



The Open University

Environment and Identity (Developments)

Canada-UK Study Tour, March 8th 2010

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Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A national strategy for housing in an ageing society

What older people say:

- Housing should be well designed with growing older in mind; it should meet the needs of all age groups. We should build **adaptable 'homes for life'**
- **Space** is important: we often need room to accommodate visiting family or a carer, and need good storage space
- **Housing design** should be user-friendly, low maintenance and safe – a downstairs WC and bathroom with shower and bath are especially important. Our homes should be affordable to heat

Cont.

- Access to green, private space, and a **safe neighbourhood** is important, as is housing that is accessible to good local transport, facilities and amenities
- Access to independent **information and advice** about our housing options is needed
- Support is necessary for people to stay living in their own homes. A reliable **repairs and adaptations services** is needed for that bit of help around the home
- But above all, **people want to be listened to**, to be involved in the design of everything that will affect us, from planning and lifetime homes standards, to the creation of safer environments, to testing new equipment and IT devices (DH.,DWP.,CLG, Feb. 2008, p21)

Focus on two developments

- Macro - Safer Neighbourhoods - Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Public Places programme 200
- Micro – Transitions in Kitchen Living (TiKL) – New Dynamics of Ageing Programme, RCsUK

Social interactions in urban public places (2007)

by Caroline Holland,
Andrew Clark, Jeanne
Katz and Sheila Peace



Bristol: Policy Press
- or online:
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/>

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Call for intergenerational research

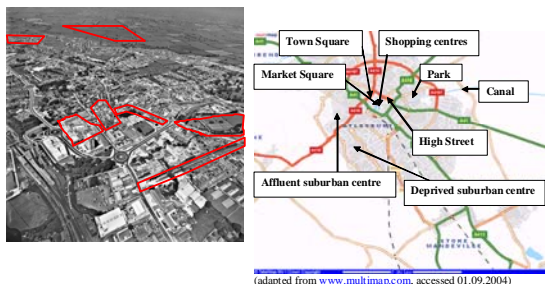
Public places as places for all:

- all age groups need access to public places
- all age groups need representation in town life
- spatial constructions of age
- ways of using public places can come into conflict

Intergenerational participative research:

- exploring different viewpoints
- sharing insider knowledge
- producing real-life solutions

Observation sites across Aylesbury



(adapted from www.multimap.com, accessed 01.09.2004)

Intergenerational interaction

- Few intergenerational interactions between non-family groups
- Age-related modes of socialisation and ways of 'being out and about' in town:
 - children
 - young people
 - younger adults
 - older people

Shared and contested use of space

Space and time:

- the rhythm of the working/school day and term time/vacation
- bus timetables/passes and 'special offers'
- twilight and the night-time economy

Central space and marginal space:

- dominance and acceptability
- using marginal space

Avoiding conflict:

- observing others and fitting around them

Safety and security in public areas



- Regulated and policed security: for whom? against whom? Reassurance. Resistance.
- Self-managed security: time, place, and optional presence. Risk evaluation, risk-taking and risk avoidance.

Developing community research – intergenerational issues

Public involvement:

- sense of personal investment in public places
- relevance and accessibility of research
- incentives: inducements and outcomes
- working in intergenerational teams

Policy-makers' involvement:

- valuing participative research process and outcomes
- accepting the consequences to costs and outcomes
- transparency in implementation

Transitions in Kitchen Living

The research teams
The OU, Loughborough University, London
Metropolitan University

Transitions in Kitchen Living

People's memories of past kitchens...

How kitchens reflect changes in people's lives...



How older people feel about their current kitchen...

Designing the kitchen to evolve naturally to meet lifetime needs...




Project Objectives


- To study people's lives in relation to the kitchen...
 - ...including older people living in a variety of accommodation types.
- To identify adaptations that people make to enhance their kitchens.
- To produce a Guide for people to adapt their kitchen to match their changing abilities and needs.


Methods (ethnographic/ergonomic)


Two interviews with each participant:

- Establish basic individual characteristics
- An oral history of kitchen living linked to life events. First remembered kitchen, kitchen with the family, in retirement, etc.
- Linking tasks – visual representation of kitchen positives/negatives, kitchen in wider space
- An examination of the current kitchen to capture typical activities, opinions, ergonomic problems, likes and dislikes.



The Advisory Group





- Mary Sinfield and Theresa Lefort, NDA Older People's Research Group
- Jane Palmer & Stewart Jones, Milton Keynes Age Concern
- Maggie Winchcombe, Years Ahead
- Alison Wright, Easy Living Design
- Karen Tsui, NDA Programme
- Caroline Jacobs, Ricability
- Cathy Bailey, Irish Centre for Social Gerontology
- Maurice Heather, PRP Architects Ltd
- Pat Strachan, Care & Repair, East England
- Anthony Slater, Lighting Manager, Thomas Pocklington Trust
- Caroline Holland, Centre for Ageing & Biographical Studies, The OU
- Elizabeth Silva, Faculty of Social Sciences, The OU
- Heather MacQueen, Science Faculty, The OU



Planned outcomes

- A Data Bank of the stories and experiences of older people, documenting their lives in the kitchen and their changing needs.
- "Inspirational material" of adaptations made by the participants that others may apply to their own kitchens.
- A Guide to help people adapt their kitchen to meet their changing needs in later life...

... this should also be useful to architects, kitchen designers, occupational therapists and social service professionals.

Dissemination

- Project reports, journal and conference papers planned in addition to kitchen design demonstrations at exhibitions.

Project team

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