



HOMESHARE
ASSOCIATION

HOMESHARE REPORT

**2023
EDITION**



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HOMESHARE ASSOCIATION

The Homeshare Association was launched in September 2022, bringing together Homeshare organisations with 40 years' collective professional experience at the forefront of the Homeshare sector in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

The Founders of the Homeshare Association are Share and Care Homeshare, Supportmatch Homeshare Services and THE HomeShare.

The Homeshare Association has three levels of membership:

Full Member ● Senior Associate Member ● Associate Member

To ensure the standards and professionalism of the Homeshare sector is maintained, organisations wishing to join the Homeshare Association are required to meet the appropriate membership criteria.

WHY THE NEED FOR THE HOMESHARE ASSOCIATION

The Homeshare Association was formed to unify the reputation and standing of highly experienced Homeshare organisations. Members are accountable to each other to ensure high standards are upheld and agree to work together on projects, ensuring larger numbers of Homeshare matches can be put in place and supported when working with organisations such as NHS (UK), HSE (Ireland) & Local Authorities.

The Homeshare Association recognises the work that independent and 'early stage' Homeshare organisations are doing and offers Full, Senior Associate and Associate membership levels. However, it is important to the Association that Full members are past the pilot stage, and are able to demonstrate experience with a sustainable and successful business model that is fully scalable. Full members use their knowledge and expertise to help other members grow their organisations.

Although Homeshare organisations do not provide Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulated activities, all members of the Homeshare Association are committed to delivering the highest standards of service and safeguarding. These standards are met through adhering to the Homeshare Association's Principle Standards and regularly appraising each other.

The vision and mission of the Homeshare Association is to be the recognised body of experience in the Homeshare market. This will be achieved by supporting our members' progressive development, collaboration, and united commitment to safeguarding.



THE FOUNDING MEMBERS

The Homeshare Association was founded to promote the Homeshare movement in the UK and Republic of Ireland to increase awareness of experienced providers and trust in the Homeshare sector.

With years of experience running Homeshare organisations, the Founding members are committed to leading the Homeshare sector into becoming a recognised, established service within Social Care.

SHARE AND CARE HOMESHARE



Caroline Cooke, Director

Dementia Friends Ambassador, who delivers a range of Dementia information sessions to clients and the wider community. Trained in the Mental Capacity Act.



Amanda Clarke, Director

Safeguarding Lead and contributor to UK government policy advisors on how "innovative" models of care, including Homeshare, can be more widely adopted.

SUPPORTMATCH HOMESHARE SERVICES



Sibel Whitehead, Director

A qualified nurse who has worked in Health and Social Care over the past 20 years and has sat on the Board of Trustees of Homeshare International since 2020.



Zaira De Novellis, Director

Personal and professional experience including caring for a family member with support needs and over 10 years' experience in providing Homeshare.

THE HOMESHARE



Lucie Cunningham, Director

A background in nursing and over 20 years' experience in Health and Homecare. Current Chair on the board of ISEN (Irish Social Enterprise Network).



Niamh Sweetman, Director

Safeguarding Lead and Dementia Friend. Previously managed a Homecare agency within the private Homecare sector.

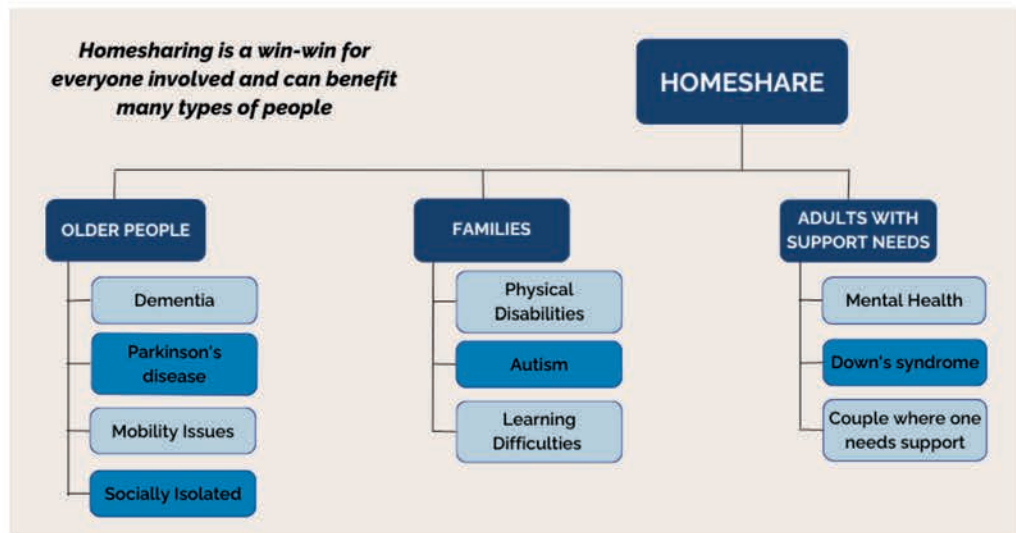


WHO IS BENEFITTING FROM HOMESHARE?

Homeshare is a bespoke person-centred arrangement that involves bringing together two people with different sets of needs, both of whom have something to offer each other.

The Householder offers a bedroom and use of their home's facilities to a Homesharer in exchange for some practical help and company; the support is spread out over the week, meaning it is not intrusive to either person, and both can maintain their own personal space and independence.

For the Householder (usually the older person), it is one of the most affordable and safest ways for our ageing population to remain living independently at home.



The Homesharer is someone looking for an affordable place to live and would enjoy giving between 10-15 hours each week of practical help, support and companionship in exchange for a home.

This often offers a lifeline to struggling renters but also fulfils the desire for helping others. The Homesharer will normally be over 21 years old and either working or studying.

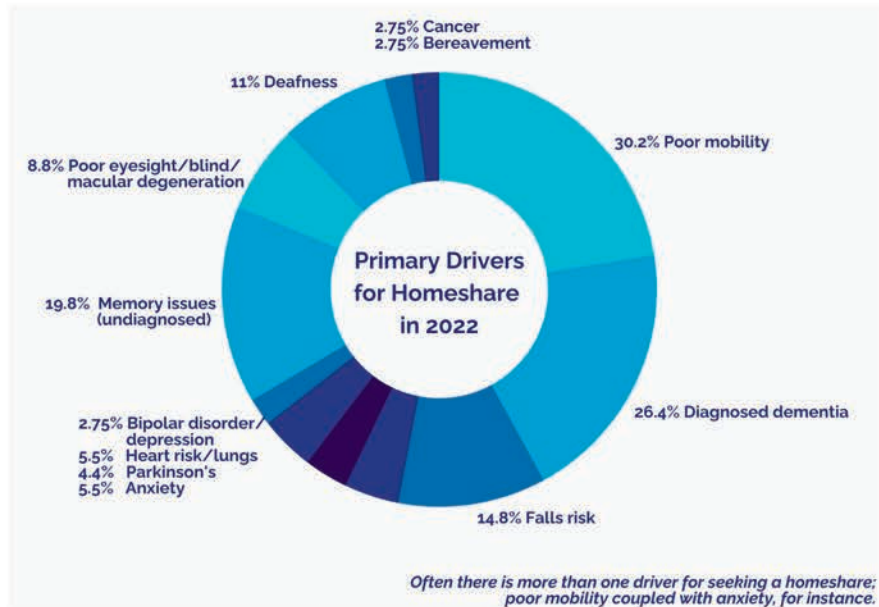
The Founding members of the Homeshare Association have been running Homeshare arrangements for over 40 years collectively and have a wealth of experience.

It has taken many years to quantify the evidence of the positive benefits of Homesharing, although the Homeshare Association has never been in any doubt about Homeshare being a valuable Social Care and Housing model.



WHO IS BENEFITTING FROM HOMESHARE?

The Homeshare Association collective client research in 2022 shows that only 4% of Householders (average age 84) moved to long-term residential care. Whilst 2.7% transitioned to live-in care, some of those still kept their Homesharer alongside the carer.



Homeshare is a flexible service; not only does it benefit different types of people, but it also sits well amongst other support services. Organisations can even place two independent Homesharers, or in some cases a couple, in a home to share the responsibility of supporting the Householder and thereby giving the Householder additional support hours.

As most Homeshare Association organisations are not typically grant-funded, participants who benefit from the service, both Householder and Homesharer, pay a monthly fee to the organisation arranging the Homeshare. This enables the running of the service.

One of the many benefits of Homeshare is that it is a very low-cost way of having support in the home for the Householder (with the added reassurance of someone sleeping in the home overnight) and very low-cost 'rent' for the Homesharer.

The Power of Homeshare

"The Homeshare continues to be a resounding success and has far exceeded all our expectations. Our mother's health has never been better. She had a recent brain scan with her neurologist who was impressed with the progress she had made. Obviously, as she has an Alzheimer's diagnosis, he wasn't expecting there to be any progress - quite the opposite."



SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT/SOCIAL CARE/NHS (UK)/HSE (IRELAND)

The Homeshare Association has standards that its members must adhere to, thereby Local Authorities, Social Care, NHS and HSE can be assured that, through the mandatory Annual Audit procedure, performance and delivery of the Homeshare Association members' services are governed and maintained.

Homeshare does not provide any Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulated activities, therefore it does not need to be a CQC commissioned service.

Raising Awareness

In the UK, Share and Care Homeshare was invited to meet the Minister for Health and Social Care in September 2021. Following that initial meeting, Share and Care Homeshare was then invited to take part in a White Paper session on the Future of Home Care and has contributed to further policy meetings during 2022 and 2023.

Since 2021, Share and Care Homeshare has been meeting Health and Social Care professionals including social prescribers, council teams and local charities in Greater London to raise awareness and build understanding. This is slow progress with leads generated from this sector only representing 8% of total leads.

THE IMPACT OF HAVING A HOMESHARE

Having a companion:

- reduces falls risk significantly
- offers a greater capacity for independent living
- improves wellbeing by reducing social isolation and loneliness
- offers the ability to maintain the autonomy of the Householder

**Quantitative research conducted by Trinity Business School in March 2023*

In Ireland, THE HomeShare met with the Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People as well as the Minister of Housing in the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage in February 2023 to discuss how Homeshare can be signposted as a Social Care & Housing option. Further meetings are planned in 2023.



SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT/SOCIAL CARE/NHS (UK)/HSE (IRELAND)

Supportmatch Homeshare pilot project in South West England

In September 2022, Supportmatch Homeshare Services launched a pilot project working in partnership with Cornwall Council, NHS England, Local Authorities and charities in the South West to provide safe and affordable housing to NHS staff, doctors, nurses, social care workers and mature students.

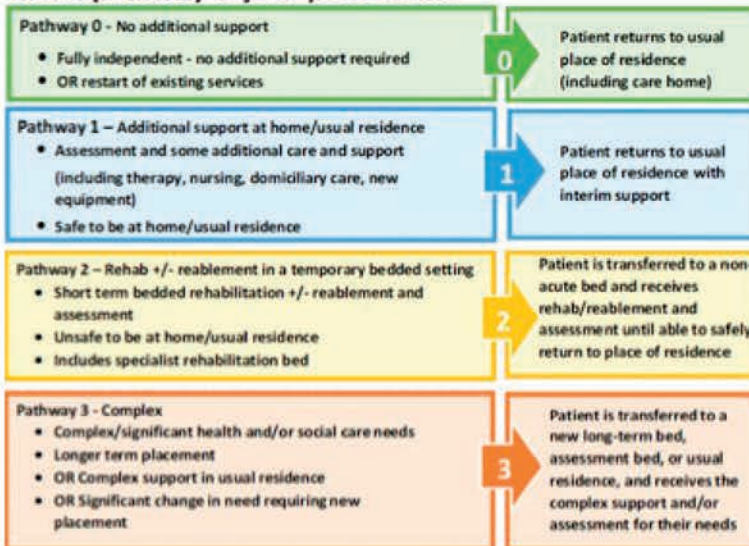
The pilot raised the awareness of Homeshare and, over the first six months, successfully arranged matches in Cornwall with a conversion rate of 79%.

It is interesting to note that 62% of all Householder applications for Cornwall were between September and December 2022, when the Social Care and NHS marketing campaign was in progress in Cornwall; this is compared to just 8% when there is no direct marketing from Local Authorities, Social Care professionals and NHS.

Homeshare and discharge from hospital

Homeshare is suitable for Pathway 0 and 1 (see graph) – i.e. people in hospital waiting to go home but who need some extra help. The pilot has shown that working with NHS partners to help make sure people can be supported at home could help with Home from Hospital.

What pathway is your patient on?



Discharge to Assess

For the full report on outcomes of the South West project, please contact enquiries@homeshareassociation.co.uk

Supportmatch Homeshare Services was winner of the NHS South West Personalised Care Award 2022.





SUPPORTING SOCIAL CARE CASE STUDY

Senior Social Prescriber, Ruth Grainger, who works across the London Borough of Wandsworth communities, talks about the growing collaboration between Social Prescribing and Homeshare, which can support communities at scale.

Q: What is your opinion on Homesharing?

"Homesharing is an excellent initiative. The whole premise behind it is to keep people living in their own home as long as possible. It is really person-centred and that's what social prescribing is all about; putting people at the centre of their own care, and connecting people within communities. Homesharing and social prescribing share the same values. Homesharing is an invaluable service which delivers impact across many areas. It benefits older and younger people, and also has a knock-on effect across many different areas within the Health and Social Care sector, more than you would imagine – and I think it should therefore be more embedded in social care."

Q: Is there a level of awareness of Homesharing within Social Prescribing?

"Within our team, we certainly discuss Homeshare and quite a few colleagues signpost people to Homeshare initiatives. For social prescribers, the key challenge is getting the message across to people that it's ok to share your space with someone else, as initially people can be concerned about this aspect. What's important is for us to explain and demonstrate the benefits of Homeshare and the difference it can make to people's lives."

Q: What is the main challenge around Social Prescribing and Homesharing?

"One of the key aspects for us as social prescribers is to reassure people that Homesharing is a safe and well-vetted service. It's about helping people understand that Homesharing is a positive move and there are endless benefits."

Q: Would you recommend the Homesharing route to other Social Prescribers?

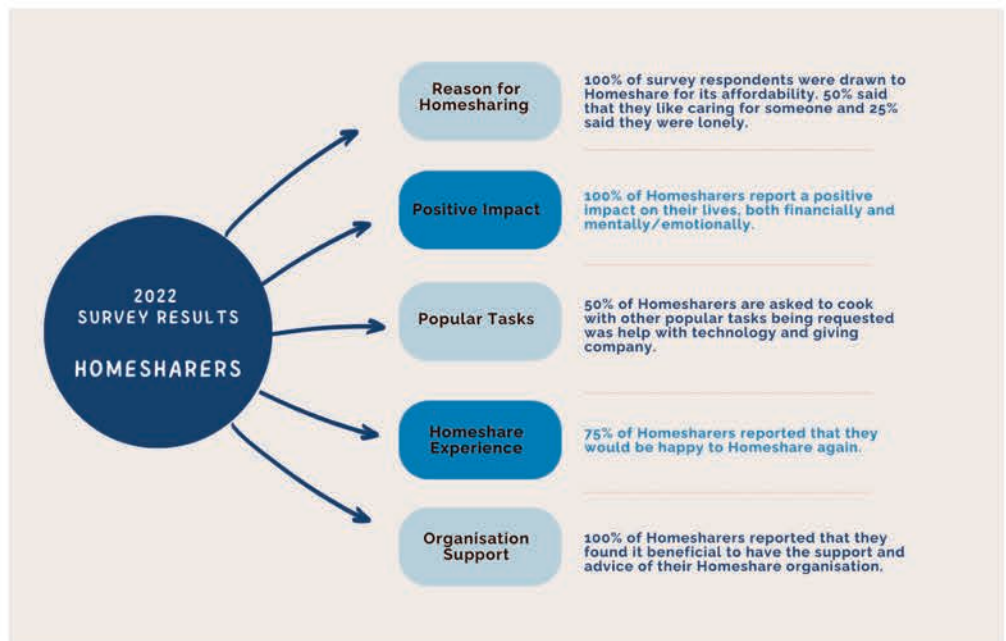
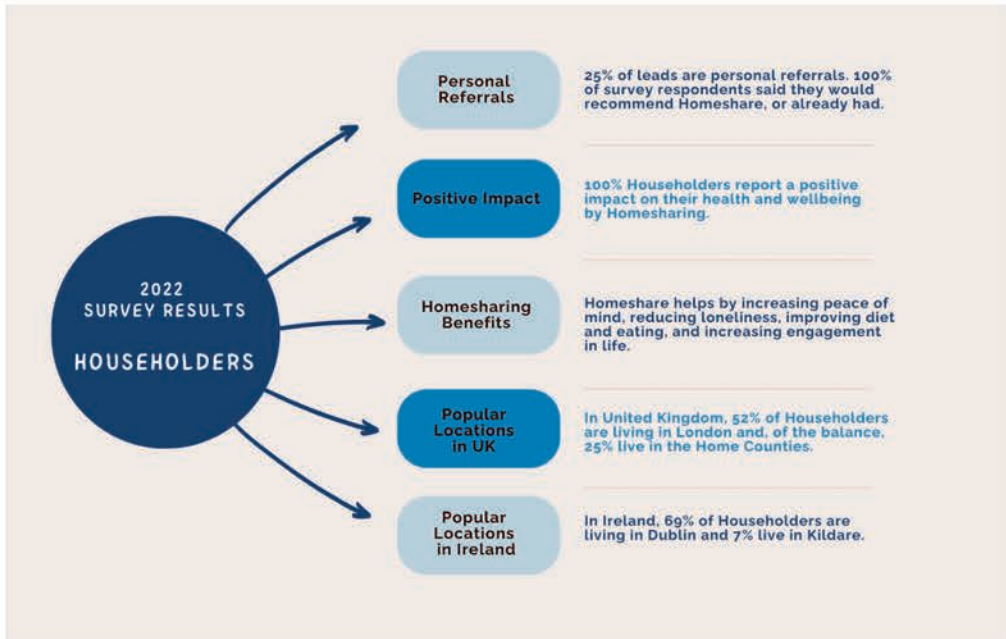
"I would definitely recommend that social prescribers consider Homeshare and make people aware of how it works, and why it works so well. Explain the benefits from the practical aspect to the company of having someone else in the home to have a chat and a giggle with! My tip is that it's also worth persevering with people – they may initially knock the idea back, but keep it on the table and keep referring back to it if it suits their situation."

Source: Blog Share and Care Homeshare website



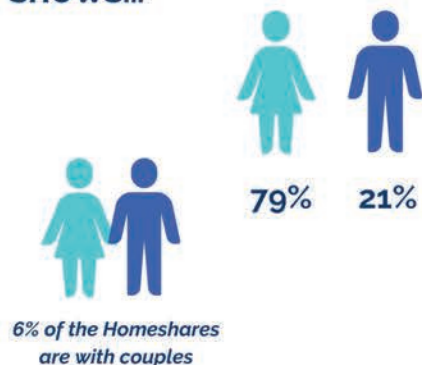
HOMESHARE SURVEY 2022

At the end of 2022, the Homeshare Association organisations surveyed their Householders and Homesharers. A selection of the results is shown below.



HOMESHARE STATISTICS

HOMESHARE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS' JOINT DATA SHOWS...



Homesharer's Age



Householder's Age



The median length of a Homeshare match in 2022 was 9-15 months with the longest match being in its 10th year

We love to only speak about the successes, but what happens if, or when, things go wrong?

Safeguarding

In 2022, members had less than 0.01% incidents that necessitated an incident report being filled out and the designated Safeguarding Lead being involved. An example of the type of issue that was serious enough to require an organisation resolving, concerned someone living with dementia getting frustrated and being verbally abusive to their Homesharer, which in turn upset and frightened them.

All Homeshare Association members have a Safeguarding Policy in place and, over the 17 years that the members have been running Homeshare organisations, all report a very low number of incidents which required the involvement of the designated Safeguarding Lead.

Mis-match

Very occasionally a Homeshare doesn't work. There are numerous reasons why this happens but, in most cases, it happens when a Householder struggles with the concept of a new person living in their home, or by expecting too much from their Homesharer. Homeshare organisations do their best to iron out any initial teething problems but there is a 28-day notice period for the 'just in case' situations.

The importance of having a Homeshare organisation involved is paramount to ensure any problems can be dealt with quickly and in a professional manner. All member organisations have a Complaints Procedure and, as a further precaution, the Homeshare Association has a Complaints Referral Procedure in place.



SHARE AND CARE HOMESHARE CASE STUDY

Wendy Spackman: A Householder's story

Homeshare was a new concept for 89-year-old Wendy, who was introduced to the idea by her daughter. Wendy hasn't looked back. Through the helping hand of her 'wonderful' Homesharer, Wendy has the extra support she needs around her home, and the comfort of sharing her day and having lots of laughs along the way.

"I had not heard of Homeshare previously and it has worked out extremely well. The team at Share and Care Homeshare have paired my Homesharer and I together very well. One of the first things that I heard about my Homesharer is that she teaches in a prep school that is close to the school where I used to work as a bursar. I absolutely loved my work so it's nice to have something in common to talk about.

"As I need a little help around the house now and again, my daughter introduced me to the idea of Homeshare. Having the comfort of someone else in the house sounded like an excellent idea to me."

"My Homesharer is a very sweet girl, and we get on very well. Sometimes I take her out for lunch and sometimes she takes me out for lunch; it works both ways. Other times we watch TV together or have a chat. It's fun and, because at 29 she is young, we have a lot of laughs. Before she came to live with me, she was living in a block of flats paying a lot of rent – now she is able to save money to eventually buy her own home, which is wonderful.

"I'm very impressed by what the Share and Care Homeshare team do; it's such a happy experience for me and the whole thing has worked out very well. Homeshare is a wonderful system."

"Living in a Homeshare arrangement is also reassuring for my family; it's comforting for them to know that someone else is in the home if I need them. My children really like my Homesharer too. Homeshare makes life so much more pleasant. It's a great success for me and I recommend it to all my contemporaries. If you compare and contrast Homeshare with the usual systems, this is so much better; it's an excellent option."





SUPPORTMATCH HOMESHARE CASE STUDY

Geoff and Sarah's story

Geoff's sister contacted Supportmatch Homeshare after Geoff lost his mother who was looking after him. Geoff is 54 and has Down's syndrome. Even though he was independent, living alone after his mother passed away was very frightening for him.

Geoff was matched to Sarah, a music teacher who has previous Homeshare experience. They connected immediately at the first meeting and Sarah was able to build a relationship of trust with Geoff from very early on.

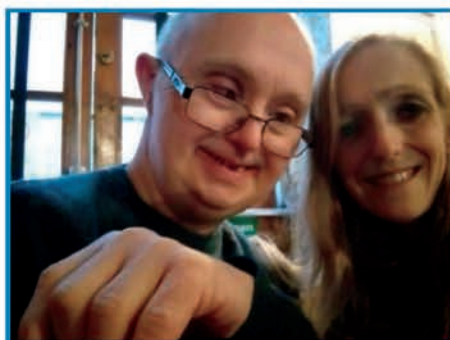
Sarah has been invaluable for Geoff's emotional wellbeing. She was always there for him, helping in the mornings with getting ready for the Day Centre he attended, preparing packed lunches for him and often collecting him from the Day Centre to walk him home before preparing dinner and spending time watching television together. Sarah was also looking after the house, doing the laundry and keeping on top of Geoff's medical appointments.

After a few months of Sarah living with Geoff, it was evident that he needed more help and Social Services became involved to offer more support to Geoff. Supportmatch Homeshare worked continuously with Social Services, the Mental Health team and Geoff's therapist to guarantee Geoff received all the care he needed.

The relationship between Supportmatch Homeshare and Social Services guaranteed Geoff full-time support for more than four years and they worked together to keep Geoff at home for as long as possible.

With the help of Supportmatch Homeshare, Social Services managed to reduce the budget for Geoff's care, but most importantly, Geoff remained longer where he wanted to be, in his own home.

In 2019 Geoff moved into a nursing home due to his deteriorating mental health conditions.





THE HOMESHARE CASE STUDY

Pat, a remarkable gentleman with an unyielding enthusiasm for life, has been Homesharing through THE HomeShare for 3 years.

Throughout this time Pat has opened his home to three Homesharers. The first Homesharer was a young musician in her 20's; the next, a mature musical gent in his 50's, and his newest Homesharer is a young working professional in her 30's.

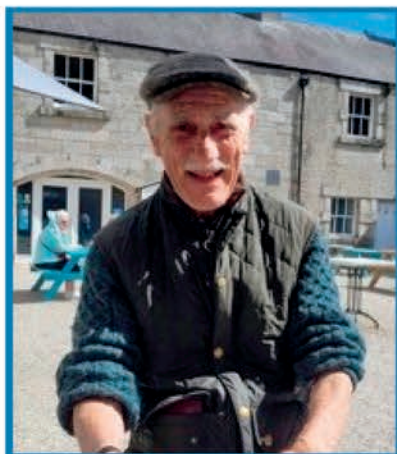
With each match, Pat has imparted much wisdom on his Homesharers through music, art, culture and knowledge. Pat's first Homesharer described Pat and his home as a mecca of creativity enabling her to focus on her songwriting.

"Homeshare has changed my life and, in addition to saving on rent, it has provided me with a wonderful life experience."

Soon after the first Homesharer had moved in, Ireland was struck down with Covid-19 and a national lockdown. Thankfully, because Pat had a Homesharer living with him, he had company and a Homesharer who was able to run errands for him. In short, Homeshare was a lifeline for Pat.

Pat and his journey through Homesharing is testament that the older generation has a great deal to offer the younger generation, and that intergenerational living can be extremely rewarding for both participants.

The second Homesharer, who was on the brink of homelessness, couldn't believe his luck to have found a Householder who not only wanted to open his home to him but shared in his passion for music; and the latest Homesharer regularly enjoys outings with Pat to cultural hotspots, such as Glencree and Powerscourt, where they exchange stories and enjoy the outdoors together.





THE PRECURSOR TO HOMESHARE

In the past year, the Founders of the Homeshare Association have all developed individual complementary services that help to overcome the idea of sharing a home, suitable for those who do not need much help around their home and/or would benefit from receiving some rent!



Helpful Housemates, sister company to Share and Care Homeshare

A Helpful Housemate is a lodger who is happy to offer a few hours of support to a Host in exchange for paying lower-than-market rent.

Helpful Housemates are interviewed, vetted and carefully selected so that the Host can feel safe and reassured that they have a willing, friendly person living in their home.

Most Hosts are in their 60s or 70s and have a spare bedroom in their home. Some simply want a vetted lodger; for others they also like the idea of giving someone an affordable home. In a Helpful Housemate arrangement, the Housemate is a friendly face who is happy to step in to give ad-hoc support and/or company for no more than 5 hours per week. The service is offered across the UK.

GUARDIANS

Guardians offered by Supportmatch Homeshare

Supportmatch Homeshare has recently been working with Cornwall Council, NHS England, Local Authorities and Charities nationally to provide safe and affordable housing to NHS staff, doctors, nurses, Social Care workers and mature students in the area.

However, the Guardian programme is offered across the UK and allows Homeowners to make a difference in their community by opening up their home to help NHS staff, Social Care workers and students, offering them safe, suitable and affordable accommodation.



Help4Housing offered by The HomeShare

Homeowners rent out a room to a vetted Housemate. The rent they receive is typically 2/3rds of the going market rental value inclusive of bills. Homeowners also receive five hours per week of practical support. Each Help4Housing opportunity is bespoke and expectations will vary, but all are affordable rental options.

Help4Housing advertise, shortlist and vet all potential Housemates to ensure the best potential Housemate is found. Help4Housing also provide ongoing support for the duration of the arrangement for further reassurance and peace of mind.



BARRIERS TO TAKE UP OF HOMESHARE

COUNCIL TAX

Homeshare organisations in the UK are either Charities or Community Interest Companies, with a small number run by Local Authorities. As Homeshare organisations generally do not receive external funding, they are financed by a small monthly payment from both the Householder and their Homesharer.

The Householder does not receive any rent from the Homesharer who lives with them; and the Homesharer is not paid for their time and help.

Crucially, the Homesharer is only moving in because the Householder needs the practical help and companionship due to physical or mental health reasons.

We would welcome a Council Tax review for older people involved in a Homeshare through a Homeshare organisation. Currently, a Householder is very likely to lose their 25% Single Person Discount as a result of a Homesharer moving in. This can make a significant impact on a Householder's budget, especially with the current cost-of-living crisis.

During the 'Homes for Ukrainians' scheme, the Government waived the loss of discount to a single person if they hosted a Ukrainian, even though the Householder was receiving rent.

In Ireland, citizens do not lose their 'Living Alone Allowance' if a Homesharer moves in with them as long as the person is not an employee, or an immediate family member, and stays in their home rent-free. It recognises that the citizen would be living alone but for that person. However, in the UK, there is no blanket council tax 'discount disregard' for Homesharers living in a Homeshare arrangement, and it is down to an individual council as to whether to offer a discretionary discount.

It is an important factor to recognise that the Householder would still be living alone if it was not for a Homesharer moving in to give them support. The Homesharer is not paid for their time and help; and are, in effect, volunteers. Additionally, the support the Householder receives potentially avoids them having minor accidents, falls or illness thereby resulting in significant savings for councils, NHS and Central Government.

DESIRED OUTCOME

For Homeshare arrangements to be formally recognised by councils, and Homesharers classed as 'discount disregard' with reference to council tax.



BARRIERS TO TAKE UP OF HOMESHARE

NHS (UK)/HSE (IRELAND) - HOME FROM HOSPITAL

When the NHS/HSE is engaging with a patient about their return home from hospital, it is the time they discuss with older people how to look after themselves as a prevention of future hospital admittances.

More needs to be done to offer Homeshare as a solution when someone leaves hospital.

A big barrier for people leaving hospital is not wanting to share their home, but with the right incentives/endorsement from the NHS/HSE, they could be more receptive to it. When placing someone in a Homeshare it is important to have a reasonable commitment from both parties; an average length of a match is around 14 months but a minimum commitment of 6 months is required. A Homesharer is not a carer, however Homeshare sits very well alongside domiciliary care (which a patient may still need for a period of time after discharge).

DESIRED OUTCOME

For the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC), NHS & HSE to support the Homeshare model for further trials to confirm the potential to support the discharge pathway.

LOSS OF BENEFITS

Both Householders and Homesharers have concerns over the potential loss of benefits as a result of entering a Homeshare arrangement.

In the UK, a Homesharer loses their Universal Credit payments for housing because they are in a Homeshare. The reason cited is that they are not paying rent, however the Homeshare monthly fee is in lieu of rent and is payable in order to live in the property.

Homeshare is a low-cost option to local government and can reduce Universal Credit payments.

In Ireland, the Homesharer's monthly fee can sometimes be paid from Housing Association Payments (HAP) at the discretion of local councils.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Further discussion on how the Homeshare arrangement should not affect any benefits, such as Housing Benefit for the Householder and Universal Credit/HAP for the Homesharer.



CASE STUDY ON BENEFITS

UNIVERSAL CREDIT IN UNITED KINGDOM

A Homesharer, who relies on Universal Credit to help with her living costs, moved into a Homeshare arrangement with a Householder in February 2022.

Universal Credit asked for a copy of her tenancy agreement but, when they received a copy of the Homeshare Licence Agreement, they rejected her application and said the rent money needed to be paid directly to the Householder and not to the Homeshare organisation.

This is at odds with the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and Tenants Fees Bill Act's recognition of Homeshare as a situation where the Homesharer does not pay rent to the Householder, but pays a fee to the Homeshare organisation instead.

The rental aspect of the Homesharer's Universal Credit was stopped. The Homesharer has not been able to pay the agency monthly fee since then, so is incurring increasing debt with the Homeshare organisation.

The Homesharer took advice from both Citizen's Advice and Shelter. On their recommendation, the Homeshare organisation amended the wording on the Homeshare Licence Agreement to make it clearer that the fee is in lieu of rent and is 'necessary to be paid in order to live in the property'. The wording on the monthly invoices also states that the fee is payable for the Homeshare accommodation.

However Universal Credit continued to reject the agreement stating that it didn't accept the agency fee as payment for the accommodation. Citizen's Advice have been helping the Homesharer to appeal this decision. They think that Universal Credit rejected the agreement as it is an unusual type of housing, but believe that Universal Credit should support Homeshare as a way to save money on housing costs.

In December 2022, the Sharer had a meeting with her local MP who was very positive about supporting her appeal and trying to change the minds of Universal Credit. In January 2023, her MP approached Universal Credit requesting the case be reconsidered but they rejected the application again, not only because of the lack of the word "rent", but also because the payment was not being paid directly to the Householder. The case is being taken to tribunal, the outcome of which is still pending.



CASE STUDY ON BENEFITS

COUNCIL TAX IN UNITED KINGDOM

The Householder was in his early 60s with autism, dementia and no speech. He was taking his pension early, no longer receiving his Employment and Support Allowance, and was exempt from Council Tax due to his severe mental health challenges. When the council was told that a Homesharer was living with him, they added the Homesharer as the main occupant and tried to bill the Homesharer to pay 75% of the Council Tax on the property.

The family lodged several appeals which went against them. Eventually the Householder's social worker got involved and, after explaining the role of the Homesharer, the council saw reason and exempted the Homesharer from any Council Tax responsibility.

The Social Worker explained: "Mr H (Householder) is living with dementia and has carers coming in daily to assist him with personal care. Mr V (Homesharer) provides company and support to Mr H who is unable to live independently alone; the essential support Mr V provides means that Mr H can remain at home and not have to go into a residential placement. Mr H is unable to communicate and it is not safe, nor possible, for him to live on his own. Mr V is not a tenant, nor is he a lodger. He does not pay any rent or utilities. He lives in the property under a Homeshare Licence Agreement and is only living there to support Mr H. Without his daily help, Mr H would have to be admitted into a care home."

The majority of Homesharers provide an essential service to their Householder and without them being there, in most cases, the Householder would not be able to live safely on their own; they may have to move to a care home (fully or partly funded by the council) which would be much more expensive than the cost of Homeshare, or indeed the income from their Council Tax.

Live-in carers are exempt from Council Tax as they offer over 35 hours of support. We believe a Homesharer should also be classed in this definition because, although the hours of support in the Homeshare agreement are 10/15 'waking' hours each week, there is also the overnight commitment which takes the support to well over 35 hours each week.

Whilst not a carer (ie not giving personal care), Homesharers do help with many practical tasks that a carer might otherwise deliver including shopping, cooking, laundry and cleaning, and they also commit to sleeping in the property overnight.



BOOSTS THAT COULD IMPROVE THE TAKE UP OF HOMESHARE IN THE UK

REACHING HOUSEHOLDERS EARLIER, AS A PREVENTATIVE

The average age of a Householder is 84 and they often come to Homeshare when they are in crisis. We believe that, if the Government offered an incentive or removed some of the barriers to older people taking someone into their home (as they did with the Ukrainian Refugees Scheme), take up of Homeshare would be greater and the pressure on GPs, hospitals and other NHS and council resources would be reduced.

The incentive could be as simple as a Householder not losing their Single Person Council Tax Discount, as is the case in Ireland, alongside an embedded referral pathway to support Health and Social Care departments to use Homeshare.

DESIRED OUTCOME

DHSC to provide clear communication through nationwide policy and inter-department correspondence to endorse the Homeshare model as a national route to help Householders.

DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL!

As there are experienced organisations already offering Homeshare across the UK, Local Authorities should support the existing Homeshare organisations as opposed to setting up their own. We have also proved that, if they help promote and build awareness, the take-up of Homeshare is much higher.

Our research shows an uptake of 79% in the South West project: 62% of which was between September and December 2022 when the Local Authority ran an awareness campaign, as opposed to an 8% take-up when Homeshare organisations met with relevant teams in Social Care/social prescribers without any specific promotion or endorsement.

This demonstrates that Homeshare is still NOT recognised by most Local Authorities as a solution to support older people living in their own homes. There needs to be regular awareness campaigns by Local Authorities to ensure professionals recognise the benefits of Homeshare.

DESIRED OUTCOME

DHSC to broker meetings between the Homeshare Association and Local Authorities to help explain the Homeshare model and the potential benefits to the Local Authorities.



BOOSTS THAT COULD IMPROVE THE TAKE UP OF HOMESHARE IN THE UK

HELP WITH PAYMENTS

From time-to-time Homeshare organisations have received direct payments from councils. We believe all councils should add Homeshare to their approved direct payments so that, when necessary, the council would pay for the Homeshare service on behalf of qualifying residents (in recognition of the benefits and other cost-savings to the council).

DESIRED OUTCOME

For a discussion to start with Local Authorities where Householders can pay for the Homeshare service via their care allowance.

BOOSTS THAT COULD IMPROVE THE TAKE UP OF HOMESHARE IN IRELAND

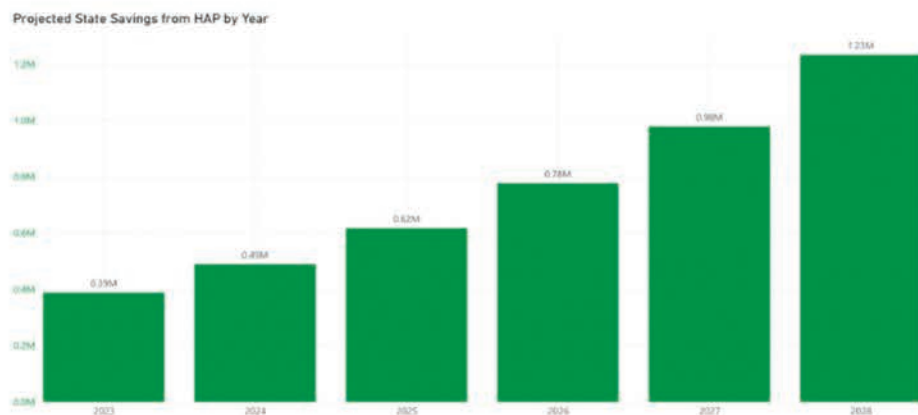
LOSS OF BENEFITS FOR HOMESHARERS

At present, the Irish Government are reviewing benefits for accommodation. The Housing Association payments (HAP) is at the discretion of local councils. We would like to see the provision of HAP for all people wanting to Homeshare.

Trinity MBA Social Enterprise project conducted by Trinity College Dublin predict, using their model, calculated savings of £4.5m by 2028 through using a Homeshare programme to house people.

DESIRED OUTCOME

Suggested savings



For the full report on outcomes of the Social Enterprise project conducted by Trinity College Dublin, please contact enquiries@homeshareassociation.co.uk.



CALL TO ACTION

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SECTOR

Every Stakeholder involved in the Health and Social Care sector knows too well that we have an ageing population and the challenges that lie ahead. Homeshare can delay older people's entry into the Adult Social Care system.

The Homeshare Association is unique in that the members of the Association can work individually to provide Homeshare services, or together on larger projects.

Homeshare needs to be incorporated into the Integrated Care system (ICS) in the UK so that the service can play a bigger part in supporting people to live independently at home.

We would welcome the Social Care sector and the NHS/HSE to formally engage with us to build a stronger framework to ensure the best possible person-centred service for a truly robust "Care in the Community" model.

By aligning Homeshare services to Local Authorities, several current challenges could be alleviated.

- more focused monitoring of health and overall wellbeing of older tenants in both private and social housing.
- a reduction in older people remaining in hospital.
- a reduction in re-admissions into hospital.
- under-occupancy of current bedrooms in social housing tenancies.
- a reduction in housing list numbers.

To help us achieve the above, we need Local Authorities:

- to overcome policy barriers that prevent people from being able to participate in Homeshare.
- to look for potential connections between householders needing support and residents on housing lists.
- to consider Homeshare for people with learning disabilities who could be supported in their own home.



CALL TO ACTION CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Government to communicate and flag the benefits and value of Homeshare through policy to establish Homeshare as a familiar and positive choice for supported living in the community.

IN THE UK

- DHSC to broker meetings with local government, NHS and other stakeholders to integrate Homeshare into the Integrated Care System.
- DHSC to communicate and flag benefits and value of Homeshare through policy and inter-department correspondence.
- Government to agree a Council Tax "Discount Disregard" for Homeshare arrangements that have been set up through a recognised Homeshare scheme.
- Universal Credit benefit to recognise Homeshare.

IN IRELAND

- Support from the Department of Health to facilitate a meeting with HSE officials to propose implementing Homeshare as a mainstream Social Care option.
- Homeshare needs to gain the support of Government and HSE officials to create targeted referral pathways.
- Homeshare to be incorporated into the existing ICPOP (integrated care programme for older persons) framework, as well as targeted circulars being generated to demonstrate the benefits of Homeshare within Acute Care Settings (discharge planners, social workers), Step down units, GP Practices, and Health Centres (public health nurses).



The Homeshare Association's vision and mission is to build the Homeshare sector with highly experienced and professional organisations and to be the recognised body of experience in the Homeshare sector.

We want to encourage more people to

THINK HOMESHARE!

Homeshare is a low-cost service which offers affordable live-in practical help, reassurance and friendly company to Householders.

Having a Sharer helps combat loneliness, anxiety and isolation and gives the Householder an agreed level of practical help and support in and around the home, plus regular friendly chats and the overnight reassurance and security.

For further information, or to arrange a meeting with the Homeshare Association, please contact:

Amanda Clarke, Chairperson
Homeshare Association



HOMESHARE
ASSOCIATION

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