

## Housing Options for Seniors

From MROO's "Housing Support for Ontario Seniors" committee

Over the next several newsletters, we will highlight a variety of housing options with seniors in mind. In this issue are more details on the life lease and Abbeyfield concepts.

Find out more about senior housing options on the MROO website here:  
<https://www.mroo.org/en/retiree-resources-and-discounts/housing.aspx>



## CANADA HOMESHARE

HOST A STUDENT IN YOUR HOME: IT CAN BE A WIN-WIN EXPERIENCE!

Over 5,000,000 bedrooms sit empty in the homes of Ontarians, with close to 2,000,000 of those bedrooms in the homes of older adults.

What we know is that 90% of older adults want to stay in their homes as they age, but that it just gets harder. Fixed incomes, rising housing and maintenance costs, loneliness and isolation, and household tasks that become more challenging over time - these are things that many older adults will need to address. What if you could leverage an empty bedroom in your home to help address some of your needs (while also promoting contact between generations)?

That is exactly what motivated us to start Canada HomeShare in 2018 (formerly Toronto HomeShare). Canada HomeShare, a HelpAge Canada program, matches home providers 55+ with post-secondary students.

In exchange for affordable and safe housing (students pay \$400-\$600 in monthly rent), students contribute seven hours per week helping with light household tasks, running errands, and providing companionship for the home owner.

Canada HomeShare's social workers oversee the process every step of the way, taking the time to get to know the participants and the homes, and facilitating 'good matches'. All participants are screened and must have a clear Enhanced Police Background Check. Personal reference checks are conducted before participants are eligible for matching.

Thinking about sharing your home with someone can feel intimidating. You will have questions and concerns, things you want to talk about. This is your home, where you need to feel at ease. We know that. Our social workers are there from the beginning, and stay involved, to make sure that participants are satisfied with the arrangement.

We are currently active in Toronto, Peel Region, Peterborough, Kingston and Metro Vancouver; our Edmonton, Fredericton, Winnipeg, and Oshawa programs are launching in 2022.

If you'd like to learn more about Canada HomeShare, please visit <https://www.canadahomeshare.com/mroo> or call us at (800) 786-9773.



# LIFE LEASE HOUSING

The Life Lease concept originated in the United Kingdom and started in Ontario in the 1970s. There are currently 150 life lease projects in Ontario, totaling approximately 12,000 units, geared to adults 55 years of age and older. Most projects are developed and owned by not for profit or charitable organizations.

Life Lease is recognized as a viable tenure form by the Ontario government.

In 2014 the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing published a Life Lease Resource Guide to help consumers considering this housing form. It can be found at [https://files.ontario.ca/books/mmah-life-lease-housing-en-20191210\\_0.pdf](https://files.ontario.ca/books/mmah-life-lease-housing-en-20191210_0.pdf)

## Market Value Life Lease

Under a Life Lease plan, the owner of the property (called the sponsor) retains title and ownership of the property. Individuals acquire a Life Lease interest in a residential unit at market value, similar to purchasing a deed to a condominium. The Life Lease owner then has exclusive use of the unit for their lifetime, shared use of all common areas and facilities, and many of the same benefits of condominium ownership. The Life Lease interest can also pass to the Life Lease owner's family upon death. Control of the property remains with the sponsor.

## What does it cost to live in a Life Lease development?

Once a Life Lease owner takes possession, they pay a monthly occupancy fee, similar to a condominium. This fee represents the Life Lease owner's share of common project costs including maintenance, management, insurance and contributions to a reserve fund.

## What happens when the Life Lease owner wants to sell?

When a Life Lease owner or their estate wishes to sell, they receive the market value, less an administration fee (5%) which is withheld by the sponsor. It is the Life Lease owner's right to establish the asking price. The sponsor maintains a waiting list of prospective buyers and facilitates the transfer of the Life Lease interest. The sponsor also has the first-right-of-refusal to purchase the Life Lease interest, at market value, and must approve the resident to ensure that they meet the admission criteria.

## What makes Life Lease attractive for seniors?

Life Lease developments have a strong sense of community, homogeneous lifestyle, ability for residents to be involved in programs and operations, and the opportunity for capital appreciation. Life Lease communities are designed to meet their residents' changing needs. Support services are provided by the owner as residents age, allowing them to maintain their independence for as long as possible in most developments.



Huron Meadow - Stayner; 56 Life-lease Garden Homes



Upper Mill Pond - Hamilton; 76 Life-lease Suites



Don't Leave Your Travelling Too Late





# ABBEYFIELD: A COMMUNAL INDEPENDENT LIVING CONCEPT FOR OLDER ADULTS

Community sponsored and supported, Abbeyfield Houses are set up and run on a not-for-profit basis under the management of a volunteer board of directors. Costs, which include meals, are supported by residents' fees. A proven concept begun in England more than 50 years ago, there are now more than 400 Abbeyfield Houses world-wide, and 30 houses currently operating in Canada, with more in development.

## In Ontario:

Caledon – 12 residents

Durham (Grey County) – 15 residents

Toronto – 10 residents

Ottawa – 10 residents

Lakefield – in design stage with Board of Directors

Ottawa – two community groups under discussion

Sudbury – community group exploring concept

Wingham – community group under development with property

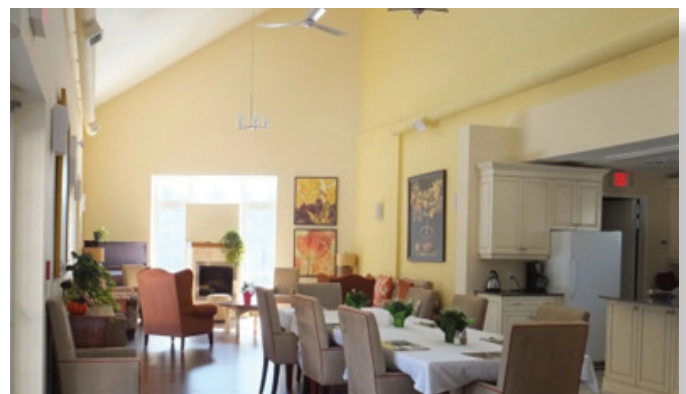
## The CONCEPT

- Non-profit, affordable, below-market monthly fees
- Developed, governed, managed by a community-based volunteer board
- Accessible building in residential area close to amenities
- Individual bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms; residents bring their own furniture

- Only 10-15 units
- Communal kitchen, dining room, living room, laundry, patio, etc.
- Objective is a home-like atmosphere
- Paid house managers provide meals and support
- 24 hour emergency support
- Lunch and dinner cooked and served on site, and eaten by residents together
- Residents look after their own breakfast - snacks are available
- Staff are expected to be helpful to residents, to help to maintain harmony, and to manage emergencies, but do NOT provide personal or nursing care, nor laundry service
- Residents may arrange PSW/nursing visits privately or through Ontario Health, until the point where they are no longer functionally independent
- Communal setting may facilitate group activities such as excursions or visiting service providers such as foot care.
- 2022 Monthly fees: Caledon \$2075; Ottawa \$2163



Abbeyfield Toronto



Abbeyfield Caledon

