

Homeshare:  
Easy to say, difficult to do -  
What the research is telling us

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Thanks to:

- Gary Moore, Manager, Social & Community Services, City of Parramatta Council, for his permission to share with you some of the findings from the Homeshare Feasibility Study commissioned by Council in 2016
- my collaborators in that study, Barbel Winter, futures Upfront, and Tony Gilmour, Housing Action Network.

# What is homeshare?



Householder with a spare room  
(usually an older person or a  
person with disability)

+ someone who needs affordable  
accommodation (usually a younger  
person)

+ agreement to pay rent and/or do  
certain tasks

= homeshare

# A global overview of homeshare programs:

- 14 countries, mostly small programs run by NFPs
- Simple idea, but many programs struggle financially
- Lot of knowledge of how to make matches etc
- Many homesharers are international students
- Some newer programs help people with disability to live independently
- High satisfaction from participants

# Homeshare Vermont, USA:

- set up 30 years ago with a housing background
- 5 staff, 14 staff volunteers who do matching
- most income from govt. & fundraising
- fees charged for a match but only 3-4% budget
- made 77 matches in 2015 FY
- have a DIY guide on their website:  
[www.homesharevermont.org](http://www.homesharevermont.org)

# Australian case studies:

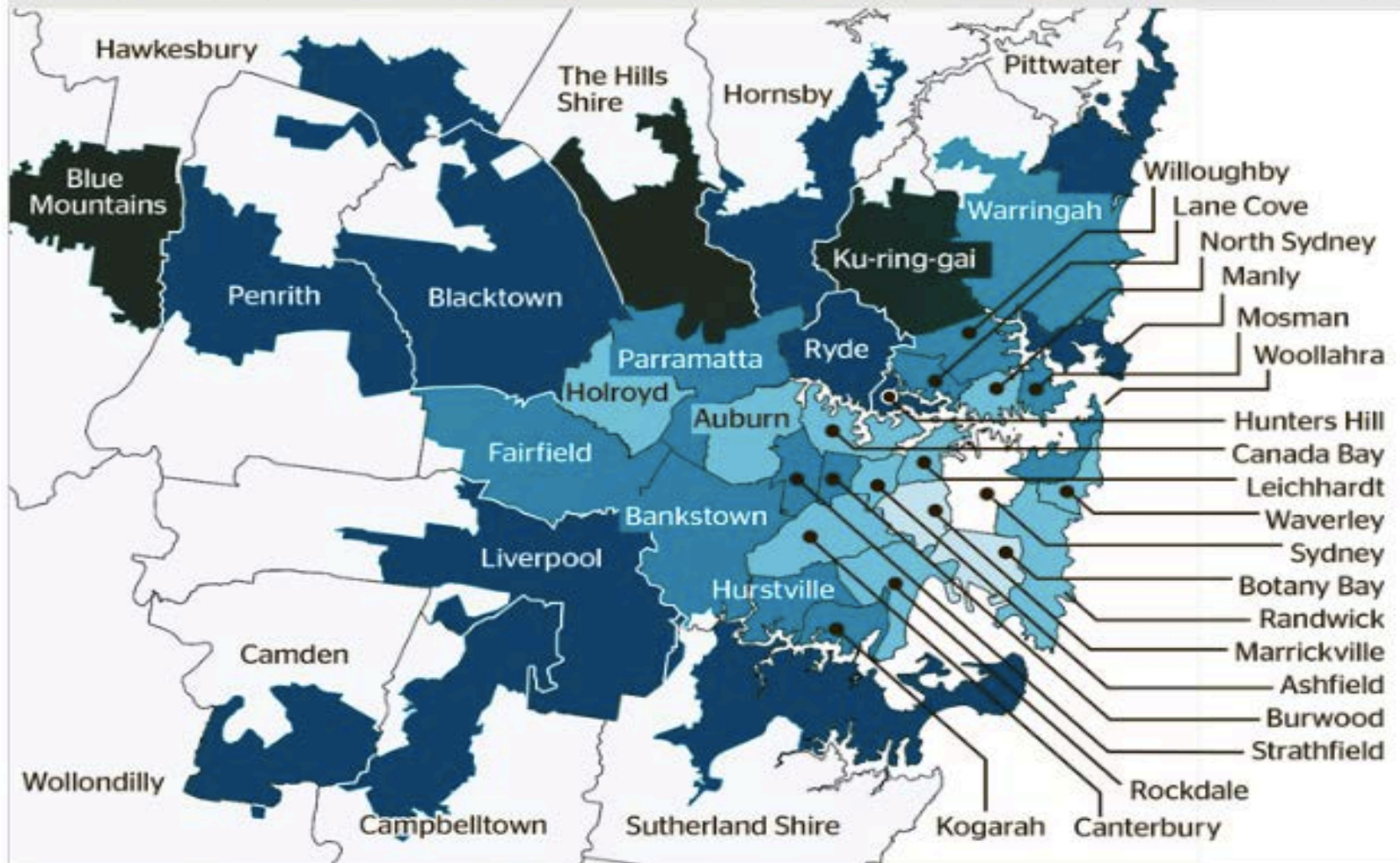
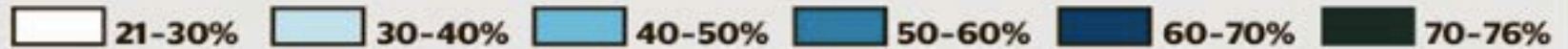
- The Benevolent Society, Sydney
  - 2000-04 & 2006-08
  - low numbers, funding lost
- Care Connect/Spectrum Migrant Resources, Melbourne
  - likely to lose funding in 2019
- Community Connections, Canberra
  - disability focus, but funding lost and users unwilling to pay

# Web based approaches:

- [www.flatmates.com.au](http://www.flatmates.com.au)
- [www.gumtree.com.au](http://www.gumtree.com.au)
- private for profit
- basic service free but fees for anything more
- used mainly by younger people
- No reference checking, or advice re tax & Centrelink
  
- UK site: [www.spareroom.co.uk](http://www.spareroom.co.uk)
- Ran a successful campaign to get tax concessions for people letting out their spare room

# Demographic and place analysis

Percentage of Sydney households, headed by a person aged 65 years or older, with two or more spare bedrooms (ABS: 2011)



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT



# However:

- Academic research tells us many older people use their 'spare' bedrooms
- Drilling down into census data tells us the potential supply of people over 55 who live alone, own their house and who have 3 plus bedrooms is likely to be quite small

# Do you want to share your home?

## Homeshare - a new possibility for Parramatta?



Do you have a spare room?

Have you ever thought about finding someone to share your home with?

Do you want someone who could help you pay bills, or give you a hand with jobs around the house, or both?

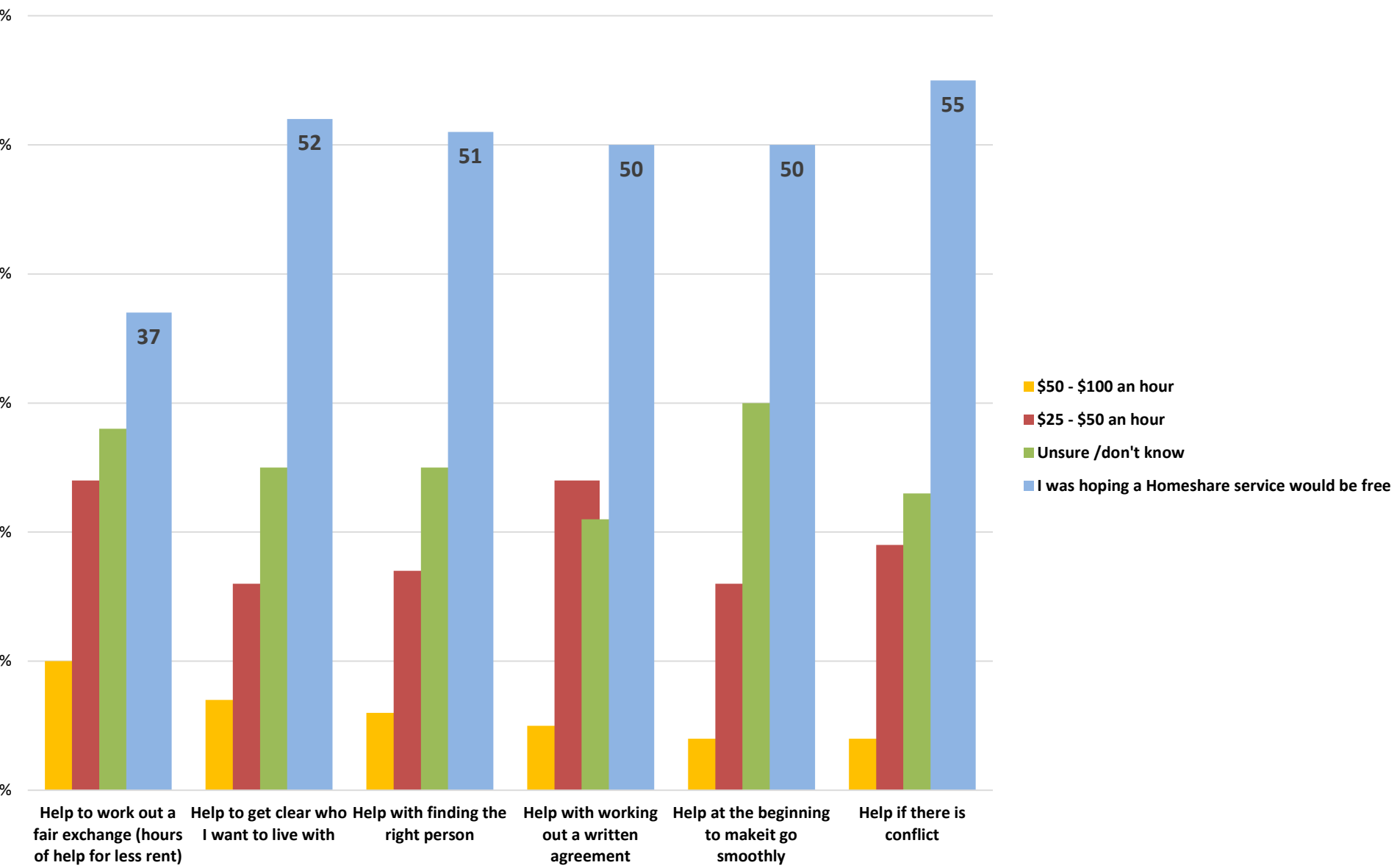


Are you looking for a room?

Do you want to find someone who is looking for a home sharer?

Do you want to offer some assistance in exchange for less or no rent?

# How much would you be able/willing to pay for....? (by percentage)



# Specific population group issues

- A. Older people
  - 55- 79 & 80+,
  - CALD & older renters
- B. People with disability
- C. Social housing tenants
- D. University students
- E. Young people

Thank you

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