



Roden Court: Integrating community, integrating care

This Case Study looks at Roden Court extra care housing scheme developed by One Housing Group in the London Borough of Haringey. The scheme of 40 units is integrated within a partially high-rise, urban housing development of 136 units that also includes affordable general needs and family housing and apartments for sale.

The scheme won the London Evening Standard New Homes Award 2011 for Best New Affordable Development.

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Introduction

Roden Court extra care, developed by One Housing Group, has now been open for over a year and therefore has had the time to established itself and develop a homely non-institutional atmosphere. Relatively small for an extra care scheme with 40 units for affordable rent (17 one bedroom and 23 two bedroom flats), it sits discretely within a larger development, designed by Pollard Thomas Edwards architects (PTEa). Whilst predominantly a scheme for older people, there are a small number of people with learning difficulties over 55 who have moved from more institutional settings, with some, choosing to share 2 bedroom flats.

Roden Court is a traditional extra care housing scheme in that it although it offers independent living, there is a minimum care requirement, and access is through social care routes rather than a choice based lettings or housing route (see page 4 for details). The quality of the building has been recognised by the London Evening Standard New Homes Award in 2011 for Best New Affordable Housing Development, judges said, "If this was my new home I'd be very happy". It was also shortlisted in the 2012 Housing Design Award's HAPPI category.

Although not facing the street, residents feel connected to the wider community, the scheme also reaches across the communal gardens it shares with general needs residents, with ongoing joint projects developing these shared spaces.



The site

Roden Court extra care is part of a 136 unit mixed tenure development in Hornsey Lane, London Borough of Haringey. The wooded site slopes down away from the road and meets hedgerow bordering wooded parkland (a disused railway line). The overall scheme is designed both to exploit and preserve this mature landscape whilst combining a range of tenures and types of housing. The overall scheme comprises: the extra care scheme of 40 units; apartments for sale (44 units); and affordable general needs housing (52 units), including family units up to 4 bedrooms, and new homes for YWCA tenants rehoused from obsolete 1960s studio flats previously on the site.



The site design consists of two long buildings, which create a central open space for the use of all residents. These buildings rise towards Hornsey Lane to create two slim towers, which house the sale units. The higher flats look down over the green sedum-covered lower roofs of Roden Court and out over the wooded gardens.

Building materials address their context, a green zinc cladding has been used to give a robust elevation that fits amongst the tall trees at the front of the

site, tall panels of white render between generous glazing and balconies give the central area a bright light feel, while to the rear garden and for the extra care housing scheme, western red cedar gives a softer, more natural finish that will weather gently as the building ages.

One of the blocks extends further back, and steps down in scale. Here the extra care housing scheme is discretely located ranging from 4 floors down to a single story at the rear, but is indistinguishable from the outside from the rest of the flats. This non-institutional feel is further signaled from the street where the scheme signage simply refers to Roden Court and the flat numbers in the extra care housing scheme.

Layout

The extra care housing scheme entrance hall is banked on one side by an office and the other by glass-walled dining room, straight ahead is a view through the communal lounge to the extensive gardens beyond shared with residents from the general needs housing. Apart from these rooms, a hairdressing suite and a kitchen, all other facilities are located on other floors adding to the domestic feel of the building. Locating the lift and staircase to all floors out of view from the entrance adds to this atmosphere.



The lounge has a mix of floor coverings and physical dividers into the room, which break up the space and delineate different areas and makes it feel more intimate: part cosy lounge, part garden room, part IT suite, but overall a very welcome and vibrant space. There is no on-site



shop, appropriate for a relatively small extra care scheme with a local supermarket a short walk away. Additionally, staff and computer charity KIT are working with residents to order shopping online. There are activities involving residents each day including aerobics and a lunch club. Residents also link up with, and attend activities at, other schemes and services in the area.

The sloping site, proximity to adjoining properties and the need to reduce the

building height where it meets the parkland area has provided opportunities to create a dynamic and interesting building. However, this also presented challenges to the design of the extra care units; the corridors have had to be double-banked, which could have appeared institutional. However, locating the lift and stair lobby midway along the scheme has reduced corridor lengths, and also clever staggering of the walls, combined with selective lighting and use of paint finishes means that the corridors appear light, interesting and welcoming.

A number of functional spaces have been distributed throughout the building, such as the staffroom and meeting rooms and also



a guest suite. Locating the laundry on the top floor above one of these staff spaces means that the laundry can be run 24 hours a day when needed without causing a disturbance to residents and also soiled laundry and bedding doesn't have to be carried through more public communal areas.

Locating a buggy store on the ground floor with direct access to the outside and from within communal areas, has offset the need to allocate buggy storage space within flats, however this space was retained allowing more spacious configuration of the flats.

With regards to sustainability, the scheme achieved Eco Homes Very Good with high insulation standards and a biomass boiler (to meet Greater London Authority policy for on-site renewable at the time). There is a centralised plant room and heating system for the whole scheme delivering under floor heating at low temperatures, more efficiently than traditional radiators. Much of the existing landscape has been retained including a high numbers of (Tree Preservation Order) trees to both the front and rear of the site. A ground source heat pump was proposed but ultimately not constructed due to problems with predicting performance and cost.

Outside space

The established community of YWCA residents who played a very active part in the planning and execution of the larger scheme remained on site throughout the two phases of the development. The social networks developed over many years ensure continuity and they have closely engaged with the extra care scheme and its residents particularly over the communal gardens. Residents and staff of the extra care scheme have set up a gardening club to develop the garden area. The former YWCA residents have donated plants and are working with the extra care residents. There is a green house, shed and external tap for watering.

All ground floor flats have private terraces or gardens; all upper floors have generous balconies (with a few exceptions regarding issues of overlooking). The overall design makes the split between the different tenures impossible to see and whilst there are separate entrances the overall impression is of a single development.



Communal facilities – summary

- Lounge with IT suite
- Hairdressers
- Catering kitchen
- Dining Room
- Guest suite
- Laundry (staff run)
- Green house and shed
- Buggy store
- Lift
- Gardens
- Staff office
- Staff Room
- Staff meeting room – rented out for meetings
- Different décor/colour on each floor to aid way-finding



Apartments

Internally, flats have been designed to maximize the feeling of space, with clear layouts. The extra care flats are all designed to wheelchair space standards and therefore feel generous. The use of standard kitchen units helps prevent an institutional feel, however the walls behind are tiled and therefore kitchen units can easily be replaced with those accessible for a wheelchair user if needed.

Walls between main bedrooms and bathrooms are designed to be able to be 'knocked out' to allow the fitting of a hoist (to the reinforced ceiling) to allow transfer of a resident from bed to bathroom, should this be required. Therefore the flats primarily look like 'ordinary' flats, but perhaps with greater space. The inclusion of generous storage cupboards is further evidence of the thinking of One Housing Group and the architects PTEa that chimes with the design recommendations of the 2009 HAPPI report (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation).



1 bed extra care flat



2 bed extra care flat

Apartments – summary

- Wheelchair space standards
- Standard kitchens – adaptable for wheelchair users
- Ceilings strengthened for hoists from bedroom to bathroom
- Knock out panels in wall between bedroom and bathroom
- Bathrooms fully accessible wet rooms
- Balconies or terraces to each apartment
- Under floor heating (no radiators reduces health and safety risk of potential burns)
- Warden alarm call system
- Generous storage within each apartment
- Well lit and ventilated apartments

Residents – Allocations + care and support services

Allocations to the scheme are principally made by LB Haringey Social Services, with One Support (a subsidiary of One Housing Group) making independent suitability assessments before accepting new residents and ensuring that there is a balance in terms of levels of need across the scheme.

Eligibility criteria for the scheme are that individuals are 55 or over; have a local connection with Haringey; require a care and support package of 5 hours per week minimum; and are legally able and entitled to hold a tenancy.



A number of residents have moved to the scheme from residential care homes, some having been placed there 30 years ago (due a lack of suitable alternatives). Staff have seen residents change and blossom living more independently. Some now cooking their own meals in their own flats with support from staff, another who had been wheelchair bound is now beginning to walk for part of the day.

As agreed with Haringey's social services, the 'service offer' at Roden Court is split between a 'core menu' and 'care options'. Staff deliver a total of 800 care hours per week, with an average of 17 (compared to initial anticipated average of 12 care hours per person per week), with the highest being 48 per week. There are a diverse group of older people living at the scheme, including an ex-traveler and some older people who had been living in a group setting for people with learning disabilities and were able to move to Roden Court together.

Most of the care (90%) is provided by One Support, however, some residents do purchase their care from other agencies using their personal care budgets. One Housing Group provides housing management.

As with any extra care housing scheme, it can be difficult to anticipate at scheme commissioning stages how catering will actually be provided when a scheme opens. Here it is working well and the management allows flexibility; meals are provided in residents own flats with staff support, or in communal dining room; some residents have meals delivered; there is also a lunch club and breakfast club.

Core Menu

- 24 hour staff on site
- Emergency response
- Accompanying to external services
- Social inclusion
- Housing related support
- Reablement
- Resettlement
- Care co-ordination and liaison
- Key working

Care options

- Getting up and dressing
- Medication management
- Food preparation
- Shopping
- Maintain social contacts
- Cleaning and domestic work
- Washing and bathing
- Waking night staff
- Care tailored to the individual

Key facts and charges

Tenure

All units in the extra care housing scheme are for affordable rent. The borough was very keen to have affordable rent for older people in this western part of the borough where it is in short supply. Residents receive Assured Shorthold Tenancies. The rental, care and support charges at the time of writing as follows:

Rent, care and support charges:

| | 1 Bedroom | 2 Bedroom |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Rent | £154.84 | £192.71 |
| Service Charge | £91.38 | £91.38 |
| Core support charge | £160.90 | £160.90 |
| Total Minimum charge | £407.12 | £444.99 |

Additional 'menu' support @ £13.97 per hour

Involvement and feedback

Roden Court residents have participated in an Elderly Accommodation Counsel run consultation, collecting their views and levels of satisfaction. Whilst there may be areas that can be improved, the resident satisfaction when compared to other schemes, has scored highest both regionally and nationally in the following areas:

Link with community at large; We feel we are part of the wider local community; Our garden is pleasant and easy to enjoy; This building makes one proud to live in it; I have a good view from my home, there is always something interesting to look at.



Learning Points

Gardens & landscaping

There are extensive gardens and although it was landscaped by the developers as part of the construction process, there has been further need for planting etc. Whilst the scheme has received some (customer enterprise) funds from One Housing Group, and from developer Galliford Try, since the scheme opened, it has highlighted the need to get landscaping and planting carefully thought through, with the involvement of scheme managers whilst the scheme is being developed (and funds are more readily available).

Flexibility of spaces

Not all of the communal spaces are being used as envisaged at development stage. However, due to the flexible way the scheme has been designed, these changes in use have been possible. Schemes need to have flexibility in how they can use spaces; the needs and wishes of residents and types of management and support delivery will inevitably change over time and the building needs to be able to respond to that.

Strong client

A strong client (development team) from One Housing Group pushed hard regarding design detailing ensuring the quality of the scheme. Importantly this was also coupled with the retention of scheme architect PTEa as the builder's architect ensuring that the detail of the original vision was carried through to the completed building.

Two-bedroom accommodation

Development of two bedroom flats has been accepted practice across housing for older people for some time and both a capital funding recommendation and a HAPPI Report design recommendation.

At Roden Court, there have been challenges in letting 2-bed accommodation due to changes in rules regarding housing benefit. However, at a time when the “bedroom tax” is in the spotlight, of particular interest is therefore that housing benefit has been paid for two bedroom flats where residents are of pensionable age and also in receipt of disability benefits.

And finally, a further issue is where residents have moved from care homes to extra care housing and no longer have sufficient furniture or budget to furnish their flat.

Note

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

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About the Housing LIN

Previously responsible for managing the Department of Health’s Extra Care Housing Fund, the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) is the leading ‘learning lab’ for a growing network of housing, health and social care professionals in England involved in planning, commissioning, designing, funding, building and managing housing, care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults with long term conditions, including dementia.

For further information about the Housing LIN’s comprehensive list of online resources and opportunities for shared learning and service improvement, including site visits and network meetings in your region, visit www.housinglin.org.uk

The Housing LIN welcomes contributions on a range of issues pertinent to housing with care for older and vulnerable adults. If there is a subject that you feel should be addressed, please do contact us.

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