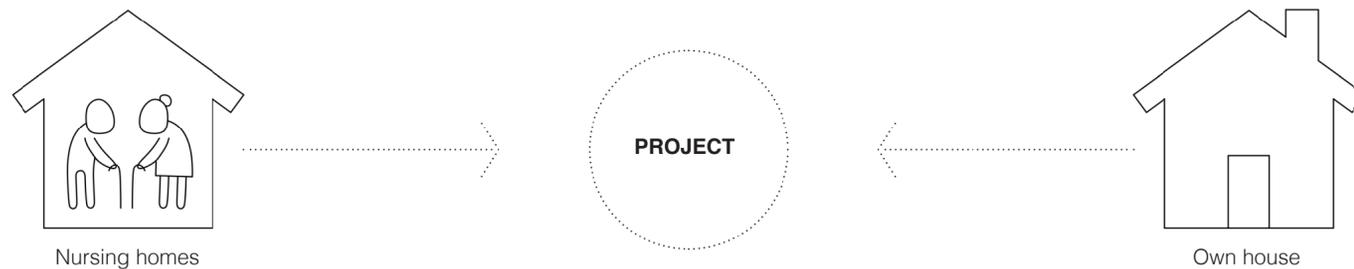


Age is just a number: co-housing across generations

Binder 1

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Master thesis in Architecture
Oslo School of Architecture and Design
Fall 2022*



- How can a mutually beneficial relationship between students and elderly in Oslo - both prone to loneliness and social isolation - be facilitated through an intergenerational housing project?

Abstract

*"For many years institutional accommodations were the only housing available to the aged in need of shelter. Older people were often grouped indiscriminately with socially maladjusted, chronically ill, or mentally disturbed patients, and crowded into dormitory-like sleeping quarters.... In recent times, housing and other assistance for older people have undergone basic changes through increased government subsidies and the introduction of social services. Moreover, there has been a vast number of studies and publications, and this has resulted in a greater general awareness of the needs of the aging. Although financial assistance is of course still vital, more emphasis than ever before is being placed on the physical, mental, and social aspects of the problem"*¹

Although the extract is from a book published in 1981, the needs and conflicts regarding the elderly are still very much relevant today. Conflicts of independence, health, safety and relocation makes the elderly a complicated group to accommodate for. Referred to as "The Housing Dilemma, the book introduces housing as part of the complex question of providing for the elderly:

*"There is now a greater awareness of the necessity of providing special housing. Public agencies will have no choice but to become more involved and play a more active role in providing suitable accommodation for all sizes of households and age groups. The increasing percentage of the elderly population has emphasized the need for improving housing specifically for them. This, therefore, will be one of the most urgent and challenging problems facing the next generation of planners and architects."*²

Raising the same questions as 40 years ago, this Diploma will investigate the issue on how to provide housing for the elderly, taking into consideration known issues associated with old age such as loneliness and declining health.

A historic shift in demography is coming as Norway is aging at an increasing rate and fertility is low. In just 10 years from now, for the first time, there will be more elderly than children in the population. This project investigates how changing the way we design housing for the elderly can respond to the demographic shift, by proposing a shift from institutionalized, age-segregated housing to an age-inclusive and social way of living. The shift in how we view housing for the elderly creates an opportunity to rethink how we build. New proposals for elderly housing investigate a larger degree of independence within safe limits, in the shape of a small-scale community that facilitates an active and social lifestyle. This project is a collection of research and various references to show the benefits of rethinking housing for the elderly. As we are already aware of the increase in the elderly population, we have the opportunity to prepare for the shift in demographics. It is an opportunity to look at how we provide healthy housing for the elderly and facilitate improvements within our field.

Over the last years, the pandemic made a great impact on all of us. For the students, existing problems relating to their housing situation became more noticeable. Many experienced loneliness and social isolation as a result of living cramped and alone in small student housing units with little to no contact with neighbors. The lack of shared spaces outside the single units became evident in the existing housing situation.

Through an architectural project focused on sharing and intergenerational relations, the goal is to rethink how we can accommodate an increasingly aging population. This project proposes an alternative way of living for students in early adulthood with senior citizens in the later years after retirement, with the goal of enhancing quality of life for two age groups particularly prone to loneliness in their current housing situations. By investigating different levels of sharing in an intergenerational housing community, the idea is to facilitate a social framework that can provide a safe, active and lively everyday life for its residents.

The chosen site is located at Adamstuen, a well-established area of care within the city centre of Oslo. The site is located along Thulstrups gate, a calm, dead end street towards Ring 2. The proposal consists of an L-shaped building with a public ground floor, 63 student units and 32 apartments for elderly, as well as a community house in the secluded courtyard.

Bibliography

Goldenberg, L., (1981) *Housing for the Elderly: New trends in Europe*. Garland STPM Press, New York.

¹ (Goldenberg, L., 1981, p.1)

² (Goldenberg, L., 1981, p.2)

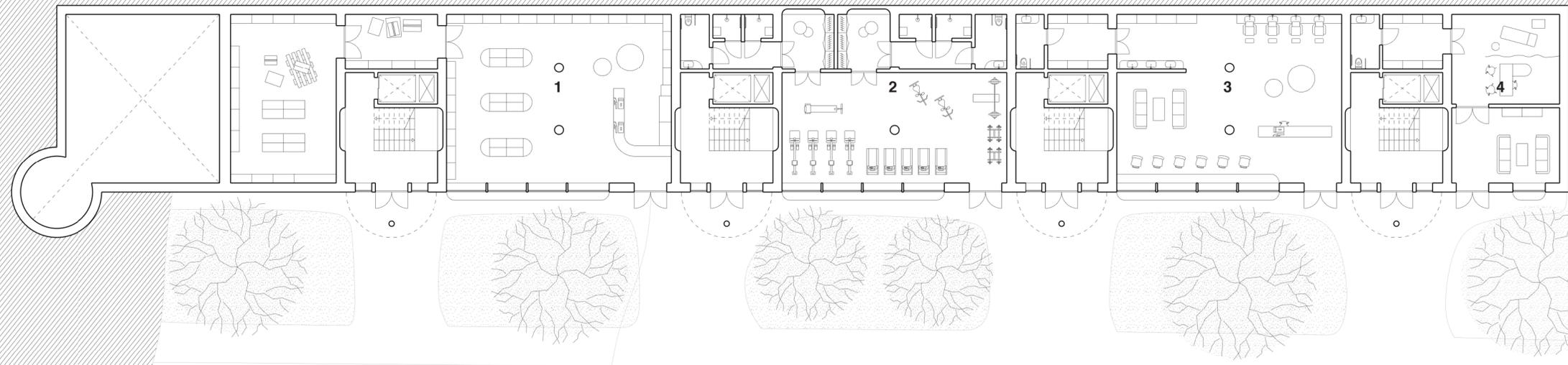




Site plan

1:1000





- 1. Grocery store and post office
- 2. Gym
- 3. Hairdresser
- 4. Examination room for doctors appointments

Public ground floor towards Thulstrups gate

1:200

