

# The Homeshare Partnership Programme Evaluation

## May 2018

### What is Homeshare?

Homeshare brings together older people and others who need support to stay in their homes, known as **householders**, with young people and others, known as **homesharers**, who provide companionship and ten hours per week of low level practical support in return for an affordable place to live.

Participants pay monthly fees to Homeshare organisations to support the matching process; these fees are normally lower than the cost of other housing or support options. The model is adaptable, so that the homesharer rather than the householder may be the person with support needs, for instance someone with a learning difficulty.

### The Homeshare Partnership Programme

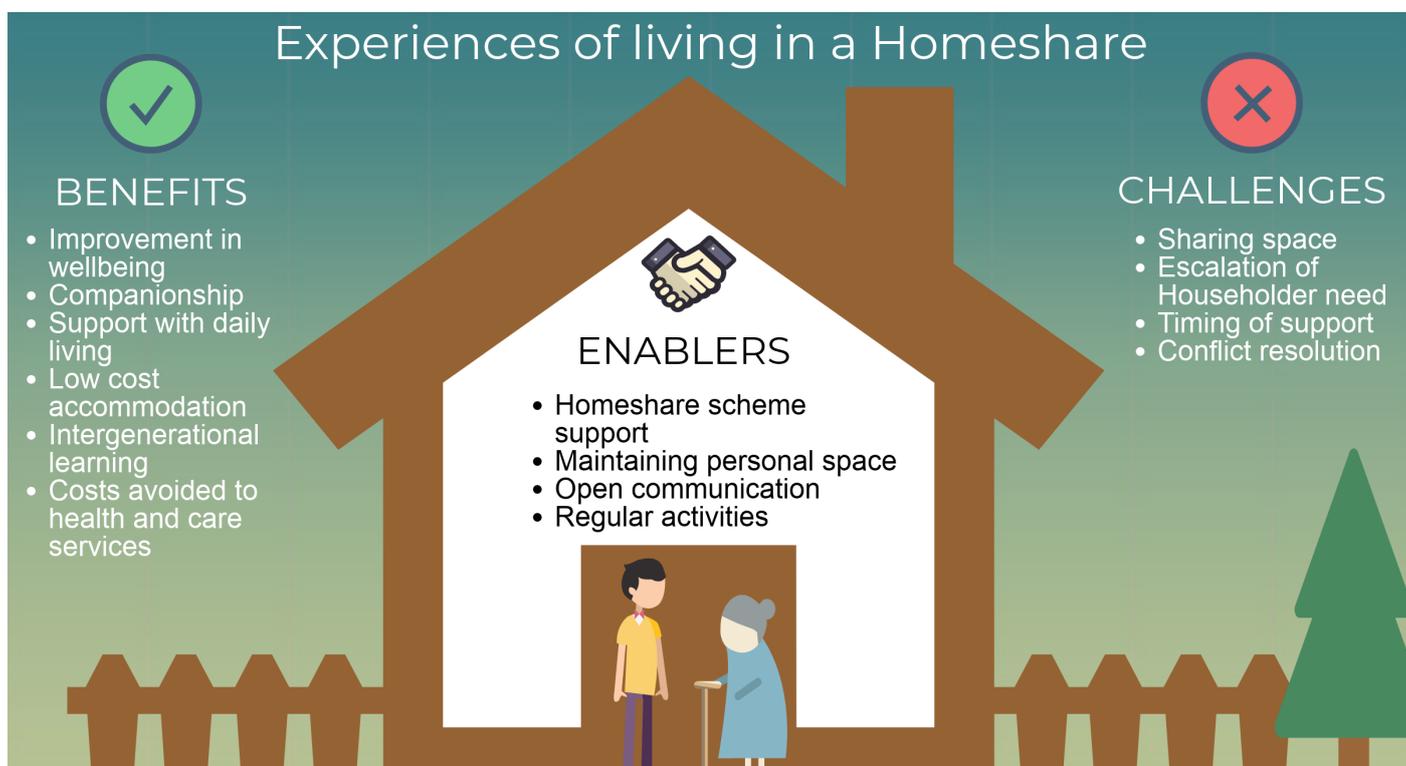
The Homeshare partnership programme was funded by the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales and the Big Lottery Fund, using National Lottery funding. They jointly invested £2m to support eight pilot sites in England and Scotland over three years to test and develop schemes which support Homesharing.

### The evaluation

Parallel to the pilot scheme's development and implementation, an independent evaluation was carried out by Traverse, managed by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). Qualitative interviews were conducted with pilot staff, local authority stakeholders, referral agencies, householders and homesharers. The results, presented in the full report, identify both 'what works' and the barriers faced in relation to operating sustainable local Homeshare schemes. It also identifies further learning on supporting sustainability and the legacy of the pilots.

### The findings

This image summarises the evaluation's findings around householders' and homesharers' experiences:



## Benefits to householders and homesharers

- Householders and homesharers both experienced reduced loneliness and improved wellbeing, especially mental health. There was also reduced use of secondary health care and social care
- Householders and homesharers both enjoyed intergenerational relationships and learning, including culinary skills, language skills and IT skills; some older people were enabled to shop online and communicate with friends and family further away
- Homesharers were able to live affordably in locations they may otherwise be unable to access
- Householders were enabled to maintain independence in their own homes

“I value the company the most, because I was on my own, had no one to talk to and you get bored when you’re on your own. Now that I’ve got Lauren [homesharer], I’ve got someone to talk to.”

Householder, PossAbilities



The evaluation found support from Homeshare scheme staff to be vital in helping to manage what would otherwise be the inevitable conflicts that might be expected when two people learn to live together:

## Challenges for matched householders and homesharers

- Becoming accustomed to sharing space
- The escalation of a householder’s care needs
- Identifying when support needs to be provided
- Navigating resolution of conflict between matches

## Enablers to overcoming those challenges

- Ongoing support from the Homeshare scheme staff to assist with open communication between homesharer and householder, supporting conflict resolution and relationship development - for example agreeing expectations on noise, shared space, time spent together
- Maintaining personal space for homesharer and householder
- Sharing interests such as religion, political allegiance and hobbies

“For me, there are the practical benefits of affordable living and independence in the city, which is a huge thing. I don’t think I could have afforded to live here and do the occupation I’m doing without Homeshare.”

Homesharer, Novus



## Learning points for Homeshare providers, schemes and local authorities

- Sustained and segmented marketing is required to attract, engage and secure buy-in from referral agencies, local authority partners and local populations
- Schemes can achieve financial sustainability with only a small number of matches, due to low staffing requirements
- The social benefits for Homeshare participants carry economic value in costs avoided to health and social care
- Not every scheme funded achieved matches during the pilot period. Matching takes time to establish, both in identifying appropriate individuals to be matched locally and ensuring match candidates have been approved through appropriate checks (such as DBS)
- Homeshare is best suited to supporting householders with lower levels of need
- When establishing a new scheme, safeguarding and quality assurance policies, alignment with local need and careful matching should all be considered

“Our Local Authority has been supportive all the way along but the commissioner doesn’t write strategies. Getting the people at the top involved has been an issue.”

Homeshare scheme staff

“I think when a genuine friendship develops, it’s no longer so contrived and it’s a genuine relationship. The actual matching is key.”

Homeshare scheme staff

## Ensuring Homeshare’s continued success

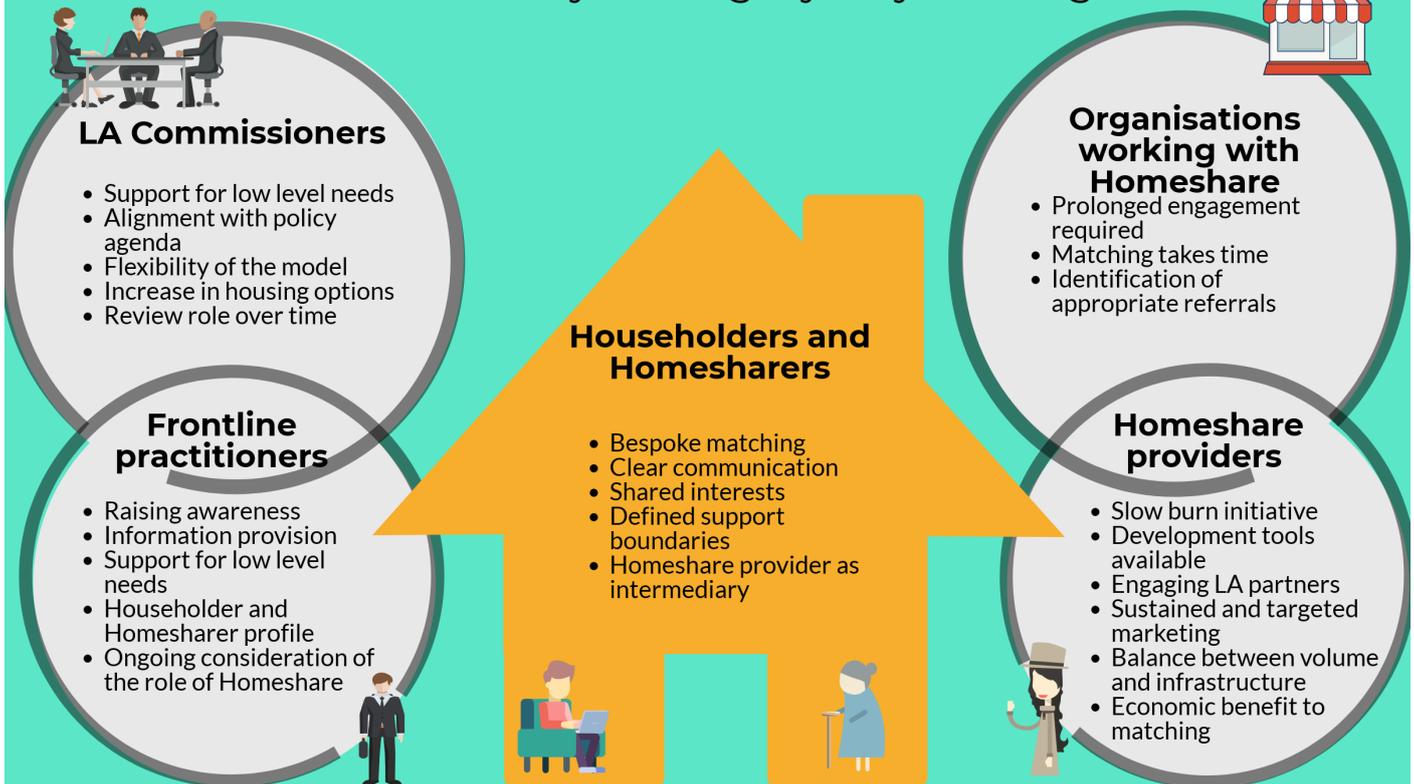
- Local authorities must be engaged throughout the development of Homeshare schemes, securing buy-in at senior and frontline levels; providing policy and practice documents to demonstrate credibility and address concerns; refining the model to align with local priorities
- Schemes must use segmented marketing approaches, including developing referral pathways with organisations with complementary aims to Homeshare; ongoing communication with frontline housing and social care professionals will ensure effective and appropriate referrals
- Monitoring and evaluation should be used to identify successes in engaging local populations and the efficacy of marketing materials
- Schemes must have the freedom to flex the Homeshare model and thus be able to develop personalised strategies according to their needs, in order to secure financial sustainability beyond the funded period



“It’s going to help people remain in their home longer and promote personal independence for longer - which will be vital for us in terms of the extra-care perspective.”

Housing lead, Knowsley

## Sustainability and legacy: Key learning



“We see a lot of people who have lost a partner and live in a three bedroom house. They just want someone to talk to. Where Homeshare does work it could make a life-changing difference.”

Homeshare scheme staff

## Be part of the Homeshare story

To read the full Evaluation report or to find out more about Homeshare, including whether there is a scheme in your area or how to set one up and get support to do so please visit:

[www.homeshareuk.org](http://www.homeshareuk.org)

Whether you're a local authority commissioner, a funder, work in health or social care or are interested in becoming a Homesharer yourself please get involved. Together we can make Homeshare a solution to loneliness, isolation and the lack of affordable housing.

**LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION**

England & Wales



**NATIONAL  
LOTTERY FUNDED**



social care  
institute for excellence

**SharedLivesPlus**  
THE UK NETWORK FOR SHARED LIVES AND HOMESHARE

