**Community resilience; people, place, and practice**

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the outputs from the Almshouse Resilient Communities (ARC) for the Future project. Increasingly global challenges require us to look at ways to increase resilience in our communities. Research on resilience has examined topics such as infrastructures and planning, in social science resilience research has typically been with disaster-struck communities. Little research on resilience has combined both built environment and community and we sought to address this gap. We conducted our research with almshouse communities in the UK, almshouses offer long-term, independent living to typically older, poorer residents. Almshouse communities include both the built estate and the human community within a specific geographic location. We applied qualitative methods through interviews and focus groups with 102 residents, staff and trustees of almshouse charities, and conducted site visits and document reviews. From our abductive thematic analysis, we identified four overarching clusters of factors contributing to resilience; this paper focuses on themes contained in two of those clusters: ‘Enhancing the built environment’ and ‘Valuing and supporting people’. The two clusters are closely linked: good design can provide spaces for community relationships to develop; a robust maintenance regime protects current assets and strengthens personal resilience by removing worries. Analysis of the role communal space plays in the daily lives of older people in almshouses, enables speculation on the importance of providing opportunities for social interaction when designing and adapting housing for society more generally, reinforcing the connection between physical and mental health and housing for designers and housing professionals. We can conclude that resilient communities need to consider the built environment and the people within it and the reciprocal interactions between them. The research is presented through a Knowledge Hub for residents, almshouse charities and housing providers.

Allowed word count: 300

**Suggested parallel session:**

1st preference: Resilient Infrastructure Design: Safeguarding Communities for the Future

or

2nd preference: Community-Centred Resilience: Engaging and Empowering Local Populations