

Annual Report 2022

Executive Summary

As of this writing, Sharing Housing, Inc. is poised to launch a pilot program we are calling SHIFT—Shared Housing Incentives for Taking Action. Since receiving the grant in May we have focused on the development of the name, marketing materials, and the program. Our work advocating for shared housing and offering education in how to select a good housemate has continued.

Vision

Shared housing is a universally accepted living arrangement—individuals feel happy, safe, and at peace with home-mates, and organizations encourage shared housing for their constituents.

Mission Statement

We work with organizations, housing professionals, the aging network, individuals, and local officials who are seeking to develop shared housing in communities. The twin crises of high housing costs and the increase in social isolation combine to make cooperative living arrangements an excellent solution. With education, advocacy, and model development, we help individuals to choose, create, and sustain shared housing.

Advocacy

Much of our work is advocacy for the idea of shared housing. In a society that often assumes that a single person lives alone, we are working on changing that assumption.

Invitations to present to groups came to us through individuals who have taken our courses or heard us at conferences. Via Zoom (or other Web conference software) we presented to:

- Brattleboro Housing Coalition;
- East Bay Housing Organization, (with Jill Lindenbaum of Roomily);



- Silicon Valley at Home (with Jill Lindenbaum of Roomily);
- Putney Vermont Housing Committee, Arlington Heights, IL Senior Center; and
- The Alliance on Aging, Monterey, CA.

Twice a month we conduct Question and Answer sessions via Zoom. These sessions are announced through our newsletter mailing list. Participants in these sessions are often colleagues who are working in their communities to promote shared housing. These sessions have led to invitations to present via Zoom to their local communities. The Q&A sessions also support individuals who are considering shared housing to take their next steps.

Currently, the newsletter list has 1453 subscribers, with 340 added in the past year. We publish two to four times a month a combination of blog posts, Q&A invites, and monthly “Doings” that summarizes our activity. Our “open rate” ranges between 25% and 35%.

One piece of our advocacy is the ongoing publication of blog posts about shared housing. Our website currently has 264 blog posts. In the past year, we published 18 blog posts:

- [An Odd Truth about Zoning](#)
- [Short-Sighted Stranger Fear](#)
- [Keeping Financially Safe](#)
- [Co-Living and Owning Together](#)
- [Diane and Gary Sharing Their Home](#)
- [Living Tiny](#)
- [How Would You Know if You Are Compatible?](#)
- [Anxiety Outcomes of Shared Housing](#)
- [When the Housemate Wants to Sublet](#)
- [Reciprocity in Shared Housing](#)
- [I've Got the Space Why Not Share It?](#)
- [Countering Fearmongering of Shared Housing](#)
- [Beneficial to Householder and Home Seeker](#)
- [When It's Time to Move](#)
- [Airbnb vs. Housemates](#)
- [Decorating Golden Rule: Live With What You Love](#)
- [Creating Comfortable Space in Shared Housing](#)
- [Broadening Your Circle](#)

We initiated a [LinkedIn](#) page and continue to have a presence on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Our Facebook following is over 1,000 users.

Publicity

- Guest on Strong Towns podcast in February: “Annamarie Pluhar: Shared Housing Doesn’t Have to Be Scary.”
- Mentioned in Next Avenue post “Homesharing Can Lower Housing Costs, Increase Companionship” (January 22, 2022), reprinted in Forbes

Education

We have two online mini-courses, **5 Key Benefits of Shared Housing** and **Sharing Housing 101**. The first is offered for free on our SharingHousing.com website. In the past year, 121 people have taken the course. Fifteen users have purchased *Sharing Housing 101*.

Other organizations that promote shared housing have purchased our books and courses to support their efforts. To date, we have sold to Roomily, the Housing Committee of Dover/Wilmington, Vital Communities, Tucson HomeShare, and Golden Girls and Boys of Canada.

Testimonials

“This is excellent!!! Thank you so much for taking the lead nationally and making all of this available for free and/or at an affordable price. I continue to recommend your materials to those in our Shared Housing Network meetings in Austin, TX.” – *Email received in response to a blog post.*

“Thank you for giving me a good set of tools for sorting out my own feelings, needs, and wants around the possibility of sharing my home.” – *Email from a former class participant.*

SHIFT—Shared Housing Incentives for Taking Action

We received a small grant to test the idea that offering a cash incentive might help homeowners make the shift from living alone to shared housing. The grant came from our local council on aging, Senior Solutions, through the Federal ARPA program. Homeowners within the geographic region of Windham and Windsor Counties of Vermont are eligible. The program consists of three phases: Learn, Act, and Enjoy. Program enrollees take the two online courses and receive a free consultation on how to make their home more comfortable for sharing. They then find their own housemate and make the changes to their home. When they have a signed agreement with their housemate, they can be reimbursed up to \$500 for expenses related to making their home more comfortable for sharing. We will then check in with them three times: a



week after the move-in date, as their probation period ends at six months. The program will launch in mid-November 2022. Currently, we are in conversation with two organizations who are interested in partnering with us to implement the SHIFT model in their communities.

Organizational

Though we continue to be a largely volunteer organization, we have added a part-time digital marketing assistant to aid in growing our media presence and managing our newsletter list.

Having conducted board meetings using Zoom through the pandemic, the board has decided that we would be a "Zoom board." As a result, our board is open to membership that is national and international.

Financial

In our annual fundraising campaign, we raised \$9,000 in direct contributions, received a grant for \$5,000 from the Alma Donchian Gibbs Foundation, and were awarded a grant of \$5,000 for our pilot project.