

A YEAR OF SHARED SUCCESS HOMESHARE IMPACT REPORT







2023
ANNUAL REPORT



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CEO MESSAGE



Founder & CEO Lucie Cunningham

As we reflect on the challenges and triumphs of the past year, I am reminded of the resilience and dedication that define our mission at THE HomeShare. In 2023, we faced unprecedented obstacles stemming from the housing crisis, escalating costs of living and rent, and mounting pressure on our healthcare system due to demographic shifts towards an ageing population.

Amidst these daunting realities, THE HomeShare remains uniquely positioned to offer a beacon of hope and practical assistance. By facilitating shared living arrangements between householders and individuals seeking affordable housing, we provide a sustainable solution that addresses multiple crises simultaneously. THE HomeShare is not just a service; it's a lifeline.

Our model not only offers relief from the financial burden of housing and social care costs but also fosters intergenerational connections that combat social isolation and loneliness. Furthermore, by enabling older adults to age in place with dignity and support, we alleviate pressure on our healthcare system while promoting independence and wellbeing.

In the face of adversity, THE HomeShare continues to stand as a testament to the power of community, compassion, and collaboration. Together, we have weathered the storms of 2023 and emerged stronger and more determined than ever to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our Homeshare participants and their families. Your willingness to open your homes and hearts has transformed lives. You've created a ripple effect of kindness and compassion.

As we honour the memory of those we lost in 2023, let us renew our commitment to creating a world where everyone has a place to call home, where people can have affordable options to live in their own homes as they age, and a community to belong to. Their legacy inspires us to persevere in our mission and reminds us of the profound impact we can have when we come together with purpose and compassion.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated team, partners, and supporters whose unwavering commitment sustains our mission. Our 2023 Annual Report is a testament to the resilience and compassion of our community. We celebrate our successes, acknowledge our challenges, and look ahead with determination to continue to build a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

With gratitude and hope,

Lucie Cunningham Founder & CEO

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 only non-profit 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. We are also one of the only Homemshare programmes in the worls that is truely person centred, because of our monthly home visit to ensure continued safeguarding.

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.

Meet the Team



Lucie Cunningham

FOUNDER &CEO



Antoinette O'Reilly

HOMESHARE MANAGER



Geraldine Kubernat

GALWAY HOMESHARE CONSULTANT



Ciara Hegarty

CORK HOMESHARE CONSULTANT

SNAPSHOT OF 2023

THE HomeShare has had a phenomenal year supporting matches in 15 counties across Ireland. Below are some of our most notable achievements

21,223

Practical Support Hours provided

86
Individuals
Housed

18%

Average Growth Year on Year since 2019

New Matches

SURVEY FINDINGS

Householders

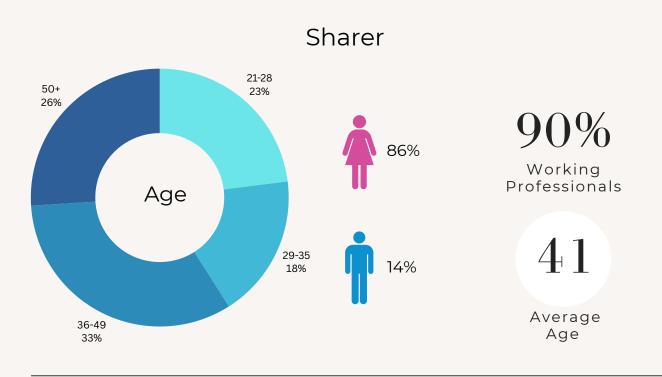
- 100% of Householders feel more secure and comfortable in their homes since Hommesharing
- 100% of Householders feel a sense of purpose and fulfillment since they started Homesharing
- 100% of Householders report Homesharing has had a positive impact on their lives
- 95% of Householders report being extremely satisfied with THE HomeShare service and support
- 91% of Householders reported developing significant bonds with their Sharers

Sharers

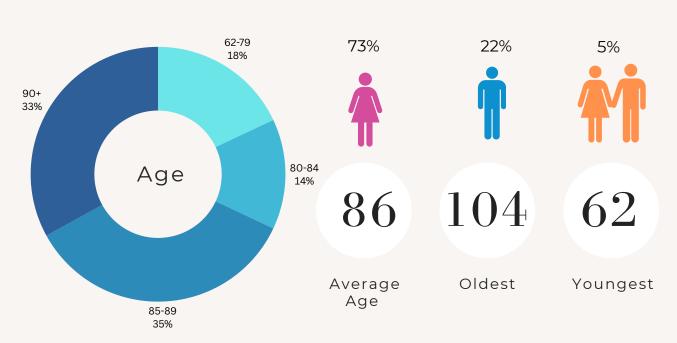
- 100% of Sharers stated they developed a close relationship with the older person they live with
- 85% of Sharers are extremely satisfied with THE HomeShare service and support
- 85% of Sharers stated Homesharing has provided mutual benefits
- 77% of Sharers stated that living with an older person has a Positive impact on their lives
- 77% of Sharers stated they will continue to Homeshare in 2024

MATCH DEMOGRAPHIC



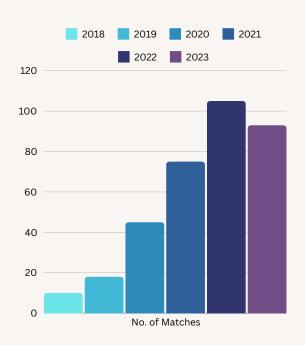


Householder

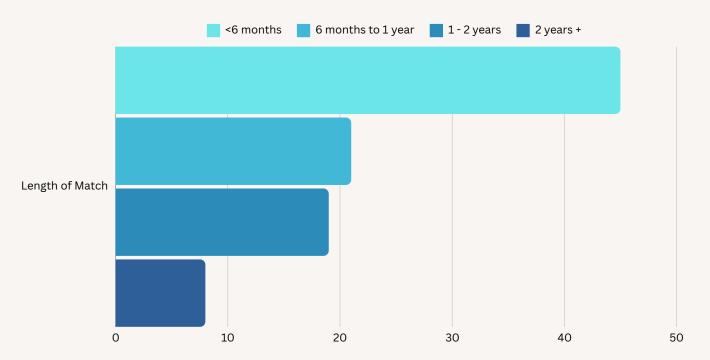


GROWTH PATTERN





Since 2018, THE HomEShare has seen a steady growth trajectory, with a slight decline in 2023 due to the loss of some of our Householders due to long term care needs or sadly passing away. We anticipate further growth in 2024 due of the continued demand for independence as people age plus the demand for affordable housing



The average length of a Homeshare match now stands at over 9.3 months with many Matches now heading into their second and third years of their homeshare arrangments.

YEAR IN REVIEW

Throughout 2023 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)

€859 (average rental of double room exclusive of bills) vs €566 (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.

In 2023, new rules allow individuals living in social housing to rent out a room in their home, earning up to \in 14,000 annually tax-free, without it impacting their pension or social welfare payments. This initiative aims to address housing shortages while also providing additional income opportunities for those in social housing, potentially alleviating financial strains on low-income individuals and families. The move not only encourages efficient use of available housing stock but also supports socioeconomic stability for vulnerable populations.

CASE STUDY 1



In early 2020, amidst global uncertainty, Tom welcomed Joe into his home through THE HomeShare programme. Tom, an 84-year-old recent widower, faced the prospect of solitary living in Dublin, while Joe, a 42-year-old professional, sought affordable housing. Their partnership, seemingly serendipitous, became a lifeline during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amidst lockdowns and isolation, Tom found solace in Joe's companionship and practical support. Joe's ability to work remotely provided reassurance to Tom and his family, offering a sense of security during uncertain times. Their shared living arrangement proved mutually beneficial, blending Tom's wisdom with Joe's vitality, navigating challenges with resilience and companionship.

Homesharing empowered Tom to age in place with dignity, thriving in a supportive environment that mitigated loneliness and isolation. Their shared experiences fostered a sense of purpose and community, enriching both their lives. Over four harmonious years, Tom and Joe's partnership flourished—a blend of generations where stories and experiences intertwined seamlessly.

Joe's presence not only enriched Tom's life but also enabled him to save for his own home, thanks to THE HomeShare programme's affordable housing. For Tom, Homesharing extended his independence for four precious years—a gift made possible by Joe's support and companionship.

In early 2024, as Tom's health declined, he transitioned to long-term care at aged 88. While their shared living came to an end, the impact of their partnership endured. Homesharing provided Tom with vital support in his final years at home, while empowering Joe to achieve homeownership and make a meaningful difference.

The story of Tom and Joe exemplifies the transformative power of Homesharing, particularly in times of crisis. Their partnership embodies resilience, purpose, and community—testifying to the compassion and solidarity at the core of THE HomeShare programme.

CHALLENGES (E.)



Reaching Householders too Late

The average age of Householders supported throughout the year 2023 stands at 86 years of age, with a large proportion suffering from some form of physical or cognitive impairment. Whilst THE HomeShare accommodates all demographics, the most farreaching 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 7% of Householders within the period of January – December 2023 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'.





Reaching Householders too Late

Potential decrease in falls by; TCD Executive MBA report 2023

We attempted to quantify the results of our qualitative research. For this, we assumed 26.7% of older people self-report loneliness and of these, 54% report falls each year. (Ward, et. al., 2019) We then applied 44% fall reduction in the presence of a companion (Giles, et. al., 2016).

Using our findings to the CSO's population forecast for the Dublin region, we calculated an estimated reduction in the number of falls in people aged 55 and over each year which is displayed in the figure below.

According to website www.falls.ie, "The direct and indirect societal costs of falls are enormous, with the healthcare costs alone in Ireland about €500 million annually".

In Dublin alone, we estimate a reduction of 2,519 falls in 2023, increasing up to 3,666 in 2036.

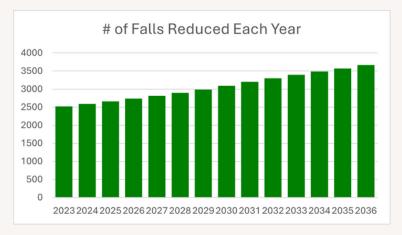


Figure 6. Number of falls reduced each year through THE HomeShare program in the Dublin region.





Housing Crisis

According to the RTB,, In Q4 2023 the standardised average rent in new tenancies grew by 9.1% year-on-year and in existing tenancies grew by 5.9%.

The Irish rental market faced unprecedented challenges in 2023, impacting both tenants and policymakers. The surge in demand for rental properties led to soaring rents, leaving few dwellings available.

The growth of renting resulted in more concentrated property ownership. Unfortunately, this trend has exacerbated the homelessness crisis. Insecurity also plagued tenants, with over 40% feeling uncertain about their housing situation. Renters faced affordability problems due to consistently high rent increases over the past decade.

- Affordability and Insecurity: Renters were twice as likely to encounter affordability issues compared to homeowners. Rental housing remained the most insecure and least affordable type of housing available.
- Government Measures: The Irish government introduced a temporary eviction ban in response to the crisis. However, lifting the eviction ban on 1st April 2023 exacerbated the situation



Housing Crisis

Potential State Savings, by; TCD Executiive MBA Report 2023

We tried to quantify how much money THE HomeShare can save the state by calculating how much money can be saved if some people who use social housing assistance were shifted towards homesharing.

The government of Ireland currently runs multiple housing assistance programs, with HAP being the dominant scheme used by the state. HAP spending has notably increased recently. The Department of Housing budget for HAP payments across 2022 was €564m, up from €465m in 2020 (Brennan, 2022). Hence, we see a huge savings potential for the state if THE HomeShare was able to accommodate some of the people relying on the HAP program through homesharing and relieve some of the pressure on the state.

To come up with an exact figure of how much money can be saved, the below assumptions were made:

- 1. The State payment for singles is €616 per month (30% less than the average). Unfortunately, the government does not release the HAP payment breakdown by occupancy type. However, we have contacted all the city councils seeking payment breakdowns, and based on the answers we received from Donegal, Meath, and Dublin, we believe that this is a valid assumption.
- 2. THE HomeShare will accommodate 50 HAP households in 2023 with 20% yearly growth.
- 3. The average state payment will grow by 5% yearly for the next 5 years reflecting the ongoing increase in rental rates.

Based on these assumptions, we calculated the savings as below:

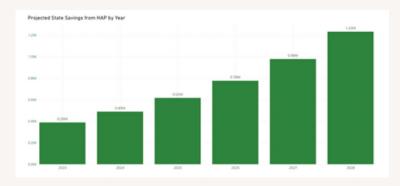


Figure 5. Projected State savings from HAP by year.

According to our predictive model, the government could save a total of €4.5 million through THE HomeShare by 2028. If we assume that THE HomeShare will run a Dublin-focused program where rents are 50% higher than the national average, then this figure could rise to €6.7 million.





Lack of collaboration with Local and National Government

Despite the benefits of THE HomeShare, the majority of local councils have yet to collaborate effectively with this initiative to spread awareness. This lack of partnership may stem from various factors, including limited resources, bureaucratic hurdles, or simply a lack of awareness of the programme's potential. Without active engagement from local councils, THE HomeShare struggles to reach its full potential in addressing housing shortages and fostering social care within communities.

However, if local councils were to actively work with HomeShare to promote its affordable housing and social care model, numerous benefits could materialise.

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

Overall, greater collaboration between local councils and HomeShare has the potential to yield significant positive outcomes in addressing housing affordability and social care challenges at the grassroots level.





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

The delay in home support packages continues to be a pressing issue, particularly for older individuals who wish to remain in the comfort of their own homes but require assistance with daily tasks. This delay stems from a significant shortage of home carers, exacerbated by various factors such as low wages yet high accommodation costs.

As a result, many older people face prolonged waits for essential support services, leading to frustration, isolation, and in some cases, compromised health and wellbeing. The shortage of home carers not only impacts the quality of life for older adults but also places additional strain on families and healthcare systems.

Without timely access to home support packages, older individuals may be forced into alternative care settings, such as nursing homes, which may not align with their preferences or needs. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, including increased investment in caregiver recruitment and training, better remuneration and working conditions for home carers, and improved coordination and delivery of support services at the community level.

Additionally, there is a need for policy reforms and long-term planning to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of home care services for Ireland's aging population. By prioritising and addressing the root causes of the shortage of home carers, policymakers can better meet the growing demand for home support packages and enable older people to age with dignity and independence in their own homes.

But where are these new workers going to live?

Not only can Homeshare enable a timely discharge by 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.

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CASE STUDY 2





Anne Byrne, aged 84, embarked on her Homesharing journey with us in 2021, seeking companionship and support after years of living alone following her husband's death.

Diagnosed with dementia and sight impairment, Anne's family grew increasingly concerned about her well-being, particularly during evenings and nights, when her fear of loneliness was most acute. Homesharing offered a lifeline to Anne, providing her with the companionship and security she desperately needed.

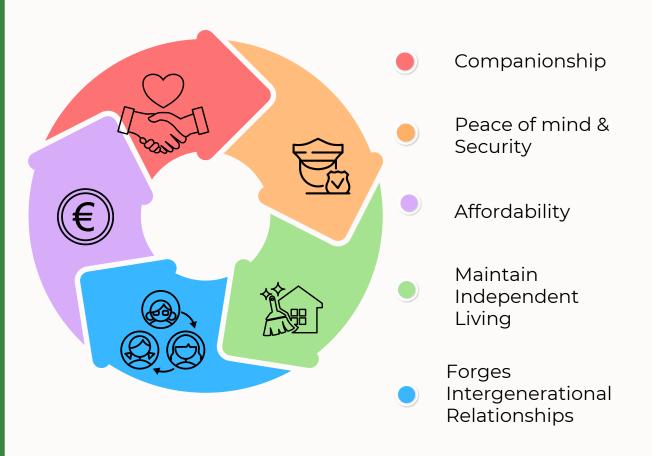
Over a three-year period, Anne welcomed four different sharers into her home, often 2 sharers at the same time which ensured Anne was never alone, even when one sharer took holidays. This arrangement brought stability and companionship into Anne's life, alleviating her fears and anxieties. In December 2022, Sylvia Lopez became Anne's latest Homesharing partner. Their bond was immediate, and they lived together harmoniously for over a year. Sylvia's presence brought joy and companionship to Anne's life, while Anne provided Sylvia with a supportive and homely environment. Their partnership transcended mere companionship; it was built on mutual respect, trust, and genuine care for each other.

Anne's Homesharing journey was cut short when she suffered a bad fall, necessitating a move to long-term care late in 2023. Despite the change in circumstances, the bond between Anne and Sylvia has endured. Sylvia continues to visit Anne regularly in the nursing home, providing comfort and companionship to this day.

The benefits of Anne and Sylvia's Homesharing match extended beyond their own lives; they also touched the hearts of Anne's family members. Witnessing Anne's improved quality of life and the genuine connection she formed with Sylvia brought immense relief and gratitude to her loved ones. Homesharing not only provided Anne with companionship and support but also reassured her family that she was safe and cared for.

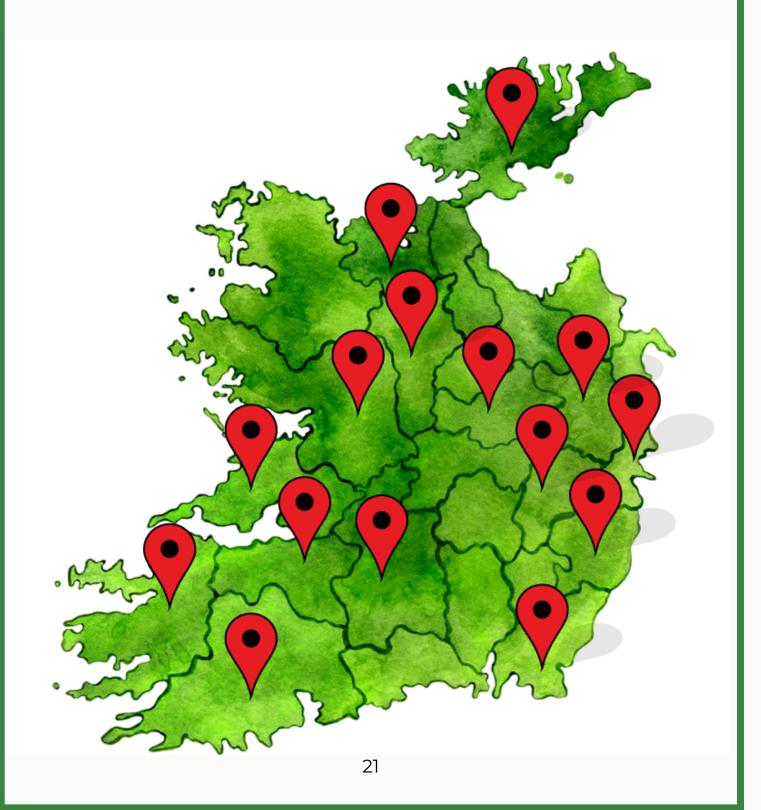
The case of Anne Byrne and Sylvia Lopez exemplifies the transformative power of Homesharing, fostering meaningful connections and improving the lives of both homeowners and sharers alike. Through their partnership, Anne found solace and companionship in her later years, while Sylvia gained a sense of purpose and fulfilment by making a positive impact on someone else's life, whilst also saving for her own future

Benefits of HomeSharing



Map of Matches

We supported Homeshare matches in 15 Counties in 2023



CASE STUDY 3





John, an 85-year-old gentleman, found himself grappling with loneliness after his wife moved into long-term care due to the progression of dementia. Alone in their family home, John not only yearned for companionship but also needed additional income to support the cost of his wife's nursing home care.

Help4Housing, by THE HomeShare, provided a lifeline to John, offering a solution that addressed both his financial and emotional needs. Inspired by the opportunity to earn tax-free income by renting rooms in his home, up to €14,000 per year, John saw an opportunity to not only alleviate his financial burden but also to foster meaningful connections with like-minded individuals.

John's desire to share his home with people he could engage in meaningful conversations with about life, philosophy, and theology was met when he welcomed Chris and Ed into his home. These young men not only rented rooms from John but also became valuable companions who shared his interests and provided practical assistance around the house.

The benefits of this arrangement were manifold. For John, the presence of Chris and Ed brought much-needed companionship and emotional support into his life. Their daily interactions provided a sense of purpose and fulfilment, mitigating the loneliness he experienced living alone. Additionally, their assistance with household chores and shared meals eased John's burden, allowing him to maintain his independence and quality of life.

For Chris and Ed, living with John offered more than just affordable accommodation. It provided them with a supportive and nurturing environment where they could engage in stimulating conversations and learn from John's wealth of life experiences. Their presence also contributed to John's well-being, as they provided companionship and practical assistance, further enhancing the sense of community within the household.

Overall, Help4Housing facilitated a mutually beneficial arrangement where John, Chris, and Ed all found fulfilment and support. Through shared living, they not only addressed practical needs such as housing and income but also forged genuine connections that enriched their lives. This case exemplifies the transformative power of Homesharing, demonstrating how it can provide both financial stability and emotional fulfilment for individuals like John, Chris, and Ed.



Support from the HSE

The Health Service Executive (HSE) should actively signpost older people or individuals living with disabilities to initiatives like THE HomeShare due to the numerous potential benefits it offers. By connecting these individuals with suitable housemates through THE HomeShare, the HSE can facilitate solutions that promote independent living while also addressing social isolation and loneliness, which are prevalent issues among these demographics. Through shared accommodation arrangements facilitated by THE HomeShare, older adults and people with disabilities can enjoy companionship, assistance with daily tasks, and increased social interaction, contributing to overall well-being and mental health. This proactive approach aligns with the HSE's objective of promoting community-based care and empowering individuals to live fulfilling lives in their own homes for as long as possible.

Moreover, by directing individuals to HomeShare, the HSE can potentially realise significant cost savings. Facilitating shared living arrangements through THE HomeShare can alleviate the demand for more intensive and costly forms of care, such as residential care facilities or frequent home visits from healthcare professionals. By fostering independence and social support networks through shared accommodation, THE HomeShare can help reduce the need for formal support services, resulting in reduced strain on the healthcare system and more efficient allocation of resources. Additionally, THE HomeShare can contribute to preventing or delaying the need for institutional care, ultimately resulting in long-term cost savings for the HSE while promoting the well-being and autonomy of older adults and individuals with disabilities.



Support to implement Homesharing in the Disability sector

In line with the <u>Time to Move on from Congregated Settings – A strategy for Community Inclusion</u> 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.

THE HomeShare has supported a wonderful match for over 3 years, whereby the Householder (a gentleman with intellectual disabilities) returned to community living late in 2020, having spent 20+ years in supported residential care. He continues to live happily 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.



TESTIMONIALS



The HomeShare is a fantastic concept! It allows my mum to remain living in her own home with the company and security of a sharer. It's given us, her family, peace of mind knowing that mum isn't alone at night. We know that she has someone kind and caring living with her and that sense of security has made such a difference in mums life. Her sharer is amazing! She's blended in so well with our family, they really are perfectly matched:-) Thanks to Lucie, Geraldine and the amazing team at The HomeShare who are so supportive and have always been there for us. We're so grateful to them for finding mum not only a home sharer but a friend:-)



Homeshare has been a brilliant experience for our family.
Enabling our Dad to remain living independently in his own
home with the best of company.



I had a outstanding experience with the organisation.

Niamh and Lucie were always supportive in terms of the arrangement and beyond. In addition, the householder and the family were kind and lovely to me. The HomeShare programme is more than a service trying to solve housing crisis, is a institution with an honest, quintessential and heartful goal.



THE Homeshare are exceptionally responsive and engaged with their clients, they provide a very high level of care for client and families. Their service has transformed the life of my aging aunt



THE HomeShare Ashleigh House, John F Kennedy Road, Bluebell, Dublin D12VE06 www.thehomeshare.ie info@thehomeshare.ie







