XXXX launches to tackle loneliness and the cost-of-living crisis

#

Date

**This Summer, a new Homeshare service is starting in XXXX, matching older people living alone with those seeking affordable accommodation in and around XXXXX.**

The news comes as the true scale of loneliness in the UK is becoming understood.
XXXXXX *(Add in local or national stats on loneliness here)*

The service, called Homeshare, works by matching people together for mutual support; a person who has a spare room and is looking for company and a bit of practical support, shares their home with someone looking for affordable accommodation. Both people benefit from the companionship and having a friendly face at home. The householder typically receives 10 hours per week of practical support provided by the Homesharer such as shopping, cooking, cleaning, gardening or even enjoying social activities together, but no personal care is involved.

Younger people are being priced out of the villages, towns, and cities they want to live in, for work or study. Latest figures again show that the average age at which people can leave home even to rent is rising along with the proportion of income spent on housing. Many people in mid and later life are also finding themselves without affordable housing options after the impact of the pandemic.

In town/city, the programme will be called XXXX offering more people the opportunity to live sociably and affordably whatever their age, with the right support structures in place to make it safe and enjoyable.

XXXX was set up by a (previous job role/interest, eg social worker) who’d seen many older people living alone, who, while not needing social care, would have benefitted from the security and company of living with someone. Name from XXXX (programme) said:

*Please note this is a previous quote – update to make it applicable to current time/stats/personal experiences.* “For most of my career I’ve seen older people with so much to give struggle because they’re on their own. They don’t need personal care, but their lives could improve so much just by having that bit of companionship that everyone needs and deserves.

“Our system often forces people into expensive and restrictive personal care when they don’t need to. The number of people I’ve seen who have mild dementia, who are perfectly capable, but have to end up selling their homes because they can’t manage a couple of tasks is heart-breaking. Often their family are worried - they don’t live locally and they assume the worst, so the older person goes into a high-support option**”**

“On the other hand, there are so many people, who can’t find a place to stay because house prices are so high. And it’s not just older people seeking companionship.

“Homeshare is a way of bringing the two groups together to solve each other’s needs by using their respective strengths, promoting stronger communities and spreading cheer.”

The Homeshare match is facilitated, supported and closely monitored by XXXX, who have a long history of working with individuals and the community. As a member of Homeshare UK, they will draw on established national good practice guidance from [Homeshare UK](https://homeshareuk.org/) to ensure safety and quality.

XXXXX along with support from Homeshare UK aim to support 20 matches in the first 2 years. *Decide the aim*

# If you’re interested in Homeshare and live within Pembrokeshire, contact XXXX name, email, phone number or visit website to find out more.

# Notes to Editors

# **Homeshare is a solution to some key issues in the UK**

1. People are living longer and want to remain independent in their own homes.
2. We have inefficient use of existing housing stock across the UK.
3. The private rental sector is unaffordable for many who are settling for poor quality accommodation far away from work and family.
4. Isolation and loneliness are growing issues for both young and old
5. The prevention agenda - Homeshare has a direct impact on health and wellbeing reducing pressure on key public services

**What is Homeshare?**

* Homeshare brings together people with spare rooms with people who are happy to chat and lend a hand around the house in return for affordable, sociable accommodation.
* Together, Householders and Homesharers share home life, time, skills and experience.
* Typically, an older Householder with a room to spare will be carefully matched with a younger person who will provide around 10 hours of support in exchange for accommodation.
* The support provided by the Homesharer might include help with daily living tasks such as; cleaning, shopping, gardening, overnight security and companionship.
* The Homeshare relationship is based on trust and friendship, allowing people to ‘live well’ within their chosen communities.
* The Homeshare relationship is brokered and monitored by a local Homeshare provider who carries out the necessary checks to ensure the Homeshare is safe and effective.
* Homesharers don’t pay rent but pay a monthly fee to the Homeshare provider for the matching and ongoing support.

**About XXXX (your organisation)**

 **About Homeshare UK**

Homeshare UK is part of Shared Lives Plus, the membership charity for a kinder, stronger society built on sharing our lives and our homes. We build communities where everyone lives a full life, regardless of the support they need.

Homeshare UK is a vibrant network of likeminded individuals who are passionate about delivering Homeshare in a safe and effective way. We also help anyone who wants to start a Homeshare service with bespoke advice, training and consultancy. We are members of Homeshare International, and proactively work with Homeshare providers across the world.

In 2021 Homeshare UK secured a 1.2 million pound grant to support the scale up of Homeshare across the UK. This money will be used to incubate two large scale programmes across the north of England and a franchise model that will be suitable for delivery in smaller towns and rural locations.

Find out more at [www.homeshareuk.org](http://www.homeshareuk.org)

[2021 Homeshare sector report](https://homeshareuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/HOMESHARE-UK-ANNUAL-REPORT-2021.pdf)