



Putting dementia into the heart of Extra Care Housing in Wales: A case study from Mold

Llys Jasmine, in the heart of Mold, Flintshire, is one of the first Welsh sites to feature dedicated apartments for people with dementia within the extra care housing facility. It was shortlisted in this year's development of the year at the Housing Awards last month, the only specialist housing scheme to be shortlist.

This case study for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network focuses on the benefits that effective partnership working brings to new extra care schemes. It looks at what key stakeholders offer to the process

and takes learning from each stage in the development process, including designing for inclusion with people with dementia in mind.



Written for the Housing Learning & Improvement Network by **Kim Yates**, Head of Care, Wales & West Housing

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About the scheme

Llys Jasmine is managed by Wales & West Housing in partnership with Flintshire County Council. The £8.3m scheme, part funded by a £5.7m Social Housing Grant from the Welsh Government, comprises 61 apartments (33 one bedroom, 28 two bedroom) and two x two bedroom bungalows for residents aged 65 and over with care and support needs. Fifteen of the purpose-built apartments are specifically designed for people with dementia and located in one area of the site.

The scheme was built on the site of an existing Flintshire Council traditional sheltered housing scheme. After extensive consultation with the various stakeholders, it was determined that the sheltered scheme was to be decommissioned and an extra care housing scheme built on the site. Over a long period of time, residents of the site moved out and the existing sheltered provision was decommissioned.



Lounge area in the dementia unit

Background research

Research was high on the list of priorities for both Wales & West Housing and Flintshire County Council at the development stage and we considered a variety of layouts and design principles. Flintshire Council engaged a consultant in extra care provision who explored the options for segregated and integrated provision for people with dementia and decided the site should have discreet and specialist dementia provision for those moving in who already had significant support needs relating to their dementia.

The site was designed by architects Ainsley Gommon and built by Anwyl Construction with support from Cambria Maintenance Services. Key features include 24 hour on-site care and support, communal lounges and a restaurant providing hot meals; hairdressers, treatment room, library and laundry. There is also assistive technology and wi-fi throughout the building.

One of the considerations at the development stage was the issue of 'capacity' amongst people who were being asked to sign for a tenancy. One of the strengths of our partnership was that the council's legal team were able to come up with a working protocol that we were both happy to work with, thereby reducing the opportunity for any issues to arise in the future.

On site management

At Llys Jasmine, there is an onsite scheme manager who provides a housing related/tenancy support service to residents. There is also an onsite manager who manages the onsite care team. Both were appointed 6 - 9 months before the building opened and used the time before the open date to carry out what has turned out to be very valuable preparation work.

This included:

- Awareness raising sessions with local people, our staff, NHS staff and GPs and local community groups to inform them of what extra care as a concept is and specific scheme information.
- Marketing of apartments and the care and support, meal and leisure services on offer.

- Creating a list of potential residents and, closer to the completion date, carrying out assessments of potential residents and completing move-in processes.
- Recruiting and selecting staff for the scheme. This included care and support staff, cleaning and site maintenance staff and catering staff.

Capital funding

The bulk of the original funding for the scheme came from the Welsh Government in the form of a grant specifically set up to promote the development of extra care in Wales. An original funding allocation of £6.3m was reduced mid-process to £5.7, necessitating a change in the building design and an increase of 5 additional apartments (with a corresponding loss of communal facilities). The footprint of the building now has a 65% accommodation and 35% communal space split as a result of the design changes.

Designing considerations

Design features that assist people with dementia to settle in Llys Jasmine include:

- Apartment layouts that help people to find key places (eg. the toilet can be seen by a person lying in bed)
- Décor and colour schemes that aid calmness and reminiscence
- A dedicated lounge and dining area where bespoke activities can also take place (residents in these flats are also able to use general communal facilities)
- A clearly identified pathway that leads around the ground floor area and into the garden, enabling people to exercise and explore without reaching a potentially confusing dead end.
- Assistive technology that enables people to be as independent as possible whilst supporting



a safe environment – from door entry and exit systems to flood alarms, the environment is designed to support people to live active and meaningful lives to the best of their ability.

Window sills are low to enable all residents to see out. Balconies are situated off every living room space. A courtyard garden at the centre of the scheme brings residents together where the sensory garden helps them to enjoy the outdoor space and makes for a meaningful activity area.

An electric scooter store is near the main entrance to encourage residents to be independent.

Throughout the design of this scheme, specific thought was given to ensuring dignity and privacy for all the residents to provide them with the maximum quality of life possible.



The apartments were designed in accordance with the Development Quality requirements of the Welsh Government and Lifetime Homes standards. Dementia care apartments follow the Dementia Services Development Centre best practice guidelines.

The main aim was to create a 'home from home', designing a building which is sympathetic to its neighbours and residential in appearance rather than institutional.



All of the apartments were built to achieve a minimum BREEAM Multi-residential Very Good standard and follow the requirements of the TAN 22 legislation for sustainability. Environmentally responsible methods of construction and palette of sustainable locally sourced materials were used to create an energy efficient design.

The scheme is split into two different levels with separate entrances, both accessible from the main road. The dementia care apartments and breakout spaces are on the upper ground floor to allow an extra level of audible and visual privacy and security.

The use of colour and light to differentiate between areas was maximised, assisting those with sight impairment and helping those with dementia to be aware of their surroundings.



A secure central courtyard garden provides a 'sheltered environment'. All residential areas of the building are away from the public, with gated access to the rear gardens, to ensure maximum security, comfort and privacy for residents.

The different areas of the scheme have their own internal and external communal areas. They remain linked to ensure effective

distribution of and access for care staff and also to avoid unnecessary duplication of facilities and services. A communal restaurant provides a good opportunity for interaction at the heart of the scheme and all residents pay for this meal service as an integral part of their charges.

Delivering care and support

The decision to provide care and support through extra care housing was developed through consultation with strategic partners as well as being informed by older people themselves, their relatives and carers.

Over 600 residents were invited to consultations and more than 400 participated in 'listening events.'

Consultation with residents and their families from Flintshire's first extra care housing development ensured learning from that project was taken forward. As a result, we provided more parking spaces, more lifts, wider paths away from windows with appropriate surfaces to differentiate public and private space, mixed tenure options, extra security and a range of activities and décor designed to appeal to males and females.



Residents appreciated individual care plans, enough but not too much support, help with household tasks, assistive technology and good use of space and light, all of which were provided. Before moving in, each individual was supported by Flintshire’s reablement team, who helped to maximise their independence

80% of the development costs were spent on wages for the workforce employed locally, providing Flintshire with a massive boost for its economy.

Over £5m was injected into the economy and every pound was spent locally five times, adding up to more than £25m being spent on goods and services in the area.

During the build process, sub-contractors took on 17 apprentices from the local area, providing them with employment and training opportunities.

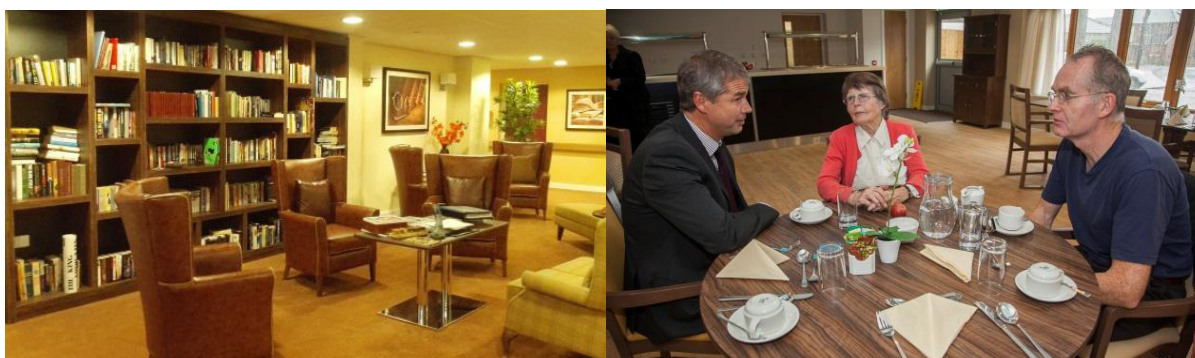
Communications and marketing

We published regular articles in both the council’s newspaper delivered to all homes and businesses in Flintshire, as well as bulletins, WWH’s newsletter and residents’ newsletter. We promoted the scheme on site, via social media, websites, at exhibitions, festivals and local fairs, informed GPs, health and social care professionals, organised site visits and local schools helped name the restaurant. The result of this engagement was that the local community welcomed the new scheme and had a better understanding of extra care and dementia. It also meant that demand for the scheme was high. Within only two months of opening (in October 2013) Llys Jasmine is now full and has a waiting list of potential residents.

What the residents say

Resident Enid Jones said: “I lived in a big house on my own before. It’s a lot cosier now, so warm and I’m not lonely. I feel looked after but can be independent. It’s wonderful.”

Tim Willan, 49, said: “I’m very pleased to see how well looked after my mother Nancy is here. She is very happy here and it’s reassuring to know she’s in good hands.” (both pictured below, right)



Conclusion and key learning points

The benefits of working together prior to opening cannot be underestimated. Not only from the aspect of the work that could be achieved around getting a great build design, but the development of procedures and protocols that work from both a housing and care perspective. This meant that things such as assessments and allocations worked relatively smoothly from the outset and, perhaps most importantly, that the separate teams had an opportunity to gel as one team that continues to work very well together.

It has been important from the outset to encourage people with dementia to be an active part of the Llys Jasmine community and it has been an active intention to include them in daily routines. The design of the building has been key to this. For example, the layout of the dining room (you can access it from both the dementia unit and the main reception) has encouraged this interaction and it is paying dividends. One resident Tom¹ took delight in describing his happiness since moving in, citing things like the friendships he has made and the difference that he can make to others' lives just by living there and being a good neighbour. "Gareth² was feeling a bit anxious yesterday when we were having lunch together so I took him for a walk to fetch a paper after lunch and we had a good natter on the way. I didn't realise he knew so much about Mold – he really taught me some stuff!"

Learning from each other at every stage of this project has been and continues to be critical.

Key learning points

- The benefits from having staff in place in advance of opening was invaluable.
- Appreciating all the stakeholder groups as partners is vital to ensure not only ownership at agency level, but ownership of the development by the local community. This has encouraged greater integration of local neighbours and community members in what goes on at the scheme.
- Involving the front line staff in the development of the service promotes ownership.
- Interior design was good but greater involvement with the dressing of the scheme to incorporate accessories that were more poignant could have been achieved and more involvement from a service user perspective at all stages would have helped this to happen at an earlier stage.
- Re: eligibility/criteria/suitability of scheme/applicant - Provide more information to those applicants who were not successful in being accepted on to the waiting list, as in the early stages some people were not clear about why their application was unsuccessful.
- The joint training helped with building a one team approach and also maximised the expertise and resources of each partner – in turn generating efficiencies.
- The regular partnership meetings not only helped to develop how the service was to be delivered but also supported the dovetailing of both partners' vision for Llys Jasmine to be a vibrant community as well as being a truly integrated part of the wider community.

¹ Not his real name – a resident at Llys Jasmine. Tom's flat is not in the dementia unit.

² Not his real name – a fellow resident at Llys Jasmine. Gareth's flat is in the dementia unit.

Note

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

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 and Wales involved in planning, commissioning, designing, funding, building and managing housing, care and support services for older people and vulnerable adults with long term conditions.

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 contact us.

For further information about the Housing LIN's comprehensive list of online resources and to participate in our shared learning and service improvement networking opportunities, including 'look and learn' site visits and network meetings in your region, visit: www.housinglin.org.uk

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