



Our ideal community would be made up of 20 flats, together with communal interior and exterior spaces, housing 30 individuals and on a site of no less than 0.5 acres (2000 sqm).

Many elements of this design brief are flexible – such as number and sizes of flats, communal areas, size of garden, etc. They are obviously limited by the amount of space and costs. Items that are negotiable are indicated by use of ‘preferably’.

Other elements are fundamental such as light, acoustics, insulation&ventilation and general environmental sustainability of the build, maintenance and running costs. The project is for older people (from over 50 up to 100+), allowing us to age-in-place, so it must meet our changing needs. Most importantly the design should enable the creation of an intentional supportive community so shared space and opportunities for casual interaction are essential.

Principles of design: Low carbon, low running cost, resilient against climate change, age and disability friendly, encouraging people to meet through design of communal spaces and routes.

AGE AND DISABILITY FRIENDLY

- The whole site should be designed to Part M(3) Wheelchair User Dwellings: Wheelchair adaptable.
- Lift access to all floors. Preferably two, to avoid anyone being trapped in or out of their flat.
- Dementia friendly design principles to be applied
- Ensure doors and windows can be easily used by all, especially those with reduced strength and dexterity.

PRIVATE RESIDENCES

- Between 15-25 units: preferably 20 units consisting of equal numbers of
 - one bedroom flats (min. 57 m²). Each flat to consist of open plan sitting/dining/kitchen, double bedroom and bathroom (preferably a step free, walk in shower)
 - two bedroom flats (min. 70 m²). Each flat to consist of open plan sitting/dining/kitchen, 2 x double/twin bedrooms, bathroom (preferably a step free, walk in shower), and an optional second WC
- Housing between 18-30 residents: preferably 30 individuals.
- All flats to be at least 2.4m in height.
- Some flats to be preferably located at ground floor level.
- Bedroom(s) for guests/carers – at least 1, preferably 2 twin bedded ensuite. To be located away from main communal area, and if more than one can be provided they should preferably be located on separate floors.
- Each flat to preferably have at least 2m x 4m of private outside space (balcony/garden/patio). Balconies should not adversely impact on form factor.
- High quality sound proofing between flats and around communal spaces
- Rooms to be light and airy with maximum views from sitting areas.
- Flats to be dual aspect to maximise natural light
- Rooms to be temperature controlled
- Good air quality throughout
- The interior of the flats designed to minimise hallways and corridors
- The orientation of the flats designed to maximise solar gain, while minimising risk of overheating.
- Good storage throughout
- Flexibility of room use, sliding walls, pocket doors.

CIRCULATION

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- Semi open outside walkways for access to stairs and lifts rather than internal corridors, in order to promote contact by overlooking external space.
- Preferably some informal spaces to meet/sit/chat on each floor with natural light, space for plants (this could be enclosed, partly enclosed or open)

SOCIAL/COMMUNAL

- The interior of the Common House should be designed to minimise hallways and corridors
- The orientation of the Common House should maximise solar gain, while minimising risk of overheating.
- One BIG space, flexible so could be sectioned off.
 - Preferably large enough to accommodate all residents plus 20% for weekly meals, and all residents for regular meetings
 - Preferably large enough for a sitting area to accommodate one third of residents (easy chairs)
 - Preferably large enough to accommodate two thirds of residents for other activities such as yoga or other exercise class, several times a week.
 - Must have convenient storage for table/chairs, shared equipment such as TV books games etc
 - Must be easy to re-arrange
 - Must have furniture which can be moved easily
 - Linked to outdoor spaces.
- Shared kitchen next to the flexible space, or could be open plan. This must be large enough to prepare and cook meals for all residents, with adequate storage for equipment and food.
- Secure storage for company documents. Preferably within an office/small meeting area, for admin and other MUCH business, big enough for up to 4 people. Sited where suitable, not necessarily in Common House.
- At least one toilet in Common House , close to dining and sitting areas.
- Postboxes/pigeon holes must be located in Common House.

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- Laundry facilities, preferably one central laundry room, within main building, to accommodate 3 washing machines and 1 dryer, ironing facilities, sufficient hanging/drying space to encourage usage.
- Preferably a hygiene suite (with bath), preferably located on ground floor but not directly off the BIG flexible space.
- Preferably other small flexible spaces for reading, art and craft work, working from home, playing music, etc

STORAGE

- Storage for shared equipment such as tools, vacuum cleaners, ironing boards, step-ladders, laundry trolleys etc. Conveniently located for access from all apartments on each floor to encourage regular use.
- Additional private secure storage for residents', eg for suitcases, big items; individual 'cages' of approx. 2m², located wherever suitable.

OUTDOORS

- Fully accessible outside space needs to be designed as a whole to be aesthetically pleasing, quiet with range of spaces for different uses
- Communal outside space – seating/dining,
- Must provide places to sit in both sun and shade.
- Garden incorporating walking route, cultivation space
- Greenhouse, potting shed, tool storage
- Raised beds, veg production
- Easy access and carefully sited bins and recycling collection points from both individual dwellings and the common kitchen.
- Drying space outside, but secluded from general view
- Preferably a cycle repair space, equivalent of 'garden shed'
- Preferably a toilet with direct access from garden

TRANSPORT

- Parking for residents' cars or car-share vehicles (for 50% of flats). Note that this may need to be reviewed in light of current advice on use of public transport. Ideally we might want to identify additional car parking space which could be used for other purposes if not needed for parking.
- At least 1 x EV charge point
- Visitors & disabled car parking.
- Storage for cycles (bikes/trikes/e-bikes) for 60% of residents
- Storage for mobility scooters for 10% of residents

OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

- Security and access to different areas within the site.
- Access to Common House via main entrance front and single door at rear
- Bell to each flat and door entry system
- Wifi enabled throughout to maximise potential for technology to support communication and functioning of cohousing and individual wellbeing.
- Consider building gardens, flats or communal over parking spaces
- Consider potential for roof gardens, roof terraces and energy generation on roof.

OTHER SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- TBD

Design group (SR/BC/VC/VW)

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