



DESIGN FOR AGEING

Mark Turnbull Travel Award Report

Dr Amber Roberts, 2019

Rationale

The aim of the travel was to provide a wider precedent base of how to deal with landscapes for ageing. Before undertaking the award my knowledge of design for ageing was dominated by residential 'end-of-life' care facilities such as dementia care homes and their associated therapeutic gardens. In traveling to Sweden and Japan I hoped to find examples of design for ageing that considered more diverse project types across the scales of landscape architecture from city planning through to small community projects. I also hoped to find projects that addressed the ageing process from retirement onwards, that enabled and encouraged healthier, happier and more resilient lives prior to end-of-life care.

The publication 'Design for Ageing' identifies 'there is (perhaps unsurprisingly) a focus on residential projects; general or sheltered (often for the over 55s) housing, extra-care, care homes and dementia care. There is little research into outdoor spaces with regards to ageing and sustainability, and there is also very little on non-residential buildings - other than healthcare buildings - especially retail, leisure, civic and workplaces' (RIBA 2017). While the majority of projects we work on as landscape architects (that directly relate to ageing) are typically care homes, this study would like to shift this balance to create an expanded toolkit of age-friendly design that can be integrated into wider types of projects and scales. As our population continues to age, the need to accommodate the needs and desires of older people will become a more fundamental aspect of urban design. While most designers think about these aspects while designing public spaces, we need to undertake research and share more of the results and positive benefits of designing with older generations in mind. Designing for ageing in public spaces is a key way that landscape architects can be at the forefront of innovation by adapting to the changing demography. It can also be a key way that we can contribute to the wellbeing and social inclusivity of older generations by providing safe and accommodating spaces for all and sharing our design experiences with the wider profession.

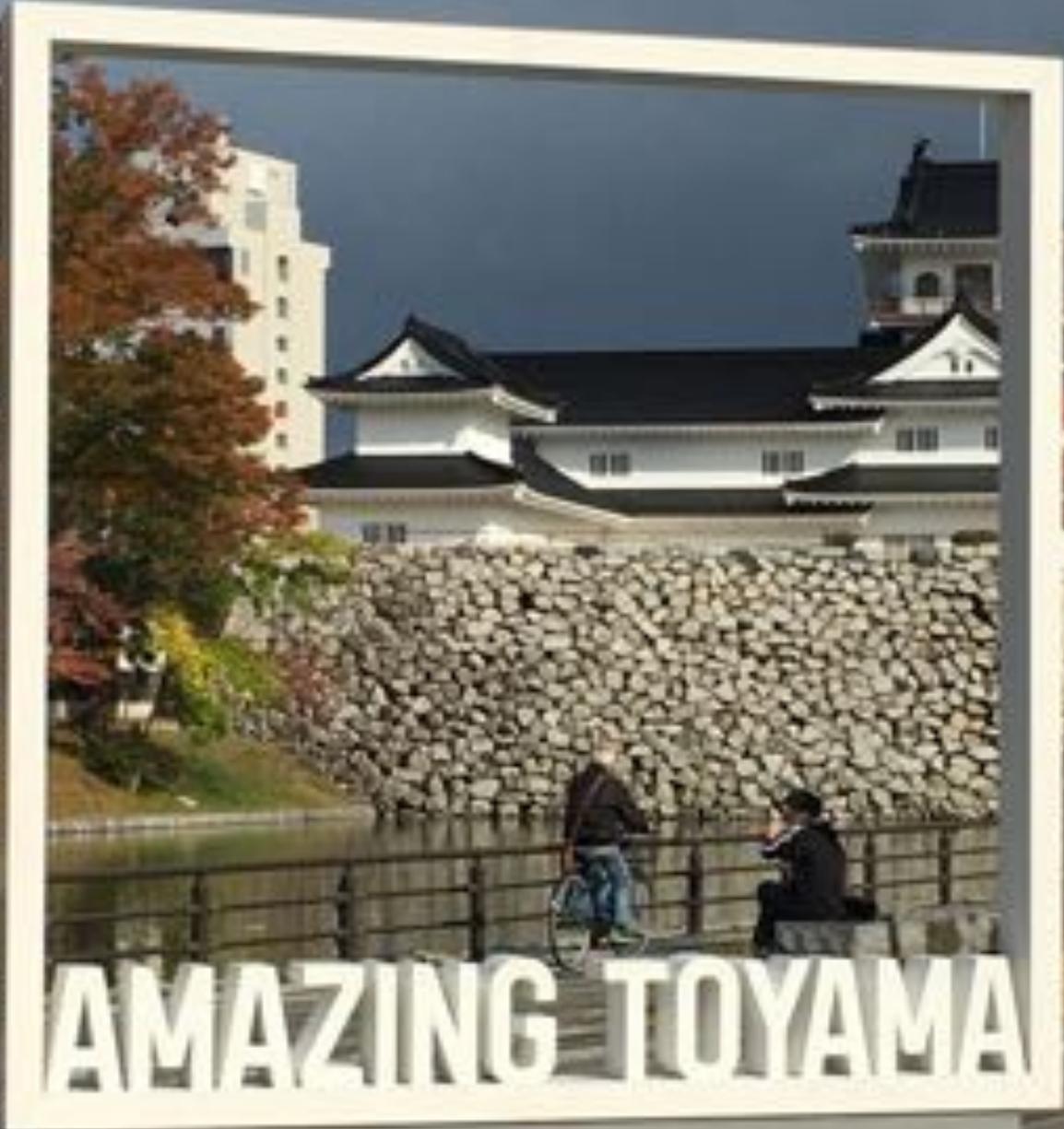
The wider environment we live in has a great bearing on our quality of life as we age 'Accessible public transport, level pavements, places to sit, the removal of trip hazards, good street lighting and public toilets are all vital components to encouraging older people to stay engaged with their local community' (Oldman, 2018). In this report the places visited are categorised into project the types; City Planning, Urban Design, Residential, Parks, Rural Design, Forestry and Community Projects in order to provide useful design for ageing precedent that addresses the whole post-retirement ageing process.

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/oct/10/what-would-an-age-friendly-city-look-like>

Destinations

Japan is currently the world's oldest country by demography, it has had to implement changes much earlier than most other countries and many of the shifts have been related to landscape. 'With the Japanese baby boom generation now approaching 65, the number of middle-aged and elderly people who will retire and seek new ways to be active is likely to climb rapidly. How these new senior citizens - healthy and undiminished in knowledge and physical strength - will design their post-retirement lives and to what degree local communities will prepare environments where they can be active and apply their abilities are important issues for communities all over Japan' (Tetsuo TSUJI, 2017). Japan is increasing resilience in older age and sustaining a better qualities of life by implementing changes to the built environment now to encourage physical activity and social interaction in newly retired people.

Sweden offers a closer cultural context with a different approach to environmental adaptation for ageing populations. Sweden has a number of well-developed strategies for ageing, having faced the problem much earlier than most European countries. As we will see Sweden addresses the health inequities of ageing and has a strong record of developing policy in this area. The country also works hard to develop community projects and initiatives to address the growing issues we face in providing health and social care for older generations.



AMAZING TOYAMA

The image features a large, white, rectangular frame that acts as a window into a scenic view of Toyama Castle. The castle, a prominent white building with a black roof and multiple tiers, is situated on a stone wall. In the foreground, a wooden fence runs along a path where a person is riding a bicycle and another person is sitting on a bench. The scene is framed by trees with autumn foliage in shades of orange and red. The sky is a deep, dark blue with some light clouds. The entire scene is presented as a photograph within a frame, which is itself a physical structure on a paved plaza.

CITY PLANNING

'If the environment is hostile to people on low incomes, that impacts disproportionately on older residents. Cities must not think about housing and town planning policies in isolation. Age-friendliness needs to be part of the debate about urban development.' Professor Phillipson, 2018.

Toyama, Japan

Toyama is a city on the west coast of Japan, in 2007 the population of the city was declining and the average age of inhabitants was increasing significantly. These factors created economic issues for the city and public facilities and transport were eroding as a result of lack of investment, creating an over-dependence on cars. During the same year officials of the city decided to tackle the issues of ageing populations head-on using it as an opportunity to restructure the city to better serve its residents. The restructure of Toyama was based on a 'compact city' strategy, aiming to quell the sprawl of the city and the dependence on private transport that was leading to isolation for older generations. Three stages of development guided Toyama's restructure

- To revitalise public transport
- To build or relocate cultural facilities and services along public transport lines
- Revitalise the city centre

Toyama planners analysed the existing transport networks of the city and the distribution of 1. Elderly residents and 2. Single elderly residents. From this they determined key pathways for a new Light Rail / LRT system.

The LRT connects to the national Shinkansen network of trains and local bus routes, it also allows for 'flat surface' access where the platform and vehicle entrance are completely level, easing mobility issues.

Between LRT stops the local authority redesigned the streets to create a 'safe, secure and comfortable walking space to encourage outings on foot'. This was achieved by creating a system of linear and pocket parks (more in the next post), providing accessible toilets, level spacious pathways, encouraging the use of walking trolleys and adapted bikes/trikes, and increasing visual interest with sculptures and art works exhibited from local collections.

By 2011 use of the LRT system had increased in elderly women by 45% and car use was down 10%, this continues to improve even further as the network develops a reputation for safe and reliable daily transport. For over 65s a day ticket costs 100¥ (the equivalent of around 70p) making the routes accessible and affordable for the majority of people.

The second aspect of Toyama's compact city strategy was to relocate cultural and welfare facilities along the new transport routes and revitalise the city centre. A new museum and city library has been constructed at an intersection of the LRT providing state of the art facilities for the city's residents. Further facilities include medical facilities such as the Kadokawa preventative care centre and the Ikedaya Yasubei Shoten, a herbal medicine pharmacy with cafeteria that promotes healthy eating for the elderly.

Kadokawa Preventative Care Centre

The centre is focused on increasing the resilience of older people, to maintain physical activity and their health and wellbeing. It is centred on the use of hot spring therapy, in keeping with the local onsen landscape and tradition. The centre also covers a wide range of care and advice to increase the independence of seniors and helping to prevent declines in health that result in the need to move to full time care facilities. The centre is housed in a now defunct primary school, as such these medical facilities create alternative uses for the infrastructures dedicated to schooling and childcare that were required during the baby-boom period.

Ikedaya Yasubei Shouten

A herbal medicine pharmacy in Toyama doubles as a community centre. Customers are greeted and counselled in a friendly manner in order to prescribe the right medicine. The shop floor also sells organic and locally grown food while the second floor serves affordable meals based on medicinal plants. This strategy helps to make organic and nourishing food easily available to older people and to raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating in maintaining their physical resilience. While the pharmacy is based on a Japanese tradition of herbal medicine, there is something that could be learnt for Scotland, to create a space where people are able to buy good quality affordable cooked food, to be able to eat with others, learn about nutrition and the importance of eating well in later life with a comforting and welcoming atmosphere.

Pocket Parks

The city has created a network of parks that are located approximately every 250m of various sizes. Each of the parks has seating, drinking water, shelter and accessible toilets, they also have suggested walking/running route maps of varied lengths to encourage people to get outdoors more. The physical infrastructure of the city encourages the use of public transport, walking and socialising, it creates an environment in which it is easier to maintain physical health and to reduce isolation (key issues that affect our health and wellbeing in older age). As the preventative measures of Toyama concern public space and are freely accessible, the interventions also help to reduce the vast health inequities that face older generations.

Economy

Toyama took huge steps to turn an ageing population into an opportunity, and the improvement of the environment was the key way that this was achieved. Building on the programs undertaken in the city centre, the government leaders looked to the wider region of Toyama to find further opportunities, they discovered the local landscape was the perfect environment to grow ... a

superfood and from this they developed a new industry and economy base for the town. They sought to utilise the skills and knowledge of the retirees of the city, who are employed in the laboratories and factories that are essential to produce the product. The focus on ... also reinforces the healthy and sustainable image of Toyama.

Sustainable Toyama

Age specialist Professor Phillipson states 'an age-friendly city needs to go far beyond work, housing and infrastructure to take in global factors such as climate change and pollution, to which older people are particularly vulnerable'. Following the success of Toyama's original plan in 2007, the local authority has gone on to develop an even more ambitious and wider ranging strategy for Resilience.

The updated strategy marks out a plan for climate, social and energy resilience and joins up to the 100 resilient cities international network. By Summer this year Toyama has already begun to construct a system of rain gardens and rain water storage facilities in line with the 2017 plan. The new plan expands the remit of design for ageing beyond individual facilities and services to the need for a safe and sustainable environment.

URBAN DESIGN

Sugamo Jizo-Dori, Tokyo

Sugamo Jizo-Dori is a shopping street in the north east of Tokyo. Originally Sugamo Jizo Dori, Tokyo attracted older people through the existence of a statue said to heal ailments, from this a whole specialised district has emerged with shops, services and restaurants that cater to older people.

The street is on a completely level plane and between 3-6pm weekdays (12-6pm weekends) it is completely car-free. The shops lining the street range from fresh fruit and vegetable stalls, to furniture, clothes and medicines. A wide range of services are available on the street making it a one-stop shop for things such as dentists, post offices, ATM machines, hair dressers, chemists, laundrettes, nail salons. Free WiFi in the area makes the internet more accessible to people that may not have it at home.

The route to Jizo dori from Sugamo metro station is completely undercover with no steps or ramps throughout the 500m route. Audio and visual traffic lights assist people to cross the two vehicular routes on the way to Jizo-dori. The street is highly legible with entrance archways either end, a central square/park and intermediary seating areas with clear maps along the street. The shop owners decorate their shop fronts with plants, flowers and other items creating a personalised and interesting street to walk down. Shopkeepers also provide benches and stools for passers-by and are helpful to those in need, defined as *omotenashi* (traditional Japanese 'hospitality that stresses gentleness towards people and the environment').

Sugamo developed from the bottom-up, older people started to go there first and then shops, services and design followed. While the cultural context is completely different in Scotland we do have areas that are already attractive to older people, we could identify these spaces and highlight them for targeted urban improvements. Sugamo is a great example of how public and private sectors can work together on a micro scale, shop keepers in such areas can be encouraged to provide seating and access to toilets that alleviates funding issues for local authorities, and while *omotenashi* might be a bridge too far, shopkeepers can also provide an informal support network. The implementation of limited car access during times of heaviest pedestrian use also creates a flexible planning solution that decreases the more problematic aspects of shared space.

Threshold design - Kyoto



Threshold design is of particular importance for older people as it is a key space that can encourage (or discourage) trips outside. The entrance/exit of the building should be multifunctional providing shelter from the elements, test the temperature before leaving, a space to gather your things and find keys etc. in order to encourage people to meet out and about. Yet a key issue in Scottish cities is the density of built form, which causes an overlap in threshold space on clear walk paths particularly in tenement districts. Kyoto has some great lessons on threshold design that are space saving and multifunctional while increasing the visual interest of the street.

Thin benches are a regular occurrence on Kyoto's streets, placed up against the building line and next to the entrance of a shop or home. Encouraging shop owners to provide rest spaces such as the informal thresholds of Kyoto would go a long way to help make more pedestrian friendly environments of narrow/pinched shopping streets, particularly those that stretch out into the suburbs of Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Tactile Paving - Tokyo

Tactile paving was invented in Japan and it is used much more widely than back in the UK to help the visually impaired to navigate. The strips extend along major walking routes and inside metro stations to help aid direction and route choice rather than just vehicular crossing points. Up to now yellow has been the most widely used colour but Tokyo plans to start experimenting with a wider variety of hues that can fit in with design schemes while still being visible for those who need them.



RESIDENTIAL

Sinnenas Trädgård (Garden of the Senses), Stockholm

Stockholm's Garden of the Senses is a small, publicly accessible garden designed for elderly people. The therapeutic garden is situated between two care home buildings set within a wider park in the Vasastan district of the city. The garden is spacious, carefully thought out and adheres to all the standard requirements of creating dementia-friendly spaces, but it does this very well. The space has:

- A highly legible layout with a central focal point and smaller character areas
- Figure of eight pathways (looped paths help to avoid the confusion of reaching a dead-end for dementia sufferers)
- Wide, clear and flat pathways
- Great planting variety such as climbing hops, Virginia creepers, clematis, gooseberries, strawberries, rhubarb. The site has also made use of mature pre-existing trees. The planting helps to create smells, sounds and colour.
- Shelter from the weather
- Domestic touches and reminders of home
- Seasonal interest
- Enclosed space with non-oppressive fences and gates
- Services access

The architecture of the neighbouring care homes is sensitively designed and resembles the apartment blocks of Stockholm.

The two care homes and therapeutic garden are set within the public park Vasaparken in central Stockholm. The park is clearly visible from the garden with a sensitive fence design that prevents the garden from feeling hemmed in. Opposite the garden, on the park side is a nursery and children's play area. Next to the care home is a brand new 'flashy' building housing designers offices and cafes. The garden and the care homes are part of the community, are visible and welcomed. (A key aspect to mention is that the design of parks here help to avoid anti-social behaviours that we commonly have back home. Most parks have active frontage with apartment block entrances, shops, schools, churches, set within the parks. This creates a good flow of people and passive surveillance that deters lesser desirable behaviours.)

Too often there's a propensity to make care homes 'high security' sites and while we do need to put the safety of the inhabitants first we don't want to make them feel distanced from the wider community. The 'Economic Commission for Europe argues that there is a need to "ensure full integration and participation of older persons in society" and "to promote a positive image of ageing and older persons"'. By integrating care homes better into our environments we are able to encourage inter-generational exchange, yet also help to reduce the negative associations many have with care homes.

Senior forum, Sweden

Senior Forum is a housing cooperative for older people in Sweden. The idea is based on providing the care and support required for healthy ageing while limiting the cost implications to the individual. The cooperative can be joined by any people over 65, who are then entitled to receive care and access to the social facilities of the complex regardless of whether they choose to move in to a Senior Forum apartment or not.

The cooperative offers a variety of housing types from general apartments to sheltered accommodation (for those that require frequent care visits) and care homes (for those that require the highest levels of support). Common areas are dotted throughout the buildings and wider site while guest accommodation, libraries and shared kitchens are provided to increase opportunities for social interaction for residents and members of the cooperative. A monthly fee covers the cost of an employee to arrange social activities.

The deposit for tenant ownership in the cooperative is much lower than the deposit required to buy an apartment in Sweden. The rent is negotiable and much lower than that of a private apartment as no profit is taken by the cooperative.

Sweden has a long history of cooperative housing models yet the example of Senior Forum is of particular interest as it reduces the cost of receiving elderly care while creating an environment conducive to healthy ageing. The flexibility of the service and the focus on the whole process of ageing (as opposed to end of life care) is incredibly useful in countries with a shortage of affordable housing and increasing health service costs.



PARKS

Rosendals Trädgård, Stockholm

Rosendals Trädgård is a market garden on Djurgården island, part of the massive National City Park in central Stockholm. The garden is dedicated to demonstrating biodynamic and organic gardening to the general public and holds a strong place in the city's push to promote healthy living.

The market garden exemplifies the farm-fork concept as vegetables, herbs, fruits and flowers grown on site are used in the cafe and wood fired bakery. The site consists of a farm shop, plant shop, vegetable fields, green houses, orchards, compost area and vineyards all grown in chemical-free soil. The purpose of Rosendal is to give practical insights about how the garden operates and as such courses and apprenticeships are run throughout the year. There are clear and honest explanations that are simple, seasonal and informative yet avoid dumbing down (seen in the sign photographed above that reads 'The orchard is closed. Due to the long dry summer and the weight of the fruit many of the trees are fragile at the moment. We are doing an inventory of the fruit trees, please do not enter').

As the cost of healthcare associated with ageing populations soars resources such as Rosendal, that encourage active lifestyles and nutritious food, are of huge benefit. By being free and publicly accessible the site helps to spread information across social groups, increasing social accessibility (a key issue for ageing nations being the widening gap between affluent and poor). The World Health Organisation highlights malnutrition as being one of the key risks of poor sections of older generations, again an aspect reiterated in the Ageing Scottish Population study (2008). Two elements contribute significantly to Rosendals success in promoting active and healthy lifestyles, the central location within the city and free access.

Sodra Tantolunden, Stockholm

Stockholm is home to 10,000 allotments on approximately 150 different sites across the city. Södra Tantolunden is an allotment area set within a park on the waterfront in Södermalm providing the (predominantly apartment dwelling) people of Stockholm a space to grow food. In reality Tanto is not limited to vegetable gardening but is a space to be creative and relax. The sheds border on holiday chalets and a wide range of gardens can be found from Japanese zen gardens and rose gardens to orchards.

The allotments in Stockholm are of interest for a variety of reasons. Firstly the space at Tanto encourages people to lead active and healthy lifestyles, not just for the allotment holders but also for park visitors that have open access to stroll through the garden site. As a result of public access

the site also provides many opportunities for social interaction as allotment holders form friendships with neighbours and talk to passers by, reducing risks of social isolation. It is in this respect, Tanto's central location within a parkland and its accessibility to the public that goes further than our allotments back home.

Building on this, by providing space to garden within the city's parks it increases the sense of ownership, civic responsibility and contributes to social justice. Having the opportunity to use such a space regardless of your residential status allows a wider range of people access to healthy lifestyles. Building on the lessons of Toyama, spaces such as Tanto are invaluable in ensuring physical resilience of retirees which in turn increases quality of life in older age.

Utsubo Park, Osaka

Utsubo Park in Osaka encourages intergenerational use and exchange, people of all ages use the park from primary school children playing, teenagers eating lunch, office workers taking a break and retired people walking and tending the flowers. Large groups of all ages are able to benefit from the same space on a scale uncommon in the UK. The facilities of the park and its varied spatial characters provide a space for everyone and encourages exchange between the generations.

Facilities of the park:

- Lots of toilets
- Lots of (different types of) benches to suit needs
- Varied path surfaces for different mobility needs
- Play equipment
- Exercise equipment
- Stalls where older people were able to sell plants and flowers
- Vending machines
- Many entrances/exits
- Lots of maps
- Areas tended by older people (rose garden)

While many of these facilities are available in parks in Scotland and the UK, the sheer number of them at Otsuba and its capacity to support varied users have contributed to the park's success. The number of access points to the park has also helped to ensure people of the surrounding buildings and neighbourhoods can easily get to the park. Of the parks I've visited so far in Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka, Otsuba is by far the most used and inter-generational friendly.



FORESTRY

Shinrin-yoku (Forest Bathing), Japan

Shinrin-Yoku or forest bathing was first introduced to Japan in 1980 to serve as an antidote to urban stresses, but it builds on a much longer tradition of silviculture and closeness with nature in the country. The practice is based on spending time in nature, disconnecting from technology and engaging all five senses to help calm and relax the mind and body. In Europe and America the concept has become popular after a series of studies proving the efficacy of forest bathing on health, wellbeing and disease prevention. A recent survey on the studies undertaken lists the range of benefits as improvements to:

- '1) the immune system function (increase in natural killer cells/cancer prevention);
- 2) cardiovascular system (hypertension/coronary artery disease);
- 3) the respiratory system (allergies and respiratory disease);
- 4) depression and anxiety (mood disorders and stress);
- 5) mental relaxation (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) and;
- 6) human feelings of "awe" (increase in gratitude and selflessness).'

Since 2006 in Japan a network of forest therapy 'bases' has been set up that provide scientifically approved therapeutic benefits in a range of different forest types. The bases cater mostly to seniors and business people from nearby cities and they provide health services that also support the disease prevention aspects of Shinrin-Yoku.

The practice is growing in Europe and there is a great opportunity to develop this in Scotland. Yet it is of prime importance that a strategy is developed that takes into account sustainable forest management and official health care checks, to avoid a 'Take Two Hours of Pine Forest and Call Me in the Morning' mentality. The efficacy of forest bathing is truly amazing but it requires careful thought and public/private engagement to ensure its benefits are available to us.



COMMUNITY PROJECTS

‘An age-friendly city should provide opportunities for people to participate in public life and contribute to their communities, through paid or voluntary work. Evidence shows doing so increases social contact and good health.’

The Guardian 2018

Yoshino Cedar House, Nara

Yoshino is an ageing village in Nara Prefecture at the foot of the mountains. The declining industry of the area is logging cedarwood and cypress. Rural towns and villages in Japan struggle to provide services for ageing residents, at Yoshino they devised a way to create a self-funded community centre that provides services, employment and social opportunities for the local residents while simultaneously celebrating and promoting local industries and tourism.

The Cedar House was built on the river bank using the local materials of cedar and cypress. Downstairs is a community centre for the surrounding villages while the second floor is dedicated to a collectively run Airbnb. This innovative approach helps to fund the community centre by attracting a steady income of travellers searching for unique hotels and authentic experiences. There is so much that can be learnt from this example that could apply to the more rural and isolated towns and villages of the Highlands and Islands. At Yoshino the community has come together to create a site specific way to revitalise their area and fund local services.

Uppsala ‘ageing in place’, Sweden

Currently in Uppsala 22% of the population are over 60, this is expected to rise to 34% by 2050. As a result of this many changes have been made in order to cater to the city’s changing needs. The central aim of the municipality is to provide people with the support and resources to be able to ‘age in place’: enabling people to stay in their own homes and still have access to the appropriate levels of care. Care home facilities are also available but the emphasis is shifted to adapting people’s existing homes to better suit their needs. This is the emphasis across Sweden, by enabling people to remain close to their family members and social circle, they are able to avoid the stress and financial implications that moving to a care home has. The care provided in people’s homes is achieved by a close cooperation between private and non-profit organisations overseen by the municipality.

The city also aims to provide age friendly outdoor spaces. Uppsala is compact and walkable, and so has less to contend with than the streets of Stockholm. There is a large city park that is very close to transport links and the main shopping street. Tactile paving has been integrated on most streets and the city has some interesting examples of integrating pedestrian crossings and tactile paving into a historic streetscape, such as using varied tones of granite setts and subtler colours of tactile pavers.

Sixteen meeting points have been set up across the city that act as local hubs for seniors to meet and undertake a range of different activities, from walks and exercise to coffee mornings and reading groups. The meeting points were developed according to 'four cornerstones of healthy ageing':

- Social interaction
- Meaningfulness
- Physical activity
- Good eating habits

These four aspects are recurring themes of the approach to ageing in Sweden. In light of this the city set up a series of Restaurang Senioren (senior restaurants). These are places seniors can get good nutritious food at a reduced rate while also being able to eat with other people (an important aspect in reducing loneliness). I found one of the restaurants at around 1pm and wow are they busy!

It is clear from Uppsala's example is that if we are to create age friendly cities we need a joined up approach that takes into account all aspects of people's lifestyles and daily routines. It isn't enough to solely provide health care as the complex elements of wellbeing and resilience as we age have huge impacts on our abilities to stay healthy too. We need holistic approaches that take into account our environment, our social needs and the need to lead a life that is meaningful.

Socially Sustainable Malmo

The Commission for a Socially Sustainable Malmö was one of the world's first local commissions to reduce health inequity. The commission was set up in 2010 after huge health disparities were uncovered in Malmö that had clear correlations with social position. This is a specific problem that can also be found in Scotland and has been highlighted as a significant risk for the future. Residents in some parts of the Malmö were estimated to have a life expectancy seven years longer than other districts of the city despite the fact that average health has improved considerably in recent decades. In order to combat this the commission sought to create a social sustainability across all areas of the city and for all socially defined groups.

The commission's focus has been on the underlying issues of health equity rather than simply treating the outcome. A report published by the commission explains 'The health care system has a significant effect on our health, but what is most important are the factors that lie outside the field

of health care. If we really want change we have to target societal structures, both physical and social, which are the ultimate causes of the risks that give rise to illnesses, injuries and premature deaths. It is about changing attitudes and finding new ways to manage and organise in a new era where yesterday's systems are no longer adequate'.

The commission presents a progressive effort to promote sustainable development from 'every perspective' and aims to build a society where everyone is needed. As such the report highlights target groups, one of which being the city's elderly. Within this group the commission found clear correlations between social position and health. Risks of ill health linked directly to lower life satisfaction, functional capacity and everyday life activities. Higher levels of education related to a higher level of participation in activities which in turn linked to higher life satisfaction and higher functional capacity.

The recommendations from the commission place a great importance on the environment in its ability to provide social equity, particularly in relation to public spaces. The report states: 'A city's design and residential environments affect well-being, health and their social distribution in many respects. Some physical characteristics of the city environment such as access to green spaces, lack of physical barriers to walking and cycling, safe and inviting outdoor environments, are directly connected to well-being and health and are often socially inequitably distributed. Since the physical environment also provides a framework for all the social interactions that occur in a city, the city's design is a fundamental prerequisite for the health of the residents from this point of view as well. Social contacts, social control and trust can be achieved or hindered depending on the residential area's design. The term health-promoting urban planning encompasses all of these aspects'. The report accurately describes the importance of our daily environments and the potential public space has to improve the quality of all our lives.

Underlying the recommendations is the need of a distinct shift in perspective on how growth and development are viewed. The recommendations are interdisciplinary and require a holistic and concerted approach from all sectors of the city.



CONCLUSION

The travel began with some questions: How can landscape architects design for age-friendly environments? How can we become more aware of the needs of ageing societies? How can we promote the use of public space for all generations? The travel award fundamentally shifted my understanding of the role of the environment in our ageing processes. In order to have the best opportunities to age healthily we fundamentally need access to pedestrian-friendly environments that encourage us to walk, socialise and maintain a connection with the wider world.

Since returning and processing the experience I am particularly buoyed by the significant role landscape architecture and urban design play in creating an age-friendly city. No city has yet achieved full age friendliness (Toyama is almost there) but the sheer range of projects and initiatives being implemented provide a strong framework for the future.

As landscape architects we need to champion the role public space has in creating health equity. From the examples I've visited in Sweden and Japan I believe the profession has a crucial role in shifting the design for ageing debate from a focus on end of life care to providing people with the space and opportunity to age healthily regardless of social position. We are already designing these spaces but we need to be more confident to make our voices heard in the discussions regarding ageing.