

# Homeshare UK Network meeting notes –

Friday 29th November



## Attendees

**Shared Lives Plus:** Ewan King, CEO; Lynne Harrison, Operations Director; Nicola Watson, Homeshare and Nations Officer

**Homeshare Network:** David Matthews - Chair (Grace Eyre), John and Roo Peake (Homeshare Leicestershire), Ruth Robinson (Shared Homes Swansea), Alison Cammiss (York Homeshare), Marian Pocock (Homeshare Oxfordshire), Audrey Heard (Homeshare West)

*Note: It had been proposed that two meetings be held, however the two attendees at the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> November agreed to come together in one group on Friday the 29<sup>th</sup>.*

## 1) Welcome and Introductions

David welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 2) Ewan setting the scene

See presentation.

## Shared Lives Plus

[www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk](http://www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk) <http://www.homeshareuk.org>

Company Number 4511426

Reg Charity Number (England and Wales) 1095562

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## National Picture

There continues to be a strong commitment to NHS reform towards prevention including housing and early models of support.

- The link between health and housing is being recognised- **Inside Housing: Housing is a crucial part of the healthcare pathway for people with mental ill health and learning disabilities** :

“NHS England will continue to work collaboratively to help local areas to strengthen, learn from and share good practice and consider other innovative options, like Homeshare and Shared Lives”

- Homeshare has been mentioned in a new report (commissioned by the last UK Government) published this week- **Our Future Homes: Housing that promotes wellbeing and community for an ageing population** :

“Homeshare offers a potential intergenerational solution, providing affordable housing to often younger people in return for supporting an older occupier to live independently at home (but not personal care).”

**ARF Funding** is making a difference in two ICB areas: Oxfordshire/ South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.

In the New Year Ewan will write to the Housing Minister, emphasising Homeshare’s inclusion in the above report, with the hope of arranging a meeting.

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## Engaging with the SLP Board on Homeshare

Shared Lives Plus (SLP) is an independent national charity which hosts the Homeshare UK Network. The SLP Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for long term direction and purpose of the charity.

The following concerns were raised at the meeting of the Board in September:

- Legitimate concerns raised by members about levels of support provided to the Homeshare UK Network in last 2 years.
- Costs and financial viability of the Network - total income currently is £3k.

The Board asked for a paper to be presented at the meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> December about future options for Homeshare UK.

To inform the paper Ewan has met with David in his role as chair, and has been reading network members' feedback provided via email.

Ewan shared that SLP cannot be a regulator for Homeshare and as such cannot set fees or geographical areas. To do so would be unlawful.

## 3) Feedback for David ahead of Board Meeting.

David asked for feedback from the members that he can present to the board ahead of the meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> December. David thanked those who had given their feedback already via email.

David felt that at the last board meeting in September the trustees were supportive of the Homeshare UK Network seeing it as 'the plus in Shared Lives Plus'.


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## Positives of the Homeshare UK Network

- “We can’t ask for more” in terms of the support with **engaging with the UK Government**.
- The network benefited from the Homeshare expansion project in terms of **resources, marketing** etc.
- When the majority of the large national providers left it became a network for **helpful and supportive conversations**.
- Homeshare UK is a **nationally recognised organisation**. Internationally Homeshare UK is known and it gives us standing as members.
- When dealing with difficult issues we know we can go to Lynne, Nicola and Ewan. **Responsive support** and talking through the situation are very important for network members.
- Lynne’s support as the **next step in the complaint’s procedure** has been useful, we don’t know where else we could have gone for this.
- The network gives the **opportunity to meet with others** and have open conversations. This wouldn’t be possible otherwise.
- **Legal guidance**
- It was useful having Kathryn and Tim, working on Homeshare in Wales. Their support was useful in making **connections locally**.
- Homeshare organisations would be in a worse position without the network.
- There is another Homeshare network (Homeshare Association) which has three experienced members but they work very differently.
- The Homeshare UK Network **links with Homeshare International**.
- The **Good Practice Guide** is useful when starting out.
- Access to **SLP Comms Team** for marketing support.


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## Development Areas

- A minority of members come to the network meetings. **Is there a way we can encourage more members to be involved, in a sustainable way?**
- **Clear messaging on support that SLP can provide** eg. How can the network support members locally? Regular refreshers on what membership provides could be helpful.
- The network is a mix of those who are new to Homeshare and those who have years of experience. This creates a bit of a mismatch but is to be expected. **We need to make sure that all members, at different stages of their journey, get something out of being a member.** Talking with new members is useful for all but can take time.
- Support for new members to **access templates/ good practice guide etc.**
- More **accessible format for Good Practice Guide.** Eg. one navigable pdf rather than individual webpages.
- Could network members train other members? SLP could gather information on who could deliver **training** and what topics are wished for. Could there be an extra training element to the membership fee?
- **Welcome meetings** with new members and existing members.
- Regular **bulletins** with updates from SLP and stories from members.
- We want to know that what we are doing is right. Support with **compliance.**
- As a network, **work together on documents:** could everyone share their documents into a central point and this form the basis of the good practice guide.

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- Space to **share the positives**: sometimes you put in a lot of time and effort and the match doesn't happen, so reflecting on the positives is important.
- Could support with **complaints or as mediator** be within the membership offer? Including a debrief meeting to learn from the situation.
- Space in the meeting agendas for **peer support and talking through any issues** members may be experiencing to encourage collaboration without taking up too much of individual members' time. A topic suggested was 'appropriate relationships in Homeshare'.

David asked if anyone had any comments about the current membership fees but there were no comments from members.

### Successes within the network

**In York:** A Ukrainian man who came over at beginning of the war was matched with a 94 year old householder. The householder's daughter supported the match and later helped the Ukrainian man find employment etc, and all three got on very well. Later, they asked if the Ukrainian homesharer could stay on as a private renter, while another sharer moved in. This arrangement really enhanced all their lives. Even when the older gentleman passed away the renter and homesharer have helped in making sure the house is occupied and the daughter, renter and Homesharer have all become great friends.

**ACTION FOR NEXT NETWORK MEETING: At the request of members, SLP to reflect on what members can do to work together as a successful network.**


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## 4) Charter Discussion

The 'Homeshare UK Network Charter' was discussed, with Lynne sharing the feedback which had been received. Once the changes discussed have been made the Charter will be shared with members.

Points discussed included:

- **The charter is signed on the basis of trust.** We can ask people to sign when they renew their membership and if unable to agree to this we can ask organisations to leave, as has happened in the past.
- **"Generosity in sharing knowledge"**- the issue of competition was discussed and that legal advice received specified we cannot influence competition in fees or geographical areas. However, members raised that it can influence how open some they may choose to be with one another.
- The different elements of matching were discussed in relation to the requirement of these to take place **in person face to face**. All were in agreement that all matches should have a face-to-face element, but some would not have every part of the process take place in person eg. initial meetings, interviews, introductions, site inspections. It was also discussed as to whether it would be appropriate for providers to commission someone to carry out the in-person meetings for them. None of those present have done this.
- **Quality Assurance Framework** is brilliant to have but is not user friendly in its current form. There was a request from members to work on this together at a future meeting.
- There were queries around "Members agree to inform Homeshare UK if they are developing new areas of work within their Homeshare work". This was felt to be around where members have previously also provided


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befriending services, consultancy, or tweaked the model as in 'helpful housemates' (by a previous member) where the homesharer was charged more and provided less hours of support.

**ACTION: Network to look at the Quality Assurance Framework together.**

## 5) Reflections on Homeshare Week

If anyone has any reflections or feedback on Homeshare Week do let us know.

## 6) AOB

Nicola updated the network that she is drafting the State of the Sector Report and will send around the draft for feedback once she has heard from those who have submitted stories/ photos etc.

**ACTION: Membership offer to be discussed at next meeting.**

## 7) Close and Date of Next Meeting

There was a suggestion at the last meeting that the time and days of these meetings vary to allow for greater engagement from members and a variety of working patterns and commitments. This will be actioned and dates sent out in due course.

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