



ask

Sharing your home: lessons from a co-design project

Dr Victoria Cornell
Housing Research Manager

LASA National Congress, Adelaide 2019

ECH Retirement Living



- Established in 1964
- Currently 105 villages / 1693 units / 1,837 residents
- Primarily South Australian metropolitan areas
- Generally smaller (10-15 units) villages integrated into the community
- Includes home/ garden maintenance, council rates, water rates

Why?

- To understand what housing options can help older people enjoy more of their lives; exploring alternative and affordable models to facilitate this
- Home sharing: would older homeowners who have extra space share their home with a 'stranger'?
- How might such an arrangement work?
 - Age and gender preferences?
 - 'Rent' or in-kind support around the home or garden?
 - Financial and security concerns?

How?

- Home sharing reference group developed questions
 - Twenty-two interview and group discussions (Nov 2018-Feb 2019):
 - Aged mid 50s to late 70s, mainly single women (widowed or divorced)
 - Homeowners (private and LTO), Adelaide/ greater metro and Adelaide Hills
 - Mix of socio-economic circumstances
 - None in receipt of HCP or CHSP, some privately contracted gardening and cleaning
- Discussions with other interested organisations, e.g. community housing providers, and homelessness/ housing referral agencies

Thoughts on home sharing

- Concerns over loss of privacy. Home represents:
 - ‘Space, privacy and not having to worry about others. Independence. Being able to do what I want, when I want.’
 - ‘Where I live; it’s mine...mmm...security, yes. Contentment.’
- Greater interest, on reflection, in co-housing rather than home sharing:
 - ‘I really don’t know whether I would be able to share with someone...would depend on who it is, if you had similar interests, their health and my health.’
 - ‘Four Masai huts around a communal area.’

Home sharing models

- Professionally managed arrangement:
 - Not comfortable 'putting an ad in the paper'
 - Comprehensive matching process
 - Trial period, and process for resolution
 - Re-matching if necessary
- No strong preference for rent or in-kind support
- Prefer same gender, and mixed feelings on age

Home sharing concerns

- Finance and security
 - Impacts on pensions, super and tax
 - Financial and/ or physical abuse
 - Squatters' rights?
- Compatibility and sharing
 - How extensive would the matching service be?
 - Expectations with respect to cleanliness, noise, visitors, pets etc
- Changing needs over time, e.g. ↑ frailty of either party

Co-design process

- Co-design 'light' best approach for this project
 - Time frame did not allow extensive full co-design process
 - Buy-in from participants greater with only one/ two periods of engagement
 - Co-design process helped clarification of terminology
- Co-design approach therefore critical in the success by defining terminology and expectations early on, and allowing fuller discussion with participants
- Co-design process helped build momentum within ECH – staff, clients and Consumer Reference Groups – and other organisations in housing and ageing sectors

Co-design process

- Who's the client? What's the drive/ interest?
- Comprehensive co-design process is not always required, but consumers have to be at the heart of design and discussions
- Real co-design is a lengthy process – do not under-estimate the work involved
- ECH is carrying out some more comprehensive co-design projects in housing and other service areas
- ECH will continue to explore a range of other co-design projects – some comprehensive and others 'light' where appropriate



ask

Thank you!

Any questions?

Dr Victoria Cornell

vcornell@ech.asn.au

