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

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## 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

This is the transcript from playtest session 9, which took place on the 8th of December 2023. The playtest comprised of 9 participants. This transcript has been fully anonymised, with all identifiable characteristics, including the participants’ names, removed, or replaced with pseudonyms.

I: …good point, and I'd love you to repeat that for, so we can get it down. Mary has been writing notes, and so on, but we'd just like to record this little discussion now. Because I'd love to hear your key points you want us to take away from your insights, and what you gathered in the game today. So, you know, what informed your decisions, has the game helped you visualise your own home in the future? What about the examples today, and the life changes, did that help us understand the process better? And has the serious game helped you think of future proofing homes, and environments? I'd love to just hear what you think today. So, that’s starting to record, so this is our, kind of, official discussion. I hope that’s alright. And I'd just love to hear what you think, really. Genevieve, I saw you nodding there, so I'm going to jump in right there, and say, I just wanted to hear your thoughts first, if that’s alright?

R1: Well, the second one, we definitely, I definitely think this is a great help. I mean, as my new friend here has said, that we know about, we have the lived experience. But when you've told us the third part of this, it's quite devastating for this gentleman.

I: Yeah.

R1: And we don't know the whole story yet, but also, you've told me that it's a private landlord, and that’s going to be really, really hard. And I think, he would have to move. I mean, I'm really sad, but by the same token, I don't think the landlord would want him in, once he finds out. Also, his financial has went down…

R2: Yeah.

R1: …which is really, that’s not helping. Put it this way, we've actually put him down to a five, just now.

I: Five.

R1: And that could even be more devastating if he ends up having to leave.

I: Yeah, yeah.

R1: And I think that’s on the cards.

I: Absolutely. So, if we kept playing, I think you're absolutely right, it would have been a rehousing…

R1: Definitely.

I: …discussion, yeah.

R1: And even us talking about it, just now, is actually, I mean, we've had both thoughts, haven't we?

R2: Uh-huh.

R1: What informed, I don't know what you mean by the first one, sorry?

I: Oh, so just, what was…

R1: Well, what's happening here today.

I: Absolutely, the decisions.

R1: I can't say anymore. Because I didn’t realise all this was going to happen before I came.

I: Yeah.

R1: I just said, right I'll go to it. So, it's, and it's really lovely, and I'm glad that you've done it this way, as well, which is important, and you've done the scales.

I: Yeah.

R1: Being a housing tenant, Council, I wouldn’t have all these problems.

R2: Uh-huh.

R1: Which, that’s one of the lucky things. No, I don't, honestly. I was involved right from the beginning, when they were doing SHQ, I was one of the lucky ones that went around the country, getting, having to get my photograph taken, and all the rest of it, to get on a plane, because I've not been in a plane since ’74. And it's all changed, even then, it's changed since those days. No, so, and when they did my wee flat, I didn’t have as much hassle as somebody in a bigger house, and that’s a bigger house, because he's got a bedroom. So, this is really great for me, to be honest with you.

I: Yeah.

R1: What was it, the other two…

I: And just to reassure you about the situation for Joseph, he got a social house, a more supportive, social home.

R2: I see.

R1: Oh, so we were on the right track then? And we didn’t know this, guys honest, this is us just finding out that you actually did what we suggested.

I: Yeah, yeah.

R1: But this is going to help you, I think, a lot.

I: I hope so.

R1: Your team, and you as well.

I: Well, I really appreciate that feedback.

R1: Sorry, I don't think I could say anymore, I think it's absolutely brilliant. And I wished it was out and about. Do the Council know about this?

I: We've played it with a few Councils, we played it with Stirling Council.

R1: Oh, well that…

I: And they loved it, yeah.

R1: Well, we had a very good friend in the region, [REDACTED], and he would have loved to have been part of this, wouldn’t he, Belle – [REDACTED]?

R3: Yeah, aye, yeah, I'm sure he would.

I: Well, maybe we could, you never know, let's…

R1: Well, [REDACTED].

I: That’s brilliant. Well, thanks for that feedback, that’s brilliant…

R1: Thank you.

I: …to hear.

R1: I really appreciate that.

I: Yeah, so do we, really. So, will we go, well, Belle?

R3: Yeah, I'm a bit more cynical than Genevieve, I have to be honest with you. The money to pay for adaptations, as people get older, and as, well as, there is an ageing population. As people get older, and they need adaptations in their homes, they may be in a private ownership situation, they may not have the money to pay for these adaptations. And they may be in social housing, again, they could be lucky, they could be unlucky. I think what's hugely wrong is that, throughout the country, we have this kind of postcode lottery. Where, in different local authorities, you'll get far more, or in others, far less. I think the whole business of adaptations, and what will be needed, it's a huge storm coming down the line towards us. And I don't think we’re in any way properly prepared for it.

I: Yeah, absolutely.

R3: Because life does happen, it does change. I speak from experience. My partner was diagnosed with MND, which I mean, that just turns your world on its head.

R2: Of course.

R3: And well, adaptations, that doesn't even begin to cover what was needed. So, there we are.

I: Yeah, absolutely.

R3: Sorry, it's a bit cynical, I know. But I think it's real, because seriously, we’re struggling to put roofs over people’s heads just now, never mind future proofing it, and adaptation.

I: Uh-huh, I think, a healthy dose of cynicism is a good thing, you know, when we’re looking at improving systems.

R3: Yeah.

I: So, thank you, that is a really important point. And I think something similar you said?

R4: I'm potentially a lot more cynical than Belle.

I: We’re going down the cynical tree, here.

R3: I've been the good cop, this is the bad cop.

R4: Our situation with Derek, well we found out after, it was MS, I think he had. And he was in a financial position where he could downsize his house, he could, you know, future proof it, and do his adaptations. But that’s it, in the real world, I mean, you've got one person in a local authority who requires a hundred thousand quid worth of adaptations, and support put in. Do you then take away from 20 folk that need five-thousand-pound worth? I know of a situation where that actually happened. And as Belle says, our housing association can do so much, but can't do it all. If you're in a private property, you'll go through an adult with incapacity assessment, through social work. And you may be forced to sell your property, and downsize, you know, to get your adaptations put in.

At the end of the day, it's money. To future proof it, they should be building houses that are future proof. It might cost £4,000 or £5,000 pounds per house more now, but it could save them £20,000 or £30,000 in the future. I'm not saying every house, you know.

I: No.

R4: But a percentage that are done like that now.

R3: A far bigger percentage, yeah.

R4: And where a family could…you know, everybody’s assuming, a lot of people are assuming, that it's just a couple that are, one person supporting the other. You often need to move a family in to support that one person. Now, moving that family in to a bigger house, would save social work, potentially, a lot of money, you know, because the support is there. I'm not saying, put the burden on them, but it helps. And I just, it's all down to money, and…

R3: Yeah.

R4: …you know, it shouldn't be, as you say, a postcode lottery.

R3: It shouldn't be.

R2: No.

R5: I think the big problem for housing is, in this climate, because of, you know, the cost of living, and things like that, there's a big campaign to get people, there are people that’s in rent arrears, so then the housing are not clawing back the money, so they’ve not got the money to put the investment in to make these changes. So, when’s it ever going to improve, as well?

R3: Yeah.

R5: Do you know what I mean? Because it's a, you know, the housing…I can't believe I'm talking like this now, I'm in housing. But non-profitable organisations, so that’s just not happening, the investment.

R3: It's true.

I: Uh-huh. Going back to that point about carers, and so on. That’s something we talked about, wasn’t it, with Susan, and that was, this vignette had her daughter moved in. And so, do you want to share some thoughts on that?

R6: Are you okay sharing something? Are you okay sharing something, just what you were saying earlier? No? Do you want me to? Okay. So, Susan was obviously very happy to stay in her house, wasn’t she, because she was there for 40 years. And her daughter moved in to help. However, as Susan’s dementia progressed, it was much harder for her daughter to look after her, and she was getting, probably, quite exhausted. Also, because Susan refused home care, didn’t she? But she went to a day centre, but only twice a week. And so, I guess, for us, I assume for you as well, I guess, and our conversations, that it made us thought of the future, didn’t it, what would we do to, you know.

R7: Definitely a care home, if there was a possibility of vacancies, that’s the problem, though, isn't it…

I: Uh-huh.

R7: …with everything, financial.

I: Yeah, very much linked here. And I think, Dina, a link to your point about, where housing sits, and all the different linkages, or what housing can do, what housing can't do. And that link between care, and housing, and health. So, and that’s a, I think, a really good point. And I think, coming to Ben, as well, we were starting to talk about these challenges. We were getting quite close to Ben, weren't we, just as a story. Is there anything you wanted to add in terms of the questions?

R8: Well, my feeling is that something that’s emerged from the questions, and from the exercise is that two-fold. That, initially, there needs to be a more straightforward, and standardised process involved here. Instead of the process varying widely from one area or Council department to another. Secondly, when it comes to financing, yes, if people are truly wealthy, then expecting them to pay their own costs is not unreasonable. It is only, in my opinion, unreasonable, that people who have managed to buy their own house, with some difficulty, and taking some strain over the years, may find themselves in a position where they simply cannot afford these adaptations, or modifications. Or not without making a big sacrifice. And yet, others, who could have reached the same point, chose not to, but to rather spend their funds in other directions, and that will then be funded.

There's a lack of fairness about it. There's a lack of equity in it. That, again, perhaps the whole system of how this is to be financed, according to need, should be dependent on the medical, and mental health needs of the claimant, rather than how much money they’ve got to pay for it.

I: Hmm. I think that element of unfairness really came through, in terms of a lot of the stories. We were talking a lot about the assessment process, as well, weren't we?

R4: Yeah, I mean, I was saying, depending on what funding you can get, can depend how enthusiastic your social worker is. How much they’ll fight your corner, and you know, and put your case forward. But I agree, a hundred per cent, it shouldn't be on…it's unfair for someone who's scrimped and saved all their life, bought their house, paid it off. And it's like, well if they have to go into a home, or things like that, in England, it's almost nothing, the house has to go. You know, why, when someone who's lived in social housing all their life, they may have passed all their money to their kids, or they may not have anything.

I: Uh-huh.

R4: But why should it be all about money? Unfortunately, it is, but it's not fair.

I: Yeah, a lot of unfairness. And that was kind of, where Ben’s vignette was sitting, wasn’t it? He was asset rich, but income poor, and what are the options, they're a little bit more tied. And the differences…

R4: It's like Council Tax, and they're on about putting Council Tax up for the really big, wealthy houses. But as you say, you might be asset rich, you might be sitting in a big house, that you worked all your life for, and you might have two matches struck together, you know.

I: Absolutely.

R3: And I don't think you can expect social housing to always, you know, to always fund this issue. You know, housing associations, I mean, they can't really afford in this climate, now, you know, to constantly fund the number of adaptations, the number of, you know, different styles and types of houses that we will require.

R4: Because Councils do it differently from housing associations. Some housing associations have their own inhouse team for doing adaptations, others contract it out. Some get, Councils have different access to grant funding than housing associations do.

R3: Uh-huh.

R4: Housing associations have different grant funding to what individuals have; you know. And there's no…

R3: There's no easy fix.

R4: …rhyme nor reason. I've written down here, joined up thinking, and working together. There's none. I was going to write down, commonsense, but I'm sorry, that does not exist in local authorities now. Because it has to be done by the book. And there's just no joined up thinking, there's no commonsense. And it's just, it's frustrating.

I: Yeah.

R5: I suppose, I don't even know about housing, but there must be some simple things you could do for the future of building houses. Why can not houses, flats, not be wheelchair accessible, so it's not going to cost any more money to make the home bigger, is it?

R4: No.

R5: So, simple things like that, you know, just making them more accessible, like, bigger rooms.

R4: They’ve said that every house has…

R3: But the rooms have got to be a bit bigger…

R5: That’s what I'm saying.

R3: ...if you want wheelchair accessibility. You have to have a turning circle.

R5: Uh-huh.

R4: They’ve said that X amount, that all houses have to have solar panels on them now. They have to be insulated to a certain standard now. There has to be a percentage, I believe, of social housing built that are accessible. But what is accessible? That is the question.

R5: Yes.

R4: What's accessible for me isn't accessible for you, you know, or you, or you.

R3: Yeah.

R4: Everyone is different.

I: Uh-huh.

R5: Yeah.

R4: So, it's, there should be, there is a building standard.

R5: Yeah.

R4: But it's wrong.

R3: But if you're saying, to make the houses bigger, but that means the builder is getting less houses on that site. It has to, if you make the rooms all wheelchair accessible. So that’s going to be an increase in costs.

R4: So, because they're getting less houses, it might only be one house over a whole development, but that one house could be a quarter of a million, half a million quid, on the bottom line.

I: Yeah. And what's the incentive for builders?

R4: Yeah.

R3: Well, that’s right, there isn't. Especially, you know, with costs going up so much. You know, there is, yeah, there's less incentive, I would say, now, probably, with the economic costs, having supplies, and everything, and you know, home building costs going up so much. There must be less incentive, and there's more of a push to get as many houses on that site as you can.

R4: Our housing association is putting two accessible houses on a new development. They're one bedroomed houses.

R3: Well, again, that’s ridiculous.

R4: Right, they're all one-bedroom houses. So, there's no room for a carer, or a family member.

R3: No.

R4: There's nothing.

R3: There's probably not even room for a mobility scooter, or a wheelchair, perhaps, who knows.

R4: Yeah, you know, things like that.

I: Yeah.

R4: So, but they're accessible houses.

R3: Yes, they tick that box.

R4: Yes, in inverted commas.

I: Yeah.

R4: For the tape.

I: Absolutely.

R3: Sorry to go off on a tangent.

R4: But they are accessible houses, they’ve ticked a box.

I: Yeah, yeah.

R6: But it's like you say, what is accessible?

R4: Yeah, exactly, you know.

R3: Exactly.

R6: Yeah.

R4: They're accessible to the guidelines they have at the moment, you know, but they might not be accessible for one person, you know.

R3: No.

I: Uh-huh, absolutely. Before we wrap up, is there anything else that anybody wanted to add, just to the discussion?

R7: Are you working with architects for the future, I just wondered?

I: We are, absolutely, we’re working with architects with architectural expertise in dementia design, and things like that. And yous are absolutely right, it's about space, it's about lighting, it's about signage, it's about technology, and things that you put in that’s supportive homes, all of that. So, there's a lot of stakeholders to make something like this work right, you know, in terms of the future proofing elements. But can I ask you just one more question? Have you enjoyed the game?

R4: Yes, yes.

I: Good.

R6: Yes.

R4: Could I ask you one question as well?

I: Yes.

R4: Could you send this out to us when you're all finished?

I: You would like to, so well that’s okay…

R4: Aye, no, the results?

I: We absolutely will, absolutely, no problem….

R4: Yeah.

I: …we can do that. And we’re wrapping up pretty soon, in February, actually, so it's going to be imminent…

R4: Uh-huh.

I: …it's not going to be too far into the future. But would a tool like this be helpful for tenants’ groups?

R1: Yes.

R4: I would love to take this back to our housing association.

I: Okay, good.

R4: And get them to do it, and get directors to do it, you know. Not…

I: The decision makers.

R4: …yeah, with the tenants.

I: Oh, yeah, that mixture of groups, and insight, yeah.

R4: Yeah. With a director and a tenant sitting together, yeah.

R3: Lived experience.

R4: Yeah.

R3: Yeah.

I: Yeah.

R4: So, they could turn around and, you know…

R8: Sorry, my apologies, I didn’t mean to interrupt, sorry.

R4: No, it's fine.

I: No, come on in, Dale.

R8: I will bring it to the attention of the housing association in our case, through the channels.

I: Okay, that sounds brilliant. Well, what we’ll do is, we’ll send you what you need to forward on, and talk about it.

R4: Yeah.

I: But it will be a tool that can be used, you know, for communities, when we finalise it. So, I suppose, that just leaves me to thank you. Thank you very much for your attention, and your game. And I'm going to go and chase Mary, but I'm sure lunch is going to arrive any second. In the meantime, we’ll have a biscuit.

R4: It may actually be outside in anther room, by the way.

I: I know. Mary is out there, so…

R4: There's another room just out there, so it may be in there, I don't know.

I: Oh, gosh, I'm not sure, we’ll go and check.

**End of transcript**