

## Case Study: Alan and Ezra

Homeshare Oxford, 2018

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A Homeshare Oxford match brings together Ezra, working in research at the Physics Department of Oxford University and Alan, a retired University librarian.

Ezra was looking for affordable accommodation in Oxford and recognized Homeshare as a great concept when he came across it online. Alan's motivation was as

much about making his spare room available to help a young person as the prospect of good company and help with technology and practical tasks.

'There have been a number of highlights, making it hard to single out any one', says Alan, 'but I must mention the surprise 85<sup>th</sup> birthday party that Ezra threw for me. I honestly had no idea that anything was afoot, only to return from coffee with a neighbour to find friends and family from all corners of the country gathered in my garden. A wonderful barbecue and a truly memorable afternoon. An example of Ezra's astonishing kindness and thoughtfulness.'

Alan is now the owner of a smart phone, thanks to Ezra's assistance in selecting one and his encouragement and guidance in the early days. 'I'm very grateful for the introduction to the miracles of the mobile phone', says Alan. 'With encouragement and guidance from Ezra, I use the phone increasingly for the basics, and photographs. I also now use Whatsapp, which enables me to be in touch with my family more directly.'

Until moving into the Homeshare with Alan, Ezra had a long commute at either end of the day. No longer. 'I now have a couple of extra hours at the beginning and end of each day. My two-hour commute has been replaced by a pleasant 15 minute cycle ride to work. What a difference!'

But the gains are far more than the extra time. Ezra is equally positive about living with Alan and enjoys time spent together. 'I'm very happy to be able to help out with the things that help Alan. We've recently been outside pruning, putting fleece on certain plants and generally preparing the garden for winter. We often eat together in the evenings, I enjoy cooking and it's much nicer to cook for two. I should also add that it's great fun to hang out with Alan; he often makes the funniest remarks'.

A year into the Homeshare, Alan reflects on the arrangement, 'It really has been such a positive experience. I felt that we were compatible from the start. Ezra's meticulous approach to lifestyle chimes precisely with my own, and his lively good humour, relaxed company and generous, kindly nature completed the bond. The bonus - his creativity in the kitchen is a marvel. I shan't forget my first introduction to Ethiopian cuisine, nor the divine breakfast omelettes.....'

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