



Respitality impact report 2024





Welcome to the Respitality end of year report for 2024. This report presents the findings of the Respitality movement for 2024 against the targets and deliverables agreed between Scottish Government and Shared Care Scotland.

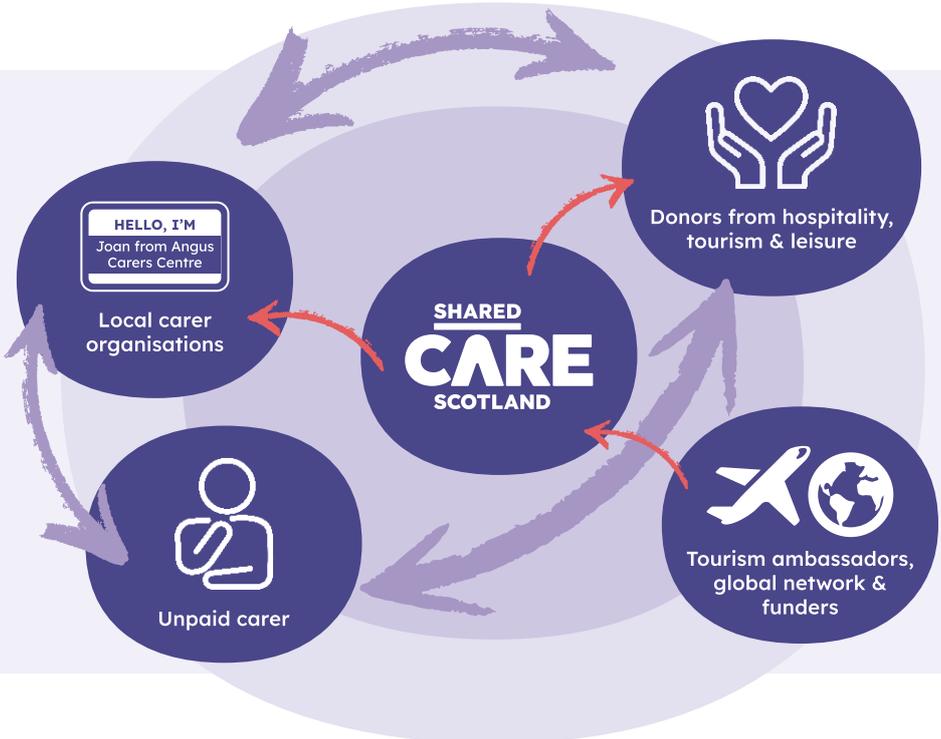
The movement is currently operated by the Respitality team at Shared Care Scotland, consisting of two 28-hour posts; our Respitality Manager and Respitality Coordinator.

We would like to thank the Carers Policy division of Scottish Government for their financial and practical support of Respitality. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the businesses who donate and promote Respitality, as well as the carer organisations and their staff who are Respitality delivery partners, all of whom have been instrumental in the success of the movement. Finally, a massive thank you to all the carers who provided us with their powerful feedback of what their breaks meant to them and allowing us to share their stories.



What is the purpose of Respitality?

The purpose of Respitality is to provide unpaid carers with energising and fun short breaks from their usual caring routine when they need it most. Carers can be of any age, support someone with any condition and can access Respitality so long as it is offered in their local region.



By collaborating with the hospitality sector, mainly via the donation of complementary breaks, Respitality has become one of the leading social tourism movements in Scotland, breaking down financial and social barriers for our communities to access breaks that they may otherwise be unable to do so.

However, Respitality does not start and end with Shared Care Scotland alone. We have a host of networks both local and national that we collaborate with to make this movement the success it is today. We will talk more about their involvement later in this report.

Our guiding principles are at the heart of everything we do with Respitality. These are:

- Warmth and kindness
- Spark
- Proficient
- Integrity
- Understanding



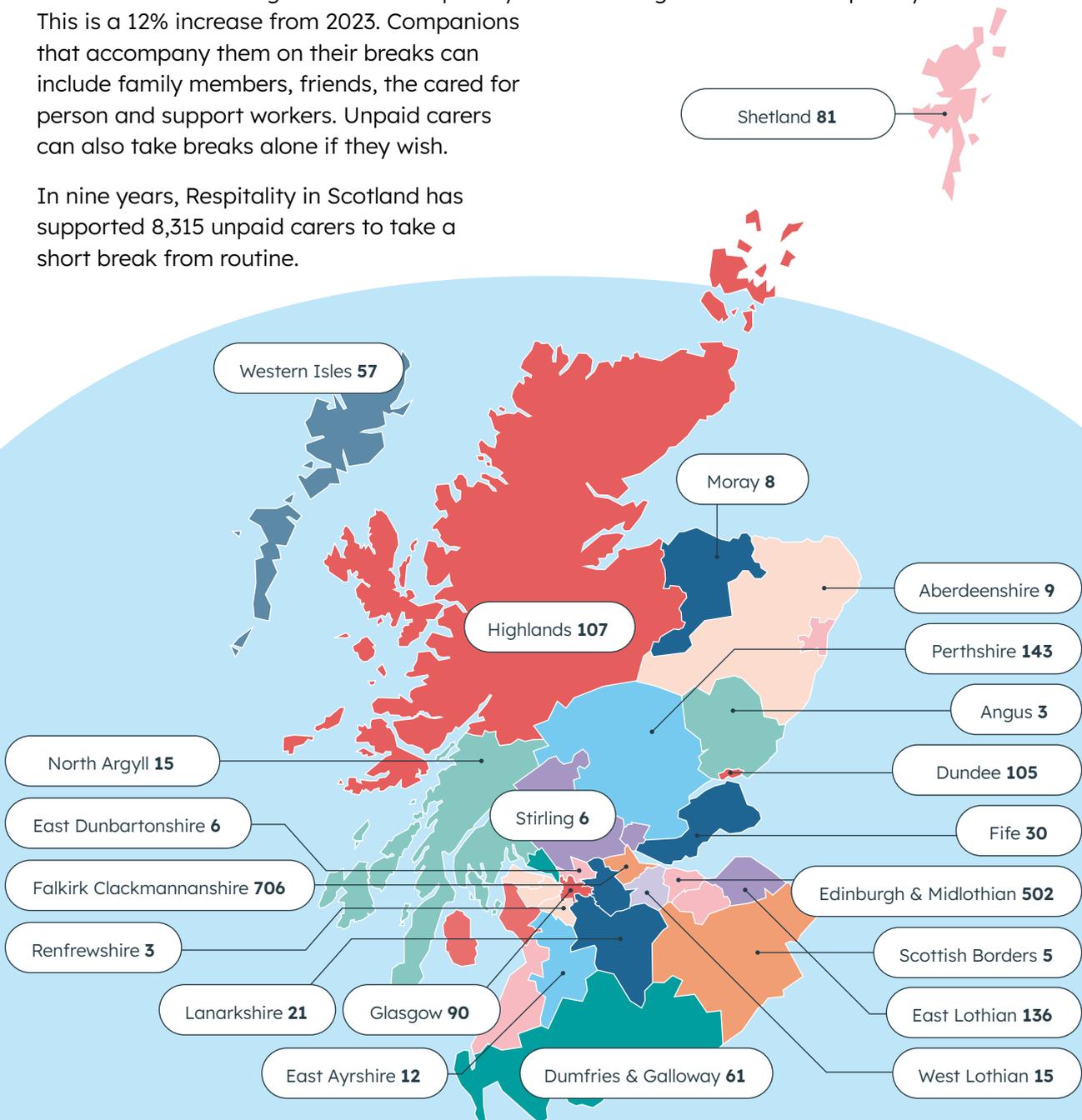
Those that require it: Unpaid carers

Unpaid carers are at the heart of everything we do at Shared Care Scotland. By championing and leading on Respitality as a social tourism movement, we aim to break down barriers that unpaid carers may experience when attempting to access breaks, whilst changing perceptions on what a meaningful short break can look like.

This year, 2,254 Respitality breaks were taken across Scotland, and as a result we supported 2,124 carers to access a short break from their caring routine via Respitality. This is a 12% increase from 2023. Companions that accompany them on their breaks can include family members, friends, the cared for person and support workers. Unpaid carers can also take breaks alone if they wish.

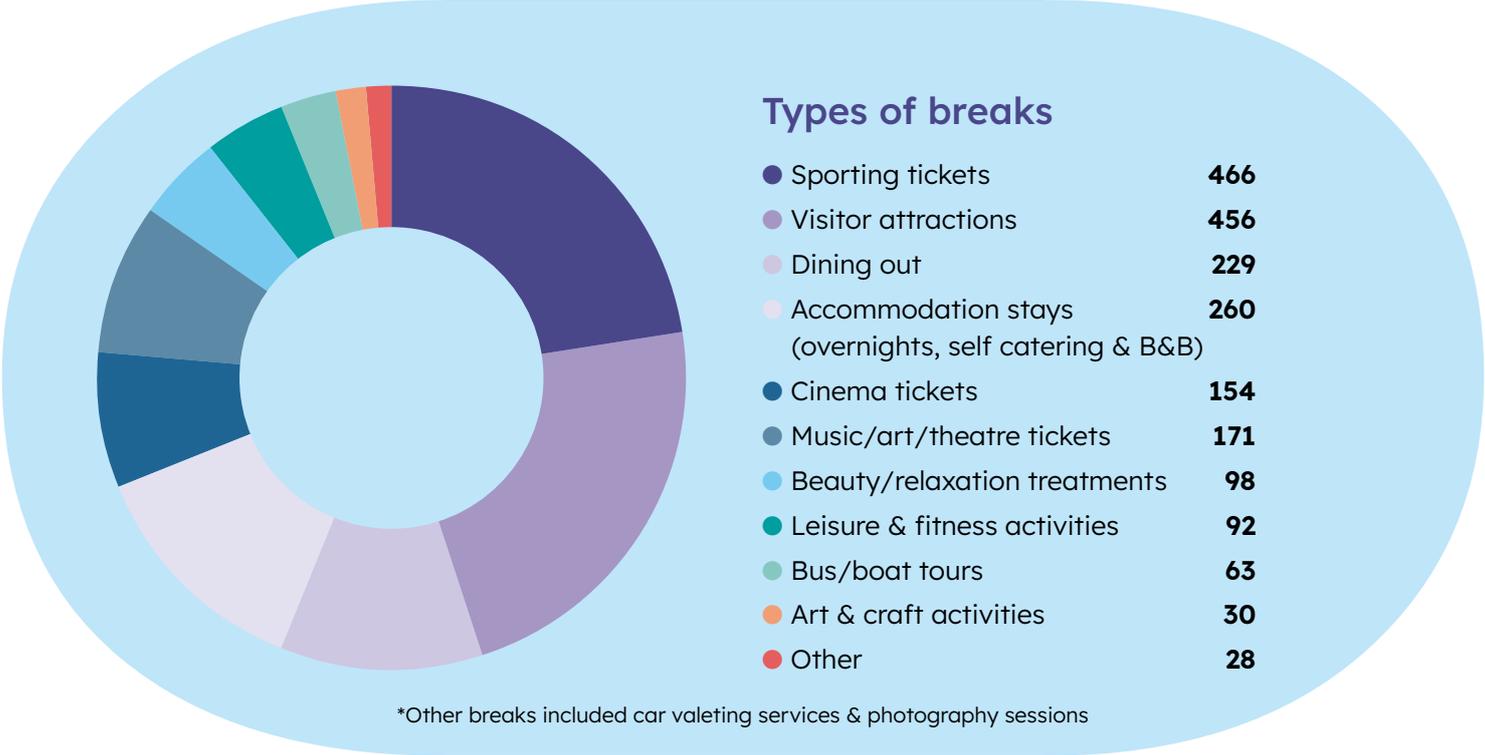
In nine years, Respitality in Scotland has supported 8,315 unpaid carers to take a short break from routine.

Most carers accessing breaks in 2024 resided in Falkirk & Clackmannanshire, making up 31% of break recipients. This region was also one of the largest to access Respitality in 2023.



As we know, by running Respitality as a social franchise and having no funding attached to delivery output, we see varying degrees of Respitality development and engagement as a result. What we do see is that delivery partners have seen increased engagement rates overall from integrating Respitality more within their team, and by attending more tourism-focused events.

We continue to see a move towards shorter day breaks being accessed through Respitality, with almost half of the breaks delivered being either a day out at a local sporting event or going to a visitor attraction. This has been a trend we have seen in the last three years of reporting on Respitality.



Furthermore, 86% of break recipients chose to take their break within their own local region. Many carers tell us that they appreciate the flexibility of what Respitality can offer. Breaks close by and shorter hours can be just as impactful, if not more so, than a week’s stay several hours away, which would reflect what we are seeing in these figures. It also tells us that the breaks that are being sourced locally by the delivery partner network are more personalised to what carers are looking for in a break.

lowest figures of unallocated breaks that we have seen in Respitality history. We give credit to our delivery partners for this achievement, as they work hard to ensure breaks are best matched to carers.

Even the best laid plans will result in cancellations due to the unpredictable nature of caring. Of the total breaks donated across 2024, only 11% went unallocated due to cancellations, short notice, postponements or suitability to carers’ needs. These are the

This year, we have been able to support the highest number of carers ever in a 12-month period since launching Respitality and we aim to have supported over 10,000 carers by the end of 2025

A Winter Delight – Carly’s story

Carly was offered a 7-night self-catering stay at Wyndham Duchally Estate, thanks to the donation from their charity partner IDILIQ Holidays in November 2024. Carly was in desperate need of time away from her home and caring responsibilities. However, due to her caring role, Carly and her husband were never able to leave the person they provide care to for more than a day or two at a time. She felt frustrated and tired and didn’t think that she would experience a proper holiday again.

Carly said that when she was offered a break it was very exciting. The thought of a business donating a whole week for free was unbelievable to her. **“I can’t actually believe that this was being offered to us.”** Carly knew that due to her caring role, she would be unable to stay for the full week. However, Duchally Country Estate was close enough to her home that she was able to travel back and forward to maintain her caring responsibilities. Carly felt that the break was matched well to her, that her caring responsibilities were taken into consideration when the break was offered to her and because of the flexibility of the break, they ended up staying longer than expected.

The location itself was perfect – it was peaceful and quiet. Carly said that the surroundings were beautiful. **“It was the perfect time to go too, they had all of their Christmas trees and decorations out”**. The estate is in the countryside, and she was able to go walking for some fresh air. Whilst they didn’t venture off the property, it was very big so there were lots of places to explore. Carly and her husband were able to spend a day in Auchterarder, as well as travelling to Perth and Crieff for days out. She felt that it was nice to be able to spend some time together as a couple, to chat and relax without the stress of their caring roles. The lodge was well catered, and they had everything that they needed. The staff were very friendly and helpful, which made her break even better. Carly loved the peace and quiet, **“it was nice to be able to watch rubbish on the TV without interruptions”**.

“I didn’t realise this was possible; that businesses do this, it’s so kind.”

To protect anonymity, the name of the carer has been changed.



The person that Carly cares for has trouble with sleep and has flipped her sleeping pattern, turning day into night. Carly and her husband rarely get a full night's sleep, so their break away to Duchally lodge was a real treat as they were able to sleep all night, leaving them feeling refreshed.

Carly said that when it came to the end of her break, she didn't want to go home, **"I wanted to stay there forever"**. She felt like she had a good break, despite not being able to stay at the lodge every night. She enjoyed having the freedom to do her own thing and enjoy some time away from her caring role. Coming back from her break reinforced the importance of finding a way to have a proper holiday from time to time, as they were left feeling so relaxed and refreshed. Carly said that this break was something they never would have booked for themselves, and they had never been on a break like this before. As the break was booked by the carers' centre, it took the pressure off: **"the break was offered, we went for it, and we arrived! Everything was perfect"**.

"I can hardly put into words what it means to me as a carer to be given that gift."



Carly was **"blown away by the opportunity"** – she couldn't believe she was offered something she knew would have been expensive to book herself. **"The main thing for me was the kindness of companies and businesses who would care so much about carers that they would offer such fantastic opportunities. Unless you're a carer or are involved with carers, I don't think you can explain the gratitude to a business that would be kind enough to offer it"**.



Those who make it happen: our local delivery network

For Respitality to be personalised and integrated into local communities, we work with a network of local delivery partners.

We recruit and support local delivery partners, all of whom have a role in offering information and support to local unpaid carers, including short breaks. Our local delivery partners also have a role in developing and maintaining positive relationships within their local tourism sector, which they achieve through various methods. For example, many delivery partners have engaged with their local Chambers of Commerce to utilise networking events, whilst others have strengthened relationships with businesses they have spent money with to leverage Respitality donations.

This diverse network of people with various skills and backgrounds, operating in different parts of Scotland and engaging different areas of the tourism industry with Respitality, has resulted in many areas of learning and success overall.

Over the course of the year, Shared Care Scotland's role has been to facilitate opportunities for the network to share the learning and development with one another. This has resulted in regular virtual meetings with the network – both nationally and regionally, which has not only helped each partner develop new ideas but has also helped them to bond as a network and serve as a gentle reminder that they are part of a fantastic strong social tourism movement, driving motivation.

During 2024, we supported 26 delivery partners to delivery Respitality across more than 27 regions.

“It was fab meeting other delivery partners face to face, and a lot of learning was shared. Looking forward to the next one!”



Themes that the network support each other on has included:

- ▶ Administrative ways of operating Respitality (e.g. how to approach 'security deposit' requests from donors)
- ▶ Sharing best practices around communication methods to share Respitality break offerings with the carers who need them
- ▶ Useful starting points and considerations for those at the beginning of their Respitality journey
- ▶ Sharing examples of donors and breaks in their local area that can be replicated in other areas
- ▶ Sharing resources and information about internal systems set up to streamline Respitality within their accompanying short breaks options
- ▶ Exploring and implementation of 'alternative' support that is classed as 'in the spirit of' Respitality to widen their offering.

We regularly ask the network for feedback on how we can best support their ambitions to grow Respitality locally. In 2024, it was identified that there was a strong desire for two areas of support: more training and guidance as a whole network, and for regional connections within the network to be made.

We provided in-house training on building and maintaining relationships within the tourism industry, which was carried out both online and in-person.

The format of the training sessions not only allowed Shared Care Scotland to share their knowledge and suggestions but provided opportunity for those within the network to share their successes and lessons learnt further empowering one another.

- ▶ Attendees from 16 regions attended the training sessions hosted
- ▶ 93% stated the training 'excellent' or 'good' value for time
- ▶ Majority of attendees reported an increase in their confidence in engaging donors



“It was one of the best training sessions I have been to in recent years.”

“I really enjoyed meeting everyone face-to-face and sharing ideas. We discussed lots of things that I hadn't thought about before which has sparked some ideas that I have taken back to my team. I felt that making the pitch would be really daunting but after all the discussions, information and advice that we were given it came very naturally and working with a partner helped with this!”

The training sessions were a clear success, and we plan to run the same training programme again for 2025, both for those looking to do a refresher, or new staff and regions. We also plan to follow up with attendees in 2025 to determine how they have applied their knowledge and confidence levels to increase and strengthen their donor relationships.

Other suggestions for future training, including social media and networking skills, are also being considered for 2025.

Four regional groups were also set up. To ensure each group was personalised and empowering, each group was given the opportunity to influence and decide how often meetings occurred, their purpose and how much support they required from Shared Care Scotland.

The set up of smaller and focused peer support groups was well received, and various best practice examples were observed:

- ▶ One region shared information about donors they work alongside with more than one site in Scotland, to explore the opportunity of offering more breaks for carers in more regions
- ▶ Discussions around how to best utilise the Voucher pilot scheme offered by the Short Breaks Fund, through the Time to Live programme in a way that can build further relationships in the tourism industry

“I love these meetings. It really inspires me to think of breaks I hadn’t considered before.”

“I have enjoyed the Regional Peer meetings and feel that we are taking steps towards a collaborative approach, sharing breaks and ideas across Scotland which I think makes the future very exciting.”

“Really thankful for the Regional Peer Group as it provided a lot of useful insight into some additional steps to carrying out Respitality.”

During the last few years, we have seen a strong shift in the network towards obtaining more localised breaks, and less reliance on national breaks that Shared Care Scotland obtain.

We have actively encouraged the network to create more of their own local offering to ensure they have a pool of their own breaks (rather than having to compete with other partners). This also provides them the steer on what types of breaks they sourced and from where, to ensure it is more personalised to what their carers are looking for in a break, therefore establishing a more sustainable model overall. The network has responded positively to this, and this year we observed the highest percentage of localised breaks sourced and taken through Respitality at 87%.



Of all network partners, 92% actively engaged in providing Respitality breaks to carers in their local region in 2024. We appreciate that 100% engagement is hard to attain when many partners are operating Respitality with no additional resource. Extra support has been provided to understand the low engagement rates from the remaining 8%, which is mostly due to capacity to grow their local offering.

As well as supporting our current network, we aim to continuously grow the network every year by a minimum of two areas.

We were delighted to start the year welcoming Renfrewshire into the network as a new partner. We also welcomed back Fife, who previously had to pause Respitality in their region due to lack of capacity within the previous organisation leading in 2018. We also welcomed East Lothian in the summer as a new region for Respitality, who were able to offer 50 local breaks from the start of their journey after a great deal of canvassing in the lead up to joining the network. Finally, Stirling joined us for a six-month pilot phase towards the end of the year, after we received interest from a local football club wishing to support carers in Stirling with football tickets. It looks probable that Stirling will join us permanently in 2025 should the pilot be successful.

At the end of 2024, it was confirmed that North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire & Inverclyde would launch Respitality in 2025.



“I have been an unpaid carer for over 20 years. The majority of this time, I was unaware that such a term existed.”

Putting your own oxygen mask on first: Susan’s story

Uig Sands Rooms offer two-night stays in their self-catering property, which goes directly to carers residing in Eilean Siar (Western Isles). This is Susan’s story, who receives excellent support from local delivery partners Western Isles Community Care Forum:

“I have been an unpaid carer for over 20 years. The majority of this time, I was unaware that such a term existed. To me it was just my circumstances, and I had to get on with it.

In those 20+ years, I lived in 3 different local authorities. We chose to return to home several years ago to support my elderly parents.

The Western Isles was our 4th local authority, and I was surprised to have been contacted by Western Isles Community Care Forum, having been put forward by my GP practice. Prior to this, I was never aware such support existed.

Since being put in touch, I have had regular updates and been contact by the team to check in, to inform you of what support is available. The Training and Assessment Officer visited our home to make us aware of all practical and emotional support offered by WICCF.



As a carer, I have found myself supporting mental health issues as well as giving physical care.

Until understanding the services of WICCF, I had never thought about how my situation impacted on my own mental or physical health. I have found myself dealing and shouldering someone else's anger, their frustration, their grief, their trauma. I realised that I was neglecting myself and things came to a head recently. I felt like I had failed the people I loved the most.

Through time & professional support, I have realised how important it is to look after yourself in the first instance which in turn benefits the people you are caring for. I am aware that asking for or accepting support does not come naturally. It can be seen as not coping, particularly for people from the Western Isles which is why, when I was first told about Respitality I didn't think it was relevant to me. Other people were much more in need than me. I was on top of my situation.

When things came to a head, I needed a break, to take myself out of the situation and to appreciate again how privileged I am to be able to care for those I love the most. Contacting WICCF to enquire about a short break was the best thing I did. The process was so simple without delving into the details.

With my responsibilities, I am unable to work full time so funds for taking time out for yourself can be difficult. I am lucky that I have external family support who can check in on those I care for so was able to feel relaxed and to switch off knowing that everything at home was fine. It allowed me to recharge. I am aware not everyone has this opportunity.

The continued support services of WICCF are so important. Being a carer can feel like a lonely place. Here in the Western Isles, we live in a rural remote community which can feel isolating in the physical and emotional sense. Being informed is so important and to have the knowledge of what is available to you. Also important to get rid of the stigma attached to accepting help and to care for self-first.

WICCF have varying levels of support. You can meet up with other people in similar circumstances or you can choose to be in contact discreetly.

I hope those who offer services for Respitality know how much these giftings are appreciated and the value of them to carers. To be able to take time away and recharge to allow you to be the best you can be to those you care for.”

To protect anonymity, all names have been changed.

Making Magical Memories: Apex City Quay's motivation

Paul Mooney is the General Manager of Apex City Quay, and his team has been honoured to support Respitality with donations of overnight stays and spa days.

“The team at Apex City Quay have been proud supporters of the Respitality project for the last year now, and very happy to continue supporting this humbling and important project. The team here value our ability to give something back to the wider community, and this is an amazing opportunity to do so, allowing us to offer our leisure facilities for those that dedicate their time, lives and passion to others and have little chance to have that break that we all need.

Our focus as a hotel is to make magical memories for our guests, creating those moments that they will treasure forever and give them a little escape from the everyday lives and stresses. There are no better beneficiaries of this than those that Respitality supports, which is why we were so keen to be involved and play our very small part. When you hear back from those that have taken the opportunities, it is truly humbling and puts into context the work that the team here do. To hear of the impact that we can have on these individuals, to get them that respite, that time to themselves, to recharge their batteries before going back to

their normal lives is truly, amazingly, inspiring. The team here all love playing their part with this, and we are proud, dedicated supporters of Respitality and the Carers centre in general and the important, phenomenal work they do.”

Quote from an unpaid carer who benefitted from one of the Apex breaks:

“It was so lovely thank you! The room was clean and beautiful, got a nice city quay view. The spa and pool were lovely, and we really enjoyed the dinner and breakfast too! It was such a great experience, and the location was great. We went for a walk around the city quay after our meal it was lovely, as well as had a laugh watching people to the water sports across from our hotel! I can't remember the last thing I have done for myself! What a difference it made. The Apex staff and the kindness shown really sold it! Would love to go back. They even gave us a free drink along with our meal as they knew it was for a short break! It's just what I needed, and I can't thank you enough!



Those who donate & support: the tourism industry

To meet demand, it is imperative that we promote Respitality as a meaningful and easily accessible movement for those in the tourism industry to support what we do, ensuring we have a sustainable number of businesses and individuals that wish to support our cause.

In 2024, we received donations from 377 businesses, which is a 44% increase on last year's donation rate. 66% were first time donors, which we see as a positive reflection of the efforts around promoting Respitality both locally and nationally. Furthermore, of those that donated to us in 2023, 48% donated again in 2024.

Despite a positive shift towards more localised and sustainable break offers, we have also seen many successful national collaborations in 2024, supporting the movement across all regions.

One of the long-term collaborations we have seen is the continued exclusive use of the Ben's one bedroom self-catering property in Pitlochry, Perthshire from the entirety of 2024. The Ben is a charity itself that provides affordable housing for those currently working in, or retired from, the licencing trade.

This property has been a haven for many carers for the past eight years, which allows them to enjoy the local area at any time of the year.

“It was so relaxing and quiet, just what we needed, my wife had been dealing with a lot of stress over the past few months so just being able to pack up the car and drive was a rare treat for us as because of our caring role it's not easy for us to take a break. We walked around the town and took a drive to the Queens view and sat in a café and watched the world go by. The Ben itself was lovely and clean and really comfortable we both left after our weeks holiday feeling recharged and ready to take on the world again.”



“Many thanks for the hospitality. I felt relaxed in the bungalow and enjoyed very much. A great little place to feel human again and breathe.”



Other national collaborations we are proud to be a part of in 2024 also include:

- ▶ **Kind Holidays by IDILIQ**, who provided weeklong stays in self-catering lodges in Perthshire
- ▶ **Historic Environment Scotland**, who provided a proportion of their Historic Sundays tickets for various sites across Scotland
- ▶ **Diageo**, who donated 100 pairs of tickets to their Johnnie Walker Princes Street & Glenkinchie Distillery sites
- ▶ **Hostelling Scotland** provided Respitality with twenty nights of overnight stays in any hostel across Scotland
- ▶ **Dewars Aberfeldy Distillery** offered cask tasting tours and lunch throughout the year
- ▶ **Howe of Torbeg** donated monthly stays in their off the grid Shepherd's Hut in rural Aberdeenshire for the fifth year running
- ▶ **The City of Glasgow College** joined us a new donor, and provided a 6-seated table for every day they were open during term time for carers and companions in their Scholars' Restaurant
- ▶ **Meadowhead Ltd** donated fourteen caravan and Wigwam stays across four of their parks over the course of 2024.

In the last
nine years, we have
received donated
breaks from
841
businesses.

In 2024, we received
break donations valued
at **£197,362**
– this is the highest
amount Respitality
has ever received
in one year!

A new observation for 2024 was a small proportion of the support we received were not direct donations to Respitality in the traditional sense, but more 'in the spirit of'. This includes:

- ▶ monetary donations from corporate companies that have been spent on breaks in the tourism industry
- ▶ 'Paying it forward' where breaks are provided after cancellations are made by paying customers
- ▶ or breaks donated through other movements such as Itison Us, that can result in businesses supporting via Respitality later in the future.

We see these alternative breaks offer extra flexibility for carers, and other opportunities for businesses and individuals to support our work.

We have begun evidencing examples of this, as we see Respitality as ever evolving and not a singular strand of how carers can receive breaks through social tourism. Additionally, should we wish to widen our aspirations further into the social tourism movement, we have a better understanding of what works in the third sector to collaborate on.



Q&A with our donors: Anjani-Devi, Holistic Yoga Shetland

How did you hear about Respitality?

I was already aware of the Respitality Scheme as I have used this scheme myself due to having caring responsibilities, therefore have had direct experience of how beneficial these generous offerings can be for an individual and how it can impact how they show up within their caring role.

I'm already aware of the pressures that may present whilst having a caring role and how easy it is to put your own needs way down the list of priorities, but through the generosity of donors and the encouragement and compassion from Shetland Carers, the risk of carers reaching a state of being overwhelmed by their situation can be lessened. What I particularly like is the accountability that is then naturally put on to the carer to use up their gift token, which of course will allow them time to be the central focus which is an excellent reminder that their needs matter too.

Regarding the sound therapy sessions which I had chosen to donate, I have worked with many, many clients using these one to one sessions and I continue to be surprised at the feedback which I receive on how the sessions how helped them in ways that they had not expected. It allows them a chance to have stillness, reaffirm the body and mind connection – as I work with somatic techniques, and has a positive effect on neural pathways, allowing the individual to process their emotions and come to a more centred state of being.

For me, it was necessary to offer this to such an important cause as I believe that no matter our situation, responsibilities etc, that we all deserve access to wellness and a sense of inner calm which can easily be forgotten if we are perhaps caring for others.



Do you spread the word about the Respitality Scheme and what you kindly offer, amongst your networks at all?

Yes! As I have experience of using the scheme, I am already aware of how compassionate, patient, understanding and approachable the staff are, therefore, I never hesitate to encourage others to get in touch if I discover that someone I meet has a caring role whether that be paid or unpaid.

I share this information with clients that I support as well as colleagues and friends. And, I always share what I can depending on how appropriate that is within each dynamic, on how I have been supported over the years by the wonderful work at Shetland Carers.

What positive impact has donating the breaks (and/or having a carer make use of the break) had on you?

I recently received my first Respitality Scheme feedback postcard from a service user and it really touched my heart. The feedback which was shared was very powerful in how it had supported them in ways they had not expected. It acted as a reminder of the importance of sharing the powerful and accessible therapeutic sessions to those who may not be able to prioritise themselves otherwise. Playing a part in this for someone is a huge honour which I handle the responsibility of dearly. I look forward to supporting other carers in this way!

What else have we been achieving?

Alongside our 'business as usual' activities, we also developed our ambitions for 2024:

- ▶ With the shift in types of breaks Respitality has offered over the years, 2024 was the opportune time to review our branding, and create a subtle but impactful refresh that would best reflect our direction and positioning in both the social care and tourism sector. As a result, we adapted our colour palette and logo and re-designed our marketing materials. Additionally, we provided each delivery partner with their own personalised branding



- ▶ As our delivery partner network grew, it became apparent that the online gateway portal used to share and book break offerings had reached its full capacity. We took the decision to re-build the breaks portal in a way that would streamline internal reporting systems and provide a better user experience for our network. Alongside the rebuild of the portal, we

also worked with the web development agency to launch our Respitality website on its own platform. We took the decision to do this as we felt it was important for Respitality to be recognised and promoted, especially to our tourism and donor audience.



- ▶ We continued to develop our global connections in the United Kingdom and Canada, and , by hosting quarterly virtual meetings to share our learning amongst other movements and gain insight into other models. Thanks to this work, we have gained confidence in our ability to support other organisations to set up their own Respitality projects. In 2025, we will offer a consultancy service to a consortium of organisations in West Yorkshire, to provide them with the resources and guidance to set their service up in the most effective way possible.

- ▶ During Summer 2024, we supported our Short Breaks Fund team at Shared Care Scotland with hosting a Lunch & Learn event in Stornoway. This gave us a fantastic opportunity to meet the local Respitality partners from Western Isles Community Care Forum in-person, as well as some of our amazing donors from the Islands, who provide breaks all year round, such as haircuts, coffee and cake and distillery tours.

“The Respitality scheme is such a worthwhile cause and Andy and I are delighted to be involved. Skoon provides an opportunity for carers to have a little break where they can relax and unwind for an hour or so. It has been lovely to receive such appreciative messages from carers and it is certainly something we will continue to do in the future.”

Emma, Skoon Gallery

“When we were asked to donate, there was no doubt about supporting. We have a small community here, and everyone lives different lives. We want to bring more local people to us and help them.”

Sandra, Isle of Harris Distillery

There was no denying how community-focused organisations and individuals on the Western Isles are, and it was a great atmosphere to be a part of.



Floating On Air: Hannah's story

Respet Float Centre have adopted a 'pay it forward' scheme at their centre, and they generously donate cancelled appointments through Respitality. This offer provides free float sessions to carers at Falkirk and Clackmannanshire Carers Centre.

Hannah was thrilled when she was offered a last-minute appointment for a Res(e)t Float session. Due to her caring role, Hannah has been suffering from anxiety which has led to panic attacks. This has resulted in poor sleep, leaving her exhausted. She was prescribed sleeping tablets, but nothing seemed to help. However, after her float session, she left feeling really relaxed and refreshed. Hannah said: **"the facilities were amazing; they really have thought of everything"**. She was offered the break when she was at work and wasn't going to have time to go home to get a towel, but the ladies at Res(e)t Float handled everything. They had everything she could possibly need including shampoo, conditioner, moisturiser, and deodorant. Despite carers being asked to bring a towel, they even provided her with one so she could take the appointment, **"I was so looked after, and it took the pressure off"**.

She had never done anything like this before and was excited but felt very apprehensive. She said that she was glad the break was offered to her last-minute because it didn't give her too much time to think about it, or she may have talked herself out of it. Hannah said that **her mind is always racing, and she finds it hard to relax**. She felt worried about being able to spend an hour in the pod, but the team were so reassuring and there was no pressure to use the whole appointment. She was even given recommendations and guidance on how to use the pod to make the most out of her appointment. She could change the colours of the mood lighting, she



"I now understand why it's called Res(e)t Float Centre, because not only are you floating in the pod, but you come out floating on air...I was transported from the stresses of life and was able to escape for an hour. It was an amazing break."

had relaxing spa music playing and when the pod felt too hot, she could open it for a few minutes – she had complete control: **"the environment was just perfect"**.

Despite her initial fears, Hannah was shocked by how quickly time passed, she said: **"I almost forgot where I was!"**

Hannah felt so refreshed after leaving her session. She said she expected her skin to be dry due to the salt, but it felt amazing after, as though she had a whole-body exfoliation. Her skin felt soft and smooth, her eyes didn't look as tired, and **she had a glow about her the next day**. She usually needs time to decompress at the end of the day, but after her stop-off at Res(e)t Float Centre, she felt so happy and rejuvenated.

Hannah said: **"I don't think I'd ever have booked something like this, because I wouldn't have wanted to spend money on myself without being sure I'd like it, but I'll definitely be going back"**. As a parent carer, she never treats herself and always puts her children first, but due to this generously donated break, **she was able to put herself first for a little while**.

To protect anonymity, the name of the carer has been changed.

Conclusion

Respitivity is a social tourism movement that creates amazing experiences for all involved. 2024 has provided us with some of our best achievements yet in terms of record numbers across our outcomes, and the strong positive impact the movement is having on those accessing and supporting it.

The saying goes, “it takes a village”, and thanks to a stronger focus on supporting our local delivery partners, we have managed to support our village in a way that has been better tailored to lift them up in the most meaningful way for unpaid carers yet.

As we enter 2025, we have many ambitions to continue building on our success. By the end of 2025, we aim:

- ▶ To have supported 10,000 carers since our 2015 launch, and generated £1 million in donations
- ▶ To collaborate with a delivery partner in all 32 regions of Scotland, making Respitivity a short break offering for all unpaid carers
- ▶ To support West Yorkshire to launch a Respitivity project in their region, with an aim to replicate this toolkit for future consultation enquiries and potential swap breaks between organisations/countries.
- ▶ To celebrate our 10 years of operation, with a focused podcast and days out for carers, as well as opportunities of collaboration with delivery partners
- ▶ To build further on 'alternative' support options for Respitivity, from businesses and individuals, to ensure our model continues to be flexible

- ▶ To implement a rolling training programme for our delivery network, to increase confidence in building local connections and growth
- ▶ To focus on increasing young carer engagement and how we make our Respitivity offerings inclusive for them.

There is a lot of potential and appetite in the both the social care sector, with the commitment to the right to a break and the need to resource easy access breaks, as well as within the tourism sector – companies are moving towards being more socially conscious and a force for good. Both contribute to further growth of Respitivity and all it has to offer.

As we approach 10 years of Respitivity, now is the time for funders to consider impactful and long-term investment in our movement, which has been proven to work for unpaid carers in Scotland.





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