



THE UK NETWORK FOR HOMESHARE

## Sector report 2021

Homeshare UK is part of Shared Lives Plus, the national network for shared living.  
Our vision is a kinder, stronger society built on sharing our lives and our homes.



# Key Messages

- Despite the pandemic, house prices rose again in 2021 with the average house price in September 2021 at a record high of £270,000; £28,000 (11.8%) higher than September 2020, making it even harder for young people to save towards purchasing their first home.
- In 2021 there was an **increase of 5%** in the number of people Homesharing
- By December 2021 there was a **41% increase** from last year on the number of older people wanting to Homeshare
- Homesharers provided over **196,000** support hours to Householders
- Householders report benefits of tackling loneliness and the comfort of an overnight presence in the home
- Homesharers report the top benefits as a safe and affordable place to live as well as the feeling of giving back to the local community

## "Having Rick to share my home has been a great joy"



Gretta and Rick  
Photo: Two Generations

[Watch Gretta and Rick's story here](#)  
Video: Two Generations

Gretta, 90 and Rick, 66 were matched by Two Generations. Gretta recently had a fall and she wanted someone in the home with her. They spend time together shopping, gardening and going for walks. Rick is very much part of the family and they spent Christmas day together.

"About two months ago I fell walking down my drive. It shook me. So what was I to do with the rest of my life? My need was to stay in my own home. A friend suggested Homeshare. My daughter found Two Generations and after talks together we found Rick. Having Rick to share my home has been a great joy. Rick is so kind and helpful with the cooking, gardening and computers. I know there is a God".

<https://twogenerations.co.uk/>

# Introduction

Homeshare is proving slowly and steadily to be a resilient, stable and sustainable solution to many key policy issues, tackling loneliness and unaffordable housing by bringing people from across the generations together in a simple but effective way. Over the last year 17 Homeshare providers reported being wholly financially sustainable and other network members are partly supported by small grants or funded via their local authority.

The network's underpinning ethos of making appropriate, safe, and effective matches continues to drive the continuing success of the model in what has been a very challenging operational environment.

Looking back at the impact of Covid 19 across the country over the past 12 months it's great to report that instances of infections in Homeshare Households have yet again been relatively low.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been acutely aware of the dangers posed by the virus to older people. The Homeshare UK network of 21 operating Homeshare providers based across the UK have risen to the challenge and further adapted practice and process to bring the risk to participants down to a minimum.

Homeshare continues to attract more participants year on year and **in 2021 we can report a 5% increase in the number of people choosing Homeshare.**

Many of our network members noted **increased interest in people wanting to Homeshare.** In December 2021, 147 older people were ready to be matched with a suitable Homesharer - a **41% increase** on last year.

In 2021 our Homesharers provided over **196,000 support hours** to Householders helping with tasks such as cleaning, shopping, cooking and gardening along with the reassurance of an overnight presence in the home.

*“It's been a really good, if challenging, year for Homeshare Oxfordshire. Not just in terms of the Homeshare arrangements we've set up and supported, but in the way we've developed our service.”*

**Marian Pocock, Homeshare Oxfordshire Manager**

Homeshare UK has for many years had the ambition to scale up Homeshare and support the development of Homeshare in areas currently not well serviced to ensure the model is well and truly on the housing and social care map!

In October 2021 we **secured £1.2million**, the biggest ever investment in Homeshare in the UK. Over the next five years we plan to bring Homeshare to two key northern cities, Liverpool and Newcastle and in addition, develop a Social Franchise model of Homeshare that will operate across smaller towns and rural areas.

Our long-standing relationship with Clarion Housing Group - the largest social housing provider in the UK - was formalised in November 2021 when we launched a joint pilot Homeshare project aimed at supporting Clarion tenants. The project aims to further understand and resolve some of the complexities and barriers many people in social housing face, enabling them to engage more fully with Homeshare.



**Deborah Fox**  
**Head of Homeshare UK**  
**Shared Lives Plus**

# Homeshare Model & Shared Lives Plus

## Who is Shared Lives Plus

We are the UK membership charity for more than 6,000 Shared Lives carers, 150 Shared Lives schemes and a growing network of 21 Homeshare organisations.

Our vision is a kinder, stronger society built on sharing our lives and our homes. We help build communities where everyone lives a full life, regardless of the support they need. We do this by turning Shared Lives care, Homeshare and our new peer support Family by Family programme into thriving, mainstream options, with all the right structures in place to support and guide those who want to share their lives and homes.

## What is Homeshare

The Homeshare model is based on the security of a welcoming home environment and good relationships. A Homeshare match brings together people with a spare room who need a little support to continue living at home with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return for affordable, sociable accommodation. Householders and Homesharers share home life, time, skills and experience.

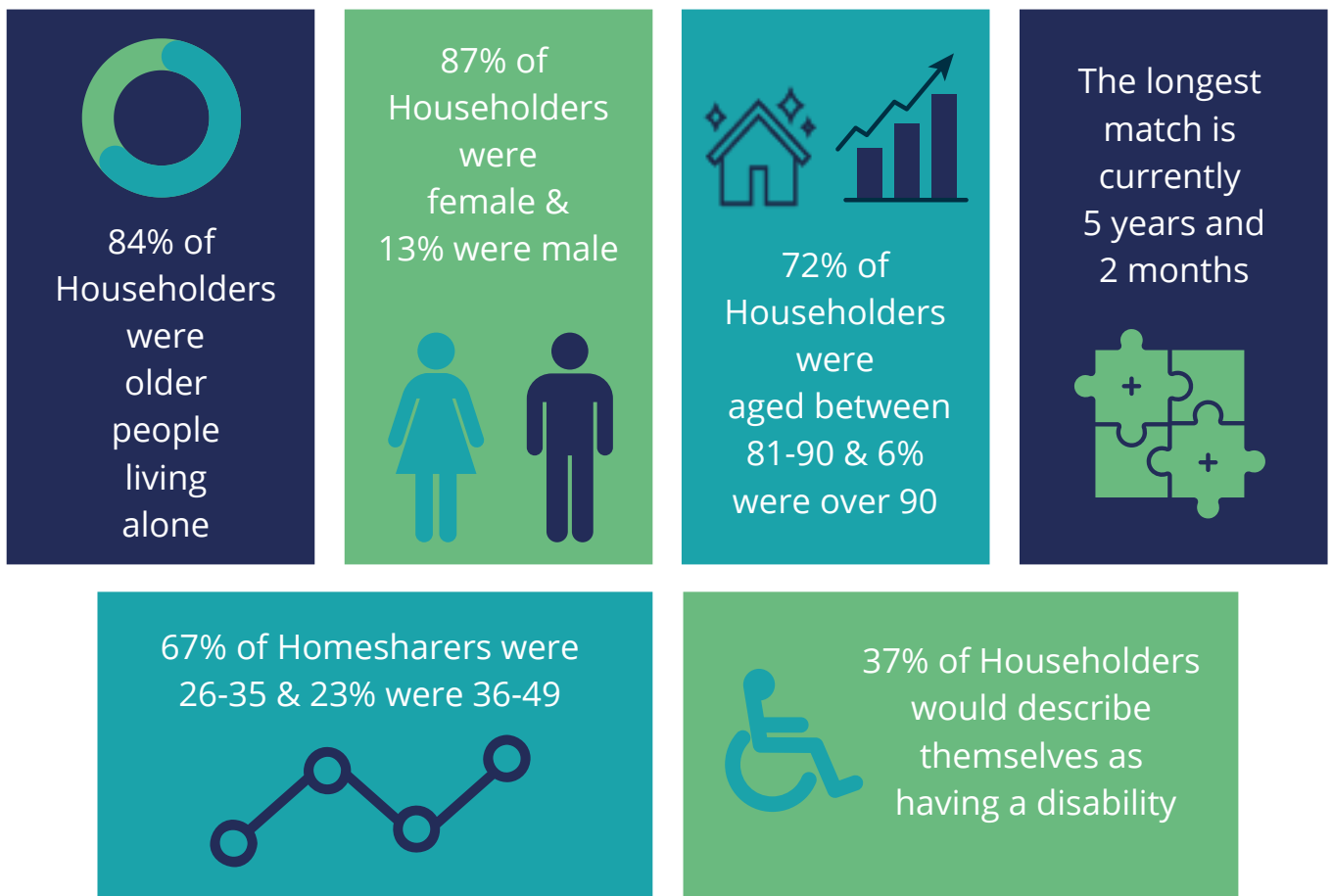
Homeshare is not a regulated activity and the Homesharer provides no personal care but enables the Householder to continue living independently by providing a minimum of 10 hours of practical support per week. More importantly, the participants must be prepared to live sociably in the property, offering companionship to each other.

Supported by Homeshare UK - the national network for Homesharing - there are now 21 Homeshare programmes in the UK playing a pivotal role in the Homeshare relationship. The programmes fulfill all the safety checks, make appropriate introductions, and provide ongoing support to each bespoke Homeshare arrangement. Our members work within Homeshare UK's Good Practice Guide and Quality Assurance Framework.



# Who uses Homeshare?

The key groups of Householders using Homeshare in 2021 were older single people and older couples between the ages of 70 and 90. Our network reported other Householder groups including people with life limiting illness, people with disabilities and people with learning disabilities.



The majority of Homesharers are now aged between 26 and 49 and include young professionals (39%), postgraduate and mature students (29%), public sector workers and older professionals (21%) in need of affordable accommodation. In 2021 8% of Homesharers were aged over 50 and a further 2% of Homesharers over 60.

# Peggy & Patricia

## The Joy of Homesharing

Peggy aged 96, and Patricia aged 53 were matched by Homeshare Living.

Whilst having a caring family in regular contact, Peggy had been feeling quite lonely for some time, particularly as the days were getting shorter. Her daughter was recommended to Homeshare Living who matched her with Patricia, a kind and homely lady, working full-time from home, who was looking for affordable accommodation.

Peggy describes the homeshare as *“a match made in heaven”* and is enjoying *“being spoilt”* with a cup of tea brought to her in bed every morning, as well as having regular companionship in the evenings.

Patricia prepares a simple supper for the two of them most days which they share together over a good chat, before watching their favourite tv show.

Peggy says *“It has been life changing having Patricia living here especially in the dark winter evenings. It really has made a positive change in my life having someone so kind and friendly around and knowing that I am not alone.”*

Patricia is delighted to be homesharing with Peggy too *“We have really hit it off so well. I have never laughed so much.”*

HOMESHARE  
LIVING



Peggy & Patricia  
Photos: Homeshare Living

<https://www.homeshareliving.co.uk/>



# UK Updates

## Wales

There is currently some small scale Homeshare opportunity in Wales. In 2021 the Welsh Government funded Shared Lives Plus to develop three Homeshare programmes over the next three years. During 2021, Tim Crahart, the HSUK Welsh Development Officer has been engaging with key stakeholders across Wales to conduct underpinning feasibility work to create the foundations for the development of Homeshare in key locations across the country. This ongoing development work has developed a strong network of supporters for Homeshare in Wales and we have started to identify organisations who would be interested in becoming Homeshare providers.



Tim Crahart

Homeshare Wales Development Officer

### Surveys carried out with potential Householders and Homesharers tell us that

- Older people in Wales believe that Homesharing would reduce their anxiety about being home alone (**71% of those surveyed**)
- Older people would value being able to give a young professional or student a safe and affordable home to live (**81% of those surveyed**)
- **98% of young professionals** in Wales told us they would be interested in signing up to a Homeshare programme.



*'It seems like a wonderful and very much needed idea as a means to provide help for the elderly and in turn helping a younger person. Both parties are in it together to help each other, so I think that would develop mutual respect between them to fulfil their duties. It's the best idea I have seen yet for helping the varied needs of different age groups in communities.'*



Quote from the family of a potential Householder in Wales

## Scotland

Tina Morrow

Homeshare Scotland Development Officer

We were delighted to receive support from 'The Ecclesiastical Insurance Group' via their Movement for Good programme in 2021. Tina Morrow our HSUK Scotland Development Officer will drive forward the first year of a 4-year development strategy supporting the further development of Homeshare across the country.

Whilst Homeshare is not a regulated activity, as a new model of support in Scotland, it's been vital to understand how it fits into Scottish Housing and Social Care legislation. During year one of the project, our key objectives have been to develop a relevant infrastructure to support delivery in Scotland including updating our Good Practice and Process Guidance.

There have been several challenges to direct engagement with stakeholders across Scotland due to ongoing Covid restrictions, but through online development work aimed at widening understanding of the Homeshare model and exploring the potential of setting-up Homeshare programmes, we have built good relationships with the Third Sector Interfaces, older people's networks, housing federations, and voluntary sector networks.



We want Homeshare to be visible, to be talked about and most of all, to thrive, and when it does it will be a true movement for good in Scotland.



## East Anglia

Ben Dunne  
Homeshare Sector Development Officer



Over the last year, we've made some great friends and allies across the region and we are now able to move ahead with our work funded by the Mercers Company to develop a local Homeshare service in Norfolk and the East of England.

As pandemic restrictions eased in the autumn, we had the chance to consult with older people face-to-face and hear their views on Homeshare. Feedback from the focus group work tells us there is a real need for a local Homeshare service in Norfolk and that some older people are already Homesharing informally but would welcome the structure and reassurance of a dedicated programme to ensure safe and appropriate Homeshare arrangements, carrying out DBS checks, taking up references, and to provide ongoing support. The Mercers Company funding has also enabled us to; push forward with development of a Homeshare Outcomes Tool (to help us measure the tangible difference Homeshare is making for participants and their families), support some of our small organisations to grow and become sustainable for the first time, and to further develop our Equality and Diversity strategy.

“ **Sharing my home might feel strange at the start but having more company and someone to help me with jobs around the house sounds much better.** ”

Potential Householder in Norfolk



East Anglia Focus Group

## Clarion Housing Group

Homeshare has joined forces with Clarion Housing Group, the largest social landlord in the country, to run the first social housing Homeshare pilot programme.

The aim of the pilot is to test the viability and effectiveness of Homeshare offered in a social housing context so that we can understand and break down the barriers faced by housing association residents. The learning from this pilot will be used to make Homeshare an inclusive scheme for everyone regardless of their housing situation.

The pilot launched in November 2021 and is still in its early stages but already the Homeshare Team have delivered a successful *lunch and learn* training session to frontline Clarion workers. Clarion are promoting the programme through their winter wellbeing calls with the aim of eight strong matches being made and maintained in 2022.



**CLARION**  
FUTURES

# A Homeshare Oxfordshire Match

## ‘Perfect catch, perfect match!’

Each and every Homeshare Oxfordshire match is very different from the next. For many people, it is their concerns about becoming isolated or lonely that lead them to Homeshare. For others, still socially connected and very much valuing their own space, it is the reassurance of having someone else around that is key to them welcoming someone new into their home.

In Valerie’s case it is the latter; she is 84, friendly, sociable and values her independence and time alone. At the same time, she recognises that the presence of someone else in the house, particularly at night, is most reassuring, not just to herself but to her brother Bill, who lives a couple of hours drive away.

Tomi, 24, a Film Studies Masters student from Slovenia, has been welcomed into Valerie’s home and is described by her as ‘the perfect catch!’ Valerie says, *“Tomi is such a lovely person to have around. I really enjoy our conversations. I actually see Homeshare as a way of keeping in touch with today’s fast-moving modern world too.”*

Reflecting on his Homeshare experience, Tomi describes Homeshare as being a way to learn as well as teach, to help and be helped; in short, an enriching reciprocity. *“To be honest”, he says, “it’s like a dream come true. Living in a lovely home with a lovely person and within my limited budget. Being of help to someone is also a really important part of it for me”.*

Bill, Valerie’s brother, continues to visit on a regular basis, but with a Homeshare arrangement in place he knows Tomi is there and is more than happy to help with the small things that inevitably crop up. *“I don’t need to worry if I can’t get hold of Valerie on the phone. A quick call to Tomi puts my mind at rest”,* Bill says. *“Homeshare, to me, is reassurance”.*



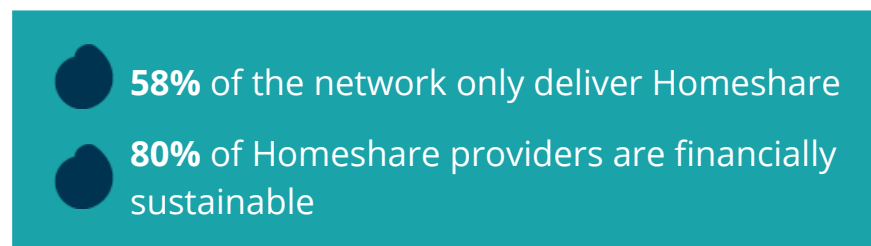
[www.homeshareoxfordshire.org.uk](http://www.homeshareoxfordshire.org.uk)



Tomi & Valerie  
Photo: Homeshare Oxfordshire

# The Homeshare UK Network

The Homeshare UK network is made up of 21 providers based across the UK. Homeshare has only really become widespread in the UK in the last 5 years however two of our network members, Share and Care based in London, and Homeshare West, based in Bristol have been operating 15 and 20 years respectively.



12 of our network members only deliver Homeshare however other programmes are run by organisations providing a range of additional services including:

- Domiciliary care
- Carer support
- Information & Advice
- Older people support services
- HIV support services

“I’m so used to living alone and having my privacy. I was a bit worried about how it all would work out. I have nothing but praise now. It’s all working well, and I think you have done a marvellous job matching us!”

Wendy, Householder with Homeshare Oxfordshire

# Impact 2021

The Homeshare network faced more Covid lockdown restrictions early in 2021 and had to navigate the challenges of Homesharers returning to work and study later in the year. Our network members started to report increased interest in Homeshare in the late summer when numbers of referral and enquires picked up.

**5%** increase in participation of Homeshare in 2021

**1126** people benefited from living in a Homeshare arrangement

**41%** increase in the number of older people wanting to Homeshare

## HOUSEHOLDERS

*REPORT BENEFITS:*

**Feeling less lonely**

**Overnight presence in the home**

**Someone to help with practical tasks around the home**

**Someone to help them connect with family and friends during lockdown**

## HOMESHARERS

*REPORT BENEFITS:*

**Having a safe and affordable place to live**

**Companionship**

**Feeling that they are giving something back to the community**

## THE HOMESHARE ARRANGEMENT

The Homesharer typically commits to provide at least:

**10hrs of support per week**

In 2021 our Homesharers collectively provided:

**196,000 hours**

of practical help, such as cooking, cleaning, gardening and shopping but more importantly provided companionship and a friendly face



# Ann & Sophie

**“Having Sophie and her dog Prince move in has made a big difference for my family & I”.**



Sophie & Prince

Photo: Homeshare Gloucestershire



Ann and Sophie have been homesharing for four months with Homeshare Gloucestershire. Ann is an old hand at Homeshare, having had two other sharers in the past. Ann struggles with anxiety and panic attacks and cannot be alone in her home at night.

Ann, the Householder felt bereft after her first sharer left because it made a huge difference for her and her family. Once the sharer left, Ann’s daughter had to spend many nights sleeping at her house, *“I was feeling guilty about that when she has a family and a life to lead.”*

Ann continued *“I also missed the rest of the friendship I was receiving. I was thrilled to bits to get Sophie! Within a week we knew we were going to be okay because we just clicked. It’s given me the companionship that I craved, she’s here every night and I feel much more relaxed. She’s everything I could ask for in a Homeshare.”*

Nicky (Ann’s Daughter) found it very difficult during the time that Ann didn’t have a sharer, *“I basically had to leave my home and move back in with mum, which was hard”.*

Now that Ann has a Homesharer again, Nicky says, *“Having Sophie there is amazing. I know mum is safe and happy with Sophie’s company and I can have my life back. I feel happier because I know mum has someone to be with her when I can’t be there. It means that I can go away for the weekends without having to worry about her. It takes the pressure off me”.*

Sophie, Ann’s new Homesharer said, *“We spend quite a bit of time together, get on well, talk and share different experiences. It’s nice to have the company, come home and talk to someone about your day. We both love the dog and we are teaching him some new tricks!”*

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire/our-services/homesharing>



**HomeshareUK**   
THE UK NETWORK FOR HOMESHARE

**Our list of network members can be downloaded [HERE](#)**

**For more information about Homeshare visit  
[www.homeshareuk.org](http://www.homeshareuk.org)**

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