

case study



Sector: Extra Care Housing in a Grouped Setting

Client: Fold Housing Association
Application: Dementia Care

the dilemma

Dementia is an age-related disease affecting one person in 20 over the age of 65. An ageing population will result in a growing number of sufferers. There are already approx 750,000 people in the UK (including 15,000 in Northern Ireland) who have dementia and this is expected to rise to 1.5 million people by 2050.



the need

Seven Oaks Dementia Care Unit

Built in March 2001, Seven Oaks is an extra care purpose-designed dementia care unit - one of the first schemes of its kind to support dementia in the community.

The brainchild of Fold Housing Association and Foyle Health & Social Services Trust, the unit solves the need for a locally supported living environment specialising in dementia care.



All the reassurance you need

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"Some people who are new to the unit, have a history of unsettled sleep patterns. Even after a few days they seem more settled, calmer and sleeping through the night."

Janice Pomeroy, Senior Care Worker.



"It's a really calm and homely place. Residents can make their own decisions - can get up when they want, go to dining rooms or eat in their own rooms. The family can visit anytime. They are treated as individuals and we identify individual hobbies and interests. We run daily activities - simple things like helping do the dishes and dusting, to musical evenings or taking the men out to play snooker."

Toni Strawbridge, Seven Oaks Manager.

the need

Seven Oaks Dementia Care Unit

It currently has 30 residents each with their own en-suite bedroom and offers the following facilities:

- **Severe dementia** - high dependency area offers additional support such as problems with wandering and incontinence
- **Mild-moderate dementia** - a homely environment which is free from rules and strict timetables
- **Five two-bedroom bungalows** - enables couples to continue living together when the dementia illness might otherwise force a separation
- **Re-ablement** - Seven Oaks has supported the development of an initiative that has enabled 150 people to successfully return to their own homes after leaving hospital with the most appropriate package of care and technology in place



Scheme background - a real community

The innovative layout of Seven Oaks is based on the town of Derry, and uses local landmarks such as the Diamond (a well-known war memorial) as a central hub, with familiar street names leading off it. The unit is built around a central courtyard garden with circular corridors leading around it.

As well as individual rooms with en-suite bathrooms, there are several shared sitting rooms, dining rooms and a pub. One street has various shops, including a grocers, hairdressers and chemists, often using the names of shops in Derry. The decoration is homely and old items such as manual sewing machines and gramophones are used to provide a sense of familiarity.



Streets from Derry



Pub



Personal possessions outside residents' rooms



Old shops from Derry



Familiar street names

What a difference Seven Oaks makes:

These are just some of the benefits over traditional institutional care:

- own bathroom, own personal space
- encourage social interaction, personal hobbies and interests
- opportunities to make tea, do the dishes and light housework
- very calm, quiet place, no buzzers going off
- treated as individuals, families can visit any time
- improves the quality of life - more independent, own identity
- alcohol related dementia is not excluded
- person centred, holistic care, look beyond the dementia

Special risks faced by people who are confused

- **Falls** - twice as likely to fall as other older people
- **Explosion** - they may turn on gas hobs but forget to light them
- **Fires and scalding** - they may be unaware of the special dangers
- **Flooding** - they may block the toilet or leave taps running
- **Wandering** - they may lose track of time, go out and get lost in the middle of the night
- **Medication** - they may forget to take tablets on a regular basis

Resident case studies:

Mary, 83

Mary had gone through a triple heart bypass and was struggling with her medication. This led to her being very breathless, she wasn't eating, suffered isolation and appeared to be a very frail elderly lady when she arrived at Seven Oaks.

A new lease of life

Now Mary has a healthy appetite and is always in the dining room, making tea or cleaning the dishes. She loves social interaction and often uses the phone in

her room to call her family. Her health has really improved and she takes regular shopping trips into town on the bus. Her independence truly has been reinstated.

Derek, 73

Derek was institutionalised; with limited speech his social skills were non-existent. With alcohol related dementia and bowel cancer, he had rejected medical intervention and hit rock bottom.

A true transformation

After joining Seven Oaks his life has been transformed. He has built solid working relationships with staff. Social skills have improved tenfold, he loves going out in the car, music and dancing and he is fully aware of his surroundings. His contrary personality really shines through.

Phyllis, 86

One of the early admissions, Phyllis came from a residential unit where she became at risk due to wandering. She was very down and confused, but now she has got her sparkle back and her personality has come to life. The medication was reduced and her family saw a difference within a few weeks.

Vera, 85

Vera was the first resident who joined the unit in May 2001 and if it wasn't for the scheme there is no doubt that she would be in a nursing home or psychiatric unit. A very bright lady who has won many spelling tests and even has a typing certificate whereby she gained 98%.



* Names have been changed for privacy.

For further information please contact marketing on 01977 660325



the technology

Door sensors



An alert will be raised should the doors be opened during the night. This is particularly important for residents who are prone to wandering at night. On one occasion, we had a resident who was prone to going into other resident's bedrooms and moving the furniture so this sensor was particularly helpful.

Bed and chair sensors



If someone is at risk of falling, we can be alerted if they have got out of bed in the night and not returned within a certain time. Of course, in most cases this is due to a visit to the bathroom so we adjust the timing of the sensor depending on the person. It can also be adjusted should the person be feeling unwell.

Fall detectors



We use these during the day time, if we have a particular problem with someone who may be unsteady on their feet.

Heat extremes



Provides advanced alerts of extreme temperatures which could lead to unhealthy living conditions. It is designed to detect three specific temperature situations: high, low and rapid rate of rise in order to raise specific alerts allowing appropriate action to be taken.

Flood detectors



The flood detector is a neat, unobtrusive sensor that provides an early warning of potential flood situations. The flood detector provides added reassurance, giving extra protection to individuals who are likely to be at risk from leaving taps turned on.

An evaluation of the technology is available on request.

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Tunstall is a founder member of the Continua Health Alliance

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