

2022

Annual Report

A REPORT BY
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THE HomeShare

Together Helping Eachother



But what if there was a way to
help older adults
remain safe, independent and socially engaged
in their own home
and help younger adults
secure affordable housing
at the same time?

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Mission

To create positive homesharing experiences between older and younger adults in Ireland, that inspires mutually beneficial social and practical supports and empowers independent living.



Vision

For homesharing to become a lifestyle choice that enhances positive ageing and develops deep intergenerational social ties.



Values

- Trust
- Connection
- Collaboration
- Commitment

Our Company

THE HomeShare is Ireland's premier HomeShare programme with over 80 years combined team experience in the Health and Homecare sector. Established in 2017 by CEO Ms. Lucie Cunningham, THE HomeShare has worked closely with hundreds of families to support them through their Homeshare journeys. Our CEO works closely with government departments and policy makers and we are delighted our efforts have resulted in HomeSharing being incorporated into National Policy, making Ireland the first country in the world to do so.

Our Service

HomeSharing is a Person-Centered and Bespoke Arrangement and is one of the most affordable and safest ways for our ageing population to remain living independently at home and also a way to offer a lifeline to struggling renters, helping to pave the way for future generations.

Our Goals

THE HomeShare's overall goal is for Homeshare to become a mainstream housing and social care option in which participants can have confidence and security.

Testimonial

As a professional Nurse, I believe Homesharing to be beneficial to both parties. For the older householders it provides company and support to those who can feel lonely or vulnerable. To the person living with them it provides accommodation that is affordable but more that that it brings them into contact with a generation that have so much to offer back in terms of life experience, wisdom, support and friendship.
Orla, Sharer

Meet the Team



Lucie
Cunningham
FOUNDER & CEO



Niamh
Sweetman
CO. DIRECTOR



Geraldine
Kubernat
GALWAY
HOMESHARE
CONSULTANT



Ciara
Hegarty
CORK
HOMESHARE
CONSULTANT



Hans
Hummel
WEB DESIGNER

CEO MESSAGE

Founder & CEO Lucie Cunningham



I am delighted to present THE HomeShare Annual Report 2022, with very special thanks and appreciation to our Homeshare Director Niamh Sweetman. This is our 3rd Annual Report and without her insight, passion, dedication and hard work, this report would not be possible.

Upon reading this report, I think you will agree there is no doubt that the Homeshare model has much to offer; not just for people seeking an affordable social support model that safeguards their independence to remain living at home, but also for people seeking affordable accommodation. In the last 12 months we have supported those on low paid incomes secure accommodation which enables them to continue their vital work in the local community. We have also supported those seeking accommodation that affords them the opportunity to save for a deposit to secure their own home in the future. Homeshare is arguably the only housing option in Ireland that is truly bespoke, person-centred and not financially motivated.

But that is just our accommodation seekers! We have supported Householders whose ages range from their 60's to 103 with varying levels of support requirements. One of the major benefits of Homesharing is social connection, which is one of the main reasons our service users participate in this programme, both young and old.

The figures obtained from our research and surveys quoted within this report speak for themselves. Only 4% of our Householders (whose average age is 87 years) moved to long term residential care in 2022 and 68% of our sharers told us they won't return to the traditional rental sector. We are now seeing the evidence of the positive benefits of Homesharing. I was never in doubt as to the benefits of this social care and housing model when I founded THE HomeShare in 2017 and I am very happy to share these strong statistics that confirm my vision for this bespoke social model. We look forward to working more closely on the social and financial impact Homesharing makes in 2023. More on that to follow!

Every stakeholder involved in the Health Sector knows all too well that we have an ageing population. One of the greatest challenges facing not just Ireland but globally is our ageing demographic and how our healthcare system will cope with the challenges that lie ahead. We have never been in any doubt that the Homeshare model has a vital role to play in supporting Ireland's Sláintecare vision of Care in the Community. The time has come for Homeshare to play a bigger role in supporting people to live independently at home and I would again invite and welcome the HSE and Sláintecare to formally engage with us so we can work together to build a stronger framework to ensure the best possible person-centred service for a truly robust "Care in the Community" model.

As another year draws to a close and I reflect on our 6th year in operation, I am yet again so grateful. Grateful to all the families and healthcare professionals who trust in our service to do our best for their loved ones and patients. I am grateful also to our very special Sharers who believe in this housing model and who go above and beyond for the special people who open their homes to accommodate them. Imagine, over 20,000 hours of household support, shopping, trips to medical appointments, meal preparation and social outings were offered by our Sharers to their Householders in the last year. Although this is the official figure, we know the true figure is far greater. This is quite a saving on the public purse and for family members, from a service that is not publicly funded but managed by a passionate team of healthcare professionals who are committed to driving our Homeshare service forward to reach as many people across Ireland as possible.

I would like to personally extend my appreciation to every organisation and individual who has supported THE HomeShare, not just in the last 12 months but over the last 6 years. We have the privilege of speaking to people every day who were referred to our services because of you. Because of your referral, you have given them information of other options available to them or their loved ones and it has given them Hope. Hope for a better life, hope for more independence and above all, choice. After all, that is what we all want. If not for our loved ones, but for ourselves in the future.

To end, on behalf of our Homeshare Team, I would like to extend our heartfelt condolences once again to all the family, friends, neighbours and indeed Sharers of the Householders who sadly passed away this year. We were honoured to have played a small part in enabling them to remain living in their own homes, right up until the end.



SNAPSHOT OF 2022

THE HomeShare has had a phenomenal year supporting matches in 13 counties across Ireland. Below are some of our most notable achievements

20,970

Practical Support Hours
provided



94

Individuals
Housed

45%

Growth in 2022



105

New
Matches

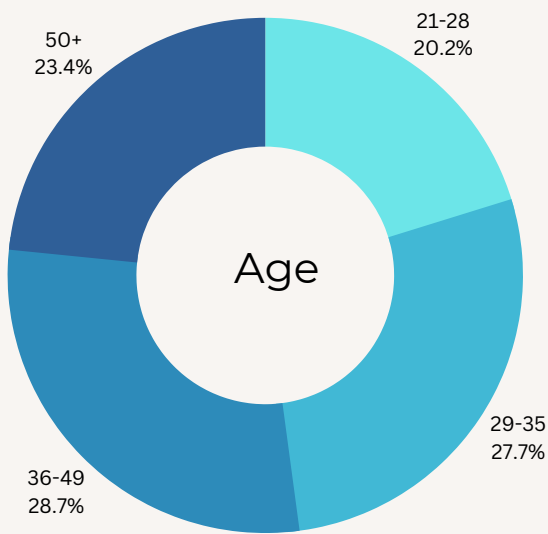
SURVEY FINDINGS

- **93%** of Survey Respondents noted that Homesharing has had a positive impact on their lives
- **75%** of Respondents noted an improvement in theirs/their loved ones health while Homesharing
- When asked if Respondents would recommend THE HomeShare, **60%** said Yes and another **36%** already had!
- For our Sharers specifically, when asked whether they would go back to traditional renting, **68%** said they would not
- When asked whether or not Respondents received enough support from THE HomeShare **98%** responded positively. We aim to achieve a full 100% in 2023

MATCH DEMOGRAPHIC



Sharer



74%

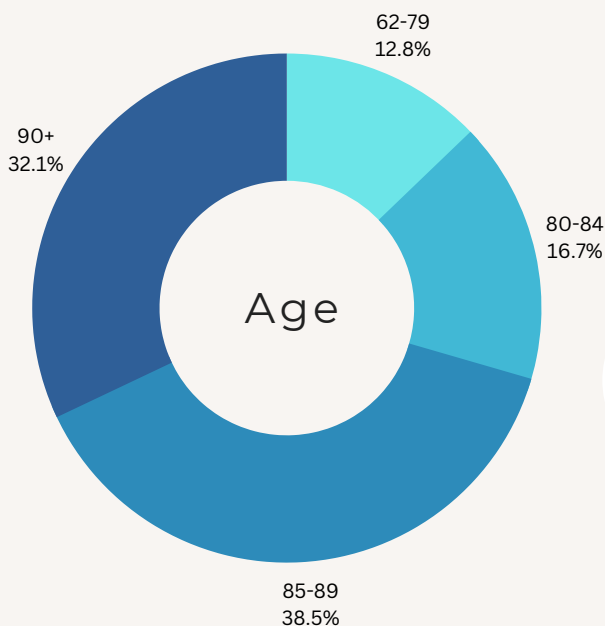


26%

74%
Working
Professionals

40
Average
Age

Householder



74%



87

Average
Age

26%



103

Oldest

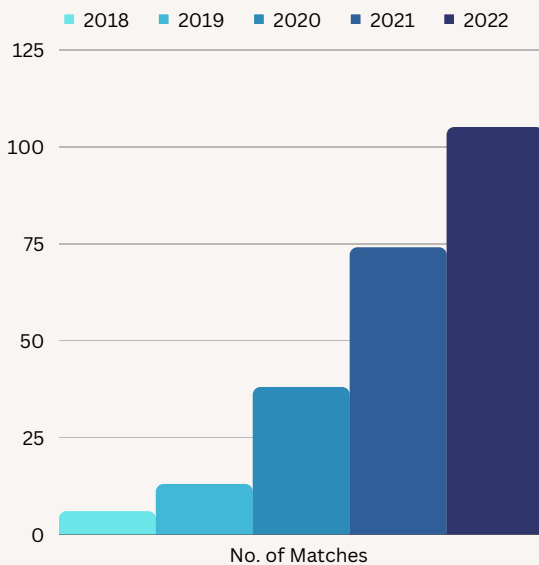
7%



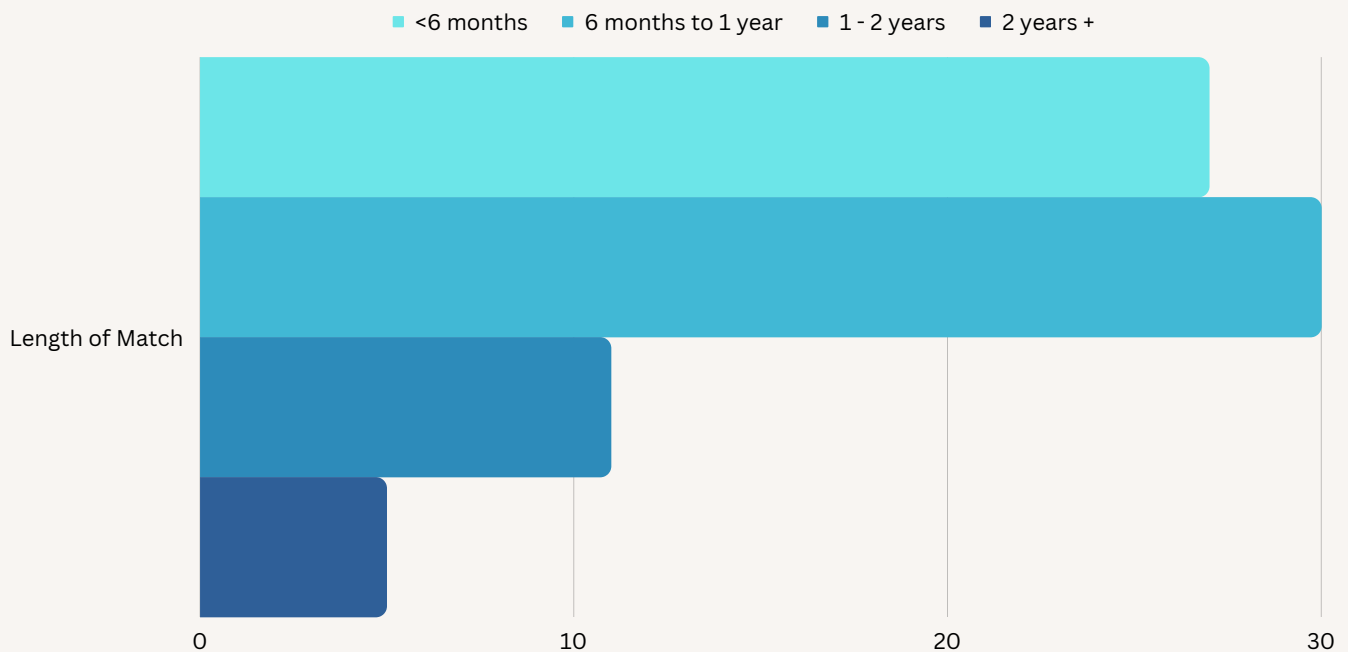
69

Youngest

GROWTH PATTERN



Year on year, THE HomeShare has seen a steady growth trajectory which emphasises the clear need for the provision of homeshare within Ireland. This past year, the organisation has grown a further of 45%



The average length of a Homeshare match now stands at over 9 months with many Matches now heading into their second and third years in their homeshare arrangements.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Throughout 2022 THE HomeShare has continued to inform the people of Ireland about the benefits of Homesharing, lobby government, and develop new ways of providing a safe and person-centered option to remain living in one's own home.



Homeshare Association

Noting the delay in the Irish Government in establishing a regulatory framework for homecare providers THE HomeShare believe regulation is crucial in ensuring the safe delivery of care across our island.

In a bid to underpin the core principles of Homesharing across the globe and provide a level of governance, THE HomeShare along with [Share and Care](#), and [Support Match](#) (two prominent Homeshare Organisations in Great Britain) have come together to establish [Homeshare Association](#)

As community organisations delivering support to a cohort of vulnerable individuals of all demographics, the association aims to benchmark how homeshare services are delivered and ensure those involved are held accountable to minimum service delivery standards and most importantly to best practice safeguarding standards.

The vision of Homeshare Association is to be the recognised voice of authority in the Homeshare market. We aim to achieve this through passion, transparent representation, progressive and innovative development of Homeshare providers, and a wholehearted and united commitment to safeguarding.

Homeshare Association's mission is to continue to ensure Homeshare is offered comprehensively; that the role Homeshare can play in later life is recognised, understood, adopted and celebrated; and to provide Government and Policy Makers, both at national and local levels, with innovative, cost effective and pragmatic solutions to a range of increasingly pressing socio-economic issues.

Founding Members Organisations





Help4Housing

In late Autumn 2021, THE HomeShare launched its newest option, [Help4Housing](#). Help4Housing was established for Homeowners and accommodation seekers to come together for mutual benefit and provide further choice in the rental market.

Another core reason Help4Housing was established was to accommodate shift workers who may work nights and would not be eligible to homeshare through the traditional homeshare model. Help4Housing enables Homeowners to benefit by sourcing a carefully vetted Housemate who will provide a little extra income (tax free up to €14,000 per annum) to the Homeowner and a helping hand around the home (5 hours per week). In line with Irish Revenues, '[Rent-a-room relief scheme](#)', Homeowner's can avail of up to €14,000 tax free rental income per year. Help4Housing works with Homeowners to create bespoke Licence Agreements by using current market value analysis to create a rental fee that not only yields a tax-free income for the Homeowner but also offers weekly practical support.

Help4Housing greatly benefits accommodation seekers who need a safe, homely environment at an affordable cost. The Housemate (accommodation seeker) offers 5 hours each week of practical help around the home (e.g., light housework, putting bins out for collections, support with technology etc) in exchange for accommodation at reduced market value (approximately 2/3 the market value. There is no expectation for the Housemate to be a presence in the home overnight, and all bills are included in the monthly fee listed on each Help4Housing opportunity. The monthly rent is established using current market rates based on the properties location offset by the Housemates 5 hours of support based on the current living wage per hour (€13.85).

Example of Affordability for Accommodation Seekers (Dublin City)

€836 (average rental of double room exclusive of bills) vs €595 (average of H4H opportunity inclusive of bills)

Help4Housing is managed and monitored by THE HomeShare Team who advertise, shortlist, vet, and introduce all accommodation seekers. In short, we work to ensure we find the best potential Housemate in the safest possible manner. Help4Housing also offers optional ongoing support for those seeking additional reassurance and peace of mind for an affordable monthly fee.

As with the traditional homeshare model, Help4Housing holds many benefits for both parties. For Homeowners, Help4Housing enables those seeking to supplement their income through renting a room in their home, with a safe and secure way of sourcing a housemate with the added benefit of not having to do the sourcing. Help4Housing also acts as a gateway into the traditional model of Homesharing so that if there comes a time Homeowners may require further support or an overnight presence, they will already have experience in sharing their home.

For Housemates, the reduced market rent allows the option to save for their futures, while the 5 hours of support provides them with a feel-good feeling knowing they are providing much needed support. There is also the highly valuable benefit of creating a lasting intergenerational relationship whereby both Homeowner and Housemate can learn and share knowledge, skills, and experiences with one another.



With special thanks and appreciation to Tadhg Daly and [Nursing Homes Ireland](#).

A project that has been very close to our hearts since THE HomeShare's foundation in 2017 is Generations Together Ireland. Our Founder Lucie Cunningham had first-hand experience of a loved one moving to long term care in 2011, her Dad. He received incredible care by the staff of the nursing home in Celbridge, Co Kildare. She thought nothing of being able to visit whenever she chose with her young children. After his death less than a year later, she reflected on their visits. Having worked in Nursing Homes herself, she was acutely aware of the special magic children bring to older people. They bring an innocent energy and lease of life like no other and also bring the Community into Nursing Homes.

In 2017, Lucie watched the Channel Four programme "[Old People's Home for 4-Year-Olds](#)" and it awakened a passion within her. Before long, Lucie had gathered an equally passionate group of Nursing Home and Childcare practitioners that soon formed a steering group to develop a pilot Intergenerational group. This group was in Lucan, West Dublin; and by 2018, it was well under way with bi-monthly visits of 3-5-year-old children visiting local nursing homes. The joy these visits brought to the children and the residents was palpable, and the impact was evident not just to them but to the staff, as they witnessed newfound friendships developing with each passing visit. Parents of the children and family members of the nursing home residents also commented on the joy they witnessed whilst being regaled by stories of the visits.

Sadly, Covid struck a year later and each special group, one by one, had to cancel their visits as our over 70's were asked to cocoon and nursing homes had to close their doors. We didn't need the research and nightly news reports to tell us of the devastating impact this had on our Nursing Home residents and their young visitors, many of whom had no grandparents living in the same Country, let alone close by and greatly missed their newfound much older friend.

THE HomeShare's passion to reignite their vision to grow Generations Together Ireland never faltered and as soon as society reopened, we were thrilled Nursing Homes Ireland were immediately responsive to the opportunity to work with us again to grow this special programme, knowing the joy it brings to their residents and staff, and the positive impact it has on their health.

We are so grateful to our friends and colleagues at Nursing Homes Ireland for showing equal passion for this project and working alongside us, so together we can bring Communities back into our Nursing Homes. The beauty of this model is that it is open to any community group (Pre-School, Primary & Post Primary schools, 3rd Level, Guides, Scouts, Choirs, Drama groups etc) to connect and buddy up with nursing homes and older person's community day centres.

For more information, please visit [Generations Together Ireland](#)

CHALLENGES



As with many organisations, THE HomeShare face daily challenges brought on by external factors outside organisational control. Year on year our main challenges remain similar, if not the same.

Monitoring and keeping up to date with external factors enable THE HomeShare to initiate more effective responses to strengthen our positioning and act on matters most prominent within our sector.

The following are some of our key challenges and how we aim to reduce the negative impact they pose to our organisations service offerings.



Reaching Householders too Late

The average age of Householders supported throughout the year 2022 stands at 87 years of age, with a large proportion suffering from some form of physical or cognitive impairment. Whilst THE HomeShare accommodates all demographics, the most far-reaching benefits of Homesharing can become lost when reaching Householders too late. We find the strongest matches are those that are formed early on, before a 'crisis' prompts Householders to consider Homesharing.

There are many benefits to be gained when Homesharing, especially for our older Householders. By Homesharing before a 'crisis' situation, Householders can benefit from the following:

- Reduced isolation leading to stronger mental health and cognition
- Improved nutrition - by having another person to share meals with, Householders reported their diets and general interest in food had improved leading to an overall improvement in health status
- Enhancing or maintaining mobility – by combining the first two points; preserved mental health/cognition + better nutrition and diet = improved physical resilience and overall health.

Whilst stats show that only 4% of Householders within the period of January – December 2022 moved on to long term care facilities, it must be said that longevity in Homesharing can be aided by a Householder's entry into the programme at an earlier phase in the 3rd stage of their life.

More often than not, Householders or family members who waited until crisis point to enter into a homeshare arrangement have said: 'I wish we had started Homesharing sooner'.

Homesharing not only benefits the direct participants, but also their extended circle such as loved ones and friends. For family members/carers Homesharing offers respite or solace in the knowledge their loved ones are supported at home with social interaction, practical in-home support and simply knowing their loved ones are not alone. This allows them to better balance their own lives and engage with their loved one in a familial sense as opposed to a support capacity.

Ageism is also a significant subfactor to overcome for Householders when first learning of Homesharing and not for the reasons one might think. It is in fact internalised ageism within the older cohort who have misplaced feelings of having little to offer the younger generation and a belief that by accepting support of any kind will diminish their own independence. Include graphic on internalised ageism

Homesharing focuses on each of these areas. By bringing two generations together, both young and old can learn from one another, share knowledge, and promote one another's independence. For the younger sharer, they encourage the older Householder to continue their daily routines and only provide support where necessary, while the older Householder supports the younger person in safeguarding their future by saving for a home of their own. One of the pillars of Homesharing is promoting one's own independence and that goes for both Householder and Sharer.

A Householder's provision of a safe and homely environment, along with enabling a sharer to save for their future is undoubtedly a highly valuable offering to the younger generation who are currently struggling within the current housing crisis. These very practical offerings are then further enhanced when you combine the value of a Householder's social contributions within Homesharing. Sharing your home with a person of a different generation provides opportunity for meaningful exchanges including teaching your counterpart about music, culture and history.

KNOW THE VALUE OF KNOWING YOUR VALUE

At present THE HomeShare supports a remarkable match through Help4Housing where the Homeowner has been teaching his Housemate how to play the harmonica. Another former Householder also used her skills and knowledge as a retired teacher to teach their American born Sharer how to speak 'as Gaelige'.

THE HomeShare continually analyse sectoral research and reporting and use feedback from past and present matches to identify more effective ways of engaging with Householders at all stages of one's life cycle. Throughout 2022 THE HomeShare has hosted information sessions with local community and active retirements groups and have continued to grow and develop our network of referral pathways.

The most significant step THE HomeShare has taken to overcome the challenge faced by reaching potential Householders too late, has been the establishment of Help4Housing which is targeted at the younger cohort within the third generation (i.e. 65+/recently retired). Within its first year of operation THE HomeShare is now supporting four Help4Housing Matches wherein the Homeowners are reaping the benefits of intergenerational living and receiving a rental income supplementing their income, and THE HomeShare is engaging with the third generation before a state of crisis.

CASE STUDY 1



HomeSharing & Help4Housing



Pat, a remarkable gentleman with an unyielding enthusiasm for life has Homeshared through THE HomeShare programme for 3 years now.

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

With each match, Pat has imparted much wisdom on his Sharers, through music, art, culture and knowledge. Pat's first Sharer described Pat and his home as a mecca of creativity enabling her to focus on her song writing. Soon after the first sharer had moved in, Ireland was struck down with Covid-19 and national lockdown. Thankfully, because Pat had a Sharer living with him, he had company and a sharer who was able to run errands for him. In short, share was a lifeline for Pat.

The second Sharer 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 share in his passion for music; and the latest Sharer regularly enjoys outings with Pat to cultural hotspots such as Glencree and Powerscourt where they exchange stories and enjoy the outdoors together.

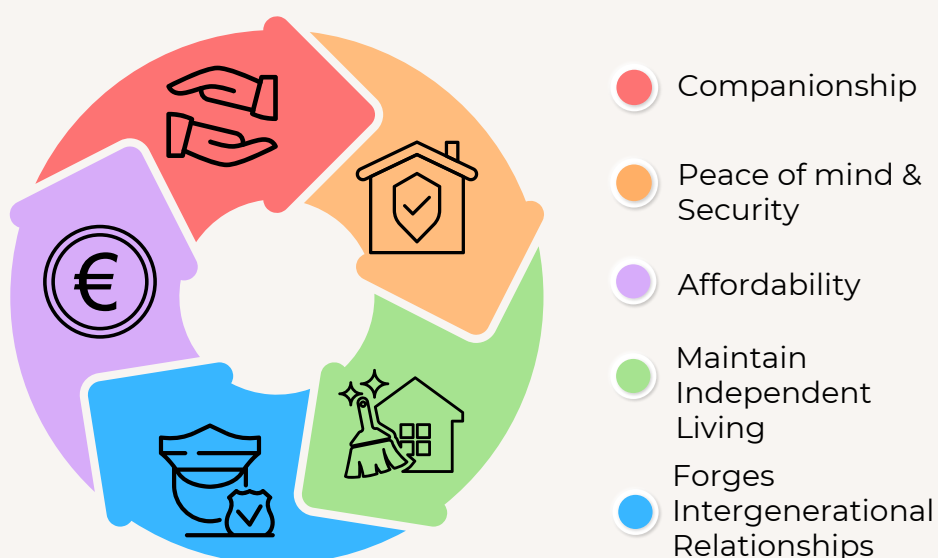
Pat, and his journey through homesharing is testament that the older generation has a great deal to offer the younger generation and that intergenerational living can be extremely rewarding for both participants.

When Pat learned of THE HomeShare's latest service offering 'Help4Housing', he thought it would be a wonderful idea to support another struggling renter by opening his home once again. As Pat already benefits from the support and companionship through THE HomeShare's traditional homesharing model, he did not feel a second sharer was necessary. By engaging in Help4Housing, Pat receives an income from renting out another spare room and 5 hours of practical support. In total, Pat receives 15 hours of practical support each week by combining both traditional Homesharing and Help4Housing, which means he has plenty of support with practical daily living tasks and a great deal of companionship.

As the process for searching and selecting Housemates is the same as when shortlisting Sharers, Pat was confident we could find a suitable match. When his now Housemate was first introduced, the pair hit it off instantly and have since gone on to form a strong connection. The pair regularly attend a Ceol session together on a Wednesday evening and Pat is now teaching his Housemate how to play the harmonica so that in time he may be able to join in on the Ceol session!

Prior to the Housemate moving in, Pat and his current Sharer, and the Housemate all had the opportunity to meet and get to know one another and be sure that for all parties, the decision to move forward was agreed by all. This was most important to ensure a harmonious living environment for all parties. Now 7 months later, the trio are each living their best lives, engaging with one another, and developing lasting friendships. The combination of services has enabled two struggling renters to find affordable accommodation in a safe and enriching environment and has empowered Pat to continue to be a valuable asset to his community

Benefits of HomeSharing



CHALLENGES



Delay in the provision of Home Care due to current shortage of home care workers

On Tuesday, 8 Nov 2022 a debate took place in [Dáil Éireann](#) on the subject of Home care.

Deputy David Cullinane stated during the debate – *‘more than 7,800 people have experienced unnecessary and costly delayed discharges from hospital so far this year due to a failure to plan and align community services with hospital need, such as step-down beds and home care packages, including more than 1,000 delayed discharges directly linked to home care shortages, which is directly contributing to the trolley crisis...’*

According to Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People Mary Butler, more than 40,000 home care hours are not being delivered weekly which equates to more than 6000 individuals across Ireland who have been approved a homecare package (fully funded) but are awaiting delivery of this care due to a severe shortage in homecare staff.

A cross-departmental [Strategic Workforce Advisory Group](#) was established in March 2022 by Minister Butler and was launched by Minister Butler and the Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English. The Group set out to examine strategic workforce challenges in publicly and privately provided frontline carer roles in home support and long-term residential care for older people.

Based on findings from the advisory group, Minister Butler confirmed that as part of the new HSE Tender for Homecare Providers, home care workers must be provided the living wage and mileage in cases where home care workers must travel between visits. Minister English added that 1000 General Employment Permits will also be made available for home care workers from January 2023. These new provisions for home care workers are aimed at alleviating the national home care worker recruitment crisis and will hopefully support the retention of existing home care workers and generate an influx of new home care workers into the sector.

But where are these new workers going to live?

Not only can our homesharing enable a timely discharge by our sharers supporting patients with home support (meal prep, householder chores, and company) but homesharing can also offer accommodation to health care support workers who are badly needed within the homecare sector but because of the high rents are unable to afford to live in our major cities in Ireland.

For many Householders wishing to exit acute care settings, the shortage of homecare provision has impacted potential matches from forming, thus rendering the Householder unnecessarily in acute care, and leaving a Sharer without accommodation.

The consequences of this are far reaching. By remaining in an acute care setting, Householder's levels of dependency can increase, and can often result in reduced mobility and cognitive function as most of their daily necessities are catered to by nursing staff. By not exercising their physical and mental abilities, if/when Householders do return home, their care needs have increased, putting additional pressure on home care workers as well as Sharers and ultimately impacting the prospect of a successful homeshare arrangement.

Also impacted by the shortage of home care workers are the various community services operating nationwide. The lack of home care workers and knock-on effects of Covid-19 has meant there has been higher demand for these services, and much like the closure of many nursing homes, many community/day care centres have also closed, meaning there simply isn't enough supply to meet the growing demand.

Latest research conducted by [Family Carers Ireland](#) reported that Family Carers are also struggling due to the delay in homecare provision; with 24% experiencing a delay or reduction in the delivery of home support hours/ packages due to the shortage of homecare workers and 76% experienced difficulty accessing services. This suggests that the reduction or withdrawal of services placed increased responsibilities and pressure on family carers who ultimately save the State €20 billion each year as it stands.

For THE HomeShare, the vast majority of enquiries this past year has come from family members seeking support for their older relative. Evidence suggests that in many cases, for those currently awaiting hospital discharge or homecare provision, it is their family members or advocates that are beating the drum and desperately seeking support to allow for a more manageable lifestyle not only for their loved one, but themselves.

While Homesharing is not the answer to every older person's struggle to return to their own homes from acute settings, it compliments homecare provision which can enable more efficient hospital discharges in many cases.

Throughout this past year THE HomeShare have spoken with many families that have been awarded a homecare package and have carers lined up, yet have been told by their medical teams that to ensure a safe and successful discharge home from an acute setting, a presence in the home at night is required. This is where Homesharing can be hugely beneficial because our sharers are that presence and can ultimately facilitate a timelier discharge. Not only that, but also provide family/advocates the reassurance in the knowledge that their loved ones are adequately monitored and receiving that all important social interaction in the evenings, locking up the house at night and meeting a number of their basic needs.

By working cooperatively with many homecare agencies across Ireland, THE HomeShare team have successfully restored Householders to their own homes by meeting the Householders basic needs of security and practical support, thus in some cases, reducing the need for additional home care workers.

Homesharing is not a replacement or substitute for homecare, however with the withdrawal of home help packages in favour of home care packages (focused on personal care), many older persons are left without the vital practical support they require to live independently and safely. Not all older persons require 'care' – some merely require practical support with daily living tasks such as cooking and maintaining their homes, shopping and putting the bins out for collection, not to mention the social interaction which is where Homesharing can offer a lifeline.

While not directly an 'assisted living service' Homesharing coexists within this sector, as part of the Age Friendly homes Programme. THE HomeShare acts as a community care alternative and can support the State to alleviate unnecessary prolonged hospital stays and long-term care admissions which is directly in line with [Slaintecare's model of Care in the Community](#)

THE HomeShare will continue to raise awareness on the benefits of Homesharing by working with the various organisations within the older person's sector, to provide further choice to those in need of support, whether for themselves or a loved one. As part of our Calls to Action, we also continue to lobby the State and Health Service Executive (HSE) to further endorse Homesharing as a mainstream support option.



CHALLENGES



Housing Crisis

According to the latest Daft Report, rents have risen nationally by 14.1% in 2022, the highest year on year increase in market rents since the launch of the [Daft Report](#) in 2005

Using Dublin and the National average salary in Ireland as an example (according to the Central Statistics Office (2022) = €45,324, equating to approximately €2,901 a month after tax); For a one-bedroom apartment the lowest rent can be found in West Dublin with an average monthly rent of €1333 This means, for an individual to rent a one-bedroom apartment in the lowest priced market rental area, 46% of their monthly earnings go toward their basic housing need.

Like full property rentals, the cost of room rentals has also risen sharply with an average increase of 13.7% in the year to October 2022. If we look at those renting a room (specifically a single room) within a property, the lowest average monthly rent for a single room can be found again in west Dublin at €634, for those on the national average salary, this is 22% of their monthly take home wage.

For those in receipt of the National average salary, the monthly fee to homeshare through THE HomeShare programme of €195 equates to just 7% of the average monthly income after tax allowing participants the opportunity to not only enjoy a more comfortable lifestyle, but to save and safeguard for their futures.

The figures above are approximations, and we must note that not every individual receives the average salary. In fact, living life on a [poverty income](#) is common in Irish society and is sadly the reality for one in every nine people in Ireland (11.9%). Based on the most recent Census data, this corresponds to almost 595,000 people. Of those living in poverty, over 93,000 are in employment and have become known as the “working poor”.

Applying the standard ‘at risk of poverty’ threshold of €15,158 per annum, or €1263.16 per month, Homesharing equates to 15% of this cohorts monthly salary which could, if managed appropriately, help to alleviate financial concerns regarding housing costs.

The current housing crisis has led to an influx of applications from accommodation seekers. Throughout the past year alone we have received over 2,300 applications from accommodation seekers in need of housing. Most applicants stated their current tenancy/accommodation offering was ending due to landlords selling their properties while others noted their rents were increasing to an unaffordable amount. We have also seen a large increase in the number of students applying to homeshare. The volume of applications from students after first round CAO offers were released in 2022 rose 45% since the same period last year.

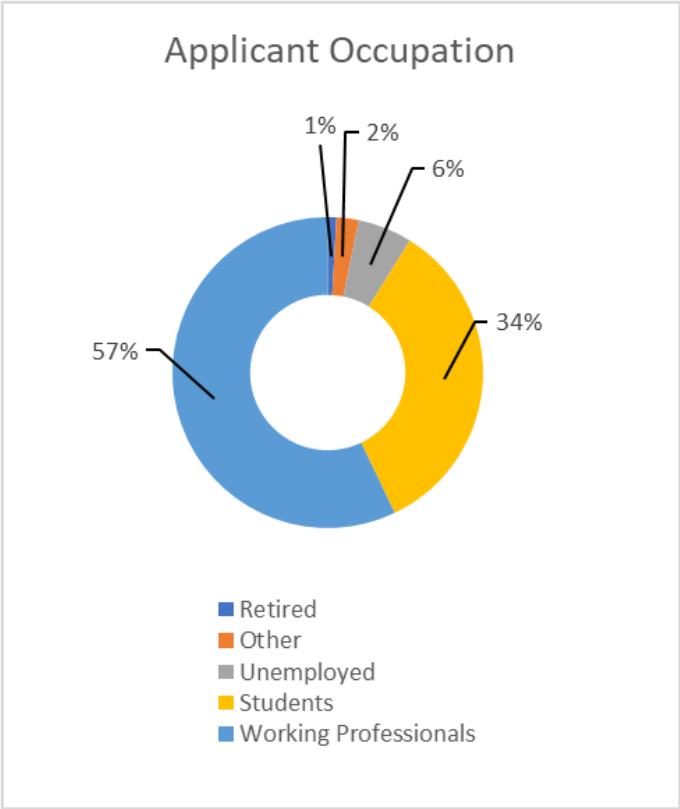
Of these 2300+ applications, in 2022 THE HomeShare housed 94 individuals from various demographics across Ireland. While we are delighted to have supported these accommodation seekers, we are also left feeling dispirited for those who were unsuccessful in securing housing.

As with most sectoral crisis', the general rule of supply and demand comes hurtling to the fore. THE HomeShare struggle with this dilemma also. Whilst we have had many referrals from Householders seeking a Sharer which creates a housing opportunity for accommodation seekers; for each homeshare opportunity created, there are hundreds of accommodation seekers applying. The 94 individuals housed through THE HomeShare programme this year equate to just 4% of our overall applications.

In today's housing market (specifically the rental market) accommodation seekers are unable to save for their futures with such a large proportion of their monthly income going on the sunk cost of renting property.

If Homesharing were to be consistently endorsed within the Health Care Sector at the direction of the HSE, there would undoubtedly be a higher volume of homeshare opportunities available for these struggling renters. As part of our Calls to Action, THE HomeShare is seeking the support of the HSE so that collectively we can provide the people of Ireland with a consistent and streamlined service offering, assuaging two key issues:

- 1.The provision of an additional and affordable support option for our older persons to remain living independently in their own homes
- 2.The provision of an alternative and affordable housing option for struggling renters, enabling them to save for their futures here in Ireland.



CALLS TO ACTION



THE HomeShare's overall aim is for Homeshare to become a mainstream housing and social care option in which participants can have confidence. To achieve this, we seek the following:

Support from local and national policy makers to overcome key policy barriers that prevent people participating in Homeshare

THE HomeShare continues to lobby government and local authorities to break down the barriers preventing individuals from accessing our services. Our alliances with Dublin City Council in 2021 and Tipperary County Council in 2022 has led to the creation of a dedicated page on their respective websites, endorsing Homesharing as an affordable and safe housing option for both young and old. We invite the remaining Local Councils to engage with us to do the same across their various platforms.

There are many older persons living in under occupied homes (specifically within the social housing forum), that require additional support however may not seek out this support for fears of financial implications to their social housing contributions. Through a strategic alliance with Local Authorities, Homesharing could enable these tenants receive the support they require to continue to live independently with no effect on their financial contribution. For example, those in receipt of the Living Alone Allowance are not penalised by engaging in a homeshare arrangement (having a sharer living in their home). A similar venture could be undertaken by Local Authorities.

By aligning our service offerings, Local Authorities and THE HomeShare could alleviate several current challenges such as:

- Underoccupancy of current social housing tenancies
- HAP recipients housed in a cost-effective manner, reducing Local Authorities' expenditure
- Reduce the number of individuals in emergency accommodation
- More focused monitoring of the health and over all wellbeing of older tenants in social housing

Collaboration with Health and Social Care professionals and other community based Older Person services to endorse THE HomeShare as a complimentary support model and develop dedicated referral pathways

In 2022, THE HomeShare has again seen a marked increase in the number of referrals across Ireland from GP's, Public Health Nurses, Social Workers, and Advocacy services etc. Our connection with the Age Friendly Homes programme has also strengthened our positioning in the area of housing. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all who advocate for Homesharing as a viable option for older persons to remain living in their own homes safely.

THE HomeShare has successfully collaborated with various organisations over the years such as Age Friendly Ireland, Sage Advocacy, Alone, Community Day Centres, local Primary Care Centres and many more. These collaborations have improved the visibility of Homesharing as an option within the community and have enabled us to support many Householders and Sharers.

Health and Social Care professionals are beginning to discuss the benefits of Homesharing across their various departments. However much like 2021, there remain many Health Care professionals unaware of Homesharing as an option or are hesitant to endorse Homesharing as the Homeshare model has no direct affiliation with the HSE.

We seek further collaboration across services (both publicly and privately operated) to enhance the prospect of reaching more individuals in need of additional support to remain living independently in their own homes. As consistency is the foundation to most successful ventures, we would like to invite the HSE to engage with THE HomeShare so that collectively we can provide the people of Ireland with a consistent and streamlined service offering.



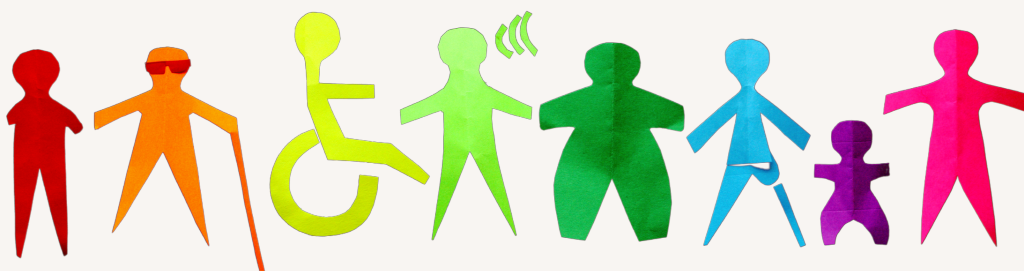
Support to implement Homesharing in the Disability sector

In line with the [Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A strategy for Community Inclusion report](#), people with disabilities are being supported to move from large institutions (congregated settings) to their own homes in the community with the support they need, enabling people to 'live ordinary lives in ordinary places'.

While THE HomeShare's programme is predominantly targeted at older persons, the programme has also worked successfully for those within the disabilities sector. THE HomeShare's model of Homesharing can provide many individuals and families with an additional source of respite and support when returning to community living.

As you will read in our next case study, THE HomeShare currently supports a wonderful match whereby the Householder (a gentleman with intellectual disabilities) has returned to community living having spent 20+ years in supported residential care. He is now happily living in his own home with the support of a local Disability Organisation and a Sharer. He and the Sharer (his 'housemate') have built a strong friendship where both parties are benefiting. The gentleman has the support and security he needs to live independently, and the Sharer has a safe homely environment, and a new friend.

We would urge those within the disabilities sector to engage with us on supporting these individuals in returning to community living, as Homesharing is not confined to the older person community.



CASE STUDY 2



Gary (69) & Kelly (23) – Evolution of a Homeshare match

*Names changed for anonymity

As you might recall from our 2021 Annual Report, Gary and Kelly are a wonderful homeshare match created out of one man's desire for independent living post residential care.

Gary has now been living independently within the community coming up to two years now with his wonderful Sharer Kelly. With the support of THE HomeShare Team, the Disability Association and not least his amazing Sharer Kelly, over this past year, Gary has successfully reintegrated back into the working world post-covid and has been busy attending shows and gigs, taking trips, and learning the guitar!

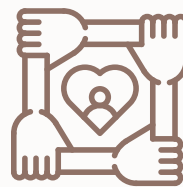
This duo's evolution has been astounding. Not only has Gary successfully engaged in tasks and activities once viewed as mere aspirations, but Kelly has also flourished and evolved. For most, full time education and a part time job in the fitness industry would be difficult enough, however Kelly has taken on even more and is now not only a Sharer working alongside Gary's Disability support team, but she too is now a support worker engaging independently with the service to provide support to others like Gary. So much so in fact that the pair have invited Kelly's service user to Christmas dinner so that she is not alone and can enjoy a homecooked Christmas dinner in Gary's home.

To further establish their homeshare bond, the pair have also adopted a beautiful kitten. This has enabled them to learn and grow together by creating a care plan for the kitten. This past year Gary and Kelly have also travelled together and are planning a trip of a lifetime to Asia in 2023!

THE HomeShare is overjoyed to have played a small part in this match formation however can in no way take any credit for this extraordinary match evolution. Over the past 23 months, the pair have overcome obstacles, created new ways of facing issues, and have supported one another throughout.



UNIFYING GENERATIONS



THE HomeShare was delighted to attend the launch of the '[Unifying Generations: Building the Pathway to Intergenerational Solidarity](#)' Report 2022 in Dublin this December. The Report was launched by Minister Mary Butler and provides insights on the role of older people in society and the power of intergenerational solidarity. Commissioned by [Edwards Lifesciences](#), research was undertaken across 6 European Countries that highlights ways to tackle ageism, foster intergenerational solidarity, and support active and healthy ageing.

Emphasizing the importance of intergenerational relationships, this report is very much in line with THE HomeShare's ethos of forging intergenerational relationship (unifying generations) by matching different generations to live together in harmony and support one another.

Below are some key points taken from the Report that we feel coincide very well with the fundamental principles of homesharing:

The [Central Statistics Office](#) notes it is anticipated that there will be twice as many people aged 65+ living in the Republic of Ireland rising from 696,000 in 2019 to 1,563,000 by 2051. According to the 'Unifying Generations Report', this demographic evolution is often perceived as a burden when in fact, older people and especially the 3rd generation, play a central role as the unifier of the community, providing significant support to the younger generation.

In complete agreement with Edwards', while society often views the ageing population as an issue, we believe that a healthy, ageing population can make a significant contribution from both a social and economic perspective.

There is clear division between generations across the globe. The older generation often undervalue their own contribution which we believe is a form of internalised ageism that needs to be addressed because in Ireland alone, 87% of the younger generation respondents say the support provided by the older generation in their daily life is quite important. This percentage is one of the highest of the 6 Countries surveyed. By empowering our older people to engage and contribute, they soon realise they have much to offer society.

Through Homesharing, Householders have shared many skills and knowledge with their Sharers. Former Barristers supporting trainee solicitors, Accountants teaching their sharers how to use pen and paper vs computerised systems, and as mentioned previously Musicians passing on their skills and knowledge on how to play musical instruments, and much more.

‘Through intergenerational friendship, older adults seek and maintain connectedness and belonging. They continue ‘being themselves’, enjoying pursuits and interests both existing and new, with people who share their interests or whose company they enjoy, regardless of chronological age’.

DR CATHERINE ELLIOTT O 'DARE, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL
POLICY, TCD

One of the most heartening results from the survey was a willingness to engage in relations purely for one's own enjoyment rather than the stereotypical 'give and take' form of intergenerational interactions. We should look beyond tangible benefits and value the friendship itself. Homesharing, while initially perceived as a transactional arrangement of support for accommodation/accommodation for support, it opens the door to a wealth of intangible benefits for both generations. For example, A new lease of life for the Householder, and a new sense of purpose for the Sharer.

There were several benefits from intergenerational interactions highlighted by survey respondents. Companionship/friendship, learning, and mental and emotional wellbeing were identified as the most important. Respondents amongst both the younger and older generations Ireland were 28 times more likely to think closer interactions between different generations are a good thing rather than a bad thing. According to the younger respondents, companionship/friendship is the most valuable thing younger people could offer an older person (62%). Ireland was the top-ranking country surveyed in this regard.

One of the objectives of this report focused on understanding the impact of the pandemic on intergenerational interactions. The survey revealed that some practical solutions could be implemented to create more opportunities for generations to meet and therefore help society recover from the pandemic. One of the most notable solutions identified by younger generation respondents identified was intergenerational housing with 24% of respondents saying this would help them to do more for/with the older generation. Intergenerational housing, such as Homesharing, has the potential to solve problems – not only could it promote solidarity, but also combat the rising cost of living and housing problems in major cities, whilst simultaneously promoting the value of the third generation, and supporting them to remain an active member of their communities.

THE HomeShare wish to thank Edward's Lifesciences, and all involved for this wonderful report highlighting the importance and value of our older population. We applaud your work and welcome further studies.

CASE STUDY 3



Tom & Kri The joy of a furry friend



Tom is a remarkable gentleman who is 96 years young. Prior to engaging with THE HomeShare's homesharing programme, Tom lived alone and was finding it difficult to keep up with his incredible garden and was missing the company of others outside of visits from his wonderful family and carers.

At 96, Tom is still full of life and has just a few minor ailments such a reduced mobility and diminishing eyesight. When THE HomeShare first met with Tom, it was evident he was a hard worker throughout his life, had given much back by way of care, attention, and love to his adoring family, and still had much more to give! We knew a Sharer with the same view on life was a must!

During our search, we came across Kri, a 35-year-old woman originally from Estonia, working and living here in Ireland for over 16 years. Kri, like Tom, has a caring and attentive nature, and a passion for gardening which was an added bonus! Our only concern was that Kri was as you would call, 'a package deal' as she was not alone in her search for accommodation. She and her gorgeous dog Pickles were hoping to find a home together. This had been proving quite difficult for Kri as many accommodation offerings in the open rental market were not dog friendly and she was at risk of having to reluctantly re-home her beloved furry friend.

It was clear that Kri was the ideal match for Tom in Homesharing so her bio was put forward with a footnote that she came with a companion in tow (Pickles). Needless to say, when Tom, Kri & Pickles met, it was a homeshare match made in heaven!

Fast forward 7 months and the trio have developed a wonderful routine and created lasting bonds. Making the most of Tom's incredible garden, full of fruit and vegetable patches, Kri has been cooking up a storm for herself and Tom with fresh ingredients straight from the garden! She too enjoys gardening and the pair have already planned to extend their vegetable patch next year. With Tom's many years of growing fruits and vegetables, Kri has learnt a great deal from Tom.

Each morning after Kri prepares Tom's breakfast and leaves for work, Pickles heads straight into Tom to wish him a good morning and keep him company until the carers arrive. Once wary of the impact an animal could pose to an older person, Pickles is living proof that animals can play a vital role in providing company and joy and can in the right environment with the right training be an asset to an older individual. It is clear to see that Tom is very fond of Pickles. He knows all her little quirks and the pair are very much in sync. The only trouble is that Pickles may need to go on a diet from all the love (treats) she's receiving!

Tom, Kri & Pickles are a testament to Homesharing and we have no doubt their homeshare journey will remain a happy and fulfilling arrangement.



WORLD HOMESHARE CONGRESS



It was with much disappointment and great reluctance that Homeshare International and THE HomeShare announced the cancellation of Ireland's World Homeshare Congress which was due to be held in May 2023 in Dublin Castle.

This difficult decision was due to the uncertainty of Covid-19, current inflation, and the high costs of accommodation for visitors and delegates in Dublin. Events like conferences have been impossible to run or even plan with any confidence for the last 3 years.

We felt optimistic back in early 2021 that we could think ahead and start planning for a super congress Dublin – and in Dublin Castle no less! But the global financial uncertainty that we see continuing to unfold confronted us with such uncertainty and financial risk that we simply had no choice but to make this hard decision.

So, it was back to the drawing board to plan for something achievable ON-LINE in 2023. Instead of the Congress, Homeshare International are hosting a series of sessions throughout the year which began in September 2022 and THE HomeShare look forward to hosting their own session in 2023. See HI in Conversation for details. www.homeshare.org

Homeshare International and THE HomeShare would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Irish Government, in particular the Department of Health and the OPW (Office of Public Works) for their support of the Congress as well as Fáilte Ireland and Dublin City Council.



An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health



OPW

Oifig na
nOibreacha Poiblí
Office of Public Works



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

TESTIMONIALS



It is my first time Homesharing and I love it. Pat is so full of life, knowledge and talent. He's an excellent musician, artist and likes to keep active. The HomeShare team (Lucie and Niamh) are extremely approachable, friendly and helpful. They provide great support, work hard and I know they are at the other end of the line to answer any questions. I have rented in Dublin for years and highly recommend the Homeshare- it is also an opportunity to live in a family home away from home. It is safe, affordable and so rewarding. I have made a great friend in Pat!



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



Homeshare provides a solution to both parties and Lucie is wonderfully supportive and professional in her role. Thank you so much for making such a positive impact on our lives.



Keep up the incredible work! It didn't work out for me, but I will always support this company. Had the absolute pleasure of working with Niamh, and she is truly unbelievable. Incredibly supportive, always available and empathetic to everything you're going through. I will always be grateful that I worked alongside her



Homeshare has allowed our 93-year-old to continue to live at home where his heart is.



This is a fantastic alternative to a nursing home and my mother has benefited socially and mentally by having a live in companion. The whole family are delighted with how it has worked out. It is also a wonderful facility for someone to avail of a lower rent in this housing crisis. It's a win for all involved. Keep up the great work and wonderful matching.



Great service which has worked out well for my elderly mother and enabled her to live at home rather than a nursing home

APPENDIX



- Share and Care
- Support Match
- Homeshare Association
- Help4Housing
- Rent-a-room relief scheme
- Nursing Homes Ireland
- Old People's Home for 4-Year-Olds
- Generations Together Ireland
- Dáil Éireann
- Strategic Workforce Advisory Group
- Family Carers Ireland
- Slaintecare's model of Care in the Community
- Daft Report
- Poverty Income
- Poverty Focus
- Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A strategy for Community Inclusion
- Unifying Generations: Building the Pathway to Intergenerational Solidarity'
- Central Statistics Office
- www.homeshare.org



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