Creating Age-Friendly Developments:
Co-producing guidance for an age-inclusive city

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"Well...

The theory behind age-friendly cities is rooted in the idea of creating urban environments that are inclusive, accessible, and supportive of people of all ages, with a particular focus on meeting the needs and preferences of older adults or seniors. This concept is driven by several key principles and theories, including **Healthy Aging:** Age-friendly cities are based on the belief that older adults should have the opportunity to age in good health, with access to healthcare services, wellness programs, and a clean and safe environment. The World Health Organization (WHO) developed the "Healthy Aging" framework, which underpins the age-friendly cities concept. It emphasizes the importance of physical, mental, and social well-being in the aging process. **Active Aging:** Active aging is a theory that promotes engagement and participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and civic affairs as people age. Age-friendly cities encourage older adults to remain active and involved in their communities by providing opportunities for learning, volunteering, and socializing. **Universal Design:** Universal design principles are central to age-friendly cities. These principles advocate for designing spaces, products, and services that are accessible and usable by people of all ages and abilities. This includes features like accessible transportation, public buildings, and housing. **Social Inclusion:** The theory of social inclusion is fundamental to age-friendly cities. It emphasizes the importance of fostering a sense of belonging and social connectedness among older adults. This can be achieved through community activities, intergenerational programs, and initiatives that combat social isolation. **Community-Based Care:** Age-friendly cities often prioritize community-based care models that allow older adults to receive necessary healthcare and support services in their neighborhoods, reducing the need for institutional care. This approach promotes aging in place, where individuals can remain in their homes and communities as they age. **Participatory Approach:** The age-friendly cities model is based on a participatory approach, involving older adults themselves in the planning and decision-making processes. Local governments, community organizations, and older residents collaborate to identify needs, set priorities, and implement age-friendly initiatives. **Respect for Diversity:** Age-friendly cities recognize the diversity within the older adult population, including variations in culture, ethnicity, language, gender, and socioeconomic status. They aim to create inclusive environments that respect and celebrate this diversity. **Policy and Planning:** Age-friendly cities require changes in urban planning and policymaking to ensure that the built environment, transportation systems, housing, and public spaces are designed to accommodate the changing demographics of the population. **Age-Friendly Ecosystem:** The age-friendly cities concept promotes the development of an ecosystem that supports the well-being of older adults. This ecosystem encompasses government agencies, community organizations, healthcare providers, businesses, and individuals, all working together to create age-friendly environments. **Economic Benefits:** Age-friendly cities are seen as economically beneficial because they can contribute to local economies by attracting retirees, creating jobs in healthcare and services, and improving the overall quality of life, which can attract businesses and investment. 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- **GM Ageing Hub**

- Housing Planning and Ageing group

- Multi-disciplinary working group, focused on improving the quality and quantity of homes for older people

Recognises knowledge gap, particularly in non-specialist sectors.

"This guide offers a list of 'age-friendly' considerations that architects, planners and developers should consider when creating new or retrofit urban developments, ensuring we are producing places where everyone can age in place"

- Every scheme should be age-inclusive.

- Diverse needs and aspirations of later life, and the need to play for decades in the future.

- Things to do, but also ways to think. Requires creativity, not ticking boxes.

Creating Age-Friendly Developments:

Key features to consider

1. Celebrating Older People

Embracing different perspectives

Valuing older people in society

Including older people as active participants

2. Planning for Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods

Diverse housing options for older people

Supporting everyday activity

Creating social infrastructure

Integrating places

Connections to nature

3. Designing Age-Friendly Homes
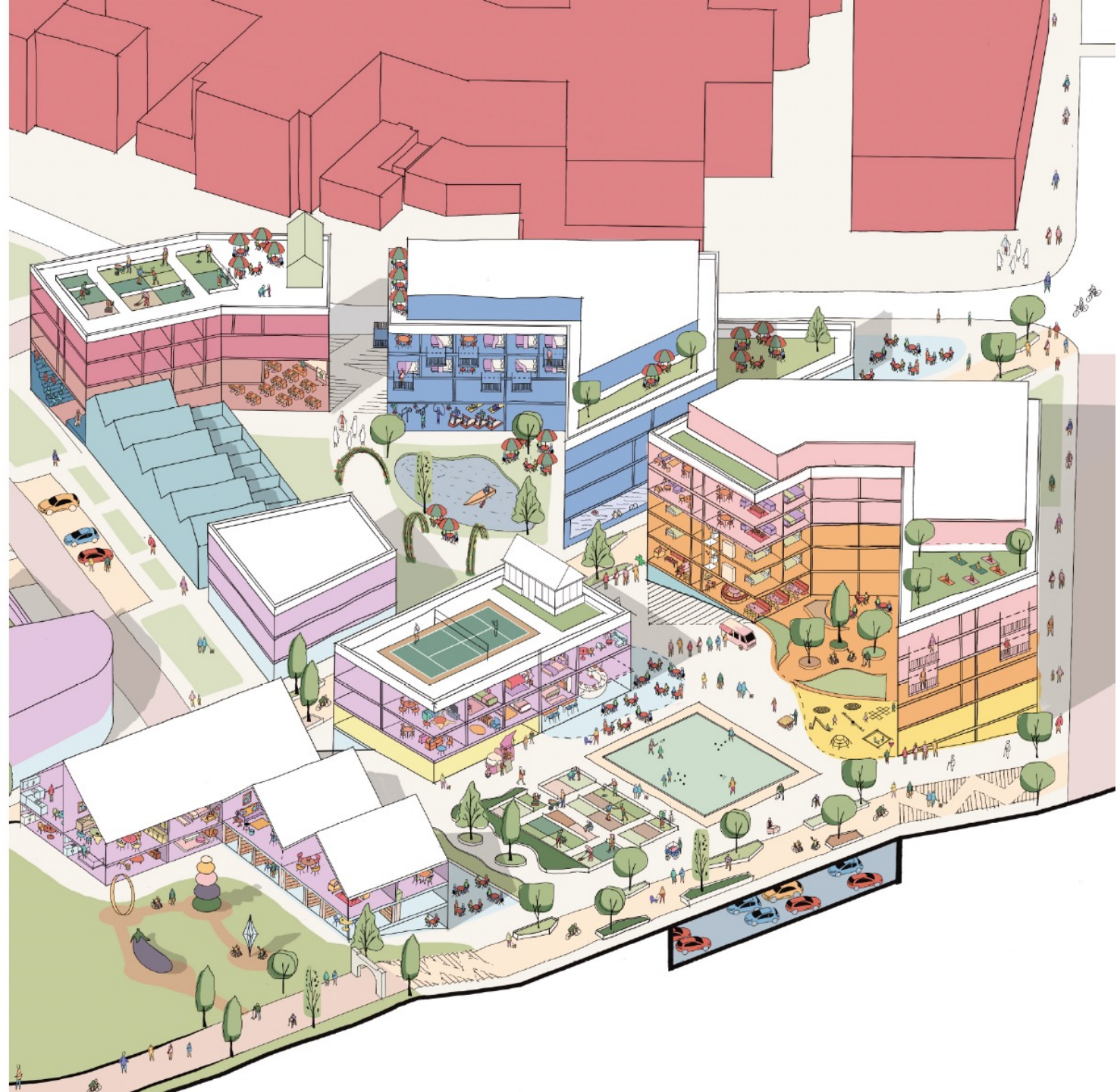
Creating healthy environments

Promoting active lives

Supporting social life

Providing appropriate storage spaces

Accessible controls and access

Maximising daylight and views

- **Importance of diverse viewpoints in the guides development**

- **Long gestation – the guide is the summation of 3 years work together, developing a shared understanding of the issues**

- **Contact your friendly neighbourhood academics! We love impact!**

Thank You!
(Guide released on International Day of Older Persons 1st October)

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