

**NSW GOVERNMENT PARTNERS WITH HOLDSWORTH BY INVESTING \$200K TO COMBAT SOCIAL ISOLATION AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY**

Press Release: 7 July 2021. *For Immediate Release.*

The NSW Department of Communities and Justice has recently allocated \$200,000 in grant funding to Holdsworth Community for the financial year 2022. The grant is the largest Holdsworth Community has received to support their innovative HomeShare program - a community-led response targeting isolated seniors and young people looking for safe, affordable housing in the Northern, Central and South Eastern Sydney regions.

“We see HomeShare as an alternate, safe response to two of the biggest areas of social need facing Australian society - social isolation experienced by older people living alone and affordable housing for young people trying to establish themselves,” said Ruth Kestermann, Holdsworth CEO. “The funds will allow us to expand our successful HomeShare service in the Inner, Eastern and Northern Sydney regions.”

Established in 2017, Holdsworth HomeShare is a service that matches older people who are living alone with a room to spare with a kind and carefully matched younger housemate who provides extra companionship and help around the house in a mutually beneficial arrangement. Since its launch, Holdsworth’s has had almost 500 enquiries from Owners and Sharers across Sydney.

“HomeShare has helped me create a sense of home, stability and security, especially in a place like Sydney when you're in your early 20's or on a lower income. I've gotten an opportunity to live somewhere I'd never be able to live.” - Scout, Sharer

“It's very reassuring having someone live in the house with me, especially in case I have a fall. I can sleep better at night knowing that.”- Bettina, Owner

Holdsworth HomeShare has thus far been supported financially by NCOSS, icare, NSW Liveable Communities Program, City of Sydney Council, Waverley Council, Woollahra Council, E B Myer Charity Fund, Kickstarter Macquarie Bank Foundation and Enid Irwin Charitable Trust.



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### **About HomeShare**

Homeshare is an international model which has been proven to have positive social impacts in the UK, US, Europe and some other states in Australia.

HomeShare is a mutually beneficial arrangement between an older person who is living alone in a comfortable home with a younger person who is happy to provide companionship in return for affordable accommodation.

The older Owner of the home receives companionship, increased safety and security, improved wellbeing and the ability to remain in their own home.

The younger Sharer has access to safe, secure and affordable housing close to study or work, companionship and connection to the local community.

As the HomeShare provider, Holdsworth Community facilitates the matching process, conducts police and safety checks, assists the match to build an agreement and then is available to both the Owner and the Sharer to provide ongoing safeguards and checks throughout their time together.

### **About Holdsworth Community**

Holdsworth Community began in the 1960s as an out of school hours' program set up for children at the initiative of local parents. With the support of council, the local parents formed The Woollahra Children's and Community Association.

With continued support from local councils and various entities, the offering of Holdsworth expanded in line with the community needs to be what it is today. There are currently over 100 staff members and over 80 volunteers at Holdsworth providing a range of services across the Eastern Suburbs.



Holdsworth Community supports children and adults living with intellectual disabilities; families with young children; older people who may be frail, ill, lacking mobility, experiencing social isolation or living with dementia; and their families and caregivers throughout Sydney and its Eastern Suburbs.

Our purpose is to support people to have independent and fulfilling lives through a connection in the community.

