

## De Gelderhorst, Ede, The Netherlands



De Gelderhorst

### Team for visit:

Sylvia Nolan	Director of Care St. Mary's Girls Residence
Val Quinn	Principal St. Joseph's Boys School
John MacPolin	Architect OMP
Eric Ryan	Director of Care St. Joseph's Brewery Road
Liam O'Dwyer	CEO CIDP

### Dates of visits:

17<sup>th</sup> November 2008

### Contacts at facility:

Jan Templelaar

**Description of services provided at the facility:**



**De Gelderhorst**

Residential Accommodation for Deaf and Deaf/blind adults seeking independent living in a Deaf community atmosphere, vulnerable adults needing low support and others requiring a high level of support and care.

Services include medical, psychiatric, social activities, physical activities, meals, language and communication development, group and independent care, supports, transport services, religious services. Close link with Deaf clubs and arts and cultural activities. Being safe is a key issue for the residents all of whom are over 50 years. Deaf people from the surrounding areas come in to join in the activities provided by De Gelderhorst. Have set up 8 day care centres to support rest of Deaf community in Holland. Noticeable that often Deaf people have moved independently to live in the Ede area to be close to the support activities.

## Description of the facility itself:



4 round 5 storey buildings all interconnected with one round main building with reception, restaurant, meeting rooms, open spaces. The outer buildings have the independent living accommodation while the main building houses the high care and service facilities. There are 83 apartments for people requiring care and 81 apartments for independent living. Of those living in De Gelderhorst 20% require medical or psychiatric care, 15% some care, 15% are multi handicapped people, 10% are Deaf/Blind people and 40% are independent living residents.

### Exterior:

Very attractive round concrete buildings with blue large windows and fire escapes. Very good parking facilities and storage facilities.

### Interior:

Interior is concrete, wood and glass. Windows are large and apartments are decorated by the residents – bright and rooms, apartments are available as doubles or single apartments. Plenty of meeting rooms and open space areas to sit and read or play pool etc. The only eye sore is the galvanised interconnecting tunnels between the buildings.

## Environment:



Outside environment well planted and nice walks and meeting places. No barriers to the hearing peoples houses surrounding De Gelderhorst making it feel part of the locality. Public transport, shops and services all easily accessible.

## Lessons for Village Project:



Make our residential facility as big as possible – sustainability vital.  
Communication and togetherness vital to the success of the project.  
All staff must learn to sign to a set standard.  
Colours, acoustics and light are vital technical requirements.

Open spaces to see across the building to the other side for signing is important.  
Internal video phone system very successful, lights for doorbell and emergency lights in corridors and lifts.

Post boxes are independent and accessible inside and outside.

Residents can exit and enter via a communal entrance or their own entrance.

Good use of multi purpose chapel area.

### Positives for inclusion:



Round buildings – no corridors, connection with central support available.

Encourage independence but with connections to day care and social activities available.

Good communication system – video phone critical.

Plenty of light throughout and especially in the apartments important.

Open communication areas and coffee shop for all.

### Negatives to be avoided:

High care needs to be in separate building since it gives an institutional atmosphere should be separate from restaurant social facilities and reception.

**Summary:**

Deaf don't want hearing and non signing around.

Apartments must be 75 square metres minimum.

Funding is from government, and the residents.

Communal activities and medical care being available on site were seen as critical.

Source most hot meals outside i.e. not prepared on the premises.

Responsibility for service must be shared with the Deaf community.

Must have Deaf staff, managers. Communication is central.

30% of staff are Deaf.

Safety a major issue.

## **Other Comments from the group:**

### **Environment:**

Very pleasant main foyer – well used space – active communal area.

Circulation extremely simple ( literal translation of a diagram into a piece of architecture) in reality works very well.

Living environment seems very pleasant too with residents having adequate privacy and independence but with option to avail of communal areas.

Finishes ok somewhere between functional and standard (residential).

Very safe, friendly

Size of the apartments ideal

Safety rails in corridors

Sensor on doors

Indoors post boxes

Bright rooms / warm colours

The open in the main block aids communication, the constant movement and activity gives a feeling of a square in a town or village.

**Lessons for Village Project:**

Residents all feel safe, happy and privileged to be living at this facility where they can enjoy independent living with the privacy they want. The fact that they can also get support on site is very attractive to residents. These residents all chose to live here because of the possibility of living with other Deaf persons. Communication with many people is possible and very beneficial for elderly who would otherwise be more isolated if they remained in their own homes. De Gelderhorst has been a greater success than was expected initially and its greatest attraction is the opportunity to live with other Deaf in a secure environment.

Door sensors for elderly

Plenty of open space and glass for communication

By having safe environment Deaf elders feel at home, this protects Deaf culture

Soft curves, the use of living plants help to dispel and austerity or possible institutional atmosphere. The director is energetic and approachable who appears to know his clients personally. Strong emphasis on communication needs of the clients.

**Positives for inclusion:**

Large number of above average sized apartments together in a purpose built facility.  
Elderly Deaf welcome the idea of communal village living within a facility where their needs can be met.

The use of signage depicting the staff members on duty by a photograph of themselves and their signing their name.

Independent living / nursing care all in one building

Video phones for all

Plenty of rooms for activities / church

Ideal measurements of rooms

Good amount of activity

Rooms / a reading and social room

The assistance technology

1. Video phone
2. Alarms
3. Door bells
4. Study area in each apartment

**Negatives to be avoided:**

Somewhat too functional in appearance, too literal translation of the diagram into built form - means that the development very nearly appears like an institutional building.

Use of materials in common areas (painted blockwork and concrete) is a little too basic.

Landscaping – no distinct themes or characteristics given to any areas around buildings – although budget may have limited what was achievable.

Not to build same to the same scale (too big)

Galvanised sheeting on exterior of building very off putting

The narrow end of each apartment was dark.

**Summary:**

A very well run and successful development.

Proof that this type of residential development for Deaf only is what people want.

Opportunity to have privacy and at the same time to be able to be among other Deaf people is the big attraction.

Buildings are adequate for their purpose but would not meet with Irish development standards.

Good integration of Deaf into facility work force.

Staff obliged to sign.

Good sense of Deaf community in the centre, good support for people and the importance of communication with all seems to be the most important factor for all residents. By living in a close community centre Deaf identity and Deaf culture is respected. Good sense of safety and residents genuinely happy to be in that environment.

The overall aspiration should be to strive for a level of comfort and modernity attractive to elderly clients (and not dictated by the personal taste or hallucination of some tortured architect).