

Short Report

Title

The development and implementation of neighbourhood oriented residential projects for an autonomous life in old age.

A guideline for small towns and communities in economically underdeveloped rural areas.

Reason/ Initial starting point

More and more communities in economically underdeveloped rural areas are exposed to diminution and ageing processes where the support for the elderly is often not sufficient enough. A residential project in combination with neighbourhood management, embedded in an age appropriate neighbourhood development process, could improve the overall quality of life as well as the provision for the elderly. (see Graphic 1) This could make communities to attractive residential areas for all phases of life.

Objective of the research project

The guideline will show how a residential project could sustain independency for the elderly in economically underdeveloped rural regions and how it could be used for age appropriate neighbourhood development. The report is mainly aimed at communities, as well as charities, housing associations and citizen focused initiatives.

Five "LIVING IN THE HOME REGION" locations in rural areas have been analysed within the scope of this research project. Additionally one excursion to further six residential projects in Germany has been undertaken, and expertise has been commissioned for the following topics: "Modular planning and building: Cost effective quality flats for the elderly in rural regions" as well as "Demographic, epidemiological and social change with specific consequences for small towns and communities in rural and economically undeveloped regions".

The outcomes of this research as well as the expertise of the working group attached to this research project have been embedded into the guideline.

The research project pursued the following questions:

- Why should communes in economically underdeveloped rural areas be proactive in finding partners to implement such a project and at the same time kick start a comprehensive development process?
- What do neighbourhood oriented residential projects mean for an autonomous life in older age? Which elements should it contain and what can be done with those?
- Where could neighbourhood oriented residential projects in economically underdeveloped rural areas be implemented, what roles would need to be filled and who could take those on?
- How can a neighbourhood oriented residential project be implemented from foundation to establishment?
- What do the cooperation partners need to know and how could they initiate sustainable funding?

Based on the demands of economically underdeveloped rural areas, a model of residency including four elements for autonomous living in older age has been developed:

1. An age appropriate residential complex for communal living
2. Moderated communal living
3. Setting up of care and nursing structures
4. Impulses for the development of neighbourhoods (see Graphic 2)

The neighbourhood management is essential for the implementation of all four elements of the residency model. The residential project can benefit the neighbourhood and the community with the support of the neighbourhood management (see Graphic 3). The community could use the model of residency for age appropriate neighbourhood development and could delegate comprehensive neighbourhood management to the neighbourhood manager.

The tasks of the neighbourhood management within the model of residency can be differentiated by three areas of action.

1. Neighbourhood oriented residency project
2. Advice and service management base including meeting areas
3. Neighbourhood development

(see Graphic 4)

The implementation of a residential project as part of an overall community strategy only makes sense if applicable connecting factors exist. In many cases small towns offer appropriate starting conditions. However the implementation requires the cooperation of different partners. These different cooperation partners require resources not just for the foundation of the housing complex but also for the actual implementation of the social concept (especially for financing the neighbourhood management), the navigation of the overall project as well as the financial support for professional advice and support.

High impact planning and steering of the project would be recommended not least to gain as many partners for the support of the project as possible. Cost effective strategies for planning and construction could benefit the realisation of neighbourhood oriented residential projects for autonomous living in older age (see Graphic 5). For example the construction of a building kit for the residential model by using modular construction could become a future strategy to implement the residential model in as many locations as cost efficiently as possible. Planning effort may be at a high for the modular construction and many takes may be required for re-financing. Whether the modular construction really does prove itself as ideal practice depends on whether there is a big enough market in the region including appropriate cooperation partners that can be found.

Result

The aim of the research project was together with the support of professionals to create a residential model for economically underdeveloped rural areas that enables autonomous living in older age.

For this purpose certain projects for living have been chosen and analysed, many different projects have been visited across Germany and plenty of professionals have been sought for their expertise. On the background of economically underdeveloped rural areas with demands on care and support structures for the elderly, the result has been a practical guideline, which demonstrates how a residential project could be created, how it could be implemented and how the care and nursing needs of the citizens could be improved.

Benchmark data

Short title: Living in small rural communities in Germany - forever

Researcher / Project lead: Nicole Rose / Dr. Klemens Deinzer)

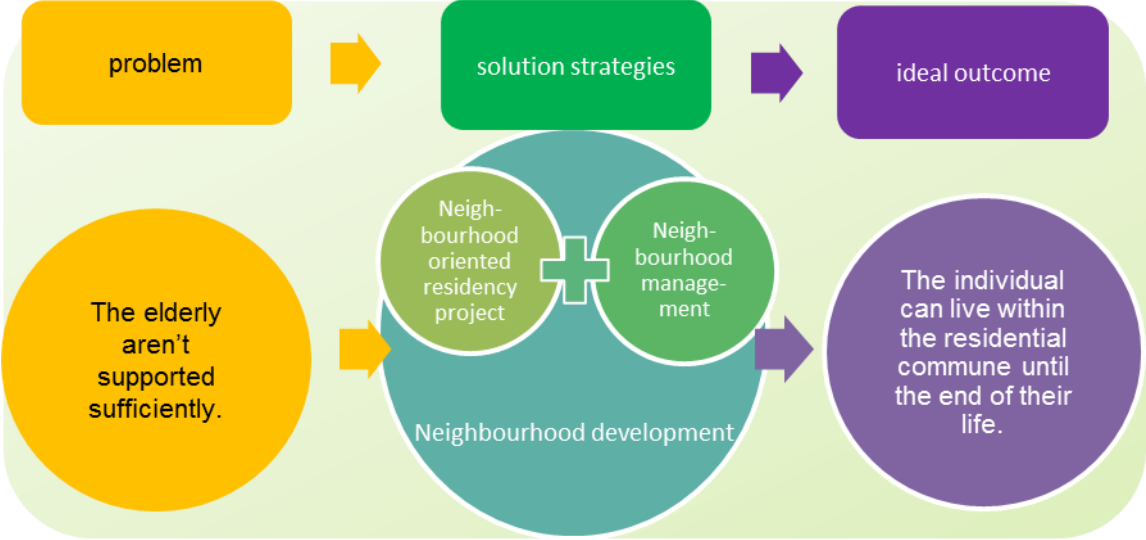
Overall costs: €153.373,01

Government grant: €74.500,00

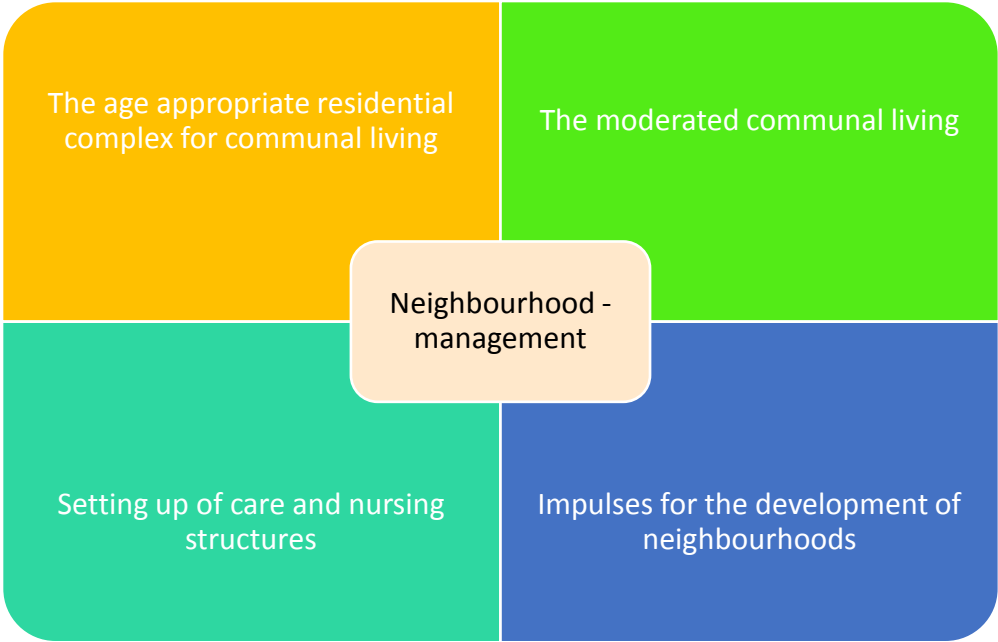
Project duration: 30 months

Graphics/Appendices:

Graphic 1: The impact of the residency model on an autonomous life in older age



Graphic 2: The constituent elements of the residency model



Graphic 3: The use of the residency model for the neighbourhood and the community



Graphic 4: Neighbourhood management and its areas of action



Graphic 5: Strategies for cost effective planning and building

