



Support for your family

For children and young people with disabilities and additional needs

Short Breaks Service
Statement 2014 - 2015

www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks



Hampshire
County Council



Dear parents and carers, children and young people

As the new Executive Member for Children's Services, and Deputy Leader at Hampshire County Council, I am very pleased to introduce the updated Hampshire County Council's Short Breaks Service Statement for 2014-15. The statement explains how our short breaks and social care support services for children and young people with disabilities are organised and how you can access them.

This statement was originally created in 2012 and involved a great deal of input from local parents and carers of disabled children; with sections being written by representatives from Hampshire Parent/ Carer Network and Parent Voice, who have also been involved in reviewing and updating this statement.

There are many improvements expected during 2014-15 due from the new Children and Families Bill, including the new duty to publish a Local Offer. This will outline all services and support available to children and young people aged 0-25 years with disabilities or special educational needs, including education, health, social care and leisure services. Parents and carers and young people have been working on the Local Offer alongside our staff, telling us what is important to them when they need to find information. This Short Breaks Statement will continue to be an important way of describing the range of services available to support disabled children and their families in Hampshire.

Yours faithfully

Councillor Keith Mans


Hampshire County Council's Executive Lead Member for Children's Services



Contents

| | | |
|------------------|--|------------|
| SECTION 1 | Introduction and summary | |
| | What is a short break? | 3 |
| | What is a short break service statement? | 3 |
| | Who is a short break for? | 3 |
| | How can short breaks help me and my family | 3 |
| | This statement | 4 |
| SECTION 2 | Short breaks programme: | |
| | Who is this for? (Eligibility criteria) | 5 |
| | How to access/Gateway Card | 6 |
| | Specialist playschemes/activities | 8 |
| | Mainstream playschemes/activities | 9 |
| | Support for mainstream activity providers | 10 |
| | Community buddy scheme | 11 |
| SECTION 3 | Specialist services from social care | |
| | Who is this for? (Eligibility criteria) | 13 |
| | How to access | 13 |
| | Types of support available | 14 |
| | Overnight breaks | 16 |
| | Personal budgets | 17 |
| SECTION 4 | Other useful information | |
| | For children under five years old | 19 |
| | Childcare | 19 |
| | Transition (moving from Children's to Adult Services) | 20 |
| | Transport | 20 |
| | How to find out about other support available | 21 |
| | How to get involved with influencing services | 21 |
| | How has Hampshire's current short breaks offer been developed? | 22 |
| | How was this statement prepared? | 25 |
| | How will this statement be reviewed? | 25 |
| | Contact us | Back cover |

Please use the quick colour reference guide at the edge of the page to go straight to the section you require. (link in PDF version)

 Quick links for further information.

Introduction and summary

What is a short break?

Short breaks are fun or educational activities for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs - allowing their parents or carers to take a 'short break' from caring. Short break activities are offered during daytimes, evenings, weekends and school holidays. Short breaks provide parents and carers with the opportunity to take part in training, leisure activities, day-to-day tasks, or education.

There is a range of short breaks available to families in Hampshire offering different levels of support, these are explained in the following pages and the diagram on page 4.

What is a short breaks service statement?

This statement is a guide to the services offered by Hampshire County Council. This statement tells you what short breaks are available to support your family and how to find suitable services. Every local authority has to provide a statement and listen and respond to parent and carers views.

Who is a short break for?

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 tells us a disability is *'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities'*. We refer to 'additional needs' in this statement as some parents and carers and young people prefer this term. Short breaks are only intended for children and young people who have an impairment. There is other support available from Children's Services and other organisations for children and young people with additional needs resulting from abuse or trauma for example, but who do not have a 'disability'.

How can short breaks help me and my family?

For your child or young person:

- to take part in exciting activities that interest them
- develop feelings of independence and get more confidence
- spend time with their friends – and make new ones
- achieve personal goals and learn new skills.

For you:

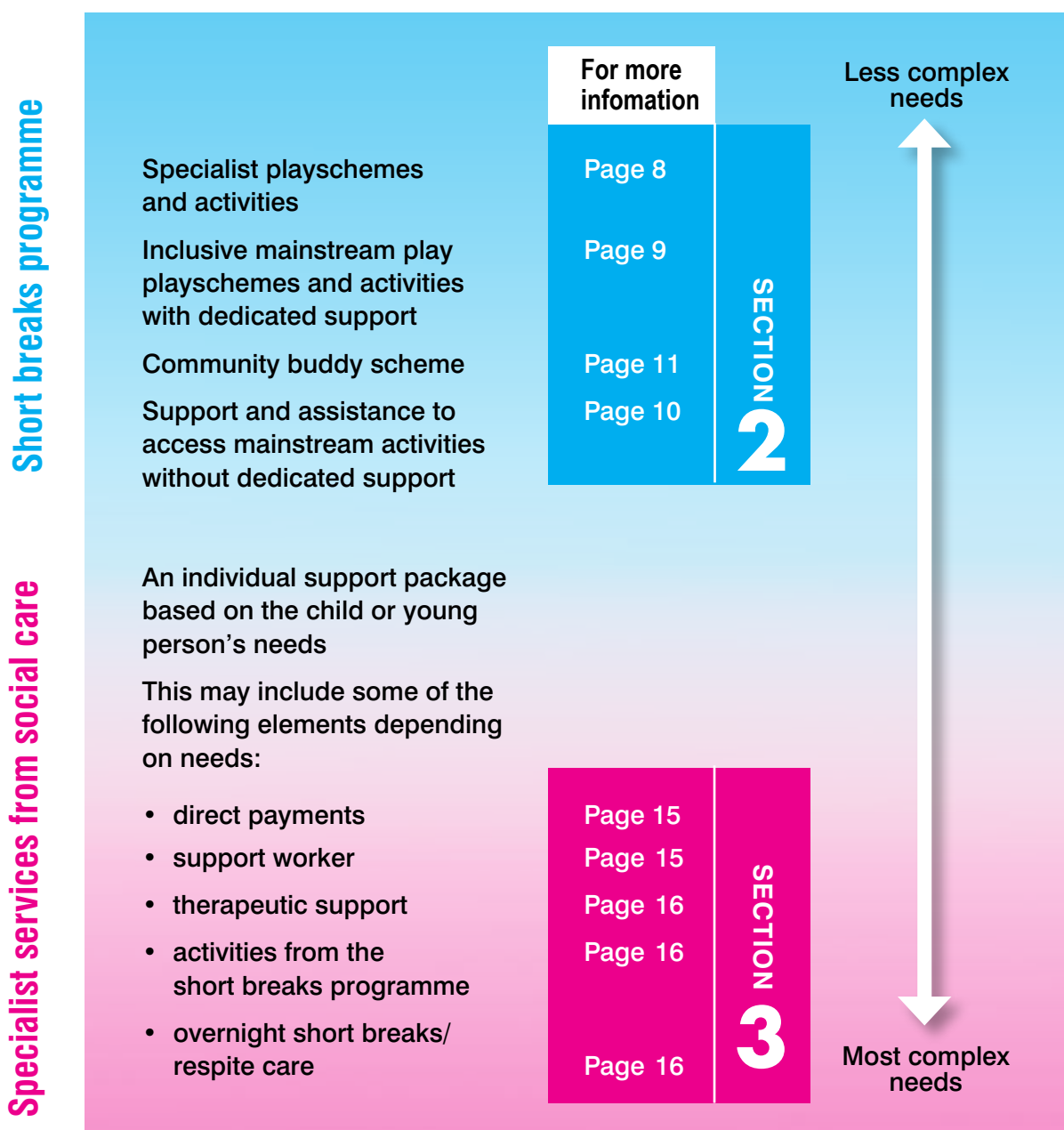
- reduce feelings of stress and allow "you" time
- spend time with your other children or together as a family
- meet and get to know other families who share similar experiences
- feel confident your child is having fun – with skilled carers who understand their needs.

This statement (also see the diagram below)

Section 2 (coloured blue) tells you about short breaks activities that are open to all children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, and how to find and access playschemes and clubs. You can get a shorter leaflet about this from shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk or phone **01962 846399**.

Section 3 (coloured pink) tells you about how to get an assessment from social work teams if you need other support, such as more help at home or an overnight short break. You can get more information about this at www.hants.gov.uk/contact-cs or by phoning **0845 603 5620**.

Section 4 (coloured purple) tells you some other information that might be useful about services for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, and more information about short breaks in Hampshire.



Please note: *Your child's and/or family's needs might change and so different services may be appropriate at different times.*

Short breaks programme

Who is this for? (Eligibility criteria)

Our short breaks programme is open to ALL children and young people who:

- have a disability and additional needs and may require support to participate fully in leisure or recreation activities
- are between 0 to 19 years old
- live in Hampshire and/or attend a school in Hampshire (excluding Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight as they have similar schemes).



We want to enable children and young people with disabilities and additional needs to join in with safe, entertaining and interesting activities, whilst giving their parents or full-time carers an opportunity to have a short break from caring. There is no limit (subject to availability of places) to the number of short breaks activities your child can participate in, and you can mix and match activities to suit your family's needs and the things that your child or young person likes to do.

- Specialist playschemes and activities – run specifically for children and young people with moderate or complex needs. (See page 8)
- Support to attend mainstream activities, playschemes clubs and groups. (See page 9)
- Community buddy scheme. (See page 11)

We have an on-going commitment to increase the range and choice of activities within our short breaks programme. We are working with, and fund, a range of voluntary organisations to provide short breaks, including activity providers (arts, outdoor and leisure centres, sports clubs etc.), organisations and special schools who provide school, holiday and weekend playschemes, and local family support groups. Any activity provider you choose can apply for funding to include your child in their programme of activities.

“Because of the social difficulties my son has, he has always refused to participate in any teams or clubs etc. outside of school which was incredibly isolating for all of us. It has only been in the last couple of years that I have been able to get him to join in with activities with others, but only through specially run groups with understanding professionals and small groups – and I realise a great many of them are through the short breaks scheme. I can't thank the short breaks team enough for helping with these extra activities as it has really made an enormous difference to my son's life (and of course the rest of my family). Thank you! ”

We are working with activity providers to develop their skills, confidence and knowledge of working with children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. Most activity providers will ask how they can support your child to enjoy an activity safely and happily – some families have used a 'book about me' or a 'passport' to provide this information, which are available to download from the short breaks section on the Hampshire Gateway website.




Please visit:
www.hampshiregateway.info

How can I access short breaks programme activities?

You can book places at an activity or playscheme directly with the activity provider. To help with the booking process we have introduced the Gateway Card scheme which is used to identify that your child or young person has a disability and additional needs and requires support.

The Gateway Card is free and will give you access to activities, playschemes and buddy schemes available through our short breaks programme. You will still need to pay the standard cost for your child to attend the activity. The Gateway Card scheme will help the activity provider to apply for funding to cover the additional costs that may be required to allow your child to participate fully.

Your personal details will be stored centrally by the short breaks team which means that you do not need to complete funding forms for every activity provider; you simply have to present your Gateway Card at the time of booking. The information stored on the Gateway Card database is only for the short breaks team's use – your personal record will not be accessible by any other teams or third parties.

 To register for a Gateway Card visit:
www.hants.gov.uk/gatewaycard

DID YOU KNOW...

Did you know? That over 5,200 children and young people with disabilities now hold a Gateway Card.



Evaluating our provision and planning future services

Information collated via the Gateway Card scheme about the use of short breaks activities helps us to evaluate our short breaks provision and has helped to inform the decision making process at our local short breaks grants panels for 2014-15 grants.



“ We have been lucky enough to have had help with swimming lessons at the Andover Leisure Centre who, with the help of short breaks/Gateway, have provided a couple of courses of 2 to 1 swimming tuition to increase his skills and water confidence (he also has dyspraxia so needs extra help to learn new skills). He had previously refused to go back to swimming and had not participated for 3 or 4 years! So this extra help was instrumental in getting him active again – and he has now progressed so well that he is now back in a mainstream class. ”

“ With the extra support at Brownies and now Guides Jessica has had the consistency of one person that she can turn to in a club without constantly interrupting the group leader, which is great!

Jessica has great activities which also provide a break for her and I have been able to leave her at venues without either having to sit outside in the car or wait with bated breath at the other end of the phone. ”

Where do I go to find out more information about activities available in my local area?

Hampshire Gateway publication

The Hampshire Gateway website is packed full of places to go and things to do! It is possible to search for an activity provider or a specific activity – and for every entry there is information about where they are, what they offer, their contact details and access information. It is also possible to search based on distance from a specific postcode. New activities and events are added weekly.

Listings of holiday activities are sent to Gateway Card holders (who have ticked ‘yes’ to receiving updates) ahead of each school holiday. Following feedback from parents and carers we will continue to provide these updates by email (and post for those without email access); to save money on printing and distribution of larger hard copy publications.

Hampshire Gateway has been designed and created through consultation with parents and has been developed in partnership with Parent Voice and Pavilion on the Park.

i Hampshire Gateway website:
www.hampshiregateway.info

i Hampshire’s Local Offer, which is due to be published by September 2014, will provide clear and searchable information about all services which families can access for disabled children and young people aged 0-25, visit **www.hantslocaloffer.info** for further information.

If you have any problems accessing any of the activities listed on the website or in the publications, Parent Voice will be happy to help: **call 0300 3038603**

“ Thanks for providing your help, support and opportunities. I have met new friends for myself and my son where I attended activities advertised by yourselves. This has helped as I am a single parent and was feeling very isolated. ”

Specialist playschemes/activities

Disabled children and young people with moderate or complex needs often require higher levels of support, staff with specialist knowledge or training (such as use of feeding pumps, administering medication or lifting techniques) or specific resources or equipment (such as hoists or changing tables) to join in certain activities. It is our aim to ensure that the child or young person's disability or support requirements are not a barrier to them accessing the activities they would like to take part in.

We work with a wide range of organisations and activity providers across Hampshire to ensure that there are playschemes and activities on offer that are suitable for children and young people with the most complex needs, allowing them to take part in a wide range of interesting and exciting activities.

Some of these schemes are run by specialist activity providers, some are run at local special schools, and some of the schemes may be run for particular disability groups. All these schemes are open to all Gateway Card holders (see page 6). Some of the activities are also for siblings too, as we understand the difficulties of having children at two different activities at the same time. This also provides the opportunity for disabled and non-disabled children to enjoy activities together.

“ We have used short breaks on quite a few occasions. I have four sons and they all love adventurous, outdoor activities. Short breaks has enabled my son who has severe cerebral palsy finally to be able to join in with his brothers doing skiing, rock climbing, zip wires, cycling, sailing and more and he loves it! We have been to sessions at Calshot and QE2 Activity Centre to name a few.

It has been fantastic for me to see all my children having fun and spending time with each other. We are really looking forward to booking more activities this year and without short breaks this would not be possible due to my son's physical limitations. ”

DID YOU KNOW...

That Hampshire now has over 40 specialist play schemes and activities just for children and young people with disabilities and more complex needs, supported by short breaks funding.

“ Hampshire County Council's short break funding has enabled SCARF to organise many events that our son has participated in such as a regular youth club, cycling events using specially adapted bikes, swimming, multisports and many other activities. Outside of school and now college these have been the only activities available to him. In essence SCARF is his social life. ”



“ My son has attended Disability Challengers for the past few years. He is severely disabled and therefore has to have one-to-one care during his time there. Challengers give me the confidence to leave him knowing he is being well looked after. He is non-verbal and has little understanding of his environment but when he arrives at Challengers his little face always breaks into a smile!

Disability Challengers has a huge impact on our family it means that I can spend quality time with my 10 year old twins, watch them play sport, take them out to places we can't go with Anthony! More importantly I sometimes have a break, some time to myself and a recharging of the batteries! ”

“ My son used a specialist playscheme for children with complex needs at Rose Road during the summer. I knew he was safe with playworkers that understood and could cope with his epilepsy and disabilities, and stimulated with activities that he enjoyed. It gave me a break to go shopping with my daughter. ”


Mainstream playschemes/activities

We understand that not all children and young people need or want to attend specialist playschemes or activities specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. Some children and young people would prefer to attend activities with their friends from school or local area, or with their siblings. Some providers apply for funding which allows them to allocate fully supported places to children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. The provider will work with you to cater for your child's individual requirements, and they will ensure that they get to know your child and the support that they need to take part in the activity, giving you peace of mind that your child is in safe hands.

You may also wish for your child or young person to attend mainstream activities within local organisations, such as Scouts or Guides, or a local swimming club, where the provider feels that they need some additional support to be able to welcome your child to the activity. In this instance, the provider can apply for specific funding to pay for the additional individual support your child needs to attend that activity. Any activity provider can apply for this funding, so you are not restricted at all as to which activities your child can attend.

You will be expected to pay for the standard cost for your child to attend the activity or playscheme, and funding from the short breaks programme will pay for the additional support that they may need.

We hope that this allows many more children to be included by local providers, allowing them to attend enjoyable and exciting activities with their friends and siblings. We have seen that a little bit of extra support can make a huge difference to enable children and young people with disabilities and additional needs to be included in mainstream activities

 Activity providers can find all the information they need about applying for funding at www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaksfunding

DID YOU KNOW...

That 275 Short Breaks Grants have been awarded to 189 organisations during 2013-14.

“ My son is non-verbal so can't give feedback, but the fact that he would literally skip from the car park to the school door, with a huge smile on his face tells me he was very happy at playscheme! ”


Support for mainstream activity providers

How can I feel confident that mainstream activity providers can adequately support my child or young person?

Our Recreation, Activities and Inclusion Officer and the short breaks team have been working hard to encourage and educate activity providers; including offering a resource pack about inclusion, holding a number of inspiring conferences about including children with disabilities and additional needs, and organising training on requested subjects. We are going to continue to encourage mainstream activity providers, and talk with them more about the training and support that they need. We have found that most activity providers want to do a good job and include your child, they just need some extra support to gain the confidence to be able to do this. Activity providers are encouraged to talk and work together with families to create positive inclusion in their activities and can find out about learning and development opportunities at www.hants.gov.uk/learning-development

Parent Voice

The short breaks programme also funds Parent Voice to provide information and support to parents of children with disabilities and additional needs to find suitable short break activities. Parent Voice staff work with the short breaks team to support and promote inclusion with a view to continuing to increase the range and number of recreation and leisure opportunities available to children and young people with disabilities and additional needs, and to improve the quality of these provisions.

 For more information visit www.hampshiregateway.info or call **0300 3038603**. There is a lot of useful information about your child's right to be included at: www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources/cdcs-resources/my-rightsyour-responsibility

“ I think Avon Tyrrell is so amazing and I think other children should go too. I love the activities and getting my Platinum Awards!!!

My favourite activities are archery, fishing, high ropes, abseiling, swimming, night walks, face painting and arts and crafts. I wish I could do it everyday!
- nine year old girl. ”

What are the costs involved for accessing the short breaks programme?

Families are expected to pay the costs that would normally apply to a child or young person doing a particular activity. However the short breaks programme will provide funding for any additional support that is required to enable your child to participate in that activity. The community buddy scheme charges an hourly (subsidised) rate, plus the cost of the activity and travel (see page 11 community buddy scheme).

We are aware that financial difficulties can be an issue for many families, so we have asked all activity providers to consider this when applying for their short breaks grant. If cost is a barrier to you attending an activity, please discuss directly with your activity provider about paying a reduced charge.

Community buddy scheme

A community buddy is a person who enables children and young people with a disability and additional needs to access activities in the community. A community buddy is like a friend going along to a chosen activity which gives a greater sense of independence as well as giving time away from home.

A community buddy is a volunteer or paid member of staff who prior to being approved for the scheme has been interviewed, checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), and fully trained. When you enquire about a buddy, the provider will organise a pre-visit from a co-ordinator where you can discuss your requirements and talk about suitable buddy matches - this consultation is free of charge. The co-ordinator will work with you to help you to choose the right buddy based upon your child's individual needs.

You can then decide together with your child or young person how you would like to use the time. The community buddy will provide the support needed to do this, whether the chosen activity is shopping, bowling, going to the cinema or just taking a walk in the park.

The scheme is open to children and young people aged 7 to 19 years old and can be used after school, at weekends, in the holidays, for a few hours at a time, or for a whole day - it is entirely up to you.

The community buddy scheme charges an hourly (subsidised) rate, plus the cost of the activity and travel.

“ Thank-you for the buddy scheme - my son has no friends and never leaves the house without me, but he got to do a trip with a buddy. ”



For further information on community buddies scheme go to our website:

www.hampshiregateway.info/en/Buddies



DID YOU KNOW...

Over 6,000 hours of community buddies were delivered to families during 2013.

“ My son has never been the sporty type and tended to restrict himself to playing on his computer or watching TV. It is only through the buddy scheme that he now gets out of the house on a regular basis and is really enjoying it. A great idea, thank you. ”

“ Keep up the good work - well done for the buddy's scheme! ”

How do we decide what activities are funded by the short breaks programme?

Funding to support individual children, and activities costing less than £5,000 in total, are discussed at a regular panel which includes Parent Voice representatives, the short breaks team and other Hampshire County Council colleagues, who make the decision.

For funding over £5,000, panels were held in autumn 2013 in all eight areas of Hampshire with Hampshire Parent/Carer Network and Parent Voice representatives.

These panels made recommendations about funding for 2014-15 to Hampshire County Council's Executive Lead Member for Children's Services Decision Day, details of these meetings can be found at www.hants.gov.uk/decisions-meetings

DID YOU KNOW...

During 2013, £325,000 of capital funding has been allocated for 13 new projects recommended by parents of disabled children to enhance community and leisure facilities.

What if I have a problem with a short break activity?

If you experience any problems in accessing a short breaks activity, or problems while your child is attending, please discuss this with the activity provider or buddy provider in the first instance and ask for a copy of their complaints policy if needed.

If you remain unhappy, or you need some support to address the problem, please contact the short breaks team on **01962 846399** or email shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk. You can also get help from Parent Voice: call **0300 3038603** or email parentvoice@roseroad.org.uk

“ My favourite things were Avon Tyrrell, craft building in the rain, and I also liked Milestones museum and the lego. It was all awesome! -
12 year old boy. ”



Specialist services from social care

Who are specialist services from social care for?

Although we have increased our number and variety of short breaks that are on offer to children and young people with disabilities and additional needs (see details of the short breaks programme on pages 5 -12), we know that there are families that need more support.

This might be because of a change in the family's capacity to support their child, or because the child or young person's needs have become greater. These increases in need might be sudden and unexpected, or they may happen over a period of time. However this situation arises, some families will be able to continue with their own resources and with informal support from friends, relatives and local support groups. Some families may find that they do not have this support available to them and that they need more help from the County Council.

This type of service is targeted at families with the most complex needs, offering an individual support package (also called a 'child in need plan') to meet those needs. To ensure that we can provide these specialist support services to the families that need them, when they need them, we have worked with local parents and carers to develop our 'eligibility criteria' that we use to assess the needs of each child and their family..

Eligibility criteria

What is the eligibility criteria for accessing services for children and young people with complex needs?

You may be eligible for specialist services from social care if your child requires substantial additional support as a result of their disability and additional needs in order to achieve their age appropriate potential – and this support cannot be provided within your family.

Examples of when you may be eligible include when:

- specialist equipment is required to be mobile
- support is required to be able to undertake all basic self care functions (that are age appropriate)
- your child or young person requires constant supervision throughout the day and for prolonged periods at night (when no longer age appropriate)
- as a result of their disability your child or young person's behaviour proves a serious risk to themselves and/or others. This includes self-harm
- without support their ability to communicate severely affects their personal safety, i.e. they are non-verbal
- they have a profound and multiple learning disability, severe learning disability, or autism with challenging behaviour, which results in a significant risk of self-harm or harm to others.

How do we access specialist services from social care?

To see what help might be needed from social care, a social worker will need to talk with you in order to complete an assessment. This could be a social worker from one of the main children's teams, or they might be from the specialist disabled children's teams depending on your child's needs. It is important to note that while many short breaks activities are available without any assessment (see page 6 How can I access short breaks programme activities?), you are able to request an assessment of your disabled child's needs at any time. This assessment should take into account the whole family's needs, but you also have the right to request a separate assessment of your own needs as a carer if required.

The assessment is just a way of recording the information gathered by talking with you, your child and other people involved with your family. You will be fully involved and you will be able to write your own comments on the assessment too. The social worker will need to discuss your family's needs with their managers to agree the plan they want to put in place to support you and any services that they hope to offer.

i To request help and support or to ask for an assessment from Children's Services, please call **0845 603 5620** or email **childrens.services@hants.gov.uk**

Please note: Emails are dealt with during normal office hours Monday to Friday. At all other times call the above telephone number.

What if I disagree with your decision about eligibility for specialist services following an assessment?

You should be given a copy of the eligibility criteria along with the decision. If you feel it has not been applied fairly, or that important factors were not taken into account during the assessment, you should ask the social worker who assessed your child for a review of the decision. This will mean that another team manager will review the decision to see whether the criteria have been consistently applied. You will receive a letter confirming the reviewing manager's decision within 21 days of your request.

After this, should you still feel the decision is wrong, you may request a face-to-face meeting with a service manager from Children's Services to discuss the decision.

i If you still remain dissatisfied, you can complain in writing to: Children's Services Department Complaints Team, Elizabeth II Court East, Winchester SO23 8UG or email **childrens.services.complaints@hants.gov.uk**

If you would like more information on the mediation process visit:
www.hants.gov.uk/mediation-process.pdf

How are social workers in the Disabled Children's team different from other Children's Services social workers?

Most Children's Services social workers get involved usually when there is a safeguarding concern about the care a child is receiving and a concern has been raised that a child may come to some harm.

Social workers in the Disabled Children's teams in Hampshire do work with children in these kinds of situations too, with the aim of working with the family to ensure all children and young people with disabilities and additional needs are safe and well looked after. It has been shown that children with disabilities are more at risk of abuse and neglect for a variety of reasons. For further information visit: **www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/children_with_disabilities_home_wda80491.html**

However, the social workers in the Disabled Children's teams have a wider role. They frequently support families where there are no such concerns - just a need for extra support due to the impact of disability on the family.

What types of support may be given?

Each family's situation is unique. Staff will spend time with your family to understand your individual needs, and to consider what services would be most suitable to support both the child or young person with disabilities and additional needs, and you as their parent or carer. The aim is, wherever possible, to help parents and carers to be able to support their child or young

person at home. The needs of siblings will also be considered when planning what might help the family. Social workers can arrange suitable support from other professionals, and frequently have a co-ordinating role to make sure all the different parts of the child's plan work well together. Some children and young people with very complex health needs will have funding support from health organisations too.

“ As a family we've always used the local specialist holiday playscheme, and with some extra support my son Mohammed had also been to Scouts. Mohammed has a physical disability, a severe learning disability and communication difficulties so if people don't get it right he can become quite challenging, but the short breaks work well as the people now know him really well.

As he has become bigger and stronger we were finding it much harder to manage at home, and when our youngest daughter was having some problems with bullying we found it hard to give her the time she needed. I also began to feel quite low and my GP was concerned that I was becoming depressed again. I was really very reluctant to contact a social worker, but once it was explained that we would be able to agree Mohammed's support together, I felt much more comfortable with the idea.

The social worker gave us some help and guidance on supporting Mohammed and put us in touch with the young carer's worker for our daughter. They were also able to refer us to other services – and we saw the team occupational therapist who arranged for alterations to be made to our home to make things easier.

Mohammed is 16 and we now have direct payments - which we use to employ a support worker. His support worker understands his needs – and allows us to spend some quality time with our daughter, which is just great! That bit of extra support means we all manage a bit better. We regularly review the plan together to make sure that it is still working for everyone – especially Mohammed. ”

The types of services that might be considered include:

Direct payments

This is where the parent or carer of a child or young person with disabilities and additional needs is given a direct payment to purchase their own service, instead of the Local Authority arranging that service on their behalf. Some parents who are using direct payments find they have more control over the services they receive and find that the care provided can be more convenient and flexible. To be able to access this service your child will need to have had a social work assessment and meet the eligibility criteria for a specialist service.

The parent or carer can choose to buy services from an organisation that provides care, e.g. a private agency, from a voluntary organisation or a nursery, or they can choose to employ a carer(s) directly. Parents and carers need to keep a record of what is spent.

 More help and advice is available from www.enhamtrust.org.uk/Our-Services/Direct-Payments--Personal-Budget-Support/Personal-budgets-and-direct-payments, Telephone **01264 345862** or email direct-payments@enham.org.uk

A support worker

This is an individual worker employed by an agency, who comes into your home to support the family. This might be to assist with personal care, to help with domestic tasks, or to support your child to do something outside of the home. Some children and young people will need experienced support workers or two support workers at the same time. Sometimes staff can stay in your home and support your child while you go out.

Therapeutic support

Many therapies come via the health service or school (for example speech therapy and physiotherapy). However, some children have other therapies as part of their social care support package, e.g. music therapy.

Activities from the short breaks programme

All the short breaks activities and support available to any family without a social care assessment (described in section 2) can of course continue, and should still be a part of the overall plan of support for the family.

What about an overnight break?

A small number of families need the opportunity to have a break overnight. This resource is targeted at families where:

- the child regularly does not sleep through the night and needs supervision to stay safe
- the child has complex health needs that regularly need attention during the night
- the child's support needs are so intensive that the parents/carers need a longer break.

Overnight short breaks are one of the most costly services provided to families, so we need to ensure that this service is available to the people who need it most, when they need it. This is not just based upon the needs that a particular condition presents but also the wider needs of parents and carers, and their families as a whole.

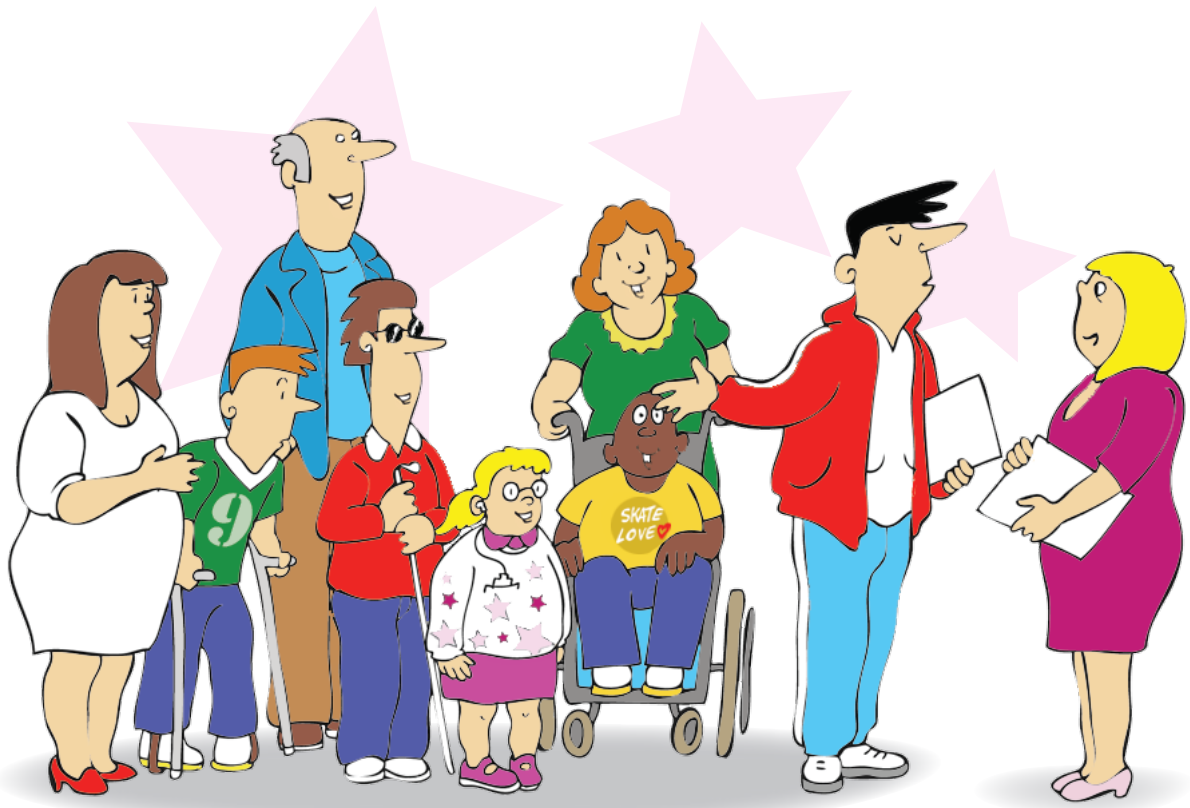
The overnight break can take place at a range of locations, including within a family home, or with trained foster carers in their home (a foster or Family Link placement), or at a residential unit (run by the County Council or by another provider).

Any place that provides overnight short breaks has to be registered and checked thoroughly, and social workers will discuss this further with you if they feel that this is a service that your family needs.

“ Emily has always been a poor sleeper since she was a baby, but the other children were the same and I thought she would grow out of it. Her health is really complicated and I now have to check her several times during the night to make sure her blood sugar levels are OK and re-position her in bed. We are looking into any monitors or gadgets that might help with this, but in the meantime, as I am a single mum, it's up to me to keep a close eye and sometimes it is easier just to doze in the chair in her room beside her! This obviously has an effect on my health and on what I can do with the other children. The youngest needs my time of course but so do the older two with homework and wanting to do some fun things in the holiday.

Emily is now 11 and I have already used the buddy scheme to take Emily for a few trips out in the school holidays. Because I can get low with my depression, my social worker arranged a support worker to come and help me with managing all the practical tasks at home at those times. The lack of sleep takes its toll on everything though and we now have 24 nights a year at a specialist foster placement called a family link, which is usually in the school holidays and weekends.

I helped the carers learn about what Emily needs before she stayed there and I feel confident in them now. Having the stays planned out means I can catch up on sleep and feel refreshed enough to do some trips out with the other children. We have reviews with the social worker and other people involved making sure everyone is happy with the plan. ”



How do we access overnight short breaks?

This is recommended by an assessment, as described before, following which the social worker will request this service from a county-wide panel. This is to ensure that we are offering services fairly across the whole county. The panel would expect to see that your family is being offered all other suitable services that might help before overnight short breaks are requested.

DID YOU KNOW...

Four teams of social workers, along with occupational therapists, support just under 1,000 children and young people with disabilities with the most complex needs in Hampshire.

What is a personal budget?

Personal budgets were introduced in England in 2008 for adult care services. The Children and Families Bill means they will be available for some disabled children from 2014.

Personal budgets are an allocation of funding following an assessment which should meet identified needs in terms of service provision. The parent or carer or the young person can either receive their personal budget as a direct payment, leave it to be managed by their local authority or have a combination of direct payment/council controlled.

In Hampshire, we held a pilot scheme with families receiving a personal budget for their social care support packages. Support planners helped families think about new ways of achieving good outcomes for the child/young person and the family, with some creative plans being agreed. Families will be able to request personalised funding for health and education needs too. The personal budgets steering group includes parent representatives and will continue to work with families and providers to implement a system for personal budgets that works well for everyone involved.

Some local authorities have chosen to give parents and carers personal budgets to buy their own short breaks activities (see page 8 Specialist playschemes/activities, page 9 Mainstream playschemes/activities and page 11 the Community buddy scheme that you do not need an assessment for). However, parents in Hampshire have told us that our short breaks services are currently flexible enough and offer a wide range of support that meets their needs. If you have any feedback about this, we would be happy to hear from you.

What are you doing to ensure families get the help they need before they reach crisis point?

Short breaks activities in themselves are intended to be preventative by giving parents and carers a break that enables them to continue in their caring role. The short breaks programme in Hampshire has been specifically designed to provide early support and intervention, ensuring wherever possible that families receive enough support so that they do not reach crisis point.

We have worked with parents and carers to design and improve our short breaks programme in order to ensure that whenever parents and carers feel that they need a break from their caring role they can access a break that is suitable for their individual family needs – whether that be support for a mainstream club/activity, a more specialist schemes for children with more complex needs or the buddy scheme. By offering this open access programme, with no eligibility for most services, we are confident that families are able to access early support before reaching a crisis situation.

In addition to the wide range of short breaks available, short breaks also funds the Parent Voice service which provides information and support for families. This allows families to access other support and advice outside of short breaks, including support to access a break from caring if the short breaks on offer do not currently meet your needs.

Next steps:

Hampshire's Local Offer, which is due to be published by September 2014, will provide clear and searchable information about services which families can access for disabled children and young people aged 0-25. Visit www.hantslocaloffer.info for the latest information.



Other useful information

For children under five years old

What if my child is not yet at school?

Short breaks activities are sometimes held just for this age group, these might be occasional activity days or a more regular provision. Short breaks activity providers and support groups may also offer activities for this age group. We recommend that you visit www.hampshiregateway.info or contact Parent Voice to find out about activities and services for under five's in your local area. Many parents of younger children use our Support for Individuals grants to help them join in a local mainstream activity (see page 9).

Children's centres

Children's centres aim to give every child the best possible start in life. They are places where all families with children under the age of five can easily access a range of different services to support them, including information and advice, drop-in sessions, access to early education and childcare services and more. Children's centres also offer services specifically suited to children with disabilities and additional needs. These services vary by area, so please contact your local centre to see what would be available to you.



To find out more about children's centres, visit:
www.hants.gov.uk/familypages

Childcare

Where can I find out about suitable childcare?

The short breaks programme is not designed to provide all the childcare working parents might need, as it is designed to give parents and carers a short break rather than childcare. However, we appreciate that finding suitable childcare is important to working parents, so you may find the below information useful.

Hampshire Childcare and Family Information Team (Cfit)

Hampshire Cfit is a free, confidential and impartial service for parents and carers, and provides information and guidance on childcare, early years education and related services in Hampshire for children and young people aged 0 -19. Cfit offers a childcare brokerage service to parents and carers who have been unsuccessful in securing childcare or early education services, or need help taking the first steps. Our outreach workers offer one-to-one support and guidance.



To find out more information, visit:
www.hants.gov.uk/cis call **0845 603 5620**
or email childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

Transition (moving from Children's to Adult Services)

How do short breaks support transition?

Transition is the time when young people are moving from childhood into adulthood, between 14 and 25 years old. This is the time when young people are preparing to leave school and take the next steps in their adult life. For young people with disabilities and additional needs more support may be needed during this time to enable them to reach their full potential.

The transition from Children's Services to Adult Services should be a positive experience and a time of opportunity for young people, and we want to support them as they become young adults.

We aim to provide a range of age appropriate short break activities for teenagers, and are continually working with activity providers to develop new and exciting initiatives for this age group. Information about these activities can be found in the Hampshire Gateway publication or visit www.hampshiregateway.info



For further information on support during transition, and the transition process, visit: www.hants.gov.uk/transition



To contact Adult Services, please call on **0845 603 5630** or email adult.services@hants.gov.uk

Transport

Do you provide transport for short breaks?

Parents and carers are encouraged and expected to transport their children to and from short breaks activities. We do understand, however, that transport can be a real difficulty in a large county like Hampshire. We have worked with some short breaks activity providers so that they can sometimes offer transport as part of the activity, but this is the exception.

Unfortunately we had to make the decision that generally we cannot fund transport for short breaks activities, as otherwise the funding for the activities would be very quickly used up by a very small number of children and young people, and we would have far fewer activities available.

To try to minimise transport issues, we are working with local providers to encourage more local activities in all areas across Hampshire to reduce the need for transport as much as possible. We do have to consider transport and ensure it is not a barrier to short breaks as far as is possible.

Where can I find out more about what other support is available for my family?

Parent Voice provides a single point of contact for information and advice to parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs aged between 0 to 19 years in Hampshire.

Parent Voice sends a weekly update to its members detailing news, research updates, parental surveys, participation opportunities and training courses. This is supported by a website which provides signposts to useful organisations, factsheets and news articles www.parentvoice.info

In every district in Hampshire, Parent Voice also has a dedicated worker who can provide local information and advice about short breaks and other services tailored to your needs. They will also work with local activity providers to support and promote recreation and leisure opportunities.

Parent Voice is working with the Hampshire Parent/Carer Network to give you a real opportunity to develop and shape services in Hampshire. You can become a member of Parent Voice if you are the parent or carer of a child or young person with disabilities and additional needs living in Hampshire.



If you would like to become a member of Parent Voice, you can register online at www.parentvoice.info
email parentvoice@roseroad.org.uk
or call **0300 3038603**

DID YOU KNOW...

The Parent Voice weekly newsletter gets sent out to **3,200 people each week.**



How can I get involved in influencing services?

The Hampshire Parent/Carer Network (HPCN) www.hpcn.org.uk is an independent, parent-led group set up to ensure that the families and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs can participate fully in the development of services within Hampshire.

HPCN would like to invite all parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs to get involved with the Network, to ensure that they are able to represent a wide range of families from across the region when working together with decision makers. They would be keen to hear from you if you would like to have your voice heard, or if you feel able to represent other parents and carers when decisions are being made about the support and services provided.

The Network aims to have two representatives from each of the district council areas in Hampshire. In addition to this they aim to represent the full range of disabilities, including learning disability, physical disability and complex needs, across all ability ranges from high functioning to profound, with representation of families with children attending special schools, mainstream schools and those in mixed placements.



If you would like to be involved with the Network, or simply to be consulted on and provide feedback on key issues within Hampshire please email: info@hpcn.org.uk or call **01962 832580**.



How has Hampshire's current short breaks programme been developed

The national story so far...

1989

The Children Act 1989 provides a clear definition of a disabled child and the roles of their parents and carers. It also recognises the pressures placed upon carers and the need for regular breaks to enable them to continue caring.

2006

Parents inform Parliamentary hearings that the biggest cause of unhappiness is the lack of short break provision.

2008

Consultations with parents and carers reveal that children and young people with disabilities and additional needs want greater choice in their short breaks and to be able to access local leisure facilities. Parents and carers just want a break from caring and to feel confident that services are meeting their family's needs.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires local authorities to offer short breaks provision – giving guidance on the type of services that should be offered. The 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' is launched, focusing upon increasing and improving short breaks provision.

2011

Aiming High Programme ends (March) and The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations come in to effect, making it a legal duty for local authorities to provide short breaks (April). On 1 October 2011 a short breaks service statement must be published which includes the range of services available, any eligibility criteria and how these services have been developed to meet the needs of parents and carers. It is recognised that these statements will need to be reviewed regularly in order to ensure that services are meeting the needs of the people these are being provided to and for. This should be done through consultation and collaboration with local parents.

The local story so far...

2007

December 2007 the short breaks provision in Hampshire was audited.

“Going for respite allows our daughter to have a life away from home which is important for her social development. It provides a light at the end of the tunnel when it all seems too much to cope with”

This view was shared by many parents and carers in Hampshire. However these audits also revealed:

- wide variations in days allocated to children with the same disability
- parents didn't feel in control of designing packages
- access to universal services was poorly developed and access to play schemes and childcare arrangements was variable
- mainstream/leisure activities staff knowledge on disability issues needed improvement
- transport was a major issue.

2008

A series of parent consultation events are held across Hampshire, highlighting the need for a better information service and for more support.

2009

Parent Voice is created to provide better information and to help parents to participate in services.

2010

A county-wide directory of short breaks providers is launched (replacing a number of smaller directories). Parent Voice forum was set up (now known as Hampshire Parent/Carer Network (HPCN)).

2011

After discussion with parents and working closely with Parent Voice the eligibility criteria for the majority of short breaks activities were removed and the Gateway Card was introduced.

2012

Bridging workers service was set up to support families and providers to support and promote inclusion for children and young people in leisure activities.

The second successful Inclusion Conference was attended by over 150 delegates and Hampshire short breaks joined the nation in celebrating the Paralympics with flame festivals held across the county.

2013

October 2013 Hampshire's Health and Wellbeing Board signs up to the Disabled Children's Charter.

Children's Services, Parent Voice and HPCN started work towards implementation of the reforms proposed by the Children and Families Bill, including the Local Offer.

“ Thanks to short breaks my daughter was able to attend the same activity centre as her best friend, with no hassle or fuss, no additional paperwork, no explaining her condition and most importantly extra support but at no additional cost to me. She loved every minute of it, and had I not wanted to spend time with her too then she would have wanted to go every day! ”


“ My Son Dean who is severely Autistic regularly attends a short break at Tower House Horses in Micheldever Station. He has a wonderful time there and as well as giving us a break he has improved hand over fist in terms of self-confidence and independence. The staff are wonderful in their patience and ingenuity and he has grown to love attending all his sessions there. ”

Next steps:

The Children and Families Bill 2014

Hampshire County Council has been a Pathfinder authority, which means we have been testing some of the proposed ideas that have now become part of the Children and Families Bill.

The main changes are a single education, health and care plan for children and young people aged 0 – 25, the use of personal budgets, and a “local offer” which gives clear information on what is available from health, social care and education and other services to support families with disabled children, including any eligibility criteria. It is planned that these reforms are fully available by September 2014, with some elements available in Hampshire from April 2014.

 For further information visit: www.sendpathfinder.co.uk

 For more information on what's happening within Hampshire, visit www.hants.gov.uk/se7sendpathfinder



How has this short breaks service statement been prepared and reviewed?

A task group was set up to review and rewrite the 2011 short breaks service statement in a format that parents could use to quickly and easily find out about the range of services that are available to meet their child's individual needs and how to access them. This group consisted of representatives from the County Council, as well as parent and carer representatives from Parent Voice and Hampshire Parent/Carer Network (HPCN).

Once the existing statement had been evaluated and areas for improvement identified, the task group also reviewed statements from other local authorities to see what parents liked and did not like. The group then worked collaboratively to write the new statement, with the majority of the text being written by parents and carers to ensure that it was written in a style and tone that other parents and carers could easily understand, and to ensure that it included all of the information that parents and carers would need to know.

The draft was available for public consultation on the County Council's website for 12 weeks until 28 September 2012.

The consultation responses were reviewed by the task group, and where possible incorporated into the final version published in December 2012.

A task group was set up to review the statement in January 2014 and, once again, parents and carers of disabled children have been involved in this as representatives on the group and in writing updates where needed. This group also considered responses from a wider cohort of parents and carers who had responded to a short breaks survey carried out by HPCN in January 2014, which identified that many people were unaware how they could find the statement, for further details visit: www.hpcn.org.uk/en/Current_projects_-_Short_Breaks

We plan to promote the updated statement through Parent Voice, HPCN and Hampshire Gateway. A printed copy is available upon request to the short breaks team.

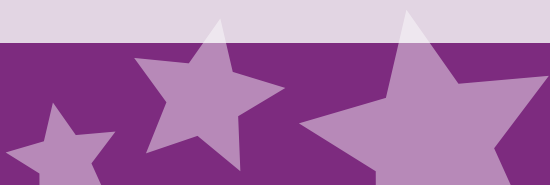
Thank you to everyone who responded in both the initial consultations and the recent HPCN survey. We hope that you like the work we have done, however we also know that there is always room for improvement.

Next steps:

Participation in future reviews of this statement

This statement will be checked annually to ensure it remains a good reflection of current services. We are likely to make changes to the statement as our services develop, and will notify parents and carers of opportunities to get involved in influencing and planning services via Hampshire Parent/Carer Network and Parent Voice.

Children and young people will be getting more involved in how they get all the information they need via the Local offer work. We would love to include more quotes and short stories from children and young people about their short break experiences in future statements. If you have anything that you would like to include please contact the short breaks team: shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk





Contact us

For more information, or if you would like this information in another language or format, such as Braille or large print:

Telephone: **01962 846399**

Email: **shortbreaks@hants.gov.uk**

Website: **www.hants.gov.uk/shortbreaks**

All names have been changed in this document to protect the identity of the child/young person and their family. However all quotes used are from parents and carers in Hampshire.

