

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

HOUSING FOR SENIORS



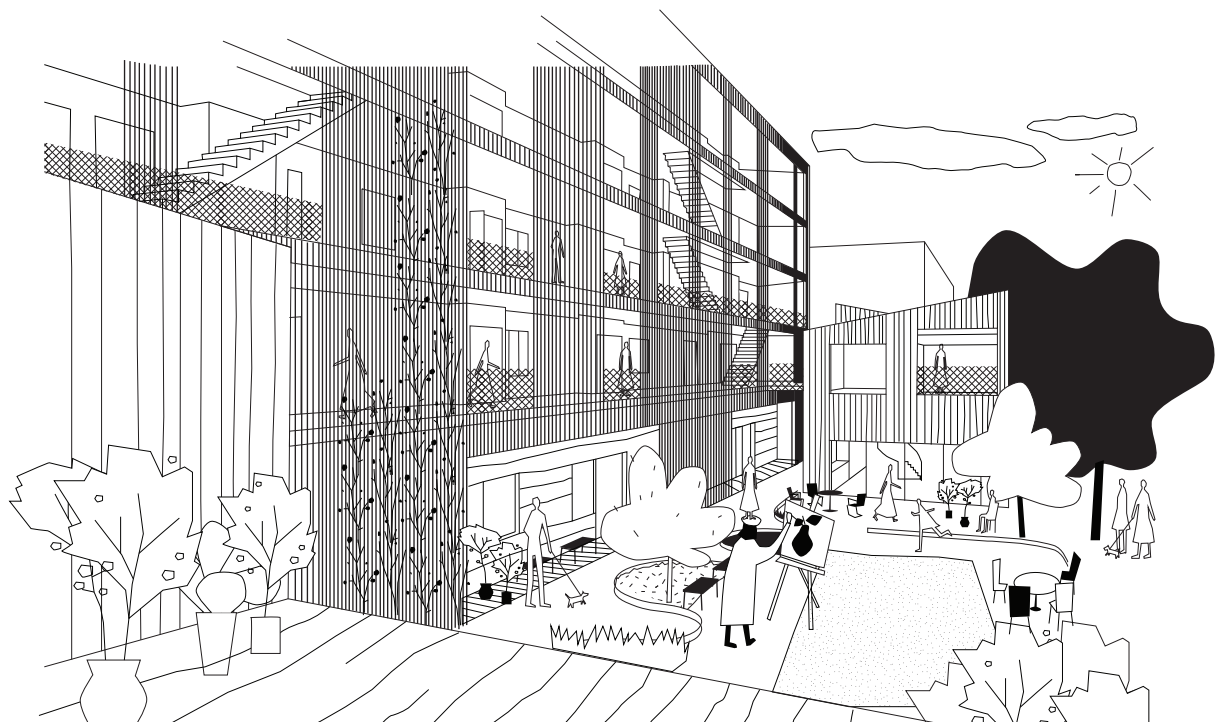
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ABSTRACT

With an older population that is growing larger we are facing a challenge in how to build for the elderly. There is a need for more alternatives that can cope with the different demands and preferences of a heterogeneous group of young and old pensioners. Society's resources are not in phase with the increasing population, which means that friends, family and other social networks will play a greater role in supporting older people. Community has a great impact on human beings well-being. This thesis looks at the concepts of home and community in relation to an ageing society. The aim is to investigate how to create quality housing that correspond to new needs that arises as people grow older by exploring the social aspects of living. How can architecture create better conditions for community?

Information has been gathered through interviews and study visits, literature and media. Sketching and (model) workshops have pushed my design forward. The result is a co-housing project for seniors at Guldmyntsgatan in Göteborg.

The ambition has been to investigate the interaction between the private dwelling and shared space, and how the design and connection between these rooms can improve and encourage social connections between residents. How can architecture contribute to improve the social life in a building and how does the relationship between private and social spaces look like?

In a society fixated by youth no one wants to be old. People often avoid thinking about how to change their living situation when they grow older and many people do not move before they really have to. By creating quality housing where the focus is put on social networks and community, perhaps people will be willing to move earlier. This prevents people from experiencing unnecessary insecurity and loneliness as they become older. Instead of associating a new way of living with something negative it could be seen as a new fun phase of life.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

A few years ago my grandmother made the decision to move from her house where she had been living for 35 years. At the age of 86 she moves almost 500 kilometers to be closer to her family. She creates a new home in a smaller apartment that is easier maintained. The move itself takes a few days but getting there has been a long process. Moving from your home can be a difficult thing and for an older person even more so since the move also stirs up a lot of emotions and worries about getting older. Talking to my grandmother about these things made me start thinking about different needs that arises when you get older and how different ways of living can create better conditions for a more fulfilling life.

Sweden and large parts of the world are facing big challenges to meet the housing demands of an older generation that is growing larger. Within a decade, the amount of people over 65 years old will increase by over one million. A lot of older people live in apartments that are not adapted to their needs and alternatives on the housing market seem few. There are approximately 1.1 million pensioner households in Sweden and less than 40 percent consist of couples living together. More than half of the women and a third of the men above 65 years old live alone. Loneliness as well and not to feel like an active part of the society are some of the problems. (Kärnekull, 2009, p. 52-59)

The majority of the housing today are built after an idea of individual and independent units with little or no space for communal activities. Only a small part of the dwellings challenge the norm, those based on community.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how architecture can create better conditions for community and in what way the design can contribute to improve the social life in a residential building. The thesis consists of a theoretical part based on literature studies and a design part where I present my design proposal and concept for a senior co-housing project located along Guldmyntsgatan in Göteborg.

The framework for a social life should be constructed without forcing people to socialize but allow for spontaneous meetings between neighbours. It has been important to look into the relationship between private and social spaces but also different levels of privacy within these spaces. Also, to get a deeper understanding of how common spaces work and are experienced differently depending on how they are programmed and where they are located.

Besides exploring various opportunities for community, it has been important to understand what it means to be older, *who* the elderly are and new needs that arises while aging. A few aspects have been particularly important to take into consideration, for example how the layout of the apartments can work well for those who might need help at home further on.

The report begins with an introduction to the subject where I briefly discuss issues like *home*, *aging*, *senior housing* and *living in community*. I also discuss different forms of communal space in relation to private space. This is followed by a summary of my study visits and design process. Then I introduce the urban context connected to my design project. This is followed by a presentation of the actual building with illustrations and drawings. I conclude with a summary and discussion around the process, work and topic.

In this report, the term *senior housing* is used as a direct translation of the Swedish concept *seniorbostäder*.

Good housing and living environments is a prerequisite for us to feel good and be able to get by even at an old age. Therefore it is important to dare to think about getting older and prepare for it, even though it is not simple. Remain living in the current home is often stated as the best option for elderly and many elderly wish to stay in their own home as long as possible. At the same time loneliness and insecurity are huge problems for many older people. To remain living in the own apartment does not need not be the same as being alone. By enhancing the feeling of a “smaller neighborhood” within the residential building this could increase the sense of community.

THE HOME

Our home is a way to define ourselves and our place in a greater context. This is where we pull back and relax in all phases of life. Living in your own apartment is still the most common and popular way of living. With age the home becomes even more important since we spend more time there. We find it harder to move around, get tired easier and do not have the strength to be as active as we used to be. The more dependent we get on others help the more important it is that the home correspond to our needs. To think about new forms of housing more suited to aging is not just about the accessibility of the home, but also ideas about social networking; family, friends, neighbors. It is about feeling secure and have access to service. The most innovative housing option today is self-organizing collective dwellings. (Huber, 2008, p.78-79)

For the building environment to be able to support the good life, there must be an understanding of how the environment can influence, support and encourage but also how it discourages and hamper. The physical environment alone can not make people happy or create community but it affects us and is relevant to facilitate or obstruct a good life. A positive identification with the home environment, to feel safe and secure and the opportunity to connect with other people is central to humans well-being.

Human territorial behavior provides a starting point for the design of different spaces within a building through peoples need of protection and oversight and clear limits between private and public areas. A positive identification is facilitated by the possibility to influence the living environment. There is a strong identification between the image the person has of himself and the room he lives in. (Tham, 2007)

LIVING & AGEING

Ageing is an ongoing process that begins when we are born, but it is not the same thing as growing old. Elderly refers to everyone above 65 years old which today make up a large part of the population. Aging is individual. For many, the final phase of life include illnesses and disabilities but not for all. Some people pass without any illness and the length of the sick periods varies. In general, the aging process begins later today than it did before.

(Paulsson, 2008, p.11)

A number of interacting factors affects the human aging. The development today is characterized by an increasing elderly population but also that people are becoming healthier at a higher age. This is the impact of improved health care, prevention of diseases, improvement of social conditions and a less wearing work life. While humans are healthier longer this also mean that periods of sickness in the final stages of life may increase because the developments in healthcare also keep us alive longer. The development has led to that the definition of the elderly begins to transform and break down into smaller age ranges: *young elderly* (65-75 years old) *average elderly* (75-85 years old) and *older elderly* (85 years old and above).

The view on elderly has changed and the limit of who is considered “old” pushed higher up in age. A negative consequence of a larger group of elderly could be that the gap between generations increases if society does not make room for meaningful activities for the elderly. Being needed is crucial for peoples self esteem and self identity. To maintain social and mental functions, it is important that society is working in a way so that older people have the possibility to fulfill their needs in another way than they have today. Greater integration of the elderly in society is an important part of healthy aging.

One difficulty when people grow old is to adapt their interests according to age and not seek to pursue interests in the same way as before. This causes frustration and disappointment at not suffice, and succeed in the same way as for. Another important issue is how to take advantage of older people’s knowledge after retirement. Perhaps older people can be active in new ways, as advisers, consultants or mentors. It is important to be aware of both their own limitations but also new opportunities.

To change and find new interests and new solutions in new situations is important for good aging as well as to look upon aging as an ongoing process, not something that happens at a specific age. This also makes it possible to manage life changes and adapt to new conditions. (Dehlin, 2000, p 20-23)

The economy will not be in phase with the increasing aging population, which means that the opportunity to get support and help from the community will be reduced. As a result more and more older people will have to manage on their own or with more informal help from friends and relatives. Social housing and social environment will have a great responsibility to deal with many elderly disabilities, such as insecurity, loneliness and lack of meaningful activities. (Paulsson, 2008, p.12)

SENIOR HOUSING

New ideas concerning housing for elderly has been tried in municipalities and county councils since the 1950s. The so called "Ädelreformen" in 1992 created change. Municipalities were given full responsibility for long-lasting care, health and social care for the elderly and disabled. The municipality was obliged to establish housing for people with special needs, sheltered housing, nursing and care homes. As a result many municipalities began to dismantle dwellings that did not meet the modern requirements for accessibility. The number of places in retirement homes has decreased and the disappearing old senior homes have been replaced by different forms of senior housing. Since the year 2000, the number of senior housing units have increased from 11 000 to 33 000 and half of the increase consists of old rebuilt senior housing. Still, the total supply of apartments has declined at the same time as the amount of elderly have increased. There are problems with people who feel isolated and insecure in their own homes.

(Kärnekull, 2009, p. 52-59)

In Sweden, Senior housing (*seniorbostäder*) is an umbrella term for all dwellings that are not covered by *särilagsstiftningen* (they do not get the investment support from the government that apply to assisted living and "trygghetsboende") and intended for people over a certain age, often 55 years old, without children living at home.

Within the concept there are a number of different housing types with a variation of services, themes and organisations. The main difference between senior housing and other residential buildings is the age requirements and that the dwellings always should be accessible on ground floor. There are usually common space shared between the apartments and sometimes a host that is paid for by the residents. Although the structure and organisation of the senior dwelling can look very different, the homes are clustered, forming an architectural whole. (Abrahamsson, 2012, p159-160)

Housing for elderly is often associated with the retirement home or assisted living which tend to create a negative image of senior housing where elderly is looked upon as helpless, weak and sick. Despite this, there is a growing interest in senior housing that has increased in the last decade. Elderly consists of people of different ages with different economic and cultural backgrounds. The elderly are not a heterogeneous group, which suggest that a wider range of different types of housing would better meet their different needs and preferences. There is a major challenge in providing the various groups of older people a safe and good accommodation on their own terms.

When talking about senior housing it is relevant to mention a relatively new form of housing for elderly; *trygghetsboende*. Trygghetsboende is a result of an investigation made by *äldreboendedelegationen* where they concluded that many older people wanted to leave their homes for a housing with staff available during daytime to achieve greater community and security. This meant a radical change in views on older people's housing preferences. A new form of housing was proposed for elderly who experience insecurity, loneliness and might require help in their everyday life. Trygghetsboende can be categorized as a form of "in-between housing" which are dwellings for the second half of life, in the borderland between ordinary housing and assisted living. Residents have to be over 70 years old. The hope was that this new form of housing could reduce the need for assisted living which is the most costly form of care for the elderly. In 2009 it was decided that the investment aid for assisted living also included trygghetsboende. Certain requirements for room size also followed the investment aid. This is a major difference between trygghetsboende and other senior housing. (Abrahamsson, 2012, p. 28-29)

LIVING TOGETHER

People have always struggled with questions about what happens when people live together in community. The dwelling is a miniature of the greater collective society. It is interesting to study what people do in these shared spaces, how they behave and what community can be. The closer we live, the stronger is the need for private space. In the radio program *Fasad* the host and architect Katarina Bonnevier describes how we are stuck in beliefs about how we should live together. There are norms that dictate how we should live as single, couple and family and how we in various ways build community. (Bonnevier, 2013)

Even with their internal differences senior housing incorporate ideas about a community which in a way makes them unique compared to the majority of dwellings on the housing market, where any form of communion are noticeably absent. Moving to a senior housing or engage in a collaborative housing project is a social, economic and cultural investment that can contribute to social ties and existential security. In co-housing the communion is often created already before moving in together and therefore strengthens the bond between the residents. In many swedish senior houses there are common facilities, although usually only one or two square metres for each apartment. The corresponding figure in swedish and danish co-housing projects is eight to ten square metres. Swedish senior housing

might benefit from being more inspired by co-housing projects. People often look at the problems with shared facilities, such as higher costs instead of looking at it as a precondition for good living. (Kärnekull, 2009, p. 52-59)

There are many people who want to move into senior housing together and by own initiative form groups to plan for their future living. But getting something built on own initiative can be difficult and demands a great commitment.

Bofaelleskab -the danish example

There is a big difference between Sweden and Denmark in their views on community and housing for elderly. While in Sweden employed staff and service have been the cornerstones when it comes to housing for elderly, Denmark has invested more in informal networks and community to form security. The danish *seniorbofaelleskab* have been around for 25 years and have many similarities with swedish co-housing project, based on collaboration. In *seniorbofaelleskabet* the residents always have their own fully equipped individual dwelling. *Bofaelleskabet* also has shared premises but not at the expense of the private residence. (Pedersen, 2013.s.14-15)

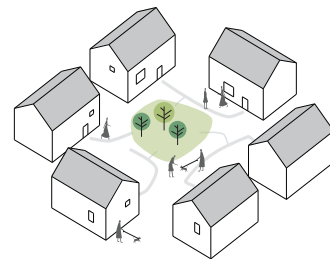
Bofaelleskabet can be described as co-housing seniors but it is difficult to pinpoint what characterizes and defines the social life and community. A study of the Danish *seniorfaelleskabet* shows that there are major differences between the different projects. Some housing have a lot of activities together and the relationships between the residents are similar to those in a close circle of friends while others have a greater resemblance to ordinary social housing. (Ibid)

What is common for most *bofaelleskab* is that the residents should not have children living at home and that at least one of the persons living in the household is over 50 years old. *Seniorbofaelleskab* is

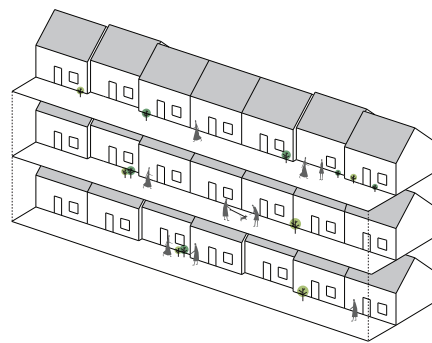
not tied to a specific form of ownership and come in many different forms. (Ibid)

Perhaps the best way to describe this form of housing and its social characteristics is as a sort of developed neighborhood; living environments where residents spend more time together and have activities together with their neighbors more than they do in ordinary neighborhoods. (Ibid, p. 17)

Many faelleskabshus are single story houses or townhouses. The idea about community is clearly visible in the dwellings placement to one another. The homes are often placed along the plot boundary to create an area in between or in front of the houses for common facilities. It is common that the houses together form a central square or, if they are placed in a row, a kind of traditional "village street". The front door is almost always facing the open space between the houses. This makes for everyday encounters between neighbors, give an overview of who come and go in the area and thereby creating a sense of security.



In the seniorbofaelleskab which has several floorlevels exterior balconies have been a way to create spontaneous meetings between neighbors. It is an advantage to oversee the common areas in order to take part in what is going on. Just as the community and the closeness to neighbors is important, it is equally important to protect the residents' privacy. Therefore, living rooms are often placed away from common areas. (ibid, p.44-45)



Shared Space

Almost all seniorbofaelleskab have a common kitchen and dining area where all the residents can gather, which also function as common living room. Shared outdoor space like terraces are also common and appreciated. Most of them also have guest rooms or guest apartments for visiting friends and family and some sort of hobby room or workshop. The size of common rooms vary but an investigation surrounding the danish bofaelleskab showed signs that small common areas typically were used less than the slightly larger. Other more or less common shared facilities are laundry room, recycling room and a small fitness room. (Pedersen. 2012, p. 47)

Common rooms does not automatically mean that they are used extensively. Although in the danish examples, studies show that the shared facilities are used on average at least once a week and in most cases a few times a week (ibid, p. 69)

The residents' age affects the life in the bofaelleskab. Many residents tell of a more active life within the house when they first moved in. With age people get more tired and does not have the strength to be as involved in different activities. It seems that a spread in age within the community is important. (ibid, p.77)

The social networking in co-housing projects is a great quality but also that which prevent many

people from moving to this type of accommodation. There is a general sense that it is difficult to establish a private life in this form of housing where people live closer to each other compared to conventional homes. Despite this, there is no indication that those living in seniorbofaelleskab have less privacy than people in ordinary residential buildings. (ibid, s.111)

TOGETHER & ALONE

In *Bostadens Estetik* Christina Redvall writes about the connection between people and their housing. She speaks of "Revir", a territory used alone or in group with defined boundaries, marking who it belongs to. This territory is the relationship between people and their surroundings. The dwelling is a private territory since this is the place where people can create something of their own and feel secure towards the outside world. Humans thrive in group and therefore collective territories are part of our nature but we also need privacy within the community. The personal sphere is the most private territory. The apartment is the residents' shared territory and the surrounding area a part of a greater collective territory if one identifies with those who live in the area. (Redvall, 1987, p. 51-52)

It is important to understand how boundaries can occur where there is shared space and the meaning of these boundaries. Shared space creates social confrontations between the residents and the way in which the space is designed might affect how it is used and perceived by the residents. When someone leaves traces behind, that person takes the room in possession which could create a situation where the space suddenly feels strange to someone else. The room has become someone's territory. Redvall means that room size can be significant.

A large room becomes too anonymous while too small spaces easily can become someone's private territory. (ibid, p. 59-61)

The building's design offers opportunities and/or limitations for social life. How the private and common areas are located provides a first image of the conditions for the social life that a house provides. A shared room should be large enough for everyone to stay in at the same time and the interior organization is important, for example how the common facilities are located in relation to private residences and entrances. The zone that connects common spaces and private spaces constitutes the building's spatial structure and this relationship is very important. Corridors, landings, hallways, niches and so on are spaces that are important to relate to. This is where spontaneous meetings between neighbors occur on different conditions than in shared common rooms. These spaces will be a link between the private sphere, common areas and the surroundings. Ideally, the building should stimulate contact between neighbors without forcing people together. In this way it could be beneficial to place shared space close to the outside, since the residents then will pass the space while entering or leaving the building. (Palm, 1989, p. 33-45)

An attractive spot for the shared space could also be a reason to go there. Different shared spaces in connection to each other also strengthens their social potential. (ibid, p. 184-188)

A successful co-housing is about a variety of interacting factors. The spatial structure supports the social life but it is also affected by how well you know your neighbors, if you get along, different responsibilities and the ability to influence. The Community is also affected by the social organization within the house with communal meals for example. The collective spaces should not be created at the expense of the private space but be an attractive addition. The building should work both when the community is strong and when it is weaker. (ibid, p. 196-197)

The *small* neighbourhood

The relationship between the built environment and social connections is not only about life within the house walls but also the relation to the neighborhood; outdoor environment, courtyards and surrounding buildings. The close surrounding area is of great importance for social life among neighbors. Sören Olsson, a sociologist and professor at the University of Gothenburg has researched social life and built environment. He argues that we can not be sure how a built environment will be used and experienced, but that the physical environment should be seen as a prerequisite for human actions and experiences. Based on these conditions people react differently and people are unconsciously influenced by the environment around them. Reactions and actions are limited and are largely determined by cultural patterns. There are unwritten rules and codes for how different spaces are used. Depending on how a space is designed and decorated it is loaded with ideas on how it should be used. The people who uses the space will develop a relationship and emotions connected to the space, they make it their territory, starting to feel at home or not. Because of our ability to choose what we do and want this contribute to an uncertainty in the relationship between the built environment and social life. The room itself gives a hint of how it was meant to be used. (Olsson in Nylander et al. 2007, p. 58-59)

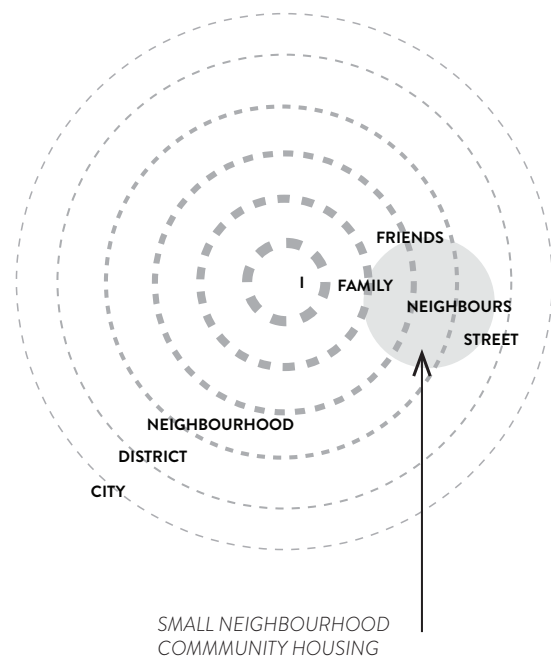
Olsson points out the importance of *the small neighborhood* (det lilla grannskapet). The term was first used in connection to a research study of nine small neighborhoods in 1997. The small neighborhood is the immediate environment around a residential building. Socially it is about people who live close to each other but it is also about the physical environment and facilities in connection to the dwellings, such as laundry rooms or storage space. The small neighborhood is a concept for a whole, a context surrounding the home. (ibid, p. 59)

Within the small neighborhood the social connections between neighbors are important, but also the need for privacy and independence. A boundary between the private and the social is important. Socializing should not feel forced and for many people it is not important or given to spend time with neighbors in the private home. (ibid, p. 59)

The courtyard or other spaces where residents can chose and control the social life are places where meetings between neighbors work well. Neighbors are perceived as important and the ability to be in a pleasant and social environment where you are seen, can stop and say hello and talk for a while are considered important.

The concept of "weak ties", created by the American sociologist Granowetter, can be used to describe the residents' wishes regarding the relationship with their neighbors. (ibid, p. 60-61)

A functioning neighborhood is part of good living. Olsson underlines the importance of a common neutral arena in the neighborhood. A semi-private space that the residents feel belongs to them and where there is a shared responsibility. In this space people become visible to each other and they can choose when to spend time there. This kind of spaces have great impact on if people feel comfortable, feel at home and safe. Both the courtyard and the local street are examples of these neutral spaces. These are places where people pass in and out of their home. A courtyard with access to seating, greenery and space for some activity is seen as a major asset. Also shared spaces that everyone passes through may have a similar function, such as common entrances or stairways. (ibid, p. 63-64)



STUDY VISITS

To get a wider perspective on how to live when you get older and how community can work in different ways, I visit a couple of housing projects for people in the second half of life.

I have realized that there are many prejudices about living together, but actually, co-housing is not collective living in that sense. You live alone but with access to a community. I think it can make life easier and more fun for many elderly who wants to live closer to other people and be part of a more vibrant *small* neighborhood.

Another insight has been that it is important that not everyone who lives in the building are too old, but that there is a spread of different ages. The older you are, the less strength you have to be actively involved in the community. Therefore, many of the cooperatives I visited had lowered their age limit to around 40 or to limit themselves to people without children living at home. Despite this, most of the people living together were pensioners and they found it difficult to get younger people to move in.

Russinet is a cooperative association with 27 apartments. Two stairwells are connected on the ground floor where there are common facilities like kitchen, dining room and a small library. There are also a roof terrace, two guest apartments, sauna and a garden shared between the residents.

Majbacken is a cooperative association with 31 rental apartments. To live here the residents have to be over 40 years old without children living at home. On the first floor there are almost 200 sqm of shared facilities, like kitchen, dining room, guest apartment, a film room and a small office.

Villa Ingrid is a condominium association with 9 apartments for people who have reached the age of 55. The building has a guest apartment with a spacious kitchen and dining room. On each floor there is a small common room in connection with the stairwell.

Mosaiken is accommodation for people over 70 who have or will develop the need of domestic help. The building consists of 57 rental units. On ground floor the home care services have facilities and staff are available during daytime. There is a communal dining room and kitchen on ground floor where the residents are served food. On the top floor there is a common living room, light room, sauna and kitchen. There is also a common roof terrace.



Russinnet, co-housing, Lund



Villa Ingrid, senior housing, Ystad



Majbacken, co-housing, Göteborg



Mosaiken, trygghetsboende, Partille

QUOTES FROM INTERVIEWS

Moving is terrible. I miss a lot of things in my old large house but moving here was the best solution. It's a new phase in life.



Before I moved here me and my partner lived seperately. He is older than me and I noticed that he was quite lonely. He is very interested in cooking and absolutely fell in love in the kitchen. This way of living has given him a much more social life.




What is special with this way of living is our extra shared space. Here you can arrange parties for birthdays and do things that you can not fit to do in your own apartment. The common areas are important. Some people are a little bit afraid of this when they first move here.

It is important to have your own apartment where you can be completely private.




It is up to each person if they want to take part in the common activities. If you do, the community is strong. We keep track of each other, notice who have collected their morning paper and so on. That feels good.







We have a fully equipped, shared kitchen. I have a large family and when they come and visit there is space for everyone to gather all together.




I've always dreamed of collective living. This is as good as it gets. You can go down stairs and read the newspaper and you don't need your own subscription.




It is important to plan for the future. I was fond of the idea to have my own apartment but also areas where I could meet my neighbours.



We who are old today are more active than previous generations. We don't want to be "put away" somewhere that we don't like to be. Some of us who haven't made a choice about how we want to live will still experience that.



A difficulty can be that you do not get along with everybody in the house. In many ways it is similar to a workplace or any family. We are so different as people but it is important to be polite to everyone.



Many people are afraid of cohousing. We want to have space around us. Do not come too close! But you can have all that here. Many people in Sweden are afraid that the neighbors are going to come too close but this is not a problem here. You decide for your self how you want to socialize. If that wasn't the case i couldn't live like this.

PART II

Map showing the different districts
in Göteborg and where there are
housing for seniors today.



INTRODUCTION

In this part I present a design proposal for a community housing for seniors. I begin to give an introduction to the urban context followed by the exterior and interior concepts of the building.

The focus is put on creating quality space for living, in terms of both private space and different dimensions of shared space. It has been important to design housing where there can be spontaneous meetings between neighbours and where there can be the feeling of a small scale neighborhood community. It has been important to create a safe and pleasant living environment that suits older people.

The plot is situated along Guldmyntsgatan in the area Högsbo in Göteborg. Högsbo is situated approximately five kilometers south west of the city centre and is part of the circle of suburbs, built during the expansive era of the 1950s and 60s. Back then, Högsbo was the countryside. Today, the area is regarded as a semi central neighborhood, close to both the city centre and nature areas.

A large area has been freed after the demolition of an old school and there are plans for new housing near a local center. There is a request for senior housing on the site.

HÖGSBO



HÖGSBO

Högsbo was planned and built between 1950 and 1960. The new residential area were primarily planned for families. As a complement to the new built housing, Axel Dahlströms torg was built, providing different services, like shops and culture. This was in line with the idea of the time, of a small "city" within the larger city with neighboring community, meeting places and commerce. The new cityplan was adapted to the terrain and nature was preserved to provide lush court yards within the area. All dwellings could be accessed from the street with cars while the court yards were kept for pedestrians. The dwellings are between three and eight-storeys high with pitched roofs and brick or plaster facades. The architecture in the residential area slightly differs from Axel Dahlströms torg which has a more typical 1960s approach. Axel Dahlströms torg is the centre for Högsbo and have a diverse range of locally oriented shops, cafes and restaurants. There is also a library and assembly halls.

Tram tracks cut through the area on a raised viaduct and divide the area into two parts. The area surrounding the plot consists of three and four-storey lamellas in red and yellow brick facades and pitched roofs. Today some of the facades have been replaced with a sheet metal cladding. The neighborhood is characterized by the hilly terrain and the houses follow the level differences with winding roads and buildings climbing the heights. The lamellas are

broken down into smaller units to comply with the height differences both horizontally and vertically. This breaks down the scale, creating a diverse impression and interesting spaces. Narrow gables and staggered buildings form slim proportions. There is a close connection between entrances and the street. Details are made of solid materials such as brick, stone, copper, oak and molded concrete and creates a variation in the architecture.








The now demolished Högsboskolan was built between 1954 and 1956. Long and narrow building volumes were placed along the existing terrain in two to three floors clad in a red brick facade. The long slabs were divided into sections that followed the landscape and smaller volumes broke down the scale of the building. Many stairwells and a varied roof scape also contributed to a diverse impression. (Lange, 2012)

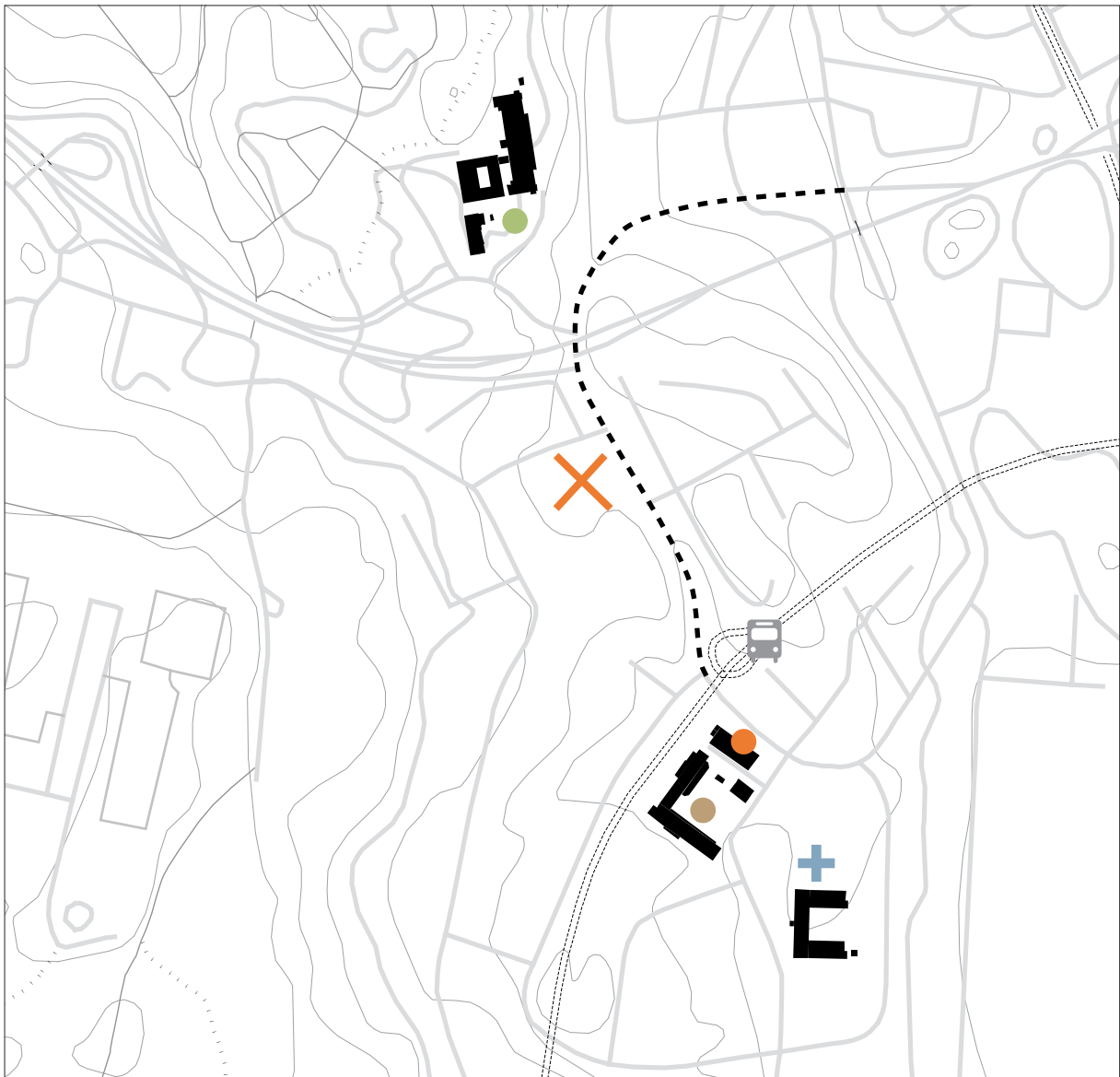
MAP HÖGSBO



Map of Högsbo showing the urban structure and green areas.

MAP HÖGSBO

-  tram stop
-  plot
-  Guldmyntsgatan
-  super market/ service
-  culture
-  retirement home
-  health care



Map of Högsbo showing the site location and nearby service.

supermarket	300 m
public transportation	250 m
flex bus-line	50 m
library	300 m
health care	500 m

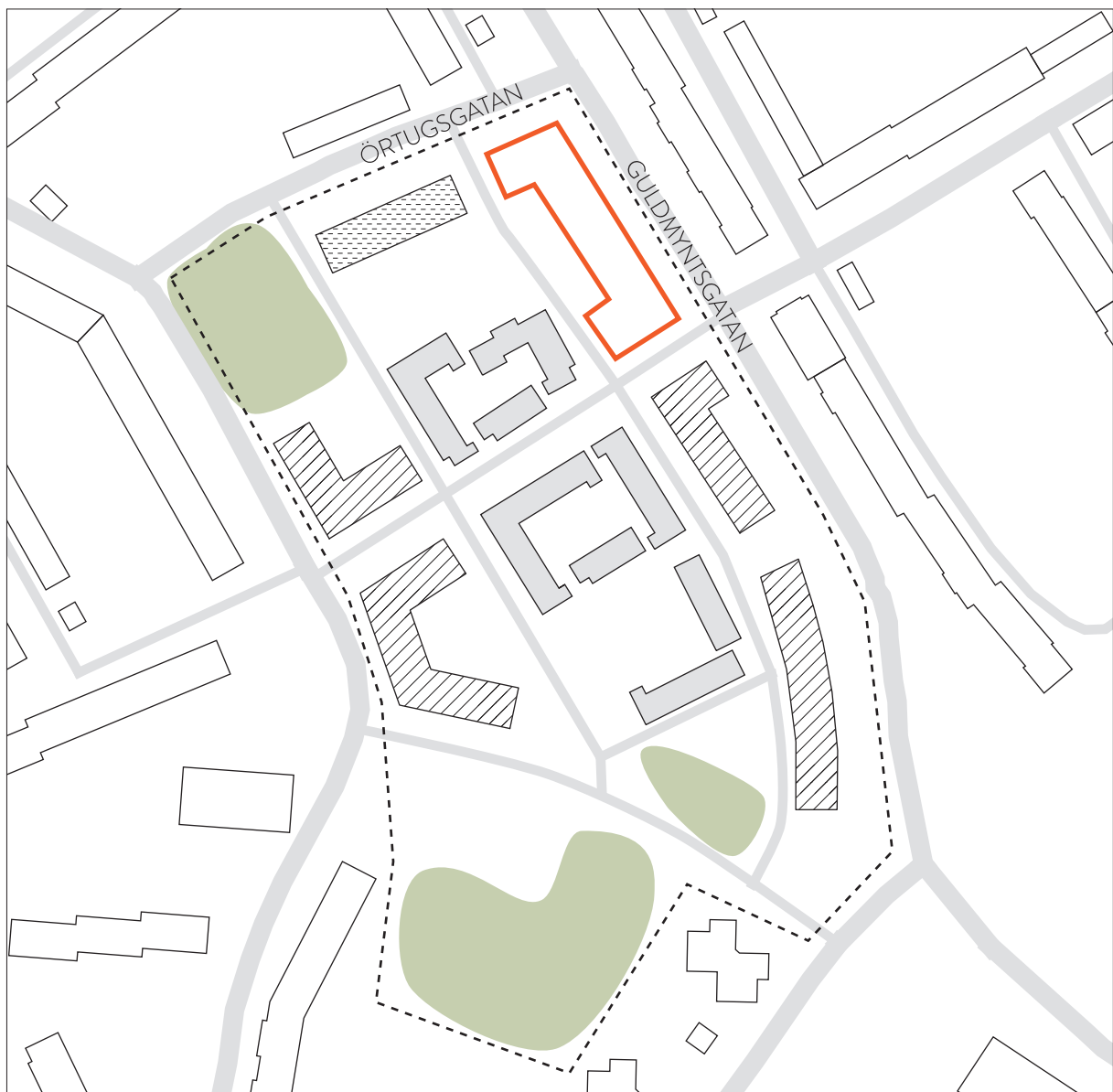
MASTER PLAN

A new master plan has been created to make room for approximately 300 new apartments. The purpose is to complement the area with accessible social housing, commerce and a new preschool. The intention is to create housing close to services, workplaces and public transportation. More residents in the area creates greater opportunities for more activities and businesses. In 2013 a competition was held for the middle part of the plan area which was won by Okidoki Arkitekter. In their proposal a new typology of wooden buildings is introduced in the area. In my project I have used this proposal as the basis for the surrounding buildings.

The masterplan states that the new dwellings in the area should relate to existing buildings and preserve the green space around them. Guldmyntsgatan should be given the character of a "city street" rather than a main road. It should be possible to incorporate businesses on the ground floor. The population has increased in the district over the past ten years by more than ten percent. 25 percent of the residents are 65 or older and there is a generational change within the neighbourhood. Therefore there is a demand for both larger apartments for families but also apartments for elderly. (Kaplan, 2013)

MASTER PLAN

- masterplan area
- plot
- park
- ▨ planned housing
- planned wooden housing
- ▩ planned pre-school



GULDMYNTSGATAN





BUILDING PROGRAM

Apartment Units

1 room and kitchen	45 sqm	3 units
2 room and kitchen	58 sqm	10 units
3 room and kitchen	70 sqm	3 units
collective/shared	90 sqm	5 units

total: 21 units

Shared Space

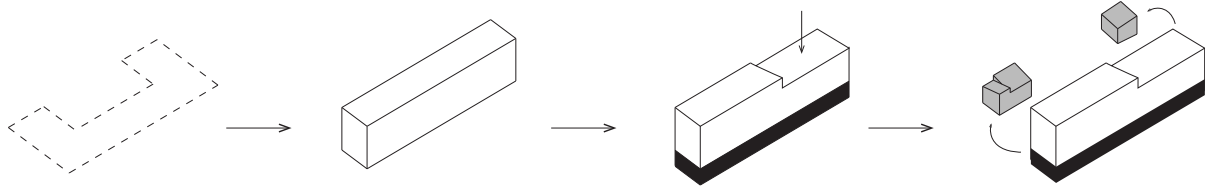
kitchen and dining area	90 sqm
living room/flexible space	50 sqm
fitness room	50 sqm
sauna	30 sqm
laundry room	30 sqm
winter garden	18 kvm
guest apartment	25 sqm
green house	15 sqm

apartment storage space	50 sqm
bicycle/walker storage	30 sqm
recycling room	20 sqm

Ground floor

space for lease	420 sqm
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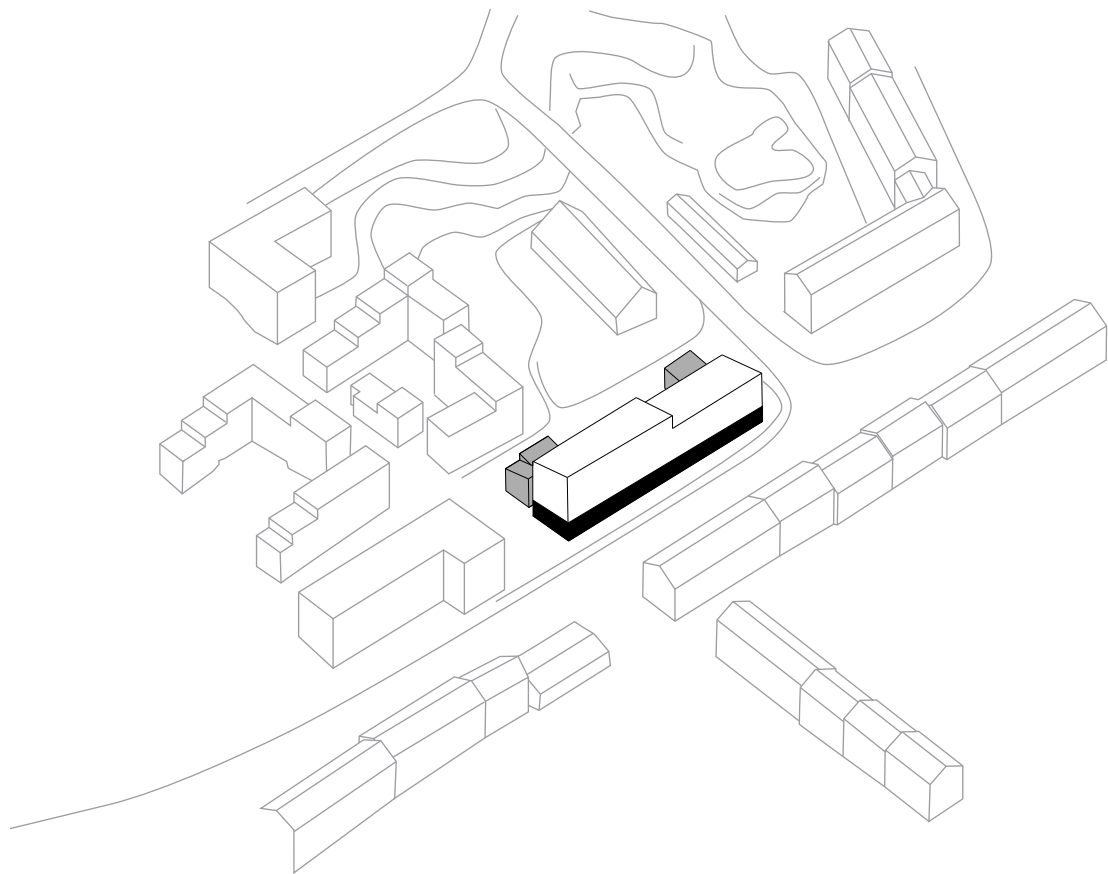
URBAN CONCEPT



The plot is situated along Guldmyntsgatan. The new building relates to the way that the surrounding buildings are broken down in scale by forming one lower and one higher part.

The ground floor has a more “public” character and contains space for lease. The apartment units are placed one level up. On the court yard side two smaller buildings are placed in front of the apartment building. These contains space that is shared between the apartments. The smaller buildings connects to the main building on the first floor.

URBAN CONTEXT



CONCEPT

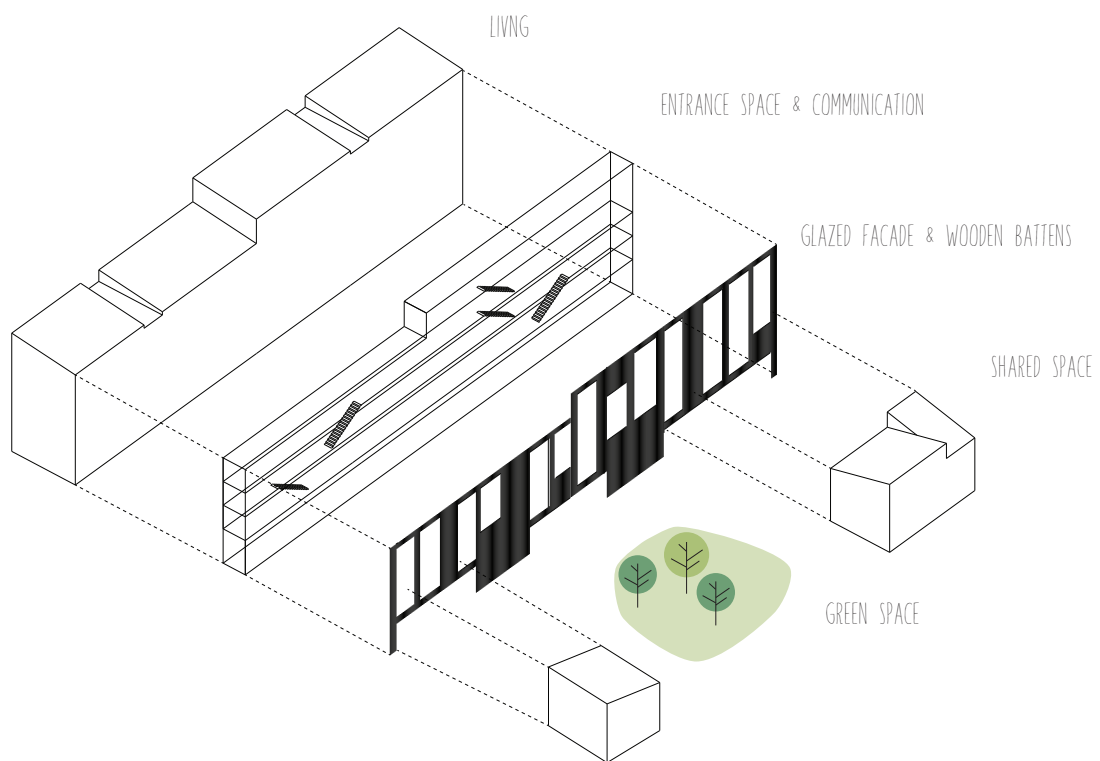
In many residential buildings the connection between neighbors is weak. Creating a neutral space with opportunities for everyday, spontaneous meetings between neighbors is important for a social neighborhood. Even more so for older people who spend more time in the close surroundings of the home. The concept is based on an idea around a "vibrant street" in front of the apartments to create a semi-private/neutral area where residents can meet on a daily basis, coming and going from their apartments.

The building consists of two sided apartments which are accessed from a sheltered entrance balcony facing the inner court yard. The balcony is reached from the entrances facing the street, accessible by lift and stairs from ground level. Stairs are placed in front of the apartments as a part of the entrance space and connect the different levels with apartments. This makes it easy to move between the different levels. It strengthens the vertical connections and further contribute to meetings between the residents.

The access balconies are glazed and partly covered with thin wooden battens. This let the light in thus gives the impression of a coherent facade. The climate is adjustable with sliding doors.

Shared facilities are located in the courtyard in front of the apartment volume. In this way, the common space becomes visible from the entrance balconies.

CONCEPT



Walkways in front of the apartments form a semi private area where residents can meet on a daily basis. It is easy to see if someone is home, say hello, look out for each other or ask for help.

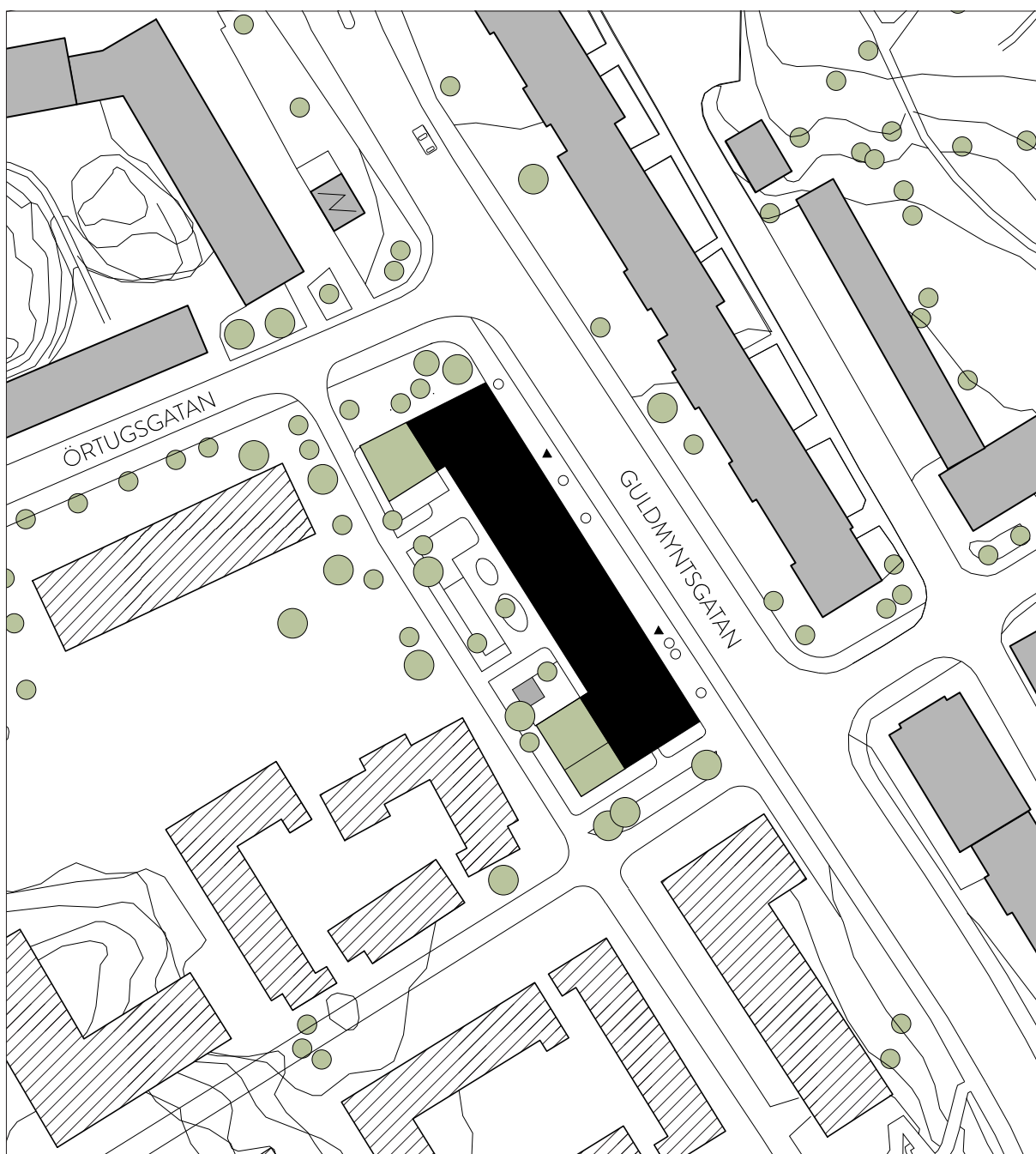
SITE

The plot is located on the parking lot at the intersection of Guldmyntsgatan-Örtugsgatan. The new building is situated along Guldmyntsgatan, at the intersection of Guldmyntsgatan-Örtugsgatan.

Towards the street the building gives the impression of smaller volumes, together forming a whole. This provides a playfulness to the building and gives it character.

Towards the court yard the entrance space becomes visible and the different volumes less distinct. Two smaller volumes for shared facilities are placed in front of the housing block, connecting to the main building on the first floor.

SITE PLAN 1:1000

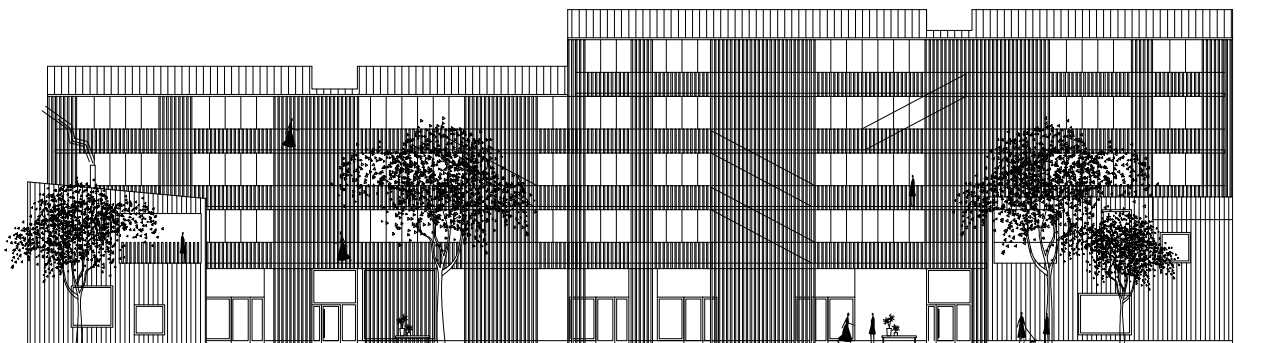


0 10 25 50

ELEVATIONS 1:400



East elevation



West elevation

The building is built with natural materials. The structure is made out of massive timber and facades and detailing are made of thin wooden paneling. Facing the courtyard the facade is more transparent. Slim wooden battens partially covers the glazed entrance room thus give the overall impression of a coherent volume.

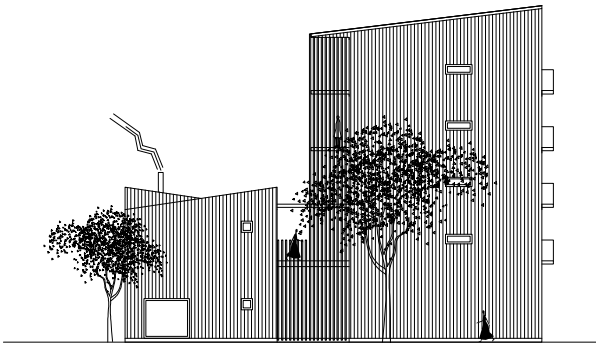


EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

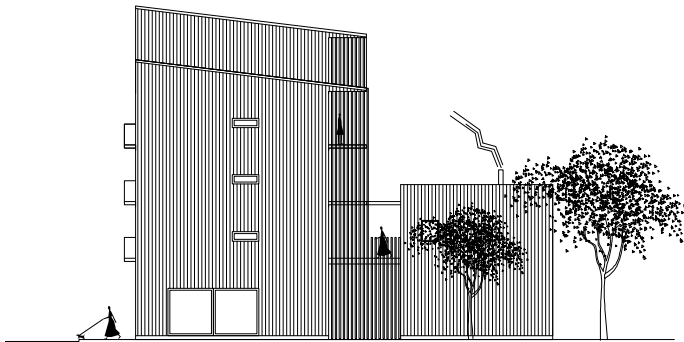


Perspective view over the courtyard with one of the shared buildings showing in the background.

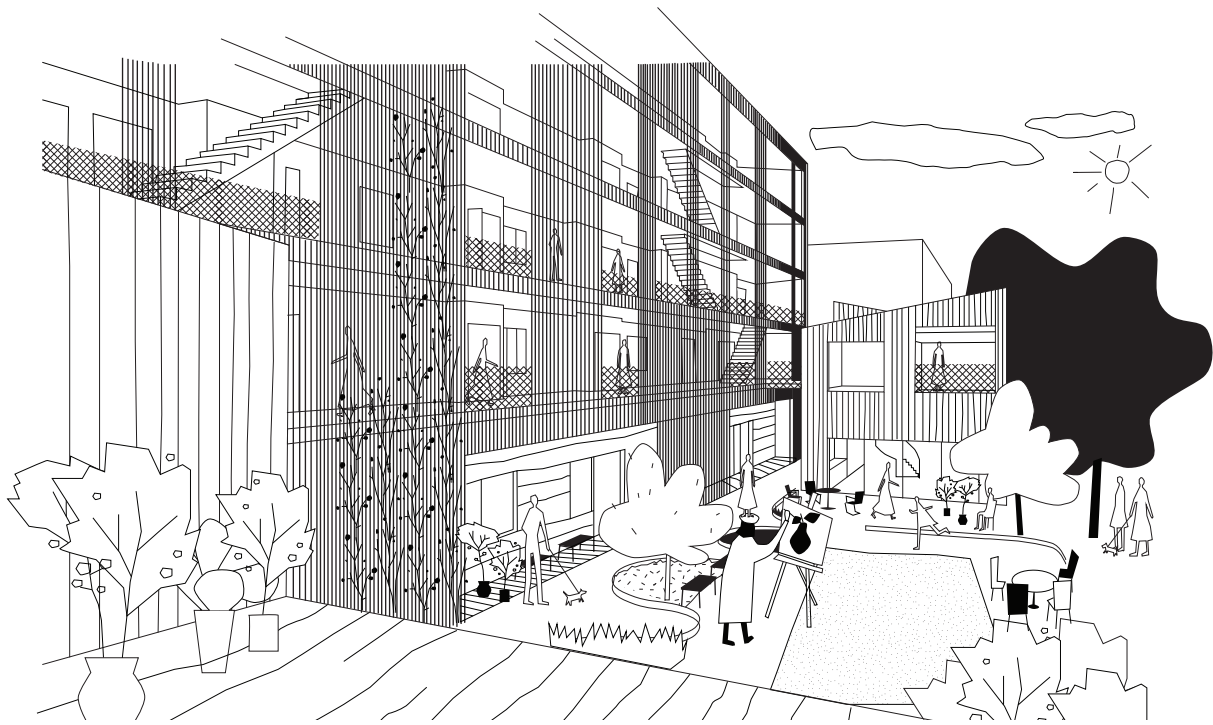
ELEVATIONS 1:400



South elevation



North elevation

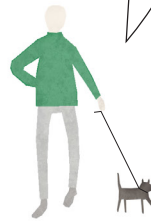


The wooden building becomes part of a new typology of wooden buildings in Högsbo, relating to the planned wooden housing blocks in the middle part of the master plan area.

*"Living here you can be yourself!
People have an open mind and
and are curious about other
people."*



*"Everyone who lives here have a
lot of ideas and sometimes it is
difficult to agree on what to do.
There has been a few arguments
from time to time but it tends to
resolve itself to the best."*



*"We have started a canasta group
in the house. Every Tuesday we
meet up and play together in our
shared living room. It so much fun
and I always win!"*



*"We discussed for a long time that
it would be fun to live together
now that we are both alone. Since
we have all this extra shared space
it doesn't feel crowded."*

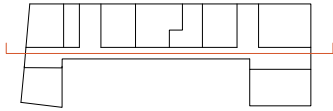


SECTION A-A 1:200



The section gives a view over the apartment layout and how the entrance balcony connects to the shared building on the first floor level.

SECTION B-B 1:400



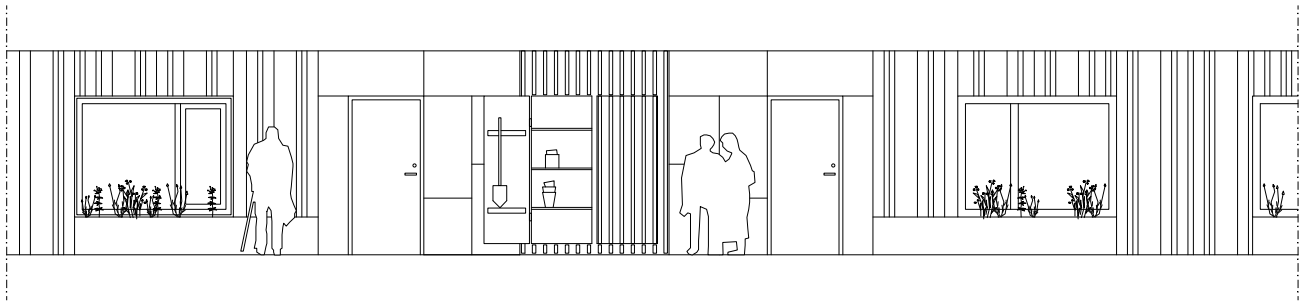
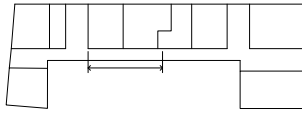
West elevation

A small niche in front of the apartments marks the entrance to the individual unit. This creates a distance to where people are passing through, and residents have the opportunity to put their own character on their entrance space. Here is room for a small bench or some plants.

Each apartment has a small storage space connected to their entrance which also functions as dividers between the apartments.



ELEVATION 1:100



Elevation entrance balcony

The panneling around windows have different widths to give it a more lively expression while the niches where the entrance doors are placed are claddd with plywood to add some variety.

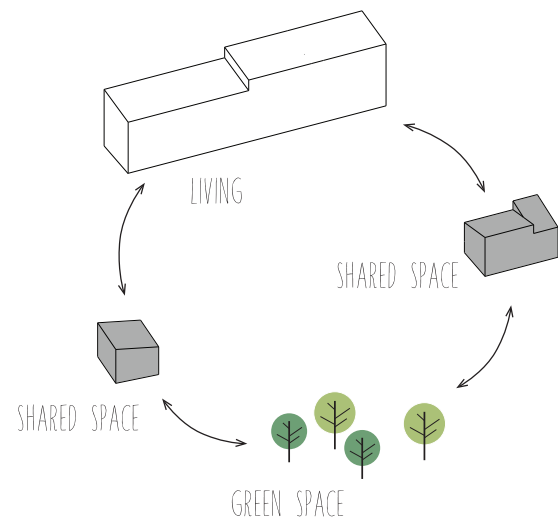
Wooden benches with built in space for plants are placed in front of the kitchen windows. A good spot to keep herbs for cooking or simple a way to create some distance between the window and people passing by in front of the apartment.

SOCIAL SPACE

The social space consists of the entrance balconies in front of the apartments which has a more “neutral” character but also of two smaller buildings with shared space. These are located in the courtyard in front of the apartment building, one on each outer edge. This provides a visible connection between the access balconies and the shared space.

The shared buildings are connecting to the larger building on the first floor level. Between the small shared buildings a green garden stretches out with patios, plantings, seating and activity area.

Each apartment has approximately 8 square meters additional shared space. This number corresponds with Swedish and Danish co-housing projects.



INTERIOR PERSPECTIVE



Illustration of the entrance space connected to the apartments. The semi-private area have places to sit and small boxes for flowers and plants, giving a green and light atmosphere. During warmer days the glass partitions towards the garden can be opened up, creating a pleasant outdoor space. The wooden battens give protection from strong sunlight.

FLOOR PLANS

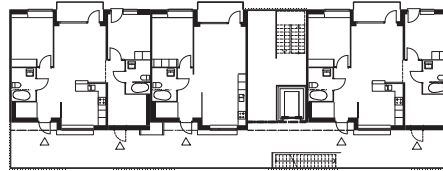
The living units form a line along the street and are accessed from two entrances facing the street. On the ground floor, except for some smaller storage rooms, there are leaseable space, creating conditions for a more vibrant neighborhood.

Stairs and elevators leads up to the first floor level where the first apartments are situated. Close to the entrance space on each level there is a shared laundry room and, starting on the second floor, storage space.

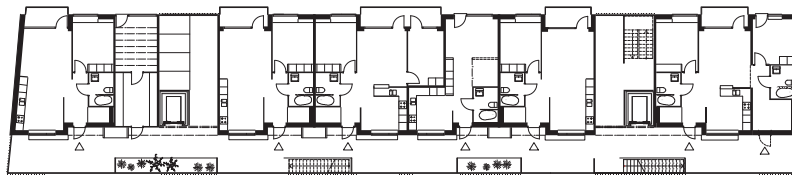
The four levels with apartments are also connected to each other with stairs that are placed directly on the entrance balcony, for an easy and spontaneous connection between the different levels.



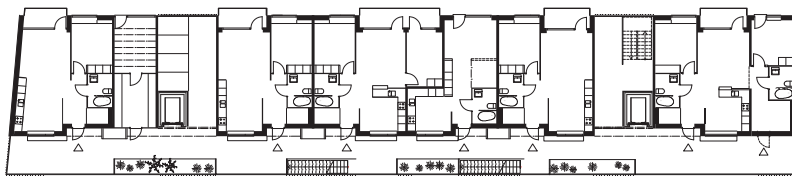
FLOOR PLANS 1:600



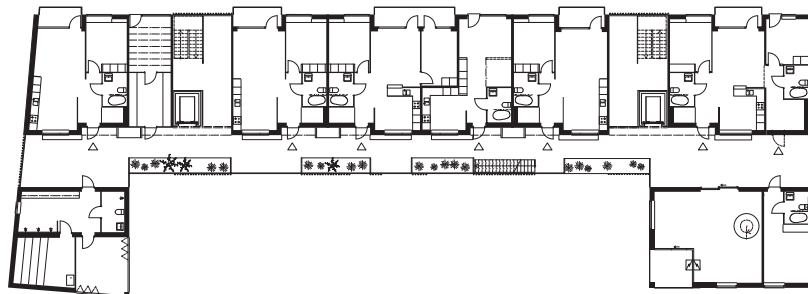
4th floor



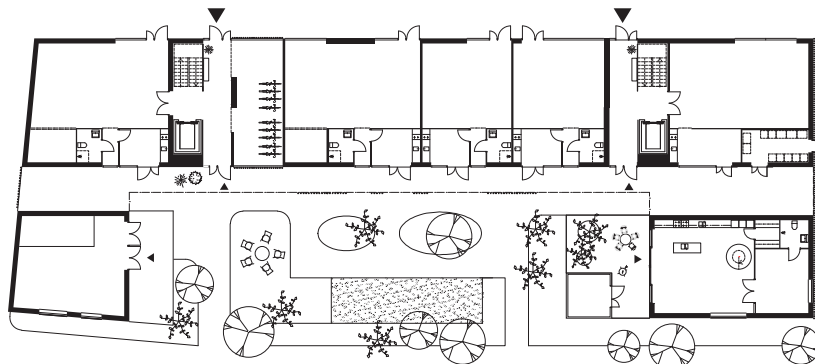
3rd floor



2nd floor



1st floor



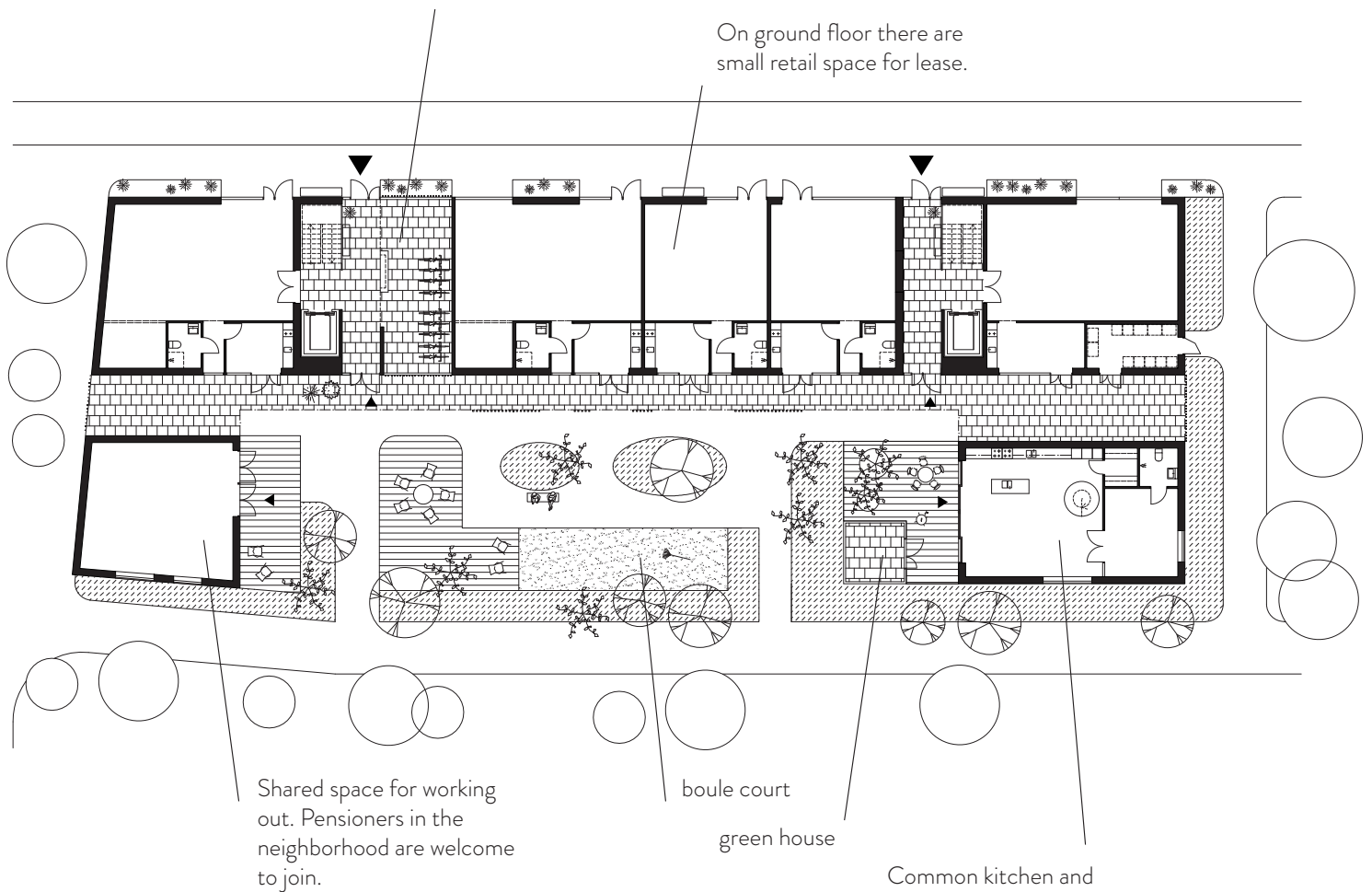
Ground floor

0 5 10 20

GROUND FLOOR 1:400

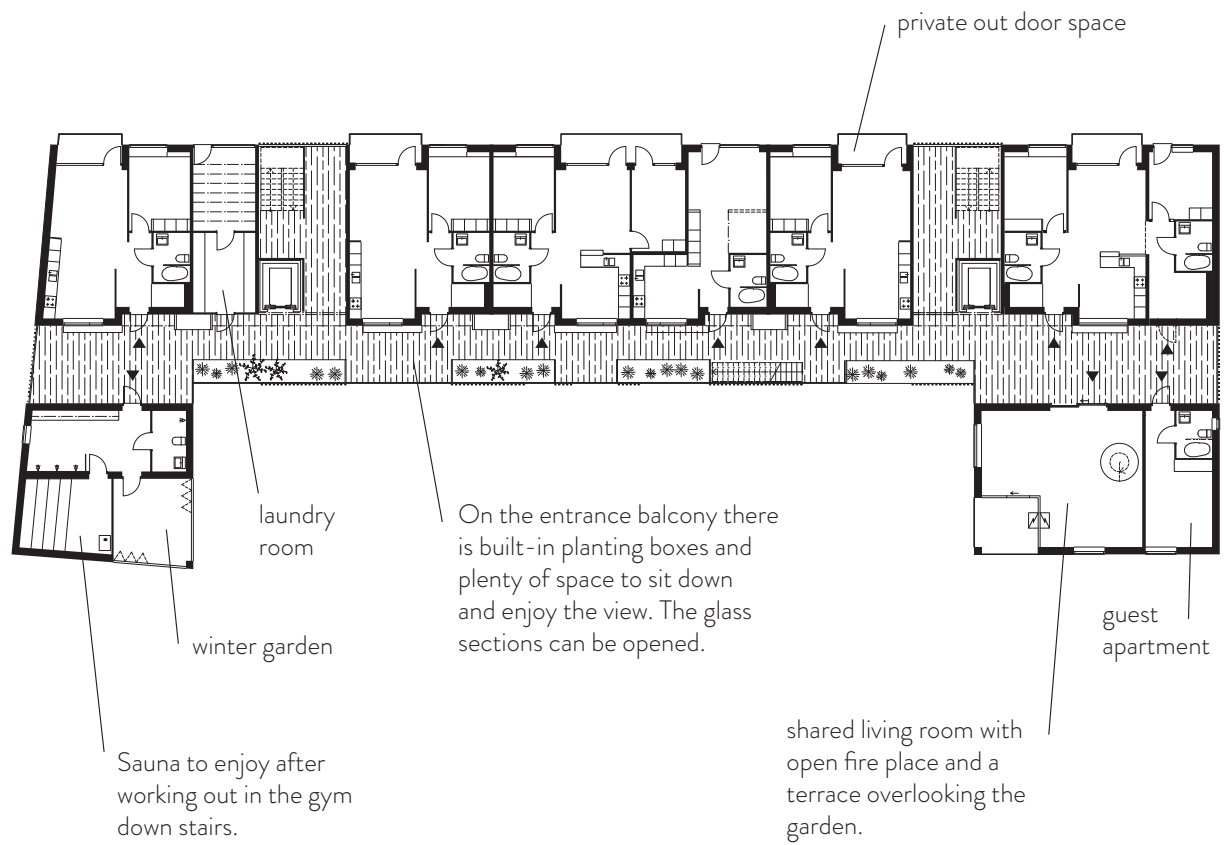
In connection to the entrance there is storage space for bikes and walkers.

On ground floor there are small retail space for lease.



0 5 10 15

FIRST FLOOR 1:400



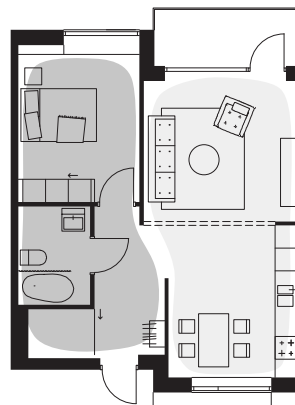
LIVING UNITS

The apartments have a clear division between the most private space and more social areas within the apartment. The kitchen and entrance hall are facing the entrance balcony, while as the bedroom and livingroom are positioned on the other side of the apartment, towards the street.

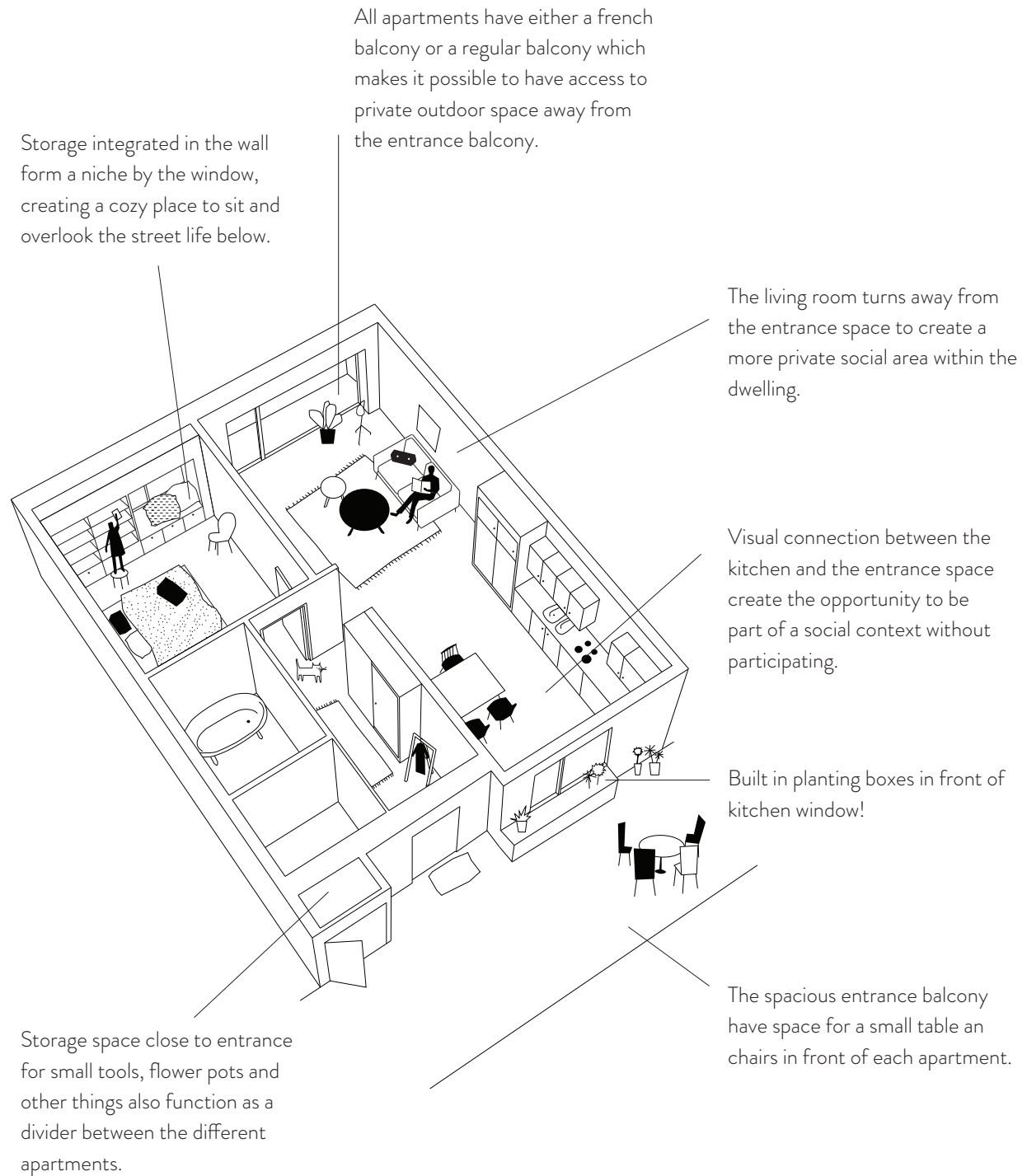
A clear division between the private and social zones in the apartment facilitate for those who might need help at home. Bedroom and bathroom are placed close to each other. In this way the staff can work undisturbed in one part of the apartment while the resident can stay in the other part of the living space.

There are four different types of apartments:

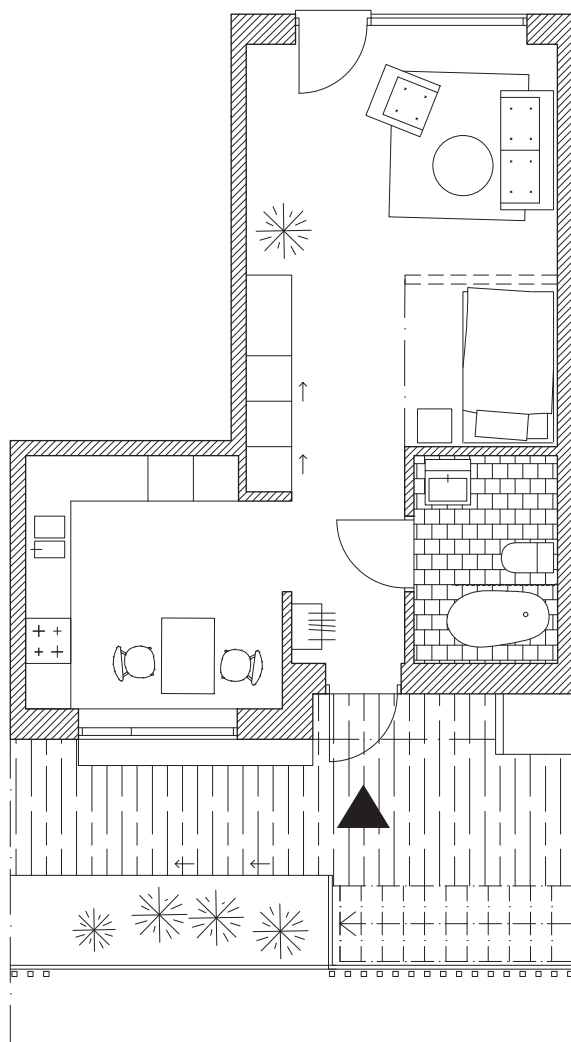
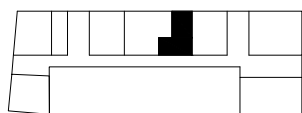
- one room and kitchen
- two rooms and kitchen
- three rooms and kitchen
- shared apartment



TYPICAL APARTMENT



ONE ROOM APARTMENT 1:100

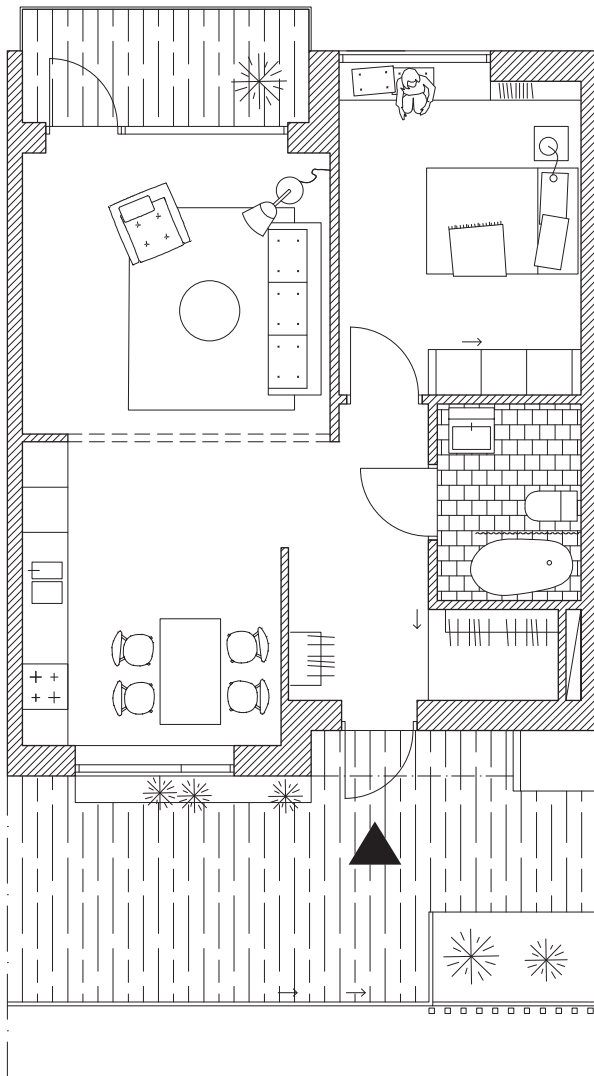
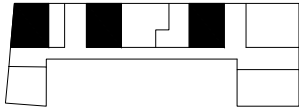


**1 room and kitchen
45 sqm**

*"I lived alone for many years but
once I moved here I don't feel as
alone anymore. There is always
someone to talk to."*



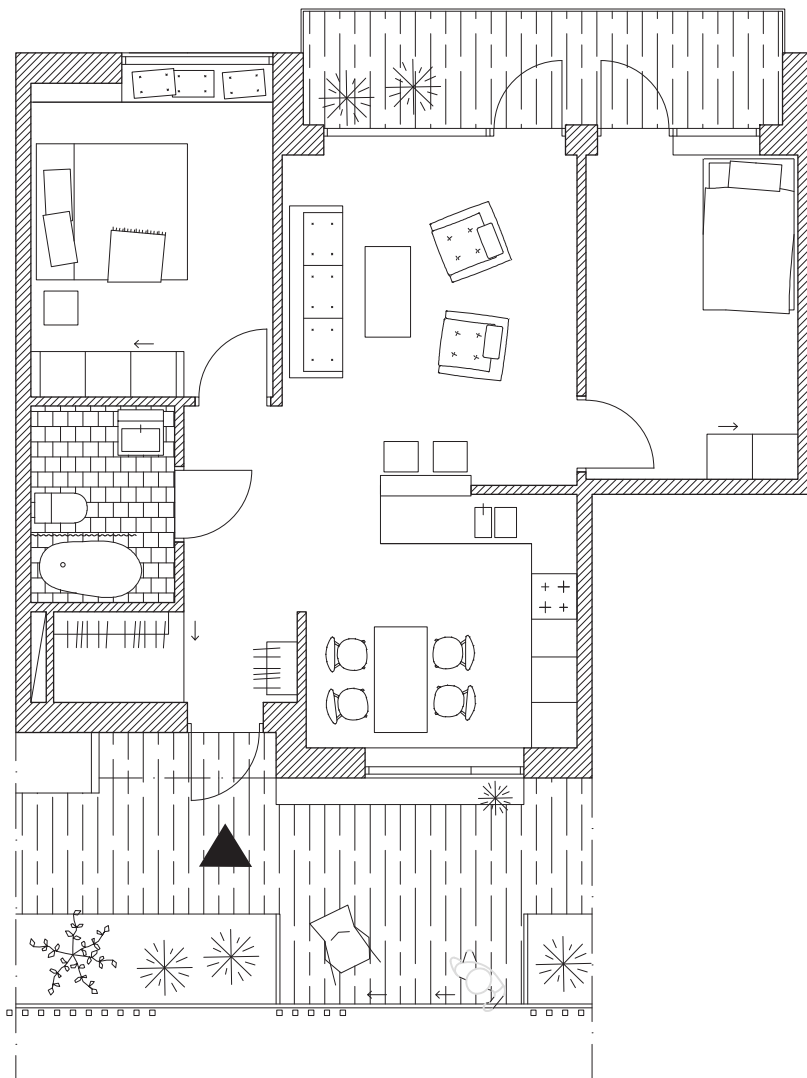
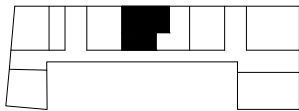
TWO ROOM APARTMENT 1:100



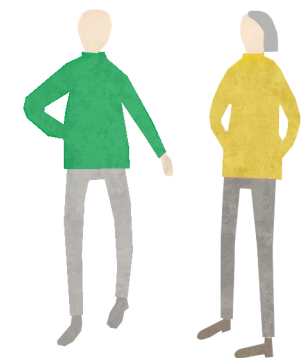
2 rooms and kitchen
58 sqm



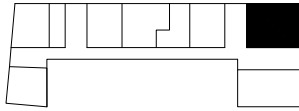
THREE ROOM APARTMENT 1:100



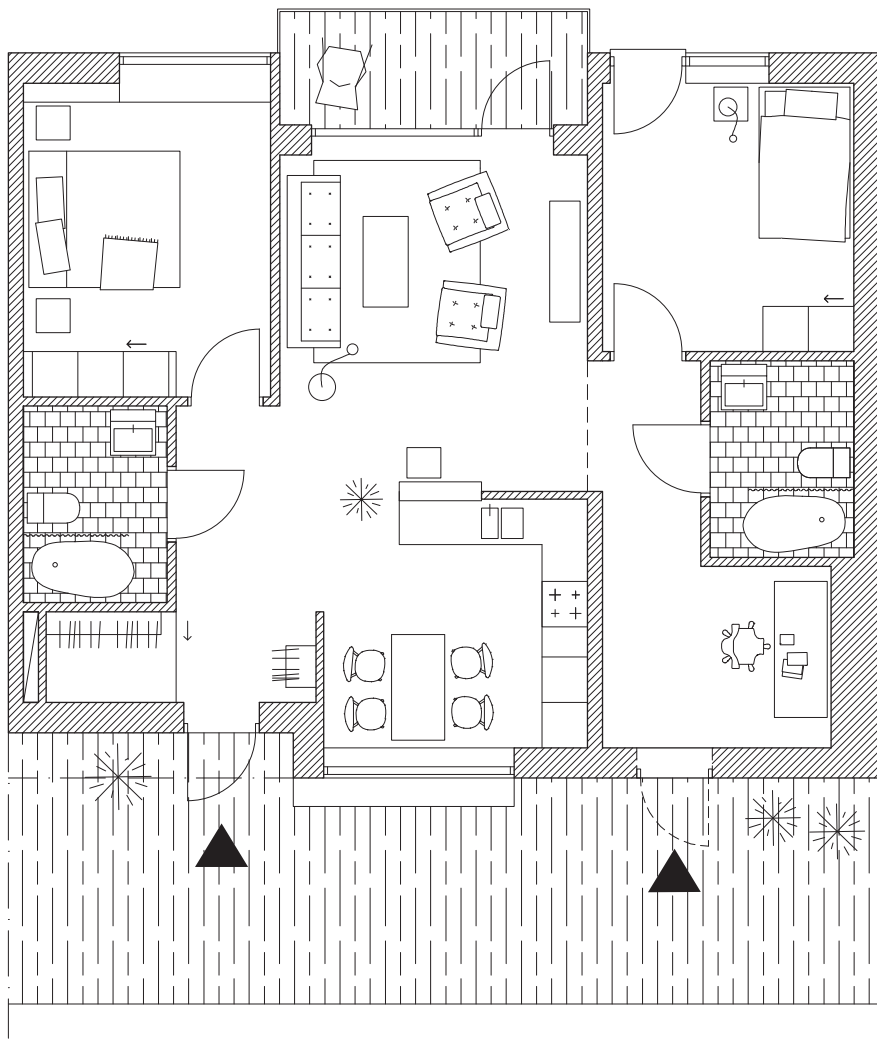
3 rooms and kitchen
70 sqm



AN APARTMENT TO SHARE 1:100



An apartment that can be shared on equal terms between two friends or siblings. Both have their own private unit but share the social areas; kitchen and livingroom.



4 rooms and kitchen
90 sqm

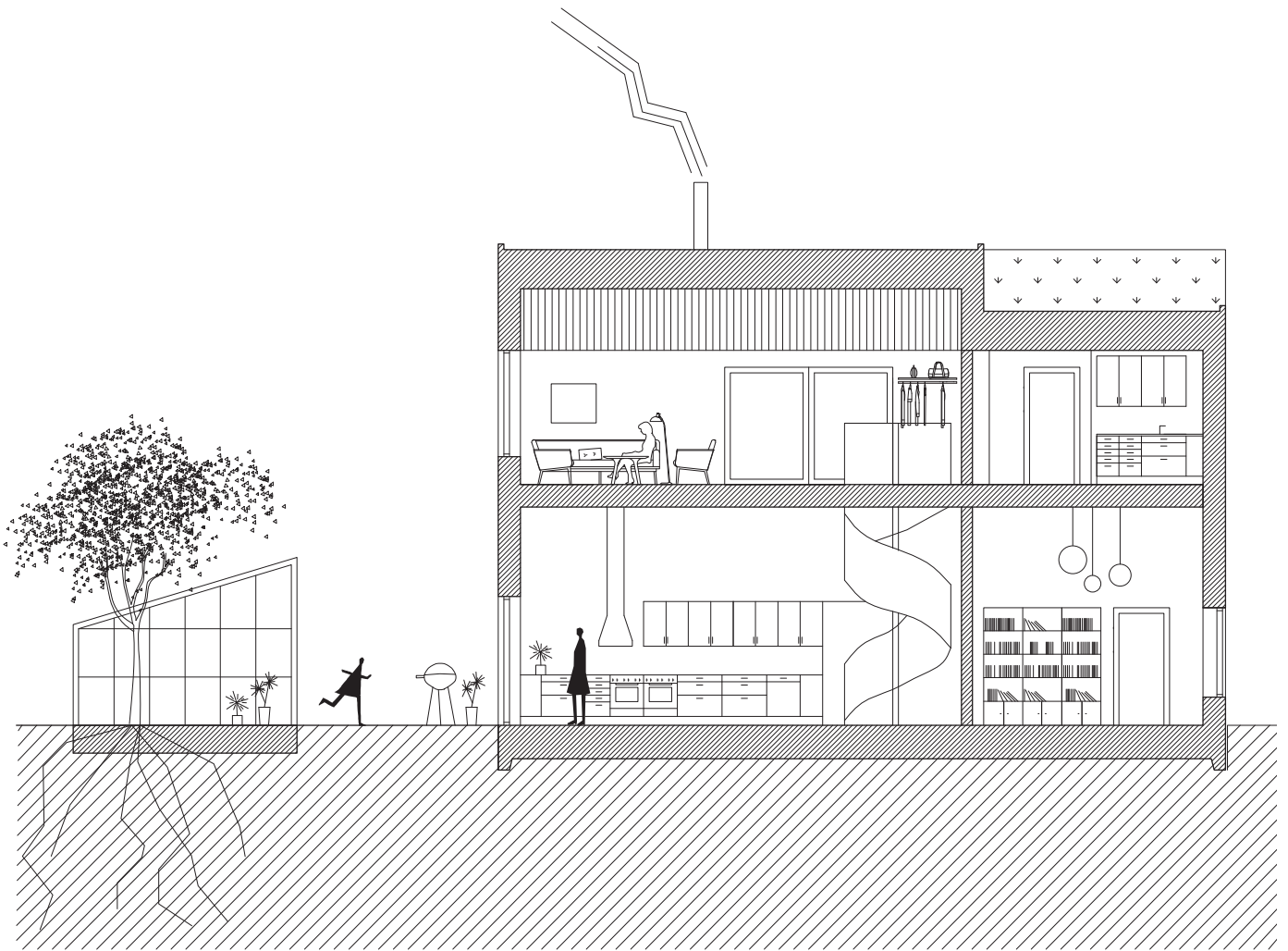
SHARED SPACE

There are two smaller wooden buildings on the courtyard side, connected to the main building. These contain space that are shared between the residents and a place for neighbours to socialize and do activities together. The shared space give the opportunity to invite friends and have events that do not fit into the private apartment.

The larger building houses a shared kitchen, dining area and a library. On the second floor there is a living room with an open fire place, a terrace and a guest apartment for visiting friends and family.

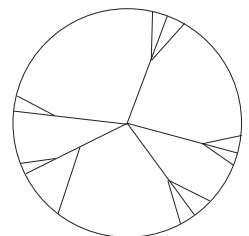
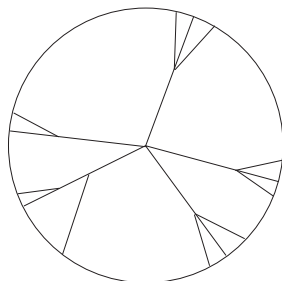
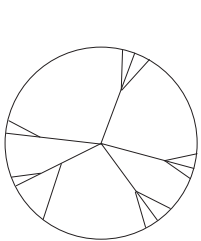
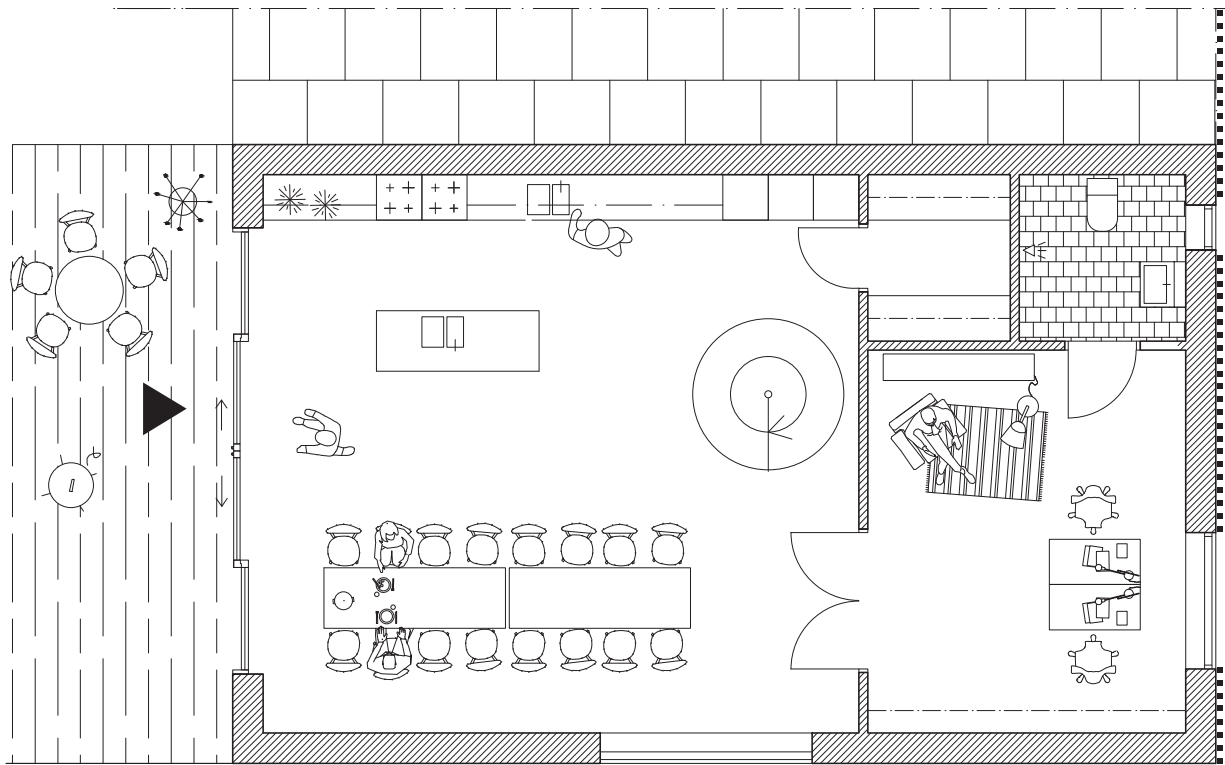
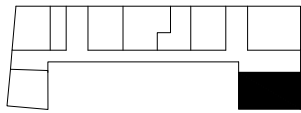
The smaller building consist of a fitness room/ gym on ground level and a sauna and space to relax on the upper level.

SECTION 1:125



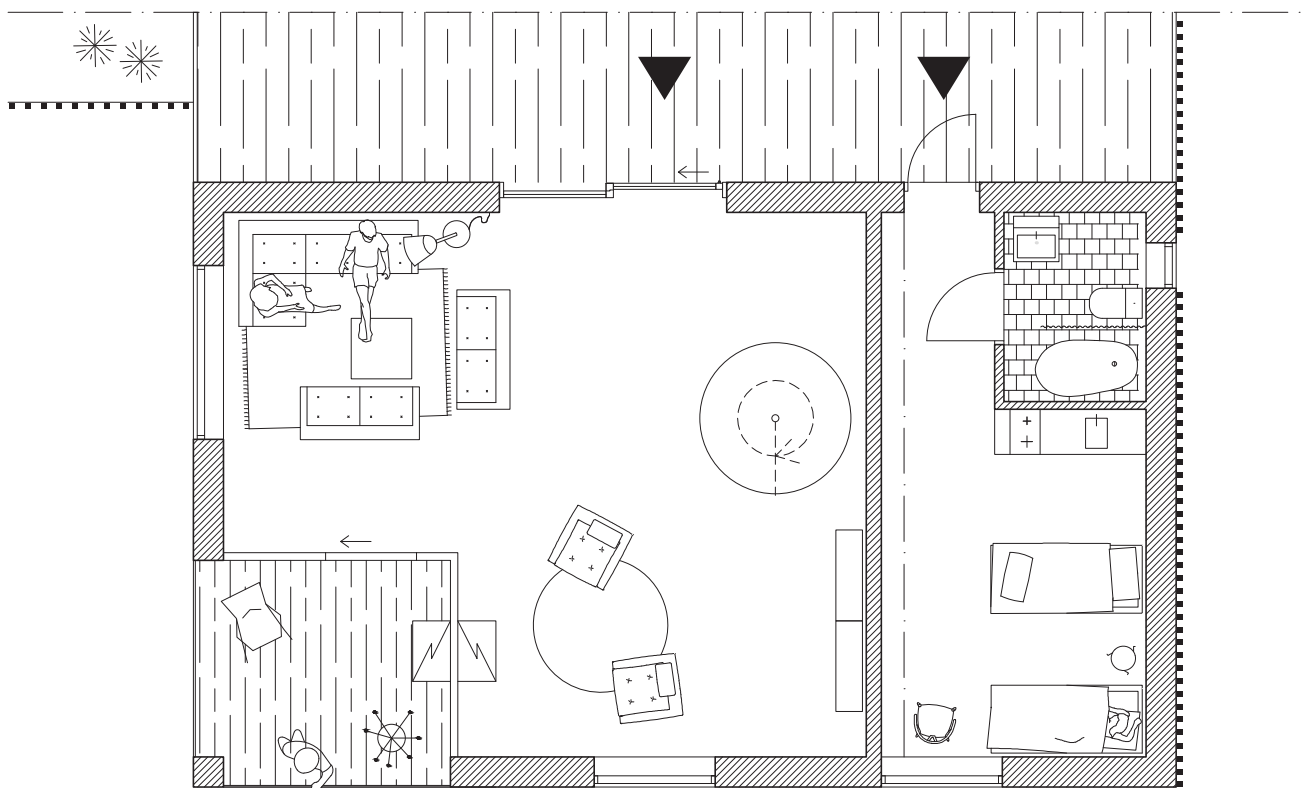
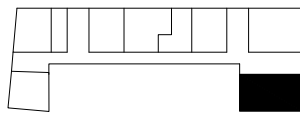
Section through one of the larger shared building showing the common kitchen, library and shared living room. There is also a green house in the garden where the residents can grow there own vegetables.

SHARED SPACE 1:100



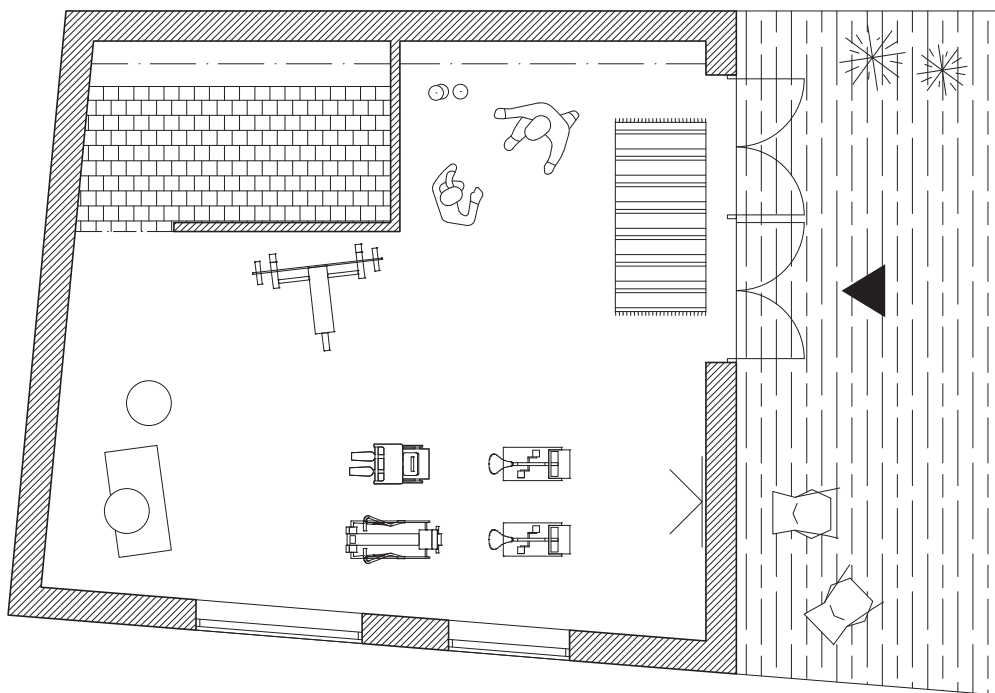
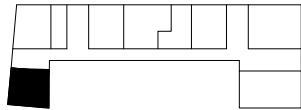
1st floor
Common kitchen, dining room, library
and connecting patio.

SHARED SPACE 1:100



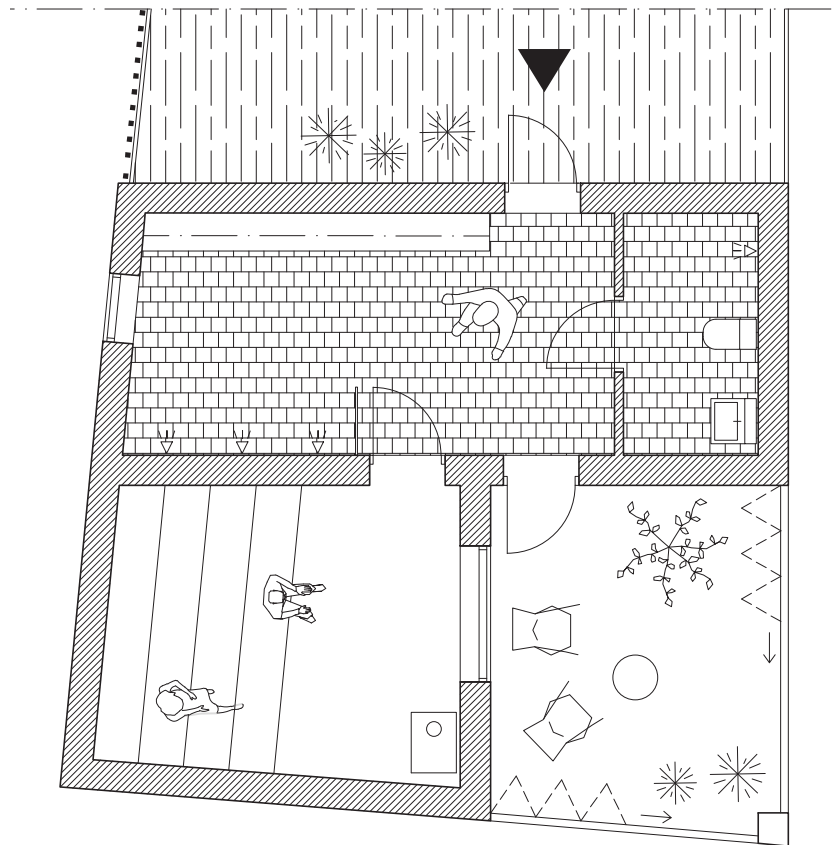
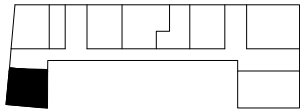
2nd floor
Common living room with open fire place and terrace.
Guest apartment with pantry.

SHARED SPACE 1:100



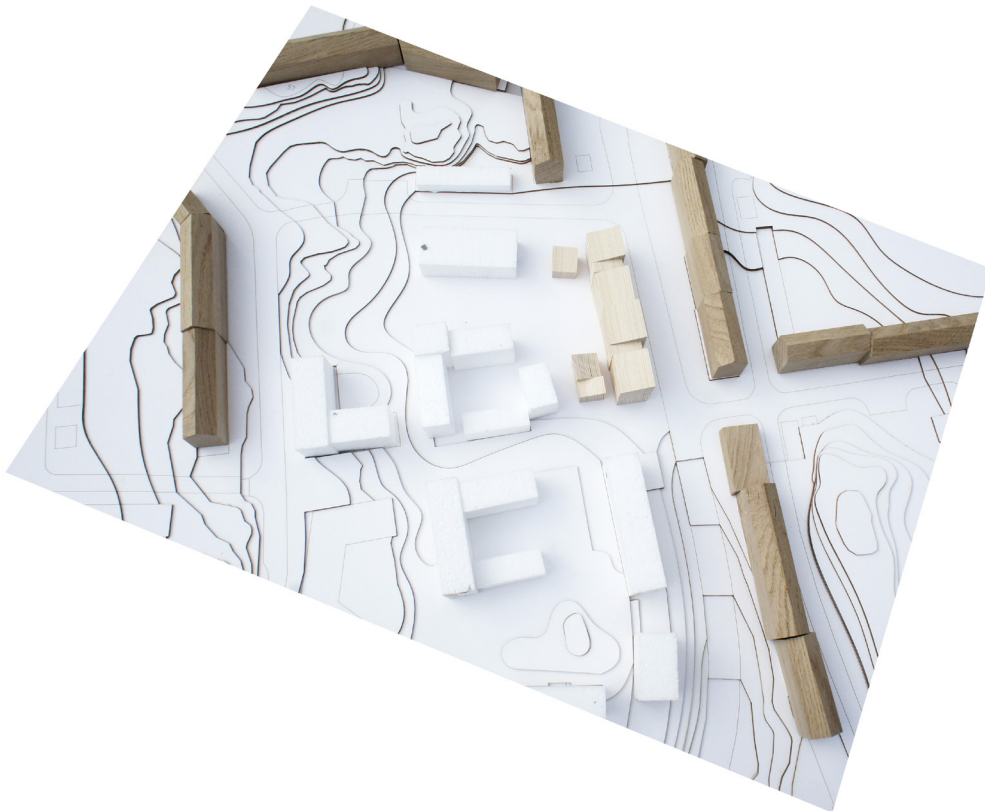
1st floor
Fitness room.

SHARED SPACE 1:100



2nd floor
Sauna, changing room and relaxing area / winter garden.

MODEL PHOTO



MODEL PHOTO



SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

The starting point for this thesis was a conversation with my grandmother and her thoughts on how to live when you get older. I have followed her journey from moving from a large house to a smaller apartment and all the conflicting emotions that followed. For many years she postponed the decision to move, after all she was still healthy and managing on her own. Instead of having this uneasy feeling about it I started to think about how moving to something new or different could be something to look forward to.

There are a lot of single households in Sweden and many pensioners live by themselves. In a society where many things are getting more individualized, ideas about community sometimes seem forgotten. At least in terms of how we live. With my thesis, I wanted to explore community in relation to senior housing by designing co-housing for seniors. The focus was put on investigating the relationship between the private dwelling and different levels of shared space as well as designing quality private space for living.

As a starting point I chose a plot in Högsbo at Guldmyntsgatan in Göteborg. A large area has been freed after the demolition of an old school and there are plans for new housing near a local center. A

senior housing in this area could be integrated with other forms of housing and provide the condition for a larger neighborhood where many different age groups meet.

I am inspired by the Danish *seniorbofaelleskabet* where older people live in their own apartments or houses but also has common areas and where there is a clear idea about community, both in terms of people's attitudes and common activities but also how the dwellings are positioned and how they are linked. In my proposal I chose to create an internal "street" in front of the apartments, a weather-protected access balcony where it is pleasant to be all year around and where the residents have the opportunity to move between the different floors. By adding this "neutral" space where people can meet in everyday life, the social bond between neighbors is strengthened. By placing the more private common rooms in front

of the living units as separate volumes, they become visible to everyone and create space that are large enough for many people to gather in at the same time.

This process has given me an insight into a complex discussion concerning how to live at an old age. Although we know that the group of older people consist of a wide range of different personalities and age groups, with different needs and preferences I started up with a naive desire of wanting to create the senior housing that would be good for everyone. This meant that I sometimes felt unsure of what would be the outcome of my final project instead of focusing on what was my original purpose. There is no solution that is good for everyone and there should not be either. It is more important that there are a variety of options for elderly to choose from that correspond to their various demands.

To plan for and create conditions for a social life within housing might be even more important for elderly. With a higher age it is common that the social circle of people around you decreases but also things like reduced strength makes it more difficult to move around as much and the surrounding neighborhood is becoming increasingly important. I believe that there are still prejudices surrounding community and collective living as a concept, partly because many associate it with a certain type of lifestyle but also because there are patterns and ideas about how we should live together that are

difficult to rephrase. I think many older people benefit from having access to shared facilities and community where they live so they can feel more safe and secure and therefore less anxious. Small social neighborhoods and proximity to other people is good for human beings. Most of the time it is simply knowing that there is someone who "keeps an eye on you", that someone cares and there are people to talk to if you choose to.

A greater knowledge on the subject has made me understand that there are various qualities to different forms of shared space. Therefore it is important to make room for both shared space that is more private as well as more neutral spaces where neighbors can meet without having to socialize. It is also important to design good private space for living since this is where people spend most of their time. An other insight is that living in community requires that not everyone is old and frail. Keeping the community alive demand commitment that requires strength.

With architecture, you can create a framework for the social life but I have also learned that it is the people who live together and their wishes and dreams in relation to the organization of different

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

spaces that form the basis for the buildings social life. I believe community living is a good option for many pensioners who want a more social everyday life. It does not solve all problems dealing with housing for elderly. A problem is that we still tend to look upon elderly as a large uniform group of people instead of seeing different individuals with a wide range of different needs and desires. One form of living do not fit all. It is also important that there are options for those who are in need of more help. But I think it is wrong to focus only on health and social care when people talk about housing for elderly. If more people made a choice about how they want to live when become older it might prevent people from being too alone and isolated in their private apartments and people could feel more harmonious while aging.

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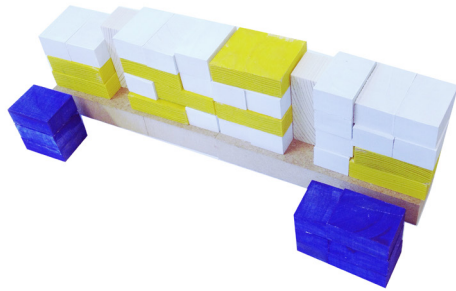
APPENDIX

VOLUME STUDY — DISTRIBUTION OF SHARED SPACE

With the help of boxes, representing different apartment sizes and shared space, I wanted to investigate how to organize the private dwellings in relation to the shared space.

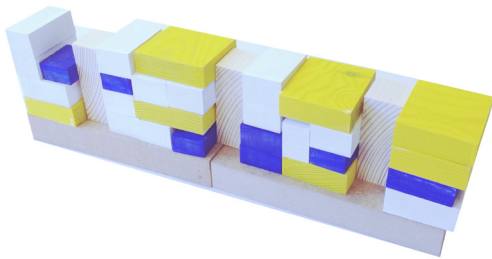
There are advantages and disadvantages to the different approaches. It is a clear advantage to gather the shared space in as few places as possible so that it become areas where everyone in the house meet each other and avoid creating private territories. A visual connection between private and shared space is also important, unless these spaces are situated so that people pass them naturally.

I came to the conclusion that in order to create a good relationship between the shared and private areas it requires a good link between them and an additional shared space that can add another dimension. A more neutral space where neighbors can meet on a everyday basis.



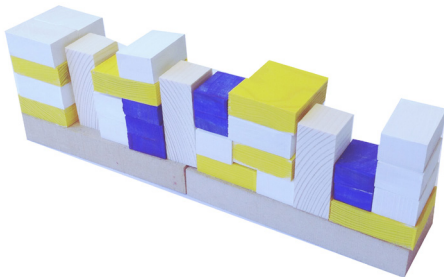
shared space as separate volumes

Shared space as separate volumes in front of the apartment block create a clear space for common activities. It might create a distance between the living units and the shared space but at the same time there is a clear visual connection between them and all the apartments have an equal connection to the shared space.



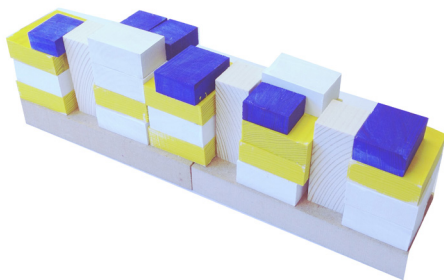
shared space inbetween units

Smaller collective spaces inbetween the apartment units could form an interesting organisation of space. Smaller shared spaces are easily accessible for the closest surrounding apartments. At the same time, smaller shared spaces might easier become someones private territory. The space could also become too small for all residents to gather in at once contrary to an important purpose of the shared space.



shared space double room height

Shared space that span between two floors create a clear vertical connection between floor levels. At the same time a lot of valuable space is lost and since the space is not passed by everyone on a daily basis it becomes less accessible.



shared space bottom and top floor

Collective space on ground floor is accessible and visible for the residents entering and leaving the building, forming opportunities for spontaneous meetings between neighbors. Shared facilities on top floor demand a more attractive program to attract people. While the residents are in their own apartments there is little connection between the living space and shared space.



SEARCHING FOR A SITE

Vänmötet

Service

Matbutik	350 m
kollektivtrafik	180 m
flexlinje	200 m
bibliotek	550 m
café/restaurang	200 m
vårdcentral	1 200 m

Gemenskap och Trygghet

Rekreation/grönområde:

Gråberget

Mötesplatser:

Antal lägenheter

ca 25-30 lgh



Kabelgatan/Stortoppsgatan

Service

Matbutik	350 m
kollektivtrafik	180 m
flexlinje	200 m
bibliotek	550 m
café/restaurang	200 m
vårdcentral	1 200 m

Gemenskap och Trygghet

Rekreation/grönområde:

Gråberget

Mötesplatser:

Antal lägenheter

ca 60 lgh



Majstångsgatan

Service

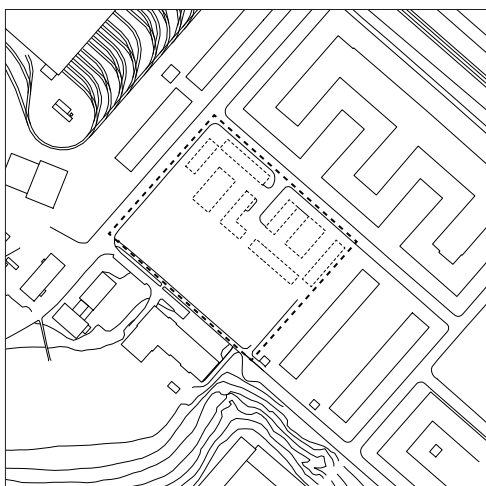
Matbutik	300 m
kollektivtrafik	250 m
flexlinje	50 m
bibliotek	300
café/restaurang	
vårdcentral	500 m

Gemenskap och Trygghet

Utemiljö
Rudalen, Svaleboskogen
Mötesplatser

Antal lägenheter

ca 40-60 lgh



Guldmyntsgatan

Service

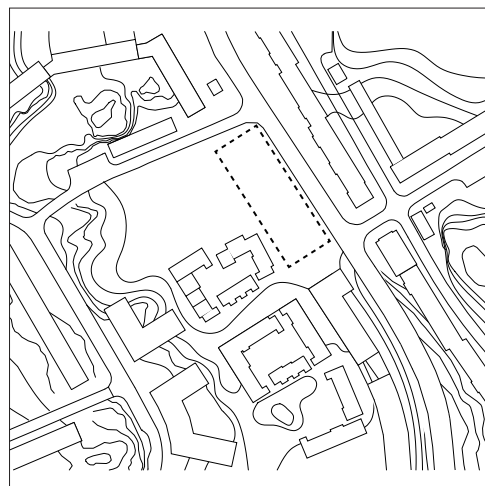
Matbutik	300 m
kollektivtrafik	250 m
flexlinje	50 m
bibliotek	300
café/restaurang	
vårdcentral	500 m

Gemenskap och Trygghet

Utemiljö
Rudalen, Svaleboskogen
Mötesplatser

Antal lägenheter

ca 30-40



INTERVIEWS

VILLA INGRID

studiebesök den 20 Februari 2014

I slutet av mars besöker jag Villa Ingrid i Ystad. Jag har fått kontakt med Ann-Christine Göransson som är initiativtagare till ett seniorboende inrymt i en före detta skolbyggnad i centrala Ystad. Ann-Christine har under många år haft idéer och en dröm kring hur ett bra boende för äldre skulle vara utformat. När det 2005 utlystes en tävling om skolans framtida användning fick hon chansen att förverkliga sina tankar. Arkitekt är Mats Persson.

Boendet är en bostadsrättsförening med 9 lägenheter för personer som är 55 år och över. Förutom en större vindsvåning har lägenheterna 2-3 rum och kök om 85 kvadratmeter. Hälften av lägenheterna bebos av par och hälften av ensamstående.

I skolans gamla skyddsrum finns en gästlägenhet med ett rymligt kök. Bostadshuset har mindre gemensamma utrymmen i anslutning till trapphuset på varje plan. Här finns ett litet bibliotek och ett spelbord för husets canastakvällar. Det finns även en motionscykel tillgängligt.

Gemenskapen i huset är stark för den som vill vara med säger Ann-Christine. Det är individuellt om man vill vara med eller inte i gemenskapen. Om man vill vara med är den stark. Vi "håller koll" på varandra, man ser vem som har tagit in

tidningen och det är skönt.

Föreningen har ibland gemensamma aktiviteter och då samlas de i den lilla matsalen i det gamla skyddsrummet.

Vi har en festkommitté och de bakar och fixar. Ibland äter vi ärtsoppa, ibland har vi fredagsmys och så har vi julbord. Vi klär julgran och dricker glögg

Några i huset träffas varje vecka för att spela canasta men det finns inget rullande schema för de gemensamma aktiviteterna.

Det viktiga var att huset skulle ha en "själ" eller hemkänsla men att var och en skulle ha sin egen lägenhet och möjlighet att vara för sig själv om man inte ville vara med i gemenskapen.

Vi som börjar bli gamla är mer aktiva än tidigare generationer och vill inte behöva uppleva det där att bli instoppade någonstans där vi verkligen inte vill bo. Några av oss kommer ändå få uppleva detta just för att vi inte har tagit ställning och funderat över hur vi vill ha det. Att flytta är hemskt. Jag saknar många saker i mitt rymliga hus men det här var en perfekt lösning. Det är en annan fas i livet.

MAJBACKEN

studiebesök den 18 Februari 2014

Den 18 februari träffar jag Bertil och Ola som bor i Majbackens bogemenskap i Göteborg. Boendet är inriktat Majbacken bildades 2003-2004 och en ekonomisk förening blockhyr lägenheter och gemensamhetslokaler av familjebostäder. Nya medlemmar väljs av föreningen. Huset var tidigare servicehus. I huset finns 31 lägenheter, enbart 2:or på 39 eller 59 kvm. De är 35 boende totalt.

Lägenheterna är små men de gemensamma lokalerna väger upp en hel del för detta. Bertil upplever ändå att det är ett problem att det bara finns så små lägenheter i huset. Det gör att många par inte vill flytta in vilket bidrar till att det inte blir så stor variation av boendekonstellationer.

Bertil och Ola tror att det viktigaste är att man trivs ihop med de man bor med, att det finns en personkemi som stämmer även om man inte kommer överens med alla. Det krävs ett engagemang för att få det att fungera. Både Ola och Bertil upplever att det finns en större sammanhållning mellan de som varit med från starten och som kämpat tillsammans mot ett gemensamt mål. Men de som har tillkommit senare är också yngre och de menar att det finns fler aspekter som påverkar gemenskapen, som exempelvis gemensamma

intressen.

Utöver månadshyran betalar varje medlem 2000 kronor i insats och en medlemsavgift på 440 kronor i månaden för nyttjandet av de gemensamma lokalerna.

Föreningen har en rad olika grupper med olika fokusområden som bidrar till gemenskapen. De har föreningsmöten varje månad och gemensamma middagar 2 gånger i veckan. Det är obligatoriskt att vara med i ett matlaget och i städlaget som rör om huset.

Både Ola och Bertil tycker de är lagom många som bor i huset men att ett par fler inte skulle skada. Boendet är för personer i mogen ålder utan hemmavarande barn vilket i praktiken innebär 40 år och uppåt. Idén är att man ska flytta in när man är handlingskraftig men att man ska kunna åldras och att gemenskapen ska bidra till större trygghet och att man känner sig mindre ensam. Den yngsta medlemmen är 47 och den äldsta är 92. Äldre boende kan inte göra lika mycket längre men de hjälper till med små saker i huset. Att känna sig behövd även när man är äldre är viktigt. Framförallt har man mycket roligare när man har större gemenskap vilket gör det lättare att åldras.

Ola och Bertil tror och hoppas att man till viss del kan minska behovet av hemtjänst genom att ge varandra trygghet, umgänge och hjälpas åt. De beskriver huset som den trygga hamnen att komma hem till. Det är bra att kunna känna igen sig när man blir äldre.

De gemensamma utrymmen är omkring 200 kvadratmeter men Ola och Bertil hade gärna haft mer yta. De tycker det är tråkigt att lokalerna inte ligger i samband med entrén och att huset på andra sätt inte i sig skapar "spontana möten".

Gemensamhetslokalerna nås genom en vanlig lägenhetsdörr på andra våningen. Det finns ingen visuell kontakt mellan de gemensamma ytorna och trapphuset. Det finns en uteplats i anknytning till gemensamhetslokalen.

Det är svårt att veta var folk bor tycker Ola och Bertil om man inte bor mitt i huset. De hade velat ha mer flexibla utrymmen och plats för informella, enkla möten. De efterfrågar också mer rörliga aktiviteter i det gemensamma för fysisk aktivitet.

MOSAIKENS TRYGGHETSBOENDE

studiebesök den 2 April 2014

Mosaikens trygghetsboende ligger i Partille Kommun vid Björndammens torg. Det är ett boende för människor över 70 år med behov eller kommande behov av hemtjänst. Huset är från 70-talet men har nyligen renoverats och byggts om. Lägenheterna har fått inglasade balkonger och större tillgänglighetsanpassade badrum. Totalt finns det 57 hyresrätter i huset, 1-2 rum och kök på mellan 37 och 74 kvadratmeter och en trerummare. Alla boende äger sin egna lägenhet. Här bor många ensamstående men också en del par.

I entréplan har hemtjänsten lokaler vilket innebär att huset har personal på plats från 7-22 alla dagar. På bottenplan finns även tvättstuga och en restaurang där de boende äter lunch varje dag. Personalen anordnar även olika aktiviteter och temakvällar för de boende.

Jag träffar enhetschefen Lena Sjöo för att få veta mer om hur byggnaden och verksamheten fungerar. Jag är intresserad av hur det sociala livet upprätthålls i trygghetsboendet.

Alla träffas och äter mat tillsammans varje dag, det är en stor del av den sociala gemenskapen och att

träffas och fika på eftermiddagarna. På kvällarna kan det bli mer ensamt, då händer det inte lika mycket i huset. Det är personalen som är annordnar aktiviteterna och på så vis upprätthåller det sociala livet. De flesta som bor här är gamla och orkar inte ta lika mycket initiativ längre.

Lena poängterar att det är jätteviktigt att det finns tillgång till bra utomhusmiljöer. De ska vara lättillgängliga och delvis solskyddade för att skapa en bra miljö för äldre. Att Mosaiken ligger nära naturen ser hon som en fördel.

Restaurang och en mindre terrass finns på bottenplan. Här finns även tvättstuga men en del boende har tvättmaskin i den privata lägenheten. På våning två finns en större terrass med konstgräs och en boulebana. Här finns en sittgrupp men terrassen ligger något svårtillgänglig. Högst upp i huset finns en lounge med fantastisk utsikt. Här finns också ett fullt utrustadt kök, ljusrum och bastu. Dessa lokalerna används mycket av personalen. Kanske bidrar placeringen av de gemensamma lokalerna att de upplevs mindre tillgängliga. Även personalen tror att de hade använts mer om det låg i anslutning till de andra lokalerna.

Lena hade gärna sett att det fanns ett “upplevelserum”. Det är viktigt att kunna ha kvar sina intressen hela livet men idag finns det lite utrymme för detta. Små saker som kan trigga minnen är viktigt än om man inte längre kan utöva sitt intresse på samma sätt.

Gemensamhetslokalen på bottenvåningen är låst på kvällarna. Detta är en säkerhetsfråga för att inte obehöriga ska komma in i huset. Samtidigt gör det att de boende inte har fri tillgång till lokalerna.

RUSSINET

studiebesök den 7 April 2014

Russinet är en kooperativ hyresgästförening med 27 lägenheter mellan 36 kvm och 90 kvm, fördelade som 1:or, 2:or och 3:or. Huvudparten är tvåor. Det läggs på ca 7 kvadratmeter gemensamma lokaler/lägenhet. De gemensamma utrymmena består av tvättstuga, bibliotek, matsal och kök. I källaren finns ett stort rum med gemensam dator och lite gymgrejer. Där finns även ett bubbelbad och bastu samt två gästrum med wc. I boendet finns även en takterass och snickerbod.

Jag träffar Lena och Birgitta som bor i huset för ett samtal.

Ju äldre man blir desto mindre utrymme behöver man, det är intressant. Jag kommer från ett stort hus, flyttade till en trea och nu bor jag i en tvåa och jag skulle klara mig med en etta. Man skalar av på något sätt när man har lär sig att skiljas från prylarna.

Det speciella med vårt boende är att vi har extra utrymmen och här kan man ordna kalas när det är födelsedagar eller sådant som man inte kan få plats med att göra i sin lägenhet. De gemensamma utrymmena är viktiga. Det kanske man är mer rädd för när man flyttar hit, då tänker man kanske mer på sin egna lägenhet.

Många av mina bekanta säger att "så skulle jag aldrig kunna bo" och stundtals har det varit svårt att få folk att bo här för att man är rädd att man blir för uppbunden. Men så är det inte, var och en har ju sin lägenhet som är fullt utrustad. Du har två saker som du är uppbunden i; du ska ingå i ett matlag och i ett städlag. LKF äger huset och vi förvaltar det. Det betyder att vi städar trappor och håller med en trädgård. När människor åldras och inte kan vara med längre då ligger det på oss andra. Det är svårt att få in yngre människor. Vi har inte längre en åldersgräns men man får inte få bo här med barn. Många är intresserade när en lägenhet blir ledig men många faller bort. För att man ska fungera här måste man vara öppensinnad och vi är bara människor. Ibland hettar det till. Vi försöker ha intervjuer när nya ska flytta in så att de ska förstå vad det innebär.

Jag frågar om varför de valde att flytta till Russinet.

Jag har alltid haft en dröm om det kollektiva boendet. Man kan inte ha det bättre än så här. Man går ner och läser tidningen och jag behöver inte prenumerera på en själv. Vi har ett fullt utrustat kök. Jag har en ganska stor familj och när jag tar hit dom så kan jag ha allihopa här och det är fantastiskt. Vill man umgås så går man ner eller ringer till någon. Vi har försökt att dricka kaffe varje dag klockan tre men man tröttnar på varandra också. Det är svårt att få variation. Vi kollar på

film ibland. Vi äter två dagar i veckan tillsammans. Själva boendet tycker jag är helt perfekt. Man har gångsavstånd till allt, det är fina lägenheter och bra gemensamma utrymmen. Vi är över 30 som bor här och en del är ganska skruttiga. Aktiviteter bygger helt på egen fri vilja, att någon tar initiativ. I början var vi väldigt igång med olika högtidsfester men det har blivit en omsättning på människor och saker förändras. Det är det här med människan. Vissa flyttar och andra kommer till vilket gör att vissa saker förviner och andra saker kommer till.

Jag har haft min lägenhet i 4 år. Jag tyckte att man måste tänka på äldre dagar, ha lite framförhållning. Familjerna är oftast så pass små. Jag tilltalades av idén att ha min egna lägenhet och kontaktytor till andra. Det ligger något bra i det. På den tiden var jag särbo med min nuvarande sambo, han är äldre än jag, och jag märkte att han var alldeles för ensam. Han är mycket matlagningsintresserad och blev helt förälskad i köket. Jag ser på honom att det har varit en bra social stimulans. Det är något i principerna här som jag tycker om och som är bra. I Sverige finns många ensamhushåll och det finns stora ensamhetsproblem.

Jag frågar om de tycker det är viktigt med gemensamma värdegrunder eller något mer än boendet som förenar dem. Är det viktigt att vara "lika"?

Vi är mycket olika! Jag hade önskat att Russinet hade lite tydligare profil. Vi är väldigt olika och ibland känns det som det finns fler friktioner än det hade behövt vara.

Jag frågar om hur de upplever de gemensamma utrymmena, vad som fungerar bra och om något hade kunnat vara annorlunda.

En nackdel är att alla rum är genomgångsrum. Pratar man om något mer personligt kan det när som helst komma någon annan. Det är viktigt att skapa spontana möten. Som tvättstugan och glasytor som skapar visuell kontakt. Man får syn på någon och så sticker man in huvudet och säger hej. Ljus tycker jag är väldigt viktigt, när man blir äldre är det härligt att det flödar in, man blir mer beroende av ljus. Något vi har saknat är ett kontor. Vi är en ekonomisk förening som behöver utrymme.

Vem bor i huset? Hur fungerar det att bo så tätt inpå varandra?

Det är flest ensamma som bor här men en del par. Flest kvinnor. Det verkar vara ett generellt mönster, att kvinnor visar större intresse för gemenskapen. Många människor är rädda för den här typen av boende, vi vill ha space omkring oss, kom inte för nära! Men det kan man ha här med. Många i Sverige är

rädda för att grannarna ska springa för mycket i dörrarna men det är inget problem här. Man bestämmer själv mycket, annars hade inte jag kunnat bo här. Man umgås både i gemensamma lokaler och bjuder in varandra i lägenheterna. Men det är att umgås med olika förutsättningar. Bjuder man hem någon till sig så väljer man vem man umgås med på ett annat sätt. Här nere i det gemensamma har man en större öppenhet.

Ett av dilemman är att man inte trivs med alla. Det är som en arbetsplats. Man går inte ihop med alla. Eller som i en familj, man kommer i diskussion med någon och så tar någon det personligt och så hälsar man inte på varandra. Man ska hälsa på varandra för vi har valt att bo här tillsammans men vi är så olika som människor. Hur hanterar man konflikter? det är jättesvårt. Det är lite som en studentkorridor ibland. Folk retar sig på varandra, det är inte annorlunda när man är 75.

Jag frågar om fördelningen mellan olika åldrar i huset och hur de resonerar kring detta.

Det som är sjuka och äldre får vara med i gemenskapen men de äter inte tillsammans längre. Ibland har Russinet uppfattats som ett äldreboende men det är det inte och det är inte helt lätt att bli riktigt gammal här, det är en svår fråga. Det kan vara svårt för vissa när de känner att de inte kan bidra lika mycket längre. Men det finns inget krav på den som är för gammal för

att kunna hjälpa till att städa. Även om vi är olika är vi är alla rädda om det gemensamma. Vi känner ett ansvar för det tillsammans. När vi gör saker tillsammans då känner man en viss gemenskap. Jag tror så mycket på det här boendet men det behövs bara en människa som inte passar in för att det ska bli spänningar.

Människan är som den är, det kan man inte planera för. Förväntningarna på boendet är viktiga och att de överensstämmer mellan de boende. Det är viktigt att vara tydlig

