

Our vision for the Mackie's site is simple; to create homes where people feel safe, secure, and supported, regardless of background – a true sense of togetherness and community. Our masterplan uses space to foster intimate communities within the larger site, with large open green spaces acting as the connective thread throughout the entire new urban realm.

We believe in the power that community has in shaping the individual, but that power can only be borne in conditions of safety, comfort and wellbeing. In essence, we aim to position architecture as a source of protection, creating spaces that function as safe havens for families, groups and individuals of all backgrounds and experience, without exception – a new definition of home.

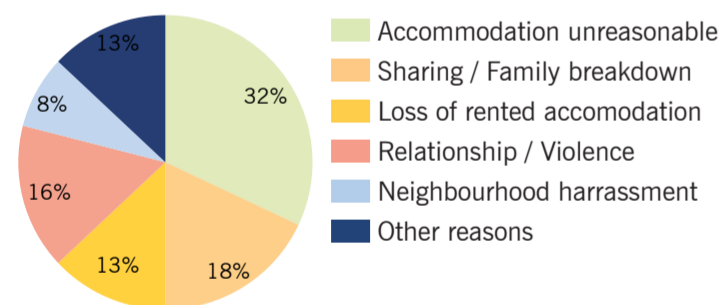
# UNDERSTANDING & RE-CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

The starting point for our proposal for the Mackie's site is a granular understanding of the people, places, positives and problems of this area of West Belfast. From the knowledge we have learnt through our in-depth research, we have envisioned a masterplan that stitches the needs of the Mackie's community into one interwoven and connected system of support. The spaces, infrastructure, and public realm we have designed directly supports the composition of this community. Our vision for a new masterplan for this site offers new interpretations of welfare, mental health provision, shelter, surveillance, accessibility, and of opportunities for mutual support.

We recognise the value in reclaiming this land as a place for people to call home – we are aligned with this project's brief that this is an urgent and significant endeavour. We also recognise the complexities of its undertaking, and have worked in direct knowledge of the issues that have persisted in this specific area of Belfast over time. Our masterplan will consider historical and prevailing issues of homelessness, social tensions, dilapidation and deterioration, and disconnection. It will also consider the parameters that impact the future residents of the site; chiefly, issues of physical disability, mental health issues, and financial hardship.

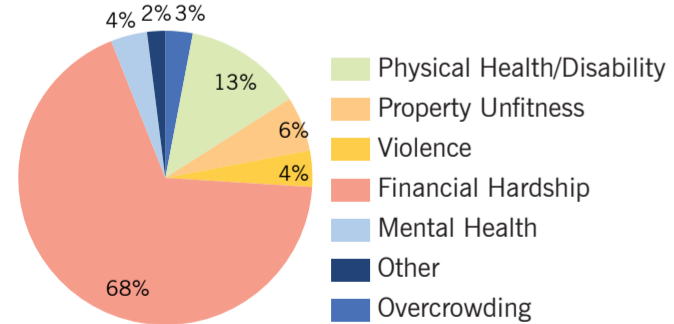
We believe that architecture and place-making offer physical definitions of community support. By interrogating the ways in which the Mackie's community has historically come together and shared moments of joy, we have envisioned new possibilities for their collective wellbeing. Our proposal therefore seeks to demonstrate the power of space to curate a new meaning of togetherness, of home, and of security.

## Reasons for application



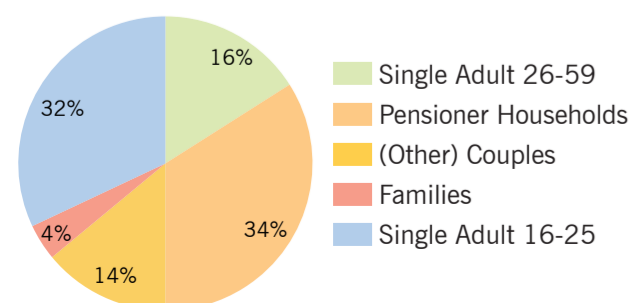
View onto Mackies site

## Reasons for homelessness



A derelict house opposite Woodvale park

## Breakdown by 'household' type



No boundaries, no segregation, equality for all



Ground Level Masterplan

We believe in the power that community has in shaping the individual, but that power can only be borne in conditions of safety, comfort and wellbeing. In essence, we aim to position architecture as protection, creating spaces that function as safe havens for families, groups and individuals of all backgrounds and experience, without exception – a new definition of home.

Central to this is providing a new 'heart' to that home. The heart to our masterplan proposal is a core green space, which we call the Mackie Garden. Its position within the entire site recalls the magnetism of a village or town's main street – the place where people are drawn to in unison to gather together, walk around, stage events, and live in vibrant activity. On this new masterplan, the street becomes a garden, and the garden becomes a place that is shared by all. A place to meander through safely, to linger amidst swathes of grass and foliage, to take in vibrant hues of colour, and to breathe clean, fresh air in comfort and safety.

Surrounding the Mackie Garden will be a connected tapestry of built spaces that redefine traditional masterplanning formulae. Clinging to prescribed understandings of nuclear living lies at the heart of many of the problems with anti-social and negative behaviours in cities. Historic developments formed of rows of terraced houses nowadays can breed a growing sense of detachment – a feeling of only having to look out for oneself. Our proposal upends these systems and instead presents unified and diverse campuses for living, intuitively inviting acts of support, sharing and community to replace those of separation, tension and isolation.

“Architecture is at its most powerful when it brings people together. Building places is about building communities – about finding the blueprint for unity and unlocking its full potential. The result is achieving new standards of wellbeing, and shaping what it means to live safely and joyfully in the world today”.

**Sir David Adjaye OBE**



Aerial masterplan



The streets act like a walled garden connecting people from all ages and backgrounds, united as one



The streets create a strong bond of togetherness and responsibility for others



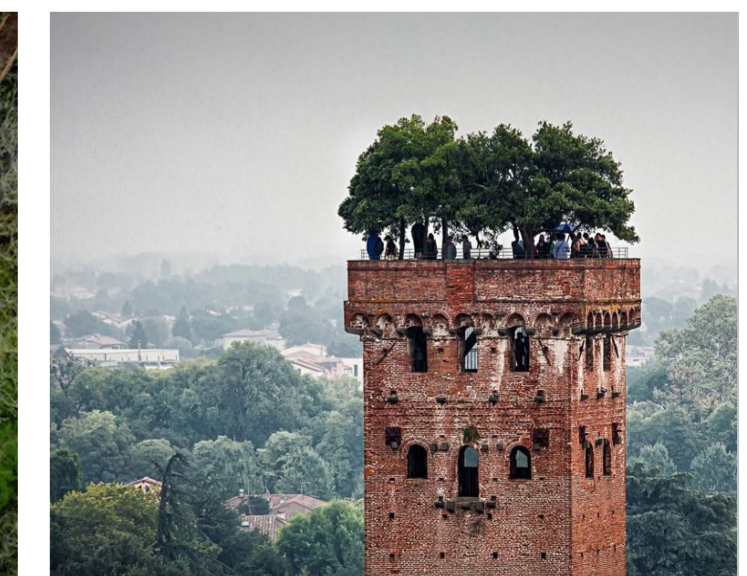
The bases for inspiration is the walled garden that creates an inward secure space connecting community



Traditional togetherness within a formal courtyard space



The Journey of discovery through natural spaces



The roof terraces create a space for intimate connectivity.

# A HOME FOR ALL



1. Two and three-bedroom homes for individuals and families are all connected to green, either through their dedicated sunken garden, or via proximity to the central Mackie Garden. Safety, comfort, and a feeling connection has been prioritised.



2. Building trust through relationships relies on having readily available, pleasant, and nurturing shared spaces. A 'living room' for the community defines a new version of home, where belonging and trust is prioritised.



3. Residents living with financial vulnerability, mental health issues, and physical limitations often need childminding support. Dedicated spaces for play provide security and peace of mind for all families on site.



4. Care comes in varied formats, through traditional therapy, one-on-one talking sessions, meditation or even silence. Dedicated rooms for care and listening are flexible enough to accommodate all versions of support.



5. Social spaces are the lifeblood communities. Small-scale Social Clubs offer flexible zones for activity and communal gathering. TVs, games, and projectors are available for use and spaces can be subdivided according to capacity needs.



6. Everyone should have the means and opportunity to lead a dignified life. Learning Spaces help with direct and indirect learning, the building of social skills, interaction and trust – all of which lead to greater opportunities for work.



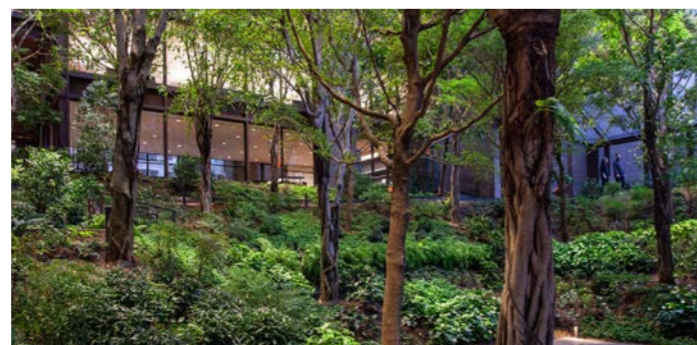
7. Prioritising flexibility and accessibility, Break Rooms function as spaces for residents to use for their own distinct needs, in small groups, for business, recreational or health purposes. They can be adapted with sub-divisions and are all digitally enhanced with free Wifi.



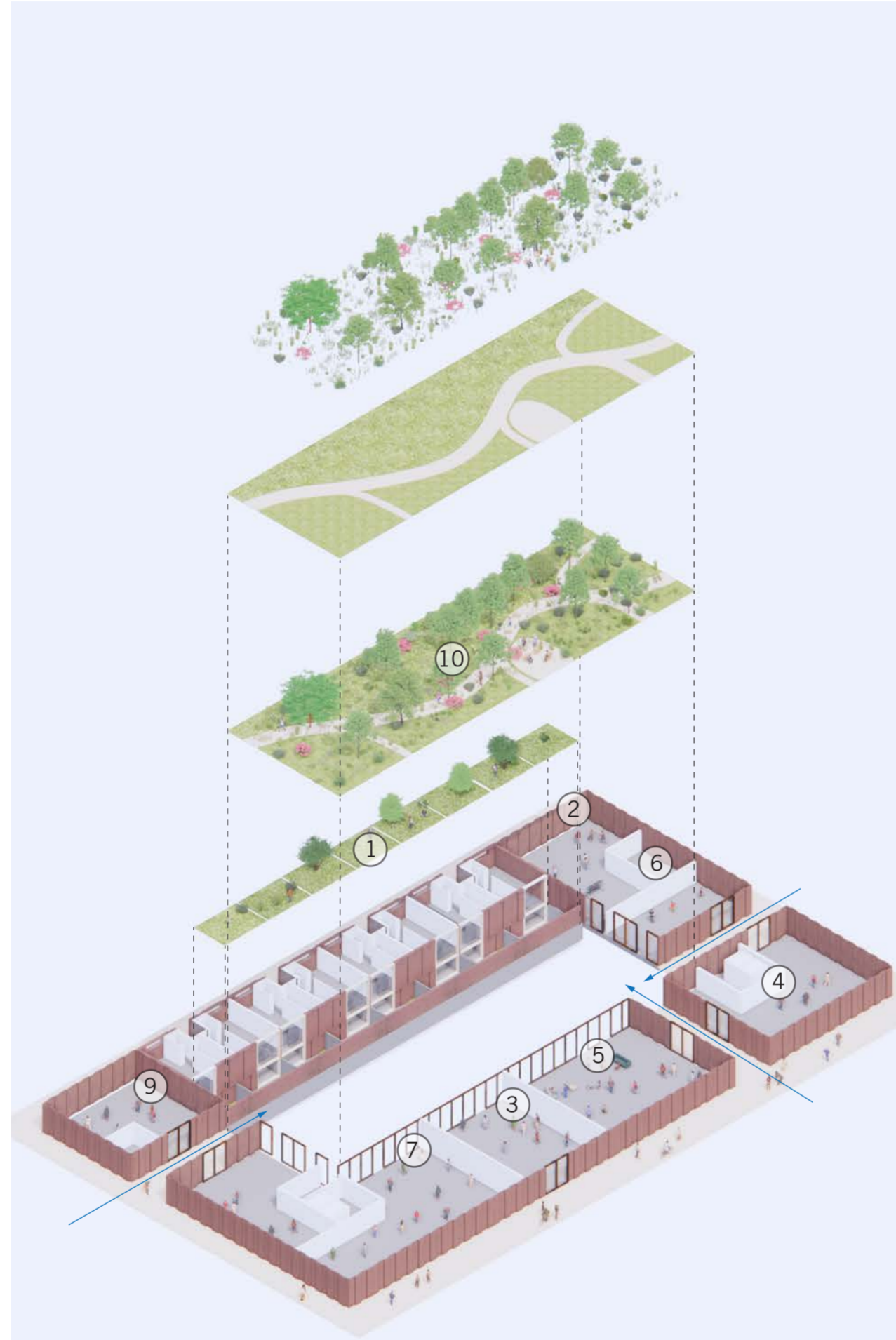
8. The roof spaces are utilised as a communal allotment garden from which the residents can grow and learn to manage self sufficient small holdings. There would be possibilities of mutual exchange of skills and produce and allow the creation of a community farmers market.



9. Vulnerability to homelessness is a driving concern for this area's community. The Mackie site will redefine the meaning of home, offering immediate, round-the-clock assistance to anyone from the broader community looking for a hot meal, sleeping arrangements or medical attention.



10. The Mackie Garden stitches the community together ensuring better health, safety and security across the entire masterplan, connecting all buildings physically and visually. This green core is an extension of the therapy provided throughout the site, offering security and confidence to improve and improve physical and mental wellness



- 1 Homes on the Green – Town Houses and Sunken Gardens
- 2 The Mackie Living Room – Community Hub
- 3 A Room for Play – Children's Activity Space
- 4 Listening Space – Flexible Therapy and Meditation Room
- 5 Social Club – Flexible Community Space
- 6 Learning Space – Educational Centre
- 7 Break Room – Flexible Spill Out Space
- 8 Shared Garden – Community Allotments
- 9 Home Away from Home – 24-Hour Sleeping and Dining Space
- 10 The Mackie Garden – Community Green Space

Tot. block in the masterplan: 11

Tot. units in the masterplan: 86 x 11 = 946 units

Total no. units in the block: 86

Studio  
Area: 30.6 m<sup>2</sup>  
Tot. studio in the block: 26

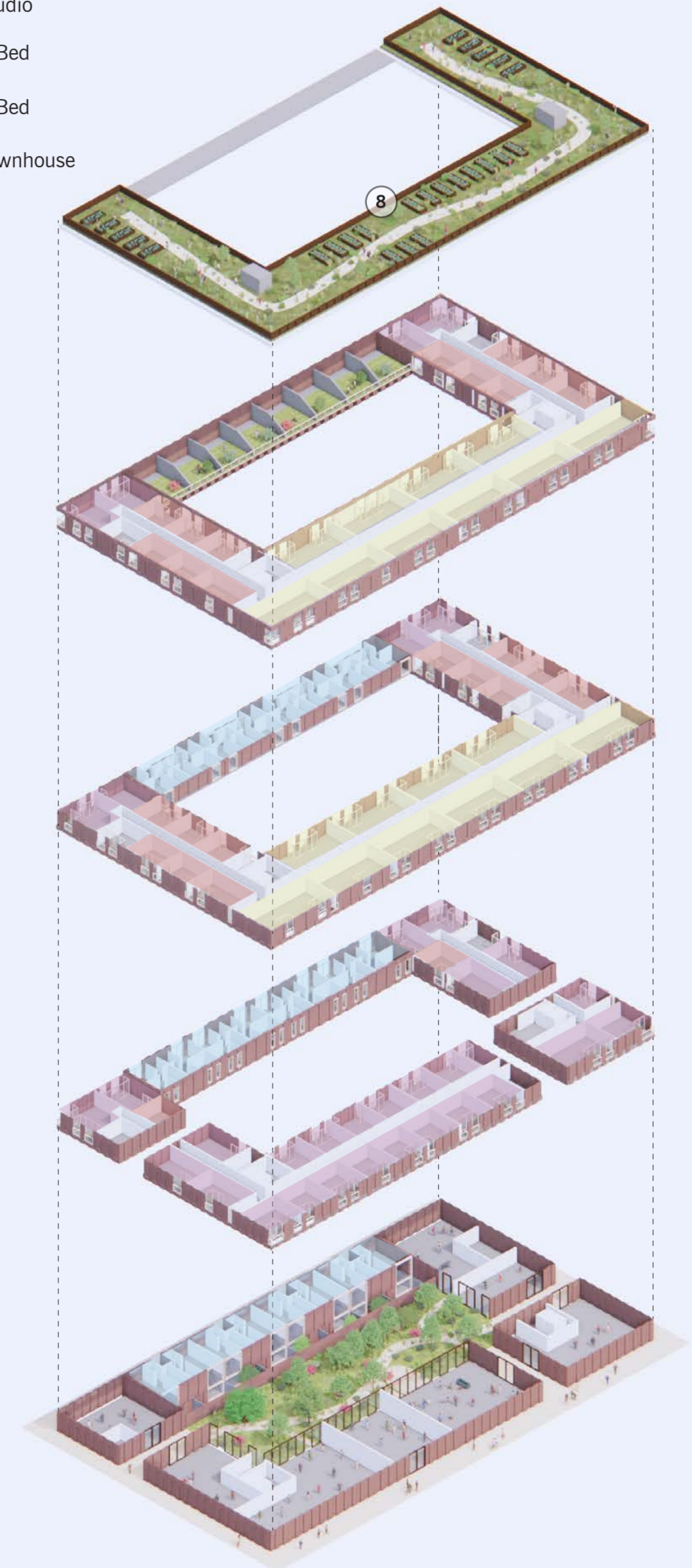
1 Bed  
Area: 35 m<sup>2</sup>  
Tot. 1 Bed in the block: 32

2 Bed  
Area: 72 m<sup>2</sup>  
Tot. 2 Bed in the block: 20

3 Bed - Town houses  
Area: 172 m<sup>2</sup>  
Tot. 3 Bed in the block: 8

## Key

- Studio
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- Townhouse



# COMMUNAL SANCTUARY

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# FOOD SHARING ROOFTOP GARDEN

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# PLAY OASIS

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# COMMUNAL LIVING ROOM





# STUDIO APARTMENT

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# TOWNHOUSE / SUNKEN GARDEN

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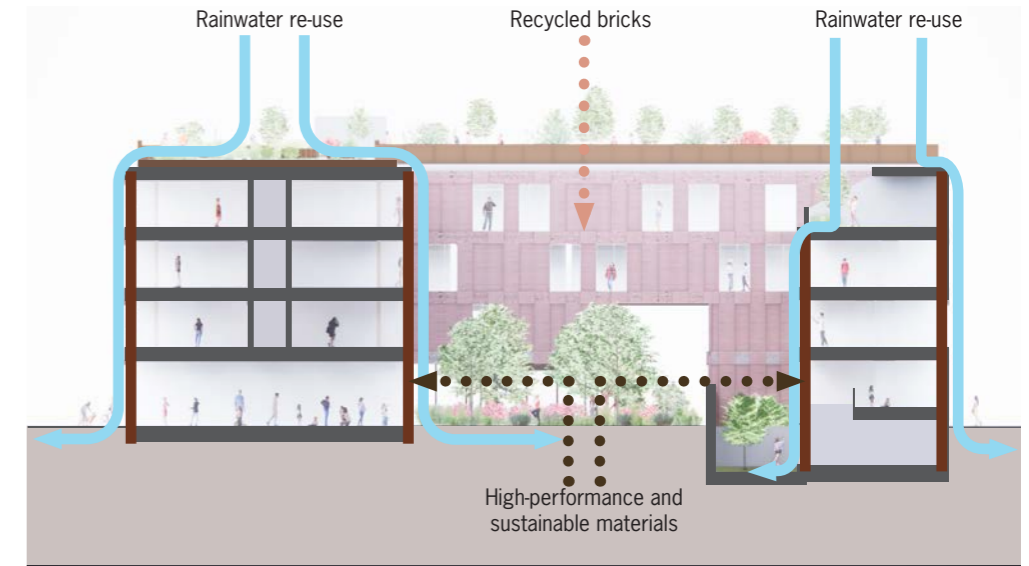
## A healthy place to live in

- Housing blocks immersed in the nature
- Each block will have its own communal garden
- Cycle and pedestrian paths that connect the whole community
- Green roofs with allotments to produce fresh veggies and fruits
- Indoor and outdoor sports facilities
- Mental health support available on site 24/7
- Community spaces throughout the site



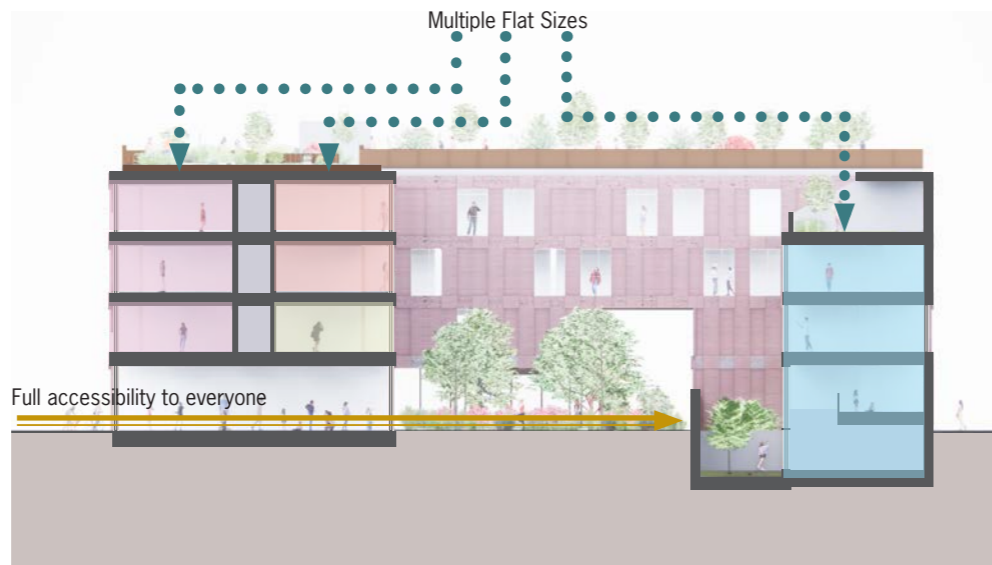
## Addressing climate change

- Collecting and storing rainwater for irrigation and greywater usage
- Permeable paving to all outdoor areas
- Use of recycled and local materials, (ex: recycled bricks; straw bale used as insulation)
- Walls, windows and roofs with high-quality performance in order to rely less on heating and cooling
- PV panels to generate energy for the community



## An inclusive community

- Affordable flats of different sizes, designed to the most high quality standards
- Spaces organised so that they can adapt to everyone's needs
- Finishes to be made or decided by the community
- Flats available to those who are most in need



## A job hub

- On site workshops on joinery, tiling, and other building activities, in order to employ local people
- Everyone's skills are supported and promoted
- Community shops and markets, where people can sell community-made goods and vegetables
- Career development support on site
- Co-working space with computers



## Co-created design

- Community involved in the design process
- Workshops organised to create new skills that can be used to personalise/finish the building
- Involvement with the maintenance of gardens and buildings



## An autonomous community

- Community that makes decisions on its own through a social housing body
- Community activities that can help funding an autonomous social housing body

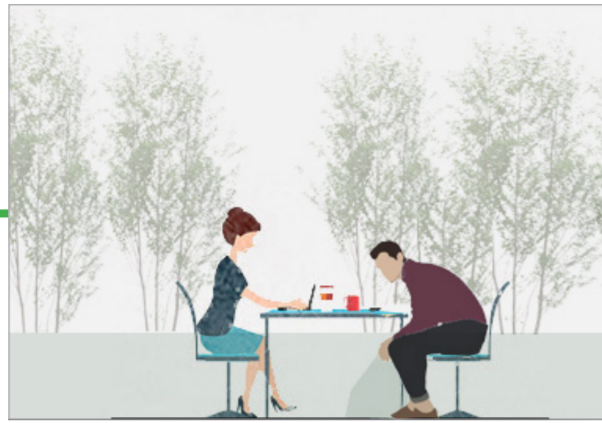


# A DAY IN THE LIVES AT THE MACKIE'S SITE



## A Day in the Life of Mark, 19, Male

Mark lives with his mum on the Mackie's site. Throughout the day they lean on each other for support – mum has been unemployed for a while and battles ongoing mental health problems; Mark left school early following struggles with addiction. Their home is now a shared space of encouragement.



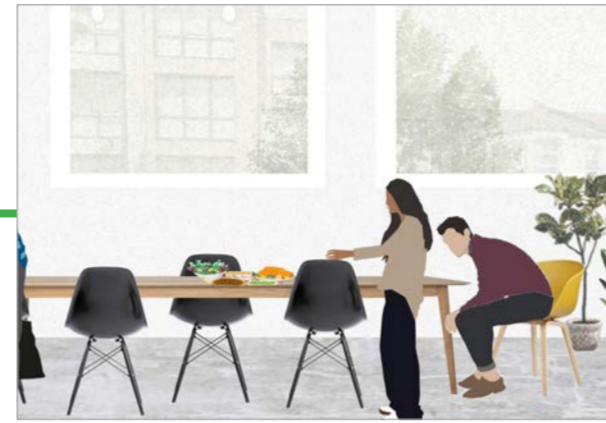
### 7.00am - Breakfast with Mum

In a bright new dining space, Mark starts each morning chatting to his mum, sharing a healthy breakfast as set plans for the day ahead. This shared moment calibrates their day towards positive thinking, reminding them of the constant support they give to each other.



### 9.00am - Friendship Blossom in the Hub

Everyday, Mark looks forward to meeting people his age in the Creative Hub. Spending mornings here means he's distracted from his former exposure to drug dealing the community. The Hub gives him motivation to pursue his interests and ideas.



### 1.00pm - Lunch with New Friends

Mark eats lunch in the shared dining hall. Here, he's been getting to know the elderly residents, chatting with them about their experiences in the city. They've grown the ingredients for their food in communal gardens, making lunch a truly shared experience.



### 5.00pm - Physical and Mental Therapy

Growing up, Mark struggled constantly with pent up aggression, often violently quarrelling with his mum. He's now a regular at the boxing class in the Mackie's community spaces, channeling all his energy into improving his technique.



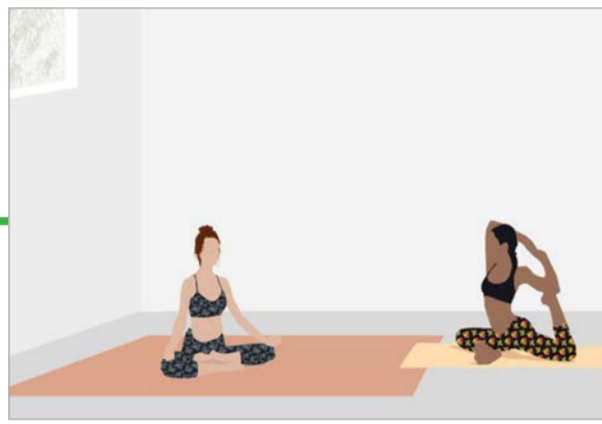
### 7.00pm - Sundown Cinema

Mark has discovered a new love for old Hollywood movies thanks to the projector screen set up in the community space. His favourite genre is spy movies, and he's even set up a movie club for his friends to chat about their favourites over snacks and beers.



## A Day in the Life of Julia, 20, Woman

Julia is a young, vibrant woman who lives on her own and who has survived years of domestic abuse from past relationships. Her home is about to welcome a new addition – she's pregnant with her first child. Her life at the Mackie's site is all about finding the support she needs for her and her new baby.



### 7.00am - Yoga and Morning Chats

Julia has made a new friend on the Mackie's site – she lives three doors down and has encouraged her to start joining morning yoga classes. This has helped Julia with her mental health struggles, and has also been useful for strengthening her body ahead of her baby's birth.



### 9.00am - Mid-Morning Learning

Julia was always a fast learner, but years of physical and emotional abuse dampened her confidence. She finds comfort attending skills sessions at the Mackie's Educational Centre. She's hoping that after the baby is born she might be able to get a part-time job in the city.



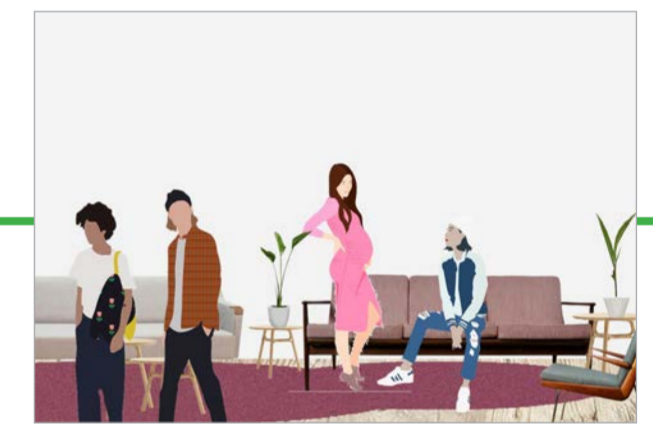
### 1.00pm - Food and Fresh Air

Mealtimes bring triggering memories of domestic violence in Julia's former home. She finds peace within the outdoor setting of the Mackie's rooftop gardens, where she'll often take a packed lunch and spend some time with friends, far from the worries of her past life.



### 5.00pm - Walking Safe

Julia knows how important it is for her to keep active. She's always been wary of walking alone at night, but the central green space at the Mackie's is well lit and surrounded by onlooking neighbours. She now walks for twenty minutes every evening.



### 9.00pm - Life in the Living Room

In her past life, Julia was held back from making new friends. Since moving to the Mackie's site, she's met with other victims of domestic abuse – at times they share stories and offer comfort to each one another, at others they play board games or simply share hot mugs of tea.



## A Day in the Life of Charli, 30, Non-Binary

Charli moved to the Mackie's site after years of unemployment and a history of drug addiction. Estranged from their family, they became homeless at a young age and struggle with trust issues. Life on the Mackie's site has helped Charli build new relationships and they now volunteer regularly, helping support the homeless community.



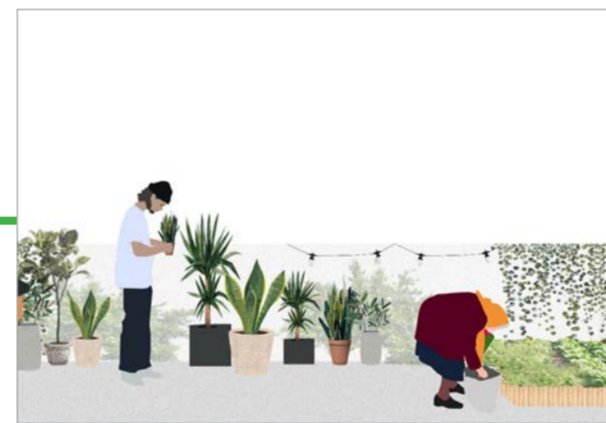
### 8.00am - Sportive Start

Charli has always loved activity and team sports. They wake up early enough on most days to head over to the basketball court on site, working up a sweat with friends in an ongoing friendly tournament before heading home for a quick breakfast.



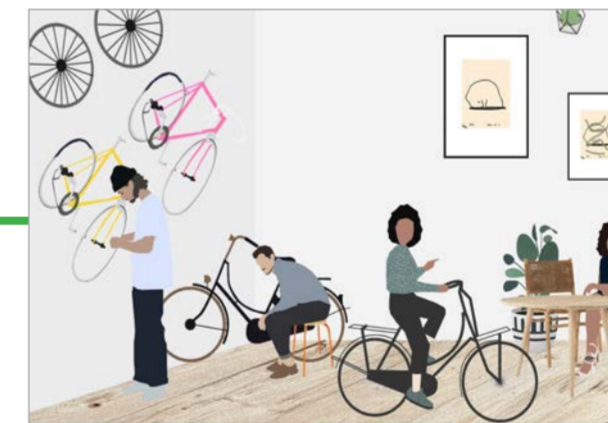
### 9.00am - Building a Future

Charli is keen to get a full-time job in the city but is aware that they need to work on building their skills up following years of living on the streets. The Education Centre is an encouraging, safe space that they feel they can be completely themselves in.



### 2.00pm - Volunteering in Nature

Charli volunteers twice a week at the Community Garden, helping grow vegetables that are sold in shops, cafes, and lunch halls across the site. They have learnt so much about horticulture and seasonality, and hope that a future job might be connected to food and drink.



### 5.00pm - Lending a hand in the Bike Shop

Charli's passion for bikes stretches to their youth, which was spent in skate parks with friends. They now build custom-made bikes for the Mackie's site community, and even help run a scheme teaching young children how to ride.



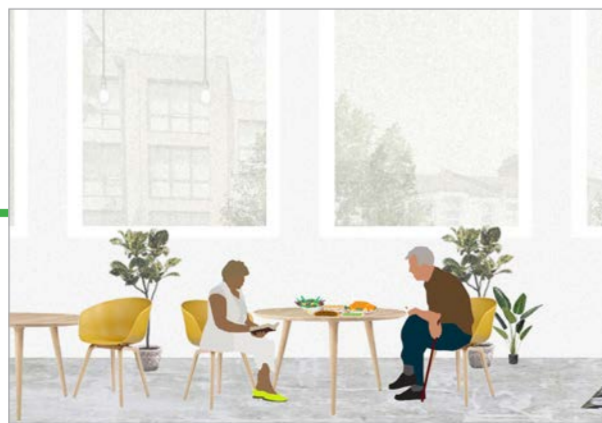
### 8.00pm - Dinner Al Fresco

Dining with friends is always a comfort for Charli, who misses having a family of their own to share the dinner table with. When it's warm enough, they love to join neighbours having dinner outside, often taking a walk together afterwards before each heading home for bed.



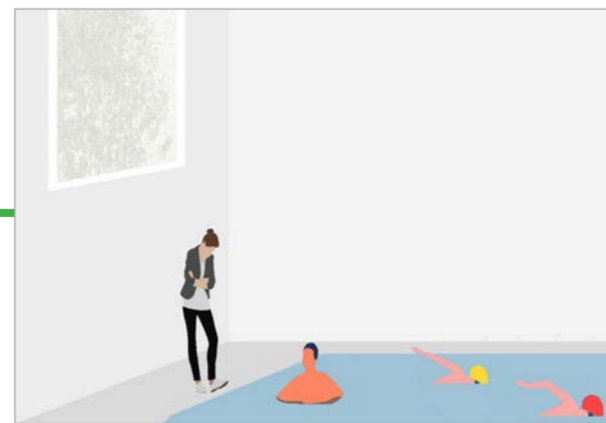
## A Day in the Life of John, 75, Male

John is a widow and has no close family to rely on. With his accessibility needs changing over time, he has moved from home to home several times over the years. Although he suffers with anxiety, he is a jovial man and has regained his love for storytelling since moving to the Mackie's site.



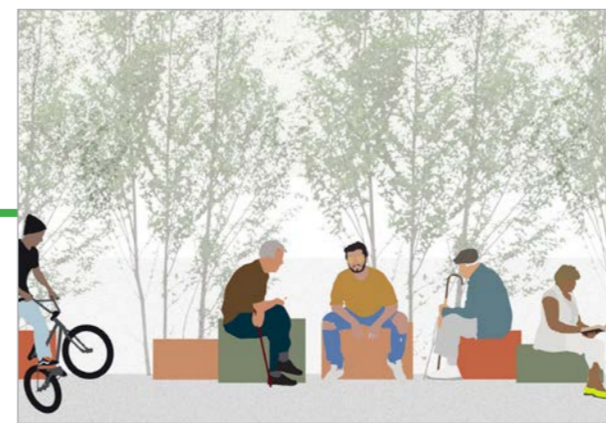
### 8.00am - Stories at Breakfast

John meets up every morning with friends from nearby homes. They always spend an hour together at breakfast, swapping anecdotes over a healthy plate of fruit. On slower paced days, they even play a board game of scrabble together.



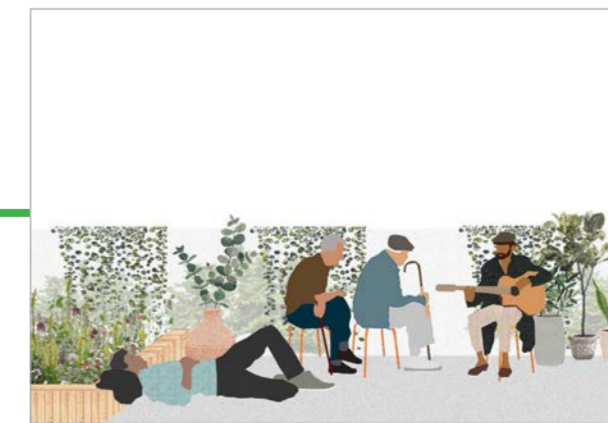
### 9.00am - Supervised Swimming

Although John uses a wheelchair for mobility, he is still able to swim if he is helped by a carer. Luckily, the Mackie's has a communal pool where volunteers are able to accompany him for a daily half-an-hour swim.



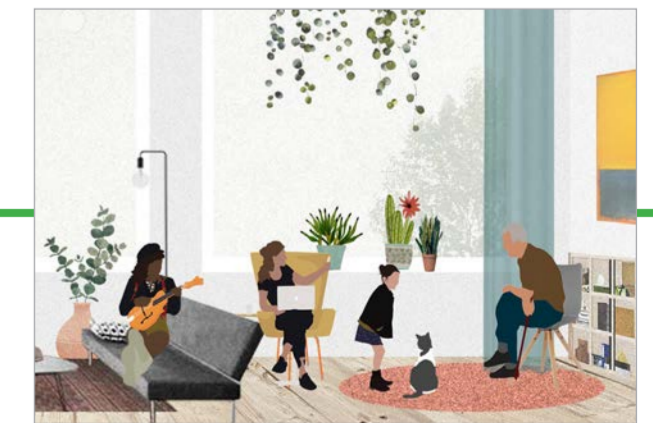
### 1.00pm - Intergenerational Park Life

John has always been a favourite in groups and makes friends easily. He heads down to the park everyday and meets with community members of all ages. Spending time with different people takes his mind off his anxiety and generally adds to his quality of life.



### 3.00pm - Meditation and Music

Despite his chatty personality, John has been advised by his therapists to spend time during the day resting or meditating. He often travels out to the central park to do so, where he sometimes sits and listens to local musicians as he loses himself in introspection.



### 8.00pm - Entertainment After Supper

John is a diabetic and has been encouraged to eat as healthily as possible throughout the day. To keep his mind off indulging in food and wine, he heads to the shared social spaces after a light evening dinner and spends time with friends. This fills the otherwise loneliest hours of his day, helping him cope with living alone.