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**An Evaluation of
Homeshare Pilot Programmes in
West Sussex,
Oxfordshire and Wiltshire**

Jane Coffey

July 2010

“... it was one of the greatest experiences I had. In fact it was one of the most important experiences [I had] here - I thought university was going to be but I must say that Homeshare was. It taught me as much as the university”

Homesharer 2008

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Jane Coffey
Senior Lecturer in Adult Nursing
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July 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Homeshare pilot programmes were funded by Section 64 grants from the Department of Health. Funding for the development and management of the Homeshare programmes in West Sussex and in Oxfordshire was awarded to the NAAPSUK and funding for the evaluation of the programmes was awarded to Oxford Brookes University. The Homeshare programmes in each area were 'hosted' by the Local Authority. Homeshare in West Sussex started in August 2006 and in Oxfordshire in January 2007.

This evaluation was originally designed to be of two pilot Homeshare programmes in West Sussex and Oxfordshire. A third pilot Homeshare programme (Wiltshire) began in June 2007 and was added to the evaluation in December 2007.

Homeshare is a way of enabling a person who requires some support (known as a 'Householder') to remain living independently. The Householder exchanges accommodation for ten hours of support¹ from a 'Homesharer' each week. The Homesharer moves into the Householder's spare room. It is a mutually beneficial arrangement whereby the Householder gets the support they need to live independently and the Homesharer gets free accommodation in exchange for providing ten hours of support each week.

A 'Homeshare Coordinator' facilitates the arrangement and is also involved in marketing the programme and dealing with enquiries and applications. A Homeshare match is made when a Householder and Homesharer with compatible wants, needs and interests is found.

¹ not care

The scope of this evaluation

This evaluation considered the Homeshare experience from three perspectives:

1. Those involved in setting up the programme (i.e. Homeshare Coordinators and their managers),
2. Householders and
3. Homesharers.

Methods

A mixed methods approach to collecting qualitative and quantitative data was used. Information was gathered in the following four areas:

1. enquiries to the Homeshare programme by Householders and Homesharers
2. applications to the Homeshare programme
3. Homeshare Coordinators' and their line managers' experiences of the Homeshare programme
4. Householders' and Homesharers' experiences of the Homeshare programme

Key findings

Ninety one applicants (24 Householders and 67 Homesharers) agreed to take part in the evaluation. This represents 27% of all the people who applied to take part in the Homeshare programme. Sixteen matches were made and six Householders and ten Homesharers who were matched agreed to be interviewed by the Homeshare researcher. The majority of Householders and Homesharers who were matched reported on the considerable benefits they gained. Four trial matches were made but these did not progress to a full match. Only one individual in a trial match went on to take part in a successful match and the evaluation; the others did not take part in the evaluation.

- Most matches worked well with Householders and Homesharers reporting positive outcomes

- It took a long time after the programme had been set up to make the first successful match (ten months). This seemed to be related to the ambitious size of the geographical area covered by the Homeshare programme;
- There was a time-lag between participants submitting applications and references and CRB check clearance;
- There were lower than anticipated referral rates to the Homeshare programmes from professionals and the voluntary sector;
- Sixteen successful matches were made across the three pilot programmes
- The terms of the Homeshare agreement were not always fully understood by Householder and Homesharer.

Conclusions

This evaluation has demonstrated that Homeshare has been successful. Interest in the programme has been demonstrated by number of applications received (three hundred and thirty nine). Sixteen Homeshare matches were made and most of these have been sustained for several months. The next steps are to increase the number of matches made and to ensure that Homeshare offers good value for money.

Recommendations for future Homeshare programmes

Recommendation 1: A value for money analysis is needed.

Recommendation 2: Homeshare programmes need to operate within a small and defined geographical area and extend out from this only when they become established

Recommendation 3: A professional engagement strategy should be identified to ensure that appropriate professionals are aware of the Homeshare programme and understand the referral criteria.

Recommendation 4: Homeshare programmes should consider how they can be respond more quickly to situations such as assisting in discharge from hospital whilst maintaining existing standards.

Recommendation 5: The time between accepting applications and generating matches needs to be shorter than those reported in this pilot study.

Recommendation 6: The Homeshare Coordinator should ask applicants to specify a time frame within which they need to find a match so that if the potential applicant has unrealistic expectations they can be appraised and time saved for both the applicant and the Homeshare Coordinator.

Recommendation 7: The Homeshare Coordinator should capture and analyse the reasons given by Householders and Homesharers who have taken part in a trial match which does not progress to a full match in order to learn from this.

Recommendation 8: Incentivise applicants to appraise the Homeshare Coordinator of changes in their status by charging them a refundable application fee (this was not possible during the pilot programme).

Recommendation 9: Homeshare programmes should consider targeting students as potential Homesharers.

Recommendation 10: The Homeshare agreement should document the support requested by the Householder and the support offered by the Homesharer, the accommodation offered, the expected contribution to Household bills, and the support they can expect from the Homeshare Coordinator. Advice should be sought to ensure the agreement does not then become a contract of employment.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Summary

This chapter sets out the background and context to the Homeshare pilot programme evaluation.

1.2 Background

This report is intended for the Department of Health, for Homeshare staff, and for interested academics and researchers.

The Homeshare pilot programmes were funded by Section 64 grants from the Department of Health. Funding to test out the Homeshare Practice Guide in West Sussex and in Oxfordshire and review it were awarded to the NAAPSUK and funding for the evaluation of the programmes was awarded to Oxford Brookes University.

The Homeshare programme is a way of enabling a person who requires some support (known as a 'Householder') to live independently. The Householder exchanges accommodation for ten hours of support² from a 'Homesharer' each week. The Homesharer moves into the Householder's spare room. It is a mutually beneficial arrangement whereby the Householder gets the support they need to live independently and the Homesharer gets free accommodation in exchange for providing ten hours of support each week.

² Not care

1.3 Aims and Objectives

This evaluation considered the Homeshare experience from three perspectives:

- 1 Those involved in setting up the programme (i.e. Homeshare Coordinators and their managers),
2. Householders and
3. Homesharers.

Key objectives were to provide:

- information on why people seek Homeshare arrangements and who will be best suited to Homeshare;
- information on the extent to which Homeshare might enable people to remain in, or gain, their own home.

to identify:

- factors relevant for the matching of Homeshare partners;
- key ingredients of a successful Homeshare arrangement;
- benefits of Homeshare for Householders and Homesharers;
- common problems in Homeshare arrangements and possible solutions;
- key events that may contribute to the outcome of Homeshare arrangements;
- how satisfied Householders and Homesharers are with the processes of matching and the support received;
- financial savings from Homeshare arrangements;
- existing services providing support to Householders;
- the range of support requirements needed by Householders;
- the number of Householders who have been previously unknown to statutory services.

and to establish how satisfied Householders and Homesharers are with the subsequent Homeshare relationship and the impact on the quality of life of all parties.

1.3.1 Homeshare programme

The evaluation was originally designed to be of two Homeshare pilot programmes: the West Sussex Homeshare programme, which started in August 2006 and the Oxfordshire Homeshare programme, which started in January 2007. In order to provide a robust analysis, the original intention had been to recruit at least 16 Homeshare matches and to interview them at two points in time over the course of the programme.

By October 2007, there had been 177 enquiries (102 from Householders, 75 from Homesharers), 47 applications (23 from Householders, 24 from Homesharers) and 1 successful match in West Sussex. In Oxfordshire, there had been 67 enquiries (25 from Householders, 42 from Homesharers), 19 applications (7 from Householders, 12 from Homesharers) and 1 match.

These numbers demonstrated that a great deal of interest in the programmes had been generated over a short period of time and that knowledge of the programmes was being disseminated effectively. However, the number of Homeshare applications and matches made was fewer than anticipated. This in itself was not a reason for concern, as this is not uncommon amongst new Homeshare Programmes³ but it did raise questions about completing the evaluation in the agreed time period (by 30 June 2009).

It was therefore proposed to add a third Homeshare Programme to the evaluation in an attempt to increase the number of matches that could be analysed for the purposes of the study. The Wiltshire Homeshare Programme was set up in June 2007 and was added to the evaluation in December 2007. Funding for the Wiltshire programme was from *Supporting People* for two years to the end of May 2009.

³ See interim report 2007

The Department of Health agreed to the addition of the Wiltshire Homeshare programme to this evaluation. It was also agreed that a final report would be produced in December 2009, rather than July 2009, to allow for an extra six months of data to be collected⁴.

Chapter two outlines the Homeshare concept in detail.

⁴ This extension was at no extra cost to the Department of Health.

Chapter 2 – The Homeshare Concept

2.1 Summary

This chapter sets out the Homeshare concept in detail and gives an overview of the relevant literature. It also describes the organisational structure of the Homeshare pilot programmes.

2.2 What is Homeshare?

Homeshare is an arrangement whereby a person who requires some support in order to live independently⁵ can exchange accommodation for the support. Accommodation in the form of a spare room is offered in exchange for ten hours of support⁶ each week. Homeshare is a mutually beneficial arrangement whereby the 'Householder' gets the support they need to live independently and the 'Homesharer' gets free accommodation in exchange for ten hours of support each week.

Homeshare is a community based programme and was highlighted in the green paper 'Independence, Well-being and Choice' (DH 2005) as an example of innovative practice.

In essence Homeshare is a very simple way of helping people to help each other. Two people, a 'Householder' who requires support and will provide

⁵ The Householder may need support to remain living in his or her own home or may need support to enable him or her to gain a home

⁶ Not care

accommodation and a 'Homesharer' who requires accommodation and will provide support are 'matched' by the Homeshare Coordinator⁷.

The arrangement works because both parties have different needs and both have something to exchange.

In the case of the Householder, his/her independence may be potentially compromised by disability, the ageing process or other circumstances. However, if a Householder is given some low-level support by a Homesharer, the opportunity to remain either living independently in their own home or gain a home may become a viable option and one that perhaps might not be possible without the Homeshare programme.

'Homesharers' are people who can offer support in exchange for free accommodation⁸. Homesharers may chose to apply to Homeshare for a wide variety of reasons: they may be students or people with a low income in search of cheap accommodation; they may be lonely or have recently moved to an area and would like to become familiar with the neighbourhood and make friends before making the commitment to rent or buy commercially; or they may simply be altruistic and keen to support people in their community.

The Homeshare Coordinator facilitates the Homeshare arrangement by interviewing people who apply to take part in the programme to identify their needs and their interests. References for Householders and Homesharer are required to derisk the arrangement and a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check is carried out for all candidates applying to be Homesharers⁹. The Homeshare Coordinator then suggests a number of potential matches. The Householder and Homesharer then meet each other and agree to a trial match for four weeks

⁷ In a Homeshare arrangement the person who requires support and is willing to share their home is known as the Householder. The person providing the support is the Homesharer.

⁸ In the Homeshare pilot schemes Homeshares were expected to contribute to the Householder's utility bills

⁹ There is no requirement to carry out a CRB check on Householders.

before going forward to engage in a formal Homeshare agreement. The Homeshare Coordinator remains in contact to provide on going support as necessary.

2.3 The Homeshare evidence base

While the Homeshare premise seems sound and the concept simple, there have been few evaluative studies of such programmes despite a number of similar schemes that are run in three continents (America, Australia and Europe). One small-scale evaluation of a UK programme has been published and the rest of the evidence base is from programmes outside of the UK.

An overview of the studies available provides some valuable insights. Jaffe and Howe (1989) identified three types of matches (dependent, transitional and independent) and made recommendations for organisational support accordingly. Montague (2001) acknowledged the importance of a skilled manager to run a successful programme and Thornton (1995), in a small-scale evaluation of a Homeshare scheme in London, identified a need to develop protocols and matching criteria.

Underwood and Wuld cited in Jaffe (1989b) argued that the key to stability includes income from multiple sources of funding, integration of the homesharing programme within existing service networks and the support of local media. These findings are supported by anecdotal evidence gathered from unsuccessful programmes in the UK and abroad. In an Economic Evaluation of Homeshare in Victoria, Australia, Carstein (2003) made two recommendations concerning funding. Firstly, to consider some participant funding and secondly, to pursue additional funding from governmental departments.

A review of Homeshare Texas's impact and contribution to the Community 1984-2004 (Shared Housing Center Inc. 2004) sets out some evidence of financial

savings and health and safety benefits to the Householder, Homesharer and their families. This is supported by both Carstein and Montague (2001) who reported Homeshare's value in Australia as an option for older people to remain in their own homes whilst providing low cost accommodation for younger people.

Homeshare makes use of current housing stock (there is a significant amount of under occupied accommodation in Britain (ONS 2005)) and it meets the government's agenda for offering people choice (2002, 2006).

The introduction and evaluation of these programmes is timely. England has an ageing population and a decrease in the number of younger people which can contribute to a decrease in support offered and received. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to meet the goals of Our Health, Our Care, Our Say (DH, 2006) which includes better prevention services with earlier intervention and more choice.

2.4 Organisational structure of the Homeshare pilot programmes

Change Up funding from the Home Office was awarded to NAAPS in 2005 for one year to scope Homeshare around the world and in the UK and to produce the Homeshare Practice Guide. Funding from Change Up was also awarded to Oxford Brookes University in 2005 for one year to complete a feasibility study on Homeshare in Oxfordshire.

The outcome of these two pieces of work was that West Sussex and Oxfordshire were identified as suitable sites for the two pilot Homeshare programmes. During that year a Homeshare Practice Guide was produced (see www.homeshare.org.uk).

Following these studies funding from the Department of Health (DH) (Section 64) for the development of two pilot Homeshare programmes was awarded to the National Association of Adult Placement Services (NAAPS) in 2006 for two years. The Homeshare evaluation was funded by the DH (Section 64) in 2006 for 3 years.

Organisationally these two programmes were managed by the NAAPS project manager with local support.

Homeshare in West Sussex was 'hosted' by West Sussex County Council. The West Sussex Homeshare Coordinator was appointed in August 2006 and was supported on a day-to-day basis by the Commissioning Strategic and Performance Manager of Services for Older People and People with Physical and Sensory Impairment at West Sussex County Council.

Homeshare in Oxfordshire was 'hosted' by Oxfordshire County Council. The Oxfordshire Homeshare Coordinator was appointed in January 2007 and was supported on a day to day basis by the manager of the Adult Placement Programme in Oxfordshire.

The Wiltshire Homeshare pilot programme was added to this evaluation in December 2007 because the West Sussex and Oxfordshire pilot programmes had not recruited as many Householders and Homesharers as anticipated. Homeshare in Wiltshire was not project managed by NAAPS but was solely managed by Wiltshire County Council. It was funded by Supporting People Programme money. The Wiltshire Homeshare Coordinator was supported by the manager of Transformation Services in Wiltshire County Council.

Table 1 below provides an overview of the management structure of each pilot programme.

Table 1 Pilot Homeshare Programmes: Management Structure

Area	West Sussex	Oxfordshire	Wiltshire
Managed by	NAAPS Project Manager		Wiltshire County Council
Programme host	West Sussex County Council	Oxfordshire County Council	Not applicable.
Homeshare Coordinator	Appointed August 2006	Appointed January 2007	Appointed June 2007
Supported by	West Sussex County Council	Oxfordshire County Council	Wiltshire County Council
Programme evaluated by	Oxford Brookes University		

2.5 Steering groups for the Homeshare pilot programmes

2.5.1 Homeshare Advisory Steering Group

A Homeshare advisory group met three times a year to provide advice and guidance on the pilot Homeshare programmes in West Sussex and Oxfordshire.

Membership was from the statutory and voluntary sectors and included David Ellis (Social Care Institute of Excellence, Chair), Clive Newton (Age Concern England), Annie Stephenson (Help the Aged), Angela Catley (Homeshare project manager), Elizabeth Mills (Homeshare International), Jane Coffey (Oxford Brookes University), Sian Lockwood (NAAPS), Sue Watt (Royal College of Nursing), Andy Tilden (Skills for Care), Andy Murphy (Vitalise) and Philip Spiers (NHFA).

2.5.2 Project Steering Groups

In addition to the overall Homeshare Advisory Steering Group there were two separate steering groups for West Sussex and Oxfordshire. Both had

representation from the relevant Local Authority and other statutory and voluntary organisations and each met four times a year. There was no project steering group in Wiltshire.

Chapter three outlines the methods used in the evaluation.

Chapter 3 – Methods

3.1 Summary

This chapter provides an outline of the methods used to gather data for the evaluation. It describes the way in which suitable quantitative and qualitative methods were both identified and applied.

3.2 Introduction

An evaluation of an innovative service generally requires the application of more than one method and accordingly, this evaluation used a mixed methods approach; both quantitative and qualitative methods were used and data was gathered in the following four areas:

1. enquiries to the Homeshare programme by Householders and Homesharers .
2. applicants to the Homeshare programme
 - data were gathered on the number of people who made an application to the Homeshare programme;
 - all applicants to the programme were asked if they would like to participate in the evaluation. If they consented, data collected by the Homeshare Coordinator at the initial interview (demographic information and reasons for applying which were needed to establish a good match) were shared with the researcher. Applicants were also asked to complete Quality of Life (QOL) questionnaires and four questions about their financial situation at this initial interview and then again for the second time at four months and for the third time at nine months.

3. Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers' experiences of the Homeshare programme
 - Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers were interviewed by the Homeshare researcher at two points in time. The first interview took place within a few weeks of their being appointed and the second interview took place in April/May 2009. These interviews were designed to solicit information about their experiences in setting up the programme, in publicising the programme, in dealing with enquires and applications, and in supporting Householders and Homesharers who were matched, as well as how the programme fitted within their own organisation

4. Householders' and Homesharers' experiences of the Homeshare programme
 - Householders and Homesharers who were matched and who had consented to participate in the evaluation took part in two interviews with the Homeshare researcher. These interviews were designed to explore their experiences of the Homeshare programme at two points in time. The first interview took place within a few weeks of the match¹⁰ and the second interview took place nine months later or at the end of the Homeshare arrangement (whichever was sooner).

An SPSS database was used for the analysis of the quantitative data and MaxQDA2, a qualitative computer package, was used to code the qualitative data prior to analysis.

¹⁰ Some of the interviews between the researcher and Householder /Homesharer took place later than six weeks after the commencement of the match on the advice of the Homeshare Coordinator.

3.3 Quantitative data collected

Quantitative data collected included:

- numbers of enquiries, applications and matches;
- Quality of Life (QOL) questionnaires: (WHOQOLBREF and EQ-5D);
- general financial information about income, debt, food and heating for all Householder and Homesharer applicants who had agreed to participate in the evaluation, and
- information about the number and characteristics of people who enquire about the programme but do not go on to submit applications.

3.3.1 Methods of collecting quantitative data: (1) numbers, enquiries, applications and matches

The Homeshare Coordinators collected and reported information about the numbers of enquiries, applications and matches.

Householders and Homesharers who had agreed to participate in the evaluation agreed that the Homeshare Coordinator could share the information collected at their initial interview with the Homeshare researcher. This information included: demographic information, their reasons for wanting to take part in Homeshare and their interests.

3.3.2 Methods of collecting quantitative data: (2) Quality of Life questionnaires

Each Householder and Homesharer who agreed to participate in the evaluation was asked to complete three Quality of Life questionnaires¹¹: one at the initial

¹¹ In their review of the literature on *Housing with care*, Croucher et al. (2006) argued that research in this area should include a robust Quality of Life measure so that the impact of a service on health and wellbeing can be identified. Accordingly, it was felt important for the purposes of this evaluation to include a Quality of Life measure.

interview, the second one four months after application and the third one nine months after application.

Selection of the Quality of Life questionnaires

It was important to identify outcome measures which the Homeshare Coordinators could be trained to use and which did not require a large amount of time to administer. In addition, the timing of when these measures might be used had to be taken into consideration.

It was decided that the questionnaires would be completed at the end of the initial interview with the Homeshare Coordinator. However, this initial interview was expected to last around an hour after which time participants may be tired. For these reasons the questionnaires chosen had to be relatively simple to administer and quick to complete. Furthermore it is recommended that a combination of outcome measures is used in any intervention study.

A review of published outcome tools for evaluating Quality of Life was carried out to assess their feasibility for use in Homeshare evaluation and two Quality of Life measurements, the WHOQOLBREF and EQ-5D were selected. Table 2 gives a summary of the feasibility of the measures chosen for the Homeshare evaluation.

Table 2 Summary of the feasibility of WHOQOLBREF and EQ-5D questionnaires

Feasibility factors	WHO-Bref	EQ-5D
time to administer	15-20 minutes	5-10 minutes
self completion	Yes/No*	Yes
self scoring	No	No
complex language	No	Possibly**

*It was anticipated that questionnaire would be self completed by the majority of applicants but that the Homeshare Coordinator may have to help some people.

**The Homeshare Coordinator was available to read the question if necessary.

Description of the Quality of Life measures chosen

WHOQOLBREF

The WHOQOLBREF is a short form questionnaire which has been derived from the long form WHOQOL-100 (WHOQOL Group, 1994). The WHOQOL is a well established measure of Quality of Life, designed as a cross cultural measure it is widely used worldwide. It has been shown to have good discriminant validity for a variety of populations.

The WHOQOLBREF contains twenty six questions. It is a generic measure of health status which produces scores in four domains: physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships and environmental influences on Quality of Life.

In addition, it also includes one question about the individual's overall perceptions of their Quality of Life and one question about the individuals' overall perception of his or her health. The respondent is asked to answer each question using a five point Likert scale for each item. These scores plus the scores for the four domains generates an overall quality of life score

EQ-5D

The EQ-5D questionnaire is a generic measure of health status which has two parts and for the purposes of this evaluation only part one was used¹². Part one assesses health in five dimensions: mobility, self care, usual activities (work, study, family and leisure), pain or discomfort and anxiety or depression. Each of these categories has three possible responses which indicate if the respondent

¹² The second part comprises a visual analogue scale (thermometer), graded from 0 - 100. Respondents are asked to indicate on the scale how good or bad their current general health is. It was not used in this evaluation because the applicants were already completing two other questionnaires (WHOQOLBREF and the financial questionnaire).

has no problems, some problems or extreme problems. Combinations of these define a total of 243 health states.

Its authors recommend that the EQ-5D is used alongside disease specific measures, as it has been described as too crude a measure to detect smaller changes over time (Brazier et al, 1999). Advantages of the measure are that it is simple and quick to administer, and it correlates well with other widely used measures.

Once the Quality of Life outcome measures had been identified, they were agreed by the project manager and with the West Sussex and Oxfordshire Homeshare programme steering groups.

3.3.3 Methods of collecting quantitative data: (3) general financial information about income, debt, food and heating

The Homeshare steering group decided that it was important to collect data to ascertain financial stability (see Appendix 1).

Four questions about income, food, heating and debt were added and administered after of the Quality of Life questionnaires. Each question had three possible responses which gave an indication of the respondent's financial situation.

Table 3 provides a summary of the information on Quality of Life and Financial situation that was collected.

Table 3: Summary of Quality of Life and Financial Situation data gathered

DOMAIN	CLIENT MEASURES
Quality of Life measures	WHO-Bref
	EQ-5D
Financial situation	4 questions

3.3.4 Methods of collecting quantitative data: (4) information about the number and characteristics of people who enquire about the Homeshare programme but do not go on to submit applications

The Homeshare Coordinators sent¹³ posted or emailed a short questionnaire (see Appendix 2) to Householders and Homesharers who enquired about the programme but did not go on to submit an application. The questionnaire requested information in two areas, firstly on their reasons for enquiring about the Homeshare programme, and secondly on their reasons for not going on to submit an application. Respondents were made aware that the information would be forwarded to the researcher and that it would be anonymised¹⁴. This information was collected between September and December 2008.

3.4 Qualitative data collected

Methods for collecting qualitative data included:

- Semi-structured interviews with Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers;
- Semi-structured interviews with Householders and Homesharers in a match.

The interviews were tape recorded with permission and transcribed. The researcher also made field notes at the end of interviews, which were included in the analysis.

¹³ The questionnaire was emailed to those who had an email address and posted to the others.

¹⁴ Note that these surveys were posted out by the Homeshare Coordinator as the Homeshare researcher did not have access to the names and addresses of applicants.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews with Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers

All Homeshare Coordinators and their managers were interviewed by the researcher on two occasions, firstly at the beginning of the programme and secondly towards the end of the evaluation period. The purpose of the interviews was to explore perceptions of the experience of setting up and running Homeshare. Follow up interviews provided comparisons over time. All interviews were carried out in confidence.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews with Householders and Homesharers in a match

Potential Householders and Homesharers who contacted the Homeshare Coordinator to enquire about the Homeshare programme were sent (or given) a Homeshare information pack including information about the evaluation (see Appendices 3 and 4 for information sheets and consent forms). At interview the Homeshare Coordinator asked if they would like to participate in the evaluation and, if so, invited them to sign a consent form.

All participants who had agreed to take part in the Homeshare evaluation and who were matched were invited to be interviewed by the researcher. Those who agreed (6 Householders and 10 Homesharers) were interviewed on two occasions. Firstly soon after the match and secondly at nine months later (or when the match dissolved (whichever was sooner)). With permission, interviews were tape recorded.

Chapter four provides an analysis of the quantitative data gathered using the methods outlined above.

Chapters five and six provide an analysis of the qualitative data gathered using the methods outlined above.

Chapter 4 – Findings from quantitative data gathered

4.1 Summary

This chapter sets out the findings from the quantitative data gathered including:

- number of Homeshare enquiries;
- number of Homeshare applications;
- characteristics of Householders and Homesharers;
 - age
 - gender
 - marital status
 - employment status
 - medical characteristics
 - place of birth
 - geographic location
 - source of knowledge about Homeshare programme
 - reasons for applying
- number of Homeshare matches;
- Quality of Life questionnaires WHOQOLBREF + EQ-5D;
- general financial information on applicants;
- number and characteristics of people who enquire about the programme but then do not submit applications.

4.2 Findings from quantitative data: number of Homeshare Enquiries

A total of 1024 people enquired about the three Homeshare pilot programmes. The West Sussex Homeshare Programme had by far the largest number of enquiries with 522 people (51%). In comparison, there were only 362 enquiries (35%) for the Oxfordshire Homeshare Programme¹⁵. Wiltshire had the smallest number of enquiries with 140 people (14%).

The significant differences in number of enquiries between West Sussex (51%) and Wiltshire (14%) can partly be explained by the fact that West Sussex was the first Homeshare pilot programme to start and had been running the longest. It was therefore expected that the number of enquiries would be higher as this was a more established programme.

Another possible contributing factor to the low number of enquiries for the Wiltshire Homeshare programme was that the Homeshare Coordinator for this programme only worked part-time (four days a week) whereas Homeshare Coordinators in the other programmes were both full time.

Figure 1 sets out shows the number of enquiries per Homeshare programme from December 2006 until May 2009.

¹⁵ The number of enquiries for Oxfordshire reported may be an under-estimate as some data on enquires in Oxfordshire were lost. This might also mean that the total number of enquiries might be higher than is reported here.

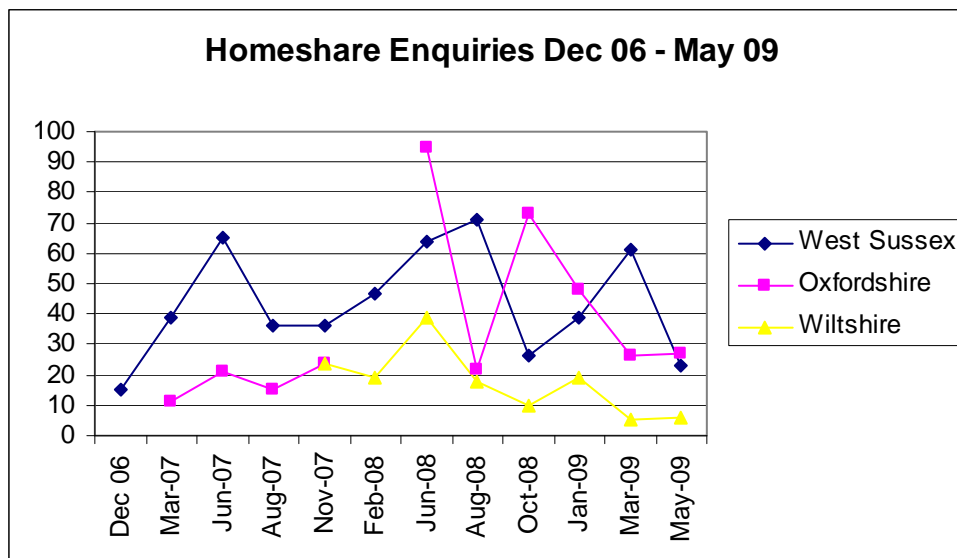


Figure1: Number of Enquiries for Homeshare December 2006 – May 2009.

*The West Sussex programme started first (August 2006) followed by the Oxfordshire programme (January 2007) and lastly the Wiltshire programme (June 2007). There is a gap in the number of enquiries in Oxfordshire between February 08 and June 08 when data were lost by the Homeshare Coordinator

**The number of enquiries is reported from December 2006 as prior to this time the Homeshare programme was being set up in West Sussex.

It can be seen from the chart that there were clear peaks in the number of enquiries at certain points in time. In Oxfordshire the peaks might have been due to students looking for accommodation options for the new academic year. The peaks might also have been due to increased publicity and/or marketing drives¹⁶.

4.3 Findings from quantitative data: number of Homeshare Applications

The conversion rate from enquiry to application was 33% of the 1024 enquiries, three hundred and thirty nine people applied to take part in the Homeshare programmes.

¹⁶ Marketing and publicity was on-going and the researcher did not have access to all the data.

As might be expected from the larger number of enquiries it attracted, the West Sussex programme had the largest number of applications: 191 applications which represents 56% of the total number of applications. West Sussex achieved a conversion rate from enquiry to application of 37%.

The Oxfordshire programme attracted 96 applications which represents 28% of the total number of applications and achieved a conversion rate from enquiry to application of 27%.

There were fifty two applications for the Wiltshire programme which represents 15% of all the total number of applications and the conversion of enquiry to application rate was 37%.

It is remarkable that the Wiltshire programme, despite having run for the least amount of time, managed to achieve the same conversion rate as the more established programme in West Sussex.

Figure 2 shows the number of applications received in the three pilot areas.

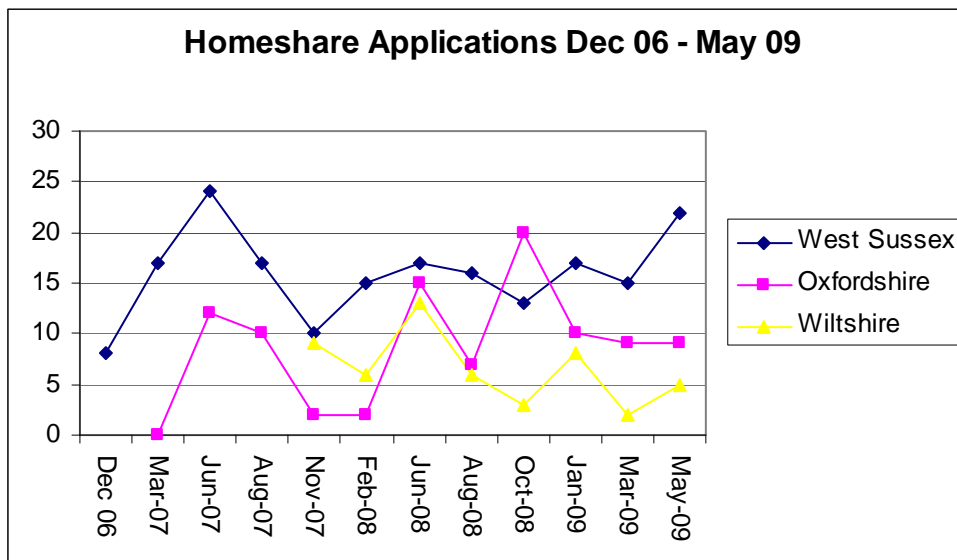


Figure 2: Number of Applications for Homeshare December 2006 – May 2009

*The number of new applicants for each time period is added to the list of applicants (some of whom may withdraw from the list for a variety of reasons).

4.4 Findings from quantitative data: demographic characteristics of Householder and Homesharer applicants

Of the three hundred and thirty nine applications only ninety one applicants (27%) agreed to take part in the Homeshare programme evaluation. Twenty four of the people who agreed to take part in the evaluation were potential Householders and sixty seven were potential Homesharers. The demographics of this group are reported below.

4.4.1 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homeshare applicants: age

The Homeshare programme attracted applicants right across the age spectrum. The youngest person to apply to the Homeshare programme was twenty three and the oldest was ninety four.

Householders

The age range was from 29 -94 years and the mean age of Homesharers was 42 years (see Table 4).

Table 4 Mean and Range for Ages of Householders

Age	Number of Householder Applicants*
Mean	73.7
Range	29 -94

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

The age range of Homesharers was from 23 -71 years and the mean age was 42 years (see Table 5).

Table 5: Mean and Range for Ages of Homesharers

Age	Number of Homesharer Applicants*
Mean	42
Range	23-71

* 67 Homesharers

4.4.2 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Gender

There were significantly more female applicants to the Homeshare programme.

Householders

There were a total of 17 female and 7 male applicants who were Householders (see Table 6).

Table 6: Numbers of Male and Female Householders

Gender	Number of Householder Applicants*
Female	17
Male	7

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

There were a total of 67 Homesharer applicants of whom 42 were female and 25 were male (see Table 7).

Table 7: Numbers of Male and Female Homesharers

Gender	Number of Homesharer Applicants *
Female	42
Male	25

* 67 Homesharers

4.4.3 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Marital Status

Householders

Eleven Householder applicants were widowed. There were an equal number of Householder applicants who were married (5) and Householder applicants who were divorced (5).

Of the five married Householders, three had applied for Homeshare to help with their spouse. One needed help because his wife had been admitted into residential care. The other Householder was separated from her husband.

Table 8 shows the marital status of Householders.

Table 8: Marital Status of Householders

Marital Status	Number of Householder Applicants*
Single	3
Married	5
Widowed	11
Divorced	5

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

Of the sixty seven Homesharer applicants, most were single (37) and a significant number were divorced (17).

Six Homesharer applicants were married and of these:

- one had recently separated from her husband and wanted to Homeshare as a way of gaining accommodation and moving away from the marital home;
- one person was living in this country whilst her husband was abroad;
- two people were looking for accommodation in the area because they had recently gained employment locally but did not want to move their families;
- two people were looking to Homeshare as a family (2 separate families).

Of those who were living with a Partner

- 2 were looking for separate Homeshares
- 1 withdrew the application.

Table 9 shows the marital status of Homesharers.

Table 9: Marital Status of Homesharers

Marital Status	Number of Homesharer Applicants*
Single	37
Married	6
With Partner	3
Widowed	1
Divorced	17
Separated	3

* 67 Homesharers

4.4.4 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Employment Status

Householders

The majority of Householder applicants were not working and only two of the 24 Householder applicants were employed.

Homesharers

Of the sixty seven Homesharer applicants, most were in employment (50), nine were students, six were not working and one was retired¹⁷. Table 10 shows the employment status of Homesharers.

Table 10: Employment Status Homesharers

Work Status	Homesharers*
Working	50
Student	9
Not working	6
Retired	1
Not known	1

* 67 Homesharers

4.4.5 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Place of Birth

Householders

The majority (22) of the Householder applicants were born in Britain, one in South America. The birth place of the other Householder is unknown.

Homesharers

The majority of Homesharer applicants (41 of the 67) were born in Britain. Four people were born elsewhere in Europe; three people were born in the United States, three in South America, two in Australia/New Zealand, two in Canada, two in China, three in Africa, two in the Middle East and one in the Far East¹⁸.

¹⁷ The employment status of the other person was unknown.

¹⁸ It is unknown where four people were born.

4.4.6 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Medical Characteristics

Householders

Most Householders reported health issues. Only 5 Householders reported that they had no health issues. Seven Householders reported one health issues (for example, Parkinson's disease, heart trouble), four people reported two health problems and eight Householders reported three or more health problems. Table 11 shows the medical characteristics of the Householders.

Table 11: Medical Characteristics of Householder Applicants

Medical conditions	Number of Householder Applicants *
No illness	5
One health issue	7
Two health issues	4
Three or more health issues	8

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

In contrast to Householders' reported health status, Homesharer applicants reported good health in the main. Of the 67 Homesharer applicants, only 17 people reported having a medical condition with the most common medical conditions being mild asthma (3 people), back problems (3 people) and mild depression (3 people). One person reported that she had cancer and 3 people reported transient conditions (for example, repetitive strain injury, trapped nerve). Two Homesharers reported that they had a chronic long term condition but that it would not adversely affect their ability to take part in the Homeshare programme. In addition two people reported allergies.

Table 12 shows the medical characteristics of Homesharers.

Table12: Medical Characteristics of Homesharer applicants

Medical conditions	Number of Homesharer Applicants*
Mild asthma	3
Back problems	3
Mild depression	3
Chronic long term condition	2
Transient conditions	3
Allergies	2
Cancer	1

* 67 Homesharers

4.4.7 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Geographical location

Householders

The majority of Householder applicants lived in West Sussex (17), with four from Oxfordshire and three from Wiltshire (see Table 13).

Table 13: Geographical Location of Householders

Location	Number of Householder Applicants*
West Sussex	17
Oxfordshire	4
Wiltshire	3

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

The majority of Homesharers applicants (43) were also from West Sussex with twenty from Oxfordshire and four from Wiltshire (see Table 14).

Table 14: Geographical Location for Homesharers

Location	Number of Homesharer Applicants*
West Sussex	43
Oxfordshire	20
Wiltshire	4

*67 Homesharers

4.4.8 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Source of knowledge about Homeshare Programme

The Homeshare Coordinators were involved in publicity and marketing the programme. This role involved talking to professional groups in health, social care, the private and voluntary sector, presenting information to older people's groups (for example, the Older person's fair), writing articles for a variety of newspapers and journals and working alongside the media for television and radio interviews.

Householders

The majority of Householders heard via newspaper and magazine or radio articles. It can be seen from Table 15 that four people heard about the programme from professionals (adult placement workers (2), social worker (1) and learning disability support worker (1)).

Table 15 How Householder applicants had heard about Homeshare

Method	Number of Householder Applicants*
Publicity (inc newspaper)	13
Professionals	4
Internet	3
Age Concern	2
Friend	1
Previous programme	1

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

Homesharers also heard about the programme mainly from newspaper and magazine articles, on the radio or television. Rather more Homesharers than in the Householder group found out about the programme via the internet. Eight Homesharers found out about the programme from professionals¹⁹. Table 16 shows how Homesharer heard about Homeshare.

Table 16 How Homesharer applicants Heard about Homeshare

Method	Number of Homesharer Applicants*
Publicity (inc newspaper)	31
Professionals	8
Internet/Intranet	16
Friend	8
Unknown	4

*Publicity included newspaper articles, talks and information in public places.

4.4.9 Demographic characteristics of Householders and Homesharer applicants: Reasons for applying to Homeshare programme

When applicants were interviewed they were asked to give their reasons for making an application, some gave one reason and some gave more than one.

Householders

Wanting companionship was the reason which prompted ten Householder to apply to the Homeshare programme for a variety of reasons including, two people mentioned that they are lonely especially in the winter, one person disliked being in the house alone at night, the wife of one Householder applicant

¹⁹ Housing officers, probation officer, community development worker, person from Age Concern and people from Citizens' Advice Bureau.

had recently been admitted to a residential home and another had recently been widowed.

Applications from seven Householders were prompted by chronic health issues, of either their spouse or themselves. Two women were involved in caring for their husbands whose health was deteriorating. Two people were concerned about their decreasing mobility and increasing frailty. Others had recently been unwell and this made them feel vulnerable. Table 17 shows the reasons Householders applied to the Homeshare programme.

Table 17 Householders reasons for applying to Homeshare programme

Reasons	Number of Householder Applicants*
Companionship	10
Health/mobility	7
Independence	6
Altruism	1

* 24 Householders

Homesharers

The reason for application to the Homeshare programme given by the majority (16) of Homesharers was to give themselves 'a housing option'; four were wanting to move out of the parental home, one had been living in accommodation linked to her work and another had been caring for a family member, several were students and three were moving to the area.

Wanting to save' was the reason for given by 13 Homesharer applicants. Of those who wanted to save, two wanted to save for their children's education (the children were living overseas), three wanted to save and also wanted company. Of the eight who were looking for cheap rent five considered that their income was inadequate to cover rental accommodation and two were also keen to help

others. Table 18 shows the main reasons for Homesharers making an application to Homeshare.

Table 18 Homesharers reasons for applying to Homeshare programme

Reasons Status	Number of Householder Applicants*
A housing option	16
Wanting to save	13
Student	8
Cheap rent	8
Company	6
Wanting to help	4
In homeshare-like arrangement	4
Debt	3
Need to leave family home	2
Split from partner	2
Unknown	1

4.5 Findings from quantitative data: Homeshare matches

When a Householder and Homesharer agree to be matched the Homesharer moves in with the Householder for a trial match period of four weeks. The Homeshare Coordinator is available for advice during this time. If the Householder and the Homesharer agree that they wish to continue a Homeshare match is made and a Homeshare agreement is signed.

The total number of matches made across all three programmes between December 2006 and May 2009 was sixteen. Five matches were made in the West Sussex programme, eight matches were made in the in Oxfordshire programme and 3 matches were made in Wiltshire.

Householders and Homesharers who were matched and had agreed to take part in the evaluation were invited to an interview with the researcher on two occasions (near to the beginning of the match and after nine months, or sooner if the match dissolved). The purpose of this interview was to reflect on their experiences of Homeshare.

Table 19 shows the number of Householders and Homesharers who were matched and who agreed to take part in the evaluation. Thirteen Householders were matched with sixteen Homesharers. This was because three Householders were matched twice.

Of the 29 matched participants, 14 people (six matched pairs) agreed to discuss their experience with the researcher. This group was composed of six Householders and eight Homesharers.

Of these, six matched pairs (two Householders were matched twice, therefore there were eight Homesharers) and additional two Homesharers (matched with Householders who did not agree to the evaluation), agreed to discuss their experiences with the researcher.

Table 19 Number of Homeshare matches, the area and if they took part in the evaluation.

Homeshare programme	Number of matches	Length of time match lasted	Numbers participating in evaluation
West Sussex	5	These matches lasted up to 8 months and 2 were on-going.	2 Householders 3 Homesharers
Oxfordshire	8	2 lasted a year (1 is on-going)	2 Householders 5 Homesharers
Wiltshire	3	1 ongoing for almost 1 year	2 Householders 2 Homesharers

In West Sussex there were a total of five matches (and three trial matches which lasted less than four weeks) which had lasted up to eight months and two were still in place at the end of the evaluation period. In Oxfordshire there were eight matches (and one trial match which lasted less than four weeks) two of which lasted for a year. At the end of the evaluation period there were four matches which were on-going. In Wiltshire there were three matches, one lasted just beyond the trial period, one lasted seven weeks and the other for almost one year and was ongoing at the end of the evaluation period.

Only six Householders and ten Homesharers who were in a match agreed to take part in the evaluation (see table 20).

Table 20 Householders and Homesharers who were matched and agreed to take part in the evaluation

Match	Householder number	Householder (age, marital status, gender, reasons for Homeshare)	Homesharer (age, marital status, gender, reasons for Homeshare)
Match 1 & 2	1	Age 27. Single. Female. Transition to independent living. (mother of the Householder interviewed at the beginning and end of both matches and Householder herself interviewed at the end of the second match).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Age 25. Single. Female. Had been living in a shared home with a family but unable to continue – keen to help Age 35 Single. Female. Just finished teacher training
Match 3 & 4	2	Age 49. Single. Female. Rehabilitation following illness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Age 27. Single. Female. South American post graduate student Age 28. Single. Female. post graduate student
Match 5	3	Age 43. Single. Female. Transition to independent living	Age 38. Single. Female. Opportunity to save and live people whose first language is English.
Match 6	4	Age 88. Widowed. Male. Loss of confidence following a fall	Age 42 Divorced. Male. Employment in the area
Match 7	5	Age 86. Divorced. Female. Loss of confidence following a fall. Householder interviewed at time of second match only	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Separated. Female. Not interviewed Homeshare only lasted a couple of weeks. Age 60. Divorced. Male. Unable to get back into housing market
Match 8	6	Couple both aged 81. Husband deteriorating health	Age 38. Single. Female. Needed alternative accommodation.
Match 9	7	(Householder declined to be interviewed.)	Age 34. Single. Female. Low income chance to save
Match 10	8	(Householder declined to be interviewed.)	Age 27. Single. Male. Student no income

An additional two Householders and two Homesharers agreed to take part in the evaluation but their Homeshare trial match only lasted a couple of weeks. These trial matches were somewhat precarious and discussions between the researcher and the Homeshare Coordinator led to agreement not to approach them at that point as it may have compromised the match. At the point of breakdown of the match the Homeshare Coordinator did ask but they declined to be interviewed at that stage. One Householder was subsequently matched and did reflect back on some of the issues in the first match when she was interviewed.

4.5.1 Reasons for breakdown of matches within a few weeks

The Homeshare Coordinators collected some general information about why the four trial matches made did not continue to a match. This information revealed;

- one Householder felt unable to share the kitchen,
- one provided a bed for the Homesharer but the bed was too short,
- two Householders found the Homesharer difficult to live with.

4.6 Findings from quantitative data: Quality of Life and Financial Questionnaires

Each of the applicants who agreed to take part in the evaluation was asked to complete two Quality of Life Questionnaires (WHOQOLBREF and EQ-5D) and four questions about their financial situation. These questionnaires were designed to be completed at three points in time (at applicants' initial interview with the Homeshare Coordinator, four months after application and nine months after application).

Compliance reduced over time, all ninety one applicants completed the initial questionnaires whereas only 32% (29 applicants) completed the questionnaires

at four months and just 15% (14 applicants) completed the questionnaires at nine months.

This meant that only the data from the first questionnaires can be reported because the numbers were too small to provide meaningful information for the second and third questionnaires administered. Therefore it has not been possible to demonstrate any change in their quality of life experienced by participants who took part in the Homeshare programme.

The findings for the WHOQOLBREF questionnaire, the EQ-5D questionnaire and the financial questions are discussed separately below.

4.6.1 Findings from the WHOQOLBREF questionnaire

Householders

Twenty three WHOQOLBREF questionnaires were completed by Householder applicants and their initial interview. Table 21 shows the scores for each of the four domains (physical, psychological, social and environmental). The higher the score the better the quality of life.

Table 21 WHOQOLBREF Scores (Householders)

	PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL	ENVIRONMENTAL
Mean	62.2	63.6	65.9	75.8
Median	60.7	64.6	66.7	75.0
Std. Deviation	17.5	12.5	15.3	11.3

*Data physical and psychological health was only available for 22 Householder

**Data for social and environmental health was available for 23 Householders

Homesharers

Sixty seven WHOQOLBREF questionnaires were completed by Homesharer applicants and their initial interview the domain scores are shown in Table 22.

Table 22 WHOQOLBREF Scores (Homesharers)

	PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL	ENVIRONMENTAL
Mean	86.2	74.3	68.8	70.6
Median	85.7	75.0	75.0	71.9
Std. Deviation	8.3	10.0	17.8	12.2

*data for 67 Homesharers

The overall Quality of Life scores were higher for the Homesharers in all four domains with the greatest score difference being in the physical domain and given that the Homesharer group were a younger group this is not entirely surprising.

4.6.2 Findings from the EQ-5D Questionnaire

Householders

As with the WHOQOLBREF it is only possible to report on the EQ-5D questionnaire collected at the time of application here. The EQ-5D reports scores in five domains. Scores were generated for all Householder applicants who completed all questions (see Table 23)

Table 23 Householder Scores for EQ-5D

EQ5-D profile	Mobility	Self care	Usual activities	Pain/ Discomfort	Anxiety/ Depression
No problems	9	18	11	11	8
Some problems	12	4	11	12	15
Extreme problems	1	1	1	0	0

* Only applicants that completed all the questions are included

It can be seen that only one person in each of the three categories mobility, self care and usual activities experienced extreme problems. However, there were more Householders who had some problems in the areas of mobility, self care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression than who had no problems. This was not surprising, given that the Householders were exchanging help for accommodation.

Homesharers

The majority of Homesharers reported no problems in mobility, self care, usual activities, pain/discomfort and anxiety/depression and no Homesharers reported extreme problems in any domain (see Table 24).

Table 24 Homesharer Scores for EQ-5D

EQ5-D profile	Mobility	Self care	Usual activities	Pain/Discomfort	Anxiety/Depression
No problems	65	67	66	56	60
Some problems	2	0	1	11	7
Extreme problems	0	0	0	0	0

4.6.3 Findings from the financial questionnaire

All those who took part in the evaluation were asked to complete four general questions about their finances (see Appendix 1).

Householders

Most Householder applicants (21) reported no debts and only two people had debts in excess of £1000.00. The majority (19) reported that they had enough money to keep their house as warm as they would like to and only one person reported being unable to keep the home as warm as he would like. These findings suggest that this group of Householders is able to manage on their

income and is, with the exception of one person, able to keep their homes warm and eat well.

Figure 3 sets out the Householders response to the financial questions.

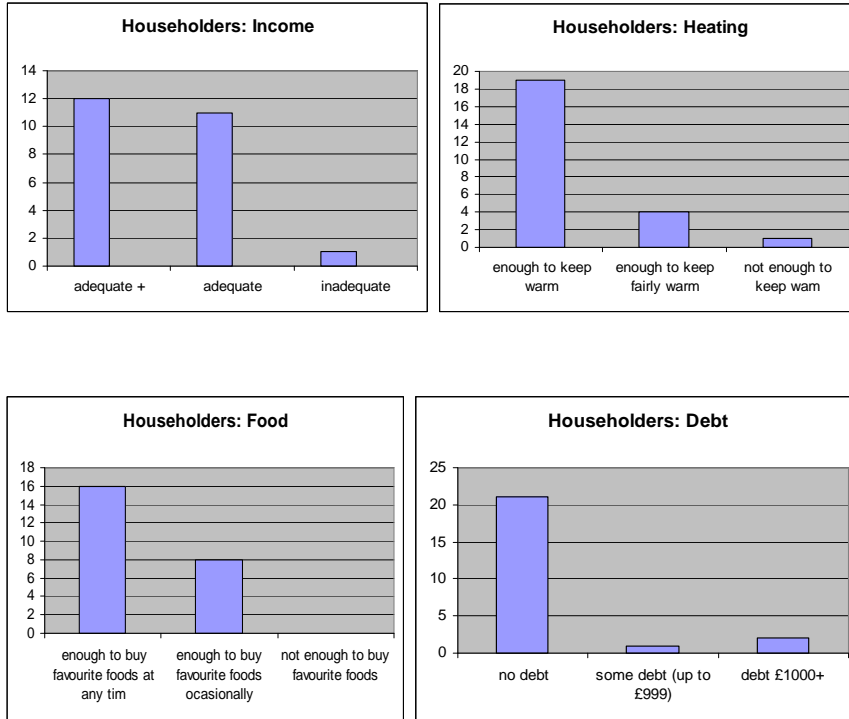


Figure 3 Householders responses to financial questions

Homesharers

More Homesharers than Householders reported debt and inadequate income to keep them as comfortable as they would like.

The majority of the Homesharers (56) reported enough income to meet their bills and eleven people reported an inadequate income. The majority also reported that they could keep their homes warm (58) although seven people reported being unable to do so.

Four people reported that they did not have enough money to buy their favourite food and twenty nine people reported some level of debt. Seventeen

Homesharers reported debts of more than £1000 and of these four Homesharers reported that their income was not enough to meet bills and housekeeping. Of these four people, only one reported insufficient money for favourite foods and for keeping the house as warm as he would like. Figure 4 shows the Homesharers responses to the financial questions.

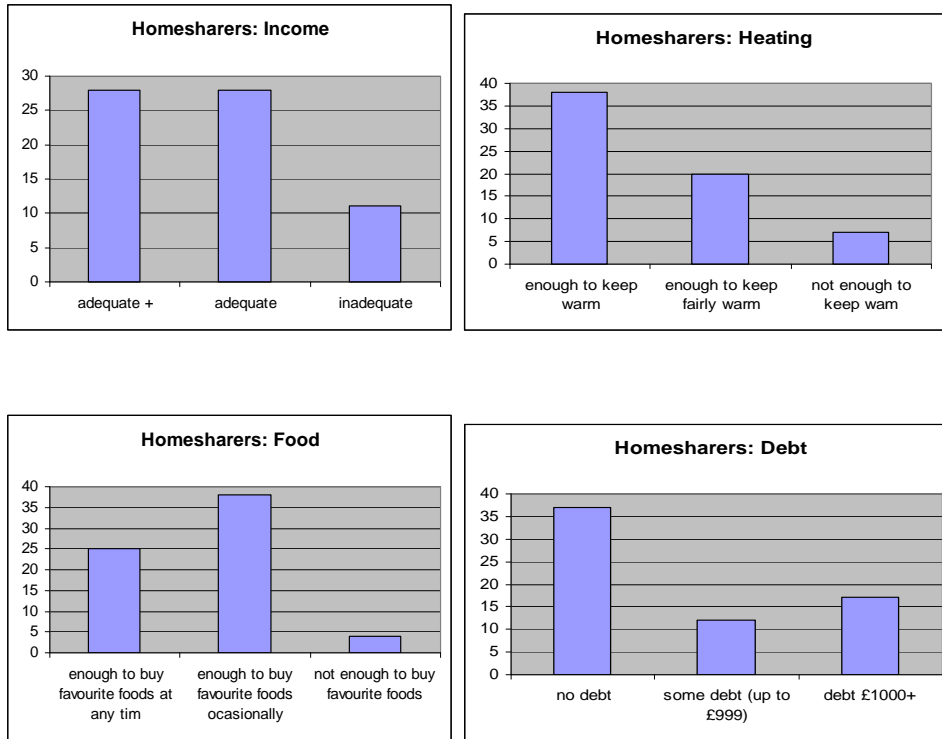


Figure 4 Homesharers responses to financial questions

4.7 Findings from quantitative data: Number and characteristics of people who enquire about the programme but who do not submit applications

The Homeshare Coordinators sent out a questionnaire in autumn 2008 to everyone who had enquired about the Homeshare programme but had not gone on to submit an application. Respondents were made aware that the information would be forwarded to the researcher and that it would be anonymised. The aim

of the survey was to try to ascertain information about the reasons these people did not go on to submit an application

Sixty nine responses to this survey were gathered. Of these forty eight (70%) were returned from West Sussex, seven (10%) from Oxfordshire and fourteen (20%) from Wiltshire. West Sussex had the benefit of having administrative assistance which possibly accounted for the higher response in that area.

The questionnaire had three key questions:

- Reasons for enquiring about Homeshare
- Reasons for not making an application
- What was liked/disliked about the information sent

The questionnaire also asked respondents to state whether they were enquiring to be a potential Householders or Homesharers and responses will be discussed separately below.

4.7.1 Householders: reasons for enquiring about Homeshare

Forty eight of the sixty nine questionnaire responses were received from people who had enquired about the Homeshare programme either as potential Householders or on behalf of a potential Householder (see Table 25). Fifteen of these people (31%) reported that their main reason for enquiring about the programme was the need for support with household tasks and fourteen people (29%) reported that their reason for enquiring was because of loneliness.

Ten people had enquired on behalf of a family member (who would be the potential Householder) and of these seven had concerns that their relative was lonely.

In addition, two of the enquiries had come from professionals who were enquiring about Homeshare on behalf of their clients and wanted to find out whether their clients might benefit from the programme.

Two people wanted to know more about the programme in case of future need, one thought it would give more security at night and three people did not respond to the question.

Table 25 Potential Householders' reasons for enquiring about Homeshare

Householder's reasons for enquiring	Number
Household support	15
Lonely	14
On behalf of a client	2
Possible future need	2
Security at night	1
Has spare room	1
On behalf of family member	10
Unknown	3

4.7.2 Householders: Reasons for not making an application

Respondents were asked why they did not submit an application and only twenty three of the forty eight respondents in the Householder category gave a reason.

Ten of those who enquired because they were lonely decided against submitting an application for the following reasons;

- two had changes in their family circumstances,
- two decided they didn't want to live with anyone,
- two felt it did not suit their needs,
- one had fallen and her health had deteriorated,
- one felt the whole thing was too restrictive,

- one decided against it for tax reasons and
- one was still considering it as an option.

Eleven people who needed support decided against submitting an application for the following reasons;

- two were admitted to residential care,
- two decided to rent their accommodation,
- one had a carer,
- one thought it would be too restrictive,
- one person who was disabled was moving to a one bed roomed flat,
- one had doubts,
- one person wanted support whilst she was caring for her husband who had subsequently died, and
- two were still thinking about it as an option.

In addition, two professionals had enquired on behalf of their clients but considered it to be unsuitable for their circumstances.

4.7.3 Householders: what was liked/disliked about the information sent

Forty two potential Householders responded to this question and the majority (36) reported that the information was clear. Six people suggested that more information was required but none of them expanded on this to suggest what additional information was needed. Three could not remember the information well enough to comment.

4.7.4 Homesharers: reasons for enquiring about Homeshare

Twenty one questionnaires were received from people who had enquired about the Homeshare programme as potential Homesharers.

The main reasons (see Table 26) cited for enquiring were because respondents wanted cheaper accommodation (6) or they were in the process of moving house or area and were looking at housing options (4). Two people were looking to save money, two people wanted to work less and two stated that they liked the idea of offering support in return for accommodation. Other reasons include marital breakdown, and a chance to improve circumstances.

Table 26 Potential Homesharers reasons for enquiring about Homeshare

Homesharers reasons for enquiring	Number
Cheaper accommodation	6
Rehousing/ relocation	4
Save	2
Offer support	2
Improve circumstances	2
Marital breakdown	1
Work less	1
Occasional accommodation	1
Unknown	2

4.7.5 Homesharers: reasons for not making an application

Only six of the twenty nine respondents in the Homeshare category gave reasons for not submitting an application. Three respondents left had moved abroad, one person's circumstances improved, one felt the information was not specific and one might consider it again at a later stage.

4.7.6 Homesharers: what was liked/disliked about the information sent

Twelve respondents in the Homesharer category responded to the question about what they liked/disliked about the information sent to them. All reported that the information was clear.

The next chapter reports on the findings from qualitative data gathered from Homeshare Coordinators and Managers.

Chapter 5 - Findings from qualitative data gathered from Homeshare Coordinators and Managers

5.1 Summary

This chapter sets out the expectations and experiences of the personnel involved in setting up and managing the Homeshare programme.

5.2 Background to setting up the Homeshare Pilot Programmes

The pilot programmes in West Sussex and Oxfordshire followed on from preparatory work carried out by NAAPSUK and Oxford Brookes University. Additional funding was granted from the DH for two years for NAAPS to set up the pilot Homeshare programmes and for three years for Oxford Brookes University to complete the evaluation of the Homeshare pilot programmes. Wiltshire funded their programme from Partnerships for Older People's Projects (POPPS) money for two years.

Each programme was staffed by one Homeshare Coordinator. In the original two pilot programmes (West Sussex and Oxfordshire) the Homeshare Coordinators were supported by the 'host' line manager and remotely by NAAPS (see chapter 2).

In the Wiltshire programme the Homeshare Coordinator was initially supported by a line manager in the community development team from the Local Authority but subsequently line management was changed to the transformation team due to internal reorganisation. NAAPS was not directly involved with the Wiltshire programme. However, the Homeshare project manager started a Homeshare Association to provide support which met a three times a year and to which all new Homeshare Coordinators were invited.

5.3 Interviews with Homeshare Coordinators and Managers

All Homeshare Coordinators (from West Sussex, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire) and their line managers (see table 27) were invited take part in two interviews with the researcher. One interview took place at the start of the Homeshare programme and the second took place when the pilot programmes finished in May 2009. The objectives of these two interviews were to explore the setting up and management of the Homeshare pilot programmes in each area.

Table 27 Homeshare Coordinators and Managers interviewed

Area	Interviewee
West Sussex	Project manager
	Coordinator
	Line manager (retired after one year)
	Line manager
Oxfordshire	Coordinator
	Line manager
	Line manager
Wiltshire	Coordinator
	Line manager

The first interview focused on setting up the Homeshare programme and the part that the interviewee had to play in its establishment. The second interview focused on how the Homeshare programme had developed. The questions asked at each interview were similar and allowed for interviewees to consider both a vision for the programme as it was being set up and reflections on how this vision developed as the programme was implemented.

Seven staff (three Homeshare Coordinators and four line managers) participated in first round interviews and eight staff²⁰ (three Homeshare Coordinators and five line managers) participated in second round interviews. This was because during

²⁰ The additional person interviewed was a more senior line manager who only took part in the second round interview.

the period between interviews, there was some staff turnover: two of the original line managers left and their replacements were interviewed around the time of appointment instead. Table 28 sets out the topics discussed in the interviews with the Homeshare Coordinators and managers.

Table 28 Topics Discussed in the interviews with the Homeshare Coordinators and Managers

<p>Setting up the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role of the Homeshare Coordinator;<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Administration,○ Interviewing potential Householders and Homesharers○ Making and supporting matches○ Marketing and publicity○• Challenges of the Homeshare Coordinator's job:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lack of peer support○ Travel requirements○ Out of hours nature of the work○ Long term funding uncertainty• Role of the Homeshare programme Line Managers. <p>Homeshare Coordinators' and Line Managers' expectations for the Homeshare programme in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vision;• Benefits;• Challenges of the programme particularly;• Success
--

The views and experiences of the Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers expressed in these interviews are reported below under the topic headings as shown in the table above.

5.3.1 Setting up the programme

The role of the Homeshare Coordinator

In each of the three areas there was one Homeshare Coordinator. In West Sussex and Oxfordshire, the Homeshare Coordinators worked full time whilst in Wiltshire the Homeshare Coordinator worked four days a week.

In the main, Homeshare Coordinators described their role in the new Homeshare venture enthusiastically and adopted a 'can do' mentality. All the Coordinators interviewed were very positive and keen to develop the role:

..into something bigger

(Coordinator)

Developing it into 'something bigger', with a greater number of staff was seen as important. Indeed, the isolated nature of the job was highlighted by one Coordinator who felt it would be helpful

to have someone to talk to about matching people

(Coordinator)

One of the weaknesses in the way the programmes were set up was identified by one Coordinator who pointed out:

If I leave all the knowledge would go

(Coordinator)

Findings from the interviews made it clear that the role of Homeshare Coordinator was diverse and responsibilities included:

- Administration;
- Interviewing potential Householders and Homesharers;
- Making and supporting matches, and

- Marketing and publicity.

Each of these aspects of the Homeshare Coordinator's role as identified in the interviews is discussed below.

Administration

Initially the Homeshare Coordinators had to manage all the administration as well as the rest of the job. As the job grew bigger some support²¹ from an administrative assistant was provided in each area. The Homeshare Coordinators were involved in dealing with emails, photocopying, phone calls, CRB checks, profile writing, references and meetings.

Interviewing potential Householders and Homesharers

The Homeshare Coordinators sent out information packs to those who enquire about the programme. They then answer any questions and clarify issues that arise. Once an application is received they interviewed the candidate and followed up references and CRB checks as necessary.

The Homeshare Coordinators carried out initial interviews, often on the phone. They then followed up with face to face interviews, in the office for Homesharers and in the home of the Householders. Interviews may involve having members of the family or friend present.

Making and supporting matches

Once Householders and Homesharers have been accepted on the programme a pen portrait of the applicant is written (usually by the Homeshare Coordinator)

²¹ A few hours a week.

and this is shared with potential Householders or Homesharers with a view to making a match.

It was clear from data collected from the Homeshare Coordinators that making matches is a result of several stages including:

- Writing and getting agreement that the pen portrait is acceptable;
- Sending the pen portrait to possible matches;
- Arranging a meeting between the Householder and potential Homesharer if the pen portrait generates interest;
- Attending the initial meeting with the Householder and potential Homesharer;
- Discussing the outcome of the meeting with participants separately, and
- Attending a follow up meeting as necessary.

However, additional stages may be introduced, for example, one Homeshare Coordinator reported:

.. recently there's been one Homesharer where I sent her approximately six profiles and she chose three and she had her first, second, and third choice and we've gone from the first to the second and now we're on the third. And it's through no fault of her own that they haven't worked out.

(Coordinator)

The interviews with Homeshare Coordinators made clear that the time to produce a match is extremely variable and may include several meetings. This can be frustrating for the Homeshare Coordinator when everything looks to be going well at the meeting and then:

They got on really well at the time, and the householder was very keen, but the homesharer's expectations of what she wanted in terms of accommodation was

just too high.....the accommodation [offered] ..consisted of a large bedroom, bathroom for own use and sitting room as well as shared kitchen and use of the large garden

(Coordinator)

The time a match lasts was variable (from five weeks to over a year) although Homeshare Coordinators pointed out that the length of time the arrangement lasts is not necessarily a measure of success. One match lasted only seven weeks, but sharing with a Homesharer enabled the Householder (a person with learning difficulties) to make the transition from living in shared housing to living alone and was therefore very successful even though it only lasted a short time. At the other end of the scale one Householder had a Homesharer who was a post-graduate student and the match lasted a year until the end of her course. The Householder is now sharing with a second post-graduate student and when her course finishes the Homeshare Coordinator will try to find another sharer.

The Homeshare Coordinators interviewed emphasised that part of their role is also to offer support to people who have been matched. The support given by one Homeshare Coordinator was summarised as:

I phone at the end of the first week both people separately. I arrange to meet at the end of the first fortnight with them together, so that I can see, check for myself, that it seems to be working okay. Another phone call at the end of the third week and then we come together at the end of the fourth week to do the agreement.

(Coordinator)

Marketing and publicity

It was interesting to note that all three Homeshare Coordinators interviewed agreed that this aspect of the job took up a large chunk of the week.

Because so much of, you know, being able to generate new people, I think we do need to continue with publicity. It's not something that will just stop one day.

(Coordinator)

The Homeshare Coordinators developed publicity materials and presentations and each of them organised a launch for the Homeshare programme. They described using many avenues for distributing Homeshare information:

....leaflets and posters .. will be sent to all GP surgeries ... all schools ..., all advice centres in the area, local district councils. All places where the public will be going, in and out, especially the adult services offices.

(Coordinator)

One of the Homeshare Coordinators suggested that there could possibly be a need in the future for support from a person whose role would be solely to organise the publicity for the Homeshare programme.

Challenges of the Homeshare Coordinator's job

The three coordinators all identified four key challenges with their job:

- Lack of peer support
- Travel requirements
- Out of hours nature of the work
- Long term funding uncertainty

Each of these challenges is discussed below.

Lack of peer support

The Homeshare Coordinators acknowledged that they had formal support from their line managers and said that they had also benefited from informal support from each other. The project manager had set up a 'Homeshare Association' which met three times a year and provided a forum for discussion and support for

the Homeshare Coordinators involved in the pilot programmes and other Homeshare Coordinators who had recently set up new programmes.

However, all three Homeshare Coordinators said that they lacked immediate peer support which meant that they had little opportunity to discuss and review potential matches with another person and there was a real sense that they felt that they may miss opportunities for matches. All of the Homeshare Coordinators identified the importance of having a team, although there were different views about how this team could best be structured:

One and a half coordinators and some admin support or a job share
(Coordinator)

.... I think an additional coordinator full time post as a minimum... Well it could be that, you know... a coordinator in post and then we have a full time administration person who can fill all enquiries and do kind of back office paper work and admin job. Or it could be that we don't have the admin post.

(Coordinator)

It was anticipated by the Homeshare Coordinators interviewed that as their roles evolved, support needs may become more defined.

Travel

Homeshare is a countywide programme in all three areas and as such does have travelling implications. In Oxfordshire the higher demand from both Householders and Homesharers to Homeshare in the city prompted a decision to focus Homeshare mainly but not exclusively, around the city centre in the first instance. As a result the travelling time for the Oxfordshire Homeshare Coordinator was reduced and this may have contributed to the higher numbers of matches produced in the Oxfordshire programme. However, it is important to recognise that Oxfordshire benefits from having a large city and two universities which contribute to the demand for a city-centre based programme.

Both Homeshare Coordinators from the other two areas identified a key issue as 'lost time' that was spent travelling:

it is a good solid half day out in terms of the travel, the interview, because the interview can take anything up to two hours .. and back again, so there is a lot of kind of dead time

(Coordinator)

The lack of any large cities in West Sussex and Wiltshire meant that restriction to an area may have been problematic:

I would like to say yes we should have restricted it to one geographical area but I think we would have ended up making fewer, we would not have got the same amount of matches.

(Coordinator)

Out of hours nature of the work

It was not expected that the Homeshare programme would require out of hours cover from the Homeshare Coordinator. However, the interviews made clear that some people seemed to expect a twenty four hour service from the Homeshare Coordinators:

homesharers think that I'm working 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I mean if they can't catch me at 9 o'clock at night on a Saturday night, you know, I've had voice mails, saying, you know, you can kind of hear in their tone of voice

(Coordinator)

A voice mail message left on the answer phone may be helpful to appraise those who ring out of hours about the normal working hours of the Homeshare Coordinator.

Long Term funding uncertainty

The pilot programmes in West Sussex and Oxfordshire were funded for two years from a DH section 64 grant. As the end of this funding approached so did the need for managers to try to justify further funding to enable the work to continue. All Homeshare Coordinators identified this as an additional pressure on them when interviewed by the researcher. It was clear that the knowledge that all three programmes were time limited put pressure on Homeshare Coordinators to get results:

and it ends up becoming discouraging because, because things haven't happened and you end up, well I do, because of where I am. I take the blame more personally

(Coordinator)

Role of the Homeshare programme Line Managers

Not only did the Homeshare Coordinators embrace the programme, so too did the managers:

..the exciting bit about the legislation [Your Health, Your Care, Your Say] is that it (Homeshare) is obviously taking us down that path, getting us to look at things differently..

(Manager)

As outlined in the introduction above, the two Homeshare Coordinators in West Sussex and Oxfordshire were each supported by a host line manager within the respective local authority who gave day to day support. The project manager from NAAPS provided overall line management for the duration of the pilot programmes. The unusual nature of the arrangement (see chapter 2) generally worked well, although one line manager described the job in the early days as having a:

Lack of clarity

(Manager)

This perhaps stems from the unusual nature of a remote project manager, overseeing two projects and the Homeshare Coordinators being 'hosted' rather than employed by the local authority.

I think XXXX probably was a bit torn as to which to begin with she should get support from

(Manager)

However, line manager of this particular programme changed soon after this and the new line manager reported that:

..we adopt an informal supervision as in a sort of a social work model but more informal, I'm aware of her day to day movements and make sure that personal safety, that she's linked into you know, the area she needs to, but also it just means that I can sort of give her that additional support.

(Manager)

When asked about previous tensions the new line manager replied:

I think its just clarity and being clear up front about what your job is and what it isn't really

(Manager)

The West Sussex and Oxfordshire programmes were set up with steering groups providing some support. Line managers reflected that although this seemed sound at the time, by the end of the programme they could see some of the limitations of this set up:

I think particularly we didn't help the [Homeshare] coordinator very well. I think we were chucking ideas [around] and I think some of the steering group meetings we had there were just ideas coming out, which I'm sure from [the Homeshare Coordinator's] point of view must have felt just overwhelming

(Manager)

However, Line Managers acknowledged that the steering groups brought people together from a wide circle of departments and agencies including, health, social services, housing, Age Concern, Help the Aged, universities, police, churches, and found that this in itself had benefits for other programmes:

you can look outside of this particular project and see how it fits within a broader context and make all sorts of connections. And what we have found is that we felt that with working with the churches on Homeshare and we are now talking very seriously about other initiatives around migrant workers and we have also now pulled in the university.

(Manager)

The Wiltshire Homeshare programme was funded by POPPS money and initially the programme was located in the community development team and after reorganisation it moved into the transformation change for social care team. Note that the Wiltshire programme was not supported by a steering group.

5.3.2 Homeshare Coordinators' and Line Managers' expectations for the programme

Expectations for the Homeshare programme fell into four broad areas:

- Vision
- Benefits
- Challenges of the programme
- Success

Each area is discussed separately below.

Vision

The enthusiasm for Homeshare to succeed was clearly evident at the initial interviews and was also present at the second interview with each manager and Homeshare Coordinator really rooting for the programme's success:

..you can see Homeshare working for all sorts of people..

(Manager)

and later:

Homeshare is often quotedas being one of those innovative ideas that actually people don't have to take the traditional routeso I think what it has done is given us a concrete example of here's an alternative way of doing things

(Manager)

There was a real sense of embracing the Homeshare concept and interviews having a clear vision of how it might work:

I'd like to see Homeshare as an option. That when our care staff go out and visit citizen service users that it becomes an option that people are readily given, to enable people to stay in their own homes for longer and for people to feel safe and remain in their own communities

(Manager)

Caution in having too ambitious a vision was expressed by one of the line managers who had supported the programme from its outset:

[Homeshare] does need to be nurtured in the beginning in order for it to, you know, put down roots and once it gets down roots, it will I am sure take off a bit on its own accord and be a sort of permanent part of the system.

(Manager)

The sense of excitement that came across from the initial interviews was almost tangible, with managers and Homeshare Coordinators working in partnership with people from diverse groups pooling ideas of how and for whom, Homeshare

could work. Time did not dent the enthusiasm but as two Coordinators reflected at the second interview, it did sharpen the realism of the vision:

I was unrealistic 2 years ago, thinking we would get hundreds of matches

Were we ever going to get 150 matches with just one person?

(Coordinator)

The challenge now is for:

People to see it as viable option

(Manager)

However, second round interviews also made clear that there are resourcing implications associated with future growth:

The capacity to expand is there, but we need more staff

(Coordinator)

Benefits of the Homeshare programme

All staff suggested that the need for companionship and to remain living in their own homes was going to be very important for Householders at the first interview:

Well it is normal. It is just carrying on living life as you want but with a bit more quality and a bit more certainty. ...continuing to live in your local community, being near your family, being near your friends, ..

(Manager)

Indeed, when asked about reasons people wanted to Homeshare the key motivation was expressed as:

number one would be loneliness (for Householder) and practicalities, putting the bins out, struggling to get a prescription from the chemist.

(Manager)

The Homeshare Coordinators reported lots of examples of Householders benefiting from the arrangement at the second interview. One person had been

in hospital for some weeks following a severe illness and the Homeshare Coordinator stated that Homeshare:

..enabled her to be discharged from hospital, she gained a friend for life, was able to start walking the dog again and able to start getting back to a normal life.

(Coordinator)

Another Homeshare Coordinator reported that a Householder who had recently had a stroke which had left him unable to walk unaided had benefited from walking with the Homesharer each day and within a few weeks was walking independently.

Another gave the example of a Householder who usually suffered from winter depression which resulted in hospitalization for several weeks each winter and reported that this Householder's daughter had said to the Homeshare Coordinator that:

this year she as not been depressed like every other winter, she has been admitted but only for two weeks

(Coordinator)

One Homeshare Coordinator reported that one Householder's face lit up when her Homesharer walked into the room and that the Householder had said that she sleeps so much better at night just knowing that someone is in the house.

The Homeshare Coordinators also reported benefits for Homesharers, for example, a Homesharer been able to save to send money home to her family and as a result of this her son would now be able to go the university. One of the line managers also mentioned the benefit for Homesharers who were saving to try and get onto the property ladder:

No matter how they save, deposits are so huge nowadays and this gives them an opportunity and they perhaps haven't got to live in that grotty bedsitter...(Manager)

Interestingly, Homeshare Coordinators also reported that it was not just the Householders and Homesharers who benefited from the Homeshare programme, stating that the families of Householders also benefited. One Homeshare Coordinator gave the example of a Householder who had previously lived alone, was fearful at night and had been contacting her daughter several times each night prior to the Homeshare programme starting. A few weeks after the start of a Homeshare arrangement, the Householder's daughter reported to the Homeshare Coordinator that she was receiving fewer phone calls as her mother knew that the Homesharer would be there from 6pm and was less fearful.

Benefits for the wider community were also identified by the Homeshare Coordinators, particularly the importance of communities being diverse:

Perhaps challenging discrimination....

(Manager)

and

It will mean that the community will not only be characterised by.. people who work

(Manager)

The benefits of the arrangement as reported by Homeshare Coordinators went beyond the simple exchange of accommodation for support. One Homeshare Coordinator said that the benefits of the programme were:

..way above any expectations of what the scheme was offeringit has given so much more to both sets of people, which is just a true delight

(Coordinator)

Challenges of the programme

The challenges to the Homeshare programme identified by Homeshare Coordinators and managers fell into four broad categories:

- Lack of clear ownership of the Homeshare programme and associated lack of referrals to the programme;
- Difficulty in converting enquiries to applications and applications to matches
- Difficulties in ascertaining full and up to date information about Homesharer applicants
- Length of time from application to match

These challenges are discussed separately below.

Lack of clear ownership of the Homeshare programme and the associated lack of referrals and lack of applications to the programme

Some of the line managers interviewed wondered if there was a link between the lack of clear ownership of the Homeshare programme and the fact that there were fewer referrals from practitioners (such as social workers, nurses or health visitors) to the programme than anticipated. Some line managers interviewed speculated that because Homeshare sits outside statutory services it might therefore be seen as less of a formal provision and they felt that this might have impacted on referrals into the service. One manager reported trying to raise the profile of Homeshare in Housing but said that the difficulty is:

trying to get them[Housing worker] to see it as a priority

(Manager)

The same manager went on to express surprise that colleges and hospitals have not seized on the Homeshare programme as a great solution:

'I don't think we have identified the best place to get referrals from Householders or Homesharers e.g. In Australia they use the internet solely to find sharers.'

(Manager)

The Homeshare Coordinators also felt that the hybrid nature of the programme organisation possibly reduced referrals and thereby impacted on the numbers of

applicants and matches. However, both line managers and Homeshare Coordinators agreed that the programme should not be a statutory provision.

In addition to the lack of ownership which was seen as leading to fewer referrals to the programme than anticipated, analysis of interview data suggested some additional reasons for fewer applications to the programme than initially assumed:

- The fact that the Homeshare programme is operated from the local authority offices meant that the public perhaps viewed the programme as being linked to social services and this may have been a barrier to them applying;
- Homeshare did not have a strong profile for the public, and
- Homeshare did not appear to be offered by practitioners as an option when help is required in the home. It was felt that this was due to possible lack of understanding and awareness of the programme by practitioners.

Evidence for the idea that Homeshare was not routinely offered by practitioners as an option also came from other sources in addition to the interview data. Although the Homeshare Coordinators meet with various groups of professionals to appraise them of the Homeshare programme, anecdotal evidence from several sources suggested that this information was not widely disseminated. This begs for some exploration of how to get information widely disseminated.

Difficulty in converting enquiries to applications and applications to matches

Homeshare Coordinators and line managers identified that the conversion rate from enquiry to application was less than they had expected but could not come up with an explanation for it (the conversion rate of enquiries to applications was 3:1). The researcher therefore designed a questionnaire to be sent to everyone who had enquired about the programme but had not applied to try understand

their reasons for not going forward with an application (findings from this questionnaire were discussed in Chapter 4).

One manager suggested that there might be cultural influences that mean people hold back from making an application:

We live in a culture where, or we work in a culture where people need to be very sure about safety, about [um] having things proven and I think Homeshare is a huge step for people to take and actually there are a lot of very fuzzy areas around Homeshare

(Manager)

Difficulties in ascertaining full information about Homesharer applicants and applicants not keeping the information given to the Coordinators up to date

All three Homeshare Coordinators interviewed reported that one of the key challenges of the programme for them was dealing with the number of applicants who provide information at interview but fail to keep the Homeshare Coordinator informed of changes to their circumstances. One Homeshare Coordinator mentioned how frustrating it can be when applicants:

have not disclosed the full situation

(Coordinator)

The Homeshare Coordinators all had experienced times when they were actively looking for a match only to find that some of the Homesharers on the list had already found somewhere to live and had signed tenancy agreements (perhaps due to the long wait for a match). Each Homeshare Coordinator reported that there was no way of knowing who on their list was 'live' and who had already made arrangements as the Homeshare applicants did not keep them informed of changes to their circumstances (despite being asked to do so).

The key challenge reported in the interviews was getting applicants into matches. This evaluation has shown that only 12% of applicants were successfully matched²². This seems to be because of a number of factors including the length to time from application to match (discussed in detail below) and the geographical location of the Householder may not be acceptable to a Homesharer who need to get to work.

Length of time from application to match

Homeshare Coordinators identified that perhaps one of the biggest challenges for the programme was the time it takes to match two people. References are taken for both Householders and Homesharers before a match can be considered. It is a requirement that all Homesharers should have a CRB check before any match can be considered and this can take up to six weeks.

I think we lose a lot because we can't match quickly

(Coordinator)

Homeshare Coordinators reported that potential Homesharers often need to find accommodation in a hurry and whilst Homeshare Coordinators can inform them that a CRB check will take several weeks, there is still no guarantee that a suitable match will be found at the end of that period. Homeshare Coordinators also mentioned that Householders may feel disheartened if a match cannot be found quickly and they may feel that they are unmatchable.

None of the Homeshare Coordinators interviewed could think of an easy solution to this challenge given the necessity of having the CRB check and associated minimum six week timeline.

²² A match is taken to last for four weeks or more (a trial match lasts less than four weeks).

Defining success

When asked interviewees found it difficult to define success criteria for the programme. Defining success criteria at the beginning of the pilot programmes is difficult as there were hopes and expectations for success but interviewees reported that was not possible to predict tangible outcomes because it was such a new idea. The only clear measure of success it was possible to define at the start, was whether or not Homeshare matches could be arranged and sustained.

Managers and Homeshare Coordinators interviewed indicated that they were keen for the programme to succeed but all were aware that getting the 'right matches' was crucial, as was the quality of the matches:

Maybe five matches of people with complex needs as part of complex packages or five people whose life is going to be ruined and with a Homesharer for three months their life is not ruined

(Manager)

In addition, it was seen as important to recognise that success is both subjective:

Successful matches are when people identify positive things for themselves.. and it will mean different things to different people

(Manager)

as well as objective:

Outcomes.. and evidence of the outcomes

(Manager)

One manager pointed out that it is important that the small number of matches should not deter the enthusiasm of Homeshare Coordinators:

eight months to achieve two matches, you know, given how long it takes to build new houses, you know, that is an extraordinarily swift time.

(Manager)

Chapter 6 - Findings from qualitative data gathered from Householders and Homesharers

6.1 Summary

This chapter provides an analysis of the qualitative data gathered from interviews with the Householders and Homesharers who were matched.

6.2 Introduction

All Householders and Homesharers who were matched were invited to two interviews conducted by the Homeshare programme researcher. The first interview took place within six weeks of the match²³. The second follow up interview was planned to take place nine months after the initial interview (or sooner if the match ended before nine months).

The objectives of these two interviews were to explore the Homeshare experience at two points in time: early on and after several months.

In the first interview with the researcher, Householders and Homesharers were asked about themselves and about their Homeshare experience. These two broad topics were revisited in the second interview (see table 29).

²³ It had initially been planned to carry out the first interviews within the first six weeks of a match taking place. However, advice from the Homeshare Coordinator was always sought before interviews were conducted as in some cases participants needed time to adjust to the new living arrangements before being interviewed. Therefore some first round interviews took place after six weeks of the match on the Homeshare Coordinator's advice.

Table 29 Topics discussed in interviews with Householders and Homesharers

Previous experience of:

- living in shared accommodation,
- employment status and
- reasons for taking part in the Homeshare programme

The Homeshare experience:

- time from application to match
- help from the Homeshare Coordinator
- exchange of support for accommodation
- nature of accommodation provided by Householders in exchange for support from Homesharers
- benefits of the Homeshare programme
- challenges of the Homeshare programme

6.2.1 Interview subjects

Six Householders and ten Homesharers were interviewed. Of these:

- six Householders were interviewed with their six Homesharers (they were interviewed separately);
- two of the Householders experienced **two** Homeshare matches over the evaluation period (i.e. these two Householders had the experience of sharing their homes with two different Homesharers) and these two Householders were interviewed at the beginning and end of *each* of their two matches (i.e. were interviewed a total of four times).
 - one of these Householders was in transition to independence from the family home and was too shy to be interviewed. Her mother volunteered to be interviewed in her place and the mother was interviewed four times by the researcher. However, at the fourth interview, the Householder herself volunteered to be interviewed by the researcher in addition to her mother.
- two Homesharers agreed to the two interviews with the researcher however, their respective Householders declined to be interviewed.

This meant that interview data was collected on six Householders and ten Homesharers.

Table 30 provides an overview of the Householders, who were matched twice, and their respective Homesharers.

Table 30 Profile of the two Householders who were matched twice and their respective Homesharers

Match	Householder	Homesharer
Match 1 Householder 1	Age: 27 Marital status: Single Gender: Female Reasons for participating in Homeshare: Transition to independent living. (mother of the Householder interviewed at the beginning and end of both matches and Householder herself interviewed at the end of the second match).	Age 25. Marital status; Single. Gender; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Had been living in a shared home with a family but unable to continue – keen to help
Match 2 Householder 1	As above – Householder 1 was matched twice over the period of the evaluation	Age 35. Marital status; Single. Gender; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Just finished teacher training
Match 3 Householder 2	Age 49. Marital status; Single. Gender; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Rehabilitation following illness	Age 27. Marital status; Single. Gender; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare post graduate student
Match 4 Householder 2	As above – Householder 2 was matched twice over the period of the evaluation	Age 28. Marital status; Single. Gender; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare post graduate student

Table 31 provided a profile of Householders and Homesharers matched once.

Table 31 Profiles of the other Householders and their Homesharers who were matched once

Match	Householder	Homesharer
Match 5 Householder 3	Age 43. Marital status ; Single. Gender ; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Transition to independent living	Age 38. Marital status ; Single. Gender ; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare opportunity to save and live people whose first language is English.
Match 6 Householder 4	Age 88. Marital status ; Widowed. Gender ; Male. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Loss of confidence following a fall	Age 42. Marital status ; Divorced. Gender ; Male. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Employment in the area
Match 7 Householder 5	Age 86. Marital status ; Divorced. Gender ; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Loss of confidence following a fall.	Age 60. Marital status ; Divorced. Gender ; Male. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Unable to get back into housing market
Match 8 Householder 6	Age 81 . Marital status ; Married Gender ; Couple. Reasons for participating in Homeshare. Husband deteriorating health	Age 38. Marital status ; Single. Gender ; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Needed alternative accommodation.
Match 9	Householder declined to be interviewed.	Age 34. Marital status ; Single. Gender ; Female. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Low income chance to save
Match 10	Householder declined to be interviewed.	Age 27. Marital status ; Single. Gender ; Male. Reasons for participating in Homeshare Post graduate student

Previous experience of living in shared accommodation, employment status and reasons for taking part in the Homeshare programme

During the interview with the researcher all Householders and Homesharers were asked about their previous experience of living in shared accommodation,

their employment status and their motivation for applying to take part in the Homeshare programme.

Findings from Householders and Homesharers are discussed separately below.

Householders – experience of living in shared accommodation

Of the six householders interviewed, all but one had had previous experience of living in shared accommodation. Three had been living in shared accommodation up until the time that the Homeshare programme started. Householder 2 lived in a three bed roomed house and normally rented out rooms. However, she had been living alone for a short time before starting the Homeshare programme.

Householders – employment status

Householder 1 was the only Householder in full time employment. Householder 2 had previously worked full time in a demanding job involving a fair amount of travelling but had been ill and had had to give up her job. Householder 3 worked part time from 6am until 8am. Householders 4, 5 and 6 were retired.

Householders – motivations for taking part in the Homeshare programme

Householder 1 was not socially confident. She had been living with her parents who wanted her to participate in Homeshare to support her make the transition to independent living. The motivations for taking part in the Homeshare programme were articulated by her mother:

“the main aim [of participating in Homeshare] as far as we were concerned is that there would be a befriending exercise as well as practical [cooking and budgeting] support. So the sharer was asked if she would include [Householder] in some of the social activities that she already does, and whether she would be willing to spend time with [Householder], just doing simple things, like ... going to a film or doing the shopping together

[Mother of Householder 1]

Householder 2 had been hospitalised for some time with a severe illness before participating in the Homeshare programme. Having someone at home to provide support had been a condition of her hospital discharge as she had been left with slurred speech, mobility and memory problems and she thought that Homeshare preferable to going to live with a relative. Householder 2 was given a rehabilitation programme to undertake separately to the Homeshare programme and the Homesharer enabled the Householder to adapt to life at home and become increasingly independent:

“she [the homesharer] was very good, because she would fill in where I couldn’t and she said I will do that and so she is very good, because she also leaves me to do anything, if I want to make my own bed and things, she says fine. So she knows when to leave me and when not to leave me”

(Householder 2)

Householder 3 had learning difficulties and was making the transition from shared housing into independent living. She chose to participate in Homeshare because she needed some support in addition to that provided by social services to enable her to live on her own. Her Homesharer match had had previous experience of working with people with learning difficulties.

Householders 4 and 5 had contacted Homeshare following falls which had resulted in a loss of confidence. Householder 4 had had previous experience of Homeshare, when some years earlier his wife had been unwell and required support when he was out at work. The arrangement had worked well, so he was delighted to find another programme in the area to help him. He lived in a large house with a family member living next door.

“...recently we came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to have someone here overnight because I had fallen and broken my hip and my daughter was anxious about my being on my own”

(Householder 4)

Householder 5 had a support worker who visited her weekly to help her to regain confidence and applied for Homeshare so that she had someone in the house at night and for companionship:

.. I fell on the stone floor and dislocated my right shoulder. Now it had a very bad effect on me... and it took away, completely took away my confidence and here I was on my own hating it.

(Householder 5)

Householder 6 was one of a couple in their 80s. The wife was running a large house and supporting her husband who had failing eyesight and decreasing mobility. They applied for Homeshare to provide support mainly for the wife who was beginning to feel overwhelmed with juggling the demands of their home and the effects of her husbands' failing health:

We were reaching a stage, when there's only the two of us, we have no children, when a lady who had worked for us as a cleaner for about twenty odd years was going to leave .. and we were desperate, [my wife] was desperately worried about how she was going to cope.... and she was really getting very depressed which is a worry.

(Husband of Householder 6)

In summary then, two Householders applied to the Homeshare programme to facilitate the transition to independent living and the other four Householders who were interviewed applied to the programme to help them to remain living in their own homes. One of the Homesharers who was matched, but whose Householder declined to take part in the evaluation, reported that the Householder was supported for some part of each week by a family member but the family thought it was important that someone was living in the house at night. The other Homesharer whose Householder (a couple) declined to take part in the evaluation said that the couple needed some support after the husband had a stroke.

Homesharers – experience of living in shared accommodation

All Homesharers who took part in a match reported that they had had experience of living in shared accommodation either at university or at other times in their lives.

Homesharers – employment status

Three of the ten Homesharers were full time postgraduate students. Six Homesharers worked full-time and of these four worked in caring related jobs, one in IT and one in teaching. One Homesharer was unemployed but engaged in private study

Homesharers – motivation for taking part in the Homeshare programme

The three post graduate students stated that they had applied for Homeshare partly for financial reasons, as one put it:

Cash flow is zero

(Homesharer)

and the other:

I was looking for a place to live which will lower my budget a little bit, because it is way too expensive with the difference of currency with my country.

(Homesharer)

The third student stated that:

Taking on the Masters, I wouldn't have done without thinking it all through. ...paying for fees and accommodation, particularly Halls, I found, you know, was going to be an awful lot of money. So this is just, this is just taking, I guess, the initial burden of whatever the cost of Halls ..

(Homesharer)

All three of the post-graduate students stayed in their Homeshare until the end of their course, at which time two of them returned to their country of origin.

One Homesharer was prompted to apply because of an article on Homeshare in the local paper. Her previous accommodation arrangement, living with a family, was coming to an end and she enjoyed helping people:

... I'm quite keen, I think, to help other people and plus the people I was living with, I was living with a family I had met through the local church..

(Homesharer)

Two Homesharers had recently moved here from overseas and one found that her original accommodation was too small; the other was keen to save and also to improve her English. Reflecting on the Homeshare experience at the second interview she reported:

I was able to improve my language and I was able to learn new things connected with different cultures, and also I thought it was a great experience for me, as well, as a person.

(Homesharer)

Of the other three all were keen to do something to help another person, two were keen to avoid living alone and felt it was an opportunity to save:

Not only for the cheap accommodation side of things but actually to help out somebody, you know, an elderly person, so they don't have to come into a care home when they don't need to

(Homesharer)

The other Homesharer was engaged in private study and had sold his house some years earlier:

I sold my house about ten years ago and went off travelling, ... and the property market just got beyond me.

(Homesharer)

Homeshare appealed to him because it offered the opportunity to be involved with:

Just sharing and supporting someone

(Homesharer)

The Homeshare experience from the perspective of Householders and Homesharers

In addition to being asked about their previous experience of living in shared accommodation, their employment status and their motivations for participating in Homeshare, Householders and Homesharers were also asked a number of questions about their experiences of Homeshare and these will be discussed under key topics.

Time from application to match

As discussed in Chapter 4, the time from application to the point of making a match is quite long partly because of the requirement to wait for the outcome of the Homesharers' CRB check before any matching can be considered. However, several Homesharers were moving to the area and needed accommodation by a certain date for example, students due to start a university course. Homesharers reported that the Homeshare Coordinators had stressed the difficulty of matching quickly to the potential Householders:

she did keep saying don't rely on it, don't bank on it, but at some point you've got to rely on something haven't you?

(Homesharer)

For one Homesharer it was a:

nerve wracking wait

(Homesharer)

Another Homesharer commented that:

it took [the Homeshare Coordinator] that long really to make this match that we now have.

(Homesharer)

However, one Homesharer who had completed the CRB checks and references and gone away for the summer had a positive experience; she reported that when she phoned to say she was returning the Homeshare Coordinator had found a possible match:

...and within about two weeks I think I'd moved in.

(Homesharer)

From this evidence, if Homesharers are in a position to apply in plenty of time, for example university students, it would seem possible to make a match. However, of course matches are not just dependent on the CRB check. There is also the important aspect of taking up references and compatibility.

Support from the Homeshare Coordinator

The Homeshare Coordinator supports both people in the match and the amount of support is determined to a large extent by the situation. There were differing opinions about the support. One Homesharer said:

I think it is really necessary to have a good relationship with the coordinator because it can be like your sounding block

(Homesharer)

Trying to get the balance of the role right was seen as a challenge. For example, another Homesharer making the transition to independence reflected that she:

didn't like the way we had meetings and the way she [the Coordinator] kept checking up on you to see if you were alright,. I felt under pressure, you know. I felt I was treated like a kid...

(Homesharer)

Another Homesharer would have liked:

.. a little bit more communication ...a little bit more is everything

(Homesharer)

The Homeshare Coordinator played a key role in providing information about the Homeshare programme including outlining to Homesharers the expectation that they would contribute to their Householder's utility bills. One Homesharer was very keen to establish what exactly the expected contribution would be before moving in and the Homeshare Coordinator gave a ball park figure. Later it appeared that the issue of contribution had not been discussed with the Householder who had asked the Homesharer asked for a much higher contribution than had been suggested. After trying to contact the Homeshare Coordinator and not getting a response²⁴ the Homesharer broached the subject with the Householder directly and it was resolved to the satisfaction of both parties. Reflecting on this experience the Homesharer wondered:

Is [there] a clear rule here it was kind of disappointing and pressure that those great close and friendly relationships, should in my opinion, get a bit tense, and is not an easy subject.

(Homesharer)

²⁴ Contact with the Homesharer Coordinator may be limited as there is no one to cover holidays or sickness. This means that there is the potential for problems to escalate. However, during the period of the evaluation there were very few reports of Householders or Homesharers being unable to contact the Homeshare Coordinator.

One Homeshare match had a precarious start when the potential Homesharer had been turned down by the Householder and her family at the first meeting. The Householder's family instead decided to find a lodger to fulfil the support requirements. This arrangement was unsuccessful and later the Householder reversed her previous decision and the Homesharer moved in. The Homesharer was surprised both at being turned down initially as both she and the Homeshare Coordinator had felt that the meeting had gone very well. However, the match did not run smoothly and some months later the Homesharer was given notice to leave. There was some disagreement about the leaving date and the Homesharer reported a lack of support from the Homeshare Coordinator:

And I feel that [coordinator] should have turned round to the people and said that they were being really unreasonable especially when they turned round and said on .. you have to move out and you have eight weeks to do so.

(Homesharer)

At about this point in time, the Householder invited a friend to move into the house without consulting with the Homesharer. The Homesharer was a little disgruntled by this and considered that the Homeshare Coordinator was:

there for the home provider but not for the homesharer

(Homesharer)

However overall Householders and Homesharers were very positive about the support they had had from the Homeshare Coordinator throughout the process.

Exchange of support for accommodation

Each Homesharer was expected to offer up to ten hours of support each week. These hours were agreed between the Householder and Homesharer.

At the initial interview with the Homeshare Coordinator, Householders outlined their support needs and Homesharers were asked what to agree what they would

be happy to offer in terms of support. For example, Homesharers were asked if they were willing to help with cooking, shopping, housework, laundry and gardening. They were also asked if they would offer companionship, take the Householder out and offer security by sleeping in the home at night. This information formed part of the criteria for matching.

The support the Homesharers in the study offered is shown in Table 32.

Table 32 Support requested by the Householder and support offered by the Homesharer

Match	Support requested by the Householder	Support offered by the Homesharer
1&2	Socializing, cooking, budgeting	1 cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, outings, companionship 2 cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, outings, companionship
3&4	Practical help, memory jogging and help with the dog	1 cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, outings, companionship 2. as above and gardening
5	Practical help and companionship	shopping, housework, laundry, outings, companionship
6	Practical help security at night	cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, gardening, outings, companionship
7	Companionship, practical help	cooking, shopping, laundry, outings, companionship
8	Cleaning, gardening	cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, gardening, outings, companionship. (this Homesharer did work some nights)
7	Companionship NB Householder not in evaluation	cooking, shopping, housework, laundry, gardening, outings, companionship
8	Companionship, walking with householder and playing chess with Householder. NB Householder not in evaluation	Help with housework and shopping. Walking with Householder.

However, one Homesharer reported that the support requirements were not made explicit. The early experience of one match was a little disappointing from the Householder's mother's perspective, as she had hoped that the hours of support would include weekends:

I think I would like to see the weekends used more as a chance to do things together... [Homesharer] does tend to go away at weekends.

(Mother of Householder)

In this instance it was reported that the hope that support would be offered over the weekend had not been communicated to either the Homeshare Coordinator or the Homesharer who provided the ten hours of support and took her supporting role seriously, reflecting:

the whole idea of me being here is to help [Householder] become more independent and it is not going to happen over night, so yes, with time I think things will start to happen easier, like going shopping together and budgeting for food. It is hard for [householder] to perhaps do that at the moment,

(Homesharer)

The same Homesharer was very positive about the experience of exchanging her support in return for accommodation:

I am really encouraged by how things have gone. I am sure we will keep going as we are really. And hopefully get better.

(Homesharer)

Despite her initial reservations, Householder 1's mother reported positively on the progress her daughter had made:

...so many people have asked me what has happened to change [Householder]. Why is she so much more confident?.

(Mother of Householder)

This particular Homeshare arrangement came to an end when the Homesharer got a volunteering job abroad and left after 6 months of sharing. Reflecting on the idea of exchanging support for accommodation the Homesharer stated that:

It has been really good from saving me rent. Because now I am going to go off and be a volunteer for six months which I wouldn't have been able to do.

(Homesharer)

Householder 2²⁵, when asked about the exchange of support for accommodation said that she found that both her Homesharers had helped her with rehabilitation, not only with her mobility but also with her speech and memory:

Having someone here... having to talk, because obviously if there wasn't someone here, I wouldn't get to talk. ...And also made me remember things. Because [Homesharer] always is there as a short stop for my memory.... So she will say have you done this, have you done.... I think because both of them [this Homesharer and the previous one] were very intuitive people.

(Householder)

One Householder had recently had a stroke; he lived with his wife (both declined to be interviewed). The Homesharer was asked to provide some household support such as doing the dishes and helping with the shopping but also talking and walking with the Householder:

...he is partially paralysed so he actually has a lot of difficulty expressing himself. And I think he really just requires a lot of patience. And so the fact that I am able to speak with him at a very slow level, I think he really appreciates that. He also really likes playing chess because he has got a very mathematical mind and [...] his verbal communication has been damaged by a stroke but nothing in his mathematical mind has gone. So he can beat me all the time at chess. ... [Householder] and I used to go for a walk every day for about an hour, which I really enjoyed. He is now independent. So we walked may be for the first three weeks, an hour a day together. Last week we haven't gone once, because I

²⁵ who had been able to go home following a period of hospitalisation which had affected her mobility, speech and memory,

come home and I say [Householder] are we going for a walk and he has always done it. And he is very proud of this fact too that he has regained his independence.

(Homesharer)

Nature of accommodation provided by Householders in exchange for support from Homesharers

All Homesharers seemed broadly satisfied with the accommodation they were provided with by the Householder:

This place is a lovely place to live, extraordinarily lovely

(Homesharer)

All Homesharers had their own bedroom; two Homesharers had their own bathrooms (seven had shared bathrooms). One Homesharer had a self contained area consisting of a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and sitting room while the rest of the Homesharers shared the kitchen with the Householder. One Householder commented:

I thought it would be very difficult to share for instance, a kitchen and that was the part that worried me.

(Householder)

Indeed this had been the downfall of her first Homeshare match which lasted only a couple of weeks. However, with her second Homeshare match things were different:

We don't seem to clash in the kitchen

(Householder)

One Householder had a home which had three levels. This was really valued by the Homesharer who felt it facilitated time together but also time apart:

This is the really good thing, us being over three storeys, because we have got the kitchen and everything down here and then upstairs ... we have got the lounge and then my room with the en suite shower and then [Householder] is right at the top with the bathroom. So in a way we can have our little separate evenings and just sort of meet in the lounge as it were and not get on each other's nerves and step on each other's toes.

(Homesharer)

Benefits of the Homeshare programme

Householders and Homesharers reported a number of key benefits of Homeshare which are summarised in Table 33. These benefits will be discussed under each topic as set out in the table below.

Table 33 Benefits of Homesharing

Benefits as reported by Householders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining and retaining independence • Improved health and wellbeing • Companionship/Friendship • Increased skills/confidence • Shared interests
Benefits as reported by Homesharers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial benefit • Companionship/Friendship • Accommodation • Language and cultural education • Understanding of another person's challenges

Benefits of Homesharing as reported by Householders

Gaining and retaining independence

The key benefit of the Homeshare programme from the perspective of Householders was that it facilitated independent living. Homeshare helped two Householders make the transition to independent living and the other four Householders interviewed said that they had been helped to remain living independently by the programme.

Even over a period of just seven weeks, Homeshare helped one Householder to make the transition to independent living and the Householder gained enough confidence to remain living in her own home (supported by care workers) after the end of the Homeshare arrangement.

Within the first five weeks there was some evidence of success for Householder 1 who was also making the transition to independent living as reported by her mother:

*And until recently she hasn't wanted to spend any time on her own in the house at night... But not that long ago she did spend the night there...
.... she is living away from home
...[she] actually had baked two potatoes and put, she had done baked potatoes and baked beans for both of them. And that doesn't sound very much does it, but
it was a real...
.... I think it has gone as well as we could possibly have hoped. Because we really didn't know how well [Householder 1] was going to be able to manage the transition from home to independent living, and what is certain is that Homeshare has enabled her to do that in that she has had this very pleasant young woman of a similar age to herself sharing the house with her, and giving her a bit more*

confidence about managing her own environment because it is so different to living at home

(Mother of Householder)

Householder 5 had in the past always lived with other people in her house. Recently when living alone she had suffered a fall:

I fell over. And up to then I was managing on my own. I mean I didn't much like being on my own, but I managed. And then I had this fall about [um] I suppose it must have been about eight months ago now. And it completely shattered my confidence

(Householder 5)

The Householder reported that things improved when the Homesharer moved in. Not only did she like having someone in the house; she also had someone to walk to the shops with which began to rebuild her confidence.

Improved health and wellbeing

Improved health and wellbeing of Householders was reported by both Householders themselves and Homesharers.

Householder 6 was part of a couple and was keen to take part in the programme so that she could have some help and support in caring for her husband whose health was deteriorating. Her husband reported improvements in the health and wellbeing of his wife after the Homesharer had moved in:

...[the Homeshare programme has] improved our health enormously. She [Householder]'s brightened up, she's cheered up, her face has become alight. And [um] she's totally different. Its put years off her, I think

(Husband of Householder 6)

This was supported by Householder 6 who had hitherto felt that things were getting on top of her and had begun to wonder how they would be able to remain living at home:

I was lying in bed a couple of mornings ago and I suddenly thought 'oh I haven't got to get up'.. I used to say that if I wasn't on top of the world before 9 o'clock the world got on top of me. And the world was getting on top of me and now I can lay back and think gosh the house is clean.

(Householder 6)

Indeed the success of this Homeshare experience meant that this couple felt they could go away on holiday leaving the care of the house to the Homesharer.

Two Homesharers reported improvements in the health and wellbeing of their respective Householders.²⁶ One of these Householders usually suffers from depression in the winter months and often requires some weeks in hospital. Since the Homesharer had moved in, the Homesharer reported that her Householder had only had one episode of depression lasting a couple of weeks, which the family reported as being a huge improvement. Another Homesharer reported improvements in the mobility of his Householder who had recently had a stroke.

Companionship/friendship

Several Householders and Homesharers reported that they had become friends through the programme, rather than just companions:

we have become very good friends as well. So it has been amazing, amazing

(Householder 1)

²⁶ NB these Householders had declined to be interviewed

.... generally when I engage with her, she's good fun, I can share jokes with her, be cheeky with her.

(Homesharer)

Increased skills/Confidence

All six Householders interviewed said that having a Homesharer living with them had had a positive effect in terms of their confidence. One Homesharer reported that her Householder, who had fallen, had gained confidence such that that she was now able to walk alongside (rather than hold on to) the Homesharer when they went to the shops together:

She [the Householder] only hangs on to me when we walk across the road really. Just when we get to the traffic cone areas. Generally I try to give her support, rather than her leaning all the time, because she is independent

(Homesharer)

One Householder improved her walking skills such that she was able walk independently following walking practice with the Homesharer.

Shared interests

The Homeshare Coordinator asked all Homeshare applicants about their interests at the initial interview and this forms part of the matching process. However, occasionally information on shared interests is not found out until later, as one Householder reported:

I had been in [] for three or four years, very long ago, half a century ago, but that I had some [] still in my vocabulary. So that was .. personal delight I think both ..my homesharer and to me that we have two languages not just one.And the fact that he's a very expert cook on [] food which he does sometimes

for us and its food that I have remembered and longed for really and I'm now having it

(Householder 6)

One Householder spoke fluent German and when he found that the Homesharer also spoke German they had conversations in German.

Another Householder had a particular interest in the subject her Homesharer was studying at degree level:

I give her tons and tons of books

(Householder 2)

One Homesharer meditated daily and the Householder was delighted that:

he's also teaching me to meditate

(Householder 7)

Benefits of the Homeshare programme as reported by Homesharers

Financial benefits

All Homesharers reported that they had benefitted financially from the arrangement, as several Homesharers put it:

Living with [Householder] has allowed me to remain solvent financially during this past year

(Homesharer)

.. [the] first thing was it helped me stabilise financially which was important, but certainly not where it ends.

(Homesharer)

...it keeps my outgoings down

(Homesharer)

The family of one Householder realised that the Homesharer was taking the Householder out for day trips, as well as for shorter outings, and so they suggested that:

I don't pay anything towards the bills and then if I do take [Householder] out and buy her coffee or whatever. That's fine

(Homesharer)

However, the Homesharer felt that was very generous so:

I do the garden for her. ... I mow the garden. ...every Sunday I go through and clean. I don't do all of it, but I spend a couple of hours cleaning ..

(Homesharer)

Companionship/friendship

The majority of Homesharers mentioned the importance of companionship:

company, companionship and everything else. The fact that I haven't been alone. Yes. I think coming from so far away I never felt I could find some kind of family here, but I did, which it was great

(Homesharer)

Another Homesharer reported that he felt he had become part of the family:

I mix, you know, perfectly well and they've been very accepting and I've just become part of the family really with parties

(Homesharer)

Assistance with academic work was also appreciated:

[The Householder] has helped me a lot in the academic. First of all I wouldn't have had the help that she gave me. I mean everything helped. Books. Knowledge. Everything. ..

(Homesharer)

One Homesharer reported that she enjoyed the company of the Householder so much that they sometimes planned outings in advance

So we're going to do a weekend in Bournemouth and I'm going to take her up to Warwick Castle ..

Sharing after a period of living alone can bring unexpected benefits in terms of companionship as expressed by another Homesharer:

I've actually quite enjoyed... being around people all the time. As long as I can have an evening to myself or so. I actually quite enjoy coming home and there being people there.

(Homesharer)

I feel quite lucky in that I really like [Householder] I really do get on with her well, and I've found it really lovely that we've got to know each other fairly well, ..

(Homesharer)

However, not all Homesharers felt 'at home' despite the fact that many had become friends with Householders:

It doesn't feel like home. It feels like I'm living in somebody else's house, even though [Householder] is lovely

(Homesharer)

Language and cultural education

Four of the Homesharers were not from the UK and valued the opportunities Homeshare gave them to learn a little more about English culture:

It has helped me a lot to finish my course and live really really happily and experience English culture for a time. So I'm happy

(Homesharer)

I am getting culture lessons. We actually do eat incredibly well and I am getting an education in wine tasting. So it is wonderful. ...

(Homesharer)

Well I wouldn't have experienced living as an English person. I mean really getting to know someone that close and viewing English from a different culture.

(Homesharer)

I'm not English so it is a big experience for me to live with, you know, English people. It is really nice, because I can, because I can, you know, see how English people live, exactly, you know, about habits and about... their life. It is just not the same if you live with the same people, the same nationality

(Homesharer)

In addition, one Homesharer had moved to the area and found that Homeshare helped him integrate:

.. getting to know the area, the culture, having help with anything you wanted in the area. I have a job, but if I didn't for instance, but I've been asking for places to go even or... advice on local issues and it's been perfect in that sense.

Understanding another person's challenges

Two Homesharers talked about the opportunity that Homeshare had given them to learn about what life is like for someone else, particularly someone who might have problems living independently:

....I am just an average 25 year-old. It isn't that I am qualified at caring or qualified at anything specific related to home share. Because for me it has been so much about learning what I have got that I take for granted.... I actually am really blessed to have my faculties ..

(Homesharer)

And another commented:

I could learn a lot of, about myself, living with [Householder]. I could learn about making compromises, being patient, looking at my life and looking at [Householder's] life. I think I could learn a lot from here.

(Homesharer)

One Homesharer also learnt about depression:

her depression's been an awful lot better. That generally helps with the seasons anyway. So she's been in very good spiritswe've enjoyed our evenings together more and she's been instigating an awful lot of conversation..

(Homesharer)

Challenges of the Homeshare programme for Householders and Homesharers

Householders and Homesharers identified four key challenges with the Homeshare programme:

1. Management of expectations
2. Routines
3. Sharing space
4. Communication

These will be discussed in order below:

Management of expectations

Homesharers and Householders were generally realistic about the Homeshare arrangement and did not think it would all be plain sailing. Adjusting to living in a Homeshare arrangement is unlike many other arrangements. Reflecting on their collective experiences, participants described some highs, some lows and a lot of learning in terms of managing expectations

..a bit like a marriage, you are suddenly with somebody, living with them. Oh my goodness, didn't realise it was going to be quite like that and they adjust and you adjust. But then I don't feel like a guest anymore and I have my friends around

(Homesharer)

Another Homesharer expressed that she was a little nervous:

.. at the beginning I was scared....And I didn't know what I was getting myself into. ... even though I know I can adjust easily because I like trying to adjust and being easy going. I didn't know how the other person was going to be. ...and I was hoping it would work.

(Homesharer)

The Householder who was used to having lodgers reported that she had experienced a mixture of 'nice and horrible people' living with her in the past. When asked about any problems she foresaw in Homeshare, she replied:

*Of course I did because I was unsure if I would get on with her [the Homesharer].
And I thought she will be horrible to me, bound to be.*

(Householder 2)

However, fortunately this was not the case and they got on very well. Indeed when asked later in the interview about her 'ideal' Homesharer she replied:

Like [homesharer]

(Householder 2)

The mother of one of the Householders had some concerns at the outset:

I am anxious that [Homesharer] doesn't become discouraged, because there is a danger there that she will and think well I have done my best, but this person isn't cooperating with me, so is it me, or you know, what is it?

(Mother of Householder)

Many Householders expected the Homesharer to sleep in the house each night. This can be a little restrictive and sometimes compromises have to be made so that the Homesharer can go away for weekends or the odd night. The family of one Householder agreed to cover every other weekend and holidays

If [family] is here, yes, that's fine, and I've .. I've said to them if I plan a holiday away, if I let them know well enough in advance ... So they are as flexible as they can be.

(Homesharer)

When a Homesharer has been in place for sometime, the question of holidays inevitably surfaces. However, this did not seem to have been explored in the initial interviews between the Householder and Homesharer or with the Homeshare Coordinators and there was no clear expectation in place around this:

.. For instance, I went two weeks holiday and I was wondering whether I have to cover the hours I missed. Because those things haven't been clear to be honest...

(Homesharer)

The challenge of adjusting to new routines

There has to be a degree of give and take around adjusting to new routines in the Homeshare programme for it to work successfully. As one Homesharer put it;

I can see she has some ways where she really wants things done in a particular way, but just step back, It's not really something I want to challenge because I want some clarity around it, I just let it go.

(Homesharer)

One Homesharer helping the Householder to adjust to independent living spent a couple of days observing that:

I was learning her routine and by just observing I found out things that are important for her, what can make her cross and I followed this routine and I just avoid what she doesn't like

(Homesharer)

The challenge of sharing space

For most participants sharing space was not a problem. Two Homesharers lived in almost self contained areas with their own kitchens and bathrooms. For those

who shared a kitchen and/or bathroom there seemed to be few problems, particularly if one person did not cook very much, as was the case with two Householders. However, for one Householder sharing a kitchen was problematic and indeed led to the end of her first Homeshare arrangement within the trial period (neither participant interviewed). So this (second) Homeshare arrangement did concern her a little in terms of the shared kitchen:

I thought it would be very difficult to share, for instance, a kitchen and that was the part that worried me.

(Householder)

The challenge of communication

The interviews indicated that it is important for participants to communicate with each other in order to prevent problems.

It was reported that sometimes this can be hampered, for example, when the Householder lacks confidence:

it wasn't uncommon for me to be sitting down and her to stand up for quite a long time and have a chat. And I would say, 'well do you want to sit down?' and she would sort of perch. But now it is much more we can sit and chat.

(Homesharer)

Another Homesharer reported that:

[my Householder] just isn't very communicative

(Homesharer)

One Householder had some memory problems which proved to be problematic in terms of communication as the Homesharer was keen to avoid reinforcing the formal nature of the Homeshare arrangement:

...I've never really kept telling [Householder] 'Oh its Tuesday; it's my evening with you'. Because that just enforces, it becomes a thing that it enforces that you're here not professionally but as part of an agreement. Whereas, and she will get upset and offended about that, because she... and both of us really consider that we're friends and I don't like to bring up 'Oh it's all part of Homeshare'

(Homesharer)

Sometimes communication was hampered by speech and language difficulties. For example, one Homesharer (an overseas student) was a little concerned when she first met her Householder, who had slurred speech:

it was hard to communicate with her. And for me to understand....But it wasn't that hard, because she just repeated twice, three times for me, so that I could get it.

(Homesharer)

For one person, the experience of Homeshare had been mixed, but the individual concerned had not communicated the problems with the Homeshare Coordinator or with Householder and it was only at the final interview with the researcher that these surfaced:

Summary of findings from Qualitative data

Of the six Householders interviewed, five reflected positively on their Homeshare experience. One Householder was negative about a particular Homeshare arrangement (her second), but this followed on from an earlier positive experience of Homeshare. Even here, however, the overall experience had had benefits; for example, it had facilitated her transition to living independently.

Of the ten Homesharers interviewed, nine reflected very positively on their Homeshare experience. Meaningful friendships had developed, lessons had

been learned and, on occasions, greater self awareness had resulted. Despite this, not everything had been rosy all of the time.

The key benefits reported by Householders included independent living, improvements in health and wellbeing, companionship and friendship, improved skills and living with someone who had similar interests. For Homesharers, the key benefits reported were financial, companionship and friendship, accommodation, language and cultural education, and an opportunity to understand another person's challenges.

Householders' and Homesharers' experiences have indicated a number of ways that the Homeshare programme might be improved. These include the need to review and, where possible, accelerate the time taken to make a match, additional cover for Homeshare Coordinators during periods of work absence or holiday, improvements in the management of expectations relating to household bill contributions and the possible effect of Homesharing on the health of the Homesharer.

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Chapter 7 will provide an overview of the findings of this evaluation and set out a series of recommendations for the future of Homeshare.

Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Summary

While the Homeshare concept captured the imagination of professionals, volunteers and lay people as a 'good, common sense idea'²⁷ the challenge for the pilot programmes was to make a 'good idea' happen in practice and to generate positive outcomes for participants. This evaluation has generated important data on both the development and implementation of the Homeshare programme in the pilot areas and its outcomes in terms of the experiences of those who participated in the programmes.

The only clear measure of success it was possible to define at the start, was whether or not Homeshare matches could be arranged and sustained. In this respect the Homeshare programme has demonstrated some success. Sixteen Homeshare matches were made which led to with a variety of positive outcomes for both Householders and Homesharers which ranged from regaining independence for the Householder to greater financial security for the Homesharer.

Other success criteria for the Homeshare programme were not defined at the conception stage because this was a new project with nothing to bench mark it against. Managers and Homeshare Coordinators had hopes and expectations for success but agreed that it was not possible to accurately predict success or failure about the numbers of matches made or the time a match might last. However, it was hoped that more than sixteen matches would have been achieved over the period that the programmes were running. This evaluation sets

²⁷ In initial conversations the researcher had with professionals, volunteers and lay people, many reported that Homeshare sounded like a good idea.

out a number of recommendations below which would improve the programme and likely lead to a greater number of matches in the future.

Having established that Homeshare can work in terms of successfully generating matches (albeit a smaller number than was initially expected) the next major question is to ascertain whether the programme is cost effective. Whilst there were some financial savings, accrued from enabling a Householder to be discharged from hospital and savings for the Homesharers have been highlighted, a value for money analysis was beyond the scope of this evaluation which set out to evaluate the Homeshare experience from the perspectives of (i) those involved in setting up the programme (ii) the Householders and (iii) Homesharers.

This chapter will set out:

- key findings from the pilot programmes;
- conclusions on the future of the Homeshare programme;
- recommendations for future Homeshare programmes.

7.2 Key findings

This evaluation reports on two sources of data. That of those who applied to take part in the Homeshare programme and agreed to take part in the evaluation (twenty four householders and sixty seven Homesharers) and those who were matched and agreed to be interviewed by the researcher (six Householders and ten Homesharers).

Only 27% (twenty four householders and sixty seven Homesharers) of all Homeshare applicants agreed to take part in the evaluation. Data was also generated from six Householders and ten Homesharers who were matched. Four trial matches were made which did not progress to a full match and only one individual in a trial match went on to take part in a successful match and in the

evaluation. As a result, there is very limited information about the experiences of those who trialled Homeshare.

7.2.1 There was a significant time-lag between the programme set-up and the first successful match.

Ten months elapsed between setting up the programme and making a match in West Sussex, nine months in Oxfordshire and eleven months in Wiltshire.

Some delay between setting up a programme and making a first match is inevitable. Firstly, there are procedures and protocols to be put in place (although the Homeshare Practice Guide provided guidance on this). Secondly, marketing and publicity are needed to generate interest within the local population and thirdly matching Householders and Homesharers is complex and depends not only on mutual interests, needs and wants but also on geographical location and other factors that influence individuals in making choices about living with someone.

However, the time lag between set up and the first match exceeded nine months in all areas. While no one set of reasons as to why there was such a large time lag was agreed in interviews with Homeshare Coordinators and their line managers, it may be that the countywide scope of the programme (rather than limiting it to a discreet geographical area and building a strong focus) and a lack of focus on specific populations, for instance, students may have been contributing factors.

7.2.2. There was a significant time-lag between participants submitting applications and references and getting CRB check clearance to proceed

Homesharers who applied to take part in the Homeshare programme were usually interviewed promptly but then had to wait up to six weeks for CRB clearance. If finding accommodation was urgent, the potential Homesharers had no alternative but to seek other options^{28, 29} and this time-delay reduced the amount of matches that could be made and is a key weakness in the programme.

7.2.3 There were lower than anticipated referral rates to the Homeshare programmes from professionals and the voluntary sector

It was anticipated that health and social care professionals and those in the voluntary sector might signpost people to the Homeshare programme and therefore the Homeshare Coordinators worked hard to promote the programme to professional groups³⁰. Of the ninety one people who took part in the evaluation only twelve (13%) had been appraised about the programme by a professional (four Householders and 8 Homesharers).

These findings were surprising and suggest that either more professionals need to know about the programme and how it works, and that they need reassurance from a senior source that Homeshare is a reputable programme before signposting people to it or perhaps that professionals may think that Homeshare

²⁸ This delay also contributed to the problem of keeping a 'live' register of Householders and Homesharers

²⁹ It has been seen earlier in this evaluation that several potential Homesharers simply applied to the Homeshare programme as a 'housing option'. It is important to try to resolve the problem of Homesharers applying but then having to wait so long that alternative arrangements have to be made.

³⁰ Dissemination of information to professionals through presentations at staff meetings and emails

is not responsive enough for their needs. It may be helpful if Homeshare coordinators ask professionals for feedback about their views of Homeshare.

7.2.4. Only a small number of successful matches were made across the three pilot programmes

Across all three Homeshare pilot programmes only sixteen matches were made during the evaluation period, which meant that twenty nine people were matched^{31 32}

Five matches were made in West Sussex (over a period of 32 months), eight matches were made in Oxfordshire (over a period of 28 months) and three matches were made in Wiltshire (over a period of 23 months).

In addition four matches (involving eight people) which did not progress beyond the trial period (3 in West Sussex and 1 in Oxfordshire).

The small number of matches is disappointing, especially given that the Homeshare programmes generated over a thousand³³ enquiries in total and that the conversion rate from enquiry to application was 33% (339 applications in total). A conversion rate of 1 in 3 enquiries to applications would seem very encouraging and yet the conversion rate from application to a match seemed low at 9%.

One reason identified by this evaluation as contributing to the low number of matches is the difficulty of maintaining a 'live' register of applicants. Many applicants did not update the Homeshare Coordinators when their circumstances

³¹ Matched for longer than the four week trial match period

³² Only sixteen matches were made. That is only a total of twenty nine people were in a match which lasted longer than the four week trial period. Four trial matches, involving eight people were also made but these did not last for more than four weeks.

³³ 1024 people enquired about the Homeshare programme⁹

changed³⁴. This reduced the number of matches that could be made as the number of 'true' applicants was less than that shown on the Coordinators' databases. This also led to Homeshare Coordinators wasting time trying to match 'ghost' applicants. The other contributory factor to the maintenance of a live register is the long delay between making an application and being matched. Applicants who have a need for support or accommodation often cannot wait indefinitely and thus have to make alternative arrangements.

7.2.5. Most matches worked well with both Householders and Homesharers reporting positive outcomes

The criteria developed by the Homeshare Coordinators for matching included: mutual interests, geographical location, the support required by Householder and the support offered by Homesharer. Prior to a Homeshare agreement being signed, Householders and Homesharers had a trial match period. If this trial was successful a match was made which lasted until either Householder or Homesharer wished it to end.

Findings from interviews of Householders and Homesharers who were in a match showed that five of the six Householders were generally satisfied with their match. One Householder asked her Homesharer to leave after four months, both the Householder and the Homesharer had reported some tensions and eventually this match finished sooner than the Homesharer would ideally have liked.

³⁴ Homesharers in particular had often made alternative living arrangements when a Homeshare had not been readily available, for example, in the period between submitting an application and waiting to hear back the Homesharer may have decided to give up on Homeshare and sign a tenancy agreement as they needed somewhere to live.

Reasons for the trial matches not progressing beyond the trial period were provided by the Homeshare Coordinators and included an inability to share space, provision of inappropriate furniture, and one Householder was concerned that the Homesharer did not fully understand her supporting role.

7.2.6. The terms of the Homeshare agreement were not always fully understood by Householder and Homesharer

Some misunderstandings about the terms of the agreement for the Homeshare programme occurred. These included: the availability of the Homesharer at weekends, the expected contribution to utility bills and interpretation of the required support required. Whilst these misunderstandings all related to individual cases, they clearly highlight how important it is to carefully communicate detailed aspects of Homeshare with all parties.

7.3 Conclusions and the future of Homeshare

This evaluation has demonstrated that Homeshare is an effective choice for some people that the concept is sound and works in practice, albeit on a small scale³⁵.

It is clear that the Homeshare programme is valued by each of the three Local Authorities in the pilot areas as funding to continue them has been committed for an additional year. The three programmes are still in their infancy and this funding gives an opportunity for further testing and refining of the concept, as well for potential growth of the programme in each area. However, there are two disadvantages of short term funding. Firstly, the Homeshare Coordinators lack job security and their 'corporate memory' is essential to the long term success of the programmes, this corporate memory may be threatened as Homeshare Coordinators may seek more secure employment opportunities. Secondly, there is a need to generate confidence amongst professionals and participants that the

³⁵ This evaluation recruited only a small number of participants

Homeshare programmes will not disappear, and short term funding may impede confidence.

Analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the Homeshare programme was outside the scope of this evaluation. Now that three programmes are up and running with additional funding provided by Local Authorities, it is important for such an analysis to be undertaken to understand whether Homeshare represents value for money.

The findings of this Homeshare evaluation support the previous literature on similar programmes: that clear protocols and matching criteria are needed and that programmes should be set up in partnership within existing organisations. This evaluation has contributed to the literature by providing data on the experiences of Householders and Homesharers. This gives some insight into the benefits and challenges Homeshare offers to its participants from their own perspective for example, companionship, help with housework and financial assistance. Furthermore, the evaluation has analysed the experience of developing and implementing the Homeshare programmes from the point of view of the Homeshare Coordinators and their managers which has provided an added insight into setting up these sorts of programmes

Homeshare as a solution to facilitate independent living and to enable people to save money on rent makes sense and is a 'good idea' because both parties have different needs that can be met through the programme and both parties have something to offer each other. Six Householders were able to either gain or continue independent living and ten Homesharers benefited financially as they did not need to pay for the accommodation provided. The programme has also had unexpected benefits in terms of increasing social capital for participants: some of the Homesharers and Householders interviewed reported that they have benefited from a mutual skills exchange. For example, one Householder learned meditation from his Homesharer and another Homesharer was given books

which helped her university course. Others have become good friends through the programme and several Householders and Homesharers remarked on the how much they enjoyed each others company.

However, the benefits of the programme must be weighed against the fact that some applicants are not successfully matched. In addition to the sixteen matches, four trial matches did not progress. Moreover, there were almost three hundred people who made an application to Homeshare and who did not even progress to a trial match. The sense of making an application and then not being approached with a possible suitable match may be disappointing and disempowering for some applicants. It has been difficult to pursue the experiences of this group relatively few people applicants (29%) took part in the evaluation. None of the participants who ended a trial match agreed to be interviewed (one Householder was later matched again and did report finding sharing her kitchen was an issue). Householders and Homesharers who agreed to take part in the evaluation agreed to complete a Quality of Life Questionnaire on three occasions but compliance was too poor to give any meaningful data to interpret which precluded analysis of the effect of Homeshare on quality of life other than that reported by individuals in interviews.

The findings from this evaluation would suggest that West Sussex and Wiltshire's Homeshare programmes could learn from Oxfordshire's experience and benefit from being geographically limited rather than county-wide. This would allow for a more focused implementation with potentially a greater number of matches being made. The pilot programme in West Sussex managed to attract the greatest number of enquiries and applications. The programme in Oxfordshire managed to make eight matches possibly facilitated by focusing the programme on a discreet geographical area around the city centre rather than attempting a county-wide implementation. The programme in Wiltshire had the fewest enquiries and made the fewest matches. Like West Sussex it is a large county

with few large cities on which to focus efforts, and unlike West Sussex the Homeshare Coordinator worked only four days a week.

Homeshare is an innovative idea. It has been seen that it does work for a small number of people. The key questions to be answered now are:

- does the programme just need more time to become established?
- is it cost effective?

7.4 Recommendations for future Homeshare programmes

Recommendation 1: A value for money analysis is needed.

It is important that the cost of Homeshare is identified.

Recommendation 2: Homeshare programmes need to operate within a small and defined geographical area and extend out from this only when they become established

It is likely that narrowing the geographical area covered by a Homeshare programme to perhaps a city centre or a number of towns rather than running a countywide programme will increase the likelihood of making matches. When defining a suitable geographical area for the programme to focus on, it would be important to ensure there are good transport routes, lots of people looking for accommodation (such as students), many individuals requiring support (such as older people) and a limited amount of cheap alternative accommodation. Limiting the programme to a smaller geography should also make the process of co-ordinating matches easier for the Homeshare Coordinators by reducing their travel time which took up a significant amount of their week.

Recommendation 3: A professional engagement strategy should be identified to ensure that appropriate professionals are aware of the Homeshare programme and understand the referral criteria.

This has the potential to increase the number of referrals into the programme from professionals. For example, future Homeshare programmes may wish to initially focus on a small group of professionals such as the ‘falls’ team rather than try to make all professionals aware of Homeshare. In developing this strategy for the future, it might be helpful for the Homeshare Coordinators in charge of the pilot programmes to contact professionals to solicit their views of the Homeshare programme and why they did not refer into the programme. This data could then shape a future engagement strategy.

Recommendation 4: Homeshare programmes should consider how they can be respond more quickly to situations such as assisting in discharge from hospital whilst maintaining existing standards.

A more responsive programme would be likely to attract more referrals from professionals. One option to improve responsiveness is to have a ‘wait list’ of Homesharers who are willing to leave their current accommodation at very short notice if required for the Homeshare programme.

Recommendation 5: The time between accepting applications and generating matches needs to be shorter than those reported in this pilot study.

Only 9% of all applicants were in a match that lasted more than four weeks. A number of Householders and Homesharers made alternative arrangements during the time they were on the database and these often only came to light after a potential match had been found for them which lead to time being wasted. Householders who have support needs and Homesharers who need

accommodation do not generally give Homeshare Coordinators a lot of notice and are looking for a quick response. Delays mean that they may seek alternative solutions, often without informing the Homeshare Coordinator, and the result is that there are fewer Householders and Homesharers in the 'pool' of potential people to match.

Recommendation 6: The Homeshare Coordinator should ask applicants to specify a time frame within which they need to find a match so that if the potential applicant has unrealistic expectations they can be appraised and time saved for both the applicant and the Homeshare Coordinator.

If a match is unlikely to be made within the applicant's specified time frame, the applicant needs to be appraised of this and the interview terminated if appropriate. This would both manage the applicant's expectations and save the Homeshare Coordinator's time if expectations were unrealistic.

Recommendation 7: The Homeshare Coordinator should capture and analyse the reasons given by Householders and Homesharers who have taken part in a trial match which does not progress to a full match in order to learn from this.

Identification of commonalities for discontinuation is likely to inform and prevent subsequent trial match failure and hopefully lead to a higher percentage of trial matches progressing to full matches.

Recommendation 8: Incentivise applicants to appraise the Homeshare Coordinator of changes in their status by charging them a refundable application fee (this was not possible during the pilot programme).

This would help to ensure that the information on the register of applicants is kept up to date, therefore increasing the probability of matches, whilst also increasing commitment levels from applicants. This fee could be refundable in two

circumstances, firstly once a match has been generated or secondly if the applicant informs the Homeshare Coordinator of changes in their circumstances which lead to them being taken off the register.

Recommendation 9: Homeshare programmes should consider targeting students as potential Homesharers.

Students tend to accept places at university or colleges some months prior to commencing their courses. This would give an opportunity to have them complete the CRB check before decisions on accommodation need to be made; meaning that the time-lag between applying and getting CRB clearance to proceed would have less of an impact.

Recommendation 10: The Homeshare agreement should document the support requested by the Householder and the support offered by the Homesharer, the accommodation offered, the expected contribution to Household bills, and the support they can expect from the Homeshare Coordinator. Advice should be sought to ensure the agreement does not then become a contract of employment.

For example, this agreement should set out: the specific support requested by the Householder, the support offered by the Homesharer, the accommodation offered, the expected contribution to Household bills from the Homesharer and also set out the level support they can expect from the Homeshare Coordinator once the match has been made. This agreement should then be signed by both parties in the presence of the Homeshare Coordinator to help to prevent misunderstandings.

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- Shared Housing Centre (2004) *Homeshare's impact and Contribution to the Community*. Shared Housing Centre Dallas
- Thornton P (1999) *The Homeshare Project: Report to the Community Care Trust*. Social Policy Research Unit University of York.

Appendix 1

School of Health and Social Care Research Ethics Committee No.

[This consent form will be used for Householders and Homesharers constituting a match and whom would both like to take part in-depth interviews. A maximum of 8 matches (16 people) from West Sussex and 8 matches (16 people) from Oxfordshire will be invited to take part.]

CONSENT FORM - Interviews

Study Title: Evaluation of two Homeshare pilot projects (West Sussex and Oxfordshire)

Name of researcher:

Tel:

E-mail:

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet datedfor the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason i.e. before, during or after the interview.
3. I agree that any words I may say during the interview can be used, anonymously, in the presentation of the research.
4. I agree to the tape-recording of the interview.
5. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Version 1 14.08.06

Appendix 2

ON HEADED PAPER

Date

School of Health and Social Care Research Ethics Committee No.060235

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: Evaluation of two Homeshare pilot projects (West Sussex and Oxfordshire)

You are being invited to take part in some research. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with friends, relatives or other people you feel comfortable talking to and do ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Please take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this information.

What is the purpose of the study?

Homeshare is a simple way of helping people to help each other. A Homeshare involves two people with different sets of needs, both of whom have something to offer.

The exchange of accommodation for help takes place between Householders and Homesharers. People who have a home that they are willing to share but are in need of some help and support are known as Householders. Those who need accommodation and who are willing to give some help and support in exchange for it are known as Homesharers.

Homeshare programmes have been successfully running in three continents for a number of years, however, there are very few programmes in England. The purpose of this research is to identify what makes Homeshare work successfully and to make recommendations in order to help develop and shape the service in the future.

When you consider whether to take part in this study to evaluate the Homeshare pilot programme it is important to realise that this research attempts to provide a voice for those who have views on the issues related to Homesharing. In order to do this, we would be asking you to reflect on your experience of Homesharing including the good things and any problems together with any suggestions that you have for improvement of the service.

If you have any reason to feel unhappy at any stage you would be free to stop. In addition, you will have my telephone number so that you could contact me if there were any queries. I will regard all discussions with you as confidential, but it is important for you to know that I am governed by a professional code of

conduct that requires me to disclose some information in public interest, by law or by order of a court.

Why have I been approached to participate in the study?

All those people applying to participate in the Homeshare programme have been invited to take part in this research. This is a new service and your experiences and feedback will help to shape and enable the development of an effective Homeshare programme.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you would be given this information sheet to keep, and would be asked to sign a consent form agreeing to take part in the study. If you decide to take part you would still be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. This would have no detrimental effect on your on-going participation in the programme.

Choosing to take part in this research, or deciding not to, will have no influence whatever on whether you get a homeshare.

What would happen to me if I decide to take part?

If you decide to participate you would be asked to complete a short questionnaire on three occasions, when you first meet with the programme coordinator, four months later and after another five months.

You may also be invited to be interviewed by a researcher. These in-depth interviews aim to explore aspects of the Homeshare match from both the perspective of the Householder *and* the Homesharer. Therefore if either party would prefer not to take part then neither party will be interviewed. Time will prevent us from interviewing everyone so please be aware that not everyone will be asked. The initial interview would last approximately one hour and its purpose would explore some of the ways the Homeshare programme has helped or hindered you. It would, with your permission, be tape-recorded.

If, following this interview, you are still interested in taking part, you will be interviewed again nine months later. This would also be tape-recorded and would explore your on-going experiences of the Homeshare arrangement.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There are no direct benefits of taking part in the study. However, we hope that the information obtained from the study would help in the development of this new Homeshare service.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

We do not anticipate that there would be any disadvantages in taking part in the study other than the time involved for completion of questionnaires and/or interviews. However, it is possible that the Homesharing arrangement does

not suit you. Should that be the case you could discuss that with your Homeshare co-ordinator or myself.

Would my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

If you agree to participate in this study, any information you provide would be completely confidential. Your name and any other personal details would not be reported as part of the study. Any other information such as tape recordings, written notes and consent forms would be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room. Data generated during the study would be retained according to Oxford Brookes University's policy on Academic Integrity and will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a minimum period of five years.

Who is funding the research?

The Department of Health have funded the study.

Who has reviewed the study?

This will be completed once ethics approval has been granted

Thank you for reading this information sheet.

Appendix 3

Financial Questions

By placing a tick in one box in each group below, please indicate which statements best describe your own financial state today.

Income

My regular income is enough to meet my bills and housekeeping and there is some left over

My regular income is enough to meet my bills and housekeeping

My regular income is inadequate to meet my bills and housekeeping

Heating

I have enough money to keep my house as warm as I would like

I have enough money to keep my house fairly warm

I do not have enough money to keep my house as warm as I would like

Foods

I have enough money to buy my favourite foods at any time

I have enough money to buy my favourite foods occasionally

I do not have enough money to buy my favourite foods

Debt

I have no debts

I have some debts (less than £999.00)

I have a lot of debts (greater than £1000.00)

Appendix 4

Homeshare

You made an enquiry about Homeshare and I wondered if you would be kind enough to help us to gain a greater understanding about the programme? If you could simply complete this short questionnaire, save it and then send it back as an attachment to..... I would be grateful.
The anonymous data will be used by an independent researcher who is evaluating the programme.

1. Where did you find out about Homeshare?

2. Which programme did you make an enquiry to (please tick a, b or c)
 - a) Oxfordshire
 - b) West Sussex
 - c) Wiltshire

2. You would have been sent some information when you enquired about Homeshare. What did you like and what did you dislike about this information?

3. What were your reasons for making an enquiry about Homeshare?

4. If you applied to take part in the Homeshare Programme, please could you tell me your thoughts about the application process?
 - 4a How long have you been waiting for a match (please count this from the time you approved your profile with the Homeshare coordinator)?

 - 4b How many profiles have you seen?

 - 4c How many introductions have you attended?

5. If you chose not to pursue Homeshare please could you tell me your reasons?

Date of completion of this questionnaire
Thank you for your time.