

Trauma Informed Design



WEST WADDY ARCHADIA



Introduction to WWA Studios

We are a multi-disciplinary practice that aspires to create outstanding people-centric places that care for our heritage. Our research-led approach that underpins our design strategy and philosophy helps our clients to know their projects will be based on the latest thinking in the sector.

WWA offers a range of design and planning services including Architecture, Planning, and Urban Design with specialists in low-energy design, ecology, heritage, and arboriculture.

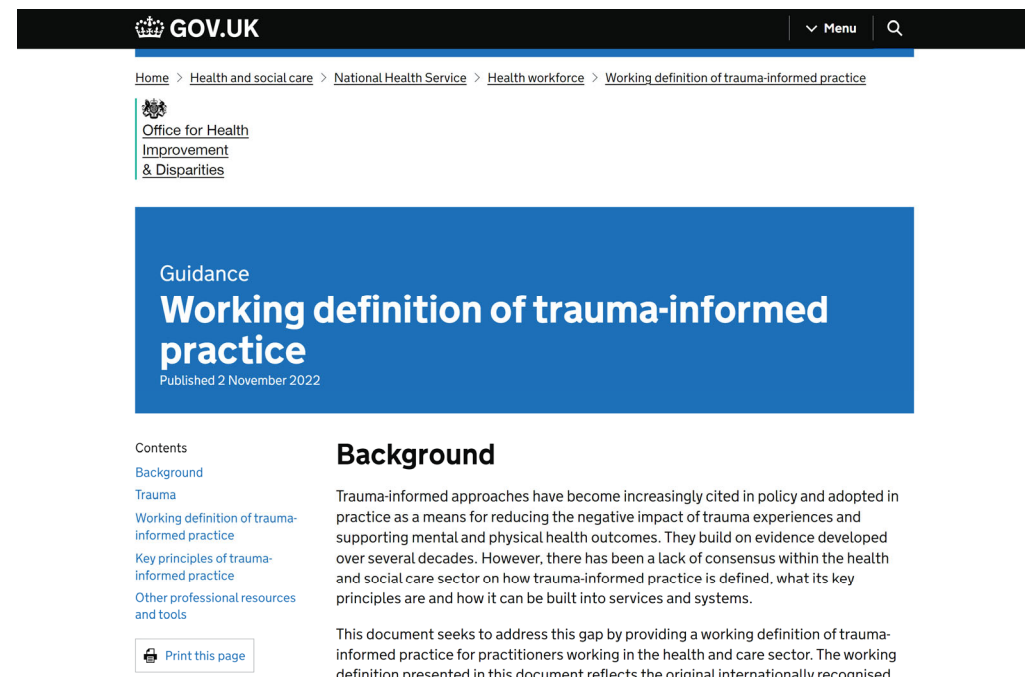
We have been working in the specialist housing sector for 30 years and have a wealth of experience with a wide variety of housing typologies.



Introduction

Trauma-informed practices

Trauma-informed practices have become increasingly prevalent in the healthcare sector and are cited in policy to reduce the negative impact of traumatic experiences. Historically although there has been a building evidence base there has been a lack of consensus on the definition, principles, and offerings. As the evidence base for exploring the use of trauma-informed practice in different settings and sectors is still developing WWA proposes a set of principles in the architectural field.



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK website page for 'Working definition of trauma-informed practice'. The page header includes the GOV.UK logo, a menu icon, and a search icon. The breadcrumb trail is: Home > Health and social care > National Health Service > Health workforce > Working definition of trauma-informed practice. The page is published by the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities. The main title is 'Guidance Working definition of trauma-informed practice', published on 2 November 2022. The 'Contents' section lists: Background, Trauma, Working definition of trauma-informed practice, Key principles of trauma-informed practice, and Other professional resources and tools. A 'Print this page' button is visible. The 'Background' section states: 'Trauma-informed approaches have become increasingly cited in policy and adopted in practice as a means for reducing the negative impact of trauma experiences and supporting mental and physical health outcomes. They build on evidence developed over several decades. However, there has been a lack of consensus within the health and social care sector on how trauma-informed practice is defined, what its key principles are and how it can be built into services and systems. This document seeks to address this gap by providing a working definition of trauma-informed practice for practitioners working in the health and care sector. The working definition presented in this document reflects the original internationally recognised'.

Introduction

Process

Following on from Patricia's input WWA's brief was to review what design interventions could assist in the healing process. We split the building into 5 'typical' sections to assess:

1. Community Entrance
2. Staff & Reception
3. Ancillary Spaces
4. Communal Spaces
5. Private Spaces

Important to note that examples provided are not the only solutions – very much based on bespoke situation



Diagram looking at the type of space and user groups

What is Trauma Informed Design?

“At its broadest level, trauma-informed design aims to promote healing and improved physical health, mental health, and overall well-being of individuals and their communities.”

Designing for Healing, Dignity, & Joy

What is Trauma Informed Design?

Choice, Comfort, and Community

Two characteristics requiring balance:

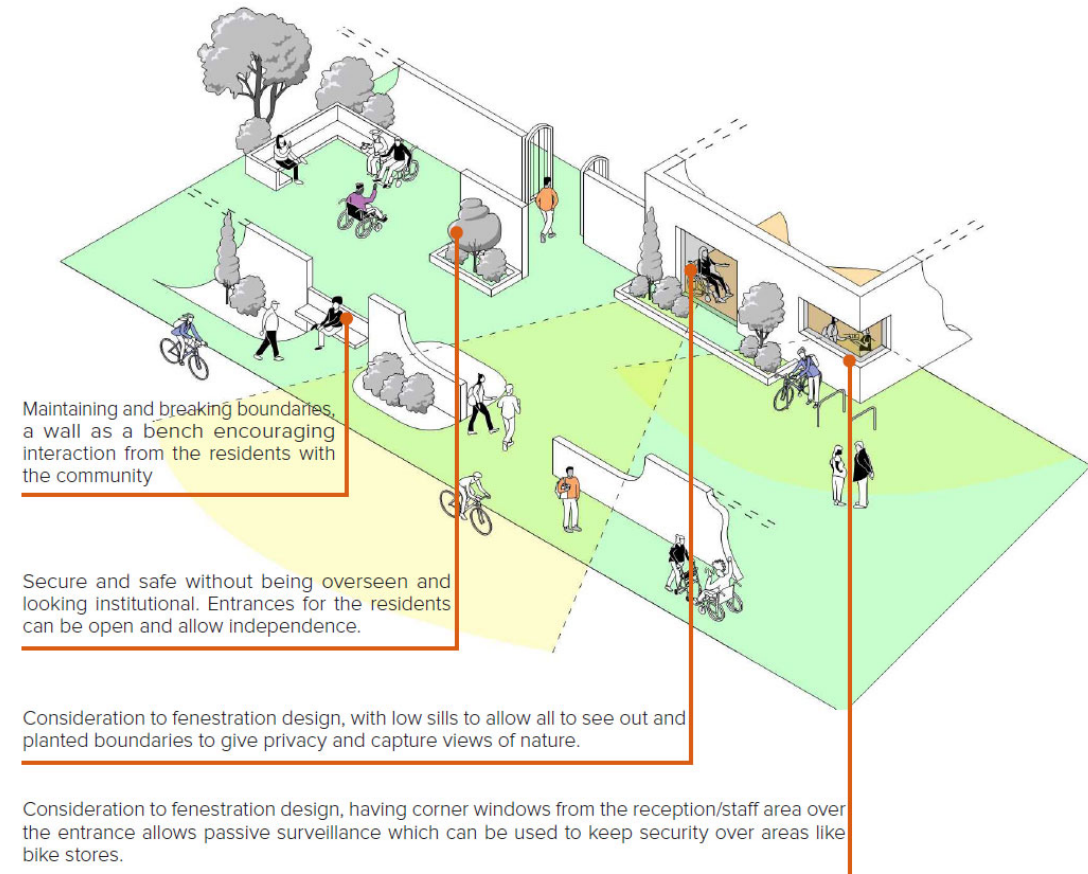
1. External 'safe haven' – provide space for retreat to provide comfort
2. Create opportunities for connection – sense of community and opportunity for interaction



Community Entrance

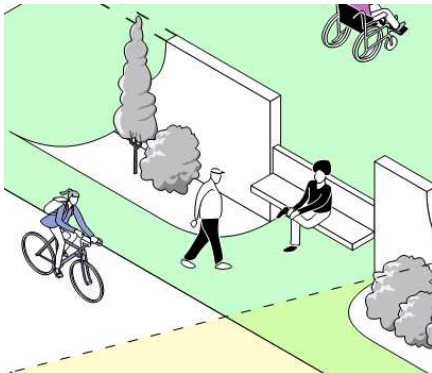
Elements to Consider

- Permeability of frontage which encourages interaction with wider community, but allows for retreat
- Surveillance and sight lines – provide people with views of spaces prior to entering them
- Transitional spaces – front gardens allow a set back
- Planting – provides the opportunity for permeable boundary treatments



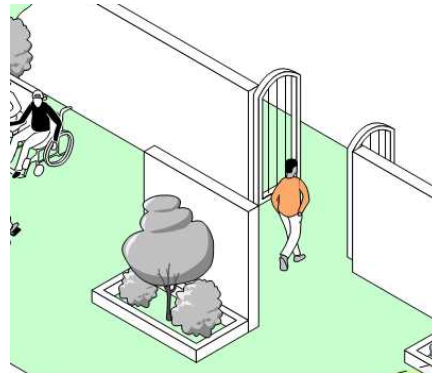
Community Entrance

Examples



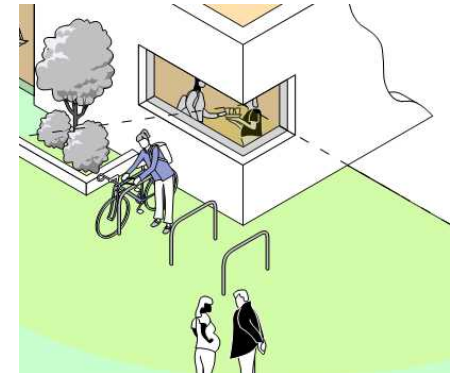
Permeability

Permeable boundaries encourage interaction



Private Entrances

Private and secure balanced with openness – without losing legibility



Surveillance – Soft Overlooking

Surveillance and sightlines, security and safety

Staff & Reflection

Choice, Comfort, and Community

Trauma-informed care – staff gain awareness of how trauma of the individual needs to be catered for in staff approach.

There should be front-facing areas and secluded private areas away from the entrance and public spaces to allow for discussion of residents in a confidential way. When working with complex LD and complex behaviours it is important that staff have an area away from the noise, challenges, and demands of the job so they have a space to down-regulate and ground themselves particularly if they have had a stressful interaction or day.

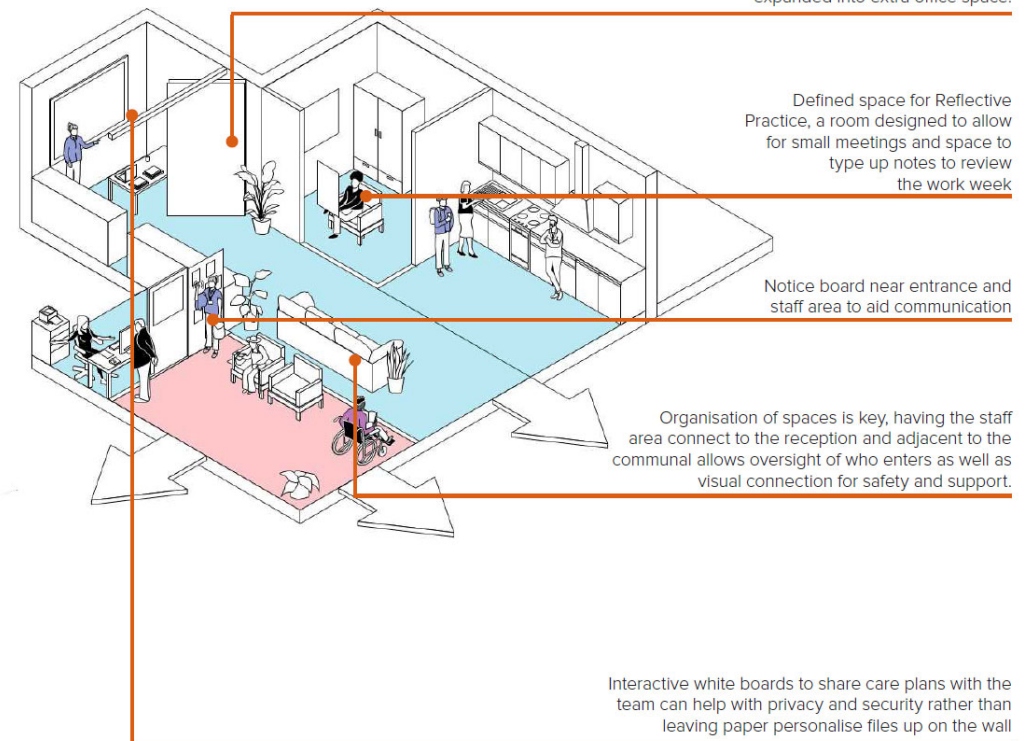


Staff & Reflection

Elements to Consider

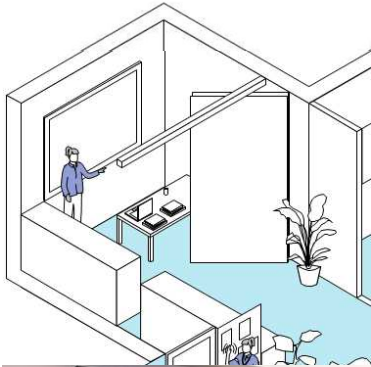
- Safe space to engage in reflective practice
- Private space for 1:1 and group meetings with individuals
- Storage – important space looks organised and is clutter free
- How staff area interacts with communal spaces and entrance
- Management of staff stress – can be in difficult situations on a regular basis

Flexible space is key throughout, a space which can be used as a meeting area with families and staff or expanded into extra office space.



Staff & Reflection

Examples



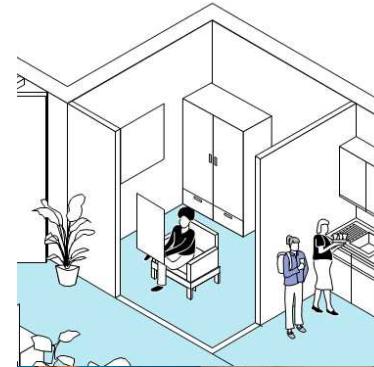
Interactive screen

Can provide opportunity to access care plans quickly and allows for safe storage of data – minimising paper



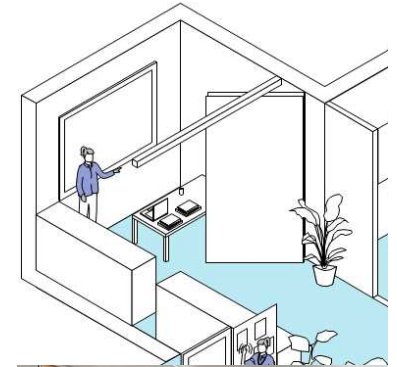
Two Way Glass

Can allow for observations to take place without creating stress for individual



Reflective Practice

Defined space for Reflective Practice, a room designed to allow for small meetings and space to type up notes to review the work week



Sliding Partitions

Allow for flexibility when limited space is available and allow for acoustic separation

Ancillary Spaces

Choice, Comfort, and Community

These are often areas that are left undesigned or forgotten. They should be part of the intent and considered fully like all other spaces.

The potential for interaction is high – however, spaces are often not designed to accommodate.

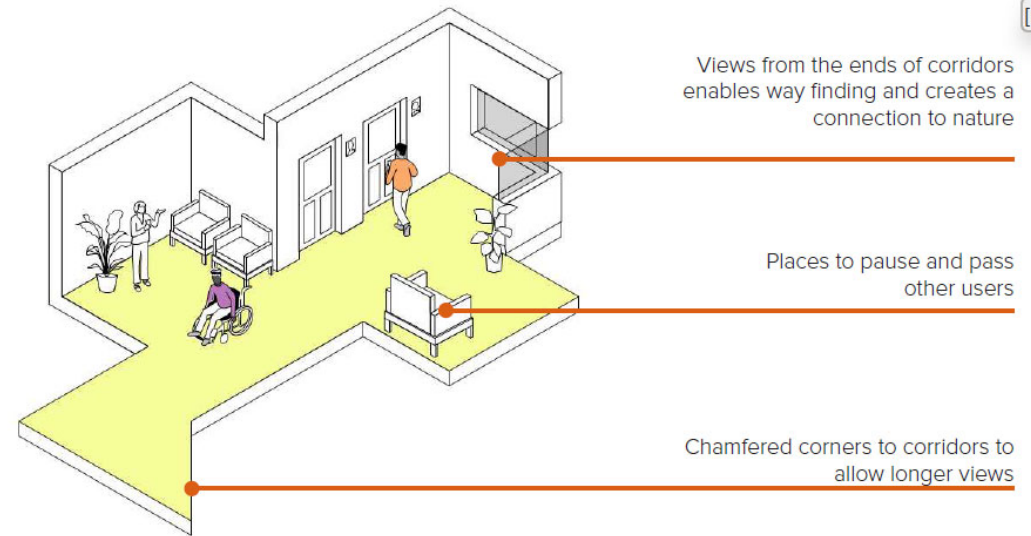
Unknown and unexpected interactions can create a negative response which can be avoided through thoughtful interventions and design.



Ancillary Spaces

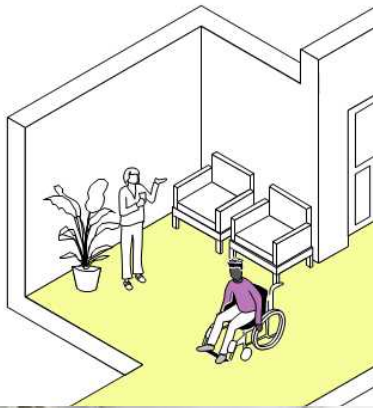
Elements to Consider

- Sight lines – the unexpected results in limited time to adapt to situation
- Views to the external spaces – allows space to feel more open
- Passing points and areas for seating – avoid confrontation
- Natural light – important for connections
- Wayfinding – aids individuals with certainty



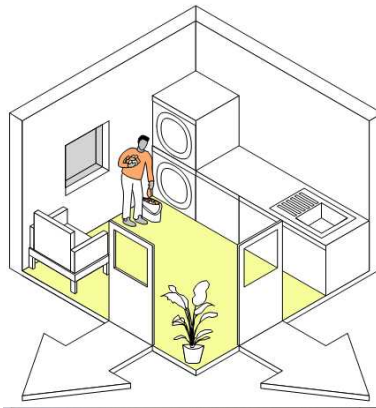
Ancillary Spaces

Examples



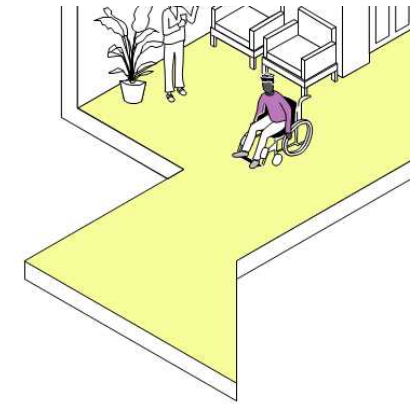
Passing Points and Break out spaces

Provides places to pause and avoid confrontation



Laundry Room

Provide seating area and has multiple exits



Chamfered Corners

Allows for clear sightlines

Communal Spaces

Choice, Comfort, and Community

Need to provide empowerment to individuals to allow them to decide how much to interact

Providing a sense of ownership is important to create 'homely' feel

Need to design spaces which minimise stress

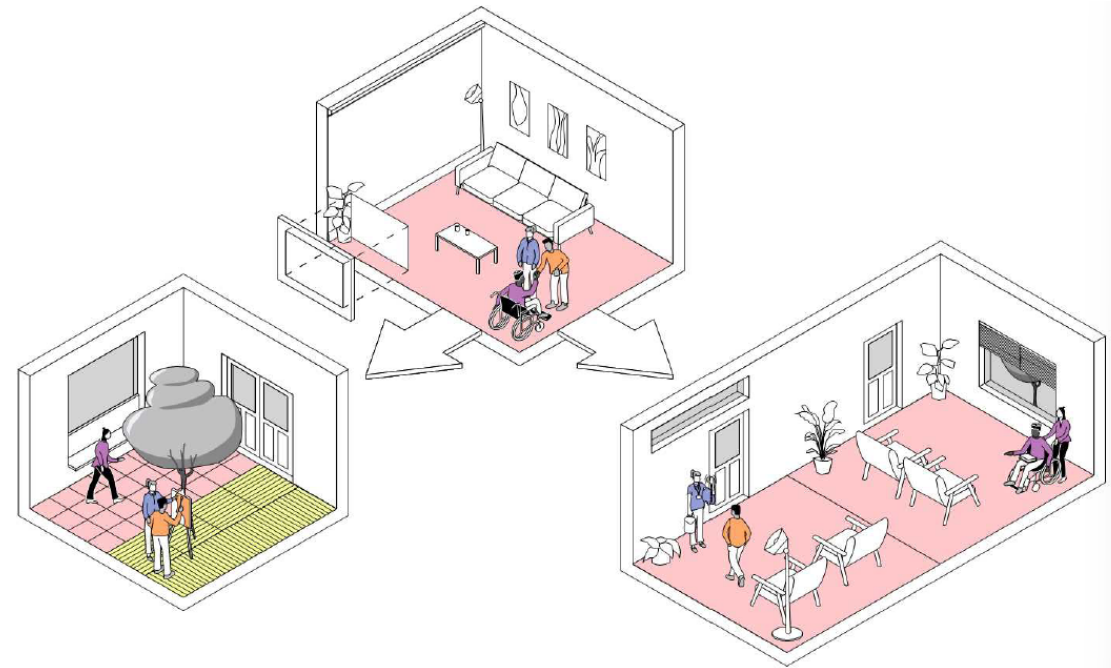
Important that areas are predictable to calm the nervous system



Communal Spaces

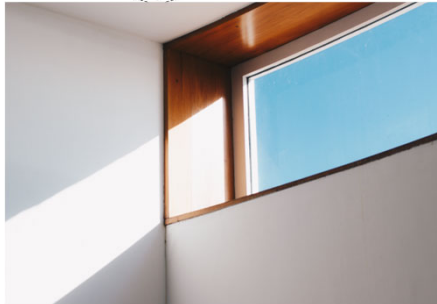
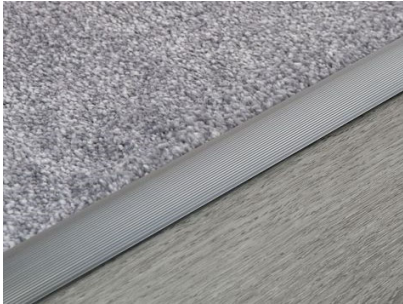
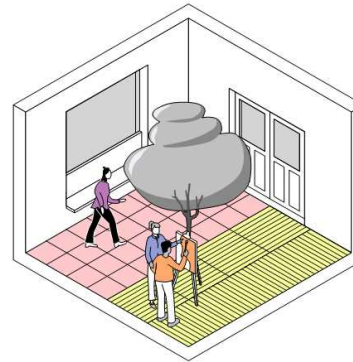
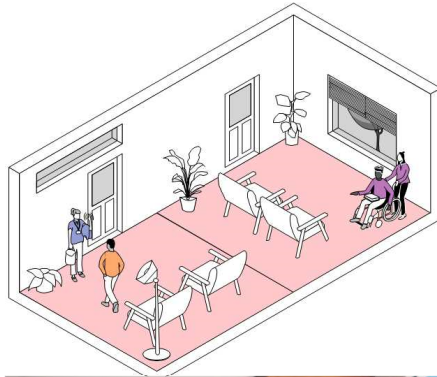
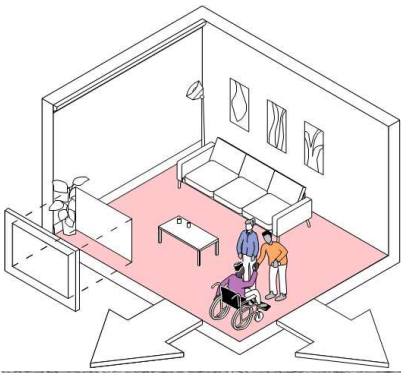
Elements to Consider

- Furniture arrangements – this provides stability and security
- Sight lines into communal spaces prior to entering- allow for mental preparation
- Cues to signal change in activity
- Variety of spaces to allow for group and individual settings
- Biophilia – same principles apply to external spaces
- Finishes – can signal transition



Communal Spaces

Examples



Floor Finishes

A change in floor finish can signal a change from a private to a communal space. Important these are natural materials and avoid institutional design

Different Spaces

Variety of spaces to allow for group and individual settings

Connection with Nature

The introduction of nature within a space can create peace of mind

Variety of Garden Spaces

Year-round greenery and breaking up of gardens with areas for sitting and areas for interaction are important.

Private Spaces

Choice, Comfort, and Community

Many who have suffered trauma have been in institutional environments for long periods of time

Needs to be comfortable space and allow for personalisation

Need spaces which are organised and do not overwhelm

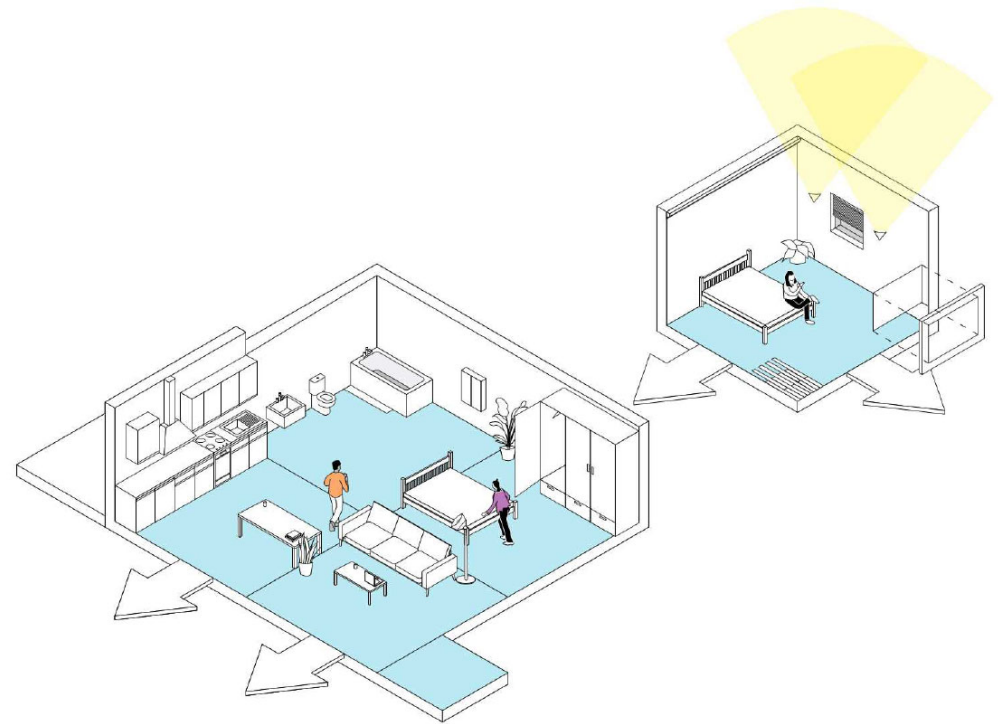
Visual cuing is important to provide information and manage expectation of what is to come



Private Spaces

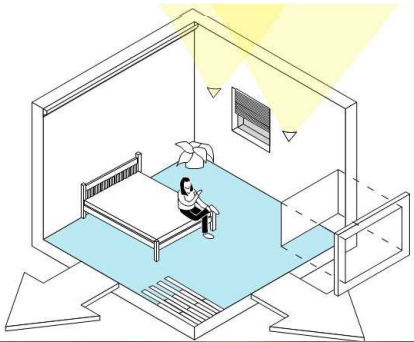
Elements to Consider

- Lighting – what is the impact of different colours and intensity
- Colours/Artwork – allows for personalisation
- Technology – can provide assistance and structure
- Finishes in wet rooms – often very institutional in their finishes
- Acoustics – separation from neighbours and communal spaces



Private Spaces

Examples



Controllable Lighting
Allow for colour and intensity control



Interactive mirrors
Allow for information from staff to manage expectations prior to leaving private



Wet Room Design
Avoids institutional feel – but still allows for safety and accessibility .

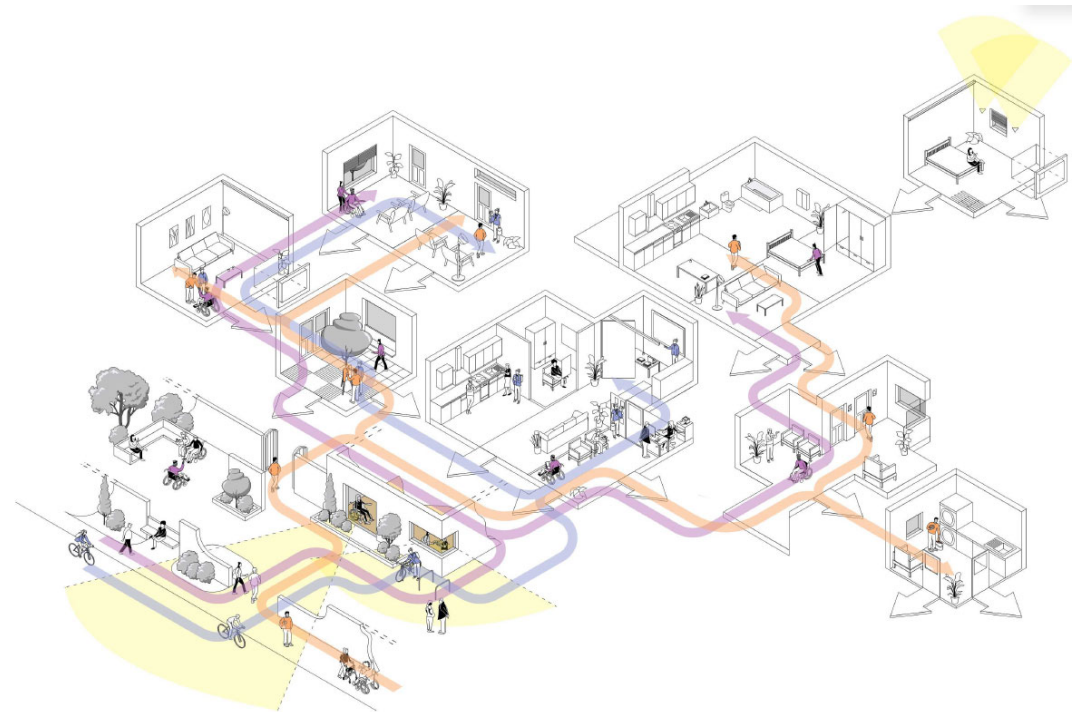
User Journey

Transitions

Important to note that the document is by no means exhaustive and provides some ideas – important to try to make interventions as personal as possible.

Provided examples of different spaces on an individual basis – important to think about the whole building.

Transitions and paths through the building are of particular importance to provide cues as to what is happening next.



Boundaries

Transitions

It is essential to understand the key characteristics of each space, who will use it, when and the intersectionality of user needs.

These thresholds are expressed from public spaces to private. This is essential to creating an environment that supports and empowers its residents and staff.

There are many ways this can be expressed from materiality to size and qualities within a space.



Diagram Trauma Informed Design

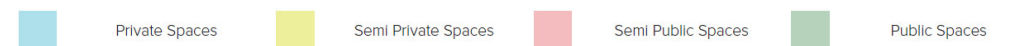


Diagram looking at the type of space and user groups

Launch

Launch of Trauma Informed Design within Learning Disabilities Environments was this morning – available through Housing LIN and WWA Studios

Really enjoyed working with Patricia to co-produce the document and Jill's work has really formed part of the inspiration – thanks to both

Its been a pleasure to work on the document and has really brought home the impact the built environment can have as part of a health solution

Any feedback/questions are welcome, both now and in the future

Trauma Informed Design

WITHIN LEARNING DISABILITIES ENVIRONMENTS



Next Steps

We are currently working with Empowered Homes on a number of projects at different stages

We have been working collaboratively on building mood boards and specifications specifically for the project

First project with input is hopefully due to start on site shortly

This is a 22 apartment development with communal spaces

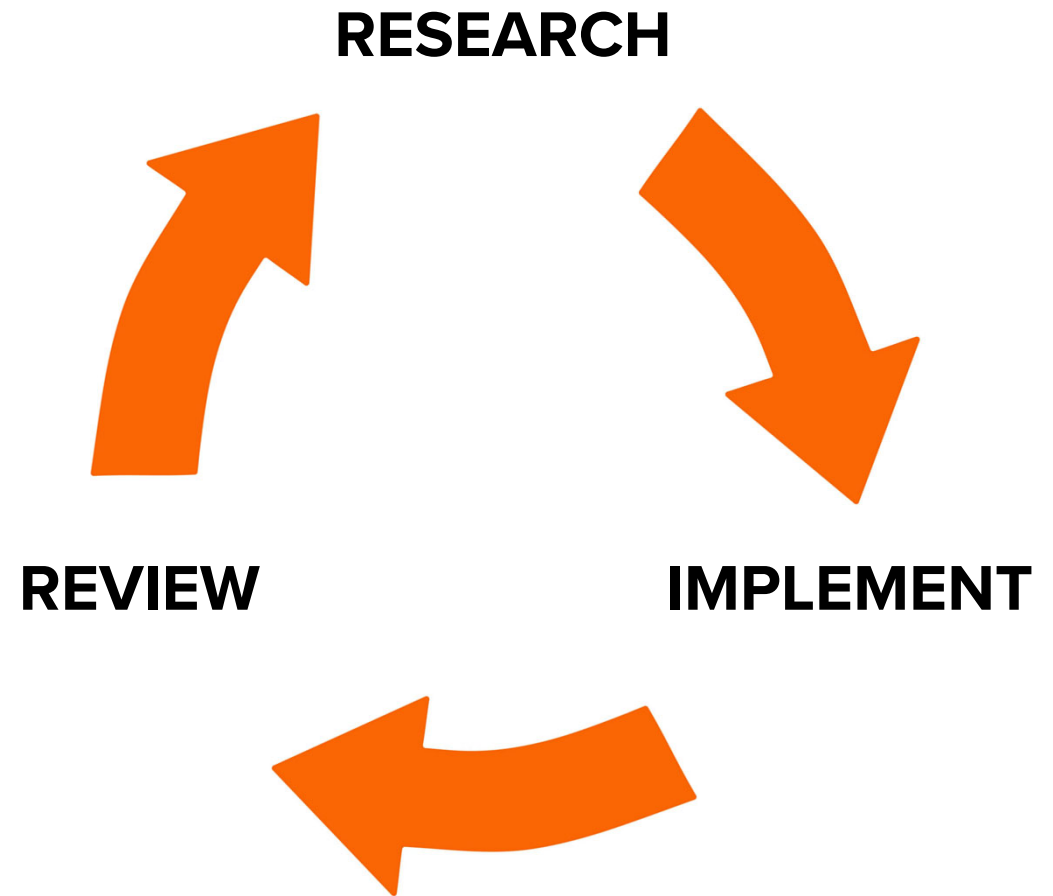


Next Steps

We will build on the document with case studies

Review the impact of the design interventions – through post occupancy evaluation

Look to complete the first case study following completion of the project



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