

Leixlip Draft Local Area Plan Submission

- In relation to the provision of accommodation in support of older living, at the moment there is no facility whereby an older person can stay within the Community that they connected with and invested in a number of years earlier, by becoming involved in the community life.
- If an older person seeks accommodation that supports them in their older ageing then unless they can afford the cost of adapting their existing accommodation, they have little option but to leave the community they have become accustomed to and seek accommodation elsewhere, and in the process establish new relationships both on their own behalf and that of their extended relations, such as their children and grandchildren.
- If a facility existed whereby an older person had the option to continue their older living within their community of choice (it must be acknowledged that not every older person would wish to continue into their older age within the community, as some would wish to leave that community and move elsewhere), but for those who wish to remain there is little option currently other than to seek a nursing home or continue in their existing house.
- **If, when a housing estate is being constructed (whether private or social) there is an obligation, placed as a condition in the planning permission and obligated by**

the Development Plan policy, that for every 10 (or 9, or 8) houses constructed one house must be constructed and designed in a way that would support older living, and the house could be bought by the Local Authority (as happens currently in relation to Part V) to be made available for older living by older person who wishes to remain within a community (access to such accommodation could be managed by a specific housing agency to a policy developed by the Local Authority). (It should be noted that the future population projections indicate that a high proportion of society will be made up of older persons).

- The Older person, when notified of their success in accessing a home within their community, can then sell their own home in the usual way into the market place, thereby avoiding the cost of having to adapt their home to support them in their older age, and rent the house from the LA/Housing Agency, that supports them to continue life within their community, using the funds released to them in the sale of their old home.
- The benefit to society is that the perceived 'house blockers' no longer block young families from being able to access a home to suit their needs, just as this house suited the now older person's needs in the past when they first settled into the community.

- Another benefit is that the older person can continue their contribution to the community of their choice.
- It also removes the need to move out of their community, removes the concern placed on their offspring to worry about them being forced to settle into a new community.
- A benefit to all and society in general is that they can continue their availability to contribute to the community in such a way that they can earn from that community the protection of the community, the companionship of the community in such a way that the older person is less likely to have concerns about security, and be less inclined to feel isolated and lonely.
- Another benefit is that the District Health nurse from the HSE can call regularly to the older person to monitor their health, particularly where their houses are clustered. One park up and the nurse can visit a number of houses.
- Each house can be designed with rising sinks, rising cooking facilities, wider doorways, wider movement areas, purpose built bedrooms, hoists in bathrooms etc. If a building is two storey it can incorporate a means of accessing the upper floor by way of stair lift or lift in the hallway.
- If the older person cannot maintain their independence they can then access an appropriate nursing home to support them with their needs.
- Such housing can be made available for other older persons considering renovations to their

own homes, to view, and I suspect there are product suppliers who would welcome such an initiative as there is currently no place where an older person can visit to view such facilities.

- It should be noted that only 20% of older persons contract Dementia, and therefore 80% do not get dementia. Persons who do not contract dementia need supports from society, that in turn facilitates their ability to contribute to society to earn those supports, and research shows that in such circumstance persons are less likely to need to access nursing homes.
- Older persons can, in theory, provide babysitting facilities, mentoring facilities, contribution to resident associations, contributions to neighbourhood watch etc.
- This provides Kildare County Council (who could propose a variation to the County Development Plan) with an opportunity to provide leadership in this area, and in doing so steal a march on other local authorities who are striving to present new initiatives to support the elderly in society.

END

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