

Model for Extra Care Housing in Wirral

Contents

1.0	Design Principles and Aims	1
1.1	Core Principles:.....	1
2.0	Brief and Design Criteria	2
2.1	Residents.....	6
2.2	Visual Impairment.....	7
2.3	Hearing Impairments	7
2.4	Mobility Impairments.....	7
2.5	Cognitive Impairment.....	7
2.6	Learning Disability.....	7
2.7	Long Term conditions.....	7
2.8	Staff.....	8
2.9	Visitors.....	8
3.0	Design Concept and layout considerations.....	8
3.1	Progressive privacy.....	8
3.2	Location and arrangement of spaces near to the main entrance	9
3.3	Circulation.....	9
3.4	Acoustics.....	10
3.5	Site specific issues.....	10
4.0	Flexibility.....	11
5.0	Interior Design.....	11
5.1	Contrast	11
5.2	Specification of finishes	11
5.3	Dividing spaces.....	12
5.4	Corridors.....	12
5.5	Orientation.....	12
5.6	Signage.....	12
6.0	Landscaping.....	12
6.1	Extra Care gardens	12
6.2	Seating.....	13
6.3	Resident participation.....	13
6.4	Footpaths.....	13
6.5	Planting	13
6.6	Boundaries.....	14
6.7	External storage.....	14
7.0	Key Design and Specification Issues.....	14
7.1	Supporting Frailty and Impairments	14
7.2	Way-finding.....	15
7.3	Lighting.....	16

1.0 Design Principles and Aims

Overview

The extra care housing programme being developed for Wirral Council is intended to help older people achieve greater independence and well being, by giving them more choice over housing and care options. Furthermore, extra care housing will help divert older people from moving into residential care and will allow the Borough to reinvest valuable resources into other services.

1.1 Core Principles:

Extra care housing enables older people to live in their own apartments in a designated development for older people, with 24 hour care and support services on site.

Key features and principles that modern extra care housing should include are as follows:-

- To provide a “home for life” as far as is reasonably practically
- To provide accessible specially designed housing that enables independent living for older people including those with physical or learning disabilities;
- To include wherever possible telecare to enable people to live safely in their own apartments and to monitor those who have dementia or other mental health problems;
- To provide communal facilities to allow community activities to be organised and to provide other services (e.g. a café/restaurant, assisted bathing);
- To provide flexible 24 hour care delivered by an on site care team;
- To provide a mixed community including those with different levels of ability and the provision of apartments with different tenures and number of bedrooms;
- To create an environment that is enabling and supports best reablement practice
- To look like a domestic home in appearance
- To create a building that its residents, families and Wirral Communities would be proud of
- To enable those who support the people, who live there to undertake tasks in a way that is efficient and can safely meet the care and support needs of residents

- To support and enable people to find privacy, comfort, support and companionship
- To be a resource for the local community
- To provide a thriving and mixed community, meeting a range of care needs, and to be able to respond to local market care needs
- To be sustainable in nature and support the environment
- The development of sites that maximise economies of scale.
- To provide for a variety of staff needs

The dependency mix of residents varies with all schemes aiming to achieve a balance between high, medium and low needs, and some providing accommodation and care for a proportion of people with dementia.

Extra care housing is not intended to be a substitute for sheltered housing or flexible community support services for older people. Instead, extra care housing is intended to complement other types of provision for older people, particularly for those who are unable to continue living in their own homes but wish to live in an independent setting with care and support staff on site.

2.0 Brief and Design Criteria

It is anticipated that as Extra Care housing could be delivered through new build, remodelling and/or conversion of existing buildings that any final design brief would have to be agreed for each scheme. However within this document are the concepts and criteria which Wirral wishes to see as a model to be adopted for extra care housing in the borough.

All extra care housing schemes in Wirral will provide independent living apartments for older people, with 24 hour care and support provided by an on-site team, and with a range of communal facilities available to support both residents and the wider community. Extra care housing schemes will offer a range of both in-reach and outreach services.

General Principles of Extra Care in Wirral

There are a number of overarching principles that should apply to extra care housing which are:

- To offer an alternative to residential care and sheltered housing;
- To create a resource for the wider community;
- To ensure staff can provide care and support discreetly;

- Variations in core design specifications, service charges, and services on offer should be kept to an absolute minimum between tenants and leaseholders in each scheme.
- Service charges need to be affordable so that individuals can afford to remain in extra care housing as a home for life

The general principles for the design of extra care housing in Wirral are as follows:

- **Apartments** - Fully accessible self contained units of accommodation that offers a 'home for life'.
- **Accessibility** - To provide an 'enabling', fully accessible environment that includes designing for mobility impairment, sensory impairment (visual and hearing), cognitive impairment and people with learning disabilities.
- **Non- institutional** - To be domestic in style and avoid creating an institutional feel, both in terms of the built environment and also fixture and fittings used.
- **Welcoming and easy to navigate** - The entrance should be clear and welcoming; with the building layout easy to understand, clearly signed, and private/public spaces obvious.
- **Communal space** - To provide flexible communal space that can be used on a multi-functional basis.
- **Staff facilities** - Should ensure that staff have the necessary functional facilities, such as changing area, rest room, sleep in facility, office space etc.

Specific Requirements

There are a number of specific requirements that Wirral would wish to see incorporated into an extra care housing scheme:

- **Flexible multi functional rooms** - support wider community use, as well as resident use; through the inclusion of a number of flexible use rooms (ideally adjoining with removable walls to enable larger spaces to be created) capable of supporting uses such as: Hairdressing, Foot care / other clinics, Therapies / treatments / consultations (ideally with adjoining en-suite facilities), Community mentoring services / social groups hobbies / activities / clubs etc.

- **Kitchen facilities** - provide kitchen facilities to enable freshly cooked meals to be provided. Kitchens to be self-sufficient and open /marketed for wider community use.
- **Restaurant/Café** - provide a restaurant / café area for both residents and the public to use.
- **Laundry** - enable residents to undertake their own laundry in their flats should they wish. In addition, a small communal laundry facility to be available for residents.
- **Privacy** - ensure 'progressive privacy' principles are adhered to, ensuring communal facilities are away from residents flats and ensuring that staff and the public do not need to walk through residents corridors to reach their destination. Also, keep the use of restrictive internal locking systems to a minimum.
- **Refuse** – if possible, to offer refuse / recycling collection points on each floor for residents use.
- **Assistive technology** - make best use of assistive technology in managing the scheme and delivering care and support services to residents. Costs must be commensurate to the risks identified.
- **TV infrastructure** - provides a communal infrastructure to deliver cable/satellite digital TV to each flat and key communal areas and broadband in each flat and key communal/staff areas.

There are a number of specific requirements in relation to meeting specific needs and these are:

Dementia - support to people with early onset / moderate levels of dementia from day one and support to severe dementia sufferers as their needs increase in the longer term.

People suffering from confusion are less likely to become frustrated if they are able to clearly see and understand their surroundings.

This is often referred to as providing a visually accessible environment. For example an environment where there are good visual clues, such as views to the outside and views from circulation spaces into communal spaces. Glazed screens and doors to communal areas enable residents to enter a room with the confidence of knowing what is going on inside.

Design features should be incorporated that will help with orientation, recognition and familiarity. A simple floor plan should be provided to guide

orientation with the help of cues and landmarks and by maximising the amount of natural light in the building, particularly where there is a change in level or direction. Smart technology can be of particular benefit to residents with dementia. For example, movement through doors can be monitored with movement (PIR) sensors without encroaching on the freedom and privacy of residents.

Each individual will respond in a different way in terms of patterns and rate of deterioration. The universal characteristics of 'home' should be recognised to create a supportive, enabling environment that might ameliorate the degenerative process.

Design Principles for Short Term Memory Loss include

- A pleasant familiar domestic environment
- Domesticity in scale and character
- Space to be surrounded by personal possessions
- A simple, easily comprehensible layout
- Visual accessibility, key vistas, open plan, etc
- Visual cues; personalising entrances, use of colour, artwork etc
- Small scale living – cluster arrangement
- A plan to facilitate wandering
- Elimination of 'dead-end' corridors
- Security
- Appropriate garden/amenity provision
- Integration with the community

Day care and intermediate or respite care

Wirral may also wish to commission day activities, respite care and intermediate care within an extra care scheme, but this would be determined on a site by site basis. Some older people with learning difficulties may wish to move into an extra care housing development. Others may be already be living in a specialist accommodation based scheme for people with learning difficulties, or in supported living scheme, and may wish to remain living in these types services. The key issue will be to give older people with learning difficulties greater choice over their housing options.

Extra care schemes

Wirral considers the maximum size for an extra care housing scheme to be 50 apartments in order to achieve economies of scale without detracting from the quality of life enjoyed by residents and to avoid schemes feeling 'institutional' in nature. Schemes can either be newly purpose built, or can be remodelled from existing sheltered housing schemes where feasible and viable.

Extra care housing schemes should provide a mix of one and two bed apartments; the exact number will be negotiated for each scheme. In addition, Wirral wishes to see a mix of tenure of extra care however the proportion will be negotiated for each scheme to reflect market conditions. Those apartments that are for sale will only be available to older people and those who require on site care and support services, as will any resale of the apartments.

Dependency mix and assessment and allocations

All people moving into extra care housing must have an assessed need for care and support, as well as a housing need. However, it is important to maintain a balanced level of need within each scheme. Allocations into extra care housing will be made through the Extra Care Housing Panel following an assessment based on need and will be ensure that there is a mix of clients who have high, medium and low care and support needs.

Location

Extra care schemes must be located near good transport links and close to a wide range of community amenities and healthcare facilities.

Operational Principles

Wirral Council wish to see extra care housing schemes operating in a manner which:

- Promotes independence, healthy, active ageing, and overall general and emotional wellbeing.
- Promotes social inclusion for residents and the local community; ensuring that older people are not left socially isolated and lonely behind their own flat door. This should be through the development of close links with the local health and social care sector, voluntary sector and private/business sector to promote the use of the extra care scheme's facilities and services, to develop a full range/programme of activities/therapies/treatments/services that could be provided to residents and the local community within the scheme.
- Empowers residents to have a strong and active say in how they wish to see their scheme operating and working – including making informed decisions around provision of new services and associated costs/service charges etc.

2.1 Residents

As well as providing an environment that can provide for emotional and support needs, it is essential that the physical environment is “enabling” in particular for those who may experience increasing care needs with the advancement of age and frailty.

2.2 Visual Impairment

Consideration needs to be given to lighting, colour schemes and tonal contrast, casting of shadows, audible signals and tactile information.

2.3 Hearing Impairments

Consideration needs to be given to the provision of hearing loops in all communal spaces. This may include materials that reduce reverberation. Greater visual access to person surroundings can help to compensate for a person who is hearing impaired

2.4 Mobility Impairments

Residents may use wheelchairs, zimmer frames, sticks or a combination of these. Space standards should accommodate the use of all mobility aids. Floors should be level with no steps and be flush at junctions such as door thresholds, shower trays and changes in floor finish. Mobility impairment can also effect reach and dexterity and therefore door fittings and fixtures should be easily reached, turn or operate.

2.5 Cognitive Impairment

Growing proportions of people now have a cognitive impairment, and so principles of design for those with dementia must be included from the outset. These will also benefit other users of the scheme. Examples may include, maximising the use of natural light, landmark features, avoidance of long monotonous corridors, or one with numerous changes.

2.6 Learning Disability

Extra care housing for people with learning disabilities does not have significantly different design issues from extra-care for older people; however consideration should be given to the needs of:

- People with a learning disability living in a residential setting or with carers who may need to move because of changing needs.
- People with a learning disability who need specially designed or adapted dwellings including the provision of suitably enabling assistive technology.
- People with a learning disability who need enhanced housing care and support.

2.7 Long Term conditions

Design should also accommodate the needs of residents with a typical long term condition and health needs associated with stroke, heart disease, cancer, diabetes and obesity.

2.8 Staff

- Need easy access to all arrears of the building
- Need easily accessible ancillary accommodation
- Need comfortable and functional facilities such as changing area, rest room and office space
- Should be bale to provide discreet care to people, eg not taking utility items through communal areas
- These areas should be given a priority need as those for residents

2.9 Visitors

- The entrance should be clear and welcoming
- Layout should be simple to understand and finding the way
- It should be obvious what spaces are public, private and semi private. Consideration could be given to providing formal and informal space for different types of visitors
- Parking should be provided for visitors

3.0 Design Concept and layout considerations

Any development of Extra Care housing would be expected to meet Wirral's current planning policies, supplementary planning guidance and sustainable design principles. Any programme of development would be expected to be designed in consultation with the Council's Department of Social Services, Housing Strategy Team and Planning colleagues. Any housing which is affordable would also be expected to meet current Homes and Communities Agency minimum standards. However, it is expected that any development would have regard to the following design concept and layout considerations. Generally, Extra Care housing should be meet full wheelchair standards throughout.

3.1 Progressive privacy

Create a balance of the various areas required for residents, staff and the wider community.

Centrally located communal facilities should be designed with progressive privacy in mind. This is key to ensuring that residents are afforded the privacy and security that all of us require within our own homes. Not only should a clear separation between areas just for residents, staff and visitors be evident but a distinction between shared spaces for residents and those for the wider community is also important. Public spaces such as communal lounges and dining rooms along with ancillary spaces such as laundries and catering kitchens should all be located centrally and away from residents' flats. Staff, visitors or day users of the building

should not need to walk through corridors off which flats are accessed in order to reach their destination. Locate areas such as assisted baths and guest rooms away from the more public areas and closer to the individual dwellings. The entrance to service areas such as the boiler and plant room, refuse store, metering room and main kitchen should be separated visually from the main entrance.

Keep restrictive internal locking systems in corridors, staircases and any communal spaces to an absolute minimum. This will ensure that residents can move around the building freely without needing to carry 'key fobs' or remember codes, since this can create an institutional environment and can outweigh the positive security aspect.

All site and building accesses should be securely controlled. Locate the entrance close to the site edge. Entry points to the site should be kept to a minimum and, if more than one, should lead directly to the main entrance door or service areas.

3.2 Location and arrangement of spaces near to the main entrance

There are many rooms that work best when located 'front of house' which can all end up competing for space near to the entrance. Care must be taken not to clutter the front of the building or leave out key spaces such as buggy storage. A small sitting area at the main entrance for residents can be a great success.

The building should have a logical layout that can be clearly understood. Communal areas that could be shared with or visited by the public, such as the lounge and the dining area, should lead from the main reception area if possible.

3.3 Circulation

Circulation areas should be adequately designed for the frail and the wheelchair user and avoid long, dull vistas. The general arrangement of circulation spaces in Extra Care should be clear and 'rational' to assist people suffering from dementia or memory loss. Breaking down the building into identifiable zones and the provision of visual clues (through pictures and graphics) and signage will greatly assist way-finding.

Careful planning can reduce the length of corridors, thus reducing the travel distances and minimising an institutional atmosphere. Walking distances for all users of the building can be kept to a minimum by the sensible location of stairs and lifts. It is ideal for both a lift to all floors and stairs to be easily reached from the main entrance. To break up walking distances for residents consider introducing small seating bays; these are

very popular with residents who want to meet in small groups for a chat, as well as providing a 'rest stop'. Terminating corridors with a place to sit and enjoy a view can avoid the sense of frustration suffered by residents with short term memory loss who might wander to the end of corridors.

3.4 Acoustics

In planning the layout, consider the acoustic separation of noisy rooms such as laundries, lift motor rooms, plant rooms and other communal spaces from residents living, sitting and sleeping areas. If layout permits, try to ensure that the living rooms of two adjoining flats are next to each other, and bedrooms of adjoining flats are next to each other.

3.5 Site specific issues

Sites come in all shapes and sizes. Adjoining buildings, existing trees, changes of level and location of mains services are a few of the factors effecting the size, height and siting of a new scheme. Consider in particular:

- Spaces should be arranged to take maximum advantage of what the site can offer, e.g.: locate individual dwellings toward the quieter areas of the site, make a focal point of an existing tree or provide views of street life. Orientate dwellings and principle communal spaces to ensure sunlight for part of the day to create a good balance of natural and artificial light and use shaded areas of the site for service spaces.
- Arrange the site layout to achieve usable external spaces; preferably a sheltered, reasonably private south facing garden, directly accessed from the principle communal spaces. If possible arrange main circulation routes to overlook the garden, to assist orientation and to encourage a sense of community. Locate buildings so that they create and define useful outside spaces that relate to the internal layout of the building. A warm south facing court yard will encourage residents to venture out and use outside spaces. The context, style and visual impact of the building must be considered, taking into account the characteristics of the local area.
- Establish a logical external circulation between the site entrance/car parking and building entrance. Ensure that residents can be dropped off and picked up by minibuses, taxis and ambulances close to the main entrance, preferably under cover.
- Ensure that refuse collection points are within limits set by the Local Authority and if vehicles are required to enter the site, ensure there is adequate turning area provided.

4.0 Flexibility

Flexibility should be a major consideration in order to avoid redundant buildings in the future or the need for residents to move on to other accommodation. Specialist Housing is always subject to changes in policy, legislation, funding and allocation arrangements. Expectations of subsequent generations will continue to rise in terms of what would be an acceptable home environment. At any one time it is likely that only a small proportion of Extra Care residents will use a wheelchair. A resident may arrive in the scheme as a wheelchair user or the onset of mobility difficulties may occur at any time during a resident's tenancy. As maximum flexibility is essential, the architecture and structural designs should allow for this.

Construction methods, flexible spaces and facilities, access to technology or the ability to install Smart technology and personal computer systems are means of trying to 'future- proof' our buildings and provide a good marketing opportunity. The extra care model for housing should have regard to flexible space and sustainability for the future.

5.0 Interior Design

Great importance should be given to a high quality interior design to provide atmosphere and ambiance for key spaces. Little consideration in this area can dramatically influence the success of a development. A well considered scheme will improve kerb appeal, provide delight and a sense of pride. Market appeal is critical in both the public and private sector for any sustainable development.

5.1 Contrast

Reduce the effects of visual impairments by incorporating colour schemes that use contrasting tones to highlight features within the building and avoid 'visual clutter'. There should be a contrast between the floor, walls and ceiling so that those with visual impairment can have an increased awareness of spatial dimensions.

5.2 Specification of finishes

Avoid shiny surfaces, especially shiny floor surfaces, as this confuses those with visual impairment. Highly patterned floor and worktop surfaces should also be avoided as this makes objects set against them harder to distinguish, e.g. a set of keys which has fallen on the floor. Natural materials assist way finding, divide spaces, highlight level changes etc and help create a warm and less clinical environment. Specify finishes for large spaces with higher ceilings such as lounges and dining rooms with a

high acoustic absorbency, in order to reduce echoes for the benefit of those with hearing impairments.

5.3 Dividing spaces

Different spaces, particularly within the 'community village' should be considered individually to enhance their function and create an ambience with a combination of lighting and subdivision of space. Large areas can be subdivided into smaller, more intimate spaces by the use of screening, indoor planting, variation in ceiling height, lighting and appropriate furnishing.

5.4 Corridors

Within corridors, create a domestic appearance with careful attention to floor finishes and choice of light fittings. Consider integrating the handrails with a dado rail and a change in paint colour or wallpaper.

5.5 Orientation

The use of colour or themes will be an important tool for assisting with way-finding. Different colour ways or use of themed wall art/photos can be adopted for different floors or areas of the building to assist visitors or residents with orientating themselves. This is particularly successful at the points where people exit from a staircase or lift.

5.6 Signage

The design of signage is paramount and a clear strategy should be developed which outlines its hierarchy, locations and style. Signage must comply with Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300:2001 provides additional points to consider.

6.0 Landscaping

The landscape setting must be structured with the specific needs of the residents in mind. Communal gardens for the shared use of the residents and wider community are often provided along with private residents' gardens and individual private patios to ground floor flats.

6.1 Extra Care gardens

The gardens associated with Extra Care accommodation function on several levels, providing both stimulating views from within the building and potential for extending internal activities into the immediate surroundings. This external space can be divided into a sequence of activity zones:

6.2 Seating

This should be designed to facilitate access for residents of all abilities, particularly wheelchair users. Benches should be located at all main entrances for those awaiting transport. The design and siting of seating must also consider the requirements for a minibus drop-off under cover and to allow for the anticipated size and tracking of emergency and service vehicles, turning heads and waiting bay).

6.3 Resident participation

Small, individual private gardens or patios provide residents with their own outside area and an opportunity to personalise this space with potted plants and garden furniture. Raised beds enable elderly or wheelchair bound residents to appreciate the planting and the opportunity to contribute to gardening activities. If the site allows, an external residents drying yard can be linked to the laundry area.

6.4 Footpaths

Secure wandering circuits of a suitable material should be integrated into the design to provide opportunities for exercise. Seating points should be strategically located to allow for resting. Sudden unguarded changes in level are to be avoided; only very gentle ramps are acceptable. The route to the entrance from the parking area should be level or ramped. Dropped kerbs should be provided to facilitate access from parking bays to the main entrance.

All paths should provide a clear route back to their origin, and dead ends are to be avoided at all times. Short cuts should be readily anticipated.

6.5 Planting

The planting strategy should in principle provide a palette of plants to stimulate the senses. This will include tall sweeping forms to provide movement, varied textures to create interesting sounds and encourage the sense of touch, vibrant colours and highly aromatic plant mixes to give year-round interest. The planting specification should be carefully coordinated to minimise maintenance and provide opportunities for resident participation. Watering points and storage facilities should also conveniently located to assist ongoing maintenance. Turf should be restricted to large open zones and ground cover utilised for smaller areas and thin strips to reduce mowing requirements.

Existing vegetation should be retained as appropriate to provide shading and an immediate sense of maturity. The retention of trees will be dependent on the findings of a detailed arboricultural survey and all trees

found to be in a dangerous condition must be removed or surgically improved. If a tree survey is required this should be carried out at feasibility stage, as the location of individual trees or tree groups may influence the form of the building or location of terraces, paths and other hard standings.

6.6 Boundaries

The garden should be enclosed with appropriate fencing to ensure security and to avoid uncontrolled wandering. Early discussions with the Planning Authority should be carried out as these will influence the design and specification of the boundary treatment.

6.7 External storage

Adequate refuse, clinical waste and recycling storage must always be provided. The size and requirements for secure cycle and buggy storage must also be considered.

7.0 Key Design and Specification Issues

7.1 Supporting Frailty and Impairments

- 'Free-swing' door closers linked to the fire alarm should be fitted to the front doors of flats and other doors regularly used by residents. Remove obstructions such as fire compartment doors, which can be held open on magnetic pads. This will avoid the hazard and frustration associated with heavy overhead door closers. Specify vision panels to doors along circulation routes and leading to communal rooms.
- Specify handrails along both sides of circulation routes that are appropriately scored to assist way-finding for those with visual impairments. Consider the design of handrails which return to the wall to avoid snagging of clothing on their free ends, which can easily lead to a fall for a frail older person
- Specify appropriate ironmongery, taps etc for older people with limited dexterity
- At least one stretcher sized lift should be included to accommodate long-base wheelchairs/stretchers/coffins
- Wheelchair standard design should be provided throughout the building. However, consideration should be given to the fact that certain areas such as residents' individual kitchens can be designed for adaptation for people who do not use a wheelchair until a later stage in their life. This will avoid costly fit outs at the initial stage and result in a more user-friendly space for the majority of residents who will never use a wheelchair in the kitchen. Allowances for future

changes should be designed in from the beginning: the construction and detailing of the building should allow for ceiling hoists to be retrofitted within flats and stud-partition walls should be reinforced for grab rails in bath and shower rooms

- Specify level-threshold showers. Flooding in en-suite bathrooms with flush showers has been found to be a problem frequently faced in this typology. Locate the shower away from doors and take care with building tolerances, detail a fall in the floor of the shower tray area only. Specify a shower head that can be tilted downwards and not fixed at one angle
- Combine shower head rails with a grab rail to avoid residents pulling the shower rails off the wall in the event of slipping
- Specify sockets and switches at appropriate height
- Generally any ramps should, as a minimum, comply with the provisions of the Building Regulations.
- Acoustics: The importance of adequate sound separation and reduction of reverberation is especially important in Extra Care schemes where some, but not all residents suffer from hearing impairments. In some cases Building Control have relaxed the stringent reverberation requirements in corridors and stairwells based on the user group.

7.2 Way-finding

- Good use of natural light and views out are essential, particularly on circulation routes and at stair and lift landings
- The use of clear glazed screens to communal areas greatly improves the feeling of light and space within the building and enables good visual access throughout. Floor to ceiling glazing could be introduced where it is safe to do so in order to create an open, contemporary feel.
- Good use of colour and tonal contrast and tactile materials aid orientation. These ensure that corridors do not become monotonous and assist way-finding. Use 'accent' colours to pick out important landmarks or entrances
- Recessed doors to flats and kitchen window-sills onto corridors provide a place for residents to display personal items which assist in distinguishing flats
- Small seating bays along corridors or overlooking interesting vistas are very popular with residents and help to create landmarks to aid orientation.

7.3 Lighting

- Lighting design is crucial. A range of different luminaires and light sources should avoid glare and sharp shadows
- Careful design of switching and dimming will ensure that different atmospheres can be created and different needs catered for
- The importance of natural lighting is strongly emphasised as this can impact moods, way finding, solar gain etc. Corridors should ideally be lit from windows or rooflights (including kitchen windows onto corridors) to avoid long, dull vistas. Consider floor voids to enable natural light to reach lower floors. Balconies and winter gardens enable natural light and views of nature and contribute to wellbeing
- Avoid numerous light fittings in a regimented array, which may cause a clinical, institutional appearance and avoid performance specifying lighting as BS lux levels as this will restrict the end design due to the requirement for uniformity. Balance ceiling mounted fittings with the use of wall mounted fittings and specify feature lights where appropriate with suitable lux levels, eg: communal lounges, winter gardens, halls etc
- Avoid sharp contrasts between highly lit and dark spaces, as the ability of one's eyes to adapt to different levels of light decreases with age. Specify adjustable and flexible lighting to create various atmospheres or reduce/increase lighting levels to suit an activity
- Install lighting along the main routes of pathways so that the garden can be used safely in the evening. Good lighting is also required to all parking areas to provide surveillance lighting and CCTV as required for security.