



Building Care: Rotterdam
A House at the End of Life
Ken Worpole

I

The medicalisation of old age



Dying and Death in An Acute Hospital

Exploring the Views and Experiences
of Hospital Staff

Key trends regarding death in the UK

In the UK today up to 60% of older people now die in hospital, yet, paradoxically, modern hospitals were rarely designed to cater for end of life, palliative care. Research (Ahmad & O' Mahony 2005) has claimed that, 'If anything, hospitals are even less focused on the needs of the dying nowadays, given medical and technical advances and current emphasis on diagnosis and treatment.'

54% of all complaints made about treatment in the NHS relate to the care and treatment of the dying.

Like many people here today in Rotterdam, I have personal experience of bad hospital endings.



The Medicalisation of Death

‘People aged 65 and over occupy two-thirds of general and acute hospital beds and account for over half the recent growth in emergency admissions.’

Most modern deaths are protracted and involve a complex of conditions.

Medicine is a performative art (heroic medicine) and people’s bodies are the ‘work-object’ of medicine.

In hospital a patient’s death is seen as a system failure

CPR (Cardiopulmonary resuscitation) - poor success rate despite medical mythology.

In hospital the subject is a collection of symptoms not a person.

Never Say Die: CPR in Hospital Space

‘How is it that a predominately unsuccessful medical intervention, CPR...has become so embedded in western health care practice that it is now a routine response to most deaths.’

‘We constantly deflect debate around death and transform it into the vocabulary of saving lives.’

The survival to discharge rate is 14%: resuscitation is now a ‘morally sanctioned routine’ .

Hospice patients live longer than those who fight death with technology and medication. Atul Gawande, *Being Mortal* (2014)

II

Care, custody & correction

‘In most cities, if you look for the most lumpen, ungainly, charmless building, hospitals from the 1960s and 1970s will be near the top of the list. Gartnavel general in Glasgow, the Royal Liverpool, Addenbrooke’s in Cambridge, the Royal Free and Guy’s in London... all follow the same type. They are silos for the sick; multi-level garages for parking the unwell. Inside they are more like the interiors of aircraft carriers, vast unwindowed complexes linked by bewildering networks of corridors. You might have thought some decency and dignity would be suited to places where people are born and die, but the makers of these hospitals didn’t seem to agree.’

Rowan Moore, Architectural Critic



Almshouse: history of an architectural type

Monastery

Nursing home

Almshouse

Sanatorium

Begijnhof

Pestalozzi village

Hospital

Spa village

Workhouse

Retirement village

Prison

Health farm

Old People's Home

Hotel

Addiction retreat

Hospice

Care

Custody

Correction



The rise of the modern hospice movement

1967 - St Christopher's,
Sydenham, London. Today,
250 in UK, 8,000 hospice
projects worldwide.

Denmark - there is no place for
'hospitals of death' In Sweden:
'It is very modern to die in a
hospice.'



St Joseph's & St Christopher's

Both designed by Stewart,
Hendry and Smith.





The contribution of Maggie's Centres



Connecting indoors and outdoors



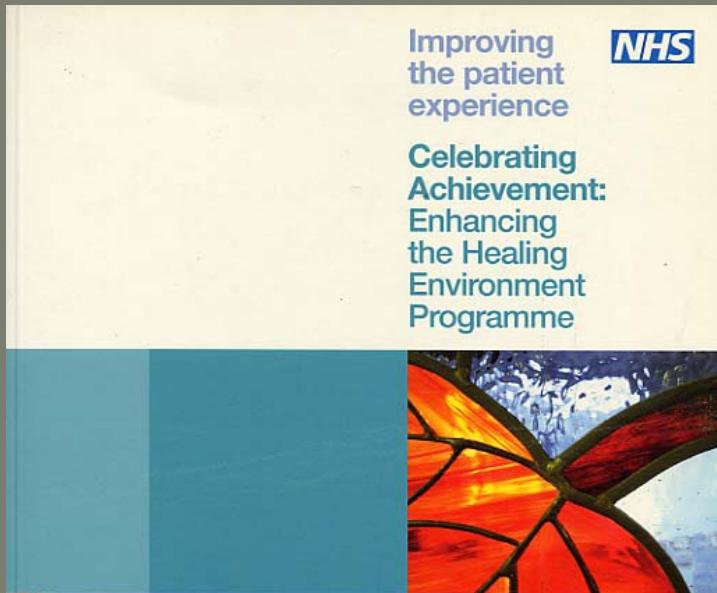




III

Design is therapeutic

Enhancing the Healing Environment



Traditional four-bed bay, St Michael's Hospital, Bristol, before refurbishment as part of King's Fund Enhancing the Healing Environment Programme.



After refurbishment: image of new en-suite room at St Michael's Hospital, Bristol.

Key design & architectural issues:

Location

Domestic in scale and appearance

Is it a religious building?

Single rooms or shared rooms?

A living village

The central importance of the garden

These are all issues shared by the HAPPI report on
'Housing our Ageing Population' (2010)

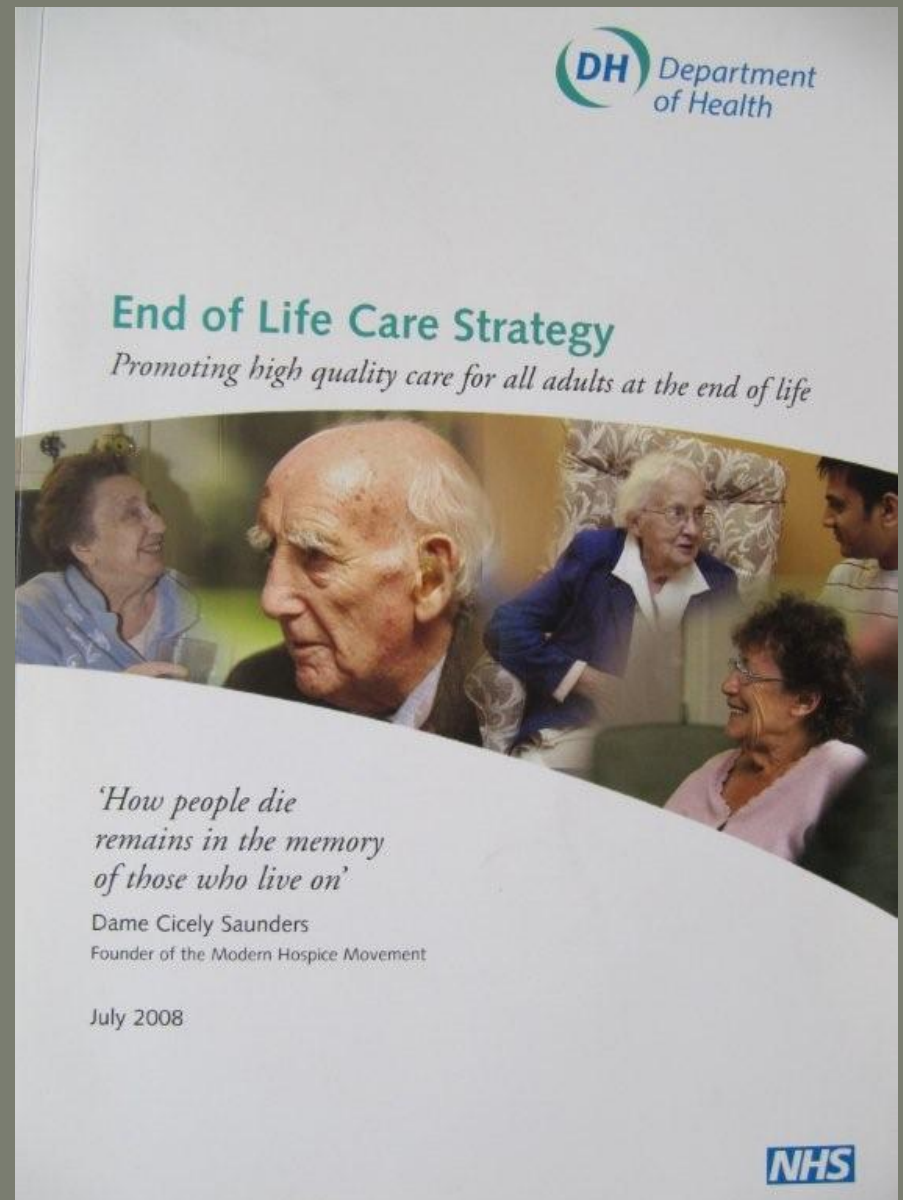
IV

A house at the end of life

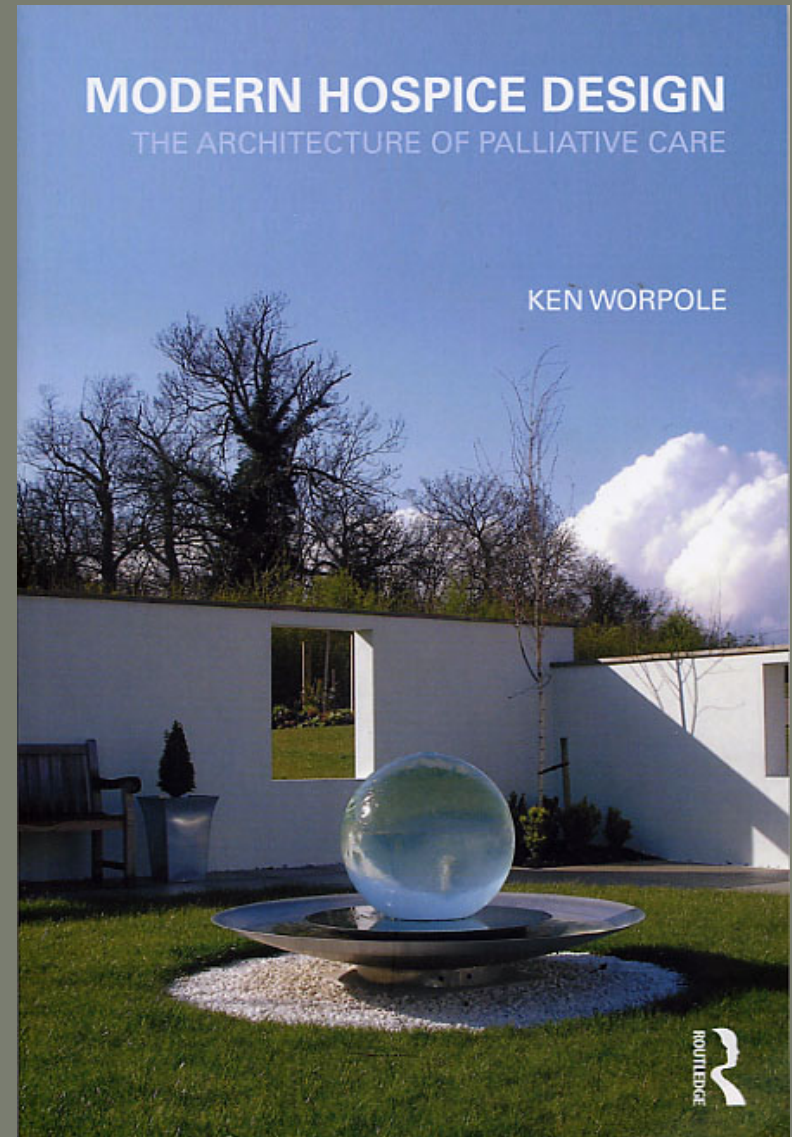
‘People need permission to die and it’s much harder if someone is begging you to stay.’

‘One of the most important things for the person who is dying is to leave the world feeling they are surrounded by kindness.’

Cancer nurse, Trea McNally



‘Eliot famously wrote of those moments when time is suspended and we seem to live at ‘the still point of a turning world’. Such times are occasions of utter absorption, when the integrity of the personality seems undivided and complete... This can be aided by architecture where - confident in the mood of a beautiful building, in spaces which allow emotions to expand and range freely - everything that matters and mattered in life is gathered in.’



Witherford Watson Mann

The 21st Century Almshouse

10/10/2017

Almshouse, Bermondsey

Our design for a '21st Century Almshouse' for United St. Saviour's Charity, has secured planning permission. The extra-care development, on Southwark Park Road, Bermondsey, will provide independent living accommodation for around 90 older people along with 200m² of ancillary communal and public rooms. This will be a very urban building that is active, open and in direct contact with the street. Loneliness has a huge impact on older people, and we are creating opportunities for sharing and sociability throughout the almshouse.



