



Regenerating the Aylesbury: Inter-generational urban extra care housing

This case study focuses on a challenging intergenerational mix of housing on the Aylesbury Estate, Walworth, in south London, that requires progressive levels of privacy across shared spaces within a dense urban environment. With an increased awareness of the impact of climate change, it explains how the risk of overheating in circulation spaces was mitigated without resorting to double loaded or mechanically vented corridors.

The redevelopment of the area is currently one of the largest social housing programs ever undertaken in Europe. Block one of Stage 1 (known as the First Development Site) will comprise extra care housing, affordable social rented and shared ownership housing and a community facility.



Commissioned by Notting Hill Housing Trust, this urban mix acknowledges an ageing city and the architectural ambition is to accommodate the extra care housing scheme within a tenure blind block that offers a coherent and well-mannered façade. The design continues to develop in close collaboration with Southwark Commissioners and Notting Hill Housing Trust via a series of focused workshops on all aspects of the design including meeting levels of need within the Borough.

Written for the Housing Learning and Improvement Network by **Ewan Cooper**, architect, Mæ

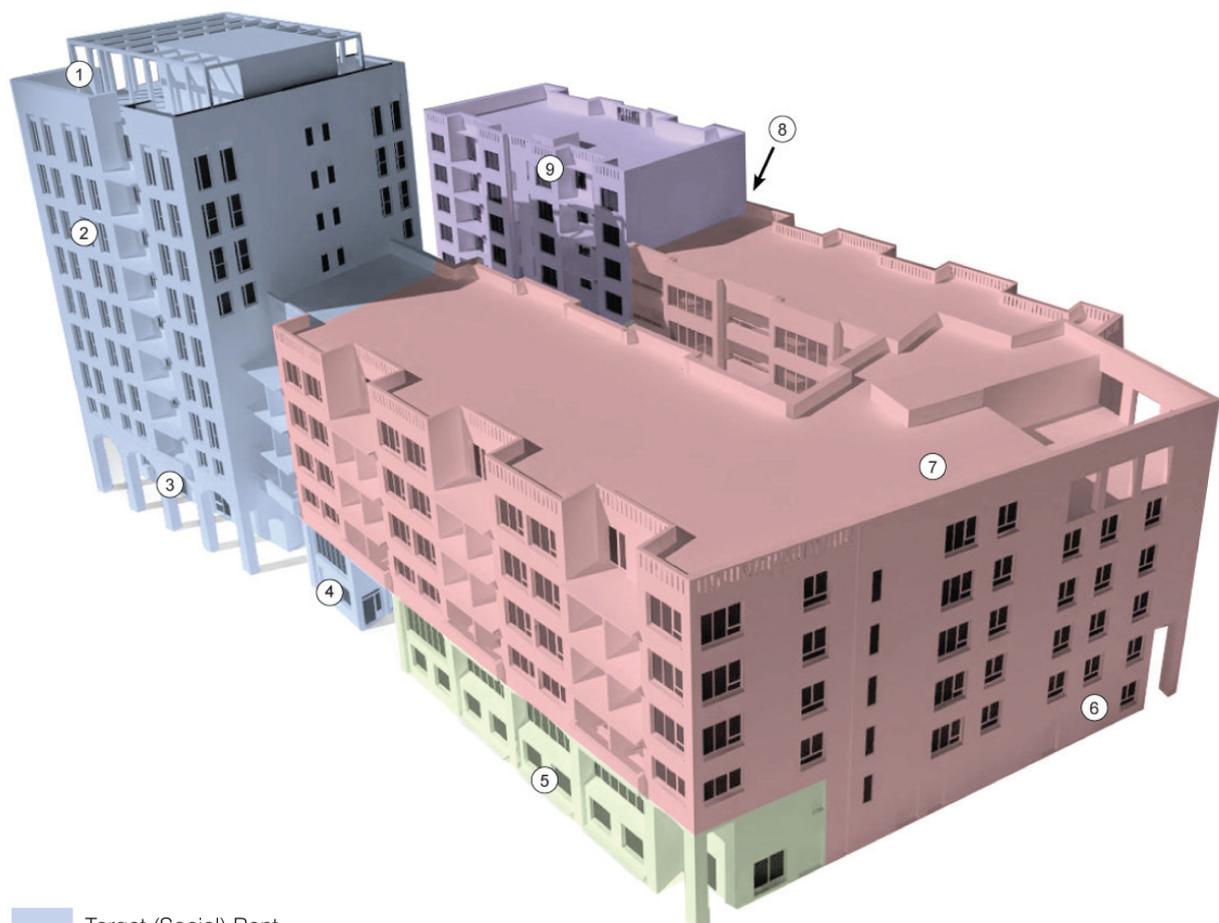
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Urban Extra Care Housing: Challenges

The extra care housing scheme comprises 50 units of mixed tenure accommodation (40 target rent and 10 shared ownership), a community facility, general needs housing (apartments and maisonettes) around a shared, enclosed courtyard which is open to the south to allow daylight and sunlight deep into its relatively narrow plot.

The block development mix of one and two bedroom apartments with different levels of provision and tenure (target rent to private sale) is driven by an ambition to provide the most inclusive extra care offer possible for older people. It also helped the economic viability of the project and the aspiration of Notting Hill Housing Trust, which in turn helps to create a higher quality domestic environment. In demanding tenure blind housing, Notting Hill Housing Trust ensure there is no compromise in architectural quality for 'less profitable' tenures.

Block Tenure / Mix Diagram



- 1 Roof top amenity space
- 2 10 storey tower. 32 No. 1 Bed and 2 Bed Target Rent flats.
- 3 Maisonettes 2 No. 3 Bed Target Rent units (at ground floor).
- 4 Maisonettes 2 No. 4 Bed Target Rent units (at ground floor).
- 5 Community Centre. 250sqm Flexible Space
- 6 Extra Care Office and Communal Spaces on Ground Floor
- 7 Extra Care 47 No. 1 Bed Units 3 No. 2 Bed Units & shared facilities
- 8 Maisonettes. 2 No. 4 Bed Shared Ownership units (at ground floor)
- 9 7 Storey Block. 19 No. 2 Bed shared ownership units and 3 No 1 bed wheelchair adaptable units

From this quality objective, the challenge was to accommodate the requirements of the South East London Housing Partnership (SELHP) wheelchair flat guidance¹ within a grid that worked with other general needs types in order to present a continuous, coherent architectural expression.

“It is clear that a major contribution to London’s projected growth in population is increasing longevity: people are living longer and there will be more older people living here.”²

The report, ‘Ageing London’ by the Mayor’s Design Advisory Group acknowledges the unsuitable nature of much of new London Housing for older home buyers who are often looking for more space (both inside and outside of the dwelling) than the first time buyer. Termed ‘last time buyers’, older people have different priorities and can be marginalised by housing that is too frequently designed as much by economic viability as it is for the flexible needs of the unknown end user.

The concept of inter-generational inclusion was driven by visits to a number of existing Notting Hill Housing Trust run extra care housing developments across London, the most successful and vibrant of which encouraged the residents to interact with children and younger adults. The least successful felt more institutional than domestic with problems such as double loaded corridors and overheating in shared spaces. Much of the activity in any of the developments was focused around the main entrance as residents gathered to welcome visitors or just watch the coming and going.

Making and maintaining a connection with the wider community became an important driver for the plan. Precedent studies showed entrances to facilities often located to the side or rear of the building, away from the street for ease of vehicular ‘drop off’ or to ensure ease of monitoring those coming or going. At Aylesbury, by offering a generous and well-overlooked entrance onto a new public space, a vibrant place is created and neighbourhood-wide social interaction encouraged.

Community Connections



¹ South East London Housing Partnership, ‘Wheelchair homes design guidelines’ October 2011

² Mayor’s Design Advisory Group, ‘Ageing London’ March 2016

The entrance becomes the heart of the plan, with a busy loggia and the two main wings of the extra care housing block running to the east and the south, which minimizes travel distances to the core. The courtyard garden and communal lounge is made immediately visible upon entry, offering the option of increased seclusion or retreat.



Shared courtyard

The garden is shared between the community centre, extra care and general needs housing. Barriers are achieved in landscaping and planting to reduce the sense of enclosure whilst ensuring security.

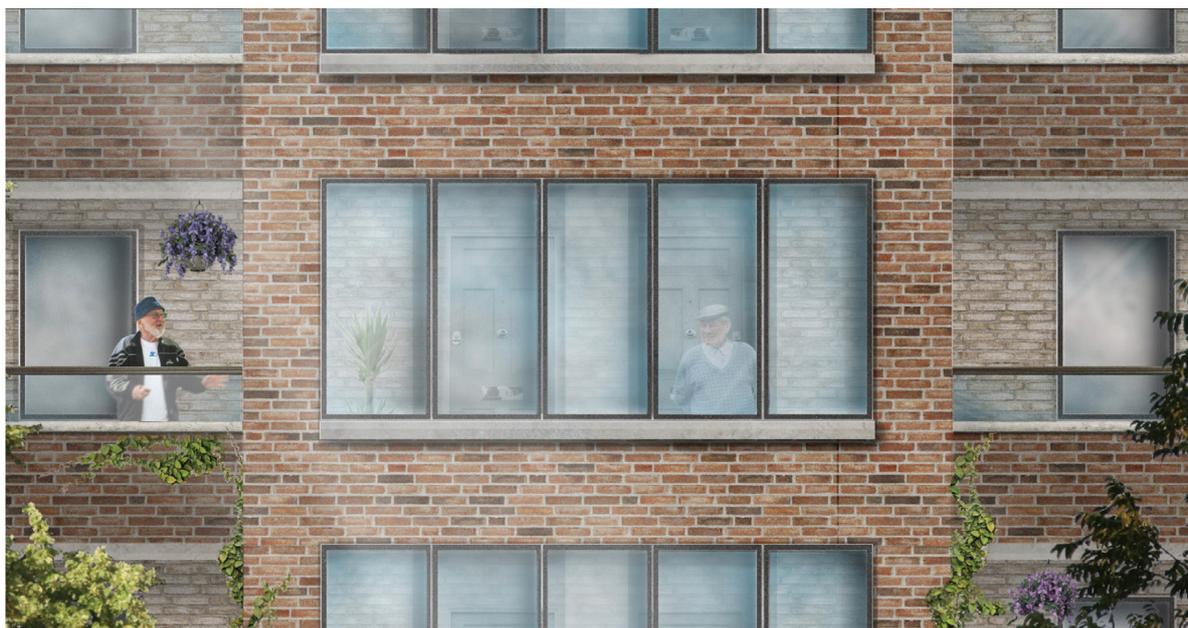
The design of the extra care communal areas and flats continues to develop in close collaboration with Southwark Commissioners and Notting Hill via a series of focused workshops on all aspects of the design, including meeting levels of need within the Borough.

Galleries

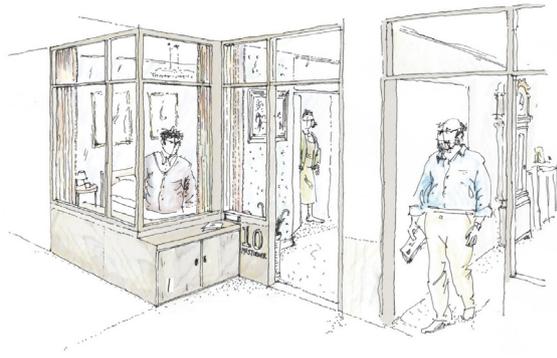
All circulation in the extra care facility is designed for the easy movement of wheelchairs, trolleys or those unsteady on their feet. Communal circulation routes are at least 1.5m wide with regular spaces at least 1.8m wide for two wheelchairs to pass. There are also plenty of informal places to rest, gather or reflect with views out from behind opening glazing.

Along the main galleries, front doors are paired into 'belvederes' to create a sheltered space outside the individual flat entrances for a neighbourly level of interaction. Residents can take ownership of the area immediately adjacent to their front doors and add personal decorative touches to the communal space, which increases familiarization, comfort and domesticity.

Seats built into the belvederes provide opportunities for social interaction and a year round view into the shared courtyard. Open galleries link the belvederes and mitigate any risk of over heating.



Elevation showing galleries



Neighbourly over looking - early sketch



Belvederes with a view of the courtyard

‘Designing Out’ Overheating in Circulation Spaces

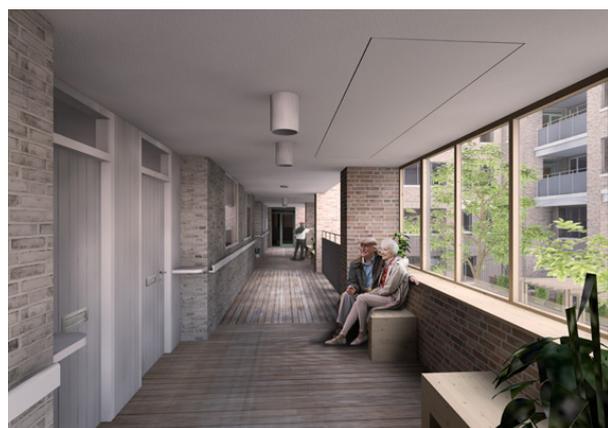
Care Quality Commission guidance for extra care service users mentions that residents should be able to control the temperature of their environment, but does not set limits. For the design of new health care buildings, Health Technical Memorandum 03-01 (DH, 2007) (HTM03-01) states: *“Calculations and thermal modeling should be undertaken to ensure that, during the summertime, internal temperatures in patient areas do not exceed 28 degrees centigrade for more than 50 hours per year”* (‘What Standards to Expect from the Regulation of your Care Home’, CQC).

Another recent study by the University of Manchester³ illuminates the often-unforeseen risk of overheating in elderly care residential design and management. The misconception that the elderly require warmer than usual environments can be harmful and is highlighted in the report as designing for an *“imagined user.”*

When designing the Aylesbury Extra Care circulation, glazed corridors were modelled and tested against predicted (higher) temperatures in fifty years time as well as highest currently recorded London summer temperatures. Under current conditions, temperatures in south facing glazed corridors would have regularly exceeded 30°C and occasionally passed 35°C.

Open decks were explored and designed with input from the Southwark Council Extra Care Commissioners with careful regard to risk of surface freezing and potential winter slip hazards.

By running district heat pipes along gallery floor slabs we were able to ensure that the decks would never freeze and within each glazed belvedere there is a radiant panel controlled by PIR sensors to increase the temperature and comfort of these spaces so that residents can enjoy using them even in the colder months of the year.



Open decks

³ Lewis A & Brand R (2015) ‘Providing thermal comfort for an imagined user: the design of energy efficient extra-care housing’. University of Manchester

Summary

An inter-generational and thoroughly inclusive mix makes for happier and more active residents.

London is an ageing city that needs to provide inclusive housing that accommodates the needs of elderly residents. (It is interesting to note that 40% of developer Wilmot Dixon's current work is in 'aged care' housing)

Overheating is a significant health and safety risk and highly recorded factor contributing to discomfort of residents in extra care.

Entrance sequences and communal areas with controlled and varied levels of privacy are imperative to a successful scheme.

Key facts

Location	Walworth, London
Date Commenced	27th June 2013
Planning approved	23rd April 2015
Key Consultation events	5 stage process (4 pre application) over a period of 12 months
Estimated Construction Cost	£24m
Cost per sq.m	£2,181
Client Consultant team	Notting Hill Housing Trust
Project Manager	Arcadis
Structural Engineer	Price & Myers LLP
Services Engineer	WSP UK Ltd.
Sustainability	WSP UK Ltd.
Landscape Architect	HTA
Quantity Surveyor	Arcadis
Site Area hectares	4.4 hectares
GEA	12,612 sqm
Number of Dwellings	115
Tenure Mix	Extra Care 50 (40 target rent and 10 shared ownership) / general needs housing (Shared Ownership. 24, Target (social) Rent. 41)
Affordable percentage	100%
Shared ownership	1%
Private sale / rental	0%
Dwelling per hectare dph	189
Habitable rooms per hectare	618
Design Standards met	BREEAM Excellent (community facility); 10% of the extra care flats to South East London Housing Partnership (SELHP) Space Requirement. 90% follow LIN guidance

Note

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

About Mæ

Mæ; our vision and values:

The logo for Mæ, featuring the letters 'Mæ' in a light grey, sans-serif font. The 'æ' is a ligature of 'a' and 'e'.

“We are architects, urban designers and researchers. Led by Alex Ely, former Head of Sustainable Communities at CABE, Mæ design buildings that seek to address today’s urban, social and environmental challenges. Our aim is always to create buildings and places that enrich culture and society.

We thrive on collaboration. Working on regeneration projects for public and private sector clients, we talk – and listen – to colleagues and communities. Our design solutions match the client’s brief with the varied day-to-day needs of the building’s users.

With a generalist approach we understand specialist needs. Whether it’s health centres or care homes we design to meet specific requirements. Through creativity we plan delightful healthcare environments, avoiding an institutional feel, convinced that everything benefits from good design and that good design has a positive impact on our health.”

About the Housing LIN

The Housing LIN is a sophisticated network bringing together over 40,000 housing, health and social care professionals in England and Wales to exemplify innovative housing solutions for an ageing population.

Recognised by government and industry as a leading ‘knowledge hub’ on specialist housing, our online and regional networked activities:

- Connect people, ideas and resources to inform and improve the range of housing choices that enable older and disabled people to live independently
- Provide intelligence on latest funding, research, policy and practice developments, and
- Raise the profile of specialist housing with developers, commissioners and providers to plan, design and deliver aspirational housing for an ageing population

For information about the Housing LIN’s comprehensive list of online resources on extra care housing, visit: www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/

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