

# Ashford Extra Care Sheltered Housing

## Design Specification

Revised February 2014



# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Aim of Extra Care Sheltered Housing</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Design and Layout</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4. Size of Extra Care Accommodation</b>	<b>10</b>



# 1. Introduction

The most significant projected rise in the population for the Borough of Ashford is that of the over 65 age group. By 2016 it is anticipated that the 65 and over age group will account for 1 in 5 of the population of the district. The number of people aged over 65 is expected to increase by 3,500 to 26,400 by 2020<sup>1</sup>. The growth of the older population will have a major impact over the next 20 years in terms of dementia, mental health issues, disability and ill health.

Providing suitable accommodation to meet a range of needs for an ageing population is recognised at all levels of government and a number of other public services. Locally, the Corporate Plan, Focus 2013-15 has a priority to deliver quality homes and neighbourhoods, to create the 'right' atmosphere where people want to live and enjoy life. The Plan identified a need to make sure that we have suitable accommodation for all the stages in life, including assistance and support to maintain people's ability to live independently for as long as possible.

Throughout this design brief the term 'extra care' is used as currently this is widely recognised as providing independent living with care provided. However as other models of the care component are developed this term may change but the overall design features required will remain consistent.

The development of extra care sheltered housing provides a further choice of accommodation to the older residents of the Borough.

**“Older people have the option of living in a modern caring environment where they can lead an independent life with care and support available when needed”**

This Extra Care Sheltered Housing Design Specification responds to the need to ensure that older people have the option of living in a modern caring environment where they can lead an independent life with care and support available when needed. Enhancing residents' quality of life not just increasing its length.

Extra care sheltered accommodation provides older people with their own individual home, with their own front door. It is not a care home or hospital and as such should not have an institutional feel. It is therefore vitally important that the scheme delivers a building that is resident focused, imaginative, welcoming, accessible, inclusive and that positively encourages family and friends to visit, creating a lively balanced community of older people.

Older people on a fixed income can spend a disproportionate amount of their income on heating or live in under heated homes which has a negative impact on health and wellbeing, therefore an energy efficient design is paramount.

Designs that assist those suffering from dementia are paramount as the number of people diagnosed with this condition is predicted to double over the next 30 years<sup>2</sup>. This is part of meeting the Prime Ministers Dementia Challenge<sup>3</sup> of creating dementia friendly communities so people with dementia can remain independent for as long as possible, and have choice and control over their lives through all stages of their dementia.

Integration with the wider community is an important factor to ensure the residents of the scheme are included in the local community. This could be achieved by 'opening up' some of the communal facilities offered to residents (which in turn means the scheme can provide a valuable resource for the local community) and locating the scheme close to existing facilities and services so residents can, if they wish, access these easily.

Consideration must be given to the ease at which the scheme could be adapted for other uses in the future but without compromising the style and quality of the extra care sheltered scheme.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.poppi.org.uk/index.php?pageNo=314&loc=&mapOff=1>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/time-to-think-differently/trends/disease-and-disability/care-demands-dementia>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/215101/dh\\_133176.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/215101/dh_133176.pdf)

## 2. Aim of Extra Care Sheltered Housing

The overarching aim of an Extra Care Sheltered Scheme is to assist older people to remain active and independent for as long as possible.

To provide accommodation for older people that offers

- Choice of different levels of care as and when required
- Independence, privacy and safety
- A feeling of 'home life'
- Choice to mix with others or be self-sufficient
- The opportunity for older local people to remain integrated with the wider community

This will be achieved by providing

- Individual self-contained accommodation
- Normal tenancy rights
- A variety of communal facilities
- Care provided as and when needed

The scheme should also be a resource for the local community, offering services such as

- Day care
- A range of communal activities and organised trips out
- A restaurant offering meals and other refreshments during the day
- Home care
- Leisure activities such as exercise classes, arts and crafts etc.
- Access to visiting health professionals, for podiatry, healthy eating etc.

Any space(s) shared with non-residents will need to be carefully planned to ensure security of residents' private spaces.

# 3. Design and Layout

The design of any extra care scheme in the borough should embrace and incorporate the 10 principles set out in the HAPPI Housing our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation report (2009)<sup>4</sup> and the refined criteria from HAPPI 2<sup>5</sup>.

1. the new retirement homes should have generous internal space standards, with potential for three habitable rooms and designed to accommodate flexible layouts
2. care is taken in the design of homes and shared spaces, with the placement, size and detail of windows, and to ensure plenty of natural light, and to allow daylight into circulation spaces
3. building layouts maximise natural light and ventilation by avoiding internal corridors and single-aspect flats, and apartments have balconies, patios, or terraces with enough space for tables and chairs as well as plants
4. in the implementation of measures to ensure adaptability, homes are designed to be 'care ready' so that new and emerging technologies, such as telecare and community equipment, can be readily installed
5. building layouts promote circulation areas as shared spaces that offer connections to the wider context, encouraging interaction, supporting interdependence and avoiding an 'institutional feel', including the imaginative use of shared balcony access to front doors and thresholds, promoting natural surveillance and providing for 'defensible space'
6. in all but the smallest developments (or those very close to existing community facilities), multi-purpose space is available for residents to meet, with facilities designed to support an appropriate range of activities – perhaps serving the wider neighbourhood as a community 'hub', as well as guest rooms for visiting friends and families
7. in giving thought to the public realm, design measures ensure that homes engage positively with the street, and that the natural environment is nurtured through new trees and hedges and the preservation of mature planting, and providing wildlife habitats as well as colour, shade and shelter
8. homes are energy-efficient and well insulated, but also well ventilated and able to avoid overheating by, for example, passive solar design, the use of native deciduous planting supplemented by external blinds or shutters, easily operated awnings over balconies, green roofs and cooling chimneys
9. adequate storage is available outside the home together with provision for cycles and mobility aids, and that storage inside the home meets the needs of the occupier
10. shared external surfaces, such as 'home zones', that give priority to pedestrians rather than cars, and which are proving successful in other countries, become more common, with due regard to the kinds of navigation difficulties that some visually impaired people may experience in such environments.



Artist's impression of Farrow Court

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/sites/default/files/happi\\_final\\_report\\_-\\_031209.pdf](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/sites/default/files/happi_final_report_-_031209.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Support\\_materials/Other\\_reports\\_and\\_guidance/Housing\\_our\\_Ageing\\_Population\\_Plan\\_for\\_Implementation.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/Housing_our_Ageing_Population_Plan_for_Implementation.pdf)

# 3. Design and Layout continued

- Provide accessibility to wheelchair standards i.e., in excess of Lifetime Home Standards with lift access to all apartments
- Offer a mix of space standards that exceed 'minimum' requirements and that are dictated by meeting the accessibility requirements (two bed flats at least 70m sq. and one bed flats at least 58m sq.)
- Concentrate on typologies that are suited to older people i.e. apartments or single-storey dwellings (or dwellings which provide self-contained accommodation on one level)
- Notwithstanding proposed housing benefit reform, provide predominantly two bed apartments because of the greater flexibility that they offer
- Incorporate communal facilities to promote social interaction. This could be limited to a single, multi-functional space with ancillary accommodation
- Provide for high levels of energy efficiency to minimise energy costs and reduce fuel poverty.
- Allow for good security arrangements
- Be located in an area which constitute a Lifetime Neighbourhood in terms of accessibility to transport, retail and other amenities and facilities that older people need
- Be 'age-eligible' accommodation, with a minimum age requirement that will require a lower level of parking provision
- Offer a housing tenure and management regime that will ensure that some control is retained by the residents, and
- Provide the ability to incorporate 'care aware' smart technology to help with future personal care and support

Locally adopted planning documents will set out policy requirements that must be satisfied. In addition, rather than set out in detail, within this guidance examples of minimum room sizes, fixtures and fittings etc., it will be a requirement that the developer will embrace the 10 HAPPI principles referred to above and conform to the approach and criteria set out in the Housing Learning and Improvement Network Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP) Resource Pack<sup>6</sup>. In particular:



- Section B, Paper B2: The design and build of successful extra care housing  
[http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/SHOPpaperB2.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/SHOPpaperB2.pdf)
- Paper B5: Good design characteristics in extra care housing  
[http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/ToolB5.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/ToolB5.pdf)
- Paper B6: Mapping the use of space in extra care housing  
[http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/ToolB6.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/SHOP/ToolB6.pdf)

And also have reference to

- Lifetime Homes Design Guide, November 2011 (Habinteg Housing Association)
- Wheelchair Housing Design, Guide 2006 (Habinteg Housing Association)
- Design and Quality Standards April 2007<sup>7</sup> (Housing Corporation/Homes and Communities Agency)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPv2/>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/sites/default/files/our-work/design\\_quality\\_standards.pdf](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/sites/default/files/our-work/design_quality_standards.pdf)

## 4. Size of Extra Care Accommodation

The total number of units, overall size and scale of each extra care scheme will be dependent on demand and site constraints. When designing a scheme the amount of shared/communal space will affect the level of service charges and must be taken into account. Service charges must be affordable and proportionate to other costs and not create a financial barrier for some older people considering moving to extra care. A review of extra care<sup>8</sup> by Hanover Housing Association has considered the use of communal space and now specifies that floor areas for flats must not be less than 70% of the gross floor area; communal facilities and circulation space must not exceed 30% (whilst retaining all core facilities). This was also reflected in the HAPPI 2 report<sup>9</sup> that found 'paying the service charges to sustain all these, usually well appreciated, facilities can be a burdensome cost to residents'.

As endorsed by HAPPI 2, the Hanover review has shown that older people prefer two bedroom accommodation. 'Residents have preferences for two bedroom accommodation that provides space for storage, entertaining guests and participating in hobbies. Formal surveys of older people have all ratified that two bedrooms are increasingly seen as a minimum'.

The size and quality of accommodation will be an important factor that older people will consider when contemplating a move from their existing home. Ensuring the design makes the scheme an attractive option for older people is paramount to its success both for the occupants and in creating movement in the housing stock by 'freeing up' family sized accommodation.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.hanover.org.uk/about-us/communications/Hanover\\_20\\_Yrs\\_of\\_Extra\\_Care.pdf](http://www.hanover.org.uk/about-us/communications/Hanover_20_Yrs_of_Extra_Care.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.housinglin.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Support\\_materials/Other\\_reports\\_and\\_guidance/Housing\\_our\\_Ageing\\_Population\\_Plan\\_for\\_Implementation.pdf](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Other_reports_and_guidance/Housing_our_Ageing_Population_Plan_for_Implementation.pdf)

