



## Homeshare Information Sheet

### 1. Introduction to Homeshare

#### What is Homeshare?

Homeshare is a simple way of helping people to help each other. **Householders** have a home that they are willing to share and need some companionship or would like some support with household tasks. **Homesharers** need accommodation and are willing to give up to 10 hours a week of help, in exchange for somewhere to stay. By putting these two people together Homeshare finds the Householder the help and companionship they need and the Homesharer a rent free place to live.

#### Homeshare in Ireland

Homeshare Ireland are the first to offer a Homeshare programme in Ireland and are piloting a programme in Cork at present. Once the pilot has been successfully completed we hope to roll out the service to other city areas.<sup>1</sup> However Homesharing is a very successful model in America, France, Belgium, Australia and in other countries. There have been a small number of Homeshare Programmes in the UK for over 20 years but it has remained quite small scale. There are currently 10 Homeshare Programmes in England in West Sussex, Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, Bristol, Somerset and 4 in London.

#### Who can get involved with Homeshare?

Householders must have a home that is suitable for sharing and be in need of some support or companionship. Householders can be single or couples and are often older people or those with a disability or illness. Homesharers must be able to spare the time to give support or companionship to a Householder. They can be single people, couples or even families with children. However the more people involved the more complicated things get and the less

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<sup>1</sup>

likely it is that a match will be made. Homesharers come from all walks of life and can be any age as long as they are over 18

### **What are the benefits of Homeshare?**

For the Householder and their family

- Help with daily tasks, such as cooking and cleaning
- Companionship
- Security within the home
- Reassurance for family and friends
- Meeting new and different people and learning from them

For the Homesharer

- Save money, by not paying rent
- Companionship
- Living in places, which otherwise may be inaccessible
- Meeting new and different people and learning from them

### **The Homeshare Coordinator**

The Homeshare Co-ordinator finds suitable Householders and Homesharers and acts as introductory agency. Co-ordinators help draw up an agreement between participants and provide support that they need in order to keep the arrangement working well. They also advise people at the end of a Homeshare arrangement.

### **What Homeshare is *not***

Homeshare does not:

- Provide the Householder with a live in Housekeeper or Cleaner.
- Offer the Householder help with their personal care for example bathing, dressing, using the toilet or taking medication.
- Just offer Homesharers free accommodation; they need to give some of their time and commitment in return.

Homeshare is an arrangement between two competent people. The Homeshare Coordinator helps set up this arrangement and offers some support but essentially participants must take full responsibility for its success. It is essential that any new Homeshare applicants are clear in advance about this and about the boundaries of Homeshare.

### **Homeshare stories from the UK**

#### *Contributing and keeping active*

Mrs. Booth is 82 years old and has a Homesharer called Nina with whom she has shared her home for a year. Mrs. Booth has a husband who has dementia and who lives in a nursing home. Mrs.

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Booth has lost the confidence to drive and she now finds it difficult to keep up with her friends and to visit her husband. As part of the Homeshare arrangement Nina drives Mrs. Booth to visit her husband every day and to spend time with her friends.

*Support to come home from hospital*

Omar is 45 years old and until recently worked as an Architect. Omar became ill, went into hospital and was unable to return home because he was too weak to support himself. Tom is a 27 year old Canadian student who has come to the UK to study. Tom has limited financial resources and accommodation near to the university is extremely expensive. The Homeshare Programme matched Omar and Tom. Omar's stay in hospital could have been much longer if Tom had not been in place as a Homesharer. Omar and Tom have a number of common interests and enjoy spending time together. Tom does any heavy tasks in the home and Tom and Omar walk Tom's two dogs together every day and this has enabled Omar to build up his strength. Omar's health has steadily improved and he will soon be ready to go back to work and to live on his own once again.

*Peer group support to enable a young person with a disability to live in their own home*

Cally is 25 and lives in a flat that she has bought through a shared ownership scheme run by a local Housing Association. Cally has lived for most of her life with her parents and has never gained the skills or confidence to live on her own. Cally lives with her Homesharer, Kat, who is also 25 and works for the local council. Kat really values the chance to live in the flat, rent free, and be so near to her work. Kat helps Cally to plan and prepare meals. Cally finds it very difficult to make friends so Kat and Cally socialise together and meet new people. Cally's Mum is very close to her daughter and keeps in regular contact. Mum gives Kat some support and advice to help her to gain the skills and confidence that she needs to support Cally well.

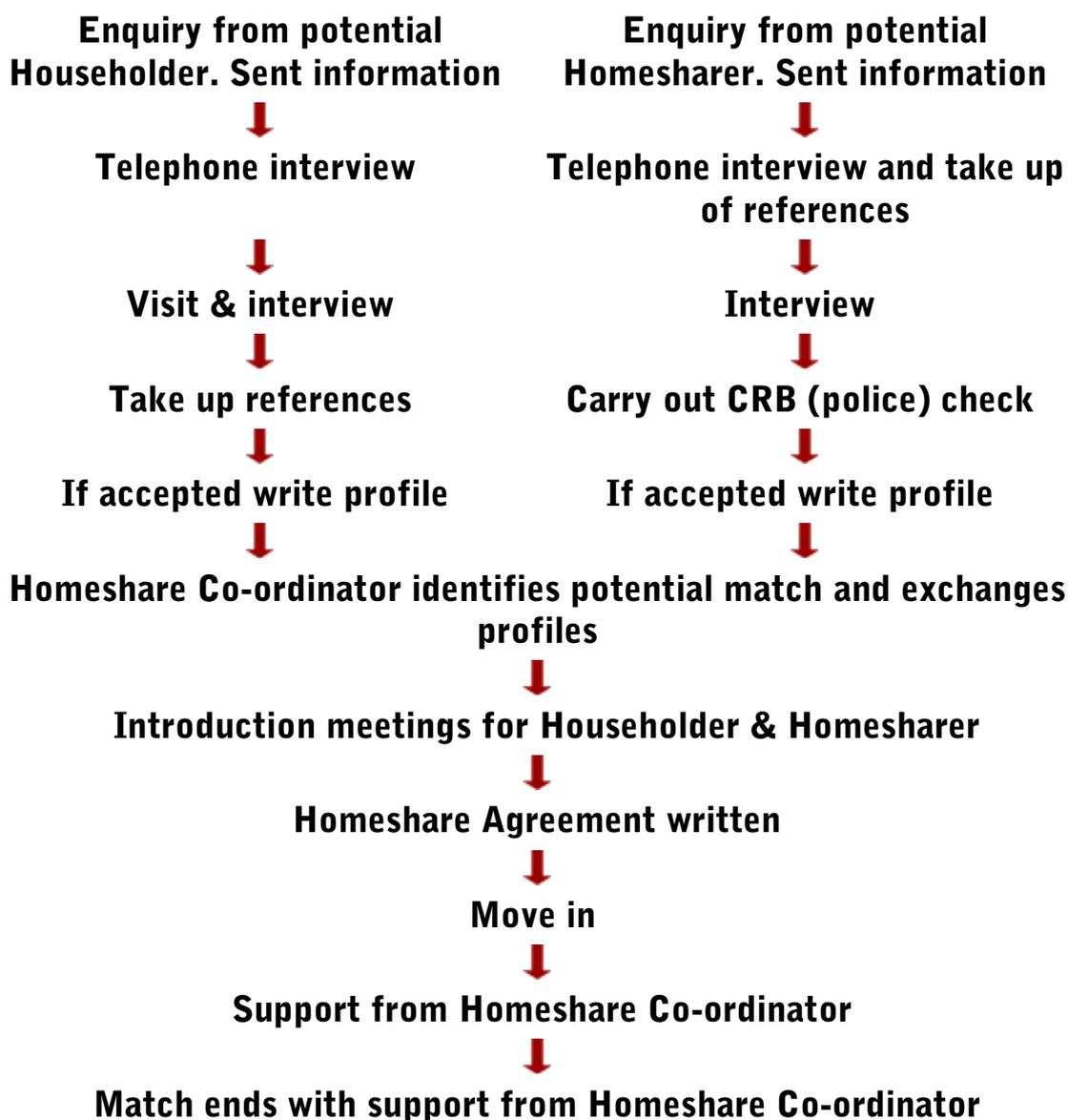
*Low cost, high quality accommodation for Homesharers*

Anna is a student nurse who is concerned about the cost of housing in any area close enough to the place where she works. Anna contacted her local Homeshare Programme and was successfully matched to live with Irene. Irene has a beautiful house that she has lived in for many years. At the top of the house are a bedroom, bathroom, small sitting area and outside terrace that are used by Anna. The area in which the house is situated is one of the most expensive in the area and Anna would never have been able to consider living there without Homesharing. Anna has saved

money and hopes to buy a place of her own in the near future once she gets a full time nursing position

### **The process of joining a Homeshare Programme**

Every Householder and Homesharer has to go through an application process to make sure they understand Homeshare, are eligible to join the programme and have been interviewed and checked. The application process is shown below



Applicants are jointly responsible with the Homeshare Coordinator for ensuring that the application process runs smoothly and does not take too long. Applicants will need to supply information promptly when requested. Checks and references can take several weeks to be returned and applicants cannot be accepted onto the programme until these have been completed. The Homeshare Coordinator can take no responsibility for reminding applicants or chasing information.

Once checks are completed a Homeshare match can occasionally be made within a matter of days however; it can take several weeks or even months

**For further information:**

Please contact Jacqui or Sean Feely 087-2771103