



Building a Community Within a Community: A Policy Toolkit for Building Intergenerational Housing

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Executive Summary

The Intergenerational Residence in West Street, Valletta, is Malta's first purpose-designed housing initiative where elderly residents and young adults share the same co-housing environment. Developed through a collaboration between the Malta Housing Authority and Friends of Don Bosco (FODB), the residence brings together older persons—many of whom were on the social housing waiting list or living in unsuitable accommodation—and young adults transitioning out of institutional care, homelessness or other precarious situations. The project was intentionally conceived not merely as a housing solution, but as a community in which secure tenure, social support and meaningful intergenerational relationships are woven together.

Almost three years after the opening of the residence this research endeavour was carried with a dual purpose: first, to analyse how the intergenerational housing model functions in practice, including the values, assumptions, and everyday dynamics shaped by space, organisation, relationships, and community; and second, to propose a scalable model that integrates both best practices and identified areas for improvement. To achieve these two goals 20 semi-structured interviews carried out in October 2025 with residents and key stakeholders involved in the Intergenerational Residence. Across participants, several cross-cutting dynamics emerged including areas of growth and existing strengths across organizational practices, relationships, spatial considerations, connections to community and values permeating the endeavour.

Under **Organization**, residents reported that the ratio of one youth to four elderly residents, the careful screening of young people, and the freedom to participate or not in social activities were widely appreciated and considered essential to the model's success. However opaque application and room allocation processes, unclear expectations around cleaning responsibilities, gaps in programming for the elderly, and the absence of a full-time coordinator to oversee community life, dispute resolution and maintenance were perceived negatively.

In terms of **Relationships**, the relationship between young and elderly residents was deemed as being overwhelmingly positive with both groups describing each other as kind, supportive and "like family". Elderly residents supported one another with groceries and day-to-day tasks, and most residents valued the presence and responsiveness of Housing Authority staff and the collaborative working relationship between the Housing Authority and FODB, even if role boundaries sometimes remained unclear. Despite these strong relationships unmanaged

conflicts, gossip, noise and perceptions of political favouritism undermined trust and led some residents to withdraw from communal life.

The **Space** theme revealed that residents were proud to live in a well-designed and well-equipped building, with particular appreciation for the roof and common areas, which were often described as “like a hotel”. However, persistent issues remained: unequal room sizes, accessibility limitations (particularly the final steps to the roof), inadequate parking, under-utilised basement space and occasional delays in maintenance. These spatial features influenced perceptions of fairness, opportunities for socialising and overall wellbeing.

Under **Community**, the Valletta location generated mixed reactions. Some residents—especially those originally from Valletta—experienced high levels of wellbeing, strong social ties and numerous opportunities for cultural engagement. Others found Valletta noisy, expensive, inaccessible and, at times, unsafe, particularly at night. For several residents there was little connection to the surrounding neighbourhood, pointing to the need for more intentional community-building beyond the walls of the residence.

Finally, the **Values** theme exposed a clearer vision of an intergenerational approach that is distinct from both social housing and assisted living. The approach is grounded in autonomy, active ageing, generational equity, housing security and mutual contribution. Residents and practitioners converged around the idea of a “Community-within-a-Community” model, in which residents are not passive recipients of services but active agents who both receive and offer support to each other and to the wider neighbourhood. However, greater efforts were required to explain these fundamental differences to the elderly and the young residents who occasionally were unsure whether this should be considered as a form of social housing.

Drawing on these insights, the toolkit proposes a **Community-within-a-Community Model** structured around five iterative stages:

1. **Preparation Stage** – selecting a receptive community, a well-located site, and an accessible building with equitable room sizes and generous common areas.
2. **Selection Stage** – appointing a competent coordinator and carefully screening both elderly and young residents for compatibility with the intergenerational model and its expectations.

3. **Administration Stage** – establishing clear house rules, transparent budgets, cleaning and maintenance procedures, upgrade plans and on-site or coordinated services (transport, counselling, health and government services).
4. **Relationship Development Stage** – creating individualised care plans, democratic governance structures, mechanisms for dispute resolution, and purposeful opportunities for social interaction and neighbourhood engagement.
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation Stage** – systematically tracking expenditure, wellbeing, levels of conflict, and the integration of young people and wellbeing of elderly residents, while adjusting practices in response to emerging evidence.

For each stage, the toolkit outlines concrete actions and key indicators that can be used to design, implement and assess future intergenerational housing initiatives.

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1. Introduction

The Intergenerational Residence in West Street, Valletta, is Malta's first purpose-designed housing initiative in which elderly persons and young adults live together within the same co-housing environment. Located in the heart of the capital city, the residence brings together individuals with distinct life trajectories and support needs, with the explicit aim of fostering proximity, mutual support, and everyday intergenerational encounters. Rather than functioning solely as a social housing solution, the project was conceptualised as a living community in which housing provision, social support, and relationship-building are intentionally interwoven.

The residence is housed in a four-storey building that had previously been abandoned and in a state of severe disrepair. Following a €1.6 million restoration investment by the Grand Harbour Regeneration Corporation, the building reopened in January 2023 as an intergenerational residence jointly managed by the Malta Housing Authority and the Salesian-inspired NGO Friends of Don Bosco (FODB) (Micallef, 2025). The physical design reflects a deliberate balance between privacy and community life: each resident occupies a fully self-contained studio apartment equipped with a kitchenette and ensuite bathroom, while shared spaces—including a common room and a rooftop terrace—provide opportunities for social interaction. Accessibility was a central design consideration, with lift access provided throughout the building.

The project builds on FODB's long-standing experience in supporting vulnerable young people through mentoring and independent-living programmes implemented in other localities. These prior initiatives demonstrated that, when appropriately supported, young adults transitioning from residential care, foster care, homelessness, or other precarious situations can successfully move towards independent living. The Valletta residence extends this approach by intentionally situating young adults alongside elderly residents, many of whom were downsizing from previous accommodation or drawn from the Housing Authority's social housing waiting list, thereby creating a structured intergenerational mix within a single building.

At present, the residence accommodates 19 individuals: 15 elderly residents (including one couple) and 4 young adults, with one young person residing on each floor. The elderly residents are predominantly over the age of 65 and were selected through the Housing Authority's allocation and exchange programmes, with particular attention paid to health status, mobility, and personal circumstances. Priority was given to individuals already living in Valletta, recognising the importance of ageing in place within familiar neighbourhoods and established social networks.

The transition into the residence was carefully managed through home visits, coordination with social workers and housing officers, and on-site support during the initial settling-in period.

The young adults, aged between 18 and 23, were selected by FODB through a structured assessment process focused on readiness for independent living and capacity to cohabit respectfully with elderly residents. Most had prior experience in foster or residential care, and their placement and ongoing support were partly funded through the Ministry for Social Policy. In addition to secure accommodation, young residents participate in a structured two-year mentoring programme designed to develop practical life skills, including financial management, household responsibilities, and access to healthcare. Each young person is assigned a trained mentor and is required to be in full-time employment or education, with voluntary work expected during periods of unemployment. Continued contact between mentors and former residents after they exit the programme underscores its longer-term impact.

From the outset, proactive engagement with the surrounding neighbourhood was prioritised to address potential stigma, particularly regarding the inclusion of young adults. This involved collaboration with local stakeholders—including the police, health services, parish representatives, and neighbouring residents—to foster understanding and acceptance of the project. Overall, the Intergenerational Residence combines high-quality housing provision with structured social support, creating a setting that promotes intergenerational interaction while enabling both elderly residents and young adults to live with dignity, autonomy, and a sense of connection.

2. Situating the Toolkit

The development of this toolkit is grounded in the lived realities of the residents who participated in this study, as well as the operational experiences of the organisations responsible for the Intergenerational Residence. The interviews reveal a complex interplay of needs, expectations, and life histories that shape how both elderly and young people engage with the intergenerational model. Many elderly residents arrived at the residence following significant housing disruptions—loss of pre-1995 leases, unsafe or inaccessible previous homes, conflicts within family settings, or domestic and emotional abuse. Others had relocated from neighbourhoods central to their identity and social networks, creating an added layer of relocation. These background factors underscore that residents come into the intergenerational space with vulnerabilities that extend beyond housing alone, bringing with them the emotional, relational, and logistical challenges that accompany major transitions.

For the elderly, the transition into the residence was also influenced by expectations shaped by traditional care models. Some struggled to embrace new ways of living or were hesitant to engage in unfamiliar communal practices, while others had health or mobility limitations that affected participation. At the same time, findings show that elderly residents felt deeply valued when contributing to the wellbeing of the young people—a dynamic that challenged assumptions that the elderly are passive recipients of support. Their desire to help, to remain active, and to feel useful underscores the importance of designing intergenerational models that recognise older adults' agency rather than defaulting to care-home paradigms.

Young residents entered the space with their own set of pressures: navigating independent living for the first time, carrying the emotional weight of difficult childhood experiences, or managing the demands of full-time employment while adjusting to life alongside older adults. Some viewed the residence as a training ground for adulthood, while others experienced loneliness, uncertainty, or the urgency of arriving in crisis. Their transition from structured environments such as residential homes to a more autonomous yet relationally complex setting highlights the need for guidance, support, and clarity around expectations within the intergenerational model.

Across both groups, loneliness emerged as a persistent theme—whether linked to the loss of family ties, distance from one's original community, changes in life stage, or the challenges of living independently for the first time. Combined with misunderstandings about what intergenerational living entails, differing expectations about shared space, and varied motivations for entering the residence, these dynamics underscore why understanding both best practices and areas of growth, with a view to developing a toolkit for future processes was deemed important.

The aim of this toolkit was twofold: 1) *to examine how this model operates in practice, the values and assumptions that underpin it, and the ways in which space, organisation, relationships, and community dynamics shape residents' everyday lives* and, 2) *propose a model that incorporates both best practices and areas of growth for future scalability*. The final model was therefore designed not merely as a set of operational guidelines but as a conceptual anchor to help future intergenerational models rooted in the values of autonomy, empowerment, dignity, intergenerational fairness and housing security.

3. Methodology

This research is based on 20 semi-structured interviews carried out in October 2025 with residents and key stakeholders involved in the Intergenerational Residence. The sample included two members of staff from FODB, one staff member from the Malta Housing Authority, thirteen elderly residents, and four young residents. This composition allowed for a balanced understanding of lived experiences, management perspectives, and the operational realities of the intergenerational model. Interviews lasted between 20 and 45 minutes, depending on participants' availability and comfort.

All interviews were conducted in person within the residence or in nearby locations chosen by participants. Prior to each interview, individuals were informed of the study's purpose, their rights, and the voluntary nature of participation. Written and spoken informed consent was collected, permission to audio-record was obtained, and participants were provided with a €20 voucher as a token of appreciation. Interviews were then recorded, scribed to identify the most salient points, and anonymised to protect confidentiality.

The study employed a semi-structured interview guide to ensure consistency across participants while still allowing flexibility for residents and staff to raise issues most relevant to their lived experiences. This format proved especially important given the diversity of residents' backgrounds and the different forms of engagement they had with the residence.

Data analysis was conducted using Dedoose software. A deductive coding framework was adopted, informed by Beck's (2020) conceptualisation of intergenerational spaces. The four core criteria—Values, Space, Organisation, and Relationships—served as the initial coding structure. During analysis, a fifth theme, Community, was introduced to capture participants' reflections on their relationship to the broader Valletta neighbourhood, which emerged as a significant dimension of their experience. This combined framework shaped the thematic findings and informed the development of the best practices and lessons learned presented in the following sections.

4. Findings

In this section an in-depth exploration of the lessons learned, and best practices discovered of the first intergenerational residence within the Maltese context was carried out. Utilizing the themes of Organization, Relationships, Space, Community² and Values as they emerge from Beck's (2020) work, this section will demonstrate how mixed results emerged. Despite some positive results with regards to the relationships and use of space, a lack of programming for the elderly and an unclear conceptualization of what makes an intergenerational residence different from social housing or youth hostels precluded the intergenerational residence from reaching its full potential. In this context reaching its full potential would entail not only providing shelter but guaranteeing dignified living and enhanced wellbeing.

Within the **Organization** theme the management side of the intergenerational residence including the room allocation process, programming undertaken with residents, issues such as security, and key decisions such as policies on the level of personalization of the common areas, and smoking was explored.

The **Relationships**' theme centred around the various relationships currently present, namely between the residents themselves, between the Housing Authority and the residents, between FODB and the residents and between the Housing Authority and the FODB. This theme explored when relationships worked, were harmonious and beneficial to wellbeing, and when relationships were conflictual, chaotic and caused distress amongst the various parties.

Space was understood as anything relating to the physical structures of the Intergenerational residence and included, the resident's rooms, the common areas, the roof and the basement, as well issues such as accessibility, maintenance and cleanliness.

Community was a theme that did not exist in Beck's (2020) conceptualization of Intergenerational Spaces, however the need for a theme emerged strongly, when participants would spontaneously discuss their relationship, or lack thereof to the neighbourhood within which the residence was located.

Finally, **Values** represented the aspirational values that bound the Intergenerational Project. It included the causal logic as to why it would be effective in achieving its intended results as well as the axiological and ethical framework that underpins all programming, physical structures and relationships.

² Community was added in this toolkit and was not part of the original conceptual framework

Table 1: Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Sub Theme	Code
Organization	Ratio of Youths to Elderly	Maintain a good ratio of youths to elderly
	Selecting the right young person	Maintain screening of youths to ensure compatibility with intergenerational program Assess youths for experience with the elderly
	Socializing	Maintain balance of privacy and socialization Do not impose social events Provide people who do not feel lonely the space to stay alone Maintain activities for those who enjoy them
	Transition from Previous Location to Intergenerational Residence	Relatively painless transition from prior residence to intergenerational
	Application Process	Residence was not always ready when viewed initially Requirements and expectations were not always explained clearly
	Allocation of Rooms	Room Allocation Process was opaque Pressure to decide quickly whether to take room Perception of Unfair allocation of rooms
	Cleaning	Unclear expectations regarding responsibility for cleanliness of common areas Disagreements on whether to hire a cleaner
	Demographics of Residents	Gender Imbalance
	Management	Ensure a full-time presence of a coordinator Coordinator to aid in programming Coordinator to aid in dispute resolution

	Coordinator to take care of maintenance
Programming	<p>A program for structured interaction between elderly and young required</p> <p>Individual Plans for Elderly Required</p> <p>Improvement in Dispute Resolution Procedures</p>
Security	<p>Cameras may provide Security</p> <p>Cameras need to be checked regularly</p> <p>Cameras should not be freely accessible to residents to protect privacy</p>
Selecting the right elderly person	<p>Multiple meetings with prospective candidates especially the elderly required</p> <p>Ensure compatibility match between elderly and youth</p> <p>Assessment should be carried out by future coordinator</p> <p>Ensure compatibility with the aims of the program</p>
Services	<p>Offer services or coordinate to make daily purchases to elderly</p> <p>Offer counselling and psychosocial support to the elderly</p> <p>Organize transport for residents with medical appointments</p> <p>Organize health services to be offered in the building</p>
Setup and Enforcement of Rules	<p>Create clear rules and enforce early</p> <p>Ensure consistent application of standards</p> <p>Ensure appropriate consequences when rules are broken</p> <p>Issue policy on pets</p> <p>Issue clear policy on decorating common spaces</p>
Sharing Space with Community	Find balance between activities inviting broader neighbourhood community and residential community

		<p>Leave certain spaces accessible only to residents</p> <p>Organize activities for broader neighbourhood community</p>
	Smoking	<p>Create clear smoking zones</p> <p>Enforce rules on smoking in common areas</p>
	Maintenance	<p>Maintenance and aid provided very helpful</p> <p>On certain occasions maintenance was quick to respond</p> <p>Maintenance requests are sometimes fulfilled slowly</p> <p>Unclear rules on when resident is required to pay for maintenance inside their room</p>
Relationships	Relationship between Youths and the Elderly	<p>Youths help elderly with technology</p> <p>Spontaneous interaction between elderly and young people</p> <p>Elderly provide a morale boost to young people and affirm them</p> <p>Elderly take the role of family</p> <p>Elderly get along very well with young people</p> <p>Potential of elderly to teach skills to young people</p> <p>Young people would choose intergenerational over hostel solely with peers</p> <p>Elderly and youths alleviate each other's loneliness</p>
	Relationship between Youths themselves	<p>Youths get along well amongst themselves</p> <p>Youths mostly know each other already</p> <p>Youth require youths to share certain experiences</p>
	Relationship between HA and residents	<p>Housing Authority personnel highly available to aid residents</p> <p>Housing Authority gave a lot of aid with furniture and insect screens</p>

		Most staff at Housing Authority were respectful
	Relationship between HA and FODB	<p>Good overall relationship between Salesians and housing authority</p> <p>Good relationships between coordinators of Housing Authority and Salesians</p> <p>Clearer demarcation of Duties between Housing Authority and Salesians</p> <p>Better communication between Housing Authority and Salesians</p>
	Relationship between Residents	<p>Many residents have positive relationships</p> <p>Many residents appreciate intergenerational set up</p> <p>Overall residents are nice and have cordial relationships</p> <p>Overall residents are helpful to each other</p>
	Conflicts between Residents	Unmanaged conflicts lead to escalation
		Gossip between residents fuels distrust
		Some residents opt to never participate in social events
		<p>Anxiety and avoidance of contact because of elevated levels of conflicts</p> <p>Certain personalities need to be managed</p> <p>Mechanisms are needed to decide house decisions and rules</p> <p>Damage to property has resulted because of conflict</p> <p>Power imbalances between residents not conducive to peaceful relations</p>
	Noise	<p>Common areas can be noisy</p> <p>Doors are sometimes slammed</p>
	Political affiliation	Perception that political connections determine outcomes
Space	Accessibility	Chair lift to aid with final steps to roof missing

Design of Building	<p>Complete Accessibility must be planned at outset</p> <p>Room size should be as equal as possible</p>
Parking	<p>Parking is problematic</p>
Common Spaces	<p>Common areas have some maintenance issues</p> <p>Basement not utilized to full potential</p> <p>Roof is highly appreciated by residents</p> <p>Common areas are of a high standard</p> <p>Roof provides opportunity for socialization</p> <p>Common areas are highly accessible</p> <p>Common areas are sometimes dirty</p>
Personal Room	<p>Some residents like layout and size of room</p> <p>Room is very comfortable</p> <p>Room was customized for greater homeliness</p> <p>Friends invited over to room</p> <p>Some rooms significantly smaller than others</p> <p>Smaller rooms preclude inviting family over for lunch</p> <p>Some showers are small for those with mobility issues</p> <p>Certain rooms have issues due to age of building</p> <p>Some rooms have small windows</p>
Overall Space	<p>Residents are proud to live in this space</p> <p>Property is well equipped</p>

		Residents are happy with the place
Community	Valletta	<p>Close Connection to Valletta Community</p> <p>Valletta close to work</p> <p>There is a lot to do in Valletta</p> <p>Dislike living in Valletta</p> <p>Lack of shops and Amenities</p> <p>Fear at night in Valletta</p> <p>Valletta can be noisy at night</p> <p>Valletta is Inaccessible</p>
Values	Intergenerational Model	<p>Community within a Community Concept</p> <p>Provide support to elderly people to empower them</p> <p>Create structures so that elderly people contribute</p> <p>Clearly differentiate between assisted living and intergenerational facility</p> <p>Clearly differentiate between social housing and intergenerational facility</p> <p>Provide opportunities to learn tolerance and living with one another</p> <p>Provide opportunities to give back</p> <p>Keeping elderly in community cheaper and better life outcomes</p> <p>Goal for Young People is to become independent</p> <p>Find opportunity in Vulnerability</p>

4.1 Organization

Ratio of Youth to Elderly

A key feature of the intergenerational model is that elderly and younger people live together in some form of community. In the Maltese case this takes the form of elderly people awaiting social housing and younger people who were formerly in residential care. Maintaining the appropriate ratio of younger to older residents is important to maintain the social dynamic. Currently the ratio was a single youth to four elderly residents. Residents in general felt that this ratio worked well, although one youth wished that there were a few more youths to share experiences with. Maintaining this current ratio or slightly increasing the number of youths will likely to lead to successful models in the future.

Selecting the Right Young Person

Given that the selection process was undertaken by the FODB a different process was employed. Youths were selected on a range of criteria including whether they were ready for the independence which could at times become loneliness that is associated with the intergenerational model (as opposed to youth hostels). Secondly youths were thoroughly vetted to see whether they could handle living in a space which needed to be shared with persons who were older than them. This meant ensuring that they had a friendly disposition towards older persons, by assessing their relationships with their grandparents among other methods. Maintaining and nurturing this approach and using some of the insights to screen the elderly in future models is a key example of a best practice that will aid future models.

Socializing

Throughout the conversations with residents a constant theme was the issue of loneliness and relationships with others. While all residents contended with the issue of loneliness to some degree, not all felt it as acutely, and not all felt that this was best remedied by continuous and intense socialization. This latter category of residents appreciated the liberty to join or forego social events depending on their levels of energy on the day, the activities they had that week, and at times what programs were running on television. While investing in a house coordinator to promote relationships between residents is an important addition to future models, such a coordinator must strike an important balance that is currently being reached, namely the organization of activities without the imposition on residents to attend.

Transition from Previous Location to Intergenerational Residence

Residents prior housing situation varied substantially, some came from rent controlled homes who had lost their rent-controlled status, while others lived in unsuitable locations such as garages, while others yet lived with their children in overcrowded homes. Moving into the Intergenerational Residence provided a relief for most residents because it provided them with greater accessibility and security of tenure, particularly for the elderly residents. However, all residents described a small period of transition, with the need of time to make the adjustment to a smaller room within a broader shared space that comprised the Intergenerational Residence. Despite this, most resident managed this transition well, adapting within days and some within weeks. Understanding this transition and finding ways of facilitating is an important practice for future models.

Application Process

A key finding of this research endeavour has indubitably been a deeper insight on how application processes and room allocation processes should work. Some participants had seen the property while it was still being renovated and were subsequently asked whether they would like to join the residence without seeing the final state of the building. This was particularly difficult for those whose transition from a larger space to a smaller one required significant sacrifice. Additionally, the intergenerational concept of shared space with both elderly and young people was not always well understood, even at later stages of the program.

Allocation of Rooms

Room allocation was a contentious process, made significantly more by the age and architectural constraints of the building thus not allowing for full customizability, meant that inevitably some residents would get larger rooms, while others would get smaller ones. Future models of intergenerational residences would do well to set out objective and clear criteria as to how room allocation is undertaken, particularly for unequal spatial features. Furthermore, providing more time to decide whether to engage in the intergenerational model would also strengthen commitment and participation to the intergenerational model.

Cleaning

An issue that arose frequently throughout interviews with participants related to the issue of cleanliness and responsibility. While participants had no doubts that cleanliness within their rooms was their responsibility, there was disagreement the level and extent to which they were

responsible for the common areas. Some participants felt that they only had to clean the area in front of their room, others took it upon themselves to clean areas beyond their room and felt disappointed when others did not share the same level of responsibility, while others still did not feel the need to clean at all the area outside of their room or the common areas. Unsurprisingly a gender dynamic could be observed with male participants opting not to clean and often dirtying passageways through lack of care. Identifying clear roles and responsibilities would likely lead to better outcomes for all residents.

Gender Imbalance

A gender imbalance was noted and commented upon by residents, with male residents noting that the lack of men presents in the residence meant that their opportunities for socialization were strongly diminished. Some residents in fact opted not to socialize at all feeling that each event would result in them feeling out of place. A greater gender balance would likely address this issue.

Management

A clear absence that was felt by all residents was the role of a coordinator or house manager who worked full-time within the residence. Such a coordinator would be important to contribute to programming within the residence, as well aid in dispute resolution. Furthermore, coordinating the maintenance and repairs within the building was better done by one role, instead of the shared responsibilities currently in place.

Programming

An important addition to future models should include more programming, particularly for the elderly. Programming would involve understanding the short term and long-term goals of the elderly and the setting up of some form of support to achieve these goals. Such an approach is essential if active ageing is to be achieved and elderly persons are truly provided with all the options and independence to live a full and active life. Currently a comprehensive program exists for the young people living in the intergenerational residence, however, a similar counterpart for the elderly does not currently exist. A structured program aimed at empowering the elderly to live their lives and contribute both to the intergenerational residence and society at large would be strongly beneficial.

Furthermore, better and more planned programming between all residents to foster relationships without forcing them would have strong results for all involved. It would certainly provide

opportunities for structure dialogues that would decrease conflict all round, while also tackling the issue of loneliness and provide opportunities for socialization for those who seek it.

Security

Given some of the conflicts that will be described in the relationships section of this work, security in shared spaces is of the utmost importance. One way that this can be achieved is through the installation of cameras in the common areas of the residence. While this may feel controversial and intrusive of people's privacy, for some of the more vulnerable residents, it might also provide greater feelings of security. Balancing the needs of both should be achieved by thinking about where cameras ought to be installed, how often they are reviewed and who should have access to the footage. Finding the right balance between these decisions, should provide the most minimally intrusive but maximally secure outcome.

Selecting the right elderly persons for the intergenerational model

Throughout the discussion with both the residents and the FODB's coordinator, a strong difference emerged between the selection process of the elderly and the young. While young persons were screened and interviewed on multiple criteria, the elderly were not. Selecting the right person will require that multiple meetings are undertaken over a span of time to ensure that the person understands the model, is willing to participate in it, and compatibility is ensured with the aims of the intergenerational model. Such an assessment is ideally carried out by, or in partnership with the coordinator of the house, as they are probably best situated to assess suitability and compatibility.

Services

An interesting development that occurred spontaneously without any intervention from either the FODB or the Housing Authority was that residents who were more mobile or who had access to wheelchairs, would offer to purchase daily groceries for those who were less mobile. Residents commented that a more structured and coordinated service would be of great aid, reducing expenditure on delivery services as well as fostering a deeper sense of community.

Additionally, due to the sometimes-inconsistent nature of public transport accessible within the particular area of Valletta, residents both from the elderly and the younger population discussed the need for support when attending certain medical appointments. Structuring such a support service would be of great aid to the residents. Furthermore, coordinating with public services offered in government departments to occasionally be provided within the intergenerational

housing residence would also increase wellbeing outcomes. Finally, a service where elderly people could benefit from the use of counselling and psychological services was also deemed to be advantageous.

Setup and Enforcement of Rules

A clear issue that emerged throughout conversations with both the residents and administrators from Housing Authority's side and the FODB, all pointed toward a lack of clarity with regards to regulations and how these were to be enforced. Residents complained of unequal treatment with regards to the level of personalization of the common areas adjacent to their room, while both administrators noting that they did not feel they had the power to enforce the rules that were being violated. A clear set of rules that had clear enforcement would aid bring clarity and any perception of favouritism as well as potentially avoid conflict.

Sharing Space with Community

An area of development which has yet been underexplored has been the fostering of relationships with the broader neighbourhood community. Some residents had managed to develop this on their own, while others who had previously lived in Valletta already had strong social networks, however for the rest, there was a strong disconnect between themselves and the broader community. Finding a balance between activities that bring the broader community and activities that were aimed solely at the residents would likely provide increasing wellbeing benefits, provided that certain space would only be available to residents. Additionally, activities organized solely for the broader community with the broader community such as having religious or community groups using the intergenerational residence as a place to meet could also have large potential to increase community openness to the intergenerational residence as well as connect the community more.

Smoking

A key source of conflict that emerged between residents that is tied to the inconsistent application of rules has been smoking indoors. While on paper residents had the right to smoke within their room, they were often found smoking in the common areas. This was exacerbated by conflicts which precluded the free access to the roof space, resulting in residents not being able to use the roof for smoking activities. Greater clarity on smoking and non-smoking areas, especially for elderly residents with particular health conditions would be an important outcome to be achieved.

Maintenance

While most residents felt that many of their maintenance requests were taken seriously and responded to promptly, there were other occasions when maintenance would take a long time to occur with persons hired to carry out the maintenance being unavailable during normal work hours or taking weeks to carry out simple maintenance. Furthermore, greater clarity on what falls squarely within the responsibility of the resident and what will be offered by the Housing Authority would ensure better outcomes for the residents and realistic expectations.

4.2 Relationships

Relationship between Youths and Elderly

A strong and recurrent finding that all residents spoke of was the good relationship between the elderly and the young. Elderly residents would speak about how generous and nice the young people were, how they sometimes cooked for the young people returning late from work, and frequently mentioning that the young person on their floor was great. Young people similarly had positive views of their relationships with the elderly. When asked whether they would have preferred to be in a location with only other youths, all the youths answered negatively. The elderly valued these interactions and complained that the young people were not around enough because they wanted to spend more time with them, while the young felt affirmed when the elderly spoke positively about them. The dynamic took familiar undertones of support and companionship despite the age and cultural differences.

Relationship between Youths themselves

Most of the youths knew each other from residential care, which aided them to feel familiar and comfortable around each other quickly. Relationships between them were positive and supportive and all the youths talked about the importance of the appropriate ratio of elderly-to-young to ensure that there are enough youths with whom they could speak to and share their lived experiences.

Relationship between Housing Authority and Residents

The relationship between the Housing Authority and the residents was deemed to be overall positive. Residents were highly appreciative of the fact that the Housing Authority had listened to residents and aided them with things such as upgrades of faulty furniture and the installation of insect screens. Residents felt that staff were overall respectful, with some minor exceptions regarding the allocation process. Furthermore, Housing Authority staff on location were available

even for small maintenance requests. Maintaining an open communication line is key for future models.

Relationship between Housing Authority and the FODB

The relationship between the Housing Authority and the FODB was mostly positive. Both coordinators spoke regularly, however both parties seem to be uncertain where their roles started and where they ended. This was exacerbated by the fact that at times communication was slow or stalled between both.

Ensuring a clearer distinction between the responsibilities of the FODB and what role the Housing Authority plays will ensure that communication is more structured and expectations as well as solutions to emerging issues resolved quickly. Future collaborations will require that collaborative relationships with strong communication lines are set up.

Conflict between Residents

A recurring theme throughout the conversation undertaken with the residents has been the presence of conflicts which in certain instances had escalated to the intentional infliction of damage on the property of residents, and theft. Living in the spatial set up of the intergenerational residence meant that residents unlike in analogous social housing accommodation had a higher degree of forced interaction, which when unmanaged and without the appropriate supports had resulted in escalated conflicts including gossip which further fuelled distrust amongst the elderly residents. Such conflicts increased anxiety of all residents, especially the elderly and lead to some residents retreating from the social life of the residence as they wished to avoid the tumultuousness and uncertainty of the situation. Mechanisms to aid with dispute resolution would likely aid the relationship between residents, especially because certain power imbalances existed between the residents.

Noise

Another cause for distress in relationships between residents was noise. Residents complained that the common areas were not kept as quiet as they ought to, with some residents watching television or radio with their door open, inadvertently leading to the entire residence being able to hear what they were hearing. Additionally, certain doors were sometimes slammed, especially at particular hours of the night that could awaken residents. While the noise issue was not classified as a major disturbance but a more of a nuisance, future projects would do well to consider this dynamic.

Political Affiliation

Political affiliation was an interesting lens that was frequently utilized by residents, especially when understanding the room allocation process. Residents expected that those who shared the same political convictions of the party in government would automatically be given preference and “skip ahead of the queue”. While this expectation is not unrealistic in certain contexts, this reading of the situation did not correspond to how allocations were carried out by the Housing Authority. Residents, however ascribed any decision made that they did not understand, as being the result of political affiliation.

Such a conviction denotes a failure to communicate more clearly the reasoning behind certain decisions which have far-reaching effects on the lives of the residents by the Housing Authority. Better communication and setting the right expectations of when and how decisions are taken would aid considerably to remove such misunderstandings.

Relationship between Residents

While the relationship between residents was overall positive, despite certain incidences of conflict, a feature of note that emerged from conversations with residents is the social anxiety surrounding gossip. Residents felt that they could not always trust other residents and be themselves as they felt that the trust would be betrayed following numerous instances when they had experienced such betrayal. The effect of such gossip was that some residents opted to completely disassociate with other residents and not attend any social events. While attendance to social events was not and should not be compulsory, not attending such social events because of fear of gossip is an outcome best avoided by having a house coordinator facilitating relationships between residents through formal activities and informal conversations. Furthermore, gossip is likely the precursor to larger conflict and intervention at early stage is likely to have a beneficial effect for all involved.

4.3 Space

Accessibility

The Intergenerational Residence was praised by the residents for providing a greater sense of security by ensuring accessibility all throughout the building, with one exception, the roof. Due to the spatial layout of the building and the fact that it was a dilapidated property that was renovated, a lift extending to the roof was not possible, leaving 16 steps between the topmost floor and the roof. These steps precluded certain residents from enjoying the roof more frequently. It must be

noted that at the time of writing this toolkit, the stair lift was being installed. Future models would do well to ensure that there is no hidden inaccessibility.

Design of Building

As stated in the previous subsection, the design of the building must be fully accessible from the outset thus preventing additional costs to modify structures to make the building fully accessible. Such a consideration requires strong user-centred thinking to ensure that the building is fully designed and equipped to meet the needs of populations it wishes to serve which in this case includes the elderly.

Additionally, creating spatial layouts in which room size and amenities are more evenly distributed in as much as it is possible considering the already existing structure if a building is being renovated is of primary importance. Spatial considerations have multiple impacts as will be explored in the subsection on the room ranging from a sense of allocation fairness to broader aspects of wellbeing and space. Ensuring that whenever possible rooms have equal desirability would aid greatly the allocation procedure.

Parking

Given the location of the residence in Malta's small capital city Valletta, which already has significant parking issues, parking emerged unsurprisingly as an important issue throughout discussions. While not all residents had their own car, some of those who had required the ability to park near, either because of mobility issues, or because their work schedule meant that when they returned home, parking was only available around 20 minutes by walk away. Ensuring parking is present in the location or the building itself would help alleviate this problem.

Common Spaces

Common spaces were generally perceived positively, particularly the roof which had a beautiful view of the sea and churches present within Valletta. Residents also boasted that whenever relatives would come to visit such relatives would say that the residence was akin to a hotel. The high levels of accessibility for most of the residence including the basement was also seen as a large positive of the intergenerational residence.

However some of the common spaces had some persistent maintenance issues such as faulty or unavailable lighting. Additionally, disputes around who was responsible for the cleanliness and upkeep of the common areas meant that some areas were not always maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. This dispute further highlighted that not all residents had the physical

prowess to clean extensive staircases that are present at the Intergenerational Residence, resulting in certain cleaning devolving on fewer residents. A more structured managed approach would probably resolve such an issue.

Another issue that pertained to the common areas related to the basement, which due to the faulty lighting and high humidity was not always used to its maximum potential for socializing activities and to further strengthen relationships between residents themselves and residents and the community. Maximizing the use of this space could also require finding a way to secure the residents living space from some more public areas, finding the right balance between privacy and community building.

Personal Room

Despite complaints by those who had been allocated smaller rooms all residents were very happy by how comfortable the rooms were. Those in the larger rooms were also happy with the size and the layout of the room and felt it was very comfortable. All residents had customized their rooms to make them more “homely”, indicating a strong feeling of attachment to the space.

This was enhanced for those with slightly larger rooms who could invite friends and family to come and see them and eat with them in the room. For those with smaller rooms being unable to invite family over for lunch and rooms with small windows were perceived to be insufficient and was a source of distress. Additionally, smaller showers for those whose mobility was impaired was also anxiety-provoking as falls were deemed to be more likely to occur.

Overall Space

Residents demonstrated great pride in living in the Intergenerational Residence feeling that the property is well equipped and were happy to form part of the community. Such a feeling arose because the space was well-designed (for the most part) and was welcoming and secure. Ensuring that a sense of pride and a sense of belonging results from living in such co-housing spaces is vital for the future success of other projects.

4.4 Community

Relationship to Valletta

Many residents had a positive relationship to Valletta. For some residents the geographic closeness of the Valletta community offered unexpected opportunities to integrate into the broader community. Some would join other elderly by the sea on summer nights despite not being from Valletta, while others were involved in dress making initiatives at the local parish. For those who

were had previously live in Valletta the levels of wellbeing that emanated from being embedded within their community were unparalleled. Residents who were originally from Valletta spoke about their deep ties to the community, the importance of being close to family, the significance of geographic familiarity, and the added benefits of having so many memories living in Valletta. Additionally, for many residents the continuous social and cultural activities provided many opportunities for entertainment.

Others had a different relationship with the city and actively hated living in Valletta. Of those residents who had a less positive relationship with Valletta, such residents noted that the hills present in Valletta meant that it could be inaccessible, particularly when carrying bags with groceries. Other residents mentioned how they would not go to socialize in certain parts of Valletta simply because there was a steep road that needed to be navigated. For others, the issues with Valletta stemmed from the fact that there were no supermarkets meaning that their daily needs had to be bought from smaller stores that charged higher prices. Finally, night times were particularly vexing for some residents, with the noise that emanates from continuous activities that take place throughout the year being inconvenient, as well as a deeper sense of lack of security due to fear of being robbed at night. While not all contingencies can be catered to keep some of these factors when selecting a site for future projects would be useful.

4.5 Values

A key finding that emerged throughout the interviews was a certain uncertainty and lack of clarity what the foundational principles of the current intergenerational model were. Elderly residents posited that the presence of the youths was akin to care staff there to help them, while the younger residents saw the intergenerational model more as a launching pad towards future housing independence, and as an in-between step between residential care and living alone.

Through conversations with the participants on what the ideal model of an intergenerational residence should look like and what key values it should be based on, a clear distinction emerged between assisted living facilities, social housing and the intergenerational model. Residents and coordinators certainly did not perceive the elderly to be in an assisted living facility, noting that their social life both within the building and outside of it mean that this was something different to an assisted living facility. While there were instances where the elderly wished for more social support, their fierce determination to remain independent came across very clearly and they perceived themselves to be simply tenants.

On the other hand, unlike beneficiaries of social housing which for the most part receive a housing unit quasi-indefinitely with no social support, it was clear that in certain instances residents required more support. Issues of loneliness, escalating tensions within the residence, as well as broader psychological needs that residents brought with them clearly indicated that their needs for most (but not all) residents went beyond a housing solution but also into the realm of social support.

Addressing this unique mixture of social support and a housing solution, a model that emerged through the various interviews was the **Community-Within-A-Community Approach**. Such an approach leveraged the collective strength of both the neighbourhood community and the residential community to offer support often found within family and close friends. Such an approach meant re-conceptualizing residents not as passive receivers of services but instead as agents empowered to provide support to other residents, their families and the broader communities. Shifting into this agentic paradigm requires believing that all residents already have something to offer and are active contributors within their communities, however, can be furthered empowered to do so at a greater level with appropriate supports.

For the elderly this support can take the form of a care plan that identifies the goals they wish to achieve in their life and providing with the appropriate support when needed. Such an approach is in line with the principles of generational equity and active ageing, ensures that there is greater overall wellbeing not merely longer lifespans, and is economically more cost-effective than earlier-than-necessary occupancy of bedspace in assisted living facilities.

For the younger residents, living with the elderly in the Intergenerational Residence provides an accurate snapshot of their lives in future communities they will inhabit thus increasing their resilience and ability to navigate differing personalities, attitudes and world views. Furthermore, although happening at lesser levels, the elderly have on occasion provided the affirmation and acceptance that the younger residents might not have experienced due to difficult or traumatic childhood circumstances.

Furthermore, the younger and elderly residents will also contribute to an underlying problem in both demographics, namely loneliness. Building social networks, providing and receiving support as well as finding a place to better integrate into the broader community are all highly effective tools that the intergenerational model can provide to tackle loneliness.

5. The Proposed Model

The findings presented within this chapter provide an opportunity to create a framework for the setup of future intergenerational housing. The proposed framework comprises 5 different stages, namely:

- 1) The **Preparation Stage**, where the ideal community, location and building layout are chosen,
- 2) The **Selection Stage** where staff and residents are selected according to key criteria,
- 3) The **Administration Stage** where house rules, yearly budgets, maintenance procedures as well as other logistics are decided,
- 4) The **Relationship Development Stage** wherein care plans are drawn up for residents as well decision-making structures to ensure that residents have control over key house decisions, and finally
- 5) the **Monitoring and Evaluation Stage** which prescribes methods to ensure measurement of progress and ways of identifying issues as they arise, while ensuring impact.

It is important to note that while the model is visualized as linear for convenience, it is to be understood as an iterative process moving back and forth between steps as deemed necessary.

Bringing together the findings of this toolkit for future intergenerational setups, we propose the Community-within-a-Community Model. The model comprises the 5 stages listed above. Within each step several action steps are proposed in order to achieve the goals of each stage, additionally in the thematic map below, key indicators are proposed for each step. Such indicators have a dual function namely to monitor progress and guide next steps but are also proposed as important criteria to evaluate proposals by providing a checklist of items to ascertain the quality of future proposals.

Table 2: Community-Within-A-Community Framework Indicators

Stage	Action	Key Indicators
Preparation Stage	Choose Ideal Community	Percentage of Elderly requiring Housing
		Percentage of Youths requiring Housing
		Community Openness to an Intergenerational Housing Project
		Availability of Spaces for an Intergenerational Housing Project
	Choose Ideal Location within Community	Close to Markets, Supermarkets
		Close to Public Transport
		Close to Pharmacies
		Well-served by Doctors and Medical Services
		Streets Surrounding location are accessible
		Proximity to Community Events and Activities
		Safety of Area
	Choose Ideal Building	Building is Accessible or can be made so
		Room size is sufficient and customizable
		Room layout is adequate
		Multi-purpose common areas available for social events
Rooms are more or less equal in size		
Furniture is of high quality		

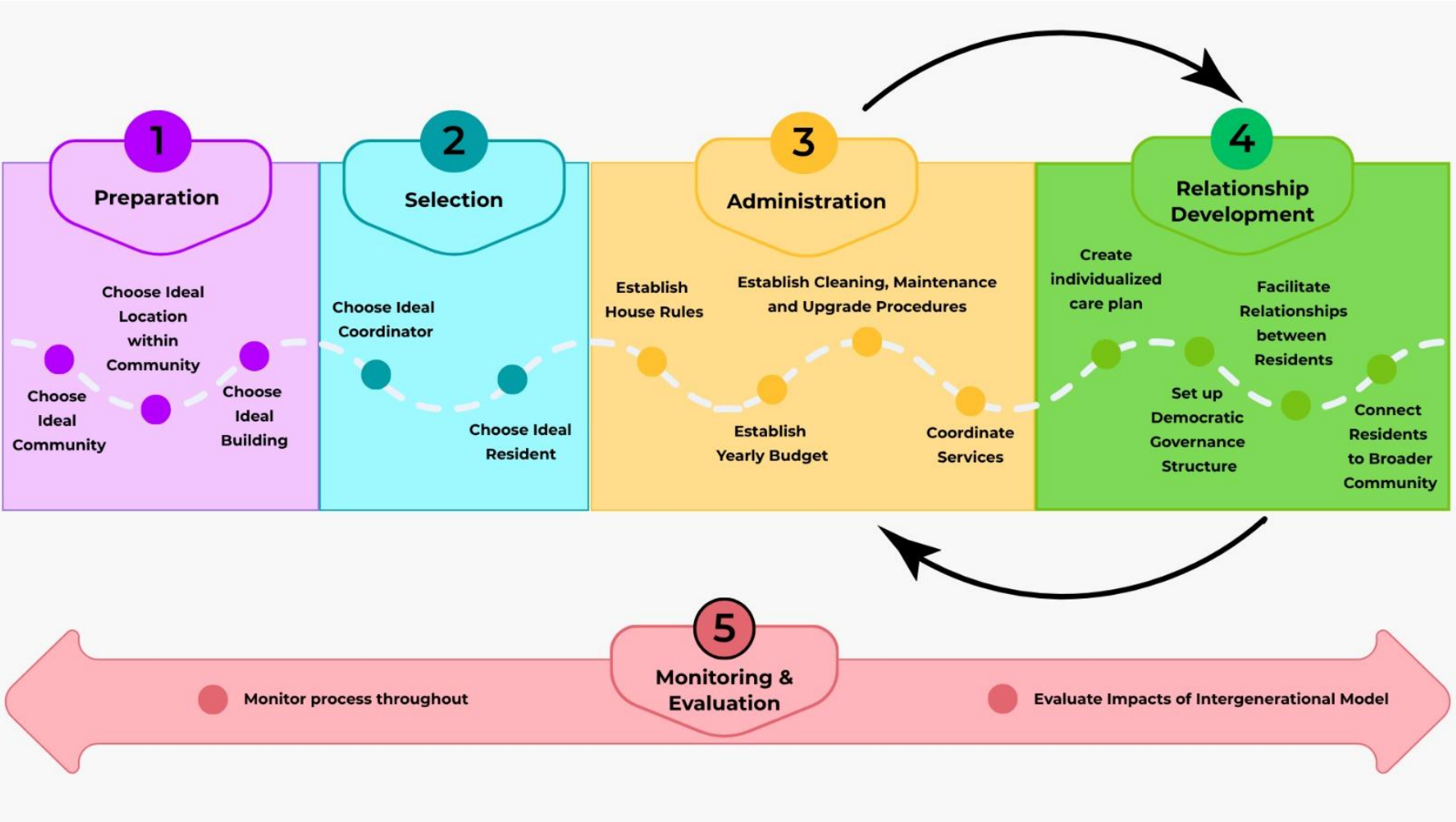
Selection Stage	Choose Ideal Coordinator	Competent in one-to-one interpersonal relationships and offering support
		Competent in creating care plans for elderly residents
		Competent in creating care plans for youth residents
		Competent in facilitating meetings at the group level
		Competent in Conflict Resolution
		Competent in administering a budget
		Competent in managing maintenance
		Competent in fundraising
		Competent in organizing activities
		Competent in coordinating services offered
	Competent in facilitating relationships with broader community	
	Choose Ideal Elderly Resident	Fully aware of Intergenerational Housing Model
		Understands rules and expectations
		Accepts to live in a smaller shared space
Tolerates living with young people		
Elderly person can live alone, with some support		

		Is open to participate in activities of the residence
	Choosing the Ideal Young Person	Fully aware of Intergenerational Housing Model
		Understands rules and expectations
		Has experience living with elderly
		Is ready for level of independence
Administratio n Stage	Establishment of House Rules	Rules regarding common areas
		Rules regarding smoking
		Rules noise
		Rules regarding guests
		Rules regarding Pets
		Rules regarding activities
	Establish Yearly Budget	Plan yearly budget
		Decide if there will be increases in rent to cover additional costs
		Identify additional opportunities for fundraising
		Carry out fundraising activities
	Establishment of Cleaning Procedures	Ascertain which cleaning needs to be done by residents
		Assign cleaner to other parts
	Establish Maintenance Procedures	Ascertain what level of maintenance to be undertaken by residents within their own rooms
		Develop rotation of suppliers, electricians, painters and plumbers for yearly maintenance work

	Establish Upgrade Procedures	Decide on yearly projects for upgrades
		Execute yearly projects
	Transportation services	Develop a transportation service for medical appointments
	Mental Health Service	Offer counselling and therapy services for residents
	Coordinate Government Services	Invite various existing government services to provide services within the building
Relationship Development Stage	Create individualized care plan	Create individualized care plan for elderly
		Create individualized care plan for young to plan for next steps
		Update individualized care plans yearly
	Set up Democratic Governance Structure	Set up regular meetings to discuss house issues
		Together with residents create a mechanism to decide important house issues
		Create a dispute resolution procedure
	Facilitate Relationships between Residents	Organize events within the residence for residents
		Provide opportunities for events for residents to take place outside of residence
	Connect Residents to Broader Community	Create events to connect residents to neighbourhood community
		Provide space for neighbourhood community to

		organize events (while respecting privacy of residents)
Monitoring and Evaluation Stage	Monitor	Monitor expenditure
		Monitor levels of conflict
		Monitor levels of wellbeing
		Monitor number of times consensus is achieved
	Evaluate impacts of Intergenerational Model	Successful integration of youths into broader society
		High levels of wellbeing in elderly
		Delayed entry into more intensive forms of assisted care

Figure 1: The Community-Within-A-Community-Framework



5.1 The Preparation Stage

The preparation stage lays the foundation for the entire intergenerational housing model, as many future challenges can be prevented or significantly reduced through careful planning at this early point. This stage involves selecting the right community, identifying the right location within that community, and choosing a building that can adequately support intergenerational living. Ensuring that a community is open to the concept, that local amenities and transport are accessible, and that the building layout provides equitable room sizes and sufficient common areas is essential. Decisions taken here strengthen both the physical and social infrastructure of the residence, increasing the likelihood that future stages will unfold smoothly and sustainably.

5.2 The Selection Stage

The selection stage focuses on choosing the right people to inhabit and manage the intergenerational residence. This involves identifying a coordinator with the interpersonal, organisational, and administrative skills required to oversee the residence, facilitate relationships, and provide support to residents. It also requires selecting elderly residents who understand the intergenerational model, are willing to engage with younger people, and can live independently with minimal support. Similarly, selecting the right young adults or other groups depending on the co-housing model involves ensuring they are ready for the levels of independence required, understand the expectations of the model, and ideally have some experience or comfort with older adults. Strong selection processes ensure compatibility, reduce conflict, and reinforce the core values of intergenerational living.

5.3 The Administration Stage

The administration stage establishes the operational backbone of the residence. Clear house rules, transparent budgeting processes, and structured cleaning, maintenance, and upgrade procedures all contribute to a well-managed living environment. This includes setting out expectations for shared spaces, noise, guests, and smoking; planning yearly budgets; and clarifying responsibilities for cleaning and maintenance. Additional administrative decisions—such as creating transport support for medical appointments, providing mental health services on site, and coordinating government services—ensure that the residence functions as a well-supported community rather than simply a housing complex. Strong administrative systems create predictability and security for residents and staff alike.

5.4 The Relationship Development Stage

The relationship development stage focuses on nurturing the social fabric of the residence. Individualised care plans for both elderly and young residents allow for tailored support and structured progression towards personal goals, including greater independence for youth and enhanced wellbeing for elderly residents. Democratic governance structures—such as regular house meetings and shared decision-making processes—empower residents and promote fairness. Purposefully designed opportunities for social interaction, both within and beyond the residence, help strengthen bonds among residents and create natural pathways to the broader community. This stage reinforces the idea that intergenerational housing is not merely about cohabitation but about meaningful, mutually supportive relationships.

5.5 The Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

The monitoring and evaluation stage ensures that the intergenerational model remains responsive, effective, and aligned with its objectives. Ongoing monitoring of expenditure, wellbeing, levels of conflict, and patterns of consensus helps administrators identify issues early and intervene appropriately. Periodic evaluation of impacts—such as the successful integration of young residents into society and the maintenance of high wellbeing among elderly residents—provides evidence for what works and where improvement is needed. This systematic approach enables the residence to remain adaptive, ensuring that both physical and relational elements of the model continue to deliver positive outcomes over time.

6. Conclusion

The experience of the Intergenerational Residence in West Street, Valletta, demonstrates that intergenerational housing is both possible and desirable within the Maltese context, but that it requires careful design, sustained management, and a clear value base to flourish. This first attempt at bringing together elderly residents awaiting social housing and young adults transitioning out of care has generated strong examples of solidarity, mutual support and everyday companionship. At the same time, it has surfaced tensions around space, expectations, roles, and community connections which, if left unaddressed, risk undermining the very goals that intergenerational housing seeks to achieve.

Taken together, the lessons learned highlight that intergenerational housing is not simply a matter of placing different age groups under the same roof. It entails deliberate choices ranging from micro considerations including how to allocate rooms, the size of the rooms and how the premises are to be maintained, to more macro considerations including, where in the community such a

residence should be located, how to integrate the residents into the broader neighbourhood community as well as ensuring that residents are well connected to services and amenities that are present within the area.

At the meso-level, a need for a skilled coordinator who can manage the logistics of such a house while also navigating the complex social dynamics within such a residence emerged clearly. Residents, particularly elderly residents were currently left unsupported resulting in tensions and lack of understanding of the intergenerational model. A competent coordinator would ensure that all residents would have a sense of belonging, would understand the rules and regulations as well as organize activities for all residents while providing support to them. Given that this approach has worked in other specialized housing projects carried out by the Housing Authority with other NGOs, such a coordinator would likely elevate significantly the wellbeing of all residents.

The proposed Community-within-a-Community Model responds to these insights by offering a structured yet flexible framework that spans five stages: preparation, selection, administration, relationship development, and monitoring and evaluation. Rather than prescribing a rigid blueprint, the model provides a set of guiding questions, actions, and indicators that can be adapted to different localities and populations. Its emphasis on autonomy, empowerment, dignity, intergenerational fairness and housing security reflects the aspirations voiced by residents and practitioners alike. If implemented well, this approach has the potential not only to improve individual outcomes—such as delayed entry into institutional care for older persons and smoother transitions to independence for young people—but also to strengthen neighbourhood cohesion and social capital.

Finally, this toolkit should be read as both a product and a starting point. It distils the experiences of one residence at a particular moment in time, with all the limitations that such a case study entail. Future intergenerational projects will need to continue experimenting, documenting, and refining practices in conversation with residents and communities. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation, including the systematic use of the indicators proposed here, will be crucial in this regard. If these efforts are sustained, intergenerational housing in Malta can evolve from a promising pilot into a robust policy and practice pathway—one that recognizes vulnerability without reducing people to it, and that harnesses the everyday strengths of residents to build genuine communities of care.

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