



# HOME SWEET HOME

**How might we** harness age-friendly design to ‘future-proof’ homes so they are sustainable, safe and inclusive places to live and enjoy?

# Brief 6: Home Sweet Home

Headline Partner:



There is one award available for this brief:

**Centre for Ageing Better  
Award of £2,000**

## How might we harness age-friendly design to 'future proof' homes so they are sustainable, safe and inclusive places to live and enjoy?

### Background

- We are living longer than ever before. Since 1990, global life expectancy has risen by over seven years. At the same time, ageing societies pose a challenge to our cities, towns and neighbourhoods, as many of the homes that we live in are not suitable for us to age-in-place.
- The likelihood of experiencing a physical impairment or disability that makes day-to-day life more difficult increases as we age. Inadequate and unsuitable housing is consistently prevalent and can exacerbate these issues, as well as magnifying the costs of health and social care for an ageing population. For example, just 9 percent of housing in England is suitably accessible.
- Shaping future housing design to be accessible and sustainable by default is a key solution. Homes should support multigenerational inclusivity, enhance life experience, and promote independence, health and wellbeing, while still satisfying basic functional and safety requirements. This is called 'Age-friendly' design, and it demands that we meet the needs of all, regardless of age or ability.
- Increased social inclusion and participation helps to reduce loneliness, depression and other mental health issues as people age, and is associated with generally improved health. 'Age-friendly' design also considers how we build age-friendly community, which The World Health Organisation advises includes education about ageing, intergenerational activities and respectful and inclusive services.
- 'Future-proofing' homes also requires us to think about our long-term relationship with the planet. Buildings and their construction together account for 36 percent of global energy use and 39 percent of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions annually. Our houses are often not set up to support sustainable living. They can be poorly insulated or inefficient, they can be built of unsustainable or resource intensive materials, and they can limit our

ability to engage in sustainable activity, eg provide insufficient space to store bicycles.

- These challenges can be addressed in different ways:
  - Adapting and retrofitting: adjusting existing housing to mitigate potential hazards that can cause injury and falls (such as installing grab rails and level access).
  - Designing new housing models that are inclusive and fit for all in the future.

### How to approach the brief

- We want to see innovative ideas which harness 'Age-friendly' design approaches. Proposals that support ageing-in-place from the outset. Homes should be built with the needs of all people who will live in them over their life course (200+ years), not just the first buyer. We do not want you to focus on design proposals that specifically target the elderly, but proposals that will be appealing to all.
- Your proposal should be explicit in its consideration of adaptability, either through a solution that uses retrofitting or adjustments, or for new designs that allow for adjustments and adaptations to be made.
- Focus on uncovering the everyday lived experience and needs of people in your chosen context. This can include social interactions and activities, personal hobbies, mealtimes, health and down-time. Map the users' journey and consider how they interact with the environment through diverse touchpoints.
- Consider materials, processes and resources that will allow for reduced carbon emissions.
- Explore the driving forces of reduced health and well-being within your chosen context and analyse the impacts of this. What are the current societal obstacles individuals are faced with?
- Evidence-based design will strengthen your design proposal. This means looking at existing research and conducting primary research by speaking with stakeholders (end-users, designers, funding bodies). This will support a robust response to the brief.
- We are interested in a breadth of proposals from different design disciplines which aim to influence housing design. Your design needs to consider how best the home environment can be socially inclusive, sustainable and enabling for active ageing-in-place.

- The successful entry will consider all of the above and seek to make a real-world difference through the designed proposal. How will your proposal reduce the increasing pressures on climate, health and social care?

For the purposes of illustration only, viable responses could include:

- An existing home that has been adapted and retrofitted to support an individual's independence, connectivity and inclusion whilst in their own home environment.
- A new housing model that encourages support, multigenerational interaction and cohesion with their local community.
- A streetscape of homes that fosters community through encouraging neighbours to interact, socialise and participate in activities.

...and many more are possible.

### **Partner Information:**

#### **Centre For Ageing Better**

The Centre for Ageing Better creates change in policy and practice informed by evidence and works with partners across England to improve employment, housing, health and communities. Ageing Better is a charitable foundation, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund.

#### **SDA Alumni Collaboration**

We invited the RSA Student Design Awards Alumni community to propose a brief topic and vote on the suggestions. Faye Sedgewick, 2019 SDA Award Winner, submitted the winning topic: Age-Friendly Design.

## **Judging Criteria**

**Your entry should demonstrate a design thinking approach to the brief and clearly communicate the following principles:**

#### **Social and environmental impact:**

How does your proposal make a positive difference for people and/or the natural world in your chosen context? How is your approach empowering people? Have you considered effective use of resources including materials and processes? Have you considered diversity and inclusion in your proposal?

#### **Rigorous research and compelling insights:**

How have you combined your own firsthand research with a review of existing research and wider trends? How can you show a clear path between your key insights and your proposal? How are your insights grounded in people's needs and desires? How did you get feedback and incorporate new ideas through prototyping and iterating?

#### **Systems thinking:**

What's the bigger picture? How have you considered the root causes of the challenge you're exploring? How does your idea connect to a wider set of issues? What might be some unintended consequences of your proposal?

#### **Viability:**

Have you considered potential models for how your proposal could work in the real world? How could it be funded and sustained financially? What are potential barriers? How would you measure success?

#### **Creativity and innovation:**

How is your idea different from existing interventions? Are there unexpected or surprising elements in your proposal?

# Entry Requirements (Briefs 1-7)

## Open Briefs

The competition will open for entries via [sda.thersa.org](https://sda.thersa.org) on 25 January 2021, and the final deadline for entries is 10 March 2021 at 4.00pm GMT.

### Online Entry

If you are unable to submit online, please contact us by email at [sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk](mailto:sdaenquiries@rsa.org.uk). As you prepare your submission, please ensure that:

- You do NOT include your name, university/college or other identifying marks anywhere on your submission.
- None of your submission files exceed 10MB – this is the maximum size for each individual file/board when you submit online.

### Submission Requirements

For all briefs EXCEPT the Moving Pictures brief, the submission requirements are:

**1 x A3 PDF hero image with a 1 sentence description** – a singular 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project and includes your project title plus a 1 sentence description. For example: 'Bare technology: a product and service design proposal to convert old computers (e-waste) into simpler, more straightforward, accessible computers for older people'. Your hero image should aim to bring your concept to life – make sure it is vibrant and engaging. Your 1 sentence description is very important, make sure you take some time to craft an impactful message.

**1 x A3 written summary** – a single A3 PDF page that summarises your big idea using the following format:

- Problem (50 words max). What is the specific problem you identified within the brief topic? Who experiences this problem, and how does it impact them?
- Process (75 words max). How did you investigate this issue and what were your key insights? What journey did you go through to get to your final proposal?

- Proposal (50 words max). What is your proposed intervention? How will it address the problem?

**4 x A3 PDF boards outlining your proposal** – 4 pages describing your proposal and responding to the 5 sections of the judging criteria. Number each board in the top right-hand corner, in the order they should be viewed by the judges. You may include relevant hyperlinks in your boards however we cannot guarantee this will be viewed by the panel.

For details on the submission requirements for the Moving Pictures brief, please see the Moving Pictures entry requirements and guidelines. Please note that late submissions will not be accepted, and all entrants are encouraged to submit their work in good time before the deadline.

# Competition Timeline

**26/08/20**

## Briefs Soft Launch

The 2020-21 RSA Student Design Awards Competition briefs go live on [sda.thersa.org](https://sda.thersa.org)

**25/01/21**

## Submissions Open

Go to [sda.thersa.org](https://sda.thersa.org) to submit your proposal

**10/03/21**

## Final Deadline

Submit by 4pm GMT on 10 March 2021

**28/05/21**

## Winners Announced

Stay tuned for the big announcement!

**6-15/10/20**

## Online Launch Events

Sign up to [our newsletter](#) to learn about our in-depth brief launch sessions held by our partners and the SDA Team

**10/02/21**

## Early Bird Deadline

Submit by 4pm GMT on 10 February 2021 for a reduced entry rate of £25

**March-May**

## Judging

Entries will be evaluated in a two-stage process: shortlisting and interviews

**29/06/21**

## Awards Ceremony

Join us to celebrate the 2020-21 RSA SDA Winners!