

Guidance Notes – please read carefully before applying

The purpose of the Scottish Government Short Breaks Fund is to improve the range and availability of short breaks for Scottish carers and the people they care for.

**Carers can apply for up to £500 from the Time to Live Fund.
However, we expect most applications to be between £300 and £400.**

This current funding cycle will run in Fife from **01 April 2026 until 31 March 2027**. Applications can be submitted at any time until **25 February 2027**, funds permitting. Please visit www.fva.org/carers for more information.

The Time to Live fund in Fife is designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- Carers will have more social and leisure opportunities;
- Carers will have improved mental health and wellbeing;
- Carers will have improved opportunities to spend quality time with their cared-for people.

Short breaks can make a huge difference to carers and the people they care for by providing time to rest, to be themselves, to pursue a hobby, catch up with friends, or just relax and recharge. For some people, a short break is something they enjoy having together with the person they care for; for others, it is about enjoying quality time apart.

If you are not sure what type of break would be best for you, please contact us so we can let you know about some of the help available around planning a short break.

You are the expert in your life and circumstances: tell us what a break would look and feel like to you.

Before you apply

Applicants to the Time to Live Fund must:

- live in Fife;
- be an unpaid adult carer, young carer, young adult carer, or parent carer of a child or children with a disability;
- provide care or support to someone who could not manage without that help because of illness, disability, mental health issues, addiction, or another care and support need.

An unpaid carer is someone who provides care or support to a family member, partner, or friend due to illness, disability, mental health issues, or addiction, without receiving payment for their work.

An adult carer is a person who provides care for another person, but not if this is only because of that person's age where they are under 18, or if the care is provided under a contract or as voluntary work. A carer can be caring for someone for any number of hours and does not need to be providing a substantial amount of care for someone on a regular basis.

A young carer is a carer who is under the age of 18, or who is 18 or over but still attending school.

Source: Carer's Charter, Scottish Government, March 2018.

You are entitled to one grant in any 12-month period. If you have received Time to Live funding within the last 12 months, we are unable to accept your application.

As a popular fund, with increasing demand, applications are assessed against the scheme criteria and available funding. Priority will be given to applicants with the greatest level of need.

Carers who fit one or more of the following categories may have a greater chance of success with their application:

- carers who live in remote or rural areas;
- carers living in areas of deprivation;
- carers from equalities groups;

When completing the application form, think about:

- whether your health and wellbeing, or that of the person receiving care, is under strain and likely to be improved by a short break;
- whether your relationship with the person receiving care, or with the wider family, is under strain and may be improved by a short break;
- how you will make the necessary arrangements for the break, possibly with support;
- how your caring responsibilities have directly affected your health and wellbeing.

Section 1 – Carer's Details

This section asks for your basic contact and monitoring information. Please complete all questions as fully as possible so that Fife Voluntary Action can contact you about your application and understand your circumstances. **Please note if this section is not completed in full, we will be unable to process your application.**

If you live in a rural or remote location, please answer this question clearly. Remote locations are communities where access to services is limited due to travel distance of 30 minutes or more and poor transport links. Applicants living in remote areas may face additional costs and barriers in accessing support, health services and community activities.

The information about ethnicity and other monitoring details helps with monitoring and reporting, including understanding whether the fund is reaching carers from equalities groups, those living in areas of deprivation, and remote or rural communities.

Section 1 continued – Additional Details

This section asks for additional information which may apply depending on your circumstances. If you are a young carer, please include the name of your school if this applies to you.

A Young Carer's Statement is completed with a worker to help young carers identify their needs, explore available support, and discuss how their caring role affects their wellbeing, education, and daily life. It helps them set goals and plan for the future.

An Adult Carer Support Plan is completed with a worker to help carers understand the support available to them, discuss their needs, and plan for the future. It helps carers identify goals and the support they need to continue in their caring role.

Please tell us whether you have received Time to Live funding in the past year. **If** you have received funding within the last 12 months, we are unable to accept your application.

Please also tell us whether you have received funding from Take a Break Scotland in the past 12 months, or whether you have a current application with Take a Break Scotland and are awaiting a decision. Take a Break is Scotland's short breaks fund for carers of disabled and seriously ill children, young people and their families. Take a Break grants can be used for a break away, leisure activities or outings, sports equipment, and other forms of support.

Section 3 – Information about your caring situation

This section helps us understand your caring situation, the needs of the person you care for, the level of support you provide, and the impact caring has on your life.

Please answer as fully as possible. You should explain:

- the year of birth of the person you care for;
- your relationship to the person you care for, for example whether they are your parent, child, partner, sibling, other relative, friend, or neighbour;
- the health condition, disability, mental health issue, addiction, or support need of the person you care for;
- how their condition or support needs affects everyday life;
- what support they need from you;
- how caring affects your own life and wellbeing;
- whether anyone else helps at home to look after the person you care for, such as family members, friends, neighbours, or others.

When explaining the impact on you, please describe whether caring affects your mental wellbeing, physical health, sleep, employment, education, finances, relationships, social life, free time, or ability to take part in leisure activities.

Section 4 – Help with the caring task

This section helps us understand what support you already have, and whether you are able to get regular breaks from caring.

Please describe any help or support you currently receive with your caring role. This could include help with personal care, household tasks, transport, appointments, medication, meals, supervision, or emotional support.

Please also explain whether you receive any support or services that give you a break from caring. This could include paid care, home care, respite care, day services, or support from another organisation.

Please tell us who provides this support and how often you receive it.

If family, friends, neighbours, or anyone else helps you or gives you a break from caring, please explain who helps, what they do, and how often they help.

Section 5 – About the short break for the you

This section asks what you would like to do, when you would like to do it, and who will take part. Time to Live grants are not just for holidays or trips away from home. The main priority is that carers can access the type of break that is most beneficial for them, and we wish to be flexible.

The grant can be used for several things, including time to rest, pursue a hobby, catch up with friends, or relax and recharge. For some people, a short break is something they enjoy having together with the person they care for. For others, it is about quality time apart.

Some examples of how carers have used short breaks funding in the past include:

Therapeutic treatments	Overnight hotel stays	Gym or cinema passes
Driving lessons	Short caravan stays*	Computing equipment
Garden equipment	Day trips	Transport costs

***Short stays are usually limited to 3 nights**

Please be clear about whether the grant will cover activities with the person you care for, solo activities for you, or activities where you will be accompanied by someone else.

Applications for overseas travel will not be supported.
Breaks that are already pre-booked cannot be supported.

Section 6 – Cost of the break

This section asks about the cost of your planned break and the amount of funding you are applying for. Please include a quotation or evidence which shows the likely costs of your break. This could include a quote from a travel agent or internet service, a price list for alternative therapies, a note of fees for a support service, screenshots, or quotes for equipment.

Your application will not be considered if any deposit or payment towards your proposed break has been made before you have received the outcome of your application.
Overseas travel will not be supported.

Please tell us:

- the estimated total cost of the break;
- a breakdown of the costs;
- how much funding you are requesting;
- if you are not applying for the full cost, how will you make up the shortfall.

Without a quote or other evidence of costs, we cannot process your application. Including screenshots showing a breakdown of costs help us make an informed decision about your application.

Section 7 – Break Outcomes

This section is about the difference the break will make.

The Time to Live Fund in Fife is designed to support the following outcomes:

- carers will have more social and leisure opportunities;
- carers will have improved mental health and wellbeing;
- carers will have improved opportunities to spend quality time with the people they care for.

Your break does not have to meet all these outcomes. Please choose the outcome or outcomes that are most relevant to you.

For Section 7.1, explain what difference the break will make to your wellbeing and everyday life. This might include reduced stress or anxiety, improved mental health, more time for social or leisure activities, better relationships, improved rest, or feeling more able to continue in your caring role.

For Section 7.2, if applicable, explain what difference the break will make to your schoolwork, homework, learning, attendance, confidence, or general education.

Section 8 – Ensuring the break is a success

This section asks you to think realistically and plan ahead.

Please explain what practical arrangements need to be in place to make the break successful for you and the person receiving care. This could include transport, replacement care, support from family or friends, booking arrangements, accessibility needs, medication arrangements, timing, or support for the person you care for while you are on a break.

Please also mention anything that might get in the way of the break going ahead and how this could be managed.

Section 9 – Referee

This section asks for details of a professional who can confirm your caring role.

A referee must be someone in a professional role who can confirm your caring role and the need for a break.

A member of your family, colleague or a personal friend will not be accepted.

Examples of suitable referees include:

- Social Worker;
- Healthcare professional, i.e. Nurse; GP, Occupational Therapist
- Support Worker;
- School staff member;

It is important that you speak to your referee and confirm that they are happy to act as your referee before you include their details, as this can delay your application.

Please provide their name, organisation, job title, contact details, how they know you, and whether they are aware of your application to this fund.

Section 10 – Signatures

By signing the application form, you are confirming that:

- all information provided on the form is accurate and true;
- the panel may seek additional information in support of your application;
- you are aware that you can only receive one funding award in a twelve-month period;
- you agree to complete a brief evaluation exercise if asked, either by form or telephone call;
- if successful, you will submit proof of purchase or receipts for your break.

Short breaks are funded by public funds. Fife Voluntary Action is responsible for ensuring that the funding in Fife is used responsibly to meet the fund outcomes.

Successful applicants must provide proof of purchase, such as receipts or invoices.

Application to this fund will also allow us to consider you for Fife Voluntary Action's [Respite](#) offer for unpaid carers.

Section 11 – Application Process

This section helps Fife Voluntary Action review and improve the application process.

Your answers to Section 11 will help us understand how straightforward the process is and how useful the guidance notes are. Your responses will not be shared with the panel and will not affect the outcome of your application.

Please tell us:

- where you found out about Time to Live funding;
- whether anything in the application form was unclear or difficult to answer;
- whether the guidance notes were clear and easy to understand;
- whether you needed support to complete the application form;
- if you needed support, who supported you;
- anything that could make the application process easier.

How applications are assessed and when the panel meets

Applications will be assessed by a panel made up of staff from Fife Voluntary Action, Fife Carers Centre, Fife Young Carers, Disabled Persons Housing Service/Self Directed Support Fife, and Crossroads Fife.

The panel will meet every eight weeks throughout 2026/27. Applications must be received by the deadlines below to be considered at the corresponding meeting:

Application Deadlines
16 July 2026
10 September 2026
5 November 2026
1 January 2027
26 February 2027

Applicants will be notified of the outcome no more than 2 weeks after each panel meeting. To allow the panel to take sufficient time to consider applications, please do not contact us regarding the outcome of your application until after the relevant meeting has taken place.

Completed applications

Completed application forms should be sent to:

By e-mail: timetolive@fva.org

By post: Time to Live, Fife Voluntary Action, Caledonia House, Pentland Park, Saltire Centre, Glenrothes, KY6 2AL.

Applications can be submitted at any time. The panel meets every eight weeks, and applicants will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible following each meeting.

Please refer to the submission deadlines and panel meeting dates above.