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Social & affordable housing in later life

Research from USA,
Canada & Japan
2018

Francesca Sanders

Image from AOI Care:
coffee mugs owned
by members of the
community on a shelf in
the care facilities



Contents



3-4 | Preface

- 3 Disclaimer
- 3 Acknowledgements
- 3 About the author
- 4 Executive summary

6-7 | Introduction

8-9 | Research methodology

10-28 | Case studies

- 11-14 Port Perry Co-housing, Toronto
- 15-17 Bridge Meadows, Portland
- 18-21 AOI Care, Fujisawa
- 22-25 Grundtvig, Fujisawa
- 26-28 Village to Village Network, San Francisco & USA

29-40 | Ideas for housing in later life

- 30-32 "Reduce the distance between people" | Building dependence
- 33-35 "Leading confident, fulfilling lives" | Purpose
- 36-37 "It's like a theme park" | Communities of every age
- 38-40 "We've released four houses onto the market" | Social value

41 | Conclusions

42 | Recommendations for policy in the UK

43 | References

Preface



Disclaimer

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust for the opportunity to travel to Japan, Canada and the USA to visit many inspiring organisations. I am indebted to all of the individuals involved in the research, who gave their time so generously. I wish to thank Food for Life, Soil Association for supporting my Fellowship. Finally, I owe a great deal of thanks to Larissa Bishop; I could not have hoped for a better interpreter and research companion whilst in Japan.



About the author

I have worked as a researcher within the health and care sector for over 10 years and I am passionate about involving people with lived experiences in the design and development of new services. Throughout my career I have had the privilege to work with communities, commissioners and providers of health and care services to develop new ideas that enhance health and well-being. These projects range from large scale initiatives such as the development of the first outcomes based contract for community services within Richmond, to smaller projects such as developing a social prescribing project within Wigan. I am interested in the wider factors that influence health and can improve quality of life, of which housing plays a significant role. We live most of our lives in our home and in our community so our homes are places where we can transform health and well-being.

As Head of Service Design at Food for Life (FFL), Soil Association, I focus on another key factor that supports well-being and prevents ill health - food. FFL aim to improve health and well-being through food that is freshly prepared, nutritious and locally sourced where possible. This is an important element of the current Lottery Funded programme, Better Care where FFL are working alongside older people, their carers and family members to test out ideas that could both reduce loneliness and malnutrition. Insights from this research has been invaluable for the Better Care programme, helping to generate ideas about how to bring communities together and the role of housing in this.

My interest in this area has been spurred on by a personal hope that my family and I are able to access affordable, aspirational housing as we approach later life.

Executive summary

This research has been prompted by the challenges associated with housing in later life. Many people are living in houses that aren't designed for ageing. If people need or want to move to retirement living or specialist care, many of the options are expensive and feel institutional. In addition, little emphasis is placed on sense of home and community.

The aim of this research was to examine a range of innovative and affordable housing solutions for later life and consider the suitability for adoption of these models in the UK. Organisations in the USA, Japan and Canada were visited. The objectives of the research include:

- How can housing promote and build a sense of community?
- What role can housing play in helping individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?
- To what extent are the emerging models affordable?
- What is the potential of the emerging models to grow at scale?

The intention of the research was to explore a variety of housing options, ranging from specialist care facilities to models that allow people to 'age in place' in mainstream housing. Models include:

- Small group homes for people with dementia
- Takurosho multifunction care facilities that also build age friendly communities
- Intergenerational communities
- Networks that enable people to age in place
- Co-housing, where a group of people invest in a home together and live communally
- Social housing

The report is divided into three main sections. The first describes the methodology. The second includes detailed case studies of five organisations. The third, carries out analysis of all of the organisations visited to propose ideas and principles for housing in later life.

Analysis from the research highlights four key elements that should be considered when developing and planning homes in later life.

1. Whilst it is important that homes and communities enable independence, there is a

risk that an overemphasis on independence can lead to disconnection and loneliness. Homes and communities should support connection. This may be achieved through peer groups, communal spaces or planned activities with the community.

2. Our homes and neighbourhoods are places where we spend most of our lives, and we spend more time at home as we get older. Homes and communities should enable individuals to lead their lives with meaning and purpose. For example, through involvement in the design and running of a home or pursuing personal passions.

3. Many housing developments designed specifically for later life are often detached from the wider community. The case studies examined demonstrate the value of bringing different generations together in an authentic way that goes further than just tokenistic community events.

4. Greater recognition should be given to the social value of innovative models of housing in later life. This may be achieved through leniency during the planning process, financial incentives or national support to test out pilots.

Whilst the emphasis of this research was on exploring affordable options in later life, most of the models still require initial investment or enhanced national funding. One of the approaches that supports ageing in place (Village to Village network) is perhaps the most affordable of the options, even so, this model tends to draw in members who are more affluent.

The intention for taking this research forward is to share the learning in a practical way and identify opportunities to test out the models. I have run workshops locally in Bristol to support their application to become an Age Friendly City and I hope to link with housing associations to pilot housing and care initiatives.

“Living in a suitable home is crucially important to a good later life. Good housing and age-friendly environments help people to stay warm, safe and healthy, close to those who make up their social circle, and enable them to do the things that are important to them” [1]

- Centre for Ageing Better



Image of AOI Care: one of the main care facilities with service users, staff and children of the staff. The space is designed to be small to enhance the sense of connection and to feel like a 'log cabin'.

Introduction

The society we live in is changing; the population is getting older. There are many statistics that demonstrate how significant this change is. The Kings Fund highlight that the population group aged 65-84 will rise by 39% over the next 20 years and that those aged 85+ will rise by 106% [2]. Whilst many of the statistics about the population are often linked with negative messages such as 'Britain's ageing time bomb' [3] there are also big opportunities as we adapt to a new society: to innovate with new services and products and to benefit from the skills and expertise of an older population. Housing is a sector that can benefit from our population getting older - driving improvements in design that make all of our homes safer, more comfortable places to live and that support social connection. The size of the housing market is significant, by 2026 48% of the growth in households will be among the over 65s [4]. It is therefore vital that government bodies and developers seize the opportunity to innovate in this sector.

Despite the potential opportunities offered by our population getting older, there has been little discussion about how we could create the homes and communities we need to ensure our society is a good place to grow old. There are some emerging and promising examples of housing, such as: Evermore, Belong Villages and Older Women's Co-housing in North London (OWCH). However, more could be increase the choice available and to raise up the profile of alternatives. Research about housing for later life reveals three major challenges: design, cost and community.

The first challenge of design is significant. Many people want to remain in their own home rather than move to a new property, yet mainstream houses can poorly designed and ill equipped to support well-being in later life. The Centre for Ageing Better highlights that 20% of homes occupied by older people failed the Decent Home Standards in 2014 [5]. In addition, the costs of inadequate housing on the NHS and social care are significant; a report on the 'future of an ageing population' estimates that **poor quality housing costs the NHS £2.5 billion per year** [6].

Secondly, the cost of retirement and care homes is expensive. If people do need extra care or want to consider retirement homes, the options are rarely affordable. The Guardian revealed that the average cost of a care home is £34,000 and that the costs have risen disproportionately with the income of pensioners [7]. If viable and attractive options were available for older people to downsize to, under occupied homes could be released onto the market, easing pressure on the housing market and making homes more affordable down the chain [8].

Finally, a great deal of attention has been focused on the physical building when developing housing options for later life with less attention paid to community and sense of home. An overemphasis on the physical design neglects one of the major social challenges facing our communities: loneliness and social isolation. A recent study found that **TV is the main source of company for older people** [9] and **loneliness is not just a feeling, it is damaging to physical health, worse than the impact of smoking 15 cigarettes a day** [10].

It is therefore vital that homes for later life are designed to support meaningful social connections. Equally, specialist housing for later life such as care homes and retirement villages can be separate from the community which can lead to the ghettoisation of older people [11]. Separation of young and old people means that communities lose out on the opportunities to share different perspectives and expertise whilst also increasing the level of stigma and fear about growing old. Research on the priorities of people in later life reveals three key elements: to feel a sense of purpose, to have a sense of well-being and to feel at home and connected with others [12]. Our homes and communities should therefore be designed with these priorities in mind, yet housing in later life is often considered just that - housing.

This research therefore aims to explore innovative examples that could offer us an alternative future with better homes and communities to grow old. Homes that are well designed for ageing, that

are affordable and that build social connections and positive communities. The intention of the research is not to find one single solution, but to explore a range of innovations.

When considering locations to study as part of this research trip, three countries were identified: Japan, US and Canada. These countries were selected because they had a similar socio-economic status to the UK and a growing older population. These similarities make it easier to compare the models and means that it is more likely that the approaches would work in the UK. The three countries were also selected because of specific characteristics that enhance the research, highlighted below.

Japan, whilst culturally quite different to the UK, has a population profile that is older than the UK. In 2015, Japan was the country with the oldest population in the world [13]. As a result, Japan has been the pioneer in adapting to a changing population and leading many of the innovations that can support health and well-being in later life. In terms of housing, there is a greater emphasis on smaller scale homes and the government has stepped away from the large institutional models which are recognised to lead to social and physiological declines among people with dementia [14]. Japan has also implemented the Long Term Care Insurance (LTCI) scheme. LTCI is a compulsory initiative for people over 40 who contribute to the cost of social care which they can access when they are 65 [15]. This scheme has unlocked opportunities for innovation in housing and care, as the sector is better funded.

USA has a different social welfare system and the social enterprises and the private sector play a more significant role in defining the homes and houses developed for people in later life. Whilst the UK currently provides universal health care and accessible provision in terms of social care, it is likely that this will decline as financial pressures grow. It is therefore valuable to understand the experience of the USA where less support is provided. The USA also has a bigger specialist housing market for people in later life: **17% of people in their 60s live in retirement properties in the USA compared to just 1% among the same age group in the UK** [16].

Canada has a similar population and social welfare system which makes comparison with

the UK easier. The cooperative and co-housing is well established within Canada and offers a more affordable route to housing. There are several cooperative and co-housing networks in Canada and government support for cooperative models has been long standing. An initial investment was made by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation in 1969 for cooperative projects. In the 1990s, thousands more pilot projects were initiated through federal and provincial support and funding [17].

This report is divided into three main sections:

- 1.** The first section describes the methodology for the research
- 2.** The second section covers five in-depth case studies
- 3.** The final section analyses the themes and offers recommendations for housing in later life

Methodology

Research methodology

Over six weeks between November to December 2017, over 20 organisations were visited, each visit lasted between one to two days. During the research, six unique models were visited:

Group Homes

Group homes are small scale care facilities for up to 12 people with advanced care needs, often for individuals with dementia. The intention of the group home is to support a normal home life, encouraging participation in cooking, cleaning and daily activities. This type of model was developed to move away from the institutional nature of many care settings [18]. The sites visited include:

- Kinoko group: Small group homes for people with dementia, Tokyo, Japan
- Midori Kokoro: Small group homes for people with dementia, Niigata, Japan
- San Antonio Gardens, group homes and retirement living, Pomona, USA

Takurosho

A takurosho is a small scale multifunction care facility, providing domiciliary care, respite, rehabilitation, outreach, day care services and activity coordination. The origin of the word comes from an approach where people would take over unused buildings to provide support within the community for older people. The takurosho model has been developed to be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people using the service and to support the wider community to become age friendly. To that end, a key feature of a takurosho is the emphasis on outreach within the community and supporting the community to support others as they get older. The sites visited include:

- Koinonia, group home and takarusho, Chiba, Japan
- AOI Care, group home and takarusho, Fujisawa, Japan
- Grundtvig, takarusho, Fujisawa, Japan

Co-housing

Co-housing is a model of living where a home is co-owned by the residents, there are private spaces (often a room and bathroom) whilst communal spaces are often shared such as the living room, kitchen and garden. Co-housing models are often led by individuals rather than developers or care organisations. The sites visited include:

- Wine on the Porch, co-housing, Toronto, Canada
- Oak Hill, co-housing, Rockwood, Canada
- Baba Yaga, co-housing, Toronto, Canada
- Port Perry, co-housing, Port Perry, Canada
- Co-ho-ho, co-housing, Hamilton, Canada

Social housing

Two organisations were visited that had a similar physical structure to co-housing with shared communal spaces and private apartments. However, the housing was owned by an overarching organisation, similar to a housing association and rented out to individuals at affordable rates. The sites visited include:

- Openhouse, affordable housing for LGBT seniors, San Francisco, US
- Hesperus, co-housing Toronto, Canada

Intergenerational communities

Many of the organisations visited brought together younger and older generations, though Bridge meadows was unique in that it had intentionally developed an intergenerational neighbourhood. The site offers affordable housing for older people and for foster children and adoptive parents. The sites visited include:

- Bridge Meadows, intergenerational neighbourhoods, with foster children, adoptive parents and older people, North Portland and Beaverton, USA

Models to support ageing in place

Two organisations were visited that, whilst they do not provide physical housing infrastructure, they support people to 'age in place' in their own

homes. These models can prevent the need for people to move to specialist care facilities and reduce the demand on health and social care. The sites visited include:

- Village to Village network, membership model that aims to support people to age in place San Francisco, USA
- Yumenomizuumi-mura, day care centre, Tokyo, Japan

In addition, I also met with University professors, students and policy makers from:

Toyo University, Tokyo, Japan
Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan
Office of the Premier, Toronto, Canada
Ontario Shores Centre For Mental Health Sciences, Toronto, Canada

Research approach and aims

Identifying the sites to visit was informed by online desk research and calls with experts within the UK to help identify the organisations to visits.

Research was gathered through site visits lasting between 1 - 2 days, data gathered during these visits included:

- Semi structured interviews with staff
- Semi structured interviews with residents
- Tour and observation of the activities
- Photographs of the facilities

The overall aim of the research was to examine a range of innovative, affordable, solutions for housing in later life in Japan, US and Canada and consider their suitability for adoption in the UK.

The objectives of the research included:

- How can housing promote and build a sense of community?
- What role can housing play in help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?
- To what extent are emerging models affordable?
- What is the potential of emerging models to grow at scale?

Reflections on the research methodology

To maximise the opportunity of travelling overseas, a significant number of organisations were visited. Whilst this was beneficial for learning about different models and for comparison, it was harder to gain an in-depth understanding of the organisations. The most insightful visits were

those that took place over two or more days as it was possible to understand the model in greater depth and to have more time to observe the day to day activities.

In the original proposal, I had considered the use of film to capture the interviews and site visits. However, as many of the adults in the facilities had advanced care needs and many did not have had the capacity to fully consent recording, it did not feel appropriate to use this method as a way to capture evidence. .

At the outset of the research, I had set aims and objectives based on the available literature. However, on further exploration and having visited many sites, it was clear that the original objectives would not reveal some of the key themes and insights that I discovered. For example, the original research objectives focused on the role of technology (which was minimal) and had not considered the value of the links between different generations. The research objectives presented in this report are the refined objectives.

Case studies

Port Perry Co-housing Toronto

**“I never dreamed I
would live in a house as
marvellous as this”**

- Bev Brown, Port Perry

Image of Port Perry: The home has been designed to be age friendly with input from experts in rehabilitation from the University of Toronto. There is a lift, with enough space for a wheelchair and care giver. The flooring pictured is suitable for wheelchairs. The home has been decorated with help from an interior designer to incorporate the individual tastes of the members and to make sure the space feels homely.

Port Perry co-housing, Toronto

Overview

Port Perry is home to four women on the outskirts of Toronto. The group were motivated to establish this co-housing arrangement because of their personal experiences. The group had supported family members to move to retirement living or care homes and had encountered high costs and were made aware that their family member may be asked to leave if their savings were exhausted. Equally, the group did not like the institutional nature of the housing in later life. In addition to the financial savings associated with pooling their assets and living costs, the group embarked on this approach to provide additional security, to live with company and to pool their money for a live in carer when needed. Additionally, the women were able to afford a home which is close to the centre of Port Perry, a location that would have been too costly for them, had they purchased a home individually.

How does this example promote and build a sense of community?

Cooking and eating together is the main form of support that the group provide one another. The group explained that they see this routine as 'a healthier way of living' and they often had little motivation to cook or eat well when they lived alone. During the visit, the women highlighted how their eating habits improved as they were being persuaded by each other to eat more vegetables or fewer biscuits. The group emphasised that the shared kitchen and evening meals was critical to the success of communal living; partly due to the cost savings and partly because sharing has built trust in one another.

The social benefits of co-housing came as an unexpected surprise for the group. Most of the women had lived alone with their own routines for many years so the thought of adjusting to living with others was daunting. However, having the opportunity to talk over breakfast or discuss the news has been an welcome aspect of daily living for them all: 'I used to call someone and they would ask if I had a sore throat...I'd say no - it's just because I haven't spoken to

anyone today. Now I enjoy the chit chat over breakfast or discussing the news'. The other social dimension that Port Perry provides is the buzz of the grandchildren around the house when they visit from time to time. During the visit, one of the ladies was baking cookies with one of the other ladies grandchildren. One of the Port Perry residents did not have children so felt she had 'inherited grandchildren'. One of the group noted that the grandchildren visited more often as there are more people to chat to and they find the co-housing arrangement interesting.

The success of communal living is dependent on social contract that the group have developed; the contract guides how the residents live with one another and sets out the arrangements if one member moves out or passes away, it also determines the level of support that members will provide to one another. Within Port Perry, the group decided that they did not want to provide care for one another. The group want to maintain independence as they did not want to feel like they were a burden to one another or that they would take over one another's lives. The group explained that they thought it important that they each lead their own lives and not to feel obliged to spend their time together. The group also decided to pay for care when the time comes and did not anticipate the agreement changing over time. Though the physical aspects of care would be provided externally, there are some low level elements of support that the women provide to one another that have clear benefits for their health and well-being: cooking and eating together, keeping an eye out for one another and the additional security provided by living with others.

Built in to the social contract is an arrangement that, if one of the group needs to move on or passes away, they advertise the room on the market. If they are unable to find someone suitable to move in within a year, the entire property goes up for sale or the room is rented out. There are less formal elements of the social contract to resolve disagreements; the group resolve issues regularly and directly as a group. They write a concern on a post-it which is

discussed at a group meeting.

How does this approach help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?

The design and renovation of the Port Perry house has been led by the group, an experience that they described as fulfilling. The group have considered every detail of how the space is decorated and how the building can be shaped to support them to grow old. The building has a lift for the three floors, there is easy access to the showers and wheelchair access as well as spare room for a live-in carer when needed. The group decided to design the house with an added level of luxury with large rooms, beautiful furnishings and a hot tub: **"I never dreamed I would live in a house as big and wonderful as this"**. To ensure the success of the renovation the group consulted with experts in rehabilitation and design for ageing from the University of Toronto. The experts gave additional advice on the size of the lift (to ensure there is space for a wheelchair and a caregiver) and the type of flooring so that it is durable against wheelchairs.

To what extent is this model affordable?

Each member of the group invested just under \$300,000 (~£170,000) to purchase, renovate and decorate the house. The specification of the house is high quality and the home is spacious so the group thought it would be possible to develop a more affordable model with smaller bedrooms and a reduction in the number of bathrooms (each bedroom is en-suite in Port Perry). Their utility bills, food and operating costs come to roughly \$1,350 (~£750) per month - this also includes an amount for a gardener and cleaner. In comparison, retirement housing is more expensive: CAD \$4,000 (£2,200) a month for a single room and food. With additional care costs, this amount comes to CAD \$6,000 (£3,300) per month. Financially, the group thought that the co-housing model is only affordable, and financially viable, when common spaces are shared (kitchen, sitting room) as this reduces the size required for the property and living costs.

This model requires capital investment so is likely to be out of the reach for those most in need. Some of the other co-housing models visited in Toronto (Oak Hill and Wine on the Porch) were planning to offer rooms for rent which would make this option more accessible for those

without assets. In addition, the group at Port Perry felt that their model of living would mean that they were less reliant on health and care services, meaning that public funds would be directed to individuals with greater needs.

The co-housing model has a positive knock on effect on the affordability of housing down the chain. By purchasing a house together, the group have released four under-occupied homes onto the market which eases the pressure on the housing market. If carried out on a larger scale, houses would become more affordable and would benefit first time buyers.

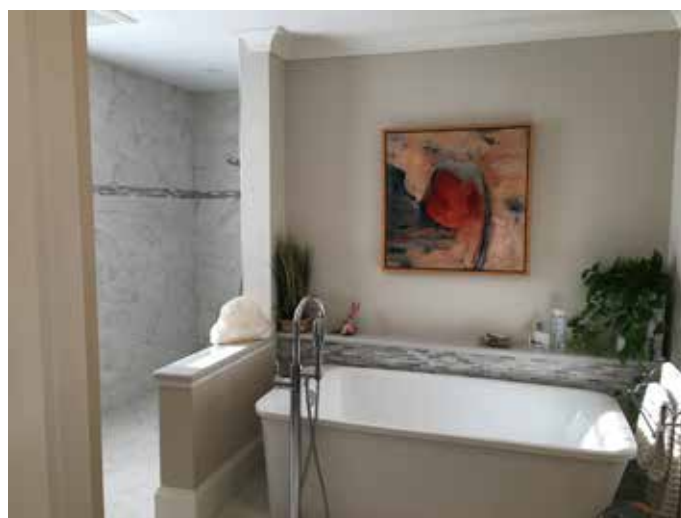


Image of Port Perry: bathroom designed for ageing with a walk in shower

What is the potential of this model to grow at scale?

Whilst Port Perry did not experience any challenges recruiting members to join their co-housing model, other co-housing initiatives struggled to gain the commitment needed to jointly invest in the purchase and renovation of a home. Two other co-housing examples visited (Oak Hill and Wine on the Porch) decided to personally invest in the housing and renovation with the hope that it would be easier to recruit others once the model was built and established: **"build it and they will come"**.

The Port Perry project took over two and a half years of planning; other co-housing initiatives visited in Toronto took even longer (over five years), either because of the time taken to identify residents or to work through the complexities of the planning regulations. As a result, some

of the co-housing arrangements encountered challenges as residents who had planned to move in together had become unwell or there had been a change in circumstances. Planning therefore needs to take place very early on.

For the co-housing model to grow at scale, there needs to be greater support from planners and property developers. The co-housing model is a new approach so it does not fit into any defined zoning rules in Canada so was subject to rejections from planners. Port Perry was the second iteration; the original project, led by another group of individuals in the area, was hampered by planning processes and shut down. In addition, the Port Perry group believe that developers should be more proactive in supporting models like these (i.e. by ensuring each room is equal in size and with en-suite options) and that banks should open up new mortgage arrangements to support shared living so that more than two people can get a mortgage together. In addition, up front investment is important to be able to demonstrate to potential residents what they are committing to; for models like this to grow at scale, seed funding or investment from new sources needs to become available.

Could this work in the UK?

Co-housing models already exist within the UK, though very few designed specifically for people in later life. Each co-housing initiative differs significantly as they are designed and led uniquely by the individuals who set them up, so the success of the model is likely to depend on the individual co-housing model as much as the context of the country. The co-housing network in the UK is a useful resource for connecting up with other co-housing or cooperative schemes which would make it easier to start a model like this. Additionally, the UK government has committed to £240m over four years from 2016 to community led housing through the 'Community Housing Fund' this scheme support co-housing initiatives such as Port Perry [19].

However, it is important to note that land and property in the UK is likely to be more expensive than Canada, making the approach less affordable.

Useful links

Online news article

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/lifestyle/real-life-golden-girls-share-home-in-small-ontario-town-1.3269568>

Online news article

<https://www.thestar.com/life/2017/01/23/thank-you-for-being-a-friend--i-can-buy-a-house-with-meet-a-new-generation-of-golden-girls.html>

Toronto co-housing facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/CohousingForCreativeAging/>

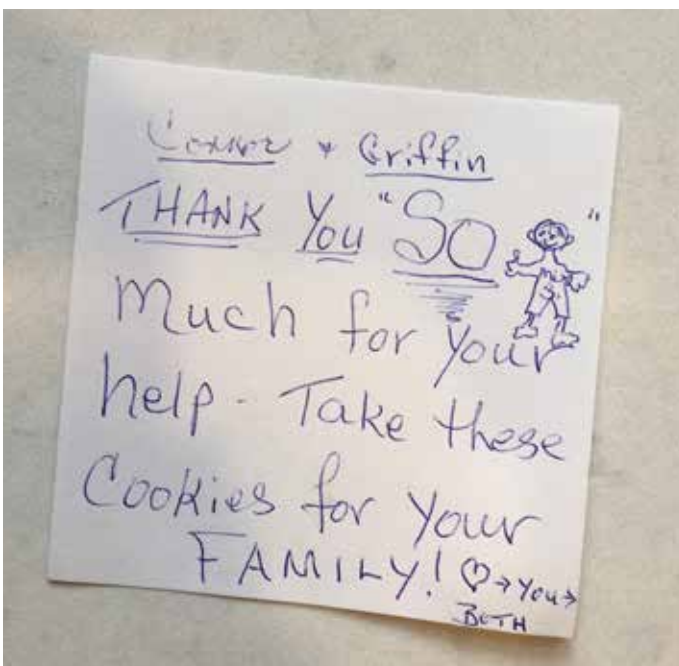


Image of Port Perry: a note from one of the members of the group who baked cookies with the grandchildren of another member.

Bridge Meadows Portland

**“85% of ‘elders’
say there is more
meaning and purpose
in their lives”**

Bridge Meadows website

Image of Bridge Meadows: The image depicts the newly opened community in Beaverton showing family homes. Flats for ‘elders’ are located to the right of the image as the site curves round.

Bridge Meadows, Portland

Overview

Bridge Meadows run two intergenerational communities within Portland, one located within North Portland and another in Beaverton. Bridge Meadows also run another community housing model for young people who are transitioning from foster care. The North Portland site has nine family homes and 27 apartments for 'elders' and has been established for over five years. The recently opened community in Beaverton has nine family homes and slightly more apartments for elders, 32. The community comprises approximately 75 residents. Within the two communities, people over 55 are provided with affordable flats under the agreement that they provide 100 hours of support to the foster families per quarter. There is also an expectation that foster parents will adopt the children within five years.

Bridge Meadows has three core aims. First, to reduce loneliness among older people and to recognise their skills and expertise. Second, to provide adoptive parents with a more supportive environment to allow them to take on the responsibilities of becoming a foster parent and to build strong relationships with the foster children. Third, to provide a stable, permanent and caring environment for the foster children, bringing an end to the frequent moves and trauma of cycling through the foster care system. As a result. The organisation has achieved impressive results: "100% of kids go to school regularly, 85% find greater academic success, 88% of parents are more confident parenting youth formerly in foster care and 85% of elders say there's more meaning and purpose in their lives."

How does this example promote and build a sense of community?

The neighbourhood has been designed alongside the CEO who is a qualified clinical psychologist, with the aim of creating a physical space that reinforces the sense of permanence, care and connection among the community. There are several spaces where active interactions between the residents can take place: the library, the art

room, the main hall. There are also a range of spaces for more informal interactions, particularly among the laundry room which is contained among the flats for 'elders', the garden space which is located in the centre of the buildings and along the corridors. Buildings are designed with the front door facing out to the main street to the wider community with the intention of signalling the link to the community. A dinner is held every Wednesday in the main hall for 'happiness hour' and a number of children from the nearby neighbourhood often join.

Bridge meadows is unusual as it provides suitable affordable 'retirement housing' yet built within a community of every generation. Whilst the community has been curated through physical design and activities to enable elders and families to form matches during the first few months, the community builds itself organically overtime. The sense of community has been facilitated by the physical space and a regular community dinner: 'happiness hour'. Happiness hour is voluntary though during the visit it was highlighted that Bridge Meadows is the "kind of neighbourhood where people would knock on your door if they haven't see you in a while". The value of the community was highlighted during an interview with a member of staff who provides psychological support and counselling, she was 'amazed at the ability of the community to heal itself' and found it rewarding to draw on the community as tool for members to overcome difficulties or trauma.

How does this approach help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?

Bridge Meadows is an important model of housing for later life as the organisation formally recognise and rely on the skills and expertise that the 'elders' can provide to the community. Many of the elders joined because they wanted to give something back to the community that they live in and to feel a greater sense of purpose. The role of each elder will depend on that person's interests and passions. Elders provide expertise and input both informally and formally. The range of activities that 'elders' provide include support

to run art classes, child care and help with homework. During the visit, I was shown a canvas that was being prepared to create street art with teenagers by one of the residents and, prior to a pot-luck dinner for the community, one of the children was receiving help for maths homework.

To what extent is this model affordable?

Bridge Meadows cost \$14.9 million and the organisation is a non profit that has received both public and private funds, including private donations, investment and tax credits. For adoptive families, the rent is capped at 26.5% of the family income. Elders with a range of incomes are able access to flats, ranging from 30-60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) [20].

What is the potential of this model to grow at scale?

Bridge Meadows has demonstrated that it is possible to scale up this model by doubling the number of sites. There are further plans for the organisation to grow and to provide advisory support to other intergenerational communities. However, building a sense of community takes time and because many of the children have difficult experiences of foster care, the neighbourhoods need to be well designed and run with the same level of dedication and support as the original site.

Useful links

Main website

<https://www.bridgemeadows.org/>

Facebook page

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/bridgemeadows/>

Online case study

https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr_edge_inpractice_063014.html

AOI Care Fujisawa

**“Why would we
take the work
away from the
grandmothers?”**

- Tadasuke Kato, CEO of AOI Care

Image of AOI Care: the image shows the public pathway that was built to go through the care facilities. The pathway has become an important route for members of the community as they walk through town and enables informal interactions between the community and residents.

AOI Care, Fujisawa

Overview

AOI Care is a 'takurosho' which is a small scale, multifunction care facility. AOI Care run a small group home for people with dementia, day care facilities, respite care and outreach activities. AOI Care is run by 43 staff and led by a management team of four people. AOI Care provide care for: 18 people who attend the day care service, 29 people through the respite facilities and 7 people who live in the group home. AOI Care site also contains a restaurant, three affordable flats for those under 25 and a coffee shop with a cosy tent outside and a room for the community to use. AOI Care has been the subject of a feature length film, a cartoon and is often on the news. There are three main reasons for the attention. First, the emphasis of AOI Care on connecting the old and young. Second, the expertise of the organisation in providing specialist dementia care. Third, the organisation is breaking down the fear of dementia and forging close links with the community.

The organisation was set up by Tadasuke Kato who became frustrated as a care worker that he could not provide the care that people needed. Whilst Tadasuke Kato has become famous for his work, he explained that AOI Care is "just **'common sense' I am a human being – my job is to know how to interact with other humans being – it is about relationships**".

How does this example promote and build a sense of community?

One of the reasons AOI Care has gained attention is because the organisation connects up people who are old and young. During the time of the visit, three members of staff had young children that they brought to work. The children spend the day interacting with the service users; this both creates a fun environment for the service users and promotes staff retention as staff do not have as many challenges finding childcare. Tadasuke Kato also explained that he hopes that the young people who grow up in the organisation become more familiar with, and supportive of, the older generation. The links between old and young

are also created informally: through a pole for children to slide down in front of one of the buildings and by supporting a service user to run a sweet shop that the school children stop by to visit on their way home from school.

What makes AOI Care unique is that it does not feel like a care facility, it is the hub of the community. The sense of community has been created by the design of the site and the services on offer. For example, AOI Care run a popular restaurant for both the service users and public and because of the quality of the food, they often have diners travelling over an hour to get to the restaurant. To promote informal links with the community, a public pathway was built through the site so that it would become a popular thoroughfare for the local people. Smaller details have also been considered to ensure the space feels welcoming to their neighbours. For example, the doors are open and there is a cosy room for the community to use in one of the buildings. This room has a shelf, stocked with coffee mugs that are owned by people from across the neighbourhood so that they know the space is open for them to use. The public spaces are blurred with the care facilities. For example, the restaurant is run in an open plan space alongside some of the day care facilities. At the time of the visit, members of the public were sitting down to eat lunch whilst service users were preparing their lunch with food from the kitchen at the adjacent counters.



Image of AOI Care: service users of the day care facility prepare their lunch with ingredients from the restaurant and next to the restaurant dining space where members of the community pop in and out

The rooms in AOI Care are purposefully small in order to promote human contact and social connections. This was highlighted as an important factor as people with dementia can have a limited field of vision which means that service users of larger facilities may not look someone in the eye all day. Food is another important aspect of the experience, helping service users to feel rich emotions and to bring people together. The restaurant is owned by a renowned Japanese chef who selects the fish daily from the harbour and sources organic food. Tadasuke Kato explained: **“food is the cheapest and easiest way to keep people healthy. It prevents frailty, broken bones, pneumonia. Everyone here eats the entire meal, there is very little waste”**.

AOI Care also create formal opportunities to link together with the community. Events and activities are a regular part of the calendar and Tadasuke Kato recognises the role the organisation plays in reducing stigma relating to older age and dementia. One of the most memorable events was the marriage of two care staff who were married on site and invited residents and neighbours to the wedding. Tadasuke Kato also described the importance of supporting the local economy so AOI Care source food from local farms and also offer affordable flats to local people in difficult circumstances with a higher rate of reduction to those under the age of 25.

How does this approach help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?

Tadasuke Kato explained that he does not see AOI care as a provider of care, rather, that the organisation is helping people to **“lead confident, fulfilling lives”**. All service users are encouraged to participate in the day to day activities such as cooking, cleaning, going to the shops or making materials to sell online (snoods or crafts). Participation in some of these activities, such as cooking with frying pans and cutting with sharp knives, has received concern from other care facilities because of the potential dangers. However, Tadasuke Kato described the importance of taking positive risks and explained **“many of the people here have been using knives for 60 years. I barely cook so it’s much safer for them to use knives than me!”**, He further explained that service users hold on to many skills through muscle memory. During the visit, some of the service users collected food from the kitchen

to prepare the afternoon snack of okonomiyaki (Japanese pancakes), others had been to a trip to the shops. There are purposefully no volunteers working for AOI Care, which is intended, as Tadasuke Kato exclaimed: **“why would we take the work away from the grandmothers?”**.

The organisation also supports service users to maintain the interests that have been important throughout their lives. For example, one of the ladies ran a small shop through her life so has been supported to run a sweet shop. One of the ladies brought her dog to live with her in the group home and the main space is decorated with their own pictures and furniture, both so that the service users maintain their sense of home and to minimise ‘relocation damage’.

To what extent is this model affordable?

Access to AOI Care is affordable for service users because of the LTCI scheme. Payment into the LTCI scheme is compulsory for everyone aged over 40. Members of the scheme are able to access social care from the age of 65, with assessment based on need rather than income. Through the LTCI, service users can access domiciliary, respite, residential and nursing care. Users of AOI Care also contribute to payment for meals and top up fees for accommodation. The top up fees are typical of the LTCI scheme, as service users are required to pay 10% of the social care costs. In the absence of such a scheme in the UK, it is unlikely that the care provided by AOI Care would be affordable to the general population. In addition, AOI Care were provided with 50% government subsidies for the construction of the small-scale multifunction care facility (a model that the government want to promote). Without government support, it is unlikely that such an impressive building could have been designed and constructed.

What is the potential of this model to grow at scale?

Tadasuke Kato is mainly focused on providing a good service for the current service users and local community rather than growing the organisation. For this model to work in other settings, the same attention would need to be paid to designing the approach with the local community and service users and making the most of the resources available, for example, not every organisation would be able to find a

renowned chef or be able to run a restaurant but they may have space for growing and know of a local gardener. In that sense, it is possible that some of principles of the organisation can be translated - promoting links with the community informally and formally or supporting participation of the service users in daily life of the organisation.

Because of collaboration with a local university, AOI Care has gained more attention from other care organisations and the ideas have spread faster. For example, 'humanitude' is a philosophy of care that AOI have adopted which emphasises physical touch, eye contact and other stimuli that can release serotonin. These principles are reflected in the design of the building - the grain of wood and sequencing of wood panelling is known to be pleasing to the brain so the organisation is designed with wood flooring and natural elements. The humanitude approach has gained traction in Japan due to the coverage of AOI Care and links to the scientific evidence.



Image of AOI Care: With two service users and a member of staff with her baby. The service users had just finished preparing pancakes for the afternoon snack.

service users with the community like the sweet shop.

Useful links

Online article
<http://www.toyproject.net/2017/04/innovative-intergenerational-care-in-fujisawa-japan/>

Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/aocare/>

Main website
<http://www.aocare.com/>

Could this work in the UK?

The affordability of this model is reliant on the LTCI scheme and given the financial pressures facing the care sector in the UK it is unlikely that this facility would be financially viable. However, the principles of the organisation could certainly apply. There are also elements of this approach that could be explored further such as: piloting a scheme to allow care workers to bring children to work or creating small initiatives that connect

Grundtvig Fujisawa

“Younger people can understand life and dying...That you can be old and still enjoy life”.

Kensuke Sugahara, CEO of Grundtvig

Grundtvig, Fujisawa

Overview

Grundtvig is set in a large white tower block that rises over the local residential area. Grundtvig organisation has received a lot of attention, primarily because of the positive impact on the health and well-being of its service users; since setting up two years ago, Grundtvig boast a 60% reduction in the level of care needs for its service users. The Grundtvig site is also capturing the imagination of planners, architects and care managers because of its unusual setting - run as a small scale multifunction care facility, from the 6th floor of a tower block. In addition, one of the most unique distinguishing features is that carers can bring their children to work. Grundtvig is a facility known as a 'takurosho', a recent model that the Japanese government are providing subsidies for and want to promote; the model provides a range of care facilities (domiciliary care, respite, day care) to provide flexible support to service users and to help the community support others in later life.

The rationale for locating the care facility in a tower block makes sense when you begin to understand the local infrastructure and housing stock. Fujisawa is a city within the Kanagawa Prefecture of Japan, located within an hour of Tokyo. The neighbourhood that Grundtvig is based in has a high population of people who are over 65 (32% compared with 23% for Fujisawa). During the economic growth of the 1950's and 1970's, public housing was developed in the area by Urban Renaissance which is a governmental agency. During this time, two types of buildings were constructed: 1) five story buildings with stairs or 2) larger tower blocks with lifts. As a result, many older people move to the tower blocks because of the lift. The managers of Grundtvig estimated that 90% of the residents who live within the tower block are over 65.

Though many care facilities are based out of town and require older people to move to them, Grundtvig decided to move to where their service users are - in the tower block. Because the organisation is based within the tower block, service users are offered greater reassurance

and it means care staff can pop round for more frequent visits and care as they are not constrained by travel time.

There are two other benefits of being based within the tower block. Firstly, the cost of the premises is cheaper. Second, Grundtvig use existing infrastructure so required minimal development costs before launching as a care facility. In addition, the tower block premises has opened up many opportunities to Grundtvig: they can easily expand as new flats become available and adapt to the changing scale and needs of the organisation: within the coming months Grundtvig will open a cafe in another flat in the block. The flexibility of accessing property as needs arise has opened up the potential to support service users to move to a more affordable, co-living arrangement within the tower block. The co-living arrangement is facilitated by Grundtvig - whereby they connect two of their service users with a student, care worker or single mother to move in to a family flat together. This co-living model offers a very affordable housing model: reducing loneliness and enhancing the support Grundtvig can provide by being based in the same block.

How does this example promote and build a sense of community?

Grundtvig place a great emphasis on understanding the interests and skills of their service users and connecting them with the wealth of activities and services that are on their doorstep in the community. Care workers and service users spend most of their day going to the pool, local exercise classes or restaurants depending on what is important to the service user and the resources available in the community. Grundtvig philosophy of care also aims to challenge misconceptions and stigma associated with ageing and dementia so outreach events are run within supermarkets and at local community events. Supporting service users to have a positive active lifestyle in the community has enabled Grundtvig to achieve impressive results, demonstrating a reduction in the level of care needs for over 60% of their residents within

the two years they have been running.

Grundtvig build a sense of community by allowing care staff to bring children to work. The CEO of Grundtvig, Kensuke Sugahara, explained that it is important to connect up the younger and older generations because it means **“younger people can understand life and dying... That you can be old and still enjoy life”**. The CEO and Executive Officer of Grundtvig are husband and wife with a young family. They did not want to separate work from family and wanted to run an organisation that makes it easier to be a family whilst having a career. They also wanted to create an alternative to the inflexible working practices, a culture of long working hours and poor maternity and paternity packages that many organisations offer in Japan; a factor they feel is responsible for declining birth rates in Japan.

An interview with a member of care staff revealed that having children within the care facility was received positively by most to the residents, that it created a positive atmosphere “it’s like ‘a theme park’”. However, one or two of the service users did not enjoy the noise made by the children so would sit away from them in the facilities.

Despite being embedded within the community, both in the tower block and by connecting with activities in the local area, there has been resistance to Grundtvig setting up a care facility in the tower block. The management team explained that there is a negative perception of care services and a cultural belief that care should be provided by society by family or friends rather than outside organisations. There is also stigma associated with getting old and dementia so many residents did not want the tower block to become a hub of care and support for older people.

How does this approach help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?

Grundtvig help service users to age well in their own homes and in their communities by investing time to coach and understand the wishes of the individual; supporting them to return to activities they had always enjoyed. For one service user this was Hula dancing. For another, the Grundtvig team had spent time with an individual who had been suffering from depression and wasn’t walking, to discover that she had previously competed in national competitions. Through gradual support they helped her attend the

swimming pool, she is walking again and her mental health and well-being has improved. The sense of choice and connection to the community is played out during lunch time - the care staff will form smaller groups based on the type of food the service user would like to eat and they will often try out a new restaurant. They feel the choice and enjoyment of food take priority over the nutritional aspects as it means most of the service users will finish their food.

To what extent is this model affordable?

Grundtvig have seen a reduction in the level of care needs for 60% of service users providing savings to the health and social care system. The co-living arrangement (between service users and a care worker or student) offers a more affordable option for residents at roughly **£350 per month for a shared flat within tower block, supported by Grundtvig (¥50,000) compared to £1,700 per month for rent in a care facility (¥250,000)**.



Image of Grundtvig: Care facilities within the tower block where service users can visit as they wish.

What is the potential of this model to grow at scale?

The location of the care facility in a residential tower block presents challenges to scaling up due to planning restrictions and regulations. Grundtvig encountered several challenges in setting up the care facility as it required a change in use for the building from residential to care. They encountered several objections and were subject to costly building regulations associated with much larger care facilities such as the installation of sprinklers. Due to these challenges,

the organisation stood back from the direct management of co-living arrangement and instead only facilitate the matching of individuals; in doing so they avoid the residents being subject to the same planning restrictions and regulations they face for the main care facility. To overcome some of the barriers, the management team have worked extensively with the local government to share their vision which has given them more space to innovate.

Could this work in the UK?

The funding provided through the LTCl scheme allow Grundtvig to provide flexible levels of support in terms of the number of visits and types of activities provided: ranging from activities such as swimming through to nursing care. Payment into the LTCl scheme is compulsory for everyone aged over 40. Members of the scheme are able to access social care from the age of 65, with assessment based on need rather than income. Through the LTCl, service users can access domiciliary, respite, residential and nursing care. The level of flexibility that Grundtvig offer may not be possible within the UK where there are greater funding constraints around social care. Within the UK, care packages are often more defined by a set number of visits or tasks. Without additional funding through a scheme such as the LTCl, it is unlikely that other organisations in the UK would be able to offer the same level of flexibility that Grundtvig provides.

Useful links

Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/grundtvig.inc/>

Main website

<http://www.grundtvig.co.jp/>

Village to Village Network, USA

“Navigating life
as we get older”

– Kate Hoepke, Executive Director San Francisco
Village

Image of San Francisco Village building and office: Map of the smaller group 'circles' around the city. San Francisco Village is one of the largest Villages in the USA



Village to Village

Overview

Village to Village is a network of grassroots community groups. Each village is formed by members from a neighbourhood who are in later life (often aged 60+). Villages are not physical buildings, they are community groups that aim to support their members to age well in their own homes and to prevent the need for members to move to residential or nursing care. There are 200 Villages in the USA and 150 more are under development. San Francisco Village is one of the largest villages, with 375 members, aged 60 to 96. The San Francisco village is run by five members of staff and has a network of 175 volunteers.

How does this example promote and build a sense of community?

As each village is run locally and supports the community to age well. There are often four types of support provided through the village: 1) social activities and peer support to build confidence and reduce loneliness 2) low level social care offered by volunteers for help in the home for tasks such as cleaning and cooking 3) access to services that have been procured through the Village such as health care visits, transport or shopping 4) signposting to health and care services. Each village is set up and run by its members so there is a lot of local variation in what is provided. For example, San Francisco village focus many of the activities on peer support and social activities whilst in Denver, there is an emphasis on practical support such as transportation, snow removal and yard help.

How does this approach help individuals feel a sense of purpose in later life?

San Francisco village is one of the largest villages with local peer networks (called circles) established within smaller neighbourhoods. Whilst San Francisco village does support people to age well in their homes, Kate Hoepke, the Executive Director recognised that continuing to live for longer in your home may not be the best option for all people. Instead, she sees the role of the Village as building the confidence of individuals

to make decisions about what would suit them best as they get older. The San Francisco village run themed discussions to help their members navigate the changes they face as they get older, during the visit a key topic discussion planned was: 'why is it so hard to ask for help?'

To what extent is this model affordable?

Typically each village is funded by 90% of the membership fees whilst the remainder is sought through fundraising. This differs for the San Francisco village which receives 55% of its income through grants and just 25% from membership as it has an established team who manage marketing and fundraising.

During the interview, Kate Hoepke discussed some of the challenges of access and equality. The model does tend to benefit those who are already active in the community and who are better off financially. Whilst this may accentuate inequalities, it can be argued that by reducing the need among this population group, services and funding can be freed up for those with greater need. This an aspect of the model that is problematic and whilst villages often offer scholarship funds (within San Francisco 20% of its members receive scholarship funds), there is a risk that the model may lead to greater inequality.

There are also challenges associated with 'ageing in place', in some cases it can mean that people live in houses that aren't suitable for their current needs. In addition, if an individual has care needs, the costs associated with receiving care at home may be higher than if they were to move to a supported facility. There are positives associated with ageing in place but the San Francisco village aim to support their members to make the right decisions about their housing needs and to help them with a move if that is the most suitable option.

Though the evidence is anecdotal, there are strong indicators that this model is supporting people to live in their homes for longer, leading to a reduction in the costs associated with moving to a care facility as well as health and social care

provision [21].

What is the potential of this model to grow at scale?

The model is unique in its ability to spread. Neighbourhoods that plan to set up a village require little investment and no changes need to be made to the existing housing stock or community environment. The successful spread of the village model is partly due to the amount of flexibility in the approach and that it can be easily adapted to suit local contexts and needs. There is a degree of central support provided by the Village to Village network which offers guides on setting up a village, advice and opportunities to share best practice.

Whilst the informal nature of the village network has been beneficial, it can mean that some villages struggle to get off the ground. Each village is in essence a small charity or social enterprise, requiring rigour in terms of business processes to ensure that they can get sufficient funding, manage a network of volunteers, run a programme of activities and market and promote the model. As the network has matured there are intentions to provide a more business and IT support through the central organisation in order to support the local villages. The degree of flexibility also means that each village varies significantly and some may move away from the core aims of the overarching model.

Could this work in the UK?

A recent report by the Centre for Ageing Better [22] highlighted that many people in later life do not want to leave their homes. At the same time, they identify that small changes made to their current homes could achieve significant savings to health and social care by preventing ill health and improving well-being of residents. The report highlights the benefits of making physical adaptations to existing stock such as railings, or lifts. Physical changes combined with social and practical support offered by a programme like Village to Village network could significantly transform the quality of housing and communities for people in later life without substantial changes to the existing housing stock or requiring new housing developments.

During the visit to the San Francisco Village, it was highlighted that there is a lack of social

welfare provision in the US in comparison to the UK and the villages fill some of gaps in social care provision. Though there may not be as significant a need within the UK, the increasing pressure on health and social care means there is growing need for a model like the Village to Village network to provide low level support, connect peers and signpost to activities.

Useful links

Research paper

<http://socialwelfare.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/docs/DoVillagesPromoteAginginPlace.pdf>

Main website

<https://sfvillage.org/>

<http://www.vtvnetwork.org/>

Ideas for housing in later life



“Reduce the distance between people”

Koji Imanishi, CEO of Koinonia

Image of Openhouse: Peer group session called 'Sister Circle'

With the
Community
...
\$01 open house

Building dependence

Koinonia is family home that also provides care on the outskirts of Tokyo, the family has grown and grown as more relatives and neighbours have needed a home and some care support. It can be defined as a 'group home' and 'takurosho' though it is first and foremost, a family home. The CEO of Koinonia, Koji Imanishi, has a philosophy about the way our society needs to change: that we need to "reduce the distance between people". Though many of the discussions around later life focus on independence, Koji Imanishi believes we should create more dependence among communities which would mean we are better cared for and better connected in later life. Koji Imanishi felt that the closer you are to one another, the more likely you are to warm to each other care for each other. Koinonia incorporates this philosophy into design of the space, where the bedrooms are smaller and there is more communal space. Koji Imanishi lived by this philosophy and lived within the family home that was also a care home.

The dependence and closeness that Koinonia builds provides a valuable new way of considering housing in later life. The direction of many health and care strategies and the discussions around later life focus on independence. Whilst this is often the desire of most people, the increasing level of independence, often supported by technologies such as sensors and devices can lead to greater distance. Families and communities lead disconnected lives, contributing to a sense of loneliness. There are clear advantages to the new wave of sensors and devices that promote independence and offer reassurance to individuals and their families but they can be detrimental in other ways. Many people are removed from the care needs and changes that happen when we get older and so are less accustomed to it and become fearful of ageing. Many of the settings I visited 'reduced the distance between people' and this is a valuable principle to consider when developing housing and building communities for later life. Connection and closeness was a key feature of many of the sites and was achieved through informal and planned daily activities as well as a smaller physical space and many communal

areas.

Planned activities were a common feature of the organisations visited and brought people together. Cooking and eating together was one of the most common activities. In Port Perry, the ladies shared the shopping duties. They took turns to cook and ate a meal together most nights. The philosophy of the groups homes in Japan focused on participation in daily life so many of the residents were involved in the preparation of food including Midori Kokoro (a care setting with multiple group homes) AOI Care, and Koinonia. Within Kinoko Group (a group home in Tokyo), cooking and eating was used as a mechanism to link with the local community; the dining room has doors that open up to the neighbourhood and is being used as a dinner club between residents and children from a local school.

Peer groups were a feature of both the Village to Village network and Openhouse in San Francisco as a way to build social connections and confidence whilst also making it easier to ask for help from one another. Openhouse provide affordable social housing for LGBT 'seniors' and the role of peer support was seen to be of significant importance. During the visit it was highlighted that the LGBT community can be more isolated as they get older as they may not have children or have become alienated from their family.

The approach to care within Midori Kokoro, Kononia and AOI Care also reinforced connection between people. All three organisations adopted an 'humanitude' style of care for people with dementia which emphasises closeness and connection through physical touch, eye contact and positive facial expressions. These methods are particularly important in the care of people with dementia, who often have a limited field of vision so in some cases they may not look someone else in the eye during the day.

Connections between people happened informally where older people were living within co-housing and social housing settings, particularly within Bridge Meadows and Hesperus

(a large affordable social housing building) where residents would help each other out through help with day to day tasks such as a lift to town or hospital to basic care needs.

Physical space was carefully designed to reinforce connections between residents and the community in many of the settings. This was achieved through the design of smaller spaces, and particularly of the communal areas for both Koinonia and AOI Care. The size of the household was also important for all of the group homes visited: Midori Kokoro, San Antonio Gardens and Kinoko Group. A maximum of 12 residents lived in each of the group homes with the intention of making the home feel like a 'home'. During discussions with staff of Midori Kokoro, it was highlighted that the government had decided to stop the development of larger care homes as it was felt the institutional and impersonal style of these larger care homes was against human rights.

Communal space was a feature of many of the organisations, for example, Openhouse had a dining room and large garden patio and Oak Hill, which is a co-housing model for people in later life, had a large basement studio which would be opened out to the community for yoga lessons, talks and activities. Bridge Meadows had a communal hall and shared laundry space, which was highlighted as the space that many of the conversations between residents take place. Within Port Perry co-housing, the kitchen, sitting room and dining room are shared. Hesperus feature various communal rooms including a gym, dining hall and gardens as well as nooks within the corridors for seating, reading and music. Whilst the management and residents of Hesperus had been under pressure to maximise the use of the space for accommodation, they decided they did not want to compromise on the communal spaces.



Image of Hesperus: one of the many communal spaces; designed to enable informal interactions among residents.

AOI Care also enable impromptu connections with the wider community by creating communal spaces with the community; carving a pathway through the plot which now serves as a popular thoroughfare to the town. The day care centre extends out into a popular public restaurant and a resident is supported to run a sweet shop where children buy sweets on their way from school.

As highlighted by the range of case studies, there is value in bringing people together and building dependence. New housing developments and health and care strategies should give consideration to how to support a sense of connectedness both among residents who live together and with wider communities.



**“Leading
confident
fulfilling lives”**

- Tadasuke Kato, CEO of AOI Care

Image of Koinonia: A resident is preparing food for the afternoon meal. A member of staff is to the left, carrying her child on her back.

Purpose

Whilst a house may just be a building, it is the place where many of us spend much of our time and this increases as we get older: people over 85 spend approximately 80% of their time in their home and immediate community [23, 24]. There is real value in creating spaces and communities that build and reinforce a sense of purpose. This philosophy was incorporated in the sites visited in three ways. First, residents would continue to take part in day to day activities or activities that had always been important to them. Second, the sites built a strong sense of connection among the residents and wider community. Third, residents found a sense of purpose by being involved in the design and build of their home.

Participation in daily life is a core principle of the small group home model which is often designed specifically for people with dementia and this was evident in all of the group homes, including: San Antonio, AOI Care, Midori Kiroro, Kinoko Group and Koinonia. Whilst visiting AOI Care, I asked the CEO, Tadasuke Kato whether the organisation have volunteers, to which he replied in surprise: **“no - why would we take the work away from the grandmothers?”**. During the visit to AOI Care, I had seen the service users, many with advanced dementia, go to the shops to collect food for cooking, chopping, using a stove and cleaning up. These activities had always been an important part of daily life so it was important not to take these activities away. In the group homes visited, not all of the residents were involved in the cutting or heating up though the food was always prepared at a visible table within the home so that residents could be involved in the process of cooking by listening to the sounds and smelling the food being cooked.

Creating opportunities to pursue individual passions was also an important factor in many of the sites visited. In AOI Care, one service user created knitted garments which were sold online, the money she received was spent how she wished and recently bought a microwave. Another lady in AOI Care had always run a sweet shop so she was given a space to set up a sweet shop that children visited on their way home from school. In Yumenomizuumi-mura, which

is a very large day care centre, there was a wide range of activities within a large community space for service users to pursue their interests - an art room, pottery, calligraphy, karaoke, carving, gardening, cooking, cafe, swimming. Service users of the centre are given a budget to decide on how they would like to spend their time.

Being part of community and supporting others was another important factor in reinforcing and building a sense of purpose. The ‘elders’ living in Bridge Meadows played a critical role in supporting both the foster children and adoptive parents, they shared their expertise in parenting and knowledge to provide a sense of permanence and support. This was both valuable to the children and foster parents as well as the elders themselves who described feeling valued and an improved sense of well-being. Hesperus, which is a large co-housing initiative, was founded by teachers of a Steiner school who wanted to grow old with like minded individuals whilst remaining close to the school. Living together and staying close to the school has allowed the residents to continue to live their values and play an important role in the neighbouring Steiner school. Whilst Hesperus has evolved over the years and now offers social and affordable housing to the wider community the sense of community and values still remain.

A sense of purpose can also be achieved through the involvement of the residents in the design, build and running of a new home or site. This was evident among the co-housing initiatives visited including Oak Hill, Port Perry, Wine on the Porch, Co-ho-ho and Baba Yaga. For example the women involved in the Oak Hill co-housing initiative were involved in the design, renovation and marketing of the home and described a strong sense of pride. Baba Yaga, which is an organisation that aims to establish a rented co-housing project in Toronto, has been driven forward by the future residents, each contributing their individual skills and expertise. For example, one of the members worked within production and marketing so has been heavily involved in the comms and marketing required to lobby the government and property developers.

The Village to Village network is a model that clearly draws on the expertise and individual passions of people in the community by involving all members in the design and running of the Village. The overarching organisation provides support, tips and resources for new villages to set up their own village but each one is unique and based on the needs and ambitions of its members; adaptable to different communities. Each village differs: some villages focus on shared procurement of care or food whereas others focus on the development of peer groups and social networks. Providing each village with autonomy and focusing on the strengths of its members has enabled this model to grow quickly: since the first village was established in 2001, 200 new villages have been set up and a further 150 are underway.

There are clearly opportunities for people to feel valued and appreciated through their experiences at home and in the community. Housing for later life should therefore provide routes for people to draw on their skills and expertise.

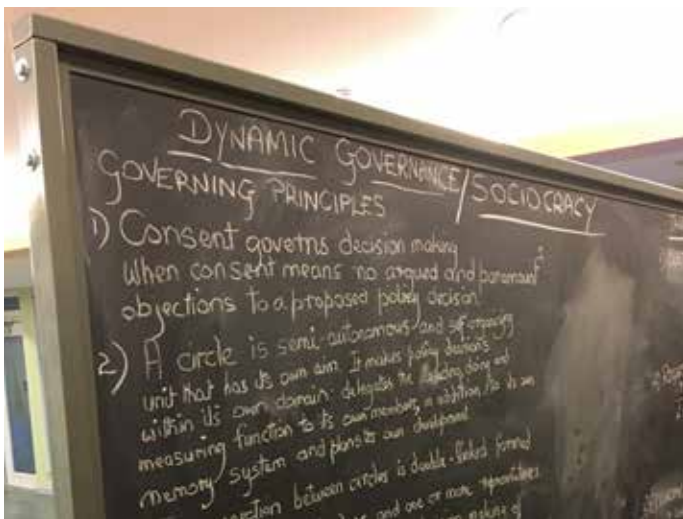


Image of Hesperus: Notes from a recent meeting where residents planned to establish 'circles' which would play a role in the decision making and running of the organisation'

“It’s like a
theme park”

- Care worker of Grundtvig

Image of Bridge Meadows: A Christmas play held in the main hall during 'happiness hour' a weekly get together to build informal relationships with the 'elders', foster children, adoptive parents and wider community

Communities of every age

Many of the sites visited recognised the value of community, not just housing. Whilst links to the community took many forms such as sourcing food from a local farm or running calligraphy events, many of the sites placed emphasis on building genuine communities of all ages, not just for people in later life.

Within Japan, many of the organisations established links between residents and younger generations including Kinoko Group, AOI Care, Grundtvig and Koinonia. Leaders of these organisations highlighted various benefits of this approach. The CEO of Koinonia, Koji Imanishi highlighted the importance of building a new generation of leaders in care and that it is important for young people to become familiar with the importance and value of care. Koji Imanishi talked positively about his own upbringing in care. Staff retention was also highlighted as a benefit of enabling staff to bring children to work by the management team of both AOI Care and Kinoko Group. Leaders of Grundtvig and AOI Care also highlighted that they felt it was important to bring together different generations so that young people do not fear ageing and can see that it is possible to live a good life, even if very unwell.

The takurosho model highlights the importance of supporting the community to be age friendly community and to break down stigma associated with getting older; Grundtvig and AOI Care run community events and outreach. The value of bringing different generations together was also evident in Bridge Meadows where children and adoptive families benefited from the expertise and support provided by the 'elders' through homework help, lessons on cooking as well as support and care.

Whilst there are positives to bringing together generations, staff from some of the organisations highlighted that some of the older residents did not enjoy having children around because of the noise, so would sit in a different room. I was also informed of disquiet because it was felt that members of staff who brought in children had been given special preference and were at times

distracted by child care.

Despite some of the challenges associated with linking different generations, there are clear benefits of embedding some of these approaches in housing and communities in later life. Creating links with younger generations breaks down negative perceptions of ageing, prevents the 'ghettoisation' of people as they get older and younger generations can benefit from the expertise that older generations offer.

Whilst links to the community took many forms such as sourcing food from a local farm or running calligraphy events, many of the sites placed emphasis on building genuine communities of all ages, not just for people in later life.



**“We’ve released
four houses onto
the market”**

- Louise Bardswich, member of Port Perry co-housing

Image of Oak Hill: The co-housing development has supported local construction workers. The space depicted is intended to be a communal space that will be open to the community for yoga lessons, workshops and talks.

Creating Social Value

Many of the organisations visited had a positive impact in terms of the value they brought to society in a number of ways. First, by improving well-being in the community and reducing pressure on health and care systems. Second, by providing jobs and economic benefits to the community. Despite the value these new models bring, I often heard how difficult it had been to gain support from planners, governmental bodies and local communities who did not recognise the value these organisations bring.

Many of the models visited highlighted the positive impact of the models on the health system. For example, Grundtvig were able to reduce the level of care for 60% of their service users through supporting them to access activities in the community such as swimming. Residents of San Antonio Gardens have longer life expectancy than the regional average which may be due to the emphasis they place on well-being through gym facilities, communal activities and social groups. Bridge Meadows is also exploring whether they could receive funding through health insurers because of the low level care needs and community support provided among their elders - for example through bringing food over or providing lifts to appointments. The takurosho model also places emphasis on supporting people in the community to support others to age well which may lead to prevention in ill health.

All organisations provided clear economic benefits to the area. For example, AOI Care, Koinonia and Kinoko and Grundtvig valued the importance of recruiting locally and sourcing food from local organic farms. In addition, the co-housing initiatives brought significant value to community by relieving some pressure on the over inflated property market. Within Port Perry, the owners highlighted that they had released four under occupied homes onto the market. Even on a small scale, this had an impact on easing the pressure on the housing market and if carried out on a larger scale could make housing more affordable and accessible for first time buyers.

Whilst all organisations had an important and positive impact on the community it is hard to demonstrate the impact. Many of the sites visited highlighted that planners and investors were unsupportive as the model was completely new so it was unclear how to categorise the development. For example, the first iteration of the Port Perry co-housing model was blocked by the planning department as it was seen to be a care facility so the case went through to legal proceedings. Another co-housing initiative, Baba Yaga appealed to the local government and to investors to develop a shared rental property for women in later life. Despite demonstrating the social value this could bring, the organisation has not been successful in receiving investment after years of lobbying. In addition, Grundtvig took a step back from setting up co-living arrangements for its service users as it would require the organisation to carry out significant and costly changes to abide by building requirements that seem inappropriate for model they are proposing (such as the installation of a sprinkler system).

As many of the models are pioneering, they receive little support in terms of policy levers or incentives. In some cases, individuals invested their own personal funds to get an initiative going including Wine on the Porch and Oak Hill. In these examples, one or two individuals invested in the purchase of renovation of a large 8+ bedroom property from their own funds which puts them at risk. Many of the innovative sites also received resistance from the local community. For example, Grundtvig received a negative response from some of the neighbours as they did not want to live next to a care organisation.

Despite some of the barriers, there was an increasing recognition of the value of these models. The takurosho model had been identified as a model that the government wanted to support so subsidised 50% of the development costs of new facilities. Toronto Office of the Premier are working with the planning department to create a new zoning categorisation for co-housing initiatives and to provide leniency to innovative housing models in later life.

As highlighted through these case studies,

innovative approaches to housing in later life can bring significant value to society though they need to be supported and often through multiple routes. These mechanisms may include, financial incentives, supportive policy for pilot schemes, leniency in the planning process and a willingness from investors to test out a new approach. Whilst the evidence of impact for the sites visited was early and anecdotal, many organisations had been effective in building the social and business case and working collaboratively in partnership with local government to develop their idea. The final section highlights some measures that could be taken within the UK to provide a more supportive environment for new and innovative approaches to housing to thrive.



Image of Oak Hill: One of the members has invested her own funds to the development of the site. The members have set up a 'model room' and image boards to attract prospective residents.

Conclusions



Conclusions

The aim of the research was to explore a range of innovative and affordable housing solutions in later life. This report has highlighted the choice of alternatives available as not one single model will work across the UK. The suitability of the different models will depend on the individuals involved and the local context. Whilst it may not be possible to adopt and implement the case studies highlighted without significant investment - this report has highlighted ideas and principles that can be translated to homes and communities more broadly. These ideas have been discussed in the previous section and highlight the value of:

- Building dependence among residents and communities
- Supporting people to lead lives with purpose and meaning in their homes and neighbourhoods
- Creating communities of every age
- Demonstrating the social value of innovative solutions

One of the primary objectives of the research was to understand the affordability of the different housing solutions. Though many of the models offer a cheaper alternative to many specialist housing for later life, most require residents to hold assets to invest in the new home, such as co-housing. Equally, some of the innovative specialist housing case studies such as AOI Care and Grundtvig are only successful and affordable due to supportive financial measures at a national level, through schemes such as the LTCI. The Village to Village Network requires the least investment from individuals though the membership model tends to attract people who are already active in their community and more affluent. Further research would be valuable to understand more about the business models that can support those with greatest need and do not have the assets to invest.

The research also revealed the challenges associated with the implementation of innovative new models including planning processes, lack of investment from developers, limited incentives and an unsupportive policy context. For the models to be successful in the UK, opportunities should be identified to support alternatives such as those visited during the research. These recommendations are highlighted on the following page.

Policy Recommendations: UK

The previous section highlighted principles and ideas that should be considered when developing housing for later life based on the insights gathered during the research. The following section outlines recommendations for changes that should be considered within the UK policy context to provide greater support for excellent social and affordable housing in later life.

Healthy new towns. The Healthy New Towns initiative aims to develop affordable housing that supports health and well-being. This presents an opportunity to pilot innovative models of social and affordable housing in later life such as those visited during the research.

Develop a scheme to fund future care needs. Long Term Care Insurance scheme was established in Japan in 2000 and anyone over 40 contributes to the insurance which provides them with social care when they are 65. This scheme has provided greater funding and scope for innovative models to develop, such as the takurosho model. A scheme like the LTCI could provide the social sector in the UK more investment to innovate and develop good models of housing and care in later life.

Sustainability and Transformation Plans. Considering the increasing emphasis on prevention and providing care closer to home, it is surprising that many of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) give little reference to housing. There should be a requirement of the STPs to incorporate plans for housing for later life. As a result, the health and care sector would achieve cost savings by preventing ill health.

Community Housing Fund: CHF is a commitment from the government of £240 million to support the development of community led housing initiatives, specifically to support affordable housing. The government has invested £240 million to support CHF. It would be valuable to focus a specific theme of the CHF on housing for later life. This should include not

only consideration for community housing that is specifically for people in later life but should also place conditions on all new developments to encourage the design of communities that support older people and build a positive age friendly community.[25].

Remove the stamp duty for those considering downsizing. Make it easier to downsize or move to housing that is more suitable. Insight from conversations held during the research revealed barriers to moving. One barrier highlighted by Demos that could be removed within the UK is to get rid of stamp duty for those who are considering downsizing [26].

Reignite support for the Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (HAPPI). HAPPI was established in 2009 to drive innovation in housing for later life. Whilst support for HAPPI diminished due to political and financial uncertainty during the coalition government - there is a clear and significant need to reignite a task force such as this.

Guidance for planners to support innovative models. In many of the organisations visited from Japan to the US to Canada, new innovative models presented concerns for planners as it was unclear what category or zone the new development should be categorized by. There was a tendency to categorise the development as a care facility rather, requiring costly (and often unnecessary) infrastructure and additional regulations. This led to delays or the failure of new projects. To support innovative models to develop in the UK, there should be more guidance provided and the development of new planning categories to support new models.

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