

How sky-high rents forced people into imaginative alternatives

Notes & Cues:	Article: <p>Renting a property in the UK can be a bleak business. The average monthly rent rose to £932 last month and in London it is even more expensive at £1, 588, according to new figures.</p> <p>With spiralling rents leaving many people with barely any disposable income, let alone the means to save towards a deposit, some are now choosing alternatives.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The older choice</p> <p>Office administrator Tina Gotla-Aluri, 42, was struggling to cope with the £950 a month she was paying for her house share in Putney, south-west London, when a friend suggested Share and Care Homeshare, which matches older homeowners who have a spare room with people who can offer practical help in exchange. She now lives in Putney with a man in his 90s and pays £180 a month to the scheme.</p> <p>In return, Gotla-Aluri provides companionship, goes food shopping, and cooks meals. “He is quite well travelled and food is one of the things we have bonded over, ” she says. “I cook British food like Sunday dinners and sometimes Indian or Moroccan food. It’s mutually beneficial.”</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Sitting it out</p> <p>While some people house-sit for free to get a taste of luxury or a different life for a few weeks, designer Jennifer Hamley, 39, and her husband, Ben, 37, have turned it into a way to live rent-free.</p> <p>The couple house-sit through TrustedHousesitters.com, which connects home and pet owners with house-sitters and costs each party £89 for an annual membership. They house-sit mainly in Brighton, taking care of pets, the home, post and watering plants.</p> <p>“It is a peace of mind for many homeowners. A homeowner doesn’t need to get anyone to check in on the house, and pet owners don’t have to pay kennels, catteries or dog walkers.”</p>
Summary:	