## Data attached to Work Package 4 of the Designing for Healthy Cognitive Ageing (DesHCA) Project

## Work Package Leads and contact information

Professor Vikki McCall

[vikki.mccall1@stir.ac.uk](mailto:vikki.mccall1@stir.ac.uk), ORCID: 0000-0002-4105-406X

Professor Alasdair Rutherford

[alasdair.rutherford@stir.ac.uk](mailto:alasdair.rutherford@stir.ac.uk), ORCID: 0000-0003-2530-1195

*Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA*

## Funding

The support of UKRI via the Healthy Ageing Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme (SBDRP) grant number: ES/V016059/1 from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is gratefully acknowledged.

## Data Archive Link and Reference

McCall, V; Rutherford, A (2024): Serious game data archive for the Designing for Healthy Cognitive Ageing (DesHCA) Project. Version 1. University of Stirling, Faculty of Social Sciences. Dataset. http://hdl.handle.net/11667/227

## Background

The Designing for Healthy Cognitive Ageing (DesHCA) aimed to test, understand, and identify facilitators and barriers for various stakeholders, including older people, in achieving cognitively sustainable housing, in both new-build and retrofit contexts.

The DesHCA project has developed a co-produced legacy tool called ‘Our House’ as part of its Work-Package 4, led by Professors McCall and Rutherford. The archived data attached to this work-package has been generated from 10 playtests of the serious game legacy tool that was developed. Our House is a serious game that was developed to generate research insights on how to deliver housing for older people that is cognitively sustainable and inclusive.

## Overview

 These are the first set of notes (1 of 1) from playtest session 10, which took place on the 29th of January 2024. The playtest comprised of 11 participants and took place online.

These notes have been fully anonymised, with all identifiable characteristics, including the participants’ names, removed, or replaced with pseudonyms.

**Online Playtest Notes – 29/01/24**

**Overall design suggestions**:

* Ability to drag and drop access and room cards into the floor plan board.
* More inclusion of the cost/price of adaptions into the game mechanics.
* Include a visual floor plan of the property.
* Add symbols to represent different rooms, adaptions etc.
* Make the game overall more visual.
* Include a reminder of what the numbers etc. on the cards represent down the side of the board.
* The bottom panel (I assume the one where you choose the rooms and adaptions?) should be displayed down the side of the screen rather than at the bottom so you don't have to scroll so often.
* Add in either a link or a description of what the adaptions actually are/need more information about these.
* Increase the screen size.
* Add definition of ‘cognitive change’.

**Session Notes**

Introductions made at beginning of the session –Chloe – Tenant representative for local council – special focus on disability and housing.

Laura – [REDACTED] – particular focus in age-related projects – [REDACTED].

Ash – [REDACTED] – focus on older adult mobility and people living with dementia.

Annie – wants to find out about ways to keep elderly residents (in need of care) in the community. Keep people living in their own homes.

Tina – has 2 main roles – community engagement officer – [REDACTED].

Cindy – [REDACTED] – focus on public engagement in health research. Also looks at serious games.

Nadine – [REDACTED]. New to ageing research. Currently has a focus on intergenerational perceptions on climate change.

Nathan – [REDACTED] – place-based practice and building environments.

Overall participants focus and discussion on the link to dementia and the importance of considering healthy cognitive ageing.

Vikki gives and overview of the DesHCA project.

Alasdair then does a walkthrough of the serious game and how it is played online. Following this we briefly discuss Susan’s vignette.

All of the participants are now given the opportunity to test the prototype for the online game – the link seems to work for everyone.

Feedback while playing the game – Nadine – Is on a laptop with no mouse – attempts to click and drag the cards into the room, however, cannot do this. Robin also has this issue. Robin is also having problems with the room not expanding as she adds more cards.

Maybe need further instruction regarding the mechanics of the game – some participants are having trouble adding adaptions and rooms to the house. Also make it clearer that dragging the cards does not work.

Tina – wants to be able to set up an open plan room. Advised to put everything in the ground floor, an open plan layout is also available in the adaptions section.

Made clear we want people to also think about entryways and access points (stairs, doors etc.).

Tina – experiencing a limit to the number of rooms she can place on floors (Alasdair resolves this issue). Also having trouble with clicking and adding the rooms and adaptions.

Consent to record is given by all participants.

Initial feedback given by participants – Chloe – “All I see are price tags on everything” – she has raised many ideas on building accessible homes. She personally sees many concerns being shut down due to unwillingness to include adaptions into new and old build houses – often shot down because of the inflated price, or from an aesthetic standpoint. Believes there are many housing adaption needs that she knows local authorities are not currently fitting, which are then more expensive to retrofit. These adaptions are also a hard sell. We know in theory that landlords will have to make changes to accommodate an ageing population, however, they have yet to start to do this. She questions what will eventually cause this change. She also believes that these changes must be affordable for tenants. Perhaps we should implement accessible ‘start off points’ in homes e.g. a downstairs office/bathroom that can then become a bedroom or wet room. Also has concerns about people living in rural areas, where it takes much longer to adapt homes/build accessible housing. Also concerned that current access options do not fully consider accessibility problems – e.g. colour contrast in letterbox plates and door handles in Fife. Councils do not seem to know how to address the needs of older people – we need older people to co-design with housing development teams. Underscores the challenge in anticipating future need – you can’t do this unless you have a clear idea of what to expect.

Annie - Agrees with Chloe. She wants the discussion to focus more on funding e.g. who is the client and who is the audience? She states that the game “feels middle class” (a concern eased by being made aware of the diverse vignettes available) not representative of the majority of the population. It may be off-putting how unrealistic these adaptions are for some people – “makes you feel it is not for you”. Also raises the issue of fuel poverty. Idea of house swaps – lots of older people currently in inappropriate housing (e.g. too big, rural) which could be used by families.

Tina – playing the game with people who are not in the older age group will increase their knowledge and awareness of adaptions available/they may need in the future. Could incorporate an intergenerational approach. Also emphasises money. Some access features currently available in homes do not consider other features e.g. colour contrast, stair lifts etc. Overall, the game was a fun way to consider a serious issue.

Nathan – Congratulations on the good work. The game offers the opportunity to consider yourself, and your own needs and future. Would like further inclusivity in the game design – wants to see a floor plan of the properties for a better understanding of connectivity between rooms. Also add symbols to represent rooms, access features etc. Would like to see a more visual approach overall so the game is more inclusive to those with literacy issues.

Nadine – Reminds her of the Carbon City Zero game. Suggests we add a reminder of the meanings of the numbers on the cards down the side of the screen. Also likes Nathan’s symbols idea. Suggests that the bottom panel should be down the side, so you don’t have to scroll so often. Feels she has earnt a lot by just playing the game. It would be good to have the option to click through for further information about the adaptions.

Cindy – Thought the game was great. Notes the difference in tone and audience of competitive and collaborative games. Has learned so much through collaboration with those from different backgrounds and sectors – something the game encourages. There is a huge potential for collaborative learning.

Laura – cost is an issue (common theme in the discussion). We need to present options to people without any knowledge of how these developments are possible. The game is useful to see what adaptions are available. Good for personal knowledge and suggestions.

Elena, Rosie, and Robin were all pleased with the feedback given.