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Summary

Introduction by the Editors

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This Issue is devoted to the problem, which is becoming ever more urgent, of housing for the aged. Mr. Schmidt, architect in Tübingen, has long concerned himself with this question, and he is the author of our main article.

His idea of distributing housing for the aged over the entire territory of a city (realized in ideal fashion in the old town of Leiden) can be only the definition of the . . . ideal solution. In the large modern city, however, it is not going to be easy to have housing made available for this purpose at moderate rentals, and this is all the more true as the urban centres are nowadays more and more "estranged". Therefore, it is up to the smaller community to find sites reasonably priced so as to be able to offer to aged residents housing at moderate rentals. The luxuriously equipped home for the aged can be a solution to the problem for a small minority only.

We are trying to present here some examples of homes and colonies for the aged which are in keeping with the idea propounded by the author of our article, in the sense that the real question is not to relegate the aged to the periphery of the city and so to cut them off from all contact with the places where they have lived and worked. That is why we are ignoring homes for the aged which, like castles, are isolated in the midst of forests, far from cities.

By means of our examples we are endeavouring to focus on the element which appears to be most important for the resolution of this problem.

Erwin Bürgi, Zurich/Lucerne

Eichhof colony for the aged in Lucerne

(Pages 379-383)

A residential colony for the aged, on a competition basis sponsored by the City of Lucerne, has been built in a park measuring 40,000 sq. meters. The complex includes three staggered double houses of two stories with two-room flats and a high riser with one-room flats.

The latter, 47 meters in height, covers 325 sq. meters. The first two floors accommodate all the common rooms and the living quarters of the resident nurse and the caretaker. 92 one-room flats are distributed in the 14 upper floors. In the arcade houses 24 two-room flats are accommodated.

The lounge can be extended to allow for theatrical performances. Radios and television sets are available to the residents. This hall could just as well be used as a dining room, with underground communication to the men's home. On the roof there is a terrace commanding a view over the lake and the mountains.

On a standard floor there are three groups of two one-room flats, facing east, south and west. In the central core are storerooms, refuse shafts, heating ducts, chimney, lifts and stairs. A flat in the high riser comprises a vestibule with wardrobe, a storage space, a studio room measuring 19.5 sq. meters with built-in wardrobe, a kitchen with dining nook and built-in cupboards, a WC with wash-bowl, a balcony measuring 6.7 sq. meters. One-third of all the flats have a slipper-bath.

Every studio room is comfortably furnished. The bed is installed in a alcove, which can be enclosed by a curtain. The windowsill is wide and thus can be used as a table or for plants. The kitchen is equipped with a two-plate range, stainless steel sink, refrigerator and oven. Provision has been made for connections for telephone, radio and television.

The balcony is roomy, sheltered from the wind and private. It forms an admirable complement to the studio. Moreover, it adds to the harmonious effect of the elevation.

Construction

For the most part of pre-fabricated elements. Decks and reinforcing partitions were poured on the site.

The pre-fab concrete elements represent a total of 8,000 cu. meters, and there are 1,400 of them, of dimensions varying from 2 to 7 sq. meters, weighing from 1 to 3 tons. Face of raw concrete. Metal window frames.

Alfred Doebeli, Biel

Home for the aged and colony for the aged in Zofingen

(Pages 384-387)

This plan was awarded first prize in a competition. A second stage will comprise the building of the colony for the aged.

A noisy highway to the west of the gently sloping site makes it necessary to displace the buildings towards the east boundary near the green zone. In this way valuable trees have been preserved. Later on, the colony will incorporate the whole site. The proportions of the main six-storey building and of the two- and one-storey annexes are completely harmonious.

Special attention has been devoted to the proper insulation of the rooms, even in winter, this being achieved by the assembling of equal-sided triangles, measuring 1.60 m. per side. Hence the following results are obtained: a fine plastic structural effect, the chance to use pre-fab elements and the creation of rooms of different sizes which are easy to furnish.

In the main building, 52 beds distributed in single and double rooms are grouped around a staircase that faces north, with lift and utility rooms. Halls, entrances, first aid station with medical department are situated on the upper level. An annex of two stories leads to the north and contains, on the lower level, the community rooms designed for recreation. At the end of this low-silhouette building, another building has been erected at right angles, with, on the north side and on one level, the staff rooms and, on the west side and on two levels, flats for married couples. The whole complex is designed on a human scale and in no way gives the impression of a barracks; it is an ideal residence for aged people, who often have difficulty moving about.

Karl Flatz, Zurich

Home and colony for the aged in Dübendorf near Zurich

(Pages 388-391)

Since Winterthur is close to the largest city in Switzerland, it is all the more subject to the consequences of urbanization. The problem of the aged is one of these consequences, and the construction of a home combined with a residential colony for the aged should contribute to resolving this problem.

The colony comprises one- and two-room apartments designed for aged persons who are still capable of taking care of themselves.

The home includes mainly single rooms and some rooms for couples, with separate toilets. Apart from the beds, the residents can bring their own furniture. Outside his own bedroom, each resident has the use of a lounge, a television room, a hobby room and, on each floor, a snack kitchen. Each resident has his own letter-box and his key, these being important details which save him from the feeling that he is quartered in a barracks. Moreover, there are no prescribed visiting hours. Colony and home for the aged with utility building and house for the staff constitute a complex that is various and relaxed, harmoniously integrated in the quiet surroundings.

In the centre is the utility building, one storey high, with, on grade level, the dining room, lounge, kitchen, laundry, director's and nurse's offices and, on basement level, the baths. As for the home, set in the southwest slope, it contains five and six stories and furnishes a cubic accent for the whole complex. It comprises 52 single rooms and 8 rooms for couples.

The staff house is three stories high and contains the flats of the director and the caretaker. Adjoining, as it does, the utility building, it is remarkable for its cubic design between the other two higher structures.

The colony, staggered and angular, contains 37 one-room flats and 15 two-room flats.

Ernst Zietzschmann and Jobst von Nordheim, Hanover

Colony for the aged on the Laagberg in Wolfsburg

(Pages 392-393)

North of Wolfsburg, famous for its motor industry (Volkswagen), is the

suburb of Laagberg. Within the scope of the general regional planning project, there has been envisaged for this site the construction of housing for the aged. Architects, contractors and the Wolfsburg public authorities have decided, for once, not to build the standard type of housing for the aged, with two or three stories and in monotonous lines, but one-storey houses giving each resident direct access to his own garden, no matter how small it may be. These little gardens extend to the west of the row of houses and constitute, along with a grassy slope, the generously conceived green zone separating the rows of houses.

The little colony is made up, on the northeast, of nine one-storey houses, on the southwest, of three rows of double houses in all, each containing two two-room flats. A recreation plaza, acting as a sort of pivot for the whole complex, in the centre of the colony, constitutes a social centre.

The staggering rendered obligatory by the contours of the site creates the effect of a collection of detached houses and not of a centralized "colony", even though all the houses cohere in a unified scheme.

Noel Moffett and Associates, London

Housing for the aged, White City Estate, London

(Pages 396-399)

The architects' assignment was to create housing for the aged on a site especially set aside in a newly developed district of London. The criteria: prices as low as feasible, individualized flats and use as far as possible of pre-fab elements. Taking as their point of departure the angle of incidence of the sunlight, the architects have conceived a construction which is pyramidal in section. Instead of right-angled elements following the building line, the architects have selected hexagonal bases, thus realizing a very lively staggered grouping that complies with the three above-mentioned criteria. Each of the one- or two-room flats, which are highly individualized, easy and comfortable, get sunlight and include a small lounging terrace. The hexagonal rooms allow for individualized furnishing. A rectangular construction style would not have allowed for more than 15 flats, whereas the present plan permits 28. Concrete elements have been planned for the ceilings. As for the columns, of equal length, they too have a hexagonal section. The windows are of three different types. The parapets are of raw brick of a dark-red shade, the internal partitions of light concrete.

Group MOHLG, London

Flats for the aged in Stevenage

(Pages 400-402)

This complex of one- and two-room flats for the aged has been carried out on the basis of studies made on already existing colonies for the aged. This group is situated near a residential zone. Shops and a bus-stop are close by. The whole project comprises 24 flats, 20 one-room units and 4 two-room units.

Each unit of one room has a studio-bedroom, with kitchenette and WC, which are separate, as well as a small vestibule with wall cupboards. The two-room flats comprise living room and separate bedroom. Each bedroom has windows on two sides. On the architectural plane, the complex avoids giving the impression of a cold barracks. In a small building there are accommodated the lounges intended for reading and recreation. The residents have at their disposal a total of 5 baths and one shower.

The structure, on a concrete raft foundation, consists of a light steel frame with timber infill panels for roofs, upper floors and external walls. The steel frame makes it possible for the roof to be erected at an early stage, thus providing covered working conditions for the following trades and shortening the time of erection. It also acts as a jig for the location of other components. The roofs are finished with asphalt and chippings and the external walls are clad with concrete tiles.

Florian Vischer, Georges Weber

Humanitas home for the aged, Riehen near Basel

(Pages 403-404)

This plan grew out of a limited competition and is for a private home for the aged, with 10 (?) double rooms for couples and 78 single rooms; it is being built in a township close to Basel.

The access to the upper part of the site calls for staggering of the different levels. On the west side, two floors originally intended for the welfare centre rise above an elevated entrance level, on which are accommodated the administration offices, dining rooms, community rooms with wide terraces which project in front of the building. Owing to considerations of economy, standard rooms for residents have been installed here. Lower down, three residence floors are staggered in such a way on the slope that it is possible, from each one, to get into the garden. All the bedrooms in the west and east wings have their own balcony.

The utility building accommodating the personnel has been adjoined to the main building in such a way that its upper level can, as the need arises, be used either by the personnel or by the residents.

The buildings are sited so that the entrance, on the north, is separated from the living tract with garden, on the south side. In this way there are also created "sections", the result being that the main building, extending towards the south side of the property, limits the visual field from the windows to more intimate spaces. The panoramic view is reserved for the community rooms.

Rudolf Kuenzi, Zurich

Project for two homes for the aged in Küssnacht, near Zurich

(Pages 405-406)

The plan for two homes for the aged of modest income, presented here, was awarded first prize in a limited competition. The City of Zurich and a private foundation shared in the assignment, the realization of which will take place on a plot owned by the City of Zurich in the wealthy commune of Küssnacht. The home of the private foundation is planned to comprise 50 single rooms measuring 15-16 sq. meters each and five double rooms measuring about 28 sq. meters each. Each unit will accommodate 15 to 20 persons. The home of the City of Zurich is to contain 70 single rooms and five double rooms of the same dimensions. Each of these homes is to be built and managed separately. Each is also to have a dining room with kitchen, a room for television, hobbies and lectures, and quarters for director, caretaker and staff.

The plan is distinguished for the friendly character of its design, for the exterior and interior staggering of the buildings.

This plan is a model for the difficult assignment of designing a home for the aged.

John W. Sudgen, Los Angeles

"Regis Medicus" doctors' house in Salt Lake City, Utah (USA)

(Pages 407-410)

Like numerous European cities, Salt Lake City too has a medical centre, comprising 15 consultation cubicles with joint radiological service, joint laboratory and premises for minor surgery, along with a pharmacy.

The utility surface is 1,800 sq. meters, distributed on two levels. The roomy consultation cubicles are grouped, on the ground floor, around a core containing, in addition to the lift and the toilets, the X-ray rooms. Next to the hall there are the cafeteria and the pharmacy. On the first floor are the central office and a sales room for optical apparatus.

The construction takes the form of a steel skeleton with doubled T sections at intervals of 6.10 meters, forming rectangles of 3x7 meters. Reinforcement has been provided by diagonals in the exterior walls. At the main columns there are, in addition, light steel sections at intervals of 3.05 meters, which, along with the flat sections in front of the decks, invest the whole building with its characteristic latticed effect. The interior steel partitions are mobile.