

## World Homeshare Congress

The 5th World Homeshare Congress recently took place in Madrid, organised by Homeshare International in partnership with Madrid's Solidarios. The theme was 'Expanding Homeshare, Building Bridges', highlighting the need to bring awareness of an innovative and social initiative for it to reach a greater public and to serve as a bridge between generations and cultures.

There was a varied programme of speakers looking at schemes in Europe and the USA where Homesharing is far more established than it is in the UK.

There is a consensus that Homeshare needs to be marketed to older people in a very positive way, so instead of

focusing on the support they can receive by taking part in the scheme, we should present it as a way that the older generation can help the younger. After all, they have a lifetime's experience to offer and many skills to pass on. The wisdom that comes with experience can often bring a different perspective to today's students facing the challenges that university can bring.

Alex Fox, the CEO of Shared Lives Plus (the umbrella body for homesharing in the UK), explained how his organisation is helping to raise awareness of homesharing across the UK and how it is hoped that the movement will continue to gain momentum. He also pointed out that with the rise of the sharing economy, as shown by the popularity of Airbnb, so attitudes towards sharing in general may become more accepting. The conference ended by hearing about the experiences of some current homesharers and how it had helped them. Rosa, a Spanish student, told the conference that the key to successful homesharing is generosity, because when you are generous with

other people, they are generous with you.

A very positive note to end on and the reason why all these homeshare schemes exist around the world, because taking part really can transform people's lives.



To see an article in the Worcester Students' Union magazine written by one of our homesharers about his experience, see

[www.worcsu.com/eatdrinkshop/worchardplayhard/](http://www.worcsu.com/eatdrinkshop/worchardplayhard/)

To see a short film featuring one of the first home sharers to join our scheme visit our website

[vestia.org.uk/intergen/video.php](http://vestia.org.uk/intergen/video.php)



Participants at the World Homeshare Congress in Madrid

1.2 million older people are chronically lonely (Gransnet, 2017)

*"I am passionate about people and I was very excited to hear about this wonderful partnership" (IGW Student)*

# IGW - In a Nutshell

- ◆ IGW is a homesharing scheme aiming to reduce loneliness and increase well-being
- ◆ 1 householder and 1 student = Homeshare match
- ◆ We carefully match people aged 55+ with University of Worcester students
- ◆ Student provides 10 hours per week of help & companionship in return for accommodation
- ◆ This means the both the support needs of the householder and the housing needs of the student are met in a cost effective way - everybody wins!
- ◆ Student also pays a contribution to the household bills
- ◆ IGW ensures that applicants are carefully vetted and matched to facilitate safe and successful relationships
- ◆ The scheme is flexible, responsive and tailored to each individual
- ◆ Ongoing support provided for the duration of the match
- ◆ Rewarding for both parties

**Inter Generations Worcester**  
**Helping people support each other**  
**through home sharing**

**If you would like to find out more about the scheme please contact:**

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## Project Update

We are still aiming to get matches in place for the start of the new academic year in September and are continuing to visit over 50s social clubs and exercise groups around the city.

We attended the 55+ and Retirement Roadshow in March where we spoke to lots of people about the scheme and met Robin Walker MP.



We also ran a full page advert in the Worcester News after Easter.



This has led to an increase in enquiries and applications for the scheme and we currently have several students and householders on our books which is great news for the scheme.

Inter Generations Worcester also features in the latest edition of the Worcester Students' Union magazine, Worc Hard Play Hard, which includes an article written by one of our current homesharers.

We will be out and about over the coming weeks, attending the Active Age Festival at the University of Worcester Riverside Centre on 10 June, the St Peter's Festival on 23 July and the Worcester Festival on 13 August.

