

From standardised to bespoke –
a journey towards meaningful
short breaks

Nick Andrews



“Never, ever, think outside the box.”

Talking of boxes... a lesson from our dog Gwen



How the short breaks journey began...



Caring relationships are *complex* and so is the support required to maintain them

We need to tread carefully in supporting these relationships...

- Unpaid carers can feel guilty when they put their own needs first
- The people they support can feel they are a burden or become resentful of 'going into respite'
- As far as possible, **both** need to win if a short break is to work well



We co-produced a set of *principles* rather than a menu of services

**CARERS
TRUST**
WALES

July 2021

**WHAT A DIFFERENCE A BREAK
MAKES: A VISION FOR THE
FUTURE OF SHORT BREAKS FOR
UNPAID CARERS IN WALES**



The 12 Principles (1-6)

- See individuals and focus on what personal outcomes matter to unpaid carers and the people they support
- Build on strengths in supporting and sustaining caring relationships
- Be sensitive to caring relationships and work towards making breaks a positive experience for everyone
- Provide accessible and timely information about break options
- Offer supported choice of breaks and help with decision-making
- Provide personalised, flexible and responsive break options, that reflect the diversity of the unpaid carer population

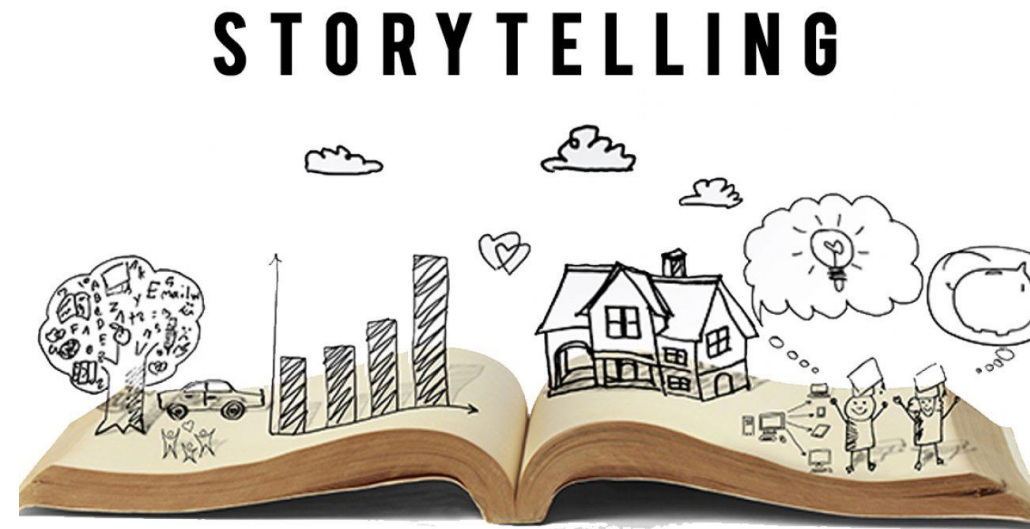
The 12 Principles (7-12)

- Identify and promote creative approaches to commissioning and other statutory funded and no cost break options
- Build links with key sectors that relate to everyday life not just social care and health
- Promote and support creative break options in the local community and communities of interest
- Nurture the development of peer support
- Ensure quality of break options with a particular focus on what matters to unpaid carers and the people they support
- Capture outcomes arising from a break for unpaid carers and the people they support

The Short Breaks scheme



The impact of short breaks is *complex* and personal outcomes are often *emergent*



Some survey findings from the evaluation study – before and after

- 86% of adult carers surveyed had not accessed a short break from elsewhere in the last 12 months
- ‘I rarely feel optimistic about the future’ from 26.2% to 8%
- ‘I’ve been feeling relaxed some of the time’ from 27.2% to 50%
- ‘I often feel left out’ from 44.4% to 23.7%
- ‘I have little social contact with people and feel socially isolated’ from 27% to 11.8%
- ‘I’ve often been able to make up my own mind about things’ from 29.8% to 53.9%

A Most Significant Change (MSC) story from the evaluation

‘Healing through horses’



Further information

What a difference a break makes report:

<https://carers.org/downloads/wales-pdfs/carers-trust-road-to-respite-report.pdf>

Short breaks scheme interim evaluation report:

<https://www.shortbreaksscheme.wales/downloads/evaluation-of-short-breaks-scheme-interim-report.pdf>

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