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Low cost alteration of housing estates to the needs of elderly people
(Flats for elderly people in housing estates)

Research assisted by the Bundesministerium für Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Städtebau

S u m m a r y

The process of ageing within the recently built housing estates will speed up during the coming years. This is a positive development for the estates, for it results a normal age structure from it plus the basis for solid social communities. This research wants to suggest low cost possibilities and how they can alter the existing housing substance to the needs of elderly people. So far the results of the housing research seem to suggest that the aim should not only consist in a deficit model of ageing. First of all, elderly people need normal and securely usable flats which are not to small and giving them their confident surrounding.

The research contains three performances:

- taxation of the living conditions considering the requirements (basis for this is shaped by DIN nr. 18025 part 2 "barrier-free flats, planning basics", as well as further demands concerning the building types, the residential environment plus the infrastructure)
- presentation of financiable adaptations (including additional steps like flat-allocation and new buildings)
- presentation of structural alterations (the few broad examples of practical work will be enlarged by significant single components which will be integrated into future tasks).

As a result it has to be portrayed that those housing estates ranging from urban plans as well as to those flats, quite a number of deficiencies occur. Besides the elderly do live subject to a corresponding allocation quite often in arcades or high-rise point-blocks which are unintelligible arranged, with small flats in bad locations. Improvements concerning rebuilding are scarcely possible and will mainly refer to the buildings (entrance, hall, elevator, corridors).

Beyond that, housing estates offer good conditions for strategies referring to the whole ward with a long term perspective, because of their vast properties. Elderly people may with punctual allocation plus removals be led into fair places where even further demands could be realised, with justifiable expense. Also for additional new buildings will be space in many estates.

It should be basically taken into consideration that with structural improvements, a stubborn transposition of demands (for example strictly following the DIN nr. 18025) suits rarely the intentions. Compromising and sympathetic understanding for the situation are much more relevant.

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