

# my story

## carers in the midlands

### > Chris Goodall

#### How long have you been a carer?

I became a Shared Lives Carer after taking early retirement, so I had time on my hands and wanted to do something worthwhile. Also my children had grown up and left home creating space in the house. I've been with PSS for two years.



#### Within safeguarding parameters, who do you care for and what are their needs?

I've supported people on respite as residents in my own home usually for a week at a time, to give regular carers or family members a break, and to give the service users themselves a break. I've supported a person with Down's Syndrome, a young person under the protection of the courts and a person with severe learning and physical disabilities.

It's usually a matter of helping people to maintain their routines, to access the community and go to the places they like to go to, especially if they have mobility or mental health issues. In short it's a matter of supporting people to do the sorts of things we take for granted.

I also support people for a day or half a day at a time, helping them to attend work placements or follow sport, and I have a long term placement. J is a young person with mild learning disabilities on early release from a secure unit, now off electronic curfew and living within my own home as a family member, benefitting from a safe, stable environment, regular meals, positive role models and support to achieve a variety of goals, including attending a full time college course and a voluntary work placement.

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## **What do you enjoy most about being a carer?**

Within this placement I have enjoyed working with numerous professionals associated with the service user and we all agree that Shared Lives seems to be turning the young person's life around. This is what I find so rewarding about being a Shared Lives Carer, witnessing the progress that someone can make with the right kind of support.

## **Any thoughts on the support that PSS has provided you with in your role?**

Throughout my time with PSS I've always been well supported by not just my own coordinator but the whole team which gives confidence in doing the job. There are regular opportunities to meet staff and other carers and service users at social events. I'm also the Carer Representative which gives me opportunities to contribute in a variety of ways to the smooth running of the scheme.

## **Any thoughts on the training that you have received?**

I received full training which is on-going and it's always thorough, relevant and of practical worth.

## **After you became a carer, how long did it take to get your first placement?**

My first day care placement came soon after I'd been approved by panel, followed quickly by respite assignments. The long term placement took about nine months because it's important that the matching process is successful.



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