

# Rethinking the **Design of Care Homes** for Inclusion, Quality of Life, and Resilience

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[www.tcd.ie/trinityhaus](http://www.tcd.ie/trinityhaus)



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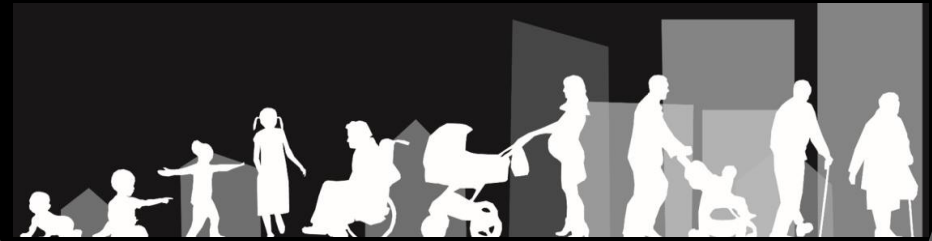
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# Introduction

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# TrinityHaus: People-Centred Design of the Built Environment

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Gaeilge

## Welcome to Trinity Haus

The **built environment** greatly affects health, inclusion, sustainability and climate change. These issues are deeply embedded and connected within our buildings, neighbourhoods, towns, and cities, and they require integrated and people-centred research and design solutions.

**TrinityHaus** responds to these challenges through transdisciplinary research and co-creation across multiple sectors and spatial scales. From housing to health care settings, and from building materials to urban design, our projects focus on the role and impact of the built environment in creating low-carbon, resilient, healthful, and inclusive communities.

[EXPLORE](#)

## Connected research areas: Co-creation to connect people, places, environment and planet

### Research Areas



#### Healthy and Inclusive Places

Wellbeing and inclusion across the life-course



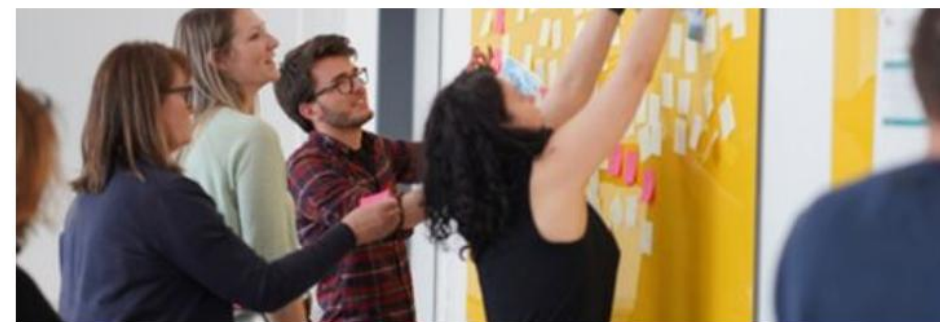
#### Climate Action and Sustainability

Climate responsiveness and sustainable energy systems



#### Construction Innovation

Innovative materials, structures & techniques

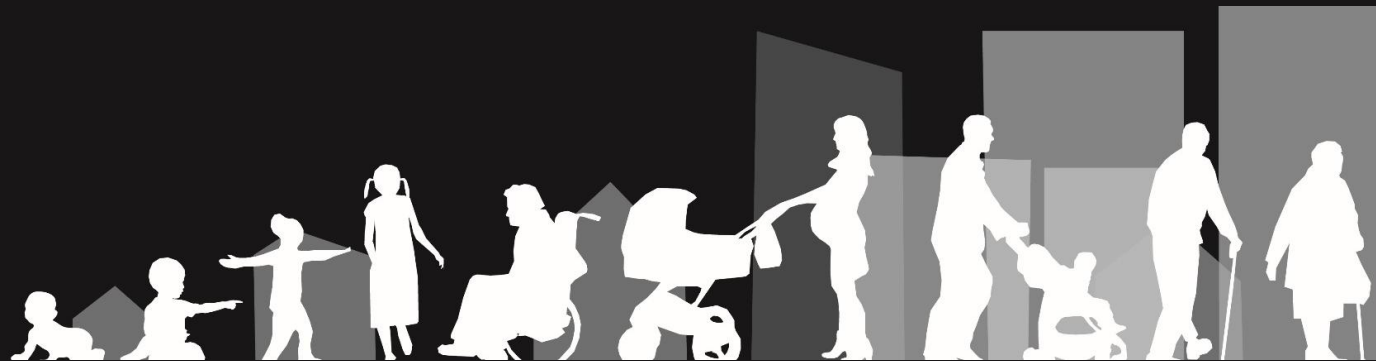


#### Co-Creation and Engagement

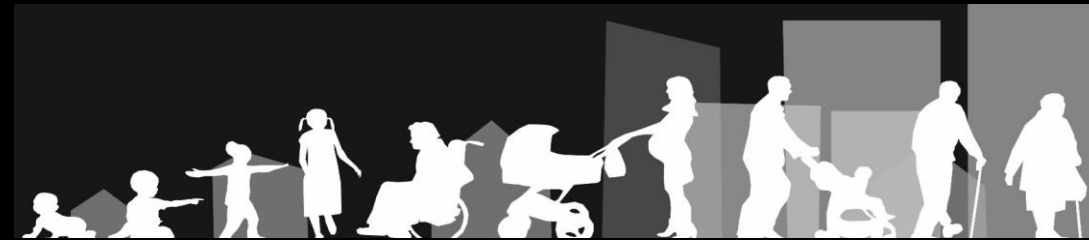
Working together for inclusion, knowledge, and just transition



Current Research - integrated approaches to **ageing + place**; role of the **built environment** in supporting **health + well-being**



# Context



Challenges & Opportunities

**Inadequate engagement & co-creation with older people**

**Inaccessible unhealthy existing housing**

**Fragmented approach to housing, supported housing & long-term care models**

**Lack of intergenerational engagement a silo/age - segregated approach (overall lack of community engagement)**

**Lack of community driven models, & insufficient alternative financing models**

**Lack of adjacent health services (e.g. GP) & community-based services.**



**Disconnect between wider spatial planning & housing or residential settings for older people**

**Inaccessible public realm, excessive travel distances, air & noise pollution, high traffic volumes & speed, lack of safe/accessible active travel**

**Poor outcomes for older people: ill-health, disability, loneliness, & lack of intergenerational engagement**

**COVID-19 and impacts from climate change & high energy costs**



# Using multiple frameworks to bring people together & identify synergies

Healthy cities (WHO)

Age-friendly cities (WHO & AFI)

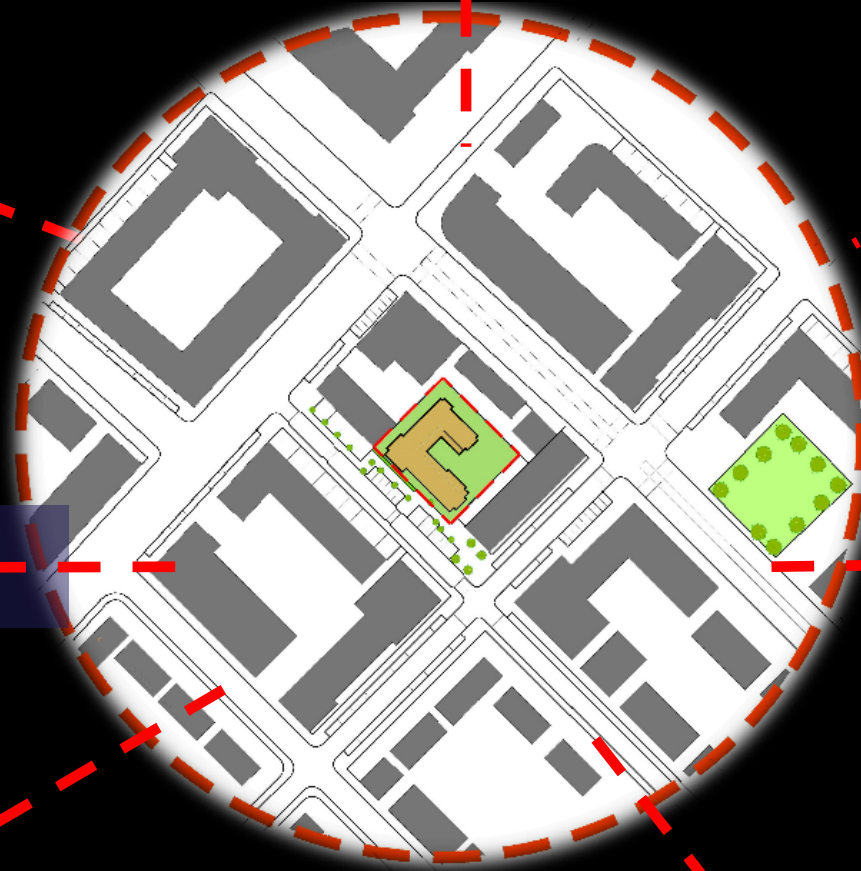
Brain healthy communities (GBHI)

Design for climate mitigation & adaptation

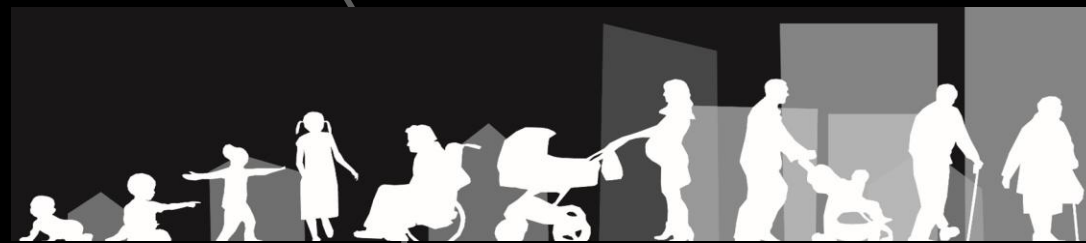
ISO - Dementia inclusive communities

15-minute cities

ISO Multigenerational Neighbourhoods



# Key Issues



Planning and Design





**Integrating health in urban  
and territorial planning:**

A sourcebook

## Neighbourhood as critical urban scale

*“Neighbourhoods are the building blocks of towns and cities. People live most of their lives in their local neighbourhood and for some, e.g. children and older people, the neighbourhood is even more significant. Both in terms of people’s health and the health of the planet, if we are unable to make neighbourhoods healthy and sustainable places, then we will not have healthy and sustainable cities.”*



**Ageing in place** is not only about continuing to live in your own home, but also the desire to continue living in your community. This is an important consideration for supported housing / long term care and the location and community engagement of RLTC settings forms an important part of ageing in place in your community.





# Location & Integration with community

## Proximity to a person's home community

- Retaining a sense of home, familiarity and connectness
- Staying close to family, neighbours, friends in term of outward & inward visiting
- Keeping contact with local familiar and favourite places
- Christie (2020) argues that a “sense of connectedness” is critical for resilience, therefore, proximity to a person's home community may be a critical factor in supporting and helping older people adapt to adversity.

## Located close to community spaces, services, and amenities

- Located within the heart of the community to facilitate greater engagement and connection to the community (residents going out / locals coming in)
- Easy access by public transport, wheeling, walking, & cycling (e.g. think about the potential of Trishaws [see - [www.cyclingwithoutage.ie](http://www.cyclingwithoutage.ie)] not only as an amenity but also for taking residents to visit family, a match, or to their GP – but what kind of cycling infrastructure is required for this?)

2019 Housing Options for our Ageing Population – Policy Statement – Action 4.12, calls for planning guidelines to ensure residential care homes and primary care centres are appropriately designed and located in areas with access to transport amenities (Government of Ireland, 2019)

*“Homes within the community not on the outskirts of towns away from amenities that some residents may be able to access themselves, such as shops, libraries and theatres” (TrinityHaus Online consultation)*

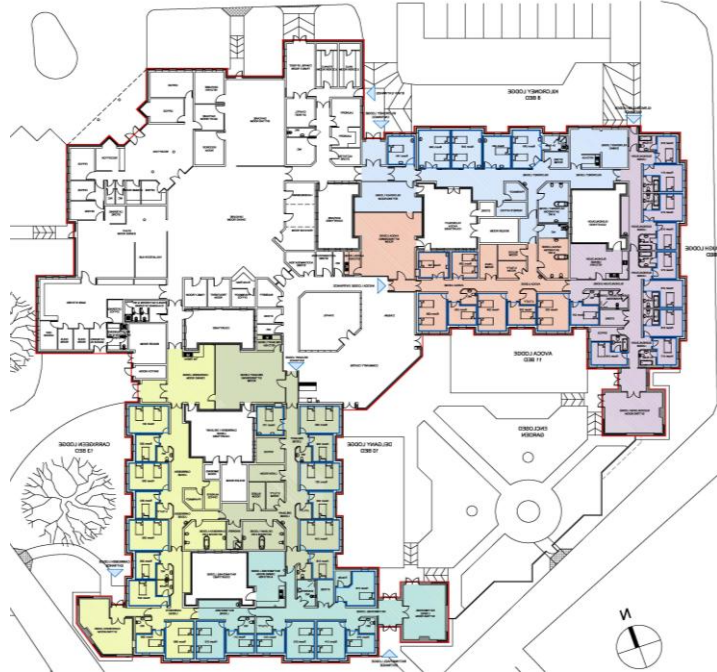








**The Village,  
Drogheda:  
3 households**



**St Josephs,  
Dublin: 6  
households**



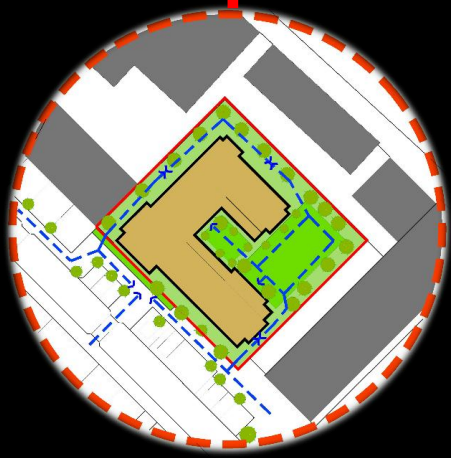
**Carebright, Bruff,  
Limerick: 3 households  
contained in 3 individual  
bungalows**



**Are there challenges with household models?  
Is there an optimum, or maximum number of household  
units than can comfortably occupy the same site?**



# Site Design



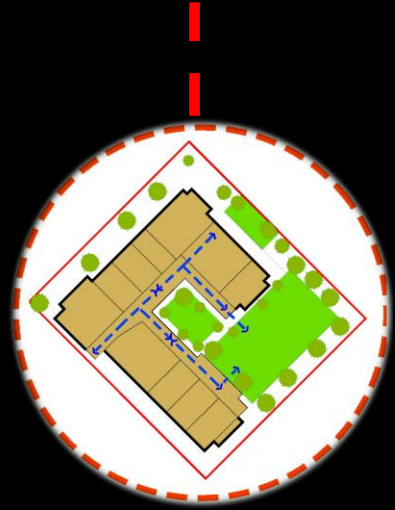
**Site design: a connected, welcoming, accessible & pleasant setting with good contact with nature**

- High quality outdoor spaces provide contact with nature, fresh air, sunlight, outdoor exercise and support a range of other important quality of life issues
- Lower infection risk association with outdoor spaces for group activity and social interaction makes these spaces critical for pandemic resilience.
- A site layout and boundaries that allow residents to ‘watch the world go by’ from their bedroom, sitting rooms, balconies, verandas, or from a garden can provide interest for residents and help them connect to the community
- External vegetation can play an important role on in providing shelter and shade to the building (e.g. helping to moderate excessive heat gain)





# Overall building configuration and number of floors



- Breaking the overall building into smaller units (i.e. households) to create a more human scale setting and help with legibility and navigation.
- Minimising double-loaded corridors and maximising light, views, and external access from the main internal circulation areas.
- Providing multiple access points (possibly for each household) and providing good direct access to outside spaces.
- Providing good internal walking routes with resting areas, points of interest, and easy access to outside.
- In multi-storey buildings ensure direct access to outdoor spaces on the upper floors (see outdoor spaces later)

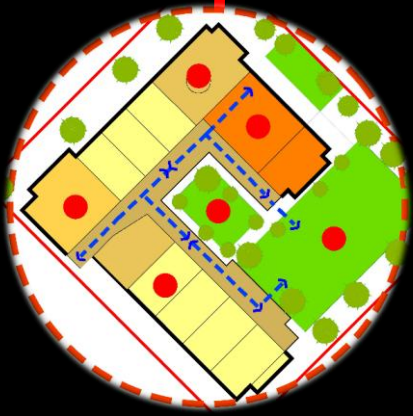
Care home Haven Bay, Kinsale Cork

Care home Pennemes, Zaandam, the Netherlands



How does the number of floors influence a setting?

# Key internal spaces



## Shared living, kitchen dining areas

- Household models typically provide a central, shared, spacious communal area composed of a living area, open kitchen and dining area.
- These common living areas often have direct access to a dedicated outdoor space (e.g. garden or courtyard)

## Bedrooms

- Spacious single bedrooms with private ensuite bathrooms
- Bedrooms provided with large windows with good views to the outside and ideally a small private outdoor space in the form of a terrace or balcony

Are there any challenges with the use or management of these central spaces?

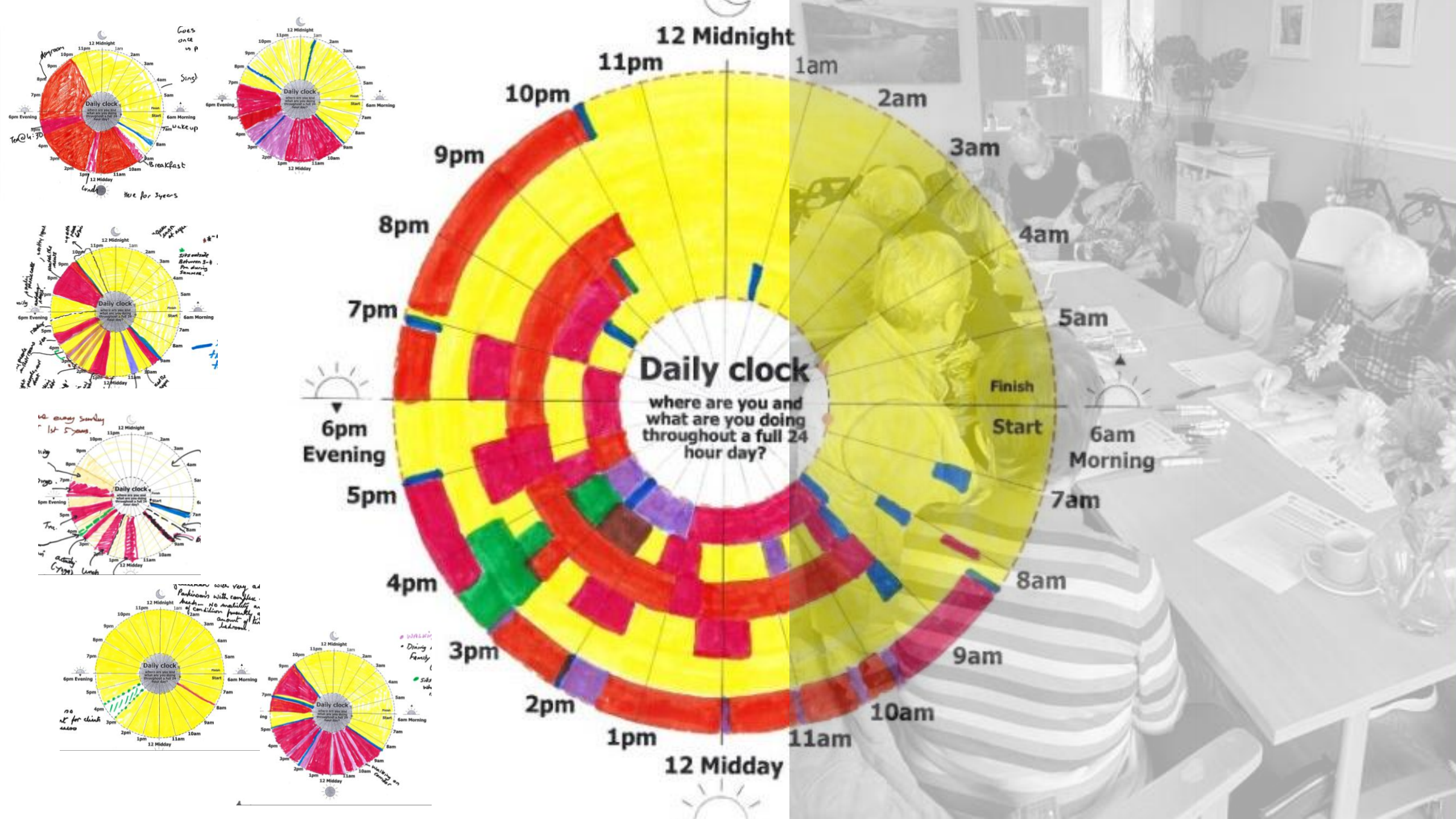
Care home, Drogheda, Louth



Care home, Bruff, Limerick



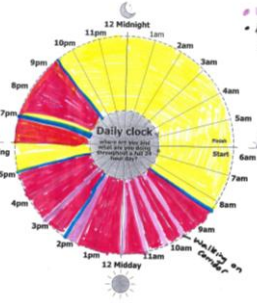
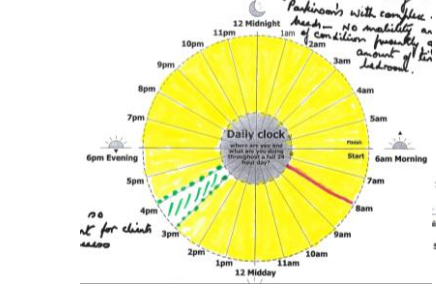
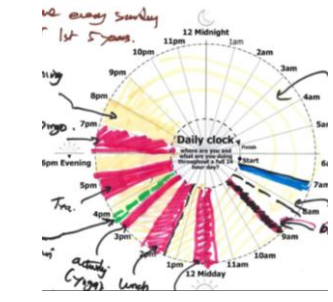
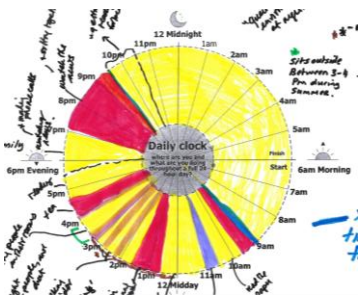
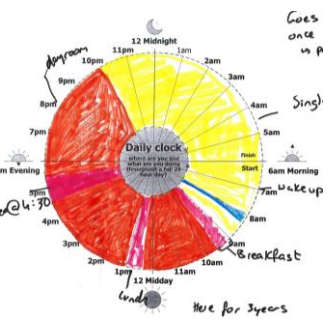




12 Midnight

Daily clock  
where are you and  
what are you doing  
throughout a full 24  
hour day?

12 Midday



6pm Evening



6am Morning

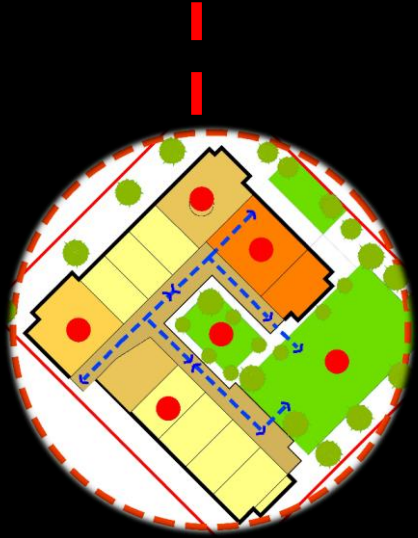


6pm Evening

6pm Evening



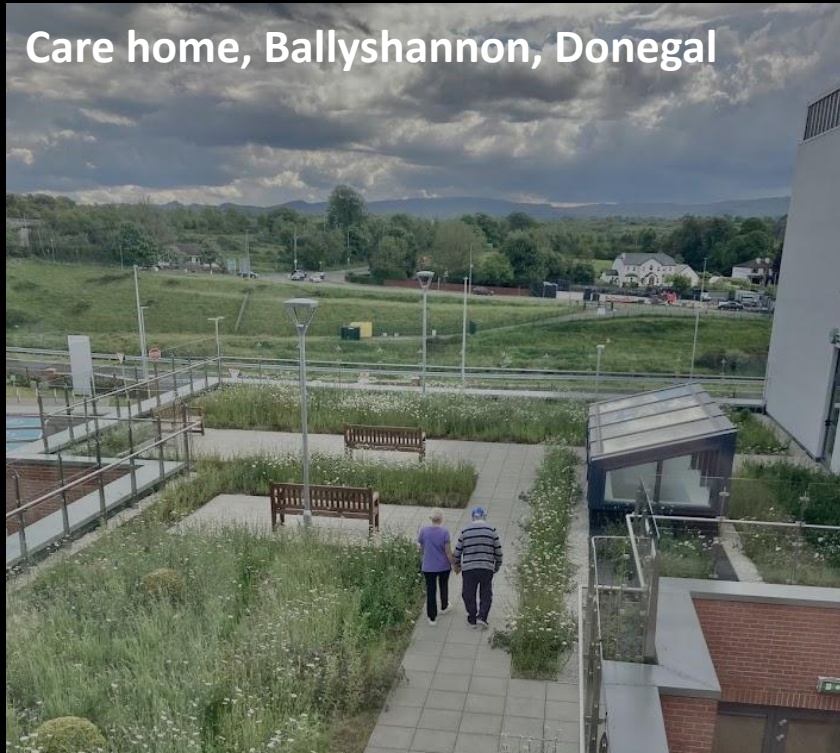
# Outdoor space: gardens, roof terraces, and balconies



- Well-designed outdoor space provides multiple benefits including access to fresh air, daylight, and views, contact with nature and, provide safe space to socialise, carry out activities or meet visitors
- Well-designed roof terraces or balconies can provide many of the same benefits as a ground level garden
- These spaces become even more important if a resident is located on an upper floor or is unable to travel to, or access a ground level garden due to illness, frailty, delirium, or infection control.

Are there shelter or safety issues associated with roof terraces or balconies?

Care home, Ballyshannon, Donegal



# Wrap Up



# The built environment and the “materiality of care”

- Care is embodied and **interdependent**
- Care happens on a spectrum of **caregiving and care receiving**
- Care operates at multiple spatial scales - there is ‘**an ecology of care**’ (Tronto, Bowlby, et al.)
- Care is ‘**placed**’ within buildings, cities. (Bowlby et. al 2022 ‘caringscapes’)
- Care depends on “**accessibility**” in terms of location and how the built environment “shapes people’s capacities”
- Care depends on places to remain supportive or conducive to care through time through **adaptability or durability**.
- **Place-attachment** and continuities of fabric and place that help us stay connected
- Care and the impacts of the built environment on the wellbeing of future generations (Davis, 2022, The Caring City: Ethics of Urban Design)





Thank you!  
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