Kent Shared Lives has responsibilities to protect and promote the health and safety and well-being of people in Shared Lives placements. Most of them will spend time out and about in the community without causing any concerns. However, some people may be confused or easily disorientated and so can become lost. There is also a chance of accidents or other mishaps, so Shared Lives hosts need to know what to do if the person they are supporting does not come home when expected or appears to be missing.

**How will this happen?**

Because the people living in Shared Lives placements need are different it is difficult to give definite rules about what Shared Lives hosts should do when a person does not come home when expected or appears to be missing. For one person it might just mean he/she has missed the bus while for another person it could mean he/she is in great danger.

Just as happens in ordinary families, it is helpful if the host discusses with the adult/s if they are going out and roughly what their plans are and/or when they are expected to be home again. This helps to avoid false alarms. Host’s need to ensure they advise their adult/s to let them know if plans change.

If an adult does not return when expected or appears to be missing the host will:

- check around the house and garden and/or immediate neighbourhood
- try to contact the adult on a mobile phone or some other way
- check with the person or place the adult was visiting (if known)
- check with any friends or relatives to see if the adult is with them
- contact Shared Lives or the out-of-hours emergency service to let them know and to agree what further action is necessary
- inform the police if the adult is likely to be at immediate risk or when it has been agreed with Shared Lives or out-of-hours emergency service that this is appropriate
- provide the police with a description and any other information they may need (or, if appropriate, work closely with the service users family to do this)

Once the adult has been found, the host needs to ensure that Shared Lives and/or all relevant people are informed – such as the police, any relatives, etc. Shared Lives will take responsibility for notifying the Care Quality Commission when the adult is missing for more than 12 hours and when they have been found again.

The hosts will support the adult in their daily life, activities and goals they choose as part of the care and support plan and will respect choices, freedom and dignity. If the adult has a tendency to wander away or to get lost the risks
around this will be properly assessed and a risk assessment will be included in the care and support plan. If there are likely to be any restrictions on choices and freedoms these will also be discussed and agreed with the adult as part of the care and support plan.