will be delivered via an open funding process. Applicants will be able to submit proposals to support all unpaid carers but will be encouraged to address identified priority needs to provide flexible breaks reflecting the diversity of the carer population, including:

- Opportunities for families to have a break together
- Young carers
- Older carers
- Children with complex health needs including hospice care
- Carers from groups underrepresented in services, in line with Welsh Government Equality Impact Assessments and building on Carers Trust expertise e.g. [Making Carers Count](#)

Organisations could apply to serve a local, regional or national population, as appropriate to their service model or target population. Services should complement and enhance existing regional provision.

Amser will aim to achieve national coverage across Wales ensuring no carer is faced with the lack of flexible breaks options locally. We will monitor the geographical distribution of successful applications and proactively drive future applications rounds in underserved areas.

6. Purpose of Evaluation

We wish to undertake an evaluation in order to explore and understand:

1. The effectiveness of the short breaks on carer outcomes, and outcomes for those they care for
2. To identify which short break interventions made the most difference for carers and those they care for
3. To assess the reach and impact the Short Breaks Scheme as had on the provision and take-up of Short Breaks for carers in Wales, from a short breaks provider perspective (both third sector and Regional Partnership Boards)
4. To investigate and articulate, the potential social return on investment of providing short breaks for carers in Wales, and develop recommendations that support Carers Trust wider campaign work such as 'A Right to Respite'
5. To identify the sustainability of the Short Breaks Scheme impacts across Wales, from the perspective of short break providers, carers, those being cared for and other stakeholders.

As a reminder the evaluation should endure due consideration of the outcomes set for the Scheme. (NB – this is not an exhaustive list, but an indicative one):

- Carers and those they care for will have improved wellbeing
- Carers will be more resilient and able to sustain the caring relationship
- Regional Partnership Boards and the Third Sector will have increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks to carers

The Theory of change in Figure 1, outlines how the delivery of outcomes could potentially be staged and the above outcomes could be assessed as follows (again not exhaustive):

Short term assessment of outcomes

- To assess whether the fund is reaching unpaid carers, particularly those most in need, to allow them to access a short break. This includes the numbers of carers taking breaks and the demographics of these carers. It also includes the types of breaks undertaken
- To understand the extent to which carers from all backgrounds, including underserved communities, are accessing short breaks

Medium term assessment of outcomes

- To assess the level of carer satisfaction of the breaks on offer and for those they care for. If sample sizes allow this could be segmented according to the type of short break taken
- To understand the impact of the short break on the wellbeing of the unpaid carer. This includes the impact on stress, isolation as well as emotional resilience. This could also consider how the different types of breaks deliver an immediate or sustained impact on wellbeing

Long term assessment of outcomes

- The impact of short breaks to improve the overall wellbeing of carers and the people they care for
- The impact of the fund in ensuring carer support providers have capacity to provide preventative breaks in the long term, to allow carers to have a rest before the situation reaches crisis point
- The impact of the fund in increasing capacity to provide preventative short breaks

Whilst the above is required, we welcome discussion and ideas regarding other research questions that may be of interest or should be included in the research. We would also welcome an exploration of potential social return on investment of short breaks.

The expertise, experience and research interests of the successful applicant would be welcome in shaping additional research objectives. However, proposals would need to meet the strategic objectives of Carers Trust Wales and in answering, do not impact on the facilitation of the Short Breaks Fund.

7. Methodology

Whilst Carers Trust Wales are flexible in terms of methods employed to fulfil the above objectives, it is anticipated that data collected will be a combination of quantitative and qualitative data – as indicated in the Theory of Change in Figure 1.

Where relevant, Carers Trust’s suite of validated social impact measurement tools should be used to measure individual-level personal outcomes. However, we would welcome a breakdown of proposed methodology from those bidding for this tender.

Carers Trust Wales will be designing and providing monitoring processes with funded projects.

Projects funded via Amser will be provided with monitoring paperwork. A feature of this may involve direct data capture with individual carers.

The Regional Partnership Boards will be distributing funds via the Short Breaks Fund through their own networks. Carers Trust Wales are supporting them with monitoring and evaluation for the funding tranche going out in early 2023, which will be spent by March 2023. Guidance will be provided to the Boards on this. In future years, support around monitoring and evaluation will be taken forward via a Regional Forum established in each region. They will be a key resource for an evaluation team. More information on this is contained within Annex B.

8. Working with Carers Trust Wales

We find the best outcomes are achieved through strong partnerships and collaborative relationships. Whilst the expertise for the research would rest with the contractor, Carers Trust Wales would anticipate being involved in the process to provide expertise in terms experience with the fund and working with unpaid carers. We would also strongly encourage and expect to see engagement with unpaid carers directly as part of the final design and implementation of evaluation work.

We also propose setting out a project communication plan during the inception stage of the project. As part of this plan the contractor will be required to provide regular updates to the Project Manager. It is expected that contractors will raise areas of concern as soon as they arise.

9. Timetable and outputs

The following outputs are required:

- A full report for Carers Trust Wales detailing the findings from the evaluation. Conclusions and recommendations should also be included where appropriate
- A summary report, providing key findings of the above
- An annual interim report, highlighting short and medium-term findings
- Localised reports for each participating organisation facilitating the Short Breaks Fund

A proposed timetable is detailed below:

Activity (Milestones)	Date
Inception meeting	January 2023
Full project design submitted and approved by Carers Trust Wales	February 2023
Data collection	February 2023-June 2025
Annual Interim Report	March 2024, March 2025
Report writing	June 2025-August 2025
Draft report delivered	September 2025
Final report delivered	December 2025
Presentation to Carers Trust Trustee board and Welsh Government to share the findings	December 2025

10. Costs

This fund is to provide short breaks for 3 years and the budget for evaluative work over this period is **£40k** inclusive of all expenses and VAT. Costs should state whether VAT is chargeable. Costs of different options should be clear (if applicable). Full cost details of any proposed sub-contracts (including transcription) and how these will be managed should be included.

In the costs section, please provide:

- A clear breakdown of the cost and approximate number of weeks allocated to each phase of the project.
- Staff costs (along with the day rate and number of weeks input)
- Administrative costs
- Fieldwork costs
- Expenses listed as a separate figure

11. Tendering criteria and procedure

If you wish to tender for this Evaluation, please send a submission which encompasses the following key headings:

a. Contact Details

Applicant Organisation and any co-applicant organisations along with key contacts for the tender application

b. Context for the research (max) 800 words

Please describe your understanding of the need for the Short Breaks Scheme, highlighting your insight into potential impacts on carers and those they care for. Please also describe your understanding of the context of the Scheme and the role of key stakeholders (which you may wish to define).

c. Ethical considerations and plans (max) 500 words

Please explain any potential ethical issues you foresee and what plans you would have in place to mitigate them

d. Research approach (max 1000 words)

Please explain the methods you intend to use to address the objectives laid out in the tender document

Provide a rationale for the methods selected

Explain any sample size you would feel appropriate

Describe the methods of analysis by which the data will be evaluated to meet the study objectives

We welcome discussion and ideas regarding other research questions that may be of interest or should be included in the research, additional to those outlined in this tender. Please include here.

e. Project plan (max 1000 words)

Please detail the key stages in the project and include a timetable of the key activities within

f. Feasibility of project and likelihood of its successful completion on time (max 250 words)

Include any potential difficulties and risks and how you would mitigate these

g. Budget Breakdown

Please provide details of the costs and a justification of the resources requested
Please clearly include total amount requested

h. Researcher experience (max 500 words)

Please provide a short summary regarding the experience you have in research with unpaid carers and/or evaluating the impact of support funds such as this

Please attach a summary CV for all researchers and collaborators in the application

Please list any peer reviewed publications or other reports relevant to the proposed research

Also include a brief outline and hyperlinks to **two** relevant pieces of work you have delivered. **We will not review more than two.**

i. Referees

Details of two individual referees, outlining the relationship and work carried out, full contact details and confirmation that you have permission to share their details with those involved in the review of the submission. Carers Trust will contact you ahead of contacting any named referee.

Tenders will be assessed based on the following criteria:

A. Understanding of the brief and the objectives

Does the contractor demonstrate a good understanding of Carers Trust Wales and the project objectives?

B. Research approach

How suitable and realistic is the proposed methodology for data collection?

Is there sufficient explanation of how the data or knowledge required for the approach will be collected?

C. Ethical Issues

How does the proposal address any anticipated ethical issues and explain how these will be dealt with?

D. Project plan and timescales

Does the proposal set out a clear plan for delivering the project on time and on budget?

Are there adequate project management and quality assurance arrangements in place?

E. Costs

Does the proposal give a clear breakdown of costs?

Does the approach and plan represent value for money?

F. Relevant expertise and experience

Has the proposal included a summary CV?

What degree of sector expertise does the researcher bring to this project?

Does the researcher have experience of delivering similar projects successfully?

Does the researcher have experience of working with vulnerable groups?

The timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

Activity	Date
Invitation to Tender released	w/c 14 November
Submission deadline	13 December 5pm
Panel to meet to discuss and finalise successful bid	w/c 12 December
Successful organisation appointed	w/c 19 December

12. Submitting your tender

Before submitting your research application, we welcome informal conversations in advance if you wish to understand any more about Carers Trust Wales, the Short Breaks Fund or the evaluation requirements. If you wish to do this, please contact:

Dr Catrin Edwards – Head of External Affairs: cedwards@carers.org

The closing date for receipt of tenders is **5pm on Wednesday 13 December 2022**. A full electronic copy of the tender including any annexes and supplementary material in MS Word or PDF format should be emailed to shortbreakswales@carers.org

If you have any questions on any details of the research brief, please contact:

Dr Tim Banks – Research and Engagement Manager: tbanks@carers.org

Annex A: Outline Terms and Conditions

Research contract conditions

The contract will be commissioned under Carers Trust Wales standard research contract terms and conditions.

Ownership of data and outputs

All data collected for the project should be provided electronically to Carers Trust Wales on completion of the contract or when requested. Data ownership will be in accordance with our standard research contract, which is available on request.

Data protection and informed consent

Contractors shall comply with all the provisions and obligations under the Data Protection Act, including the eight data protection principles and all subordinate legislation.

Annex B: Guidance provided to RPB's including 12 principles

Short Breaks Scheme for Unpaid Carers Guidance for Regional Partnership Boards on Allocation of Funding 2022-23

The Welsh Government is providing a grant of £9m over three years from 2022 to 2025 for a national **Short Breaks Fund** (the Fund) for unpaid carers which aims to increase opportunities for unpaid carers to take a break from their caring responsibilities.

This guidance gives an outline of the Scheme and allocations available to Regional Partnership Boards (RPB's) along with a framework to guide allocation of funding at regional level for the 2022-23 allocation. It is important to note that this funding must be allocated by 31 March 2023. Further funding will be available to RPB's in 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years.

1. Context of the Short Breaks Fund

The creation of this new Short Breaks Scheme for Unpaid Carers is a key Welsh Government Programme for Government commitment and also supports the delivery of Priority 3 in the Strategy for Unpaid Carers:

Supporting life alongside caring - all unpaid 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.

Development of this new Fund has been informed by research commissioned by Welsh Government in 2021: What A Difference a Break Makes: A Vision for the Future of Short Breaks for Unpaid Carers in Wales. The research sets out 12 key principles for short breaks which underpins the design and delivery of the Short Breaks Scheme and provides a framework for allocation of funding. The 12 principles are detailed in Annex A.

The research importantly provides the following, coproduced definition of what constitutes a short break:

Any break, which strengthens and/or sustains informal caring relationships and enhances the wellbeing of carers and the people they support. This may be achieved through a service, an activity or an item.

Carers Trust Wales have been appointed as national coordinating body for the new Scheme and are putting into place systems for allocation of funding, support for those being funded, carer involvement and representation as well as monitoring and evaluation.

2. Overall Purpose of and Intended Outcomes of the Short Breaks Scheme

The Short Breaks Scheme intends to benefit 30,000 carers across Wales over the next three years through the following key aims:

KEY AIMS OF SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

- Increase the availability and accessibility of short breaks
- Provide personalised, flexible and responsive break options
- Prioritise and target short breaks to those who need it most

These are drawn from the 12 Key Principles within the What a Difference a Break Makes research, and will underpin and guide all allocations of funding.

The Short Breaks Scheme is focussed on outcomes for carers and those they care for. The theory of change model which details how the Scheme will deliver change is contained in Annex B. In summary and importantly, the outcomes of the Scheme for carers and those they care for will be:

OUTCOMES OF SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

- Carers and those they care for will have improved wellbeing
- Carers will be more resilient and able to sustain the caring relationship
- Regional Partnership Boards and the Third Sector will have increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks to carers

3. Allocation of Funding to Regional Partnership Boards 2022-23

The Welsh Government is allocating £2 million for the financial year 2022-23, the majority of which will be allocated to Regional Partnership Boards (RPB's). The allocation for year 2022-23 will therefore be:

RPB	Allocation
Cardiff and the Vale	252,047
Cwm Taff	286,529
Gwent	357,650
North Wales	414,565
Powys	76,415
West Glamorgan	246,647
West Wales	239,146

Funding will be provided to each relevant Health Board via an uplift in the Regional Integration Fund. A timetable for distribution of funding will be delivered shortly. This funding needs to be allocated by **31 March 2023**.

4. Framework for Allocation of RPB Funding 2022-23

Funding is being awarded to RPB's in recognition of the current responsibilities they have to support carers across their region and their role in doing so collaboratively across health, social care and the third sector. Funding is also being awarded in order to encourage further partnership working between health boards, local authorities and the third sector and encourage innovation and best practice in delivering short breaks for carers.

This funding is additional to existing funding RPB's have for carers via the Regional Integration Fund. It will need to be allocated solely to support short breaks and be fully ring fenced and accounted for as such. Through ring fencing the Short Breaks Scheme, outcomes, innovation and good and emerging practice will be collated and reported to Ministers and the Ministerial Advisory Group on Unpaid Carers.

In allocating to solely support short breaks, RPB's may wish to utilise some of the allocation to cover the overheads involved in this. This should not exceed £10,000 per RPB within the grant allocation and could be used to support relevant operational costs, for example around allocation decision making, capturing evaluation data etc.

Further guidance on monitoring and evaluation of the Scheme and implications for reporting will be provided when the funding is allocated. RPB's should put into place mechanisms which will enable capture of data and insight on the different elements of the framework. Please note Annex Band (Theory of Change) and note Outcome Measures and Key Performance Indicators.

As per existing arrangements around allocation of the RIF, it is anticipated that RPB's will allocate at least 20% of funding received to third sector providers, or through proposals which work in collaboration with the third sector.

The framework for allocation of funding presented here is to be used to guide allocations in this financial year. Further guidance will be provided for future years in line with the approach presented in section 5

Framework for Allocation of Funding 2022-23

A. Funding should contribute to delivery of Short Breaks Scheme Outcomes

- Carers and those they care for will have improved wellbeing
- Carers will be more resilient and able to sustain the caring relationship
- Regional Partnership Boards and the Third Sector will have increased capacity to deliver preventative, responsive breaks to carers

The Short Breaks Scheme funding allocation is there to benefit all unpaid carers and should reflect the diversity of the carer population. As such outcomes should be delivered for all carers. The Carers Trust definitions of carers are:

Adult carers

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.

Young and young adult carers

A young carer is someone aged 25 and under who cares for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support.

Older young carers (16-25) are also known as young adult carers and they may have different support needs to younger carers.

RPB's can allocate funds across the diversity of their carer population, in line with the key aims of the Fund (see subsequent sections), which ensures those most at need are prioritised. RPB's are expected to have regional insight into those most at need through their Regional Population Needs Assessments.

B. Funding will be focussed on the Key Aims

KEY AIMS OF SHORT BREAKS SCHEME

- Increase the availability and accessibility of short breaks
- Provide personalised, flexible and responsive break options
- Prioritise and target short breaks to those who need it most

These aims should be seen as the “criteria” against which all funding is allocated.

Key Aim: Increase the Availability and Accessibility of Short Breaks

As a reminder, the definition of a short break is:

Any break, which strengthens and/or sustains informal caring relationships and enhances the wellbeing of carers and the people they support. This may be achieved through a service, an activity or an item.

A short break can take many forms – a weekend away, a night at the cinema, a trip with other carers, a meal out, getting a haircut, attending an art class etc. It can be something a carer does on their own, or it can be a break with the person they care for. The break can also be a group-based activity, where there is the added value of peer support. It can also involve a family day out – either supported or unsupported.

The Short Breaks Scheme has been created to stimulate **new and existing provision**, which take innovative or creative approaches to supporting breaks, which benefit both the carer and those they care for. It is an opportunity to do something different and new, to test new ideas, which have the caring relationship at the heart of them.

RPBs may already be providing timely and diverse breaks in line with their statutory Population Needs Assessment. Funding can be used to expand the capacity of existing provision and this may be a pragmatic solution given the short timescales for allocation in this financial year. If existing providers are to receive funding, this funding will need to demonstrably increase availability and accessibility of short breaks, be accurately monitored as such and financially ring fenced for financial reporting.

Micro grants schemes which provide direct funding to carers to have a break may already be in place. Funding could be allocated to increase provision to these schemes. If intending to do so, the Short Breaks Scheme funding should be clearly ring fenced and monitored. If funding is allocated to expand such schemes, evidence of need in doing so should be captured and returned with monitoring information e.g. waiting list numbers.

RPB's should endeavour to allocate funding to **new or extending existing** provision, which will also increase availability and accessibility and assist in meeting the other key aims.

Some of the funds could be allocated to schemes which deliver over the three years of the Short Breaks Scheme. Multi year awards can provide a systemic and incremental approach to increasing availability and accessibility of short breaks. However, the opportunity to fund new ideas around short breaks will be limited if funding is pre-allocated and it would not fit with plans to support regional approaches in future years as outlined in section 5. As such, RPB's are guided to not make multi year awards with all of this tranche of funding, unless by exception.

Funding should not be awarded solely to one scheme or one provider, unless in exceptional circumstances. Whilst this may be a pragmatic approach due to the short timescales, it may not enable a range of short breaks to be provided and may not meet the requirement to allocate at least 20% of funding to the third sector.

Please contact Carers Trust Wales to discuss your proposals if they involve multi year awards and/or provision of funding to one scheme or provider.

Key Aim: Provide Personalised, Flexible and Responsive Break Options

Breaks which are flexible and responsive to the needs of the caring relationship will be ones which deliver lasting outcomes and will be sustainable for those involved.

In order to deliver the outcomes of the Scheme, breaks need to be personalised to meet the needs of the caring relationship. Carers and the person they care for should be at the centre of the design of the break, and the needs of everyone involved be considered. It would be recommended to consider the mutuality of support for the carer and the person they are caring for. In funding personalised, flexible and responsive breaks RPB's could consider the following approaches:

- Build links with key sectors that relate to everyday life, designing breaks through collaborative working with for example hospitality, tourism, arts, leisure and education. Breaks could be co-designed with a local arts project that can provide group art classes, or support artistic activities within the home. Tourist providers may be able to provide special breaks over the winter months etc.;
- Inspire organisations to create innovative and responsive solutions that reflect the diversity of the carer population, such as peer support and community interest breaks in person and online;
- Embed both creativity and safety in break options moving forward from the pandemic, including in person and online options. These may need to be interchangeable as we enter the winter months, and viral loads increase.
- Ensure break options recognise important factors relating to diversity and inclusion, for example, age, disability, language, sexual orientation and culture. Whilst this increases accessibility, it also ensures personalisation. What a young person wants from a break will be very different to an older person and vice versa. Delivering breaks to those from ethnic minorities may require a creative approach to identifying carers, the communication of the need for a break and the delivery of it.
- Consider setting up a micro grants scheme which fund carers directly to take a short break. These could use existing structures but should clearly be additional to any existing micro grants scheme, and be branded and monitored as a Short Breaks Scheme short break.

Key Aim: Prioritise and Target Short Breaks to those who Need it most

Those most in need of caring has been defined as

- Those carers caring for 50 plus hours a week
- Those who do not currently have access to a short break
- Those with complex needs and those who care for them

These definitions of those most in need are not exclusive.

RPB's will have strong insights from their Regional Population Needs Assessment which will also guide those most in need in their area. Carers from groups underrepresented in services, in line with Welsh Government Equality Impact Assessments, should be identified and options for short breaks should clearly include support for these groups.

There may be options to strengthen collaboration with a range of organisations in order to reach out to carers most in need and those under-represented by services.

The Short Breaks Scheme funding provides an ideal opportunity to do so and in future years, Carers Trust will collaborate with RPB's on this, see section 5 for more insight on this.

Carers Trust Wales will put into place mechanisms to monitor whether the Short Breaks Scheme is reaching carers most in need and those under-represented based on demographic data, including age, race, gender, sexuality. This will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the fund reaching diverse populations encompassing those with protected characteristics and to improve insight into the short breaks needs of different sectors of the Welsh population.

RPB's should put into place mechanisms for capturing key data, if not already in place. Further guidance on monitoring and evaluation of the Short Breaks Scheme funding will be made available on allocation of award of funding.

2. Allocation of Short Breaks Scheme funding in 2023/24 and 2024/25

In years 2023-24 and 2024-25 the funding allocation to the Short Breaks Scheme will be £3.5 million. Welsh Government have decided that, following advice from the Ministerial Advisory Group on unpaid Carers, 40% of the total funding will be allocated to Regional Partnership Boards (RPB's), using proportional funding to each RPB based on population size.

The remaining 60% will be used to establish a new Wales wide third sector grants scheme – 'Amser'. More details on Amser will be available in 2023.

From April 2023 onwards (and drawing on Carers Trust's knowledge and expertise managing grant allocations and ensuring carer representation and involvement) Carers Trust Wales will support RPBs to establish and facilitate **Regional Short Breaks Forums**, in line with the seven RPB footprints.

These Forums could include RPB Carer Representatives, unpaid carers, Local Health Board Carer Leads, Social Services, Community Voluntary Councils and/or other third sector organisations representing diverse communities. This may vary across reflect regional needs but will enable a greater focus on short breaks provision across the RPB and include opportunities for peer learning across RPBs.

These will guide RPBs' allocation of funding to services under the Short Breaks Scheme for years 2023-24 and 2024-25, ensuring alignment with the 12 Key Principles of 'What a difference a break makes' and ensuring proposals deliver the outcomes of the Scheme.

Annex A: Twelve Key Principles for Short Breaks

Principle	Descriptor
1. See individuals and focus on what personal outcomes matter to carers and the people they support	Start with a 'what matters' conversation so that: • Break outcomes that matter most to people are given meaningful consideration • The exploration of break options with people is mindful of the active offer, of language, culture and diversity
2. Build on strengths in supporting and sustaining caring relationships	As well as identifying difficulties in caring, explore: • Satisfactions in caring and positive ways of coping • Ways a break can help to support these, including breaks taken together as well as apart
3. Be sensitive to caring relationships and work towards making breaks a positive experience for everyone	As far as possible, ensure: • The interdependent wellbeing of carers and the people they support • Carers do not feel guilty and the people they support do not feel a burden
4. Provide accessible and timely information about break options	Provide information: • On a variety of break options, including breaks taken together and breaks taken apart, scheduled breaks and breaks to cover emergency situations • At a time when it is needed, in formats that are accessible and engaging , and, for the youngest carers, are age appropriate
5. Offer supported choice of breaks and help with decision making	• Offer relational support to help people think through their break options - do not give them a list
6. Provide personalised, flexible and responsive break options , that	• Ensure people have access to timely, personalised break options, including breaks that can support them to engage in paid employment,

reflect the diversity of the carer population	education/training and leisure should they wish • Ensure break options recognise important factors relating to diversity and inclusion, for example, age, disability, language and culture • Be responsive to changing needs and preferences
7. Identify and promote creative approaches to commissioning and other statutory funded and low cost/no cost breaks options	Think 'outside the box' about: • Alternative ways to commission and fund breaks, for example, through the development of social enterprises, individual and pooled Direct Payments as well as no cost options • The challenges and opportunities associated with implementing these into practice
8. Build links with key sectors that relate to everyday life not just social care and health	Design breaks through collaborative working, for example, with hospitality, tourism, arts, leisure and education • Strengthen collaboration with health services on the provision of short breaks for people with complex needs and their carers • Work with health services to proactively identify carers whose break opportunities are most likely to be limited because of the complex nature of care they provide
9. Promote and support creative break options in the local community and communities of interest	Support the development of diverse local community breaks for people, including informal support and micro-enterprises • Embed both creativity and safety in break options moving forward from the pandemic, including inperson and online options
10. Nurture the development of peer support	Ensure opportunities for carers to access/benefit from peer support • Explore ways to facilitate this, including collective break options, delivered face-to-face or online
11. Ensure quality of breaks provision with a particular focus on what matters to	Develop approaches to quality assurance that are: • Meaningful • Support learning and further development

carers and those they support	
12. Capture outcomes arising from a break for carers and the people they support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify ways to effectively capture break outcomes - both planned and serendipitous outcomes• Ensure this information informs future policy and practice development

Annex B: Short Breaks Scheme Theory of Change

