

The LinkAges Intergenerational Housing Project

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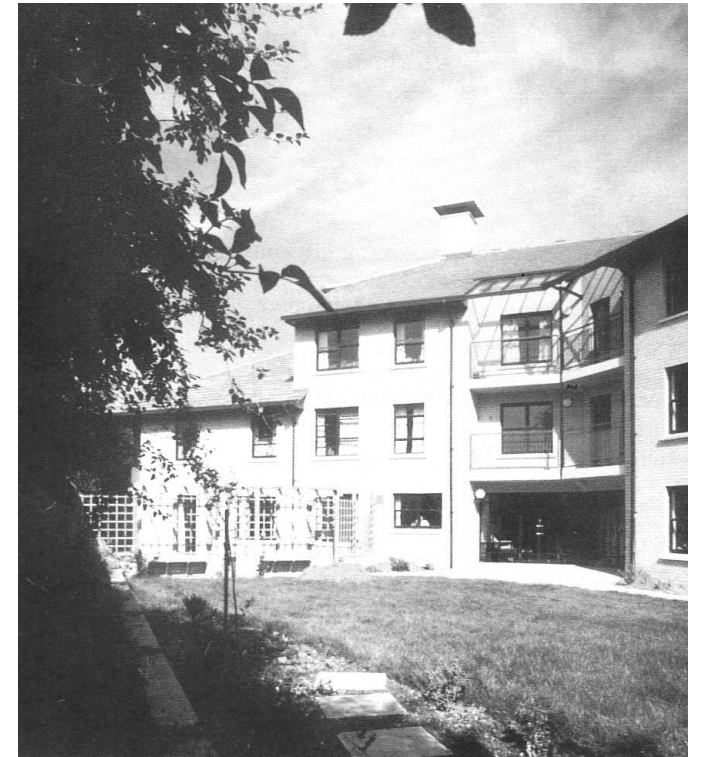
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CHS GROUP 
housing, care, and community services in Cambridgeshire


90⁺
YEARS



Background:

- The LinkAges project is a collaboration between CHS Group – Cambridge Housing Society Ltd, housing 7000 people across Cambridgeshire and
- LinkAges are comparing 3 different projects
- Cambridge Hub – a student led organisation that aims to support students to make a positive change in their community
- Based at a 25 unit sheltered scheme built in 1987



Why this project?

- Cambridgeshire County Council withdrew Supporting People funding in 2014
- Staff support was cut
- Resident satisfaction was falling
- Newer residents change the traditional demographic
- Aim to provide companionship and improve health & wellbeing of tenants through volunteering



The Students

- Recruited from Cambridge colleges
- Post graduate (PhD) students
- International element
- Interviewed by both agencies
- Values based interview
- Training in human centred design and project planning
- Safeguarding, dementia and money matters



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Tenant views:

- I like the students, they are nice to talk to- I've always been with young ones and am delighted to be with them
- Very often people don't want to join in
- Some people work, don't have time. You can't force people
- I didn't really chose this place I just needed somewhere to go
- 33% take an active part in student activity/support
- 33% join in community events such as film nights or BBQ
- 33% have no interaction with students

Student commitment:



- 15 hrs input per month (was 30)
- Includes admin and planning time
- Rent charged at 80% market rent
- Furnished accommodation
- Free Wi-Fi
- Collect data for the project analysis

CHS commitment

- Provided college standard furnished accommodation
- High speed Wi-Fi necessary for student dissertations and data
- Fees to Cambridge Hub to manage/supervise the students and collect data
- Amenity funding for activities

Student views:

- Fed up with college accommodation
- Hands on volunteering with older people was exciting for me
- I can't help my Gran directly but I can give back through this scheme
- I love having my own space
- I feel more of a community here than in college



Legacy:

- Project is closing after 2 yrs
- Due to repayment of Housing Grant required to continue to house under 55's in a grant-funded building
- Students felt they had benefited in communication skills “good knowledge for life”
- Small number of residents have benefited greatly in terms of wellbeing and feeling of security
- Self sustaining activity group – such as resident committee
- Activity calendar
- Communal events such as BBQ and events will revert to the Housing Officer
- Housing will revert to over 55's
- We hope to have a similar arrangement with ‘keyworkers’ which will satisfy Homes England
- Not easy to ‘retrofit’ IGH into a scheme