

Blackwood Homes: Smart neighbourhoods for independent living

Case Study



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Blackwood Homes

Blackwood Homes provide a range of accessible housing. They partnered with The Data Lab and other organisations across various sectors to build homes and communities, enabling vulnerable and frail individuals to live more independently using cutting-edge assisted technologies.

The Challenge

Blackwood Homes aimed to co-create attractive homes and neighbourhoods for independent living, promoting healthy and happy lifestyles. They wanted to ask questions, co-design and test new ideas with real people, and learn together what it takes to develop thriving neighbourhoods of the future.

Their priority was to design affordable, accessible, and age-friendly homes and facilitate physical activity through the provision of equipment like electric bike stations. Additionally, they sought to address common complaints of ageing by offering products and services to help people age well and feel secure in their neighbourhoods. Lastly, Blackwood aimed to foster social connections by enabling people to connect safely online through new technology.

The Solution

Partnering with The Data Lab, Canon Medical, the University of Edinburgh and care rental giant Enterprise, they attended meetings and workshops seeking funding to build on the success of the SMILE project (part-funded by The Data Lab), which demonstrated how smart meter data can be used to infer many health and wellbeing measures.

This project de-risked further investment into solutions designed to facilitate the switchover from analogue to digital care systems.

“Working in partnership is key to delivering an exemplar project and we believe it has been vital in our work to create a future-proof model that will allow people to live healthier and happier for longer.”

Simon Fitzpatrick, Development and Commercial Director at Blackwood

The Outcomes

The Data Lab assisted Blackwood Homes and the consortia to secure funding from UKRI's Healthy Ageing Trailblazers challenge - the only funded project in Scotland - to create neighbourhoods for independent living.

This ongoing project is being trialled in three Scottish neighbourhood, and all signs point to the ability to provide an additional five healthy years, in line with the mission of the funding.

New products and services have been launched, which build on work done with SMILE to now form CleverCogs™, a bespoke digital care and support system aiming to improve quality of life, tackle digital exclusion, and transform social care practice.

The engagement levels across the regions within this project have been strong and we seek to see how this learning can be rolled out nationally and across private and social care services.



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