

Enhancing Age-friendly Environments in Post-Danwei Communities

A Case Study of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory

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Abstract

Following the transition to a market economy and the dismantling of the Danwei community in China around the beginning of the 21st century, the basic unit of urban governance began shifting from the Danwei system to a community system, with welfare functions transferred to the new community. In particular, high-density 'Danwei' communities formed, which were created by all the national public organisations, and were based on employment relationships (e.g., all workers from the same factory lived together in the same community). In the post-Danwei period, these communities face severe challenges due to an ageing population and typically deteriorating areas. To combat these issues, the government has introduced numerous policies and initiatives at the municipal level to support ageing-in-place in these post-Danwei communities. However, no specified community-building actions have been developed for this particular context, which has unique spatial constraints resulting from its historical development.

This thesis aims to respond to the call, proposed in the 14th Five-Year Housing Development Plan, for district-specific renewal plans to promote organic urban renewal. Specifically, it addresses the limitations of existing broad and generalised action plans for upgrading age-friendly environments in high-density post-Danwei communities, particularly regarding outdoor environmental spaces constrained by China's administrative system. The primary data for the thesis were collected through walking interviews, focus groups, and workshops. The walking interviews collect the elderly about their living experience in the neighbourhood. The focus groups were used to gather opinions on the elderly's preferences and community updates. The design guideline was developed through the co-design workshop with the related experts. From a thematic analysis of this data, the research proposes design guidelines for outdoor living spaces in high-density post-Danwei communities to bridge the gap between government work plans and practical implementation guidelines. These guidelines aim to enable such communities to achieve the outdoor environment construction goals set by the Chinese government for promoting healthy ageing. Achieving healthy ageing helps China gain demographic dividends from increased life expectancy and alleviates potential financial and social burdens associated with rapid population ageing.

Keywords: China; post-Danwei communities; high-density; age-friendly

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 The Context of Ageing Urban Populations Worldwide

The global ageing of urban populations has become an unstoppable demographic shift in the 21st century, shaped by the deep interplay of three core factors: accelerated urbanisation, extended lifespans, and declining fertility rates. Data from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division(2017) indicates that 55% of the global population currently resides in urban areas, with this proportion projected to rise to nearly 70% by 2050. The number of individuals aged 60 and above is anticipated to increase from 901 million in 2015 to 2.1 billion, constituting one-fifth of the world's population. Among this cohort, the number of people aged 80 and above is expected to more than triple, reaching 434 million.

From a regional perspective, urban ageing exhibits marked global disparities: the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development(OECD, 2020) projects that within the next three decades, the over-65 population in its member states will reach 25.1 percent. Japan, however, had already seen its over-65 population exceed one-third as early as 2015(Cabinet Office of Japan, 2016). Concurrently, Latin America, the Caribbean, and developing regions in Asia and Africa will lead global urban ageing growth between 2015 and 2030. However, these areas often face this challenge with lower per capita incomes and weaker social security systems(World Bank, 2019). This disparity further exacerbates the global North-South divide in knowledge production, with Northern countries(such as the UK and Canada) accounting for 39% of relevant academic studies, while Southern nations remain marginalised in research on urban ageing(Ferreira et al., 2025).

The essence of urban ageing stems from the convergence of longevity and urbanisation. Its core drivers include extended lifespans resulting from improved healthcare, globally declining fertility rates, and regional migration patterns – Eastern European cities face accelerated ageing due to youth outflow, while American cities ease this pressure through higher birth rates and immigrant inflows(United Nations Population Fund, 2020). This transformation has profound implications: economically, the declining proportion of working-age populations slows potential growth rates and challenges the sustainability of pension funds, with OECD countries' pension expenditure as a percentage of GDP projected to rise by an average of 3.5 percentage points by 2050; Socially, weakened family caregiving functions have created a rigid demand for professional care services,

while rising rates of the elderly living alone have triggered social issues such as loneliness and mental health concerns. Tokyo's proportion of the elderly living alone has already reached 48%. In terms of urban governance, traditional city infrastructure and public services struggle to meet the needs of ageing populations, with problems such as inadequate accessibility provision and shortages in community care services becoming prominent.

Global governance approaches have diversified in response to these challenges: firstly, policy and institutional optimisation, including raising retirement ages, refining multi-tiered pension systems (such as the 'flexible retirement schemes' implemented by OECD nations), and expanding long-term care insurance coverage (World Bank, 2019); Secondly, urban spaces are being adapted for ageing populations, following the World Health Organisation's (WHO, 2017) 'Age-Friendly Cities' framework to advance barrier-free community infrastructure, age-friendly transport systems, and embedded care service centres. Thirdly, technology is empowering care provision through smart health monitoring devices, telemedicine platforms, and AI-assisted care systems to enhance service efficiency and accessibility (United Nations Population Fund, 2020). Fourthly, establishing social participation mechanisms to encourage the elderly to engage in voluntary services, lifelong learning, and informal care networks, thereby unlocking the potential of 'Active Ageing' (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2020). These initiatives provide practical references for global cities addressing ageing challenges. However, achieving the objectives of enhancing well-being for the elderly requires dynamic adaptation to regional development levels and cultural contexts.

1.1.2 China's Ageing History

China entered an officially ageing society in 2000 when more than 10 per cent of its population was sixty-one or older¹. China has already begun a period of accelerated population ageing, with the proportion of individuals 65 and older reaching 14.2% by the end of 2020². Higher levels of economic development and prosperity are often correlated with higher levels of ageing in countries where the population is ageing. China's ageing rate is significantly lower than the average of high-income countries, and higher than that of middle-income countries. However, China's GDP per capita is lower than the average for upper-middle-income countries, and its rate of population ageing is greater than that of these nations. This rate indicates that China's ageing process is ahead of schedule relative to its current level of economic development (Peng & Hu, 2020).

Population ageing is one of China's major demographic concerns today,

¹ From China's fifth census [http: www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/pcsj/rkpc/dwcrkpcsj/](http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/pcsj/rkpc/dwcrkpcsj/).

² Office for National Statistics 2021 Population Statistics
<https://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01&zb=A0301&sj=2021>

manifested by vast numbers, quick rates, and substantial variances in geographical characteristics(Tian, 2010). According to the most recent U.N. World Population Prospects 2010 Revision, the proportion of China's population aged 60 and over is expected to increase to more than 30 percent in the following decades. From 2020 to 2050, the total number of persons aged 60 and older in China will increase by 333 million in 2025, 398 million in 2030, 446 million in 2035, 463 million in 2040, 473 million in 2045, and 498 million in 2050, with the most rapid rise and accelerated ageing occurring between 2020 and 2035(Figure 1-1)(Chen & Wang, 2018). Then, in 2100, the population aged 65 and above will rise to about 31% of the total population(Zuo et al., 2020).

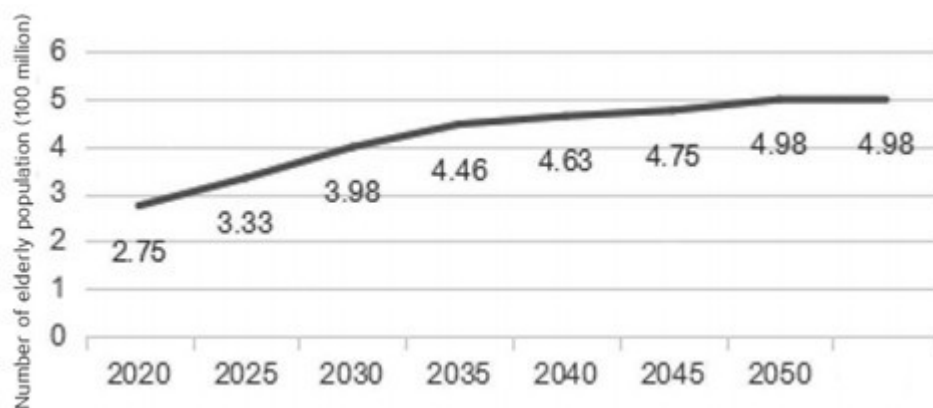


Figure 1-1. China aged 60+, 2020-2050(R. Chen & Wang, 2018)

As the proportion of the elderly increases, the fertility rate reduces, and the working-age population decreases, the elderly's dependency ratio³ will increase progressively. China's dependency ratio for the elderly was 19.6% in 2018 and is projected to reach 36% by 2035, above 50 by 2050. Data projections indicate that the elderly's reliance ratio will increase rapidly between 2010(11%) and 2050(33%), and compared with rural areas, the pressure of the elderly's care in urban areas is greater, and the gap in long-term care resources is larger(Asian Development Bank, 2014). The burden of caring for the elderly is becoming increasingly evident; therefore, improving their ability to live independently and promoting their health is vital to reducing the burden on individuals and society.

1.1.3 Current Status of Building Age-friendly Communities in China

The Chinese government's concern about population ageing began in the 1980s, and the development of the pension system has progressed through four stages, as outlined in government policies(Figure 1-2). From the 1980s to the 1990s, a

³ The old-age dependency ratio is the ratio of the number of the elderly to the number of working-age people in the non-working-age population, which indicates the number of the elderly per 100 working-age people and is calculated as the ratio of the population aged 65+ to the working-age(14-64) population.

fundamental legal framework for protecting the rights and interests of the elderly was established. From 2000 to 2010, the social pension system was established(Chen et al., 2024), with a focus on developing social pensions. Following the establishment of old age care, governmental efforts to improve the quality of life in old age were initiated from 2011 to 2019, thereby enriching the coverage of the old age care system. Local governments began to establish the layout of community-based ageing. At the present stage, with the pressure of the rapid development of ageing, the Chinese government, from the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Outline of Vision 2035⁴, has raised the work on ageing to the level of a national strategy, focusing on the development of what is phrased as the ‘silver-hair’ economy.

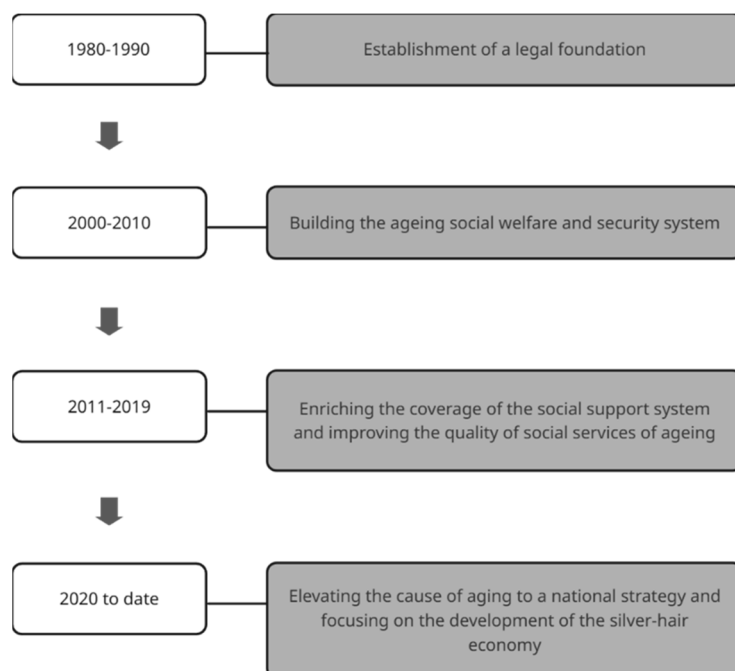


Figure 1-2. Layout Development of the Chinese Government's Social Support System for Ageing(Summarised by the author)

Regarding the urban living environment, the concept of ‘building age-friendly cities and age-friendly neighbourhoods’ was put forward for the first time in China's Twelfth Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Ageing Career in China⁵, issued by the State Council in 2011. This plan emphasises strengthening barrier-free facilities and improving the living space for the elderly. The community here is a localised concept in China. The Chinese community, translated as Shequ, is the

4 Outline of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Vision 2035 https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2021-03/13/content_5592681.htm

5 The Twelfth Five-Year Plan for the Development of Ageing in China https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2011-09/23/content_6338.htm?utm_source=chatgpt.com

jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Committee in the administrative sense of the state rather than a naturally occurring settlement⁶; it is also how government policies and measures are implemented at the grassroots level(Ding, 2008). This thesis is a study of community in China, so all references to the community in the text henceforth are to the Chinese community; as shown in Table 1-3, by 2024, the Chinese government has put forward a total of six programme documents on age-friendly communities and has achieved an 85 percent penetration rate of neighbourhood services for the elderly in just 13 years.

Time	Policy documents	Publishing organisation	Essential point	Implementation results
2011	Twelfth Five-Year Plan for the Development of the elderly in China	State Council(PRC)	Proposing the construction of age-friendly cities and communities, promoting barrier-free environments, and improving community elderly care services.	Launch of a pilot project to build an ageing-based infrastructure; creation of a national age-friendly city to begin in 2015.
2016	Notification of the National Population Development Plan(2016-2030)	State Council(PRC)	Promoting the development of age-based communities and the integration of health, care, and community services.	Promote the revision of urban planning in many places to incorporate elements of ageing demand and promote the integration of family and community care for the elderly.
2017	The “13Th Five-Year Plan” for The Development of The National Ageing Career And The	State Council(PRC)	Propose the building of age-friendly communities; promote the integration of health, care,	Building a National Senior Living Demonstration Area from 2017 to 2026; improving

⁶ The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Organisation of Urban Community Neighbourhood Committee(Draft for Soliciting Opinions of the Revision)
<https://sqfwc.snnu.edu.cn/info/1016/1145.htm>

	Construction of The Pension System		and community services.	Accessibility Coverage.
2020	Implementation programme on Effectively Addressing the Difficulties of the Seniors in Utilizing Smart Technologies	General Office of the State Council	Addressing barriers to the elderly's use of information technology platforms and smart devices; upgrading information technology communities.	Pilot information-based senior living platforms and training services.
2022	The "14Th Five-Year Plan" for the Development of the National Ageing Career and Senior Care Service System	State Council(PRC)	Planning a 15-minute walking circle for senior care services; promoting community-embedded service facilities.	Target 2025: construction of community-sized home service circles; acceleration of the application and construction of technological home products and facilities for the elderly.
2024	Opinions on Developing the Silver-Hair Economy and Enhancing the Well-Being of Seniors	General Office of the State Council	Promoting an age-friendly environment, improving age-friendly facilities, developing community catering services for the elderly, and providing assisted medical services.	The basic pattern of an age-friendly society is expected to be established by 2035, with the penetration rate of service facilities exceeding 85 percent.

Table 1-3. Programme Document of the Government of China on Age-Friendly Environmental Communities(Summarised by the author)

1.1.4 The Dilemma of Post-Danwei Communities

Communities, as the basic unit of urban governance, have not been around for long in China; previously, the smallest unit of governance in cities from the 1950s to the 1990s was the Danwei. Because Danwei was a unique management system in China during the planned economy period, it carried a strong flavour of a special political context. Here, the author first provides a brief introduction to the concepts of the "Danwei system" and "Danwei community". Subsequently, in Section 2.5.1.1, the author provided a comprehensive and more detailed explanation of the concept of "Danwei". Danwei is not only an organisation, but also a management system for China. David Bray (Bray, 2014a) defines the Danwei System as the absorption of citizens into each Danwei (each organisation is one Danwei) through organisational embeddedness, with the state, through the Danwei, to implement an institutional system of comprehensive management and resource control over urban residents during the Chinese Planning Economy period. The "danwei community" refers to the specific area within a city where each "Danwei" (work unit) is located, which was a closed place of life and work in China during the Planned Economy that relied on the Danwei organisation. Integrating the Danwei's administrative, economic, and social functions into one living space and assuming social security and social services for the district's residents on behalf of the government formed an omnipotent community (Bray David, 2014: 33). While the Danwei community is part of the Danwei System, the Danwei System is a Chinese-specific form of state governance. However, with the end of the Planned Economy and the advent of the market economy, the Danwei system began to disintegrate and decline. In the section 2.5.1.1, the author has a Since 1989, when the Organic Law of the People's Republic of China on Urban Neighbourhood Committee⁷ came into force, namely, a law that stipulates residents' committees are grass-roots mass self-governing organisations for urban residents' self-management, self-education, and self-service, the Chinese government has been promoting the "street offices - residents' committees" system. This system, replacing the Danwei, undertakes the functions of social governance and services. Since then, the Chinese government has been promoting the "street office-residents' committee" system, in which social governance and service functions are exercised in the place of the Danwei. It was not until 1999 that the community system was first implemented in China on a pilot basis, and since 2000, China's urban governance has formally adopted the community system⁸.

After transitioning former Danwei residential areas into community-based governance, these neighbourhoods underwent a reform process that localised

⁷ The Organic Law of the Urban Neighbourhood Committees of the People's Republic of China

⁸ Opinions of the Ministry of Civil Affairs on Promoting Urban Community Construction Nationwide
<http://www.reformdata.org/2000/1119/21297.shtml>

resident services within the community. With this transition, neighbourhood environments, management systems, and population structures have undergone a series of upgrades and transformations. The goal of neighbourhood development has shifted from merely ensuring residential functionality to enhancing the overall living experience of residents. Through housing environment renovations, the decentralisation of resident services to the community level, the systematic establishment of community healthcare services, and the expansion of community functions, these neighbourhoods have managed to maintain and further improve residents' quality of life following the dissolution of the Danwei system. These transformations have given rise to a distinct community identity, leading scholars to define them as post-Danwei communities(Cui, 2010).

While post-Danwei communities have significantly improved the quality of life for residents, the severe ageing phenomenon has now created an urgent need for community-based senior care support system upgrades. That is because community governance in China has long been plagued by a gap between “conceptual communities”(policy imagination) and “experiential communities”(actual life)(Du & Tan, 2023). Currently, the development of age-friendly communities in China follows a top-down model, where the central government sets overarching goals, and local governments formulate specific implementation plans based on these national development objectives. Due to China's administrative structure, governance is structured from the State Council down to provincial, municipal, and district governments, with no formal government institution at the community level. Instead, community governance is managed by government-dispatched agencies. In this system, the municipal government issues policies and implementation frameworks for community development, while district governments are only responsible for executing these plans. This centralised approach to age-friendly community development has created a major challenge: significant disparities exist between districts within the same city regarding infrastructure conditions, economic development pace, and demographic composition. These variations extend down to the community level as well. When a unified operational framework for age-friendly communities is applied uniformly across an entire city, some communities face difficulties implementing government plans due to spatial constraints and unique local conditions. This results in gaps in the application of government policies, particularly in post-Danwei communities. Under the Danwei system, many young workers were recruited to meet industrial production needs, which led to rapid population growth and increased residential density, thus ultimately shaping the current high-density environment. Following China's shift to a market economy, many factories went bankrupt, leaving laid-off workers facing economic hardship. Furthermore, the once-young migrant workers who moved in for production purposes have now collectively entered old age. The combination of economic hardship and a large ageing population has made the elderly in these communities increasingly reliant on social support. However, the government's

standardised community development framework fails to fully accommodate the complex realities of high-density communities, creating a bottleneck in developing age-friendly environments in post-Danwei communities. Additionally, after the government introduced new planning strategies for revitalising post-Danwei communities, realising these plans in the lives of the elderly presents further challenges.

1.1.5 Glossary of Terms

In order to facilitate the readers' subsequent reading, the author here first introduces some concepts mentioned in the subsequent thesis and matters with a unique Chinese background.

Community Party and Mass Service Centre(CPMSC)	A secondary outpost of the district government. It is also an important support for the grassroots-level Communist Party building. It is the practical node and main position for conducting Party building, governance, and service work. The purpose of building community Party and mass service centres is to maximise the exertion of the political leadership, ideological guidance, mass organisation, and social appeal capabilities of the community Party organisations in the community. ⁹
Ageing in place(AIP)	The American Association of Retired Persons(AARP) (Kakulla et al., 2025) defined Ageing in place(AIP) as: The ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.
Danwei	"Danwei" was a special organisational form commonly adopted by various social organisations in China after 1949. It was the basic organisational unit for the state to manage personnel within the public ownership system, redistribute resources and welfare,

9. The official website of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China
https://www.mca.gov.cn/n152/n166/c43712/content.html?f_link_type=f_linkinlinenote&flow_extra=eyJpbmVfZGlzcGxheV9wb3NpdGlvbil6MCwiZG9jX3Bvc2l0aW9uIjowLCJkb2NfaWQiOiIzOTMwYjM5Mzc2MDRiNjg5LTA3NmExNGRhMGViZjYzMWIifQ%3D%3D

	and implement social control. ¹⁰
Community	A community is a social living entity composed of residents within a certain area. Urban communities usually correspond to the jurisdictional areas of residents' committees. ¹¹
Neighbourhood Committee	According to the revised and currently effective "Organisational Law of Urban Residents' Committees of the People's Republic of China" of October 28, 2025, Article 2 stipulates that residents' committees are grassroots mass self-governing organisations where residents manage themselves, serve themselves, educate themselves, and supervise themselves. They implement democratic elections, democratic consultation, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic supervision. ¹²
Property Management Company	Established in accordance with the law, with independent legal person status. It is entrusted by the owners to provide services such as property maintenance and repair, environmental and order management in accordance with property service contracts. It is a corporate legal person. ¹³
Grid System in the community	Grid management is a grassroots governance approach that divides urban and rural areas into several grid units and integrates resources to carry out refined governance and convenient services. ¹⁴
Street office(or called Subdistrict	It is an agency established by the

¹⁰ Encyclopedia of China (Sociology Volume)

¹¹ Document No. 23 of 2000 issued by the Central Committee (The Opinion of the Ministry of Civil Affairs on Promoting Urban Community Construction Nationwide)

¹² Organisational Law of Urban Residents' Committees of the People's Republic of China
http://www.npc.gov.cn/c2/c30834/202510/t20251028_449063.html?f_link_type=f_linkinlinenote&flow_extr a=eyJpbmxbmVfZGlzcGxheV9wb3NpdGlvbil6MCwiZG9jX3Bvc2l0aW9uljowLCJkb2NfaWQiOiJNmUwNmE2NzVjZWRIIM2JjLWQwNWQwYzljZWEzMDIlZWEifQ%3D%3D

¹³ Property Management Regulations (Order No. 379 of the State Council, revised in 2018)

¹⁴ GB/T 34300-2017 "Urban and Rural Community Grid-based Service Management Specifications"

office)	district-level city or city without districts' people's government, with the approval of the higher-level government. It is responsible for handling public services, public management, public security and other tasks within the jurisdiction, and performs duties such as comprehensive management, overall coordination, emergency response and law enforcement. ¹⁵
Five-year Plan	It is a medium- and long-term planning outline for China's national economy and social development. It clarifies the national strategic intentions, specifies the development goals and key tasks, and is a guiding document for the country's five-year development. ¹⁶
National Territorial Space Planning	National Territorial Space Planning: It is a strategic and comprehensive plan at the national level, specifically formulated for certain key areas, with the core focus on spatial layout and coordinated development. It is the detailed implementation and spatial carrier of national development plans and territorial space plans in specific regions. ¹⁷

15. Organic Law of the People's Congresses and the People's Governments at All Local Levels of the People's Republic of China
http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c2/kgfb/202203/t20220312_317069.html?f_link_type=f_linkinlinenote&flow_ext_ra=eyJkb2NfaWQiOiI4OWJlMThlMzA4M2ZlOTAyLWU5NTk4NmUzZTEwYmU5YmliLCJpbmtpbmVfZGlzcGxheV9wb3NpdGlvbil6MCwiZG9jX3Bvc2l0aW9uljowfQ%3D%3D

¹⁶ The National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China.
https://www.ndrc.gov.cn/wsdwhfz/202503/t20250303_1396404_ext.html?f_link_type=f_linkinlinenote&flow_extra=eyJpbmtpbmVfZGlzcGxheV9wb3NpdGlvbil6MCwiZG9jX3Bvc2l0aW9uljowLCJkb2NfaWQiOiI3ZTVjMDlmMDQ5NmZkOTA4LWYyNWY3M2E4YTc2MmJlMjcifQ%3D%3D

17. Provisional Measures for the Management of National-level Regional Planning
https://www.gov.cn/gongbao/content/2015/content_2973164.htm?f_link_type=f_linkinlinenote&flow_extra=eyJkb2NfaWQiOiJlMWEyMDFjZWY3M2E4YTc2MmJlMjcifQ%3D%3D

1.2 Significance of the Thesis

1.2.1 Contributions to China's National Goal of Building an Age-Friendly Society

Reasons and significance of case selection. This thesis responds to the one-district-one-policy regeneration programme called for in the 14th Five-Year Housing Development Plan¹⁸ issued by the local governments to promote organic urban regeneration. It addresses the limitations of the existing crude age-friendly environmental upgrading action programme in the application of the outdoor environment in post-Danwei communities due to the constraints of China's administrative system after transforming post-Danwei communities into open-plan communities. The thesis proposes a guideline for designing an outdoor everyday temporal living space for high-density post-Danwei communities, and bridging the implementation of the government's work programme for the high-density Danwei communities. Therefore, the motivation for this thesis is to enable these communities to fulfil the Chinese government's goal of building community outdoor environments as a means to achieve healthy ageing. Achieving healthy ageing will help China reap the dividends of longevity and reduce the potential financial and social burdens associated with rapid population ageing.

1.2.2 Reasons for and Significance of Case Selection

Taking the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community as a case, this thesis follows the research process described above to collect data for the fieldwork. There are two reasons for choosing Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as a case. Zhengzhou is one of the foundations of Chinese civilisation and one of the eight ancient capitals of China. Throughout history, the Xia, Shang, Guan, Zheng, and Han dynasties all used Zhengzhou as their capital¹⁹. The first is because of the strategic significance of Zhengzhou. As part of the thesis investigation, Zhengzhou was chosen due to its significance in these policy developments. Zhengzhou has been chosen for the study because of its high importance in China's national development strategy this year. The Chinese government has formulated the 13th Five-Year Plan for the development of the central region, with Zhengzhou as the centre of the Central Plains Special Economic Zone, which holds an important place in China's economic and strategic development. The document sets out the goals of “improving the well-being of the people, raising their living standards, promoting the civilisation of the migrant population and building a harmonious and liveable smart city.” Therefore,

¹⁸ Zhengzhou Housing Development ‘14th Five-Year’ Plan
<https://public.zhengzhou.gov.cn/D5105X/6840862.jhtml>

¹⁹ Zhengzhou Municipal Government Website <https://www.zhengzhou.gov.cn/view202402.jhtml>

in a rapidly developing metropolis such as Zhengzhou, adequate consideration should be given to age-friendly planning for urban neighbourhoods to address the growing ageing problem.

Firstly, since 2000, the regional differences in China's population ageing have reversed, as the labour force has shifted from less economically developed regions, such as several provinces in Henan, Anhui, Sichuan, Hubei, and Hunan, to economically developed provinces, such as Beijing, Zhejiang, and Guangdong. This circumstance has resulted in accelerated ageing in regions with less economic development. In economically developed regions, on the other hand, the rate of ageing has slowed and even dropped in some places. During the sixth census, the number of people aged 65 and older in Shanghai decreased by 5.7%(Chen, 2012). There are substantial regional variances in the progression of ageing, and the central region has the most severe ageing problem, followed by the eastern region(Chen & Wang, 2018; Zeng & Wang, 2010). However, cities in the central and western as well as northeastern regions are ageing substantially more quickly than those in the eastern region, and far older, highly aged cities are being added in the central and western as well as northeastern regions than in the eastern region. Moreover, the gap between the western and eastern regions in terms of the rate of ageing has shrunk dramatically. The extent of ageing in Chinese cities is relatively unevenly distributed geographically. However, research on age-friendly cities in different regions is also unevenly distributed and primarily concentrated in metropolitan and eastern regions. There is a significant lack of research on age-friendly cities and neighbourhoods in the midwestern and northeastern regions(Wu, 2015).

The second reason is the typicality of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory and its community, which ensures the replicability of the research results. Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory was part of China's First Five-Year Plan(1953-1957)²⁰, one of the goals of which was:

To concentrate major efforts on industrial construction centred on 156 key construction projects designed with the help of the Soviet Union for China, consisting of 694 large and medium-sized construction projects, and to establish the initial basis for socialist industrialisation in China.

The planning programme for the factory Danwei at Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory was designed by Soviet planners. Due to China's need for a rapid industrial base at that time, the design of the factory Danwei was carried out with a high degree of standardisation and reproduction. The six state cotton textile factories in Zhengzhou were built according to the same plan, and the layouts of those factories were identical. Therefore, as an example, the design guidelines

²⁰ The first five-year plan(1953-1957), https://www.gov.cn/ztl/content_86256.htm

produced by the research on the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory can be replicated entirely on other factory Danwei with the same design layout. In addition, the Soviet-aided factories in other parts of China, although slightly different in layout from the Zhengzhou State Cotton Factory, all reflect Soviet settlement planning ideas of the 1950s, which will be developed in later chapters. Furthermore, geographically, Zhengzhou is located in a plain area. Therefore, the design guidelines derived from this study provide a reference for improving age-friendly environments in former factory-based Danwei communities (in the post-Danwei period) across other cities in plain areas.

1.3 Research Problem and Objectives

1.3.1 General Research Question

This thesis focuses on how to implement the government's goal of age-friendly community renewal in China's post-Danwei communities' outdoor public spaces. In gerontology research, the elderly are divided into three groups: young-old (65-74 years old), middle-old (75-84 years old), and old-old (≥ 85 years old) because there are significant differences in the physiological characteristics of these three groups (Applebaum et al., 2019; Seccombe & Ishii-Kuntz, 1991). Since this thesis focuses on public outdoor spaces and the primary user group is the young-old, who can move around independently, including those who are mobile and use assistive devices, the classification of the elderly should not follow the age-based classification standards of gerontology. However, it should be determined based on whether they can move around independently in outdoor spaces. Therefore, the author categorises the elderly as the young-old, who can move independently within the community with the aid of assistive devices, and the dependent elderly people, who are unable to move independently within the community and rely on the assistance of others. This thesis focuses only on the young-old category as defined by the author. This is because a key task of *The 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development and the Outline of Vision 2035 of China* is to provide basic living security for dependent elderly people who are unattended or difficult to care for. By contrast, improving the quality of life for the young-old is not a mandatory target. This explains why there is insufficient emphasis on the young-old in the policy goals for building age-friendly communities. Therefore, this thesis argues that academic research should focus more on the rights and interests of the young-old. In the following thesis, the group of elderly people that the author describes refers to young-old people.

1.3.2 Research Aims and Objectives

To complete the above three research questions, this thesis proposes to achieve the following research aims:

1.3.2.1 Aim1 and objective1

AIM 1: Understand the context of Chinese planning policy and the major arguments within the literature on age-friendly communities in the post-Danwei context.

The first aim is to clarify the current research process on age-friendly communities and the requirements for future development. That identifies the gaps in current research on age-friendly communities in China. The design and study of post-Danwei age-friendly communities need to be carried out in compliance with the requirements of urban planning regulations. Therefore, a review of China's current planning policies and regulatory requirements is required first. A literature and policy review was then conducted to identify the limitations of the current research stage and future directions for development within the constraints of the policy.

OBJ1: Conduct a literature and policy review to understand the policy context in China and the principles of age-friendly cities and communities.

The purpose of OBJ1 is to understand the context of current development and priorities. A literature and policy review was conducted to summarise and analyse previous research on age-friendly cities and communities. This objective also involved summarising and synthesising policies related to urban planning and the development of an ageing society in China. As a research method, literature review is often used as a method of constructing theory before collecting field data (Kabir et al., 2023; Taherdoost, 2023). This part explains different policy levels, from top government-level policy to local city-level policy. This way, the gap and development direction of current research on age-friendly cities and communities in China were identified in line with the policy requirements.

1.3.2.2 Aim2 and objective2

AIM2: Explore the elderly's perception of the post-Danwei community and their living experience, including their interactions with each other and with other people and organisations within the post-Danwei community outdoor space, taking Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as an example.

The second aim of this thesis, taking Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as a case study, collected and analysed the perceptions and experiences of the elderly living in post-Danwei communities, so as to explore the nature of such communities. That has allowed the author to identify the scenes of life of the elderly within the outdoor space of the post-Danwei community and to identify the direction of community enhancement.

OBJ2: Through the case study, the characteristics and requirements for developing post-Danwei age-friendly community public spaces were identified by taking Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as an example.

This objective employs a case study, focus group, and design ethnography(walking interview) as research methods. The details of these specific methods are shown in Chapter 2. The first step is to use a case study to sort out the design principles of post-Danwei age-friendly communities. The information from a case study on the development history of a Danwei community allows the author to consider the causes of the current situation of the post-Danwei community. The next logical step is to conduct a walking interview as a design ethnography to gain insight into the perspectives of the elderly regarding public spaces in their community. This step used a DJI Pocket camera to record the conversation and the community environment along the walking route. Then, focus groups were held to understand the preferences of the elderly in the community and gather opinions from other groups. Together with the design principles identified and sorted out from the case study, these insights were used to derive the design requirements for age-friendly communities in post-Danwei contexts.

1.3.2.3 Aim3 and objective3

AIM3: Propose solutions to the site limitation problem for improving the age-friendly environment in the post-Danwei community.

The third AIM proposes upgrading post-Danwei communities, taking into account the needs of the elderly and the extent of implementation. It illustrates the role communities play in enhancing the quality of everyday life of the elderly in urban areas. The AIM3 results provide a design guide for policymakers on age-friendly community upgrade evaluation or decision-making.

OBJ3: Develop age-friendly environment upgrading design guidelines of post-Danwei communities in China.

The third objective, through a co-design workshop, is to develop post-Danwei age-friendly communities' outdoor space design guidelines for the plain city. Based on the data collected by OBJ1 and OBJ2, OBJ3 discussed these data with relevant experts and the elderly in a workshop. The board game of the co-design workshop was created by the researcher, which is also a part of this PhD outcome. The outcome of this PhD project is a design guide. To ensure the validity of the research results, the author held another workshop and invited potential users of the guidelines to discuss the rationality of the guideline and put forward opinions as the outcome in Chapter 7.

1.3.3 Expected Outcomes

Designers should create distinctive community spaces within outdoor environments, ensuring that older residents remain connected and integrated into the evolving community environment in line with the government's goal of an age-friendly community. This requires understanding the community's background and the overarching urban planning framework, providing designers with structured guidance on community placemaking. Thus, this thesis aims to bridge the gap in implementing age-friendly environment development objectives in post-Danwei communities by creating an everyday temporal living space design guideline for outdoor space. Everyday temporal living space is a collective, public space shaped by residents' daily activities and socio-cultural aspirations. It is constantly reshaped over time and serves as an important agent in improving the quality of life for urban residents (Warakanyaka & Atmodiwirjo, 2017). Through case studies, Chen (2024) indicates that small-scale renewals of public spaces within Danwei communities significantly improved residents' mental health, especially following the pandemic. Therefore, updating the purpose of living in everyday temporal living space aligns with the scarce usable space in the high-density built community environment of post-Danwei communities. Furthermore, based on the premise that the community environment renewal plan finalised by the government will not be disrupted or has not yet been completed, the rights and interests of the elderly in the new environmental conditions for outdoor space can be maintained by organising spatial facilities. It is a management and development guide of the community for policymakers and a practical reference for designers involved in post-Danwei community environment enhancement projects.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters (Figure 1-4), which are as follows: Chapter 1 Introduction, Chapter 2 Literature review, Chapter 3 Methodology, Chapter 4 The Case study of Past Development of the No.3 Cotton Textile Factory in Zhengzhou, Chapter 5 The Current State of Ageing-in-place in post-Danwei community, Chapter 6 Develop Design Guidelines for Age-friendly Upgrading of Public Space in Zhengzhou, Chapter 7 Discussion and Chapter 8 Conclusion. The introductory chapter provides an overview of the thesis's background, significance, and objectives. Chapter 2 presents the relevant topic based on the objectives of the thesis, identifies the theoretical gaps, and formulates specific research questions to complete the aims. Chapter 3 outlines the project's research methodology based on the objectives and theoretical results presented in the above chapters.

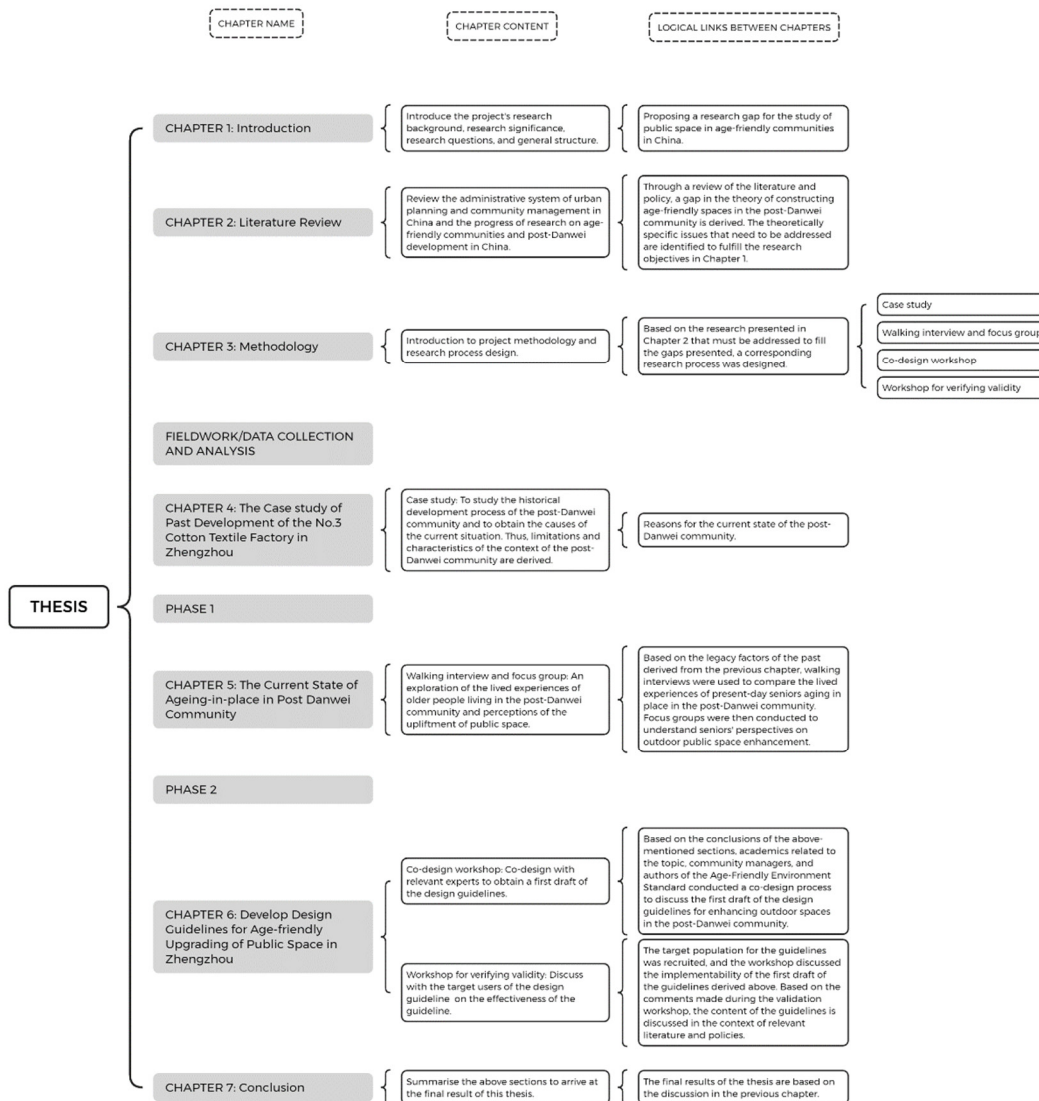


Figure 1-4. Structure of the Thesis(from the author)

The subsequent two chapters present the data collection and analysis for this thesis. Chapter 4 is a review of the development history of the Danwei community, using Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community as an example, to get the causes of the current community status of Danwei, Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory now after entering the post-Danwei era, and to propose the constraints of the historical background for the enhancement of the age-friendly environment of the community in the post-Danwei period. Chapter 5 is a study based on the results of Chapter 4, an analysis of the elderly in the post-Danwei period. Life experiences are explored, and the perceptions of the elderly regarding environmental enhancement are collected. The results of the above chapters form the primary theoretical basis for enhancing age-friendly outdoor public spaces in post-Danwei communities. Combining these with the goals and requirements of China's national construction of age-friendly

environments in the community, a co-designed board game was conducted in the co-design workshop, which invited scholars and professionals in related industries. After the first draft of the design guidelines for enhancing age-friendly outdoor public spaces in post-Danwei communities had been finalised in the co-design workshop, the author held another workshop to verify the implementability of the guidelines. The validation workshop invited potential beneficiaries of the design guidelines as participants to discuss the guidelines and propose modifications. The final step was to examine the comments from the validation workshop and the content of the design guidelines in the context of the literature, policy, and background presented in this thesis. These are elaborated on later in Chapter 6. The conclusion of the thesis is presented in Chapter 7, which includes the final version of the design guidelines.

The research process for this project was designed according to the linear, structured, age-friendly design approach (Figure 1-5) with seven tiers constructed by Keates and Clarkson (2004). Tier 1 defines the needs of the elderly and specifies the social motivations for designing products and services. Tier 2 establishes the functionality and usefulness of the product, and an evaluation of competing products can help provide insight into the necessary functionality. Tiers 3 to 5 focus on the different stages of human-system interaction, and design guidelines for technical ease of use and accessibility are applied to these tiers. Prototyping and testing of various forms of prototypes play a vital role in these design stages. Tier 6 involves evaluating the whole system to ensure good usability, ease of use and accessibility before the design reaches the final stage. Furthermore, tier 7 evaluates the final design outcome against the needs of the elderly. Although this design process model is for product design, the design of a neighbourhood is essentially a “product” tailored to the needs of the residents (Allsup & Gabashvili, n.d.; Baumann et al., 2025; Cantù et al., 2012; Kwack, 2004). This process can be used as a new way of thinking and exploring further possibilities, which can be used to evaluate the thesis’s subject.

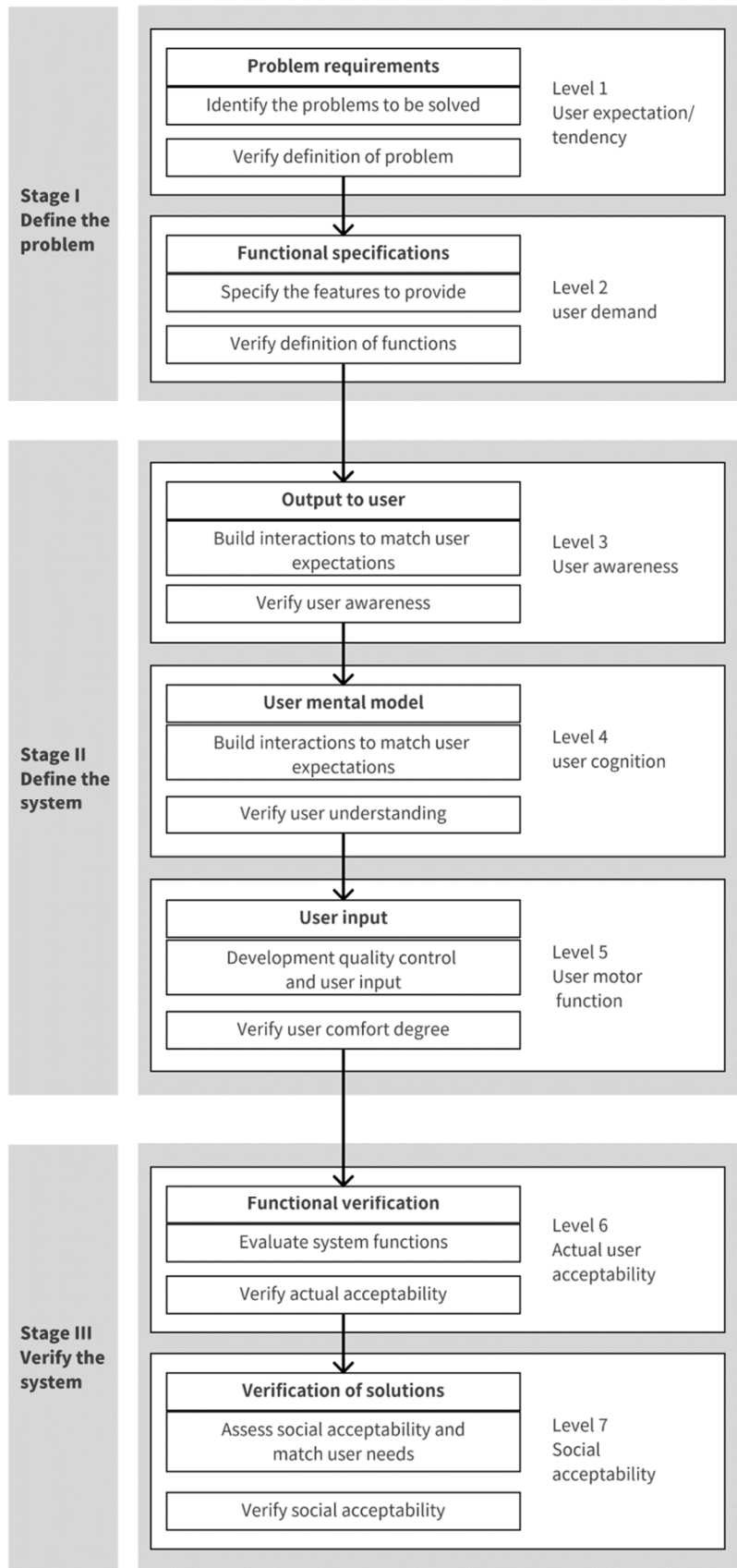


Figure 1-5. The Linear Structured Age-Friendly Design

1.5 Research Design

The research background, significance, and purpose of the thesis have been presented in Chapter 1. The general research question and the research aims of the topic are presented, showing their alignment. The background of the project topic is that the concept of community in China differs from that in other countries. As an overlap of geographic and administrative systems, it is the most basic unit in China for implementing political action and urban governance(Xiang & Hua, 2019). As China's population ages rapidly, the urgent need for social support for the elderly has driven the Chinese government to launch a series of policy initiatives aimed at accelerating the development and construction of age-friendly residential community environments and facilities. However, due to the limitations of the government's administrative system, policies and actions often fail to take hold when confronted with communities that have special contexts and constraints. One typical type of community is the post-Danwei community, a community under the administrative Danwei System unique to China from 1949 to the 1990s(Li, 2008), which was codified as a community after the bankruptcy of the Danwei System and entered the post-Danwei era. To cope with the peculiarities of post-Danwei communities, the thesis research design has aligned a number of overlapping aims and objectives. The first AIM summarised the context of Chinese planning policy and the major arguments within the literature on age-friendly communities. The second is to explore the elderly's perceptions of the post-Danwei community and their experiences of living there. The last AIM was followed by proposing solutions to address the site limitation problem, aiming to improve the age-friendly environment in the post-Danwei community. To address the research aims, this thesis employs a mixed-methods approach, justified in Chapter 3, including the case study, walking interview, focus group, and workshop. Subsequently, it has proposed design guidelines as the key research output, intended to support the achievement of government objectives and the implementation of relevant initiatives in post-Danwei communities. In this chapter, the structure of the whole thesis and the logical connection of the chapters are also presented in the thesis schema(Figure 1-4). The next chapter provides a literature review of relevant topics in the study of AIMS, identifying theoretical gaps.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

After introducing the background and research questions of the thesis, this chapter systematically reviews and summarises the research progress on the age-friendly community environments in the context of the transformation of China's urban governance system and ageing. Chinese cities' spatial and social structure had undergone a significant transformation from the Danwei System to the Community System. This process has profoundly affected the spatial organisation, social governance model, and daily life of contemporary urban communities, especially post-Danwei communities. Against this backdrop, how urban planning and community design can effectively respond to the needs of an ageing society, especially in terms of age-friendly public spaces, has become an important issue for sustainable urban development in China. This chapter is divided into four main parts to review the state of the art: the operating model of China's urban planning system; age-friendly communities; public spaces in China's Urban Design research; age-friendly communities in China; and the evolution of China's urban governance system, the Danwei System, and Community System. The multidimensional complexity of age-friendly construction in the outdoor environment of post-Danwei communities is clarified. The literature review chapter identifies a number of research gaps and provides a solid background and theoretical basis for subsequent theoretical discussions and practical applications, and clarifies the development direction of age-friendly post-Danwei communities.

2.2 The Urban Planning System

2.2.1 Chinese Urban Planning System

Based on the types of planning systems, Sun(2019) divided the paradigms of urban planning into three categories: Construction Planning, Regulation Planning and Development Planning according to the types of planning results. The core of Construction Planning is to organise and execute projects efficiently in accordance with unified standards to achieve desired results, making it a typical form of blueprint planning. The starting point of Regulation Planning is to focus on distributing and protecting land use rights and interests, which are usually shown as general local regulations. That is to support the forecast of future overall development for the development planning. Although these paradigms have different logical starting points, their essence is the same: control and intervention in private development and construction. Anther countries,

depending on each country's own conditions, choose different urban planning paradigms to coordinate national and regional strategic planning and development. However, the consensus across almost the entire world regarding urban planning is that it must be established in the form of law.

China’s urban strategic planning can be divided into two parts, with 2010 as the cut-off year. In the 1990s, the process of reform and opening up in China started to accelerate. Meanwhile, Chinese society underwent a gradual reform of administrative management from controlled government to market-driven, and also began to adopt an urban-led pattern of economic development(Zheng, 2016). To adapt to social developments, China introduced urban strategic planning(Image 2-11) from Western countries, and took construction planning as its core, blending the other two paradigms to build a Chinese modern urban planning pattern(Sun, 2017). The Chinese modern urban planning pattern in this time is consisted by Land use planning, Land planning, Urban and rural planning, planning for functional zones and Marine function planning, these systems are independent and are organised and controlled by the former Ministry of Land, the Ministry of Housing and Construction, the National Development and Reform Commission and the former Ministry of Environmental Protection respectively. Under this development pattern, China’s urbanisation has been advancing at an extremely rapid pace. According to No. 17²¹ of the “Series of Reports on the Achievements of Economic and Social Development in the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of New China, by the end of 2011, the urbanisation rate of the resident population had reached 51.27%. This meant that the proportion of people working and living in urban areas exceeded 50%, an increase of 33.35 % over the end of 1978(Beginning of reform and opening up), representing an increase of 33.35 percentage points compared with the end of 1978(the beginning of China’s reform and opening-up policy) and an average annual growth rate of 1.01%.

The old urban planning system					
	Planning for functional zones	Land planning	Urban and rural planning	Land use planning	Marine function planning
National level	National plan for functional zones	National land planning	National urban and rural system planning	National general plan for land use	National Plan for Marine functional zones
Provincial level	Provincial-level functional zones are planned	Provincial territorial planning	Provincial urban and rural system planning	Provincial land use general plan	Provincial Marine functional zone planning
Municipal level			Municipal master plan	Municipal land use general plan	Municipal Marine functional zone planning
County level			County master plan	County-level land use general plan	County-level Marine functional zone planning
Township level			Town master Plan - Township Plan	Township level land use planning	
Village level			Village planning	Village-level land use planning	

Special plans for infrastructure and resource utilization

Image 2-11. Chinese Old Urban Strategic Planning(Summarised by the author from the literature)

21 The level of urbanization has been continuously rising and urban development has been making great strides forward - the seventeenth report on the achievements of economic and social development in the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China https://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2019-08/15/content_5421382.htm

In 2006, to address these problems and establish an environmentally friendly society, China conducted urban planning reform. The General Office of the State Council(2017) first introduced the concept of National Territorial Space Planning, which is the general objective and task of the state in a certain period from the perspective of rational development, utilisation, management, and protection of territorial resources. It adopts a five-level, three-category, four-system institutional framework encompassing national, provincial, municipal, county and township levels, alongside Master Plans, Detailed Plans, and Special Plans(Table 2-2). This approach emphasises a holistic, comprehensive perspective to establish a unified master plan integrating multiple planning frameworks(Baodong et al., 2024). The real practice of National Territorial Space Planning started in 2010. The National Territorial Space Planning, a multi-compliance and planning system(Diagram 2-3), is expected to be basically completed by 2020, and it will be finished by 2035. Appendix 1 shows the programmematic documents about the establishment and development scheme of the National Territorial Space Planning System.

Categorisation	Content	Description
Five-level	National, provincial, municipal, county, and township levels	Reflecting the vertical transmission relationship: National strategy → Local action → Implementation at the village level ²²
Three-category	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Master Plan 2. Detailed Plan 3. Special Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master Plan: A strategic, comprehensive blueprint defining development-conservation frameworks and baseline controls - Detailed Plan: Within development boundaries, implementing specific land use and facility allocations, encompassing regulatory detailed plans

22 The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council Issue Several Opinions on Establishing a Territorial Spatial Planning System and Overseeing Its Implementation Adhering to Ecological Priority and Green Development in Planning Compilation Work
https://www.mee.gov.cn/xxgk/hjyw/201905/t20190524_704028.shtml

		<p>and practical village plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sectoral Plan: Targeting specific areas/sectors(e.g., farmland conservation, transport, ecological restoration), refining the master plan and guiding subordinate plans(Bai et al., 2025; Dong et al., 2024)
Four-system	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Compilation System 2. Implementation Supervision System 3. Regulatory Policy Framework 4. Technical Standards System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Compilation System: Formulating a single national blueprint to unify spatial development and conservation arrangements - Implementation and Supervision System: Establishing a monitoring, evaluation and health-check regime for the ‘single blueprint’(e.g. annual health checks and five-yearly evaluations) - Regulatory and Policy Framework: Integrating new regulations through the Land Administration Law and Urban and Rural Planning Law - Technical Standards System: Standardising compilation guidelines, database specifications and data output formats(Du et al., 2024; Li et al., 2025)

Table 2-2. Five Levels, Three Categories, and Four Systems in the Chinese Planning System(Summarised by the author)

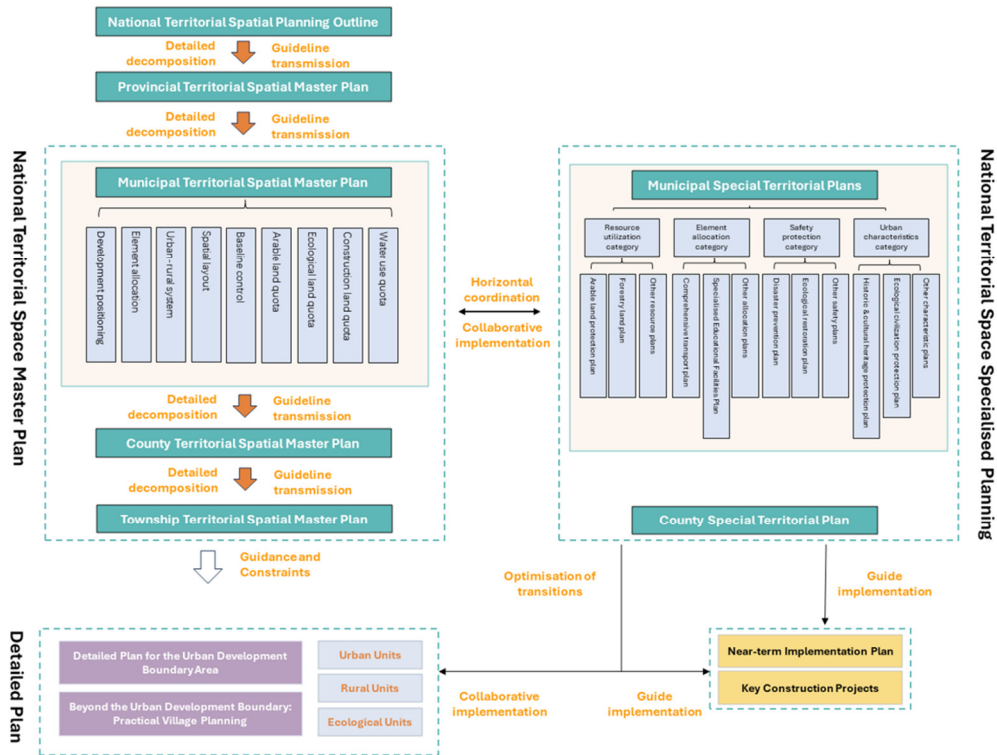


Diagram 2-3. The Transmission Mechanism within the Territorial Space Planning System(Hongzhi et al., 2025)

National Territorial Space Planning is the overall objective and task of the state for a specific period of time, from the perspective of the rational development and use of national land resources and the management and protection(Lv et al., 2001, p. 137). It is still essentially a blueprint for construction planning. China's National Territorial Spatial Planning integrates various planning systems to form an integrated plan, with the country's strategic development as its goal, and this plan is expressed as a top-down control plan. Nationwide urban planning adheres to a "one-plan" framework, yet the implementation of this "one-plan" framework is not achieved overnight.

National Territorial Space Planning is divided into master plans, detailed plans, and special plans. The master plan serves as the backbone, and the detailed plans are utilised as a tool for urban development and protection, controlling the type and size of land in the area. Related special plans are then used for planning and preparing land for coastlines, nature reserves, transportation, energy, water resources, and other ecological resources.

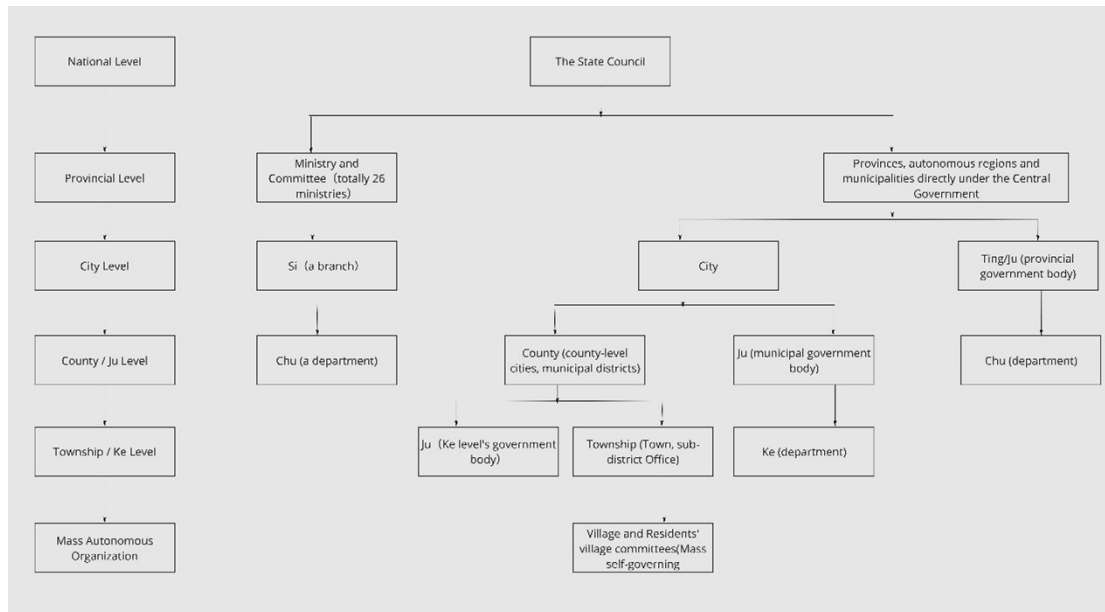


Figure 2-4. China's Administrative Structure(Summarised by the author)

The process of National Territorial Space Planning, development, and control is also a top-down hierarchical administrative process. As shown in Figure 2-13, its administrative hierarchy in territorial spatial planning does not take place further down the municipal level; regional planning at the county level and below is the responsibility of the municipal government. To shorten the review and approval time, the planning and review process at different levels can be roughly summarised as the principle that “the department responsible for review and approval shall be responsible for supervision”(Figure 2-5).

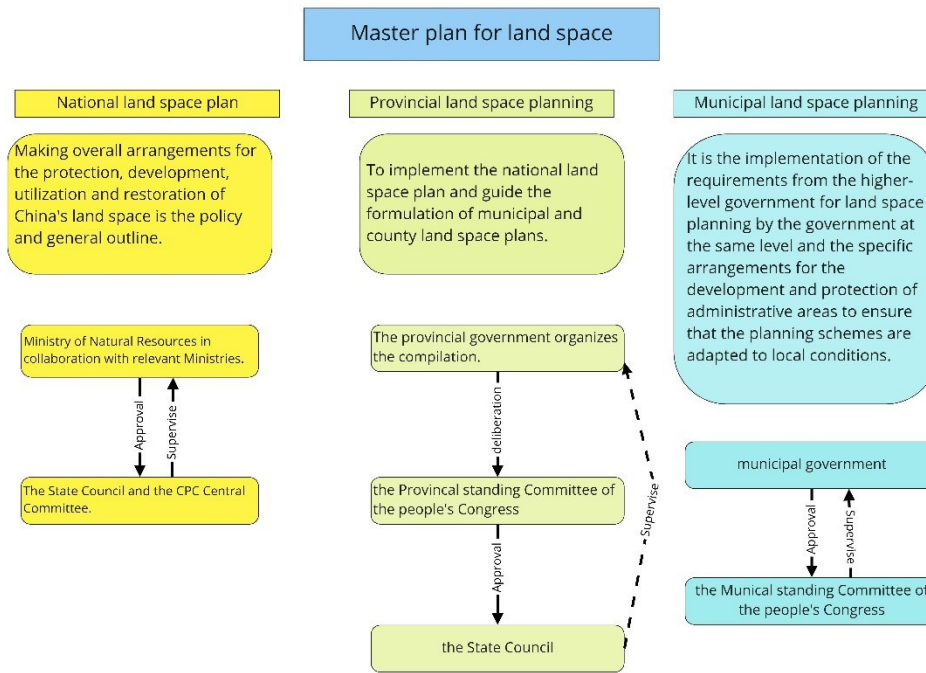


Figure 2-5. Structure for the Development, Approval and Monitoring of National Territorial Space Planning(Summarised by the author)

The planning and approval process of the land space plan is also hierarchical. The Master Plan is a national-level framework plan. Formulated by the Ministry of Natural Resources in collaboration with relevant departments, it is submitted to the Central Committee of the Party and the State Council for approval, and then distributed to provincial governments for the further formulation of plans within the respective jurisdictions. After the provincial governments have completed their planning, the Standing Committee of People's Congress at the same level will deliberate on the plan, followed by the Standing Committee of People's Congress at the same level submitting it to the State Council for approval. At the municipal level, the National Territorial Space Planning is approved by the Standing Committee of the People's Congress at the municipal level, and the municipal government draws up the plan. This ensures that the planning within the city is coordinated with the resources of other regions and in line with the national strategy, but also gives the city greater freedom to plan according to its own circumstances. Each level of National Territorial Space Planning will be integrated into a "one map" after approval, which will become the basis for planning and construction laws. If there is a need to modify the plan after it has been integrated into "one plan", the application has to submit to a higher level of government and eventually to the State Council for approval.

Different levels of government(Table 2-6) are responsible for different kinds of

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plans in National Territorial Space Planning. Planning at the provincial level and above is primarily the master plan and does not involve detailed planning. However, relevant special plans can be prepared at the national, provincial, municipal, and county levels, and are generally organised by the natural resources department or related departments. The type and precision of special plans at different levels and regions can be chosen in relation to the actual situation, and no uniform standards are set in the National Territorial Space Planning system.

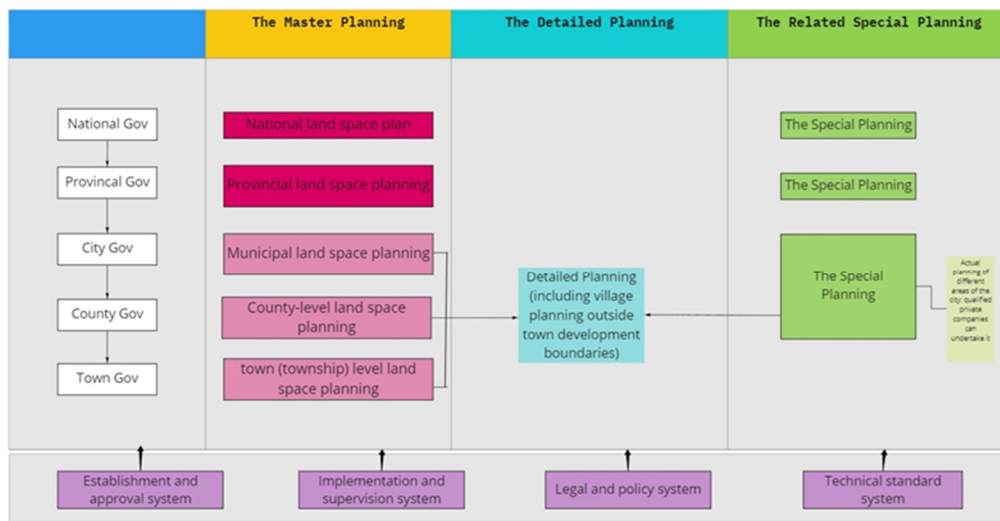


Table 2-6. The Administrative Level of Master Planning, Detailed Planning and Special Planning (from the author)

2.2.2 Discussion

China's National Territorial Space Planning is a component of national strategic planning that focuses on holistic development. Consequently, China's urban planning system is relatively lacking in flexibility when it comes to local-level planning. China's current land use planning system is characterised by top-down and multilevel management. Guided by national strategies, it integrates plans at all levels to form a unified legal foundation. Nevertheless, the implementation of plans remains hampered by coordination difficulties and complex approval processes, which have, to some extent, hindered the rapid implementation and effective realisation of outdoor space adaptation measures for the elderly in communities. There is a need to increase the flexibility of local planning in the preparation of future control plans, leaving some room for adaptation to the needs of future urbanisation and transformation.

2.3 Age-friendly Communities in Urban Design

2.3.1 Urban Design

Urban Planning and Urban Design play differing roles in the urban development process. The former provides a systematic framework for land development and legal regulations, while the latter focuses primarily on ‘making places’ to enhance the environment and increase experiential value and a sense of belonging (Gunder, 2011). Carmona et al. (2003, pp. 1–10) defined Urban Design as:

The work for the process of shaping the physical space for people’s daily life and the aesthetic feeling of making places in the urban areas.

Urban design is not solely concerned with designing a space, but rather with creating a place. Haug (2023) and Carmona et al. (2003) defined characteristics can be summarised as follows: 1) Focusing on the construction of urban form that prioritises liveability and social equity; 2) Recognising both the material and immaterial aspects of place-making, where the emphasis lies in shaping a “place” imbued with identity, belonging and meaning, rather than merely physical construction; 3) the construction of physical space, public life, and culture within the constraints of economics (market forces) and politics (regulatory frameworks); 4) recognising urban design as a dynamic process that values continuity between past and future. As a quintessential interdisciplinary discipline, urban design endeavours to bridge the “stitch” between spaces, that is, within the ‘skeleton’ of urban planning, how to shape public spaces that in turn forge relationships between people and between people and the city.

Regarding an age-friendly environment, urban design focuses more on “the details of daily life within public spaces”, while urban planning emphasises “systematic and equitable” allocation of spatial resources (Chao, 2017; Phillips, 2017; Sreedharan & Chandy Mathew, 2019). Therefore, both urban design and urban planning are means to achieve an age-friendly city. The Age-Friendly Cities Framework constitutes a framework strategy encompassing all aspects of urban life (World Health Organisation, 2007), whilst community governance is the way in which age-friendly cities are implemented. At the level of age-friendly communities, Salmistu & Kotval (2023) argued that comprehensive guidance for community development requires planners and designers to work together, thereby achieving complementary roles.

2.3.2 The Age-friendly Community

As the proportion of the elderly in the population rises, government welfare funding for the welfare of the aged also increases. Tang and Zhi (2022) pointed out that there is a direct correlation between the health status of the elderly and the

balance of government finances. The efficient allocation of health and medical resources is a key intermediate variable in alleviating financial pressure. Many researchers have focused on reducing social and family responsibility for ageing, boosting the elderly's drive to live independently, and alleviating ageing-related health problems (Seema S. Lekule & Umanjali Damke, 2023; Shen et al., 2024; Susnea et al., 2022; B. Tang et al., 2022; Z. Wu & Wang, 2024). To support the elderly's lives, communities built to be age-friendly are of critical relevance to active ageing. The concept of age-friendliness originates from the Environmental Ageing Discipline presented by Lawton and Nahemow (1973). This literature subsection investigates the ageing process and the associated environmental issues the elderly face.

2.3.2.1 Definition of Age-friendly Environment

The World Health Organisation (WHO) published *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide* (Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing, 2007), which proposes the following recommendations for urban environments to support active ageing:

An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation, and security to enhance quality of life as people age.

The principle of the age-friendly environment is person–environment fit, that is, the space should be capable of “compensating” for the deficiencies of the elderly as their abilities decline (Diego Sánchez-González & Carmen Egea-Jiménez, 2021). Furthermore, the age-friendly environment should be complex and integrated, combining physical places, information, services and the social environment (Yu et al., 2022). As the Framework proposed by the WHO, the components of an age-friendly environment can be categorised into eight areas: outdoor spaces and buildings, transport and mobility, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community support, and health services (Figure 2-7). Thus, an age-friendly environment refers to helping the elderly build and maintain their intrinsic capacity throughout their lives and improve their functional ability at their current level through the environment, thereby promoting healthy ageing (Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing, 2023).

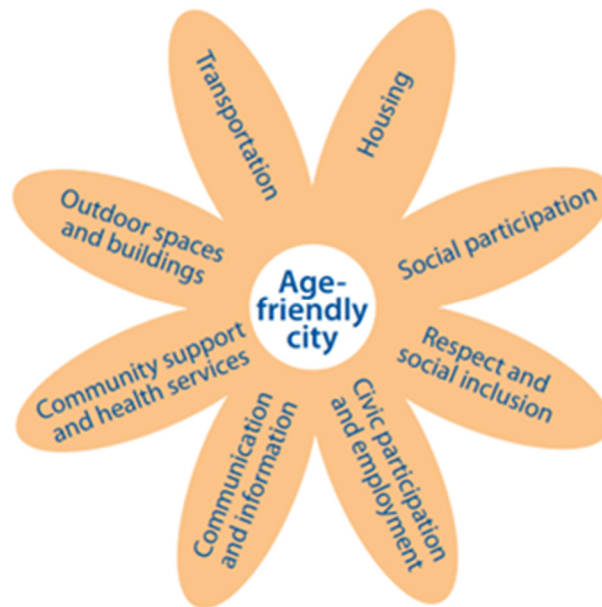


Figure 2-7. Age-Friendly City Topic Areas(Demographic Change and Healthy Ageing, 2007)

The term “age-friendly environment” is a conceptual framework that encompasses both physical spaces and socio-cultural atmospheres. In academic research, it is further subdivided into the terms “age-friendly city”, “age-friendly community”, and “age-friendly space”. The relationship between these terms is one of progression from macro-level concepts to concrete spatial practices(Figure 2-8).

Term	Definition	Level
Age-Friendly Environment	General framework for achieving the goal of “active ageing” by improving the living, transportation, social and service environments for the elderly(Bosia et al., 2017).	Macro Concept
Age-Friendly City	Based on the WHO's “Age-Friendly Cities” framework, improve eight areas at the city level to support the elderly(Hoof et al., 2021).	Urban Levels
Age-Friendly Community)	Promote the principle of “age-friendly” at the community level, focusing on neighbourly relations, community-based services and resident participation(Huffman-Oh, 2021).	Neighbourhood level
Age-Friendly Space	Design of physical spaces optimised for the daily needs of the elderly(Chau & Jamei, 2021).	A specific piece of physical space

Figure 2-8. A Glossary of Age-Friendly Terms(from the author)

These “age-friendly” terms carry different meanings in academic research, leading to significant differences in research goals(Hoof et al., 2021; Vidovićová, 2017):

1. Age-friendly environments emphasise theoretical and policy frameworks.
2. Research on age-friendly cities often focuses on system evaluation, with city-level studies using comprehensive indicators to evaluate the age-friendliness of cities.
3. Research on age-friendly communities pays more attention to social capital and resident empowerment.
4. Age-friendly spaces aim to guide specific design and standard setting.

2.3.2.2 Characteristics of an Age-friendly Community

Numerous scholars have done large-scale surveys of the elderly to identify what kind of neighbourhoods encourage the elderly to participate in their neighbourhoods and improve their vitality(Choi, 2020; Fujihara et al., 2024; Lee et al., 2019; Moorman et al., 2016; Patterson & Chapman, 2004; Smith et al., 2013; Tiraphat et al., 2017; Xu et al., 2022). For instance, the American Association of Retired Persons undertook a comprehensive nationwide study of Americans over 45²³. Access to large hospitals, clinics, good security, churches, retail centres, door-to-door transportation, outside maintenance service, health monitoring services, accessible public transportation, and home-delivered meals were identified as ten variables related to the study. The National Association of Area Agencies on Ageing(NAAA) views age-friendly communities as comprised of four focuses ²⁴ : Planning and community participation, housing, mobility and accessibility, and health and wellbeing. It focuses on housing and accompanying infrastructure to fulfil the needs of the elderly, with a particular emphasis on the physical environment component.

In several studies, many researchers asserted that the environmental design of age-friendly neighbourhoods emphasises orderliness and compactness, particularly regarding neighbourhood density, mixed land use, the closeness of open spaces and amenities, and traffic structure(Bhuyan et al., 2020; Colangeli, 2010; Kraye & Friedman, 2015; Nykiforuk et al., 2019; Shirazi, 2019; Tuckett et al., 2018). In addition, Menec et al.(2011) developed an integrated ecological model that depicts how the structure of a community's physical environment may affect the elderly's prospects for social interaction. Much research has discovered that a high-density setting with a strong street network gives residents additional

²³ These Four Walls: Americans 45+ Talk About Home and Community

https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/topics/livable-communities/housing/four_walls.pdf

²⁴ <https://www.usageing.org/files/n4aMakingYourCommunityLivable1.pdf>

options for destinations, encouraging residents to walk inside the communities and discouraging automobile use (Badland & Schofield, 2005; Baobeid et al., 2021; He et al., 2020; Koohsari et al., 2021; Y. Lu et al., 2017). Kerr (2012) contends that mixed land use, high street connectedness, and high residential density are essential spatial qualities for forming walkable communities. However, the rules for age-friendly communities should not be rigid and should be adaptable to the area's needs. In a survey of 56 Canadian communities, Menec et al. (2015) found regionally inconsistent results. More focus should be placed on the influence of regional variation on the characteristics of age-friendly communities. Consequently, further research is needed to confirm the efficacy of the intervention across diverse geographical and cultural contexts.

Several researchers highlight the need for a supportive environment that includes infrastructure and services for the elderly, and the significance of their participation in their communities and the recognition of their value. A recent scholarly study has agreed that constructing age-friendly communities necessitates fostering the active engagement of the elderly in various ways (Buffel, 2018; Buffel & Phillipson, 2016; Steels, 2015). The construction of age-friendly communities is an ongoing process of building and regulating. The elderly are not only beneficiaries of communities but also of the people who shape the community's culture (To & Chong, 2017). Several organisations established frameworks of age-friendly communities based on considerable research on the elderly. For instance, the World Health Organisation (WHO) conducted questionnaires and interviews with the elderly based on group meetings, assessed, and summed up the core components of age-friendly communities. Communities can benefit from the skills, knowledge, and experiences of the elderly, and their rich life experiences represent valuable resources for identifying the needs for and support of community services.

Moreover, according to Alley et al. (2016), social and community service workers should actively participate in community development. Their opinions should also be considered in developing communities and policies. Engaging the elderly in community planning and construction organisations improves the area's design, counteracts the cognitive biases of professionals, and increases older folks' happiness with the community. In their study on AIP, Ahn (2019) discovered that ageing people who were more socially connected were more likely to have stronger AIP intentions. Moreover, the elderly's participation in community organisations was crucial to fostering their social connections. The community Organisation field encompasses the community's physical and social landscape, including economic operations, housing, and the activities of the residents (Gitlin, 2003). Providing social support and knowledge to one another also contributes to community cohesion (Raphael, 2006).

The necessity of an ageing-friendly community has been thoroughly examined.

Nevertheless, in recent years, a range of differing opinions has emerged regarding terminology, along with various nuances in the interpretation of ageing-friendly community characteristics (Table 2-9). However, the characteristics of ageing-friendly communities proposed by these different academics are still within the framework of the ageing-friendly environment proposed by the WHO. Therefore, there are no differences in evaluation criteria due to differences in the characteristics of ageing-friendly communities in related research.

Researcher	Concept	Characteristics
Age-friendly community : Austin et al.(2001)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A place to call home 2. Building community 3. Make needs meet 4. Being valued and respected 5. Staying active 6. Getting what you need 7. Getting around 8. Feeling safe 	This concept is centred on the evaluation of the assets, capacities, and needs of the elderly. Statistically, this notion cannot be generalised to other areas.
Age-friendly community : Feldman and Oberlink(Feldman & Oberlink, 2003)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximises independence for frail and disabled 2. Addresses basic needs 3. Promotes social and civic engagement 4. Optimises physical and mental health and wellbeing 	This concept focuses only on the elderly and encompasses both physical and social factors that support active participation, independence, and engagement. This concept is special in that it covers items such as the "Proportion of persons age 65 and older who would want to be working for pay" and the "Proportion of persons age 65 and older who had difficulty paying for medical care." This concept quantifies unmet demands, making it easier to identify and prioritise age-related issues that require immediate treatment.
Liveable community : AARP Public Policy Institute(State Herberger Centre for Design)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transportation 2. Walking 3. Housing 4. Shopping 5. Safety and security 6. Recreation and culture 7. Health service 8. Caring and mutual support 	This concept highlighted the availability, suitability, and affordability of the physical environment and associated community services to facilitate independence and social engagement for dependent(frail) and independent the elderly, as well as the general population. It has questions like "Are the

Excellence et al., 2005)		walkways suitably lit at night?” & “Does your community have a hotline for information or a directory of services for the elderly?” This concept, as opposed to that of Feldman and Oberlink(2003), specifies only the presence or lack of physical and social contextual demands.
Age-friendly community : D. Alley et al.(2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accessible and affordable transportation 2. Housing 3. Safety 4. Health care 5. Community involvement opportunities 	This concept emphasises essential age-prepared qualities. This concept aligns with that of Feldman and Oberlink(2003) and the State Herberger Centre for Design Excellence (State Herberger Centre for Design Excellence et al., 2005)(State Herberger Centre for Design Excellence et al., 2005). Although this concept accounted for a wide range of physical and social environmental aspects, it may be limited in that it only contained the most essential qualities, hence limiting its applicability in diverse contexts. The remaining suggestions presented a variety of physical and social age-friendly environmental aspects for communities to identify issues that its members deem critical.
Age-friendly city and community : World Health Organisation(2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Outdoor spaces and buildings 2. Transportation 3. Housing 4. Social participation 5. Respect and inclusion 6. Civic participation and employment 7. Communication and information 8. Community supports and health services 	This notion encompasses the physical environment and structures, as well as social policies and services for active ageing. This notion comprises eight domains(physical and social environment) with numerous elements in each category. This idea, unlike those of Feldman and Oberlink(2003, p. 269), Kihl et al.(2005) and Alley et al.(2007), is highly adaptable and may be used to generate qualitative and

		quantitative findings of unmet demands based on the preferences of the users. As a result, it gathers more vital information that can be rigorously analysed to produce interventions and policies that are age-friendly.
Lifetime neighbourhood: Harding(2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Built environment 2. Housing 3. Social inclusion 4. Social cohesion and sense of place 5. Innovation and cross-sectoral planning 6. Services and amenities 	Underpinning the concept are the principles of inclusive design, sustainability, and engagement. This concept, similar to the lifetime home concept and the WHO's(World Health Organisation, 2007) concept, focuses on the neighbourhood with a number of critical features to create a sustainable community.
Positive ageing framework New Zealand Ministry of Social Development(2007)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing 2. Transport 3. Access to facilities and services 4. Income 5. Employment 6. Opportunities 7. Health 8. Living in the community 9. Cultural Identity 10. Attitudes 	This concept is founded on the premise that the years are perceived and experienced positively. The concept includes 10 domains with unique desired objectives. However, the indicators are typically limited to features of the lives of the elderly at a specific moment.
Mence et al.(2011)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical environment 2. Housing 3. Transportation options 4. Communication and information 5. Social environment 6. Opportunities for participation 7. Informal and formal community supports and health services 	Mence et al(2011b) concept is similar with WHO's(2007) concept. This concept, however, focused on the connection between the elderly and their environment(social connectedness) in order to promote age-friendly policy decisions. Respect and inclusion(World Health Organisation, 2017) and safety(D. Alley et al., 2007; State Herberger Centre for Design Excellence et al., 2005); do not fit as a component of the environment, but rather as the result of adopting age-friendly

Table 2-9. Characteristics of Ageing-Friendly Definitions(Summarised by the author)

2.3.2.3 The Influence of the Physical Environment of Communities on the Elderly

Previous research has demonstrated that the comfort of a community's public space positively influences the promotion of daily activities and the elderly's physical and mental health(Anderson et al., 2017). This comfort is primarily reflected in the cleanliness and aesthetics of the community's public space environment, the intensity of light, the sufficiency of street furniture and paving, and the design of the public space environment(Buffel & Phillipson, 2016; Yen et al., 2014).

Depression-related poor mood, feelings of hopelessness, and apathy are prevalent mental disorders among the elderly(Snowdon, 2010). In contrast, the study of Kono et al.(2004) indicated that the elderly who regularly walked had lower signs of depression. Age-friendly community environments emphasise the development of the elderly's abilities to care for themselves, and there is a substantial correlation between the elderly's perception of control over their physical surroundings and good emotions in subjective well-being. Adlakha(2020) concluded that carefully constructed and managed high-density communities are more conducive to reducing cognitive decline, improving people's sense of belonging and contentment, and promoting physical and mental health. Participation in community activities is one of the most crucial means of maintaining and enhancing the elderly's mental health. For instance, the “healing landscape” concept, prevalent in retirement communities in recent years, allows people to benefit from both active and passive components(Warr et al., 2004).

2.3.3 Discussion

Research on age-friendly communities and outdoor public spaces has progressively established a coherent conceptual framework and initial theoretical foundation. Existing studies have identified a series of key characteristics defining age-friendly communities. However, current design and development guidelines fail to address all community types and the nuances of diverse older-people demographics. Oswald and Cooper(2024)note that mainstream “age-friendly” frameworks suffer from underrepresentation, cultural gaps, and policy blind spots, rendering their spatial design recommendations inadequate for the elderly with multiple marginalised identities. Consequently, a gap exists in current research concerning the systematic deepening of outdoor community space design frameworks tailored to diverse demographic backgrounds. Secondly, policies for

age-friendly environments often fail to account for the lived experiences of diverse senior groups, such as financially vulnerable, indigenous communities, and migrants, thereby preventing all senior groups from benefiting equally (Greenfield et al., 2025). Consequently, subsequent research on age-friendly communities must prioritise addressing public perception biases, policy fragmentation, government funding shortages, and the segmentation of the elderly's demographics. This shift from theoretical to practical implementation will advance the comprehensive development of age-adapted communities.

2.4 Current Status of Research on Age-Friendly Communities in China

2.4.1 Policy Requirements for the Layout of Public Spaces in the Chinese Communities

The Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of China's Guidelines for the Planning of Well-Equipped Communities (2021)²⁵ stipulate that public spaces in communities should encompass basic public service facilities, convenient commercial service facilities, municipal infrastructure, and other public spaces. Among these, basic public service facilities should include a community service centre, a kindergarten, a childcare centre, an elderly service centre, and a community health service station. Additionally, convenient commercial service facilities include a Supermarket, multiple mail and express delivery service facilities, and other convenient commercial outlets. Municipal supporting infrastructure includes essential living resources such as water, electricity, roads, natural gas, heating, telecommunication network signals, parking and charging facilities, pedestrian systems, accessible facilities, and waste disposal points. The guidelines specify that public activity spaces include recreational gathering areas for residents within the community and public green spaces. This thesis focuses on the scope of outdoor public spaces within a community, defined as open-type spatial aggregates within the community that are frequently used by residents for daily activities and serve specific social interaction, sports, and recreational functions (Lu & Misni, 2025).

Classification	Facility Name	Facility Requirements and Design Standards
Basic public service	Community Service Station	The total floor area is approximately 800 square metres, including a public service

²⁵ Guidelines for the Planning of the Well-Equipped Communities
<https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2022-01/12/5667815/files/a84ca3d812e54074a43e332f3cc18eca.pdf>

facilities		hall, a police station, a residents' committee office, a recreation room, a reading room, and a party and mass activity centre.
	Kindergarten	At least six classrooms, with a building area of $\geq 2,200$ square metres and a total ground area of $\geq 3,500$ square metres, providing inclusive preschool education for children aged 3 to 6.
	Nursery school	Construction area ≥ 200 square metres, providing care services for babies aged 0-3 years.
	Senior service centre	Integrated with community service stations, a daycare centre with an area of ≥ 350 square metres can be established to provide daytime living care, catering, health care, and cultural and recreational services.
	Community health service centre	Building area ≥ 120 square metres, providing preventive, medical, family planning, rehabilitation, and epidemic prevention services.
Convenience commercial facilities	Supermarket	Building area ≥ 300 square metres, offering fruits, vegetables, fresh produce, and daily necessities. In older neighbourhoods, 2-3 convenience stores of 50-100 square metres may be established.
	Mail and express delivery facilities	The number of self-service mailbox compartments should be 1 to 1.3 times the community's average daily delivery volume, and the floor area of new community terminal service stations should be ≥ 15 square metres.
	Other convenient commercial stores	Including barbershops, laundromats, pharmacies, repair shops, domestic service outlets, restaurants and other independent store.
Municipal infrastructure	Water, electricity, roads, gas, heating, and telecommunication network facilities	Facilities are well-maintained and operate safely and reliably. The property features fibre-optic internet access and 5G network coverage.

	Parking and charging facilities	New communities shall have at least one parking space per household for motor vehicles, with 100% of the necessary infrastructure reserved for charging facilities; adequate parking sheds and charging facilities for non-motorised vehicles shall be provided.
	Slow traffic system	The community is connected to local facilities and residential areas, and residents can walk to the bus stop in 10 minutes.
	Barrier-free facilities	Building entrances and exits are equipped with wheelchair ramps and handrails. Public spaces meet accessibility requirements, and elevators are installed in older communities as needed.
	Sanitation facilities	New communities shall have garbage collection stations of ≥ 120 square metres and public toilets of ≥ 30 square metres. Integrated toilet units may be installed in decayed communities.
Public space	Public entertainment and gathering spaces	At least one outdoor activity area of ≥ 150 square metres, equipped with fitness facilities and children's play facilities; new communities must have a multi-purpose sports area of ≥ 800 square metres.
	Public green space	At least one open public green space; new communities must have a park of at least 4,000 square metres, with 10%–15% of the area designated for sports facilities; decayed communities must build pocket parks or mini parks.
Public property management	Property service office	The floor area of new community property management buildings shall be no less than 2% of the total property area and no less than 50 square metres. Professional management is encouraged.
	Property Management Services Online Platform	Promote online property management services.
Community	Management	Establish a community management

management mechanism	mechanism	system led by the Party committee, organised by the government, with participation from property owners and services provided by enterprises.
	Full management services	Manage illegal construction by the law, and organise residents to participate in environmental improvement and waste sorting.
	Community culture	Regularly organise cultural activities, establish community rules and regulations, and foster a distinctive cultural atmosphere.

Table 2-10. Construction Requirements for Public Spaces in Complete Residential Communities in China(Summarised by the author from the Guidelines for the Planning the Well-equipped Community issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of China)

2.4.2 The Current Research Progress

The current research on ageing-friendly communities in China focuses on the senior care and services of the community, with more emphasis on research from the perspective of the elderly's declining physical and mental functions. Generally, it can be divided into two parts:

1. Research the content and mode of the elderly' everyday activities and the activity-supportiveness of their physical surroundings. No universal conclusions have been reached regarding the activity content of the elderly(Ding, 2010; Huang & Zhu, 2018; Wang & Luo, 2009).
2. Investigate the function, structure, scale, and design practices of public space environments in age-friendly communities. Few studies have been conducted on the design strategies of public space environments in communities, with the majority focusing on the ageing-friendly design of public spaces in terms of function(Li et al., 2011), structural patterns(Ding, 2010; Hou & Dong, 2022; Huang et al., 2016; Yu & Wang, 2020), spatial scale(Wang et al., 2013; Zhou & Liu, 2013).

Regarding research on age-friendly public space environments in neighbourhoods, Chinese research has primarily focused on the function, structure, scale, and design practices of age-friendly public spaces in neighbourhoods(Li, 2022). There is also some literature on the characteristics of the everyday activities of the

elderly, as well as the relationship and support between the neighbourhood public space environment and the activities. Research on age-friendly communities in China relevant to this thesis focuses on the following areas: residential neighborhoods, senior facilities, urban leisure spaces for the elderly, road transportation, green landscapes, social services for the elderly, planning techniques and regulatory indicators, and other components.

2.4.3 Residential Areas

Early studies on the elderly's settlements in China concentrated primarily on the 1990s(Du, 1998, 1999; Hu, 1994; Ye, 1997), and scholars continued to investigate and propose novel ideas and concepts. Zhang(1995) noted that the Planning and design of ageing communities should consider the elderly's physical and psychological requirements. Future home building and settlement planning should incorporate "senior apartments" into the system. Hu and Ma(2000) evaluated ten years of practice and experience in the construction of the elderly's housing environment in China and offer the principal countermeasures for developing the elderly's housing construction in the twenty-first century. In terms of the relationship between the mode of residence and the mode of the elderly, most scholars believe that AIP should continue to be the predominant mode of ageing in China. At this time, the elderly should live with their families and enjoy the traditional Chinese mode of ageing(Luo, 2021). According to He(2005), China's ageing facilities system may be split into two primary categories: the social ageing model and the home-based ageing model. To deal with China's projected ageing population, more researchers advocate integrating home care and social support to build an old-age support system(Cao, 1997).

2.4.4 Facilities for the elderly

Li and Liang(2021) assessed the current status of senior facilities in China, defined the different types of senior facilities, and provided solutions to deal with them from various perspectives. According to the relevant literature, there are five primary types of institutions for the elderly in China: Community the elderly day care centres, apartments for the aged, nursing homes, gerocomium, and hospices(Dou & Feng, 2015; Xiao, 2023; Zhan et al., 2011; Zhan et al., 2008; Zhang, 2015) (Diagram 2-11). Based on a comprehensive analysis, Wang(2002)outlined the principles to be followed in the future planning of residential areas and essential ageing facilities(Table 2-5).




Design Principles	Key Content
Supplement and refine national standards.	Building upon the existing supporting facilities outlined in the Code for Planning and Design of Urban

	Residential Areas ²⁶ , enhance and supplement facilities for the ageing population.
Centred around the AIP	Meeting the AIP requirements for diverse family structures(such as families with the elderly, the elderly living alone, and older couples)
Enhance the functions of service provision for the aged, support for the ageing, and care services.	Tailored services for the elderly, highlighting healthcare, nursing care, wellness support, social interaction, and cultural and recreational activities according to the characteristics of both the very the elderly(aged 80 and above) and the elderly(aged 60–79).
Insufficient support for supplementary family-based ageing care	Community support networks alleviate the pressure on middle-aged people in raising children while caring for aged parents.
Meeting healthcare and nursing needs	Establish community healthcare facilities, care homes, and home-based hospital beds to enhance services for the elderly with disabilities and those of dependent the elderly.
Satisfy cultural, social and mental needs	Establish senior activity centres, activity stations, and activity rooms to provide spaces for cultural activities, recreation, fitness, and emotional support.

Table 2-11. Principles of the Future Planning of Age-Friendly Residential Areas(Wang, 2002)

Although the construction and development of aged care facilities in China(Table 2-12) are progressing well, the elderly in China currently prefer to live at home(Liu et al., 2022). Many factors influence the elderly's acceptance of aged care facilities in China. Jiang et al.(2011) found that the willingness of the elderly in China to live in aged-care facilities is rising. However, income and funding sources are the main factors limiting the development of aged-care facilities. Compared with the elderly who live alone, the elderly with high psychological resilience are more likely to choose to live in aged care facilities such as nursing homes, retirement homes, or welfare institutions(Tang, 2023).

²⁶ National Standard 'Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards' issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/xw_zt/moe_357/jyzt_2019n/2019_zt13/zcwj/201906/W020190606322674731563.pdf

Facilities	Description
	<p>A nursing home is a medical institution staffed by medical and nursing staff to provide medical care, rehabilitation promotion and hospice care within a certain area for long-term bedridden patients, patients in advanced palliative care, chronically ill patients, senior the elderly who are unable to take care of themselves and other patients who require long-term care services.</p>
	<p>Community senior day care centre refers to a facility that provides day care services such as meal provision, personal care, health care and rehabilitation, leisure and recreation for semi-disabled the elderly who cannot take care of themselves completely and need some care in their daily lives in the community.</p>
	<p>Apartment for the aged is a type of flat for the elderly, with a system of catering, cleaning, cultural and recreational services, health care and integrated management.</p>

	<p>The hospice is a combination of rehabilitation, care and senior care. the elderly with medical insurance can apply for a long stay. We mainly take in patients with stroke, paralysis, post-operative rehabilitation, terminal tumours, dementia, hospice care and senior patients who cannot take care of themselves and need medical care for a long time.</p>
	<p>Geracomium is a non-profit Organisation that provides senior care services. Its service targets are the elderly in rural areas who are incapable of working, have no source of livelihood, and are unable to provide support to those who are legally obliged to do so or who have legal support to provide support but are unable to do so. Those homes positioned to do so also accept self-funded the elderly entitled to a pension and adhere to the principle of voluntary admission and free discharge.</p>

Table 2-12. Primary Types of Institutions for The elderly in China(Summarised by the author)

2.4.5 Urban Leisure Activity Space for the elderly

Urban leisure spaces serve as crucial venues for public recreational activities, deeply embedded within the broader context of the leisure economy and fulfilling the everyday social and psychological needs of urban residents(Guo et al., 2008). These spaces encompass both formally designated public domains, such as parks, plazas, and waterfronts, and privately owned yet publicly used facilities, including cafés, shopping centres, and entertainment complexes. The defining characteristic of such spaces lies not solely in their physical attributes but in their social construction as accessible, interactive, and leisure-oriented environments, as recognised by the public(Johnson & Glover, 2013).

From the perspective of temporality and user typology, Sun et al.(2001) employed time-geography theory to explore seasonal variations in leisure behaviour among retired the elderly residents in Beijing. Through this lens, they identified the fundamental patterns of routine leisure activities, revealing nuanced spatio-temporal differentiation shaped by age-specific rhythms of urban life. Similarly, Zhang et al.(2007) applied time-geographic methods through questionnaire-based trajectory mapping in three distinct Beijing communities, further substantiating the temporal and spatial divergence between older and younger populations in their engagement with urban leisure facilities. Their findings confirmed that factors such as age, gender, income, household structure, and residential environment significantly influence the temporality and spatiality of leisure activity, calling for a more inclusive and stratified approach to urban design and social policy.

In parallel, spatial-structural perspectives have enriched the discourse. Guo et al.(2008) conducted an empirical study in Shenyang, identifying a monocentric spatial clustering of leisure activity nodes. Peripheral residents were constrained by increased commuting costs, thereby highlighting spatial inequities in leisure accessibility. Extending this analysis to macro-scale spatial dynamics, Cheng et al.(2021) integrated POI datasets and nighttime light remote sensing imagery to examine the leisure tourism space in Nanchang. Their findings revealed a distinct ‘dense-centre, sparse-periphery’ distribution pattern and uncovered a long-term spatial shift in the urban leisure core, signalling structural evolution over time.

Moreover, a series of recent studies have advanced methodological frameworks by utilising multi-source big data and machine learning. Liu et al.(2023), focusing on Nanjing, constructed a predictive model of leisure participation by fusing mobile signalling data, street-level visual perception metrics, and socio-economic indicators. The study identified both internal physical attributes and external socio-economic conditions as key determinants of spatial heterogeneity in leisure engagement. To complement this, Liu et al.(2021) employed trajectory reconstruction techniques to delineate Urban Leisure Zones, offering a novel meso-scale typology for analysing functional layouts and behavioural clustering of leisure spaces.

Methodologically, the above literature reflects a decisive shift towards data-informed spatial modelling in leisure space research. Substantively, it demonstrates a growing concern with behavioural patterns, spatial justice, and design responsiveness. Collectively, these works mark a transition from static morphological analysis to a more dynamic, behaviorally attuned, and design-oriented paradigm—one that integrates digital sensing technologies, user experience, and socio-spatial logic to inform the contemporary discourse on urban leisure space design.

2.4.6 Transportation

The emergence of a senior society has unquestionably imposed a unique load on China's urban road transport system and introduced new requirements. Li Qiang(1998) presented solutions to Japan's significant road traffic difficulties as the country ages. Consequently, more research has been conducted on age-friendly road traffic. Zhu & Wang(2001) suggested that China's road safety issues have become relatively significant in the context of ageing. Due to declining physical functions and cognitive abilities, the elderly face significant disadvantages in judgment, reaction times, and environmental adaptation, making them particularly vulnerable to accidents during nighttime driving, at complex junctions, and when crossing roads. Furthermore, the existing transport environment proves to be insufficiently accommodating for the elderly in terms of facility design, signalling arrangements, and information delivery. Inadequate coverage of road safety education has left them with weak awareness of potential hazards. Therefore, they suggested the research and analysis should focus on the traffic safety issues of senior groups. Mao et al. (2005)and Mao et al.(2006) have conducted extensive research on road traffic difficulties in ageing cities, including investigating more American traffic concerns and building and operation techniques. In addition, they proposed some solutions to the road traffic issues caused by China's ageing population. Xin et al.(2020) and Wang(2013) also investigated road traffic issues, proposing that building a new urban transport system for an ageing society can increase the effectiveness of public transportation through efficient traffic direction and land layout. In addition, it emphasises the creation of a network for slow urban traffic and improving social and humanistic awareness in road traffic development.

Over the past three years, considerable research has been conducted on age-friendly road transport, primarily focusing on barrier-free design, regional differences, service optimisation, transportation equity, and other factors. Gu(2024) introduced the concept of Elderly and Public Transportation Disabled(EPTD), referring to the elderly unable to access public transport independently, highlighting their frequent neglect in existing transport research and policy. The study recommends more granular transport planning based on big data, such as proximity to bus stops and low-platform vehicle availability, alongside tailored transport services segmented by region and health status. Xie et al.(2022) utilised large-scale real-world high-speed rail ticketing data to systematically reveal behavioural features and potential barriers faced by the Chinese elderly during high-speed rail journeys. Adopting a segmented perspective, they proposed policy-relevant age-friendly improvement recommendations, establishing an efficient “age-friendly” transport research paradigm within China's high-speed rail studies. Compared to traditional evaluation methods targeting “all passengers”, Zhang(2024) adopted an aged-centric perspective and used the Grey Comprehensive Evaluation method to

establish a bus service quality assessment system.

2.4.7 Landscape

The urban green landscape arrangement should also consider the specific demands of the elderly, including High accessibility, versatile functionality, and safety(Hu & Huang, 2021). Mao(1999) primarily investigated and assessed the setup of green landscapes in the elderly's activity areas, highlighting the necessity to adapt it to the demands of the elderly. Based on the usage rate of green spaces in the community by the elderly of different genders and at different times of day, Ren et al.(2025) proposed adding a variety of facilities to increase usage rates. With the spread of the notion of green leisure space research, a growing number of domestic scholars have joined the field. Through their work, Guo and Xu(2009) summarised the research history of green leisure areas for the elderly in China. They suggested that future studies on green space for the elderly should focus more on the factors that influence their utilisation of green space. Additionally, the components of green leisure space for the elderly and the planning system for green leisure space for the elderly must be standardised and made more professional. However, there is no unified guidance or effective practice framework to integrate age-friendly design into green space planning in China(Xie et al., 2019). However, standardisation also presents drawbacks in the context of age-friendly green spaces. Zhou et al.(2022) also pointed out that the rigid top-down approach of China's planning system makes it difficult to account for local population ageing trends and develop people-centred green spaces.

2.4.8 Social Services for the Elderly

Song(2004) pointed out that the essentials of communities provide comprehensive community services to the elderly. The community aged service need to recognise both the similarities and differences among the elderly. Comprehensive services should be developed from general medical, cultural, and recreational activities to spiritual consolation, psychiatric therapy, and end-of-life care. Zhao et al.(2023), through research and analysis of actual cases, argued for establishing a systematic and comprehensive network of social services for the elderly. This system includes a medical, educational, and recreational network. At the community level, following the requirements of the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Ageing Services and the Construction of the Elderly Care System(2016-2020)²⁷, the integration of medical care with aged care services has become a mainstay of policy promotion. After the implementation period of the 13th Five-Year Plan, namely post-2020, China's communities have completed the basic construction of community-based the elderly service systems, encompassing service mechanisms and facilities. However, in the past

²⁷ The 13th Five-Year Plan for the Development of National Ageing Services and the Construction of the Elderly Care System https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2017-03/06/content_5173930.htm

development of community services, in practice, this model faces challenges, including inefficient coordination among multiple departments, inadequate community medical resources, and insufficient government regulation(Wang, 2017). Furthermore, establishing intelligent matching, response, and supervision mechanisms for the elderly services—by integrating data and resources from government agencies, healthcare organisations, and service providers—constitutes a key priority for community service development under the 13th Five-Year Plan for the National Ageing Development and the Elderly Care System Construction. However, implementation continues to face challenges, including technical maintenance difficulties, high usage barriers for the elderly, and data isolation issues(Zhang, 2017).

2.4.9 Discussion

The “Guidelines for Planning the Well-equipped Community”, issued by China's Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, provides policy support and preliminary operational standards for developing public spaces of urban communities in China. Based on the policy requirement, the research on age-friendly communities in China currently focuses mainly on specific aspects, such as livelihood support services and environmental adaptability, particularly regarding the physical and mental decline of the elderly. There is relatively abundant research on living spaces and facilities for the elderly. In addition, although research on age-friendly communities encompasses the field of social services and emphasises the importance of establishing comprehensive social service networks for the elderly, current regional studies in China do not provide systematic guidance on how to effectively mobilise community residents, social organisations, enterprises, and government resources from the perspective of governance mechanisms. Once the framework for community service functions has been established, from an operational perspective, the question arises as to how to ensure the long-term, orderly functioning of the community service system in accordance with the specific circumstances of each community. In addition, most studies on age-friendly community services are based on a passive supply perspective. There is a lack of research on the active participation of the elderly and the construction of community self-organisation networks.

2.5 The Chinese Urban Neighbourhood Governance System

2.5.1 The Chinese Danwei System as the Urban Space Governance System

2.5.1.1 Formation of the Danwei System during the Planned Economy

Period

The “Danwei System” is a special kind of organisation based on China's socialist political system and planned economy(1949-1978), which is an organised form of redistribution under socialism, and assumes various functions including political control, professional division of labour and livelihood protection(Li et al., 2009). The establishment of China’s Danwei system(a core social and organisational model in the planned economy era) was intended to rapidly build up an industrial base under a planned economy in the immediate aftermath of the founding of the People’s Republic of China(PRC). China followed the form of the Soviet Union's Five-Year Plans for National Production, which directed the planning programmes for all state-run factories in the socialist camp countries of the USSR and East Germany, and initiated a wave of construction of modernist communities to establish productive cities²⁸. China's first Five-Year Plan²⁹, which ran from 1953 to 1957, was a phase of urban planning that targeted key cities for the laying out of industrial production facilities due to the weakness of the country's economic capacity, its urban facilities and welfare system, and its industrial base in the early years of its existence(National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2009). One hundred fifty-six industrial bases were constructed and represent a significant urban typology(Huang, 2006). In line with the national production programme, the Danwei System was developed during this period and is unique to China.

The “Danwei System” is divided into two basic dimensions, institutions and organisations; the former is mainly concerned with the institutional dimension of society. The latter is mainly concerned with the dimension of organisational systems and structures. The urban construction under the Danwei System is manifested in the fact that the Danwei community, where each Danwei is located in the community of the Danwei System(Yang et al., 2017), which is the main organisation that became the primary governance of the society during the period of the planned economy(Song, 2017). The so-called Danwei community, on the

28. The Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. <https://cpc.people.com.cn/GB/33837/2534639.html>

29. The First Five-Year Plan(1953–1957): The Five-Year Plan was part of China's national economic plan, mainly covering major construction projects, the

other hand, refers to social communities formed by various departmental organisations, enterprises, and institutions. Examples include those formed by party and government agencies, state-owned management institutions, welfare service providers, and state-owned enterprises in urban society. This social community is called a Danwei, e.g., each state-owned factory is a Danwei, which is a regional social unit formed based on kinship relationships and on which the Danwei community relies for its management, funding, infrastructure, and communities (Fan & Jiang, 2020). A Danwei served as an employment absorber during the planned economy. It includes all production and distribution activities issued by the state. It also undertook the welfare system for the people under its jurisdiction, with the adoption of the dualistic structure system of urban and rural areas of the household registration system to limit the movement of the population. In cities, the population was fixed in the Danwei, where the household registration was located. This gradually strengthened the vertical linkage control mechanism linking the State, Danwei, and individuals (Zhang & Xu, 2012), ultimately forming a Danwei System with Chinese characteristics.

Against the backdrop of the vigorous development of socialist productive forces, Danwei, as a “complex community practice”, aimed to emphasise socialist ideological education and the functions of the professional community (Liu & Fisher, 2006), which was primarily based on organisational control and was an industrial production development and population management mechanism that met the requirements of the times. That was because, according to the theory of the Production of Space from Henri Lefebvre³⁰ (Fuchs, 2019), the Danwei system constructed a unique “perceived space” and “conceived space” structure in Chinese cities, which was an important means for the country to achieve industrialisation and social stability. The perceived space refers to each Danwei as an independent physical unit in the city (referring to the actual physical layout of the Danwei System, such as factories and Danwei communities) and a conceived space with political, economic, and social functions. The residents’ internal structure, organisation, management, and social relationships are intertwined, forming a highly autonomous and relatively closed socio-economic unit (Liu & Chai, 2012). This unique spatial structure originated from the state’s comprehensive control and organisational operation model in the planned economy period. The Danwei System not only directly organised and managed residents’ working and living arrangements but also shaped people’s daily behaviour, social relations, and psychological identity through its unique spatial form (Lu, 2019), leaving a profound impact on China’s urbanisation process.

30 Henri Lefebvre proposed that social space can be categorised into three types: spatial practice / perceived space, which refers to the material space perceived and utilised by people in their daily lives and social relations; representations of space / conceived space, which is the space conceived, planned, and abstracted by planners, architects, specialists, and authorities; and representational space / lived space, which is the space actually experienced and imbued with meaning by people through their lives, culture, art, memory, and symbolic practices. These three spatial categories are interconnected and interwoven, constituting a dialectical whole of spatial production.

2.5.1.2 The Memory and Cultural in the Danwei Period

The Danwei system fostered a “dependent personality” through full coverage of facilities and welfare, binding individuals’ identity, value, and memories to the organisation(Li & Wang, 2009). Life within the Danwei shaped collective contexts and everyday memories. This collective identity emerged through the danwei’s continuous production of collective rituals for its members—such as political study sessions, the establishment of personal role models, and the use of specialised language and symbols(Tian & Wang, 2017). The collectivised environment fostered by long-term “compulsory” gatherings mandated by the Danwei has instilled in its members a behavioural pattern favouring collective activities. This has also cultivated an unconscious, ‘non-compulsory’ preference for collectivism among younger generations raised within the Danwei system(Zhao, 2015). Moreover, this distinctive system and residential model fostered unique customs and culture. Lifestyle practices such as collective celebrations, communal dining, and Danwei cultural performances gradually developed into a specific “Danwei culture”(Jiao & Hua, 2016). Moreover, these enclosed living units within cities, whose members are from different regions within the country, foster a special cultural sphere within the Danwei community. Its internal language, customs, and marriage patterns all carry a sense of “enclosedness”, forming a “unit culture” and identity that is perpetuated across generations(Liao, 2013; Tang, 2012). Thus, the Danwei system represents not merely a form of resource allocation but also an emotional and cultural bond.

2.5.2 Chinese Community System

Since the late 1980s, with the dismantling of the Danwei System and the relaxation of the urban and rural household registration system, the population began to migrate from rural areas to cities, entering a stage of rapid urbanisation. The Chinese government promoted ‘urban community services’ to temporarily solve social service issues after the withdrawal of the Danwei System(Zhang, 2012). Xiang and Hua(2019) divided the development of the Chinese Community System into four stages:

1. Community service stage(mid-1980s to 1990): The Community should focus on providing community services to disadvantaged groups(services for the elderly, people with disabilities, priority groups, families in need, and children) and other convenient services.
2. Community construction trial and exploration stage(1991-1999): Urban Environment construction was proposed, and community construction commenced.

3. Full-scale Deepening of Community Development(2000-2009): *Nationwide promotion of community development, focusing on innovating community management systems and establishing new community organisational structures.*

4. Community Governance Stage(2010-present): *The focus of community development has shifted to building urban and rural community governance systems. To enhance governance capabilities and establish a governance framework characterised by co-governance with residents' participation.*

Therefore, the community building in China began in the 1990s(Fan Minglin & Cheng Jin, 2005). With the decline of the Danwei System, the state gradually promoted the reconstruction of community services and management systems under the structure of “the Street Office+ Neighbourhood Committee”. In 1999, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of China formulated the “Implementation Plan for National Community Building Pilot Areas”. It launched “urban community building pilot projects” in 26 cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Wuhan, officially starting exploratory attempts at urban governance models(Zhang, 2007). Since its comprehensive implementation in the 20th century, the community system has formed a grassroots administrative network organised by communities. Chinese communities are not simply neighbourhoods but urban grassroots governance units with management functions and distinct political intentions. The community system is a platform for the Chinese government to maintain social stability and provide social services(Wong & Poon, 2005). The Complete Residential Construction Guide, issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, explains that it has three functions:

1. Basic unit of urban residents’ daily life circle: Communities are the main venues for residents’ daily life. To provide basic public services such as education, medical care, ageing care, childcare, and cultural entertainment to ensure residents’ basic needs.

2. Basic unit of social governance: Communities are the vehicles through which the government provides services to residents and implements policies.

3. Basic unit of urban structure: As the basic cells of cities. The community aims to solve the “urban ills” caused by traditional urban planning’s single-function and fragmented nature.

Currently, communities are structured as a “government-social integration” administrative framework comprising government agencies such as the CPMSC and Neighbourhood Committees³¹(residents’ self-governance organisations)(Ren,

31 According to Article 2 of the "Organic Law of Urban Neighbourhood Committees of the People's Republic

2012). However, the focus of management has not been entirely shifted to residents or self-governance organisations. Although the community system has taken shape at this stage, community-led service provision continues to dominate the governance model. Residents have little sense of participation and no factual basis for self-governance(Xu & Chow, 2006). In addition, from a management perspective, when communities become the ‘interface’ for the lower-level government to delegate tasks, its governance functions continue to expand. However, the corresponding powers and resources have not developed simultaneously(Li & Fu, 2019). As grassroots governance units, communities face the problem of fragmented governance(Ta Na et al., 2012).

Entering the 2010s, community governance reform shifted its focus to multi-stakeholder participation, social coordination, and the development of information technology. Governance methods gradually moved away from the Danwei model. Communities were no longer limited to administrative leadership, but emphasised coordinated governance by the government, the private sector, social organisations, and residents(Wei, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023; Zu et al., 2023). Lai & Ruan(2020) pointed out that, especially in the context of an ageing population, the government began to introduce more social forces to support AIP and community service systems within communities. It also establishes governance mechanisms that are mainly focused on residents’ needs. Resident participation mechanisms also boomed during this period, emphasising the substantive participation of residents in community building rather than the previous symbolic participation(Luan & Zhang, 2020). In addition, the community system gave rise to many resident groups and self-help networks in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, further promoting this four-party community management mechanism.

2.5.3 Danwei System Transformed to Community System— Post-Danwei Period

Post-Danwei refers to the historical and spatial state of citizens’ transition from “people at Danwei” to “people at social” after the breakup of the Danwei System. This term was developed to understand the complex changes in the reconstruction of the Chinese urban governance network after the demise of the Danwei System(Figures 2-13, 2-14). Post-Danwei communities(Figure 2-15) refer to residential communities that have transitioned from the sites of former Danwei communities. This type of community is different from newly built communities after the Danwei System period. Evidence shows that the travel time, activity

of China”, a Neighbourhood Committee is a grassroots mass self-governing Organisation for residents to manage, educate and serve themselves.

http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c2/c30834/201905/t20190521_296644.html

patterns, and spatial perception of residents in post-Danwei communities are quite different from other types of residential communities (Table 2-16). Furthermore, Lu (2019) points out that life experiences during the Danwei System period continue to shape residents' behaviour and spatial cognition in the post-Danwei period.



Image 2-13. A Danwei's Product Block in the Danwei Period – Lanzhou Chemical Plant, 1958 (from VJshi website)



Image 2-14. A Danwei's Living Block in the Danwei Period – Lanzhou First Woollen Textile Factory (from Sohu website)



Image 2-15. Wuhan Fifth Cotton Textile Factory in the Post-Danwei Period(from Message Board on People's Daily Online)

The characteristics of post-Danwei communities are: 1) That is usually old neighbourhoods with high building density and fragmented public spaces. 2) There are issues such as multiple property rights, overlapping management, and complex governance. 3) The transitional spaces shifting from organisational control to Territorial Jurisdiction³²(Wang, 2021; Ye et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2021). The thesis stands in the perspective of the “post-Danwei era”. It is used to research the change in the influence of neighbourhood life rather than neighbourhood life under China’s current Community System. That is because the term “post-Danwei” refers to transforming the urban governance system and the dynamic process of reconstructing residents’ social relationships, neighbourhood spatial organisation, and cultural memory (Chai et al., 2007).

Zhao and Chai(2013) pointed out that the governance structure of post-Danwei communities still retains the administrative nature of Danwei and faces challenges such as insufficient participation in multi-stakeholder governance, inadequate community infrastructure, and a lack of resident participation. The transition from “Danwei member” to “non-organisation member” means the individual must rebuild their identity within their own market and community, yet this process is often accompanied by feelings of loss and inadequacy(Tang, 2012).

³² Government administrative bodies, operating on a territorial basis, define clear management boundaries and primary responsibilities to establish a precise social governance mechanism for residents(Han, 2017).

Residents have continued to recognise the social services provided by the omnipotent and closed Danwei community(Li & Wang, 2009). Owing to the incomplete development of community infrastructure and the underdeveloped state of social organisations in contemporary society, a cohesive public cultural ethos has yet to take shape. Consequently, public figures frequently find themselves isolated and unsupported. This ultimately precipitates a crisis in public spiritual life, where individuals lose access to shared spiritual resources(Tian & Liu, 2016). Therefore, the post-Danwei era necessitates the cultivation of a new public spirit rooted in community life to bridge the gap in collective memory and cultural continuity resulting from the collapse of the Danwei system.

Dimension	Danwei period	Post-Danwei period
Organisational Structure	Organisations(factories, government departments, enterprises and institutions) are core social entities	Resident communities serve as the primary units of grassroots governance, with the government's sub-district offices and residents' committees playing a dominant role.
Governance structure	Vertical management: 'State – Danwei – Individual'	Horizontal governance: Government-driven + Social organisations + Market forces + Resident participation
Layout pattern	Closed-off: Work, daily life and welfare facilities are concentrated within the Danwei community	Openness: Diverse residential zones, fragmented spaces, relatively dispersed functions
Welfare supply	Comprehensive employer provision: housing, healthcare, education, retirement benefits, and employment support	Government and market-led initiatives, with communities providing basic services, while residents bear a greater share of the burden
Neighbourhood relations	Workplaces are tightly knit, with strong neighbourhoods and pronounced collectivism	Weakening neighbourhood ties, high population mobility, and diversification of social networks
Mobility	Household registration tied to workplace, restricting population mobility	The relaxation of the household registration system has enabled large-scale urban-rural migration into cities
Identity	'Danwei-bound personnel', whose identity, employment and benefits are tied to the	Identity relies more heavily on community and social resources

	organisation	
Governance objectives	Industrial production, social stability, ideological education	Social services, social governance, resident participation, multi-stakeholder collaboration
Limitations	A closed environment, lacking in mobility and diversity	Fragmented management, insufficient resident participation, and inequitable resource allocation

Table 2-16. Comparative Residential Area in the Danwei Period and Post-Danwei Period(Summarised by the author)

2.5.5 Discussion

The Danwei community enclosed space organised production and life, forming a unique urban form that shaped residents' habits, identity, modes of interaction and community culture. With China's transition from a planned economy to a market economy and the increase in population mobility, this governance model gradually lost its adaptability, prompting the state to build a grassroots governance system based on the Community System after the collapse of the Danwei System. From community services to all-around community governance, China's community-building process has revealed a trend from a single administrative control model to one involving the coordinated participation of multiple actors. However, the governance process still faces challenges such as unclear responsibilities, uneven distribution of resources, fragmented governance, and a lack of resident agency. The Danwei community, which was restructured after the introduction of the Community System, is also known as the post-Danwei community. The term "post-Danwei" does not merely describe institutional change but also concerns the reconstruction of cultural memory and social relations. Moreover, the historical legacy of the Danwei era continues to influence community governance practices. The spatial perceptions, behavioural patterns and neighbourly relations established during the Danwei System era still play an essential role in residents' daily lives and community identity. Therefore, in the study of post-Danwei community governance, it is essential to fully understand the enduring influence of the Danwei era.

2.6 Summary

The previous chapter introduced the outline of this thesis, including the research questions, background, objectives, and significance. This chapter reviewed the literature on keywords related to the research questions. Through analysing urban governance transformation, the current status of age-friendly community

construction, research on the adaptability of outdoor spaces for the elderly, and urban planning systems, it was found that research on age-friendly communities in China lacked systematic research on various types of communities, such as post-Danwei communities. Post-Danwei communities demonstrate that the Danwei System continues to exert a residual influence on the transition from the Danwei System to the community system, contributing to the complexity and specificity of research on the adaptability of outdoor spaces for the elderly in post-Danwei communities. Under China's urban planning system, the development of age-friendly environments in such unique communities requires a deeper understanding of the residual influence of the Danwei System. Design theory calls for further advancement, and the formulation of systematic and comprehensive solutions needs to be proposed. Such a perspective holds significant implications for enhancing the quality of urban space in China's ageing society and advancing the modernisation of community governance. Therefore, the next chapter presents the methodological approach to exploring the development model of age-friendly public spaces in post-Danwei communities.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the research reviewed the research progress on topics related to post-Danwei communities, summarised the characteristics of age-friendly outdoor public spaces in communities, the theory of age-friendly community design in China, the development of the governance system of residential neighbourhoods in China's cities, and the operation of China's urban planning system. In this chapter, the methodology involves a systematic introduction to the philosophical concepts and research design of this project, explaining how the research aims presented in Chapter 1 were achieved. That includes the research paradigm, research approach, research methods, and data analysis methods. The chapter also provides a detailed explanation of the reasons for selecting the research methods, the implementation process, and the approval of research ethics.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The research paradigm of this thesis is interpretivism. Interpretivism originated from Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology and George Herbert Mead's Symbolic Interactionism(Wright & Losekoot, 2012). During the transition from positivism to hermeneutics, Symbolic Interactionism and hermeneutic phenomenology jointly established the research foundation of hermeneutics(Tower et al., 2012).

Phenomenology was initially founded by German philosopher Edmund Husserl and later developed further by Alfred Schutz. Husserl emphasised studying how humans perceive and understand the world from the perspective of individual subjective consciousness, proposing that phenomena are constituted through human subjective experience and consciousness (Mbhiza, 2024). Schutz emphasised that the research objects of social sciences differ from those of natural sciences, as social sciences focus on the everyday experiences and subjective meanings of people. He proposed that knowledge in the social sciences must be a “second-order construction” of individual meaning, i.e., constructed based on individual subjective experience (Goldkuhl, 2012). Symbolic interactionism originated from American pragmatist philosopher George Herbert Mead and was further developed by Herbert Blumer. Symbolic interactionism emphasises that humans create and assign meaning through symbols, especially language, in the process of interaction. Blumer outlined the core principles of symbolic interactionism: meaning precedes action, meaning derives from interaction, and meaning is adjusted through interaction (Alver & Caglar, n.d.; Clegg, 2006; Grills, 2007; Puddephatt, 2009).

Interpretivism, as a research paradigm, aims to understand the meaning behind human behaviour and social phenomena, emphasising the importance of the author's subjective experience, social interaction, and contextual background in knowledge construction (Pulla & Carter, 2018). According to interpretivism, knowledge is socially constructed, and researchers should delve into how people generate meaning within specific social and cultural contexts, as well as how research subjects interpret their behaviour and environment (Mbhiza, 2024). Interpretivism posits that social reality is subjective and pluralistic, undetermined by people's perceptions and interpretations. Therefore, interpretivists do not seek universal laws but instead emphasise the details, context, interactive processes, and individual subjective meanings within specific situations (Goldkuhl, 2012; Irshaidat, 2022). Interpretivism is particularly suited for studying social phenomena that cannot be quantified and involve rich subjective experiences. Researchers focus on how individuals or groups understand their own experiences and how they confer meaning on events. This research paradigm is prominent in fields such as sociology, anthropology, education, political science, and information systems (Thanh & Thanh, 2015; You, 2024). Additionally, the interpretive approach emphasises a deep understanding of individual behaviour and interactions within specific social and cultural contexts, arguing that only by contextualising phenomena can their essence be accurately grasped. Therefore, it is suitable for research that requires a deep understanding of social complexity and diversity (Mallon, 2007; Pulla & Carter, 2018). Moreover, knowledge from an interpretive perspective is not objectively given but is constructed through language, interaction, and social practice. This perspective can reveal how power, discourse, and social structures influence individual and group behaviour (Kelliher, 2005). Consequently, interpretivism typically employs qualitative research

methods, such as interviews, observations, and narrative analysis, which can capture the rich, dynamic, and multifaceted real-life experiences of the research subjects(Mbhiza, 2024; Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

However, except for interpretivism, pragmatism is also a common research paradigm like interpretivism in design studies(Goldkuhl, 2012b). Pragmatism derives from the Ancient Greek term(action). It is a philosophical school that developed in the 1870s(William, 1943). Peirce was the creator, while Wright(1830-1875), Holmes(1841-1935), Fiske(1842-1901), James S.(1842-1910), and others developed and expanded the concept. Pragmatism is defined by its underlying theory. Its theory of truth is agnosticism in disguise. Experience is the source of knowledge, and what may be known is restricted to experience; what lies beyond experience is unknowable, and there is no reason to inquire about it. No matter what is said, it is impossible to attain wisdom outside of experience. To resolve this issue, one must still rely on expertise. Truth is merely an explanation of experience, one that makes sense of the complexity of experience. If it makes sense, it is the truth, and it is valuable to us, while ignoring the so-called objective truth(Feng, 1991). Unlike empiricism, which focuses solely on external perceptions, and rationalism, which relies solely on reasoning, pragmatism incorporates logic, sensations, and personal experiences(William, 1943).

The difference between the interpretive paradigm and the pragmatic paradigm lies in their application objectives and research methods. First, in terms of objectives, pragmatism emphasises the practical application of knowledge, using it to solve real-world problems and achieve concrete changes; interpretivism, on the other hand, focuses on deep understanding and description of phenomena. In terms of methodological choices, pragmatism advocates for methodological pluralism, prioritising a problem-oriented approach and combining multiple methods. Meanwhile, interpretivism leans more towards specific qualitative methods to achieve a profound understanding of social phenomena and individual experiences(Goldkuhl, 2012a).

The reason for choosing interpretivism as the research paradigm is decided by the research topic background. The thesis is based on the problem that the municipal government's work programmeme arguably cannot be implemented in post-Danwei communities due to their limited conditions, making it difficult to achieve all of the national development goals for age-friendly communities. Therefore, based on the research background, this thesis aims to explore how post-Danwei communities can achieve the principles and requirements of age-friendly communities proposed by the state in an alternative manner. That requires a multilateral approach based on the development process, site conditions, community culture, and behaviour of the elderly in post-Danwei communities. Based on the elderly's life experiences, site conditions, and community culture, the proposed design guidelines align with their interests and national

development goals. Interpretivism emphasises the significance of human behaviour, which is inconsistent with the thesis's exploration of how the Danwei system has shaped the behaviour of the elderly. Second, the contextual nature of phenomena emphasised by interpretivism means that the results derived from those exist within specific contexts. According to Carroll(2014), who discusses the extent of transferring policy ideas from one nation to another and the potential hurdles to this process. In theory, research can help identify effective techniques in other countries, which can then be implemented more broadly within the nation to which those are applied. However, it is uncertain whether any lessons can be learned from this experience. Therefore, from the perspective of the development stage of post-Danwei communities and the particularities of community culture, interpretivism is consistent with the thesis that replicability is limited to post-Danwei communities rather than being a universal characteristic of all communities. Finally, interpretivism emphasises understanding how research participants construct its perceived reality from its perspectives, which is also consistent with the exploration of the causes behind the daily behaviour of the elderly in post-Danwei communities, thereby providing recommendations for improving the community environment in line with the elderly' behavioral motivations.

3.3 Methodology

The methodology of this project is a single case study, using the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community as an example, which is an exploratory-explanatory type of case study. A case study as a research approach usually refers to an in-depth and detailed exploration and analysis of one or a few specific individuals, organisations, events, or situations. The objective of a case study is to understand complex phenomena, and it is particularly suitable for examining how a specific phenomenon behaves in real-world contexts. According to Yin's(Yin, 2018, p. 15) definition of a case study:

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon(the case) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident. —Case study research: design and methods.

Case study research often emphasises depth and specificity, contextualised analysis, and the integration of diverse data sources. Case studies enable an in-depth and detailed exploration of research subjects within their contextual settings, with a particular focus on the interactions and connections between phenomena and their backgrounds(Annamalah, 2024). It also recognise the importance of context in explaining phenomena rather than seeking broad generalisations(David, 2007). Standard research methods, including interviews,

observations, and literature and policy reviews, use diverse data collection methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the research subject (Baharein & Noor, 2008; Fitzgerald, 1999; Florenthal & Ismailovski, 2019).

Case studies can be descriptive, used to illustrate the characteristics and processes of a phenomenon. They can also be explanatory, aiming to reveal the causal relationships or mechanisms underlying phenomena (Tsang, 2013). From the perspective of the type of research question, according to Peter Swanborn's summary, explanatory case study is particularly suitable for answering "how" and 'why' questions, especially when researchers cannot control the research variables but want to understand the phenomenon fully (Miskovic, 2011). The descriptive case study, on the other hand, addresses questions like "What happened?" (J.-édéric Morin et al., 2021). In terms of application outcomes, the descriptive case study primarily focuses on detailing phenomena, while the explanatory case study prioritises exploring theoretical frameworks or hypotheses, explaining mechanisms or causal relationships (Blatter & Haverland, 2012). In terms of results, an explanatory case study often constructs theory models or mechanisms, while the descriptive case study often provides a rich contextual description (Baškarada, 2014). To date, the development of the case study has broken through the limitations of 'exploration only' and is now widely used as a research tool for theoretical explanation and mechanism analysis (Shishkov, 2020).

First, the research question of this thesis is complicated and contextual. The outdoor environment of post-Danwei communities is not just a spatial issue but also involves multidimensional factors such as historical legacy, property rights, population structure, and governance mechanisms. Unlike new communities formed after the Danwei system was abolished, post-Danwei communities are highly contextualised, with significant differences in the transformation paths, physical environments, and resident compositions during the process of "De-Danweiisation". Second, the research background of this thesis is based on the gap between theory and practice in a complex context, namely, that China's community development goals and municipal government policies cannot be fully implemented in post-Danwei communities. Finally, this thesis focuses on "post-Danwei communities" as a typical field to explore how to improve the friendliness of the outdoor environment to the elderly under conditions of limited spatial resources and fragmented governance. The case study can help to understand complex situations and bridge the gap between theory and practice, emphasising the influence of context on practical behaviour (Tobita, 2025). That is due to the research logic of case study, which reveals social mechanisms through the "ventilation" process of a specific case and combines specific characters and contextual conditions to conduct explanatory reasoning with horizontal and vertical connections (Qu, 2020). In the study of post-Danwei

communities, the case study can focus on individual cases for in-depth analysis, providing references for similar community strategies. The selection of typical communities as the case study is consistent with the time and research resource constraints of the research as an individual researcher. Furthermore, explanatory case study is suitable for answering “how” and “why” research questions (Yin, 2018) and constructing theories and mechanisms (Innes et al., 2000). The thesis first describes the community's past development history and current status to clarify the effects of policy interventions. It then examines the demand for post-Danwei transformation and the implementation mechanism, which aligns entirely with the characteristics of the explanatory case study.

3.4 Research Type

This project is a qualitative study. Hammersley (Hammersley, 2013) defines qualitative research as:

A form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasise the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis.

Qualitative research is a rigorous exploration of “meaning” and “understanding” aimed at comprehending human motivation, beliefs, and behaviour within a specific context. The interpretive methodology typically employs qualitative research because it emphasises that social behaviour emerges within particular cultural, historical, and social contexts. Qualitative research enables researchers to immerse themselves in the field, capture complex social interactions and subtle differences in interpretation, and thus more accurately reflect the real-life situations of the research subjects (Schwartz-Shea, 2014). This thesis aims to understand the experiences and challenges faced by the elderly in post-Danwei contexts, particularly in relation to AIP. It also seeks to identify how to strike a balance between policy requirements, the needs of the elderly and local conditions in the post-Danwei context.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Inductive Reasoning

This project is a research project on induction reasoning. Induction refers to the process of inferring explanatory frameworks from a set of observed and understood cases without prior theoretical assumptions, and when the theoretical

framework is not yet clear(Locke, 2007). Induction generates new theories or concepts through pattern recognition and summarisation of the data(Hayes et al., 2010). This reasoning approach is particularly suited to highly complex contexts.

The conceptual framework of this thesis determines that it must be an inductive study. This research is based on the evolution of the Danwei community from the Danwei era to the post-Danwei era, taking into account social development trends. It provides recommendations for improving the age-friendly environment within the community, which is a highly typical inductive process. From the research paradigm of this thesis, since interpretivism emphasises a deep understanding of phenomena within specific contexts, inductive reasoning allows researchers to develop theories or explanations from rich data details, aligning with interpretivism's fundamental principle of "developing knowledge from individual experiences and meaning construction"(Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). In terms of the research strategy employed in this thesis, case study typically avoid starting from established theories and instead generate theories or explanations through in-depth exploration of one or more cases(Ridder, 2017). In addition, inductive reasoning is a natural fit for a case study(Eisenhardt, 1989; Moglia et al., 2011).

3.5.1 The Research Method

This thesis is followed by a discussion of research methods, including fieldwork, which encompasses interviews(both walking and personal), Focus Group Discussions, and Workshops. The author drew upon Keates and Clarkson's Linear Structured Age-friendly Design Approach with the Seven Tiers model(2004) to design the research framework for this thesis(Figure 3-1). The framework presented below may also be applied to other regional ageing research projects. Consequently, the data collection process commenced with an understanding of the complex context of the post-Danwei community. This thesis gathered the life experiences and perspectives of the elderly within the post-Danwei community. Ultimately, it identified the needs and challenges of AIP within the post-Danwei community, subsequently constructing a theoretical framework grounded in policy objectives. Subsequent sections provide the details of the research process and specify the methodologies employed at each stage.

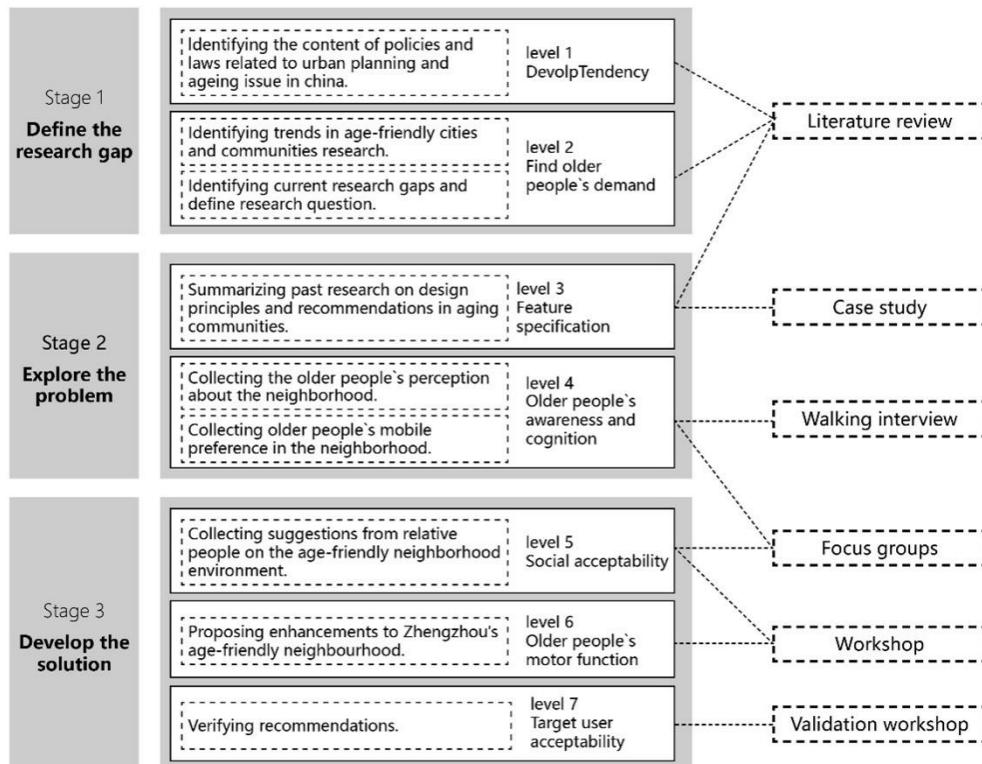


Figure 3-1. The Research Process(from the author)

3.5.1.1 OBJ: Conduct A Literature and Policy Review to Understand the Policy Context in China and the Principles of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

Stage 1 is about defining the problem through literature and policy review. The literature review is defined as a comprehensive analysis, summary, and review of a specific topic(Chris, 2018). Gessler and Siemer(2020) summarise the steps of a literature review based on Chris(2018) proposed framework for Literature review:

- (1) The definition of the scope(specify the research problem and research question);
- (2) data selection(systematic search and eligibility screening: define the sources and search terms, include the relevant research, and screen and read the selected research to exclude the ineligible research);
- (3) data processing(critical appraisal: assess the quality of the selected research to exclude poor or inappropriate research; analysis: select the relevant data from the different texts, and critically evaluate the extraction; synthesis: synthesise and re-analyse the pooled data) and
- (4) data reporting(present the findings, and discuss the conclusions and limitations of the review).

The primary purpose here is to find a research gap. That has been done through a literature and policy review and analysis. This step identified the trends in age-friendly research and the requirements of policies and regulations for age-friendly communities. Through this analysis, the author figured out the development trends.

3.5.1.2 OBJ2: Identify Requirements for Developing Post-Danwei Age-Friendly Community Public Spaces, Take Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as an Example

After OBJ1 identifies the specific problem, in the next logical stage, OBJ2 explores the current issues and defines the functionality and practicality of the post-Danwei outdoor public space. Moreover, the insight into the current situation of the community, including its layout, community culture and the daily behaviour patterns of the elderly. That is aided by understanding the past development path. Proposing different perspectives on upgrading guidelines and testing for later stages plays a vital role in these design phases. The methods employed in this OBJ are case study, Walking Interviews, and Focus Group Discussions.

Those OBJECTIVES can be addressed by dividing into different sub-objectives.

3.5.1.2.1 Research Method- Case Study Method, Walking Interview and Focus Group

Sub-objective 2.1: To explore the design direction of the Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Upgrading Project for the research site.

This stage used the case study as the method: By studying the past development history of the site and understanding the evolution and causes of the construction of the target case. The development direction of the age-friendly community during the post-Danwei period can be obtained by combining the current situation of target cities and policy development goals. In an intensive approach, a case study is a comprehensive investigation that collects data on a particular instance(Heale & Twycross, 2018). The case study enables the comprehension of the complete development process related to the research topic, as Swanborn(2010, p. 3) mentioned in *Case Study Research: What, Why, and How?*

Alternatively, we could select participation in a trade union during a certain period as our case. Evidently, based on our results, we will not be

able to say much about the 'political participation of the adult population in this country' or about 'participation in Labor union in general'. However, we can probably formulate very interesting conclusions about how differences in participation developed within this selected case. This might suggest some tentative ideas about the phenomenon in general and at least provide us with suggestions for designing further research. In a case study, the author collects information by studying the characteristics of individuals involved in the same case and their relationships. Instead of the word 'people', one could use the words "organisations", "events", "nation-states", or any other entities. However, even when studying entities like these, one should not overlook the fact that it is people who act and react to one another within the given case.

The data of Sub-objective 2.1 were acquired from: Individual interviews, Archival Data from documents(including newspapers, official statistics, policy documents, visuals, maps, plans, and diagrams). The case study can be an excellent method for the pre-collection. The principles and information collected from the case study can be verified through the walking interview. The problem identified in the case study can be further explored through a walking interview.

The community's historical development process is divided into two parts. One part is the collection of historical data on the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community. The other is individual interviews with residents who experienced the Danwei system and the community system(based on the date of establishment of the Danwei, the participants must be the elderly) and community managers during the Danwei system period and the post-Danwei transition period. The two methods complement each other in interpreting the meaning of the data and verifying the authenticity of the materials. The interviews with residents, community staff and managers are three semi-structured interview scripts(see Appendix 2), each divided into three sections: the establishment of Danwei, the prosperous development of Danwei, and issues related to the transitional period of Danwei. These correspond to three significant transformative periods in urban grassroots governance and neighbourhood development strategies since the founding of the People's Republic of China. The content of the interviews with residents focused on their experiences of community life and community layout. The questions in the interviews with managers focused on community governance, management, and development strategies. Archival data were collected from the Zhengzhou City Archives, the Community Party and Mass Service Centre(CPMSC) collection, the personal collections of Danwei community managers, online news reports, government websites, and relevant papers.

Sub-objective 2.2: To identify how the elderly feel about their neighbourhood in

Zhengzhou.

This stage uses walking, in-depth, and semi-structured interviews with 21 elderly people to gather their preferences and experiences of using existing public spaces in the community. King & Woodroffe(2019) defined the walking interview as a research method where researchers conduct face-to-face interviews with participants while they are walking.




The purpose of this stage is to identify the needs of the elderly and clarify the motivations for service provision. Electronic devices record audio and video during the walk-in interviews. Before conducting the interviews, the author first visited the streets near the interviewees' homes and took photographs to document the public environment in the community. The interviewees for the walking visits and the specific route choices are described and explained below. The recording device is the DJI Pocket, which is small enough to be used for video and video recording.

The participants determined the interview route, and the author conducted the participant observation and semi-structured interviews. While following the research participants on their walks, the interview was conducted based on the interview script written by the author. When conducting semi-structured interviews, the author further questioned the participants' responses, and the starting point referred to the Twelve Urban Quality Criteria(Table 3-2) created by the Gehl Studio³³. Asking respondents to use the Twelve Urban Quality Criteria allowed participants to describe their experience of public spaces more comprehensively for each question. This increases the consistency and validity of the data. That makes it easier to code the data for the following analysis stage.

33 TWELVE QUALITY CRITERIA(GEHL STUDIO), <https://decid.co.uk/tools/tool-8-twelve-quality-criteria-gehl-studio/#:~:text=Gehl%20studio%20developed%20the%20%E2%80%98%20Twelve%20Quality%20Criteria,assessing%20whether%20it%20lives%20up%20to%20the%20criteria.>

TWELVE URBAN QUALITY CRITERIA

LOCATION:

-  = YES
-  = IN BETWEEN
-  = NO

Protection	<p>Protection against traffic and accidents. Do groups across age and ability experience traffic safety in the public space? Can one safely bike and walk without fear of being hit by a driver?</p>	<p>Protection against harm by others. Is the public space perceived to be safe both day and night? Are there people and activities at all hours of the day because the area has, for example, both residents and offices? Does the lighting provide safety at night as well as a good atmosphere?</p>	<p>Protection against unpleasant sensory experience. Are there noises, dust, smells, or other pollution? Does the public space function well when it's windy? Is there shelter from strong sun, rain, or minor flooding?</p>
Comfort	<p>Options for mobility. Is this space accessible? Are there physical elements that might limit or enhance personal mobility in the forms of walking, using a wheelchair, or pushing a stroller? Is it evident how to move through the space without having to take an illogical detour?</p>	<p>Options to stand and linger. Does the place have features you can stay and lean on, like a façade that invites one to spend time next to it, a bus stop, a bench, a tree, or a small ledge or niche?</p>	<p>Options for sitting. Are there good primary seating options such as benches or chairs? Or is there only secondary seating such as a stair, seat wall, or the edge of a fountain? Are there adequate non-commercial seating options so that sitting does not require spending money?</p>
	<p>Options for seeing. Are seating options placed so there are interesting things to look at?</p>	<p>Options for talking and listening/hearing. Is it possible to have a conversation here? Is it evident that you have the option to sit together and have a conversation?</p>	<p>Options for play, exercise, and activities. Are there options to be active at multiple times of the day and year?</p>
Enjoyment	<p>Scale. Is the public space and the building that surrounds it at a human scale? If people are at the edges of the space, can we still relate to them as people or are they lost in their surroundings?</p>	<p>Opportunities to enjoy the positive aspects of climate. Are local climatic aspects such as wind and sun taken into account? Are there varied conditions for spending time in public spaces at different times of year? With this in mind, where are the seating options placed? Are they located entirely in the shadows or the sun? And how are they oriented/placed in relation to wind? Are they protected?</p>	<p>Experience of aesthetic qualities and positive sensory experiences. Is the public space beautiful? Is it evident that there is good design both in terms of how things are shaped, as well as their durability?</p>

Table 3-2. Twelve Urban Quality Criteria (from Gehl Studio)

The participant's physical activity capacity determined the time duration. This method aims to walk with the participant in the 15-minute living circle of the target community. The 15-minute living circle was first proposed in the Shanghai City Master Plan(2017-2035)³⁴ and subsequently defined as a community-based spatial unit concept in China's Complete Residential Area Guidelines. Its goal is to build a network of urban community living circles within a 15-minute walking distance that are livable, workable, and tourist-friendly.

Sub-objective 2.3: To collect the elderly's views on the improvement of outdoor Spaces in the community.

The project intends to use 3 Focus Group Discussions as a research method for exploring the elderly's perceptions for improving the community's public space. Parker & Tritter(2021) define a focus group as a qualitative data collection method in which researchers gather opinions on a specific topic through controlled group discussions. The core of this method lies in stimulating deeper and broader discussion content through interaction among participants.

This inquiry seeks to discover differences and disputes among the elderly in the neighbourhood. The elderly's perceptions, as collected during the walking interview, served as the reference for the semi-structured interview questions in the Focus Group Discussion.

3.5.1.2.2 Considerations for Method Selection

For OBJ2, an in-depth interview is an excellent opportunity to learn about the perceptions and knowledge about Danwei and post-Danwei culture held by the elderly. Additionally, qualitative research frequently employs open-ended questions and participant observation(Trent & Cho, 2020). Such a flexible method is also ideal for contextual understanding during walking interviews(DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). That makes the interview results more comprehensive(Mashuri et al., 2022), thereby providing a more comprehensive mapping of the life experiences of the elderly.

Concerning the selection of structured or semi-structured interviews, Gomm(2008, p. 322) argued that semi-structured interviews focus on constructing meaning, or what is in the interviewee's mind. Structured interviews, on the other hand, are well-suited for conducting breadth interviews because set

³⁴ Shanghai Master Plan(2017-2035),
<https://ghzyj.sh.gov.cn/cmsres/65/65a89e5a71aa44b1a7b8f45cbefaf414/0eb1d6b486b06ea9ed60decd246a4ee7.pdf>

questions are preferred when collecting vast quantities of data. However, for this study, semi-structured interviews are more appropriate. That is because semi-structured interviews are good for preventing the interviewer from having too much control over the situation, preventing participants from saying what they think and feel or revealing much about their everyday activities (Farthing, 2016, p. 129).

When exploring the historical and developmental processes of special organisations, such as Danwei communities, the case study emphasises the need for an in-depth understanding of the context, yielding realistic and explanatory research results (Heale & Twycross, 2018). In particular, for complex social phenomena embedded in a social context, researchers can gain an in-depth understanding of the unique development path of a community from multiple levels (Crowe et al., 2011). Furthermore, the case study can use a longitudinal perspective to integrate multiple sources of information and thoroughly present the entire historical evolution of the Danwei community from its origins, development, and transformation to its current state, as well as provide an in-depth explanation of the social behaviour of residents and the process of change (Sitorus, 2021; Zainal, 2007). Therefore, the case study is a suitable choice for explaining the characteristics of communities against the social context of the Danwei system and identifying the causes of the current state of post-Danwei communities. Therefore, it is particularly well-suited for researching community history and transformation.

The walking interview is selected because the perceptions of use among the elderly and the analysis of the local cultural background lend themselves well to walking interviews (Marcotte et al., 2022). The lengthy nature of interview data collection makes it challenging to comprehend individual experiences and local culture in a limited amount of time. According to the 'naturalistic' perspective, social research aims to capture the characteristics of naturally occurring human behaviour. However, this can only be achieved through direct contact, not by inferring what people do in artificial settings, like experiments, or from what they say in interviews elsewhere (Hammersley, 1998). Compared to the sitting interview, the walking interviews offer a unique perspective by allowing people to share their observations and attitudes toward the environment, thereby generating more comprehensive data (O'Neill & Roberts, 2019).

Focus Group Discussion is one of the qualitative research methods that provides a deeper understanding of people's views and perceptions of a particular issue by exploring their diverse experiences and beliefs (Woodyatt et al., 2016). Meanwhile, the Focus Group Discussions are a method that many academics have used in age-friendly related topics. These experiences have proven the effectiveness of this method to be highly effective and relevant to this topic (Fjell et al., 2021; Flores et al., 2019; Kuo et al., 2018; Kurniawan, 2008; Li & Woolrych, 2021; Parekh et al.,

2018; Plouffe & Kalache, 2010; Roberts et al., 2020; Shellae Versey et al., 2019; Van Hees et al., 2018).

3.5.1.2.3 Participants Recruitment

The participants recruited for the community's historical development process section included five female residents who had lived in the target community since its establishment as a Danwei community and four male residents who had also lived in the target community since its establishment as a Danwei community. Three managers were from the Danwei period community. One senior leader was primarily responsible for determining the direction of Danwei management. And two managers were specifically responsible for Danwei community management and service implementation. Four community managers, the staff from CPMSC, were responsible for the community's daily management during the community system transformation period. A total of 16 participants were interviewed individually in this stage.

During the Danwei system period and the community-based building period, managers selected one leader and one ordinary employee, respectively, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the community's operation during different periods. Leaders were often the ones who formulated work plans, while ordinary employees were responsible for implementing. The work experience of these two groups often provided two distinct perspectives: one based on the overall situation and the other based on specific conditions.

The selection of participants for the Walking Interview was based on the following criteria: a) residential status: living with family, living with a spouse, living with a caregiver, and living alone; b) health: the presence of illnesses that limit one's time and scope of activities; and c) gender. The number of participants is one male and one female, according to the variables a) and b), for a total of 14 individuals. These three variables were chosen because they may affect the mobility routes, memory, and comprehension of the subjects. Illness status has been shown to affect the rate of cognitive decline in the elderly(Kujawski et al., 2018). Castilla(2022) confirmed the influence of gender on visuospatial working memory, mental rotation and navigation strategies. The residential status variable was selected because the emotional and caregiving support received by the elderly varies between generations, and the culture of Chinese families in which grandparents help raise their grandchildren is distinctive(Guo et al., 2021). A total of 21 participants were finally recruited through the walking interview method. In order to ensure that the responses obtained from the walking interviews are genuine and not deliberately designed to highlight the achievements of community building. The walking interview participants' recruitment does not include any of

the elderly in the current management position in the community. For the same reason, the recruitment of participants for the subsequent focus group also did not include any individuals currently working in management positions in the community.

3 Focus Group Discussions were with the elderly(aged 60 or over). Participants were selected from the following people: 5 females, the elderly, for a Focus Group Discussion, 5 males, the elderly, for a Focus Group Discussion, and 6 mixed-gender, the elderly, for a Focus Group Discussion(3 females and 3 males). Due to the limitations(see Section 7.5), in recruitment, there were only two female participants in the actual mixed-gender Focus Group Discussion.

To recruit participants for the interview of the community's historical development process, Walking Interview and Focus Group Discussion, the author did the following:

1. The placement of adverts in the CPMSC, which is the district government agencies at the community level. Advertising is done in the form of posters on bulletin boards at the entrances and exits of the community.
2. Visit places in the community where the elderly frequently congregate(e.g., parks, squares and the common room in the CPMSC) and put up the poster on the Noticeboard of those places. The posters designed by the author contain the content, purpose and conditions of the recruitment. The posters were displayed in these places for participant recruitment(Appendix 3).

3.5.1.2.4 Validity and Reliability

The above participant recruitment criteria are theoretically logical and practical. However, this sampling method cannot guarantee that the collected interview data covers all possible answers to the interview questions. To avoid data omission, the research conducted supplementary interviews during both the case study and walking interview phases. That is, after completing the interviews as outlined in the recruitment plan described above, the author continued recruiting based on the original recruitment criteria until no new ideas emerged from the interviews. In the case study interviews, the author recruited nine residents who had lived in the community since the establishment of the Danwei system, three managers from the Danwei period, and four community managers from the transition period following the Danwei system. Since the leaders from the Danwei period were at a higher level and there were fewer of them, the author only recruited one.

3.5.1.3 OBJ3: Develop an Age-Friendly Environment Upgrading Design Guidelines of Post-Danwei Communities for Plain City in China

OBJ3 is to develop the research outcomes of the thesis that meet the needs of the

elderly and align with the policy goal. The outcomes are represented in the form of guidelines. The upgrading guidelines are proposed based on the results of the previously mentioned Objectives, the characteristics of the post-Danwei community, the needs of the elderly in the post-Danwei community, and the development requirements of an age-friendly community in China. All of these are studied deductively by the author, who also proposes guidelines for upgrading age-friendly communities suitable for the post-Danwei context.

3.5.1.3 OBJ3: Develop Age-Friendly Environment Upgrading Design

Guidelines of Post-Danwei Communities in China

3.5.1.3.1 Research Method-Workshop

To confirm the validity of this project's results, the effectiveness of upgrading the model was discussed through a Co-design Workshop, with the needs of the elderly from the post-Danwei community and the government's policy goals as a reference. Workshops are a qualitative research method in which data is collected by guiding groups of people to participate and collaborate in discussing issues or constructi(Graham et al., 2015; Kaźmierska & Wygnańska, 2019). In the co-design workshop, the co-creation guideline method used is the co-design board game. Board games are a commonly used structured game method in workshops. Tabletop games may be risky to deliver, but it also provide unique dialogue around designed artefacts(Fullerton, 2024, p. 15). Elements such as cards and everyday temporal living spaces have been used to guide multi-party dialogue, thereby jointly constructing objectives(Odendaal & Zavala Barreda, 2024). The author designed the board game used in this study, and the details of the process are introduced in Chapter 6. After the guideline was created through a co-design workshop with personnel who would participate in implementing the community renewal project, a validation workshop was conducted to assess the guideline's actionability.

3.5.1.3.2 Considerations for Method Selection

The reason for choosing a workshop is its interactive, process-oriented, and data-diverse nature(Ahmed & Asraf, 2018). Its objective is not merely to collect “facts” or “data” but rather to deconstruct the premises, assumptions, and implicit meanings that participants hold regarding a specific issue through interaction(Charlton & Hayes, 2017). That leads to consensus or multi-party dialogue, ultimately forming knowledge with practical significance and feasibility(Poldma et al., 2012), such as design guidelines. In an interpretive framework, this multi-perspective dialogue is the key means of revealing “how

social action is interpreted and given meaning by participants”(Kögler, 2005; Reed & Skovajsa, 2015; Sullivan, 1984). The post-Danwei community is a complex entity in which administrative management and residential groups overlap, and its operating mechanism involves the participation and collaboration of multiple parties. Therefore, in selecting methods for forming and validating the guideline, it is necessary to develop a theory of multi-party co-construction effectively; thus, a workshop is a suitable choice. Board games are used in co-design workshops to encourage participants to think openly and express themselves in diverse ways(Brandt et al., 2008). This pre-designed game format protects each participant's opportunity to express themselves, particularly when differences in social status exist among participants, thereby naturally regulating the power dynamics arising from such differences(Rüller et al., 2022). Additionally, structured pre-set elements can incorporate policy concepts and preliminary research findings through game props such as cards, discussion frameworks, and cue cards, which aid participants in understanding the issues and make the discussion process more engaging(Jessen et al., 2018; Odendaal & Zavala Barreda, 2024). More importantly, this form of collaborative work can facilitate positive interactions between academic researchers and planners who design for the community, as well as actual community managers, enabling the participants to share work experiences and compensate for each other's knowledge gaps(Myers et al., 2018).

3.5.1.3.3 Participants Recruitment

The recruitment of participants at this stage primarily involves experts from outside the community. Therefore, unlike the poster-based recruitment in the previous stage, contact information from the participants' institutional websites is primarily used to send invitation emails or messages. The author waited for responses from potential participants. The principle for recruiting participants for the co-design workshop was that their work must be directly related to the development of age-friendly communities. The participants included academic personnel related to the topic, community operators(CPMSC staff), provincial compilers of the age-friendly environment building standard, and businessmen in the senior service industry. The recruitment criteria for the validation workshop included potential users of the guideline, specifically decision-makers and implementers of government policies related to age-friendly community renewal, as well as planners. A total of 10 participants attended the co-design workshop, while 6 participants participated in the validation workshop. The number of participants in these two workshops was determined by the recruitment principles and methods, as well as the total number of individuals who agreed to participate in the workshops.

3.5.1.3.4 The Workshop Design

The workshop process was divided into three stages (Figure 3-3). The first stage involved the author explaining the research background and fieldwork results, which are described in Chapters 4 and 5. The second stage was the discussion phase for formulating the design guideline, conducted through a structured discussion using a board game developed by the author. This game is essentially a gamified representation of the discussion process, where gamification serves as a serious game format designed to enhance participants' emotional engagement without an entertainment purpose (Sebastian Deterding et al., 2011). This approach has been increasingly used in recent decision-making studies (Aubert et al., 2022; Deng et al., 2014; Efthimiou & Tucker, 2020; Konstan et al., 2012; Mavroudi et al., 2022; Roy & Warren, 2019), particularly in urban design and urban planning (Tan et al., 2020). Given that decision-making processes in these fields often involve multiple stakeholders from different disciplines, serious games have been reported to effectively create a safe space for communication between expert and non-expert stakeholders (Mavros et al., 2022). Additionally, some health studies have shown that tabletop games have a positive effect on cognition in ageing (Gielis et al., 2019; Hopkins et al., 2023; Levati et al., 2024). Moreover, there is an abundance of tools that can help facilitate discussion, such as Streetmix. That kind of online tool for designing the layout of the visualised streets may facilitate discussions among participants regarding street facilities. At the seminar, the author provided two computers and opened the Streetmix website³⁵. If participants needed to use it during the discussion, they could do so independently. The introduction to the game used in the thesis is detailed in the following chapter.

The author developed the discussion framework based on normative documents issued by the government regarding community planning and existing management schemes³⁶. Specifically, it referenced the Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards (Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards, 2018), the National Demonstration Standards for Age-friendly Urban and Rural Communities (Trial Version) (National Health and Wellness Commission, 2020), and the Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-Based Community Senior Care Service Facilities in Zhengzhou (Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government Office, 2024). The selection of these three documents as the discussion framework was based on China's community planning and management system being entirely government-led. Moreover, the nature of these documents justifies their selection.

³⁵ The street mix website <https://streetmix.net/-/3061444>

³⁶ Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-based Community Elderly Care Service Facilities in Zhengzhou City <https://public.zhengzhou.gov.cn/D0104X/8455729.jhtml>

National Standards for Model Urban and Rural Age-friendly Communities
https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/zhengceku/2020-12/14/content_5569385.htm

The Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards(Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards, 2018) is a government-issued normative document for community planning, carrying legally binding force. Therefore, the structure of the design guideline must not violate the framework specified in this document. The National Demonstration Standards for Age-friendly Urban and Rural Communities(Trial Version)(National Health and Wellness Commission, 2020) is an evaluation standard issued by national ministries for age-friendly community environmental development. As CPMSC functions as an external agency of the district government, it plays a key role in the operation and management of community governance at the grassroots level. The institutional nature of CPMSC determines that its primary responsibility is to implement tasks assigned by higher-level governments and undergo periodic assessments. Consequently, the evaluation standards established by national ministries serve as the foundational basis for local work implementation and represent the day-to-day operational objectives of CPMSC. Therefore, aligning the design guideline with CPMSC's work objectives ensures the policy's practical feasibility. Additionally, the Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-Based Community Senior Care Service Facilities in Zhengzhou(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government Office, 2024) is a directive issued by the municipal government, specifying management requirements for community facilities. Thus, the management-related sections of the guideline must comply with local government mandates. By integrating statutory community design regulations, national age-friendly community development goals, and local management models, this discussion framework ensures alignment with both national and local policy contexts.



*Image 3-3. The Workshop Record Photo
(from the author's phone)*

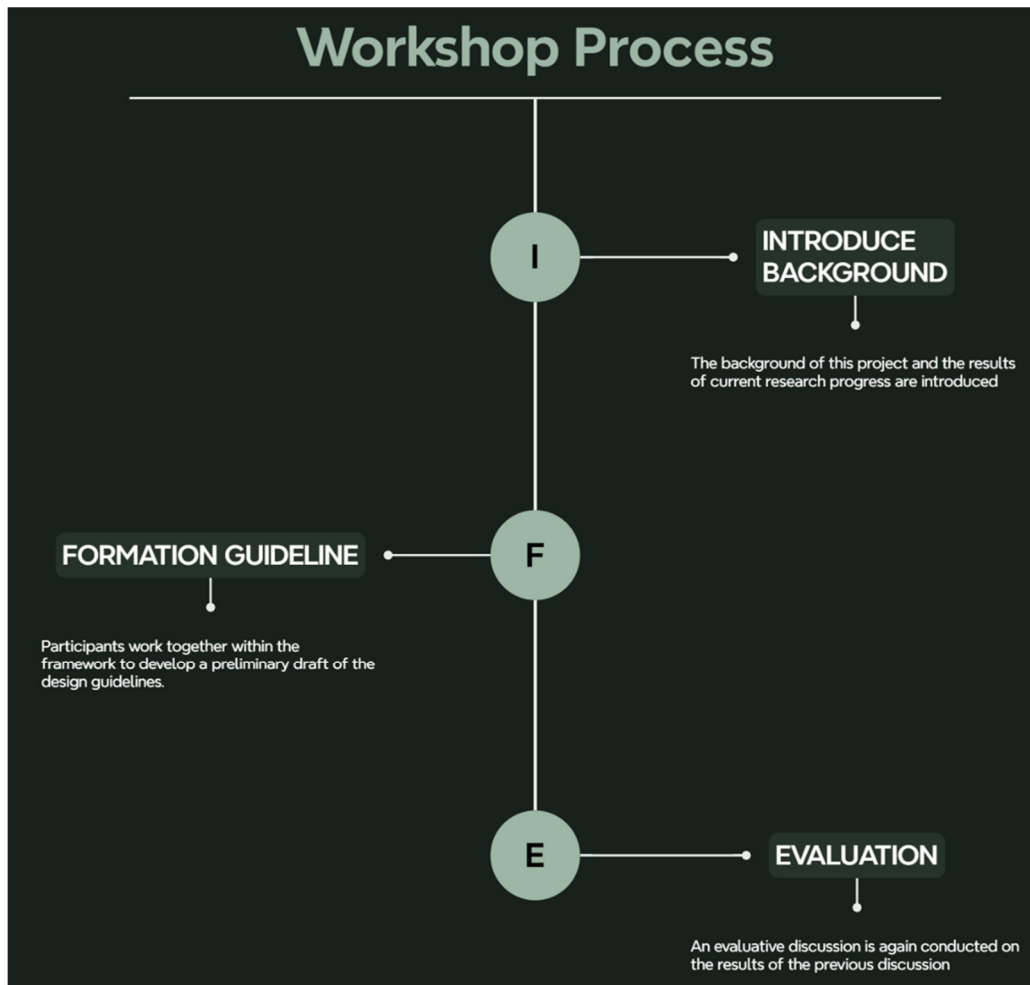


Figure 3-4. The Workshop Process(Drawn by the author)

These are the framework design explanations for the workshop. Returning to the execution of the workshop, following the presentation, the formal session of the workshop commenced with the board game. The author designed the board game used in this session based on the community’s development goals and relevant legal regulations, integrating roles and activities related to community operations and community design into a structured card-based format. The cards were categorised into process cards, function cards, characteristic cards, reminder cards, and supplementary cards, which were used in conjunction with a custom-designed whiteboard.

3.5.1.3.4.1 The Workshop Process

The process of the Workshop is divided into four stages:

Stage 1: Background Presentation- That is a debriefing by the author.

Stage 2: Board Game- Group Discussions, which are group discussions to propose a framework of guidelines for age-friendly community enhancement in

the post-Danwei period.

Stage 3: Board Game- Review Discussion, in which the two groups have a more detailed discussion based on the discussion results in Stage 2. The purpose of this review is to discuss the implementability of the results from the previous stage and iteration.

Stage 4: Summary- In which the representative from each team presents the results. Ask questions and discuss the results with each other.

3.5.1.3.4.2 The Board Game Instructions

1) Overall introduction to the game: principles of the game, number of participants, introduction to the cards, and rules of play.

Basic materials: Discussion framework(each item is pre-cut), matching cards, post-it notes, key points of the current state of the community, board for Stage 1, board for Stage 2, draft paper.

Number of participants: 5 participants per group.

Participant selection requirements: practitioners from the CPMSC, relevant academics, businessmen in the senior care industry, and developers of standards or policies for age-friendly environments.

2) Introduction to paper cards: Including classification, function, and number of cards. The clear, large images of the Game Card are in Appendix 4.

Process cards: 3 cards(Figure3-5)

Content: The flow cards are a schematic representation of the group's stage actions. Those are divided into discussion, review, and iteration. The process cards outline the key issues that participants must consider during the review and iteration phases.

Usage: Place the corresponding card on the board when performing the appropriate action.

Purpose: To remind the facilitator(the author) of the stage that each group is undertaking. To help the facilitator keep track of time.

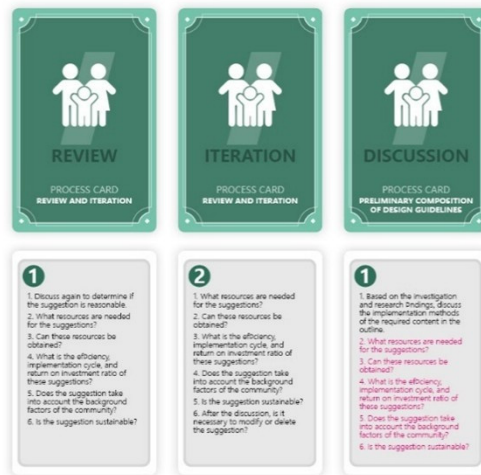


Figure 3-5. The Process Card(Designed and drawn by the author)

Function Card-Role: 10+black cards(Figure 3-6)

Contents: Those cards correspond to the participants who are participant to build age-friendly communities(10 cards), and several blank cards correspond to the series.

Usage: Used in all stages of the discussion to help participants organise their thoughts. For example, what departments and people are needed for this initiative? If more participants are needed than the 10 roles given, it is up to the participants to add to the blank cards.

Purpose: To help organise the participants' thoughts in a group discussion.



Figure 3-6. The Function Serious-Role Card(Designed and

drawn by the author)

Function Card - Method: 11 +blank cards(Figure 3-7)

Contents: Means to solve the problem of AIP in the community and several blank cards corresponding to the series.

Usage: The author has pre-printed supplemental methods cards that list methods previously used in the community. If the desired method was not included, participants could write it on the supplemental cards.

Purpose: To assist in organising participants' thoughts during the group discussion.



Figure 3-7. The Function of the Serious-Method Card(Designed and drawn by the author)

Reminder card: 1(Figure 3-8)

Content: A reminder of the discussion that has strayed from the research question.

Usage: If present when the discussion is complete, the attitude card UNIFY OPINION is played to remind the other participants that the next discussion is going to take place. Suppose a participant has doubts about the validity of a result. An undetermined attitude card is placed next to the corresponding result. Then either continue the discussion or wait until the rest of the discussion is over before discussing the undetermined content.

Purpose: As participants represent different stakeholders with different types of jobs, the relative social hierarchy of positions may lead to the neglect of lower-ranking participants in verbal discussions. To address this issue, the attitude cards allow participants to use actions instead of words, ensuring that each opinion is fully recognised and discussed. Reminder cards can be used as a politeness tool to refocus on the discussion when it gets off-topic. Participants can use these cards to gently remind others to return to the central discussion theme.

Considering that in the Chinese cultural context, directly interrupting and pointing out off-topic discussions may be seen as impolite, especially when there is a difference in the social status of the participants, directly interrupting the discussion of those with a higher social status than themselves can cause a great deal of stress for participants (Jeanne & Helen, 2009). The author recognised the need to utilise visual cues as a means for participants to subtly remind one another, thereby maintaining a harmonious workshop atmosphere and discussion focus.

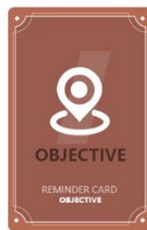


Figure 3-8. The Reminder Card (Designed and drawn by the author)

Attitude card (Figure 3-9)

Content: Undetermined or confirmed.



Figure 3-9. The Attitude Card (Designed and drawn by the author)

The addible card: several (Figure 3-10)

Content: Blank cards

Usage: Participants can write the name of a card on a blank card and use it as a new card if they feel that the card is missing any content during the workshop.

Purpose: Setting up blank cards allows participants to work together to update the functionality of the cards during the workshop discussion.

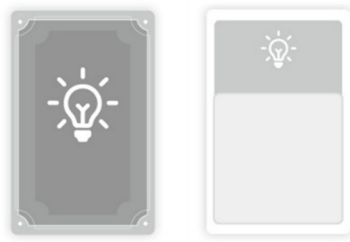


Figure 3-10. The Addible Card(Designed and drawn by the author)

Character cards: 8(Figure 3-11)

Content: These are the analysed results from the community fieldwork that the author presented during the first-phase workshop debriefing.

Usage: Can be used at any stage of the discussion. Refer to it when discussing solutions to the current problems in the community.

Purpose: To help the participants in the group discussion sort out their thoughts and confirm that the content of the framework they propose is in line with the characteristics of the post-Danwei community.

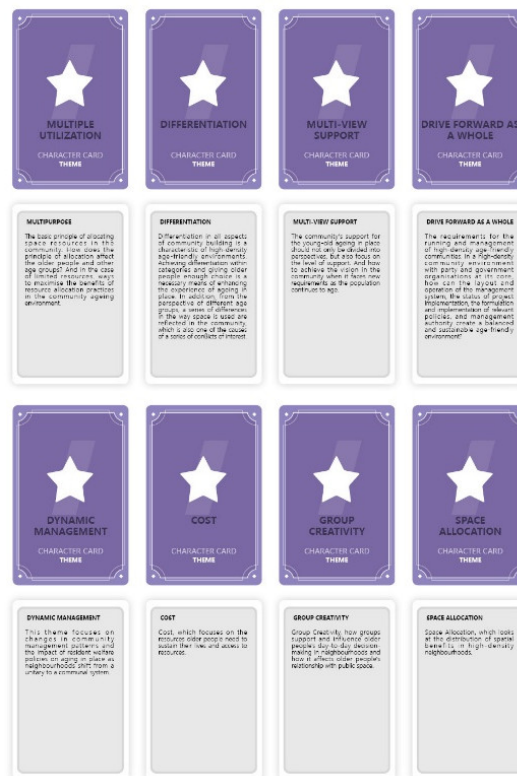


Figure 3-11. The Character Card(Designed and drawn by the author)

These cards are used in conjunction with a custom-designed board(Figure 4).

3) Rules for playing the board game

Game board 1(Figure 3-12) is used during the post-Danwei Age-Friendly Communities Design Guideline Framework Formation Discussion phase of Stage 2.

1. The upper left corner is an attitude card area where participants can place attitude cards to consolidate their views on the outcome of the discussion.
2. The bottom left corner is the notes area for placing function cards and drafting sticky notes(using sticky notes or draft paper from the base material) during the discussion.
3. The middle area is labelled “Frame” and is used to place the content of the discussion frame from the base pack. Participants tear out the content to be discussed from the frame text.
4. The “Ideas” area is located to the right of the “Framework” section and is used to hold the discussion results based on the framework snippets.
5. The section labelled “Results” on the far right was used for the second stage of the evaluation phase to reassess the results of the “Ideas” section and to finalise the conclusions of the discussion.

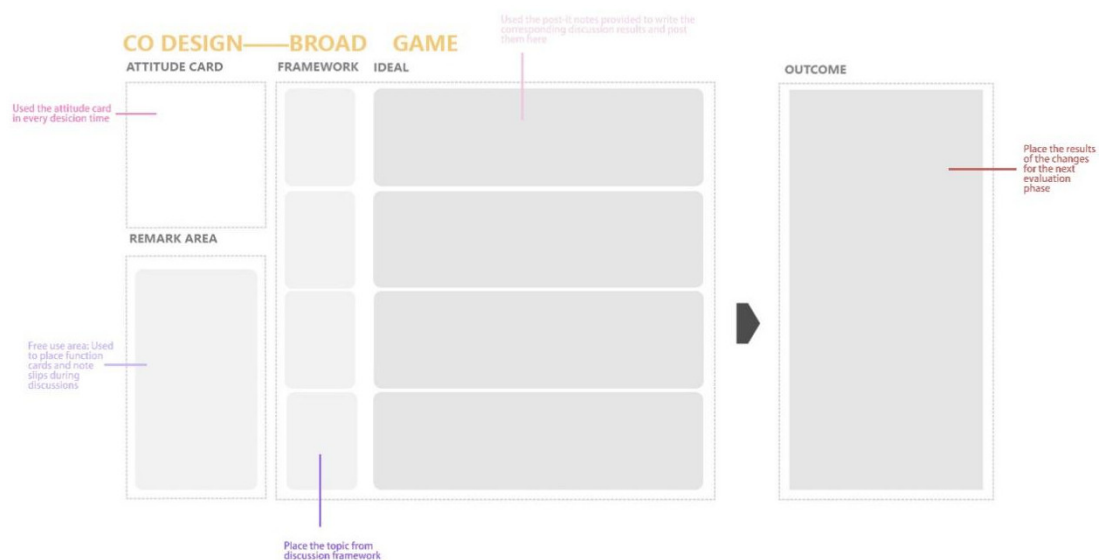


Figure 3-12. Broad 1 of the Series Game(Made by the author)

The review and iteration phase of Stage 3 is used for game board 2(Figure 3-13).

Evaluation of the initial guidelines

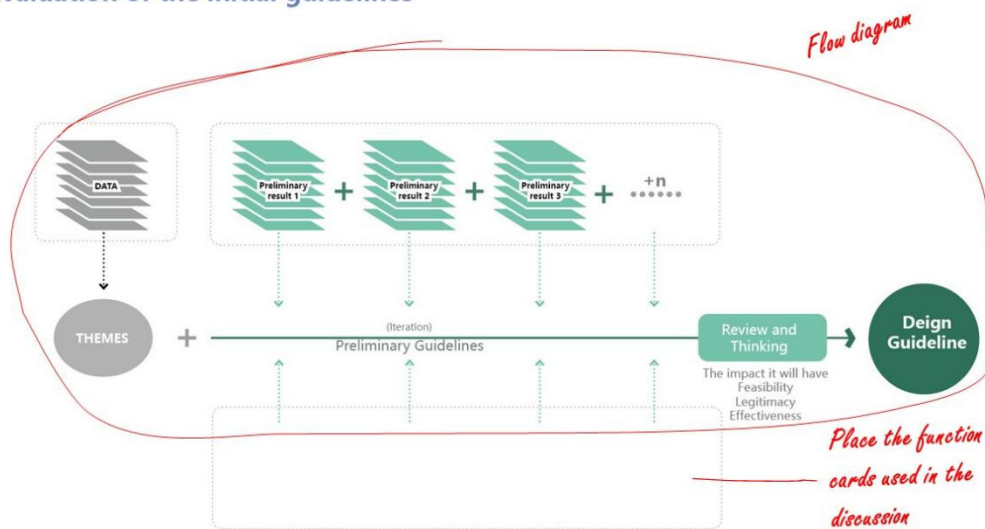


Figure 3-13. The Introduction of Board 2 for the Board Game

The primary function of game board 2 is to process indications and provide a designated area in the lower portion for participants to place the function cards during the review discussion.

Tasks in the review phase:

1. Discuss again to determine if the suggestion is reasonable.
2. What resources are needed for the suggestions?
3. Can these resources be obtained?
4. What is the efficiency, implementation cycle, and return on investment ratio of these suggestions?
5. Does the suggestion consider the background factors of the community?
6. Is the suggestion sustainable?

Iteration stage:

1. What resources are needed for the suggestions?
2. Can these resources be obtained?
3. What is the efficiency, implementation cycle, and return on investment ratio of these suggestions?
4. Does the suggestion take into account the background factors of the community?
5. Is the suggestion sustainable?
6. After the discussion, is it necessary to modify or delete the suggestion.

The above questions were designed based on the existing challenges of the Sanmian Community, its limited development resources, and the community's unique cultural background. The central idea is for participants to consider whether the framework can be effectively implemented within the community and whether subsequent support is sustainable. The group's final discussion outcomes are placed in the OUTCOME section on the right side of Board 1.

3.5.1.3.4.3 Workshop outcome outputs

Through the serious game introduced in Section 2, the workshop conducted group discussions, which were for evaluations of the given framework. The final and retained opinions of the two discussion groups are presented in Figure 7. During the actual implementation of the board game, participants in the third stage did not follow the author's introduced rules of pasting the evaluated discussion results onto the OUTCOME section. Instead, they removed discarded content from the IDEAL section and placed the iterated content within the outlined area of IDEAL. The detailed results can be found in Appendix 5. The final result, however, is that the author has iterated on the workshop discussion result through a review of the relevant literature.

3.5.1.3.5.4 Discussion Process

Considering that there were 10 participants, it might not be possible to ensure that each participant had sufficient time to express their views if they discussed together. Therefore, participants were divided into two groups: the Yellow Team and the Blue Team. The Yellow Team consisted of staff from CPMSC, personnel involved in age-friendly standard formulation, and senior care service company operators. The personnel responsible for formulating age-friendly standards were typically from design institutes or corporate groups and, like representatives of the elderly's care service companies, were practitioners in the elderly's care industry. Therefore, the author grouped them. Blue Team comprised CPMSC staff and academic professionals from related fields. The following section provides a detailed account of the discussion process of the two groups. The division of CPMSC staff into two groups is based on the consideration that the work experience of CPMSC staff, as the actual implementers of community management work, is an essential reference for determining whether the results of the discussion can be implemented in reality.

3.5.1.3.4 Validity and Reliability

To assess the validity of the guidelines, the research subsequently organised a workshop to discuss its feasibility. Potential beneficiaries of the guideline were

invited to share their professional experiences and evaluate whether the guidelines could serve as a reference and be implemented in real-world projects. Since the thesis aimed to establish community renewal and operational mechanisms, which were impossible to implement during the four-year PhD programme, the guidelines could not be applied in real communities to validate their validity. Therefore, the research chose to engage relevant stakeholders, including government project decision-makers, programme implementers, and planners, to collectively discuss which aspects of the guidelines were operationally feasible in their respective work contexts.

3.5.3 Data Analysis

3.5.3.1 The Method of Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis was employed throughout the thesis to process the primary data collected by the author. Thematic Analysis is a data analysis method used to identify, analyse, and report patterns, or themes, within data (Lochmiller, 2021). Undetermined on the theoretical stance, Thematic Analysis can be operationalised in various ways (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In the community's historical development section, the data analysis method employed was Inductive Thematic Analysis. It is a data-driven approach that does not pre-establish a theoretical framework; instead, it identifies recurring themes from the data to capture participants' authentic experiences and meaning-making processes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data analysis method chosen is based on the purpose of the case study, which was to review the development history of the Danwei community, identify the factors contributing to its current state, and suggest directions for future development that should be considered. The description of life experiences among residents in the Danwei system community is a comprehensive data analysis from the participants' perspective. In addition, as a unique community in China where geographical and industrial interests overlap, the construction of the Danwei system is not only a change in the environment but also a part of urban governance and social development. It is necessary to look at the entire development history of the Danwei system from a comprehensive perspective. Finally, as the author is an individual researcher, the chosen methods for interviews were in-depth interviews with a small sample size. This analytical method prioritises depth over breadth, making it suitable for exploring deeper meanings from a limited sample (Mishra & Dey, 2022). Therefore, Inductive Thematic Analysis is an entirely appropriate analytical method. Table 3-14 presents an example of the steps performed in Inductive Thematic Analysis.

Steps	Description	Relevance
Step 1: Familiarization of collected data	Reading collected data which is in form of texts and listen to the audio recorded (if any)	Understanding the context of data from the respondents' sides
Step 2: Creating or generating initial codes	Breaking down research data into units and assigning codes for each group	Making data more organized
Step 3: Searching for themes from codes	Using codes to learn similar patterns provided by certain codes when combined	To be aware of what collected data communicates in a language other people can understand
Step 4: Reviewing obtained themes	Assessing obtained themes and confirming whether they represent the actual collected data.	Assurance of correctness and consistency of themes with the collected data
Step 5: Defining themes	Giving themes meaning that are consistent with collected data, codes and sub-themes	Making themes more understandable by other readers
Step 6: Identification of the most significant quotations	Going through collected data and identify quotations that significantly explain respective themes than others	Enhancing transparency in research and making the final document more narrative and interesting to read
Step 7: Writing up	Preparing the final document in a precise and analytical manner while considering the audience and other rules of writing research works	Communicating research output to the audience in a language that can be easily understood.

Source: Authors and the reviewed literature

Table 3-14. An Example of the Steps Performed in ITA(Mwita & Mwilongo, 2025)

In both the walking interview and Focus Group Discussion sections, Reflexive Thematic Analysis(RTA) was employed. RTA is a qualitative data analysis method that involves ongoing interaction and reflective engagement between the author and the data, leading to the identification of meaningful themes that explain participants' experiences and perspectives rather than objectively “discovering” themes within the data(Braun & Clarke, 2019). RTA emphasises the construction of meaning underlying participants' language, making it particularly suitable for analysing complex socio-psychological phenomena in cultural contexts(Campbell et al., 2021). Additionally, Byrne(2022) pointed out that RTA reveals deeper meaning structures by focusing on the explanatory role of themes in theoretical construction rather than the frequency of their occurrence, resulting in theories that are highly aligned with research questions. For research on the life experiences and perceptions of the elderly in a post-Danwei context, the analysis results need to provide an in-depth explanation of how the Danwei system exerts a lasting impact on the elderly. RTA is particularly well-suited for small sample sizes in such complex contexts. Table 3-15 presents an example of the steps followed in RTA.

Step	Purpose	Operating Procedures
Step 1: Familiarisation with data	Deeper understanding of primary data begins to reveal its initial meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transcribe interview recordings - Read the text multiple times, jotting down initial thoughts in the margins - Refer field notes and reflective journals whilst

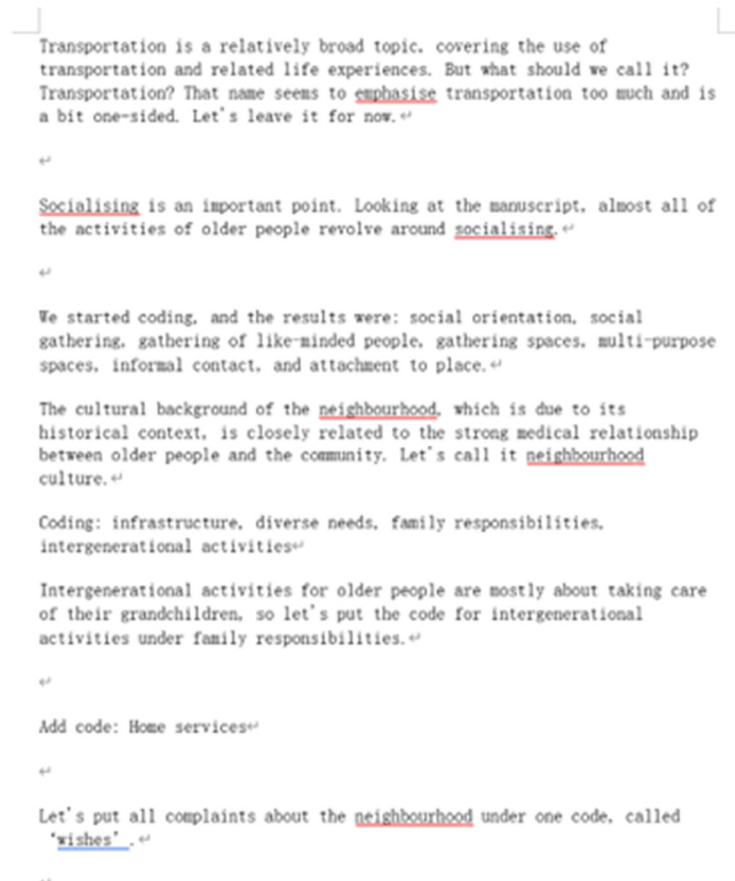
		reading
Step 2: Generating initial codes	Identify meaningful data segments and assign labels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coding the printed transcripts(semantic & latent) - Simultaneously consult reflective notes from the interviews to preserve contextual details
Step 3: Generating initial themes	Aggregate the coding to form preliminary themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Categorise codes
Step 4: Reviewing and refining themes	Assessing the consistency, distinctiveness, and responsiveness of the theme to the research question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-tier review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal consistency of coded data; 2. Representativeness of the overall dataset - Merge/split themes and sub-themes to avoid the error of equating themes with topics
Step 5: Defining and naming themes	Define the core concepts and boundaries of each theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft concise definitions and descriptions for each theme- Avoid excessive sub-themes that fragment the analysis
Step 6: Producing the report	Integrate the analysis results to construct a logically coherent narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise data to establish correspondences between segments and themes(colour and letter labels) - Select representative citations, accompanied by explanatory notes and analysis

Table 3-15. The Steps Performed in RTA: summarised by the author from Trainor & Bundon(2021)

3.5.3.2 Thematic Analysis Process of the Thesis

This section takes the walking interview transcripts as an example to demonstrate the coding and theme development process of RTA. During the coding process,

the author refined the codes through three iterations. First, the author coded the interview transcripts sentence by sentence to form the original codes. Then, the author reviewed the codes again, investigated the research questions, and modified some of the codes. Figure 3-16 shows a screenshot of the author's thought process during the code iteration. After the supervisory team provided feedback on this version of the codes, the author made further revisions to finalise the codes.



Transportation is a relatively broad topic, covering the use of transportation and related life experiences. But what should we call it? Transportation? That name seems to emphasise transportation too much and is a bit one-sided. Let's leave it for now. "

"

Socialising is an important point. Looking at the manuscript, almost all of the activities of older people revolve around socialising. "

"

We started coding, and the results were: social orientation, social gathering, gathering of like-minded people, gathering spaces, multi-purpose spaces, informal contact, and attachment to place. "

The cultural background of the neighbourhood, which is due to its historical context, is closely related to the strong medical relationship between older people and the community. Let's call it neighbourhood culture. "

Coding: infrastructure, diverse needs, family responsibilities, intergenerational activities "

Intergenerational activities for older people are mostly about taking care of their grandchildren, so let's put the code for intergenerational activities under family responsibilities. "

"

Add code: Home services "

"

Let's put all complaints about the neighbourhood under one code, called 'wishes'. "

"

Figure 3-16. The Author's Coding Diary

After the coding was completed, the author began mapping the codes from the walking interviews. Based on the research questions and project context and drawing on literature and relevant materials, the author began to reflect deeply on the codes (Figure 3-17). It finally resulted in the themes presented below.

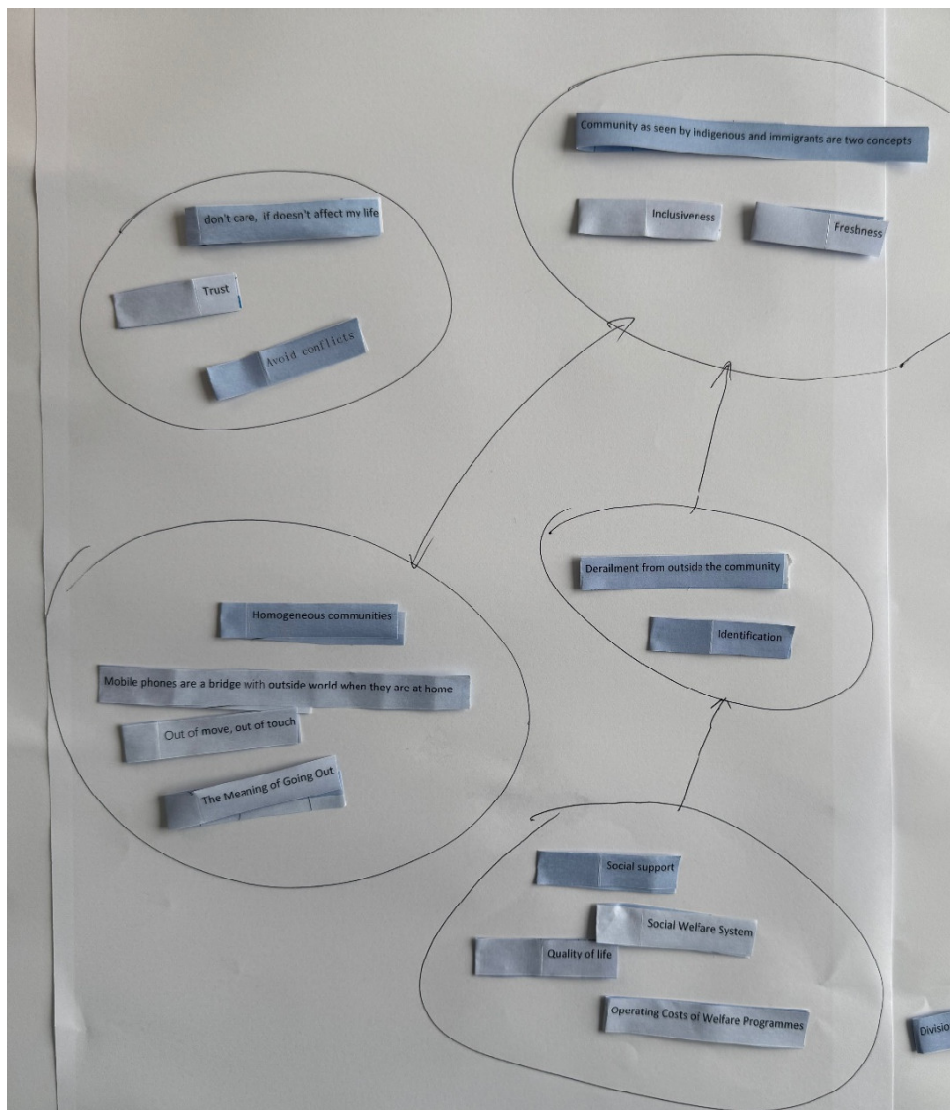


Figure 3-17. The Process of Forming A Theme(from the author)

3.5.3.2 The Software for Analysis

The data analysis for the interviews conducted throughout the research process is performed using NVivo software. Qualitative data from the content of the interviews is analysed through a process of inductive, topic summary and thematic analysis utilising NVivo 12(Azungah, 2018). NVivo is the most popular software for qualitative research analysis and is suitable for qualitative research. It can collect, organise, and analyse audio transcripts, Focus Group discussions, and interviews.

3.6 Ethical Approval

To avoid potential emotional stress, privacy breaches, or social consequences for participants resulting from the use of methods such as interviews, observations, or questionnaires, each such research project must undergo an ethical review to safeguard participant rights (Bouma & Diemer, 1996). Additionally, the role of ethical review is not solely supervisory; this review also prompts researchers to systematically assess the rationality of their research design, thereby enhancing the overall quality and transparency of their research (De Wet, 2010). Currently, ethical approval is a fundamental component for universities worldwide to ensure the legitimacy and credibility of research (Châu et al., 2023). Therefore, the research process of this thesis adhered to the criteria and regulations of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Ethics Committee (FASSEC) at Lancaster University and was carried out after obtaining research ethics approval from FASSEC at Lancaster University (Appendix 6). Participants who contacted the author via the recruitment methods outlined in sections 3.5.1.2.2 and 3.5.1.3.4 received a Participant's Information Sheet, which detailed the content, purpose, and arrangements of the data collection part, as well as how the participants' rights are protected. The participants' information sheets specifically explain that participants' privacy must comply with the Data Protection Act of 1998, as required by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Lancaster Management School Research Ethics Committee of Lancaster University. The data collected were securely stored in accordance with the university's data security guidelines and were accessible only to the research team. Participants also signed a consent form before each data collection session, confirming their agreement to the anonymous use of their responses in the research findings.

3.7 Summary

Guided by the interpretive research paradigm, this thesis employs a qualitative research method, utilising the case study as its primary research strategy. Specific research objectives are designed around the three core aims of the thesis, serving to achieve the research's systematic goals. Objective 1: Through a literature and policy review, identify the institutional, spatial, and service challenges faced by post-Danwei communities (former Danwei communities after transformation) in China for building an age-friendly environment. Objective 2: Focus on the selected post-Danwei community case study. Conduct an in-depth analysis of the development history of the selected post-Danwei communities through case studies, explore the causes of the current situation, and collect the real-life experiences of the elderly in the community through walking interviews, supplemented by Focus Group Discussion discussions to integrate the needs and suggestions of senior people for multiple environmental improvements. Thematic

analysis was used to code and analyse the collected audio transcripts. The final thematic interpretation provided a targeted orientation for the future development of post-Danwei communities. Based on these findings, in the third stage, Objective 3, the author invited the individuals involved in the operation of the age-friendly community renewal project to participate in a co-design workshop to jointly develop a guideline for enhancing the age-friendly environment suitable for post-Danwei communities. The above research design fully reflects the cognitive logic of subject-contextualisation interaction from an interpretive perspective, ensuring the interaction and reflectiveness of the research process and laying a solid methodological foundation for the application and promotion of subsequent results.

Chapter 4 The Case Study of Past Development of the Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the methodology used in this thesis. Starting from this chapter, the completion process of OBJ2 and OBJ3, as mentioned in the method, was gradually introduced. This chapter explores the evolution of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory(The official Chinese name now is Sanmian) community, interpreting the ideas and residents' experiences of industrial production community building during the Danwei System period. It demonstrates how the factors of the social system and the internal management factors of the Danwei contributed to the development process that led to the current state of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community. This also serves as the basis for the development of the Danwei community after it transitioned into the community system referred to as the post-Danwei community. This chapter utilises archival materials to gather relevant information regarding the development of the Danwei's construction and management, thereby clarifying the evolution of this community. Interviews were conducted with leaders who managed the community during the Danwei System period and the transition period following the Danwei System. To summarise the biases in the construction and management of the community during the Danwei System period and its transition. The research in this chapter involved interviews with residents who witnessed the whole process of the Danwei System's development and transition, and was later analysed, including Inductive Thematic Analysis. The study explores the characteristics of residents' life experiences during the construction and development of Danwei System communities in China, as well as the impact of the Danwei System on residents' community culture. In conjunction with a series of national policies, the author summarised the causes

of the current situation in the community, and used this as a basis for proposing ideas for upgrading the environment of the post-Danwei community. To rapidly build up an industrial base under a planned economy in the immediate aftermath of the founding of the state, China followed the form of the Soviet Union's Five-Year Plans for National Production, which directed the planning programmes for all state-run factories in the socialism countries like the USSR and East Germany, and initiated a wave of construction of modernist communities.

4.2 Planning Ideas for the Danwei Community

4.2.1 Zhilkombinat in the USSR

Urban planning in the Soviet Union was aimed at exploring the socialist way of living. One of the ways of living proposed by Leonid Sabsovich to explore the Sotsgorod(Соцгород) was known as Urbanism(Crawford, 2022). Sotsgorod(Image 4-1) is a type of urban unit built around a production base with a population of 50, 000 to 60, 000 people. Each production base has complete residential, educational, cultural, entertainment, and transportation facilities, aiming to shape a socialised lifestyle through spatial and institutional arrangements. It advocated the maximum use of industrialisation in economic and social activities to concentrate population and resources towards large cities or industrial centres, and the organisation of people's daily lives through dense residential areas and a well-developed system of public services. Residential areas are required to develop a range of public service facilities to liberate the labour force. It also raises the inhabitants' standard of living and creates the most favourable conditions for collective living. In this view, "high concentration" was both a manifestation of the efficiency of industrial production and an effective way of shaping new socialist social relations(Xiao, 2022). As a result, a large number of the Zhilkombinat(Жилкомбинат) were built in the 1920s and 1930s to accelerate the construction of a new socialist life. The Zhilkombinat(Image 4-2) was the basic Living Combine within the sotsgorod, a standardised form of Living Combine replicated within the same or different sotsgorod(Crawford, 2018). Zhilkombinats attempted to socialise daily life and abolish traditional family life. The closed personal life of the family unit(including household chores) was turned into a communal activity and transferred to a public space to encourage more collective interaction and collaboration among the residents(Crawford, 2022). In the 1950s, the initial introduction of a set of standardised construction methods in the Zhilkombinat significantly improved construction efficiency and compressed construction costs(Reid, 2014). The scientific nature of the spatial layout and the industrialisation of the construction process were achieved(Коряков et al., 1956). The private indoor space of the flats is sized to meet minimum living standards, without separate kitchens and bathrooms. The original purpose of this design was to develop the concept of

collective living and to get people out of their homes and into public areas. Domestic work was developed as a collective activity to strip out women's labour from the household and better serve production. Therefore, in the Zhilkombinat, it is required to build a large number of public spaces and set up facilities such as public dining rooms, public kitchens, and public childcare centres(J. Wang, 2018). This planning idea emphasises enhancing residents' collective sense of belonging through shared spaces and public service facilities. Secondly, Zhilkombinat is standardised in architectural design, and science and technology are applied in planning and design to achieve scientific spatial layout and industrialisation of the construction process, laying the foundation for the construction of modern settlements. In terms of artistic spatial layout, it embodied the beauty of form and composition in the planning and layout of settlements. It became another form of expression of Soviet avant-garde art. This type of planning reflects Soviet political thought, science and technology, and art.

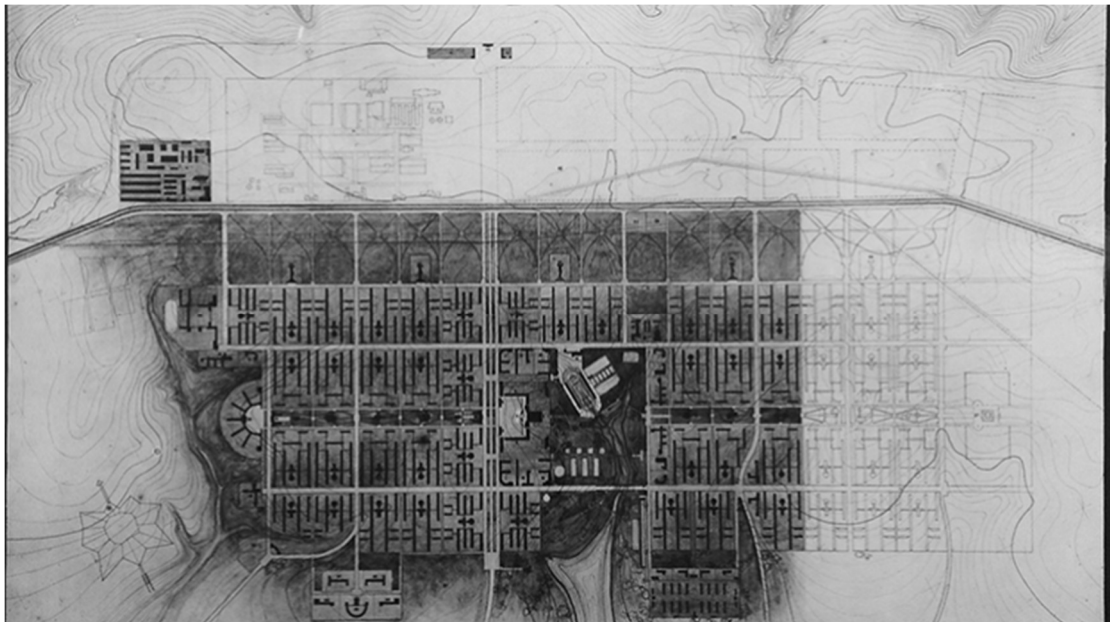


Image4-1. Early site plan, KhTZ sotsgorod, 1930(from Central State Archives and Museum of Literature and Art of Ukraine, TsDAMLM, f.8, o.1, d.263)



Image 4-2. Perspective view of the standard zhilkombinat model, KhTZ sotsgorod, 1930(from Central State Archives and Museum of Literature and Art of Ukraine, TsDAMLM, f.8; o.1, d.263)

4.2.2 Application of the Zhilkombinat Planning Approach to State-Run Factory Danwei Communities in China

Application of Zhilkombinat planning in China's state-run factories and Danwei communities. In the early 1950s, China's large-scale industrialisation was inspired by the Soviet Union's assistance and planning models, which gradually led to the formation of factory Danwei compounds(Danwei communities) as a form of housing. To meet the demands of rapid industrialisation and large numbers of workers, state-run factory dormitories in Danwei communities were built in the form of double-sided corridors or silos, continuing the principles and requirements of the Soviet Union's exploration of “standardisation” and “industrialisation” in Zhilkombinat(Deng et al., 2023). The factory dormitory continues the Soviet design orientation of “simplifying private space and expanding public space”, creating an intense collective atmosphere and highlighting the all-encompassing coverage of residents' lives by the Danwei organisation. The idea of “centralised logistics and public management”

advocated by Soviet Zhilkombinat was also reflected in the centralised planning of dormitories, canteens, bathhouses, kindergartens, medical stations and other public facilities in early Chinese state-owned factories(Chai, 2014). Like the Soviet Union's emphasis on “public catering” and “public childcare” in Zhilkombinat, China's factory Danwei compounds usually had large canteens, public bathhouses, and factory-run kindergartens. This practice, on the one hand, unified the management of logistics and life and improved efficiency; on the other hand, it objectively strengthened the organisational cohesion of the Danwei(Fu Qiang, 2006).

4.2.3 Summary of the Formation of the Danwei System in the

Planned Economy

The Danwei System community was planned as a community model to serve the needs of the Danwei System. With the assistance of Soviet specialists, the central idea was to create a socialist way of life, with the development of industrial production as the main purpose of the grouping, with the requirement of rapid construction and low budgets. This absolute modernist functional planning did not exist with humanistic concern for the inhabitants(Hess & Metspalu, 2019). It was a staged settlement designed to serve both production needs and the country's population management requirements.

4.3 The History of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile

Factory Community

4.3.1 Early Years of Establishment(1953-1957)

4.3.1.1 Development Goals

During the First Five-Year Plan period, due to the limitations of comprehensive national power, it was impossible to equilibrate the balanced development of industrial and urban construction. Therefore, the goal of urban development in this period was to focus on industrial construction as a development strategy. In the First Working Conference on Urban Construction in China held in June 1954, it was emphasised that priority should be given to the development of cities hosting 156 industrial projects during the period of the First Five-Year Plan, in which the expanding cities with a large number of industrial construction projects were required to issue urban general layout plans before 1954. As industrial bases continued to be completed, many workers settled in the new industrial cities. The corresponding construction of public service facilities, such as housing and municipal works, was also completed(Wang, 2021). The Zhengzhou No. 3 State-

Run Cotton Textile Factory recruited two batches of 3136 new workers³⁷ in 1954 and 1956, which included technicians and skilled labourers from the developed textile industrial regions of eastern and southern China.

The construction of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory commenced on April 16, 1954, and was completed on December 15, 1954, with the entire construction period lasting just eight months. This schedule was in accordance with the construction mandate approved by the State Planning Commission in the 53rd Quarterly Document on Planning and Textile Industry(Document No. 3). During this period, the overall development goal was to have the completed industrial facilities operating normally and stably in production within the timeframe specified in the National First Five-Year Plan. The planning scheme for the factory was provided by the USSR, and continued the design concepts of Soviet Zhilkombinat from the 1950s, with standardised design and rapid construction.

During the First Five-Year Plan period, the factory's work primarily focused on completing the production tasks assigned by the state. There are fewer documents related to the factory during this period retrieved from Zhengzhou city archives management, including a report on the investigation of the factory's infrastructure situation by the Zhongnan Inspection Group, a provincial and municipal government working group's instructions on the problems of the factory's infrastructure process, and a report explaining the problems of the infrastructure situation in the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory. During this period, the National Cotton Textile Factory established the basic rules and regulations²⁸. It exceeded the technical and economic targets every year.

4.3.1.2 Site Selection

The factory site is located in Zhengzhou City, on the south side of Zhengzhou Construction Road, west of Tongbai Road, east of the State Cotton Four Factory, and north of the Longhai Railway, and special railway transport was first connected(Figure 4-3). The Cotton Spinning Road runs between the living block and the Production block. The living block and the Production block are two completely closed neighbourhoods, surrounded by walls, with gate guards at the entrance and exit gates. The entire Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory covers an area of about 650,000 square metres, of which the living block site is on the south side of the Production block, with a length of 975 metres from north to south and a width of 995.5 metres from east to west. At the beginning of the factory, a total of 84,128 square metres of staff accommodation was built. The staff dormitory is a three-story flat-type building. Public service facilities include a canteen, infirmary, nursery, and bathhouse. The living block land resources were abundant, and most of the area was free in layout at that time. Participants

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recalled that when the factory was first completed, the residential area had no recreational facilities or green spaces, and no secondary streets were paved near the residential buildings. Furthermore, in the early days of the living block's construction, aside from the primary roads, all other outdoor roads within the block were unpaved dirt roads.

The location of the canteen in 1954 was in the north-east part of the living block in a large temporary hut and a few small houses. Cooking utensils were also very simple, with a steamer and a hand-operated noodle-rolling machine as the most basic cooking utensils, and manual operations such as manual noodle-rolling and manual coal-rolling were used to complete the meal supply of the canteen. Construction of the canteens was completed in 1956, and two general canteens and one Muslim canteen were built in the living block and the Production block, respectively, serving an average of 2,500 people each day. As the factory's production expanded, larger canteens were gradually constructed, and more advanced cooking equipment was introduced.





Figure 4-3. Zhengzhou National Cotton No.3 Factory Location

4.3.1.3 Management Approach

4.3.1.3.1 No separation between production and life

The coding of the interviews (codebook in Appendix 7) and the transcripts of the interviews (Appendix 2) with managers during the Danwei System period yielded a theme titled “the production and life are not separate”. This theme describes how the Danwei management system was structured to function. The dualistic structure system of urban and rural areas that was mentioned in the previous section, whereby the household registration system restricts the immigration of people, is manifested in the Danwei System community as a closed community. The factory (a Danwei) employees and their family members living in the living block. But the foreigners whose household registration does not belong to this Danwei, required a letter of introduction to enter the Danwei block. Factory employees fell under the population management jurisdiction of their own Danwei, with both their work and personal lives centred within the Danwei's premises.

The management institutions of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory are divided into four systems: the production command system, the production and operation management system, the technical management system, and the life and welfare system. The setting up and adjustment of its management organisations are based on the provisions of the state organs, the counterparts with the management of the higher organs, and the production needs in the factory. The state has strong control over the production activities of Danwei. However, the construction of the living block in the factory was further planned and constructed by the factory as a Danwei. In 1954, according to the needs of the production preparations, it was put under the “one-governor-responsibility system”. Set up the office, supervision office, personnel section, planning section, property section, security section, wage section, training section, safety and technology section, installation office, engineering section, machinery and materials section, raw cotton finished products section, health section, general affairs section, and spinning, weaving department, the General Mechanical Department of the three workshops. In 1956, the factory's management system (Figure 4-4) was adjusted to meet the actual needs of the production situation under the “one-governor-responsibility system”. The Production block and the living block were under the unified command of the factory director, but they were managed separately³⁸.

The operation of the living services and the system of employee wages and benefits is financed from the profits of the factory's production. The factory

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production is based on the production target issued by the state. After finishing the year's production tasks from the country government, the remaining funds are used for further construction and development of the factory. Therefore, the operation and further development of the facilities and services of the living block, as well as the services for the employees, are dependent on the production performance of the Danwei. To accommodate the employment of employees' family members in the living block, the factory employed unemployed family members in the Danwei to provide basic living services, such as tailoring, hairdressing, laundry, mini-steelworks, carpentry, repairs, and catering. Full employment and livelihood security coverage for people in the Danwei was realised.

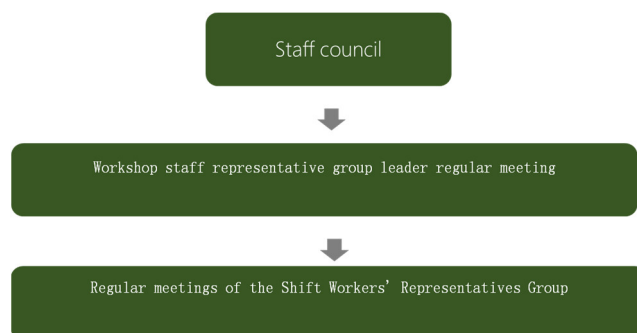


Figure 4-4. Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory Democratic Management System(from the Annals Of Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory 1954-1985)

The form of resident participation within a Danwei during this period was embedded in the production management due to the integrated nature of production and life in the Danwei System. The form of resident participation in decision-making about developments within the community(a Danwei) was the staff congress within the factory, which was the democratic management system of the factory during the Danwei System period, named the three levels of democratic management(Figure4-4). The first staff congress was held in 1955 and served as the system and organisation for staff to participate in decision-making on major issues, management, and supervising cadres. The factory staff congress set up different management groups according to actual needs, including democratic management groups for personnel rewards and discipline, labour protection, production and operation, life and welfare, and staff education³⁰. The main rights of the staff congress are:

1. To decide the annual production plan, financial budget and final accounts, various programmemes for the development of production, and significant issues in the management of the factory.

2. To decide on labour protection, employee welfare, and use various funds.
3. To decide and approve the establishment, modification, and abolition of factory rules and regulations.
4. To decide on major issues concerning the living and welfare of the employees and the allocation programme of the employees' housing.
5. To supervise the proper use of rights by leading cadres and staff at all levels of the factory.

In practice, the labour unions are responsible for the workers' welfare and the social security of the organisations in which they operate; Danwei provides basic amenities, but there is no system of welfare protection for the different population groups during this period. Therefore, the labour union were responsible for providing individual assistance to economically disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

During this period, the birth of the factory and the development of socialist production were the goals, which determined that the development of the living block was not aimed at developing neighbourhood life. Instead, all resources were directed toward keeping the factory's production on track and fulfilling the production tasks issued by the state. Therefore, the living block was essentially a set of supporting facilities for the production block. Regarding the environmental construction of the living block, the factory set up a special greening group in 1956 to the Danwei, prune, water, and raise seedlings according to the greening layout of the whole factory. In 1982, the factory further set up a greening committee. Greening and landscaping became part of the factory's agenda. Its development goal was to build a garden-style factory. The Patriotic Hygiene Committee was set up in 1957 and is responsible for the maintenance of hygiene and rubbish removal from the main street in the living block.

Properly providing logistics services to workers is one of its essential roles. At that time, it only provide the basic neighbourhood living services because. It did not have a mode of operation for quality living services for the residents. It is a non-profit operation of life services, completely unrelated to commercial services. The source of funds of those living service relies on the production profit from factory. -An interview with a Manager of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory

4.3.1.4 Life Experience

The content related to life experiences is derived from a theme developed through interviews with residents who have lived in the Danwei named Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory, since this Danwei community were built and describes the residents' individual and collective life experiences during this period.

4.3.1.4.1 Boundaries between Large and Small Families

This theme focuses on Neighbourhood associations within Danwei life, exploring the intersections and boundaries between collective and individual life. Strongly imbued with socialism, the participants' perception of the period was that the basic cell of society was the Danwei, with the individual family as the basic cellular component. Therefore, during this phase of their lives, the participants transcended the boundaries of individual family life both spatially and psychologically. The idea of treating the Danwei as an extended family, connected to the participants' own small families, permeates the interview scripts from this period. Firstly, the division between public and private space within the community is two parts. The first part is the division of the sovereign pairs of public space, and the second part is the division of the private sphere from the public sphere. The division between the private and public spheres in the individual lives that residents identified with did not follow the physical boundaries between public and private space. Danwei's living block was laid out as shown in the Figure 4-5 for this period, leaving plenty of land space. There were 43 buildings in total, of which 37 were residential buildings(32 for dependents and 5 for singles), and all were three-storey residential buildings(Figure 4-6). The seven public buildings, including a new workers' canteen, a warehouse, a co-operative building, and four electricity distribution rooms built in 1956, were all one-storey buildings(Liu, 2022). The dormitory building clusters mainly adopt a peripheral layout, with the residential buildings in a U-shape, single-row or L-shape layout, forming an enclosed or semi-enclosed space. Each building is made up of designed standard units, and each building is enclosed to form a peripheral grouping of squares. This layout creates a relatively private courtyard-type public communication space and promotes neighbourhood associations. Secondly, the compact layout of service public spaces and residential buildings in the neighbourhood allows residents to enjoy life services within a 5-minute walk(Hu, 2019).

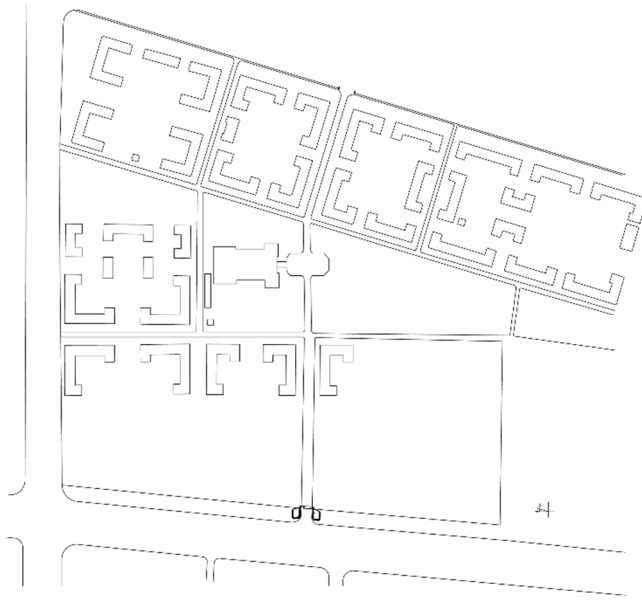


Figure. 4-5 Layout of the Living Block of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory at the Early Stage of Establishment(Summarised by the author from the literature and documents of CPMSC)



Figure4-6. The Staff Dormitory Building(By the author)



Figure 4-7. Formation of Residential Planes at the Beginning of the Construction of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory(modal grid method)(Zhou & Liu, 2022)

The private apartments have small bedrooms(Figure 4-7), each building floor featuring a shared kitchen and restroom. After cooking in the communal kitchen, residents carry their meals downstairs to the open space below to eat together. For male residents, sharing meals with neighbours is one of the main ways to relax after a day's work. Meanwhile, children play around with their friends in the open space in front of the building. Besides, female residents watch their children to make sure they safety while engaging in activities such as handicrafts or picking vegetables with other female neighbours. Residents move part of their personal family life from their small homes to public spaces, blending their family life with collective life. Eating has special significance and ritualistic qualities in the family, reflecting intimate relationships and personal preferences, and is an important part of private life(Biermann & Rau, 2020). Although there are public canteens within the living block, collective dining in the canteens reflects public rules, social interaction, and identity(Li, 2003). This act of eating is a public-domain behaviour that separates individuals from their families and serves as a means of shaping collectivism. Liu(2005) pointed out that the “public canteen” system during China's Danwei System period was a state-sanctioned method of stripping family members of their private dining rights and centralising meals to serve collectivism, collective production, and social mobility. However, the layout of independent family residences within neighbourhood communities fostered a neighbourhood culture that challenged the traditional perception of the family as an independent unit, further shaping residents' understanding of group life that encompasses individual life.

I only carry my stool and sit down with the neighbour in the public space.

At that time, my flat was relatively small, so when my family and I were having meals, we used to go out and sit in front of the building for meals. Because there is almost no space at my home. My apartment is very small. Even a double bed and some basic furniture almost fill the entire place. None of the furniture is mine either. I rented it from the Danwei. The rent is very cheap, almost like a welfare item. The room is very small. Even with a bed for the adult and a bed for the child, it is almost completely filled. ---A Resident of the Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory.

At the same time, participants agreed that the ownership of public space is collective rather than individual. At that time, there was no concept of neighbourhood service and property management in the living block. The maintenance of the environment in the public space mainly relied on the self-consciousness of the residents, and the maintenance of the community environment mainly relied on residents' voluntary cleaning. Sweeping the floor together in the outdoor space or inside the staircases was an agreed-upon habit of the residents, with no unified arrangement or organisation. Participants saw this behaviour as contributing to the collective rather than safeguarding personal interests, in line with the values of personal dedication to the collective propagated by society at the time. Secondly, this awareness was also reflected in the territorial division of the inhabitants when they occupied the space. There are two types of occupation, permanent and temporary. Residents would move a small chair downstairs to sit in the space in front of the building when they went downstairs to eat, and then move it back after they finished eating. This kind of temporary occupation is based on the residents' acquiescence that the ownership of this public space belongs to all of them. Long-term occupation, on the other hand, is when residents recognise that a specific location and a certain range of public space belongs to individuals, and the "owner" of this space will put a small fence around its boundary to indicate its ownership. Areas that could be used long-term by mutual agreement generally referred to specific locations outside some first-floor apartments, specifically, areas away from the resident gathering spots near the first-floor entrances. Examples included the spaces along the outer walls of these apartments (spanning the length of the walls) and small plots of land that residents enclosed to serve as their own small backyards (Figure 4-8). The main reason for this behaviour was the food rationing system implemented during this period, where food had to be purchased with a rationing ticket, and there were rationing restrictions on the type and weight of food that each person could have. Some of the first-floor households used the area outside their windows to engage in a little small-scale farming to increase the family's food source. Participants agreed that the area where the boundaries of their dwellings met the land could be considered a backyard as long as there was access, such as a door or window. This consensus was not based on anything and was more in favour of mutual understanding during a difficult time in life.

Participants thought it was good that their neighbours could get more food as long as it did not affect them.

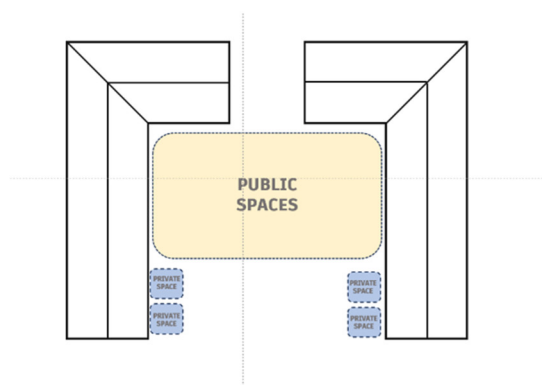


Figure 4-8. Territorial Division of the Public Space in front of the Building(from the author)

Then the children of the neighbours, if their parents don't come back home when they get out of school. I let them to come to my flat for a meal. I get along very well with my neighbours. ---A Resident of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-run Cotton Textile Factory.

In addition to the spatial blurring of the boundaries between the collective and the individual family, intermingling in personal life filled the neighbourhoods of the Danwei of the time. Each dormitory building could be seen as an extended family, internally subdivided into smaller families. Helping neighbours with their family responsibilities within their means. Participants recalled that it was not uncommon then to go and help a neighbour with his or her children who had just finished school while the neighbour was on duty. In their daily lives, residents would share meals in the communal kitchen and at their neighbours' homes, and sometimes, they would share their food with a neighbour who had just left work and did not have time to cook. They go out to the communal bathhouse to take a shower together and go to work together(Figure 4-9). Each family spends most of its time with the collective, and this way of life shapes the community culture of socialist settlements in China.



Figure 4-9. Individual Activities and Neighbourhood Collective Activities of Residents within the Living Block (self-drawn by the author)

4.3.1.4.2 Egalitarianism

At that time, they were all courteous and harmonious with each other and could sympathise with each other and take care of each other. That is to say, there was no such thing as being humble. No one gets along with their neighbours for the sake of personal gain. There were no flats with separate facilities, and when I lived there, it was an old building. There was just one door, and one door was for two families, and all three were quite neighbourly. It is like giving you this, and then a little bit earlier, in there, you don't have to close the door at night, the block is very safe. Secondly, they all care for each other, and when I go to work, my neighbours don't even have to lock their doors, so they take care of each other very well. –A Resident of Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory.

The theme Egalitarianism focuses on the neighbourhood culture of this period. Neighbourhood culture during this period was based on the ideology of socialism, with the goal of eliminating economic differences between individuals and working towards equality and common prosperity between members of the community, with an emphasis on social solidarity and the common good (Firdaus Syam & Syaefa, 2021; Larson, 2021). The penetration of this ideology promotes the formation of common values among community members, including social habits, behavioural styles and ideas. It constitutes the culture of Danwei's neighbourhood, promotes collaboration and harmony among neighbours, and promotes the overall level of civilisation in the community (Rong, 2009). From the early years of the founding of the PRC to 1978, the distribution of income among the state, enterprises and residents was characterised by 'the state getting the lion's share, enterprises getting the middle share, and individuals getting the small share', while the distribution of residents' income was characterised by absolute

egalitarianism(National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2009). Participants recalled that complete egalitarianism was realised during that period, and that the quality of life of each resident was identical in terms of living conditions, wages, and access to household goods. Housing was in standard-sized staff dormitories allocated by the factory, with interior furniture purchased by the factory and rented to employees as welfare housing at a very low price. Access to living goods is uniformly distributed on a ration basis, and there are no differences in dress or diet among residents.

Secondly, in addition to distributive equality, there was gap-filling, which was also an important means of realising a completely egalitarian collectivism. In 1955, after the Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory officially started production, the factory organised training in night schools to fill the gap of some employees who had not been educated before joining the factory. In the internal report of the Party Committee of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory dated 21 November 1959(see Appendix 8), it is shown that the Red Special School was constructed in the Danwei. The Red Specialised School was a special school for the stage of Danwei management and development, with the Party Committee leading a three-pronged internal training school for politics, technology and culture. The school is divided into three sections: the first is the study of Party policies and Marxist philosophy; the second is training in production techniques; and the third is systematic training in basic cultural knowledge. The purpose of its schooling was to fulfil the national plan and accelerate the process of socialist construction. After a series of trainings, the new employees eliminated illiteracy within Danwei and basically bridged the cultural and technological gap between them and the old textile workers introduced to the factory.

4.3.1.4.3 Interaction with the Outside World

This theme focuses on the connection between residents and the outside of the Danwei. The light industry Danwei within Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory was the star of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory's economic development during this period. Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory was established in 1954 under the guidance of the State General Administration of Urban Construction, with the specific help of Soviet experts who were active in the planning process. After an analysis of the nature of the Zhengzhou city as: 1)an industrial city with light industry as its mainstay, 2)a railway transportation hub, and 3)the political, economic, and cultural centre of Henan Province(Wang The 1954 master plan of Zhengzhou shows a new urban area immediately west of the Beijing-Guangzhou Railway(longitudinal) and south of the Longhai Railway(transverse) as the site of the factory, with the railway as the dividing line between the old city and the new industrial area in the western suburbs, which developed simultaneously across the railway(Figure 4-10). In the

early stages of development, the total value of the textile industry in Zhengzhou was 143.47 million RMB(around 14.9 million GBP) in 1957. The author is unable to calculate how much this amount would be worth today, after taking into account the inflation rate. Since China experienced rapid transformations in its monetary system and price mechanisms due to the restoration of the national economy, currency reforms, and periods of significant instability, including hyperinflation in the late 1940s(Hu, 1970). These factors render the purchasing power of equivalent monetary amounts incomparable with today's standards(Burdekin & Wang, 1999). However, official records indicate that 143.47 million RMB represented 36.22% of Zhengzhou's total industrial output value, making it the No.1 industrial contributor in the city that year³⁹. Danwei's important position in the city also brought corresponding social status to its employees, as well as employee benefits. Participants recalled that the Zhengzhou textile-related Danwei was once one of the most popular workplaces for employment in Zhengzhou, not only because of the good security and welfare benefits for the employees' personal lives, but also because of the factory's preferential policies for recruiting employees' children. And there was anecdotal evidence that workers in Zhengzhou textile factories were quality objects in the marriage market.



Figure 4-10. 1954 Zhengzhou City Planning Master Plan(from: Zhengzhou City Cylinder Planning Atlas)

During this period, the residents of Danwei were almost closed in Danwei and hardly went out. Firstly, because Zhengzhou's weak urban infrastructure, including living services and public recreational areas, is almost non-existent, the residents' living services are mainly provided by the Danwei. There is no place

39 In 2018, Zhongzhou Ancient Books Publishing House published 'The History of Mianfang Road Street.'

outside the Danwei worth going. Secondly, people travelled mainly on foot; public transport within the city was not widely available, and fares were expensive. Private transport was almost non-existent. The mode of transport largely limited people's ability to leave the Danwei, and due to the urban/rural dichotomy and the busyness of the factories, there were few opportunities for participants to leave the Danwei, whose closeness was at its highest during this period.

4.3.1.5 Characteristics of Danwei During the Establishment Period

The Danwei living block presents the following characteristics in the early stage of construction:

1. Inside Danwei, management ideas are closed externally and internally; the characteristics of regimentation are consistent with forward development. The management system of fixed and non-mobile personnel.

2. The planning idea continued the Soviet Union Zhilkombinat design idea, using the neighbourhood type building group form to create a collective life for the purpose of architectural design. The design concept of Soviet Zhilkombinat was adopted.

3. Regarding Neighbourhood associations, the semi-enclosed building clusters gradually form neighbourhood social circles, and the open spaces enclosed by the building clusters become outdoor gathering points for the residents. The spatial layout of the residential building dissolves some of the boundaries of the family and creates an extremely close neighbourhood communal life.

4. Through internal education, the socialist value of equality for all was created within the living block, forming a culture of positive contribution to the neighbourhood.

4.3.2 The Danwei System Flourished(1958-1977)

4.3.2.1 Development Ideas

The further construction of the living block depends on the efficiency of the factory, and after the efficiency of the factory has increased, further and better facilities will be added. This idea is based on the principles of Marxist economics. Industrial production is the production of the means of production, which grows fastest in the process of expanding reproduction; urban housing construction is the production of the means of consumption, which grows slowest in the process of expanding reproduction. Therefore, the means of production need to be prioritised over the means of consumption. That is, it is the law of priority for the production block over the living block development. Due to the 1958-1961 period, the political movement of the impact of the National Cotton Factory, it was difficult to maintain normal production work. According to the Zhengzhou No.3

State-Run Cotton Textile Factory records from 1954 to 1985, the intense left-leaning political movement led to the decline of all production capacity. The construction of the living block followed the building of staff accommodations, to solve the problem of resources for staff accommodation, as well as the political movement based on the people's commune. In 1961, after the end of the Great Leap Forward, after five years of restoration of production. 1966 to 1976, during the period of the Cultural Revolution. The production order from the country was seriously disrupted, and productivity declined.

4.3.2.2 Management Approach

No separation between production and life

The Danwei System reaches its zenith as a characteristic social system of political control and redistribution of production results. The state had firm control over Danwei, enabling state policies and leaders' ideas to penetrate factory production and employees' lives fully. Mao Zedong, the leader of the Chinese government during this period, believed that the gains of the Chinese socialist revolution within the Danwei had been eroded by counter-revolutionary revisionism, that a large number of the Danwei leaders did not embrace Marxism, and that these people represented the bourgeoisie—the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution political campaigns through whole country launched by the government. Factories began to reorganise their management systems in response to the government's demands for political campaigns. In 1958, the factory was streamlined and had five workshops: steel cleaning, roughing, preparation, weaving, and motorised. There were economic planning, security, personnel, administration, life and welfare sections, an engineer's office, a canteen office, and Red School; the cadres were temporarily set at 297. In 1963, the Red Guards⁴⁰ office was added to rectify the movement, and the children's primary school was restored to its 1956 setup. In 1969, the revolutionary committee implemented the Danwei of leadership, the establishment of the office, political, labour, production, and logistics, four groups. However, the aim of management, living services, and production was to hit the capitalist erosion. During the period, participants recalled that daily travelling from the Danwei to the outside was not frequent for the residents.

First of all, in the landscape construction, according to the factory record 1961, the factory's flower beds and gardens, in addition to retaining the production block on both sides of the gate of the apple orchard, pear orchard, are farmed with food crops and vegetables. 1965, due to the influence of the extreme 'left' line, the

40 The Red Guards were a mass political organisation primarily composed of students, mobilised by Mao Zedong during the Cultural Revolution. Though not formally part of the military, these ideologically charged units functioned as enforcers in political struggles. By donning military uniforms, the Red Guards constructed a political identity through “symbolic uniforms”, thereby reinforcing their revolutionary legitimacy(Li, 2010).

farming of flowers and grasses, and the diligence of inspection of the enterprise, were in opposition to each other. The higher-ups instructed each Danwei not to keep potted flowers. Therefore, the factory sent all the potted flowers to the city park and destroyed the four flower beds in front of the office building of the Production block and the thirteen-story pagoda pines. 1966, when the 'Cultural Revolution' started, the farming of flowers and factories was criticised as a bourgeois interest, and the flower houses and flower beds were torn down and destroyed. In the period after this, the factory mainly focuses on afforestation⁴¹.

For resident welfare, in addition to the original employee benefits. Implementing targeted assistance to the senior, sick, and disabled residents. According to the Zhengzhou City Federation of Labor union, the situation of the old, weak, sick, and disabled people in the factory survey report shows that during this period, individual retirement began for the elderly, as well as some serious illnesses caused by the type of work or other reasons. These people are now eligible for retirement and sick leave. Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory had 311 old, sick, and disabled workers in this period, accounting for 24 percent of the total number of workers. Among them are 23 old, weak, and disabled employees, accounting for 0.47 percent of the total number of employees, and of the old, weak, and disabled eligible for retirement, 16 people account for 33 percent of the total number of employees. The factory provides targeted welfare payments for disadvantaged groups to protect the employees' lives.

In terms of housing construction, three three-story buildings with an area of 3,498 square metres were built in succession in 1967. Participants recalled that the construction was completed at an unreasonably low cost and in an unreasonably short period because the factory managers were in a hurry to fulfil the requirements of their superiors. The interior walls of these buildings were boarded up, there was no heating equipment, and the quality of the construction was neglected in favour of a uniformity of appearance with the original Soviet-style buildings to cope with the unreasonable construction targets issued by the superiors. As a result, these buildings were also known to the participants as 'Leap Forward Buildings'(Figure 4-11). Four additional 4-storey staff buildings were constructed between 1975 and 1976 to solve the problem of the tight accommodation resources for the young staff.

41 Annals of Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton textile factory 1954-1985



Figure 4-11. The Dormitory Named Leapfrog (from the author's photographs)

4.3.2.3 Life Experience

4.3.2.3.1 Boundaries between Large and Small Families

As mentioned in 4.3.1.4.1, this theme focuses on neighbourhood associations within the Danwei community during this period. The positive neighbourhood associations that were initially established in the living quarters during the early years of the establishment continued during this period. However, due to the surge in staff numbers and the increase in large families, new forms of construction and ways of allocating accommodation changed the previous patterns of neighbourhood associations. Instead of the Zhilkombinat with communal kitchens and toilets, the new staff flats are laid out as complete residential flats. In addition, the accommodation is no longer allocated to the same cluster of production workshops. Instead, each family was allocated a flat according to their family composition. Familiarity with Neighbours is weakened within a building compared with the previous phase. However, because they were employees within a Danwei, participants reported that the neighbourhood associations mentioned above in the public space still happened in the new resident buildings. Nevertheless, the Great Leap Forward⁴² mode began because the factory production order was affected by the political movement during this period. Workers began to engage in production in the form of three shifts, and

⁴² The Great Leap Forward was a nationwide economic campaign spearheaded by the Chinese Communist Party from 1958 to 1961. Its objective was to achieve industrialization and agricultural collectivization rapidly. However, due to its detachment from reality, policy imbalances, and political extremism, it ultimately resulted in widespread starvation and economic catastrophe (Palese, 2009, p. 8).

ideological training was required during off-duty hours. Participants recalled that work became busier during this period, and Neighbourhood associations changed from a fixed time and place in the space in front of the residential building to short chats with neighbours in public service facilities. The boundaries between collective life and the individual family became clear in this period. Families became independent cells again.

The residents' position of neighbourly associations became the basketball court next to the canteen, gathering young people, children and parents who looked after the children. According to participants, the reason why people chose the basketball court to stay is that the basketball court was the only court for sports in the living block at that time, and it was also one of the few large public gathering spaces in that area. The cafeteria and the basketball court replaced the space in front of the building as the central gathering place for residents. According to the participants' recollections of outdoor public spaces, there was a ranking of outdoor public spaces within the living block as perceived by the residents. The basketball court and cafeteria were the centre of the living block as a top-ranked No.1 area, while the space in front of the building became a rank No.2 space during this period(Figure 4-12).

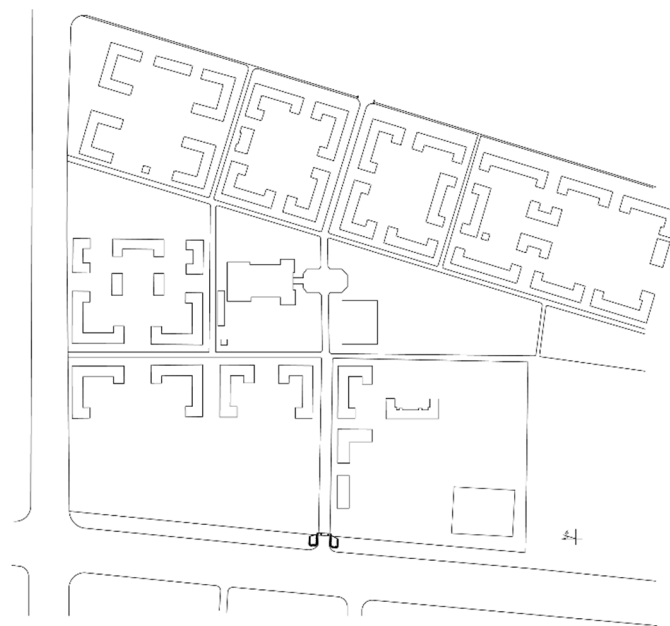


Figure 4-12. The Living Block Layout during 1959-1977(Summarised by the author from literature and documents of CPMSC)

4.3.2.3.2 Egalitarianism

The theme Egalitarianism focuses on the neighbourhood culture of the period. Egalitarianism reached its peak during this period. Due to the Cultural

Revolution's crackdown on petty-bourgeois practices, the pursuit of personal enjoyment of life was utterly forbidden. Participants reported that collective arts and cultural activities were also a significant part of the residents' participation in collective recreational activities. As the Danwei remained closed, entertainment within the Danwei was also organised by the labour union. It consisted of various cultural performances on the theme of workers' culture and the propaganda of revolutionary ideas. Everyone's recreational life was the same, and the residents did not feel a lack of autonomy or boredom in their choice of recreational activities. However, participants feel delighted with the status quo. Moreover, the factory has set up the Red Flag School in the leading position for socialist ideological education. The emphasis on political and ideological education for employees peaked during this period, and every employee, including the management, was required to conduct ideological education after work. Participants recalled that the residents' collectivist ideology and moral awareness were significantly higher during this period compared to the previous one. The atmosphere in the neighbourhood remained the same as in the previous period, which was one of harmony and fraternity.

At that time, the factory would show a film every Saturday in the open space, where the primary school is now, every Saturday when there was no double holiday. Now, the piece of primary school in Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory, the original is an open-air stage. Two shelves were built, pulled a piece of white cloth, showed an open-air film, which made people think that they may have to go early to occupy a place to go to see a film, and they were very happy. It was great to see a film on Sunday and Saturday. In addition, after entering the factory, as a worker, there was a library, so I borrowed some books to read, which was also a kind of stress-relieving recreation from the factory production life.

Other cultural activities, the New Year's festivals, and the Labour union also have to organise some cultural and sports activities, but the New Year's festivals will be there, so it seems that enjoyment at that time is also relatively lacking. From the residents of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory.

4.3.2.3.3 Interaction with the Outside World

During this period, the prevalence of bicycles per household increased significantly due to the increase in productivity of China's light industry. The renewal of the transportation system has made it possible to increase the distance that residents can travel. However, there were no attractive places outside of the Danwei, residents did not go out frequently. Secondly, due to the intense political campaigns of the Cultural Revolution and the increased workload, residents were still firmly fixed in their Danwei since the political problem. The

Danwei remained closed and cut off from the other Danwei and other places.

4.3.2.4 Characteristics of the Danwei System Flourished

Between 1958 and 1977, the institutional advantages of the Danwei system were brought into full play, and the state achieved strong control over the urban grassroots through the Danwei, during which the living block was characterised by:

1. The management of Danwei was based on the government's orders and responded positively to the political movements initiated by the state.
2. Instead of continuing the layout of the Soviet Zhilkombinat type of group buildings, the planning concept emphasised the independent living of the family more.
3. The family re-emerged as the smallest cell in the neighbourhood, and the boundaries between private family life and communal life became stronger.
4. As for neighbourhood culture, egalitarianism in the living block reached its peak, further strengthening collectivist ideological awareness.

4.3.3 Transition from the Danwei System to the Community

System(1978-2006)

4.3.3.1 Development Ideas

Until 1978, the production order and management system of the Factory returned to normal, followed by rapid growth in output year by year. With China's reform and opening up kicking off in 1978⁴³, the economic system began a major change. After the reform and opening up, the ownership structure of the Danwei system disintegrated. The then Chairman of the Communist Party of China(CPC) proposed in the report of the 15th National People's Congress(NPC) that public ownership should be the mainstay of the economy, with a variety of ownership systems developing together, as the basic economic system at the primary stage of socialism. The non-public economy was recognised as an important part of the socialist economy. The emergence of the market economy and the relaxation of the management of the population's household registration brought about the mobility of the population. Danwei can not fully control the people living within the Danwei where they work. However, in order to solve the problem of the livelihood security of this group of laid-off workers⁴⁴, the beginning of the national housing

43 China's reform and opening-up represents a profound systemic transformation: the political system has shifted from high centralisation toward democratisation and the rule of law; the economic structure has transitioned from a planned economy to an era of state-regulated free trade; and international strategy, ideological frameworks, and multiple other dimensions have undergone significant changes(L. Peng & Pei, 2009; W. Wang, 2009; Tao, 2017). The reform and opening-up has created a distinctive model of governance, this socialist path demonstrates an alternative modernisation choice(Hong, 2010).

44 As the factory's economic performance continued to decline, some staff began to be made redundant. - from participants

reform system in the 1980s allowed the living block of the staff dormitory to be sold to factory workers as welfare housing. Subsequently, some of the laid-off workers sold their flats, and a group of foreigners entered the Danwei, gradually opening up the completely closed Danwei. In 1986, the Ministry of Civil Affairs put forward the concept of “community” as the basic unit of urban governance, thus constructing a three-tier system of grassroots urban power and organisation, and proposing the development of community service work in the city(Lin et al., 2011). In 1987, the Ministry of Civil Affairs convened the “National Symposium on Urban Community Services”, proposing that urban community services should start with services for the senior, the disabled, the privileged, the needy, children, families, and other convenient services(Blaxland et al., 2014). In response to the policy of community-based system, the living block services are no longer provided with the purpose of matching the production, and the living services are started with the purpose of meeting the needs of the residents. Further construction of service facilities has also begun. In the 1990s, the operation and management of various infrastructures in the living blocks began to be handed over to the government. This was in order to prepare the living block to be equipped with community living service facilities and service capacity in accordance with national requirements after the exit of Danwei(Shi et al., 2024). Finally, in 2006, the factory went bankrupt, and the living block of the Danwei was decommissioned, and the land was administratively divided into a community, namely the Sanmian community in the city.

4.3.3.2 Management Approach

No separation between production and life

Since 1978, the factory's management system has been restored to its original organisational structure, and the Revolutionary Committee has been abolished. The unified production, work, and living services management was still maintained. However, in order to meet the national policy of providing living services in the community and in order to accommodate the employment of the large number of young people who returned to the city after the Cultural Revolution in the 1980s, the Life Service Company and the Labour Service Company were established in 1982⁴⁵. To strengthen management, 22 committees were established, in addition to the functional sections. Named:

- Public Security Committee
- Civil Adjustment Committee
- Employee Education Committee
- Labour Protection Committee
- Prevention and Control Committee
- Labour Appraisal Committee
- Safety and Fire Prevention Committee
- Room Separation Committee

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- Greening Committee
- People's Air Defense Committee
- Family Planning Committee
- Energy Conservation Committee
- Family Members Committee
- Environmental Protection Committee
- Power Saving Committee and Confidentiality Committee
- Five Talks, Four Beauties and Three Fondnesses Committee
- Patriotic Hygiene Committee
- Total Quality Management
- Rationalisation Suggestion Committee
- Catering Management Committee
- Flood Control Committee

In addition, to further develop the knowledge training of the employees, the Employee University and Employee Evening School have been established. To provide professional higher education for the employees.

In 1995, the Ministry of Living was established to oversee the construction and management of the living block, which was prepared for the sale of housing reform and the transfer of infrastructure management to the government. In order to ensure that all residents are assigned welfare housing, 26 new apartment-style staff residential buildings were built in another style (image 4-13) compared with the building designed by Soviet designers. According to the report on accelerating the construction of urban housing issued by the State Construction Commission of China in 1978, the average floor space per household should not exceed 50 square metres⁴⁶. The sale of 85.4% of the total area of residential buildings was finalised. Here, closed property management was also implemented for the five living quarters. After carrying out water, electricity, and gas renovation, each household pays separate fees to the factory according to the water, electricity, and gas meter readings. However, the factory subsidises a portion of the household's energy costs and provides rent reductions to reduce the cost of living. The management of the staff elementary school was transferred to the City Education Department. Secondly, the health section was expanded into a general staff hospital, and the management of the staff hospital was subsequently sold to the Ohashi Group. Phasing out the management of facilities in the living block.

⁴⁶ State Council Approval of the State Construction Commission's Report on Accelerating the Construction of Urban Housing http://m.fsou.com/html/text/chl/4/467_3.html



Image 4-13. Residential Building from 1990s(Photograph by the author)

Since the 1980s, there has been a gap in factory management of living blocks. Private business was allowed after entering the market economy, and private vendors began appearing in the living block to sell daily necessities. Newcomers and leavers began to appear in the living block, and employees began to leave the living block after being laid off. Some people entered the living block to live in the living block by buying a flat after it was allowed to be purchased and sold. Danwei's internal management of Danwei employees remained the same, but it had no management authority or binding power over the new non-Danwei people who entered the neighbourhood. This has led to a series of problems with security and hygiene in the living block.

Yes, now there are more private shops, but it was convenient for the people, and it keeps increasing. You see this kind of road, like this street. A few years ago, I lived on the road. People hardly walk on the pedestrian. Because those cars and those small food vendors set aside on the street for many years. --From a resident of Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory

4.3.3.3 Life Experience

4.3.3.3.1 Boundaries between Large and Small Families

This theme follows from 4.3.1.4.1 and 4.3.3.3.1 above and focuses on neighbourhood associations in the Danwei living block during a period of Danwei transition. During this period, extended families were no longer bound by the walls of the Danwei pair, but rather by whether or not they were affiliated with the institutional system of the Danwei. Some employees within the Danwei living block gradually began to be laid off. Some of those laid-off employees moved out of the living block, and some laid-off employees continued to live in the living block. Losing a job within the living block was seen as a destabilising factor for the population. Participants recalled that during that period, there were cases of burglaries in the Danwei by laid-off youths, and Danwei residents began to intentionally stay away from some of the laid-off residents who had been “made unsafe”. The collective has been tied to the Danwei in neighbourhood associations. Neighbourhood associations have been narrowed down to the employees of the Danwei in the living block. New outsiders have been excluded from the larger collective of ‘old Danwei people’.

It has changed. Please take a look at the privacy issue we discussed earlier. In the past, there was no privacy between neighbours. How many people were in your family? What kind of relatives were in your family? What's for lunch today? And the neighbours know each other, but not anymore. At the door, a closed door on the stairs leads to the corridor. Around the residential building, I saw the neighbour's face all the time. It's good to say hello to each other. Isn't this kind of good relationship with neighbours? I usually talk to neighbour about my household, or do I feel the hot days. Now in the home door a closed, my air conditioning and open, and I did not meet neighbour a lot like in the past. Before that time I can talk to the neighbour the day to night, the sun fell. We were under the shade of the tree, which was a cool place where there was a breeze, a gathering place where people had to gather together, everyone in a piece of chatting, talking, riding the cooler. This issue no longer exists. Tiny, the elderly have nowhere to go, are left at home feeling lonely, and struggle to find what to do online. Around the residential building, a few older men and women are sitting and chatting. Currently, there is almost no mutual interaction, no new interaction, and not as much as before the 70s and 80s, especially in the 1950s and 60s, when the harmonious relationship between neighbours had dissipated. It's all about privacy now between the neighbours. It's all about privacy now. Why do I have to tell others what we're discussing? I am afraid that people are scared to

know. Yes, it's the same now. –a Participant from Zhengzhou No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory

The boundaries of the family in personal life were fully established during this period. The new buildings were full of self-contained apartments. In addition, because the neighbourhoods were no longer completely homogeneous, the residents began to focus on privacy and a sense of boundaries among themselves. Homogeneity here refers to the difference between Danwei people and non-Danwei people that the participants often mentioned. However, it essentially refers to whether or not the group of people is affiliated with the system. Institutionalised refers to those institutions or units that are directly or indirectly controlled and managed by the state, including but not limited to government departments, state-owned enterprises, and institutions; the staff of these units usually enjoy the establishment, treatment, and protection stipulated by the state. In addition, during this period, due to the concentrated construction, remodelling, and expansion of buildings within the living block, the open space within the living block was filled (Figure 4-14), and there was less space for outdoor activities. Therefore, a new pattern was formed on the collective gathering ground of Danwei due to the further improvement of urban facilities outside Danwei and the popularity of motorcycles and buses in this period. Danwei residents' reachable distances were longer, and there were more recreational activities and entertainment venues outside Danwei during off-duty hours. In addition, the Workers' Cultural Palace, a mixed-use urban park within 10 minutes walking distance outside Danwei, has become a significant gathering place for Danwei residents within walking distance. Participants preferred the Workers' Cultural Palace not only because the park's grounds and facilities were in better condition than the living block but also because most of the people who gathered there were workers from the National Cotton Factory No. 3 and several neighbouring state-run factories. The collective activities among this homogeneous group were the main reason participants chose this place.

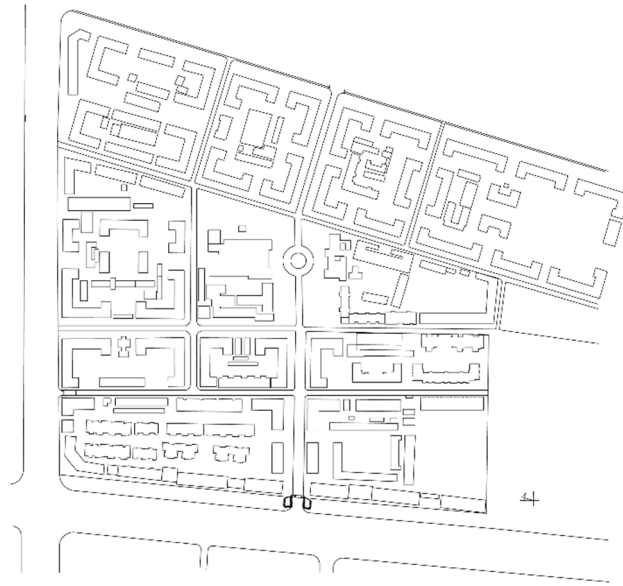


Figure 4-14. The Layout of the Living Block of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory(Summarised by the author from literature and documents of CPMSC)

4.3.3.3.2 Egalitarianism

Neighbourhood culture in this period is no longer completely egalitarian as in the previous two periods, but relatively egalitarian in a narrow sense. Within the influence of the Danwei culture, the social network of the Danwei people in the living block still maintains collectivism. However, this does not apply between the Danwei people and non-Danwei populations within the living block. The unfamiliarity caused by the difference in backgrounds with the newcomer population leaves a lack of trust between neighbours. This state of fragmentation has not resulted in a new neighbourhood culture. Eventually, the Danwei population developed a search for egalitarianism and a rejection of differentiation. Participants claimed the differentiation from the new residents' living backgrounds and jobs made them uneasy because of the lack of understanding.

4.3.3.3.3 Interaction with the Outside World

In Zhengzhou No.3, Cotton Textile Factory's efficiency declined year by year, and the staff's salary, welfare benefits and social status also plummeted. It went from where young people competed for jobs to being a typical representative of precarious work. Low wages, difficulty in finding a new job after losing their jobs, and other labels were attached to the factory workers. To Danwei residents, this brought a significant sense of alienation and loss. With the rapid progress of urban construction in Zhengzhou, the new urban communities and public spaces,

compared with the old and crowded living block of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-run Cotton Textile Factory, were more attractive to the residents. It formed a strong psychological sense of belonging to the living block and actively participated in modern urban life outside the living block.

4.3.3.4 Characteristics of Living Block in Transition

Neighbourhood characteristics during the Danwei System's transition to a community-based system are:

1. Danwei's living block is gradually approaching the requirements of the community system in terms of its management standards and models. From providing living support to matching production to creating a service-oriented living environment.
2. The planning idea is to complete the planning and construction required by the country's government. In order to cooperate with the reconstruction of the urban governance system after the market economy, the Sanmian community(which was called the living block of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-run Cotton Textile Factory) constructed the living service facilities according to the community functions and standards required by the higher government. In addition, according to the number of employee households that have not been allocated housing for welfare housing, the name, organisation, and system of Danwei have vanished after completing the remaining protection work for employees' rights and interests.
3. The independent boundaries of each family reinforce neighbourhood associations, while neighbourhood associations are restricted to homogeneous neighbours only. The social exclusion of newcomers to the neighbourhood creates fragmentation within the living block.
4. Neighbourhood culturally, the living block is culturally fragmented, with the Danwei population retaining its previous collectivist ideology, in contrast to the non-Danwei population, which is fragmented.

4.4 Characteristic of the Transition from the Danwei System to the Community System(1978-2006)

Reviewing the development history of Danwei as an urban settlement, it can be seen that the Danwei system is a social system unit that integrates political control, redistribution of production results, and social welfare provision and emphasises its spatial and organisational characteristics such as administrative, closed, and monolithic(Bray, 2014b, pp. 33-37). So, the change in the Danwei neighbourhood results from the development of the Danwei system. From establishing the Danwei system to the period of booming development and its eventual dissolution, the Danwei neighbourhood, for example, the layout and

development ideas of the living block provided within the Danwei, also changed. The changes in the living block's occupancy and the changes in the management within the Danwei shaped the distinctive neighbourhood association styles and neighbourhood culture (Table 4-15). Overall, the experience of living in a collectivist neighbourhood did not disappear after the bankruptcy of Danwei but continued to influence residents' lifestyles and thoughts. Even the influx of non-Danwei people did not break the habits and culture within the Danwei community.

The element of the Danwei Community	Early Years of Establishment(1953-1957)	The Danwei System Flourished(1958-1977).	Transition from the Danwei System to the Community System(1978-2006)
Management	Closed externally and internally, the regiment is characterised by a consistent forward movement. A management system in which personnel are fixed and immobile.	Everything is subject to the orders of the government and responds positively to political campaigns initiated by the state.	It is progressively closer to the requirements of a community-based system, from providing life support to matching production to creating a service-oriented living environment.
Planning and construction	Continuing the Soviet Union's Zhilkombinat design concept, the building was designed in the form of a neighbourhood-style group of buildings to create a communal living environment. Adopted the design concept of Soviet Zhilkombinat.	Instead of continuing the Soviet idea of grouped building layouts of the Zhilkombinat type, more emphasis was placed on family independence.	To complete the planning and construction required by the State. In order to cooperate with the reconstruction of the urban governance system after the market economy, the reconstruction of the living service facilities is carried out according to the community functions and standards required by the higher government, in addition to building welfare residences by the number of employee households that have not been allocated housing, in order to safeguard the employees' rights and interests in living after Danwei's exit.

<p>Neighbourhood association</p>	<p>The semi-enclosed building clusters gradually form neighbourhood social circles, and the open spaces enclosed by the building clusters become outdoor gathering points for the residents. The spatial layout of the residential buildings dissolves some of the boundaries of the family and creates an extremely close neighbourhood communal life.</p>	<p>The family has re-emerged as the smallest cell within the neighbourhood, and the boundaries between private family life and collective life are stronger.</p>	<p>The boundaries of each family's independence are reinforced, while the neighbourhood associations are limited only to the homogeneous neighbours. Social exclusion of newly arrived residents creates fragmentation within the living block.</p>
<p>Culture of the Danwei community</p>	<p>Through internal education, the socialist values of equality for all have been created within the living block, creating a culture of active dedication to the neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Egalitarianism among living block reached its peak, further strengthening the awareness of collectivism.</p>	<p>Cultural fragmentation has emerged within the living block. Part of it is the retention of the previous collectivist ideology by the Danwei group, which contrasts sharply with the dispersion of the non-Danwei group.</p>

Table. 4-15 The Characteristics of the Development and Changes in the Living Block(from the author)

4.5 Summary

This chapter introduces the context of the era in which the case Zhengzhou No.3 State-run Cotton Textile Factory was constructed, and elaborates on the design thinking and construction history of Danwei's settlements. First, the literature and policy review explains the emergence and significance of the Danwei system, a unique social management system that emerged in China during the period of the planned economy in order to rapidly build an industrial base, which not only undertook economic functions(such as wages, housing, and medical care), but also held the right to distribute the results of trial production and the right to confer social identity, constituting “organised dependency” and embodying the three-pointed “dependence” of the Danwei system. This constitutes “organised dependency”, which embodies the functional characteristics of the trinity(Xie & Wu, 2008). The planning of the Danwei block, the entity of Danwei in the city, was a closed block of production sites under the guidance of Soviet planners, reflecting the idea of socialist settlement planning in the Soviet Union in the 1950s, to explore socialist lifestyles, rapid urban construction, and the restoration of industrial productivity as the principle of standardised Zhilkombinat neighbourhoods. In the ensuing data collection, further understanding of the thinking behind the development of Danwei's living block in the context of the Soviet Union, the disappearance of the Soviet model of socialist Zhilkombinat in China's Danwei living block can be clearly seen. Through interviews with the residents of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory, the author explores the living experiences of this neighbourhood during the Danwei system in the past. As well as interviews with former managers of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory, the interviews were conducted to understand the management thinking of the Danwei neighbourhood in the past. A thematic summary of the transcribed interviews was made to summarise the living experiences of the living block in Zhengzhou No. State-run Cotton Textile Factory in different periods. Background explanations are provided alongside relevant information collected from official institutions, such as the Zhengzhou Municipal Archives and the Zhengzhou Textile Museum.

In terms of living experience, three themes have emerged. First, the neighbourhood culture generated in the living block through party education during the Danwei system period is tightly integrated with the party ideology and is a neighbourhood culture that conforms to socialist values. The living layout of the Zhilkombinat, which explored the collective lifestyle, shaped the neighbourhood interaction styles and habits of the Danwei people. This resulted in the theme of Boundaries between large and small families, focusing on the

experience of neighbourhood interactions within the living block. The public living facilities in the living block break traditional families' living patterns and boundaries, and intermingle family and collective life. Second, a theme that explains neighbourhood culture, 'Egalitarianism', arises under the influence of the Danwei's function, reflecting that the Danwei is not only a living space but also a pathway for social mobilisation in China. This system created a strong political identity and collective consciousness(Bjorklund EM, 1986). The third theme, 'Interaction with the outside world', focuses on the residents' connection with the outside world of Danwei, describing the social status of Danwei residents during the development of the Danwei system and the experience of going out. The fourth theme, "No separation between production and life," describes the management and development goals of the living block at different times in the cotton factory. It shows the living block's shift in thinking from providing a living guarantee for workers in line with production to providing a living service. It clearly shows that the influence of Danwei culture on the interaction patterns and outdoor space choices of the residents of the living block persists. Participants' choice of outdoor space for daily activities focuses on gathering homogeneous groups of people.

Chapter 5: Phase 1 – The Current State of Ageing-in-place in the Post-Danwei Community

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the development history of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory Danwei. It revealed how the current high-density layout of the community developed and how the current community culture and neighbouring interaction patterns were formed during the Danwei system period. On this basis, this chapter focuses on the experiences of the elderly in the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community (formerly the living block of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory Danwei) after entering the post-Danwei period, after transitioning into the Community System. It describes the experiences of the original Danwei residents who entered the ranks of the elderly and remained in the Sanmian community (formerly Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory) to enjoy their retirement. After the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory residential area was integrated into the Community System, it was administratively divided into the Sanmian community. Later, due to the large population of the community, it was administratively adjusted into the Sanmian East community and the Sanmian West community. To conserve space in this thesis, the Sanmian East and Sanmian West communities are collectively referred to as the Sanmian community. Based on the conclusions of the case study chapter, the unique residential culture, shaped by the Danwei system and residents' recognition of social relationships, still exists within the community. The Sanmian community still retains the community culture and resident behaviour patterns formed during the Danwei system period. In this chapter, the author conducted walking interviews with the elderly to explore the experience of ageing-in-place (AIP) and then performed a thematic analysis of the resulting interviews. Four themes emerged, focusing on the impact of changes in the administrative management mode of residential communities on the elderly, the resources needed for the elderly's daily lives and how to get them, the impact of the elderly's daily activity choices, and the right to allocate the use of public spaces in the community. On this basis, the author used focus groups to collect the elderly's views on environmental improvements and continued to use thematic analysis to obtain three themes focusing on the characteristics of the post-Danwei community's age-friendly environment construction, the principles of public space resource allocation: the post-Danwei community's perspective and level of support for the young-old; and the requirements for the daily operation of the post-Danwei community. Based on these results, the next chapter introduces a workshop the author held with relevant experts to co-design guidelines for improving the age-friendliness of the

post-Danwei community environment.

5.2 The Experience of the elderly in Post-Danwei Community

5.2.1 Data Collection

5.2.1.1 The Content of Community

The residential area of the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community was renamed Sanmian Community after entering the Community System. When the Sanmian Community is used in the following, it refers to the combined concepts of administration, welfare, population, and area within the administrative boundaries. In contrast, when the community is used, it refers to the residential community units. The Sanmian Community was then administratively divided into the Sanmian East and Sanmian West Communities to efficiently administer the resident population. However, the two communities belong to a 10-minute walking circle, which is the infrastructure of a community unit. In the perception of the residents, the two communities are not divided according to administrative divisions. Therefore, in the following, the reference to Sanmian Community refers to the administrative division of Sanmian East and Sanmian West Communities.

The subsequent analysis of the data results involved the existing operational and management institutions in the community. As introduced in Chapter 1, there is a difference between the meaning of “urban community” in China and ‘community’ in English. Therefore, it is appropriate to introduce these organisations first to provide a context for the subsequent data analysis.

The management institutions within the Sanmian Community are the Community Party and Mass Service Centre(CPMSC) of the Sanmian Community, Jiatai Property Service Company, Neighbourhood Committee, and Zhengzhou Hongxing Real Estate Co., Ltd.(Table 5-1). In the current administrative division of communities in Zhengzhou, the Sanmian community is divided into two parts: the Sanmian eastern and Sanmian western communities. Therefore, each of the Sanmian East Community and Sanmian West Community has its own CPMSC. All the functions of CPMSC are exactly the same. Therefore, in order to facilitate readers' understanding of the subsequent description of the Sanmian community. The author hereby clarifies that in the subsequent thesis, the CPMSC of the Sanmian community refers to the combined term of the two CPMSCs of the eastern and western communities of Sanmian. The CPMSC serves as the district government's outpost agency at the community level. Its predecessor was the Community Service Station. In 2019, it was established and managed under the leadership of the Communist Party of China, featuring activity venues, service

facilities, financial support, and dedicated staff, functioning as a shared space open to both Communist Party members and the general public. It serves as a bridge connecting the community with government departments, industries, and Communist Party organisations within the district. It serves as a platform for political propaganda, offering a venue for Communist Party members, grassroots officials, potential party members, and community residents to engage in political activities and provide public services. In terms of public affairs services for residents, the CPMSC's scope of work encompasses providing window services⁴⁷ for education management, entrepreneurship services, recruitment and communication, volunteer assistance, and government affairs related to people's livelihood and well-being. The CPMSC is the specific agency of the Chinese government for population management, public services, and the implementation of policies and development plans in the community. Therefore, the layout of the CPMSC typically includes party and mass service windows, party-building culture windows, reading rooms, and rooms for cultural and recreational activities⁴⁸.

Name of organisation	Responsibility range	Nature of organisation
The Community Party and Mass Service Centre	Guided by Party building, we coordinate community governance and service initiatives encompassing policy promotion, public welfare services, resident self-governance, cultural education, and conflict mediation.	Output agency of the district-level government
Jiatai Property Service Company	Acting on behalf of residents, to maintain and manage residential properties and related facilities, providing security, environmental, order, and service safeguards to ensure the community's normal	Private service company

47 The service counters at the Community Party-Mass Service Centre primarily offer residents one-stop convenience and administrative services, including policy consultation, document processing assistance, social security and medical insurance services, employment and senior care support, civil affairs assistance applications, volunteer service coordination, and cultural and sports activity registration. This enables residents to handle various matters conveniently within their local community.

<https://dangjian.people.com.cn/GB/n1/2020/0714/c117092-31783315.html>

48 What does the Party-Mass Service Centre do?

<https://www.12371.cn/2024/01/04/ART11704363444575550.shtml>

	operation and a well-being living environment.	
Neighbourhood Committee	Under the leadership of grassroots Party organisations, residents shall be organised to conduct self-governance activities, assisting the government in delivering public services, social management, civil mediation, and facilitating residents' communal community life.	Mass self-governance organisations
Zhengzhou Hongxing Real Estate Co.	The utilisation and allocation of state-owned assets, and the maintenance of community buildings.	State-controlled joint-stock limited company

Table 5-1. Division of Responsibilities Among Management Organisations within the Sanmian Community (from the author)

According to the description provided by CPMSC staff in the Sanmian community, Jiatai Property Services Company was recommended by the Zhongyuan District Government, which is located near Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory. It was introduced when Danwei entered the community system as a private service company responsible for maintaining and managing public facilities. According to the description of the management of the residential area in the previous chapter, Jiatai Property Services Company assumed the responsibilities of the greening maintenance, the Patriotic Health Committee, and the maintenance team of the Facility management and Service Department of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory after the Danwei system period.

The Neighbourhood Committee is the most basic grassroots self-governing organisation in Chinese urban communities. Members of the Neighbourhood Committee are generally elected by residents of the community, reflecting the concept of citizen self-governance. However, its daily work is carried out under the guidance of the government. Its main responsibilities include organising residents to engage in community health, public safety, cultural events, mediating neighbourhood disputes, and managing public affairs. As self-governing organisations operating under government guidance, the Neighbourhood

Committee serves as a bridge between the government and residents⁴⁹.

Zhengzhou Hongxing Real Estate Co., Ltd. is a state-owned holding company established following the bankruptcy and restructuring of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory. It is currently responsible for managing state-owned property assets within the Sanmian community that belong to Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory on behalf of the government. These organisations share responsibility for the operation of Sanmian Community. The author outlines the structure of the community's operational and management bodies to provide a concrete contextual backdrop for subsequent thematic analysis of the community's current state. Below is an account of the author's walking interviews.

5.2.1.2 Conduct Walking Interview

Twenty-one elderly people living in the Sanmian community were interviewed for approximately an hour to gain insight into their perceptions and experiences of the current state of building age-friendly environments in the community. The transcripts of the interviews were analysed for themes using NVivo software after translation. Using NVivo for coding and subject analysis is less restrictive than paper-based techniques, and the analysis process is more transparent (Woods et al., 2016). After coding the interview transcripts (the code book of the interview in Appendix 9, and the transcripts of the walking interview in Appendix 10, four themes eventually emerged:

- Dynamic Management, which focuses on changes in community management patterns and the impact of the elderly's welfare policies on AIP as communities shift from a Danwei to a communal system.
- Cost, which focuses on the resources the elderly need to sustain their lives and access to resources.
- Group Creativity, which focuses on how social groups support and influence the elderly's day-to-day decision-making in communities, and how it affects the elderly's relationship with public space.
- Space Allocation, which looks at the distribution of spatial benefits in post-Danwei communities.

5.2.2 Themes from the Walking Interview

5.2.2.1 Theme 1 Dynamic Management

⁴⁹ The Law of the People's Republic of China on Urban Neighbourhood Committee
http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/c2/c30834/201905/t20190521_296644.html

Dynamic management reveals the immediacy of communication with the elderly brought about by the current working model of the community CPMSC. The immediacy of information is the basis for the CPMSC's flexible approach to regulating practice and encourages communication between the elderly and the community. In addition, the flexible, adaptive nature of the work of the community administration compensates for the lack of welfare for the elderly in some parts of the community. The grid management system is for managing the servicing of residents, whereby the Grid Leaders help dependable elderly people solve the issues of AIP. However, it has no substantial impact on improving the quality of life of the young-old. However, the management model of the grid system, combined with the close community relationship of the community, formed an effective information network. Participants had trust in the community management and praised their work highly. However, participants were frustrated by the elderly's lack of involvement in decision-making in the community environment enhancement project and the inability to decide the allocation of space in the community to protect the interests of the elderly.

5.2.2.1.1 Sub-theme: A Trusted Mediator

The sub-theme mentioned the most in the interviews was the CPMSC acting as a mediator to receive feedback on the elderly's conflicts with other neighbours. This sub-theme is about how conflicts are resolved in the community. Currently, the management of age-friendly environments in the community is coordinated and supervised by the CPMSC. the elderly complain to the CPMSC when they encounter difficulties in their lives or when they have problems with their community, and the CPMSC then coordinates with the elderly to try to solve the problems.

W17: This fresh chicken is very smelly and has a great odour. Anyway, it would be better to have a chat with them(the retailers who selling the chicken). There is a WeChat group chat⁵⁰. The residents asked the CPMSC to coordinate. The CPMSC should be responsible for such a small matter and discuss it with them. The CPMSC went there and discussed it a few times, but it would have been better.

However, the CPMSC, as the second-level district government outpost, is administered by the Sub-district Office, which is a first-level outpost of the district government. Therefore, CPMSC is not a law enforcement agency and cannot impose any mandatory requirements. In the view of the elderly, the CPMSC is responsible for acting as a credible "mediator". It can be said that the CPMSC is

⁵⁰ WeChat is a widely used instant messaging and integrated services application in China. WeChat group chats serve as a multi-member communication method within WeChat, where participants can share content via text, voice messages, video calls, and files. This functionality is equivalent to the Channel function in Microsoft Teams.

almost always the places mentioned by the elderly as places where complaints can be made. This is the most accessible and credible community management institution in the view of the elderly.

CPMSC is the implementer of service-oriented community policy, and the good service attitude from the staff greatly encourages the elderly to provide feedback. This ensures that the CPMSC has timely access to information, which is the basis for the humane management of the community. Although some issues still needed to be resolved, participants generally felt that these were due to jurisdictional issues rather than poor performance by the CPMSC. The confidence of the elderly in AIP was encouraged by the active coordination of the CPMSC and the attitude of goodwill towards the elderly.

W16: Now, when I go to the CPMSC, if my husband and I have to come here to do some formalities. In the CPMSC, DD(the Grid Leader⁵¹ of the participants) and the other staff are here. The community party secretary, director and DD, the staff are very eager to help. Sometimes I forget to take my glasses, and I can't read the word on the paper, but they assisted in completing the formalities.

It's all done with the help of the CPMSC. They are quite enthusiastic, quite nice to people, you know. Their professional ability is quite excellent. Now, the community is doing quite well, you know? You see, when there is an epidemic, there are cases of infection in every community. This community is the only one without any. There were no helpful people like those before. It's a well-managed community.

5.2.2.1.2 Sub-theme: Decision-making Flexibility

Another subtheme that was often mentioned was an adjustment on the go. As described in the last sub-theme, timely access to information about residents provides a reasonable basis for the humane management of the community. In compliance with the law, the CPMSC makes decisions based on the actual situation of the community that is in the best interests of the community at the time, even though they may conflict with some of the regulations in place. The CPMSC, as the actual implementers of the project at the community level, can

51 A Grid Leader refers to the person responsible for grid services and management within a community. The community grid service and management system is a comprehensive service management unit at the grassroots level, divided into the smallest administrative units in urban and rural areas. Rural areas are generally divided into administrative villages, while urban communities are generally divided into living blocks. The division of grids takes into consideration factors such as the location, population size, area, and ease of management within the community or village. Each grid has one Grid Leader, one to two full-time grid workers, and several grid volunteers from the Communist Party of China and members of the public. In the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community, the Grid Leaders are all CPMSC staff members.

http://www.heshan.gov.cn/jmhsspjd/gkmlpt/content/2/2650/post_2650308.html#2687

make flexible management policies according to the actual living conditions of the residents. This is more in alignment with the actual interests of the residents. For example, the mobile stalls in the open-air market on Xiangrong Street(Figure 5-3), mentioned several times by participants, are street occupiers and had been banned before the epidemic. However, the economic pressure on residents has been increasing due to the difficulties in general employment after the epidemic. Mobile vendors' selling prices are lower than those of grocery sellers with storefronts, and their operating costs are lower. Prices of products are lower than those in farmers' markets and grocery shops. Several buildings adjacent to Xiangrong Street have been acquired. Those buildings are under renovation after being included in the project of the National Cotton Culture and History Exhibition Street. There is no noise impact on the residents on the street after the original residents have moved out. Therefore, mobile vendors on Xiang Rong Street were allowed to provide cheaper food to residents after they were allowed to set up their stalls there, which was repeatedly mentioned in the interview script. Not only did this initiative create more jobs, but lower prices were also an essential factor in the well-being of residents, repeatedly mentioned by participants.



Figure 5-3. Xiangrong Street Location(from the author)

5.2.2.1.3 Sub-theme: Information Notices

This sub-theme is about letter dissemination within the community. The Grid Leader sends notifications to the elderly with information about projects in the community. The most frequently mentioned method of informing participants was to use the group chat formed by WeChat to inform about events, projects, and welfare services in the community, all summarised and informed by their Grid Leaders. There were also verbal notifications from Grid Leaders or acquaintances. The acquaintance network complements WeChat notifications in instant messaging. The staff of the CPMSC handles WeChat messages, and the content of the notification only contains information related to the work of the CPMSC.

The acquaintance network, however, was one of the channels through which participants obtained information about activities in the community and groceries'

price changes. During the interviews, some participants subconsciously informed their acquaintances about price changes in different categories in the community today when they met them by chance. The network of acquaintances was also an essential source of information for participants who did not use smartphones.

5.2.2.1.4 Sub-theme: Participation in Decision-making

This sub-theme is about participation in decision-making for various projects in the community. Only one participant reported having been involved in a meeting about decision-making, while the other the elderly reported needing to gain decision-making participation. Also, information about projects in the community and the progress and influencing factors was unknown and yet to be discovered. Instead, the participants had many ideas about the senior services and building projects and wanted to be involved in the actual decision-making. Participants did not care about not being involved in project decisions, but were frustrated that the project implementation did not meet their expectations. They were looking for feedback channels that would implement their ideas.

In the community, most of the 50s Soviet-designed buildings and the office building of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory are fenced off for construction, a project to build a street displaying the history of the state textile cotton factory culture. There is a textile history museum, as well as other cultural and recreational facilities. The participants' response to this project was muted, with more concern about whether the new project would include more retirement facilities and public space once it was constructed. The interviews also showed that the participants needed to be more transparent about the information regarding this large-scale cultural exhibition project. The CPMSC management office had posted public notices, but this way of informing the elderly about the project needed better communication.

5.2.2.1.5 Sub-theme: The Welfare System and Its Supplementary Resources

This sub-theme encompasses the use of social welfare for the elderly in the community. After the transition to a Community System of service-based management, the communities experienced a breakdown in implementing benefits for residents. Policies were in place, but project funding was delayed due to government financial constraints, and subsequently, social support to cope with the rapid ageing in the community was also delayed. The only community service most frequently mentioned by participants was the home-based medical check-up service, which included door-to-door blood pressure monitoring and auscultation services provided by CPMSC staff.

The fact that welfare benefits for the elderly vary from one area to another

aggravates the anxiety of some elderly living alone and in poverty. The CPMSC, as the concrete implementers of the national policy and the first level of handling complaints from the elderly, has taken on the responsibility of filling in a range of unrealised community-level old age projects, such as social care and subsidies. After the Community System, the CPMSC's service delivery system to community residents is grid-based. Each staff member is the head of a grid point in a community. The grid captains provide one-on-one hardship assistance to the elderly in need in their communities. However, due to the limited number of Grid Leaders, they can only help the elderly who live alongside and face some insurmountable difficulties in life first. For the rest, it is up to the elderly and their families to adapt to the current circumstances and wait for the social support programmes to be implemented later.

Participants have formed a timely communication and support mechanism with the Grid Leaders in the grid management system, and this model of primary work delivery has well compensated for the weak social welfare. Household chores that the elderly cannot do alone when they live alone are assisted by the Grid Leaders, who come to their homes as volunteers. The elderly living alone in this mode can temporarily receive home care assistance and continue to AIP. This approach increases the trust of the elderly in the CPMSC staff, increasing their confidence in community welfare support. In the interviews, the elderly living alone or with disabilities repeatedly praised the home visits made by the community Grid Leaders.

Meanwhile, the situation pressured other the elderly in relatively good health. On the one hand, they recognise the frequent visits and responsive attitude of the Grid Leaders. However, on the other hand, they feel the psychological burden of human interaction due to the close relationship they have built up over a long period with the grid. They think that they should not bother the Grid Leader too often; after all, this kind of home care is voluntary and not remunerated. However, with the increased physical limitations of the ongoing ageing process, such the elderly who are still strong compared to other more vulnerable people but whose actual physical strength is already burdened with their daily chores become the last to be considered for welfare support within the community, and this group of participants is often frustrated and helpless.

W116: Community service, you see, my classmate, he was in the No. 3 Cotton Textile factory community there. His family was living on Qinling Road. The community service around Qinling Road is that after the age of 60, there may be an hour-a-day carer, for free, to help you do households. I heard people also tell me that from March, people have begun to volunteer services. Those sixty years of age or above can have service. Because I left the community for a while, but I came back. I asked XXX(the head of the grid), and she said I can register you. But here

don't have this service yet, but here used to have it..... then I came to them(CPMSC), and they were very busy. Then I saw that they were busy, sometime until midnight. Then I said I was fine. I'll tell them what, if I need anything hurry. Volunteers said they can help me.Then they asked me about the situation, and I told him about it; the results of this now have been more than half a month, and so far. I have registered successful for the Five Guarantees System.

According to the Regulations on the Work of Providing Support for the Five Guarantees in Rural Areas⁵², issued by the State Council of the People's Republic of China⁵³, the targets of the Five Guarantees System include mainly the elderly, persons with disabilities, as well as minors in villages who fulfil the following conditions. Five Guarantees targets are defined as the elderly, disabled individuals, and minors in rural areas who are incapable of working, have no source of livelihood, have no legal support obligor, or who have a legal support obligor but are incapable of providing support for them.

5.2.2.2 Theme2 Cost

Cost focuses on the expenses that the elderly have to pay to age, including time, money, and all other costs. the elderly show low-risk resilience in the face of financial pressures and the pressure to keep their extended family running. Anxiety over risk concerns and financial constraints was the most emphasised throughout the interviews. Secondly, due to residents' inability to secure sufficient living space or afford to expand their living space, street public spaces became a de facto temporary expansion area for residents when they required additional living space. This also leads to the encroachment of street space and the reduction of pedestrian connectivity. However, the well-established retail sector in the community provides the elderly with a wide range of choices for purchasing.

5.2.2.2.1 Sub-theme: Bread and Butter

This sub-theme is the main conflict in AIP concerning the living expenses of AIP. Pensions are needed to cover personal living expenses and sometimes to subsidise the family expenses of children. The personal living resources include the purchase of daily necessities, medical support, nursing support and assisted living expenditures, and the family maintenance resources are shown by subsidising the family expenditures. The elderly in the community are almost all retired workers from the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory, and pension increases are very tight in coping with rising prices. Participants most

53 Regulations on the Work of Providing Support for the Five Guarantees in Rural Areas
https://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2006-01/26/content_172438.htm

often mentioned the need for strict control over their lives to maintain life's basics. Therefore, the elderly spend much time evaluating the value of money for goods and food when shopping. In addition to this, the elderly's financial situation is low in risk capacity, so participants repeatedly cited the need to protect their health and safety to avoid additional medical and nursing costs and, more importantly, to avoid increasing the burden of support on their children, as the reason for their behaviour.

WI16: If I fail the operation and become paralysed. If something happens to me, I will still need the children to take care of me. The kids need to go to work and have no time to take care of me after surgery. I'm not okay with being bad on my own for disturbing my kids' work. So many people have suggested that I don't have the surgery.

The need for environmental aids for the ageing process is increasing. The current policy for the installation of Assisted Living Facilities is to rely on the residents to pay for themselves with government subsidies and programme discounts. The buildings in the community are multi-storey staircase buildings without lifts. A large proportion of the residents have yet to support the installation and running costs of the lifts, and they have been shelved due to pressure from the residents. Other assisted facilities are also almost entirely dependent on public funding.

The financial situation of the elderly who are tasked with caring for their families is particularly serious in terms of sustaining the whole family. The community's overall per capita income is low, and the pressure on participants to have a homogeneous income and to spend money within the household is extreme. When overall household income is low, families' incomes are mixed together to sustain the family. In addition to this, because of the burdens of taking care of families or being taken care of by families, AIP is currently the main way for the elderly there. Subsidising their children's expenses is also an important means for the elderly to maintain their position in the family, and one of the most important tasks in retirement. However, the elderly's income comes almost exclusively from their pensions, and there is no way of employment for the elderly in good health in the community.

5.2.2.2.2 Sub-theme: Extended Space

This sub-theme reveals the cost of space needed for living in the lives of the elderly. Community residential buildings are mainly dominated by the staff welfare housing built by the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory. These flats are small in size, and with the development of the later stages of life, they can no longer carry all the contents of the residents' lives. Many residents have moved many of their living activities to the streets, such as drying clothes, raising flowers,

parking, storage, and other activities. This has also led to the problem of pedestrian traffic being squeezed out of the pavements and mixed with vehicular traffic when the streets are extensively occupied. Secondly, encroachment on the street also reduces the connectivity of the street for walking. Multiple constituent elements within the built environment of a community within 500 meters walking distance within a high-density community have higher correlations with the elderly's health compared to the broader environment(Li et al., 2022). This was also confirmed in the interviews, for which spatial interventions in the street were one of the most current areas of concern for the participants.

Regarding the results of the spatial interventions that have been taken in the current communities, a spatial intervention that has been fully developed and implemented at one time has not been systematically evaluated, and sustainability is not guaranteed(Koenig, 2018). The improvement of the participant's quality of life after the spatial renewal was positively responded to by the participants, but then the residents encroached upon the street space in another way. Many ideas of how to implement the spatial intervention came from the participants. Overall, they all revolved around removing obstacles that encroach on the pavement and increasing walking quality, movement opportunities, safety, and the amount of space available.

5.2.2.2.3 Sub-theme: Selectiveness

This sub-theme covered the optionality of resources needed for the elderly's lives. Participants often mentioned going to different places and their reasons. When discussing grocery and service purchases. Different choices for different personal conditions made participants very certain about the optionality of undetermined within the community. The living infrastructure centred on Xiangrong Street, including the staff hospital, restaurants, supermarkets, and administrative services, can ensure the provision of necessities for the elderly. During the interviews, participants repeatedly mentioned the necessities of life, such as food, groceries and medicines, complete life supplies and medical services sold in the community, as well as the fact that life in the community did not receive any impact when it was blocked, which were obtained easily in the community by CPMSC staff delivery door to door, as well as the fact that life in the community did not receive any impact when it was isolated in the home during the epidemic. In terms of availability, the number of grocery shops and restaurants in the community is substantial, and the abundance of types of choices available in the community was also evidenced in the interviews. Medical resources are also available in the form of a pharmacy within a five-minute walk, a community-level staff hospital, and a municipal general hospital within a 15-minute walk(Figure 5-4).



Figure 5-4. Layout of the 15-minute Living Circle for the Sanmian East Community(Indicative signs within the community)

5.2.2.3 Theme 3 Group Creativity

Group creativity reveals how the elderly are affected by their position in different organisations. In the current post-Danwei period, the activities that the elderly engage in around their belonging groups represent a continuation of the collective activities from their Danwei period. It also serves as a part of their public spiritual attachment. In family organisations, influenced by traditional culture, the elderly continue to hold obligations to the extended family. Their personal life can only occur after their obligations to the family have ended. However, in social groups, the elderly's time always revolves around the location of the social group. The elderly receive not only moral support but also security care. The social group encourages the elderly to go out and is an essential factor in the elderly's place attachment. The encouragement of familiar friends also increases the elderly's confidence to go out. However, the elderly's social groups have high homogeneity and exclusivity. The highly closed social circle also creates a disconnect between the elderly and those outside the community, making it difficult to expand into new social circles. The isolation of the elderly in communities is relative. The

social world of the elderly in the State-run No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory is still within the State-run No. 3 Cotton Textile Factory, but there is a close-knit social network within the Sanmian community. In terms of getting along with retail organisations within the community, establishing certain social relationships is an essential factor that affects the elderly's sense of shopping experience and trust. The retail culture of the community requires retailers to be integrated into the community. Regarding party organisation, the elderly with party membership and other memberships are significantly more engaged in community public activities.

Emile Durkheim(2014, pp. 389–396)(2014, pp. 389–396) distinguishes a group into two kinds: Mechanical and organic. Mechanical Group is based on the relationship between the individual definition and the others on the premise of evident characteristics and attributes(e.g., familial, tribal, colloquial, or physical traits). An organic group is a group that is self-invested, and results in subjectively chosen groups in this theme are all Organic and refer to groups of all types of social relationships, friendships, volunteers, interest groups and others that the elderly in the community are a part of. The level of active participation in social activities is associated with the elderly maintaining their overall self-efficacy, and has played a clear positive role in reducing disability(Mendes de Leon et al., 2003).

5.2.2.3.1 Sub-theme: Tasks within Family

This sub-theme is about the tasks the elderly take on after retirement. In the Chinese cultural context, the elderly have changed from working as their primary task to family matters after retirement. If some grandchildren or spouses need care, the elderly must take on caregiving duties until their children or other guardians can take over. The personal life of the elderly begins after there are no family members who need care. These tasks also influence the paths and areas of the elderly's daily outings, centring around being active around schools and hospitals.

5.2.2.3.2 Sub-theme: Social Group Support

This subtheme focused on social groups of the elderly. The elderly in the interviews had their own social groups within the community, and the emotional support that this social contact generated during the move gave the participants a strong desire to walk in the community(Figure 5-5). The manner and location of their gatherings essentially determined the range of activities for the elderly. Not only that, but going out to meet the community also encourages the confidence of the elderly to AIP; they want to stay and take advantage of the opportunity to see close friends. This is despite residential buildings and other public spaces in the community, except the community hospital, being partly equipped with barrier-free features. This is because the lack of basic accessible facilities, such

as lifts, is a travelling burden for many participants. Participants indicated that they are trying their best to overcome the shortcomings of the physical environment to ensure that they can stay connected to the community.

W1: I wear gloves, and when I walk on the stairs, I wear my gloves and tug on the stair rails. When I go down, I easily fall. Because of my age, I'm afraid my legs will give out, and I'll fall on my hind legs.

The willingness to choose to age in a community with strong community ties, such as the Sanmian Community, was emphasised many times by participants in the interviews.



Figure 5-5 Community Public Space (Photographs from the author)

The elderly's personal time in the community is spent around social groups.

W12: Those buildings, I don't know anyone there, so I don't even go there when I stroll in the community. I don't go there because the community is quite big, covering an area of 170,000 square metres, so sometimes you don't know anyone in some residential buildings. I also don't usually go somewhere I am not familiar with. I mean that I'm fine going to that place. But I didn't live there. When I stay around their building. Those people who live in those buildings will ask me why I come there. If I've been around here, people who live there may doubt my purpose. As long as I know the people in those places, I can often go there. If you don't know the people around there, why do you go there?

The elements of familiarity perceived by the participants were primarily people and, secondarily, familiarity with the physical environment. Changing or expanding the scope of daily travelling caused difficulties in expanding the social circle and the process of adapting to the new environment. Because of the sudden changes in living conditions brought about by the great changes of the times experienced by the retired the elderly of the Zhengzhou State-run No.3 Cotton Textile Factories in their early years, some of the habits, as well as the changes in social status and economic conditions brought about by this particular experience are incomprehensible to the residents of the community who have

been restructured into the living quarters of the non-state-run factories. So in the Sanmian community, the elderly's social group is stable and closed. In the interviews, the idea of not being able to fit in with any other social groups, no matter inside the community and outside the community(non-State-owned cotton factory retired workers and their families), was repeated many times.

W11: I would like to go outside and meet someone I know, you got it right? If I go somewhere new to me, and I am old and deaf. I can't see and listen well. So I am trying not to leave this place, I am trying to stay in this place.

Yes, I do. In familiar places, I know all the people in here. Yes, if I move somewhere else, it will be difficult for me to make new friends. First of all, when I speak, other people may not understand what I am saying sometimes. It's embarrassing. So it's better to stay here.

However, the social groups of the elderly with disabilities are segregated from the non-disabled groups. Because of accessibility issues, the elderly with disabilities organise their community groups outside their communities, such as integrated parks, where there is a mature barrier-free environment. In contrast to the elderly, the lives of the elderly with disabilities in the communities do not include recreational activities but only survival support.

The relationship between the elderly and their social groups is one of reciprocity. Not only do they provide emotional support, but they also share the responsibility of guardianship of the elderly with their families and society. The elderly with a history of significant medical problems, who can move and think on their own, are judged to be a safety risk if they live on their own. The elderly who have no family members to rely on are under the supervision of the CPMSC, while the rest are under the guardianship of their families. The elderly go out every day to gather with the community, not only to provide emotional support to each other but also as a form of care for the elderly in the community.

One of a participant had suffered a fall a few years ago and is now recovered, although she still lives on her own. However, her children come to her home during the day at mealtimes to cook for her, and she spends the rest of the day out in the neighbourhood with her best friends. She said that she only comes home for meals during the day and spends the rest of the day walking with her friends and watching other people play cards.

5.2.2.3.3 Sub-theme: Retailer-related

Participants felt that familiarity in shopping also meant a better experience process and trust, which subsequently motivated the elderly to choose the same shop consistently.

WI8: This is China's society, a humane society, a humane society, you cannot just do cold and simple trading every day, everywhere, right? Normal life requires this kind of communication between people.

WI10: Especially when the fruit seller next to the Wanjiayu convenience store is cheap, but I don't buy his fruit; people don't know him, so they buy his fruit. The seller says the fruits are good, but I don't believe him. The store seller, you don't know him, he will cheat you. The fruit store I mentioned is on the side of the junction road, next to the supermarket. The market just imported a building. The fruit is okay; anyway, it's a little more expensive to buy a good one online.

I like to buy groceries at a shop or stall where I am familiar with the owner. If the seller and I know each other, that is more friendly.

The elderly also consider their relationship with retailers in their shopping choices. The current retailers in the community were all stationed in the Sanmian community in the 1980s when the reform and opening up began, and over the past 40 years, they have developed a business mechanism that meets the purchasing needs and shopping patterns of the residents. Over the years, the relationship between the elderly and retailers has been a buying relationship between customers and merchants, as well as a community relationship with a certain social element. Unlike the relationship with the elderly community groups, this shopping relationship develops out of trust. Once trust is broken, the elderly will not choose to shop here. The elderly also share shopping information with their community groups, which in turn affects the shop's business. Older shops in a community tend to maintain a good reputation and relationship with residents, integrating themselves into the community.

WI6: I can go out of the residential area. It's just outside this doorway, and there's an electric car mechanic there. I often go out and chat with him when I'm free. I'm very happy to have a chat with him.

WI20: Courier delivery point that I don't even need to get out of the car, the attendant of the other delivery pick up point really gave me a hand during a hard time. The staff member told me that I didn't have to get out of the car. They gave me the parcel in my hand. Just like this, now I feel that society really warms my heart.

However, some of the newer shops in the community do not recognise that retailers are part of the community, and the profit-driven business model has lost several older customers.

5.2.2.3.4 Sub-theme: Impact of Multiple Identities on Community Participation

This theme focuses on the impact of identity on community participation. Participants who are members of the party are obliged to participate in activities held at the community party centre. The aura of honour that comes with party membership is also positive for the elderly's participation. However, this aura affects the motivation of the elderly who are not party members to participate. Party membership requires them to be the most motivated and diligent in their various endeavours. The elderly generally report that the public activities they participate in are homogeneous, and that this homogeneity is diverse, including hobbies, social identities, and peers. Participation in public activities of non-party groups is mostly in pairs. In the case of community management and participation in community public activities, it is difficult for non-member groups to find a sense of belonging and identity in the activities without community support and lower subsequent participation.

5.2.2.4 Theme 4 Space Allocation

Spatial allocation is concerned with the impact on spatial quality of the distribution of benefits associated with community spaces. The elderly value the convenience of proximity to infrastructure, but also suffer from some intolerable noise and odours due to the proximity of some housing to retailers. Yet over time, this living environment has become a sign of the community's vibrancy. This culture has made the elderly inclusive of such influences, accepting them as long as they do not interfere with their daily life. The elderly understand and accept that there is a space conflict in the high-density community environment and that there is no space to resolve it or back down. The following theme describes the elderly's daily activities, their routes and areas. The use of different functional and social spaces by the elderly is also described. The final focus is on the current status of housing replacement for the elderly. It is more difficult for the elderly in the community to replace their next stage of adapted housing. Finding suitable housing, economic costs, and buying and selling policies combined lead to difficulties for the elderly to replace adaptive housing on their own.

5.2.2.4.1 Sub-theme: Sensory Experience

This sub-theme is concerned with the sensory experience of living in the high-density built environment and the impact on the quality of life of the elderly. Overly compact layouts (Figure 5-6), while conducive to encouraging walking, created conflicts between various groups over spatial resources and interests. Participants often prioritised the potential mobile safety hazards that dense foot traffic could create, which reduced the utilisation of the elderly's outdoor spaces. The proximity of amenity resources and shops is an important factor that promotes walkability for the elderly. The continued development of a variety of

retailers in the community. The characteristic of having a somewhat noisy community has become a community feature, and over a long period of time, the elderly have become accustomed to this community atmosphere. It is considered an important expression of community vitality. However, the impact of noise and odour caused by the business practices of retailers in too close proximity to the neighbouring the elderly can be significant.

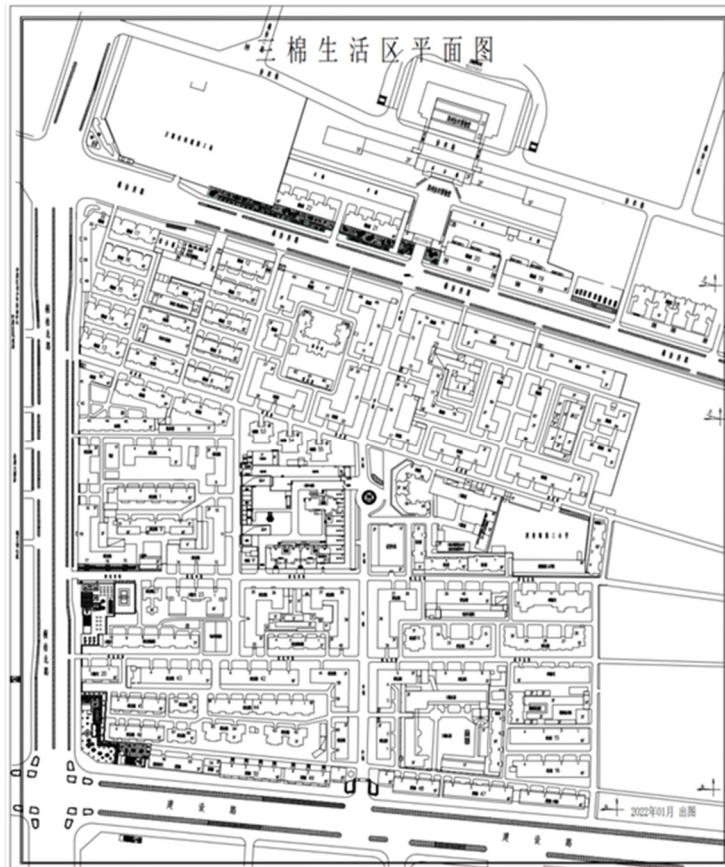


Figure 5-6. Layout of the Sanmian Communities(From the community information archive of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory)

The community has a low level of greenery, and the overall appearance of the buildings and landscaping has a distinctly old feel. The current renewal projects completed in the community are mainly to satisfy the function rather than to beautify the appearance. However, the participants did not feel negatively about the appearance of the buildings and felt that they did not care about anything placed in public spaces, as long as it did not affect their lives. The elderly understand that the primary conditions of the community limit the development of the community and that there needs to be more space for the development of environmental beautification in decaying communities.

5.2.2.4.2 Sub-theme: Functional Space vs. Social Space

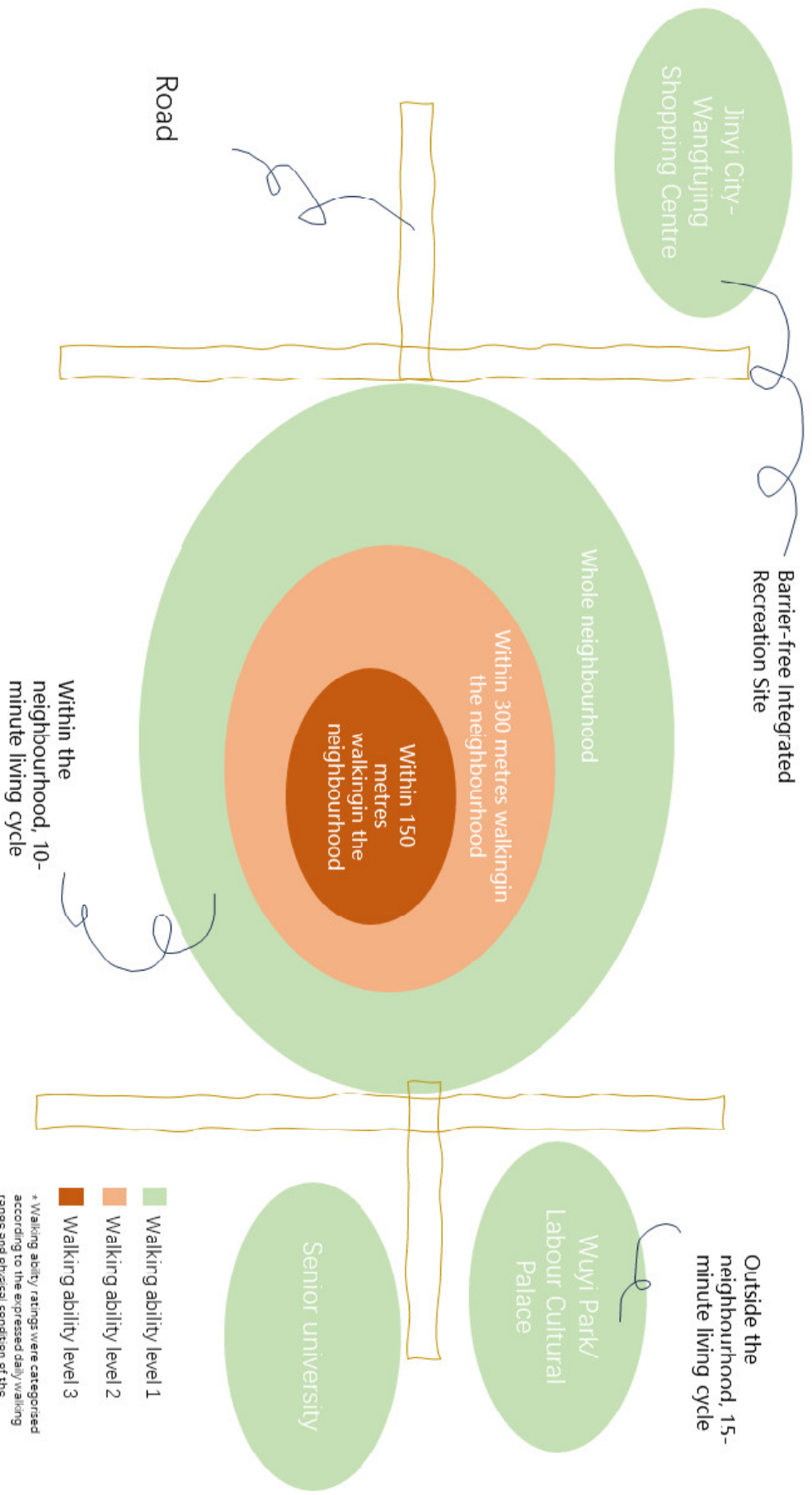
The daily activities of the elderly are categorised into household and personal activities. Family activities include grocery shopping and babysitting. As mentioned above in the subtheme of tasks in retirement, the elderly's paths to recreation, exercise, and purchasing also revolve around family members. This is why the community's primary school on Xiangrong Street and the proximity of the grocery shop make some of the elderly's routes for daily shopping and outings primarily focused around Xiangrong Street during peak school hours (Figure 5-7). It is only after they can put aside their custodial work that their range of activities converges towards the gathering places of their peers. As for personal activities, they included exercise, leisure activities, studying, and volunteering. Based on the experience of the elderly mentioned in walking interviews, participants' personal activities mostly took place within the community or a 15-minute living circle.



Figure 5-7. Facilities around Xiangrong Street (Mobile photography by the author)

There are two kinds of gathering spaces where the elderly are concerned: public spaces for activities and self-created spaces, distributed in streets within communities and in supporting infrastructures outside communities, such as large parks and community colleges for the elderly. The community Senior university is one of the trends and requirements for developing senior education proposed in the "14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the National Aging programme and Senior Care Service System". Embedding senior education facilities in communities is a manifestation of the popularisation of senior

education facilities, and the lack of public space in nearby high-density post-Danwei communities can be compensated to a certain extent by the presence of large parks and comprehensive facilities such as Senior universitys within a 15-minute living circle. Compared to the 5-minute and 10-minute living zones within 500m of the home, access to these large-scale recreational facilities within the 15-minute living zone requires crossing the street and walking a longer distance. Crossing the road means increased safety risks, and the road outside the community naturally differentiates the range of activities for the elderly with different physical abilities. It is mainly the less mobile the elderly who complete so few exercise activities in the community, and these out-of-community facilities divert some of the more mobile the elderly. In the interviews, the range of activities of the elderly at one level of physical condition was basically the same(Figure 5-8).



+ Walking ability ratings were categorised according to the expressed daily walking range and physical condition of the participants in the walking interviews.

Figure 5-8. Staying Area for Participants with Different Physical Conditions(Summarised by the author from the walking interview content)

In addition, the elderly are actively building spaces for social gatherings(Figure 5-9). Those spaces built by the residents can be seen everywhere in the community. These open spaces are built with materials contributed by those who are members of the community.



Figure 5-9 Spaces Created by Social Groups(Mobile photography by the author)

Although these spaces are officially public spaces, the residents consider that these spaces belong to the people who built those spaces. Although these ubiquitous resting places are not marked or laid out in a way that prevents strangers from using the space, the different social groups in which the participants are embedded only gather in the spaces they have constructed. Even though the land occupied by these places is legally a street space, participants indicated that the private spaces they used were built by them and their communities, and no participant mentioned that they would use spaces built by others. However, on the premise that there were no major fire safety hazards overall, the community's management opted for a flexible approach to management. The opportunity for the elderly to create their own space was preserved, which mitigated the lack of public space for the elderly in the high-density post-Danwei communities.

5.2.2.4.3 Sub-theme: Way of Daily Travelling

This sub-theme is concerned with how the elderly get around daily and the extent to which they travel. The compact layout of the community dictates that the elderly spend most of their time outdoors on foot. Basic shopping, entertainment, healthcare, and dining are all within a ten-minute living circle. Recreation, healthcare, and dining are all within a ten-minute living circle in the community. All participants discussed the convenience of the proximity to amenities in the

high-density environment.

Greater accessibility makes it rare for the elderly to travel further by private car or public transport, and they spend most of their time in the community. Second, the elderly's expectations for staying fit and healthy make walking a very efficient way to combine exercise and meet lifestyle needs. For the elderly, all travelling activities are expected to serve the purpose of exercise.

Apart from walking, public transport is the second most popular mode of transport for the elderly. The main reasons for this are the cost of fares and the excellent public transport network within a 10-minute walk of their home. The city's senior welfare policy is to make off-peak metro rides and all-day bus fares free for the elderly over the age of 60. This initiative greatly encourages the elderly to use public transport. Free transport has also helped the elderly to travel more widely, with 90 percent of participants stating that public transport is their primary mode of transport to travel further afield to enjoy more infrastructure when physically able to do so.

Most of the elderly today do not have a driving licence. In the past, few people owned cars in China; most of the elderly relied on walking, bicycles, and public transport before the 1980s, and then began to have motorbikes for transport. However, using this kind of private transport requires extra expenses to maintain daily use. Whether parking management fees and electricity costs are charged is a consideration for the elderly in controlling the number of trips they make and where they travel. For the elderly who need to travel on three-wheeled electric bicycles, their range of movement is basically limited to 15 minutes, due to traffic regulations that prohibit electric tricycles from travelling in the city, and can only be driven within the community. Even now, when cars are widely available, the elderly still need others' support to use cars as their main means of transport because they require financial costs and spatial resources that the elderly and the communities can hardly afford and accommodate. This is because communities are equipped with far fewer parking resources. Early community construction was not able to take into account the later car popularity as a factor of development of the times, and in the later stages, the population density gradually increased, so that barely any public space could be used for parking.

5.2.2.4.4 Sub-theme: Adaptive Housing

This sub-theme focuses on the need to replace senior housing. As mentioned in the previous sub-theme, due to the difficulty of installing accessible facilities in the community, many participants are in their current state of physical health. It is possible to meet the basic needs of life, but consider the travelling problems at a later stage when entering the stage of lacking independent living ability. The

elderly living on the upper floors want to change to lower-floor flats in the community. However, searching for suitable housing relies on the elderly themselves to find suitable residences. Individuals need better access to housing information, making it difficult for the elderly to find suitable housing. There are also constraints on the availability of housing funds and policies on purchasing and selling older homes, making it difficult for the elderly to replace their homes independently. Discrimination against the elderly by landlords in the communities is common regarding renting.

WI14: This room belongs to my ex-wife's room. I can't rent someone's room, they look at me like this(quiet old and sick), they are afraid that I will die in their flat.

WI4: The move out is not just saying; it needs real money. If I want to buy a flat, I need to sell my current flat to pay for the new one. But no one wants it. My flat is quite old, it was built around the 1950s. Now the policy requires only cash transactions for trading my flat. It is not allowed to loan. I have no money to buy another flat, and I did not consider changing to a lower-floor flat. I mean that I want to change, but I cannot afford a place.

5.2.3 Local Government Action

China has responded positively to the goals of the National Action Commitment on Healthy Ageing set out in the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health launched by the World Health Organisation(2017). In the 'Outline of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China and the Vision for 2035' proposed by the National Central Government of China in 2021, active response to population ageing was for the first time upgraded to a national strategy(Government of the People's Republic of China, 2021). According to the model given in the National programmemes for Age-friendly Cities and Communities: A Guide, published by the World Health Organisation(World Health Organisation, 2023)for developing and sustaining age-friendly city projects(Figure 5-10):



Figure 5-10. Model of Principles and Steps for Creating Age-Friendly Environments from WHO(World Health Organisation, 2023)(World Health Organisation, 2023)

The uniqueness of the Chinese Government's pattern of action determines the way in which it works on the construction of an ageing society, and the development of all ageing undertakings is carried out under the leadership of the Communist Party of China(CPC) and under the unified management of the Government(Figure 5-11). The formulation of five-year plans for national economic and social development by the CPC Central Committee is a visionary goal for China's social and economic development in the following five years, a programme document for the government's work objectives and requirements, and the implementation and fulfilment of the development goals set out in the five-year plans by the governments at all levels is an important way of the CPC's governance of the country, and an important embodiment of the socialist mode of development with Chinese characteristics(National Development and Reform Commission of the People's Republic of China, 2020).

Since 1953, when China began preparing five-year development plans, it has prepared and implemented 13 five-year plans and, in 2021, issued its Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development(Government of the People's Republic of China, 2021), an outline document of China's development goals for the period from 2021 to 2025. After the release of the Five-Year Plan, the State Council formulates targeted programmes according to the objectives of different aspects of the Five-Year Plan, for example, the 14th Five-Year Plan for the

Development of the National Senior Career programmeme and Senior Care System(Government of the People’s Republic of China, 2021b), which is an outline document of China's senior career development objectives for the period from 2021 to 2025. Provincial governments formulate their own five-year plans based on the requirements of the five-year plans issued by higher levels of government, and according to the different circumstances of each province, to implement the development requirements of the five-year plan documents issued by the State. Subsequently, municipal governments study and understand the five-year plan documents issued by the provincial government and then formulate the corresponding five-year plan documents according to the situation in the municipality and issue them to all departments for implementation. In addition, after the implementation of the development objectives of the ageing cause issued by the State, the relevant specific implementation process documents are organised by the relevant competent authorities to prepare specific special plans. Specialised plans can be prepared at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, and the type and precision of the preparation of specialised plans at different levels and in different regions can be chosen in accordance with the actual situation(Department of Natural Resources of Fujian Province, 2022).



Figure 5-11. The Process of China's Action on Ageing(Summarised by the author based on the literature)

5.2.4 Stage Development Goals of China's Ageing Action

In the 13th Five-Year Plan, which has been completed, China has achieved the initial comprehensive construction of an old-age protection system, guaranteeing the smooth implementation of social old-age care. Policies and laws on ageing

have been further improved; social security has been expanded, and urban pilots of the security system have been conducted to explore experience; and the old-age service system has been improved.

From the content of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan outline document, it can be clearly seen that the completion of the building of the old age security system and pilot work to explore. In the 14th Five-Year Plan, the development of the ageing cause will focus on improving the quality of life in old age, and the focus of the development of the ageing cause will be on the development of old-age services(State Council General Office, 2022). The direction of community development is to sink public service resources and prioritise the development of community senior care. The development goals for China's ageing programme from 2021 to 2025 are in the document (Government of the People's Republic of China, 2021; General Office of the State Council, 2022):

- Promoting the construction of a senior care service system and improving the elderly's care service network
- Supporting community and home-based senior care, and enhancing the capacity of community-level senior care services.
Enhance the quality of senior services and strengthen supervision of these services.
- Encourage social forces to participate in senior care services and develop the elderly care service industry

The future development goals for decayed communities are:

- Strengthen the transformation of decayed communities and improve the quality of life of residents.
- Promote the construction of public service facilities and improve the living environment
- Promote the construction of digitalisation and artificial intelligence management communities, and improve the quality of community management
- Encourage residents' self-governance and promote the modernisation of community governance

The relative national planning document for ageing is the 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of the National Ageing Career and Senior Service System, issued by the State Council of China in 2021, which puts forward five development goals in response to the development trend of ageing in China and the specific national conditions(Table 5-12):

1	The supply of elderly care services continues to expand.	The elderly care service supply that covers urban and rural areas, benefits all people, is balanced, rational, high-quality and efficient, and will be further expanded. The capacity of family elderly care will be effectively enhanced, the bottom-line elderly
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		care services will be improved, inclusive elderly care service resources will keep increasing, and multi-level, diversified and high-quality elderly care services will develop in a well-regulated manner.
2	The health support system for the elderly becomes more sound.	The supply of elderly health service resources will keep increasing, and the allocation will become more rational, and the talent team will grow stronger. Home-based medical services such as home hospital beds and on-site medical visits will be actively provided, the health level of the elderly will be improved, and their health needs will be better met.
3	Diverse forms of services for the elderly achieve innovative and integrated development.	Services such as education and training, culture and tourism, fitness and leisure, and financial support for the elderly will be enriched. The industry of products for the elderly will expand, scientific and technological innovation capacity will be enhanced, and intelligent products and services will benefit more senior citizens.
4	The capacity of essential safeguards continues to strengthen	The business environment for the industry will be optimised, and supporting policies, including planning, land, housing, public finance, investment, financing and personnel, will be more effective. The scale and capacity of practitioners will be improved, and systems such as comprehensive supervision of elderly care services and long-term care insurance will be improved.
5	The social environment becomes more age-friendly and liveable	Construction of national model elderly-friendly communities will be fully promoted. Efforts will be made to effectively solve difficulties encountered by the elderly in using smart technologies, and foster a social atmosphere of respecting, caring for and helping the elderly.

Table 5-12. Development Goals of China's 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development Service System of the elderly(Summarised by the author based on the policy document)

	Fourteenth Five-Year Plan documents	Thirteenth Five-Year Plan documents
Priorities	Improve service of older people network, support community and home care, improve service quality, and encourage commercial participation	Promoting the development of the elderly care service industry, supporting family and community care for the elderly, upgrading the level of specialisation and improving the protection system

Table 5-13. Comparison of Development Goals for Ageing in the 14th Five-Year Plan and 13th Five-Year Plan

In terms of upgrading age-friendly environments in decayed communities, China has been taking several actions since before the 14th Five-Year Plan (Government of the People’s Republic of China, 2021) in 2021. To date, the State has issued a guideline document on the modelling of age-friendly communities, followed by a series of building standards and regulations, as well as guidelines on enhancing age-friendly outdoor and indoor environments. In terms of policy, a system of standards for the construction and upgrading of age-friendly communities has been fully formed. About the construction standards for age-friendly communities, during the 13th Five-Year Plan period, the Department of Ageing and Health of the China Health Commission (CHRC) has proposed seven models and construction work plans for Age-friendly Communities in Chinese Cities (Figure 5-12) in the “Notice on the creation of national age-friendly demonstration communities” (CHRC, 2020).



Figure 5-14. Modelling Age-Friendly Communities in Chinese Cities (Summarised by the author based on the policy document)

The List of Replicable Experiences and Practices in Implementing Urban Renewal Initiatives (Office of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 2022) aims to promote successful urban renewal experiences by, among other things, optimising the planning and implementation process of renovation projects in decayed communities, ensuring that each project has a clear objective and an actionable implementation plan, and focusing on the participation and

feedback of the community residents to enhance the effectiveness of the renovation and the satisfaction of the residents. The Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Construction of a Liveable Environment for the elderly(China National Committee on Aging, 2016) specifies the enhancement of the livability of the living environment for the elderly by promoting age-friendly renovation of decayed communities, with specific measures including optimising the space for the elderly to engage in daily activities, installing additional age-friendly facilities, and upgrading the ageing-friendly of public service facilities. The Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Comprehensively Promoting the Renovation of Decayed Urban Communities(General Office of the State Council, 2020) emphasises the improvement of the living conditions of residents in decayed communities, with specific actions including the comprehensive renovation of the infrastructure in the community, such as upgrading the water supply, power supply and gas supply networks, upgrading the quality of the roads and improving the public lighting. At the same time, the document also emphasises the optimisation of public space in the community and the increase of green areas and areas for recreational activities to enhance the quality of living. On Solid and Orderly Then from a Broader Urban Renewal Perspective(Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, 2023) promotes the modernisation of decayed communities and buildings to improve their efficiency of use, with specific measures including strengthening the comprehensive management of decayed communities, improving supporting facilities and upgrading the level of public services, such as increasing the number of healthcare and senior care facilities.

The Guiding Opinions on Accelerating the Implementation of Ageing Adaptation Projects for the elderly at Home(Ministry of Civil Affairs et al., 2020) focuses more on ageing adaptation at home, including the provision of barrier-free facilities for the elderly in their homes, and the installation of additional facilities, such as handrails, ramps, and emergency call systems, to ensure the safety and convenience of the elderly at home.

In the development of social security systems for the elderly, subsequent documents issued by the state did not focus exclusively on improving the quality of services. Two years after the release of the 14th Five-Year Plan, China's State Council issued a new document on the opinions on promoting the construction of a basic old-age service system(General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China & General Office of the State Council, 2023). China's 12th Five-Year Plan proposes the establishment of a senior service system(Plan for the construction of a social old-age service system 2011-2015), a document that represents the state's requirements for the further development of the old-age service system at the current stage. It is about the direction of further development of the social security system for the elderly and the rules of social security. It specifies that during the 14th Five-Year Plan(2021-2025), the State will

focus on the financial resources and care needs of the elderly who have no resources to support them.

Laws and regulations on the rights and interests of the elderly have been continuously developed and improved. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the elderly, promulgated in 1996, was amended in 2009, revised in 2012, and amended again in 2015 and 2018(Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the elderly, 1996). The Civil Code of the People's Republic of China, which will be implemented in 2021, provides legislative responses and regulations for recent years. The Civil Code of the People's Republic of China, which will be implemented in 2021, provides a legislative response to and regulates disputes over the elderly in recent years(People's Republic of China Civil Code, 2020).

5.2.5 Measures by Regional Governments

After the state puts forward development goals and requirements, regional governments refine plans and implement tasks. After China issued a document on the national five-year social and economic development plan in 2021, the Henan provincial government formulated the outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of Henan Province and the Visionary Goals for the 23rd Five-Year Plan according to the development of the province by interpreting the document of the high-level government. It issued it to the municipal governments in the province. The Zhengzhou Municipal Government then formulated the Notice of the Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government on the Issuance of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of Zhengzhou City and the Outline of the Visionary Goals for the 23rd Five-Year Plan in accordance with its own situation(Table 5-15). Subsequently, in response to the 14th Five-Year Plan, various special plans related to the construction of age-friendly environments and the renovation of decayed communities were issued by various ministries and commissions and then continuously refined and implemented in the community(Table 5-16). In addition to the government's work plan, Henan Province has introduced local regulations on senior care(Henan Provincial Senior Service Regulations, 2022) to ensure the further development of the senior service system by legislating the requirements for the construction of senior services in the province.

Table 5-15. The 14th Five-Year National Social and Economic Development Plan of Henan Province and Zhengzhou Municipal Government Specific Five-Year Development Plans Related to Age-Friendly Cities(Summarised by the author)

Provincial Government: Notice of the People's Government of Henan Province on the Issuance of the Outline of the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of Henan Province and the Outline of the Visionary Goals for the 2035 Years

Urban Renewal and Urban and Rural Habitat Construction Plan of Henan Province under the 14th Five-Year Plan

The 14th Five-Year Plan of Henan Province on Public Services and Social Security

Development Plan of Pension Service System and Recreation Industry of Henan Province in the 14th Five-Year Plan Period

Municipal Government: Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government on the issuance of Zhengzhou City National Economic and Social Development 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the Visionary Goals for 2035

Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' for Public Health System and Health of the People

Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' Development Plan for Pension Services

Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' Medical Security Development Plan

Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' for the Protection and Development of Disabilities

Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' Modern Service Industry Development Plan

Zhengzhou Municipal Housing Development '14th Five-Year' Plan

Zhengzhou 2024 National Economic and Social Development Plan

Table 5-16. Action documents issued by the governments of Henan Province and Zhengzhou Municipality to complete the 14th Five-Year Plan on Ageing(Summarised by the author)

Policy and regulation	Content
Regulations on Senior Services in Henan Province	It stipulates the legal framework and specific requirements for the construction of the senior service system in Henan Province. It clarifies the responsibilities of all levels of government and the assessment standards for senior services.
Implementation programme for Strengthening the Work of the Senior in the New Era in Henan Province	To propose concrete measures and objectives to strengthen the work on ageing in the new era.
Work programme on Intensive Care Services for Disabled the elderly with Economic Difficulties in	Propose a programme of intensive care services for the elderly with disabilities who are in financial difficulties, to ensure that their basic living and care needs are met.

<p>Henan Province</p> <p>Circular on the Issuance of Implementation Standards for Basic Public Services in Henan Province</p>	<p>Standards for the implementation of basic public services in Henan Province have been formulated, covering a wide range of areas such as services for the elderly, public health and education, to ensure the quality and coverage of public services.</p>
<p>Notice on the Pilot Work of Building a Smart Senior Service Platform</p>	<p>To put forward specific requirements and measures for the pilot work on the construction of an intelligent senior service platform, and to promote the intelligent development of senior services.</p>
<p>Opinions on the Implementation of the Dynamic Adjustment Mechanism for Medical Service Prices in Henan Province</p>	<p>Proposed the establishment of a dynamic adjustment mechanism for medical service prices to ensure reasonable price adjustments.</p>
<p>Notice on vigorously promoting the construction of senior day-care centres in urban areas</p> <p>Technical Guidelines for Comprehensive Renovation of Old Urban Districts in Henan Province</p>	<p>Proposing specific measures and standards for the construction of urban day-care centres for the elderly, and upgrading the capacity of day-care services for the elderly.</p> <p>To propose technical standards and requirements for the transformation of decayed communities, to enhance the living environment of communities, to promote the construction of smart communities and to improve management effectiveness.</p>
<p>Construction Standards for Age-Friendly Buildings in Henan Province</p> <p>Implementation Opinions of the General Office of the People's Government of Henan Province on Strengthening the Protection of Senior Service Talents</p>	<p>Standards regulating the age-friendly construction of buildings apply across the province.</p> <p>Proposing specific measures to strengthen the development of the senior service workforce and ensure the training and protection of senior service professionals.</p>
<p>Notice on the Pilot Work of Building an Intelligent Senior Service Platform</p>	<p>To put forward specific requirements and measures for the pilot construction of an intelligent senior service platform, and to promote the intelligent development of senior services.</p>
<p>Opinions on Strengthening the Senior Service System</p>	<p>The opinions on strengthening the construction of the senior service system in Henan Province have been issued, specifying specific measures and objectives.</p>
<p>programmeme of action to</p>	<p>Propose specific measures to address the</p>

effectively address the difficulties of the elderly in the use of smart technologies	difficulties of the elderly in the use of smart technologies and help them adapt to the development of a smart society.
Zhengzhou '14th Five-Year Plan' period 'one old one small' overall solution notice	The programme is committed to addressing issues related to the elderly and children during the Fourteenth Five-Year Plan period and to improving the quality of life of both groups through the provision of a comprehensive range of benefits and services.
Opinions of Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government on Promoting the High-Quality Development of Senior Care Services	Emphasis was placed on optimising the layout of senior service facilities, promoting the intelligent development of senior services, enhancing the supply capacity of senior services, and establishing a sound evaluation system and regulatory mechanism for senior services.
Administrative Measures for the Payment of Old Age Allowance in Zhengzhou City	To regulate the granting and management of old-age allowances and raise the level of welfare for the elderly, conditions and criteria for the granting of old-age allowances have been set.
Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-based Community Pension Service Facilities in Zhengzhou City	Standardising the operation and management of home-based community senior service facilities, improving the quality of services and management levels, and formulating specific operation and management assessment standards and evaluation indicators.
Zhengzhou City, the combination of health care and senior care services implementation measures notice	Promoting the integration of medical and health care with senior care services, upgrading health management services for the elderly, promoting cooperation between medical institutions and senior care institutions, and developing community-based home care services.
Zhengzhou Municipal Health Commission Continues to Carry Out 'Three Conveniences' Service for the elderly	Addressing the problem of the elderly's difficulties in accessing health care by providing services that facilitate registration, access to health care and medication, and assessing the experience of the elderly in accessing health care through the establishment of green channels and the optimisation of the process of accessing health care.
Zhengzhou Municipality to coordinate the 'five doctors' reform implementation programme notice	Implementing the linkage of medical care, medical insurance, medicine and health care, upgrading the overall level of medical and health care services, strengthening medical and health care services, and promoting the development of

Zhengzhou City Active Response to Population Ageing Key Contact City Construction Work programmeme	healthy ageing. Propose specific measures to cope with population ageing and build age-friendly cities, including establishing a sound service system for the elderly, promoting the development of the ageing industry and strengthening the protection of the rights and interests of the elderly.
List of Basic Senior Services in Zhengzhou	It lists the items and standards of basic senior services for the elderly, including material assistance, care services, legal proceedings services, etc., to ensure that the elderly enjoy basic livelihood protection.

About 57 percent of the documents issued by the Henan Provincial Government and Zhengzhou Municipal Government on the construction of age-friendly environments in older communities after 2021 are on senior care services. This is in line with the overall focus of the 14th Five-Year Plan issued by China's State Council. In particular, the Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-based Community Aged Care Service Facilities in Zhengzhou City(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government Office, 2024) provides a detailed implementation plan for the construction and operation of age-friendly community services and service facilities in five key areas: service facilities, operation and management, service content, assessment mechanisms, and supervision and management. This programmeme includes the general layout, the specific division of labour, the specific functions of the service facilities, and the specific requirements on management(Tables 5-17 and 5-18). The operational mechanism for the implementation of the programmeme is:

Level 1. Zhengzhou Civil Affairs Bureau: responsible for the coordination, guidance and supervision of the city's home-based community senior care service facilities.

Level 2. District and County(city) Civil Affairs Departments: provide business guidance for home-based community senior living service facilities, and are responsible for promoting the establishment of systems, implementation of policies, industry supervision, evaluation and assessment of home-based community senior living service facilities under their jurisdiction; other relevant departments are required to cooperate in the implementation.

Level 3. Sub-district Offices: Responsible for the site selection, construction and operation supervision of home-based community senior service facilities under their jurisdiction; regularly investigating the elderly's health conditions, service needs, etc. and entering them into the senior service information platform.

Level 4. CPMSC: Under the guidance of Sub-district Offices, responsible for the operation and management of home-based community-based senior service facilities under their jurisdiction, providing or helping to link senior services around the needs of the elderly.

Overall layout	District and county (city) people's governments should be combined with urban planning, population size, service radius of the reasonable distribution of home community elderly service facilities, the implementation of the 'Zhengzhou City, the list of basic services for the elderly', to the city's older people to provide inclusive, accessible services to the large and small, the formation of a system, and efforts to create a 'quarter of an hour' home elderly care service circle.
Installation of elderly service facilities at home and in the community	District and county (city) people's governments and street offices should co-ordinate the resources of facilities and set up facilities for home-based community elderly care services:
Street elderly Service Centre	Each street has at least one comprehensive elderly care service centre covering institutional care, community care and home care, with the uniform name 'So-and-so Street Elderly Care Service Centre' and a uniform signage. Taking into account the population size and other actual circumstances of each street, the area is, in principle, no less than 2,000 square metres, and there are, in principle, no fewer than 50 beds for nursing care, with the average floor space of the beds being no less than 30 square metres.
Community day care centres	At least one day care centre has been built in each community, with a floor area of not less than 200 square metres each in principle, and newly built community day care centres with a floor area of not less than 350 square metres each; larger communities can be divided into several service points, with a service radius of about 1 kilometre, and with the uniform name 'So-and-so Community Day Care Centre'. The uniform name is 'so-and-so community day care centre', and a uniform sign is hung.

Table 5-17. Layout of home-based community senior care facilities in Zhengzhou(Summarised by the author based on the policy)

Street Service Centre for the Aging (SSCA)	Neighbourhood day-care centres	Private suppliers
Mental comfort services: visits and care, psychological counselling, emotional relief, etc.	Mental comfort services: Visiting care, psychological counselling, emotional counselling, etc.	Life care services: assisted meals, assisted baths, assisted mobility, assisted cleaning, assisted shopping, assisted medical care, assisted emergencies, housekeeping services, etc.
Home safety monitoring: safety guidance, call service, emergency rescue assistance service, ageing-friendly retrofitting guidance service, etc.	Home safety monitoring: safety monitoring, emergency assistance, ageing-friendly retrofitting guidance, etc.	Skilled care services: full-time care, day care, home beds, short-term care, etc.
Entrusted services: reading and writing letters, registering and buying medicines, collecting goods, paying fees, etc.	Cultural, sports and recreational services: cultural entertainment, sports and fitness, leisure and health care, etc.	Medical rehabilitation services: medical care, home care, rehabilitation training for cognitive disorders, leasing and recycling of rehabilitation aids, leasing of intellectual toys, etc.
Education and training services: Educational counselling, silver hair counsellors, free caregiving training for family members of eligible older people, etc.	Educational counselling services: silver hair counsellors, popular health care, health care knowledge, fraud detection and prevention campaigns, etc.	Rehabilitation and physiotherapy services: massage, moxibustion therapy, instrumental therapy, lumbar rehabilitation, joint relaxation, cognitive sensory training.
Elderly Services: Display and Presentation of Elderly Products	Health management services: Establishment of health records, organisation of regular clinics, etc.	Elderly goods services: Sales of elderly goods, etc.
Health management services: Establishment of health records for older people in the service, organisation of regular clinics, etc.		Home safety services: ageing-friendly home modification services, etc.
Cultural, sports and recreational services: cultural entertainment, sports and fitness, leisure and health care, etc.		Family support services: carer skills training, short-term care, etc.
Legal services: legal counselling, fraud-awareness and fraud-prevention campaigns, people's mediation, legal aid, etc.		Other services: other services needed by older people
Referral services: establish a service information database to provide referral services such as medical rehabilitation, home care, social work, volunteers, admission to elderly institutions, etc.		

Table 5-18. Basic Services of the 15-minute Walking Circle for the elderly(Summarised by the author based on the policy)

The accessibility of resources for the elderly to age in the community is described in the policy as requiring the construction of a “15-minute” walking circle for the elderly. Within a quarter of an hour's walking time, there are two levels of integrated senior care facilities. With the community as the basic unit, the current government-led as the main provider of resources for old-age care, supplemented by the private sector, the service resources are mainly voluntary, non-profit, and supplemented by for-profit commercial services. Operators of senior service facilities are required to have a clear mechanism for punishment and reward, as well as a monitoring system. The implementation of the construction and management of age-friendly communities is a four-tier system(Figure 5-19), with the overall national goal as the unified basis.



Figure 5-19. Guaranteed Implementation System for AIP in China’s Communities(Summarised by the author based on the policy)

In relation to the construction of community environments, the provincial documents issued by Henan Province focus mainly on detailed policy requirements and specific actions for the transformation of decayed communities and the physical environments of age-friendly communities, age-friendly cities, age-friendly buildings, etc., covering specific measures and implementation details at a number of levels. Among the provincial and municipal action documents, Henan Province's Technical Guidelines for Comprehensive Retrofitting of Old Urban Communities(Technical Guidelines for Comprehensive

Renovation of Decayed Urban Districts in Henan Province, 2020) details the retrofitting requirements for decayed urban or county towns, specifically including eliminating safety hazards, such as identifying and remediating structural problems in old buildings, improving basic functions, such as upgrading drainage systems and heating facilities, as well as increasing public support facilities such as parking spaces and rubbish disposal facilities, with the aim of comprehensively improving residents' quality of life. The Building Standards for Age-friendly Construction in Henan Province(Henan Provincial Department of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, 2021), on the other hand, sets out specific age-friendly requirements in building renovation, focusing on the addition of intelligent systems such as emergency call devices and safety monitoring devices to enhance the safety and comfort of the living environment for the elderly. The implementation plan issued by the Zhengzhou Municipal Government, including the Work programmeme for the Construction of Key Associated Cities to Actively Respond to Population Ageing(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government, 2023), proposes to improve the quality of life of the elderly through the construction of an age-friendly city, with specific measures including the promotion of age-friendly community renovation, the construction of living environments to meet the needs of the elderly, and the optimisation of service facilities for the elderly, such as the installation of additional activity centres for the elderly and medical and nursing care facilities.

With regard to community services, the Zhengzhou Municipal Government developed a list of basic senior services in Zhengzhou(List of Basic Senior Services in Zhengzhou, 2023) based on nationally issued Opinions on the Promotion of the Construction of a Basic Senior Services System(2023). Detailed implementation requirements have been developed based on the social security requirements for the elderly in the state-level document. These include application targets, service items, guarantee contents, responsible institution, and funding sources.

To further safeguard and protect the legitimate rights and interests of the elderly, Henan Province enacted local regulations on the protection of the elderly in Henan Province in 1990(Regulations on the Protection of the elderly in Henan Province, 1990), and adopted an amendment to the Regulations on the Protection of Senior People in Henan Province in 2018, which implemented the Regulations on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the elderly in Henan Province in 2019(Regulations on the Protection of Rights and Interests of the Senior in Henan Province, 2018). Thereafter, during the 14th Five-Year Plan period, the Regulation on Senior Services in Henan Province(Regulations on Senior Services in Henan Province, 2022) was enacted in 2022 to ensure that the province's goals for the elderly were met. This regulation covers the planning and construction of senior service resources, the implementation of community-based senior services, institutionalised senior services, combined medical and recreational services,

support and guarantee measures, supervision and management, and penalties for non-compliance.

5.2.6 Discussion with the Policy Implementation

Participants' descriptions of their experiences of old age from the walking interviews confirm that actions to upgrade the age-friendly environment in decayed communities after the 14th Five-Year Plan have been significant. The security of basic old-age resources for the elderly has also been addressed. However, many of the documented action objectives were not realised due to objective factors.

Theme #Dynamic Management

In its Fourteenth Five-Year Plan, the Chinese Government has clearly defined the development goals for the ageing sector, emphasising the need to improve the quality of senior care services and the network of senior care services, and the formulation of corresponding implementation plans by all levels of government. This management model ensures top-down implementation of the policy, with provincial and municipal governments formulating specific implementation rules and plans based on national policy. In the dynamic management of the theme, the CPMSC, as the main agency for policy implementation, actively responds to feedback from the elderly and makes timely adjustments to management measures. This flexible management approach is important in practice, especially in solving problems encountered by residents and adjusting service measures.

Policies formulated by the Government at the macro level are gradually implemented through all levels of government, while dynamic management at the community level ensures flexible implementation of policies at the micro level. Although the policy framework and objectives are clear, there is little in the way of the elderly' participation in decision-making and management. How can the interests of the elderly be safeguarded in community building when their participation is low? Secondly, how can the attention of the elderly to community development programmes be increased, and how can the elderly be made to better understand the elements and objectives of community development programmes?

Theme #Costs

In its policies, the Chinese Government has emphasised the promotion of community and home care for the elderly, and has encouraged the participation of social forces in senior care services. These measures require substantial financial support, and the Government has also formulated a number of policies to safeguard the basic living and service needs of the elderly. Among the elements of concern in the theme cost, the elderly are facing the pressure of high prices and living costs, and some community services and welfare benefits cannot be fully

implemented due to insufficient funding. Residents' financial pressure from high prices affects their quality of life, and despite policy provisions, insufficient actual financial support leads to implementation difficulties. The policy framework developed by the government needs strong financial support to be truly implemented. In practice, cost-of-living pressures and inadequate services for people in the community suggest that financial issues in policy implementation still need to be addressed. Ensuring adequate financial support for the policy is key to realising its objectives. So, how can the elderly' quality of life be enhanced in the absence of financial support and the gradual construction of projects? What aspects of outdoor environmental enhancement should be focused on to maximise support for the elderly when budgets are limited? How can the interests of the elderly be safeguarded in community building when their participation is low?

Theme #Group Creativity

The Government's policy encourages community and home care, promotes the building of age-friendly communities, and emphasises the sinking of community public service resources to enhance the quality of life of residents. In interviews with the elderly, CPMSCs are directly accessible to the elderly, and this high accessibility and supervision provide more efficient services. However, the elderly equally perceive the benefits of their community activities on the quality of life and old age to be clear. The creativity of the community is reflected in the mutual help and support among the elderly, the community activities that bring identity, the enthusiasm for building the environment, as well as the variety of recreational activities. Even the close community relationships formed by the elderly in their past experiences help the elderly cope with the difficulties in life.

There is a need to form a good interaction between government policies and the actual operation of the community. The formulation and implementation of policies need to give full consideration to the practical needs and opinions of the elderly, and encourage their participation in policy implementation and community building. It is worth exploring the power of the community to work together to enhance the motivation of the elderly in the community to participate.

Theme # Space Allocation

The aspects of concern in the allocation of thematic space are particularly prominent conflicts in the high-density built environment. The policy specifies standards for the renovation of decayed communities and the construction of age-friendly communities, the promotion of smart communities, the improvement of community management and the improvement of the living environment for residents. There is no issued government work plan to guide the establishment of a replacement housing system for the elderly. The demand for living space among the elderly primarily exists in terms of basic survival needs rather than quality of life enhancement. the elderly want to have adequate public

spaces and facilities for their retirement. However, the public space available in the high-density built environment is very limited, and the actual site conditions cannot accommodate the upgrading of senior facilities in decayed communities as stipulated in the city's construction regulations. Reasonable space allocation and an optimised community environment are key to improving the quality of life of residents. In high-density residential complexes where land area for public space is scarce and per capita facilities for the elderly are insufficient, how can the construction and operation of age-friendly environments in communities enhance the quality of life for the elderly?

5.2.7 Conclusion of the Experience of the Elderly in Post-Danwei

Community

The thematic analysis of the 21 transcripts from the walking interviews led to four themes: dynamic management, cost, group creativity, and space allocation. Models, implementation programmes, social security regulations and policies for age-friendly communities in China have been well developed. However, implementation has been slower. However, in general, the improvement of community environment and services is significant for the life of the elderly, but the resources available to the elderly for ageing are limited. The community's current environment is also challenging for the ageing process. Still, participants' perceptions of the current state of the environment were more positive. Participants actively choose to age in place, understand the limited space and resources, and actively use their initiative to overcome the difficulties.

Dynamic management reveals the immediacy of communication with the elderly brought about by the current working model of community CPMSC authorities. The immediacy of information underpins the flexible management practices of the elderly' CPMSC authority and facilitates communication between the elderly and the community CPMSC authority. In addition, the flexibility and adaptability of the work of the community management authority compensate for the lack of welfare for the elderly in some parts of the community. The grid-based management system is a management system that serves the residents and helps dependent the elderly to solve the problem of ageing at home through the Grid Leaders. However, it does not have a substantial impact on improving the quality of life of younger people. However, the grid-based management model forms an effective information network with the close relationship between neighbours. Participants had great trust in the community management and rated their work highly. However, the lack of participation of the elderly in decision-making in the community environmental enhancement project and the inability to decide on the allocation of community space to protect the interests of the elderly were frustrating for the participants.

Costs refer primarily to what the elderly pay for their old age, including time, money, and all other costs. Faced with financial pressures and the stress of keeping the extended family functioning, the elderly demonstrated low-risk resilience. Anxiety about risk concerns and financial constraints was most prominent throughout the interviews. Second, without access to adequate living space or the financial costs of expanding living space, the public space of the street became the area where residents expanded in real time when they needed more living space. This also leads to encroachment of street space and reduced pedestrian connectivity. However, well-established retail in the community provides the elderly with a wide range of shopping options.

Group creativity reveals how the elderly are affected by their position in different organisations. In family organisations influenced by traditional culture, the elderly continue to have obligations to the extended family. Their personal lives can only begin after their obligations to the family have ended. In social groups, however, the elderly's time is always centred around the location of the social group. The elderly receive not only moral support, but also security. Social groups encourage the elderly to go out and are an important factor in the elderly's attachment to places. Encouragement from familiar friends also boosts the elderly's confidence to go out. However, social groups for the elderly are highly homogeneous and exclusive. Highly closed social circles also result in the elderly being disconnected from people outside their communities, making it difficult to expand into new social circles. The isolation of the elderly in the community is relative. The social circle of retired the elderly from Zhengzhou National No.3 Cotton Textile Factory remains within the factory, but there is a close-knit social network within the Sanmian community. In terms of getting along with the retail establishments in the community, establishing certain social relationships is an important factor that affects the elderly's sense of shopping experience and trust. The retail culture of the community requires retailers to be integrated into the community. In terms of party organisations, the elderly with party memberships and other memberships are significantly more involved in public activities in the community.

Spatial allocation is concerned with the impact on spatial quality of the distribution of benefits associated with community spaces. The elderly value the convenience of proximity to infrastructure, but also suffer from some intolerable noise and odours due to the proximity of some housing to retailers. Over time, however, this living environment has become a sign of community vitality. This culture has made the elderly tolerant of these impacts as long as they do not interfere with their lives. The elderly understand and accept that spatial conflicts exist in

the high-density built environment and that there is no room for resolution or room to step back. The following themes describe the elderly's daily activities, routes, and areas. The use of different functional and social spaces by the elderly is also

described. The final focus is on the current status of housing replacement for the elderly. It is more difficult for the elderly in the community to transition to their next phase of adapted housing. A combination of finding suitable housing, financial costs, and buying and selling policies makes it difficult for the elderly to replace their own adapted housing.

According to the implementation of the current national development policy, combined with the themes obtained from the analysis of the interviews. The following issues should be considered as characteristics for the development of age-friendly environments after the conversion of post-Danwei communities:

- How can the elderly be supported in developing their own communities? How can the cohesion of the community be used to help the elderly integrate into the environment and enhance community participation?
- How can the quality of life of the elderly be enhanced during the construction process? What aspects of outdoor environmental enhancement should be focused on to maximise support for the elderly when budgets are limited?
- In high-density communities where there is a lack of land for public spaces and insufficient facilities for the elderly per capita, how can the construction and operation of age-friendly environments in these communities improve the quality of life for the elderly?
- How can the quality of life of the elderly be enhanced when financial support is not available, and projects are built gradually? What aspects of outdoor environment enhancement should be focused on to maximise support for the elderly in the face of budgetary constraints? How can the interests of the elderly be safeguarded in community building when their participation is low?

5.3 The Element of Community Upgrading

5.3.1 Data Collection

Three Focus group discussions were conducted to understand the elderly community members' preferences and opinions on community improvement. Through Reflective Thematic Analysis, the following four themes emerged: Differentiation, Multipurpose, Multi-View Support, and Drive Forward as a Whole (the code book of Focus Group Discussion in Appendix 11, and the transcripts of FGD in Appendix 12). These themes correspond to the characteristics, principles, resource allocation, and sustainable development of community improvement. The focus groups were gender-based, with two single-gender groups and one mixed-gender group. Each focus group lasted approximately two and a half hours.

5.3.2 Data Analysis Results

The transcripts of the focus group discussions are the same as those in Section 5.2, and Reflexive Thematic Analysis is still used. The analysis follows the same process as in Section 5.2.2. Due to word limitations, examples are not repeated in this section.

5.3.2.1 Theme 1 Differentiation

This theme focuses on the characteristics of a post-Danwei age-friendly community that should possess differentiation. From the perspective of the elderly, the differences in social quality, behavioural patterns, preferences, and requirements for the environment, services, and social support during the ageing process are fundamental to upgrading ageing-in-place in the post-Danwei communities. Conversely, the age-friendly environment provided by the community should be differentiated in various aspects such as infrastructure, services, public spaces, transportation, shopping, healthcare, education, and civic services, giving the elderly sufficient choices to enhance their AIP experience. From the perspective of different age groups, differences in space usage reflect a series of interest conflicts within the community.

5.3.2.1.1 Sub-theme: Public Spaces

Differentiation permeated all opinions on improving the quality of life for the elderly in the community during the interviews. The complex and individualistic nature of the elderly's hobby preferences means that supporting diverse hobby spaces in outdoor environments is one of the main factors that participants use to judge the quality of the space. Additionally, coordinating space usage given the differences in usage times and behaviours of different age groups in public spaces is crucial. The conflict between different age groups in space is not about space occupation but rather about cultural isolation, leading to non-aggregation and fear of potential safety hazards during peak times. Collision during crowd gatherings is the greatest fear of the elderly, as a single collision could cause health damage that excludes them from the activity group of the elderly, depriving them of their original social circle.

I don't know where I can walking. Why is that? Where do the elderly go? If I tell them stay at home every day, because I can't go out. I have no place to go. If I want to go to the Cultural Palace or Wuyi Park, I have to cross the road, which is very inconvenient for the elderly. I am afraid do it alone. When the elderly cross the road, there's no one to take care of them, so they have to be careful. – From a participant

5.3.2.1.2 Sub-theme: Public Service Facilities

The public service facilities within the community encompass essential services such as healthcare, compulsory education, civic affairs agency services, policing, transportation, and specialised services related to ageing care. The current development of the community focuses on providing comprehensive coverage of basic services for all age groups within the community service system stipulated by policy. Amenities are concentrated within a 10-minute walk, and this centralised layout within a 500-1000 metre radius perfectly aligns with the characteristics of multiple travel purposes among the elderly. The convenience of living and the abundance of facilities within the community are universally acknowledged advantages among participants. However, the planning of community facilities, which is primarily guided by unified national policies, has become a standardised political task without considering the need for further subdivision of senior care institutions tailored to the differentiation within the actual senior population. Currently, the community is mandated by policy to establish a daycare centre for the elderly. The daycare centre in the Sanmian community primarily provides fee-based services for safe daytime care of the elderly. This function, however, is already embedded in various activities and locations within the participants' daily living routines. Participants primarily seek senior care institutions that can cater to different stages of ageing with a variety of pricing and service models, such as full-time or half-time nursing homes. In particular, price differentiation is a crucial factor for the elderly to maintain economic security. Due to concerns about financial instability in later life, participants express the hope that they will have more pricing options for care institutions to ensure they can sustainably afford the costs.

I don't have that problem, but I always think that the issue of caring for the elderly is a big deal. I once proposed a suggestion, which was called home-based care for the elderly at that time. Because if everyone goes to a nursing home, first of all, there's not enough space. Secondly, the fees are relatively high. Based on their current pension levels, they can't afford to live in a nursing home, and they can't see their family often. Moreover, to reduce the offspring's responsibility for supporting their parents, nursing homes try to keep the elderly confined within a certain area. They don't allow them to go out around freely. What if they fall? The families will be upset. Why? Because nursing homes have two different pricing structures: one for those who are independent and one for those who aren't. That's right, two different prices. For those who are getting older, if the price is a bit high, they'll need their children to contribute more money. Our monthly pension isn't enough. – From a participant

5.3.2.1.3 Sub-theme: Cultural Differentiation

The significant differences in life experiences between the elderly and the young generation have created an evident communication gap. The cultural differentiation between older residents in the community and different age groups has not only led to the closure of social circles but also extended to a desire for segregation in terms of preferred spatial types. During discussions, participants frequently mentioned the barriers to interacting with people of different age groups and expressed the hope that commercial venues and public spaces within the community could be segregated from other age groups. This is particularly prominent in dining establishments. Despite the presence of 22 sit-down restaurants and 5 take-out-only restaurants within the community, which are affordable and diverse in cuisine, participants have high expectations for government-initiated, dedicated dining halls for the elderly. They expressed a reluctance to dine with young people, preferring to eat only with other elderly people.

5.3.2.2 Theme 2 Multipurpose

This theme encompasses the fundamental principles of space resource allocation within communities, including various human resources, spaces, allocation systems, and materials. What are the impacts of allocation practices and principles on the elderly and other age groups? And in situations where resources are limited, how to maximise benefits in the practice of allocating resources within the community senior care environment?

5.3.2.2.1 Sub-theme: Multipurpose Use

Streets have long been encroached upon by residents and have become the main carriers of various living facilities within the community. In particular, the disorderly parking of cars and non-motorised vehicles is the primary cause of street chaos. The lack of parking spaces within and around the community is currently an unsolvable dilemma in such high-density areas. The reserved land resources from early planning have been filled with residential buildings as the local population has increased, resulting in an extremely imbalanced situation between population and supporting facility resources. The group most affected by this situation is the elderly, as streets are the main gathering places for participants within the community. Streets not only serve as the main venues for the elderly to take walks, shop, and exchange information within the community but also as extensions of living spaces for other groups when housing areas are insufficient. Given this unavoidable encroachment, streets must continue to serve multiple functions. Therefore, new design ideas and management models should focus on developing comprehensive living streets to organise the intertwining of public and private spaces within street spaces.

5.3.2.2.2 Sub-theme: Principles of Allocation

The effectiveness of space allocation within the community was questioned in all three focus groups. The existing activity facilities are too few, and priority is given to the elderly with a smaller walking range. As respecting the elderly and cherishing the young is a traditional virtue in Chinese culture, the elderly always enjoy priority access to public activity facilities within the community. This has led many the elderly to be pushed out of the community to exercise in surrounding comprehensive parks. Regarding how to create more activity spaces within the community and enhance its entertainment value, some participants believe that small spaces in front of residential buildings can be utilised to disperse and insert more activity facilities in small quantities. The general principle is to create small, dispersed micro-spaces rather than developing public spaces in the form of complete small pocket plazas.

5.3.2.3 Theme 3 Multi-View Support

This theme explains the perspectives and levels of community support for the ageing-in-place of the young-old. The functions and nature of the services currently undertaken by Chinese communities determine the specific implementation methods for providing comprehensive support for residents' senior care. It specifically describes different aspects, perspectives of concern, and implementation situations regarding ageing-in-place. Additionally, it discusses the new requirements faced by communities as their populations continue to age and how to realise these visions within the community.

5.3.2.3.1 Sub-theme: Price Control

The elderly are most concerned about the price increases of daily necessities, especially foodstuffs. There are three types of food material sales within the community: street vendors, independent private shops, and small farmers' markets. Street vendors do not have fixed locations, eliminating the need for rent and a series of other management fees. In contrast, private shops and small farmers' markets have operating costs such as rent, utilities, and more. Therefore, due to their lower costs, street vendors near Xiangrong Street always offer the lowest prices. However, the spontaneous vending behaviour of retailers is individual and does not comply with city street management regulations, making it impossible for market supervision departments to effectively regulate food safety and quality. Farmers' markets, on the other hand, are community public service facilities initiated by grassroots governments, and their food safety supervision is in place. Nevertheless, the leasing of individual sales points within farmers' markets is conducted by individual merchants, who have control over specific product pricing, similar to private shops. Food prices have the greatest

impact on the elderly, as their income sources are limited. Relying on pensions, support from children, or savings, the elderly cannot improve their current economic situation. Given that hiring individuals beyond retirement age violates labour laws, a system for managing and regulating commodity prices within the community should be introduced to reduce merchants' operating costs and artificially intervene in price increases to ensure that the cost of living for the elderly remains within a controllable range.

5.3.2.3.2 Sub-theme: Space Renewal

The renewal of outdoor spaces in decayed communities, including aesthetic and functional improvements, is the foundation for the development of age-friendly outdoor spaces. Modifying existing spaces to be barrier-free is one of the challenges for the further development of high-density, age-friendly communities due to funding shortages and space limitations. The construction of barrier-free facilities in decayed communities is not only a demand of residents with mobility impairments but also one of the goals of community construction set by the government. However, the related construction funds are not fully provided by the government; some facilities, such as elevators within buildings, are funded by residents' contributions and partial subsidies. Barrier-free facilities on streets are part of the government's urban community development plan and can receive government funding. However, due to tight government budgets, the barrier-free environment within this community has not been completed. Furthermore, squeezing out space for elevators and other barrier-free facilities in a high-density built environment requires direct insertion into the existing tight spatial layout, which can easily infringe upon the living quality of some residents. This makes it challenging to obtain unanimous approval from residents when voting on and raising funds for project initiation, especially from first-floor residents. The vulnerability of the elderly and disabled individuals in mobility within the community is a key concern in current urban planning policies. Therefore, in response to the increasing mobility needs of ageing residents, the voting mechanisms for related public construction projects should be changed through legal provisions to support the rapid approval of age-friendly environmental projects. Additionally, when the spatial interests of other residents are compromised by the addition of barrier-free facilities, emphasis should be placed on actual compensation rather than community mediation to resolve conflicts.

Public spaces underwent a round of basic infrastructure renovations after the implementation of the Community System, including road levelling, water and electricity services, electric vehicle charging, lighting, and more. However, the performance of the environmental maintenance services provided by the property management company, introduced to support the sustainable development of the new environment, has been subpar. The community only undertakes basic

garbage collection and limited cleaning services, excluding issues related to the sanitation and parking management within residential buildings. There are gaps in the division of responsibilities for environmental maintenance. In response to the disorder and further deterioration caused by inadequate space maintenance, a comprehensive space maintenance strategy needs to be established urgently.

So the management of parking spaces, the environment of the community, the resources, and the quality of people's behaviour are all intertwined. It's not just about parking; it involves many aspects. For example, if they originally designed an underground parking lot for us, but in reality, if people don't use it, what can they do? – From a participant

5.3.2.3.3 Sub-theme: Social Quality

The impact of public spaces on social activities among the elderly is particularly prominent in high-density environments. The primary social activities of participants take place on the streets within the community. However, the chaotic current state of the streets has reduced the available spots for staying. As a result, the already limited public resting facilities are not favoured or utilised by the elderly. Currently, the social gathering places for the elderly are concentrated in the spaces in front of their residential buildings, where public resting facilities are lacking. The elderly spontaneously bring chairs and sit near their homes to chat with friends. This gathering and chatting have become a fixed routine for the elderly within the community. Participants highly stress this form of street-side chatting, considering it as one of the essential manifestations of close community relationships and community culture. Yet, these harmonious daily gatherings in the streets are actually "inserted" temporarily into the outdoor spaces. These places often face challenges due to weather changes and safety threats from the mixed traffic of vehicles and pedestrians. Therefore, it is crucial to reconfigure these spaces, preserving the existing habits of the elderly while creating safe and suitable gathering spaces.

5.3.2.3.4 Sub-theme: Transportation

After ensuring accessibility and affordability for the elderly in transportation, further attention should be paid to the experience of using transportation modes. Apart from the construction of the physical environment, participants also exhibit differentiation in their choices of transportation modes. Only 18.75% of participants reported that their daily use of private transportation is primarily an electric bike; the rest rely on walking and public transportation. No participants reported daily experiences of using taxis or ride-sharing services. The community is rich in public transportation resources, with transportation stops located at the community entrance, approximately a 5-minute walk away. The fact that the

elderly can ride public transportation for free further encourages participants to use it. The layout of public transportation stops and the design of public buses, such as buses and subways, are generally well-suited for use by the participants. However, when the participants experience temporary illnesses or have just recovered, they may feel insecure due to weakness when taking the current experience of taking a bus, leading them to refuse to continue using public transportation. One participant reported falling from the back to the front of the bus due to a momentary loss of balance, resulting in a serious waist injury. This is closely related to the strong rearward force that Chinese buses typically generate during acceleration and braking. Currently, the bus models used for both regular buses and BRT in Zhengzhou are uniform. The challenge lies in how to improve public vehicles to accommodate the mobility needs of the elderly in weakened states while controlling the operational costs of municipal transportation.

Walking is the primary mode of transportation for each participant and also one of the main forms of exercise for the elderly. The purposes of their trips are often multipurpose, and walking is an efficient way to combine exercise with other travel objectives. The main daily activities of the elderly are within the community, but when walking through streets, they are often squeezed onto the roadway below the sidewalk by parked cars, making it difficult to maintain a continuous walk on the sidewalk. Although the compact layout of the community is conducive to walking, the chaos on the streets disrupts the walkability, requiring both management and improvement of the facilities to further enhance the walking experience.

5.3.2.3.5 Sub-theme: Micro-Stress

Participants' demands for community services are primarily focused on alleviating the micro-stress of life brought on by housework. They hope to devote more energy to pursuing hobbies and maintaining health. The physical exertion of housework is a significant burden for participants and sometimes poses safety risks. Simple housework can lead to indoor falls, potential fire hazards, and the continuous accumulation of low-energy activities can deplete their energy throughout the day. Especially for the elderly living alone or with a partner, without the companionship of children, they must bear all the household chores themselves, and their demand for transferring these tasks to community services is the greatest. Particularly regarding meals, when preparing Chinese cuisine for one or two people, the limited variety of ingredients that can be cooked at once makes it difficult to maintain a balanced nutrition. Moreover, the cooking process for Chinese cuisine is relatively complex, and the subsequent kitchen cleanup is not a short task. This uninterrupted micro-stress brings not only physical but also mental helplessness to the young-old. Among the three focus groups, the most urgent conflict identified is the lack of an established catering system for the

elderly within the community, followed by a series of free public services, such as home cleaning and delivery, aimed at alleviating the physical exhaustion caused by housework.

5.3.2.4 Theme 4 Drive Forward as a Whole

This theme focuses on the requirements for operating and managing post-Danwei age-friendly communities. In a high-density community environment with party and government organisations as the leading core, it examines the layout and operation of the management system, the status of project implementation, and how relevant policy formulation, implementation, and management authorities create an age-friendly environment. Additionally, it explores the implementation of supporting venue planning and design and their coordination with management models to support the sustainable development of age-friendly communities.

5.3.2.4.1 Sub-theme: Community Support System for the Elderly

The construction goals of the community's support system for AIP currently show uneven internal development. The goals for the elderly's healthcare system, senior education, civic services for the elderly, and care for the elderly who live alone and are unable to care for themselves have been largely achieved. However, the development of age-friendly environment construction, the silver economy support system, senior care institutions, various welfare subsidies for the elderly, and social participation by the elderly is significantly lagging. Daily life is a synthesis of all activities, and only through the joint development of multifaceted support can a robust support system for ageing be provided. Therefore, it is crucial to improve the leadership processes and models for developing age-friendly communities, enhance the efficiency of multi-party and cross-departmental collaboration, and steadily advance the development goals of age-friendly communities in a balanced manner.

In daily management, holistic planning may be an effective means to address the conflicts arising from resource allocation in existing communities. During the discussions in the three focus groups, participants mentioned the issue of uneven space allocation due to the different property rights of public spaces that remained from the transition from the block system to the Community System. This is because the property rights and their agents for different public spaces vary. After entering the Community System, to meet the government's specific requirements for age-friendly modifications to the block environment, although a unified plan was implemented for the overall public space, there was no overall planning for the management and operation of the modified facilities. As a result, residents later expressed significant complaints about the separate and multiple charges for operating the property infrastructure.

The leisure facilities resources around a 10-story building aren't enough to be shared. Besides, there are two issues with the residents. One is the lack of resources, which is the biggest problem. The other is that the residents are unwilling to pay the fees, right? They just don't want to pay. Everyone should be more conscious of paying for the maintenance of public facilities.- from a participant

The level of participation by the elderly in decision-making about the construction of community support systems for ageing is low. During the focus group discussions, no participants reported having ever been involved in conversations on community decision-making. Two participants reported that they had heard of meetings for community decision-making that included the elderly. The participants were not informed about the original plans for public space renovation and disagreed with the purposes of the original space modifications. Therefore, how can the community participation of the elderly be scaled up and synchronised with the community environment and management system to achieve steady progress and development?

5.3.2.4.2 Sub-theme: Senior Service Agency

The comprehensive promotion of the community senior care support system necessarily includes the continuous development of management agencies. The management of senior affairs is a long-term and meticulous process. The needs of the elderly frequently arise, and contact with relevant CSCMP personnel is also frequent. The staff working there were unanimously praised by the participants for being caring, helpful, and proactive. This diligent and positive work attitude made all participants confident in the staff of the elderly service agency, believing that as long as their needs were within the staff's authority, they could be resolved smoothly.

However, the CSCMP is only an output agency of the sub-district office, and the resources available to the staff there are very limited. Therefore, many of the needs raised by the elderly rely on the CSCMP to report to the local government and await approval of relevant funds, with the speed of fund approval always being uncertain. Various factors, including funding, administrative processes, and interdepartmental discussions, often cause this delay. However, the elderly gradually lose confidence and become anxious during the long wait. A male participant mentioned the delay in implementing a guardianship mechanism for the elderly, which immediately sparked disappointment and anxiety among other participants regarding the delays in multiple ageing projects. Therefore, how can the funding sources and approval processes for ageing projects be optimised to expedite payments to the projects and boost the elderly's confidence?

5.3.3 Discussion

5.3.3.1 Development Direction of Chinese Policies

When compared with the China Age-Friendly Community Model(National Health and Wellness Commission, 2020)(Figure 5-20), it can be seen that the participants' development expectations for post-Danwei communities align with the elements of the current age-friendly community model. However, the overall development expectations lean more towards conflicts in management models and development processes. Regarding the operation of age-friendly communities, the Zhengzhou Municipal Government has issued the corresponding grassroots management action document, the Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-Based and Community Senior Care Service Facilities(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government Office, 2024). This document outlines the unified operational requirements and assessment standards for urban home-based and community senior care service facilities within administrative regions. Although the document specifies that the service targets all the elderly in need, priority is given to those who are extremely poor, from low-income families, from special families under the family planning policy, or who have made significant contributions to society as recognised by the government. The entire operation is a community-based senior care guarantee, with resources primarily inclined towards economically disadvantaged and care-challenged elderly. The municipal government's community senior care operation requires providing basic living support and safety guarantees for the elderly, without explicitly stating work requirements for improving the quality of life. In contrast, the development goals outlined in the national 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of Ageing Causes and the elderly Care Service System(Government of the People's Republic of China, 2021b) clearly state that meeting the diverse and multi-layered needs of the elderly is a value-added item rather than a mandatory task. The exploration and investigation of this study on the in-situ ageing experience of the elderly reveal that current policies and government work plans do not consider improving the quality of life for the target elderly population of this thesis as a short-term goal.

At this stage, the author elaborates on the insights gained from focus groups regarding the views of the elderly on community improvement. After conducting three focus group discussions, four themes emerged from the elderly's perspectives on community enhancement: Differentiation, Multipurpose, Multi-View Support, and Drive Forward as a Whole. The directions for community development directly indicated by these four themes include:



Figure 5-20. Model of China's Age-Friendly Community --- from the Work of Building an Exemplary National Age-Friendly Community

Environmental Maintenance

1. Lack of comprehensive property maintenance services, with gaps in responsibility for environmental maintenance.
2. Controversy over fees for public service facilities.

Community Ageing Projects

3. Long-term Unstable and unreliable funds that do not arrive on time as scheduled for community ageing projects.
4. Optimisation of community public space allocation to improve the utilisation of small spaces.
5. Establishment of ageing life support service agencies to alleviate the burden of housework, especially dining, on the elderly.
6. Senior care assistance institutions for different stages of the ageing process, particularly various types and levels of senior care nursing institutions.

Community Environment Improvement

7. Rectification of street environments, clearing encroachments while preserving social spaces for the elderly, and ensuring street walkability.
8. Universal accessibility in the community.
9. Respecting the diversity of the elderly's social life and creating differentiated spaces within the community.
10. Assistance in constructing suitable resting spaces and creating fragmented nearby areas.

Comprehensive Community Management

11. Regulation of community prices to ensure affordable living costs for the elderly.
12. Increasing the participation of the elderly in community decision-making.
13. Providing assistance for gatherings and activities of the elderly.

5.3.3.2 Current Situation of Community Environmental Construction and Policy Implementation

5.3.3.2.1 Community Characteristics

This section discusses the current situation of Theme Differentiation in terms of policy implementation and community environment construction. To explain the causes of the specific contradictions mentioned by the participants, it is necessary to understand the implementation background of local government work. Due to the Differentiation in backgrounds among different old living blocks, it is essential to avoid superficial renovation projects carried out by local governments solely to fulfil upper-level government tasks. The Guiding Opinions on Comprehensively Promoting the Renovation of Decayed Urban Residential Areas, issued by the General Office of the State Council(2020) did not specify concrete measurement standards and explicitly required local governments to tailor measures to local conditions based on their specific backgrounds. This aligns with the characteristics of building an age-friendly community in the post-Danwei period, as reflected in the theme of Differentiation. In the work of municipal governments, attention should be paid to the manifestation of local background specificities in community development.

5.3.3.2.2 Principles of Community Operation

This section discusses the current situation of Theme Multipurpose in terms of policy implementation and community environment construction. In China's programmematic documents for developing age-friendly communities, the "14th Five-Year Plan for National Ageing Development and Pension Service System"(Figure 2)(Government of the People's Republic of China, 2021b) and the "Implementation Plan for Creating Demonstrative National Age-Friendly Communities"(Figure 5-20)(National Health and Wellness Commission, 2020)(National Health and Wellness Commission, 2020) explicitly outline the comprehensive development content of China's senior care services for 2021-2025, as well as the functions and elements of age-friendly communities. Therefore, specific action plans for transforming post-Danwei communities are formulated by municipal governments in accordance with policies and regulations from higher-level governments, and then implemented by subordinate district governments. The policies and work plans implemented by the Zhengzhou Municipal Government are a series of specific implementation plans(Figure 5-22) formulated to fulfil the functional requirements and development layout of age-friendly cities as mandated by higher-level governments. Some actions have not been completed due to limitations in site availability and funding allocations.

Moreover, the existing policies, government actions, and implementation standards represent the unified standards and goals of the municipal and district governments for community senior care construction within their jurisdictions. As an output agency of the government, the CSCMP also fulfills unified government tasks. This standardised work plan, coupled with grassroots institutions deeply embedded in the community, has indeed achieved the initial transition to the Community System in a short period. However, in the subsequent stages of community service and environmental improvement under the Community System, the unified plan has begun to show drawbacks upon implementation. Specifically, the lack of corresponding policy guidance in the landing of the rough unified work plan. Therefore, employees of the CSCMP, when carrying out tasks required by higher-level authorities, primarily rely on their own work experience to handle matters related to the elderly. This fragmented work experience has not been systematically integrated, making it difficult to form an efficient and locally tailored resource allocation approach for overall resource regulation in such a post-Danwei community within the framework of Multipurpose utilisation.

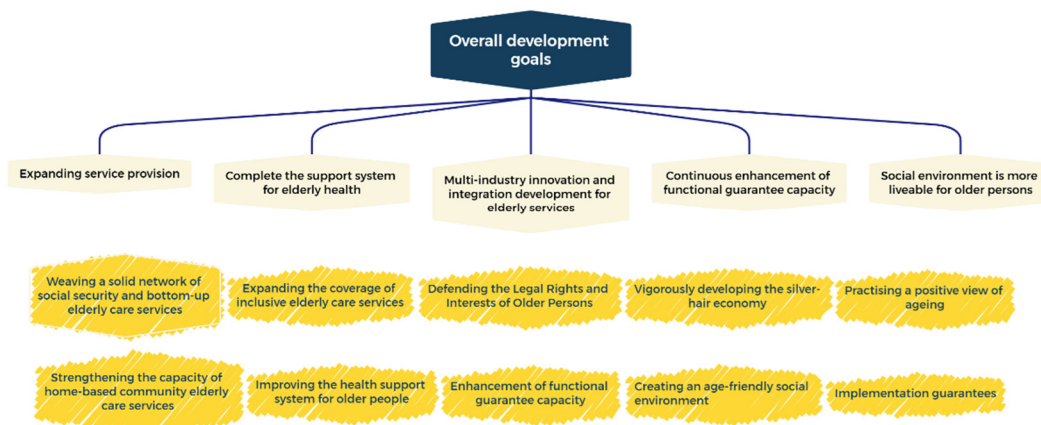


Figure 5-21. Development Goals and Specific Modules of the 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of National Undertakings for the Aged and The elderly Service System -- from the 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of National Undertakings for the Ageing and The elderly Service System(Summarised by the author from policies)

Zhengzhou Municipal Government Action Document

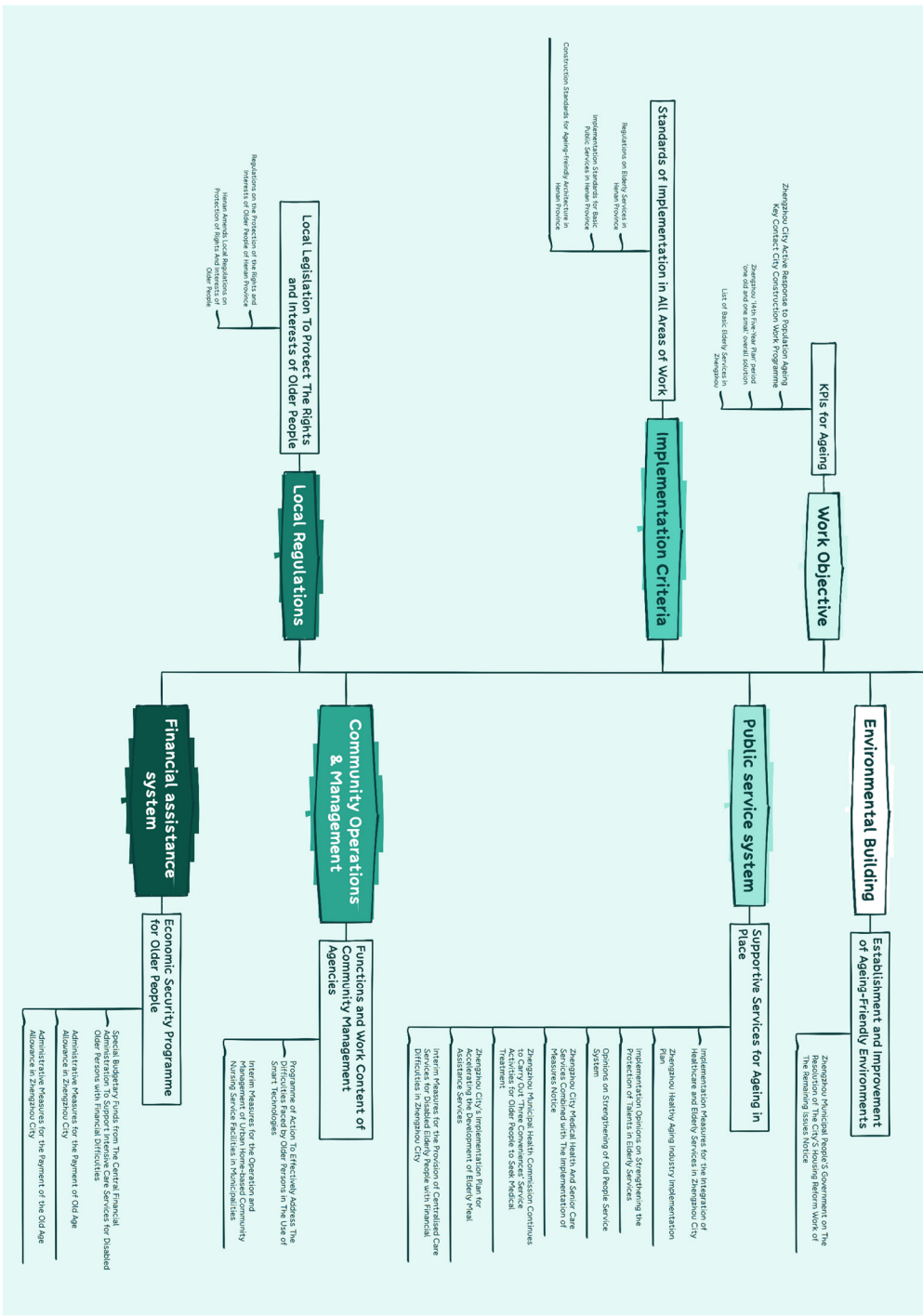


Figure 5-22. Work Plan and Policy of Zhengzhou Municipal Government on the Establishment of Community Pension System(Summarised by the author)

5.3.3.2.3 Perspectives and Levels of Community Support

This section discusses the current situation of Theme Multi-view Supports in terms of policy implementation and community environment construction. The government's work plan for building age-friendly communities is approached from

the perspective of urban development and management, rather than that of the elderly. The municipal government formulates plans based on considerations of local resource mobilisation constraints and its own development situation, aligning with the basic status quo of urban development. However, when implemented at the community level, there is a lack of actual assessment from the residents' perspective and a system for work plans. The community development work of the CSCMP must be carried out in accordance with the directives of higher-level governments. This results in discrepancies between the implementation of government policies and the actual benefits for the elderly. Additionally, in the Interim Measures for the Operation and Management of Urban Home-based and Community Senior Care Service Facilities in Zhengzhou(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government Office, 2024), detailed provisions are made regarding the operational mechanisms, facility requirements, operational requirements, services and functions, as well as supervision and evaluation of age-friendly communities within the city. From an operational perspective, it does not reflect the uniqueness of different types of communities. As a result, the practical application of policies in the context of post-Danwei communities like Sanmian Community has not fully and organically integrated into the daily routines of the elderly. As described in the theme of Multi-View Support, the support needed by the elderly does not merely end with the establishment of service functional modules. Rather, more attention should be paid to the perspectives and levels of support to achieve cohesion between policy outcomes and the actual lives of the elderly.

5.3.3.2.4 Requirements for Community Development

This section discusses the current situation of Theme Drive Forward As A Whole in terms of policy implementation and community environment construction. The progress in improving the elements of an age-friendly environment in Sanmian Community is uneven. At the current stage of construction, as introduced in Theme Drive Forward as a Whole, certain functions have only been partially completed. Based on the development goals outlined in Henan Province's 14th Five-Year Plan for the elderly Care Service System(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government, 2023)(Figure 5-23), the current progress in community service and environmental renovation is relatively lagging. However, medical reforms and basic services for vulnerable senior groups have been largely completed. It was only in July 2024 that the Zhengzhou Municipal Government issued a specific work plan for the establishment of a catering system for senior communities(Zhengzhou Municipal People's Government, 2024), nearly a year after the central government issued the Action Plan for Actively Developing Senior Catering Services(Ministry of Civil Affairs et al., 2023). This delay highlights the reasons for uneven community development, including the time cost of administrative processes from central government policies to local government

implementation, as well as the varying levels of development of age-friendly environments in different communities due to the differences in situations among local governments mentioned by participants. On the other hand, the analysis of focus group results reveals that this is related to the sub-theme of community agencies as the frontline implementers of community management and operation. These agencies are merely a part of the administrative process in documents and policies, without further reforms to meet the requirements for further community development.

Zhengzhou's 14th Elderly Care Development Plan

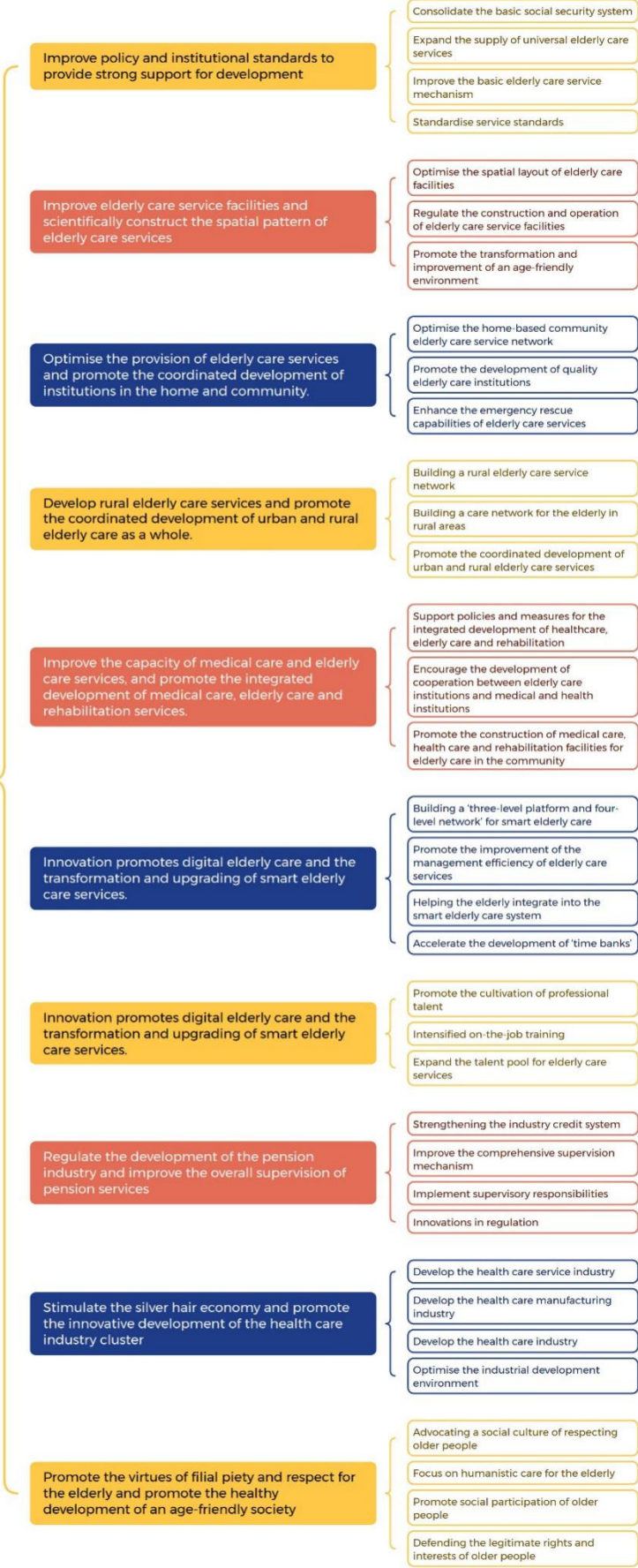


Figure 5-23. Zhengzhou's 14th Senior Care Development Plan(Summarised by the author from the policy)

5.3.3.3 Forming a Framework for Community Design Guidelines

The current situation is partly attributed to the processes involved in community-level administrative work, but more importantly, to the lack of a cohesive agent for implementing government work plans and policies. By integrating practical situations with policy documents, it can enhance the sustained effectiveness of government policy outcomes after the policy implementation, improve the quality of life for the elderly, and promote healthy ageing. Therefore, in the subsequent sections of this article, which constitute the final part of this thesis's data collection, the thesis outlines the creation of a prototype design guide for the post-Danwei community through a workshop. Participants in the workshop, as introduced later, include academics in related fields, formulators of construction standards for the built environment, practitioners in senior care institutions, and staff from community management organisations. Considering the diverse professional perspectives of the participants, there may be deviations in the discussion process aimed at forming the design guidelines. This thesis employs the discussion framework based on the age-friendly community model proposed by the Chinese government, informed by the walking interviews from previous sections and the focal group data analysis results in this section.

5.3.4 Conclusion of the Element of Community Upgrading

This section presents the discussion content from the focus groups, using thematic analysis to explore the elderly's views on community improvement. Four themes emerged: Differentiation, Multipurpose, Multi-View Support, and Drive Forward as a Whole. Firstly, Differentiation focuses on the characteristics of the post-Danwei community improvement, highlighting the unique features that should be cultivated in spatial construction, environmental management, and service actions. The second theme, Multipurpose, explores the principles of resource allocation for further community enhancement. Next, Multi-View Support showcases the levels and perspectives that should be considered in supporting the elderly to AIP within their community. Lastly, the theme of Drive Forward as a Whole addresses the operational and management improvement requirements for the post-Danwei community, as well as age-friendly communities. It discusses these in conjunction with current policy and work requirements for the construction and operation of age-friendly communities. A review of the walking interview results, combined with the focus group analysis, highlights the issue of inadequate support for the elderly during the process of creating an age-friendly environment in the community. Currently, government finances are tight, with delays in funding allocations for community construction,

and the post-Danwei communities face challenges due to low per capita public space. These conflicts make it challenging for communities to achieve China's short-term goals for building age-friendly communities. Therefore, how can similar communities provide support to the elderly based on existing spatial conditions and resource forms to achieve healthy ageing? Ultimately, it is pointed out that the elderly are not the primary focus group in the government's current community senior care initiatives. Especially in the process of improving the community environment, the existing community work plans do not provide sufficient support for the elderly during actual implementation. Furthermore, it highlights the consequences of gaps between unified policies and government actions when implemented in the context of community realities. Therefore, in the formation of the next stage of design guidelines, based on the government's goals for building a community senior care system, a workshop will be conducted from the aforementioned perspectives to develop a prototype of the design guidelines.

5.4 Summary

This chapter adopted two interconnected methods to investigate the development of AIP within post-Danwei communities. In summary, the elderly tend to have more positive perceptions of the current state of the community environment. The elderly actively choose to AIP, understand the limited space and resources, and actively use their own initiative to overcome the difficulties. However, the overall feedback indicates that the obstacles to AIP will not be overcome when a large number of the elderly enter the old-age stage.

The first stage involved walk-through interviews with 21 elderly people in the Sanmian community. Reflective thematic analysis yielded four key themes:(1) Dynamic Management, highlighting the evolution of community management models and the impact of senior welfare policies on AIP;(2) Cost, concerning the accessibility and sufficiency of resources for maintaining the elderly's living standards;(3) Group Creativity, addressing the influence of group interactions on daily practices and engagement with public spaces; and(4) Space Allocation, focusing on the negotiation of spatial interests within the post-Danwei context. The second stage utilised three focus group discussions to capture the perspectives of the elderly on community improvement. Thematic analysis of Focus group discussions identified four themes central to advancing age-friendly environments in the post-Danwei community:(1) Differentiation, referring to the distinct characteristics that define post-Danwei age-friendly communities;(2) Multipurpose, which addresses the principles guiding the distribution and allocation of internal resources;(3) Multi-view Support, elucidating the multiple forms and levels of support available for AIP; and(4) Drive Forward as a Whole, which underscores the comprehensive operational and management strategies

required for sustainable development. In synthesising these findings, this chapter underscores the multidimensionality and complexity of AIP within post-Danwei communities. Addressing challenges related to governance, resource distribution, social dynamics, and spatial organisation is essential for creating inclusive and sustainable age-friendly environments. These insights laid the foundation for the subsequent chapter, which integrates policy analysis and expert consultation to inform the co-design of targeted community development guidelines.

In the workshops section, the author categorised and organised the outcomes of the guidelines developed during the workshops and then discussed them in conjunction with relevant literature, policies, and field research findings. It finally led to the development of the thesis's design guideline. During the workshop phase, all discussions across both workshops were guided by discussion outlines, the details of which are provided in Chapter 6. Therefore, there was no need for further coding analysis in this case.

Chapter 6: Phase 2 - Develop Design Guidelines for Post-Danwei Community Age-friendly Upgrading

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, walking interviews were used to understand the lived experiences of the elderly and to analyse in depth the cultural context of the community and the patterns of decision-making behaviour of the elderly. The analysis reveals the actual impact of current policies, management models and environmental constructions on the lives of the elderly. It also identifies the main contradictions in the study of AIP for the elderly in the community. Firstly, there is a gap between the way government policies are formulated and implemented when applied to actual projects on the ground, and a lack of flexibility in applying guidelines when faced with the constraints of site conditions in different types of communities. This has further contributed to the slow pace of upgrading the ageing environment in post-Danwei communities. There is a lack of support for the elderly to age in place.

Subsequently, the elderly from the community were recruited to participate in a focus group to collect their opinions on upgrading the community environment. After consolidating the results of the previous data, this chapter begins to draft the preliminary design guideline. At this stage, a 10-person workshop was held, including academic experts, relevant standard setters, owners of private senior care service organisations, and administrators of the target community, to preliminarily formulate the design guidelines for post-Danwei communities. During the workshop discussions, participants were divided into two groups, each comprising five people, to co-design the guideline structure. Here, the preliminary draft of the design guideline was formed. The final step of the project is a validation workshop, which invites the potential beneficiary population to review the research results. In the workshop, a group discussion took place about whether the guideline could be applied to the real-world age-friendly renewal project of post-Danwei communities. The next chapter is the conclusion of the thesis, which summarises the findings of this PhD project.

6.2 The Process of Workshop

6.2.1 Discussion Outcomes of the Yellow Team

The nature of the work of the Yellow Team members aligns with the characteristics of their discussion outcomes, which, compared to the Blue Team, focused more

on practical operational guidance for environmental upgrades.

1. **Emphasis on government leadership:** The Yellow Team frequently mentioned that the government should fund the installation and renovation of age-friendly facilities, reflecting their view that the government plays a leading role in constructing high-density, age-friendly communities.
2. **Focus on practical operations and detailed management:** They prioritised feasibility and implementation details. In their discussion results, the Yellow Team proposed numerous practical recommendations for implementing the framework, such as regular inspections of water, electricity, and gas facilities for the elderly living alone and establishing community fire prevention and emergency response networks. These measures demonstrate a strong emphasis on operability and detailed management. Additionally, the Yellow Team placed particular importance on the funding sources for any renovation projects, ensuring that project feasibility and execution were primary considerations.
3. **Emphasis on service integration and resource utilisation:** They highlighted the importance of integrating various community service resources, such as supporting the development of community-based integrated medical and senior care institutions and encouraging the establishment of home- and community-based senior care services through volunteer service. Their goal was to enable the community to provide more comprehensive and convenient community services.

In the discussion on the residential environment, several members of the Yellow Team particularly emphasised that the elderly represent an underutilised force in the operation of age-friendly communities. Quality supervision of the residential environment is one of the responsibilities of community services, and the involvement of the elderly could be further expanded. During the discussion, one participant also highlighted the shortage of community service personnel. According to the previous fieldwork in the community, a volunteer social group has been established to assist CPMSC staff in some service tasks, such as helping the dependent elderly living alone with grocery shopping and accompanying CPMSC staff on visits to senior residents without family support. This volunteer social group primarily consists of recently retired elderly people but remains relatively small in scale, with most participants being member of Communist Party of China.

Moreover, there are no clear operational guidelines, and their tasks are mainly assigned temporarily by the superior government. Participants believed that the elderly within the community have the potential to undertake more community service responsibilities. However, incentives are needed to motivate non-

Communist Party members of China's elderly to actively participate in community services and take on structured responsibilities for services that should be provided but are currently not in operation. Based on these concerns, the Yellow Team proposed establishing a time banking system for senior volunteer services under supervised management to implement the home safety inspection system for the residential environment.

Regarding spatial environment design, ensuring the functional integrity of high-density residential spaces is the current upgrade objective. The Yellow Team pointed out that the existing community design experience has been uniformly borrowed from other communities, which does not align with the context of high-density built environments. Consequently, existing public facilities have not been effectively utilised under high-density conditions. Additionally, considering the urban planning policies related to the preservation of historic and cultural park, the potential increase in human traffic could introduce challenges related to fire safety, traffic management, environmental maintenance, and residents' rights, making environmental upgrades even more complex.

The Yellow Team emphasised the establishment of an accessible equipment and tool borrowing scheme as a key development focus for post-Danwei communities. Participants explained that the facilities they referred to included small publicly accessible equipment or tools, such as custom-made combinable street rest facilities for the community, mobile-assisted transport devices and props for collective activities, as well as the library of things - DIY tools, books, or even community skills borrowed or loaned. One participant, who works in an the elderly's service company, shared that based on their work experience, community-provided rental services for daily living aids and recreational public equipment can significantly enhance the living experience of the elderly. A proposed approach was to replace individually installed street rest facilities with uniformly designed combinable furniture, ensuring that residents could continue to use streets as an extension of their indoor living space. Additionally, these outdoor public installations should also reorganise street spaces, improving the walkability and pedestrian connectivity of the community. Participants further emphasised that the installation and use of soft facilities should not follow a replicable or standardised approach. Due to the limited street space in high-density built environments, these installations must be highly adapted to the specific conditions of each street and block to reorganise street functions effectively.

The “exclusive social” space created by the elderly in the street space, as mentioned in the results of the previous walking interview, has created a blurred boundary between public and private space. The boundaries are not exclusively physical but also temporal and psychological. The elderly “assert” their spatial claims by placing their chairs and decorating around them. However, the physical

location of their private social space is embedded within the public space, and this boundary is constantly infiltrated by neighbours' greetings(Clark, 2000). Delineating the boundaries between private and public spaces ensures that the functional areas of the street have clear boundaries. Enhance the orderliness of the upper functional layout of the street while respecting the residents' living habits. Integration aimed at enhancing pedestrian flow, expanding facilities for residential activities, and improving the safety of staying spaces for the elderly. In the divided area, the elderly and other residents can use the combined outdoor furniture and facilities for spatial layout. Not only does this continue the private space formation way, but it also enables the elderly to continue to maintain ownership of their private space and retain their place in the outdoor space. The borrowing solution of customised combinable outdoor furniture proposed by the participants can effectively address the boundary between private and public space in the street. Creating continuity between public and private spaces. Not only that, the toys provided by the free loan scheme can enrich the socialisation of the elderly in downstairs spaces within the community.

Therefore, it is necessary to custom-design these installations based on the specific characteristics of each district. Additionally, this participant highlighted that accessible equipment and tool(Figure 6-1) borrowing schemes, such as assistive tools and services, can provide a strong sense of security for the elderly. The rationale behind this perspective, as observed in their daily work, is that the elderly also withdraw from mainstream social activities after retirement. Consequently, they assess their status in the community based on the available resources they can access and use within the community. When applied to a high-density built environment, assistive transport facilities serve as a link between indoor and outdoor spaces for the elderly. From personal mobility to the transportation of goods, these facilities help mitigate the impact of non-barrier-free environments on mobility. Participants also assessed that the costs and spatial footprint of these installations were manageable within the community's capacity.



Figure 6-1. Moving-Assisted Handling Equipment - Example from A Network that Participants Searched with on His Mobile Phones

Overall, the Yellow Team's approach to enhancing post-Danwei age-friendly communities focused on three main aspects:

1. **Functionality of community outdoor facilities:** Renovating existing facilities to better adapt to high-density outdoor environments, maximising the utilisation efficiency of these facilities.
2. **Human resource structure of community service teams:** Reducing the dependency of public community care services on government funding and establishing a stable, nonprofit-oriented care service team.
3. **Integration of assistive devices:** Incorporating assistive devices for the elderly, as well as assistive devices for reorganising street functions.

6.2.2 Discussion Outcome of the Blue Team

The Blue Team was composed of staff from CPMSC and academic professionals from related fields, which led their discussion outcomes to focus more on the construction of a management mechanism. From the perspective of operational mechanisms:

1. The Blue Team focused on developing community operational mechanisms,

such as enhancing the responsibilities of property management companies and establishing third-party supervision related to property management companies.

2. **Emphasis on the community participation of the elderly:** The Blue Team placed great importance on community engagement and multi-stakeholder governance. They proposed measures such as community-led leadership groups for the elderly and the promotion of self-organised activities, aiming to enhance the sense of belonging and participation of the elderly in the community.
3. **Focus on the application of technology:** Throughout the discussion, the Blue Team frequently mentioned the role of information technology in community development, such as utilising online health and ageing information platforms and promoting online health and ageing products.

How to help the elderly adapt to changes in the community environment and overcome the disconnection caused by the fast-paced transformation of society was a recurring discussion angle in every section of the discussion framework addressed by the Blue Team participants. First, the Blue Team believed that as long as the pressure brought by societal changes on the elderly is kept within an acceptable range, it remains manageable. They argued that while the community should ensure the basic living needs of the elderly, it is also essential for them to adapt to the evolving environment. Establishing an age-friendly environment in an intergenerational community should not be entirely tailored to the preferences of the elderly. A community environment designed solely based on the needs of the elderly would reinforce the isolating social and behavioural patterns inherited from the Danwei system. It could infringe on the interests of other age groups within the community.

The second key issue emphasised by the Blue Team was how to actively engage the elderly in adapting to changes in urban and community environments. They emphasised the influence of social groups on the behaviours and mindsets of the elderly, as highlighted in the author's previous research on the Sanmian Community. The Blue Team believed that leveraging the support of social groups to encourage participation in community development and promoting more active use of outdoor spaces could be a practical approach. Overall, they suggested that outdoor environment improvements should be accompanied by a series of measures to help the elderly adapt to environmental changes. A reasonable pressure level is a safe and motivational force that encourages the elderly to maintain their adaptability. Additionally, supporting social groups in organising collective activities could play a critical role in providing psychological support and facilitating outdoor engagement, ultimately helping the elderly integrate more actively into the community.

Another focus of the Blue Team's discussion was the resource investment

mechanism for building an age-friendly community environment, particularly the composition of resources for further development. A key question raised was how to reduce dependency on government funding and accelerate the current development process. Participants discussed the slow progress in the construction of community care facilities and the development of public service systems, which were directly impacted by government funding cycles and local fiscal allocation constraints. The Blue Team proposed establishing a stable commercial investment model for social capital. This would include increasing the proportion of private capital investment, introducing more non-profit private service providers and facility operators, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of community renewal efforts. They also stressed that existing business models within the community should undergo dynamic upgrades to align with environmental improvements, ensuring a balanced provision of services and support for residents' daily lives.

The Blue Team participants also raised concerns about conflicts arising from the differing ownership rights of existing resources in the community, which pose a significant obstacle to expanding basic care facilities. The Blue Team argued that the underutilisation of existing state-owned housing in post-Danwei communities, particularly in high-density environments, is a severe resource waste⁵⁴. They emphasised that without establishing a robust community resource allocation system, ensuring the efficiency of any community renewal plan would be challenging once implemented.

Overall, the Blue Team's approach to enhancing post-Danwei age-friendly communities focused on three main aspects:

1. Establishing a robust community resource allocation system: Forward-looking planning strategies require developing a more efficient cross-departmental collaboration system. An online data platform for the application and arrangement of cross-departmental resources and work allocation should be established to ensure the timely allocation and full utilisation of existing community resources.
2. Building a multi-source investment mechanism: Establishing a sustainable community development model that enables the introduction of diversified

⁵⁴ As the primary executor and coordinator of community development plans, CPMSC does not control over state-owned housing resources in the community. This creates significant challenges in coordinating and applying for public housing at the operational level. Some non-private housing units in the community remain under state ownership and are managed by companies established after the restructuring of Zhengzhou No.3 State Textile Factory. Additionally, some vacant storefronts and housing units are privately owned, leading to complex negotiations involving multiple departments and state-controlled enterprises in defining responsibilities and coordinating interests. The recently introduced Interim Measures for the Subsidization and Operation Management of Urban and Rural Care Facilities in Zhengzhou (Interim Measures for the Subsidization and Operation Management of Urban and Rural Care Facilities in Zhengzhou, n.d.) proposes integrating state-owned housing resources in old neighbourhoods as a supplementary measure for care facilities. However, in practical application, this government initiative has yet to show clear progress.

funding sources, effectively attracting commercial investments for community construction. Establish an online evaluation and real-time feedback system to promote the upgrading of enterprises within the community and increase the diversity of services provided for the elderly.

3. Mitigating conflicts of interest in intergenerational community development. Taking measures to reduce and eliminate the barriers to community participation and cross-generational interactions caused by insular mindsets and behavioural patterns among the elderly. Unifying collective interests among residents, breaking age-based cultural divisions, and fostering a harmonious community atmosphere.

In the refined design guideline proposed by the Blue Team, it is evident that the Blue Team placed greater emphasis on the community's natural, cultural, and social environment, ensuring that the renovated environment not only meets the living needs of the elderly but also aligns with the long-term urban development plans. Based on these principles and characteristics, the Blue Team, after discussion and evaluation, proposed the following refined design guideline:

Comprehensive environmental management: The Blue Team proposed a comprehensive environmental improvement plan for the community, including waste removal, greenery maintenance, and repairing damaged pavements. Additionally, they emphasised enhancing security management by installing surveillance cameras and access control systems to ensure a safe living environment for the elderly.

Decentralised spatial layout: The Blue Team suggested restructuring the community's spatial layout to form a well-integrated activity system for the elderly. For instance, they proposed the establishment of senior activity centres and fitness plazas within the community, providing recreational and social interaction spaces. These public facilities should be evenly distributed to ensure accessibility for older residents throughout the community. Additionally, ensuring smooth pedestrian pathways within the community is essential to enable the elderly to conveniently and safely reach different areas.

Integration of green ecology: The Blue Team emphasised that age-friendly renovations should fully consider greenery coverage factors. They suggested increasing green space within the community and planting species beneficial to the elderly, such as medicinal and wellness plants. Additionally, they encouraged green travel modes, promoting walking and cycling as low-carbon and environmentally friendly mobility options for the elderly.

Community cultural development: The Blue Team believed that community culture is critical to age-friendly renovations. They suggested enhancing the elderly's sense of belonging and well-being by organising cultural activities and

establishing interest groups. Additionally, they emphasised strengthening care and educational guidance for the elderly, improving their self-care awareness and abilities.

The Blue Team, when drafting the guideline's detailed implementation strategies, highlighted the importance of "multi-stakeholder participation and co-governance." They recommended that the government, community, residents, and enterprises work collaboratively on the renovation process, creating a strong synergy for progress. Additionally, they stressed the need for policy guidance and support to provide solid regulatory and financial backing for renovation efforts rather than relying solely on government funding as the primary financial driver for community development.

6.2.3 Comparison of Outcomes between the Two Teams

The differences in the professional backgrounds of the Yellow Team and Blue Team participants influenced their discussion outcomes, leading to variations in the overall goals and specific measures of age-friendly renovations.

1. Service Integration vs. Community Participation and Empowerment: The Yellow Team focuses on integrating and efficiently utilising different types of service resources to address the diverse needs of the elderly. The starting point of the Yellow Team is 'immediate' implementation and operational efficiency, focusing on directly translating policies and resources into service outcomes. They propose a holistic programme of ageing services that responds to the context of the community, enabling the elderly and community residents to access a wide range of support quickly. In contrast, the Blue Team focuses on theoretical underpinnings and innovative approaches, emphasising utilising and promoting a sense of agency among the elderly and encouraging the elderly, volunteers, social groups and the government to work together. They propose establishing an open and consultative governance mechanism that allows the elderly and other community members more say in the decision-making and management process. It encourages the elderly, social organisations, and the government to participate in governance together, thus enhancing their connection with society. They pay more attention to long-term impacts and emphasise new management models and cross-disciplinary collaboration to explore sustainable and flexible community development paths.

2. Shared Focus on Technology for Ageing Support: Despite their differences, both teams recognised the importance of technology in community development, particularly in areas such as online health and ageing information platforms and intelligent health and ageing products. That reflects the growing emphasis on technology-driven ageing support in contemporary community development initiatives.

From the summary of the discussion process and results, it is evident that the Yellow Team and the Blue Team exhibited distinct characteristics in their discussions on the framework for design guidelines for high-density, age-friendly communities. The Yellow Team focused on practical experience and operational feasibility, emphasising government leadership and service integration. In contrast, the Blue Team emphasised theoretical foundations and forward-thinking perspectives, advocating for community participation and technology-assisted ageing support. However, these differences stem from the two teams' distinct understandings and perspectives regarding the age-friendly enhancement of decayed high-density communities. In the thesis, as analysed in previous case study chapters, the historical evolution of community development and the interaction between community management models and spatial forms demonstrate the necessity of adapting management models in response to environmental changes within collective communities. Although this project primarily focuses on the design of outdoor spaces in communities, both the author's previous field investigations and the experiences shared by academic professionals and practitioners in community-based care services indicate that outdoor environmental improvement strategies require not only physical environmental modifications but also updates to community management models to enhance the actual living experience of the elderly. Furthermore, policy support and market collaboration are key factors in ensuring the sustainability of facility maintenance and management. These combined efforts can help create a safer, more accessible, and inclusive living environment for the elderly.

In the following discussion, the author incorporates key insights from both teams to develop more scientifically grounded, rational, and feasible design guidelines. The way of presentation for part of the guidelines produced at the end of the board game was based on the format used in SWA Group's Field Guide to Life in Urban Plazas: A Study in New York City⁵⁵.

6.3 Generation of Design Guideline

At this stage, the author summarises the workshop's results into a first draft of the design guideline. The second step is to integrate the literature, existing policies, and government operational frameworks to discuss further and refine the first draft. The purpose of using the card game framework in the workshop was to create a collectively agreed-upon foundational framework derived from the experiences of stakeholders involved in age-friendly community development. This would ensure that the guiding principles were relevant to the actual context

⁵⁵ Field Guide to Life in Urban Plazas: A Study in New York City <https://www.dexigner.com/news/32354>

in which the community operates, could be replicated in other ‘post-Danwei’ community improvement projects, and were supported by academic evidence. However, the framework for discussion at the workshop did not provide a practical design approach, nor did it make specific reference to regulations, policies, as well as general urban planning guidelines. Instead, it focused on defining the characteristics and directions for developing age-friendly community environments. Therefore, the author is further refining the first draft by incorporating the relevant literature and national goals and requirements for age-friendly community development, ensuring that its content presents detailed and implementable guideline for designing outdoor public spaces.

Guideline for Enhancing Age-Friendly Environments in High-Density Communities in China's Post-Danwei Era

6.3.1 The Way to Use the Design Guideline

This guideline uses the residential area of Zhengzhou No. 3 State Textile Factory (currently administratively divided into Zhengzhou Sanmian West Community and Zhengzhou Sanmian East Community) as a case study. It is intended to guide environmental upgrading design and serve as a reference for evaluating project decision-making in post-Danwei communities with the same planning layout as Zhengzhou No. 3 State Textile Factory and other post-Danwei communities located in urban areas with flat terrain. Decision makers of community regeneration projects can refer to the Guideline to evaluate the content of regeneration proposals when discussing and making decisions. In addition, landscape architects can read the guidelines before designing their projects to provide theoretical support for their design proposals for community regeneration projects.

6.3.2 Rationale and Principles

6.3.2.1 The foundational Regulatory Policies of the Design Guidelines

The guideline design is primarily based on the *14th Five-Year Plan for Senior Care Service Development* and the *14th Five-Year Plan for Housing Development of Zhengzhou*. The outdoor environment design guidelines are formulated in compliance with the Urban Residential Area Planning and Design Standards, the Technical Guideline for Comprehensive Renovation of Decayed Residential Areas in Zhengzhou, and the Age-friendly Building Standards of Henan Province.

6.3.2.2 The Context of Community

In compliance with the national framework for age-friendly community

development and local construction standards, this guideline is based on the on-site conditions of post-Danwei communities observed in the preliminary field research. It reflects the elderly's social interaction patterns, community emotions, behavioural motivations, and needs. Community emotion refers to the emotional state at the community level, which emerges in a specific community space and time when most residents, based on shared living needs, form a collective psychological experience through a unified evaluation. It is founded on residents' perceptions of community affairs and is a distinct form of community participation (Ji & Yang, 2023). Only by deeply understanding and accurately grasping the concept and characteristics of community emotion and fostering it can the elderly become more integrated into community life. In the continuously evolving community environment, it is crucial to create distinctive life scenes for the elderly, support the active development of their social relationships, and expand their activity spaces. This approach stimulates new enthusiasm for participation, empowers local communities, promotes the construction of age-friendly community governance coalitions, and ultimately realises healthy ageing.

6.3.2.3 Principles

The principles of this guideline are based on the spirit of the national development goals for community building, respecting the culture of post-Danwei communities and the lifestyles of the elderly. The following principles were established for drafting this guideline:

- **Government Development Goals as the Leading Framework:** The guideline's recommendations align with the national the elderly care strategy, using urban government regulatory documents and municipal community development plans as the fundamental framework. Under the premise of complying with relevant policies and laws, it provides recommendations for age-friendly environment upgrades.
- **People foremost:** The guideline prioritises the needs of the elderly, considering their behavioural patterns and the cultural context of Danwei communities.
- **Cost Minimisation:** The guideline emphasises reducing costs, including site construction costs, financial expenses, and management costs, in community placemaking.

6.3.2.4 Goal

A community is a complex system, and developing an age-friendly community requires the collaboration of multiple departments to achieve coordinated internal growth. Thus, in this guideline, the author first outlines the elements for upgrading an age-friendly environment in post-Danwei communities, covering all aspects of community composition, including the built environment, cultural development, community operations and management, community participation, community healthcare systems, education, intergenerational relationships,

safety and security, community services, economic development, and social welfare protection. Following this, the guideline proposes detailed design recommendations, focusing specifically on outdoor environments.

The conceptual approach of this guideline is structured around the daily life of the elderly, categorising the locations and characteristics of their activities and providing corresponding scene-based design recommendations. The reason for constructing everyday temporal living space through micro-level analysis of the elderly's daily lives rather than conducting a macro-level community analysis is that China's age-friendly community development has already established a foundational senior care support system. The current phase is focused on improving the quality of life for the elderly. Existing macro-level planning strategies and government-led community development policies primarily focus on the broader community environment but lack contextual integration with everyday community life and overlook the creation of distinctive everyday temporal living spaces. While infrastructure and policy safeguards provide the foundation for an age-friendly environment, enhancing the quality of life for the elderly requires micro-level design guidance. Therefore, this guideline, which focuses on scene-based design recommendations to improve everyday experiences, effectively bridges the gap between high-level planning and the lived experiences of the elderly in the community.

6.3.3 Building Age-Friendly Communities in the Post-Danwei Era

6.3.3.1 Classification of the Elderly's Everyday Temporal Living Space

Everyday Temporal Living Space on the Street

Daily Shopping: The elderly frequently visits shop at outdoor stalls, supermarkets, and convenience stores in the post-Danwei community. At outdoor stalls, they select products and complete transactions. Outside supermarkets or convenience stores, they may pause briefly to wait for companions, rest, or organise their belongings.

Medical Care: This includes walking routes to hospitals and clinics and outdoor waiting areas for medical consultations or rest. Throughout these activities, the elderly have high expectations for accessibility, comfort, and safety in both pathways and waiting areas.

Grandchild Pickup and Drop-off: This space covers the route from home to school, rest, and waiting spaces near schools in the post-Danwei community. Safety in commuting routes and supervision of grandchildren is a significant concern. Therefore, routes should be as short and direct as possible to ensure smooth and secure passage.

Everyday Temporal Living Space-Informal Scene

Informal scenes primarily involve spontaneous social interactions during walking or resting activities in the post-Danwei community. The spaces for these interactions can be categorised as follows:

- 1) **Linear Social Spaces:** Including internal residential roads, municipal roads (community-related sections), and pedestrian pathways. As continuous spaces, they serve as essential routes for the daily movement of the elderly. For instance, internal residential roads connect different apartment buildings, facilitating frequent encounters and conversations among older residents during walks. Municipal roads within the community section also serve as spaces for social interaction as the elderly pass through them in daily activities. Pedestrian pathways are specifically designed for walking and leisure, creating opportunities for spontaneous encounters and interactions.
- 2) **Green Space Social Areas:** Small green spaces provide leisure and relaxation areas for residents. With fresh air and scenic environments, these areas are equipped with benches, pathways, and other amenities, attracting the elderly for rest and recreation. They provide comfortable social environments, enabling the elderly to interact while enjoying the outdoors.

Everyday Temporal Living Space-Formal Scene

Formal scenes refer to organised and purpose-driven gatherings, such as conversations, interest-based exchanges, and board game activities. The spaces for these activities can be categorised as follows:

- 1) **Fitness Activity Spaces:** These areas are specially equipped with various fitness facilities suitable for the elderly, such as Tai Chi, rotating pushers and waist-back massagers. While engaging in physical exercise, the elderly share fitness experiences and insights, thereby strengthening their social connections.
- 2) **Multipurpose Activity Spaces:** Primarily indoor spaces, these areas feature flexible layouts that accommodate large group activities and can be reorganised for different events. These spaces can host cultural activities, lectures, and events organised by CPMSC. The elderly can also reserve them for interest-based gatherings and hobby-related activities. The variety of activities and spacious environment foster an intense social atmosphere, fulfilling the organised gathering needs of the elderly.
- 3) **Node Interaction Spaces:** Semi-enclosed spaces near residential entrances, arranged informally by older residents, serve as node interaction spaces. These locations serve as key gathering points for

various social groups of the elderly, as they are common passageways for residents entering and exiting the buildings. These spaces play an essential role in the social activities of the elderly's social groups, facilitating daily interactions and regular gatherings.

6.3.3.2 Living Environment

The Development and Management of Living Space

Safety Inspections and Age-Friendly Renovations: Regular inspections of water, electricity, and gas facilities for households with the elderly living alone, empty nesters, or those with disabilities. Regular safety inspections serve as a fundamental measure to ensure the safety of the living environment for the elderly. Research indicates that systematic inspections of water, electricity, and gas facilities can effectively reduce accident risks and enhance the quality of life for the elderly (Yang et al., 2024).

Development of the Elderly Volunteer Groups and Time Banking Systems: Establishing a volunteer service network and a time banking system for the elderly helps foster a culture of mutual assistance, strengthen social cohesion, and provide emergency support resources (Dieker et al., 2018).

Smart Home Care Facilities: Modern intelligent care technologies, such as emergency call devices and remote monitoring systems, can enhance the sense of security and self-care ability of the elderly (Yang et al., 2024).

Age-Friendly Home Renovations: Renovations include optimised spatial layouts, non-slip flooring, handrail installations, adaptive kitchen appliances, and accessible bathroom facilities. Research emphasises that government financial support and policy initiatives are crucial for ensuring the large-scale implementation of home adaptations.

Residential Building Refurbishments and Facility Maintenance: Upgrading interior structures and equipment in residential buildings ensures the integrity of facility functions, thereby extending their lifespan and enhancing safety.

Establishment of Special Funds and Monitoring Systems: The government should allocate dedicated funds for home support facility renovations and implement monitoring systems to track and provide real-time alerts on the health and safety of the elderly living alone (Yang et al., 2024).

Regular inspections of water, electricity, and gas facilities in households with the elderly living alone, empty nesters, or those with disabilities are crucial to ensure basic living safety. Additionally, developing volunteer groups for the elderly and establishing a service time banking system help strengthen community mutual

support and social connections. Yang et al.(Yang et al., 2024) emphasise that age-friendly home adaptations should comprehensively consider spatial layout optimisation, non-slip flooring, handrail installations, kitchen equipment upgrades, and improvements to toilet and bathing facilities.

The integration of smart home care facilities further enhances safety measures. These technologies include emergency call devices and security monitoring systems, which can significantly reduce emergency response time(Yang et al., 2024). Meanwhile, government financial support facilitates the renovation of age-friendly indoor spaces (Han et al., 2021). Dieker et al.(2018) highlight that intergenerational community design, through support networks and social connections, helps alleviate loneliness and improve safety.

Establishing a community fire prevention and emergency response network ensures the safety of the community. Implementing an emergency call system and upgrading indoor fire prevention facilities can enhance the ability to respond to emergencies. Lu et al.(2023) highlight that high-density residential buildings require specialised safety facilities, such as standalone smoke detection alarm systems, to reduce fire risks. Additionally, a well-structured community emergency response mechanism can further increase the elderly's confidence and emergency preparedness. Through infrastructure renovations and enhanced fire drills, the safety awareness and emergency response capabilities of community residents can be significantly improved.

Ecological Environment Construction and design in the whole community

Enhancing Ecological Environment: Well-planned green spaces improve air quality and provide recreational and social spaces for the elderly.

Designing Small and Micro Green Spaces: Compact green spaces can maximise environmental benefits within limited public space.

Integrating Community Greening with Cultural Elements: Community-led initiatives incorporating cultural elements can foster a sense of belonging, enhancing psychological well-being and social participation among the elderly in the post-Danwei community.

Developing a sustainable ecological environment is crucial for enhancing the quality of life. Through community-led initiatives, residents are encouraged to participate in planning and maintaining green spaces, beautifying the environment and strengthening community cohesion. Wang et al.(2024) highlight that utilising small and micro spaces to create green environments can improve air quality while providing social and recreational spaces for the elderly.

6.3.3.3 Convenient Facilities

Barrier-Free Facility Development

Barrier-Free Adaptation of Public Facilities: Ramps, stairways, elevators, and handrails should prioritise age-friendly design and adopt cost-effective procurement strategies to reduce financial burdens(Akiyama & Kim, 2005).

Commercial Operations and Third-Party Collaboration: Introducing market mechanisms through public-private partnerships can enhance the sustainability of facility maintenance and management.

Community Roadway and Facility Signage System: The community wayfinding system should emphasise legibility, incorporating text size and colour contrast adjustments based on the needs of the elderly to improve readability and recognition(Gaglione, Cottrill, et al., 2022).

Integration of Community Culture: Designing wayfinding systems with cultural symbols integrates community identity with age-friendly facilities, enhancing the sense of belonging and recognition among the elderly.

Pedestrian Pathways and Transportation System

Principles for Street Design Improvements: All modifications should prioritise the safety and fluidity of pedestrian movement for the elderly while preserving the street's role as an extension of residential life and a space for social interactions.

Safe, Accessible, and Highly Connected Pedestrian Pathways: Pedestrian pathways should have designated functions, such as social interaction spaces and transit routes. The use of low-noise pavement materials can enhance walking comfort(Zexia et al., 2022).

Emphasising Streets as Linear Social Spaces: Multifunctional facilities should be integrated into the street design, ensuring that sidewalks accommodate mobility and additional uses. This maximises space efficiency, enhances pedestrian flow, and creates informal social interaction opportunities, allowing the elderly to engage in spontaneous greetings and interactions on sidewalks.

Separation of Pedestrians and Vehicles: Primary roads should feature clear zoning, with distinct pedestrian pathways, bicycle lanes, and electric vehicle routes marked by ground signage, colour-coded pathways, and physical barriers such as green buffers. Secondary streets should prohibit private car access, restricting use to pedestrian traffic and short-distance electric vehicles. Emergency and special-purpose vehicles, including fire trucks, ambulances, security patrol cars, and vehicles for people with disabilities, should be allowed access and designated parking spaces within the post-Danwei community.

Age-Friendly Public Transportation Adaptation: Public transportation services in the post-Danwei community should be fully upgraded to accommodate older passengers, including the introduction of low-floor buses, increased seating availability, and visible signage, thereby enhancing confidence and accessibility for the elderly(Akiyama & Kim, 2005).

Optimisation of the Transportation Network: Given the slower walking speed of the elderly in the post-Danwei community, the distance between community areas and public transit stops should be optimised, with rest areas and weather shelters strategically placed along routes(Gaglione, Gargiulo, et al., 2022).

Safety Measures: Existing functional spaces and rest areas along streets should be preserved, while protective barriers between these areas and vehicle traffic are implemented to ensure pedestrian safety.

Aesthetic Enhancements: Trash bins should be placed regularly to maintain cleanliness along pedestrian pathways. Additionally, small-scale landscape features like mini sculptures and flower beds should be integrated along pathways to increase visual appeal and create an enjoyable walking environment.

Public Gathering Spaces

The street: Utilising fragmented spaces to create small green areas and activity zones that cater to the elderly's recreational needs while ensuring barrier-free accessibility(Figure 6-2).

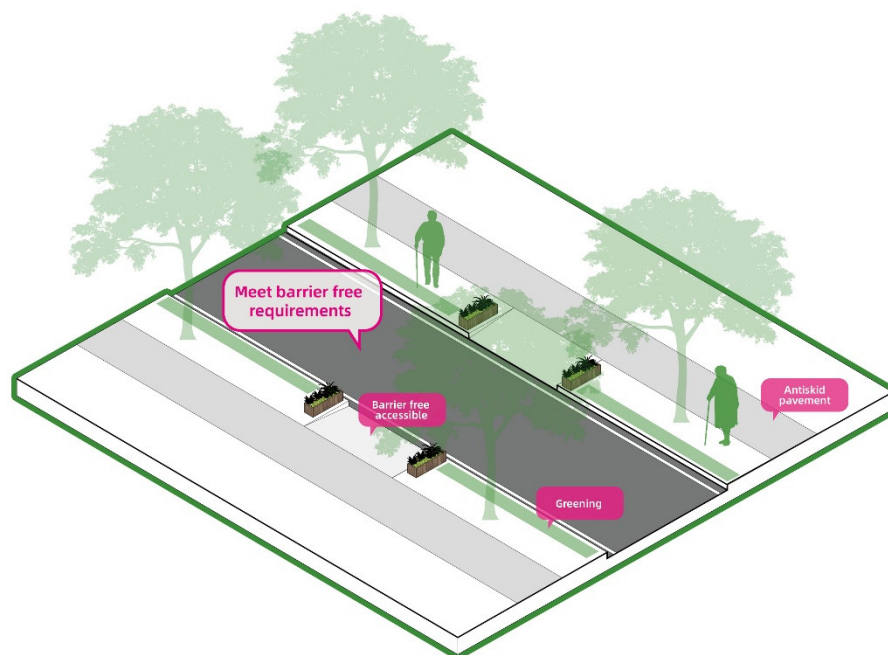


Figure 6-2. Example of Street Layout(Drawn by the author)

Differentiating Space Types: Designing varied activity spaces based on characteristics of the post-Danwei community, such as tranquil gardens and fitness areas, to diversify community life and encourage multi-generational participation.

Supporting Facilities and Accessibility

The Centralised Layout of Convenience Facilities: Placing essential amenities in community centres or areas with convenient transportation ensures easy access for the elderly.

Facility Management and Donation Mechanisms: Implementing community-led donation and management systems to supplement maintenance costs and encourage resource-sharing.

Ensuring Emergency Evacuation Safety: Maintaining open spaces in high-footfall areas, such as community entrances and market surroundings, to serve as emergency evacuation points.

Scene

Establishing Formal Social Interaction Spaces in the post-Danwei community
These spaces are organised and purpose-driven gathering areas, including conversation spaces, interest-based exchanges, fitness activities, sports, and board games. The designated areas can be categorised as follows:

Fitness Activity Spaces: These areas have age-friendly exercise equipment, such as Tai Chi spinners and lumbar massagers. the elderly can exercise while engaging in peer discussions, fostering social connections, and enhancing well-being.

Multipurpose Activity Spaces: Primarily plazas or indoor halls with flexible and open layouts, capable of accommodating large gatherings. These spaces can be reorganised to host diverse events, including cultural activities, lectures, and performances organised by community service centres. Those spaces also serve as venues for self-organised board game sessions and hobby-based activities, enriching social engagement.

Node-Based Interaction Spaces: Semi-enclosed spaces near residential building entrances, self-arranged by the elderly, are key gathering points for social groups. These locations are essential hubs for daily interactions among senior social groups(Figure 6-3).

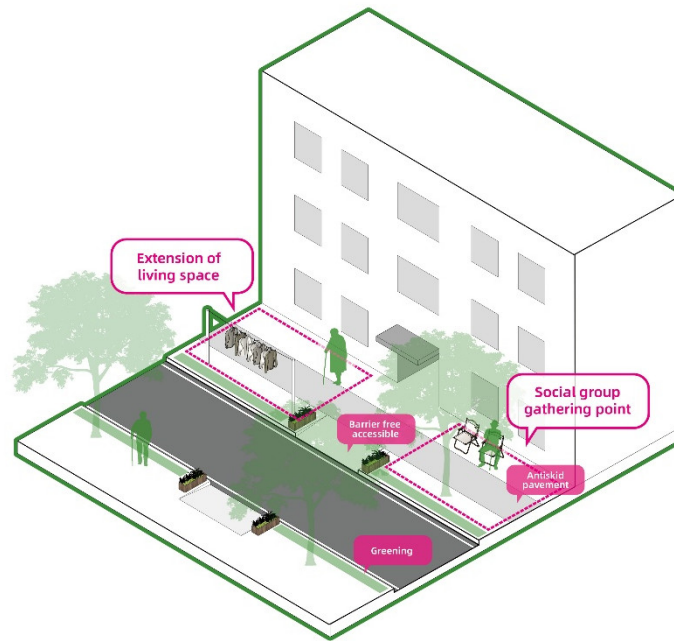


Figure 6-3. Functional Zoning of the Street at the Entrance of the Residential Building(Drawn by the author)

Intergenerational Spaces: Designating intergenerational spaces: Installing playground equipment for young children near the elderly’s gathering spots, allowing the elderly to supervise their grandchildren while enjoying their leisure time.

Commercial and Retail Spaces

Mobile Stalls: Non-slip flooring materials for the outdoor stall areas(Harris & Shaw, 1988). Stall height between 0.78 and 0.85 metres, making product selection easier for the elderly(Bakhshi et al., 2007; Harris & Shaw, 1988). Each stall is equipped with seating for short-term rest during shopping. Stall width should ensure adequate space for pedestrian flow(Figure 6-4).

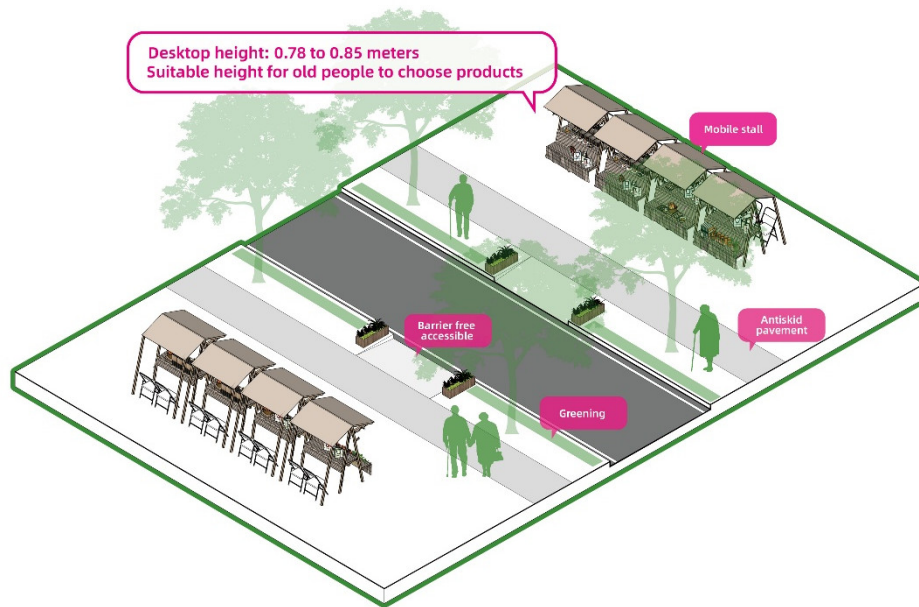


Figure 6-4. Illustrations of the Mobile Stalls Zone Design(Drawn by the author)

The Retail Stores: Ensuring wheelchair and mobility aid accessibility at both entrances and exits(Figure 6-5).

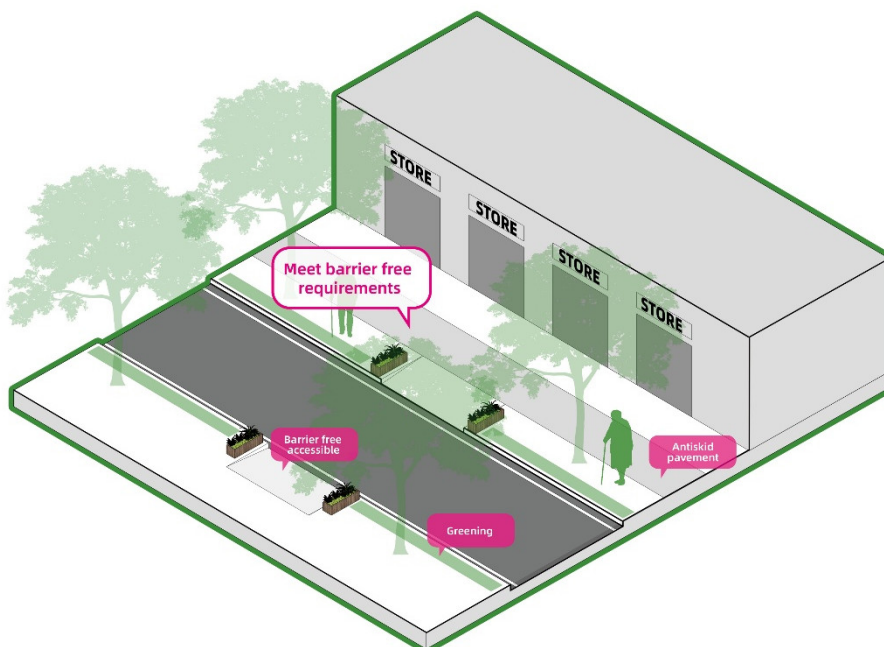


Figure 6-5. Illustrations of the Street Area in front of the Retail

Healthcare and Educational Spaces

Inclusive Medical Space Design: Customising age-friendly wayfinding systems in and around the post-Danwei community hospitals, facilitating navigation for the elderly.

Educational Facility Accessibility: Establishing designated waiting areas near schools(Figure 6-6) in spacious, well-ventilated locations in the post-Danwei community. Determining waiting area size based on school capacity and pickup volume. Installing marked signs to indicate designated waiting zones for different student grade levels, helping caregivers(some of them is the elderly) locate the designated waiting areas efficiently.

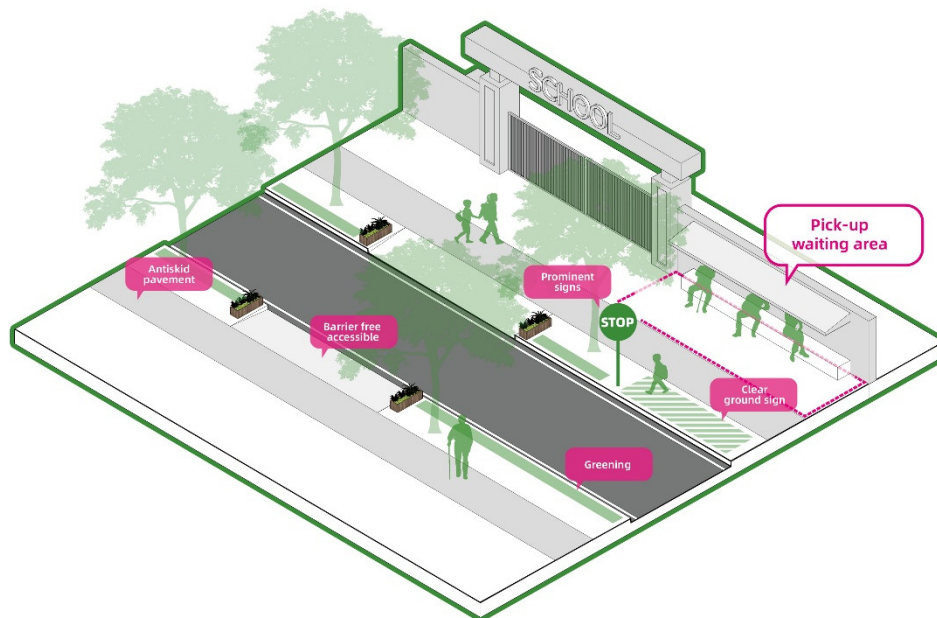


Figure 6-6. Illustrations of the Street Area in front of the Educational Facility(Drawn by the author)

A significant body of literature highlights the fundamental role of well-equipped and accessible facilities in age-friendly environmental construction(Jung et al., 2024; Scharlach, 2012; Vol, 2021; Xiang & Mei, 2024; Yang et al., 2024; Yu et al., 2019). Wen et al.(2018) explored the elderly's needs and preferences for recreational activities in urban green spaces, emphasising the importance of barrier-free design in enhancing usage rates. Additionally, Wen et al.(2020) demonstrated the distribution of green spaces and its effects on the elderly's physical and mental well-being while addressing equitable access challenges.

The issue of fairness in green space utilisation remains particularly prominent in high-density post-Danwei communities. Akiyama and Kim(2005) pointed out that transportation policies targeting the elderly and individuals with disabilities must incorporate barrier-free design and universal planning to ensure accessibility and convenience. That includes infrastructure improvements such as ramps, elevators, handrails, and public-private collaborations to reduce financial burdens and ensure long-term facility maintenance. Additionally, by enhancing signage readability and integrating smart information displays, improving community wayfinding systems can significantly improve mobility experiences for the elderly while fostering cultural identity and a sense of belonging.

Concerning pedestrian roads and transport systems, cities should use low-noise materials for pedestrian roads and ensure the separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to ensure the safety and mobility of the elderly. Create walkable communities and control the number of cars passing through the community to make more space for street use. Regarding the community's public transport, ageing improvements should be integrated, including improvements in the environment of access routes, stops, and buses. For example, improving the smoothness of bus travel and improving station facilities are essential to increase the confidence of the elderly in using them.

Streets carry a variety of everyday living spaces for the elderly. The classification of outdoor public space can be divided into daily life and social scenes. Those activities mentioned here refer to the behaviours of the elderly in the community to satisfy their daily needs, such as buying groceries, going to the doctor and having meals. Social scenes include all behaviours in which the elderly interact with others in the community, unrelated to their living needs, such as chatting, playing cards, and chance encounters. The enhancement of the elderly's experience in this kind of scene should be the primary purpose of enhancing outdoor public spaces. Therefore, streets and other outdoor spaces should be optimised according to the behavioural habits of the elderly and the environmental characteristics of the community to give them a better social experience and a safer and more convenient experience in the public space. Focus on creating fragmented spaces and creating more public meeting points for differentiated activities. The differentiated design of public spaces in the community can meet the diversified leisure and recreational needs of the elderly and, at the same time, enhance convenience and attractiveness by optimising the layout of small outdoor spaces and rationally concentrating facilities. Finally, the elderly are helped to create comfortable and safe small gathering points scattered throughout the community. The safety and comfort of these places should be enhanced in accordance with the gathering locations that have been developed

over the years in the community. Under this premise, the street is segmented to separate access, social interaction, and residents' living behaviours, ensuring a smooth and safe walking experience.

6.3.3.4 Community Services are Easily Accessible

Health Management and Services

Health Management Services Provided by Primary Healthcare Institutions: As the core providers of community health management, primary healthcare institutions should offer essential health check-ups and disease prevention services. The effectiveness of community services depends on integrating health management with volunteer networks, which helps raise health awareness among the elderly and promotes healthy lifestyle habits.

Supporting Community-Embedded Integrated Medical and Care Institutions: Community-embedded integrated medical and care institutions facilitate the coordination of medical and caregiving services, reducing long-term hospitalisation rates and enhancing the quality of life for the elderly (Morikawa, 2014). Community participation and coordination mechanisms can effectively promote the implementation and sustainable development of the integrated medical-care model.

Senior Care Service Facilities

Senior Care Institutions Providing Daily Assistance and Meal Support Services: Senior care facilities should focus on essential daily care services while offering catering and mobility support to meet the elderly's fundamental needs. Besides, their care services should integrate social resources and adopt innovative models to ensure sustainable development and service quality (Wang et al., 2023).

Renovating Housing Facilities to Adapt to Senior Care Needs: Modifying existing community housing to meet care needs can reduce infrastructure investment costs and enhance service accessibility (Tobin et al., 2012).

Multifunctional Care Centres and Rehabilitation Assistive Devices: Establishing multifunctional care centres that provide rehabilitation and recreational services helps the elderly maintain health and independence. Additionally, professional guidance should be provided to ensure the proper use and maintenance of assistive devices.

Optimisation of Social Resource Investment: Social resources and volunteer groups can address workforce shortages, enhance the flexibility of the elderly's care facility management, and promote community integration.

Community Visits and Legal Services

Visits and Support for the Elderly with Special Needs: Conducting regular visits to the elderly with special needs to ensure their safety and well-being is a key component of community services. Cross-departmental collaboration mechanisms can enhance the coverage and effectiveness of the social security system(Kolosova, 2024).

Development of Volunteer Groups and Student Participation: Expanding volunteer groups, particularly by encouraging student participation, can strengthen community support networks, reduce social isolation among the elderly, and improve their community engagement.

Mobility Assistance Devices and Home Medical Support: Introducing mobile lifting assistive devices and home healthcare services can enhance caregiving efficiency and comfort while reducing the physical burden on caregivers.

Legal Service Offices and Information Communication Channels: Establishing community-based public legal service offices to provide legal aid helps protect the rights and interests of the elderly. Community nurses and volunteers can act as information bridges, assisting the elderly in accessing relevant services(Pettigrew, 2000).

Information Notification

Community Information Notification and Feedback Mechanism: Community management institutions should ensure that the elderly receive timely information and establish a feedback mechanism to address their concerns. The information dissemination system should integrate modern technology with traditional methods to enhance information accessibility and interactivity.

Utilising Familiar Social Networks for Information Dissemination: The familiar community networks and healthcare workers play a critical role in information dissemination in the post-Danwei community, particularly in explaining complex policies and assisting the elderly in accessing services.

The accessibility and convenience of community services are key factors in improving the elderly's quality of life and social integration. Research indicates that integrating primary healthcare and health management services can significantly enhance health outcomes and reduce disease burden. For example, Morikawa(2014) found that Japan's community-embedded care system, which integrates medical and nursing services, has improved service accessibility for the elderly while reducing long-term care costs. Meanwhile, Wang et al.(2023) emphasise that combining social governance models with technological support provides a crucial foundation for delivering more sustainable and inclusive care

services for the elderly.

Expanding community visits and legal services can address the needs of the elderly facing difficulties, ensuring their safety and rights are protected. Pettigrew(2000) highlights that community health nurses play a crucial role in disseminating information, utilising interpersonal networks and social interactions to help the elderly access healthcare and legal services. Additionally, Kolosova(2024) emphasises that cross-departmental collaboration mechanisms can further optimise the coordination and execution of social services, thereby enhancing the social security and support system for the elderly.

An effective information notification and feedback system is vital for ensuring efficient community management in the post-Danwei community. Pettigrew(2000) stresses that community nurses and volunteer networks serve as information bridges, improving the efficiency of information dissemination and assisting the elderly in understanding complex policies and service procedures. Furthermore, Wang et al.(2023) highlight that integrating modern technology with traditional social networks in information dissemination systems can provide timely feedback and support in emergencies.

6.3.3.5 Broad and Adequate Social Participation in the Post-Danwei

Community

The elderly's Social Organisations and Activities

Establishing the Elderly's Social Organisations, Such as Senior Associations:

Community-led leadership groups of the elderly can ensure the relevance and effectiveness of activities through feedback mechanisms in the post-Danwei community. the elderly are more likely to engage in volunteer activities through social networks and community organisations, which enhances their social support and overall well-being(Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008).

Implementing Community-Based "Silver Age Initiatives" to Support Active Participation in Community Activities:

Diverse public activities organised by the community not only cater to the interests and hobbies of the elderly but also strengthen their social connections and psychological well-being(Shea, 2017). Research suggests that loosely structured community activities are more accessible and engaging for the elderly, resulting in higher participation rates and improved activity outcomes.

Encouraging Spontaneous Activities and Recreational Engagement: By motivating the elderly to initiate and participate in cultural and recreational activities, their social engagement and sense of self-fulfilment can be further

enhanced in the post-Danwei community(Principi et al., 2012).

The elderly Education and Volunteer Services

Establishing Lifelong Learning Centres and Organising Diverse Educational Activities: Educational programmes help improve cognitive abilities and social skills, enhancing the elderly's ability to adapt to the outside post-Danwei communities in the social environment(Shea, 2017).

Encouraging Volunteer Service Models such as Home- and Community-Based Senior Care: Participation in volunteer services significantly improves psychological well-being and social adaptability among the elderly, with volunteers reporting higher life satisfaction and happiness(Morrow-Howell et al., 2003).

Forming Neighbourhood Mutual Aid Groups and Volunteer Teams: Establishing community mutual aid teams can complement formal caregiving systems while fostering emotional support and social interaction among community members(Tang & Morrow-Howell, 2008).

Social participation has a profoundly positive impact on the psychological well-being and social adaptability of the elderly. Research indicates that establishing grassroots social organisations of the elderly can promote community engagement, strengthen social support networks, and alleviate loneliness and anxiety among the elderly. Additionally, community-based organisations and educational activities enhance cognitive abilities and social skills, providing opportunities for lifelong learning and personal growth.

The development of volunteer service mechanisms improves the psychological well-being of the elderly and enhances their sense of social responsibility and self-worth. For instance, Morrow-Howell et al.(2003) found that the elderly who engage in volunteer activities report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction. Furthermore, Tang and Morrow-Howell(2008) emphasise that community mutual aid organisations can effectively integrate social resources, offering emotional support and practical assistance to older residents.

With support for education and volunteer services, the elderly's social participation can shift from passively receiving services to actively assisting, thereby strengthening community cohesion and functionality. The diversity and flexibility of community activities help attract more older participants while catering to their diverse needs.

The successful implementation of these strategies requires close collaboration between government and community entities, alongside integrated social resources and policy support, to ensure long-term sustainability and

effectiveness.

6.3.3.6 Creating an Atmosphere of Respect for the Elderly in The Post-

Danwei Community

Active Ageing Education

Providing Active Ageing Education for the Elderly in the Community:

Psychological well-being and active ageing education are essential for enhancing resilience among the elderly in the post-Danwei community. Research indicates that active ageing programmes help improve mental health and reduce feelings of loneliness (Bartholomaeus et al., 2019). Additionally, psychosocial interventions have been shown to effectively prevent depressive symptoms and enhance self-control, psychological resilience, and life satisfaction. Active ageing education strengthens self-control, enabling the elderly to face challenges with greater optimism (Forsman et al., 2011a; Zhou et al., 2021).

Organising Educational Activities on Respect, Care, and Support for the

Elderly: Promoting social connections and psychological well-being through community education and social activities is crucial in the post-Danwei community. The research shows that regular group activities significantly reduce the risk of depression and enhance overall quality of life. Group participation and social interaction help alleviate loneliness and improve self-worth among the elderly (Blazer, 2010).

Family-Based Care for The Elderly

Implementing Family-Based Care for the Elderly: Providing structured training programmes and psychological support can enhance caregivers' skills while alleviating emotional stress. Family support programmes improve the quality of care while reducing the emotional burden on caregivers (Heller et al., 2015a).

Expanding Funding Sources for Free In-Home Services: Integrating psychosocial interventions with community resources can broaden the reach of caregiving services and improve mental health outcomes.

Encouraging Social Organisations to Provide Supportive Care for Families of

the Elderly with Disabilities: Collaboration between communities and social organisations is key to improving caregiving services. For instance, social cooperation and psychological support networks have significantly enhanced the quality and accessibility of care services for the elderly.

Developing a culture that values filial piety and respect for the elderly relies on the combined efforts of education and family caregiving systems. Forsman et

al.(2011b) emphasise that psychosocial interventions can enhance psychological resilience and social interaction skills among the elderly while also effectively preventing depression and mental health issues. Furthermore, Bartholomaeus et al.(2019) highlight that community resilience programmes play a crucial role in promoting social interactions and emotional support, thereby improving the elderly's psychological well-being and social adaptability. In family caregiving, Heller(2015b) suggests that training programmes and integrating social resources can enhance caregiving skills while alleviating psychological stress among caregivers. These initiatives improve the quality of care and facilitate the efficient allocation and utilisation of social resources. By integrating education and support systems, the culture of filial piety and respect for the elderly can be further strengthened, ensuring that the elderly receive comprehensive psychological and physical support for a high-quality life.

6.3.3.7 Technological Staff for the Elderly

Smart Health and Care Information Platform for the Elderly

Utilising the Smart Health and the Care Information Platform of the Elderly for Real-Time Service Matching: The online the elderly care platform optimises service demand and supply coordination through real-time data analysis and remote health monitoring, ensuring that the elderly receive timely and efficient care services(Kong et al., 2024). The platform integrates health management, online virtual social interactions, cloud communication, and price comparison features, enhancing the quality of life and service accessibility for the elderly in the post-Danwei community.

Introducing Online Health and the Elderly Care Products into Communities and Households: Smart devices and electronic health systems, such as remote health monitoring and emergency response systems, significantly enhance the safety and convenience of home-based care services for the elderly(Pires et al., 2016). These products provide physiological health monitoring, personalised medical recommendations, and caregiving support.

Training for Using Electric-related Things

Helping the Elderly Learn to Use Smart Products and Technologies: Training in technologies assists the elderly in overcoming fears of new technology, enhancing their ability to use smart devices, thereby increasing independence and social connectedness(Hung, 2023). The widespread adoption of technologies should be accompanied by systematic training programmes to ensure that the elderly can fully benefit from technological advancements(Majumder et al., 2017).

The application of online health and care information platforms for the elderly is a key approach to enhancing the quality of life for the elderly. Kong et al.(Kong et al.,

2024) emphasise that integrated online care platforms for the elderly can address the elderly's diverse needs in terms of health management, social interaction, and safety. Additionally, Pires et al.(Pires et al., 2016) highlight that real-time health monitoring and remote medical services provide immediate health management and reduce caregiving costs, ensuring continuous medical support for the elderly.

Regarding technology training, Hung(2023) stresses that providing technology education for the elderly helps enhance their digital literacy and independence. Majumder et al.(2017) further note that smart home devices and wearable medical sensors can facilitate home-based health monitoring and remote medical support while reducing loneliness and social isolation.

In summary, the integration of online the elderly's care platforms and technology training not only promotes technological innovation for the elderly's support but also advances their care services toward greater intelligence, convenience, and personalisation. Future developments should refine online platform functionalities and strengthen technological training for the elderly to achieve a more comprehensive and sustainable online care system.

6.3.3.8 Effectively Managed and Funded

Organisational Structure and Staffing

Designating Specialised Personnel for the Elderly's Affairs within Community Workers: Establishing dedicated positions for the elderly affairs and enhancing the staffing of community social service personnel are key to improving service quality and efficiency. Research indicates that through joint planning and cross-sector collaboration, government policies and community participation can promote service integration, thereby enhancing service coverage and response speed for the elderly.

Deploying Professional Social Workers to Serve the Elderly: Introducing the care service companies for the elderly into communities and employing qualified professional caregivers can help meet the diverse needs of the elderly. Additionally, partnerships and private sector involvement can provide specialised expertise and resource support, enhancing service quality and accessibility.

Financial and Policy Support

Increasing Financial Investment in Senior Care Facilities: Government-led financial investment is crucial for expanding the post-Danwei community infrastructure and service coverage. Research emphasises that innovative financing mechanisms, such as the Public-Private Partnership projects and community funds, can more effectively attract resources, ensuring the sustainability of high-quality the elderly care services.

Establishing a Long-Term Mechanism for Age-Friendly Community

Development: Policy frameworks should encourage the elderly's participation in the post-Danwei community decision-making and feedback mechanisms, enhancing service transparency and engagement. By implementing a tiered evaluation system, resources can be allocated more effectively while monitoring community development progress.

In recent years, the management and protection of the elderly have become a central issue in social governance. Research suggests that properly allocating community social workers and dedicated personnel helps deliver more professional and timely services, ensuring that the elderly enjoy their fundamental rights (Alfonso Lara Montero et al., 2017). At the same time, strengthening policy and financial support, including expanding public investment, introducing private-sector partnerships, and establishing long-term mechanisms, is crucial for enhancing the sustainability and quality of community services. Moreover, innovative social governance models emphasise cross-sector collaboration and broad stakeholder participation, which contribute to optimising resource allocation and improving governance efficiency. Further studies indicate that enhancing financial support and refining community feedback mechanisms can increase the elderly's social participation and policy responsiveness. These measures safeguard the basic welfare of the elderly and foster social interaction and cohesion within communities, laying a solid foundation for the development of age-friendly communities.

Safety Inspections and Age-Friendly Home Modifications

Regular Inspections of Utilities in Households of the Elderly Living Alone, Empty Nesters, and Those with Disabilities: Routine safety inspections are fundamental to ensuring the safety of the elderly's living environments. Research indicates that systematic utility inspections can effectively reduce accident risks and enhance the quality of life for the elderly.

Developing Senior Volunteer Groups and Time Banking Systems: Establishing a senior volunteer service network and a time banking system helps foster a culture of mutual assistance, strengthen social cohesion, and provide emergency support resources in the post-Danwei community.

Smart Home Care Facilities: smart home facilities, such as emergency call devices and remote monitoring systems, can enhance the elderly's sense of security and self-care abilities.

Renovating Residential Buildings and Facility Maintenance: Upgrading internal structures and facilities in residential buildings ensures the integrity of essential functions, thereby extending the lifespan of facilities and improving overall safety.

Establishing Special Funds and Monitoring Systems: Governments should allocate dedicated funds for modifying home support facilities and implement monitoring systems to track and provide real-time alerts on the health and safety of the elderly living alone.

Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Response

Establishing a Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Response Network:

Communities should develop a comprehensive fire prevention and emergency response system to effectively address unexpected incidents. High-density residential areas, like the post-Danwei community, which is a high-density building and population environment, require special attention to fire safety facilities and emergency exit configurations.

Implementing an Emergency Call System: Smart alarm systems and community surveillance equipment can enhance response times in the event of accidents, thereby reducing fire hazards and accidental damage.

Enhancing Fire Safety Facilities in High-Density Residential Areas: Given the safety requirements of the post-Danwei community, which is characterised by its high-density building environment, it is essential to increase the number of fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems, and fire doors to strengthen fire protection measures.

Installing Independent Fire Detectors and Upgrading Fire Prevention Systems:

Research indicates modern fire detection systems can significantly reduce fire incidence rates and improve emergency response capabilities.

Renovating and Maintaining Fire Safety Infrastructure: Upgrading outdated fire equipment and replacing ageing building materials ensures community fire prevention facilities comply with modern safety standards.

Waste Sorting

Waste Sorting Education and Recycling Initiatives: Educating residents on waste classification and recycling can increase environmental awareness, while resource recovery programmes can help subsidise community activities.

Resource Coordination and Management System: Future communities should establish resource coordination mechanisms, optimise waste sorting and recycling processes, and enhance community sustainability.

Third-Party Supervision and Strengthening Property Management

Responsibilities: Property management companies should assume greater responsibility by introducing third-party supervision to ensure environmental sanitation and effective waste management (F. Wang et al., 2024).

Conducting Routine Inspections of Utilities in Households of the Elderly Living Alone, Empty Nesters, and those with Disabilities is critical to ensure basic living safety. Additionally, developing senior volunteer groups and establishing a time banking system contribute to strengthening community mutual support and social connections. Age-friendly home modifications should comprehensively consider spatial layout adjustments, non-slip flooring, handrail installations, kitchen equipment upgrades, and improvements to toilet and bathing facilities.

The adoption of smart home care facilities further enhances safety measures. These facilities include emergency call devices and security monitoring systems, which can significantly reduce emergency response times. Moreover, government financial support is critical in renovating and installing age-friendly indoor facilities. The intergenerational community design should be highlighted through support networks and social connections to help alleviate loneliness and improve safety.

Establishing a community fire prevention and emergency response network is essential for ensuring safety in residential areas. Implementing emergency call systems and upgrades to indoor fire prevention facilities can significantly enhance the community's ability to respond to emergencies. High-density residential buildings require specialised safety equipment, such as independent smoke and fire detection alarm systems, to reduce fire hazards. Additionally, a well-structured community emergency response mechanism can boost the elderly's confidence and preparedness for emergencies. By renovating fire safety infrastructure and conducting regular fire drills, the awareness of safety measures and emergency preparedness among community residents can be significantly improved.

Raising awareness of waste sorting and promoting recycling activities can enhance residents' environmental consciousness. Revenue from the recyclable waste industry chain can subsidise community activities, contributing to a sustainable development model. Therefore, integrating green space initiatives with waste sorting measures enhances environmental quality and promotes community sustainability and resident engagement.

6.4 Validation

6.4.1 Validation Workshop

Due to the time limit of the PhD programme, there was no opportunity to implement the design guideline in the community before the author graduated. How can the guideline be implemented in the post-Danwei community? To

answer this question, the author held a workshop and invited government officials from departments related to age-friendly community renewal. Through group discussions, participants discussed whether the guideline could be effectively implemented in their actual work, drawing on their work experience. A total of six participants attended the validation workshop, comprising four employees from municipal-level renewal departments, one employee from a district-level senior care department, and one architecture professor who also serves as a planner.

The workshop is divided into two parts. The first part consists of researchers giving a slide presentation on the development process of the guideline, including the research background, research questions, and fieldwork, lasting approximately 30 minutes. The second part is a group discussion on the content of the guideline. Participants take turns proposing suggestions for improving the content of the guideline, with the discussion lasting approximately one hour.

6.4.2 Experts' Advice

First, all participating experts expressed approval of the guideline' direction and scope. There is two suggestions from the experts on the validation workshop:

1. **Part of the guideline have been completed.** Since the development of the guidelines is based on the policy objectives for developing age-friendly communities in China, the modules covered by the guideline are also part of ongoing policies. Therefore, participants responded that the respective departments had successfully implemented some of the recommendations in the guideline.
2. **The detailed elaboration of the guidelines content.** Regarding the content of the guideline, experts believe that some of the guideline are not detailed enough and lack specific guidance for implementation in practice. The guidelines should be further refined. Participants cited an example from the guideline mentions a 'Smart Health and Care Information Platform for the Elderly.' This section should be further elaborated to provide detailed guidance on how to design and establish such an information platform.

To address this issue, the author thinks that it is perhaps based on discussions on establishing digital twins for healthcare, or other smart-based initiatives. Age-friendly communities are complex entities, although the main focus of this topic is on outdoor public spaces. Therefore, through the above discussion, it is clear that the innovative points of the guideline for improving outdoor public spaces in post-Danwei communities are based on everyday temporal living space and aim to ensure that the elderly can continue to enjoy their rights to use public spaces in the ever-changing environment of their communities. This is to prevent the destruction of their social relationships and outdoor spaces after the completion

of community renewal projects due to environmental changes. However, when developing design guidelines, the author believes that as a reference book, the guidelines should clearly describe the requirements for all aspects of community operation. As one of the services currently used in age-friendly communities, information platforms need to be mentioned, but it is not the focus of this thesis. However, the author is unable to provide more suggestions based on the current research results. Additionally, participants mentioned that, as government employees, the information platform is currently under development. Therefore, further content refinement by the author is deemed unnecessary, but there is potential to continue and expand the work. The final version is the guideline that is present in Chapter 7.

6.4.3 Policy Directions

This thesis addresses a contentious issue in the implementation process of China's community renewal policy, specifically whether community renewal should be standardised. As mentioned earlier, the construction of age-friendly environments in Chinese urban communities is based on national development goals issued by higher-level governments, which are then translated into specific, unified renewal plans for individual cities and issued to lower-level district governments for implementation. This top-down, politically directive community renewal mechanism requires lower-level governments to meet specific targets outlined in the documents within a specified timeframe. The advantage of this approach is that it allows for the rapid completion of the age-friendly environment update goals set by higher authorities. For a rapidly ageing society like China, this approach is undoubtedly in the interests of the majority of community residents. However, as the policy requires that the goals be achieved within a limited timeframe, district governments often do not have sufficient time to conduct field research in the communities within its jurisdiction to assess the feasibility of the new update plan and provide feedback to the municipal government. It is impossible to know in advance whether the updated plan issued by the municipal government applies to all communities. That has led to the incompatibility of the general update plan studied in this thesis with post-Danwei communities. Fortunately, the Chinese government's urban governance system gives the government strong control and close ties to communities. Through the CPMSC as a bridge, the government can promptly supplement and adjust any incompatibilities in the community after the implementation of the updated plan.

This feedback mechanism is mainly focused on post-implementation remedies rather than pre-implementation adjustments. That has led to a growing gap between post-Danwei communities and well-equipped communities established after 2000. Under the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan for the Development of China's Ageing Care and the Senior Care Service System(2021-2025), by 2025, the infrastructure for community aged care will be completed, and

the basic layout of China's urban social service mechanism for AIP will be established. China's community services and facilities will be able to support all the elderly in maintaining a basic standard of living. In the next phase of China's community aged care service system planning, improving the quality of life of the elderly will inevitably be a major theme of development. After the initial unified layout of aged care community facilities is completed, it is time to move on to regional upgrades, which will improve and refine the aged care environment in local communities. In the process of more detailed community upgrades, researchers recommend that the Chinese government slow down the pace of upgrades to allow time for research and policy formulation for each community. In addition, researchers believe that the role of the government should be slightly adjusted to allow room for adjustments in the implementation of the 'one community, one upgrade' policy. The complete control of high-level government over the design of age-friendly community environment construction projects should be shifted to joint design with grassroots governance organisations. In the current process, the municipal government is the organisation responsible for formulating plans, while the district government is the organisation responsible for implementing plans. Researchers suggest that the municipal government should be adjusted to become the reviewer and framework formulator for the implementation of national development goals. In contrast, the district government should be transformed into a detailed plan formulator for community renewal. The specific operational process is as follows: the CPMSC conducts resident surveys on the municipal government's new programme and reports to the district government.

After summarising the results, the district government proposes specific amendments to the new programme based on the conditions of its jurisdiction. The municipal government then reviews whether the national development goals have been achieved. The research programme can refer to the research process in this thesis, and guidance manuals similar to this guide can be provided to different types of communities for the district government to summarise. The plans proposed through this process meet the actual needs and site restrictions of each community. From an organisational perspective, this can reduce obstacles to the implementation of community renewal plans by district governments. From a follow-up management perspective, it can reduce the management burden on CPMSC in the daily operations, allowing the staff of CPMSC to spend more time on improving services for the elderly. From the perspective of the elderly's participation, their opinions serve as an important basis for compiling age-friendly environment renewal plans and constitute the practical participation of the elderly in community development. As mentioned in Chapter 5, CPMSC led the organisation of the meeting where participants share their views are currently limited to providing feedback on proposed plans without any decision-making authority over community renewal initiatives. Therefore, the author suggests that future Chinese policies for the development of age-friendly

urban communities should focus on the formulation of personalised government work plans that respect the specialty of different communities rather than pursuing uniform, rapid development.

6.5 Summary

This chapter outlines the co-design process for developing the preliminary design guideline for age-friendly environments in post-Danwei communities. A structured workshop engaged academic experts, policymakers, private senior services company leaders, and community administrators, facilitating a multi-stakeholder discussion to ensure that the proposed design guideline aligns with local governance policies and site-specific conditions. The workshop revealed two primary perspectives. The Yellow Team, composed of government representatives and service providers, prioritised practical implementation, emphasising government-led funding, service integration, and detailed operational mechanisms. In contrast, the Blue Team, consisting of academic professionals and community planners, focused on long-term strategic development, advocating for multi-stakeholder governance, technology integration, and participatory community models. In Section 6.2, based on the design guideline framework derived from the workshop discussions, this thesis integrates relevant literature and official documents on age-friendly community development. The final output of this research, namely, the design guideline for enhancing age-friendly environments in post-Danwei high-density communities, serves as a reference for guiding the continued transformation of former state-owned factory communities. It provides practical recommendations for advancing age-friendly environments and fostering the development of high-quality age-friendly communities in the post-Danwei era. Subsequently, a validation workshop was held, inviting potential beneficiaries of the guideline to evaluate their feasibility based on their work experience. The participants then approved the guideline. Finally, based on their own experience in conducting this project, the author put forward recommendations for the direction of the Chinese government's age-friendly environment renewal policy in the next phase. The author believes that in the next phase of environmental improvement, attention should be paid to the special characteristics of communities rather than continuing with rapid, uniform upgrading. It requires the municipal government to improve the implementation process of age-friendly environment upgrading projects and focus on cooperation with grassroots governments to ensure the applicability of upgrading plans and the participation of the elderly.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

7.1 Overview

This thesis aims to explore ways to enhance the age-friendliness of outdoor public spaces in post-courtyard communities in China, with a focus on the Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory community. As China transitions from a courtyard-based urban governance model to a community-based system, former factory-affiliated residential communities are facing unique challenges. These challenges include high residential density, an ageing population, and a disconnect between top-down ageing policies and local implementation realities. Despite government efforts, current uniform age-friendly upgrading programmes often fail to address the complexities of these communities.

To address these challenges, the author sets out three research aims in Chapter One.

1: Understand the context of Chinese planning policy and the major arguments within the literature on age-friendly communities in the post-Danwei context.

In chapters 1 and 2, the author used policy review and literature review to understand the context of the post-Danwei community. As well as the process of building an age-friendly environment with the post-Danwei community.

2: Explore the elderly's perception of the post-Danwei community and their living experience, using Zhengzhou No.3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory as a case study.

In Chapter 4, the author conducts a historical analysis of community evolution through archival research and interviews with former managers and residents. Then, in Chapter 5, the author collected data for AIP at the post-Danwei community. Exploring the daily living experiences of the elderly through walking interviews and focus group discussions on gathering the ageing in post-Danwei community upgrading suggestions from the elderly.

3: Propose solutions for improving the age-friendly environment in the post-Danwei community.

In Chapter 6, the process of creating a guideline is presented as the outcome of the thesis: co-design workshops with experts and community representatives to develop targeted renovation guidelines.

The outcomes of each phase collectively construct a cumulative understanding

of how spatial and governance improvements can support AIP within the context of the post-Danwei community. The author finished the three aims and described the process in Chapters 2 to 6.

7.2 Findings

7.2.1 Project-related Academic Research Progress

This thesis reviews the literature related to the research question. It highlights the lack of systematic research on the construction of age-friendly communities in China, particularly in ‘post-Danwei communities.’ The lingering influence of the Danwei System has made the issue of outdoor space adaptability in such communities even more complex. Under the current urban planning system, the development of age-friendly environments requires a deep understanding of the impact of the Danwei System, the improvement of design theories, and the proposal of systematic solutions. That is of great significance for improving the quality of urban space in an ageing society and promoting the modernisation of community governance.

7.2.2 Methodology for Research on Improving Age-Friendly

Environments in Chinese Communities

The thesis, based on an interpretive paradigm and case study method, identifies key challenges in creating age-friendly environments in post-Danwei communities, including institutional, spatial, and service-related issues. Through interviews and focus groups with the elderly, it reveals their lived experiences and needs. Thematic analysis highlights both environmental shortcomings and community aspirations. The next step involves integrating the aforementioned themes with a review of current community development policies, discussing the outcomes and challenges encountered during policy implementation in the post-Danwei community. This process leads to identifying key points for developing an age-friendly community environment, which is the next step in formulating guidelines. A co-design workshop, as a final stage, with stakeholders, yields targeted guidelines to enhance age-friendly renewal efforts in these communities.

7.2.3 Case Study of the Historical Development of Danwei

Communities: The Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile

Factory Community

This phase clarified the institutional, spatial, and social structure of the community during three key periods of the Danwei system: establishment(1953–1957), peak operation(1958–1977), and transition(1978–2006). The findings reveal that the community was initially built to serve rapid industrial production, guided by Soviet urban planning models. It lacked human-scale planning, prioritising efficiency and control. While fostering a strong collectivist culture and neighbourhood cohesion, the model also embedded long-term spatial constraints and social hierarchies that persist today.

7.2.4 Ageing in Post-Danwei Community Experience

The findings of Chapter 5 reveal that ageing experiences in post-Danwei communities are shaped by a complex interplay between inherited social structures from the Danwei period, high-density built environments, fragmented governance mechanisms, and limited financial resources. Through thematic analysis of both walking interviews and focus groups, multiple interconnected challenges and opportunities have emerged.

Firstly, dynamic management mechanisms represent both strengths and limitations of the current community governance. The grid-based management system adopted by CPMSC facilitates a timely response to residents' needs and allows flexibility in service delivery. However, the elderly remain largely excluded from meaningful participation in decision-making processes related to environmental upgrades and resource allocation. While participants expressed trust in the responsiveness of front-line community staff, they also voiced frustration over limited involvement in shaping public space arrangements that directly impact their daily lives.

Secondly, financial constraints create significant barriers to achieving comprehensive support for ageing. Despite policy commitments to AIP and fundamental welfare guarantees, limited government funding has resulted in the incomplete implementation of community facilities and services. The elderly experience continuous financial pressures related to the rising cost of living, limited retirement income, and insufficient affordability of specialised care options. Public spaces often serve as extensions of private living areas due to limited indoor space, further intensifying conflicts over public space usage.

Thirdly, group creativity and social cohesion, which are deeply rooted in historical

Danwei social networks, continue to serve as important adaptive strategies for the elderly. Community-based mutual support networks, long-standing personal relationships, and collective recreational activities provide moral and practical support for ageing residents. However, these closed, homogeneous social groups also contribute to social exclusion and limited interaction across generations or with newer community members.

Fourthly, spatial allocation conflicts remain a core challenge in high-density environments. The limited availability of public spaces, competing demands among different age groups, and restricted opportunities for housing adaptations create tensions in daily life. While the elderly generally demonstrate tolerance for spatial compromises, the long-term lack of tailored public spaces for safe and differentiated socialisation has constrained their overall well-being.

The focus group discussions further highlight four additional dimensions critical for community enhancement:

Differentiation emphasises the need for age-friendly design to reflect the diverse preferences, social habits, and physical needs of different sub-groups of the elderly. Current uniform facility planning fails to address the heterogeneity of the ageing population.

Multipurpose reflects the need for flexible, layered use of limited public space resources. In particular, walking routes, streets, and micro public spaces serve overlapping roles as social venues, transportation corridors, and informal living extensions.

Multi-view Support underscores that adequate ageing support requires simultaneous attention to financial affordability, barrier-free environmental upgrades, diversified institutional care options, food security, household service provision, and transportation accessibility.

Drive Forward as a Whole identifies institutional limitations in fragmented administrative processes, delayed funding allocation, inconsistent maintenance services, and low participation of the elderly in governance. Holistic, cross-departmental coordination and empowerment of grassroots organisations are necessary to advance age-friendly community goals.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that while national policies provide a broad framework for community ageing support, implementation at the post-Danwei community level faces multiple practical constraints. Particularly the needs of the elderly residents. Those capable of independent living but requiring differentiated community support, which remains under-addressed in current work plans. Closing the gap between standardised policy frameworks and

community-specific realities requires more inclusive governance mechanisms, flexible planning models, and context-sensitive design approaches that balance top-down mandates with grassroots expertise and lived experience.

7.2.5 Co-design the Upgrading Guideline of Age-Friendly

Environment in the Post-Danwei Community

Building upon the prior qualitative investigations—including walking interviews, focus groups, and policy analysis. The last part of the data collection step adopted a co-design approach to develop age-friendly environment upgrading guidelines tailored for post-Danwei communities collaboratively. The co-design process utilised a structured board game, integrating national regulatory frameworks, local policy contexts, empirical research findings, and the lived experiences of the elderly into a participatory design tool.

Two teams at a co-design workshop were organised to formulate and refine the guidelines. The first workshop brought together academic experts, government standard-setters, senior private care service providers, and community administrators in small-group board game sessions. Participants were divided into two teams, including the Yellow Team and the Blue Team, each contributing complementary perspectives and priorities to the guideline development process.

The Yellow Team emphasised pragmatic physical interventions to address spatial constraints and ageing challenges in high-density environments. Their proposals focused on(1) optimising the functionality of outdoor facilities to maximise space utilisation,(2) restructuring the community care service workforce towards more sustainable, non-profit-oriented models to reduce financial dependency on government funding, and(3) systematically integrating assistive technologies both for the elderly and for the management of public street spaces.

In contrast, the Blue Team, composed of CPMSC staff and academic professionals, prioritised governance reform and systemic capacity building. Their proposals included(1) establishing robust cross-departmental community resource allocation mechanisms to enhance efficiency and reduce resource wastage,(2) diversifying financial models by introducing multi-source investment mechanisms, including private and commercial capital, to accelerate development while ensuring long-term financial sustainability, and(3) addressing intergenerational conflicts by promoting cross-age social integration, discouraging the isolation tendencies inherited from the Danwei system, and fostering inclusive community participation for the elderly.

Moreover, the Blue Team developed detailed environmental and spatial design recommendations emphasising decentralised spatial layouts, improved green

ecological environments, upgraded public safety infrastructures, and enriched cultural and social programming to enhance the elderly's sense of belonging and psychological well-being. The approach strongly advocated for multi-stakeholder participation, proposing collaborative governance frameworks that integrate government agencies, community organisations, private enterprises, and resident representatives into shared decision-making processes.

The design guidelines ultimately produced through this co-design process were grounded in three core principles:(1) alignment with national policy frameworks and regulatory mandates,(2) prioritisation of the elderly's needs and behavioural patterns within the unique cultural context of post-Danwei communities, and(3) cost-minimisation strategies to ensure practical feasibility and fiscal sustainability across both construction and long-term management phases.

Significantly, the final guidelines shifted the focus from macro-level policy objectives toward micro-level scene-based design strategies. By centring on the everyday temporal living space of the elderly, the guidelines bridge the persistent gap between high-level planning frameworks and the complex realities of post-Danwei communities. This context-sensitive, participatory design approach provides a replicable methodological contribution for future age-friendly community development in other high-density, historically embedded urban communities across China.

7.3 Contributions

7.3.1 Research Process for the Development Plan of an Age-Friendly Community

This project provides a replicable three-stage methodological framework for developing age-friendly community improvement programmes in different regions of China. It enables the formulation of age-friendly community upgrade programmes tailored to local needs based on unified national guidelines:

Identify the causes of the current situation in the community based on its historical development and predict future development directions: To analyse the evolution of China's planning direction in the community. It offers a policy-sensitive perspective on understanding the challenges of AIP within the current community.

To explore the current living conditions of AIP in the post-Danwei community: Walking interviews were conducted to investigate the daily lived experiences and spatial perceptions of the elderly. Focus group discussions were used to gather

suggestions from the elderly for community improvement. The insights gained were coded by theme to extract potential characteristics and requirements for community improvement design.

Based on the results of the community fieldwork, collaborate with relevant experts for co-design: Through co-design workshops, qualitative research findings are transformed into actionable design guidelines. This step integrates residents' knowledge with planning professionals' expertise, ensuring that improvement proposals are grounded in empirical research while considering spatial feasibility.

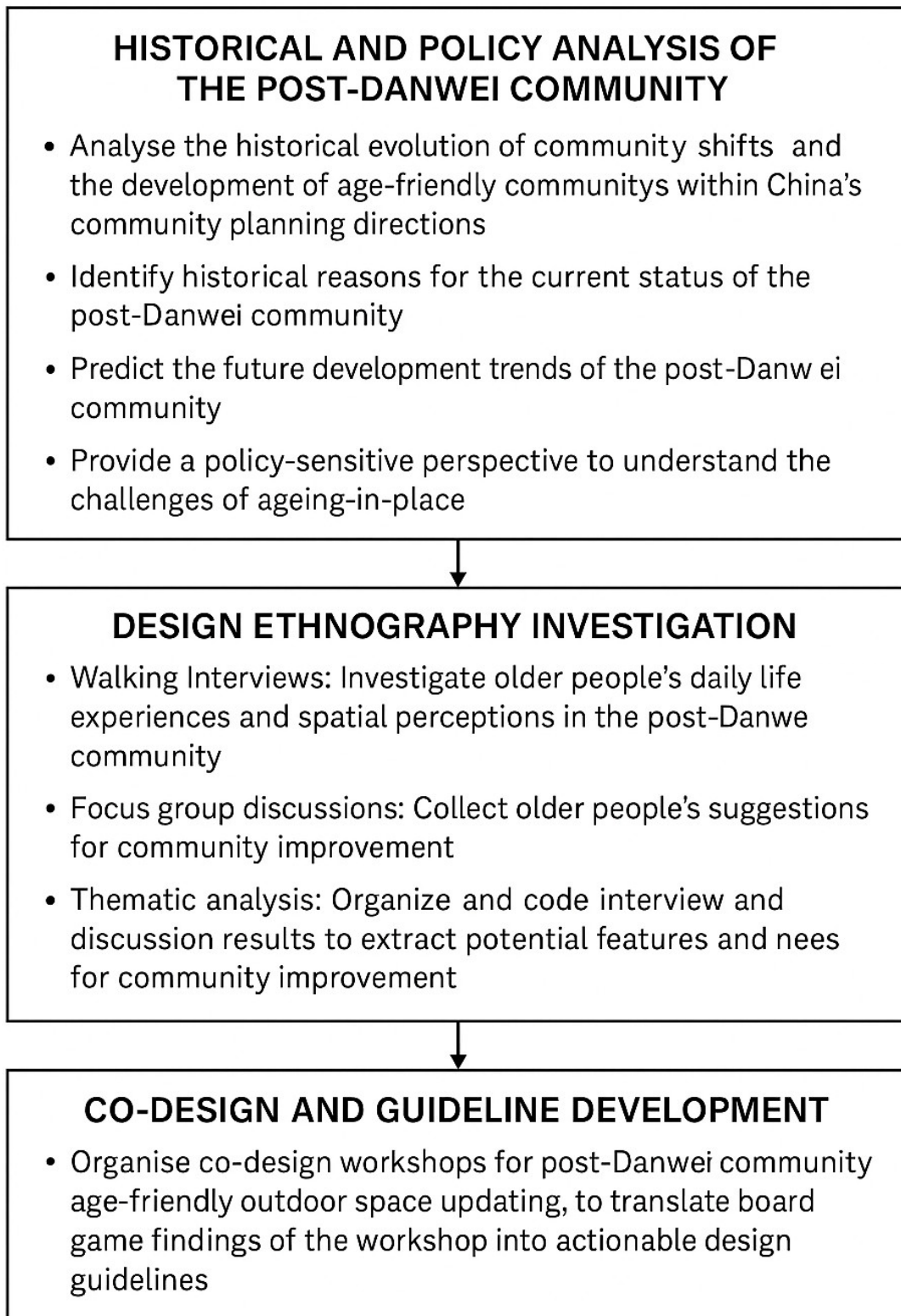


Figure 7-1. Research Process(from the author)

Beyond the design guidelines themselves, this research further develops a policy recommendation framework that addresses systemic constraints in China's

existing community renewal mechanisms. Currently, China's top-down, standardised policy model enables rapid completion of large-scale, age-friendly infrastructure upgrades but often fails to accommodate diverse local contexts such as post-Danwei communities. The rigid uniformity of centrally issued policies limits the flexibility of district governments in tailoring renewal strategies to site-specific constraints, leading to the observed gaps between policy objectives and ground-level realities.

The thesis suggests reconfiguring the policy implementation hierarchy to introduce greater flexibility and encourage bottom-up participation. Specifically, while municipal governments should continue to serve as the reviewers and framework designers aligned with national development goals, district governments should be empowered to formulate detailed community renewal plans through direct consultation with local communities. CPMSC organisations, as grassroots governance intermediaries, should play a more active role in collecting resident feedback, conducting participatory evaluations, and conveying practical recommendations to district-level authorities. Through this model, personalised community upgrading plans can better reflect the spatial limitations, demographic structures, and cultural particularities of individual post-Danwei communities.

Such a reform would not only reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies but also enhance resident participation, empower local decision-making, and ultimately produce more effective and sustainable outcomes in building age-friendly communities. In this context, the research process and participatory co-design method developed in this thesis may serve as a replicable methodological reference for future policy formulation and guideline development across other ageing Chinese communities.

7.3.2 The Board Game for Co-design of the Guidelines for Upgrading the Age-Friendly Environment in Communities

The second contribution to knowledge is the development of a structured board game as an innovative co-design tool to facilitate stakeholder engagement in formulating guidelines for upgrading age-friendly environments in post-Danwei communities. Recognising the complexity of balancing multiple stakeholder interests in community renewal processes, particularly within China's highly centralised governance framework, this board game transforms the collaborative planning process into a structured, participatory, serious game format. The board game integrates China's multi-level regulatory frameworks, including national planning standards, age-friendly evaluation criteria, and local management regulations, into the design of the game structure and card system. Through the

staged workshop process, the game enables practitioners from different backgrounds (community managers, academics, senior care service providers, and policy developers) to systematically deliberate on age-friendly design options while ensuring compliance with existing legal and administrative constraints. The inclusion of process cards, function cards, character cards, reminder cards, and addible cards not only guides participants through structured discussions but also mitigates power imbalances among participants of different social or professional hierarchies, particularly addressing cultural sensitivities in communication within the Chinese context. That gamified approach creates an inclusive platform for knowledge co-production, allowing participants to iteratively evaluate proposals in terms of feasibility, resource availability, and alignment with community-specific characteristics. The board game format is designed to be highly adaptable and a low-cost tool to implement, enabling its replication, promotion, and application in other post-Danwei communities or similar high-density urban neighbourhoods facing ageing population challenges. As such, the thesis provides both a methodological innovation for co-design practices in urban planning and a practical tool that serves to support the development of more tailored, context-sensitive, and age-friendly community environments.

7.3.3 The Age-Friendly Environment Upgrading Guideline of Post-Danwei Community

This section outlines the programme for implementing the above final version of the guidelines, including the required participants and the duration. The yellow sections in the table represent provisions related to design, while the white sections represent provisions related to management and operations.

7.3.3.1 The Brief of the Guideline

The content of this guide is targeted at a specific community within China, the post-Danwei community's outdoor space upgrade design for age-friendly and supportive community comprehensive management actions for AIP. Due to the fact that the urban community governance in China is strictly led by top-down policies, the operation plan for an age-friendly environment at the community level is researched, formulated and implemented at the municipal level. The special background of the post-Danwei community and the huge differences in actual conditions compared to other Chinese cities make it necessary to adopt differentiated design ideas and implementation methods in implementing the goals of the government's age-friendly community construction. However, the existing action documents do not provide more specific suggestions and methods for the environment of this special background community. Therefore, to fill the gap in the implementation suggestions for post-Danwei communities in the

overall community update and outdoor spaces upgrade plan assessment and related policies.

This guide is constructed based on the official action documents and a series of national standards of the government's age-friendly community construction and governance. Through a series of data collection and analysis, it provides more specific design and management suggestions at the community level for various community updates, senior support action documents and standards of the country. The potential users of this guide include decision-makers of the post-Danwei community environment upgrade projects, daily managers of the post-Danwei communities and landscape designers. Decision-makers of the post-Danwei community revitalisation projects can refer to this guide when evaluating the content of the revitalisation proposals to carefully assess the feasibility and applicability of the projects. Daily managers of the post-Danwei communities, such as Community Party and Mass Service Centres, property management companies and Neighbourhood Committees, can refer to the governance suggestions in the guidelines when managing and operating the community. Additionally, landscape designers can also read these guidelines before designing the project to provide theoretical support for the design proposals of the post-Danwei community revitalisation projects.

7.3.3.2 The Guideline for Enhancing Age-Friendly Environments in High-Density Communities in China's Post-Danwei Era

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Daily Shopping	Short Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / CPMSC	CPMSC, Residents	Outdoor stalls, supermarkets, and convenience stores need accessible pathways, brief resting seats, and safe transaction areas.
Medical Care	Short Term Project	District Health Commission / CPMSC	CPMSC, The Local Hospitals	Walking routes to hospitals and clinics and outdoor waiting areas for consultations or rest require accessibility, comfort, and safety.
Grandchild Pickup And Drop-Off	Short Term Project	District Education Bureau / CPMSC	CPMSC, The Local Schools	Routes should be short and direct to ensure safe and smooth passage for grandparents picking up grandchildren.
Medical Care Accessibility	Short Term Project	District Health Commission / CPMSC	The Local Hospitals, The Community Clinics, CPMSC	Improve accessibility of medical service routes and waiting areas for the elderly, focusing on comfort, safety, and barrier-free access.
Outdoor Waiting Areas for Medical Consultations	Short Term Project	District Health Commission / CPMSC	CPMSC, The Local Hospitals	Provide covered waiting areas, rest seating, and safe walking routes adjacent to medical facilities.
Accessibility Of School Waiting Zones	Short Term Project	District Education Bureau / CPMSC	CPMSC, The Local Schools	Establish spacious, ventilated waiting areas near schools; marked zones guide older caregivers to student pick-up areas.
Node-Based Interaction Spaces	Short Term Project	CPMSC	The elderly Groups, Neighbourhood Committee, Neighbourhood Committees	Semi-enclosed informal gathering areas near residential entrances allow spontaneous daily interaction among the elderly.
Linear Social Spaces	Short Term	CPMSC / The	Landscape Architects,	Internal residential roads, municipal roads,

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
	Project	Subdistrict Office	Property Management, Residents	and pedestrian pathways serve both circulation and spontaneous social encounters.
Green Space Social Areas	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / The Subdistrict Office / Property Management Company	Landscape Architects, Neighbourhood Committee, Neighbourhood Committees, Residents	Design small green spaces with benches, pathways, fresh air, and scenic environments for the elderly's leisure and interaction.
Designating Specialised Personnel for The elderly Affairs within Community Workers	Short Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Government Officials	Create dedicated positions for the elderly's affairs to enhance service quality and coordination.
Safety Inspections for Utilities	Short Term Project	CPMSC / District Housing and Construction Authority	Property Management Company, Residents	Regular inspections of water, electricity, and gas systems to reduce accident risks for the elderly living alone or with disabilities.
Establishment of Special Funds & Monitoring Systems	Short Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Monitoring Teams, Financial Authorities	Allocate dedicated funds and implement real-time monitoring for the safety of the elderly living alone.
Community Information Notification and Feedback Mechanism	Short Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Community Management Institutions, Residents	Ensure timely information dissemination and establish feedback channels, integrating both modern technology and traditional methods.
Utilising Familiar	Short Term	CPMSC / Subdistrict	Healthcare Workers,	Use familiar community networks and

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Social Networks for Information Dissemination	Project	Office	Community Leaders	healthcare workers to explain complex policies and assist the elderly in accessing services.
Implementing an Emergency Call System	Short Term Project	Fire Department / CPMSC	Alarm System Providers, Security Personnel	Install smart alarms and surveillance to reduce fire hazards and accidental damage.
Smart Home Care Facilities	Short and Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Office Private Service Companies, Electric Equipment Providers	Install emergency call devices, remote monitoring systems, and intelligent care systems to enhance safety and self-care capabilities for the elderly.
Barrier-Free Adaptation Of Public Facilities	Short and Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / District Civil Affairs Bureau	Construction Firms, CPMSC	Design ramps, stairways, elevators, and handrails that prioritise age-friendly design and cost-effective procurement.
Health Management Services Provided by Primary Healthcare Institutions	Short and Medium Term Project	District Health Commission / CPMSC	Primary Healthcare Institutions, Volunteers	Provide routine health check-ups, promote disease prevention, and integrate health management with community volunteer networks to improve the well-being of the elderly.
Establishing a Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Response Network	Short and Medium Term Project	Fire Department / Neighbourhood Committee Neighbourhood Committees	Security Teams, Emergency Volunteers	Develop a comprehensive fire prevention and emergency response system for high-density residential areas.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
The Street(Public Gathering Spaces)	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Landscape Architects, Community Designers, Residents	Utilise fragmented spaces to create small green areas and activity zones that cater to the elderly's recreational needs while ensuring barrier-free accessibility.
Differentiating Space Types(Public Gathering Spaces)	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Landscape Architects, Community Designers, Residents	Design varied activity spaces based on community characteristics, such as tranquil gardens and fitness areas, to diversify community life and encourage multigenerational participation.
Fitness Activity Spaces	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	CPMSC, Fitness Equipment Suppliers, The elderly	Equip areas with age-friendly fitness facilities(eg, Tai Chi spinners, waist-back massagers) to combine exercise and social interaction.
Multipurpose Activity Spaces	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	CPMSC, Community Service Providers, The elderly	Flexible indoor spaces for cultural activities, lectures, performances, hobby sessions, and self-organised group activities.
Intergenerational Spaces	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Education Bureau	CPMSC, Residents	Install children's playground equipment near the elderly's gathering areas to support grandparental supervision during leisure time.
Mobile Stalls	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Commerce Bureau	Property Management Company, Stall Owners	Apply non-slip flooring materials; minimum passage width of 1.5m to accommodate wheelchairs and shopping carts; stall height 0.78-0.85m for the elderly's easy access; seating for rest during shopping; ensure adequate pedestrian space.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
The Retail Stores	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Commerce Bureau	Property Management Company, CPMSC, Store Owners	Ensure wheelchair and mobility aid accessibility at both entrances and exits, providing barrier-free circulation.
Age-Friendly Home Renovations	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / CPMSC	Renovation Contractors, Financial Support Agencies	Optimise spatial layouts, install handrails, non-slip flooring, adaptive kitchen appliances, and accessible bathrooms with government policy support.
Renovating Residential Buildings & Facility Maintenance	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / CPMSC	Property Management Company	Upgrade interior structures and equipment to ensure building integrity and safety for long-term living.
Enhancing Ecological Environment	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office / Property Management Company	Landscape Architects, Neighbourhood Committee, Neighbourhood Committees, Residents	Well-planned green spaces improve air quality and provide recreational and social spaces for the elderly.
Designing Small And Micro Green Spaces	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office / Property Management Company	Landscape Architects, Neighbourhood Committee, Neighbourhood Committees, Residents	Maximise environmental benefits within limited public space by developing compact green spaces.
Integrating Community Greening With Cultural Elements	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office / Property Management Company	Planners, Designers, Landscape Architects, Residents	Incorporate cultural identity into green spaces to strengthen the belonging and social participation of the elderly.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Community Roadway And Facility Signage System	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / CPMSC	Wayfinding Designers, CPMSC	Customise wayfinding systems with clear text size, colour contrast, and cultural symbols for readability and community identity.
Principles for Street Design Improvements	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority	Property Management Company, CPMSC, The elderly	Prioritise safety and fluidity of pedestrian movement while preserving the street's role as residential life extension and social interaction space.
Safe, Accessible, and Highly Connected Pedestrian Pathways	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority	Construction Authority Property Management Company, CPMSC, The elderly	Assign pathways for both social interaction and transit; apply low-noise pavement materials to improve walking comfort.
Emphasising Streets as Linear Social Spaces	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority	Property Management Company, CPMSC, The elderly	Integrate multifunctional facilities into sidewalks to encourage spontaneous greetings and informal social interaction.
Separation of Pedestrians and Vehicles	Medium Term Project	With District Housing and Construction Authority	Property Management Company, CPMSC, The elderly	Zone streets into distinct pedestrian, bicycle, and electric vehicle lanes with clear markings, colour codes, and green buffers.
Age-Friendly Public Transportation Adaptation	Medium Term Project	Transportation Bureau / District Housing and Construction Authority	CPMSC, Public Transit Providers	Upgrade public transport with low-floor buses, more seating, and highly visible signage to improve accessibility for the elderly.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Optimisation of the Transportation Network	Medium Term Project	Transportation Bureau / District Housing and Construction Authority	CPMSC, Transport Providers	Adjust distances to transit stops and provide rest areas and shelters to suit the elderly's walking speeds.
Safety Measures in Pedestrian Spaces	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority	Property Management Company, CPMSC	Preserve rest areas along streets while installing protective barriers to ensure pedestrian safety.
Aesthetic Enhancements	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office / Landscape Designers	Landscape Architects, Property Management Company	Install small-scale landscape features, trash bins, flower beds, and sculptures to create enjoyable pedestrian environments.
Supporting Community-Embedded Integrated Medical And Care Institutions	Medium Term Project	Health Department / The Community Clinic	Medical And Care Institutions, CPMSC	Coordinate medical and caregiving services to reduce long-term hospitalisation and improve quality of life.
Senior Care Institutions Providing Daily Assistance and Meal Support Services	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Care Institutions, Social Resource Agencies	Offer essential daily care, mobility support, and integrate social resources to ensure sustainable development and service quality.
Renovating Housing Facilities to Adapt to Older Senior Care Needs	Medium Term Project	District Housing and Construction Authority / CPMSC	Renovation Contractors, Financial Support Agencies	Modify community housing to meet care demands, reducing infrastructure investment costs and improving accessibility.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Multifunctional Care Centres and Rehabilitation Assistive Devices	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Rehabilitation Centres, Assistive Device Providers	Provide rehabilitation, recreation, and professional guidance to support the elderly's independence and proper device use.
Optimisation of Social Resource Investment	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Social Resource Agencies, Volunteer	Expand volunteer groups to address workforce shortages and promote community integration.
Visits and Support for The elderly with Special Needs	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Cross-Departmental Collaboration Teams	Conduct regular home visits to ensure the safety and well-being of vulnerable elderly.
The Centralised Layout Of Convenience Facilities	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	Community Planners, Property Management	Place essential amenities in community centres or areas with convenient transportation to ensure easy access for older residents.
Facility Management and Donation Mechanisms	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	CPMSC, Neighbourhood Committee, Residents	Implement community-led donation and management systems to supplement maintenance costs and encourage resource sharing.
Development of Volunteer Groups and Student Participation	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Schools, Volunteer	Encourage student participation in volunteer services to strengthen support networks and reduce social isolation.
Mobility Assistance Devices and Home Medical Support	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	Assistive Device Providers, Healthcare Services	Introduce mobile lifting equipment and home healthcare services to ease caregiver burden.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Legal Service Offices and Information Communication Channels	Medium Term Project	District Justice Bureau / CPMSC	Community Clinic, Volunteers	Establish public legal service offices and information bridges to assist the elderly in accessing services.
Establishing The elderly's Social Organisations Such as Senior Associations	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	The elderly	Form community-led leadership groups that organise volunteer activities and provide peer support.
Implementing Community-Based "Silver Age Initiatives"	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	Community Activity Organisers, The elderly	Organise diverse public activities that enhance social connections and psychological well-being of the elderly.
Encouraging Spontaneous Activities and Recreational Engagement	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	The elderly Groups, Volunteers	Support the elderly's cultural and recreational self-organisation to strengthen self-fulfilment and community participation.
Establishing Lifelong Learning Centres and Organising Diverse Educational Activities	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Education Bureau	Volunteer Service Organisations, The elderly	Provide education programmes to improve cognitive abilities, social skills, and adaptability to changing environments.
Encouraging Volunteer Service Models such as Home- and Community-Based Senior Care	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	Volunteers, Senior Care Institutions	Expand volunteer-based care services to improve the well-being and adaptability of the elderly.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Forming Neighbourhood Mutual Aid Groups and Volunteer Teams	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	Mutual Aid Teams, Community Members	Establish mutual aid networks to complement formal caregiving systems while fostering emotional support and interaction.
Enhancing Fire Safety Facilities in High-Density Residential Areas	Medium Term Project	Fire Department / CPMSC	Equipment Suppliers, Property Management	Increase fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems, and fire doors to strengthen fire safety measures.
Installing Independent Fire Detectors and Upgrading Fire Prevention Systems	Medium Term Project	Fire Department / CPMSC	Fire Detection System Providers	Apply modern fire detection systems to significantly reduce fire incidents and improve response capabilities.
Renovating and Maintaining Fire Safety Infrastructure	Medium Term Project	Fire Department / CPMSC	Renovation Contractors, Property Management Company	Upgrade outdated fire safety equipment and replace ageing building materials to meet modern safety standards.
Ensuring Emergency Evacuation Safety	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / Subdistrict Office	CPMSC, Property Management Company	Maintain open spaces in high-footfall areas, such as community entrances and markets, to serve as emergency evacuation points.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Waste Sorting Education and Recycling Initiatives	Medium Term Project	District Ecological Environment Sub-Bureau / CPMSC	Residents, Third-Party Supervise Organisations	Educate residents on waste classification; establish recycling programmes to subsidise community activities.
Resource Coordination and Management System	Medium Term Project	District Ecological Environment Sub-Bureau / CPMSC	Resource Management Teams	Establish coordination mechanisms to optimise waste sorting, recycling processes, and sustainability.
Third-Party Supervision and Strengthening Property Management Responsibilities	Medium Term Project	District Ecological Environment Sub-Bureau / CPMSC	Property Management Company, Supervisors	Assign greater responsibilities to property managers and introduce third-party oversight to maintain environmental sanitation.
Utilising Smart Health and Care Information Platforms for Real-Time Service Matching	Medium Term Project	District Health Commission / CPMSC	IT Service Providers, Online Medical Care Agencies	Integrate real-time data, health management, cloud communication, and service coordination to improve care delivery.
Training for Using Electric-related Things	Medium Term Project	CPMSC / District Civil Affairs Bureau	The Training Class Provider, Volunteers	Offer systematic training for the elderly to overcome technology barriers and adopt smart devices for independent living.
Increasing Financial Investment in Senior Care Facilities	Medium Term Project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Financial Institutions, Private Investors	Expand infrastructure and service capacity through innovative financing such as the Public-Private Partnership project and community funds.

Section	Time	Leading Departments	Participants	Operation Principle
Deploying Professional Social Workers to Serve The elderly	Medium and long-term project	District Civil Affairs Bureau	Private Sector, Care Service Companies	Employ qualified caregivers and promote private-public partnerships to address diverse care needs.
Establishing a Long-Term Mechanism for Age-Friendly Community Development	Long Term project	District Civil Affairs Bureau / CPMSC	Planners, Leaders of CPMSC and Neighbourhood Committee	Build policy frameworks encouraging participation, transparency, and continuous evaluation of community progress.

Table 7-1. The Thesis Outcome – Age-friendly Environment Upgrading Guideline for Post-Danwei Community(summarised from the author)

7.4 Implications of the Project

Government officials are the main beneficiaries of this research. The guidelines can be used directly to guide the improvement of age-friendly environments in post-Danwei communities. They can also refer to the methodology used in this research to explore models for developing age-friendly environments in other communities. Designers also have something to learn from this research. They can refer to characteristics of post-Danwei communities when designing an environmental renewal project for post-Danwei communities. Understanding these characteristics and context will assist designers in creating places that foster a sense of belonging for residents within the post-Danwei context, which will also reduce the amount of preliminary research they need to do.

7.5 Challenges and Limitations

The major limitation of this research is the unpredictability of participant recruitment, especially when recruiting experts. It is challenging to predict the exact number of professionals who will participate. Additionally, as an individual scholar conducting field research in China, the author had very limited opportunities to obtain assistance from relevant departments. Therefore, there were limitations in collecting written materials, as some community-related materials were stored in inaccessible departments. There may also be textual materials related to the content of Chapter 4 that the author was unable to obtain. However, the thesis is theoretically sound overall. Secondly, the inherent subjectivity of qualitative research means that the author's analysis is influenced by their Chinese background and perspectives on urban governance and citizens' rights. The analysis presented in this thesis differs significantly from analyses of neighbourhood development in European cities, that is, a distinction that requires examiners and readers to carefully consult the background information provided in the thesis. Finally, the challenge of this thesis is how to ensure that the research results have a tangible impact on the development and management of post-Danwei communities. Although the author may have influenced some participants from government and community management agencies through their participation in the data collection process, they may have begun to pay attention to the quality of life of the elderly in special communities, such as post-Danwei communities. However, it may not be easy to have a significant impact on actual actions. In the next step, the author will begin to consider how to promote the guidelines to help post-Danwei communities develop age-friendly environments.

Furthermore, due to the unique characteristics of the specific residential areas of state-owned factories under the "Danwei" system, and given the vast geographical scope of a country like China, the actual situation may vary. Therefore, unlike the specific outcomes obtained from the study of the "Danwei" system transformation in the communities, this research primarily values the transferability of its research

methods to other, similar research contexts. Thus, its results cannot be guaranteed to be fully transferable to other post-Danwei communities. The application in other post-Danwei communities requires the intervention of operators to make detailed adjustments based on the specific circumstances of the communities.

The last limitation is that the influence of CPMSC cannot be avoided in the participants' recruitment. In the recruitment methods for the focus groups and walk-in interviews mentioned in Chapter 3, posters were placed on the bulletin board of CPMSC. Since CPMSC holds dual centres of credibility and community management in the community, there is inevitably a potential possibility that some participants might inquire about the staff of CPMSC after seeing the posters, and then contact the author. During this process, whether the staff of CPMSC can have some influence on the participants' responses through a pre-chat with them is something the author cannot know and cannot avoid. However, the progress in the construction of the physical environment of the community and the improvement of resident service quality are undeniable in reality. Although the influence of CPMSC's rights cannot be avoided, the author believes that this does not mean that the participants' recognition of the improvement of the community environment is influenced by CPMSC's power.

7.6 Future Directions of This Topic

For the future of this research project, the development of an age-friendly environment requires the quantification and standardisation of age-friendly assessment systems for special communities such as post-Danwei communities. This will help bridge gaps in policy implementation across diverse geographic contexts and community types. Consequently, it will establish a more comprehensive policy framework and implementation approach for community management and development. Follow-up research could focus on analysing large-scale cross-sectional data and conducting residential satisfaction surveys. The results of this research could be used to construct an age-friendly index system for post-Danwei communities, thereby providing a more accurate assessment of policy-making and project implementation outcomes. Additionally, within China's top-down decision-making system, the question arises of how to promote the rights of the elderly in community decision-making. Future research should further propose more detailed practical guidance on enhancing the voice of the elderly in community participation. Finally, the author calls for future research to focus on the economically disadvantaged elderly populations in Chinese cities. Compared to the dependent elderly and disabled the elderly, the elderly appear to be in relatively better physical condition. Their physical frailty due to ageing is often easily ignored by policymakers and implementers. Unlike the elderly with rural household registrations in China who have farmland to obtain food, economically the vulnerable urban elderly rely solely on meagre pensions for their livelihood. Consequently, their economic vulnerability is often more severe than that of their rural counterparts. In terms of improving the quality of life. The urban economically disadvantaged elderly also exhibit greater dependence on public finances. However, as a developing nation, China's government fiscal capacity falls far short of that of developed countries in per capita welfare expenditure. Consequently, the pace and methods of ageing-friendly environment development differ significantly from those in

developed nations. It is hoped that more scholars will focus on this issue in the future, accelerating the improvement of living environments for the urban economically disadvantaged elderly in China.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Several Opinions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on Establishing a Territorial Space Planning System and Monitoring Its Implementation

No. 16 of 2019

Territorial spatial planning serves as the guiding framework for national spatial development and the spatial blueprint for sustainable development, forming the fundamental basis for all development, conservation and construction activities. The establishment of a national territorial spatial planning system and its implementation, integrating key functional zone planning, land use planning, urban and rural planning, and other spatial plans into a unified national territorial spatial plan to achieve "multiple plans in one", and strengthening the guiding and constraining role of national territorial spatial planning over various specialised plans, constitutes a major deployment by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council. To establish this system and oversee its implementation, the following opinions are hereby put forward.

I. Significant Importance

Spatial plans at all levels and of various types have played a positive role in supporting rapid urbanisation and promoting the rational use and effective protection of national territory. However, issues persist, including excessive planning types with overlapping and conflicting content, complex and protracted approval processes, and frequent changes to local plans. Establishing a nationally unified, scientifically efficient territorial spatial planning system with clearly defined responsibilities and authorities is crucial. This system will holistically plan the development and protection framework for territorial space in the new era, comprehensively considering factors such as population distribution, economic layout, land use, and ecological conservation. It will scientifically allocate production, living, and ecological spaces. This constitutes a key measure for accelerating the formation of green production and lifestyles, advancing ecological civilisation, and building a Beautiful China. It is an essential means of upholding a people-centred approach to achieve high-quality development and high-quality living, and a necessary requirement for ensuring the effective implementation of national strategies, promoting the modernisation of the national governance system and governance capacity, and realising the Two Centenary Goals and the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

High-quality living standards, and building a beautiful homeland. It is an essential requirement for ensuring the effective implementation of national strategies, advancing the modernisation of the national governance system and governance capacity, and realising the Two Centenary Goals and the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of

the Chinese nation.

II. General Requirements

(1) Guiding Principles. Guided by Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, we shall fully implement the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress and the second and third plenary sessions of the 19th CPC Central Committee. Centring on the coordinated advancement of the Five-Sphere Integrated Plan and the coordinated promotion of the Four-Pronged Comprehensive Strategy, we shall uphold the new development philosophy, adhere to a people-centred approach, proceed from actual conditions, and advance high-quality development. We shall refine the top-level design of territorial spatial planning, leverage its foundational role within the national planning system, and provide spatial safeguards for the implementation of national development plans. Improve the system for the development and protection of territorial space, enhancing its strategic nature, scientific rigour, authority, coordination, and operational feasibility. Achieve higher quality, greater efficiency, enhanced fairness, and increased sustainability in the development and protection of territorial space.

(2) Primary Objectives. By 2020, a fundamental territorial spatial planning system shall be established, with the gradual implementation of integrated planning systems encompassing: - Planning formulation and approval mechanisms - Implementation and oversight frameworks - Regulatory and policy structures - Technical standards systems The formulation of territorial spatial master plans at the municipal and county levels and above shall be substantially completed, forming an initial national "single map" for territorial spatial development and protection. By 2025, the legal, policy, and technical standards systems for territorial spatial planning shall be refined; a comprehensive territorial spatial monitoring, early warning, and performance assessment mechanism shall be fully implemented; and a territorial spatial development and protection system shall be established, underpinned by territorial spatial planning and utilising unified land use control as its primary instrument. By 2035, the modernisation of the territorial spatial governance system and governance capabilities shall be comprehensively enhanced, with a territorial spatial pattern taking shape that features intensive and efficient production spaces, liveable and appropriately scaled living spaces, and picturesque ecological spaces, all characterised by safety, harmony, competitiveness, and sustainability.

And governance capabilities, and a national territorial spatial pattern will be fundamentally established, featuring intensive and efficient production spaces, liveable and appropriately scaled living spaces, and ecologically pristine spaces, all characterised by safety, harmony, competitiveness and sustainability.

III. Overall Framework

(3) Establish territorial spatial planning through a tiered and categorised approach. Territorial spatial planning constitutes arrangements for the spatial and temporal development and protection of territorial space within a defined area, encompassing master plans, detailed plans, and relevant specialised plans. National, provincial, and municipal/county-level authorities shall formulate national territorial spatial master plans, while townships shall develop their own territorial spatial plans based on local conditions. Relevant specialised plans refer to specific arrangements for spatial development, protection, and

utilisation within designated areas (e.g., river basins) or sectors to fulfil particular functions, constituting specialised plans concerning spatial use. National territorial spatial master plans serve as the basis for detailed plans and the foundation for relevant specialised plans; relevant specialised plans must be mutually coordinated and properly integrated with detailed plans.

(iv) Clarifying the focal points for formulating national, provincial, and county-level territorial spatial master plans. The National Territorial Spatial Plan constitutes the overarching arrangement for the nation's territorial space, serving as the policy framework and guiding principle for its protection, development, utilisation, and restoration. Emphasising strategic considerations, it is formulated by the Ministry of Natural Resources in collaboration with relevant departments, and issued after approval by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council. Provincial territorial spatial plans implement the national territorial spatial plan and guide the formulation of municipal and county territorial spatial plans. Emphasising coordination, they are organised by provincial governments, reviewed by the standing committee of the people's congress at the same level, and submitted to the State Council for approval. Municipal, county, and township territorial spatial plans detail the implementation of higher-level territorial spatial planning requirements by local governments, providing specific arrangements for development and protection within their administrative regions. Emphasising implementation,

Urban territorial spatial master plans requiring State Council approval shall be organised by municipal governments for compilation, reviewed by the standing committee of the people's congress at the same level, and submitted by provincial governments to the State Council for approval. Provincial governments shall define the content and procedural requirements for the compilation and approval of other city, county, and township territorial spatial plans based on local circumstances. Localities may, according to their specific conditions, consolidate the compilation of city/county and township territorial spatial plans, or compile township-level territorial spatial plans for several townships as a unit.

(5) Strengthen the guiding and binding role of specialised plans. Specialised plans for coastal zones, nature reserves, and other areas, as well as territorial spatial plans spanning administrative regions or river basins, shall be organised and compiled by the competent natural resources authorities of the relevant region or the higher-level authority, and submitted for approval by the government at the same level. Specialised plans concerning spatial utilisation in specific sectors—such as infrastructure for transport, energy, water conservancy, agriculture, information technology, and municipal services; public service facilities; military installations; and plans for ecological and environmental protection, cultural heritage conservation, forestry, and grassland management—shall be organised and compiled by the relevant competent authorities. Relevant specialised plans may be formulated at national, provincial, or municipal/county levels. The type and level of detail for specialised plans at different levels and in different regions may be selected based on practical circumstances.

(6) Detailed planning shall be formulated at the city/county level and below. Detailed plans constitute operational arrangements specifying land use and development intensity for specific plots, serving as the statutory basis for conducting land and spatial development and conservation activities, implementing land use controls, issuing planning permits for urban and rural construction projects, and undertaking various construction works. Within urban development boundaries, detailed plans shall be formulated by

the city/county natural resources authorities and submitted to the corresponding level of government for approval. In rural areas outside urban development boundaries, practical village plans integrating multiple plans shall be formulated by township governments at the level of one or several administrative villages, serving as detailed plans to be submitted to the next higher level of government for approval.

as the unit, with township governments organising the compilation of integrated multi-plan practical village plans to serve as detailed plans, submitted to the higher-level government for approval.

IV. Preparation Requirements

(vii) Strategic Orientation. Fully implement major decisions and deployments of the Party Central Committee and the State Council, embodying the strategic nature of national will and development plans. Develop territorial spatial plans at all levels in a top-down manner, making strategic and systematic arrangements for spatial development. Implement national security strategies, regional coordinated development strategies, and main functional zone strategies. Clarify spatial development objectives, optimise urbanisation patterns, agricultural production patterns, and ecological protection patterns. Determine spatial development strategies, transform approaches to territorial spatial development and protection, and enhance the quality and efficiency of territorial spatial development and protection.

(8) Enhance scientific rigour. Uphold ecological priority and green development, respecting natural, economic, social, and urban-rural development laws while tailoring planning to local conditions; Adhere to the principle of prioritising conservation, protection, and natural restoration. Based on assessments of resource and environmental carrying capacity and the suitability of territorial space for development, scientifically and orderly coordinate the layout of functional spaces such as ecological, agricultural, and urban areas. Delineate spatial control boundaries including ecological protection red lines, permanently protected farmland, and urban development boundaries, as well as various marine protection lines. Strengthen bottom-line constraints to reserve space for sustainable development. Uphold the concept of the mountain-water-forest-field-lake-grassland community of life, strengthen ecological zoning management, act within water resource limits, protect ecological barriers, construct ecological corridors and networks, advance ecosystem conservation and restoration, and conduct environmental impact assessments in accordance with the law. Adhere to integrated land-sea planning, regional coordination, and urban-rural integration to optimise territorial spatial structure and layout. Coordinate the comprehensive utilisation of above-ground and underground space, focusing on improving infrastructure such as transport and water conservancy, public service facilities, and heritage preservation. Continue historical traditions, strengthen landscape control, and highlight regional characteristics. Adopt a top-down and bottom-up approach with social collaboration, improve public participation mechanisms, and leverage expertise from various fields. Employ urban design, rural development, big data,

And public service facilities, preserve historical and cultural continuity, strengthen landscape management, and highlight regional characteristics. We shall combine top-down and bottom-up approaches with social collaboration, improve public participation systems, and leverage the expertise of specialists across different fields. We shall employ urban design, rural development, big data and other means to refine planning methods and enhance the quality of planning formulation.

(9)Strengthen Coordination. Enhance the overarching role of national development plans and reinforce the foundational role of territorial spatial planning. Territorial spatial master plans shall coordinate and comprehensively balance spatial demands across all relevant specialised domains. Detailed plans shall be formulated and amended in accordance with approved territorial spatial master plans. Relevant specialised plans shall comply with territorial spatial master plans, must not contravene their mandatory provisions, and shall incorporate their principal elements into detailed plans.

(10)Emphasis on Operational Feasibility. Adhering to the principle that the entity responsible for formulating a plan shall be responsible for its implementation, clarify the key points for formulating and managing territorial spatial plans at all levels and of all types. Specify binding planning indicators and rigid control requirements, while also setting out guiding requirements. Develop policy measures for plan implementation, propose requirements for the breakdown and implementation of subordinate territorial spatial master plans and relevant specialised and detailed plans, and improve the plan implementation transmission mechanism to ensure plans are usable, effective, and practical.

V. Implementation and Oversight

(11)Strengthen planning authority. Once approved, no department or individual may arbitrarily amend or unlawfully alter plans, preventing the practice of revising plans with each change of Party committee and government leadership. Lower-level territorial spatial plans must comply with higher-level plans, while relevant specialised and detailed plans must align with master plans. Adhere to the principle of planning before implementation; no development or construction activities may contravene territorial spatial plans. Uphold the principle of "multiple plans, one coordination" and refrain from establishing additional spatial plans outside the territorial spatial planning system. Technical standards for relevant specialised plans should integrate with territorial spatial planning.

Integration principle, prohibiting the establishment of additional spatial plans outside the national territorial spatial planning system. Technical standards for relevant specialised plans shall be aligned with national territorial spatial plans. Where amendments are genuinely necessary due to major national strategic adjustments, significant project construction, or administrative boundary changes, prior approval from the planning approval authority must be obtained before proceeding with amendments through statutory procedures. Serious accountability shall be pursued for any violations of laws, regulations, or disciplinary rules during the formulation and implementation of national territorial spatial plans.

(12)Improve planning approval mechanisms. Establish a tiered system for reviewing and filing territorial spatial plans based on the principle that the approving authority shall also oversee implementation. Streamline approval content by focusing approvals on essential matters and substantially reducing processing times. The number of cities requiring State Council approval shall be reduced. The master territorial spatial plans

of municipalities directly under the central government, cities with independent planning status, provincial capitals, and cities designated by the State Council shall be approved by the State Council. During the preparation and review of relevant specialised plans, coordination with related territorial spatial plans and verification against the "single map" shall be strengthened. Upon approval, these plans shall be incorporated into the territorial spatial information platform at the corresponding administrative level and overlaid onto the territorial spatial planning "single map".

(13) Improve the land use control system. Implement categorised land use controls across all territorial spaces based on territorial spatial planning. Within urban development boundaries, adopt a "detailed planning + planning permission" control approach; outside these boundaries, implement either "detailed planning + planning permission" or "constraint indicators + zoning access" based on dominant land use zones. Special protection regimes shall apply to nature reserves centred on national parks, significant maritime areas and islands, key water sources, cultural relics, and similar sites. Land use control systems shall be tailored to local conditions, allowing scope for regional management and innovative practices.

(14)Overseeing Plan Implementation. Leveraging the national territorial space information platform, establish and improve mechanisms for dynamic monitoring, evaluation, early warning, and implementation supervision of territorial space planning. Higher-level natural resources authorities shall, in conjunction with relevant departments, organise inspections to verify the implementation of control requirements—including various control boundaries and binding indicators—in subordinate territorial space plans. The execution of territorial space planning shall be incorporated into natural resources law enforcement inspections. Improve the long-term mechanism for monitoring and early warning of resource and environmental carrying capacity. Establish a regular assessment system for territorial spatial planning. Based on the actual development of the national economy and society and the results of regular planning assessments, dynamically adjust and refine territorial spatial planning.

(15) Advance reforms in streamlining administration, delegating powers, and improving services. Building upon the integration of multiple planning frameworks, coordinate the three key phases of planning, construction, and management to promote the consolidation of multiple approvals and the unification of multiple certificates. Optimise existing approval processes for preliminary land (or sea) use reviews, planning site selection, construction land planning permits, and construction project planning permits for development projects, thereby enhancing approval efficiency and regulatory service standards.

VI. Legal, Policy and Technical Safeguards

(16)Refine the legal and policy framework. Research and formulate the Territorial Space Development and Protection Law, accelerating the development of relevant laws and regulations for territorial space planning. Review existing laws, regulations, and departmental rules pertaining to territorial space planning. For provisions requiring breaches of current legal frameworks under the "multiple-plans-into-one" reform, seek authorisation through established procedures before implementation, ensuring seamless legal continuity during the transition period. Develop supporting policies aligned with key functional zones to ensure effective implementation of territorial space planning.

(XVII)Refine the technical standards system. In accordance with the requirements for the integration of multiple planning systems, the Ministry of Natural Resources, in collaboration with relevant departments, shall be responsible for establishing a unified technical standards system for territorial spatial planning. Revise and improve the standards for surveys of the current status of natural resources and land use classification for territorial revise and refine standards for land resource status surveys and land use classification in territorial spatial planning. Develop methods and technical specifications for formulating territorial spatial plans at all levels and for all categories.

(18)Enhance the national territorial space information platform. Based on natural resources survey and monitoring data, utilising nationally unified surveying benchmarks and systems, integrate various spatially related datasets to establish a unified national territorial space information platform. Using the national spatial planning information platform as the foundation, and in conjunction with the formulation of spatial planning at all levels and categories, the construction of county-level and above spatial planning information platforms shall be completed simultaneously. This will ensure the precise implementation

of the main functional zone strategy and various spatial control elements, gradually forming a single national spatial planning map. It will also promote data sharing among government departments and information exchange between government and society.

VII. Work Requirements

(19) Strengthen organisational leadership. All regions and departments shall implement the requirements for territorial space development and protection outlined in the National Development Plan. The territorial space planning system shall play a strategic guiding and rigidly controlling role in territorial space development and protection, overseeing all types of spatial utilisation to ensure every inch of land is clearly planned. Adopt a bottom-line mindset, grounded in resource endowments and environmental carrying capacity, to expedite the establishment of ecological function safeguarding baselines, environmental quality safety thresholds, and natural resource utilisation ceilings. Strictly enforce plans with unwavering commitment, persisting over the long term to ensure consistent implementation of the blueprint. Party committees and governments at all levels must fully recognise the significance of establishing the national territorial spatial planning system. Principal leaders shall personally oversee the process, implementing the government's responsibility for organising the formulation and execution of national territorial spatial planning.

Spatial planning, clarify responsibility allocation, secure funding, strengthen team development, enhance supervision and assessment, and improve publicity and education.

(20) Implementing Work Responsibilities. All regions and departments shall enhance guidance, coordination, and management of sector-specific plans involving spatial layout. They shall formulate policies conducive to the preparation and implementation of territorial spatial planning, establish clear timetables and roadmaps, and foster collaborative efforts. Departments such as organisation, personnel, and audit shall explore incorporating the execution of territorial spatial planning into the audit of natural resource assets upon the departure of leading officials, using this as an important reference for the comprehensive assessment of Party and government officials. Discipline inspection and supervision authorities shall strengthen oversight. Departments including development and reform, finance, banking and finance, taxation, natural resources, ecology and environment, housing and urban-rural development, and agriculture and rural affairs shall formulate supporting policies for the main functional zones. The competent natural resources department shall, in conjunction with relevant departments, expedite legislation on territorial spatial planning. Organisation departments shall emphasise enhancing planning awareness in the education and training of principal officials of local Party committees and governments. Education departments shall explore strengthening the development of disciplines related to territorial spatial planning. The Ministry of Natural Resources shall enhance coordination and oversight, assume responsibility, and collaborate with relevant departments to continuously refine institutional frameworks in accordance with the overall territorial spatial planning system. It shall expedite the establishment of planning formulation and approval systems, implementation and supervision systems, regulatory and policy frameworks, and technical standards systems, while strengthening professional capacity building and industry management. The Ministry shall conduct regular supervision and inspection of the implementation of these guidelines, reporting major matters to the Party Central Committee and the State

Council in a timely manner.

(Xinhua News Agency, Beijing, 23 May 2019)

Appendix 2 Case Study Interview scripts and Transcripts

Case study interview script-Community leader

1950s–1960s

1. How did the Zhengzhou National Third Cotton Textile Factory manage its neighbourhood during the planned economy era?
2. What role did the Zhengzhou National Third Cotton Textile Factory play in community development during the planned economy era?
3. What were the welfare benefits for residents?

1980s–1990s

4. How did neighbourhood management change after the reform and opening-up?
5. What was the direction of development after the reform and opening-up?
6. What difficulties were encountered during this process, and what achievements were ultimately made?

2000s–2010s

7. What role did the Zhengzhou National Third Cotton Textile Factory Community have after the restructuring of the Third Cotton Textile Factory community?
8. How do you view the changes in the community across these three periods?

Case study interview transcript-Community leader 1

Researcher 00:01

This time I'd like to conduct an interview centred on the company's management model and its

development, so I want to start from the past. May I ask if you grew up at the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory, or when did you first get to know the Factory?

Participant 00:28

Let me jump in first. You asked whether I grew up at the Factory—actually, no. I was sent down to the countryside in 1976. My personal timeline is: sent down in 1972, joined the army in 1978, and demobilised at the end of 1980 to return to the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory. So, as for the situation before 1980, my understanding is limited—our family conditions were not great back then.

It was only after 1980 that I really came into contact with the Factory. After I returned from the army I was assigned to the motor-vehicle workshop and worked there until 1985. At that time the Factory ran a targeted training programme, so I enrolled in the Radio & Television University to study law. After graduating in 1985, I went back to the motor-vehicle workshop and worked another three years.

In 1990 I was transferred to the Factory's discipline-inspection commission and did disciplinary work until 1994. Around 1993–94 there was a nationwide wave of going into business, and I, too, went into business for a time—not entirely on my own; it was organised by the Factory. I acted as the person in charge and led a group to set up Sanling Industry & Trade Company, which was essentially a subsidiary under the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory.

Later, from 1994 to 1997, I continued to work there for three years. In 1997–98, when some senior Factory cadres retired, I was transferred back into the enterprise system to serve as secretary of the discipline-inspection committee.

From 1997 to 2006 I did that for nearly a decade, after which I was transferred to a subsidiary under our Factory—Hongfa Knitting. It was a non-woven needle-punch operation using needle-punch machines rather than traditional looms. Much of the knitwear people wear is “punched” on such equipment rather than woven; the end product looks the same, without the warp-and-weft patterning you'd expect.

Researcher 02:37

Oh, I see—understood.

Participant 02:37

After that I helped to set up another project in cooperation with a wholesaler in Hong Kong—the Hongma Knitting Factory—where I served as general manager for a few years. Around 2005 I went down to Shenzhen and worked in funds for a while, then returned to Zhengzhou to continue for two or three years at Dahua Company.

Afterwards I was transferred to Hongyun Company. Do you know Hongyun? It was a joint venture between our Factory and Hong Kong's Huayun Company. The head office was in Shenzhen, and we jointly established a firm called “Hongyun Company”, where I was chairman and general manager for three to four years.

Roughly during 2006–2009. In 2009 I returned to the old Factory—what is now a major state-owned enterprise—serving as Party general-branch secretary and general manager, and I've been here ever since. When I came back in 2009 the enterprise restructuring was just under way, and I was involved throughout that process.

By about 2012 the restructuring was essentially completed. The housing estate you now see that we developed sits near the original factory grounds. You know that, right? Are you a post-90s or post-00s generation?

Researcher 04:21

I'm post-90s. After the later demolition and rebuilding of the production block here, I also saw the related planning documents—I've read that file.

Participant 04:30

Since you're post-90s, you probably have a fair idea. The place I'm in charge of now used to be the site of our branch company; later that branch was abolished. The land is slated for housing construction, though it's not fully built yet. The workers located there were properly resettled at the time. In the past there were nearly 23,000 square metres of premises here, with roughly 200 employees. One sector, one Danwei, operated for over twenty—almost thirty—years, and finally transformed into what you see now.

What you now see as Hongyi Company evolved out of that sector—the sign over the door still says “Hongyi Company”. In fact, the company functions as a financing platform.

So I’ve walked the whole path. If you ask me about the 1950s and 1960s, I really can’t answer—that was too early.

My mother was transferred from Shanghai; we’re essentially a family that came up from Shanghai. From what I heard growing up, the entire Factory was one of the earliest mills established along Mianfang Road and a key construction project at the time. The Party branch then assigned the task to push construction ahead rapidly, but there weren’t workers to speak of—about 80% of the employees were transferred from Shanghai. It was just a few years after the founding of the PRC—about three years after liberation—when many young people answered the call and were transferred in batches from Jiangsu-Zhejiang, especially Shanghai, bringing both skills and drive.

Another c.10% were transferred from Qingdao and elsewhere in Shandong, and a portion of their personnel were reassigned directly. The remaining c.10% were local people. Think about it: some peasants were farming; once their land was requisitioned and they had nowhere to work, arrangements had to be made for them to change occupations and enter the Factory.

Researcher 06:24

So, at that time the vast majority of Factory employees were essentially “brought in” from elsewhere, and locals were only a small fraction. The workforce was basically all young people, with hardly any older people.

Participant 06:44

There really weren’t many older people then. If there were, they were retired senior cadres—former factory directors, division chiefs and the like. The chiefs we had back then were all very senior, many from the so-called “old ‘38 generation”—people who had started work in the 1930s. They were already in post in the 1950s and 1960s and then gradually retired. We now refer to them as retired cadres. Most of them were veteran Party members and cadres dispatched from other places to take up leadership roles in the Factory, such as general manager.

Participant 07:28

Back then, many arrivals were officers transferred from the army; some had been army commanders or even commanders of military regions. After demobilising they came to the Factory and served as factory directors. That was very common.

Researcher 07:34

So it’s fair to say that, apart from that cohort of cadres, the rest of the Factory was largely made up of young people?

Participant 07:38

Yes. In the 1950s and 1960s the Factory was almost entirely young.

Researcher 07:41

I’d like to ask: under the Danwei System, how was the living block managed?

Participant 07:51

On that point, I can explain in detail.

Researcher

Returning to that topic—could you describe how the living block was managed at the time?

Participant

When the Factory was built, the living block was planned as an integrated counterpart. In the living block we had a nursery, a hospital, schools, and what we now call a “supermarket”, which we used to call a “co-operative”. There were also public bathhouses and barbershops—basically the whole array of social functions could be found within our living block.

We built our own primary and middle schools; pupils could study within the Factory schools up to lower secondary level and only went out for upper secondary. Management of the living block, like production, was unified under one leadership team—there was no separation. A factory leadership team typically

had five factory-level cadres, and the factory director would designate one specifically to take charge of living-block affairs.

So the living block fell under unified factory leadership; the director-general oversaw both production and daily life. The Factory also assigned cadres to handle concrete aspects of everyday livelihood—food, sanitation, the basics. We called this “logistics” (houqin); in the 1950s and 1960s the “Logistics Department” is what we would now call the general services/back-office.

Within logistics there was a clear division of labour—for example, dedicated staff handled housing allocation and the issue of furniture. In those days tables, chairs and stools were issued uniformly by the Factory, not bought by workers themselves. For my parents’ generation, collecting furniture was almost like stating quantities: “Two tables and three stools,” and you would collect them from Logistics. The quality wasn’t anything special, but it was all provided “by the state”.

The whole system operated on a supply (rationing) basis. Take housing allocation: no payment was required. If a household needed two rooms, they got two; some older people even felt two rooms were too large and asked for just one. Those houses were built in the 1950s, and many are still in use or have only recently been renovated.

The management model was fully integrated. The living block had no independent revenue stream; its operation—staff wages, water, electricity, heating and routine maintenance—was entirely funded by the operating income of the production side.

If a sewer was blocked, roads were dirty, or a water pipe burst, living-block managers would deal with it. Later, in the late 1990s to around 2000, the living block began to install central heating, and those costs also came out of the Factory’s production income.

At that time there were also small shops and grain stores in the living block. As children we carried cloth bags to buy rice and flour. Under the planned economy there were ration coupons and purchase coupons; cigarettes, liquor, sugar and cloth were all centrally sold in those shops.

Although these shops were in the living block, they were not managed directly by the Factory. Grain stores and co-op shops were staffed by personnel dispatched from the Second Light Industry Bureau (akin to today’s supply-and-marketing co-operatives). They built and stocked the shops; we provided the premises. They formed part of the state-sector system—somewhat like today’s corporatised social organisations.

The schools were initially established by the Factory itself, and many teachers were Factory employees—anyone with a certain level of education could become a teacher. Later, university graduates were also assigned to us and came under unified Factory management.

Researcher 12:22

So at that time, the school was run by the Factory itself—set up in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 12:30

Yes, the schools were run by the enterprise with enterprise funds. Conditions were quite good then. For example, from the late 1980s into the 1990s, the Factory even ran its own poultry farm. Each year certain welfare items were distributed: when eggs were available, staff were notified to collect them without waiting for the New Year—by quota per person: 10 jin at New Year, 5 jin on ordinary occasions.

Likewise with sugar: the trade union mainly issued white sugar each year. Welfare distribution was essentially equal between the living block and the production block—if front-line workers received 5 jin of brown sugar, staff in the living block received 5 jin of white sugar; the standards were the same. And personnel were fluid rather than fixed in one system: today you might be a workshop director on the production line; tomorrow you might be transferred to Logistics as head of the housing/property office. The two sides operated as one, closely linked, with no sharp dividing line.

Researcher 13:45

In your view, under the planned economy, what primary role did the Factory play in the development of the living block?

Participant 13:57

Do you mean the living block?

Researcher 13:59

Yes, the living block.

Participant 14:00

At bottom, the core role of the living block was to provide logistical back-up for frontline production workers. That was its most basic function. The living block itself did not engage in business; all of its funding—wages, construction, maintenance—depended on the operating profits of the production line.

The living block had no independent revenue and did not bear any profit target; its main duty was simply to deliver logistics well. After 2000—especially around 2002–2003—as state-owned enterprises ran into increasing difficulty, logistics began to marketise.

In fact, by the mid-1990s the entire textile sector had already started to decline. As the national economy gradually opened up, the old planned system was phased out and the Factory no longer enjoyed unified state “contracting and purchase”.

Under the planned economy, the state assigned you an annual production task—say four to five hundred million in output value—and the products mainly supplied the military and other priority Danwei. So long as you fulfilled the task, state funding followed; staff pay and material 保障 were not a problem, and the enterprise did not need to find its own market.

Later, especially once the market economy took hold, everything had to be done under your own steam. The state stopped allocating tasks; enterprises had to source orders and negotiate prices themselves—co-operating with Hong Kong firms, foreign investors, and doing some domestic sales. That is when the real transition began, and the operational pressure of the handover from plan to market became evident.

Researcher 16:14

I'd like to understand the scale of the living block at the time.

Participant 16:17

Take Henan today—there's practically no textile industry left. The old industrial architecture has been dismantled, leaving only a so-called “textile association”, which now functions more like a civic-type body under the guidance of an industry 主管部门; it is no longer a state administrative organ in the old sense.

As for the logistics side, its purpose was to 保障 the daily needs of frontline workers. For meals, the staff canteen prepared the food and sent it straight to the workshops for workers to ladle out. We ran a three-shift system; some posts could never stop the machines, which ran day and night. Shifts were eight hours per rotation. At first it was a week of nights then a week of days, and later it gradually shifted to a three-shift pattern—e.g., two days on, two days off.

Researcher 17:19

Under the planned system, were logistics, production and living-services departments completely separate, or were they in fact integrated?

Participant 17:30

Structurally they formed a single whole. The enterprise framework comprised logistics, production, sales, finance and the General Manager's Office—uniformly under the factory director. At that time there was not yet the concept of a “company system”; it was a “factory” (chang), not a “company” (gongsi). Under the factory director sat various functional departments—logistics, production, sales, finance, and so on.

We also set up a Labour Service Company to resolve employment for local farmers when land was requisitioned. After their land was taken, some were placed in the Factory as workers, but not everyone could adapt—some were older or not physically up to frontline work—so they would be arranged into the Labour Service Company. This Danwei was established specifically for them.

The Labour Service Company mainly absorbed those older or less physically suited to the posts, as well as some with disabilities. They did simpler auxiliary work such as packing, trimming off-cuts, recycling waste, etc. This was part of the state-owned enterprise's social responsibility—ensuring such people were not left jobless.

After restructuring, this system evolved into what is now **Tianhe Textile Co., Ltd.** It still retains a portion of the Factory's old workforce; there are more than sixty retired staff remaining—most have passed on, but a few are still with us.

Researcher 19:31

So the enterprise was not only in charge of the production block, but also coordinated management of the living block, with all living services handled by the enterprise?

Participant 19:50

Exactly. The production side focused solely on production and did not touch living services. Frontline workers just concentrated on their work; everything related to daily life was handled by Logistics. For example, the public baths were under Logistics; meals too—canteens, bathing, barbering—all unified under Logistics.

Housing was also arranged by Logistics. If you needed an allocation or a swap, you went to Logistics to process it. Nursery provision was likewise a Logistics matter. I myself attended the Factory's nursery. Families would drop children off early—our nursery took children from six in the morning; once parents were at work, the nursery took over. Babies could be sent to the crèche from six months; at three they moved into nursery, then progressed to primary school—an end-to-end pathway entirely administered by the Danwei's logistics system.

Researcher 20:59

So maternity and childcare for young mothers were also centrally handled by the enterprise?

Participant 21:04

Of course. After giving birth you didn't need to worry about housing, and you didn't have to look after the child yourself—there were mother-and-child dormitories. Such facilities no longer exist today; people have to manage at home, which is much tougher. In our time it was straight from crèche to nursery to primary school—an entire chain guaranteed by the enterprise's logistics 保障.

Researcher 21:28

And the Factory hospital was also under Logistics?

Participant 21:31

Yes. The Factory hospital belonged to the Logistics system. Although each department had its remit—for instance, Finance handled finance—they were all parts of the broader logistics, coordinating with each other in service of the enterprise's overall operation.

Researcher 20:59

So were maternity and childcare for young mothers also centrally handled by the enterprise?

Participant 21:04

Of course. After you gave birth you didn't need to worry about housing, and you didn't have to look after the child yourself—there were mother-and-child dormitory buildings run by the Danwei. Those facilities no longer exist; nowadays families have to manage at home, which is much harder. Back in our day it was straight from the crèche to nursery and then on to primary school—an entire chain guaranteed by the enterprise's logistics system.

Researcher 21:28

And was the Factory hospital also under Logistics?

Participant 21:31

Yes. The Factory hospital was managed by the Logistics department. Although each department had its own remit—for example, Finance handled finance—they were all parts of the broader logistics system, co-ordinating with one another in service of the enterprise's overall operation.

Researcher 21:47

During the planned-economy period, for the department managing living services—leaving production aside—would you say its role in this sphere was one of governance and control, or primarily a service role?

Participant 22:21

It could provide services, but the living-services department had no authority to manage other departments—it couldn't do that.

Researcher 22:26

I'd like to follow up: after Reform and Opening-up—especially from the 1980s through the 1990s and up to 2000—did neighbourhood management in the living block (the aspects you've just mentioned) change?

Participant 22:50

It did. That was when "Residents' Committees" (what we now call community workers) began to come into play. They were set up under the Sub-district Office; at that time the name hadn't changed yet—it was still the Sub-district Office with Residents' Committees No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 and so on, each responsible for a defined area with clear divisions of labour.

The primary duty of a Residents' Committee was to interface with government matters—liaising with the Sub-district Office and reporting upwards to the district government, even the district CPPCC—generally not directly to the municipal level; there was a clear chain.

Of course, functions that the enterprise had originally undertaken—such as the staff hospital, nursery and schools—also increasingly involved government departments. At that time the Materials Bureau, Health Bureau and Education Bureau would connect with us: for example, schools aligned to the Education Bureau, hospitals to the Health Bureau, with the Residents' Committee co-ordinating in between.

Researcher 24:01

Did they also handle household-registration matters—for example, applying for or transferring a hukou?

Participant 24:06

Yes. Household registration, local public order, and neighbour disputes had already moved completely out of the enterprise's management system and became the responsibility of the Residents' Committee.

If workers had a dispute—say something you might once have mediated informally on the shopfloor—the enterprise no longer handled it; the Residents' Committee did. You'd see Auntie Zhang or Auntie Li from the Committee bring both households together: "Was your shopping basket really stolen? Did they take it?" One side would say no. Misunderstandings were common—everyone burned coal briquettes back then; if a sack was a few briquettes short, people might suspect the neighbour. The Residents' Committee would step in to mediate such quarrels.

Researcher 24:49

So it's fair to say that, since Reform and Opening-up, the Residents' Committee's remit has changed substantially?

Participant

Yes. From the 1980s and 1990s onwards, besides mediating internal disputes and doing basic community work, the Residents' Committee gradually expanded its functions. Especially after enterprise restructuring, the Committee effectively took on reporting and liaison duties with the Mianfang Sub-district Office and other government departments. Compared with the planned-economy period, its scope became much wider; back then, many living-service and management tasks were primarily handled by the Logistics side of the enterprise.

Researcher 25:36

So, picking up on what you said about changes to the Residents' Committee in the 1980s and 1990s, is it fair to understand that, after restructuring, its functions expanded? And in the 1950s and 1960s, what were the Residents' Committee's main responsibilities?

Participant 25:48

In the 1950s and 1960s the Residents' Committee mainly handled social affairs—organising mass activities and mobilisations, such as clothing donations or calling on residents to take part in voluntary public-interest labour. For these socially oriented tasks, the Residents' Committee would take the lead in co-ordination and promotion.

Researcher 26:14

So can I put it this way: in the 1950s and 1960s the Residents' Committee, to some extent, supplemented the Factory's Logistics department, and it also organised public-interest activities and undertook certain administrative services—issuing certificates, handling formalities, and so on?

Participant 26:42

Yes, that's a fair reading. The Residents' Committee operated under the unified leadership of the Sub-district Office and was mainly responsible for interfacing with wider society on matters the enterprise's Logistics could not handle—such as issuing marriage and divorce certificates, and household-registration moves in and out.

It also helped co-ordinate things like grain-and-oil rationing, school admissions, and hospital visits. It was indeed a supplementary force: for some matters the Committee would brief enterprise leaders and discuss how to handle them. When the state called for charitable donations or visits to veterans, for example, the Residents' Committee would take the lead in mobilising, and the enterprise would respond internally—both sides playing their part in tandem.

Researcher 27:49

Besides the change in the Residents' Committee's remit, were there other notable changes in managing the living block after Reform and Opening-up—especially in living facilities and basic infrastructure?

Participant 28:05

The most fundamental shift came with restructuring. In fact, the “decoupling” was already being advanced gradually beforehand. Our Danwei was formally restructured in 2005. From 1995 to 2005 there was a decade of step-by-step transition and evolution. Push it back another ten years and you're at 1985. In other words, over those twenty years the whole system was moving towards socialisation—this included changes in the roles of the Sub-district Office and the Residents' Committee, and even when people started calling it the “community” (shequ). My memory isn't crystal clear, but I think the term “community” only really appeared around 2006.

The word “community” came later, learning from abroad—building larger communities and residential compounds, turning Residents' Committees into communities. People are used to it now: where we once said “go to the Residents' Committee”, now we say “go to the community”.

So the past two or three decades have been a continuous socialisation process. For example, schools originally run by the Danwei no longer belonged to the Danwei; the Education Bureau took them over directly. The land was originally ours, but in the end it was all reallocated: for primary schools, No. 3 Middle School, primary schools of that kind—once “Danwei-run schooling” was abolished, even the land was taken back.

The old co-ops and corner shops disappeared too. Later on, even barbers run by the Danwei couldn't keep going and were replaced by private operators—people set up their own shops. Those former second-tier barber salons and the like—no one carried them on.

What remains today is basically just the nursery. The nursery and the hospital in our compound still belong to Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory. I am the legal representative for the nursery; we are now a non-profit private entity, and I am still the legal person for that nursery. For annual inspections and the like I have to go in person with my ID; as long as I'm here, that role stands—if I were to leave, all the paperwork would have to be changed.

It's the same with the hospital: I am still its legal representative. Later on we also set up a **Community Health Service Centre**; that part has in fact never been completely spun off.

As for our original main body—it has now evolved into **Zhengzhou Sanmian Tianhe Textile Co., Ltd.** I am still the legal representative of that company. It's only two or three people now, but it's an independent legal entity. It grew out of the old collective enterprise: although it's no longer a state-owned enterprise, you can't simply deregister it because it still carries a state-assets background; it isn't purely private.

At the time it was actually started through staff pooling their funds—an entrepreneurial impulse—making use of resources from the Labour Service Company and the Second Light Industry Bureau. It wasn't established through direct state investment, so it wasn't a typical SOE; it existed specifically to resolve the issue of **land-acquired households**. In other words, when people's land was requisitioned and they

entered the Factory but couldn't do frontline production, how were they to be supported? They had to rely on the Labour Service Company. That company then provided auxiliary services to the main enterprise—packing, labelling, cleaning, sweeping the plant area—staffed by us. Over time it evolved into a collective enterprise under the Second Light Industry Bureau.

Under state policy then, the assets of collective enterprises were owned by the collective organisation—“given by the state” in a sense—but they were not state-owned assets, so the state couldn't simply intervene or take them back. The property rights were collective—not state, and not private. The Tianhe company I'm talking about emerged precisely from that context.

You're now in Erqi District, which in earlier years fell under the Second Light Industry Bureau—the light-industry system. Labour Service Companies and the collective-enterprise ownership form were all overseen by that Bureau. As for its full official name, I honestly can't recall; I don't have the documents. You could look it up in older records.

Researcher:

So our understanding is that the restructuring began to be pushed forward in the early 1990s?

Participant:

Yes. Restructuring advanced step by step from the 1990s. You'll recall the “dual-track” system had already started by then—the planned economy was giving way to the market economy, and the two operated in parallel.

Why did the first wave of newly rich in China emerge at that time? It was precisely because people profited from arbitrage under the dual-track system. Suppose you were a factory director: you could obtain steel at the planned price of 2,000 yuan per tonne, but sell it on the market for 3,000—your profit was the difference. Or goods allocated to you at a planned price of 5 yuan might fetch 20 yuan on the market—of course you made money. That sort of “buy low on plan, sell high on market” created a group of early winners. You can see it in firms like Shuanghui, Shuangfeng, and among the first batch of stock speculators—many of the earliest fortunes were made that way.

Researcher:

So it's fair to say that after Reform and Opening-up in the 1980s, production and daily life gradually decoupled through the 1980s and 1990s, and by the 2000s they were basically fully separated?

Participant:

Yes. The Second Light Industry Bureau spelled this out clearly in its documents at the time: as the local light-industry bureau, it was responsible for all collective economic organisations within a county or district, so it was natural that the **living block** fell under its remit.

Management of collective-staff matters in our living block was co-ordinated by the Second Light Industry Bureau. The state also required policies to be adapted to local conditions, so, depending on local realities, the Bureau and different local Danwei worked together to handle the coupling and separation of production and daily life.

You mentioned Huasheng Street and the bus company—back then there were state city buses and also township-run “public coaches”. Private cars were rare; for long trips you relied on those, and for urgent communications there were fax and telegraph. The system was fairly complete, but it really was a different era.

Participant 35:25

We originally came under the Industrial Bureau, which had a second-tier body called the **Second-level Supply Bureau**. At the time, provincial Party committees asked localities to join forces and set up corresponding enterprises. By the mid-1980s, enterprises had developed into quite strong sectoral players.

From 1989 our Factory began gradually divesting its social functions—transferring part of them to society. Only after 2001 were all transferrable functions fully moved out; the collective enterprises that could not be transferred were retained.

Participant 36:11

So, after the 1980s and 1990s, although we talk about “decoupling”, it wasn't complete.

Researcher 36:19

And state rules weren't uniform—some prevailing regulations at the time still required certain collections?

Participant 36:29

Later, as the market economy took hold, some entities eliminated themselves. Take the old **supply-and-marketing co-operatives**: people in our community stopped shopping there and went instead to the small supermarkets in the community; the co-ops couldn't compete and were gradually withdrawn. The same with barbers: they had been Danwei-run, but individual private operators came in and squeezed them out. The few Danwei-run institutions that remained were slowly abolished.

In the past the Factory even dispatched people to support and backstop those entities, but as market competition intensified they simply couldn't operate and were merged or closed. The Factory had never been mandated to retain them permanently—at the start we merely provided sites and premises so they could serve staff, as with the co-ops. As the number of self-employed operators grew, those Danwei-run outfits lost their income and could no longer survive.

Researcher 37:34

So those Danwei largely wound themselves up in the late 1980s and 1990s. At that time private traders were allowed to open shops in our living block, but they still had to sign leases with the Factory, right?

Participant 37:50

Exactly. Any outside operator using Factory-owned premises for business had to sign an agreement with the Factory and apply to rent from us.

Researcher 38:04

Because the buildings here were collectively owned back then—ground-floor Danwei served as shopfronts and weren't private property, correct? Staff-owned flats were only purchased later, from the late 1980s into the 1990s, and those became private; but unsold housing stock remained enterprise-owned. Public-use premises—was it around that time that outsiders were first allowed to rent them to open shops?

Participant:

In principle, yes—that's my understanding. I wasn't responsible for the living block then, so I don't know every detail. As I said earlier, I only took charge of the living side after 1990, when Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory had already become Zhengzhou Sanmian Co., Ltd. After I became a general manager over a larger section of the Factory, that was the first time I took over living-block affairs. From 2009 onwards I'm sure about the situation: the Factory's street-facing shop Danwei and enterprise premises were leased out, generating income. Before that it must already have been happening—by around 1985–95 it was common to rent out property, especially in the early 1990s with rapid marketisation, when most public-use premises were leased. Under the old planned economy we wouldn't have dared do that; marketisation really began in the late 1980s to early 1990s—perhaps around 1989–90. By the early 1990s the planned system was receding and operations were basically market-based. I can't recall the exact node when it became "fully market", so you might also check published sources.

Participant:

Broadly speaking, yes—that's how I understand it as well. But because I wasn't in charge of the living side at the time, I don't know all the specifics. As I mentioned, I only took charge of the Factory's living functions after 1990. By then Sanmian had already become Zhengzhou Sanmian Co., Ltd. After I became a general manager over a fairly large section, I took over the living side for the first time.

From 2009 onwards I'm clear about the situation: the Factory's street-facing shop Danwei and enterprise premises were leased out, generating income—that I can confirm. But it certainly started earlier. From around '85 to '95 it became common for the Factory to permit property leasing, and in the early 1990s marketisation was especially evident—most public-use premises were leased out. Under the planned economy we wouldn't have dared do that. The market-oriented reforms began in the late 1980s to early 1990s, roughly '89 or '90. By the early '90s the planned economy was gradually exiting and operations were basically market-based. I can't recall the precise node when it became fully market-run; you could check published sources.

Researcher 40:33

I imagine a policy document came first, and then changes happened gradually?

Participant 40:42

I never saw such a document.

When did the planned economy withdraw from the textiles sector?

Researcher 41:05

After Reform and Opening-up, market-economy elements were introduced into the development of the living block. Did management of some infrastructure also begin to be transferred to other departments then—for example, primary schools now under the Education Bureau? Did that handover start at that time?

Participant 41:45

Before Reform and Opening-up it was the planned-management model. In August 1984, the document referred to the “Thirty Provisions” issued in November.

Researcher 42:00

So in that period, did infrastructure management gradually shift to the various government departments?

Participant 42:08

Do you mean “handed over to the government”? Strictly speaking, it wasn’t a transfer of a management function; rather, the whole set of social functions gradually withdrew from the Factory. In fact, we never had a dedicated department to manage those social functions.

The entities you mentioned—supply-and-marketing co-ops, barber shops, grain stores, nurseries, primary schools, hospitals—were all social-function Danwei. Their exit wasn’t mainly because we actively transferred them: some phased out on their own; some were handed over through ad-hoc arrangements.

In the past, teachers at the school were our Factory’s own staff. After graduating from university they reported to Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory and were assigned to teach in the Factory-run school, rather than going into production. We also had a publicity department and an organisation department; some graduates—say, those good at writing—were placed in the school as teachers. People like Director Wang, among the first cohort with strong educational backgrounds, naturally went to teach and look after academic affairs.

So yes, some functions—like the school—were indeed transferred. But many others mainly exited on their own. The Factory itself didn’t directly manage the co-ops, grain stores or barber shops; those Danwei were run by higher-level departments—we merely provided the premises. Later, the usage rights to those sites were gradually taken back; it wasn’t a proactive transfer of functions on our part.

Researcher 43:57

But the hospital and schools—those have now all been transferred out, haven’t they?

Participant 44:01

Yes, they’ve all been transferred now.

Researcher 44:03

Was that only after 2006, or had reallocations to the various departments already begun in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 44:11

The schools were handed over relatively early—my recollection is the 1990s. But I wasn’t that familiar with the Factory’s internal situation in those years. From 1990 to ’93 I’d only just come up from the shop floor and was still a front-line worker, so I didn’t understand these matters. I know even less about the 1980s—I wasn’t back then.

Researcher 44:34

Please just speak to what you do know.

Participant 44:40

There isn’t much. I left my post for three years of study from 1985 and returned in 1988, still working at the Factory, and I didn’t know much about the living block in that period. It was only around 1990 that I started to have a little contact with it. You’re in the discipline inspection set-up now—you know how, under that urban system, enterprise operations and arrangements were all by unified instruction. So

before the 1990s, everything on the living side was under unified management. I've worked within that system throughout, and I know the specific rhythms and arrangements quite well.

Researcher 45:16

I'd like to ask: before the year 2000—say, during the 1980s and 1990s—did the management and construction of the living block encounter any difficulties? Or were there notable achievements at the time? In other words, during the '80s and '90s, what problems did the living block face in terms of management and construction, how were they solved, and did any effective management models emerge?

Participant 47:25

Back then, if people didn't come to me, I wouldn't go looking for them. It was my remit, so I just got on and did the job myself.

Participant 57:23

By the shopping centre, we kept an office building for Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory. As for why it's called "No. 3 Factory", it was near Suzhou Road and there needed to be a bit of local distinctiveness. So we retained a plant building of over 1,000 square metres, and planned later to put up a bridge for future visits. But the follow-on renovation never got finished—dragged on for years, five or six, far too long.

Along the corridor on both sides of that road, the old houses were originally to be preserved, but later all the workers were relocated. The total investment was close to one billion yuan, and about 18,000 yuan per square metre. Hotpot places and other restaurants were cleared out, with a view to turning it into a visitor attraction.

Researcher 58:08

Has work on that attraction now begun?

Participant 58:10

There's a project called "Jililai", a Zhengzhou initiative from around 1985. You asked why so many factories here were called cotton textile mills—No. 1, No. 2, No. 3 and so on. At the outset, Zhengzhou was a key development project: the "Nanfang Yitiao Street" strip was designated for supported development. And once you crossed Songshan Road into Erqi District, that area mainly had smaller factories and small houses.

Researcher 58:37

So that side was small factories and small houses, while on our side No. 2 and No. 3 were relatively large mills, right?

Participant 58:44

Yes, though now they're all basically on an equal footing. The property market has ebbed, but property-related sectors have largely picked up again. Doing assessments in that way has indeed affected the figures reported upwards.

Researcher 59:17

We can understand that from a historical perspective.

Participant 59:18

Right. Take the western suburbs: if you re-ran things with a different political approach, you might get another outcome. But for now the area still isn't running smoothly, just as you said—nothing much else to add. If you go further on, the private-equity project everyone keeps discussing—that too involved changes around Dajing Park at the time. Zhengzhou is a big city in scale, but it hasn't actually had a particularly dazzling industrialisation.

Researcher 59:50

When we did the museum project, I thought that direction was excellent. From our disciplinary perspective, for a city's development—say, Zhongshan is now ranked as a new first-tier city—if you're going to radiate to surrounding areas by mega-city standards, Zhengzhou needs its own cultural calling card. Without that, you can't bring urban construction and cultural clarity into alignment.

Participant 59:55

Look at the old state-owned mills in the western suburbs: they may seem like "backward areas" today,

but you can't call them "slums". In reality, they were the bedrock of China's industrialisation—those mills held it up.

Participant

Back when we were setting up commercial management and bringing people in, we had 22 or 23 textile machines (noted as textile equipment). Although that kit is outdated now, it was the mainstay of the light-textile industry at the time.

Researcher 01:01:07

Yes, exactly.

Participant 01:01:08

I know this area well. Now that the district has been redeveloped, there ought to be traces of it kept on the city's cultural calling card. After all, this used to be a large factory employing 150,000 textile workers—an independent group enterprise. Even the landscaping at Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory was done by their own hands. We also took part in the redevelopment back then—wanted to help, and actually did help, didn't we?

Researcher 01:01:25

Yes. If this part can be developed well, it could become a strong urban tourism showcase. For children, it could serve as a study base for understanding the foundations of light industry. Overall, it would be a fine cultural calling card for the city—useful not only for publicity but also for boosting the surrounding economy. And Zhengzhou's development has now moved into a new phase, so we can't label this area a "slum". Each sector of the city bears different functions; it's simply a matter of differing positioning.

Participant 01:02:05

Right—the government isn't able to push funding down now.

Researcher 01:02:08

Indeed. For example, many firms are clustered in the High-tech Zone; but over here in the western suburbs, you can see places like Yinji Wholesale City still located here. It's just a different industrial profile, that's all.

Participant 01:02:26

Yes, that's how things stand on our side.

Researcher 01:02:31

From our professional perspective, if every part of a city were redeveloped to a single, uniform model like Jinshui District, the city would basically "flatline". Cities need differentiation. The individual economy in the western suburbs is actually much more developed than in the east. For urban development, that diversity is very important. Personally, I'm convinced this area is not a slum—it's simply a different development path.

Participant 01:03:06

Different areas have different production functions.

Researcher 01:03:07

Yes—the functions do differ, and—

Participant 01:03:12

Exactly.

Researcher 01:03:13

What's your view of the role we play now: after restructuring—post-2000—and especially since 2016, when, as Xinmin mentioned, we separated management of the living block and the production block? I don't specialise in this field, so I'd like your advice. In managing today's living block, what role does Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory play? Is it still comprehensive management as before, or is responsibility divided across several tiers?

Participant 01:03:55

We still have two deputy general managers on the factory leadership side. In the past, General Manager Zhang oversaw the living-services portfolio—everything from daily necessities and sanitation to environmental protection, epidemic control and repairs for water leaks.

Of course, many functions have now been transferred. For example, welfare housing allocation used to be under our control, but following the housing reform it became fully market-based. People started purchasing commercial housing and affordable housing, and building the so-called “three add-ons” (sān gè dājiàn). The factory no longer allocates flats, because we simply don’t have a housing pool any more. Dwellings are fixed, but people come in waves and all need somewhere to live, so we reached a point where there were no Danwei left to allocate. Just then the State rolled out the housing reform and monetisation policy, and people began buying commercial flats themselves. Although the policy function of housing reform has shifted, responsibilities such as building management and maintenance are still being shouldered by our factory.

Researcher 01:04:52

So the management of the state-owned assets is still handled by a subsidiary company?

Participant 01:04:56

Yes. We are still managing them at present, and we are under the supervision of SASAC (the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission).

Researcher 01:05:02

So is it like this now: as part of the group, Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory has most state-owned assets held in trust by related subsidiaries—for example, collective assets by a poverty-alleviation company—while another portion of state-owned assets is entrusted to you because you are the legal-person entity?

Participant 01:05:23

No. They are all State assets.

Researcher 01:05:27

And the before-and-after change you mentioned?

Participant 01:05:29

They were not purely collective assets. As early as 2008, the collective employees over in Xianghe convened their workers’ congress and unanimously agreed to undergo restructuring together with the main factory, folding all of their assets into a state-owned enterprise. This was implemented nationwide as a unified arrangement.

Researcher 01:05:49

So that includes the service company and the kindergarten?

Participant 01:05:55

The kindergarten was state-owned to begin with. The hospital is also state-owned; it is currently under the trusteeship of Daqiao Hospital. “Trusteeship” in practice means leasing: for example, I lease that asset to you to operate; the profits (or losses) are yours, but you pay a fixed annual rent—say, one million yuan. Whether you earn or lose money isn’t my concern, provided you pay according to the contract.

Researcher 01:06:18

Understood. Aside from this infrastructure, there are still some residential Danwei that were never purchased by occupants, correct?

Participant 01:06:33

Yes—there are still several hundred Danwei unsold, right?

Researcher 01:06:35

And these Danwei are still being held in trust by Sanmian’s company?

Participant 01:06:39

We are still collecting the rents on those flats.

Researcher 01:06:40

So the company still retains management rights over that stock—able to lease and collect rent, yes? A further question: how do you view the changes across these different periods? Personally, I feel there hasn’t been that much change.

Participant 01:06:57

From my perspective—

Researcher 01:07:01

From the angle of managerial evolution and institutional change—

Participant 01:07:03

I'd say the general trend is towards greater stringency. First, government management of these living-services domains has only grown more complete. Second, governance is increasingly grounded—closer to ordinary people's lives. Third, in terms of managerial functions, administrative capacity has become stronger and the scope of management ever wider.

These are my three intuitive impressions of the process. For instance, in the early days the Sub-district Office and the residents' committee might only have handled neighbourhood disputes and simple formalities like household registration or marriage and divorce certificates. But as society has developed, the "community" concept took hold and restructuring advanced, their duties became more and more granular. Take matters of building quality—fire safety in high-rises, waterproofing, or structural safety—and the upkeep, maintenance and cleaning of public spaces related to everyday life in the community: nowadays these are basically our remit. You can see residents are living quite well; behind the scenes it is essentially our team doing the work. Of course, in practice some functions are carried out jointly with the Sub-district Office and the residents' committee.

So at each stage those three features have become more evident: management ever more concrete; functions ever more expanded; and control capacity ever more robust. Now they have direct links to every household. For example, Party membership credentials are handled by the residents' committee/the community; if you need proofs for life events—marriage, funerals, family-relationship attestations—these used to be issued by the enterprise but are now entirely devolved to the community level. Many functions that once belonged to the enterprise have been transferred to the government or the community to undertake. Governmental management and the rule-of-law apparatus have sunk to the grassroots—indeed, have steadily expanded their reach. Some technical functions once handled by enterprises are now also taken over by government. Previously divorce certificates were issued by enterprises; now the residents' committee can issue marriage and divorce certificates, right? What used to be handled by enterprises has been pushed to the societal level.

As for retired workers' administration, it used to be our enterprise's job. Before 2005, the enterprise interfaced with government; after 2015, part of that work was devolved again—and we as an enterprise are still continuing to manage that cohort.

Researcher 01:10:28

The related benefits are still issued by you, right?

Participant 01:10:34

Yes. We still handle matters around birth, ageing, illness and death.

Researcher 01:10:38

So the current mechanism is still in place?

Participant 01:10:43

The Danwei's framework still exists. Two systems are running in parallel.

But most matters—for example projects related to the one-child policy—are now handled by the community.

Researcher 01:10:52

You mean certain functions do need to be outsourced or transferred?

Participant 01:10:55

Yes. If some certificates are still issued through the enterprise, efficiency is now very low.

So overall what we are talking about is *control capacity*. Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory's governance capacity has actually strengthened, hasn't it? For instance, issues involving social stability are now dealt with by the jurisdiction's Sub-district Office and the community lead; the enterprise basically no longer intervenes.

Researcher 01:11:23

At present, we've devolved all that can be devolved to the community. Will there be further devolution in future, or has it reached a steady state?

Participant 01:11:38

The guiding idea is not that we proactively push to devolve more functions; it's a two-way interactive process. If you want to devolve, the other side must be able to take it on. If the community is unwilling to receive it, you can't just hand functions over, can you?

Let me give an example: before 2005, we had more than 4,000 retirees who were all taken over by the government. Once you reached retirement age—say, 54—you were no longer under Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory; the government received you entirely.

At that time our three communities also set up *construction branches* and established corresponding Party branches, holding related meetings.

But after 2005 we ran into difficulties when we tried to keep advancing this work. The government side believed the enterprise had already undergone restructuring—entering a phase of “the State retreats, the private sector advances”—with SOEs gradually exiting and private firms coming in. They therefore regarded us as already a private enterprise and would no longer take over this part of the business.

Researcher 01:12:23

So now the government only manages state-owned enterprises, and no longer Danwei like yours?

Participant 01:12:28

In fact our company's registered status hasn't changed; nominally we still carry the “Sanmian” plate, and that has never changed.

After restructuring, the entire demonstration area completed settlement and separation. The production block is now entirely in private hands, while construction- and livelihood-related infrastructure is overseen by SASAC.

Take me as an example: I'm now the head of a private enterprise, but I also carry the title of a state-owned enterprise head. Those two identities run in parallel.

Researcher 01:12:57

So even if it's a private enterprise, it's essentially still run by “our own people”?

Participant 01:12:59

No. Private enterprises put up the funds and bought the state-owned portion outright—it was *purchased*, pure and simple.

Researcher 01:13:06

So is your relationship something like a joint company set up with the private enterprise?

Participant 01:13:13

No, not a partnership—that can't be called cooperation.

They paid cash and bought it; there is no cooperative relationship.

For example, the government sold off more than 300 *mu* of land at one million yuan per *mu*—about 300 million yuan in total. Once the private enterprise paid the government, the land was no longer State-owned nor privately (individually) owned; after expert review, title was assigned to the buyer.

At the time our factory still had nearly 6,500 employees. Around 2008 we began implementing “buy-outs of length of service”.

Take someone like me: with a long service record, the maximum buy-out covered 45 years, at an average compensation of 1,500 yuan per year—roughly 50,000 yuan in total to buy out all service years. After the buy-out your SOE status was cancelled—you effectively exited the State system.

Researcher 01:14:17

Got it. And their retirement and social insurance then fell under the social insurance system?

Participant 01:14:22

Social insurance contributions are paid wherever you produce and work. The years that were bought out don't count towards your social insurance record. Although your service years were bought out, you continued working—you hadn't retired. We were transferred from Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory to the new plant; after buying us out, they assigned us to work in the new plant's area—some people went to build the new plant out by the airport. At that time one to two thousand workers petitioned over the buy-out. The buy-out rate was about 60%. I was responsible for handling that; I personally disbursed over 100,000 yuan in compensation—some people went to work in supermarkets, others started businesses. Those who didn't take the buy-out were assigned to continue working at the new plant. Although their social insurance belonged to the new employer, the finance system still sat within the old enterprise. Even though you were no longer an SOE employee, your social insurance remained registered under the old unit, which made the periodic payments.

On the works/construction side, all funds at the time were sustained entirely by production and

operations. After 1990 we began to decouple step by step. One method was to lease out part of the public housing stock, and use the rental income for enterprise “self-financing”. By July the hospital-related formalities had been completed. Back then the enterprise needed to invest nearly two million yuan a year to keep the hospital running. To suppress operating costs, we also tried to manage pricing along the supply chain. Later the hospital couldn’t be run any longer; the enterprise couldn’t continue injecting funds, so we decided to suspend hospital operations. We then leased it out—annual rent was one to two million yuan. But after the enterprise completed full restructuring, the finances couldn’t hold up and deficits emerged. Our approach then was “trusteeship”: find a party to take over hospital operations—so long as you could keep it functioning normally.

Researcher 01:16:21

Could they still make any money?

Participant 01:16:25

I remember we signed a contract with them—roughly in the late 1980s or 1990s—and it ran a long time, from about 2010 through to 2023, so a good dozen years. By 2012 and 2016 it was still under trusteeship. In 2011 they paid only 50,000 yuan. We kept to that standard. Now the operation is running at a loss, but the annual rent has risen to nearly one million yuan.

Researcher 01:16:52

So roughly a twenty-fold increase.

Participant 01:16:55

Yes. In the present circumstances someone has to do it—you face dozens of patients and families over a year.

So your point just now, about the Residents’ Committee evolving into the *community*, makes sense to me. The government’s interests, tension and control capacity are all strengthening.

The enterprise has basically exited. In the past there was still a sense of cooperation between the enterprise and the community; now perhaps a trace of that remains. But in reality many enterprise people have left, and business can hardly be sustained. A single Sub-district Office cannot get things done independently; it has to rely on the strength of the community.

So the old model did have its logic: the Residents’ Committee used to be part of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory, later grafted into the Community System. Back then, without large enterprises behind them, the Residents’ Committee alone could not get things done—everything depended on enterprise backing.

Take, for example, veteran resettlement or resource allocation—previously the enterprise took the lead; now the community takes the lead and the enterprise supports from behind. The model has flipped: the community leads, the enterprise cooperates, and together you create synergy.

Overall, management functions are now stronger and cohesion is stronger too—you’ll have felt that yourself.

Researcher 01:18:24

And that cohesion now sits with the community rather than the enterprise?

Participant 01:18:26

Exactly—it’s no longer within the enterprise. The enterprise has no project managers and no management targets, because the core business no longer exists. Without an operating entity, the corresponding management functions weaken, and cohesion and credibility fade with them. Many things simply cannot be done unless they are done in the name of the community. So many functions that used to belong to the enterprise—housing provident fund business included—are now handled by the community. Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory used to be a complete system, and the management force belonged to the enterprise; the Residents’ Committee was embedded within the enterprise. Now the community leads, with corresponding mass organisations, and the community’s voice carries weight. That said, we cannot be entirely detached from the enterprise—many matters still need support from our side. After all these decades, there are still countless ties between enterprise and community.

As for the so-called “old workers”, the majority of community staff today—80%, even 90%—are no longer enterprise employees; they left the enterprise system long ago. Young people don’t want to work in mills. We don’t recruit at our factory now, and those of us not yet retired can hardly cope. Society is no longer enterprise-led, is it? Young people simply don’t want to enter factories. In the past the norm was “the next generation follows the last”—my parents were both with No.3, and I joined No.3 as well.

But I’ve told my own child—now thirty—that I don’t recommend going into a mill. The first and second generations were “factory people”; by the third and fourth, they’re not. And the entire textile sector has basically declined across the board. If you try to find a normally operating textile mill now, it’s very hard. Our mill used to be tied to the No.1 factory at Bandaow Xishui; that plant has now ceased production.

Factory No.1 later relocated, but after the move it completely dispersed—people dispersed too. Factory No.5 never developed. After Factory No.5's restructuring it never actually got built. It failed to get built for particular reasons at the time—such as not obtaining the land parcel—so in the end staff were simply kept on the books until retirement; it finished completely, with no new plant. Factories No.6, No.2 and No.1 were merged and acquired by the same developer. Factory No.6 itself no longer exists; its production and sales had basically come to a halt.

Researcher 01:20:51

Did that part subsequently enter judicial procedures?

Participant 01:20:53

Yes. There was a Secretary Wang who oversaw the economic side of things. He was later reassigned to do property management. You could say he went with the market and adapted to China's overall development trend. Over in Baisha they're now providing services across the board, but in fact they can't keep it going.

The next trend is that many factories will withdraw and talent will drain away. At present only we at Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory are still holding on, kept running with support from the district, but our production operations have already been placed in trusteeship with three to six enterprises.

Researcher 01:21:28

Does that include the Jinyi Group?

Participant 01:21:30

Yes. Factory No.1, No.6 and No.2 belong to Jinyi Group; No.3 is Pingyuan Company; No.4 is "Shiyi"; No.5 is Fenjiang. You can say that Factories No.1 to No.5 have basically completed transformation, and the sector as a whole just cannot develop. As for the living block side having its own staff—there really aren't any now. The enterprise's shadow no longer exists. But the construction/works department is still in charge of this area. They think that, since our generation of old workers is still around, people will come to the living block department when something happens. Because we've not yet retired, everyone knows us and agrees to let us handle things. Back in the days of Factory No.1, anything to do with household goods or domestic matters came to us in the living block.

Take housing issues: if you sold your flat, we would still go and repair it for you. Now it's different: once a dwelling's maintenance fund is used up, we won't repair it any more. Whether penalties should be paid, whether to repair—those we don't deal with. In the past the state allowed that if my maintenance fund was exhausted, I could draw on yours.

But now the housing maintenance funds are under the housing administration department, not under us. For example, if someone asks me, "the community's maintenance fund is used up, can we still borrow as we did before?"—now we cannot.

Each person can use only their own maintenance fund. That's the "fairness" principle: if you use more, you make it up yourself. The state no longer allows mixing funds. If your fund is empty and you come to us to repair, and we refuse, you'll petition; but if we do repair, it's unreasonable, because the state cannot keep paying to repair the home you personally bought. Title has been fully transferred to you—you have the documents and the property is yours—so the state paying to repair it would be unjustifiable. In the past we would still step in; now we don't. If you ask why we don't repair after restructuring, that becomes an issue of "loss of state-owned assets". After many functions were separated, the affairs once managed by the state and enterprises still need someone to do them. If you do them, you risk accountability; if you don't, the public is unhappy. Doing good can still bring censure—people may say you caused a loss of state assets. If you aren't censured, you can serve the public. So this turns into a very real contradiction. It's one of the major problems we currently face—there are others, of course.

Researcher 01:23:56

This in fact shows that some functions cannot really be stripped away, because there's nobody to take them on.

Participant 01:24:10

Exactly. Anything else?

Researcher 01:24:11

Nothing else. Many thanks—what you've explained has really made it clear to me.

Participant 01:24:23

So, looking at the entire restructuring process, the government's breadth and depth of management now far exceed the past. It used to be just the "old ladies" organising an annual event or two; now it's different. Anything involving personal certificates, family relationships, birth, ageing, illness and death,

and administrative procedures is all handled by the community, with no connection to the enterprise. Previously those functions were all borne by the enterprise, carried out jointly by the enterprise and the government. But now, if you want to obtain authority and grasp resources, what you rely on are “cohesion”, “centripetal force” and “organising power”. Without those functional supports, nothing runs. If you raise your hand to summon workers now, they won’t come—they’re no longer your employees. But if the community issues a notice, they respond. For example, when heating or power supply needs repairs, people go to the community first. So many things that look like everyday trifles are ultimately underwritten by the community. For one of his projects, our enterprise no longer had any remit—our work over these past three years has been, one might say, greatly weakened.

Researcher 01:26:01

So the concrete front-of-house execution is now the responsibility of the community, and then you provide custodial management afterwards, is that right?

By “custodial management” you mean trusteeship of state-owned assets, with roughly a 30-year loan period.

In the past, both front-end and back-end work were handled by Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory; now the front-end belongs to the community, while the back-end decision-making and co-ordination are still handled by No.3, because you are acting as custodian of these properties.

Participant 01:26:24

Yes. We are now the custodians of state-owned assets, but the assets do not belong to us and we have no right of disposal.

In the past, when housing was allocated, once it was “allocated to you”, you owned it and the title became yours.

Now that won’t do. All properties are registered, accounted for and recorded.

If you want to allocate a Danwei to an individual—even by way of a one-off, bundled investment—it’s not permitted.

The state no longer allows the buying and selling of these old enterprise dwellings—the enterprises are under rectification.

At present they can only be let. Housing may be rented out but not sold; the rent policy is still under study.

Researcher 01:26:50

This is the compensatory-housing issue left over from the planned-economy period, right?

Participant 01:26:53

Yes. Much of the rent on these Danwei is in fact uncollectable. So the state adjusted the social functions: a portion of the dwellings were reclassified as “publicly managed Danwei”, meaning they are managed in a unified way by the public authorities. The rent on these Danwei is roughly in the low-teens of yuan per square metre. I can’t recall the exact figure, but this category is subject to audit. The audit authorities even came and asked us, “Why are you still charging such a low rent here?” They said market rents had already gone up and we ought to raise ours as well. But we had set this up as closed-loop internal management, part of the enterprise’s internal regime, and these properties had not been incorporated into the socialised administrative system. The administrative management departments said the pricing should be under their overall control so that they can adjust in line with the market. Our enterprise side was still operating under the old internal system, and raising rents was very difficult—any increase would trigger public discontent. Even now some are still at 0.8 yuan per square metre—this old legacy rent, which, frankly, no one is happy about.

Researcher 01:27:51

So our pricing authority is: we propose it internally, then submit to SASAC for approval?

Participant 01:28:03

Yes. For example, the current 0.3-yuan standard was set nationally many years ago. It’s from a bygone era.

If we want to adjust prices now, we must first report to SASAC. The Housing Administration Bureau has to assist with the procedures, and only after SASAC approves can it be implemented.

Researcher 01:28:12

In other words, we have to submit first and wait for approval before we can officially raise the rent?

Participant 01:28:16

That’s right. Without approval, we can’t raise it.

A lot of things now must go through government authorisation.
If SASAC or the government does not agree, we cannot act.

Researcher 01:28:23

I see. Thank you, General Manager Wu. Your explanation has clarified a lot.
In reality we don't have much capacity or substantive authority.

Participant 01:28:32

All we have left now is the capacity to "provide services".
But many service functions have already been progressively stripped out.
Take street cleaning and refuse collection—these are no longer done by the enterprise, and even items we once undertook are no longer handled by us.
The enterprise simply contributes some funds to the government, and the government hires people to carry out the work.
Especially in summer, when more people are doing laundry or taking showers, refuse volumes rise; street cleaning and routine maintenance—these mobile cleaning and repair tasks—are now all performed by the government. Our enterprise no longer takes part.

Researcher 01:29:07

After hearing all this, I feel I truly understand.
My visit is to study the Sanmian community's transformation across stages, particularly the management functions the enterprise has undertaken within the community and how its management model has evolved.
For us, this is essentially a change in "organisational nature", which will inevitably bring changes in spatial layout and, in turn, changes in the management model.
My research focus is precisely this—management model transformation.
Do you still have any functions related to the market and products?

Participant 01:29:53

We have a department called the Comprehensive Management Office, and entities like Tianhe Textile Company, the hospital, and the 120 Emergency Medical Centre are still in place.
That said, their management scope has basically been simplified. Apart from the Comprehensive Management Office still handling some concrete matters, the other Danwei just do some preliminary property management in Building No. 1. Our few departments mainly handle lettings and keep today's staff going by collecting rent. There's little participation in the market: mostly we look after two canteens and the shopfront Danwei at the back.
The Comprehensive Management Office deals with many issues, including allocation, management and disputes over shopfront Danwei. As for the kindergarten, although it is still under our name, in terms of social governance it has already been reassigned; the same with the hospital. The hospital chiefly provides medical services and is not much involved in concrete management; likewise for other Danwei, which basically no longer intervene in day-to-day work.
The Comprehensive Management Office also has to handle a great many historical issues left over across decades. Think about it: how many years has it been since the buildings of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory were put up? It's 2024 now—about seventy years, isn't it? From the factory's establishment and rise to prominence to the present, it has indeed come a very long way—how could there not be legacy problems?

Researcher 01:31:14

Indeed—viewed this way, quite a lot of the system has been retained.

Participant 01:31:19

Yes. To understand the process, in essence the functions have just been continually evolving.

Researcher 01:31:21

Thank you so much!

Case study interview transcript-Community leader 2

Participant 00:00

Those in charge of management certainly knew a lot about these matters. But not necessarily everything. Management today and management in the past are two completely different concepts.

Researcher 00:08

Yes, I would like to understand how our Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory managed the living block during the Danwei System period.

Participant 00:19

The living block in the past included the factory canteen, barber shop, and dormitories for singles—these were all part of the living block. In addition, there were guesthouses, hospitals, and schools, which were also included in the living block. Management in those days was carried out in sections. Although we belonged to the factory's establishment, the living block was also under the unified management of the factory. It was just that the functions were divided. That is to say, although it was generally called "under the management of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory", in fact, different departments were responsible. The living block was managed by a specific department, such as the "Living Department" or the "Living Service Company", which was an independent department. For example, production workshops had their own management systems, but living services were under the Living Department, which was a complete functional department.

Researcher 01:16

So, during the Danwei System period, what kind of role did the factory play in the development of the living block? Because now the Sanmian community functions mainly with a "service" orientation, but the living block in the past was operated by the factory, right?

Participant 01:35

Yes, it was mainly to provide logistical support for employees—all living services were concentrated in this area.

Researcher 01:41

So, the policy-making, service facilities, and management authority of the living block were all within the factory, right? Because the Sanmian community now only takes on the role of grassroots service provision.

Participant 01:55

At that time it was completely under the direct leadership of the factory.

Researcher 01:58

So the factory had direct management authority over the living block?

Participant 02:02

Yes, it was a kind of comprehensive supervision. If the living block had any needs, like repairing the bathhouse, it was always the factory's responsibility. The supporting facilities of the living block in those days were very complete—they had been in place since the factory was built. Later, as the economy shifted from the Danwei System to the market economy, these supporting facilities were gradually abolished.

Researcher 02:28

In your impression, in the 1950s and 1960s, how were residents' welfare benefits?

Participant 02:35

In the 1950s and 1960s I was still young. I was born in 1960, part of the “post-60s” generation.

Researcher 02:44

Yes, I mean what impression you had of welfare benefits at that time.

Participant 02:46

I think the welfare benefits back then were quite good. You see, under the Danwei System, many things were very convenient to use. Do you know why at that time everyone envied workers in the textile factory? People even preferred to marry someone working in the textile factory. Why? Because the welfare benefits were good, right? The wages were high, and in daily life people hardly had to worry about anything—the factory took care of it all. Now it's different. Now when others see you living here, they think you are from a “poor household”, you see? That's the difference between past and present. Nowadays people just say it's an “old block”.

Researcher 03:31

So, regarding welfare benefits, how were they reflected at the trade union level?

Participant 03:35

The trade union was not managed by the Living Department. Our trade union belonged to the Party branch or the production department system. But speaking of welfare, it really was quite good. The scope of welfare provided by the union was relatively wide.

Researcher 03:47

Roughly what did that include?

Participant 03:48

Basically, they gave out everything.

Researcher 03:50

Do you mean just during festivals, or also at ordinary times?

Participant 03:54

Every festival they gave things out. For example, oil, rice, flour. In summer they would give white sugar, sweets, you know? During Spring Festival they also gave cooking oil. We also had allowances for consolation. Welfare at that time really was excellent.

Researcher 04:12

So, during the Danwei System, what was the basis for trade union welfare distribution? Was it according to the factory's actual output—like apples if apples were produced, eggs if eggs were produced—or was there a unified standard?

Participant 04:27

No, trade union welfare could not exceed the budget. Funds were limited. The trade union funds didn't just appear out of nowhere. They were drawn proportionally from the factory's profits. After extracting a certain proportion, some had to be handed over to the Municipal Federation of Trade Unions, then the city would allocate part of it back. So you see, overall, trade union funds were limited. Basically, in winter each employee received a barrel of oil, in summer five jin of sugar each, something like that. Other welfare, like rewards for advanced individuals, that was another matter. If you wanted something extra, like a cup, you had to find your own way.

Researcher 05:19

So at that time, in the 1950s and 1960s, the welfare system covered all living guarantees, plus some additional rewards, correct?

Participant 05:26

Yes, but those additional benefits were also limited.

Researcher 05:28

Were these additional parts determined by production returns?

Participant 05:32

Yes. If production efficiency was poor, the funds were less. And part of the funds also came from employees' union fees. But generally, the fees paid by employees were fully returned—none was kept. For example, if your department paid 100 yuan, it would all be returned to your department, for you to use at your discretion. Authority was delegated to the grassroots, that's how it worked.

Researcher 05:57

After the Reform and Opening Up, especially from the 1980s and 1990s onwards, what changes took place in the management of the living block, or in neighbourhood management within the Sanmian community?

Participant 06:11

There were changes, but not particularly dramatic ones. The original system was still there, just gradually being adjusted.

Researcher 06:20

So, in terms of management style, there wasn't a major transformation?

Participant 06:22

Actually, the changes were quite significant. You see, today's residential blocks are nothing like what they used to be, right?

Researcher 06:28

Yes. I mean, after the 1980s and 1990s, weren't there also people from other factories allocated to live here? Later, after housing could be bought and sold, many non-state factory people also moved in. Do you think, in terms of management of the living block by the Sanmian community, or in relation to the management of the original infrastructure, were there new adjustments or changes?

Participant 06:59

It did indeed become more difficult to manage. Previously, the houses were almost all occupied by employees, but now, how many households are still former employees? Take our staircase entrance as an example: now very few of those living there are from the original factory.

Researcher 07:13

Then—

Participant 07:14

Now it's no longer the original people living here. Most of the houses were given to their children, or directly sold, you know? So by now, very few genuine old employees still live here, almost none. I think since the 1980s and 1990s, the management of the living block had already started to decline significantly. If you talk about the 1950s and 1960s, of course the management was good. At that time, stairwell hygiene was cleaned daily. Even the stairwell rubbish had designated cleaners. Back then, even the rubbish in the courtyard was the responsibility of the logistics department of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory.

Participant 07:57 (continuing)

Actually, they hired people through the logistics department—it wasn't done directly by logistics. That was under the Property Office. Not the living logistics, but the Living Property Department was responsible for hiring cleaners. You see? It seemed to be the "Patriotic Health Committee" within the community that hired them. In the past there was also an organisation called the Patriotic Health Committee. At that time, it really played an important role. Within the scope of the Sanmian community, environmental sanitation was basically all organised and arranged by the Patriotic Health Committee.

Researcher 08:32

So, was the Patriotic Health Committee responsible for supervision, or for actual management? For example, were hiring cleaners and sweeping the streets their responsibility?

Participant (no time code)

Both. At that time, sweeping and cleaning, all these costs were arranged and paid for by them.

Researcher 08:44

Was the Patriotic Health Committee a division under the Living Department, or independent?

Participant 08:51
It was a department.

Researcher 08:52
And the department's name was—?

Participant 08:54
It was called the Patriotic Health Committee.

Researcher 08:56
Was this Committee a subordinate unit under the Living Department?

Participant 08:57
Yes, its short name was the "Aiwei Committee". That's what we all called it back then.

Researcher 09:01
So the Property Office didn't manage these affairs?

Participant 09:04
The Property Office was only responsible for some parts, not everything. The Property Office mainly handled: rubbish disposal, collection of road lighting fees, and the daily cleaning of stairwells—those were under their jurisdiction. Stairwell sanitation had designated personnel, but their responsibilities were different from those of the Patriotic Health Committee. The Aiwei Committee really played a very significant role in the past.

Researcher 09:30
So hiring cleaners and arranging supervision were also under the Aiwei Committee, correct?
What do you think was the general direction of management and development of the living block after the Reform and Opening Up?

Participant 09:41
There was a direction, yes.

Researcher 09:42
Because after the Reform and Opening Up, society gradually moved towards marketisation, population mobility also increased, and our Sanmian community gradually opened up to the outside world. It was no longer a completely closed Danwei-based community. As a factory manager at that time, what do you think was the main direction in community management or construction?

Participant 10:01
At that time, the factory no longer directly managed community construction—this was all the responsibility of the Living Department. Our trade union didn't interfere much with the Living Department's affairs. We mainly focused on the bigger picture—major policies and large-scale organisational activities, not too many details. The trade union couldn't possibly manage every detail. Although final decisions were made by the factory leadership, the execution of details was mainly handled by the Living Department.

Researcher 10:27
So, in your view, did the work direction of the trade union change after the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 10:34
Yes, it did change in the 1980s and 1990s.

Researcher 10:39
Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, were there changes later on?

Participant 10:41
Yes, in terms of functions. Staff numbers also decreased, and the whole organisation was downsized.

Researcher 10:47
And how did its functions change?

Participant 10:49
The scope of responsibilities became broader.

Researcher 10:52
You mean the trade union's duties expanded?

Participant 10:53
Yes. For example, in the past our trade union office could seat a dozen people. Later, after 1989, it was gradually reduced. When people left, they weren't replaced. Suddenly one person had to manage two, three, or even five different areas. The workload increased—there were fewer people, but the tasks didn't decrease. Overall, the core function of the trade union didn't change: it was still to serve the ordinary people, to serve the workers. The trade union itself never had any special status—its role was clear: to provide benefits for employees, to carry out mass work, mainly relying on enthusiasm.

Researcher 11:35
After the Reform and Opening Up, the community gradually opened to the outside. In this process, did we encounter any difficulties, or achieve any successes? Because after the reforms, other Danwei people gradually moved into the living block, including outsiders, self-employed households, and those who bought or rented houses—these were no longer our original factory employees. In this process, do you think there were practical problems?

Participant 12:13
The main problem was: the population became too mixed, not as simple as before. When I was young, our family lived in the "Little Three-storey" block, and in summer we never locked the door. At that time relationships between people were very simple. Later, it gradually became impossible. After the 1980s, things became chaotic. Really chaotic, you know?

Researcher (no time code)
Do you think there were any achievements after the community gradually opened and the outside population increased?

Participant 12:53
I don't drink water now, I just had some at home. As for achievements—honestly, they don't have much to do with me. I just live my own life. I can't really say there were "achievements".

Researcher 13:02
Do you think the quality of life improved? For example, living conditions, convenience of daily life?

Participant 13:06
Apart from shopping becoming more convenient, in other aspects I think things were okay—acceptable. There were also more apartment buildings, and housing conditions improved to some extent. Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, welfare benefits should be considered to have improved somewhat.

Participant 13:21
But at that time, what welfare benefits were there?

Researcher 13:23
Do you mean in the 1980s? What were welfare benefits like then?

Participant 13:24
By the 1980s and 1990s, there were basically no welfare benefits anymore. Because the factory's performance was poor, gradually the apartment buildings were built, but many of the benefits that used to exist were cut. Anything that could be cut was cut. That earlier welfare model was all abolished. Later, the factory started restructuring and reorganisation—that was around 2006. Around 2006 the Sanmian community was established, right? The Chang'anpu area also started to be redeveloped. The current Sanmian community was established around 2006; before that there was no such "Community System". Before 2006, this place was still under the Danwei System, directly managed by the factory. There was a Residents' Committee, but it wasn't a real "community" in the proper sense. After restructuring, it was merged into the community governance system. What used to be called the Residents' Committee was then incorporated into community management.

Researcher 14:01

After Sanmian was incorporated into the Community System, post-2006, the Sanmian company still existed. What role do you think it played within the community?

Participant 14:29

I wouldn't know about that. Around 2006, Sanmian's functions had already been separated. What role could it still play? Basically, it no longer participated in concrete affairs.

Researcher 14:36

And what about the trade union? Did the trade union's work stop after restructuring and reorganisation?

Participant 14:41

How could it stop working? The trade union has always continued to operate. The trade union still exists today. Although our enterprise was restructured, the trade union was never abolished. I myself have been retired for over ten years, but even if there was only one person left in the trade union, it would still be there.

Researcher 14:55

After restructuring, did the content of the trade union's work change?

Participant 15:01

I wouldn't know. After I retired, I wasn't very clear about it.

Researcher 15:04

After you retired, did you still receive trade union welfare benefits?

Participant (no time code)

No. In the past, when we were still working, if old employees retired, during Spring Festival or other holidays we would still visit them and bring greetings. But when we ourselves retired, this welfare no longer existed.

Researcher (no time code)

How do you view the changes in the community across these periods? For example, changes in residents' living conditions, or changes in management and trade union benefits? Were these changes simply a matter of "less and less", or were there other aspects?

Participant (no time code)

Welfare gradually disappeared, little by little. In the end everything became marketised. What welfare was there? None at all. The issue of "welfare" no longer existed. The old staff canteen was also demolished. On the site of the original canteen, now a tall building has been erected. You see that tall building now—it was built on the foundations of the canteen.

Researcher 16:04

May I ask, when the public-owned factory still existed, apart from distributing welfare and organising activities, did the trade union have other functions?

Participant 16:21

Of course. There were also labour competitions. And assistance for employees in difficulty, poverty alleviation work, and funding programmes for poor university students. All these had corresponding work arrangements at the time, and there was also a Women Workers' Group.

Researcher 16:37

And after the Community System came into place, did these tasks become the responsibility of the community?

Participant 16:44

That was because the service targets were different. The trade union only managed employees, while the community managed residents. After restructuring, the two no longer had any connection—they were unrelated and not part of the same system. Yes, clearly they were two sets of personnel and two systems. To let the trade union manage residents was impossible—it simply couldn't be done. Now all these things are handled by the community, the Residents' Committee, and the Sub-district Office. These are two separate systems; they are no longer the same thing.

Researcher 17:10
Yes, I understand what you mean.

Participant 17:11
Now they are no longer part of the same system. The trade union still manages people within the factory—the service targets of the trade union are “employees”. Once you retire, you no longer belong to the trade union’s service group, you see? Now the trade union has introduced something like a “One-Card Pass”, but retirees cannot apply for it—it only serves those still in employment. The trade union’s function is to serve employees, not residents. This distinction must be made clear, do you understand? For example, even at the Sub-district Office or in Honghe there are trade union organisations, but they only serve employees within the Sub-district Office system. As for residents in the community, they are not their service targets. You see, these are “two separate lines”—they no longer intersect, you understand?

Researcher 18:20
And what about after the enterprise went bankrupt and was restructured?

Participant 18:23
Even if the enterprise went bankrupt or was restructured, the trade union still continued to serve employees. Although the numbers decreased—sometimes only one person remained—the trade union still had to be preserved, still had to continue functioning. Trade union organisations cannot be abolished. Now the city still has a Trade Union Organisation Department, you know? It has nothing whatsoever to do with the community system—these are two completely independent lines. Do you understand?

Researcher 18:46
I understand, good. Thank you. I’ll pause here for now.

Case study interview transcript-Community leader 3

Researcher 00:02
After the Reform and Opening Up, our neighbourhood management was essentially about changes in the management of the production block and the living block. But the overall management policy did not seem to change much, is that right?

Participant 00:10
Yes, basically there were no particularly significant changes.

Researcher 00:14
From the 1980s and 1990s to after 2000, especially before 2006 when it became the Community System, although the number of outsiders increased, overall there were not too many major difficulties in community management. However, indeed, as the population grew, the pressure on cleaning services increased somewhat. The management methods were basically the same as before: the Property Office was still responsible for basic repairs, rubbish removal, environmental cleaning and so on in the Sanmian community, while the Residents’ Committee was responsible for issuing basic certificates and neighbourhood coordination. This was the same as before. In addition, after the Reform and Opening Up, outsiders also began to enjoy some of the basic infrastructure services of the Sanmian living block, such as the staff hospital. But could they also attend the kindergarten and primary school? If they were purely outsiders, not Sanmian employee families?

Participant2 01:53
At the beginning, it was the model of “enterprises running social services”. That is to say, the enterprise set up kindergartens, hospitals, canteens and other supporting services. These facilities were basically “for insiders only, not outsiders”. The service targets were mainly Sanmian employees and their families. For example, in the Sanmian living block, some families were “dual-worker families”, meaning both husband and wife worked at Sanmian; some were “single-worker families”, where one worked at Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory and the other at Zhengzhou No.4 Cotton Textile Factory or

Zhengzhou No.6 Cotton Textile Factory, but they also lived in the Sanmian living block. Their children could choose to attend the kindergarten of No.3, No.4 or No.6 Cotton Textile Factory. If they thought the kindergarten at No.3 was better, they could send their children there. Because their housing was allocated by No.3, and their household registration was there, they had that choice.

Researcher 03:11
And what about outsiders?

Participant2 03:13
At first, in principle they were not allowed. But with economic development, especially after moving from the planned economy to the market economy, outsiders gradually were able to send their children to the No.3 kindergarten as well.

Researcher 03:28
And what about primary school? Could they also attend?

Participant2 03:32
Primary school was a bit different from kindergarten. The primary school originally was also managed by Sanmian, but before restructuring it had already been handed over to the Education Bureau, no longer under Sanmian management. After the Reform and Opening Up, the model of “enterprises running social services” was gradually abolished, because the enterprise’s burden was too heavy. Functions such as schools and hospitals were gradually transferred to the government. Sanmian Primary School was one of the first to be transferred. Now it is called “Zhengzhou Zhongyuan District Jiànshè Road No.3 Primary School”. Its service targets were not limited to children of the Sanmian living block—children from the No.4 and No.5 Cotton Textile Factories nearby could also enrol. So during the Danwei System, Sanmian not only focused on production but also assumed the function of “running social services”, playing the role of a “general manager”—managing everything, including education, healthcare and welfare.

Researcher 04:56
So the factory acted as a “general manager”.

Participant2 04:58
Yes, the specific daily affairs were managed by the Living Department.

Researcher 05:02
So during the Danwei System, all welfare, organisational relations, infrastructure and so on, which now belong to government management, were at that time all managed uniformly by Sanmian. It played the role of “running social services”. After the Reform and Opening Up, production and living gradually became separated.

Participant2 05:26
Yes, these functions could only be gradually transferred to society.

Researcher 05:27
So part of the functions were transferred to the government, but the basic operation of the living block was still temporarily managed internally by the factory’s Living Department, right? From what I understand, later after the factory went bankrupt and moved into the Community System, Sanmian company actually still retained some management functions under the current system framework. For example, wasn’t this building later taken back by Sanmian company?

Participant2 05:58
Yes, this building was originally the property of Sanmian company, that’s right.

Researcher 06:01
But weren’t these two floors later transferred to the community?

Participant2 06:05
Yes, I later gave these two floors to the community.

Researcher 06:07
Because originally they were still under Sanmian company’s management, and the kindergarten was also managed by Sanmian company. Do you know, after the Sanmian living block was turned into the Community System, what role Sanmian company now plays in the community?

Participant2 06:23

Sanmian company is now equivalent to the former Living Department functions, about 70% of which have already gradually been taken over by the Sanmian community. Now many procedures are handled by the community, and the company—that is, the Living Department—no longer participates in this management.

Researcher 06:41

So now it is gradually withdrawing, but still bears some responsibilities, correct?

Participant2 06:46

Yes, it is basically carried out according to the directives of the higher authorities, following the requirements from above.

Researcher 06:53

So the current directive is that we gradually withdraw.

Participant2 06:58

Yes, it's a gradual withdrawal.

Researcher 06:59

So we no longer recruit new people?

Participant2 07:02

Basically we no longer recruit new staff—it is a gradual withdrawal. But as for the hospital, if they need to hire people, they still have to.

Researcher 07:11

Isn't the hospital now under the management of Daqiao Hospital?

Participant2 07:13

That was handed over to Daqiao Hospital. They have a cooperative relationship. The hospital is still a hospital, but it now operates under the name of Daqiao Hospital. They still have to recruit staff, because the hospital must continue running—it cannot simply stop hiring. But as far as Sanmian is concerned, it basically no longer deals with these matters, it is gradually withdrawing.

Researcher 00:00

Zhongjian—that is, the China State Construction Bureau, the Daqiao Bureau—is now in charge of management. You see, they are doing construction work there again. I heard they are preparing to build a CT room.

Participant2 00:16

Why do these things have to be entrusted to other Danwei?

Researcher 00:20

It's state policy.

Participant2 00:22

Mm.

Researcher 00:23

It's a matter of policy. From my impression, it's not the first time—it was always managed under the Central Hospital's trusteeship.

Participant2 00:39

Do you know what policy this is?

Researcher 00:41

It's national, you can't really figure it out. Just like education, which is now managed in a group system—hospitals are the same. You see, the Central Hospital also has an East District and a West Development Zone, doesn't it?

Participant2 00:54

So now the No.3 Factory Staff Hospital is divided into several different modules, managed by different Danwei?

Researcher 01:03

No, it is entrusted as a whole. They just use the name.

Participant2 01:08

So who exactly manages the Sanmian Staff Hospital now?

Researcher 01:15

The one really in charge now seems to be Daqiao Hospital. They pay money to Daqiao Hospital, and then Daqiao Hospital strengthens management.

Participant2 01:24

Are there other Danwei managing other parts?

Researcher 01:29

Not that I've heard of. They mentioned something about inspections, but it's not clear.

Participant2 01:41

I roughly understand.

Researcher 07:32

And the kindergarten is still managed by Sanmian company now, right?

Participant2 07:36

Yes, the kindergarten is still under Sanmian company's management.

Researcher 07:37

Apart from the kindergarten, what else does Sanmian company currently manage? For example, I've heard that heating fees are still collected by Sanmian Property and then submitted in a lump sum, is that correct?

Participant2

Yes.

Participant2 08:08

And part of the rubbish disposal fees used to be deducted from the wages of retired employees by Sanmian company, but now it can no longer be deducted—it has stopped. Now residents just pay it themselves.

Researcher 00:00

At present, the Party A is basically the Cotton Spinning Sub-district Office. It acts as an intermediary, introducing Jiatai Property to promote the renovation of old residential blocks.

Participant2 00:09

The state requires that a new property company must be brought in to promote the renovation and renewal of residential blocks. So, under the guidance of the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office, Jiatai Property was introduced.

Researcher 00:24

And your No.3 Factory Property, as the trustee of state-owned assets in this area, hired Jiatai Property. In the agreement you signed, Jiatai Property is Party B, and you are Party A, correct?

Participant2 00:35

Yes, we are Party A, they are Party B, and there is also a supervisory party, which is the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office.

Researcher 00:40

And in the future, if...

Participant2 00:42

In the future, as society develops, since we were originally a state-owned enterprise with loans, later perhaps a new company will be established. At that time, the new company will sign an agreement with Jiatai. Because the Sanmian living block in this area belongs to state-owned assets, we don't yet know what the new company will be called—it could be something like Xicheng Investment Company, or it could be another company. They would then sign an agreement with Jiatai, essentially paying Jiatai a certain fee—for example, you're responsible for road cleaning, rubbish disposal, so much per month, and I'll pay you that much.

Researcher 01:24

I see.

Participant2 01:26

Yes, that's how social development will move forward.

Researcher 01:28

I see.

Participant2 01:29

You have to understand, this is about not allowing state-owned assets to be lost. They are state-owned assets. In the past, we were acting as trustees of state-owned assets, though we also had loans. In the past we also had higher-level departments—this was all part of the management framework on behalf of the company, that's how it worked.

Participant2 08:08

And part of the rubbish disposal fee used to be deducted from the wages of retired employees by Sanmian company, but now it can't be deducted any more—it has stopped. Now residents all pay it themselves.

Researcher 00:00

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In the future, as society develops, since we were originally a state-owned enterprise with loans, later a new company may be set up. At that time, the new company will sign an agreement with Jiatai. Because the Sanmian living block in this area belongs to state-owned assets, we don't yet know the name of the new company—it could be Xicheng Investment Company, or another. They would then sign an agreement with Jiatai, essentially paying Jiatai a fee—for example, you handle road cleaning, rubbish disposal, so much per month, and I'll pay you that much.

Researcher 01:24

I see.

Participant2 01:26

Yes, that's the direction of social development in the future.

Researcher 01:28
I see.

Participant2 01:29
You need to know, this is about not allowing state-owned assets to be lost. They are state-owned assets. In the past, we were essentially trustees of state-owned assets, though we also had loans. And we also had higher-level departments—this was all part of the company's management structure, that's how it worked.

Researcher 03:02
So, at that time, we actually had our own repair and construction team?

Participant2 03:08
We called it the repair team, yes, the repair team. Just like under the Infrastructure Division, there was also a repair team—that's how it was.

Researcher
I see. For example, now if you wanted to allocate money for something like landscaping in May, we had a landscaping team—if the landscaping team hired a certain number of workers, we paid them their wages. So previously the expenses were handled by the Living Services Department. The Living Services Department was responsible for allocating funds to various sections, and then paying staff or outsourcing as needed. The Living Services Department coordinated it all. Yes, and the money came from the factory.

Participant2 03:53
That money wasn't from the factory—it was paid out by the Living Services Department. As for how they handled it later, I'm not sure. Later there were also residential blocks—for example, rubbish collection might have been handled by the Sanmian Property Office. Later on, what was it called, there was also a community called the Electric Power No.4 Community. They were given the funds, and then that community hired rubbish collectors. You see, for rubbish collection, they'd just say: how much does it cost? I'll give you that much.

Researcher 04:29
And is it still like that now? So essentially you give the community the money, and then the community pays the property company?

Participant2 04:34
Yes, the money is given to the community, and the community itself coordinates with the property company. They are no longer involved in signing the agreements, only in paying the money. The No.3 Factory's property company just pays the money to that place, that's all.

Researcher 04:47
Wasn't there also an East Sanmian community later on? Weren't there a few residential buildings there that implemented residents' self-governance and refused to let Jiatai Property in?

Participant2 04:59
I don't know about that place.

Researcher 05:01
There were a few buildings that set up a residents' self-governance organisation.

Participant2 05:06
Are you talking about the one at Electric Power No.4? The Yiqian Road community, with the Xin Yilu family compound of dozens of households? I forget.

Researcher 05:16
Anyway, he told me the other day which one it was, but I haven't seen it yet.

Participant2 05:19
You'd better confirm the exact name, and see where it comes from.

Researcher 05:23

He said that in those few communities the residents firmly refused to pay property fees and would not let Jiatai Property in.

Participant2 05:31

Then maybe it's not part of the No.3 Factory—could it be somewhere else?

Researcher 05:34

It now falls under the jurisdiction of East Sanmian community and West Sanmian community.

Participant2 05:37

It belongs to East Sanmian community.

Researcher 05:38

So it's managed by East Sanmian community, and then East Sanmian community helped them organise a residents' self-governance body. They managed it themselves and refused to let Jiatai Property in.

Participant2 05:47

I really don't know about that. Whether this is the case, I don't know.

Researcher 05:54

I'll check with the community staff later to confirm.

Participant2 05:56

I don't know about this, so I can't say carelessly. Yes, I don't know.

Researcher 08:10

So now Sanmian Property Company no longer collects any fees at all? Because I heard earlier that Sanmian Property Company deducted 6.5 yuan and then paid that money to Jiatai Property. Is that still the case?

Participant2 08:34

No. Let me explain how this "deducting 6.5 yuan" situation came about—it was related to the heating renovation. Right now, the heating renovation in the Sanmian living block has not yet met the number-of-households standard required by the Heating Company. According to the regulations, for example, if there are 10 buildings, the Heating Company requires at least 95% of them to have completed household heating renovations. Only after this renovation is completed can the heating system be transferred to the Heating Company.

Currently this is handled by the logistics department, which is now called Anguang Xingye Company. If we reach this renovation standard, then the heating system can be handed over to the Heating Company. It's not that we insist on collecting the heating fees—it's because the Heating Company won't take it over. Since the renovation proportion hasn't met their requirement, they won't accept it. Actually, we would prefer to hand it over to the Heating Company.

Researcher 09:45

So you mean that in our living block, the buildings haven't yet all reached the 95% completion rate?

Participant2 09:55

It's not that a particular building hasn't met the standard, but that the system as a whole hasn't been completed.

Researcher 09:59

And when you say "system", what exactly do you mean?

Participant2 10:01

For example, one building can be a system, or one unit can be a system. Researcher 10:07
But there are still some buildings that haven't been renovated.

Participant2 10:09

Yes, since they haven't been renovated, the Heating Company won't take them. So Sanmian has to collect the fees first and manage them temporarily.

Researcher 10:17

And then after collecting, you hand them over to the Heating Company?

Participant2 10:19

Yes, Sanmian first collects the heating fees, and then hands them over to the Heating Company.

Researcher 10:23

So this part of the work won't be transferred to Jiatai Property?

Participant2 10:29

It's not that we don't intend to transfer it. The situation now is this: whether it's Sanmian company or the Heating Company, Sanmian actually wants to hand everything over to the Heating Company, right? But the Heating Company has a requirement: if the renovation ratio isn't high enough, they won't accept it. That's the situation. For the No.3 Factory company, the original idea was to transfer it all, so they wouldn't have to take on this responsibility. But since it can't yet be transferred, maintenance still has to be handled, right?

Researcher 11:02

So at present, maintenance is still managed by the No.3 Factory?

Participant2 11:04

Yes, both heating fee collection and maintenance are managed by the No.3 Factory.

Researcher 11:06

That includes maintenance of the heating system?

Participant2 11:08

Yes, I'm talking about the heating system. Since Sanmian collects the fees, residents naturally assume that if there's a problem at home, they should come to us. As long as you're the one collecting the money, you're considered the responsible party. Currently the fee collected is 300 yuan, and the property collects it. Actually, we don't want to be collecting it. Originally the Heating Company could allow residents to pay directly at the bank or online. Once the payment is made, it's the Heating Company's responsibility.

But if we collect the 300 yuan here, then we must allocate staff to handle collection, management, and maintenance. The original plan was to gradually hand all this over to the Heating Company, but since the proportion hasn't been met, they won't take it. For example, over at the Public Security Bureau, once the heating was changed to one meter per household, the Heating Company accepted it, right? Then the residents paid directly to the Power Supply Bureau, and the factory no longer had to use manpower to collect the money.

So it's not that we insist on collecting this money.

Researcher 12:28

So at present, No.3 Factory Property is still taking on those property management responsibilities that cannot yet be transferred, and continues to be responsible.

Participant2 12:41

Yes, it's because the standards haven't been met—some institutional requirements haven't been achieved, and some technical conditions aren't up to standard. So Sanmian Property still has to collect fees, manage, maintain, and invest manpower and resources.

Researcher 12:57

Why wasn't the renovation completed at that time? Was it a problem with the buildings, or because the factory went bankrupt before it was finished?

Participant2 13:05

It's not that simple—it's mainly an issue with the residents. Some residents didn't want the renovation. All kinds of notices had already been posted, publicity was done. As far as I know, the No.6 Factory reached about 95% renovation and was already handed over to the Heating Company. No.1, No.4, and No.5 Factories have not yet been handed over because the renovation proportion is not sufficient.

Researcher 13:29

And why didn't some residents want the renovation? Where was the resistance?

Participant2 13:34

There were mainly two reasons. The first was that some residents had just finished decorating their homes. Their original heating system was connected in series, with pipes running through the flats above and below. To renovate meant construction in their homes, drilling holes, damaging the decoration, affecting the appearance—so they didn't want it. That was one situation.

Another situation was that some residents simply didn't live here, so whether it was renovated or not didn't matter to them.

Researcher 14:11

So for them it didn't matter, and they didn't object either.

Participant2 14:15

Yes, and there's another situation. These people are rare, but their impact is big. They freeload on the heating. They refuse the renovation, but they draw heat from the upstairs pipes. They don't want to pay, and they don't want the renovation either.

Researcher 14:33

I'd like to ask, was this renovation project funded by the factory?

Participant2 14:41

No, the renovation was paid for by the residents themselves.

Researcher 14:42

So they didn't want to pay this money.

Participant2 14:44

Exactly, they didn't want to pay. For example, the renovation cost was about sixty yuan per square metre. In fact, when the Heating Company renovated old residential blocks, the renovation standard for the factory blocks wasn't set very high. Sixty yuan per square metre was already quite cheap. Outside in other places it cost even more. But some people still refused to pay. You can't force them, and no one is going to rush to renovate for you. If the renovation proportion doesn't reach a certain threshold, then the whole system can't be renovated.

Researcher 15:09

So originally our residential block did have heating, right? This project is just for renovation?

Participant2 15:17

Yes, there was heating. When the buildings were first constructed, heating pipes were installed. Some gas pipes were laid across the rooftops, and after more than twenty years of exposure to the elements they've aged. A lot of sediment has built up inside the pipes, reducing heating efficiency—so they should be renovated. The Heating Company required the renovation for two reasons: first, the pipes were old; second, without "one meter per household", they couldn't properly charge fees. It wasn't easy to control or manage. Previously, it was one meter per floor, and the gas meters were all connected in series.

Researcher 15:54

And before parts of production and living were handed over to society, was our property department responsible for heating?

Participant2 16:07

We were responsible for supplying it on behalf of others.

Researcher 16:11

So before it was handed over, including back then, was heating actually provided by the Heating Company, with the fees collected by the factory? And at that time it counted as a factory welfare benefit?

Participant2 16:23

At the very beginning, the factory gave heating subsidies.

Researcher 16:27

So the factory paid part of it, and residents paid part of it—this was when the enterprise was still in charge?

Participant2 16:31

Yes, before restructuring, the enterprise provided a certain subsidy.

Researcher 16:34

Until what year did this welfare continue?

Participant2 16:39

It seems subsidies continued into the 1980s—at the beginning they were always there.

Researcher 16:42

So from the founding of the factory until before the Reform and Opening Up, there were always these subsidies. Then after the reforms...

Participant2 16:49

Gradually, as socialisation happened, the subsidies disappeared. According to the Heating Company's requirements, there were no more subsidies. Once the enterprise was gone, who was left to subsidise?

Researcher 17:00

But the enterprise didn't go bankrupt immediately—it was only reorganised in 2000, wasn't it?

Participant2 17:03

It had already gone bankrupt.

Researcher 17:04

So in the 1980s and 1990s...

Participant2 17:06

Yes, during the 1980s and 1990s, before the enterprise completely went bankrupt.

Researcher 17:07

At that time there were already plans to gradually socialise these services?

Participant2 17:09

Yes. During socialisation, the enterprise was still covering part of the subsidy. Some residents didn't actually know this—they always thought the enterprise was just collecting money from them. But in fact the enterprise was still subsidising them.

Researcher 17:22

So the subsidy had existed in the past, and was gradually cancelled. Now, with heating renovation, residents have to pay themselves, but some refuse. Some of the work has been done, but some people just resolutely refuse to renovate, and nothing can be done. Before the enterprise went bankrupt, were heating subsidies still in place?

Participant2 17:47

No, they were no longer provided.

Researcher 17:49

So after the heating renovation, residents no longer received subsidies, and the prices were no longer reduced. After that point, did other welfare benefits from the factory also begin to decline gradually? Was this after they were handed over to society?

Participant2 18:17

Yes, gradually all those disappeared too—welfare benefits were completely gone.

Researcher 00:00

For the old residential block renovations in No.3, No.4, and No.5 Factories, were they all declared through the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office?

Participant2 00:08

Yes, all those reforms of management systems, as well as specific infrastructure upgrades, all had to be reported by the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office to the higher-level departments.

Researcher 00:20

So was it the Sub-district Office opposite that managed them? Or was that area under another Sub-district Office? You mentioned the Jiànshè Road Sub-district Office?

Participant2 00:38

The residential block is under whichever Sub-district Office, then that Sub-district Office is responsible for declaring the projects. These renovation projects are all handled by the Sub-district Office.

Researcher 00:38

I see.

Participant2 00:39

It's not declared by the property company.

Researcher 00:43

I had thought the property company applied for them itself.

Participant2 00:45

No, generally they are proposed either by residents' representatives or decided by higher authorities. The higher authorities designate which renovation projects the Sub-district Office must undertake, and they are all reported in the name of the Sub-district Office. For example, how to renovate roads, how to upgrade facilities. In the past, some areas like No.1 and No.6 Factories didn't undergo renovations because they belonged to Qinling Sub-district Office. The Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office previously renovated not only roads but also put heating pipes underground, and buried all the cables and wires. Now even the small communication cables in the middle Sanmian area have been put underground—I mean communication cables, not power cables. You should be able to see these renovations, right? These were all declared by the residential blocks under the Sub-district Office's jurisdiction. For example, the heating pipes in No.1 and No.6 Factories weren't buried, but in No.3, No.4, and No.5 Factories they were, because those areas were under the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office.

Researcher 02:00

I see. So the community, as a dispatched agency of the Sub-district Office, is responsible for assisting the Sub-district Office in carrying out these specific projects. The community participates because it works under the leadership of the Sub-district Office.

Participant2 02:18

Yes, it is a dispatched agency of the Sub-district Office.

Researcher 02:20

So even the old residential block renovations shown on TV were applied for by the Sub-district Offices managing those communities, not by the enterprises themselves. Because most enterprises no longer exist—many went bankrupt or were restructured. The enterprises basically don't exist anymore. So the applications are made in the name of the Sub-district Office or the community under the Sub-district Office. That's one way. Another way is when the higher authorities directly designate which projects the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office should do that year. How those decisions are made above, we don't really know. But what I know is that No.3, No.4, and No.5 were handled like this—renovations were undertaken in residential blocks under the jurisdiction of the Sub-district Office.

In the past, when children attended kindergarten under the enterprise, the fees were very low, right? But once transferred to society, they became the same as public fees, because the enterprise withdrew from that role.

Researcher 18:40

Before primary schools were transferred to the Education Bureau, when we attended primary school, were there still miscellaneous fees? Because compulsory education meant no tuition, but there were miscellaneous fees. I'm not too sure—were they collected?

Participant2 19:03
Yes, the kindergarten hasn't been transferred out yet.

Researcher 19:05
So it hasn't been sold off?

Participant2 19:08
No, it can't be sold. It's called a "transfer", transferring it into social management. Since it hasn't been transferred, it remains as it was. But even if it hasn't been transferred, it still has to charge fees.

Researcher 19:14
Yes.

Participant2 19:17
It hasn't been transferred.

Researcher 19:18
Not yet transferred. But was there originally a plan to transfer it?

Participant2 19:22
Yes, originally all of them were meant to be transferred.

Researcher 19:26
And currently?

Participant2 19:28
It still hasn't been transferred. These departments were all products of the planned economy. After moving to the current system, the idea was to gradually transfer schools, hospitals, and kindergartens into social management. Some departments have been transferred, others haven't—that's the situation. Primary schools have been transferred, but kindergartens haven't.

Researcher 20:01
I see. So it's simply that if it could be transferred, it was transferred, and if it couldn't be, it remained.

Participant2 20:06
Yes. If it hasn't been transferred, the fees still remain under the original management. For example, even if the kindergarten hasn't been transferred, its fees must follow the standards set by the Education Bureau. Those standards must be approved by the higher supervisory authorities. You can't just decide the fees yourself.

Researcher
Yes, that's right.

Participant2
All our fees here must be approved by higher authorities, such as the Price Bureau or the Education Bureau. Which department specifically approves them, we don't really know, because we're not part of that system and don't fully understand their management authority. For example, if the Price Bureau or Education Bureau approves a specific fee standard, then they can only charge according to that standard—they can't charge arbitrarily. Even though the kindergarten hasn't been transferred, its fee standards are still reported to and approved by higher-level authorities.

Researcher 21:08
I understand. Now, regarding the rubbish disposal fee—you just mentioned that it can no longer be deducted, right?

Participant2 21:16
It's not that it couldn't be deducted. For rubbish disposal, we never charged a property fee, only a rubbish disposal fee. So in the past, for both active and retired workers, we only charged 6 yuan per month. Back then, wages were issued through the Industrial and Commercial Bank, including pensions. Each factory had an account set up with a specific bank. Our factory's partner was the Industrial and Commercial Bank. Every worker's wage account was with that bank. So the 6-yuan rubbish disposal fee for both active and retired staff was deducted directly from that account.

Researcher 22:07

So it could be deducted directly from their wage accounts at the Industrial and Commercial Bank.

Participant2 22:08

Yes, that's how it worked. The enterprise signed agreements with the bank when you were employed, so your wage account could be used for automatic deductions. Every month, 6 yuan was deducted automatically. But think about it—nowadays with how much prices have gone up, 6 yuan is nowhere near enough, but still only 6 yuan was taken.

Later on, pensions started being paid through social security cards. The issuing banks were no longer the same—some were Bank of Communications, some Zhengzhou Bank, some Industrial and Commercial Bank. Once the cards changed, pensions weren't necessarily paid through our old accounts, so we couldn't manage the deductions anymore.

Researcher 23:09

So now their wages are no longer paid by the factory, right?

Participant2

Correct, not by the factory. After the land reform, pensions were issued centrally by society, and the factory could no longer deduct that fee from the wage accounts.

Participant2 23:24

You'd need to check exactly which year this started—I don't remember clearly. It was when social security cards were first issued. Once those cards came in, pensions went straight to them, and deductions couldn't be made.

Researcher 23:43

So now it's impossible to deduct the 6.5-yuan rubbish disposal fee from pensions.

Participant2 23:50

Yes, it can't be deducted anymore.

Researcher 23:52

So now all retired workers are in this situation?

Participant2 23:56

It should have been in the past two years. I recall that a few years ago, some retired workers still had two accounts for their pensions—not two separate salaries, but the same wage paid through two channels: one was the social security card, the other was their old Industrial and Commercial Bank passbook. Around 70–80% of retired staff were fairly conscientious—they would deposit some money into their old account so the 6 yuan rubbish fee could still be deducted. You see, it was only about 70 or 100 yuan per year—under 100 yuan. They would deposit a bit of money into their passbook in advance to cover it. But later, banks gradually stopped providing this deduction service. So now everyone has to pay the fee themselves, according to the unified arrangement.

Researcher 25:05

So originally, No.3 Factory did handle deductions, right?

Participant2 25:09

Yes, originally deductions were made.

Researcher 25:11

And now, because it can't be deducted, people just pay it themselves. And this money is paid to No.3 Factory Property?

Participant2 25:17

Yes, it's paid to No.3 Factory. There's a property payment office specifically in charge of it.

Researcher 25:20

Not paid to Jiatai Property?

Participant2 25:21

No, it's paid to No.3 Factory Property payment office.

Researcher 25:24

So outsiders also go there to pay? Then No.3 Factory Property transfers the money to Jiatai?

Participant2 25:28

Yes, whether original residents or outsiders, they all go to the No.3 Factory Property office to pay. Then No.3 Factory Property transfers it to Jiatai.

Participant2 25:32

Yes, then it's handed over to Jiatai.

Researcher 25:33

So why hasn't this part of the work been directly transferred to Jiatai?

Participant2 25:37

It's not that we don't want to hand it over—we would like to, but they won't take it.

Researcher 25:42

Why won't they take it? Tell me why.

Participant2 25:44

It's hard to explain clearly, but I roughly know. For example, if 300 households pay fees, the total might be 10,000 yuan. But rubbish disposal costs 20,000 yuan. So Sanmian company has to cover the extra 10,000 yuan. In other words, we signed a rubbish disposal contract with Jiatai. Each month, we have to pay Jiatai 20,000 yuan.

Researcher 26:09

So the 20,000 yuan is paid by Sanmian to Jiatai?

Participant2 26:11

Yes, Sanmian pays Jiatai 20,000 yuan each month, but only 10,000 yuan is collected from the residents.

Researcher 26:14

So Sanmian makes up the missing 10,000 yuan itself?

Participant2 26:16

Exactly, that's it. You understand now? So we would like to transfer it, but Jiatai doesn't want to take it.

Researcher 26:21

If you transferred this work, Jiatai would no longer get that subsidy of 10,000 yuan.

Participant2 26:23

Yes, they would lose the subsidy. I just gave 10,000 yuan as an example—the exact figure I don't know, you'd need to check the financial accounts.

Researcher 26:29

So after Jiatai was brought in by the Sub-district Office for the old residential block renovation, No.3 Factory Property signed an agreement with them, which included subsidising the rubbish disposal fee?

Participant2 26:36

It wasn't us who brought them in. Jiatai was introduced by the Sub-district Office during the renovation of the old blocks.

Researcher 26:42

And later No.3 Factory Property signed an agreement with Jiatai, taking responsibility for rubbish disposal costs.

Participant2 26:45

Yes, so if we handed everything over directly to Jiatai, they wouldn't receive the subsidy.

Participant2 26:55

In effect, they take charge of road cleaning and rubbish disposal for us. However much money they

require each year, we calculated it jointly with several factories under the organisation of the Sub-district Office and then signed an agreement. The agreement stipulates, for example, 20,000 or 30,000 yuan per month, and it follows that standard. But the money collected from residents doesn't reach that amount.

Researcher 27:31

So right now this part of the work is running at a loss. And even though you're willing to transfer it, if you handed it all over to them, you'd still want to—but Jiatai doesn't want to take it.

Participant2 27:43

Yes, they don't want to take it. We are responsible for collecting the fees. Whether or not enough is collected, we must still pay Jiatai the contractually agreed amount, plus make up the shortfall ourselves.

Researcher 27:53

So what you bear is the contractual obligation to pay the fixed amount, not a subsidy arrangement.

Participant2 27:55

Exactly. The contract states the sum, and that's what we must pay—not "I'll subsidise you this much". It's written clearly in the contract. When we talk about a subsidy, it's only because we didn't collect enough, so we had to cover it ourselves.

Researcher 28:01

I see.

Researcher 00:00

It seems the situation here is rather complex.

Participant2 00:02

Yes, it's not just a single project issue. This situation came about after the bankruptcy and restructuring of the No.3 Factory, when the Sanmian living block shifted from the Danwei System to the Community System. Although restructuring took place, the Living Services Department of the No.3 Factory was retained, continuing to handle those management and service responsibilities of the living block that couldn't yet be fully transferred to society.

Under the national old residential block renovation policy, it was required to bring in a new property company. So, under the coordination of the Cotton Spinning Road Sub-district Office, Jiatai Property was introduced. The Property Office under the Sanmian company's Living Services Department signed a property service agreement with Jiatai, which clearly divided responsibilities between both sides. According to the agreement, Jiatai Property is responsible for rubbish disposal, cleaning, streetlight maintenance, gatekeeping, and vehicle management within the block. The Sanmian Property Office continues to be responsible for collecting the rubbish disposal fee.

Researcher 01:38

So you only collect the rubbish disposal fee, and never collected a property fee?

Participant2 01:44

That's right. We don't collect property fees, only disposal fees. Property fees are supposed to be collected by Jiatai themselves from the residents. Whether or not they've actually collected them, we don't know—but in principle that is their responsibility.

Researcher 01:54

And they haven't collected them now either.

Participant2 01:55

Yes, they haven't collected property fees.

Researcher 02:06

Did the agreement stipulate that they can't collect them?

Participant2 02:09

No, it's just that it hasn't reached that stage yet.

Researcher 02:14

So you mean this reform project hasn't yet advanced to the stage of property fee collection?

Participant2 02:19

Yes, it's still under discussion. Exactly how it will be implemented hasn't been decided yet.

Participant2 02:27

How do you view the changes in this area across the different periods? Now the place is already called East Sanmian community and West Sanmian community. How do you see the changes across these stages?

Researcher 02:47

Now, under the institutional management of the district government, the district Party committee and government, or the Sub-district Office, the overall road conditions are much improved compared with before. Streetlights are now regularly maintained, rubbish disposal is carried out normally. As for Jiatai Property, after they came in, they set up two gates in the Sanmian living block, one at the north and one at the south. The gatekeepers collect parking fees for motor vehicles. The standard was set by them, but approved through certain procedures. Sanmian company no longer participates. Their fee, as I roughly know, is about 50 to 60 yuan per month. Now they sign agreements with the residents, and fees are collected directly by them—we don't take part.

Researcher 04:04

So across the different periods, like before 2000, in the 1980s and 1990s, and up to now, the whole community has undergone big changes—especially in terms of management style and procedures. How would you evaluate the changes over the years?

Participant2 04:26

According to social development, or rather the requirements of higher authorities, and with the introduction of new property companies to manage the residential blocks, the overall trend has been towards improvement. But in some aspects, when it comes to implementation, residents haven't fully understood, and haven't yet paid the fees as required. For example, as I understand it, some old residential blocks—not newly built high-rise ones—like those managed by Changcheng Property, when residents move in, they directly pay property fees. Those blocks have lifts, and fees are charged per square metre, maybe one yuan per square metre or more.

But in the old Sanmian block, the No.4 Factory, and other blocks under Cotton Spinning Road management, including No.5 Factory, as far as I know, none of them have yet been charged property fees uniformly. But I've also heard that some other old blocks outside have started collecting property fees, calculated by the building area of the old block. The rates for old blocks are different from those for new ones. New blocks may be 1.8 yuan, 1.6 yuan, or 0.65 yuan per square metre, some even 2 yuan. The old blocks are around 0.38 to 0.40 yuan per square metre.

Researcher 06:04

Is this fee standard set by the property company itself?

Participant2 06:06

No, it's not set by the property company, it's stipulated by the state. The property company and the Housing Administration Bureau have a Property Section, which sets the standards according to various management regulations, and then enforces them. All fees must be approved.

Researcher 06:23

So all these fees must be approved by the relevant departments, is that what you mean?

Participant2 06:26

Yes. What I'm saying is that in some other residential blocks outside, they've already started charging these fees, also with approval from the Housing Administration Bureau. Whether it's in Zhongyuan District or Zhengzhou City, it's the Housing Administration Bureau of Zhengzhou or Zhongyuan District. They have a Property Section. If Jiatai Property wants to apply, it comes under Zhongyuan District, and the Pricing Section of Zhongyuan District will set the rates for them. For example, if they set it at 0.38 yuan per square metre, then residents pay 0.38 yuan per square metre. That's how outside residential blocks are doing it. But in Sanmian, as far as I know, it hasn't reached that stage yet—probably because the reform measures haven't been rolled out here.

Participant2 07:08

If it really does reach that stage, then it will be entirely Jiatai Property's responsibility.

Researcher 07:11

So everything will be fully handed over to Jiatai Property. I see. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Participant2 07:20

No, nothing else.

Case study interview transcript-Community leader 4

Researcher 1 00:00

Before the CSCMP was uniformly renamed, our work was mainly led by the Residents' Committee, and the organisational setup varied from place to place, right? I'd like to understand the earlier development model and the subsequent changes, as well as some of the coping measures at the time. Essentially, I'm doing a historical study of community development. So, could you tell me when you first started working in the community?

Participant 00:33

Strictly speaking, I began working in the community in 2011, though on and off. Altogether, I've worked continuously in the community for less than ten years, but my involvement started back in 2011.

Researcher 1 00:46

And how would you describe the role of the Residents' Committee in the Sanmian community around 2011?

Participant 01:01

Let me give you a brief overview. The term "community" (shequ) only began to be used in 2000; before that, they were all called Residents' Committees. At that time, social management relied primarily on the Danwei System. Both the general public and Party members were organised and managed collectively within their work units (Danwei).

The so-called Residents' Committees functioned as an extension of government authority and of the Danwei's functions. They mainly handled tasks like issuing residence permits, certificates of unmarried status, and, back then, birth permits. After 2000, in order to strengthen grassroots governance, Residents' Committees were merged with community Party organisations (local Party branches dispatched by higher-level bodies), thus forming what we now call "communities". The full names were actually twofold: "X Community Residents' Committee" (i.e. the Residents' Committee) and "Chinese Communist Party X Community Committee" (i.e. the Party organisation). Together, these two are what we call the "Two Committees".

Initially, community Party membership was very small, since most Party members still worked in their Danwei, and their Party affiliations remained there. So communities generally only had Party branches, not full Committees. If a community had fewer than 50 Party members, it could only establish a Party branch. In those early days, community work was thus led by a Party branch, which organised a few Party members to carry out convenience services for residents. Staffing was minimal, anywhere from five or six people up to seven or eight.

After 2010, cities began to standardise. In Zhengzhou, all communities were uniformly renamed "Community-level CSCMP". Before this, some were still labelled Residents' Committees, some Party branches, and so on. The renaming was standardised by the Organisation Department, but behind the uniform naming was a gradual expansion of community functions.

From 2010 onwards, communities increasingly shouldered extensions of government responsibilities, such as workplace safety, petition handling and stability maintenance, fire safety, etc. Initially, with few staff, communities just issued residence permits and birth permits. Later, with more staff (seven or eight people), they began to cooperate with "self-managed Party members" and "building heads" (residents elected as activists) to promote legal education, safety awareness, and neighbourhood patrols. Later still, city management functions were added. From 2015, urban management began shifting down to the community level, whereas before it had been handled by the District Urban Management Bureau and Sub-district Office departments. After 2015, communities also took on food safety checks, fire inspections, and tasks related to "civilisation creation" and "hygiene creation". Communities increasingly handled government work: dangerous building inspections, assisting in land planning, etc.

Civil Affairs Bureau work always came under communities, such as minimum subsistence allowances, support for low-income and bereaved families, and social security statistics for the unemployed. Communities also posted recruitment information, liaised with Danwei and schools. For example, if a resident's child was admitted to university but the family was financially strained, they could apply at the community, and the government would provide a subsidy. Community responsibilities grew significantly. Whenever higher-level departments wanted services brought closer to residents, they devolved them to communities.

Let me also mention community facilities. Before 2010, a community might have had only one small room, 20 or 30 square metres. After 2015, regulations required 200 square metres minimum, with 600 square metres for a fully standardised community. Our community was renovated in 2017. Before that, it had only about 100 square metres-basically just the floor you see in this three-storey building. The first two floors then housed the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory's retirement office, entirely separate. Only in 2017, under coordination from higher-level leaders, were all three floors renovated and used jointly.

Researcher 3 07:10

In the by-election, when we say "three nominated for two positions", how is that proportion calculated? Is it 70% or 66%?

Participant 07:22

Three for two is obviously 66%. If you nominate three people and elect two, that's three for two. Isn't that 66%? This time it was between me and XXX-who would enter the Danwei, me or XXX? Didn't we discuss this last time? You said nomination was by differential ratio.

Why was XXX made a Standing Committee member? That's not the same as being a member of the Community Party Committee.

Researcher 1 07:50

Right, you mentioned during the Committee meeting that once the numbers were calculated, Shangguan qualified.

Participant 07:57

No, she was appointed Party-building officer, which doesn't conflict with being a Committee member. Party-building officer is a position within the Committee.

Researcher 1 08:05

So that was you then? Alright, I see. Can't XXX be elected into the Committee? Don't we have exactly five Party members now?

Participant 08:15

There are two vacancies, yes, and one is the community secretary.

Researcher 1 08:22

You mentioned 2015 earlier.

Participant 08:25

Yes. After 2015, with the push for improved facilities, our community obtained more space. At the same time, staff numbers increased. Community halls were redesigned: the ground floor was generally set up as a counter-service hall, where residents stood outside and staff sat inside. By 2020, a citywide "People-friendly Renovation" campaign removed these counters. Now residents and staff meet face-to-face, eliminating the barrier, bringing staff closer to residents.

In the earlier Residents' Committee era, most residents would still go to their Danwei for matters, since Danwei managed everything. After Danwei bankruptcies and restructuring, residents were effectively pushed into society. During the transition, habits such as not paying service fees developed, since previously the factory's logistics handled water, electricity, gas, and heating. Residents, as Danwei employees, didn't pay property fees. But once responsibility was shifted to society, factories could no longer afford it, so it was handed over-and communities became responsible. Then it was called "community management"; now we call it "community governance". Management and governance may differ by only one word, but the meaning is significant: "management" implies authority, functions, and funds; "governance" recognises that communities, as dispatched agencies of Sub-district Offices, are not a level of government but self-governing mass organisations.

Thus, for real improvements like road repairs, the community must mobilise multiple resources. If government funds suffice, the simplest method is to apply via the Sub-district Office. But in recent years, with tight budgets, we have had to coordinate with local Danwei. These are our “co-construction units”: schools, kindergartens, the police station, hospitals, the Sub-district Office itself. If internal residential roads need repair (not municipal roads, which have public funds), then units and the community contribute jointly. Roads are just one example; many other projects work similarly.

Meanwhile, as former factory Party members (especially those laid off) transferred into the community, our Party membership grew from under 50 to nearly 290. With such growth, higher authorities required us to establish a full Party Committee. That is why today our community is at the Committee level.

Researcher 1 12:31

So some communities may still only have Party branches?

Participant 12:37

Yes, some are branches, some general branches. It depends on the number of Party members transferred into the community.

Researcher 1 12:41

But in terms of resident services, they are the same?

Participant 12:45

Yes, services are the same.

Researcher 1 12:49

But not all are uniform, right?

Participant 12:50

In the “Two Committees”, whether it’s a Party Committee, General Branch, or Branch depends on Party member numbers. For example, some new communities may have many residents but fewer than 50 Party members-then it’s just a Party Branch.

Researcher 1 13:06

I see. If it is a Party Committee, like the one listed on the wall here, does that mean the secretary has greater responsibility?

Participant 13:14

Whether it’s branch secretary, general branch secretary, or committee secretary, at community level the responsibility is essentially the same. All must lead Party-building work, educate members, organise activities-no difference.

Researcher 1 13:34

So, over these years, as you said, the community’s functions have steadily expanded. From Residents’ Committees to Community Committees to today’s CSCMP, Party and community work has fused together, right?

Participant 13:56

Yes, we usually call it “Party-building leadership”: under the Committee’s leadership, the Residents’ Committee staff implement the work. For example, when staff retire, new members must be by-elected into the Community Party Committee, since Committee members are usually the backbone.

The reason community and Sub-district secretaries are called the “first responsible persons” is because they must execute Party resolutions. Execution means that under the Committee’s leadership, the Residents’ Committee implements the work. Now it is nationally required that Party secretaries also serve as Residents’ Committee directors-“one shoulder to carry both”. Before 2010 and 2015, sometimes the two posts were separate, but since 2020’s nationwide re-election, the posts are unified.

Researcher 1 15:02

And before the merger?

Participant 15:08

There was no “merger” as such.

Researcher 1 15:10

I mean, was it one person in charge or two? From both periods, how would you describe the relationship between residents, Residents' Committees, and Party organisations? After complete unification, with expanded functions, how has the resident–community relationship changed?

Participant 15:32

It has improved significantly. From my experience, with fewer functions in the past, we had less contact with residents. Residents didn't really understand community roles. But as we delivered real services, contact increased, and residents gradually understood our responsibilities and organisational form.

The biggest misunderstanding was that residents thought we were a level of government. But over time, through our work and publicity, they came to see we are a self-governing mass organisation, an extension of government, not government itself. They learned to distinguish what is within community responsibility and what is not.

Especially during the past three years of the pandemic, residents witnessed our work firsthand, which also brought us closer together. So residents now have a much deeper understanding of the community: from incomprehension or even suspicion, to genuine familiarity and trust.

Researcher 1 16:38

So in other words, the community is now more deeply rooted. Can I understand the earlier stage as being a supplementary organ to the Danwei system, whereas now it has become—

Participant 16:57

An institution that directly delivers government service policies to residents' doorsteps.

Researcher 1 17:07

So essentially all grassroots work is now being undertaken.

Participant 17:08

Yes, grassroots work is more detailed, and our distance from residents is much closer. In the past, if residents needed to deal with the Civil Affairs Bureau, for example to apply for minimum subsistence allowance, they had to go there in person. Now these matters can be handled at the community, with the Sub-district able to approve. Public rental housing, low-rent housing—many of these functions have also been devolved. This process of devolving responsibilities has reduced the number of trips residents need to make.

In the earliest days, the Residents' Committee was essentially just a seal—issuing residence certificates, birth certificates, things of that sort. Matters like stamping for family planning have become less and less, but the range of services has only expanded.

Researcher 1 17:48

From your perspective, what were the advantages and limitations of the earlier form of community organisation? And what are the advantages and limitations of the newer form with devolved responsibilities?

Participant 18:05

Back then, people's entire lives were managed by their Danwei—it looked after birth, death, and everything in between. Communities mostly managed freelance workers or young graduates not yet in employment. Communities took on few responsibilities because Danwei covered nearly everything. The advantage of that model was that only a handful of people were needed; a Residents' Committee could consist of one or two people, affectionately called "committee aunts".

But as community responsibilities grew, staff numbers increased and the age profile became younger. With many government functions devolved, professional skills were needed. The older committee aunts struggled to adapt, and the communities became younger. A younger workforce can provide higher-quality services, but the downside is that the elder committee aunts had an age-related affinity with residents, a natural closeness that younger staff lack. That said, this gap can be bridged through long-term experience.

Take our colleague XXX, whom you've met before. When he first arrived, the residents in his grid didn't know him. But after five or six years of engagement, he has become a "star section chief" here. Even in grids he doesn't directly oversee, residents recognise him and praise him, because he truly dedicates

himself to serving them. It all comes down to how you approach your work and how you close the distance with residents.

The main disadvantages now are, firstly, that communities are self-governing bodies without independent finances. Many resident demands require funding, but communities themselves lack funds, which makes matters difficult. In the past, we didn't need funds because we didn't handle matters that required spending. Now, with demands that involve costs, the financial gap is a major limitation.

Secondly, communities shoulder many responsibilities without the corresponding authority. This is a big constraint. Take urban management, for instance: the original departments had legal powers granted by law. Communities have no enforcement power.

Researcher 1 20:54

So, the community has the right to report but not the power to enforce?

Participant 20:56

Exactly. We can only advise and report. The effectiveness isn't great, especially with issues like street vending. These conflicts are inherent in management—those being managed will resist. At first, people might listen when we advised them. But once they realised we only had the power to "advise", they stopped paying attention. This leads to repeated work with little result.

Researcher 1 21:29

You just mentioned that with devolved responsibilities, communities now liaise with many more departments. So when problems arise, does the community report them to all relevant departments? For example, street vending issues would be referred to the Urban Management Bureau, right?

Participant 21:51

Yes, we communicate directly with the Sub-district's urban management division and the enforcement team. Sometimes we accompany them to advise or enforce, but the enforcement authority always lies with the enforcement team.

Researcher 1 22:04

So would it be fair to say that communities are now the main coordinators of cross-departmental work?

Participant 22:13

Yes—the phrase is: "a thousand threads above, one needle below."
Whatever tasks come from above, we must help implement.

For instance, the economic census or population census requires us to liaise with the Statistics Bureau. Whether it's sampling, data collection, or compensation, it needs our support. For fire safety, we check gas and storage safety in coordination with the Fire Department. For food safety, we coordinate with the Food and Drug Bureau. For street vending, with the Urban Management Bureau. For land-use issues, with the Civil Affairs Bureau.

In short, whenever higher authorities assign a task, it falls to us community staff to implement it. We learn as we go, since many of these are specialist areas. As the saying goes, "specialists do specialist work", but community staff often need to be jacks-of-all-trades. Even if you don't know, you learn on the job. Inevitably, this sometimes leads to policies not being perfectly explained, but that is unavoidable.

Researcher 1 23:22

Right. In your view, how has this shift in responsibilities affected the future development of communities?

Participant 23:37

From my perspective as community secretary, community development always follows the leadership and directives of the higher-level Party Committee. I trust that as they assign us tasks, they will also strengthen our teams and address our shortcomings.

Development is closely tied to the local economy. When we go to study in more developed places like Shanghai or Shenzhen, their community development and governance models are the direction we look to. In those places, the shortcomings I've just mentioned have already been gradually resolved.

So I believe that, with time and social progress, our community will also gradually make up for its deficiencies. As people often say: "Use a developmental perspective to solve developmental problems." Problems are only temporary—they will be patched up in due course.

Researcher 1 24:30

Secretary Song, most of the tasks our community carries out now are assigned by higher-level Party Committees. Are there any initiatives we have put forward ourselves, or experiences we have summarised into our own projects?

Participant 24:45

Yes, there are such cases.

You see, each community has a different situation: some are newly built residential compounds, while others are old neighbourhoods like ours. In an old community like ours, some problems can't be solved by higher authorities—no matter who you report to, there's nobody to rely on. We can only rely on ourselves and the residents.

For example, we had a small residential courtyard with two blocks and over 70 households. There was no property management service, thefts often occurred, and public security was a problem. There was no CCTV, no street lighting, and no one to handle sanitation. What could we do? Reporting upwards led nowhere, and no property company wanted to come in, because 70 households can't sustain a property firm. Even if you just hired one doorman and one cleaner, the monthly wages would already be 6,000 yuan. Split among 70 households, the property fee would be too high.

So the community had to step in. What did we do? We guided the residents to set up a Community Property Management Committee or a Residents' Committee, step by step, and promoted self-management. Altogether we piloted this in three courtyards. Two of them were so successful that they were later publicised at provincial and municipal levels, with officials coming to observe. One even became so well known that it was eventually included in the Third Cotton Mill's redevelopment project. But we didn't stop there—we moved on to new courtyards, and those are doing well too.

Now, in the two-block courtyards under self-management, there are barriers, entry systems, CCTV, street lights, and dedicated cleaners. Cars have parking spaces, and electric bikes no longer get stolen. The residents' living environment has improved, and when issues arise, they no longer come running to the community office for help.

Instead, they feel that the community is right by their side. Life has improved, and their recognition of the community has grown stronger. Now, when we visit their courtyards, the residents are warm and affectionate—people are genuinely close to us. That's the development we've seen.

Researcher 1 26:52

Alright, I think I understand.

Case study interview script-Community management staff

Comprehensive Deepening Phase of Community Development (2000–2009)

1. How did neighborhood committees manage and build neighborly relationships in community development?
2. What efforts did neighborhood committees undertake in community management and neighborly relations?
3. In serving residents, what specific work did neighborhood committees perform regarding neighborly management and development?
4. What was the relationship between institutions and residents at that time?
5. What support did neighborhood committees provide to older people in neighborhood management and development?
6. What role do you believe neighborhood committees played in fostering neighborly relations?
7. What limitations and strengths emerged in practice?

Community Governance Phase (2010–Present)

8. How did the functional changes following the restructuring of neighborhood committees into Neighborhood Party-Mass Service Centers impact neighborhood management?
9. What effects did this have on neighborhood development?
10. How has this affected neighborhood management?
11. What support is provided to nearby older people?
12. What is the relationship with residents like?
13. What limitations and strengths have emerged in practice?

14. What role do you believe the Neighborhood Party-Mass Service Center has historically played within the neighborhood?

15. How would you evaluate the changes in the neighborhood across these past phases?

Case study interview transcript-Community management staff 1

Researcher 00:00

Before the Community System was introduced, how did the residents' committee build and manage relations with residents in terms of construction?

Participant 01:02

When I arrived, the residents' committee had just been established. The Sanmian community was still rather run-down, not as good as the environment now, and governance was not comprehensive. It was nothing like the current Party-led model. At that time, all were old housing blocks, property management was not in place, and property fees were difficult to collect. The Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory property company managed the area, but the property fee was only 6 yuan a month. High-rise housing charged by floor space, usually over 100 yuan per household, but here it was just 6 yuan. Some of that was directly deducted from retirees' pensions, but some tenants refused to pay property fees for years.

Researcher 01:50

You said the fee was deducted from retirees' pensions, right?

Participant 01:54

Yes, for Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory retirees, 6 yuan was directly deducted. But many state-owned enterprises had been restructured, and some people were dissatisfied with society, so they refused to pay property fees for years. Non-factory retirees, for example, did not pay, and some tenants also didn't. Property management was far from comprehensive, and residents had little awareness of it. Now, in high-rise housing, property management covers landscaping, road maintenance and so on, but back then property management was at an early stage, not well developed. Property fees could not be collected, no one swept the streets, and it became a vicious cycle.

Participant 03:01

In that situation, even though there were annual inspections for creating a "civilised city" or "hygienic city," the community's work basically meant going out with big brooms to sweep the streets.

Researcher 03:11

How long did this situation last?

Participant 03:15

For about two or three years. That was when I came in 2013. The community staff carried big and small

brooms. We had all the tools, but basically we were half sanitation workers — mostly tearing down illegal ads and sweeping the streets.

Researcher 03:38

So the property company then was Jiatai Property?

Participant 03:42

It was the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory property.

Researcher 03:44

Why?

Participant 03:45

Because in earlier years, Zhengzhou No.3, No.4 and No.5 Cotton Textile Factories were very prosperous, and many people competed to get in. But after reform there was a breakdown, and many refused to pay property fees long term. This created a vicious cycle: few sanitation staff, and community staff had to do the work themselves. Sometimes, when there was a major inspection, the community staff had to act as sanitation workers and clean the streets.

Researcher 04:17

So before the CSCMP was established, this community basically had to handle, besides its own duties, all the in-between work that was not implemented by Danwei or other organisations.

Participant 04:31

Yes. For example, clearing junk from rooftops. When there were strong winds, like on top of our dormitory buildings, teachers couldn't get up there, but we all went up, even women. Below, there were discarded items, weeds in flowerbeds, and people planting things on rooftops. It was still accessible then. Now it's harder with ladders, but back then we carried things down in big plastic bags, soil, discarded materials, and flowerpots — all bit by bit. Nobody wanted them, nobody managed them, so we had to clear everything ourselves.

So it wasn't just the streets that we had to clean, even rooftops of 6–7 storey buildings. With no mandatory property management, community staff were not only handling paperwork but spending most of their time cleaning outside.

Researcher 05:34

So back then, all the vacant areas left out during property reform were taken on entirely by the community.

Participant 05:44

Yes, there were inspections, but since property didn't do anything, we had to go ourselves, sometimes recruiting volunteers to help.

Researcher 05:58

So you not only supervised and implemented, you also had to do it yourselves.

Participant 06:04

Yes. Property companies had no role. After reform, when property fees couldn't be collected, there was no way to hire workers. The higher-ups still demanded inspections, so the community had to take everything on personally.

Researcher 06:21

Later Jiatai Property came in, and the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory's property fees were transferred to Jiatai. At that time, were retirees' fees still deducted from their pensions?

Participant 06:33

Yes, still deducted directly, because they were tied together. As far as I know, heating fees and property fees were both directly deducted.

Researcher 06:39

After deduction, Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory still handled the transfer of property fees to Jiatai?

Participant 06:45

Yes, because most of our residents are older people. Their awareness of property management is not as strong as in new residential areas. And since ours is an old block, before property could move in, some illegal constructions had to be cleared, and that took a lot of effort. For example, some ground-floor residents had enclosed land and treated it as their own. In the older generation's mind, that was "theirs." Some resisted demolition, but we had to tear down the illegal structures. We spent a lot of effort to clear them, returning public space to residents before property management could properly move in. Property companies usually prefer to manage new developments, as they are easier to handle.

Researcher 07:33

At that time, within the neighbourhood, what role do you think the residents' committee played?

Participant 07:49

The work focus was being accountable to the higher leadership, receiving tasks from various levels and departments, and carrying them out. Management was not only office paperwork, but also going into the community to implement. Hygiene was one key aspect, but safety also had to be ensured.

Researcher 08:19

Did safety patrols also fall on you? For example, those supposed to be done by Jiatai Property?

Participant 08:24

Since Jiatai Property moved in, things have improved. We've taken less part in sanitation, more in serving residents and fulfilling our own responsibilities. Each of us has our own area of responsibility. In terms of Party building, social affairs, spiritual civilisation, or urban management, each of us is assigned to a department. That's how it works — division of labour.

Researcher 11:33

So for the overall environment, for services, for problem-solving — all of that counts as support, including emotional support, right?

Participant 11:45

Well, in the past there were also arrangements — for example, every building had a building manager, sometimes responsible for one unit, or, if the building was smaller, perhaps several units. At that time, we had little communication with them, not like now when there are specific requirements. Now we have launched the "Knock-on-doors Campaign," which was specifically aimed at elderly people living alone and solitary elderly residents. It started around 2022 or 2023, about two years ago, during the pandemic period.

Researcher 12:29

So this began during the pandemic?

Participant 12:31

Not exactly at the start of the pandemic, but during those three years of the pandemic.

Researcher 12:36

Was this activity organised by the Sanmian Community itself, or were volunteers recruited by the Community?

Participant 12:41

Later, as the Community developed, it was basically our own internal work. Because once Jiatai Property came in, things improved. Jiatai handled most of the external sanitation. If residents complained about dirty stairwells, we would contact Jiatai directly, rather than doing it ourselves like before.

Researcher 12:56

So was this campaign initiated by the Community itself, or assigned by the Sub-district Office?

Participant 13:03

It was initiated by the Community itself. You see, our jurisdiction has about 4,000 people, more than 2,000 households. But a large proportion are elderly, many of whom came from the south as migrant workers back in the day. Now they are old, in their seventies, eighties, or nineties, and many of them live alone.

Researcher 13:27

And now all of this is handled through the grid system, right?

Participant 13:30

Yes. You see, with so many elderly people living alone, it is inevitable that some fall ill, and their children are not nearby. Back then, with the One-Child Policy, many families had only one child, who might be working, sometimes in Zhengzhou, sometimes elsewhere. Many children do not live in the city. So we compiled lists of solitary elderly residents. Now we mainly rely on grid leaders and micro-grid workers. Each has their area of responsibility, and we collect information about the elderly in the jurisdiction. Then we recruit volunteers. We can't visit every household every day, but at least we try to go a few times a month depending on circumstances, to ask about their situation and show concern for the elderly. We also cooperate with some university students. For instance, we have a partnership with the Institute of Acoustic Engineering. They bring students from time to time to accompany us on home visits, chatting with the elderly, providing companionship, and sometimes helping with light household chores. It is not major help, but it provides psychological comfort — the elderly feel that they are cared for, that there are groups in society who remember them.

Researcher 14:54

So were these activities required by higher authorities, or initiated by the Community itself?

Participant 14:59

They were initiated by the Community itself. Some activities are requested from above, but the Knock-on-doors Campaign was mainly our own initiative.

Researcher 15:07

And the university students' involvement too, right?

Participant 15:10

Yes, the university students came through some of our partner organisations.

Researcher 15:13

So these activities you mentioned — were they all after the CSCMP (Community Party-Mass Service Centre) was established?

Participant 15:25

Yes. To put it bluntly, before that it was all about construction, and we ourselves were like half sanitation workers. Construction was the focus then. Service work started afterwards.

Participant 15:34

Because earlier, for construction, we dealt with the demolition of illegal structures. You can see that most of those have now been cleared. The community roads have all been paved — no more dirt tracks where wind blew dust everywhere, or mud sticking to your shoes when it rained. Now it is all cement.

Researcher 16:00

I would like to ask, later on with the "civilised city" and "hygienic city" campaigns, and the introduction of university partners and volunteer recruitment — were these activities entirely organised by you each year, or were they tasks assigned with quotas, or entirely self-initiated by the Community?

Participant 16:20

Basically, it was initiated by the Community itself.

Researcher 16:22

Did the Sub-district Office have requirements for your service-related work?

Perhaps not rigid tasks, but at least policy guidelines?

Participant 16:32

I am responsible for social affairs, such as subsistence allowances and low-income support, and also some elderly activities. The facilities side, you could say, was more about charity and contributions. But each year, with regard to solitary elderly — those without children, unmarried, with no family — we would be responsible for visiting them at home. In my case, I worked with Teacher Guo downstairs, and we would make home visits. For elderly people living alone, usually defined as over 60 years old, and also for elderly couples living on their own, we would make regular contact, to understand their daily life and needs. As you mentioned, some elderly people have children working elsewhere, leaving them without

care. That becomes our responsibility. For example, there is an auntie in our area who contacts me frequently. Her son and daughter-in-law are both disabled, and she has no spouse, so she often turns to me. Our relationship is closer, and she trusts me more.

Researcher 18:02

So the elderly trust your services. How do you usually keep in touch — through WeChat?

Participant 18:08

Sometimes WeChat, but mainly home visits or phone calls. For example, before the New Year, during extreme weather, we were required to check in on subsistence allowance households, low-income families, disabled residents, and solitary elderly. We have many elderly in our jurisdiction: more than four or five hundred over the age of 80, and according to household registration, over a thousand over the age of 60 — in reality about seven or eight hundred people if you count those living here.

Researcher 18:36

About the elderly population — do you base this on registered residents, or on the Community's own statistics of actual residents?

Participant 18:50

We maintain records. There is a database on the computer, and each of us keeps record cards for our assigned buildings. These must be updated regularly. You cannot assume that someone who lived there ten years ago is still there now — tenants come and go, children grow up and get married, families move out or move in. Our records are quite accurate, as we also rely on national censuses, and during the three years of the pandemic we kept information up to date.

Researcher 19:25

How often do you update the records?

Participant 19:27

There isn't a fixed schedule. It depends on each person's assigned buildings.

Researcher 19:32

Do you update them during home visits?

Participant 19:37

Yes, updates are made in the course of daily work.

Researcher 19:39

By census, do you mean the national population census?

Participant 19:43

Yes, the ten-year national census. But even between censuses, when tenants move out, we update records ourselves. Also, we have micro-grid leaders and grid members, who are local residents. They inform us of population changes. For example, an elderly neighbour like Auntie from Building 47, in her seventies, knows exactly who lives opposite her, upstairs, downstairs. She doesn't need to accompany us on home visits — she already knows. Even the tenants are known. So we often gather information through residents as well.

Researcher 20:49

I see. One more question about the past: during the construction phase, how would you describe the relationship between institutions and residents at that time?

Participant 21:18

Between the Community Residents' Committee and the residents? I feel it was not as good as now.

Researcher

So you would say it was more...?

Participant 21:25

Back then it felt more like keeping one's head down, just doing the work, not communicating much, unlike now. Sometimes when we went to clean the streets, people would joke that we were not doing our real jobs, not being serious. At that time, the Residents' Committee mostly stayed indoors, doing office

work, like handling certificates in the service hall. Each city department had its own procedures, such as for subsistence allowances, disability benefits, or community affairs. But some residents would complain, asking where we had gone. Those who understood were fine, but those who did not thought we were neglecting our duties.

Researcher 21:57

Right, so at that time there was something of a disconnect between your work and residents' understanding.

Participant 22:06

Yes, because back then, after finishing office work we went straight to outside tasks like housing repairs. There wasn't anything like today's "knocking-on-doors" campaigns or chatting with elderly residents.

Researcher 22:15

So you didn't have a real-time communication and monitoring mechanism, right?

Participant 22:21

That's right, it felt like we were working in isolation, not doing well, just finishing the task and heading home.

Researcher 22:30

And now, do you have a real-time mechanism for communication and interaction with residents?

Participant 22:35

Yes, it feels much better. Nowadays grid members and residents are very familiar with each other.

Researcher 22:41

Do you notify residents of activities by WeChat or by text message?

Participant 22:44

WeChat. We've established WeChat groups — at first, one per grid, with around four or five hundred residents, meaning four or five hundred households in each.

Researcher 22:57

That was at the micro-grid level?

Participant 22:59

No, initially it was one group per grid. We currently have 66 grids, though one has been emptied due to demolition. Each remaining grid covers four or five hundred households. The WeChat groups were set up during the pandemic.

Researcher 23:19

So the groups were created at the start of the pandemic?

Participant 23:22

Yes, during the pandemic. At first our Community had about a dozen staff, roughly two people managing each grid, with four or five hundred households each. But once groups exceeded 300 people, it became difficult to manage and adding friends was troublesome.

Researcher 23:43

So later it changed to one building per grid leader, correct?

Participant 23:45

Yes, one grid leader per building, and one WeChat group per building. That made management much easier. For example, in our Green Building No. 9, there are three entrances, with around 12 households each — so 36 in total. We have a very responsible grid leader who keeps track of all 36 households, communicates with residents, gathers information, and reports back to us. So the purpose of the micro-grid WeChat groups is precisely this.

Researcher 24:25

So the micro-grid leader is a person responsible for a building, not just the WeChat group. One grid leader is supported by two micro-grid leaders?

Participant 24:36

Not exactly. For example, in my case, I and another colleague manage one grid for Community work. Alongside us, two residents serve as micro-grid leader and micro-grid member. They are elected from among residents, and you can think of them as an upgraded version of the former building head.

Researcher 25:00

I see. So the micro-grid leaders and members overlap geographically with the official grid staff — essentially the same role as building heads.

Participant 25:10

Yes, the micro-grid leader is the building head — elected from within the building.

Researcher 25:16

And the two official grid leaders — are they usually younger or older?

Participant 25:27

Not too young. Young people are usually too busy with work. People in their thirties and forties have jobs. It's mostly older residents — not extremely old, but generally in their fifties or sixties. There are some in their seventies or eighties, but few because of the physical demands. Most are middle-aged.

Researcher 25:52

By middle-aged, do you mean forties or fifties?

Participant 25:59

Mostly fifties and sixties, since they are retired and have both the energy and the time to do the work.

Researcher 26:06

So most are “young elderly,” just retired.

Participant 26:09

Yes, though it depends on the building. For example, on An Street, a young man manages one building because he does not have a job.

Researcher 26:21

When did the micro-grid leader system start here? Was it during the pandemic, or some years after?

Participant 26:30

About three years ago. During the pandemic our work was quite passive. When compounds were sealed, since ours is not a newly built residential community, with more than ten exits, it was difficult to enforce closure. Supplies had to be prepared in advance. For nucleic acid testing, residents often didn't know when it would happen. That's when WeChat groups became essential — initially large groups with three or four hundred people, later divided by building for easier management.

Researcher 27:14

So it is not the WeChat group that manages, but the grid leader, correct? What exactly are the responsibilities of a micro-grid leader?

Participant 27:21

Micro-grid leaders are responsible for a fixed number of buildings, unlike us two who manage an area of four or five hundred households. Our jurisdiction in Sanmian West is divided into five grids.

Researcher 27:41

What is the relationship between the building heads and the micro-grid leaders?

Participant 27:45

Grid leaders and grid members are Community staff. We divide the area into five grids, and each grid is then divided further into eight or nine micro-grid leaders and micro-grid members.

Researcher 27:57

So each grid is divided into eight, and each building has one micro-grid leader, is that correct?

Participant 28:00
Essentially, the two of us direct a dozen or so micro-grid leaders and micro-grid members.

Researcher 28:05
What is the working relationship between micro-grid members and micro-grid leaders?

Participant 28:07
It's cooperative, not strictly hierarchical. After all, everyone is a volunteer offering their service selflessly.

Researcher 28:15
So they are like an upgraded version of the building heads, right?

Participant 28:19
Yes, you could put it that way.

Researcher 28:22
And they coordinate with you directly, as local volunteers.

Participant 28:31
Yes, they are volunteers, residents, and also Party members who take part.

Researcher 28:34
What kind of work do they handle in coordination with you?

Participant 28:39
For example, the two of us manage 37 buildings, which is too many for us to cover in detail. So we divide the 37 buildings into nine portions, and each micro-grid leader and member takes responsibility for a small section.

Researcher 29:11
What kind of specific tasks do they do in these small areas? Like notifications?

Participant 29:15
Yes. We've set up WeChat groups, so some notices go out via group message, but many elderly residents cannot use smartphones. Micro-grid leaders notify them directly. For instance, during nucleic acid testing, Mr. Tang of Building 69 was very responsible — I would tell him half an hour in advance. Back then Community staff were few, only about a dozen of us with a dozen or so volunteers, but the workload was heavy and the area large. Testing was done building by building, in batches, to avoid long queues and large gatherings. Micro-grid leaders used their authority and trust to rally residents and help coordinate Community work.

Researcher 30:17
So micro-grid leaders are essentially the next level down from grid leaders, correct?

Participant 30:26
Yes. For example, if we are responsible for one large grid, within it there are seven, eight, or nine smaller sections. The micro-grid leaders cover these buildings, which makes management easier.

Researcher 30:35
Are they paid employees of the Community?

Participant 30:38
No, they are all enthusiastic residents.

Researcher 30:43
So entirely voluntary?

Participant 30:47
Yes, entirely voluntary and unpaid. The two of us are the grid leader and grid member for our grid, and we also handle documents from higher-level authorities, as well as residents' administrative matters. Business is not too heavy, but at year's end it is especially busy — reviewing low-income and minimum-

subsistence allowance cases, elderly benefits, only-child subsidies, and so forth. These tasks are mainly the responsibility of grid leaders and grid members.

Researcher 31:23

And the micro-grid leaders are the ones who carry out concrete tasks on the ground, right?

Participant 31:24

Yes, they implement and coordinate for us, since they know their buildings best. Because they live there, they notice things. For example, during lockdowns, when some residents pried open building doors in violation of rules, the micro-grid leaders spotted it and reported it quickly.

Researcher 31:57

Do micro-grid leaders have very specific duties written down?

Participant 32:08

They do participate widely. For example, in fire safety work, although Community staff took the lead, micro-grid leaders were always involved. They also helped sweep courtyards, supported elderly residents, and even cleaned communal spaces voluntarily during the Spring Festival. These were self-initiated — there weren't rigid assignments, since they are volunteers.

Researcher 32:37

So their relationship with you is not based on formal job descriptions?

Participant 32:43

They do have documents from above outlining their tasks, but in practice most of the work is done out of goodwill and self-motivation.

Participant 33:06

Exactly. They are chosen by resident recommendation. For example, if someone nominates Auntie Wang for being responsible and caring, she becomes a micro-grid leader. They hold a certain prestige within the community.

Researcher 33:22

So they are formally recorded, with defined responsibilities, and you rely on them to notify residents.

Participant 33:35

Yes, they help with notifications and coordination. Sometimes we send notices directly, but residents with poor Mandarin also help spread the word. During the pandemic, Building 9 was exemplary: activities were carried out unit by unit, saving time and preventing cross-infection. That's very good for an old neighbourhood.

Participant 33:59

In the early days of the pandemic, we worked until 3 a.m. without sleep. It was chaotic and disorderly, but later we realised managing by building groups was far more effective. It was exhausting but much more organised.

Participant 34:15

We didn't run ad-hoc roadside testing like others did. Instead, we used small blue stools and makeshift mobile testing stations. Residents appreciated this very much.

Researcher 34:51

Alright, I understand this phase. Let's move on to the next. In the next stage, after the reorganisation into the Party-Masses Service Centre, what do you think the influence has been on neighbourhood development? In which aspects? Did you have an impact, and were you able to play a role?

Participant 35:18

You mean the Party-Masses Service Centre now?

Researcher 35:20

Yes, after its establishment, when we became a service system.

Participant 35:22

Of course it has had an impact. Now everything is guided by Party building, isn't it? The work is no longer as chaotic as before. Back then it always felt messy — busy here, busy there, but in the end nothing was really achieved. Now things are fixed and feel much more regulated.

Researcher 35:45

So in terms of management, it has made the development of the Community more standardised, right?

Participant 35:56

Yes, you could say it has moved onto a proper track. It's no longer like before, when the Community Committee felt like it was run by a few old men, giving an impression of being unsophisticated. Now it feels much more formal.

Researcher 36:09

So you feel that all aspects of Community development can now be carried out in a regulated way, right? There is high responsiveness and actions can be modelled into systematic practice.

Participant 36:24

Yes. Because we get a lot of help from the masses, we are in frequent contact with them. For example, we often carry out safety inspections through the grid system, and as I mentioned earlier, the "Knocking-on-doors" action. During the pandemic, when there were many elderly people living alone, their children could not come in and the elderly themselves could not go out. We helped many of them buy groceries and other necessities. So the residents recognised our work, which in turn made it easier for us to carry out our functions smoothly.

Researcher 36:54

I see. I have another question regarding the Party-Masses Service Centre era. Since you mentioned much support for the elderly already, I won't repeat those questions. But I'd like to ask about funding. In terms of funding, since the Community cannot always apply for funds — say for small-scale environmental improvements — is there still room for providing support to the elderly?

Participant 37:45

There should be, yes. In terms of funding, this year's pandemic response required quite a lot of input, unlike the past when we could get more money approved for activities. Now we mainly rely on ourselves to compete for resources. For instance, last year we had a "Happy Home" project initiated by the Zhongyuan District Charity Federation. They knew funding was tight not just in Zhongyuan but in several districts. Still, we could apply through certain projects. Last year we also set up the "Master Wang Volunteer Team" and another initiative called "Happy Home," along with a volunteer patrol team. Since old neighbourhoods are less secure than new ones, we needed to recruit volunteers for daily patrols, and to buy patrol equipment. For example, in heavy rain we needed shovels and raincoats, but we had no money for these. The higher authorities don't allocate funds for such things, so we had to secure funding ourselves through project applications.

Participant 40:05

These activities are for the benefit of ordinary people.

Researcher 40:06

So these are also welfare measures developed independently by the Community, right? Like free clinics. Were those initiated by the Community itself?

Participant 40:15

Yes, those were proactively arranged by us. Service providers would sometimes approach us, but we also reached out ourselves. For example, students studying hairdressing and beauty therapy needed practice, while our elderly residents were not too fussy about hairstyles. So we arranged for free haircuts, sometimes even door-to-door. These don't require funding.

Researcher 40:34

Apart from these measures, are there other kinds of work the Community has been carrying out?

Participant 40:39

For example, in the past we had joint-building units, like the students from the Printing and Dyeing Institute. You can go outside and take some photos later; we have several joint-building units, and all of these are free, so they don't require any funding.

Researcher 40:53

I see. I also noticed the Community has organised a lot of lectures. Were those arranged by you directly?

Participant 41:03

Yes. For lectures, we once invited a teacher — I can't recall his full name now, maybe you can find it online. He was from the Red Cross, surnamed Cui or Fan, three characters. I can't remember clearly right now. They gave voluntary talks because they were from the Red Cross. I can show you, last time in class...

Researcher 41:37

Let's check later.

Participant 41:44

And before, we also invited some more capable, certified speakers, like our Teacher Fanrong.

Researcher 42:01

And there's also Captain Niu, right? You can look him up online later.

Participant 42:08

Yes, they are from the Red Cross Volunteer Service Team. They've come here to give us lectures, because they themselves are part of the Red Cross. They are volunteer rescue workers. You can search their information online; they've been here many times.

Researcher 42:25

And you can directly contact them?

Participant 42:29

Yes, we can all contact them. Captain Niu, for example — you can find him online. They belong to the Red Cross, which is a public welfare organisation. Later, we also invited some lawyers. Of course, lawyers often charge, but when they are involved in public service projects, they sometimes don't. We also have contacts with the fire brigade and others. So it's not always about paying people, because frankly, we don't have that kind of money.

Researcher 43:02

If you do need to pay someone, where would the money come from? From the Community's budget or from the Sub-district Office?

Participant 43:19

Actually, most of the time we're just doing service work, and rarely do we have to spend money. Everyone's finances are tight, so we can't rely on paying people. For some events, like lectures, we used to invite Teacher Lu Fashun. He was a well-known elderly teacher in our Sub-district, who unfortunately passed away the year before last. We also invited Teacher Long to give Party lectures — he was always happy to come. These teachers didn't come for money — even if we offered 200 yuan, they wouldn't do it for that reason. They were our own resources and were willing to participate.

Participant 43:56

Like Teacher Fan, during the pandemic he also volunteered in the Community. Later, people came to know him better and realised he was actually a member of the Red Cross. He looked like an ordinary old man, but it turned out he was an excellent swimmer. You can check his information online, he really is quite remarkable.

Researcher 44:11

So now that the Community has shifted towards being service-oriented, you feel that the relationships among residents are indeed closer. But what about the relationship between Community staff and residents — how has that changed?

Participant 44:30

I think residents trust us more now. In the past, they came to the Community only to handle certificates or paperwork, like in a registration hall. Now our relationship with residents is more personal. For example, last year a Party member suddenly suffered a cerebral haemorrhage, which affected his mental abilities. His family's financial situation was poor. His wife, in her fifties, was still working, and he had already retired due to illness. Their only son works in Xinjiang and wasn't around. One day, his wife phoned me and asked me to check on him because he was emotionally unstable and she couldn't get home from

work. That kind of request is really based on trust. Another teacher once sent me a WeChat message about a water leak in his house. That issue wasn't under my responsibility, but he still trusted me enough to ask for help.

Researcher 45:26
Why do you think this change has occurred?

Participant 45:34
I think it's because our service orientation has strengthened. We often go down into the grids, visit households, and show concern for residents. So when they face difficulties, they naturally think of turning to us.

Researcher 45:45
But do they know that some of these issues aren't actually your responsibility?

Participant 45:49
Yes, they do. Many matters really aren't our job. But if a family has a sick person, you can't just ignore it. They trust us emotionally. For example, once a family member asked me to talk to an elderly man who kept losing his temper and smoking too much. She said, "Instructor Lu, he listens to you more than to me, can you persuade him?" So they're willing to involve us in such matters.

Researcher 46:10
But in cases like the water leak, you couldn't actually solve it yourself, right? Since that isn't your role.

Participant 46:19
That's right. A water leak has to be handled by professionals. We are not a property management company. Our work is based on policy directives and documents from higher authorities, not technical repairs. We really don't know how to fix such problems.

Researcher 46:38
And persuading an elderly man is more of a family matter. Yet they still ask you — do you think that's more about emotional trust? Between the two types of work you mentioned, which do you think you're doing more of: concrete administrative work, or emotional support?

Participant 47:20
I'd say it's mostly emotional support. For example, when we go down into the grids, many people greet us, and that connection is emotional. Doing this job requires heart. If you've solved someone's problem but they still treat you coldly, it shows you haven't done enough. So yes, it's really more about emotional investment.

Researcher 47:47
Especially since the subdivision of grids, do you feel your relationship with residents has become closer? Do you feel fully integrated into the neighbourhood network, or still just a "staff member" or "volunteer"?

Participant 48:20
I feel I've actively integrated. In the past our focus was more on cleaning and maintenance, but now it's more about our specific duties. After finishing the paperwork, we don't wait for leaders to instruct us — we go down ourselves to look around and check if there are problems.

Researcher 48:38
So this is a form of spontaneous neighbourhood participation?

Participant 48:41
Yes, it's spontaneous. Working in the Community, you can't just sit in the office waiting for people to come. You must actively go down and talk to residents. It's not just about handling welfare or one-child subsidies. You should walk around, check on conditions. For example, if I see small ads posted in stairwells, I tear them down myself. That's our "old routine." If I find dirty spots, I'll call volunteers to help clean. We also chat with residents. The aunts in the courtyard all know us. When we walk past, they'll say, "Look, shouldn't this spot be cleaned?" or "That upstairs neighbour keeps a dog off the leash." They bring issues to us. Because often we help them address problems, unlike before, when we just swept with a broom but didn't solve the underlying issues.

Researcher 49:47

Yes, indeed. Now problems are raised through you, and you also understand the residents more deeply.

Participant 49:54

That's right, because we meet them often. For example, with our "Knocking-on-doors" action, it wasn't like leaders ordered us to visit a certain number of households each day. We arranged it ourselves, depending on our workload. The more often we visited and talked, the more recognition we earned from residents.

Researcher 50:09

So it can be said that you have already become part of the Community.

Participant 50:13

Yes, whenever residents have problems, the first thing they think of is the Community. For example, elderly people and children in the neighbourhood all come directly to the Community when they need help.

Researcher 50:18

Indeed. Let me ask one last question.

Participant 50:22

Now the Community is almost like half a property management company. Residents don't really trust property management firms, so they come straight to us for many issues.

Researcher 50:32

Why do you think this happens?

Participant 50:33

For example, if the stairwell lights are broken, they come to the Community;
if hygiene is poor, they come to the Community;
if dogs foul the corridors, they also come to the Community.

Researcher 50:40

What do you think of this phenomenon, that residents distrust property management but prefer to turn to the Community?

Participant 50:48

I think human relationships and trust are built little by little. During the pandemic we did a lot of work, and residents generally recognised that. For example, in neighbouring residential compounds management was chaotic, even in some new-built estates, as you may know. But our old neighbourhood actually managed the pandemic quite well. Some places took shortcuts, setting up a single fixed testing site. But we established more than ten mobile testing points, making services more flexible, which residents trusted. Some people elsewhere complained no one delivered food or cared for them during quarantine. Our Community was not like that. We prepared supplies the day before and started work at six or seven every morning. By seven o'clock we were already out, either visiting quarantined households to test them or testing the general public. Residents really appreciated and trusted us. Even after the pandemic ended, many residents still contacted me, saying, "Teacher Lu, where are you? I want to thank you." At that time, families couldn't visit, older people were stuck at home, so they were especially grateful to us.

Researcher 52:04

So from the transition from Danwei to Community, what do you think are the advantages and limitations of the current model?

Participant 52:18

I think the biggest advantage is that work progresses more smoothly now. For example, before when we issued a notice or organised an activity, no one participated. But now many residents support us. For instance, before last Spring Festival we organised a couplet-writing event. We didn't invite any professional calligraphers because the Sub-district Office didn't allocate funds, so there was no budget. But residents volunteered, saying, "I'll write the couplets." Everyone joined in. So although Community funds are limited, residents' initiative and participation are much higher than before.

Researcher 52:47
So you think the main limitation is funding?

Participant 52:49
Yes, definitely funding. Sometimes we want to organise activities, and if we could prepare small gifts, more residents would take part. But because of limited funds, it isn't possible.

Researcher 52:58
Besides these two points, do you see any other advantages or limitations?

Participant 53:04
For example, our Community actually has no enforcement power. If we need to remove unauthorised structures, we can only rely on persuasion, appealing to reason and feelings. We cannot invoke a regulation to force demolition. That is a real limitation. Similarly, with bicycles parked chaotically — at the metro entrance near Jianshe Road, the bikes are lined up properly, but elsewhere they are in disorder. We can only tell residents, "Please park your bikes neatly." Another issue is the shortage of charging posts. Some residents, to save money, run electric wires from their flats to charge e-bikes. It's dangerous, but we can only advise them verbally, since we have no power to enforce.

Researcher 53:49
And charging posts are part of old neighbourhood renovation projects, right?

Participant 53:57
I'm not too sure about the specifics. But now almost every building has some charging posts installed underneath.

Researcher 54:05
Yes, it's part of a livelihood project, as one element of P-type building renovation. From Community construction until now, we could say there have been two stages. How do you see the development across these two stages?

Participant 54:20
I feel that the current stage is more systematic and more standardised. In the past, people just worked with their heads down, without much structure.

Researcher 54:29
So back then it was still a relatively primitive way of working?

Participant 54:33
Yes, it was a gradual process of becoming more standardised.

Researcher 54:36
That's true.

Participant 54:38
You can feel it too — now it's clearly more regular. In the past it was mostly just cleaning. Now we provide services for residents while also handling routine tasks, including fire safety. The whole work system is now more systematic and comprehensive, moving step by step towards formalisation. And we've developed a team of volunteers as well.

Researcher 54:59
Speaking of fire safety management, you mentioned that in earlier stages it was mainly about clearing clutter and combustible items. Were there other aspects of fire safety management in those earlier times?

Participant 55:17
In the past our Community had many problems with "four categories of unauthorised structures." These makeshift constructions created major safety risks, such as people running electric wires everywhere to charge vehicles — wires were tangled like spider webs, extremely dangerous. Now most of these issues have been addressed. We now have two standardised large sheds equipped with charging facilities.

Researcher 55:34
And this rectification work was led by the Community?

Participant 55:38
Yes, of course led by the Community. Even the installation of charging posts was promoted and implemented by us. Early stages involved applications and site selection. With so many buildings, lots of places needed them. But problems also arose. For example, if you put a charging post under one building, residents there might object. Everyone had their own small concerns. So site selection required us to coordinate. It wasn't up to us to simply decide, but to get residents' agreement through a lot of communication, and only then move forward.

Researcher 56:10
So for facility siting, such as charging posts, was it planned by urban construction or design units, or given as a scheme by the Sub-district Office?

Participant 56:21
We could contact them, but the site selection was mainly coordinated on our side.

Researcher 56:24
So your role was to mediate between residents and contractors?

Participant 56:27
Yes, exactly a "linking above and below" role. For example, if residents suggested, "We need a charging post under our building; so many people are dangerously wiring from home," then we would canvass opinions. We can't simply decide ourselves. After choosing a site, we still had to report upwards. Higher-level departments would also ask us to communicate and apply first. They come from time to time to check whether we need fitness equipment, charging posts, and so on.

Researcher 57:06
In the site-selection process, were you only responsible for coordinating residents, or did you also work with contractors? For example, if the plan on paper wasn't suitable, or residents objected, could you provide feedback for adjustments?

Participant 57:17
Of course. We had to coordinate with residents and also with the contractors. If we thought a design plan was problematic, we would confirm with residents, then feed it back to the contractors for adjustment. As long as the suggestion was reasonable, they would revise it accordingly.

Participant 57:32
Basically, most construction projects are coordinated by the Community. For example, the "Shiheng Shizhong" project, or old neighbourhood renovation like the housing renewal along Tongbai Road. It's not possible to listen only to contractors or only to orders from the Sub-district Office. The key is communication with the residents.

Researcher 57:54
So contractors must contact the Community before implementation?

Participant 57:56
Yes, they must. For example, this year we plan to renovate part of the surveillance system, scheduled to start after the Lantern Festival. But before starting, the contractors must talk with us. We had already done inspections beforehand, noting which cameras were broken or unlit. And this also requires coordination with the property management.

Researcher 59:52
So right now these problems still rely on the community to figure out solutions. For things like maintenance, repair, and management, some issues still haven't been assigned to a specific responsible unit.

Participant 01:00:01
Yes, for maintenance and repair we need to coordinate across multiple sides. It's not like contacting one unit can solve everything—we have to reach out to different departments depending on the situation. In our jurisdiction there are only two property companies. For example, roof leaks: the third factory is only

responsible for legacy issues from earlier years. But now there are also new problems, which they still need to step in and address. They can't just say, "this isn't our job," and ignore it.

Researcher 01:00:28

As you just mentioned, some issues are historical legacies, and some are new. After the community renovation was completed, when you report these problems upwards, do you report them directly to different departments depending on the issue, or do you submit them all to one higher-level department, and let them coordinate?

Participant 01:00:54

We usually coordinate with multiple departments directly.

Researcher 01:00:55

So the community is responsible for overall coordination, and then different departments handle specific problems?

Participant 01:00:57

Exactly. Because the issues residents raise aren't of a single type—some report leaks, some report ground surface damage, some report clogged drains. It's impossible for just one unit to solve all of that. So we have to coordinate with multiple departments, such as the subdistrict office, urban management, and so on. Each issue has to be matched with the appropriate department.

Researcher 01:01:19

And matters like those under the Social Security Bureau's authority are all handled strictly according to jurisdiction, right?

Participant 01:01:21

Yes. For some problems we really cannot solve them ourselves—we can only rely on law enforcement departments to step in, because the community itself doesn't have any law enforcement authority.

Researcher 01:01:26

Right.

Participant 01:01:27

The community has no real power at all.

Researcher 01:01:29

Got it. Thank you.

Participant

No problem.

Case study interview transcript-Community management staff 2

Participant 00:00

Nothing special. Let me first tell you about the earlier situation. When I first came, most of the CSCMP was run by retired older women. They were quite respected among residents, warm-hearted, and familiar with everyone. If something happened in a household, once they notified others, people knew right away. But now it is different. Now we have university students and graduates working in the CSCMP, and the staff structure is completely different. In the past, a single Sanmian community might only have had one computer; now almost everyone is equipped, and everything is modernised.

Researcher 00:51

Now it is called "CSCMP", but in the past, community names across the country weren't unified. It was only later that they were standardised into this title. Before the CSCMP was established, that is, after the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory went bankrupt and was restructured, from around 2006, it was changed into a residents' committee, right?

Participant 01:19

Yes, but I wasn't here yet in 2006, though that doesn't matter.

Researcher 01:22

So the CSCMP has only existed for about a decade. Back in 2006, when you had just arrived, that was considered a watershed. From 2006 to 2010 was one stage, then from 2010 to 2016 was another stage, and afterwards came the deepening of the Community System, with the CSCMP being built around 2017. In your view, before the CSCMP was established, during the residents' committee stage, what role did the Sanmian community mainly play in neighbourhood association? For instance, what was the focus of its work?

Participant 02:18

The main focus was certainly on dealing with neighbourhood disputes.

Researcher 02:22

You mean quarrels between neighbours?

Participant 02:24

Yes, little conflicts, trivial matters between neighbours. The Sanmian community served as a service platform, the most basic grassroots organisation, primarily dealing with residents. For the Sanmian community to carry out tasks and drive forward as a whole, residents had to cooperate; when residents had difficulties, we also had to cooperate. It was a relationship of mutual support. Working in the CSCMP ultimately relies on residents' backing.

Researcher 02:54

So before the CSCMP was set up, in your own work, before the pandemic, what was your main responsibility in the Sanmian community?

Participant 03:18

I was basically responsible for overall tasks. If residents had needs, we would respond. Party-building was included, such as helping disadvantaged Party members; and also services for disabled people—directly dealing with residents and working for their welfare.

Like, for instance, with solitary and widowed older people, we were the ones to support them and help with any difficulties.

Researcher 03:50

So in the process of building the Sanmian community, how did you first establish relationships with residents?

Participant 04:00

When I first came in 2009, I was responsible for family planning work. At that time, family planning was very important—if you failed, everything else was vetoed.

We would visit households every day, sometimes sitting downstairs on a stool to take notes, waiting for residents to come down, then use that chance to understand their situations.

Some households were hard to find, such as older people who rarely went out, so we had to go directly to their homes.

Only through this approach could we gradually build relationships with residents.

At the very least, we had to make sure they knew we were staff from the Sanmian community, so they wouldn't see us as strangers or worry about being scammed.

Once they recognised you as part of the CSCMP, they would approach you about issues.

If they didn't even know who you were, then even if you said you were from the CSCMP, they might not believe you, right?

So we had to make residents familiar with us and trust us.

Researcher 04:54

Do you think this kind of household visiting started when?

Participant 04:59

When I came in 2006, it was already being done, especially for family planning—it was mandatory to visit homes.

I carried on with that practice after I arrived.

At that time, we were stationed at the market area, with only two people.

Later in 2018, due to a job transfer, I came to the current Sanmian community.

The first thing I did after arriving was visit households to understand how many older people and how many disadvantaged households were in the jurisdiction.

Together with Teacher Fu, we were in charge of three grids, and we both went to visit households and understand residents' actual situations.

Researcher 05:49

Besides household visits and population management, during that earlier period, how was management and construction carried out in the Sanmian community? For example, apart from administrative services and statistics, did the community take on other responsibilities?

Participant 06:18

Of course, the Sanmian community had to take on many responsibilities.

For example, residents needed to handle medical insurance, one-child certificates, disability benefits, and even the relevant paperwork for people over 80 years old—all of these had to be processed in the Sanmian community.

Only after we prepared and submitted these documents could residents actually receive their welfare.

Researcher 06:45

And in terms of managing the community environment, how did we do that?

Participant 06:56

In an old Sanmian community like ours, the working conditions were certainly not as good as now—it was improved gradually. When I first arrived, the community office was just one room. Later, there were changes in East Sanmian community. Initially, only the third floor was used by the Sanmian community, while the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory retirement office was still in charge. After leadership coordination, the first and second floors were gradually given to the Sanmian community for use, becoming public service spaces. From what I know, originally the third floor was for the retirement office

of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory, and later the first and second floors were also made available for the Sanmian community.

Researcher 08:07

Were these offices and resources arranged by the Sub-district Office?

Participant 08:12

No, they belonged to Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 08:16

So the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory retirement office directly provided these resources?

Participant 08:17

Yes, it was the retirement office. After coordination by higher-level leaders, the resources were shared with the Sanmian community.

Researcher 08:32

Besides office space and public environment, before the CSCMP was established, did the Sanmian community participate in managing outdoor spaces, such as Xiangrong Street? I saw there were mobile vendors there, and later a farmers' market was built through public investment. Was the Sanmian community involved in that management?

Participant 08:59

Yes, we were involved. At that time there was a large floating population, and the vendors fell under the management of the floating population. Xiangrong Street was next to Zhengzhou No.4 Cotton Textile Factory in the west and East Sanmian community in the east, and our community managed the whole street. At that time, temporary business permits were issued to vendors, recorded in a small booklet, to regulate management.

Researcher 09:34

Were those temporary permits issued by the Sanmian community, or by another unit?

Participant 09:38

It should have been us collecting the information and then submitting it, with the higher-level department issuing the permits.

We were responsible for collecting and submitting the information, and the higher-ups handled the permits.

Researcher 09:59

So although you didn't issue the permits directly, the Sanmian community was responsible for supervision, correct?

Participant 10:04

Yes, we certainly had supervisory and management responsibilities.

Researcher 10:09

Did the Sanmian community supervise hygiene and pricing in the market?

Participant 10:12

In the past, the market also had property management.

Researcher 10:19

So their property management also covered part of this?

Participant 10:21

Yes, their property management also paid attention to those aspects.

Researcher 10:23

And regarding prices in Xiangrong Street and the farmers' market, did the Sanmian community take part in management?

Participant 10:32

Pricing did not fall under our Sanmian community's responsibilities. Prices in vegetable markets were overseen by specific functional departments.

Researcher 10:43

Did the Sanmian community supervise hygiene in the market?

Participant 10:45

Yes, we took part in hygiene supervision.

Researcher 10:47

Was this supervision part of regular inspections, or only occasional?

Participant 11:02

Certainly regular inspections—it was part of our daily work.

Researcher 11:32

So possibly every day? Maybe even several times a day?

Participant

Yes, when things were tense, we might go several times a day.

Researcher

Let me change topic. Around 2010, how were community services carried out?

Participant 11:54

Which aspect of community services do you mean?

Researcher 11:58

I mean services for residents, apart from daily administrative tasks—were there welfare-oriented services?

Participant 12:03

Yes. For example, for disabled people and families who lost their only child, there were some policies. For families who lost their only child, there was an age division: under 48 and above 49. If the woman was 49 or older, she would be categorised as a special group, and we would help with the relevant paperwork. After the procedures were completed, they received a certain subsidy every year.

Researcher 12:44

If we're still talking about around 2010, what was the relationship between the Sanmian community and residents at that time?

Participant 12:56

The responsibility of the grassroots Sanmian community was to serve residents, so certainly we were working towards better serving them.

Researcher 13:03

What about the "grid manager" work? Around 2010, was that already in practice? To what extent?

Participant 13:16

At that time, the concept of "grids" did not exist yet. It was mainly divided by sub-areas, and we were responsible for managing residents in our designated sub-area.

Researcher 13:25

So "grid-based management" only began in recent years?

Participant 13:34

Yes, only in recent years has the "grid" division been clearly defined. Back then it was just: whoever was responsible for a particular building or area would visit and understand residents' situations and provide services.

Researcher 13:48

At that time, was the relationship between you and residents close? For example, between community workers and neighbours, was it familiar?

Participant 14:03

Certainly we had frequent contact. When I first arrived, I had to establish familiarity with residents. Once everyone knew you, they would be willing to approach you with problems. If there were neighbourhood disputes or difficulties, only if residents trusted and knew you would they be willing to speak up. If they didn't even know who you were, they wouldn't voluntarily come to you.

Researcher 14:27

In East Sanmian around 2010, were there any demolition or construction projects?

Participant 14:35

I wasn't in East Sanmian in 2010—I came in 2018. In 2010, I was in West No.4 Cotton Factory area, and there were also demolition and construction works. You might be referring to the demolition of illegal structures, like someone building a shed next to their building. Around 2016–2017 was when demolitions peaked, what was called "large-scale demolition and construction". But I can't recall the exact year. In fact, the situations in No.3 Cotton Factory and No.4 Cotton Factory were similar—they faced the same issues.

Participant 15:28

It lasted about a year or so, but I can't remember exactly which year—it was sometime in the 2010s.

Researcher 15:34

Was there a big difference between demolition and construction then, compared to your work now?

Participant 15:39

Certainly there was a difference. After the demolitions, the roads were rebuilt, and there were fewer illegal structures. I think the demolition in No.3 Cotton Factory area was done really well—basically everything was removed.

Researcher 15:52

What was the specific situation at the time?

Participant 15:55

Once the roads were cleared and rebuilt, the environment in front of people's homes improved. Parking and other matters became more convenient, and there was far less disorder.

Researcher 16:04

And during the demolition and construction process, what role did the Sanmian community play?

Participant 16:17

Mainly coordination and mediation. There were certainly residents unwilling to move, and we had to do a lot of work with them. Now everyone can see the difference—the environment is indeed much better.

Researcher 16:33

At that time, did you supervise or coordinate with construction or design units?

Participant 16:46

What was mainly demolished then were residents' illegal structures—like sheds for storing bicycles or electric scooters. It wasn't large projects built by units; mostly it was privately built by residents.

Researcher 17:04

Besides demolishing the "four types of illegal structures", many community livelihood projects were also promoted—such as road repairs, installing street lights, adding iron gates, and electronic access systems. During these projects, did the Sanmian community take on supervisory or coordinating roles?

Participant 17:42

Certainly we had supervisory responsibilities. The Sanmian community was the actual management body, with more than 300 households under our jurisdiction, so we had to take part in supervision and

management. For things like road repairs, the community definitely had to be aware and keep track of the situation.

Researcher 18:05

And roughly in which years were these livelihood projects carried out?

Participant 18:10

Roughly between 2018 and 2019, or 2019 to 2020.

Participant 18:22

I was transferred to this community in 2018, and just around that time road repairs began, along with the installation of electronic access systems and so on.

Researcher 18:42

Do you still remember the exact name of that project?

Participant 18:45

That I'm not sure about, because I wasn't directly involved in its management, so I don't know the formal project name.

Researcher 18:51

Do you know who we could ask, or where we could check the project name? For example, the construction unit or contractor? Was it part of the "Old Neighbourhood Renovation"?

Participant 19:07

It should have been the "Old Neighbourhood Renovation" project, the renovation and upgrading works for old neighbourhoods in Zhengzhou.

It should be traceable—it was carried out in those years, and ours is in the Cotton Textile district.

I think you could ask the Sub-district Office or the Sanmian Community office, they should know more clearly.

From my impression, it started around 2019 or 2020. Indeed, quite a lot of things were improved, such as the road surface and basic infrastructure.

Researcher 20:13

So you remember it was roughly in 2020 when construction began?

Participant 20:21

Yes, about that time.

Researcher 20:27

During construction, did the Sanmian Community play a role in coordinating between residents and the contractor? For example, if residents raised complaints, would you relay them to the construction unit?

Participant 20:44

Yes. For example, sometimes residents complained that the area in front of their door had been dug up, making it difficult to go out. We would communicate with the contractor, suggesting that they build a temporary passageway or add some protective measures to ensure residents' basic safety.

We dealt with such things starting from the small details. The contractor sometimes considered these issues proactively, but our community would also remind and supervise them.

Researcher 21:11

Let's return to around 2010, when you were involved in community work—not necessarily in Sanmian. At that time, what kinds of support could the community provide for older people?

Participant 21:29

What kind of support do you mean?

Researcher 21:34

For example, in terms of services—financial assistance, age-friendly environmental modifications, psychological or emotional support, or medical support. These would all count.

Participant 21:57

All of these basically existed.
For instance, the community would visit solitary elderly people at home.
During festivals, if there were welfare distributions, they would certainly be prioritised.
But as for large-scale financial support, our community really didn't have that capacity back then.
We did give holiday supplies like rice, flour, and cooking oil during the Spring Festival.

Researcher 22:31

Let's now talk about the present stage.
From 2017 onwards, "Community Party-Mass Service Centres" began to be established.
Compared with the earlier "Residents' Committee", what functional or responsibility changes did this bring? Did it have an impact?

Participant 22:49

Certainly it's better than before.
Services are more detailed and more diverse.
In the past, it might just have been about solving residents' day-to-day problems. Now we also pay more attention to special groups. For example, some solitary elderly who never married and live alone—we visit and ask if they need help cleaning their homes, which is also a form of care.
And, for example, through the Women's Federation, if there are women with disabilities, we arrange for auxiliary facilities to be installed in their homes, such as grab rails in the toilet. These fall under rehabilitation-type services.

Researcher 23:30

Apart from the support you just mentioned, where do you think the biggest changes are after the transformation of the community's functions?
Is it that there are more service projects, more funding, or that the direction of services has shifted?

Participant 23:48

I think there are more kinds of projects, and the direction of services is gradually shifting.
Funding is also better than before.
For example, for families who lost their only child, the subsidies were much smaller before. Now one person can receive over 1,000 yuan a month, and those over 60 may receive even more.
In the past, the subsidies were much smaller, sometimes non-existent.
All of this has changed gradually with social development and the improvement of living standards.

Researcher 24:37

What specific impact do you think the establishment of the Party-Mass Service Centre has had on the management of the whole community?

Participant 24:46

It is definitely better than before.
Community services and Party building work are now more systematic and better guaranteed.

Researcher 24:54

In what aspects do you feel it has become better?

Participant 24:59

I think it's an overall improvement.
Under the Party's leadership, all community services are more standardised and effective.

Researcher 25:13

So overall efficiency and service quality have improved, right?

Participant 25:15

Yes, it's not just in one particular aspect, but an all-round improvement.

Researcher 25:19

Do you think the management approach itself has changed in terms of model?

Participant 25:25

Yes, the management model is also constantly being updated.
Previously it was the traditional model, now it's grid-based management.

And we now also have micro-grid assistants, who understand the situation in their area in a much more specific and detailed way.

Researcher 25:40

So how do the micro-grid assistants usually cooperate with your community work?

Participant 25:45

Each grid assistant is very familiar with their own area, sometimes even more so than we are. When we go on inspections, we may not reach every household, but they live right there—they know which families are elderly or in difficulty, which households have conflicts, whose basement is cluttered. As soon as there's an issue, they report it promptly.

Researcher 26:13

So they can also detect problems and report them at the first instance.

Participant 26:17

Yes, they let us know immediately. Sometimes when we need to visit a household to handle something, we also bring them along to coordinate and persuade residents.

Researcher 26:26

And now do the grid assistants mainly manage their areas through WeChat communication? Or are there other forms as well?

Participant 26:37

We mainly communicate with micro-grid assistants through WeChat groups. We also use phone calls. For example, in strong winds I might ring them to ask: "It's very windy today—when you went down to check, did you see any broken branches on the power lines?" Anything safety-related is usually handled by phone.

Researcher 27:02

So you take the initiative to check in with them.

Participant 27:03

Yes, sometimes calling is more convenient than WeChat.

Researcher 27:05

Besides online communication, does the community also post notices through posters or other means?

Participant 27:16

Yes. You mean publicity posters, right?

Researcher 27:21

Yes, for example notices posted outside residential compounds.

Participant 27:24

Of course. For instance, with anti-fraud campaigns, each grid puts up posters. Fraud is so prevalent now, so these publicity efforts are particularly important. Posters are only one method, we use multiple channels together.

Researcher 27:49

Do you think the establishment of the Party-Mass Service Centre has had an impact on the development of the whole community?

Participant 27:59

The impact is certainly positive—the establishment of the Party-Mass Service Centre has improved community work. How could it not have had an impact?

Researcher 28:05

How about the relationship between the community and residents, compared with before?

Participant 28:10

It has definitely changed.
Back in 2009, for instance, we didn't yet have WeChat groups.
Now every grid, even every micro-grid, has its own group.
Residents can directly raise problems in the group.
If we are familiar with them, they also contact us privately—communication is more direct and convenient.

Researcher 28:38

So it can be said that the “tentacles” of community work now reach much deeper, right?

Participant 28:49

Yes. With the establishment of grids, especially micro-grids, the work has become more detailed and concrete.

Researcher 29:01

Looking back at the different stages of community development, how would you evaluate them?
For example, what changes or differences have there been, and what strengths or weaknesses?

Participant 29:15

I don't think there's anything “bad” about it—the work of the community has been improving step by step.
Both in management and service, there have certainly been changes.
The most obvious difference is in the development of the internet—before it wasn't so advanced, now with powerful internet technology, it's naturally different.

Researcher 29:31

That's a big change. In the past, when the internet was not advanced, did it affect notifications and the advancement of work?

Participant 29:41

Of course it did.
Previously, notices were given by holding meetings or making phone calls—contacting people one by one.
Now a message sent in a WeChat group reaches everyone quickly.
We still make calls sometimes, but far less often than before.

Researcher 30:02

So nowadays, do you feel that over the course of a month, WeChat is more effective, or are phone calls more effective?

Participant 30:12

Each has its advantages.
Phone calls allow us to confirm if someone can attend, for example, a meeting.
WeChat works too—people reply with “received” or request leave.
So I think there's not much difference—it depends on whether communication is done properly.

Researcher 30:39

Now that the community has developed to the stage of the Party-Mass Service Centre, what advantages and limitations do you see?

Participant 30:55

There are definitely advantages. The Party-Mass Service Centre achieves full coverage, with a wider and more comprehensive service range.

Researcher 31:08

And in your view, are there any limitations?

Participant 31:12

I don't see any particularly obvious limitations.
Now in the community there are both Party members and ordinary residents.
Whether Party members or not, the service targets are all residents—it's not limited to one group.
Community services have taken deeper root.
As we often say, “The Party leads everything.” Our work is carried out under the leadership of the Party.

Researcher 31:44

Alright, let's end the interview here for today. Thank you!

Case study interview transcript-Community management staff 3

Participant 00:01

This device is quite good.

Researcher 00:04

I specifically bought a voice recorder.

I'd like to ask you, from the establishment of the Sanmian community up until now, you've been here for many years.

I especially want to know, before the establishment of the CSCMP, around ten years ago and the earlier stage, what do you think was the main role played by the Community Residents' Committee at that time in the neighbourhood? What was the main focus of your work?

Participant 00:35

At that time, our main focus was still centred on providing services for residents.

Researcher 00:41
Resident services were the main direction, right?
And what did those services mainly include?

Participant 00:46
The services covered many aspects.
Such as social security, family planning, including the processing of the one-child allowance-all kinds of matters, very specific and numerous.

Researcher 01:09
And at that time, in terms of community environmental construction, what was the focus of the Community Residents' Committee's work?

Participant 01:19
It was also centred on the jurisdiction, mainly serving residents.

Researcher 01:26
Beyond administrative affairs such as population statistics or medical insurance, how was environmental supervision carried out?

Participant 01:44
Do you mean the physical environment?
At that time, the conditions were relatively poor. Our community office was only on the third floor-the first and second floors hadn't yet been allocated to us.
The overall environment was also rather basic.
Now it's much better, the environment has improved a lot.

Researcher 01:59
And what about the outdoor environment back then?

Participant 02:00
Back then the outdoor environment wasn't really managed either. Now it's much better; it has indeed improved step by step-I can really feel that.

Researcher 02:10
At that time, did the community have responsibilities for managing or supervising the outdoor environment?

Participant 02:19
At that time, much of the outdoor sanitation work was borne by our community itself.
For example, in the morning when we started work, community staff had to go down and shovel rubbish.
Now it's much better-basically it's all handed over to the property management companies.
You might not know, but back then the working conditions were really tough-the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory had no property management, no one was taking care of those things.

Researcher 02:43
So at that time, the Community Residents' Committee was actually also doing a lot of work that should have been handled by property management?

Participant 02:47
Of course. At that time, every rubbish bin was cleaned by our community staff themselves.
Now staff are much more fortunate-since having property management, the workload has been greatly reduced.

Researcher 03:04
But wasn't there a factory-run property service under the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 03:13
Yes, there was, but the property fee they collected was only a few yuan per household.
Many people simply refused to pay.
Because it was a bankrupt enterprise, not like today's residential property companies, which charge per square metre.
With such low fees-just a dozen yuan-of course the services couldn't keep up.

Researcher 03:35

So apart from cleaning rubbish, what other "property-like" work did the community have to do back then?

Participant 03:42

There was plenty of work; all the tasks at hand had to be done by us.

Researcher 03:45

For example, did you also handle repairs, or vehicle management and supervision?

Participant 03:54

Yes, we also managed repair issues. For example, if a roof was leaking, residents would first come to the community, and we'd issue them a repair slip. Then they would take that slip to the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory or its factory-run property service.

Researcher 04:07

So residents first had to come to the Community Residents' Committee to get this slip?

Participant 04:09

Yes, we had a form-they had to get this slip from us first.

Researcher 04:13

And then go to the factory for repairs? Why was that procedure necessary?

Participant 04:15

This process was for the convenience of management-it was equivalent to the residents first registering with the community, and then we, as the intermediary link, would pass the information on to the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 04:32

So in fact, the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory was responsible for the actual repairs?

Participant 04:36

Yes, when I first came here, this process was already in place.

Researcher 04:39

So you essentially played an intermediary role?

Participant 04:43

Yes, we were the coordinating link in between.

Researcher 04:47

So residents couldn't just go directly to the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory for handling?

Participant 04:48

No, they couldn't. For example, if someone's roof was leaking, they had to come to the community first to register. Only after filling out the repair slip could they take it to the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory for handling.

Researcher 05:04

So residents would take the repair slip directly to the factory, right?

Participant 05:07

Yes, and we were also responsible for mediating many neighbourhood disputes.

For example, if water leaked from the third floor down to the fourth floor, such matters required us to step in and mediate.

In short, the community's work was very detailed and very comprehensive, wasn't it?

Researcher 05:21

So from that time, the community was already dealing with neighbourhood disputes?

Participant 05:26
Yes, mediation was always part of our work.

Researcher 05:32
And apart from disputes between neighbours, would family conflicts also come to the community for mediation? For example, quarrels between husband and wife, or arguments at home?

Participant 05:37
They would, family conflicts were also brought to the community.
Although we didn't have a formal "Mediation Committee", as long as residents came to us, we would step in to mediate.

Researcher 05:42
This practice of "going to the community when something happens"-when did it start to form?

Participant 05:49
By the time I arrived, this practice had already been established. That's how it was spread externally too.

Researcher 05:52
Do you know why this practice formed? Why even family disputes would come to the community?

Participant 05:57
At the root of it, it comes down to one thing: it's a tradition.
By the time I came, it was already a routine part of the community's work.

Researcher 06:07
So, as a grassroots organisation...

Participant 06:09
Yes, we are the most grassroots unit within the government system, and that includes civil mediation work.
Some small conflicts between neighbours or within families could be resolved through community mediation.

Researcher 06:23
When you say civil mediation, that includes family disputes as well, right?

Participant 06:27
Yes, family disputes could also be mediated by us. We could act as intermediaries to coordinate.
If the conflict could be resolved at the community level, that was, of course, the best outcome; if mediation failed, then it had to go through legal procedures or other channels.

Researcher 06:38
Was the establishment of a Mediation Committee in the community something required by the Sub-district Office, or stipulated by the higher-level government?
Also, returning to ten years ago, when there was no CSCMP yet, the community still bore many of the responsibilities of property management.
In terms of resident services, what was the state of the community's development and construction back then?

Participant 07:05
The biggest limitation back then was the lack of funds.
With little financial allocation, many projects to improve the environment simply couldn't be carried out.
Now things are much better-both hardware facilities and living conditions have improved significantly.
On the one hand, living standards have risen, and on the other hand, the government now pays much more attention to grassroots development.

Researcher 07:28
Back then, was the lack of money because projects couldn't get approved, or was there simply no designated funding available?

Participant 07:34

It was mainly due to lack of finance. At that time, the system wasn't yet complete, and many things were still in the exploratory stage.

Now, as long as a project is reasonable and the procedures match the relevant channels, if there is funding, it's much easier to genuinely do things for the people.

Researcher 07:53

That's very true. And in the past, during the urban construction stage of the community...

Participant 08:01

At that time, the community had no money. Even if the community wanted to do something, it had to report upwards and rely on approval from above, you know?

Researcher 08:06

So back then, what kind of support could the community provide for elderly residents?

For example, environmental modifications, project applications, emotional support, medical assistance, or elderly care services-were these available?

Participant 08:24

There were some, but not as systematic or well-developed as now.

For example, during traditional festivals, we would visit and offer condolences to solitary elderly residents.

Researcher 08:36

And where did the funding for these visits come from?

Participant 08:39

It also came from above.

Researcher 08:44

From the Sub-district Office or from the community?

Participant 08:46

The community had no dedicated funds. We would provide a list-for example, how many solitary elderly people were in the jurisdiction-and before each festival we would report it upwards. Only after approval from above would the funds be allocated.

Researcher 09:01

So in the past, support for solitary elderly residents mainly came in the form of festival visits?

Participant 09:07

Yes, and also routine visits in daily life.

Researcher 09:10

And how do you think the relationship between community staff and residents was in the past?

Participant 09:23

It was always based on trust. Residents did recognise the community staff.

Researcher 09:33

Just like now, when many residents face conflicts, they go to the community first for a solution.

Participant 09:36

Yes, the community is essentially a platform for resolving disputes. Many issues have to be handled by the community. The community was like a "nanny", wasn't it?

Researcher 09:45

Do you think it was the same in the past?

Participant 09:46

Yes, it was the same in the past.

Researcher 09:48

In the past, when residents came to the community, was it mainly for help or for administrative procedures? Were there many such matters?

Participant 09:58

Whenever they faced difficulties, they would go to the community.

Researcher 10:00

And compared with now, do you think residents came to the community for help more often back then, less often, or about the same? For example, around 2010.

Participant 10:06

Actually, it was more frequent then, because at that time the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory had not yet been demolished, and there were far more residents than now. Later, after the requisition, the number of households decreased by several hundred.

Researcher 10:18

And when the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory was undergoing renovation, did the community take on management or supervisory responsibilities in the process?

Participant 10:27

Of course, we had to assist-it was a must.

Researcher 10:30

So were the tasks you received arranged by the community leadership, or directly assigned from above?

Participant 10:38

They were assigned from above. Such renovations were municipal projects, not things decided autonomously by the community.

Researcher 10:42

And what specific responsibilities did your community have?

Participant 10:44

We were the actual executors. Whatever work was assigned from above, it ultimately came down to us in the community. All the coordination, notifications, and implementation were our responsibility.

Researcher 10:56

So in the early stage of the renovation, the initial coordination work with the construction side was also handled by the community?

Participant 11:00

Yes, in the beginning the most important job was mobilising the residents. To be honest, that was quite difficult.

Researcher 11:05

So the construction side was only responsible for the building works, and all the early mobilisation and communication were not their tasks?

Participant 11:10

That's right, the construction side was mainly responsible for the actual works. The early-stage work, like door-to-door mobilisation and coordination, was all handled by us in the community. Even during construction we had to assist with supervision, especially regarding construction safety-such as going to the site to check, reminding them to wear safety helmets, and paying attention to various safety measures. Although the construction side had their own safety officers, we still had to cooperate in supervision.

Researcher 11:27

Regarding elderly services, apart from festival visits and hardship assistance, was there anything else?

Participant 11:36

Each of us was responsible for our own jurisdiction. For example, I was responsible for this area, and he

for another. We all knew the elderly residents in our respective areas quite well. This kind of responsibility division has always been passed down; it was done the same way before.

Researcher 11:51

And among the services provided in the past, which ones were government-led? Which ones were projects declared by the community itself to obtain funding? And did the community ever take the lead to bring in social forces or private capital to provide services?

Participant 12:13

Do you mean private service providers?

Researcher 12:14

Yes, for example third-party service providers or social organisations introduced by the community.

Participant 12:16

No, basically none of that. We mainly relied on internal community resources. Private capital wasn't something we brought in; much of it was handled through community contacts, not through market-oriented operations.

Researcher 12:27

Has our community ever taken the initiative to bring in private elderly care service providers? For example, offering home nursing, medical services, or medicine delivery?

Participant 12:37

At present, this area is still not well developed.

Researcher 12:39

So if a resident now has such a need, would the community intervene and coordinate?

Participant 12:42

Yes, now if residents have such needs, we can step in and help coordinate.

Researcher 12:49

And in the past, say around 2010, were there cases of elderly people themselves bringing in private elderly care providers? In such cases, was the community required to act as guarantor or to conduct reviews?

Participant 13:09

The community would not act as guarantor; that was not part of our duties.

Researcher 13:11

Would the community participate in reviewing or providing support?

Participant 13:16

There was no formal process for review either. Some residents did come to consult with the community, and we could give them advice depending on the situation-for example, suggesting how younger family members might handle things, giving them ideas, and helping solve problems. But it was limited to offering advice.

Researcher 13:31

So in the past, the role of the community was more like that of an adviser, without engaging in specific operations or approvals.

Now, let's talk about the renovation of old residential areas-such as demolition of illegal structures, road repairs, installation of streetlights, and so on. These projects were driven by state and sub-district funding. Around 2010, did elderly care services ever include projects directly declared by the community, with allocated funds, and led by the community itself? Not relying on the sub-district or other agencies, but with the community taking the main responsibility?

Participant 14:11

Projects like elderly care were mostly handled by other agencies. The community had no authority to lead them; we were more about coordination and assistance.

Researcher 14:14

Right, so did the community ever take the lead in cooperating with other agencies to run elderly care projects or resident service projects? For example, holding lectures on elderly care, free health clinics, or day-care services?

Participant 14:28

No, such cooperation didn't exist in the past.

Researcher 14:29

I see. One more question about the past. Around 2010, what do you think were the advantages and limitations of the community management model in practice at that time?

Participant 14:58

Overall, it wasn't very standardised back then, not as systematic and detailed as now.

Researcher 15:07

You mean the system wasn't as well developed then-like the processes and regulations weren't clearly defined?

Participant 15:13

Yes, things are much more standardised now, and the system has gradually improved. I can't put it in very technical terms, but the sense is that everything has become more regulated and proper.

Researcher 15:22

I see. For example, compared with the former Residents' Committee, does the current Community Party-Mass Service Centre have more detailed institutional arrangements? Such as clearer work procedures and division of responsibilities-with duties assigned to individuals, set timetables and checkpoints. Is that the difference?

Participant 15:53

In fact, there isn't that much difference. The key is still the sense of responsibility of the staff. Processes can exist, but what matters is whether people take them seriously.

Researcher 16:00

I'm not asking about staff members' sense of duty or care. What I mean is whether, in terms of the mechanism of work distribution, both periods already had duties assigned to individuals.

Participant 16:15

Ah, I didn't quite understand your point at first.

Researcher 16:18

For instance, in the past environmental patrols might be carried out by whoever was free at the time. Now has it become designated staff, designated posts, with regular inspections? So, from ad hoc arrangements to an institutionalised, standardised system.

Participant 16:34

Back then we basically went out every day anyway, especially in the areas we were personally responsible for. You had to be out there every day.

Researcher 16:40

So where do you think the change from "non-standardised" to "standardised" mainly lies?

Participant 16:44

It's that the work systems and procedures weren't well developed at that time. Now it's much better, more systematic.

Researcher 16:48

So this "improvement" doesn't just mean management processes, but also the content and scope of work. In the past it was mainly the community doing the tasks, whereas now the coverage is broader, right?

Participant 17:28

Yes, certainly broader than before. Both the range and depth of services have been enhanced.

Researcher 17:30

So, from the perspective of priorities, the former community focused more on environmental construction work, like road repairs, cleaning, and basic infrastructure. Now the emphasis is more on resident services, such as elderly care, support, government services, and psychological care. Is that a fair understanding?

Participant 17:45

Yes, that's basically accurate.

Researcher 17:51

So I can put it that the earlier focus was more on "environmental construction", whereas now it leans towards "comprehensive services", covering wider aspects such as ecological environment, cultural development, community governance, and humanistic care.

Participant 17:58

Yes, now the services are indeed broader and more detailed.

Researcher 18:03

And how do you view this change? What are your comments or feelings about it?

Participant 18:18

I think overall the working environment has improved a lot. When the environment improves, people's enthusiasm for work also rises, doesn't it?

Researcher 18:40

And this improvement is reflected in what ways? For example, having more office space, better equipment such as computers and printers?

Participant 18:53

Yes, indeed all aspects have improved a lot. Compared with the past, the changes are really significant.

Researcher 18:58

So mainly it's the office facilities and working environment that have improved, is that right?

Participant 19:01

It's not just the hardware conditions that are better. The overall atmosphere of the work and the quality of people has also improved. Now most community staff are university graduates, and the overall calibre is certainly higher than before.

Researcher 19:14

You mean the quality of the personnel has improved?

Participant 19:23

Yes, and people's enthusiasm for their work has also increased. With a good atmosphere and good conditions, naturally people put more effort in.

Researcher 19:27

So it's the environment driving the change in people?

Participant 19:30

Yes, environmental changes definitely change people-that's for sure.

Researcher 19:34

Have the benefits and welfare also improved?

Participant 19:35

Of course they've improved. When I first started, my monthly salary was only 650 yuan.

Researcher 19:41
When did you start working here?

Participant 19:43
At that time I joined as a community committee member, with just 650 yuan. Now you see, newly recruited community staff can earn nearly 3,000, plus social insurance and medical insurance. Back then we had none of those benefits. The difference is really quite big.

Researcher 20:02
Yes, the treatment now has indeed improved.

Participant 20:04
Exactly. When I first joined, we didn't even have pension contributions or medical insurance, but now we do.

Researcher 20:07
So in your view, since the community has transformed into a Party-Mass Service Centre, what impact has this functional shift had on community construction and management? It could be positive or it could include some problems.

Participant 20:34
I think the most obvious thing is that residents rely on the community more. If I were a resident of the Third Cotton Mill, I'd certainly want to come to the community-if something happens, I'd go to the community.

Researcher 20:46
So residents' dependence on the community has become stronger.

Participant 20:47
Yes, now if anything comes up, people are willing to come to the community. Everyone trusts and relies on the community.

Researcher 20:53
Can I ask something specific? When residents come to the community, we all know that the authority and funding of the community are limited. Many issues can't be fully solved at the community level-for example, certain approvals, engineering projects, or law enforcement matters, which don't fall under community responsibilities.

Participant 21:24
Yes, that's true. What we can do, we will certainly do. For things beyond our remit, we can only do our best to coordinate or guide.

Researcher 21:27
So in your opinion, do residents frequently coming to the community mainly because they get their practical problems solved, or is it more that the community provides them with emotional support, listening, and advice? Which aspect do you feel is more prominent?

Participant 21:45
Both are there. But ultimately, residents come to us because they believe the community can "get things done", or at least help get their problems implemented. If we couldn't even do that, they wouldn't come to us, would they?

Researcher 21:53
I've noticed that the community's care for solitary elderly residents is not only material, but also includes emotional and psychological support. Has the community indeed undertaken such work?

Participant 22:15
Yes, things like psychological support and household visits are all very important parts of our work.

Researcher 22:21
And when you carry out household visits, besides understanding the elderly residents' basic situation, do you also pay attention to their psychological state?

Participant 22:24
Yes, that's actually a form of caring for the residents.

Researcher 22:28
So during visits, besides learning about their living conditions, do you also provide psychological comfort or emotional support? Would you say that's part of your duties?

Participant 22:38
Of course, that's part of it too.

Researcher 22:41
So in practice, you take the initiative to do this work, like having a chat with them, comforting them, or helping to ease their emotions, right?

Participant 22:44
Yes, for some elderly residents we know their family situations as well, and naturally these things come up in conversation.

Researcher 22:48
Because in the national guidelines for community staff, there isn't a rigid requirement for you to provide emotional counselling. But in practice you've taken the initiative to do these things. Do you think this voluntary effort helps with other parts of your work?

Participant 23:35
Of course it helps.

Researcher 23:39
And do you feel that compared with the past, the relationship between you and the community residents has changed?

Researcher 23:53
Do you think the relationship between community staff and residents now is different from before?

Participant 23:55
I think the relationship has become closer.

Researcher 23:55
Do you mean it's improved compared with before? Or do you mean that community staff have now become part of the neighbourhood relationship network?

Participant 24:12
Yes, it means we've already integrated into it.

Researcher 24:14
And what role do you feel you play within this "neighbourhood relationship network"?

Participant 24:34
I think it's quite an important role-that of mediator and decision-maker. For some small issues among residents, like minor disputes between neighbours, they'll actively come to the community for help with coordination and resolution.

Researcher 24:53
And for some bigger issues, like those involving policy or requiring departmental coordination, would they also come to you?

Participant 25:04
For small issues they come directly to us-like cars parked under windows or trivial domestic matters. For big issues, if we can't solve them, we'll help to report them upwards. But sometimes for the big issues they might not necessarily come to us.

Researcher 25:27

From the former Residents' Committee to the current Community Party-Mass Service Centre, do you think there have been changes in the management approach?

Researcher 25:42

So compared with the past, how do you think the community's management approach has changed?

Participant 25:47

Researcher 25:52

Could you be more specific about the changes?

Participant 25:52

Now the work has become routinised; many things must be done in advance. For example, with the issue of residents charging electric scooters by illegally connecting wires, we now have to go down every day to patrol. This has become a regular part of our daily work.

Researcher 26:08

So now it's written into the work log, right?

Participant 26:10

Yes, it's just routine.

Researcher 26:12

In the past, each person was responsible for a section, and relied on self-initiative to patrol, without fixed times or standards?

Participant 26:19

Yes, it mainly depended on initiative. When to go down and check was basically arranged by oneself.

Researcher 26:22

And now it's become a system of fixed posts, fixed times, and fixed responsibilities?

Participant 26:34

Yes. Now the community has to go down every day to check for potential safety hazards. Residents see us patrolling daily, and they feel the community is very responsible.

Researcher 26:50

And do you think the management of neighbourhood sections has changed compared with before?

Participant 26:55

What I just said is precisely the change-the change is huge.

Researcher 26:56

So in your view, what's the biggest difference compared with the past? How was section responsibility allocated back then, and how is it now?

Participant 27:04

Now the community does have divisions of labour. For example, I'm responsible for subsistence allowance, he's responsible for family planning, and someone else is in charge of Party building. But when it comes to actual work, for big tasks everyone gets involved. It's not like you only do your own bit. For example, with creating a civilised city or public health campaigns, everyone does it together.

Researcher 27:26

So each person has their own specific duties, but also has to take part in common community tasks?

Participant 27:30

Yes, because we're short-staffed, so we still have to cooperate.

Researcher 27:36

And now the individual responsibilities are still broken down?

Participant 27:38

Yes, but once there's a task, like creating a civilised city or a healthy environment, everyone still joins in.

Researcher 27:46

From your perspective, has the way grassroots community work is carried out changed compared with the past?

Participant 27:56

It has changed, though it's hard to explain in detail. But the changes are indeed substantial.

Researcher 28:02

For example, in which specific aspects has it changed?

Participant 28:04

Now we have grid groups and WeChat groups. Many notices, policies, and tasks are sent directly in the groups. Communication is much more detailed and timely.

Researcher 28:16

So the method of information transmission has also become more refined?

Participant 28:18

Yes. In the past, even mobile phones weren't widespread. Now even elderly people use WeChat.

Researcher 28:24

That's true. With WeChat and grid-based management, a lot of things have become more efficient.

Participant 28:29

For example, when it snows, we'll remind everyone in the WeChat groups to pay attention to safety and send out relevant information and publicity. That aspect is very thorough.

Researcher 28:38

Do you feel people's responsiveness is higher than before?

Participant 28:40

Of course. Now with more publicity, the response is naturally better. You probably can't imagine how big the change is.

Researcher 28:45

What role has WeChat played in all this?

Participant 28:47

A very big one. For example, with the annual review for family planning, we just notify people directly in the grid groups. Everyone sees it at once, it's very convenient, and service efficiency has improved a lot.

Researcher 29:02

So now WeChat has become the main method of notification? Are there other ways?

Participant 29:15

It's the best method.

Researcher 29:16

Other than WeChat groups, are there any others?

Participant 29:21

Basically, it's all through WeChat groups. Sometimes we also use the Party members' group for notifications, like for meetings.

Researcher 29:33

So phone calls are much less frequent now?

Participant 29:35

Yes, otherwise we just say it in the group.

Researcher 29:36

So phone calls are rarely made?

Participant 29:38

We do still make calls. If someone has something on, or if we're not sure whether they're available, we'll contact them by phone.

Researcher 29:43

So our main methods of notification now are WeChat and phone calls. What about letters?

Participant 29:55

That method isn't used much anymore. We mainly put up publicity materials, like posting notices in stairwells, or handing out leaflets door-to-door. That sort of thing.

Researcher 30:09

And what role do the micro-grid heads play in all this?

Participant 30:17

Their main role is still publicity, right?

Researcher 30:19

So they're mainly responsible for publicity, but do they also take part in community management?

Participant 30:23

Yes, they also take part in management.

Researcher 30:25

So they also participate in management work?

Participant 30:27

Yes, they have to attend regular meetings, and whatever issues come up, they are responsible for passing them on.

Researcher 30:33

And do we have specific work responsibilities laid out for the micro-grid heads? Is it through written documents, or formally announced at meetings?

Participant 30:43

Yes, there are clear regulations.

Researcher 30:45

So it's formally explained by the community at meetings, not just passed around informally by the grid heads themselves, correct?

Participant 30:53

Yes, there are many related systems, and the content is very well developed.

Researcher 30:57

And is the micro-grid head system based on agreements signed with the community, or not?

Participant 31:03

They're volunteers, no contracts.

Researcher 31:07

Was this system something our community devised itself, or was it issued from above?

Participant 31:16

It came from the broader context, yes, it was uniformly arranged from above.

Researcher 31:19

So it wasn't independently set up by the community?

Participant 31:20

No, it was decided by the sub-district office. The entire "micro-grid" system was arranged that way.

Researcher 31:25

Do you know where it first started?

Participant 31:28

Nowadays, which city in the country doesn't do this? Grid-based management is everywhere.

Researcher 31:29

But the specific term "micro-grid" isn't actually used in many places.

Participant 31:31

I didn't quite catch that earlier—you mean "micro-grid". Grid-based management is something promoted by higher levels.

Researcher 31:36

Yes, I mean the "micro-grid head" model. Was that also introduced through directives from above?

Participant 31:39

Once you mentioned it, I understood.

Researcher 31:42

I mean the way our community uses "micro-grids" within the grid system.

Participant 31:44

"Micro-grids" were developed as an extension of grid-based management.

Researcher 31:47

So this wasn't the original "grid head" position set by the sub-district office, but rather something our community extended into "micro-grid heads"?

Participant 31:52

Yes. "Micro-grid heads" are selected from among enthusiastic residents, nominated by everyone—people who are particularly active and proactive.

Researcher 31:58

And this title of "micro-grid head", did you first encounter it in documents, or by borrowing experiences from other communities?

Participant 32:05

In our case, it's also according to the higher-level arrangements. Whatever comes down, we implement. The documents clearly state "micro-grid head".

Researcher 32:13

Yes, it's definitely "micro-grid head". So that means it was also set up through official documents issued by the sub-district office.

Participant 32:18

Yes, they are there to assist the grid heads with their work.

Researcher 32:21

So the main purpose of establishing micro-grid heads was—

Participant 32:23

—to facilitate the work of the community, making it more detailed.

Researcher 32:25

Right, so the establishment of micro-grid heads was essentially to support the grid heads in carrying out their duties. In the official documents from above, was it the case that only grid heads were explicitly set out, or were both positions formally included?

Participant 32:47

It should have been uniformly set by the higher levels; it was in the official documents.

Researcher 32:49

Do you remember roughly which year the “micro-grid head” system began?

Participant 32:54

Just within the past few years, but I can't recall the exact year.

Researcher 32:59

Another question: since entering the stage of the Community Party-Mass Service Centre, have there been any limitations in practice? For example, now that the community's functional scope has expanded and grid-based management has become more in-depth, at this stage what do you think are the most obvious advantages, or what features and changes stand out?

Participant 33:36

I think the advantages are quite obvious; they really do show.

Researcher 33:43

Where do you think these advantages are specifically reflected?

Participant 33:44

They are reflected in many specific areas of work. For example, when the community carries out its tasks, residents' level of cooperation is not the same as before.

Researcher 33:58

Do you mean that residents are more cooperative now, or that the efficiency of notifications has improved?

Participant 34:04

Both. Some work is indeed carried out much more smoothly than before.

Researcher 34:09

Is that because there are now more channels of communication? Would you say the increase in cooperation is because information flows more smoothly?

Participant 34:17

Yes, exactly.

Researcher 34:18

Once the channels of communication are open, residents' cooperation naturally improves.

Participant 34:24

Yes, I think that's why work is now carried out so much more smoothly.

Researcher 34:35

And apart from this, do you think there are any other advantages?

Participant 34:41

Now we have more information than before, especially about residents. After all, our work is mainly about serving the residents, isn't it? If we don't have that information, then what can we rely on? Nothing else matters—what's crucial is understanding residents' situations. For example, if you are responsible for a particular grid, the grid head needs to know the details of that area, including all kinds of feedback from residents. This information really is very important—the more specific it is, the better the service can be.

Researcher 35:12

So you feel that the updating of information between residents and the community is now quicker. But do

you think there are currently any limitations in the actual work? For example, in management—or do you imagine that if things continue under the present system, problems might arise in the future?

Participant 35:30

I haven't really felt there are limitations, haven't come across many.

Researcher 35:33

But in your view, what practical limitations exist in the current work process?

Participant 35:36

There are indeed some. For example, when certain tasks come down from above, by the time they are implemented at the community level, sometimes there feels to be a lack of execution strength.

Researcher 35:51

What do you think is the reason for this lack of execution strength?

Participant 35:54

Take our Mianxi Courtyard, for example. We've certainly carried out some closed-loop management there, and the micro-grid mechanism has indeed played quite a good role. But sometimes it still feels like the execution isn't strong enough—it may be because resources are limited, or because responsibilities and authority aren't clearly defined. Many issues in old communities are actually quite complex, and what we can mostly do is coordination. For example, things like hardening the ground—the community itself has no funding support for that, right? A lot of the time all we can do is coordinate, make use of whatever resources can be mobilised. For instance, having a word with a contractor and asking them to lend a hand when convenient.

Researcher 36:37

So you think the main limitation is that the community can only coordinate, but can't directly resolve issues. And regarding the "lack of execution strength" you mentioned, what do you think is the core reason?

Participant 36:55

At the end of the day, I think it's mainly because the community's authority is too limited.

Researcher 37:16

In other words, precisely because authority is so limited, the execution strength ends up appearing inadequate in some matters.

Researcher 37:24

Apart from the issue of authority, do you think there are any other limitations?

Participant 37:24

Not really. On the whole, community work now is carried out in a fairly orderly way.

Researcher 37:33

And in terms of funding? Are there restrictions for the community there?

Participant 37:36

The community itself has no funding whatsoever—none at all.

Researcher 37:41

So, for example, if we want to organise an activity, whether large or small, the funding must always be applied for in advance, correct?

Participant 37:44

Yes, it requires an application upwards. You can first draft an application, then submit it level by level for approval.

Researcher 37:52

So that means all activity funding must be applied for by the community, but the approval and allocation go through the sub-district office, is that right?

Participant 38:08

Yes, that's essentially what I just said—the funding here is all obtained through applications. As for what happens above, it's not really within our remit to comment, since it's outside our responsibility.

Researcher 38:22

Right, so our community mainly just coordinates with the sub-district office, and doesn't directly deal with other projects or work units, correct?

Participant 38:28

Correct. Our most direct superior is the sub-district office, and all our work falls under the management of its leadership.

Researcher 38:35

So here we don't directly interact with other departments or organisations.

Participant 38:42

That's right. Our main task is to do our own work well; the community's main responsibility is to receive and carry out all the tasks assigned by the sub-district office.

Researcher 38:50

I understand. Thank you very much—I'll stop the recording here.

Case study interview script-resident

1. Do you remember the communities during the planned economy era?
2. What was it like for the older people to live here?
3. What advantages do you think the living environment had back then?
4. What disadvantages do you think the living environment had back then?
5. How did people travel back then? What transportation did they use?
6. What activities did residents participate in? What activities were available for the older people?
7. What were the main gathering places back then? Were older people the primary users of these meeting spots?
8. How would you assess the neighborhood relationships during that time?
9. After China's reform and opening-up, what changes do you think occurred here once it became a community system?
10. Following the community's redevelopment and reconstruction, what changes do you observe? What are your thoughts on this?
11. How would you evaluate the community's evolution across these three periods?

Case study interview transcript-resident 1

Researcher 00:00

Roughly when did you start living here?

Participant 00:04

My family moved here in '68. That was quite early.

Researcher 00:08

Were you born in '68?

Participant 00:10

No, I left in 2006, but I'd lived here since 1968.

Researcher 00:16

When you first moved into the community—back in the '60s—it was still the planned economy era, before the reform and opening-up. Do you recall what the community was like during the planned economy period?

Participant 00:42

It wasn't called a community back then. At the very beginning, it was just the Third National Cotton Factory. Around the '70s, the factory had something called the *Family Committee*. It was called that back then. Later on, in the late '70s and early '80s, the *Family Committee* was divided into sections. I remember our family belonged to what was called the Eighth Residents' Committee. I was still young then. The residents' committee was located where Sanmian West is now.

The Sanmian Community used to be the *Family Committee* of the Third Cotton Factory, which was later divided into what became five or six separate ones. You see, the Third Factory had its production zone on the south side of Mianfang Road—this was the earliest part. At first, there was just one *Residents' Committee* called the *Family Committee*. Then in the 1980s, it was divided into smaller sections. I was too young to know everything clearly, but I knew my family belonged to the Eighth Residents' Committee.

There were quite a few of these within the Third Factory. And possibly not just inside the factory—because by the late '70s and early '80s, the younger workers started getting married and buying houses. At that time, the Third Factory began selling housing. There was a residential compound on Qianjin Road. Later, near what is now the Specialised Court area, there were two compounds. There was also one in Xigang. That's how they got split up. I only know that ours was the Eighth Residents' Committee—nothing about the others.

Researcher 02:57

Aside from how the residents' committees were divided, do you remember what this area—where you lived—looked like back then?

Participant 03:07

It was around 1972. I remember that the road running through Sanmian wasn't tarmac. Proper asphalt roads didn't come until after the '70s. Back then, it was all coal cinder and rubble, but it was rammed quite firm. There was basically just Xiangrong Street, one road through the middle, and nothing much else.

At the time, in the Sanmian residential compound, where today's buildings No. 26 to 30 on East Lühua Street are, that used to be a recycling station. Buildings No. 15 and 16 on the same street were where the coal depot was. There was also a small factory called Yamei Children's Clothing Factory, and between buildings 26 and 30, there was another small plant affiliated with the Third Factory. Those who couldn't get assigned to the main factory were placed there—family members mostly. I don't know exactly how many machines there were, maybe one or two.

There was a small factory there. Later, in the 1980s, the Third Factory bought that land, and by the 1990s, they had built buildings No. 15 and 16. Buildings No. 26 to 30 were probably constructed around 1985—it took more than a year to finish. Around that time, this part of Zhengzhou started getting access to mains gas. Central heating didn't arrive until nearly the 1990s.

The community buildings were constructed relatively late—I'm not sure whether it was the '80s or '90s. There used to be a small two-storey building downstairs. When I was young, the factory kindergarten was located in what is now the Sanmian West Community. It was later relocated to the ground floor of buildings No. 5 and 6 on New East Lühua Street—those buildings were newly built.

The original two-storey building became the kindergarten's kitchen. It's still there now—next to building No. 41 on East Lühua Street. It's a small single-storey structure, and there's still a chimney there. That part has remained.

The school has also been repurposed. One of the buildings used to be the primary school—it's now part of the hospital. The roundabout in the middle of the Third Factory has been redeveloped three times. The first version had a huge propaganda board. Back in the day, it featured a large portrait of Mao Zedong and Lin Biao.

The roundabout was demolished in the 1980s and replaced with a fountain, which attracted many visitors from across Zhengzhou. By the time the fountain was built, the factory was already in decline. They built a flowerbed around it, which is still there but hasn't been maintained much.

The tall building across the street is now under the management of the Sanmian West Community, but it used to be the Third Factory's canteen.

Participant 07:30

When I was a kid, we used to play up there. Back then, apart from the Erqi Tower in Zhengzhou, the 18-storey building at the train station, and the seven-storey municipal party committee building, that one was one of the tallest buildings around.

I even climbed up to its rooftop to play.

Researcher 07:48

So the canteen was originally quite a tall building, was it?

Participant 07:50

It wasn't exactly a tall building. It was relatively taller compared to others at the time. Most buildings were just two storeys; residential ones might have been three, around ten metres high at most. The canteen—actually, it was also called the *club*—had a large hall with a high, arched ceiling.

Speaker 3 08:19

It—

Participant 08:21

On the southern side, it had a second floor with a library and a barbershop. On the ground floor, there was a Halal canteen and the accounting office.

When they were planning staffing numbers—you could ask someone about this—they were drafting for six textile factories, and I think this one had the most workers. It had over 10,000 people.

At that time, it was still the planned economy period, and people were allocated posts through the *Danwei* system.

Speaker 3 08:52

That school—

Participant 08:58

When I was in primary school, around 1972 or 1973, all the educational resources were here. We could only attend half-day classes. Several year groups shared the same classroom—older kids in the morning, younger ones in the afternoon.

Later, the school wasn't the only facility run by the *Danwei*. There used to be an open-air stage too—right where the current inpatient department is. That spot used to be the open-air stage.

Researcher 09:38

It was demolished?

Participant 09:41

Yes, it was demolished. In the 1970s, they started building over it. Where Buildings No. 60 and 61 of Xiang Street stand now—that's where they first built a four-storey school building.

Participant 09:57

That must have been in the '80s or maybe the '90s.

Researcher 10:07

I joined the army in 1984, and by the time I came back, the school had already changed. They had demolished part of it in the '80s and started putting up residential buildings.

Participant 10:13

Yes, they built family housing there, and the school was moved slightly westward.

Researcher 10:17

And the stage was replaced by a hospital.

Participant 10:20

The stage was torn down, and a new hospital building was constructed.

Researcher 10:24

Because now, of the two buildings standing there, one of them was built later.

Participant 10:27

Yes, of the two buildings there now, one is newer. It wasn't part of the original structure.

Participant 10:32

As for the kindergarten, it originally had a two-storey building. That site was later converted into a hospital. It was a kindergarten first, then became a hospital, and in the 1990s it was demolished and replaced by a new building.

Over by the Hongwei Processing Plant and that whole area—that's now under redevelopment. Back in the 1970s, we used to call it the *air defence curtain* zone, and it was a favourite spot for children to play.

That part was quite fun. It used to be an air-raid shelter. Below it was a command centre—solid construction. If you'd gone three years ago, you could still get down there and take a look. It was only last year or the year before that it was completely filled in.

Because of the high groundwater level, you can still see how things were. For example, under the shed over there, if you look at the steps leading down, in the '70s and '80s, this was used for civil defence drills. Students had to evacuate—there were even requirements like getting from the third floor to the

bottom within 20-odd seconds. That included students from the fourth floor too. The depth was more than 20 metres.

Researcher 11:54

After it was filled in, the drills stopped?

Participant 11:56

Yes, they stopped the drills. Later on, no one emphasised this kind of thing anymore—there were no more exercises.

That air-raid shelter used to connect directly beneath the kindergarten—the one that stands there today. In fact, there were two entrances where kids could go down. Probably filled in now as well.

The interesting part was that deeper inside the shelter, there was a command room and a meeting room. You could even find copies of Mao Zedong's quotations and other such things. You can't see any of that now—it was only visible up until last year, before they filled it in completely.

So basically, all those buildings are gone now. The Third Factory used to have an entire air-raid system. From what I recall, back in the 1970s and early '80s, during the early reform and opening-up period, the Third National Cotton Factory was seen as a national showcase. I'm not exactly sure why, but apparently even foreigners who came to China for interviews or visits were taken on tours of the Third Factory.

They would be shown the factory's canteen, the nursery, and the production area. I saw quite a few of them myself.

The vegetable market was closed down about ten years ago—probably a decade ago. Before that, it used to be called the *Floodlit Ball Court*. Before the '80s, it was run by the Zhengzhou municipal trade union, and they held all kinds of sports events there—basketball matches and so on.

It was one of the few venues in the city where you could play ball under floodlights at night. There weren't many places like that. This was one of them.

Researcher 14:10

So there were quite a few recreational activities at the time?

Participant 14:11

Oh yes, it was great fun. We used to watch open-air films. In the early days, they'd screen them just north of where the Zhongtie building is now.

Back then, that was the boiler house of the Third Factory. People would queue there to fetch hot water. There was also a public bathhouse in the residential compound—separate from the many bathhouses inside the production area.

There wasn't much else, really.

Researcher 14:57

Go on.

Participant 14:58

Right by the hospital entrance, beyond the community centre—these days there's Wanjiayu and Yuxiangzi Street. Back then, there was a Dimilan supermarket—but it's gone now.

Researcher 15:11

When I came last year, Dimilan wasn't there—I only saw Wanjiayu.

Participant 15:16

The massage parlour there has closed down too. That place used to be run by the municipal bureau of commerce—it was a small shop opened by the department store, called a *cooperative*.

They sold soy sauce, fabric, general household goods—basic daily necessities.

At that time, the Third Factory area was quite small. The shop was called a *cooperative*.

By the 1980s, some privately run shops had also started to appear. There was a famous case connected to one of them—I think it was only solved last year, or the year before?

That case had gone unsolved for decades.

Researcher 16:42

You mean a criminal case?

Participant 16:48

Yes, it was connected to that old *cooperative*.

And now, just north of the Wanjiayu supermarket, there's a shop called Chengxin Vegetable Store.

Researcher 17:12

The subsidised vegetable shop, right?

Participant 17:17

In the early days, there was a dining company there, and also a small single-storey shopfront.

Participant 17:25

When I was a kid, it was always packed with people. That would've been in the '80s and '90s. They usually sold *huimiàn* (stewed noodles). Most of the vendors were Hui, though that particular stall was run by a Han family.

It was all quite fun around here back then.

As for the hospital, it used to be a school. In between, it went through a few changes, and eventually it became the hospital we see today.

Researcher 17:57

Were all these constructions managed by the factory?

Participant 18:01

Back in the planned economy days, the whole area covered by the factory and the surrounding residential compound was like a society in itself—it had everything.

Researcher 18:12

So all the planning and approvals were handled by the factory?

Participant 18:18

Yes, back then there was something called the Disciplinary Committee and other such departments—they reported and got approval to build Sanmian Town. Basically, everything here was managed by the Third Factory.

The factory alone had its own kindergarten, probably starting in the 1970s. The kindergarten was divided into sections. They even had a special section called the *nursing room*. Older generations called it that. Children under three still needed breastfeeding, so there was a separate nursing room. That building has since been demolished.

It was right next to the production area. The production area even had an orchard—an apple orchard and a greenhouse.

All of it belonged to the Third Factory. For example, the area in front of buildings No. 26 to 30 and No. 41—all along this street—they planted fir trees, desert trees, and other kinds. That was in the '80s. Back then, there was an Auntie [name unclear] who brought them in from Hubei. Those trees are practically cultural relics now. Her home was in the single-storey buildings on Lùhua East Street—No. 2, if I remember right. There are fitness machines in front of it now.

That little house was hers. She was from Hunan but came to support development in inland areas from Hubei. Her husband probably took part in the War of Resistance Against Japan.

When she came here, she was in charge of the greening team and built quite a lot. They used to plant trees on the hillside. She even bought desert plants. In the apple orchard, there were grapes too. I remember it fondly—there were grapes, apples, pears. It was all so charming when we were little.

But all of that has been torn down now—nothing left.

Researcher 21:09

The orchard you mentioned—was that where the Junhui Supermarket is now?

Participant 21:12

No, the orchard was where buildings No. 21 and 22 of the new Mianxin area stand now—on Mianxi Road.

Researcher 21:21

Mianxi Road, buildings 21 and 22?

Participant 21:24

Yes, that's the spot. Just west of the Textile Museum.

Researcher 21:33

Was the orchard run by the Third Factory itself? Were the fruits free for residents?

Participant 21:40

When the fruit ripened, they would harvest it and distribute it to the workers.

Researcher 21:45

Were there people specifically in charge of looking after it?

Participant 21:48

Yes, the greening team managed it specifically.

The greening team actually produced quite a few talented individuals. In the early days, few people were well educated, but many of them later retired. There was someone called [name obscured], who started working at the Third Factory after graduating from Henan Agricultural University.

Researcher 22:20

A real top student, then.

Participant 22:23

He had three brothers. One became a factory director, another worked in Ersha—initially at the Housing Administration Bureau, later as the manager of Ersha Property Management Company. He himself worked in greening—he was responsible for the greenhouses and that kind of thing.

Speaker 3 22:38

All year round—

Participant 22:40

Yes, all year round they would grow flowers, even for receiving foreign visitors. It was traditional to have flowers in all four seasons. He was the one who cultivated them.

Researcher 22:48

That's a good system.

Participant 22:51

Back then, it was like a little world of its own—everything was there. I no longer fall under Sanmian East's jurisdiction. This plot is now part of Sanmian West Community. They used to call it Building 7 of Department 7. That area has now been requisitioned.

In the past, the Third Factory had its own vegetable market and sewing shop. Back then, you didn't just go out and buy noodles—you'd bring flour from home and exchange it for noodles. You'd pay an extra one or two cents.

The old building has now been requisitioned. It was built in the 1990s.

Researcher 23:27

Is that the *dustpan-shaped* building?

Participant 23:29

You mean the building shaped like a dustpan?

Researcher 23:32

Yes. Some parts of it have now been requisitioned, right? Those few *Soviet-style buildings*?

Participant 23:37

They're not actually Soviet-style buildings. But within the Third Factory there were also different housing sections—like the one where I lived, and where Teacher Wu used to live. During the requisitioning of the *air-raid shelter area*, you could still see two *Cultural Revolution-era buildings*. They were built in 1972, I think.

Researcher 23:53

Built during the big political training campaigns?

Participant 23:54

No, not the Great Leap Forward—that was 1958. The Cultural Revolution started in 1966. I never heard of any official announcement declaring it over, but 1976 was said to be the end—when the Gang of Four was overthrown. After that, nothing more was really said.

Even post-1976, schools were still doing those things—kids would carry little golden rods, cut out paper triangles, make small flags. Teachers would lead the kids out to march. It was fun back then.

Researcher 24:41

And now all that's gone.

Participant 24:43

Yes, it's all gone. Back then, there was a branch of the Vegetable Company near Guo Qilong's place. There was also a sewing room and a noodle press machine.

Researcher 25:00

Which building was that in?

Participant 25:03

You can't see it from outside anymore—it's been sealed off by construction hoarding.

Researcher 25:10

So it's not one of those Soviet-style buildings, but still barricaded? Which area is it in?

Participant 25:15

Right in the middle. If you enter through the main gate on Mianfang Road, after passing the first building—not Sanmian East, but this side—what used to be called Lühua East Street, or perhaps Mianfang West Road Buildings 72, 73, 74, 75. Behind the commercial complex across the road, there are some buildings further back.

Researcher 25:41

Yes, that's it. There used to be a grain store there.

Participant 25:42

But the building numbers don't match those blocks anymore.

Now I can't remember how it was divided. Some flats were sold later on. Currently, this area falls under Zhengzhou City's jurisdiction—it's called Xiangrong Street. Some buildings are listed under Xiangrong Street. Others were called Lühua West Street.

Back in the day, the Third Factory was very well known. You could ask the older folks. Between 1982 and 1985—even up to 1986, 1987—it was still relatively well-known across China.

When people talked about Zhengzhou, they'd often mention the *Green City*. But really, it was all centred around the Third National Cotton Factory at that time.

Researcher 26:34

Yes.

Participant 26:35

The point is, they had already moved in during the '50s—earlier than even the provincial government. The Third Factory started in 1951. The First National Cotton Factory was built in 1954. By the time the Third National Cotton Factory got going, everything was already established.

They planted *French parasol trees* (Platanus). They grow fast. By the 1980s, the trees on both sides of the central road had already formed a full canopy. When you walked down the middle, the sunlight couldn't reach you anymore.

Researcher 27:07

Even now—

Participant 27:09

If you look at the old photos Zhao took—he took them from the stairwell—you can still see the high canopy effect. From that angle, it was completely green.

Researcher 27:23

Back in those days—

Participant 27:24

They used to call it the *Green City*. Later on, the Provincial Party Committee area around Jinshui Road—well, even now, you can still see the sun from the middle of the road in summer.

Researcher 27:36

So—

Participant 27:38

But in the central area of the Third Factory, if you go there in summer—

Researcher 27:43

The trees are very tall.

Participant 27:44

It's not just that they're tall—they completely block out the sun along the road.

Researcher 27:48

Yes, exactly.

Participant 27:50

This area was actually quite well known. There was also a road built in 1972—Construction Road.

Researcher 32:44

Let me ask another question. Uncle, when you lived here, were there any older people living with you? And what kind of life do you think they had here?

Participant 33:16

There were very few. My mum, for example—she was a military spouse. She didn't have a job. When she came to the Third Factory, she was unemployed.

At one point, we had to rent a place outside the compound—near Zhutou (Pig Head area). We rented for about a year.

Back then, renting was almost laughable. The flats were tiny. From what I remember, around the time they started building Construction Road, by the late 1970s, there was already talk that housing was insufficient. That's when the Third Factory began to face a real housing shortage.

Our family, for example, originally lived at No. 31 Xianggang Street. That was a *tongzilou*—what people now call “corridor-style buildings.” But back then, they were actually a form of collective housing. Soviet-style architecture.

It was like a hospital. You entered, and each household had just one room. There were maybe seven or eight families sharing one kitchen.

It's a bit like school dormitories today—maybe better now. But in hospitals, you can still sometimes see that kind of layout, although not on the same scale.

Participant 34:40

It was an open-plan setup. There was one water pipe on one side, and each household had its own small stove. The toilet was communal. There were partitions, of course—but in these kinds of buildings, what you had was a one-plus-two system: one room plus two shared spaces.

Even in your interviews last year, you would've heard about this. What looks like one household now might have actually been shared by three families.

Researcher 35:19

Yes, I remember hearing from someone's grandmother—back then, weren't there several families sharing one kitchen?

Were there still cases like that?

Participant 35:28

Yes. If you look at Building No. 40 now, units 1, 2, and 3 share the same kitchen and toilet. And Buildings 45 and 60 also have one shared kitchen and one toilet.

By the 1980s, more and more of these setups started to appear. Actually, in the 370 block area, many of the buildings constructed during the Cultural Revolution had this kind of arrangement. Even now, behind the school, if you look near Cishangsi and Guomaisi, there's still a building like that.

It's a single-storey building. In that one, each household had its own kitchen, but the entire floor shared three toilets. So it was still communal.

These were built during the Cultural Revolution. By the late '70s and early '80s, housing still wasn't enough. So what did they do? In those *tongzilou*-style corridor buildings, they started having two families share a single room.

Researcher 36:59

So people would hang up curtains?

Participant 37:00

Yes, some people hung curtains. The factory even provided golden-fringed ones—curtains to divide the space. But really, it was two families living in one room. If both families got along and discussed things properly, it worked out.

Back then, families had lots of children. If one family had only boys, and another only girls, they'd swap rooms accordingly. But if they didn't agree, they'd report it to the factory, and the factory would install a divider.

In those days, every household was issued the same standard furniture by the factory. From what I remember, each family got one double bed, one single bed, and a desk with three drawers—what we called a “three-drawer table.” And there were stools as well.

Researcher 37:55

So even the furniture was issued by the factory?

Participant 37:58

Yes, it was all standardised. Every household got that basic set.

Researcher 38:03

That's quite something—fully furnished.

Participant 38:08

It was a bit like those model villages you hear about nowadays—like Nanjie Village in Linyi. Back then in Zhengzhou, there was Xima Sheep Village (Xiamayang), which they're saying is being redeveloped now, though no one knows what it's really like.

But conflicts always arose eventually. Over time, tensions would build up. Even after I returned from the army in the 1990s, we kept hearing stories about people fighting and arguing.

My own family started out with just one room on Xiaosheng Street. Later, we moved to Building No. 37 on Lühua East Street. That flat had two rooms, but still shared a kitchen and toilet with another family. Eventually, that other family was reassigned to one of the Cultural Revolution-era buildings, and we got the whole flat to ourselves.

Back then, housing allocation also followed its own rules. If you had seniority or contributed more—ask any of the older residents—they'll tell you how it worked.

Nowadays people talk about “model buildings” and fancy names, but in reality, back then it was all about *rank and seniority*.

Researcher 39:23

Right.

Participant 39:24

If your rank was higher, or you had more years of service, you'd get a slightly larger place. Later on, they also began factoring in household size.

Researcher 39:38

Would they take into account, for example, if your family had three generations living together—grandparents, parents, and children? Would that factor into allocation?

Participant 39:50

Yes, once they started allocating based on household size, they took all that into account.

Researcher 39:53

So back then, were there many families living with three generations under one roof? Or was it quite rare? Were there few elderly people in the factory?

Participant 40:03

Yes, at that time there wasn't really an ageing issue. The Third Factory, for instance—it recruited its first group of workers mostly through support from the south. Many of them were young workers from places like Hubei, Wuxi and Suzhou in Jiangsu, and Shanghai.

Speaker 3 40:30

Most of them weren't even married yet.

Participant 40:33

So the one-room flats didn't feel small. Apart from the collective dormitories near Xizhan, most workers didn't even need to move into housing straight away. Why?

Because rent for a room was only a few yuan per month, and a worker's monthly salary at the time—during the planned economy era—wasn't very high. The economy was divided into light and heavy industry.

When I first started working in 1988, after coming back from military service—I had a driver's licence, so I started at Grade 3 level—but even then my salary was just over 31 yuan, or maybe 27.

It's hard to imagine now. In 1981, I went to technical school.

Each month we received a basic living allowance. The performance pay system in the factory—like in Sanmian, where there was a "721 University" set up—was such that the allowance was only about 11 yuan a month. That had to cover everything: meals, accommodation, toiletries.

There wasn't much to buy—if you could afford washing powder or soap, that was already something.

Researcher 42:06

So even though the factory allocated housing, they still charged a small symbolic rent?

Participant 42:12

Yes, it was very standardised. Water charges, for example, were calculated per person—just a few mao per month.

Researcher 42:19

Was the water bill based on a set rate or on how much was used?

Participant 42:24

There weren't any meters at that time. It was just a flat rate based on headcount.

Researcher 42:29

And the factory subsidised a lot, right? So in that kind of living environment, what do you think were the pros and cons?

Participant 42:38

Back then, there was a very strong sense of human warmth. You probably can't imagine it now. Kids were naughty, and people didn't have much to eat. If one household cooked something nice, the entire building would know.

Our family lived at Nos. 31, 32, and 33 Xiangcheng Street. You'd think three separate buildings would mean people didn't know each other.

But actually, the three buildings were interconnected. You didn't even need to go outside to walk between them.

Nowadays, each block is numbered, but back then it was all essentially one building with several entrances. The corridors were all linked.

Researcher 43:34

Yes, I noticed that from outside. I saw that the entrances had three different door numbers stuck on them.

Participant 43:39

Exactly—they were all connected. That one block had over a hundred households across three floors.

Researcher 43:46

So if something happened to one family, everyone would know about it.

Participant 43:51

Exactly. And there were even flats where two families shared a single room.

There were also shared kitchens.

Researcher 44:05

So with more communal spaces, neighbourly relations were much closer, right?

Participant 44:12

Yes, of course there were occasional arguments, but it was different. Back then, nearly everyone was part of the Third Factory—the workers and their families all knew each other, so quarrels were rare.

It's not like now, where you might not even know who lives opposite you. The human warmth was truly different.

Researcher 44:33

Besides that, do you think there were any other advantages back then?

Participant 44:36

Apart from the strong sense of community, the most obvious was safety. All the way through to the 1980s—from as early as I can remember until I joined the army—I almost never heard of anything being stolen.

Researcher 45:01

So the overall public security was excellent.

Participant 45:05

Yes, basically before I turned fifteen, I only ever heard of one case of someone catching a thief.

There just wasn't the kind of chaos you see nowadays. People around my age—those in their sixties or slightly younger—all know what I mean.

There weren't even electric fans until the late '70s. When I was in primary school, just owning a radio was a big deal. If someone turned it on, all the kids in the compound would come running to listen. In our building alone, at least ten kids would gather around to listen to the radio.

In 1981, the Zhang family, who lived upstairs in the Third Factory housing, bought a 9-inch television. That place became a hotspot. They even put a magnifying lens in front of the screen so about thirty people could sit around and watch.

Researcher 46:22

So it really became something people shared together.

Participant 46:26

Yes. Later, over at the grain shop, the Grain Bureau even paid to buy a TV for everyone to watch. In the 1980s, the Second Residential Compound of the Third Factory had something similar too.

Researcher 46:50

When you say "grain shop," do you mean a store that sold grain?

Participant 46:54

No, I'm referring to a privately run grain shop. There are still a few single-storey houses left in that area now.

Just west of the two three-storey buildings, near the public toilet—you can still see four or five small bungalows if you look west from there.

Researcher 47:14

So the Grain Bureau paid for the television for communal viewing?

Participant 47:18

Yes.

Researcher 47:19

Were there other places like that?

Participant 47:22

That was in the '80s. Near the Second Compound of the Third Cotton Factory, there was a vegetable

shop. Every evening, the shop owner would carry the television out and place it on a tall stool. Later on, he just kept it permanently on a proper TV cabinet.

Researcher 47:49

I remember seeing those big TVs on cabinets when I was a kid too.

Participant 47:58

Yes, they were cathode ray tube TVs.

Participant 48:01

They used to have those with slanted screens. For a while, people all over the country were buying them. But then the manufacturer went bankrupt—that must've been after 2000, or maybe in the late '90s.

Back then, no one worried about their children being left alone. The adults all worked in the Third Factory, and after school, the kids would always be looked after. No one ever went hungry. It wasn't like today.

Researcher 48:51

Exactly.

Participant 48:54

Lots of things were communal. You could go into any household and eat. The funniest thing is, I had a classmate who, as a child, never ate at home—he always ate at the neighbours'.

Researcher 49:10

So he just ate at the neighbour's place?

Participant 49:16

Yes, he ate at the neighbour's, even slept there.

Researcher 49:22

He didn't go home?

Participant 49:24

Sometimes he'd only go home once a week. And his home was just ten metres or so away from the neighbour's—on Building 31, Lühua East Street.

Researcher 49:48

That kind of mutual care must have eased the burden for a lot of families.

Participant 49:53

Yes, there really wasn't much to worry about back then.

There was this other thing—we used to say it all the time, but you don't see kids like that anymore.

There was a man just a few years younger than me, I think he was a middle-level cadre who'd been transferred from the mountains. Always in meetings. He was a disabled veteran, so his salary was quite high, and his family was doing well financially.

They had three children, and the boy I mentioned just now—Luo Qinghua—would always eat at their place. That was in Building 36. He basically had dinner there every day.

Researcher 50:48

[Laughs]

Participant 50:50

Their nephew also stayed on to work at the factory. And not just him—there were always people around their place. [Chuckles]

Researcher 50:55

You all had such good relationships. That goes beyond typical neighbourly ties.

Participant 50:58

Yes, the relationships were genuinely strong. So many memories—it's hard to even recall everything.

The older kids would look after the younger ones—not just their own relatives, but other children too.

For instance, when my brother and I were little, we used to follow our neighbours, Meng Shulin and Meng Shucun, everywhere. Later, when I was about to start primary school, my brother was told to look after me and take me out to play.

Back then, even 5 or 3 *mao* (cents) was hard to come by, so we couldn't afford to go to Bishagang Park.

The park walls had flowers growing on them. I still don't know if those were meant to keep kids out or tempt us to climb in.

Researcher 51:39

Yes, exactly. You had to buy a ticket to go to the park back then, didn't you? I remember that from when I was little.

Participant 51:46

Yes, later the tickets went up to over one yuan, but in the '70s and '80s it was just 5 or 3 *mao*. Even then, we didn't have the money to go.

Researcher 51:56

Right, I remember they stopped charging admission much later. But going to Bishagang must have been quite a walk for you?

Participant 52:10

Bishagang was a great place. But if you came home late, you'd get scolded—or even a beating.

Did Teacher Wu mention this when you interviewed him? When we were kids, we even used to go to Xiyou Lake and catch fish along the riverbank.

Researcher 52:24

So you and the other kids in the compound would go out together—there were so many chances to play.

Participant 52:30

Yes, we all used to walk there together. In the '70s, '80s, and even into the '90s, Bishagang Park still had goldfish exhibitions. There was a man at the Third Factory with the surname Xing—an old technical worker at the factory. He kept goldfish at home. My family did too, and so did his. Later, people from outside the area found them fascinating and ended up taking away the goldfish from his grandmother's place.

They left them out overnight, and by the next morning, they'd all been stolen.

That was in the late '80s.

Researcher 53:07

So before the reform and opening-up, public security was actually quite good—it only started to decline later.

After the reforms, the factory hadn't gone bankrupt yet, but it must've affected life in the factory compound, right?

Participant 53:26

Back then, everyone wanted a job in the factory—that was considered a proper job.

If you ran a private business, people thought you were disreputable. Only those who couldn't get hired anywhere else would go into trade.

But that was a special era. I remember it clearly. Before 1982, this kind of thing still happened—people would bring grain from the countryside or from other provinces to exchange for rice. Even the Spring Festival Gala mentioned it.

If you were caught, it was considered “speculation and profiteering.”

Researcher 54:31

Yes, I remember that term—“speculation and profiteering”—very well.

Participant 54:37

Exactly. As I recall, the Third National Cotton Factory was still thriving around 1989. Back then, each textile factory in Zhengzhou had its own product specialisation and sales channels.

As long as the state issued production tasks, the factories were always busy.

The Third Factory mainly produced cotton fabrics and medical textiles.

Participant 55:18

In fact, the Third Factory had a carding division—half of it processed synthetic fibres, the other half processed cotton.

Researcher 55:30

Synthetic fabrics?

Participant 55:32

Yes, blended fabrics.

Actually, in the '80s and '90s, the winter uniforms worn by the Chinese military were mostly made from fabric produced by the Third Factory.

The advantage of their fabric was that when it caught fire, it wouldn't stick to the skin—unlike the synthetic cloth from other factories.

Researcher 56:01

I didn't realise there was such a difference—that each factory had its own specialities.

Participant 56:04

The Fourth Factory mainly produced *satın cloth*, but a lot of their fabric was used to make grain and flour sacks.

Researcher 56:21

That's right. I always thought these factories were more or less the same.

Participant 56:26

The Fifth Factory later started trying to produce woollen cloth—it was considered more high-end.

The Sixth Factory was a bit more mixed. Part of it made wool textiles, but later they mainly focused on producing workwear and denim.

Researcher 56:50

Denim was originally used for workwear, wasn't it?

Participant 56:55

Yes, originally the fabric was for workwear. Later, they started adding more finishing processes—like stone washing.

Researcher 57:06

Which was the original purpose of denim, really.

Participant 57:10

Wasn't the denim from the Fifth Factory called the “Basketball” brand?

Participant 57:15

The Sixth Factory made plain woven cloth. The Fifth Factory, by the late '80s and early '90s, also started producing finished garments.

Researcher 57:25

So you feel that after the reform and opening-up began, the factory's production changed—and so did life in the community. Apart from public security, what other changes did you notice? Because the factory hadn't gone bankrupt yet, but reforms had already started.

Participant 57:49

There were big changes.

Researcher 57:52

What specifically changed?

Participant 57:55

Before privatisation, the factory compound was extremely clean. Even the areas around the buildings, though they were just bare earth, were all uniformly planted with grass. In summer, the factory would organise pesticide spraying, mosquito control, and grass planting—it was all well managed.

Researcher 58:39

So after the reform and opening-up, before the factory actually went bankrupt, why did things suddenly become messy and disorganised? Was it because street vendors moved in?

Participant 58:46

Yes, street vendors started appearing, and gradually people began getting laid off.

Researcher 58:53

After they were laid off, did they still live in the factory compound?

Participant 58:58

Yes. Around the 1990s, the factory began its first round of housing allocation. At first, it wasn't distributed household by household. Instead, it was calculated based on years of service. You paid a portion of the cost and received 85% of the property rights—but you couldn't sell it.

Researcher 59:26

That's right.

Participant 59:28

Some people still rent to this day. Back then, the housing was managed by the factory's Housing Management Office.

Researcher 59:34

So if someone's renting a home now, are they still renting it from the Third Factory's Housing Office?

Participant 59:38

Later, everything was handed over to the Housing Management Office.

Researcher 59:43

So does that mean the old housing from the Third National Cotton Factory is still available to rent?

Participant 59:48

Yes, about ten years later, people were given the option to pay a bit more and obtain full property rights.

Speaker 3 01:00:02

That's right.

Participant 01:00:04

So now you've got a mix—some are rentals, some have 85% ownership, and some are fully owned.

Researcher 01:00:09

So after people were laid off, they didn't actually move away?

Participant 01:00:11

Exactly. Even those without full ownership could still transfer their property. Some people even sold theirs.

Researcher 01:00:21

So with all that movement and change, the factory couldn't manage the place anymore?

Participant 01:00:29

Right—each household started managing things on their own.

Researcher 01:00:34

That must've had a big impact. Besides that, what other changes did you notice?

Participant 01:00:43

For ordinary people, the biggest difference was daily life. Things like grocery shopping became much easier. After the reform and opening-up, the country developed rapidly—motorways, railways, all got built. Transportation in Zhengzhou also improved a lot.

Now, no matter the season, you can get whatever you want—especially vegetables and fruit. Even if they're not in season, you can still buy them.

Researcher 01:01:15

Yes, after the reform, things were already becoming much more abundant, right?

Participant 01:01:22

It wasn't like it is now, but it was definitely much better than before. Life became a lot more convenient. But to be honest, there were a lot of fake goods back then, and the market was a bit chaotic.

I still remember very clearly—when our family first moved here, the first apple I ever ate left a strong impression. It was called “Red Banana” at the time. The texture was a bit like today's Huanium apples—soft and floury.

Researcher 01:01:56

Yes.

Participant 01:01:57

Later, there was another type of apple called *Shegu*—which is quite similar to the Huanium.

Researcher 01:02:20

Huanium—I didn't even know what *Shegu* was until much later. Then I realised it's actually imported, right?

Participant 01:02:25

Yes, they just gave it a foreign-sounding name.

Researcher 01:02:27

Actually, *Shegu* is just a translation of “Delicious Apples” in English. The name was too long to pronounce in Chinese, so people just called it *Shegu*. It's really just a naming thing.

Participant 01:02:47

Exactly. And in recent years, there's been a lot more variety in fruits and vegetables too.

Researcher 01:02:53

So all of this—was it during the early reform and opening-up, in the 1980s?

Participant 01:02:58

Yes, it started in the '80s. You don't see those situations anymore. From last year, all of it's gone.

In the early days, buying bananas in the factory compound was actually quite interesting.

Bananas, you see—they don't ripen naturally on the tree in the south. They have to be transported—by truck or train—to other parts of the country. So they were shipped all over China. The varieties and sizes varied too.

But we in the north couldn't really tell the difference—anything that looked like a banana was called a banana. But in the places where they're grown, people can tell them apart. For instance, *bajiao* and *banana* are different types.

Back before the reform, if you wanted to buy bananas, you had to go to special places like the “subsidiary food supply company.”

Researcher 01:04:18

Yes.

Participant 01:04:18

Bananas were a scarce commodity back then. They would place them carefully on wooden racks and keep stoves on either side to maintain the temperature. It usually took about five to seven days for them to ripen and turn yellow.

Researcher 01:04:41

So they were artificially ripened using heat?

Participant 01:04:44

Exactly. Even though there were bananas, the quantity was very limited.

Researcher 01:04:54

Did it become more common after the 1980s?

Participant 01:04:56

Not quite in the early '80s. It wasn't until the late '80s—when private businesses were allowed—that bananas became regularly available in the Third Factory compound.

By then, the state-run food company had shut down, and small vendors started popping up. Bananas even became a wholesale item in the market.

Researcher 01:05:18

Did they pull carts into the compound to sell them?

Participant 01:05:21

Yes, that's right. There used to be a No. 2 wholesale market. Even in recent years, some vendors would source bananas from places like Wanbang Market, or from the intersections of the western and northern third ring roads.

I've seen it myself. After they brought in the bananas wholesale, they'd store them in the air-raid shelters under the Third Factory.

Researcher 01:05:49

To ripen the bananas there?

Participant 01:05:50

Yes, exactly. They'd ripen them in the shelters—wait for them to turn yellow—then take them out to sell.

It wasn't until last year that the shelters were filled in—only then did this practice stop.

Researcher 01:05:55

So after ripening the bananas, did they sell them at wholesale price, or no longer in bulk?

Participant 01:06:01

Most of the time, they sold them themselves—it wasn't large-scale wholesaling. A whole cartload of bananas would be divided among several banana vendors.

Each vendor would get a share, and they'd set up at different air-raid shelter entrances—each one selling their portion separately.

Researcher 01:06:27

So they were doing business inside the air-raid shelters?

Participant 01:06:30

Yes, they ripened the bananas in the shelters.

Researcher 01:06:33

And then sold them outside?

Participant 01:06:34

Exactly—once they were ripened, they'd take them outside to sell.

Researcher 01:06:38

Where exactly did they sell them? Outside the Guofanggong building? Or on Xiangrong Street?

Participant 01:06:42

Right downstairs—you know the place. There was a man surnamed Bai and another surnamed Liu.

Researcher 01:06:47

There's a fruit shop downstairs now. But back then, they only sold bananas, right? Did they have a proper stall, or how did they sell? At that time, the factory hadn't gone bankrupt yet—shops inside the compound wouldn't have been privately owned?

Participant 01:07:04

There were a few privately run ones, but not many. Later, the ground floors along Xiangrong Street were demolished—some people even turned windows into doors. For a while, that whole section was closed off.

The shops that really started doing well didn't emerge until the 1990s.

Researcher 01:07:25

So you're saying that the privately run shops really started booming in the late '90s. Before that, in the early '90s, it was mostly street vendors with carts?

Participant 01:07:36

Exactly. Back then, it was all street stalls—just a cart and a stand.

Researcher 01:07:41

I remember buying something from a shop downstairs. Later I interviewed an auntie who told me the people running it were really kind. So during the 1950s and '60s, under the planned economy, did you feel there were any disadvantages in daily life? And after the reform and opening-up, were there any changes—good or bad—that stood out to you? Some of the details might not have come up earlier.

Participant 01:08:09

During the Cultural Revolution and the planned economy period—honestly, day-to-day life was manageable, but if a family encountered any serious issue, the authorities would step in.

The factory had a *Family Committee*.

Researcher 01:08:36

Was the *Family Committee* back then similar to today's Residents' Committee?

Participant 01:08:40

Today's community is basically what the *Family Committee* used to be.

Researcher 01:08:50

You mentioned you were in the Eighth Residents' Committee?

Speaker 3 01:08:54

It was actually the Family Committee.

Researcher 01:08:55

Would the Family Committee help solve problems?

Participant 01:08:59

Yes. For example, my mum didn't have a job. The women in the committee—many were elderly ladies with bound feet.

Back in the '50s and '60s, women like my mum had worked in small factories. She used to work in one that made gauze or something, but didn't stay long.

Later on, in the 1970s, over by the old canteen—I mentioned earlier there was a library, a barbershop, and a Halal canteen—the Third Factory brought in a man named Yang Zizhang, who had worked before Liberation. He and a few older men each trained a group of apprentices.

Some of those old ladies who worked in the barbershop are still looking for jobs today.

Even though the wages were low and the positions were registered as collective household accounts, as long as you had a job, you got ration coupons.

Back then, you needed coupons for everything—cigarettes, tofu, bean sprouts.

It wasn't like today. Just having a household registration meant you could eat—but without money and coupons, you couldn't buy anything.

Researcher 01:10:45

So everyone had to find a job?

Participant 01:10:46

Yes—as long as you had a job, even if it was a collective one, the factory would arrange somewhere for you to work. You'd receive a wage, and you'd be issued ration coupons.

Researcher 01:10:59

Was medical insurance also covered by the factory?

Participant 01:11:01

Yes, employees of the factory were covered.

Researcher 01:11:04

And were family members fully covered too?

Participant 01:11:07

In the beginning, yes—they were included. But later on, that changed. It was separated.

Not everyone was treated exactly the same. When I was little, if you had a fever or something, the ABC Hospital would give you some medicine to take home.

As I grew older—even though it was still the planned economy—it gradually became more flexible.

If a child needed to see a doctor, a parent had to take them. You'd get a referral slip and could claim reimbursement from the factory.

Children of Third Factory workers attending the factory kindergarten also had obvious benefits—tuition was free, you only had to pay for meals.

Researcher 01:12:09

What about crèches, preschools, nursery classes, or breastfeeding support—did those cost money?

Participant 01:12:16

They all existed, but for children of Third Factory workers, kindergarten was free—only food expenses had to be paid.

Researcher 01:12:18

Aside from those things, were there any other difficulties at the time?

Participant 01:12:29

One inconvenience was that if your relatives came to visit, you had to report it. Everything was recorded manually.

If you were a Third Factory worker and had guests at home, you needed to inform the Residents' Committee. They'd write it down, and sometimes even come by to check.

Because grain rations were fixed—if you had extra people staying with you, they had to bring their own ration coupons.

Without them, you wouldn't be allowed to buy food. There were different types of ration coupons—Henan Province coupons, national coupons. If someone brought a coupon from another province, it wouldn't work here.

Back then, there were a lot of people who'd come from the south to support local development, so this created some difficulty.

Researcher 01:13:26

So outside visitors were quite restricted—you had to report to the Residents' Committee in order for them to stay?

Participant 01:13:33

Yes, and the police station might even come to check household registrations.

Researcher 01:13:36

Did they need an introduction letter?

Participant 01:13:41

It was best to have one. But even without it, you still had to report.

Researcher 01:13:44

So even if it was a visiting relative, you still had to register their stay?

Participant 01:13:54

Yes, you had to let them know. I was a kid back then and didn't understand a lot of it.

Researcher 01:13:57

After the reform and opening-up, in the '80s and '90s, aside from having more goods and greater variety, were there any other advantages or disadvantages to life?

Participant 01:14:14

People's attitudes changed too. It was actually quite difficult to find a job during that time.

Back then, if you didn't go out and set up a street stall, you had to apply all over the place. When the sent-down youth returned to the cities and had nothing to do, they were called "unemployed youth."

My wife even had an *Unemployed Youth Certificate*.

Many people who had gone to the countryside came back after years without work. Their families were worried about them. Society wasn't that stable either. A lot of those who had gone to the countryside early—some with middle school or high school education—came back around age 20 and had no jobs, just loitering about.

Researcher 01:15:32

So by that time, the big state-owned factories could no longer guarantee job placements?

Participant 01:15:36

No. The factories had very tight quotas back then. Under the planned economy, you needed a quota to enter a big factory. Without one, you just had to wait.

Researcher 01:15:46

I heard that after moving to Kaifeng, if you didn't have a job quota, the factory wouldn't issue grain coupons anymore—only cash.

Participant 01:15:54

If you didn't have a job, you had nothing—not even money.

Researcher 01:15:57

No, I mean for regular employees—the factory would just give cash instead of grain coupons?

Participant 01:16:01

Grain coupons weren't fully abolished until 1994.

Researcher 01:16:06

So the factory was still issuing grain coupons at the time, but you could also use cash to buy food—was it both?

Participant 01:16:13

It wasn't that rigid. I think from around 1983 onwards, both money and grain coupons could be used.

Researcher 01:16:26

So if you had cash, you could buy food?

Participant 01:16:28

Yes, you could—but not necessarily enough.

Buying things wasn't that convenient. For example, train tickets were cheap, but really hard to get.

In 1983, I took a green train from here to Hangzhou. The ticket only cost 10 yuan and 50 cents. The return trip was 11.50. But the whole train was packed.

Researcher 01:16:59

You couldn't even get a ticket.

Participant 01:17:01

Exactly—people were even sitting on the floor of the train.

Researcher 01:17:08

My dad told me people used to fare-dodge a lot back then.

Participant 01:17:15

Lots of people climbed onto freight trains.

Researcher 01:17:18

That's right—my parents' generation basically all rode freight trains at some point.

By the way, during the '50s and '60s, and after the reform and opening-up, what kind of transport did people usually use?

Participant 01:17:40

Right up until the 1990s, we were still taking green trains. Long-distance coaches didn't really appear until the '90s.

Researcher 01:17:50

What about getting around within the city?

Participant 01:17:54

Students mostly walked. Bicycles were a big deal—if a family had one, they were doing well.

Researcher 01:18:05

That was during the planned economy period, right?

Participant 01:18:06

Yes, the planned economy. You needed an *industrial coupon* to buy a bicycle. It wasn't until the 1990s that bicycles became common.

Researcher 01:18:19

So during the planned economy era, walking was the main way to get around?

Participant 01:18:24

Yes, though some people had bikes. Students mostly walked. There were buses too. Walking, buses, and bicycles—those were the three main options.

Researcher 01:18:36

There weren't really any others—motorbikes only started appearing in the '80s and '90s.

Participant 01:18:45

Yes, motorbikes started showing up in Zhengzhou around 1991 or 1992.

Researcher 01:18:55

That's right.

Participant 01:18:56

There were brands like *Shimoma* and *Shanying*—belt-driven motorbikes.

Researcher 01:19:03

So transport at the time included buses, motorbikes, cars, and bicycles.

Participant 01:19:08

Zhengzhou had a tram system, but it was shut down in 1981.

Researcher 01:19:13

So that was after the reform and opening-up began.

Participant 01:19:16

Yes.

Researcher 01:19:17

And then after 2000, electric bikes became popular again.

Participant 01:19:23

Yes, they started appearing in the late 1990s—around then.

Researcher 01:19:31

So by the late '90s, electric bikes were already around. In those earlier decades, what were the main gathering places in the community—for leisure, errands, or social activities?

Participant 01:20:00

If you're talking about before the 1980s, up to around 1985 or 1990—the main place was the *Third Factory Club*.

Researcher 01:20:12

And the canteen?

Participant 01:20:15

Yes. Where *Junhui Supermarket* is now—that used to be the club.

Researcher 01:20:24

So Junhui Supermarket is where the club used to be. What sort of things happened in the club back then?

Participant 01:20:28

In the 1980s, the club would show films. Theatre troupes from Henan Province and Zhengzhou—*Yu Opera*, *Yue Opera*—they all came to perform.

Well-known groups performed there. Sometimes there were so many people that the chairs collapsed during shows.

Researcher 01:21:06

So it was essentially a performance hall. Did it serve any other purposes?

Participant 01:21:11

Any kind of factory event—or youth activities—would be held there too.

Researcher 01:21:17

Could people go in and use it casually?

Participant 01:21:19

No, it wasn't open for casual use—it was managed by the factory. You couldn't just walk in. That's all I remember.

Researcher 01:21:27

And after the reform, did the main gathering places change? Was the club still in use?

Participant 01:21:44

The club was declared structurally unsafe in the 1990s. It was labelled a hazardous building, and people weren't allowed to use it anymore.

Researcher 01:21:55

Roughly when was that?

Participant 01:21:56

Sometime in the 1990s. After that, all events were moved to the basketball court. Whenever the factory organised anything, it took place there.

Researcher 01:22:10

So after the 1990s, most activities happened on the basketball court?

Participant 01:22:14

Yes, but not very often. Didn't make much of a difference. For example, I joined the army in '83, came back in '88, and was laid off in '91—never saw any major events during that time.

Researcher 01:22:32

Aside from those places, what about the stage in the Music Park? Was that a gathering space too?

Participant 01:22:36

The Music Park stage was mostly used for political activities organised by schools, or just school events—not factory ones.

Researcher 01:22:47

Right. Back then there weren't many elderly people anyway—it was mainly young workers. After the reform and opening-up, did a wave of retirements bring more elderly people into the community?

Participant 01:23:00

Not many people were retiring yet during the reform period.

Researcher 01:23:03

So after they retired, could older people still go to the same places for activities? Were they still using those factory spaces?

Participant 01:23:13

That place later became the *Old Cadres' Activity Centre*.

Researcher 01:23:20

So that's what became the Old Cadres' Activity Centre. Do you remember around what year it was set up?

Participant 01:23:23

Around the year 2000.

Researcher 01:23:25

So before 2000, elderly people weren't really the main users of those gathering spaces, because there simply weren't that many of them. Is that right?

Participant 01:23:39

Yes, older people mostly spent time outdoors—at the *Cultural Palace* or elsewhere. Places like *Jianglong Street* or the crossroads in the middle—there were more elderly people around there, just sitting and chatting.

Researcher 01:24:01

So even before 2000, it was common to see elderly people gathered for conversation, but just not in large numbers.

Participant 01:24:08

Exactly. There weren't too many elderly folks back then.

Researcher 01:24:11

So places like the Third Factory Club weren't really used by older residents. Once they retired, they no longer went there for activities?

Participant 01:24:22

That's right. They rarely went.

Researcher 01:24:24

Did retirees still go to the basketball court?

Participant 01:24:30

They usually went with their grandchildren—took the kids along.

Researcher 01:24:35

So they'd bring their grandchildren quite regularly.

Participant 01:24:36

Yes. And another thing—this doesn't exist anymore—but across the road from the basketball court, there used to be a large open space. It was a big garden, full of flowers, and the smell was wonderful. There were three or four osmanthus trees. It's gone now.

Researcher 01:25:12

One last question—aside from those spaces, did older residents also sit outside their buildings on small stools for a chat, like they do now?

Was this habit already established back then and just continued on?

And regarding neighbourly relations—earlier you mentioned that relationships were especially close during the planned economy period.

How would you describe neighbourly relations in the following decades?

Participant 01:26:01

Nowadays, people feel more distant from one another—most don't even know who their neighbours are. It's no longer the case that we're all from the same workshop.

Researcher 01:26:10

Why is that? Weren't people all familiar with each other before? What changed?

Participant 01:26:15

That's right.

Things began to change around 1985, when they started selling 85% or 75% housing ownership rights. Actually, it was closer to 1995 when it became widespread.

That's when people started to spread out.

In the early days of the Third Cotton Mill, most of the older generation came in at the factory's founding. They were recruited from places like Luohe, Xuchang, and Nanyang, and there wasn't much additional recruitment after that.

Real recruitment began in 1981, but even then, you had to sit an exam. Many people in Zhengzhou applied because the wages were relatively high.

From the start of the reform period in 1981 through to 1989, a lot of people either resigned or transferred elsewhere, and older workers became fewer.

Those who entered the factory in the 1950s and 60s only began to retire in the 1990s.

Researcher 01:28:27

So you're saying that after the reform and opening-up, neighbourhood ties became weaker due to changes in residential arrangements—even among people from the same workshop?

Participant 01:28:41

Yes.

During the planned economy period, everyone on the same staircase was from the same workshop—it was all organised collectively.

Once they started selling ownership rights, people became more mixed—no longer from the same unit or even the same department.

Researcher 01:28:57

So once property rights were sold off and residents were more mixed, even people who'd originally worked together weren't necessarily neighbours anymore—because the factory was so large, is that right?

Participant 01:29:07

Exactly. The factory was huge.

Researcher 01:29:11

With neighbourhood ties weakened, how do you think that affected people's daily interactions?

Participant 01:29:32

There's definitely more social distance between people now.

Researcher 01:29:37

Do you think there's more conflict too? More arguments?

Participant 01:29:38

Yes, definitely more arguments.

One clear example was in the 1990s when they started installing heating... Yes, it was around that time.

Participant 01:30:00

They installed central heating and began charging fees.

Back when the factory still functioned, if someone was still employed, the heating fee could be deducted straight from their wages. Retirees also received subsidies.

The government provided support too.

But now, heating fees are collected by private property managers, and things are chaotic.

People don't belong to the same work unit anymore—there's no collective oversight.

Researcher 01:30:46

After the 1980s, the factory compound opened up, and not everyone living in the community was a Third Cotton Mill employee anymore.

Participant 01:30:55

Yes, that's true. For example, in my area...

Researcher 01:30:59

That screw factory next door was part of the power supply bureau, wasn't it?

Participant 01:31:03

Yes.

Participant 01:31:08

That whole courtyard used to be very chaotic. Later on, the Third Mill was split up—there was also the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Mills, as well as factories for protective equipment and the Provincial Textile Machinery Plant. Things became increasingly complicated.

Researcher 01:31:32

So eventually the whole place became disorderly?

Participant 01:31:33

Yes, the entire environment deteriorated.

Speaker 6 01:31:34

And there was the Main Factory as well.

Participant 01:31:38

Yes, and the Printing Factory. Even now there's still that Gongdian Mushroom Factory near Longmendong.

Researcher 01:31:45

That's when neighbourly relations began to break down.

Participant 01:31:48

Back when the Third Factory was still in operation, with its three-shift system, the factory could still maintain order in the neighbourhood. Children were disciplined and didn't run wild.

Researcher 01:32:15

But once the factory's performance declined, it couldn't maintain that control anymore.

Participant 01:32:17

Exactly. By the 1990s, the factory couldn't manage everything anymore.

Researcher 01:32:25

Previously, this area was primarily overseen by the factory bureau and the residents' committee.

Participant 01:32:34

The factory had its own Security Department, which actually outranked the local police station.

Researcher 01:32:43

The Security Department wasn't the police—it was an in-house security division?

Participant 01:32:45

Yes, it belonged to the factory itself.

Researcher 01:32:47

And the residents' committee and police station were involved as well?

Participant 01:32:50

Yes, the police station also had jurisdiction.

Researcher 01:32:53

What changes did you notice when the residential area transitioned to the formal community system?

Participant 01:33:12

The change from residents' committees to communities started after 2000—maybe over the course of ten to fifteen years.

Researcher 01:33:25

The community here was established around 2006, right?

Participant 01:33:29

Yes, not quite twenty years ago. I don't remember the details too well.

Researcher 01:33:48

In terms of daily life, did you notice any changes? Or did it feel much the same as in the early reform era, just under different management?

Participant 01:34:11

The management body changed, but when I worked as a social security officer, I didn't notice much difference. It's only in recent years that I've seen some improvements. After the factory was sold off, there was no one to take responsibility. If your roof leaked, it could go unrepaired for years.

Researcher 01:34:53

So after the community was established post-2006, someone eventually started managing things again?

Researcher 01:35:00

This was before the community was integrated into the Party-Masses Service Centre system, correct?

Participant 01:35:07

That was really just a change of name.

Researcher 01:35:09

Right, so just a rebranding. But what you're saying is that once the community governance system was in place, the previous neglect and disorder started to be addressed?

Participant 01:35:19

In my memory, it was around 1999...

Researcher 01:35:23

Right.

Participant 01:35:24

Before 2005, there wasn't much difference between the residents' committee and the community.

Researcher 01:35:35

That's right, more or less.

Researcher 01:35:36

It wasn't until after 2006 that there were noticeable changes.

Participant 01:35:38

Yes, between 2000 and 2005, things were still similar. It was only around 2006 that things started to shift. At that time, the police station on the third floor set up a police service room, and later that became the community office. I only found out then.

In 1999, when I went to get my marriage certificate, I still had to provide a letter of introduction. Back then, all I knew was the residents' committee.

When I went to the civil affairs bureau, they told me to get a letter from the residents' committee verifying my employment.

Researcher 01:36:38

That makes sense. Back then it was still just the residents' committee—only after 2006 did it change into the community.

Participant 01:36:42

Exactly. At the time, it was just called the residents' committee. In my sector—Number Eight Bureau—there was an old lady who served as a committee officer.

Researcher 01:36:56

Do you feel that after transitioning into the community system, previously unmanaged matters started to receive attention?

Participant 01:37:03

Yes, that was around 2006 or 2007.

Researcher 01:37:11

Exactly.

Participant 01:37:13

I remember Fan Xiaohua ran for the residents' committee then—it was quite interesting. She ran in our sector, and everyone knew her.

She used to be the MC for events at the Third Cotton Mill.

Researcher 01:37:48

And then?

Participant 01:37:51

As far as I recall, she started working at the community office later on and began receiving a salary. But I wasn't too familiar with the specifics.

I only learned after 2006 that the community office was located upstairs.

Researcher 01:38:13

What do you think of the changes brought by the community system after 2006?

Participant 01:38:15

Gradually, someone started to take responsibility. It wasn't like before when no one was in charge.

Back in the day, there was an elderly lady at the residents' committee who refused to issue letters. I was keeping my personnel file myself at the time.

When I was laid off in 1991, the office director even carried the archives home. I was worried about losing it—if I lost my file, I'd lose my entitlements.

Researcher 01:39:32

So how did you eventually resolve it?

Participant 01:39:34

I went to the elderly lady in charge at the Eighth Bureau residents' committee. At first, she refused to help—she was only responsible for matters related to demolition.

My wife didn't get involved either; she only dealt with birth registrations.

Eventually, the residents' committee helped me and issued a new personnel file.

Researcher 01:40:00

So proper administrative support only started after 2006?

Participant 01:40:05

Yes, things were still chaotic around that time. The Eighth Bureau is now the site of the three-point patrol office.

Researcher 01:40:17

Since the introduction of the community system, aside from basic administrative tasks being covered, have you noticed any changes in the living environment or services?

Participant 01:40:32

The most obvious change is the reduction in illegal constructions.

Researcher 01:40:37

That's true.

Participant 01:40:39

Demolition started in 2015. After that, the environment improved.

The ground in the Mianxi Courtyard was resurfaced, and the roads were repaved.

Even before the large-scale urban renewal projects, the government started to manage areas like Yudong Courtyard. Gradually, some form of oversight began.

Researcher 01:41:17

Apart from better oversight, have you noticed any changes in the cultural atmosphere, the composition of residents, or your quality of life?

Participant 01:41:33

As the buildings have aged, many people who bought homes or lived there themselves have left.

Researcher 01:41:45

So most of the housing is now rented out to migrant populations?

Participant 01:41:46

Yes, mostly rented to migrants—people staying temporarily.

Researcher 01:41:50

With the population increase, what kinds of differences have you noticed in daily life?

Participant 01:41:57

In the past, dozens of bicycles went missing in the courtyard, and lots of electric scooters too.

Researcher 01:42:12

Did the situation improve once surveillance cameras were installed?

Participant 01:42:14

They still get stolen. Electric scooters aren't stolen as often, but batteries go missing all the time.

Researcher 01:42:22

When were the bike sheds originally built?

Participant 01:42:24

They've been around since the 1980s. But now they've been removed. The old sheds could accommodate two or three hundred bikes.

Researcher 01:42:34

Were all of them removed? What about the ones in the eastern section?

Participant 01:42:37

The entire community has removed the old bike sheds. The western community now charges fees. Fewer people use the old sheds in the west because most residents are now migrants. Those flats belong to the Sixth Factory. During the redevelopment, the Third Factory reclaimed some of the land—it originally belonged to a vegetable processing site. They turned it into a basketball court and even moved the hoops there, but it wasn't put to use. They said it caused too much disturbance, so they stopped. Now that space has also been converted into a bike shed. Fewer bikes now, and they charge around 40 to 50 yuan per month. Not many people use it.

Researcher 01:43:22

Aside from these changes, what other shifts have you observed in community life with the increase in migrant residents? For example, in terms of neighbourly relations or daily services?

Participant 01:43:35

Neighbour relations have become even more distant because of the transient population. In terms of everyday life, the Third Factory compound is still relatively convenient—especially for grocery shopping. Even though the vegetables at the Third Factory market are more expensive than those at Guangming Market, residents from Guangming, Wuchang, and Baihua Road still come here to shop, because the Third Factory market offers a wider variety. If you have guests over and want to cook something special, it's easier to find what you need at the Third Factory market.

However, the fish stalls here are consistently about 0.5 yuan more expensive than those at other markets.

Researcher 01:44:40

So it's a case of higher prices because of greater variety.
Do you think there have been any changes in community infrastructure since transitioning to the community governance system?
You mentioned earlier that everything used to be managed by the factory—what's different now?

Participant 01:45:00

Now it's mainly the community that handles things.
I've seen the areas around Mianxi Courtyard, Ludong Courtyard, and Ludong Bridge. Particularly, the new buildings on Mianfang West Road—Blocks 19 and 20—residents there are in the process of establishing self-governance.

Researcher 01:45:44

I remember hearing that those buildings don't require a property management company?

Participant 01:45:48

That's right—because they're five-storey walk-ups.
Now, in places like Jiecai Community, even though the Third Factory property management company is gone, the current property managers can't really do anything either.
Residents are looking to manage things themselves.

Researcher 01:46:04

Weren't those buildings originally three storeys?

Participant 01:46:07

Yes, three storeys.

Researcher 01:46:08

Why isn't the property management involved?

Participant 01:46:10

It's not that they're uninvolved—it's just that they can't collect fees, so they don't want to be involved.
But on the surface, they can't outright say they're not managing it.
Sometimes the residents scold the property managers. There's a lot of tension because the management is ineffective. Things are messy every day.
For example, between the two main gates, there are guards and barrier poles on both the north and south ends. They collect parking fees.
But in theory, if you charge for parking, you should also provide parking management.
They take the fees but don't manage the spaces—naturally, the residents are unhappy.
In the past, during the Third Factory era, it was the factory that collected the fees.
Retired workers had deductions—for example, 6 yuan for waste removal.
There were fewer non-local residents, and things were tightly managed.
At my place, under my father's name, it was a 6-yuan deduction.
After he passed away, I started paying, and the amount increased to 16.5 yuan.

Researcher 01:48:09

Why the increase?

Participant 01:48:11

There was an extra layer of procedure added.
Actually, the 6.5 yuan was a fee specifically for waste transfer—moving rubbish from bins to the neighbourhood transfer station, which was then handed over to the municipal sanitation department.
The fee residents pay isn't the same as a general property management fee.
Property management is only responsible for transporting waste from the bin to the transfer point, but residents feel the service doesn't match the cost, which naturally leads to dissatisfaction.
So conflicts between residents and issues with property management have created a rupture.

Researcher 01:49:14

So most people basically stopped paying?

Participant 01:49:17

They couldn't collect it. Property management couldn't enforce it. The Third Factory didn't want to deal with it either—better to wash their hands of it than take on an unwinnable task. When Jiatai Property first took over, they weren't aware of the situation. For example, in Sanban East, there used to be five or six cleaners; now there's only one. He said no one sweeps anymore. If there's no income, there's no labour.

Researcher 01:49:52

So now the property company only collects the 6.5 yuan rubbish fee per household and assigns one person for cleaning. They haven't enforced a formal property management fee?

Participant 01:50:04

Right. They've never even mentioned charging for property management.

Researcher 01:50:09

So a lot of buildings don't pay any property fees and are self-governed?

Participant 01:50:28

Back when the Third Factory managed things, there were at least two people sweeping the streets.

Researcher 01:50:34

Since transitioning to the community governance model, apart from these conflicts, have there been any benefits or new types of tensions?

Participant 01:50:45

Now the community really serves the residents—especially in the last five or six years. The state has also supported thermal insulation projects for buildings. Not every building received insulation, but there's now someone responsible for repairs. There are two Soviet-style blocks whose roofs were leaking—after the community reported it, someone came to fix it. The community director went door-to-door mobilising people. Residents were very pleased with the repairs and were willing to cooperate. But some residents still demanded compensation from the community.

Researcher 01:52:06

Did that create trouble for the community?

Participant 01:52:08

Yes, residents have mixed opinions. Sometimes during construction, if something on the roof got damaged, residents would demand compensation. The community would try to mediate, but if the resident was unreasonable, it was difficult to handle.

Researcher 01:52:37

Does the community try to resolve these disputes collectively?

Participant 01:52:42

Yes, they try to mediate, but with difficult residents, there's not much they can do.

Researcher 01:52:48

Apart from this, are there any updates in community redevelopment or reconstruction?

Participant 01:53:01

Two new high-rise buildings were built next to the canteen, but that was a Third Factory-led project, not related to the community.

Researcher 01:53:15

I was referring to the entire Third Factory residential area, including the production zone—some parts have indeed been replanned and redeveloped.

Participant 01:53:35

Those two high-rise buildings were reconstructed. The original canteen was demolished.

Researcher 01:53:46

The production area was sold, and after demolition, new buildings were erected. Some older blocks were fenced off for cultural heritage preservation. The basketball factory was also rebuilt, although it hasn't opened yet.

Participant 01:54:17

When I came by last year, I saw that all the illegal constructions had been demolished.

Researcher 01:54:21

The basketball factory has been taken down. The old school there was also an illegal structure.

Participant 01:54:27

That area is known as the "42 mu plot", which includes the air-raid shelters and the Hongwei Processing Factory.

After the reform and opening up, these changes were generally beneficial to ordinary people.

Researcher 01:55:00

Yes.

Participant 01:55:02

Returns from the "Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside" campaign also came back gradually.

Back then, one child per family was allowed to stay behind.

Many of them couldn't get into major state-owned factories because they didn't have the necessary employment quota.

The Third Factory established a Labour Service Company, and labour dispatch roles became more common.

The Hongwei Processing Factory completely shut down around 2010.

Researcher 01:55:32

So why were those buildings classified as illegal constructions?

Participant 01:55:37

Why was the basketball factory considered unauthorised? Because that area—known as Mianxi Courtyard—was actually one of the most successfully managed zones under the community's efforts. Through coordination by the community, with some financial support from the subdistrict office, they launched a resident-led governance scheme.

Participant 01:56:08

These buildings have historical significance; they were originally dormitories, part of the integrated living and working zones of the Third Factory.

You've probably heard that China built four textile plants based on just eleven blueprint sets.

Yes—one blueprint was used to construct four identical factories. Now, three of them have essentially disappeared, and only the Third Factory remains.

Its residential section is well-preserved, and residents' quality of life has improved, thanks to the national programme for old residential area renovation.

The state has encouraged preservation efforts.

For example, cities like Shanghai and Harbin have sent delegations to learn from the experience here. Rather than requisitioning and demolishing old buildings, the government has promoted structural reinforcement and adaptive reuse—preserving history by keeping these old blocks for rental use.

This has coincided with proactive leadership, dedicated community action, and strong support from residents and older generations.

In Zhengzhou—a railway city—the main axis besides the railway is Mianfang Road, the traditional hub of light textile industries.

While other factories have been razed, the Third Factory's production area and administrative buildings remain.

They have become key elements of the city's cultural heritage, now under the supervision of the cultural relics bureau.

Although opinions vary on the quality of renovations, most residents support preservation, viewing it as a way to retain Zhengzhou's historical memory.

Researcher 01:58:59

Yes, this part of the area has not been requisitioned.

Participant 01:59:01

That's right. They plan to develop it into a cultural street district, with upgraded and comfortable housing—something that's both culturally rich and livable, linked to the textile industry legacy. The residents support this vision.

Researcher 01:59:49

So there's general agreement on the community's redevelopment plans. I noticed the basketball factory was also part of the broader demolition and redevelopment scheme?

Participant 02:00:00

Yes, after the basketball factory was demolished, the plot was left unused for two or three years. The state is also advocating for the development of resident activity venues. The community reached out to private investors for redevelopment, and while plans are in place to reopen it, construction has not yet begun.

Researcher 02:00:17

So the basketball factory became derelict. Regarding these planning initiatives and building reconstructions—including the redevelopment of Jinyi City after its acquisition and conversion into a charging station—what is your overall view? Since the introduction of the community governance system, many new residential buildings have been constructed.

Participant 02:00:52

The newly built high-rise buildings have been beneficial, particularly for elderly residents in this area. In the past, there were no tall buildings, and at night one could clearly hear the freight trains running along the Longhai Railway. People with sensitive hearing often couldn't sleep well. Now, with the high-rises in place, the noise is significantly reduced. That's an improvement in the living environment.

Researcher

Indeed, the high-rises have brought environmental benefits.

Researcher 02:01:51

Jinyin was originally part of the First National Cotton Factory.

Participant 02:01:53

And this area, near Jinxiucheng, has become far more commercially developed.

Researcher 02:01:58

Jinxiucheng was part of the Fourth National Cotton Factory, and the production area of the Third Factory is known as Fangyuan Commission.

Researcher 02:02:08

Fangyuan Commission refers to the production sector.

Researcher 02:02:21

Do you think overall living standards have improved since the re-planning?

Participant 02:02:21

Yes, they've improved. At least the noise from the trains is no longer an issue for residents on higher floors.

Now people can sleep without having to open windows during the summer.

It's a noticeable enhancement in living quality.

With the country's economic growth, people here are able to enjoy better rest.

Researcher 02:02:45

How would you evaluate the transformation of this area across the three different periods?

Participant 02:03:04

From a psychological perspective, the planned economy era had less pressure; people generally felt life was better then.

Participant 02:03:49

But today's living conditions are objectively much improved.
Although prices have gone up, transport costs haven't risen significantly.

Researcher 02:03:49

Especially when you compare the cost of bicycles—those have increased substantially over the decades.

Participant 02:04:20

After the reform and opening-up, the environment became more disorganised and unhygienic.
But once the community governance system was introduced, illegal structures decreased, and infectious diseases became less common.

Participant 02:04:57

In the past, illnesses like hand-foot-and-mouth disease and mycoplasma infections were common among children.

Researcher 02:04:57

So post-reform, life became more diverse, with more transport options and broader exchanges within and beyond the community.
Although the influx of non-local residents brought challenges, these have been addressed through improved governance.
The cost of living has increased, but so has the overall quality of life.

Participant 02:05:48

Yes, quality of life has improved—but people feel more exhausted now.

Researcher 02:05:51

People are more fatigued, and neighbourhood relations have changed significantly.

Participant 02:05:59

Yes, neighbourly ties have become much weaker.

Researcher 02:06:01

How would you compare the current state of neighbourhood relations under the community governance model to those in the early reform period?

Participant 02:06:21

Neighbourly relations are clearly more distant now compared to the past.

Participant 02:06:21

There are fewer children, and raising a child alone is difficult.
In the past, dual-income households didn't need to provide as much hands-on care because neighbours supported one another.

Participant 02:06:50

From around 1976 to 1983, private cars were extremely rare in Zhengzhou.

Researcher 02:07:13

Nowadays, private cars are much more common, and traffic congestion is a serious issue.

Participant 02:07:15

Yes, traffic jams are a real problem now.

Participant 02:07:35

In the past, residents moved in and out of Mianxi Courtyard and Luming Courtyard, but some returned because of the availability of parking.

Researcher 02:07:35

So after the implementation of community governance...

Participant 02:07:36

...property management was introduced. Initially, some residents were reluctant to pay property management fees, but gradually came to accept it. Jiatai Property Management first took over Sanban East, and then expanded to the Guomin Cotton Factory area. Service awareness has improved over time.

Researcher 02:08:13

Compared with the reform era, under the community governance system, would you say there are more cars now and changes in population density?

Participant 02:08:29

Population density isn't lower than before.

Researcher 02:08:31

So although the population density is lower than in the past, there are now more vehicles?

Participant 02:08:35

The density only started to decline in recent years due to demolitions and resettlements—many people moved out.

Researcher 02:08:42

Did they move out mainly because of demolition, or for other reasons?

Participant 02:08:45

Partly due to demolition. In fact, the proportion of long-term residents in the Sanmian East community is relatively low.

Participant 02:09:08

Sanmian East encompasses several units, including a rosewood processing plant, a prevention and control textile factory, a hospital, schools, a kindergarten, the local police station, and the subdistrict office.

Researcher 02:09:08

All of these are part of the Sanmian East community?

Participant 02:09:29

Yes, but the units themselves have very few staff—often just one or two people.

Researcher 02:09:29

So there's a high level of population mobility?

Participant 02:09:31

Yes, Sanmian absorbed many non-local residents.

Researcher 02:09:33

That reflects normal population mobility, especially post-COVID.

Participant 02:09:37

Exactly. Previously, many outsiders rented housing here. These older flats are spacious but have low rental prices. After the pandemic, there were fewer tenants, business declined, and the number of people decreased.

Participant 02:10:20

Currently, many buildings—especially those in the Wenke complex—have a high number of vacant units.

Participant 02:10:35

The two "Comfort Housing" buildings have even more empty flats.

Participant 02:10:40

In the past, you could rent a unit for 300 to 500 yuan per month, often for business purposes. Tenants would be away during the day and return only to sleep. That's much less common now.

Researcher 02:10:40

So to summarise: from the reform era to the 2000s and into the post-pandemic period, population steadily increased along with new building construction. However, since the pandemic, population numbers have declined, primarily due to demolition and economic factors.

Participant 02:11:17

The decline in population density began after 2017.

Researcher 02:11:18

So from 2000 onwards, both population and vehicle density increased, but began to fall after 2017. How would you evaluate the changes brought about by increased population density?

Participant 02:11:48

I haven't really thought about it much, but I did feel that although the population grew, public security definitely got worse.

Researcher 02:11:58

Security conditions deteriorated?

Participant 02:12:03

Yes, especially in Buildings 1 to 5 in the central area of the street.

Participant 02:12:10

The issue isn't necessarily that outsiders targeted older people, but many of them were temporary residents and didn't care for the environment—throwing rubbish around carelessly.

Participant 02:12:30

The problems in this building are obvious. There used to be weekly communal cleaning, but now there are constant disputes among residents. Some people dump rubbish in the stairwells. It's a common complaint among residents.

Researcher 02:13:19

Did the property management get involved to mediate?

Participant 02:13:22

There's no property management for this building. The community staff handle it—they go speak to the households involved.

Researcher 02:13:34

Do you think higher density brought any benefits, despite the drawbacks?

Participant 02:13:44

Yes, a few years ago, when the population density was high, more people were running businesses. Whether they were locals or migrants, it made things more convenient—shopping was easier, and goods sold better.

Researcher 02:14:04

That makes sense.

Participant 02:14:09

Another benefit of high density was felt in education—especially in kindergartens. A few years ago, the Sanmian Kindergarten, a provincial-level model institution, had its enrolment slots snapped up the moment registration opened. Competition was fierce, particularly before the pandemic. But in the past two or three years, they had to reduce enrolment by one class, probably due to a drop in birth rates and the population decline.

Researcher 02:14:53

In your view, has higher population density had more negative or positive impacts on older residents?

Participant 02:15:01

That depends on the personality of the individual older person. You can't generalise.

Participant 02:15:12

There are still older residents who gather every day at the small square, chatting or playing cards. That place is always lively.

Researcher 02:15:28

Yes, there's always a card table set up there.

Participant 02:15:31

Yes, there are often people playing cards, sometimes with others standing behind to keep them company.

Another issue is that there is no secondary school in the Sanmian area, and few residents have had long-term household registration here.

Initially, there was intense competition for places at Sanmian Kindergarten. Primary school access was manageable, but getting into secondary school was more difficult.

However, in the past year or two, as the population density increased, the problem of accessing secondary education has actually eased.

This is because the former Guomian No. 3 Factory-affiliated middle and high schools were abolished.

There used to be No. 65 Middle School, but now, with more students, the problem seems to have resolved itself.

Researcher 02:17:10

The middle school affiliated with Guomian No. 3 Factory was originally located in the Guomian Market Factory, correct?

Participant 02:17:14

Yes, it was originally part of the No. 3 Factory, and better than the ones affiliated with other factories. But towards the end of the planned economy period, it was abolished.

Researcher 02:17:27

So there used to be a middle school directly within the factory?

Participant 02:17:30

Yes. Before the Textile Institute existed, the school was cancelled during the Cultural Revolution—it was the Guomian No. 3 Factory's affiliated school.

Researcher 02:17:51

And later it was converted into a vocational school?

Participant 02:17:56

Yes, after it became a vocational school, the middle schools from Guomian No. 3 and Guomian No. 1 were merged.

Researcher 02:18:03

That didn't last long, did it?

Participant 02:18:06

I'm not sure if it lasted four or five years. Later it was closed and the students were transferred to another middle school.

The factory school soon became a dangerous building, and the students had to go to the middle school of Guomian No. 6 Factory. That school has also been shut down, it seems.

Researcher 02:18:34

Now that the population has increased again, has there been any plan to build a new middle school?

Participant 02:18:41

There are more primary schools now.

Researcher 02:18:44

You're referring to...

Participant 02:18:45

Near Guomian No. 1 and No. 6 Factories, there's a new school in Jinxiucheng on Hushu Road, apparently run by an education group. A few years ago, many parents wanted to send their children there—it charged over 30,000 yuan per year.

Researcher 02:19:15

That's quite a lot.

Participant 02:19:17

Jinxiucheng has a primary school between Yihe Road and Huzhu Road. It's under the administration of Zhongyuan District in Zhengzhou, and it's considered a good school.

Both are branch schools and children can attend them. Hongjiang Community also established Hongjiang Middle School, which is a branch of No. 4 Middle School and is now referred to as No. 7.

So currently children can go to these schools. The teaching quality is quite good—perhaps not perfect, but parents are generally satisfied and always asking whether their children can be placed there.

Researcher 02:20:30

So attending school has become easier.

Participant 02:20:31

Yes, children can be placed in these schools.

Even those who weren't allocated to these schools last year were placed in No. 16 Middle School.

Researcher 02:20:40

So educational resources have improved.

Participant 02:20:42

Yes. Parents are reassured. They feel it's far better than the No. 65 or No. 68 Middle Schools back in the 1960s.

Researcher 02:21:00

Apart from education, have there been changes in healthcare provision?

Participant 02:21:07

Healthcare is a bit more complicated. It's hard to say whether it's better or worse.

The hospitals affiliated with Guomian Market and No. 1 Factory now see fewer patients.

Researcher 02:21:23

Yes, fewer people go there now.

Participant 02:21:25

In contrast, Sanmian Hospital has become better known and has started turning a profit.

Researcher 02:21:47

People even come from the South Third Ring area to visit.

Participant 02:21:49

Some veteran soldiers prefer to come here rather than to the city centre hospitals or the Chinese Medicine Hospital, which they find too expensive or inconvenient. Chinese medicine is also slower to take effect.

They prefer the Sanmian Hospital, which has become quite busy—its third floor is nearly full now.

Researcher 02:22:23

With more people, the standard of healthcare has improved as well.

Participant 02:22:27

Yes, the medical standard is quite good.

Researcher 02:22:31

With a larger population, the hospital has also started generating profit.

Participant 02:22:33

Indeed. It's very different from the past.

Researcher 02:22:54

The former Central Hospital used to be called the United Hospital or the Textile Hospital—it was originally located inside the Sanmian compound.

Participant 02:22:55

Yes, it was later relocated as society developed.

In the early years, many doctors were transferred from across the country to support the inland areas—their technical skills were excellent.

Even today, there are many retired doctors and a number of young doctors who graduated from medical schools have been hired.

Now that the hospital serves more people, including new arrivals, the government designated it as a medical-eldercare integrated institution last year—indicating that it now also provides eldercare services.

Participant 02:23:54

The daytime care centre sees a lot of people; it's quite a profitable operation.

Researcher 02:24:00

Isn't the daytime care centre located in Sanmen West?

Participant 02:24:05

Every community must display a signboard. Sanmen East also has one. The Mianfang Road Subdistrict Office is located in this area.

Researcher 02:24:12

So both Sanmen West and Sanmen East have their own centres?

Participant 02:24:16

Yes, every community is required to display such signage.

Researcher 02:24:19

That's right. Since the two communities are separate, each has its own centre. The one in Sanmian East is situated inside the hospital.

Participant 02:24:23

In fact, the subdistrict office and the three daytime care centres are all located within the hospital complex here.

The Sanmenxia Road intersection centre only has a signboard; it has no actual facility, no physical site.

Researcher 02:24:41

So the integration of medical and eldercare services in the Sanmian community is primarily concentrated at the Sanmian Hospital, especially in the inpatient department, where population density has increased.

Participant 02:24:57

Yes, it essentially functions as a hospital, but it has long provided eldercare facilities.

If you investigate, you'll find that several elderly residents have lived there for more than ten years.

Researcher 02:25:10

Indeed.

Participant 02:25:11

Some people even sold their homes and moved in permanently.

Researcher 02:25:16

Now with expanded services and increased occupancy, the hospital can operate at a profit.

Participant 02:25:22

Yes, the hospital is now generating revenue.

Researcher 02:25:25

That's a significant change. Do you think the cultural atmosphere has changed as well?

Participant 02:25:30

It has, especially over the past two to three years.
During major festivals, the community organises activities in the small plaza.
These events didn't exist a decade ago—now they're expected.

Researcher 02:25:53

So cultural activities have become more diverse.

Participant 02:25:55

Yes, the community now holds cultural events, which weren't there before.

Researcher 02:26:00

Such events were absent in the early period of the Reform and Opening-up, but were present during the planned economy era.

Participant 02:26:05

Exactly. During the planned economy period, there were basketball and table tennis competitions, cycling races organised by the factory, and sports days at schools.
The three primary schools in the area also developed well.
All of this existed under the planned economy.
In the mid-phase of the Reform era, public morale was unstable and there was no management, so these activities faded.

Researcher 02:26:32

And now, such activities have been revived?

Participant 02:26:33

Yes, with state support, these events are being revived and have become more frequent.

Researcher 02:26:40

Understood. Thank you very much—I'll stop the recording here.

Case study interview transcript-resident 2

Researcher 00:00

What was this community like during the planned economy period?

Participant 00:05

During the planned economy era, this community—and the entire western suburbs—belonged to what was essentially a unified urban area of Zhengzhou. The western suburbs were considered a relatively prosperous zone. Why do I say that? Because at that time, especially in the case of the Third Cotton Mill (*Sanmian*), Zhengzhou's economic backbone consisted of these large state-owned enterprises. For instance, the Third Mill contributed significantly to taxation and the local economy.

My parents were transferred here in the 1950s from the Central-South region to support the interior; I myself am not originally from Henan. Back then, many people were assigned here from elsewhere. During the planned economy, the factory compounds were well-maintained, and both economic and political status were high. Living conditions were comparatively good. Although the area was called the "western suburbs," it did not resemble a rural setting.

Most of Zhengzhou's major factories—six textile mills (five of which were located here), a dyeing factory, a cable factory, and a textile machinery factory—were concentrated in this region, making it the economic centre of the city. As a result, the Zhongyuan District, which included the western suburbs, was considered quite desirable. Even administrative staff and military personnel preferred to marry women from the Third Mill because the conditions were favourable.

The overall environment was excellent. Although there were no new buildings as we see today, the residences were mostly garden-style with wide spacing between blocks. The tallest buildings were only three storeys high. These Soviet-style buildings date back decades—I'm renting one now that predates me, and I was born in 1967. That housing is now nearly 70 years old. Back then, the environment across the western suburbs was truly commendable.

Researcher 02:08

Do you recall any specific advantages and disadvantages of the living environment during the planned economy period?

Participant 02:24

Although it may sound a bit nostalgic, the most significant advantage was the harmonious neighbourly relations. Housing was quite different from today—there were no commercial housing complexes. People lived in old-style houses, sometimes with two or three families sharing a unit. Relationships were very cordial. In those days, people didn't even lock their doors at night, and everyone looked out for one another.

I remember going to work while neighbours' children, whose parents were also working, would come to my house for meals—it was completely normal. These were pre-Cultural Revolution days, and family relations were warm, and society was stable. The older generation held strong moral values, and parenting was stricter, especially compared to the south.

Although the era wasn't affluent, basic needs like food and clothing were guaranteed. Education was also stress-free. In terms of parenting and community interaction, everything was built on mutual respect and collective well-

being.

Researcher 04:04

Besides the close-knit community and stable public order, were there any other notable features of the living environment?

Participant 04:22

Yes—what stood out was the spirit of mutual understanding and support. People were courteous and considerate. At the time, there was essentially no competition over resources, as distribution was centrally planned and basic living needs were met. After Liberation, people felt content with what they had. This fostered harmonious relationships and a collective spirit of mutual assistance, which are sorely lacking today.

In contrast, today's new apartment buildings are often occupied by strangers who hardly know each other. Back then, communal spaces like shared courtyards were actively used together—people even helped one another collect laundry if someone was at work. The old housing blocks in the Third Mill were inhabited by long-term residents who had lived together for decades, so there was a strong sense of familiarity and trust.

There were barely any petty disputes or conflicts. The environment was genuinely harmonious. Having personally lived through natural disasters, the Cultural Revolution, military service, and even armed conflict, I deeply cherish that period. Though families were large, with many children, neighbours lived in solidarity and helped each other in public areas without fuss or resentment. That kind of atmosphere is very difficult for younger generations to comprehend today. The broader social environment was simply better.

Researcher 07:04

When you mentioned communal spaces, were you referring to corridors and outdoor streets, or shared kitchens and bathrooms?

Participant 07:19

All of those, including shared toilets and kitchens. Sometimes two or three households shared a single facility. People showed mutual respect. For example, during times of economic scarcity when condiments were limited, neighbours would share without hesitation. If someone came home late and didn't have soy sauce, they might use vinegar instead, and no one would mind. It was an unspoken understanding. There was little income disparity, and people weren't possessive. Even if you needed to borrow something, you didn't have to explicitly ask. That's just how things were—it really was a pleasant environment.

Researcher 08:37

Yes, because in later developments, like the newer buildings, each unit had its own kitchen and bathroom, so communal space was no longer part of daily life.

Participant 08:54

Exactly. Now everything is self-contained.

Researcher 08:57

Would you say that began with the *Qinggonglou* buildings—that is, the newer workers' dormitories—which didn't include shared facilities? The previous buildings still had two families sharing a kitchen and a toilet?

Participant 09:01

Yes, two households shared those facilities, each having their own separate space.

Researcher 09:08

Was that in the *Qinggonglou* (young workers' dormitory)?

Participant 09:10

No, those were built later to solve the housing shortage for the Third Cotton Mill. In the past, it wasn't uncommon for a family with four or five siblings to live in one room. The *Qinggonglou* were originally communal dormitories, where two or three families lived in a single room. Even after getting married, people still slept on bunk beds. Later, Liu Yuan came to address the issue and improve housing conditions for textile workers. At the time, it wasn't rare for three families to share a single room—there was hardly any privacy.

Researcher 09:58

Right, I recall the kindergarten was torn down and later redeveloped.

Participant 10:03

Yes, over time the area was renovated, and several Qinggonglou were rapidly constructed to address the housing problem. During the planned economy, no one bought property—housing was allocated. You had to meet certain criteria, like years of service, age, and marital status. Only after a comprehensive assessment could you be assigned a place to live. It really helped relieve the burden for many young workers at the Third Mill. Liu Yuan was specifically sent to resolve this issue.

At the time, families were allocated homes on Qinggong Road. Some units had shared areas within the apartment—usually two families shared a kitchen and a toilet. But there were no conflicts. Unlike today, where shared spaces are calculated as part of your rent or purchase under the “common area” system, those old houses had no such calculations. Only modern high-rise buildings introduced shared-area costs.

Researcher 11:34

Do you think, in the planned economy era, these shared residential arrangements—like the communal kitchens, bathrooms, and outdoor spaces—offered any benefits?

Participant 12:10

The outdoor spaces weren't like today's with fitness equipment. I remember when it got hot, everyone would pour water in front of their door to cool things down. There was no air conditioning and very few fans. People shared the space. Someone would bring out a bamboo mat, and we would bring out ours too, or grab stools to sit together. Everyone from the building would come down—adults would chat about factory matters while children played.

There were even open-air films. Each week, different cotton mills would take turns showing movies. People lined up in an orderly fashion. If you placed your stool in a spot and left, it would still be there when you returned—no one would take it. There wasn't the kind of selfishness you sometimes see today.

Researcher 13:51

Exactly.

Participant 13:51

Back then, harmony prevailed. If someone put a brick or a cup down to save a spot, no one would touch it. People followed the rules and respected each other's space.

Researcher 14:09

There must have been plenty of open spaces?

Participant 14:15

Yes, buildings along Luohe Road were spaced far apart, and the greenery was quite nice.

Researcher 14:20

So people brought down their stools to chat?

Participant 14:26

Yes, everyone brought their own stool. At the time, houses were small and space was limited, especially for families with many children. Most meals were eaten outside. Inside, there was barely any furniture—maybe just a crude wooden box as a cabinet. Beds were numerous, since there were many kids. So we mostly ate outside.

Researcher 15:11

Everyone brought out their bowls and stools to eat?

Participant 15:14

Sometimes not even a stool—just a bowl.

Researcher 15:17

Right there in front of the building?

Participant 15:18

Yes. The buildings weren't tall—just three storeys—so everyone came down to eat. Children played with neighbours all day long, which is one of the reasons neighbourly ties were so strong. Entertainment was

limited, but trade union activities were plentiful. Every mill had basketball and football fields. Though recreational activities were simple, each year there were spring and autumn sports meets, and we'd cheer each other on. Every mill's union had its own team.

There were also cultural performances—each mill had its own propaganda troupe. Overall, the atmosphere was really positive back then.

Researcher 16:26

So back then, there were many public events, and in daily life people ate outside and socialised in shared spaces?

Participant 16:39

Yes, people were kind-hearted. If you didn't go home early, you could leave your shoes outside—no one would take them. This environment fostered harmonious relationships because everyone lived so closely together.

Researcher 16:54

Did you have night patrols back then?

Participant 16:57

No, there weren't any issues back then. Like I said, neighbours looked out for one another. The doors were hardly ever locked because there wasn't much to steal—most furniture belonged to the state, essentially a form of welfare.

You could rent a bench for just a few cents a month; it was basically a benefit.

Researcher 17:29

How much did people pay for housing each month?

Participant 17:31

Water and electricity were charged according to regulations. There weren't many meters—every household received a set quota of electricity and water. There was nothing really worth stealing from anyone's house.

Researcher 17:50

Mr. Chen, besides the physical aspects of the living environment—whether indoors or outdoors—were there any other disadvantages?

Participant 18:05

If we talk about shortcomings, looking back now, one issue was the absence of formal property management. There wasn't a unified management system. Each factory had a housing department, but to be honest, it wasn't very effective. Still, people were highly self-disciplined.

For example, when it snowed, everyone would automatically sweep the snow in front of their own door without needing to be told. There were safety committees and community offices at the time, but people simply took responsibility.

You'd wake up in the morning to find that the areas in front of each building were spotless.

Researcher 19:03

Was this a spontaneous act by residents?

Participant 19:05

Yes, all spontaneous. Back then, no one would say "I only sweep my part, not the shared area." People helped each other and were very proactive. Social security was also strong. It wasn't until after the Cultural Revolution that public safety declined.

There were hardly any incidents of theft or robbery. If something like that did happen, the whole neighbourhood would know. It was seen as shameful, and the parents would lose face. After the Cultural Revolution, this kind of behaviour became more common and caused many societal problems.

(Sorry, I need a cigarette—please wait a moment.)

Researcher 20:28

In the 1950s and 60s, how did people mainly get around?

Participant 20:39

Mainly by walking. Public transport was limited. Zhengzhou had only a few bus lines, so people mostly

walked. Activities organised by schools or factories—like political events, youth group activities, or visits to martyrs' cemeteries—were all taken very seriously.

On holidays like May Fourth Youth Day, Labour Day, and National Day, the factories would organise collective events. Students would go on foot for outings or grave-sweeping trips, bringing their own food.

Bicycles were rare, and there were virtually no motorcycles.

Researcher 22:02

So there weren't many public buses in the city at the time?

Participant 22:08

Correct. Zhengzhou had only a few routes—I remember Route 1, 4, and 9.

Researcher 22:20

The city itself was small, too.

Participant 22:23

Yes, very small.

I remember when I was growing up, it only extended to what's now the overpass area. Past Tongbai Road, you had railways, and beyond that was Houzhuang, which was already considered rural. San Guan Miao and other areas were all countryside back then. The city was really small.

Researcher 22:47

I recall that at the entrance of our current community, there are benches along the street—

You know the metal bench near Ma Yunhong's liangpi shop on Mianfang Road?

I remember sketching something there.

Back then, was the area really just that small?

Participant 23:12

Back when I worked in West Li, going to Xili felt incredibly far. We called it "going to the countryside"—just like saying we're going on a trip now.

Even going to Xiliu Lake felt like a major excursion.

Researcher 23:24

So you rarely used public transport back then?

Participant 23:26

Right, it wasn't accessible.

The only bus route really was along Jianshe Road, running toward the railway station. Other than that, most of Zhengzhou wasn't served by public transport.

The city's footprint was tiny.

Researcher 23:46

So factory workers mostly walked to get around?

Participant 23:49

Yes, everyone walked.

I was transferred here from the south to support the interior. Back then, during Chinese New Year, people rarely visited family. You only went back home if something major happened—like a parent falling ill. Tourism was completely out of the question—people didn't have the money or the plans.

Most households had three to eight kids. Supporting a family with just one salary meant there was no room for leisure. People didn't take leave easily. The older generation had a strong sense of duty.

If the state issued a political task, people willingly worked overtime and took their responsibilities seriously.

Compared to today's frequent travel, back then it was simply not possible—people lacked both the money and the time.

There were no public holidays like we have now.

Researcher 25:13

So back then, people rarely travelled around the city, let alone went on trips?

Participant 25:19

Yes, even visiting relatives within the city wasn't common.

For example, if two families were related and both lived in the city, they would usually just walk to see each other. Some had bicycles, but not many. There were no red envelopes back then. Gifts were usually local specialties like fruit or cakes. These presents were often bulky, unlike today's neat delivery boxes.

Researcher 26:10

So even when public buses were available, people didn't ride them often?

Participant 26:20

Exactly. There were very few bus routes, and the wait times were long.

Sometimes you'd have to wait forever for a bus.

The tickets weren't expensive, though. I remember movie tickets were only 13 cents—or sometimes just 5 cents.

Everything was cheap. A popsicle cost three cents, and two kids would share one.

A five-cent ice cream bar was already considered pricey—parents wouldn't buy it easily.

Salaries were low, and people had to support whole families.

There were no fast-food restaurants or Western food back then—you didn't see things like steaks on the street.

Researcher 27:19

In the 1950s and 60s, were there many older people living in the factory residential areas? Did they participate in any activities?

Participant 27:34

There were quite a few elderly people.

Many of them came from the south to support the interior regions—especially in those western factories.

The industrial base here wasn't made up of many local people.

Researcher 28:11

So did they bring their elderly parents with them?

Participant 28:14

Some did, but many of the young people who came to support the interior moved here first, then started families.

Bringing young children wasn't common.

The different dialects between the central and western suburbs were mostly due to the influx of non-locals who came to aid development.

Researcher 28:39

So there were elderly people in the community during the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 28:44

Yes, there were. Back then it was called the "Residents' Committee" (居委会).

Researcher 28:47

So there were already elderly residents.

Participant 28:47

Yes, and the Residents' Committee—which is what we now call the community office—was mostly made up of elderly women.

They barely earned any money.

Researcher 29:01

And their main activity was being part of the Residents' Committee?

Participant 29:05

Yes, the Residents' Committee had significant influence—people would go to them whenever something happened.

The factories had strong economic performance, and during the planned economy, the Residents' Committee received a lot of support.

Most members were older women. When I was a child, I saw many elderly ladies with bound feet—most were

over fifty or sixty. They walked slowly but were very active, always attending gatherings. The committee directors were usually elderly women—not like today, where there are mostly male secretaries. Back then, people called them "Granny Guo" or "Auntie."

Researcher 29:58

Did the elderly men participate?

Participant 30:00

Rarely. It was mostly elderly women. Some men had to support their families. A few stayed home to look after the children, and only after the kids were older would they take part in the Residents' Committee.

Researcher 30:24

So in the 1950s and 60s, the committee work was mostly done by elderly women?

Participant 30:27

Yes. The younger people had to work and support their families.

Researcher 30:32

So the older men—were they still working, not retired yet?

Participant 30:35

No, it wasn't really about retirement back then—there wasn't such a clear concept of retirement age. Those working in the Residents' Committee were generally older. There were few young people involved. Men participated less because they had to provide for their families.

Researcher 30:53

So these elderly women and men weren't necessarily of retirement age—they might not have been in their fifties or sixties yet?

Participant 31:01

Correct.

Researcher 31:02

Just relatively older, then?

Participant 31:05

Yes, some didn't have formal jobs and looked after grandchildren. Later, they gradually joined the committee work.

Researcher 31:18

So some of those who came to support Central China's development were already in their forties or fifties?

Participant 31:28

Yes, and quite a few arrived before they even got married.

Researcher 31:31

And they brought their elderly mothers with them?

Participant 31:33

Yes. Some came with their parents, who didn't work but could still take part in local activities organised by the Party Office.

Researcher 31:41

And some people just grew older after moving here?

Participant 31:46

Exactly.

Also, many of the elderly involved in the Residents' Committee were Party members.

Researcher 31:50

So some of the elderly men came along with them?

Participant 31:54

Some of the elderly were relocated here. The young workers often came before getting married, and later brought their children.

Now, many of those elderly are gone.

Most of the ones who came with their families were in their 80s or 90s now—if they're still around.

Researcher 32:26

So for the elderly who came in the 1950s and 60s, there weren't that many—most were young men bringing their children. The actual elderly population only appeared later?

Participant 32:41

Yes, it was rare for two generations to come together. Usually, only a few brought children or elderly parents—very low proportion.

Researcher 32:55

Did those who came start participating in the Residents' Committee immediately?

Participant 32:57

Not all of them. Some brought children, some had a stronger sense of civic duty and were willing to participate in community service.

Nowadays we call it "volunteering," but back then, there was no pay or the pay was very minimal. Still, many elderly people were willing to contribute.

In the evenings, they would remind neighbours to bring in the laundry, help watch children, and encourage kids to study. The elderly were very enthusiastic.

The work of the Residents' Committee was excellent at the time.

Researcher 33:37

Between the 1950s and 1980s, what about the elderly men—those who retired or were already old when they arrived—did they have activities?

I didn't participate in the committee myself back then.

Participant 34:04

There were many activities. Every year, there were spring and autumn sports games.

Researcher 34:09

Could the elderly men also participate?

Participant 34:11

Yes, they could. The sports meets really encouraged community involvement.

There were basketball courts, factory-wide sports games, teams at the workshop level, and also cultural events.

Older folks with hobbies or talents also joined.

Researcher 34:42

Were these events organised by the workshops?

Participant 34:46

By both the workshops and the Residents' Committee.

There were also cultural groups like senior yangge (traditional dance) teams.

Researcher 34:52

So for those who retired between, say, 1957 and 1978, they could all participate?

Participant 35:00

Of course. There were all kinds of activities, and they all took part.

At the time, trade unions played a major role.

Researcher 35:10

Did the union manage activities for retirees?

Participant 35:15

Yes, the union was very influential.

There was a membership dues system.
Unlike now, when most private companies have weak or no unions, and even state-owned ones are less active.
Back then, unions were strong—they organised spring and autumn games, New Year galas, and so on.
The factory would allocate funding to support union activities.
Overall, the unions were very active.

Researcher 36:07

So the union handled recreational and cultural activities for both retirees and active workers?

Participant 36:14

Yes, along with activities by the Communist Youth League and Party branches.
The May Fourth Youth Day events also included retirees and Party members.
There were inter-factory competitions—tug-of-war, basketball, football.
Lots of events. Young people today rarely see that.
Even shuttlecock (jianzi) competitions were held.

Researcher 37:03

Were there teams specifically for elderly participants?

Participant 37:06

Yes, there were retiree representatives in the activities.
Back then, events were numerous, but not like today's popularity of gateball.
The main events were basketball, football, yangge dancing, and the like.
In the 1950s and 60s, ballroom dancing was also popular.
Many older people danced really well—better than today's younger generation.
It was formal, with classes and competitions.

Researcher 37:50

So these activities included both the elderly and young people? Were they managed by the union?

Participant 37:58

Yes. The textile factories had many female workers, and they held joint events with the military—like dance parties—to promote interaction.
Military clubs and factory clubs both hosted dance events, which also served as venues for matchmaking.

Participant 39:01

Many female textile workers found suitable partners; military officers also resolved personal matters. There were so many activities back then—it was really enviable.
People often participated in basketball games and cultural events right outside their homes. Activities were very vibrant, unlike today where there are fewer workplace activities.
Back then, venues like cultural centres were almost never idle.

Participant 39:21

Now, venues have to be rented, and there are far fewer resources for cultural and sports events.
The trade union played a major role in the past.

Researcher 39:39

So previously, cultural and sports events were managed by the union?

Participant 39:42

Yes, the Party and government at the factory supported the union's work.

Researcher 39:46

The welfare of veteran employees was mainly managed by the factory, though other departments were involved as well?

Participant 39:55

Yes, staff welfare was planned and arranged based on the enterprise's performance, and the union also had some authority.
Every year, the union would distribute benefits.
For example, during the Spring Festival, large factories like the Third Mill, which had around 5,000 workers, could

apply to distribute items like rice, flour, and oil.
Almost every worker received union-provided benefits. Later on, workers in hardship could apply for extra aid.
In the past, the union played a big role. Party and Youth League activities were also very active.
As a veteran Party member with nearly 50 years of service, I've experienced how organised and demanding those activities were.
New Party members were cultivated through rigorous procedures. Group meetings happened almost every week, and there were larger events monthly.
The process for admitting new members was very serious and highly valued.
Nowadays, such procedures are rare—especially political activities.
Party and Youth League members had to take the lead, and there was no pay—it was all voluntary and driven by enthusiasm.
During festivals or factory events, Party and Youth League members would take the initiative to clean the environment and maintain public hygiene.
They were very self-disciplined. Back then, people had a strong sense of political consciousness and cultural quality.

Researcher 42:03

A strong sense of political consciousness.

Participant 42:08

Yes, absolutely. Party discipline was very strict.
Party and Youth League members understood their responsibilities.
There was a slogan that said Party and League members must lead by example.
Now, there are fewer activities, and the self-discipline of Party and League members isn't what it used to be.
The more capable a Party member was, the less they would shirk responsibility.
People respected Party members because they were role models, always at the forefront of events, and they never asked for anything in return.
That's why Party members had high prestige in the community.
Now, unions and Party/League activities are rare—especially in private companies, where unions are almost non-existent.
Even in the community, older Party members are more willing to pay dues than younger ones.
Many young Party members are passive or don't pay at all, and some even don't care if their membership is revoked.
Older Party members take pride in paying dues and being part of the Party.
In the past, joining the Party had strict standards—it required endurance and integrity.
People didn't take shortcuts.
Nowadays, many join for career advancement or other goals, unlike before, when it was about political honour.

Researcher 45:00

I'd like to ask: in the planned economy era, aside from the political and Party-related activities where Party members led by example, were there any activities specifically for retirees or that encouraged retirees to take the lead?

Participant 45:26

Yes, even after retirement, Party members still participated in activities.
Their organisational ties with the Party remained.
There were various social and factory events, and retired Party members were required to attend Party group life meetings and other organisational events.
Retirement didn't mean disengagement—they had to participate.

Researcher 45:54

What were the main gathering places in the community at that time?
Were elderly people the primary users of these spaces?

Participant 46:06

Well, back then I was a Youth League member.

Researcher 46:08

Nowadays, if you're not a League member, it's seen as nothing.

Participant 46:11

In the past, residents' meetings weren't as complicated as now, and the conditions for gathering weren't demanding.
Our Residents' Committee meetings were very simple.

Researcher 46:20

Not just formal meetings—I mean cultural or spontaneous gatherings.

Participant 46:27

There weren't many restrictions before.

For example, whether it was a hospital event or a meeting, people would just bring out their stools and set up outside.

Everyone completed tasks voluntarily.

Nowadays, communities must have activity venues and fitness equipment.

Back then, any patch of open space could be used—a small building might be put up.

If it couldn't fit everyone inside, the rest would gather outside and bring their own stools.

The Residents' Committee head and staff would notify people—like, "There's a meeting at 3 PM"—and everyone would show up.

No phone calls; it was all word of mouth or slogans.

As soon as people heard, they came.

People were very proactive.

Researcher 47:38

So once notified, people would just find an open space and gather?

Participant 47:42

The Residents' Committee usually had a fixed place.

During meetings, people would bring their own stools over.

Researcher 47:51

Were people notified by phone?

Participant 47:56

There were no phones—it was all shouted slogans.

In the early days, they used paper or metal megaphones.

Announcements like fire prevention or disaster notices were shouted this way.

Researcher 48:15

Besides formal meetings, for private chats or recreational activities, did people use casual open spaces or were there designated places?

Participant 48:32

In the early days, gatherings mainly took place in open spaces. There weren't devices like tape recorders back then, but quite a few people were fond of cultural activities and could play musical instruments.

Each factory had its own propaganda troupe, and some workshops also organised recreational events. Usually, a few culturally enthusiastic individuals would take the initiative to organise such activities themselves.

As Labour Day approached, people would discuss and prepare performances to take part in competitions or events organised by the factory. The trade union or other relevant departments would either organise or select programmes. People were highly self-motivated and would take the lead in organising.

The trade union was responsible for public functions and required each workshop to contribute a programme. Retired workers also voluntarily organised performances, which were reported through the Residents' Committee and selected step by step for participation in the competition.

Cultural and sports activities were highly active, and participation was voluntary, not compulsory. Material rewards were minimal—it was mainly about honour and spiritual fulfilment. For instance, a basketball match might offer a vest as a reward, which wasn't materially significant but carried strong emotional encouragement.

Back then, enthusiasm for participation was very high. People weren't seeking material gain; they participated for a sense of spiritual satisfaction. Activities were abundant, which helped compensate for the limited number of cinemas.

Many children, especially girls, were reluctant to spend money on films. Open-air cinema was extremely popular. The factories screened three to four films every week, taking turns. Tickets only cost a few fen or a jiao, but many people still couldn't afford to attend.

Amateur cultural and sports activities were diverse and greatly enriched people's lives.

Researcher 51:15

Apart from large-scale group activities, where did people gather socially on a more casual basis? Were these gatherings held in random open spaces or in fixed places?

Participant 51:28

There were fixed venues as well.

Researcher 51:30

You mean during the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 51:32

Yes. People who could sing brought their own instruments. I played the *erhu*, and others had different instruments, similar to what you see today.

Researcher 51:40

Did people go to the cultural palace to perform?

Participant 51:43

Sometimes. But often it was right in the factory. There were large open spaces where enthusiasts would play the *suona*. There weren't many musical instruments back then—no guitars. Mainly there were *suona*, *erhu*, *jingban*, *huqin*, and accordions. Neighbours would bring their accordions downstairs, sit down and play, while others listened.

Researcher 52:09

Would older people also organise such performances on their own?

Participant 52:17

Yes. Although the instruments were simple, many people could play them, especially the *suona*, accordion, *erhu*, flute, and harmonica. *Yueji flowers* were also popular at the time. You didn't see guitars or saxophones like you do now.

In the earliest days, people even played the bugle. The atmosphere in these neighbourhoods was very free. Because the factories operated on three shifts, activities were usually held at times that avoided disturbing night-shift workers—either in open spaces or at the cultural palace.

The cultural palace had always been the main venue for recreation in the western suburbs—it was the workers' cultural palace.

Researcher 53:17

Were these gathering places more fixed or spontaneously chosen? Did older people actively take part?

Participant 53:30

There weren't many participants at that time.

Researcher 53:31

Was that because there weren't many people?

Participant 53:33

Yes, the ageing population wasn't as pronounced back then.

Researcher 53:37

Or was it because of family responsibilities?

Participant 53:39

That too. Plus, our previous generation appeared much older in their fifties or sixties. They faced more economic pressure and heavier burdens.

Unlike today's sixty or seventy-year-olds, people back then looked aged once they were over fifty, especially retired women. Living conditions and economic standards were relatively poor, and life expectancy was shorter.

Just look at today's fifty- or sixty-year-olds—they don't appear old at all.

Researcher 54:31

Yes, exactly.

Participant 54:32

That's why ageing wasn't obvious at the time. Especially in the western suburbs, most people were from other regions, transferred to support the inland development. There were few locals, so the ageing demographic wasn't as noticeable.

But nowadays, ageing is very obvious. There are many people in their sixties and seventies.

Back then, each factory had its own club and technical activity centre. These were regularly opened and offered free activities. Every factory had a club and an auditorium, and the facilities were very good.

Researcher 55:29

Could the factories, as well as the retired workers and their elderly family members, access these venues and take part in the activities?

Participant 55:40

Yes, when the clubs were open, both the elderly and children could enter freely. Only a few films required tickets purchased by the trade union—most activities were free.

Researcher 55:58

Do you think life changed after the Reform and Opening-up? For instance, in terms of management, living environment, social gatherings, entertainment formats, and consumer habits—especially during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 56:33

There were definitely some changes following the Reform and Opening-up. Especially after the "iron rice bowl" system was dismantled and enterprises were restructured, political and recreational activities for the elderly clearly declined.

There were also financial limitations—community-level organisations didn't have the funds to organise activities.

Researcher 57:17

Back in the 1980s, the community management system hadn't been implemented yet, had it?

Participant 57:22

Management by the factories was still relatively effective. Before restructuring, the situation during the 1960s was still quite normal, and there were activities.

Researcher 57:35

What were the changes compared to earlier times?

Participant 57:37

Not many, really. The main difference was that after restructuring, there was much less funding available for organising activities.

Researcher 57:49

Did the funding for these activities disappear entirely after the Reform and Opening-up?

Participant 57:51

Before the factories were fully restructured, they still allocated some funds, and the trade union had a

small budget—but it was far less than before.

During the planned economy, the state managed finances centrally and allocated special-purpose funds for such activities. After restructuring, with so many issues around efficiency and profitability, it became difficult to maintain welfare provision or sufficient funding.

With limited financial resources, the frequency and number of activities declined.

Researcher 58:51

So the reduction was due to funding shortages and poorer enterprise performance?

Participant 58:55

Exactly.

In the early years after the founding of the People's Republic, people had strong ideological consciousness and a willingness to endure hardship. But with economic development, people began to pursue higher living standards and material comforts.

As a result, the spiritual value of activities weakened. People became more concerned with material incentives, and their enthusiasm declined.

Shifts in social values and spiritual pursuits led to a decrease in both the spontaneity and self-motivation for participation. Activities became less frequent.

The trade unions' authority was also undermined, making it harder to organise anything. When there were no material rewards, people were less inclined to take part.

Amateur cultural life faded, and there were fewer recreational or educational opportunities for retired workers.

There was also a lack of clarity around the allocation of party dues and activity funds, which made it difficult to organise.

Residents' Committees and the community centres lacked funding and organisational support. The content of Party-related activities for older members became limited, and their motivation declined. Even factory cadres rarely organised visits to revolutionary base areas or other such ideological activities.

Researcher 01:02:08

Apart from the changes you've just mentioned, do you think there were other changes in the living environment after the Reform and Opening-up during the 1980s and 90s?

For example, the construction of many new residential buildings?

Participant 01:02:18

Yes, the newly built residential buildings were quite good.

Researcher 01:02:19

And new household electrical appliances were introduced.

Participant 01:02:24

Living conditions definitely improved. After the Reform and Opening-up, people's living standards and quality of life improved considerably, but at the same time, people's expectations also increased.

Researcher 01:02:40

So you're referring to the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 01:02:42

Yes. Compared to earlier years, life quality for older people in the 1980s did improve significantly, and people were generally quite content.

Researcher 01:02:51

In what aspects did this improvement in quality of life occur?

Participant 01:02:53

In terms of food, housing, and clothing—there were improvements across all these areas.

Researcher 01:02:57

And in terms of shopping?

Participant 01:02:58

Yes. As living standards rose, so did people's needs and expectations. Alongside economic development and rising incomes, people gradually developed an awareness of travel and leisure. Eventually, it became normal to take a few days off each year to go on a trip. In the past, people were reluctant to travel—mostly due to heavy workloads and a lack of holidays. Especially when the state needed people to be on duty, even during the Spring Festival there would be no break.

Researcher 01:03:43

So travelling began to become more common in the late 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 01:03:45

Yes, but at first it didn't really take off, as the holiday system wasn't fully in place yet, and people often had to work overtime.

Researcher 01:03:54

Aside from these changes, what about the living environment—for example, outdoor spaces? How did they compare with earlier times?

Participant 01:04:08

There were major improvements in housing conditions. Rental housing became better. It was no longer the case that one family had to squeeze into a single room, or that two families had to share a single doorway. Sanitary conditions also improved—a lot of facilities had previously failed to meet basic standards.

Researcher 01:04:28

Which specific facilities are you referring to?

Participant 01:04:31

Mainly private hygiene facilities—such as having one's own kitchen and bathroom as part of a complete home unit. Previously, toilets and kitchens were shared and not common in individual homes. Hygiene conditions improved noticeably, and so did overall quality of life. People had more autonomy in managing their home lives, and the environmental conditions were better. During the early phase of reform, people were fairly satisfied, because the restructuring hadn't been fully carried out yet and the welfare benefits from state-owned enterprises were still in place.

Researcher 01:05:26

What changes were there in the outdoor environment?

Participant 01:05:28

There were more public spaces for exercise and places for older people to relax.

Researcher 01:05:36

These were all post-1980s developments?
Can you give examples of the leisure spaces for older people?

Participant 01:05:41

Expectations were not as high back then. It wasn't like nowadays where a certain number of fitness machines are required. At the very least, there were basketball courts and recreational venues. There used to be workers' cultural palaces and other public venues, which remained open at the time—though they were somewhat different from those today.

Researcher 01:05:54

Were the workers' cultural palaces still around in the 1980s and 1990s? Were there more facilities?

Participant 01:05:58

There weren't many new facilities, but the cultural palaces and other public venues remained open.

Researcher 01:06:05

So that didn't really change.

Participant 01:06:07

Not much changed. They were still open to the public—unlike now, where access is often fenced off and requires payment.

Back then, these spaces were genuinely open to residents.

Researcher 01:06:18

In terms of mobility within the neighbourhood during the 1980s and 1990s, what changes were there?

Participant 01:06:26

The main change was that people started developing a sense of tourism.

Researcher 01:06:30

Apart from tourism, were there any changes in everyday local travel?

Participant 01:06:33

People had more ways of getting around, and they also started going out more often.

Researcher 01:06:43

There were more spontaneous outings. What about modes of transport?

Participant 01:06:48

By the 1980s and 1990s, bicycles had become widespread, which solved a lot of commuting issues.

Researcher 01:06:54

So bicycles were common.

Participant 01:06:56

Yes. Bus routes increased, roads were wider, and overall conditions improved.

Some people even had motorbikes and could go on countryside outings.

Back then, youth league members would ride bikes to Mangshan for day trips. That was the beginning of the concept of “outings”.

People would go walking in parks on weekends, appreciating the environment. As living standards improved, so did people’s ability to appreciate such experiences.

However, unlike today, where many retirees travel regularly, people back then had many children and heavier family burdens. Leisure wasn’t fully liberalised.

Nowadays, with only children, the burden is relatively lighter.

Researcher 01:08:26

So back then the burden was heavier.

Participant 01:08:27

Yes, but all these changes kept pace with improvements in the living environment.

Researcher 01:08:36

In your opinion, compared with the planned economy era, what were the shortcomings of living conditions in the 1980s and 1990s—including cultural, social, or physical aspects?

Participant 01:08:48

To be honest, the biggest drawback was that interpersonal relations became more complicated.

In the past, though living conditions were worse, relationships were harmonious—people were understanding and willing to help each other.

There was deep emotional bonding among neighbours. If someone had difficulties, others would step in.

Later, although conditions improved and space expanded, people became more distant.

After moving into new flats, neighbours no longer greeted one another as they used to.

That sense of unfamiliarity became quite obvious, and the kind of neighbourhood solidarity we had before was gone.

In addition, public safety also gradually deteriorated, especially after the political upheaval.

Researcher 01:10:10

In the 1980s and 1990s, the natural environment slightly deteriorated. Aside from that, with the increase in the density of residential buildings in the community, more personnel from other work units moved into the living area.

What impact do you think these changes had on the living environment—either positive or negative?

Participant 01:10:44

There were certainly benefits. Before the Third Cotton Mill was restructured, the factory personnel were relatively homogeneous, and there were fewer outsiders, which made neighbourly relations simple and familiar.

After restructuring, more outsiders moved in, society became more complex, and public safety and neighbourly relations became more complicated.

Some residents came from very different backgrounds. In the past, everyone in the factory knew one another—there were workshop colleagues, close family ties, even three generations working in the same Danwei.

After the restructuring, some family members lived in the Third Cotton Mill compound, others didn't. Neighbourly relations became complicated, and people no longer knew each other.

Researcher 01:12:11

When you say the level of mutual understanding became more complex, do you mean that people no longer knew each other well?

Participant 01:12:17

Exactly. Outsiders didn't know you, and integration took time. People didn't understand each other's situations, which led to heightened caution.

Once people became more guarded, it created a defensive mindset, and that led to emotional distance. Even minor conflicts could escalate. Neighbourly relationships were no longer as harmonious as before.

Researcher 01:12:43

When you say a lack of mutual understanding led to emotional distance, could you elaborate?

Participant 01:12:49

Getting to know someone is a gradual process, from strangers to acquaintances. Now society is more diverse, with all sorts of people. After getting to know someone, people might find they don't get along, leading to suspicion and probing. This increases defensiveness.

If people are constantly on guard with one another, mutual distrust grows, leading to estrangement.

Interactions aren't as smooth and close-knit as they used to be when everyone knew each other well.

Now society is more complex. There are also idle or problematic youths entering the community, which has made management chaotic.

Researcher 01:13:48

Besides this complexity and the disorder in management, do you feel these newcomers caused any other issues beyond neighbourhood disputes and safety concerns?

Participant 01:14:07

There were also economic factors.

For instance, many workers from the Third Cotton Mill went out to buy homes—some borrowed money, some used personal connections. People's financial situations varied greatly.

Under the housing reform policy, some families couldn't afford to buy homes, some borrowed, and others relied on guanxi (connections).

This created a significant wealth gap, which led to social divides. Some looked down on those who were poorer, while the poor felt inferior or even resentful toward the rich.

After the restructuring, these kinds of tensions became more common.

Researcher 01:15:51

You also mentioned the increase in Danwei-built housing and the chaotic management situation. What exactly do you mean by "chaotic"?

Participant 01:16:05

Mainly, it was due to unfamiliarity. People from different Danwei were all mixed together, which made management much more difficult.

Researcher 01:16:15

So, by "different management", do you mean that the Third and Fourth Cotton Mills each managed their own areas?

Participant 01:16:25

No, I mean that overall, community management became more difficult. In the past, with fewer people, management was easier. Now there are far more residents—some register with the community, some don't.

Researcher 01:16:49

And that was even before the widespread use of mobile phones.

Participant 01:16:50

Exactly. Some people would come to register, some wouldn't, and the community had no idea who these people were.

Some refused to register, making it difficult to manage them.

Researcher 01:17:12

Yes, I see.

Participant 01:17:13

You couldn't enforce registration. If someone didn't register, you couldn't issue them a household registration. But when people refused to cooperate, there was a lack of information flow, making management very difficult.

Researcher 01:17:28

Was this during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 01:17:47

Yes. Back then, the workload for the community wasn't as heavy as it is now. Today, household registration is mandatory.

Researcher 01:17:57

What practical problems did community management encounter?

Participant 01:17:59

At that time, there was no effective networked management system, so things were chaotic. Public security was another big issue. Community governance included maintaining security, but when you didn't know who lived there, it was hard to manage. Some people weren't properly registered, or may have had criminal backgrounds—residents' identities were unclear. Even basic information like gender of the residents wasn't always known.

Researcher 01:18:28

You mentioned that in the 1950s and 1960s, neighbourhood management in the living quarters was conducted using loudspeakers. But by the 1980s and 1990s, people from different areas had moved in—like some residents under the management of the Fourth Cotton Mill, others under the Third—and outsiders had started buying flats there. Did the way of issuing public notices change?

Participant 01:18:54

It wasn't as convenient in the '80s and '90s. Usually, they would just post a notice slip at the entrance.

Researcher 01:19:01

Was that the responsibility of the property management office?

Participant 01:19:02

Yes. Landlines weren't common back then, and mobile phones didn't exist. It was very difficult to get in touch with anyone.

Researcher 01:19:19

So, public notices from the community were often ineffective?

Participant 01:19:22

Yes. You didn't even know who lived upstairs, so you couldn't deliver any messages.

I wouldn't even know whether it was a man or a woman living there.

Back in the 1950s and 1960s, on the street where I lived, everyone knew what was going on in each other's homes. There was no need for the community or residents' committee to intervene—neighbours were just that familiar with one another.

Researcher 01:19:53

Aside from that, you mentioned earlier that cultural and recreational activities were very vibrant in the 1950s and 1960s. Venues for events and informal gathering places—such as open pits, dining together,

cooling off in summer, or practising musical instruments—changed when the layout of the community shifted in the 1980s and 1990s, even though the Workers' Cultural Palace still existed. What changed in terms of these informal gathering places?

The basic infrastructure remained, but the housing density increased, and some areas were demolished. Did this affect informal gatherings and organising activities?

Participant 01:20:39

There were big changes—activities became much fewer.

Researcher 01:20:41

So the basic activities declined, and the role of the trade union faded.

Participant 01:20:45

Yes. Under the planned economy, the factory led the Residents' Committee and had wider social influence. Zhengzhou's economy at the time largely relied on those factories.

Residents' Committees were mostly composed of elderly women, but they had the support of the enterprise behind them. The Party and the trade union led, and the enterprise backed the Residents' Committee. There were financial allocations to support cultural, recreational, and political activities. After the restructuring, the Residents' Committee lost that support. Financial assistance decreased, interest relationships became more complicated, and governance became more difficult.

I've worked in community governance before, so I know how hard it is. There's no funding, no law enforcement authority, and even if you do something, no one listens.

Researcher 01:22:57

That's very true.

Participant 01:22:58

Community work is hard. Even the inspection teams from higher authorities pointed out that Party member activities lacked content and were poorly organised.

It's difficult to mobilise enthusiasm among Party members. Meetings had no substance. Elderly members in their seventies or eighties were hard to organise.

During the pandemic, veteran Party members still played a leading role.

They never forgot their oath. At crucial moments, they would still step up.

I'm old myself—I can't do much, but I do what I can.

Researcher 01:24:51

So...

Participant 01:24:53

What I mean is, whether before or after the restructuring, veteran Party members have always remained politically conscious and committed to Party values.

Researcher 01:25:06

Before the restructuring in the 1980s and 1990s, when the density of the Sanmian Community increased and more residential buildings were constructed, the layout of public gathering spaces also changed. Did you notice any changes in public gathering places for residents?

Basic facilities such as basketball courts and canteens were still there, but there were fewer open spaces—fewer areas suitable for open-air film screenings.

Did gathering spaces become more concentrated in small squares in front of buildings and other fixed spots?

Participant 01:25:51

Public gathering spaces became very limited. The spaces were small, and the venues were few.

Participant 01:26:00

And another thing: when the restructuring began, many people were laid off. People were generally too busy trying to make a living. People my age all went through it—we were born in the New China, experienced hardship and political upheaval, were sent to the countryside, served in the army, fought in wars, and later faced the one-child policy and the wave of unemployment.

Since Liberation, I rarely took part in political activities—I lived through them personally.

At the time, people weren't concerned about material things—we were focused on survival. Now that we've grown old, back then in our forties or fifties, we were all still hustling to get by.

Researcher 01:26:42

So back then, informal community gatherings happened less frequently?

Participant 01:26:49

Yes, we didn't have the time. Everyone was busy making ends meet. Only when there was nothing to do would people dine together. There was very little time for community activities.

Researcher 01:27:17

And with more outsiders moving in and many old neighbours moving out, it was no longer like in childhood when people brought out stools to sit and chat together.

Participant 01:27:26

Exactly. No time for that anymore—everyone was focused on surviving. There was no leisure for the kind of gatherings we used to have.

Researcher 01:27:33

Did you observe any older people still bringing out stools to sit together in the community during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 01:27:40

No. At that time, there were many elderly people, and traditional values were still strong. Older people mainly looked after children.

In our country, unlike in the West, the elderly had to help their children manage household responsibilities.

They didn't have much time for leisure. After the restructuring, they were even less likely to have time for entertainment.

Researcher 01:28:21

If they were looking after children, where in the community did the elderly spend time?

Participant 01:28:24

There weren't any fixed activity spaces. Occasionally, they'd go for a walk in the park, but there were no organised activities within the community.

Researcher 01:28:29

So elderly people didn't really spend time within the community itself?

Participant 01:28:30

That's right. There weren't any community activities.

Researcher 01:28:32

What about basketball courts or small plazas?

Participant 01:28:34

There were basketball courts—men played there, and children too. But the overall level of activity was low.

Researcher 01:28:42

After the restructuring and reorganisation of the Third Cotton Mill, the former production area was converted into a museum, the Textile City was transformed into a residential area, and the blocks next to the Sanmian West Community became high-rise developments.

What do you think about these changes? Were there other changes as well?

Participant 01:29:23

There were significant changes. After the museum was built, it preserved the textile base. After all, several spinning mills were once very prominent and made a major contribution to Zhengzhou—there's no denying that.

But after the restructuring, Zhengzhou lost its economic backbone. The Grand Transport Station and others were also restructured.

The museum and some associated properties were acquired, but we've yet to see any tangible results. Looking at the past glory of the factory areas compared to the present is disheartening. Back then, the economy was driven by these enterprises.

Now, the situation is awkward, and there haven't been any obvious improvements. My family and I are still hoping the redevelopment will eventually succeed—turning it into a textile-themed city or a tourist destination. That would represent the pride and legacy of the past. But for now, everything appears to have stalled. The economic issues are hard to resolve, and it's been a long time already. It's disappointing.

Researcher 01:30:57

How would you evaluate the changes in our area across these different periods?

Participant 01:31:05

From my perspective, each period had pros and cons.

During the planned economy, although material conditions were poor, there was less psychological pressure, society was harmonious, and interpersonal relationships were warm.

Reform and Opening Up was undoubtedly positive—living standards improved—but competition also intensified, and the pressure has increased, especially now.

I think retired people are relatively well-off—at least they don't worry about food or clothing.

But the main issues now are elderly care and medical treatment.

I often say, if the country wants to stimulate consumption, all it needs is to ensure healthcare and pensions for the elderly.

If medical expenses are fully covered, and retirees receive reliable pensions, then they won't need to save.

That would drive consumption. Right now, the problem is people have to pay out of pocket when they fall ill—so the elderly feel they must save.

Researcher 01:32:20

That's very true.

Participant 01:32:21

I have to save as well. Without solving the issue of healthcare costs, who dares to spend freely?

Researcher 01:32:29

So, during the planned economy, the medical expenses of employees and their families were fully covered by the Danwei?

Participant 01:32:37

Back then, with a *three-part hospital admission form*, seeing a doctor at the hospital didn't cost a penny. The form had three sections—one was submitted by the factory to the hospital in June, another was handed to the patient upon discharge, and everything was reimbursed by the state.

Researcher 01:32:55

Did family members, such as elderly relatives, enjoy the same benefits?

Participant 01:32:59

I think family members had to pay for medical care.

Researcher 01:33:06

So elderly people had to pay out of pocket?

Participant 01:33:08

But the cost was very low.

Researcher 01:33:10

Was it because medical expenses were low at the time, or because the factory subsidised them?

Participant 01:33:17

Back then there was essentially no medical insurance. People didn't bring medicine from home. If a patient had a *three-part hospital admission form*, they could go to the hospital and receive treatment without paying. Doctors didn't overprescribe medication either.

Researcher 01:33:43

So, if I understand correctly, elderly family members who weren't employees but moved here still benefited from the medical system?

Participant 01:33:49

Yes, and schooling was free too. I only had to pay a few yuan during high school.

Researcher 01:33:53

So during the planned economy, before the restructuring, there was no real pressure on the elderly to afford medical care—whether they were employees, retirees, or family members?

Participant 01:34:13

As far as I remember, no one was unable to seek medical treatment, and I never heard of any family who couldn't afford to see a doctor.

Researcher 01:34:23

Community density varied across the three periods.

Before the 1980s there were more open spaces. In the mid-1980s, more buildings were constructed, and after the restructuring, new high-rises were built near the Sanmian West Community.

Setting aside the production area, in the residential areas, the number of buildings increased, the kindergarten relocated, and the Textile Museum was built.

How would you evaluate the changes in density and spatial layout across these three stages?

Participant 01:35:17

Society keeps progressing, so you can't really compare now with the past.

Material conditions have improved. In the past there were many open areas—there weren't even many bicycles, so there was no pressure on space.

Nowadays, parking is a major issue.

Researcher 01:35:42

It's because of the increased population density.

Participant 01:35:44

Yes, there's a large floating population, and the available space has become smaller and smaller.

On top of that, property management has fallen behind. The property services in several of the former factory compounds are lagging.

It's even a joke—how can you collect parking fees when the basic infrastructure doesn't even meet the requirements?

You want to collect parking fees—where are people supposed to park? There's no space.

And if the property hardware, the roads, the parking facilities, and other requirements aren't in place, it just feels like the management is more chaotic.

It's not that management has disappeared, but rather that it's become disorganised—there are more conflicts.

That's why both the government and residents are frustrated about property management.

It's difficult to solve.

Researcher 01:36:47

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Participant 01:36:49

No, I still need to pick up my grandson.

Case study interview transcript-resident 3

Participant 00:02

I grew up here. I was a worker at Factory No. 3.

Researcher 00:06

How many years have you lived here?

Participant 00:09

I worked in the factory, and after retirement I continued living here.

Researcher 00:14

So you came here when you were a child?

Participant 00:17

Not exactly as a small child. My parents were both here, and I was born here. In 1962, I was sent down to the countryside—you may not know, but at that time city residents were sent to rural areas. My mother took me back to the countryside, while my father stayed here. He was among the very first group of workers when the factory was established, transferred from the army.

Researcher 00:49

So you more or less grew up here, right?

Participant 00:51

Later, I grew up in my hometown until I was in my teens. Then when my father retired, we came back here. It's been forty to fifty years since.

Researcher 00:59

Auntie, I'd like to interview you. Do you still remember what the community looked like during the planned economy period?

Participant 01:06

Yes, I do. Originally, we weren't here but a bit further back in the old community, the bungalow area. At that time, everyone was poor. It was the rationing system, everything was allocated by plan.

Under the apartment buildings was our workers' canteen.

That was the old canteen, where all the workers ate. In the afternoons, after meals, the space was used for entertainment activities—dancing, listening to music. It was very nice.

Researcher 01:48

These entertainment activities in the canteen hall—were they organised by the workers themselves, or by everyone together?

Participant 01:56

Family members could also go—everyone was there.

Researcher 02:00

Did the entertainment facilities include sound equipment?

Participant 02:02

Yes. Overall, in the old community, we lived quite happily.

Researcher 02:09

Was this in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 02:10

Yes. I spent my whole life working here.

Researcher 02:16

And back then, in the residential compound, what were relations among people like?

Participant 02:26

Extremely harmonious.

Researcher 02:27

In what way?

Participant 02:28

Extremely harmonious. You know Xiangrong Street, near the primary school entrance? That street was a busy vegetable market. It was only in the past two or three years that it was demolished. That whole street used to be a vegetable market. Since there were many southerners in Factory No. 3 and Factory No. 4, you could buy southern-style vegetables easily and cheaply. Elderly people didn't like to go far, and even when children moved out after marriage, they still wanted to come back, because it was so convenient here.

Researcher 03:00

Yes.

Participant 03:01

Buying vegetables and entertainment were convenient. Later, when May Day Park opened, it was easy to exercise there.

Researcher 03:12

In the 1950s and 1960s, did people often go to May Day Park?

Participant 03:15

Not many at that time. There were too many children. In families like ours with many siblings, parents were all working, and everyone was busy looking after kids. At that time, people worked rotating shifts every day, with little rest. May Day Park used to be called the Workers' Cultural Palace, with walls around it. It wasn't open, and you couldn't go in, so not many went.

Researcher 03:52

Back then, what were the social activities inside the community like? Where did people usually gather after work to chat or spend time? What was the outdoor environment like?

Participant 04:16

Entertainment wasn't as developed as today. The community only had a few rooms, unlike the many facilities and conveniences available now.

If a few people in the community wanted to do something, they would organise some activities. In the Factory No. 3 compound, there was a fountain—our Danwei's fountain—where people often gathered for activities.

There weren't many entertainment options, mostly walking, sitting around and chatting. The atmosphere was relatively relaxed.

Researcher 05:16

So daily life was relaxed. And the environment?

Participant 05:22

The environment was also nice. In the old community, several generations lived together in one household.

Researcher 05:29

Were the buildings still new at that time? Were there many open spaces?

Participant 05:38

The open spaces were about the same as now. The buildings were old houses, built in the 1950s and 1960s.

Participant 05:47

Yes, the old houses from the 1950s and 1960s. The houses along Jianshe Road were built later. Our family lived on Jianshe Road. Those houses were wooden structures, not tall, only three storeys. Inside the Factory No. 3 compound, there were no tall buildings either—the highest were only three or four storeys.

Researcher 06:13

So during the planned economy period, the outdoor environment and air quality in the community were fairly good.

Participant 06:19

At that time there wasn't really a community. The residential compound was inside the factory. Workshop leaders and such—there was no community as we understand it now. In recent years, development has been good. If people have problems, they can go to the community. If neighbours aren't getting along, community leaders mediate.

Researcher 06:48

Thinking back to the 1950s and 1960s, in the residential compound, what outdoor spaces did adults usually use? And how did children play—where were their activity spaces?

Participant 07:12

The place that used to be our vegetable market was the activity centre. There was a basketball court there. People didn't really play basketball often, but sometimes the television station came to hold events—right here in Factory No. 3.

Researcher 07:31

In the 1950s and 1960s, how were the facilities like hospitals, kindergartens, bathhouses, barber shops, supply and marketing co-operatives, grain and oil shops used? Was there a bathhouse indoors at that time?

Participant 07:59

The Danwei had a bathhouse.

Researcher 08:01

Inside the factory workshops?

Participant 08:04

Yes, workers bathed there after work.

Researcher 08:07

And for family members—was there a bathhouse in the residential compound?

Participant 08:10

Yes, there was a bathhouse in the residential compound.

Researcher 08:12

Did you use the one next to Junhui Supermarket?

Participant 08:33

Yes. After bathing, people would chat. The bathhouse was free—workers didn't have to pay.

Researcher 08:38

And were family members also free of charge?

Participant 08:39

Family members weren't free. They couldn't enter the bathhouse during the day. After six o'clock in the evening it was open to outsiders, so family members could go in then. After bathing, you could go over to Mianfang Road to warm yourself by the fire. The factory also had a place for heating during the day. There was only that one bathhouse.

Researcher 09:01

Was there a public area in the bathhouse where people gathered and socialised?

Participant 09:10

Yes. After bathing there was a big mirror on the wall where people sat to rest and chat. That was it.

Researcher 09:26

Did the bathhouse have large pools for soaking?

Participant 09:30

The men's bathhouse did—it had a big pool. The women's didn't, it was all showers.

Researcher 09:36

And the barber shops and grain and oil shops? Did people gather there?

Participant 09:43

At that time, you had to queue for rice and oil.

Researcher 09:49

Purchased with ration tickets?

Participant 09:50

Yes. You had to line up very early to buy things. The coal yard was next to the police station. The coal yard used to be right there. Everyone queued up early in the morning to buy coal briquettes. There was a barber shop under the building, another at the back entrance. Under our building there were two barber shops. There were also the grain shop premises, and the building next door is now a restaurant.

Researcher 10:25

Would people gather and chat around these shops, or did they just leave after buying things?

Participant 10:42

After buying, people would chat for a while and then leave. There were many children, so everyone was busy going home. After working eight hours a day, people were tired and wanted to rest. Housing conditions were poor—two, three, even five families shared one kitchen. Public toilets were shared by five or six households.

Researcher 11:09

What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of the indoor and outdoor living environment in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 11:26

The advantage was that although wages were low, they were still enough to feed the family. The disadvantage was the inconvenience of several families living together. Sometimes there were quarrels—washing dishes and cooking all in the same sink, competing for use. Some people were unhygienic, pouring dirty water from chamber pots into the sink where others washed vegetables, which caused conflicts.

But relationships were close. If someone cooked a good dish, they would share it with neighbours. Life was harmonious. Unlike now, when people only think about money. Back then, life was simpler. As long as you earned twenty or thirty yuan a month, you felt content.

Researcher 12:19

So both materially and spiritually, life felt fulfilling.

Participant 12:21

Yes, very happy.

Researcher 12:23

And the outdoor environment—what were its pros and cons?

Participant 12:27

There weren't many cinemas. Cinema tickets were expensive, several jiao each.

Researcher 12:33

So there were few films shown in the community, and people went to cinemas in the city?

Participant 12:43

Yes, mainly the club. Where the metro entrance is now.

Researcher 12:47

Was the club part of Factory No. 3?

Participant 12:48

Yes, this side was Factory No. 3. On the other side of Tongbai Road, Factory No. 1 also had an old cinema.

Researcher 13:00

So Factory No. 1's club was an open cinema in the past?

Participant 13:02

Yes, it was. An old cinema. By the 1980s it was already there. Cinemas were an important form of entertainment. At that time, there weren't many other leisure activities, so people found it very enjoyable. May Day Park also had a skating rink. People went there to chat. But the park wasn't as open or convenient as it is now.

Researcher 13:37

Do you have any other comments on the pros and cons of the indoor or outdoor environment in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 13:45

Transport was inconvenient. If a family had a 28-inch bicycle, it was considered happiness. There were basically no private cars. The factory had buses to transport workers. Generally, there weren't many outdoor leisure activities. Now it's different—there are metros and buses, travel is much more convenient.

Researcher 14:20

At that time, the factory buses carried workers and family members from the residential compound to the production area.

Participant 14:29

Yes, there were fixed routes. Everyone knew the schedule and waited in advance. For middle or night shifts, people all relied on these buses.

Researcher 14:44

So the buses transported workers from the residential area to the production area.

Participant 14:55

Most Factory No. 3 workers lived in the family compound. But after marriage, some who no longer worked in the textile industry lived further away, such as in the East District. They all took the factory buses. It was very convenient.

Researcher 15:15

So the Danwei provided shuttle buses as a welfare benefit, carrying workers from the residential compound and those living outside.

Participant 15:22

Yes, transport was free.

Researcher 15:23

Was there only one route?

Participant 15:26

No, there were routes in all directions—east, west, south, and north. If you lived in the East District, you took the east line bus; in the West District, the west line bus. The routes were fixed.

Researcher 15:39

Were there many people taking the shuttle buses, including family members living outside?

Participant 15:46

Yes, quite a lot.

Researcher 15:48

Apart from the factory shuttles, what were the main means of transport for residents in the city during the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 16:00

Mostly bicycles or walking.

Researcher 16:02

Were there any other main transport options?

Participant 16:04

The main ones were bicycles and walking.

Researcher 16:06

So people didn't often take the bus?

Participant 16:08

Hardly ever. People were reluctant to spend the money. A bus ticket was three to five fen, but monthly wages were only ten to twenty yuan, so they couldn't afford it. Sometimes I would walk home from the railway station and didn't think it was far. My daughter said the station was far from home, but I told her, "Just walk back, it's good exercise." At that time, everyone was used to walking.

Researcher 16:49

Besides the activities you mentioned in the 1950s and 1960s, were there other activities in the production area?

Participant 17:05

In the residential compound, a few people would sit together and sing opera, put on performances. Although there wasn't proper sound equipment, everyone was happy.

Researcher 17:19

So those were self-organised, not formally arranged by the factory?

Participant 17:23

Yes. During Spring Festival and Lantern Festival, the factory organised folk performances. People wore "big-headed doll" costumes, paraded through the streets, and entertained the public. The programmes were simple like that.

Researcher 17:43

Where were these activities held? For example, where was the Lantern Festival celebrated? And where did people gather privately to sing?

Participant 18:03

Usually at the entrance of Wanjiayu. It used to be a supermarket, and before that, a co-operative. People sang right there at the entrance.

Researcher 18:13

Was it in people's homes, or in a small square?

Participant 18:17

There were no small squares back then. Those only appeared in the 1990s. The buildings had only recently been built.

Researcher 18:28

And the Lantern Festival activities—were they held on Jianshe Road, or in the Factory No. 3 club?

Participant 18:33

No, they were on Jianshe Road. People walked there, circled around the dance area.

Researcher 18:40

So they went around in a circle, beating gongs and drums?

Participant 18:41

Yes, beating gongs and drums. After one round, everyone was very happy.

Researcher 18:45

Were there other activities?

Participant 18:50

Not many. Things weren't developed back then, and people's needs were modest. Still, they felt happy.

Participant 19:10

Nowadays, going out is convenient. Living conditions are better, and national policies are good. Elderly people have free bus passes. Compared with the past, the difference is huge.

Researcher 19:22

How would you evaluate life in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 19:31

Neighbourly relations were simple and harmonious. Unlike now, when even neighbours across the hall don't know each other. In the workshops, everyone was from the same factory. They often shared food, and if someone needed help looking after children, neighbours helped. Relations were peaceful. Elderly women would step in to mediate when issues arose. There was no barrier between factory life and life outside.

Researcher 20:23

At that time, people mainly lived within the Danwei. So, how do you think the community changed dramatically after the reform and opening up in the 1980s and 1990s—in terms of living environment, indoors and outdoors, activities, travel, neighbourly relations?

Participant 20:59

Of course there were changes—now it's all high-rise buildings.

Researcher 21:02

Yes, in the 1980s and 1990s.

Participant 21:04

In the late 1990s, housing in the textile industry became tight, and it wasn't easy to get an allocation. My husband and I were both workers, and originally we didn't live inside the factory compound but behind the factory, where there were several residential compounds. It felt quite good. But at that time resources were scarce, and there was no central heating. Children really suffered. Later, when the factory allocated us housing, we moved in, and there was heating and natural gas. Cooking became much easier. Before, we used coal briquettes. If the fire went out, cooking became difficult—you couldn't even boil noodles.

Researcher 22:05

So natural gas came in during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 22:07

Yes, in the late 1980s.

Researcher 22:15

Before that, people cooked with coal briquettes, not natural gas?

Participant 22:19

That's right, there was no gas, only coal briquettes. We queued every day to buy coal, carried it home, and lit the stove. At night you had to get up to add coal, otherwise in the morning there'd be no fire for cooking. Now it's much better. With heating, winters aren't cold, and with gas you can cook anytime—life is so much more convenient. We're very happy now.

Participant 22:55

May Day Park now has singing, dancing, brisk walking, and all sorts of fitness equipment.

Researcher 23:04

Was that after the 1980s and 1990s, or only after 2000?

Participant 23:10

That started in the early 2000s, in May Day Park.

Researcher 23:12

When did heating begin?

Participant 23:14

Heating started in the late 1990s. Before that, there wasn't any.

Researcher 23:23

In the 1980s and 1990s, many new buildings were constructed, outdoor space layouts changed, and private vendors opened shops. Later, with housing reform, houses could be bought and sold, so outsiders also moved in. After restructuring, people from other factories lived here too. Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, what changes did you see in the community?

Participant 24:02

The living environment began to improve. In the 1980s, our family lived in a 9-square-metre room. A family of three in such a small space—there wasn't even room for a table. By the 1990s, the housing was bigger, over 40 square metres. Later, when the factory built new housing, we moved into a flat nearly 80 square metres, with heating and natural gas. That was far better than before. Our family has moved three times.

Researcher 24:58

So in the 1980s and 1990s you were allocated a flat.

Participant 25:04

Yes. In 1999, during the housing reform, as a dual-worker family, we were allocated this current flat.

Researcher 25:16

And then you moved again—where to?

Participant 25:18

We now live in No. 1, Lühua West Street.

Researcher 25:20

And in between, you moved once more, right?

Participant 25:24

Yes.

Researcher 25:25

Into the newly built staff housing?

Participant 25:26

Yes, into a new flat.

Researcher 25:28

So the indoor living environment improved—bigger, better.
Was it a flat-style residence?

Participant 25:35

Yes, one bedroom and one living room. At the very least, it felt wonderful. I could shut my own door, eat freely, and not share a toilet with others.

Researcher 25:45

So it was one bedroom and one living room?

Participant 25:46

Yes. Everything was our own. Behind our own door, we had a toilet and kitchen, plus a small sitting room. The three of us lived there, with one bedroom as well. At that time, housing had no shared common area, so the whole 40-odd square metres were usable. Two large rooms—very nice. My daughter was overjoyed. She said, “Mum, isn’t Dad from Shanghai? This is our little Shanghai!” The flat was so nice. The child was delighted. So we moved there. It was a brand new flat.

Researcher 26:18

What about the outdoor environment—were there changes from the 1950s–60s to the 1980s–90s?

Participant 26:22

Of course. After we moved, there were far fewer fields and vegetable sellers.

Researcher 26:29

And the farmland at the back—was that during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 26:32

Yes, it was farmland. If you crossed Tongbai Road overpass, everything on the other side was fields.

Researcher 26:42

So how did you manage buying things?

Participant 26:43

We had to go far. Over in Zhutun there were people growing vegetables, and a few vendors. Even to buy steamed buns, you had to travel quite a way. Now it’s so much more convenient, and that area is bustling.

Participant

When we moved here in 2000, it still wasn’t well set up. My daughter said, “Mum, let’s go back home, it’s not cold there—we have heating.” Before, there was no heating. When she did her homework, I would give her a hot-water bottle, tucked inside her clothes to hold.

Researcher 27:15

So when your daughter was doing homework, did the second flat you lived in have heating?

Participant 27:17

No heating. It was only in the third flat we were allocated that there was heating, plus natural gas.

Researcher 27:24

So in the later housing, you had both gas and heating? The third allocation was long-term housing?

Participant

Yes, a reform housing flat. It was calculated based on years of service.

Speaker 2

Based on work years?

Participant 27:36

Yes, both of us had our years of service counted. At that time we paid more than fifty thousand yuan. It felt like a huge sum—fifty to sixty thousand was a fortune back then. Money was very tight. When my daughter entered university, we had no money. Both of us were still working then.

Participant

Then in 2006 the factory restructured. If you were over 45 or had 30 years of service, you could retire under the internal arrangement. The pension was 380 yuan. I met the conditions, so I stopped working. After retirement, I went out to do key work outside, while my husband was still at the factory. In 2008, the factory moved away, and he also left. Since then, we've no longer worked in the factory, just lived in the residential compound.

Researcher 28:50

In the 1980s and 1990s, besides the changes you mentioned, how did people's social life and main gathering places differ from the planned economy period?

Participant 29:01

May Day Park became popular—everyone went there. Back then it was still called the Cultural Palace, not May Day Park. Only in recent years was the name changed. The Cultural Palace was the site of the Zhengzhou Federation of Trade Unions. People went there to exercise, chat, or perform opera.

Researcher 29:27

Why were there more activities in May Day Park during the 1980s and 1990s? Because of better construction? Or some other reason?

Participant 29:34

Yes, construction improved, and people also had more free time.

Researcher 29:37

Was that because of restructuring?

Participant 29:39

Before, we worked four shifts. Later it changed to three shifts, and then work wasn't as busy. People had time to go out and enjoy themselves, and the Cultural Palace began to be developed.

Researcher 29:56

So during the planned economy up to the 1980s, was it always like that?

Participant 30:00

No, things have improved a lot in recent years.

Researcher 30:02

Do you mean just in recent years? Or were facilities already improving during the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 30:11

It was different. In the past, the sports ground was just uneven dirt pits. Now there are rubber tracks and fitness equipment. Before, it was only empty ground, nothing else.

Researcher 30:32

So by the 1980s and 1990s there were already rubber tracks?

Participant 30:34

Yes, that's right. They gradually appeared in the 1990s.

Researcher 30:38

And the social interactions you mentioned before, like chatting in front of the grain shop or in public spaces downstairs—when moving from the planned economy into the reform era of the 1980s and 1990s, did that change?

Participant 30:55

Well, what about the people in the community now?

Researcher 30:59

I mean in the 1980s and 1990s.

Participant 31:01

In the 1980s and 1990s, not many people really went out to socialise.

Researcher 31:06

Why? Because they were too busy?

Participant 31:09

Yes. People had no time—between work and raising children.

Researcher 31:12

So in the 1980s and 1990s, indeed people were busy. But many went to the Cultural Palace, not staying in the community to socialise.

Participant 31:16

Yes, just like after the 1990s and early 2000s, when there were more places for leisure, people no longer stayed in the courtyards. Except for the elderly, those old people still gathered at the main entrance.

Researcher 31:30

So everyone went out to have fun, since the spaces outside were bigger, with more people, and more entertaining?

Participant 31:33

Of course, outside spaces were larger, livelier, and there were more people. You see now at the small rural-style shops near the television building, there are always ten or so elderly people. They feel they've lived in the courtyards for decades, even though the houses have been rebuilt, they don't want to leave. The place is familiar, and the people are familiar, so they still come every day by bicycle or tricycle.

Researcher 32:00

At that time, did children still run and play on the basketball courts? Was it still like that in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 32:09

Yes, they all played there. Later, once the vegetable market was built, there was no space left, only a small patch of open ground remained.

Researcher 32:16

In terms of use of the basketball courts, what were the differences between the 1950s–60s and the 1980s–90s?

Participant 32:23

Well, with the economic and social development, many places were turned into vegetable markets, and they were no longer basketball courts.

Researcher 32:28

I mean in the 1970s or 1980s–90s, when the basketball courts and canteen still existed, what was the Factory No.3 club like in the 1950s–60s?

Participant 32:44

We used to go there, I watched films there.

Researcher 32:45

And in the 1980s–90s, what changes were there in how it was used?

Participant 32:51

The cinema has now been replaced by residential buildings.

Researcher 32:56

Are you referring to the Factory No.3 club? By the 1980s–90s had it already been turned into housing?

Participant 33:02
Those flats were built quite a while ago.

Researcher 33:05
So by the 1980s–90s, people were no longer really going to the club?

Participant 33:11
Yes, people didn't go much anymore, and later that place was converted into residential buildings.

Researcher 33:14
Was this because workers were being laid off?

Participant 33:17
Mainly because they no longer screened films there, so people stopped going.

Researcher 33:25
During festivals, did the factory still organise entertainment events? Were there any changes in the 1980s–90s?

Participant 33:31
Yes, originally the cinema hosted events, such as Children's Day choir performances, National Day, or the Party's birthday. The club also hosted performances, with singing and dancing. Now that whole area has been turned into residential buildings, the change is huge. When I now go to the Economic Commission near the courthouse, I feel quite nostalgic. I used to work there, and it feels familiar. I remember when the factory reformed and opened up, the first impression on entering was that you had to carry your work permit, and entrance was checked. Before entering, they confirmed whether you had your pass. When I think of it now, it was always bustling, especially around the market area, with more than ten thousand people.

Researcher 35:07
In the 1980s–90s, did residents still gather privately to sing in the living quarters, the same as in the 1950s–60s?

Participant 35:20
There was even more entertainment than back then, certainly more than before.

Researcher 35:28
So gatherings in the living quarters were still frequent? Especially after migrants and people from other factories moved in, were gatherings even more common?

Participant 35:51
Yes, relations were quite good, always fairly harmonious.

Researcher 35:57
So outsiders moving in didn't affect neighbourly relations?

Participant 36:01
At that time, no, it didn't. Everyone accepted one another, people would share their thoughts, and if anyone had difficulties, neighbours would help. Relations were very good.

Researcher 36:18
Regarding the outdoor environment, what changes were there in the 1980s–90s compared with the planned economy period?

Participant 36:23
The roads were definitely improved, the environment was better, it felt much improved.

Researcher 36:33
Would you say that in the 1980s–90s, elderly people had become the main users of the gathering spaces in the living quarters? Where did they mainly gather?

Participant 36:56
At the entrance of the Wanjiayu supermarket.

Researcher 36:59
And in the courtyards, near the basketball courts, in the 1980s–90s, were the elderly still mainly gathering there?

Participant 37:06
Yes, they still sat around the basketball courts.

Researcher 37:08
What did they mainly do? Chatting? Square dancing or singing?

Participant 37:26
No, at that time dancing was still criticised as improper.

Researcher 37:30
Then later, after 2001 when the factory was restructured and the living quarters became a community, with new planning and construction, what changes do you think took place in the community?

Participant 37:58
There were definitely changes. Now there is a community, and if you have issues you can report them. Neighbours may quarrel, but the community will help resolve problems. The sanitation and facilities downstairs are much better than before. Elderly people can exercise downstairs, children can play outside after finishing homework — it's very good, no need to go out far, and the roads are well built.

Researcher 38:55
So the children just run on the street?

Participant 38:56
Yes, they play right at my doorstep, it's great. I think the old residential compounds are still quite good.

Researcher 39:05
What do you think of some public facilities being demolished and turned into supermarkets or markets?

Participant 39:14
I think it's good, it makes life convenient.

Researcher 39:16
So you don't feel public space was compressed? On the contrary, it became more convenient?

Participant 39:21
Yes. In the past, buying groceries or anything else was inconvenient. Now it's much easier. Take the pandemic for example — we didn't need to leave home, we could still see a doctor, still buy food. Without these facilities it would've been much harder. Life is very convenient now.

Researcher 39:42
How would you evaluate the changes across these three periods within the community?

Participant 40:00
Well, in the past housing was always several families sharing one unit, very inconvenient. Now every family has its own home. Whatever the size, it belongs to you alone. You don't have to share toilets, kitchens, or corridors with four or five other households like before.

Now with the community, if anything happens, there are people to manage it. Even though the Danwei no longer exists, and we no longer belong to a work unit, there is still someone responsible. The government has communities at each level, right? I think that's very good. The change is huge.

Researcher 40:52
Do you think that besides big changes, there were also things that used to be good but are now worse, or things that used to be bad but have now improved?

Participant 41:06

I never really thought about good or bad back then, just that everyone got along, society was stable, you didn't worry when you went out.

Researcher 41:16

And you feel the same now?

Participant 41:18

Yes, I think it's still stable now. When you go out you feel at ease. Transport is convenient. In the compound you can see a doctor, children can go to school and nursery, all of that is possible. Now you can get to the metro or bus within ten minutes of leaving your door. That's a huge transformation.

Researcher 41:42

So the quality of life is higher?

Participant 41:45

Yes, much higher now. At the very least, older people know how to take care of themselves. With improved economic conditions, they have both money and time to look after themselves properly, and also ease the burden on their children.

Researcher 42:07

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Participant 42:15

Yes, I think the community is quite stable now. Whether it's chatting, or square dancing, in the evenings people dance in the small square. It feels very good and harmonious. I hope it gets even better in the future.

Researcher 42:39

In the past, the Danwei was in charge, now it's the community. How do you see this change?

Participant 42:49

The community is much more convenient. Factory No.3 was huge, now we have East Community and West Community, and the management is very clear. If you have a problem, you can go directly to the community staff. They are warm and patient, and help you resolve issues. In the past the factory was too busy to care about private matters. Now it's different. For example, recently when the installation of gas safety valves was required, the gas company staff had a poor attitude and residents didn't want to install them. Later, community workers went door-to-door to explain, and everyone was satisfied.

Researcher 43:45

That feels very harmonious. Compared with when enterprises managed things, the service is much better now.

Participant 43:51

Yes, the community follows up directly, and residents are satisfied and think it's quite good.

Researcher 44:03

What do you think are the differences or shortcomings between the corporate management system and the community system?

Participant 44:16

There aren't really any shortcomings; the community system is still better.

Researcher 44:24

It feels more in tune with daily life, right?

Participant 44:42

Yes, the original unit mainly focused on production and didn't pay much attention to residents' daily lives. The CPMSC management is more considerate and more humane. If you have any issues, you can contact the CPMSC, and they will help you resolve them. I think CPMSC management is better.

Researcher 45:09

Alright, I'll end the recording here.

Case study interview transcript-resident 4

Researcher 00:00

I'd like to ask you about the past of the community. I remember you worked in this factory—what kind of work did you do? Were you a maintenance worker? Could you tell me what the community was like during the planned economy period?

Participant 00:20

There was no community back then.

Researcher 00:21

You mean the residential compound.

Participant 00:23

Yes, the residential compound was managed by the factory itself.

Researcher 00:25

And what was it roughly like?

Participant 00:27

There was a department specifically responsible for sanitation, greenery, and roads. It was called the Construction and Maintenance Section, or sometimes the Infrastructure Section, also known as the Repairs Section—the name was changed several times. This department was in charge of building houses, repairing roads, greening, cleaning, collecting rubbish, planting and cutting down trees, and so on. There was also the Discipline Inspection Section, with a section chief and staff members, as well as frontline workers who were responsible for daily cleaning and management.

Researcher 01:16

What were the outdoor environment and the basic indoor facilities like at that time?

Participant 01:24

There were not many facilities then; the main responsibility was the roads.

Researcher 01:28

Wouldn't barber shops, bathhouses, schools, and hospitals count as facilities?

Participant 01:33

There were no schools at that time. The bathhouse was inside the factory, where workers could bathe for free, but family members could not use it. The factory area was divided into the production area and the residential area. The residential area was where workers' families lived, while the production area was where the factory operated.

Participant continues

The hospital was called a health clinic; it was very small, not a proper hospital. The health clinic was relocated several times before finally settling at its current site. It had departments such as surgery, gynaecology, and dentistry, but all on a very limited scale. At that time, there were no schools. The supermarket was called the co-operative, and the current site used to be the co-operative. Overall, the facilities were very basic, and living amenities were limited.

Researcher 03:57

So this primary school was built later?

Participant 04:00

Originally, there were too few people and no school. Even the housing was not fully occupied.

Researcher 04:12

When was the primary school built?

Participant 04:13

There was no school before.

Researcher 04:15

Were there primary, middle, and high schools?

Participant 04:17

There was no secondary school, only a primary school, which I think was built after the Cultural Revolution.

Researcher 04:23

After the Cultural Revolution?

Participant 04:24

Yes, I recall it was after the Cultural Revolution. Factory No. 1 and Factory No. 3 jointly built a school, further west, near Tongbai Road. Later, due to some unrest, the school was moved near the market, at

the site where Henan University of Engineering now stands. A public hospital was also located there. The original school buildings were demolished, and the school was relocated.

Researcher 04:57

So the difference lies here—the schools were only built after the Cultural Revolution.

Participant 05:02

Yes, the schools were built very late, even later than the Cultural Revolution.

Researcher 05:05

So what about the primary school of the textile factory?

Participant 05:09

It wasn't called the Factory No. 3 Primary School.

Researcher 05:11

So Factory No. 3 Primary School was only built after the Cultural Revolution?

Participant 05:14

Yes, only after the Cultural Revolution.

Researcher 05:16

Before that, did the children attend the primary school of Factory No. 1?

Participant 05:19

Yes, they went together.

Researcher 05:21

What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of the living environment during the planned economy period? Both indoors and outdoors.

Participant 05:34

There were no particular advantages or disadvantages.

Researcher 05:39

Could you be more specific about the housing, the outdoor environment, the cultural atmosphere, and living services?

Participant 05:48

Culture and services were integrated. In the past, there was no one specifically managing them. In each building, there would usually be a warm-hearted person who took the initiative to organise residents to clean up.

Researcher 06:39

So the factory did not manage these things.

Participant 06:42

Correct. There was no property management, no one in charge. The General Services Section did not take care of these matters either.

Researcher 06:45

Did the logistics department not take care of kitchens and bathrooms?

Participant 06:48

Logistics only managed public facilities. If something in your own home broke, you had to repair it yourself.

Researcher 06:58

The Patriotic Health Committee was responsible for sanitation management.

Participant 07:03

What exactly were they in charge of? I think the director was responsible.

Researcher 07:07

So he only looked after the roads outside, and the stairwells were not cleaned?

Participant 07:10

No one managed the stairwells; residents cleaned them themselves. Back then, the Residents' Committee oversaw impoverished families—you would collect a certain sanitation fee from this area, which was then used to buy things and for meals.

Researcher 07:39

So the Health Committee only managed the roads outside, is that right?

Participant 07:44

I'm not too sure what exactly the Patriotic Health Committee did.

Researcher 07:47

Anyway, they didn't look after the stairwell sanitation.

Participant 07:49

That's right, they didn't. In the fifties and sixties, no one took care of the stairwells.

Participant 07:54

It was still the Residents' Committee.

Researcher 07:57

Did the Residents' Committee leaders organise the cleaning?

Participant 07:59

No, not by organising or leading—it was done by each household themselves.

Researcher 08:01

So everyone swept the area in front of their own door.

Participant 08:02

Yes. My family used to sweep as well. We were poor, and at that time the community was called the Residents' Committee. The Residents' Committee would ask people to help, saying this place also needed sweeping.

Researcher 08:39

And the sanitation fees—were they collected?

Participant 08:41

Most people paid, some didn't. If they didn't pay, there was nothing to be done—there was no enforcement.

No one was specifically in charge. The Residents' Committee was more or less a mere formality; in practice, no one managed things, it was all handled by ordinary residents themselves. The area outside my door was swept by me for many years. Near the kindergarten by my home, that patch of ground was also always swept by my family. It might have cost over 30 yuan in a year, I can't quite remember, but roughly so.

Researcher 09:21

So during the 1950s and 1960s, under the planned economy, the Patriotic Health Committee actually didn't play much of a role.

Participant 09:29

I don't know exactly when they started to play a role—I wouldn't dare to simply say they were useless.

Researcher 09:37

So the sanitation inside the buildings and in front of the doors was all self-managed.

Participant 09:39

Yes, all managed by ourselves.

Researcher 09:42

Were there any advantages to the living environment at that time?

Participant 09:45

The scope of what you're asking is too broad. I'm not well educated.

Researcher 09:52

For example, in terms of facilities?

Participant 09:56

There were no facilities—no fitness equipment, nothing at all.

Researcher 10:03

How would you evaluate the neighbourly relations at that time?

Participant 10:06

Neighbourly relations were much better than they are now.

To be honest, now there are basically no neighbourly relations.

Back then, people didn't even lock their doors. If you lived downstairs, you wouldn't lock your door all day. At mealtimes, neighbours would come by, and everyone helped each other.

My building wasn't high, only three floors. We would bring food downstairs and eat together with our neighbours.

Now, doors are locked tightly, and neighbourly relations are nowhere near as harmonious as they used to be. I don't think we can return to that era.

Researcher 11:04

That's certainly true.

Participant 11:06

Especially nowadays. When I was young, it was different. Now I've become an old man, an old woman. With nothing to do, people just sit downstairs. Even the security staff can't find anyone when they come down.

If I want to find Ma Maxin, he's at work, not at home. So who do I turn to when something happens?

I told him, public security needs to be managed carefully—but who is managing it now?

Nowadays, when you knock on a door, no one answers.

Honestly, the neighbourly relations of that time cannot be brought back.

Researcher 11:40

What do you think people mainly used for transport indoors and outdoors during the planned economy period?

Participant 11:49

The most advanced means was riding a bicycle.

Researcher 11:52

Was it the main one?

Participant 11:54

No, bicycles were not mainstream.

Researcher 11:57

What about public buses or factory shuttles?

Participant 11:59

There were no factory shuttles, and we couldn't even afford bus tickets.

Researcher 12:02

The fares were quite high.

Participant 12:03

Even though it was only one jiao, we still couldn't afford it.

Researcher 12:05

Didn't the company provide welfare subsidies?

Participant 12:09

Did it? No, not at all. Later, there were some night shift shuttles, but that came afterwards. For commuting, whether near or far, you had to solve it yourself. If you lived in the city, you would ride a bicycle. There were no motorbikes, and if you couldn't afford one, buying a bicycle was already quite something. Back then, even a cheap brand like Flying Pigeon or Forever cost at least 150 yuan. At that time, both the elderly and children were at home. For example, nowadays four people in a family might be working, but back then, if a household had two people working out of five, that was already considered good. My salary was on the higher side, sixty to seventy yuan, but with thirty yuan in expenses, life was still very tight. There was no money to buy a bicycle.

Researcher 12:53

So...

Participant 12:54

Even those with higher wages had to tighten their belts and save for more than a year to buy a bicycle worth over one hundred yuan, sometimes even 150 yuan. A bicycle at that price was considered advanced. If you had no money, you just walked. Most people walked. Out of ten people, seven walked. Going to the city, playing, everything—you walked. People rarely took buses. At one jiao per ride, many couldn't afford it.

Researcher 13:40

So wages were really low.

Participant 13:42

Exactly, wages were only a few yuan. With bus fares at one jiao each way, taking it twice a day for work was already a big expense. Not everyone could afford to take the bus. Most people walked. Nowadays, people can buy electric bikes or cars. Those without money at least buy an electric bike—but who could afford that back then?

Researcher 14:10

Right. Do you remember what activities residents engaged in during the planned economy period? Either organised by the factory, or spontaneous gatherings, like singing or dancing?

Participant 14:28

Some people did ballroom dancing.

Researcher 14:30

Even in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 14:32

Yes, ballroom dancing began after Liberation. People used to dance in open spaces. At that time, they would even use the canteen. After supper in the workers' canteen, on Saturday evenings, they would clear away the tables and dance. On Saturday nights people danced, or they went to the park, the Workers' Cultural Palace, Bishan Park, or the open spaces of various Danwei. There were also open-air film screenings—once a week on Saturday night. People brought small stools and sat watching films. There weren't many other recreational activities.

Every Sunday, the factory organised a "Roaming Day", when they booked a cinema and tickets cost 1 jiao 2 fen. I know that film was shown for decades before it stopped.

Later on, ball games and such were all spontaneously organised on the factory courts.

Researcher 15:47

So these spontaneous activities took place on the courts.

Participant 15:49

Yes, there were several courts back then, at least two in each place.

Researcher 15:53

So after work, people all went to play.

Participant 15:55

When people had free time, they all went to play ball games.

Researcher 15:56

Were there spontaneous gatherings downstairs, like chatting or children running around playing? Where did those take place?

Participant 16:05

Right out on the road. At that time there weren't really any safety concerns, because there were no cars, and no one restricted the children. Now there are so many cars that you wouldn't feel safe letting kids run about. Back then, with only bicycles around, they wouldn't knock into you. It was safer, and parents felt reassured. Would you dare let your child run about freely now?

Researcher 16:27

Indeed. So during the planned economy period, were there shortcomings in the living environment? Was it mainly about resource scarcity?

Participant 16:48

It was just poverty—nothing else. If you had some ability, you could get hold of scarce goods, like woollen coats, collars, or leather shoes. If you had the means and the ration tickets, you could buy them. If not, you couldn't—right?

It wasn't like now, when if you have money you can buy anything, even cannons or aircraft. Back then, even the cheapest things used at home, like a ball, meant saving up. To buy a sewing machine to mend clothes, you needed not only money but also a special ticket. Sewing machines required not just the ticket, but also industrial points. Yes—you might be issued a ticket, but without points it was useless. With points but no ticket, also no use. There were three forms of "currency": money, sewing machine ticket, and industrial points. Even buying milk required a ration ticket, not just money. It wasn't like, "I have cash, so I can buy whatever I want."

Researcher 17:42

After the late 1970s, into the 1980s and 1990s, the factory's layout changed because many new buildings were added. Later on, people from other factories also came to live in the community. After the housing reform, when houses could be bought and sold, outsiders rented or purchased here. So the demographic structure of the community changed. With the market economy, many private shopkeepers came in. The whole form of the community changed. What changes did you notice in daily life once it entered that period?

Participant 18:28

Well, in the past, private vegetable sellers weren't allowed. You could only buy from the supply station's vegetable shops. Otherwise, across Jianshe Road there was a large market, but in our compound there wasn't one. To buy vegetables you had to go there. After the reforms, it became more convenient, yes, but also messier. By the 1980s, it was already starting to get disorderly.

Researcher 18:51

I mean the 1980s and 1990s.

Participant 18:55

In the early 1980s and 1990s, it was still manageable.

Researcher 18:58

There were more goods, and a greater variety.

Participant 19:00

Yes, by then there were already individual vendors, though still relatively few. For ordinary people it was convenient, but it also became increasingly chaotic. For example, in this very street a few years ago, you could hardly walk through for the crowds, never mind cars. The small vendors filled the street for many years. Later it was rectified, but only for a while. In recent years, without management, street vending revived again.

In the past, vendors occupied the whole space, right up to the shopfronts. Residents were fed up. If they weren't driven out, the roads were so blocked that people couldn't even pass through.

Researcher 19:35

So in the late 1980s and 1990s, regarding the living environment—indoors and outdoors—what changes occurred?

Participant 21:39

In the 1980s and 1990s, elderly people's activities were still mostly self-organised. Everyone found their own things to do.

Researcher 21:42

Which kinds of spontaneous activities do you remember most clearly?

Participant 21:44

Playing cards, chatting, dancing, sometimes gathering in the courtyard, playing mahjong, singing songs—very simple things. It was all self-organised, nothing formally arranged.

Researcher 21:55

Did the factory ever organise activities specifically for retired workers?

Participant 21:58

Sometimes the factory put on performances or gatherings, but most of the time, retired workers organised activities themselves in the community or residential compound.

Researcher 22:05

So where did these spontaneous activities usually take place?

Participant 22:08

Usually in the open spaces of the residential compound, by the courts, or at the entrances of the stairwells. People would gather together there to socialise and play.

Researcher 22:13

And what about the children? Were there many activities for them in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 22:16

Yes, children had plenty of activities. They ran and jumped around in the courtyards, played games. It was relatively safe at that time, and parents felt more at ease.

Researcher 22:22

Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, was there any difference?

Participant 22:25

Actually, not much difference. They still played freely. In the 1950s and 1960s there weren't many toys, while in the 1980s and 1990s there were a few more, but basically it was the same.

Participant 21:42

Playing chess and cards—back then men retired at sixty and women at fifty. They thought it was good for the body, so they did exercise. At that time, no money for travel, so instead they would run together, jog a bit, or swim in the river. This was how they exercised.

As for other activities organised by the factory, I really don't know. At least as far as I know, I don't know if the factory organised any.

Researcher 22:04

So it's actually quite similar to today, right? Retired people in the community still engage in their own activities. Nowadays we also just chat downstairs, or go to the Cultural Palace, or go out ourselves.

Participant 22:18

Yes, no one manages it. Even now, activities are all self-organised.

Researcher 22:22

In the 1980s and 1990s, were the gathering places for elderly people the same as today? For example,

some always gather in a small square, some downstairs by their own building, some go daily to the Cultural Palace, some had fixed spots—like originally near the grain shop, but when the grain shop disappeared, did the gathering places also change? Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, did the gathering places change?

Participant 22:47

Back then, the factory had big open spaces, plenty of room. It wasn't far, so people just sat together to chat, gossip, talk about family matters. If you were elderly, you might go to the courts. Everyone chose their own places. That's how many elderly people spent their time.

Researcher 23:05

So some would sit and watch, while others played ball—is that right?

Participant 23:08

No, the elderly didn't really play ball. My old classmates might sit there, and those playing ball also had to think of the elderly sitting nearby. If the ball hit someone, it would cause trouble. So those playing had to adjust, and the elderly just sat there. Later on, as markets appeared, those spaces changed location.

Researcher 23:26

And on weekdays, when workers were at work and no one was playing on the courts during the day, did elderly people sit there?

Participant 23:35

No, no one dared to sit there. Why? Well, in our words—it wasn't safe.

Researcher 23:39

Not that they were afraid of being caught, right?

Participant 23:41

No, it wasn't deliberate.

Researcher 23:42

So even when there was no one, still no one went there?

Participant 23:44

No, if no one was playing, then no one went there either.

Researcher 23:45

And after the Reform and Opening in the 1980s and 1990s, did people's travel and mobility change?

Participant 23:59

I think it was still more or less the same. Back then there were no electric bikes, still mainly bicycles. Very few people could afford cars—I don't know about others, but in my family we certainly couldn't afford one.

Researcher 24:10

But the frequency of going out increased.

Participant 24:12

Yes, that was by bus. Bus fares weren't so expensive anymore. By the 1990s my wages had risen to seven or eight hundred yuan, so of course we could afford the bus. Everyone took buses, there was no other choice. At that time there were no taxis, you couldn't take a taxi even if you wanted to. I never once took a taxi back then. Taxis simply didn't exist in all directions—so yes, just the bus.

Researcher 24:39

Later, when Factory No. 3 went bankrupt and was restructured, and our residential compound also transformed into a community system, with new planning and new buildings—old ones torn down, new projects constructed—apart from what I just mentioned, what other changes did you notice? And how do you feel about these changes?

Participant 25:08

Now, in the family compound, the community is in charge. If you have any problems, you can turn to the community, right? If you face difficulties, you can ask the community for help, right?

Researcher 25:18

Before, couldn't you go to the factory?

Participant 25:22

Go to the factory—who would you even go to? Once you retired, who looked after you? The retirement office often didn't handle matters; many things they didn't take care of, so you had to manage on your own. The factory itself was only responsible for workers' jobs and wages. The retirement office dealt with retired staff. As for the Residents' Committee, it never managed major issues—only small matters in the neighbourhood. The rest you had to solve yourself. But now, if you have difficulties, you can go to the community, can't you?

Researcher 25:53

So the range of living services has expanded and improved.

Participant 25:56

Yes, there are many more services now. For example, nowadays there are volunteers who sweep the streets, organise publicity events, or set up activities for festivals. Back then, who would have managed these things?

Researcher 26:10

Exactly. Apart from this, do you have anything to add about the changes since moving into the community system?

Participant 26:19

Nothing much to add about the community.

Researcher 26:23

How would you evaluate the three phases of change here in the transition from factory production area to community? There were essentially three stages: first, the planned economy era when the compound was first built; then the changes in the 1980s and 1990s after the Reform and Opening; and finally, after bankruptcy and restructuring, the transition into community governance.

Participant 26:44

The earlier changes were relatively minor.

Researcher 26:45

Yes, but there were changes. And now, after bankruptcy and restructuring, with the shift to community governance, there has been another big change. How would you evaluate the differences across these three stages?

Participant 26:54

Well, you see, now the community takes on responsibilities that in the past would have been left to the police station. Sometimes if you report something to the police, they tell you to go to the community. How should I put it? The community today has a much greater role than the old Residents' Committee ever did. The old Residents' Committee only dealt with neighbourhood sanitation. Nowadays, the community can handle many things—you can turn to them about security, or family matters. There are volunteers, as I mentioned before, wearing red vests—I've seen them, even though I haven't used their services myself. I know that nowadays the range of services is much broader than in the past. So yes, the community today is much stronger than the old Residents' Committee ever was.

Researcher 27:45

How would you evaluate the changes in the community environment across these three stages?

Participant 27:52

There's no way to change it, girl. The place is only this big.

Researcher 27:57

It's become denser, and some of the original facilities have been demolished. The density is higher now, and some facilities have been removed. How do you see this?

Participant 28:10

I think space should still be kept for ordinary people. There ought to be a square, or something similar for daily life. Now there's no space left at all. Back when the factory was here, there was plenty of space. With greenery, you could put up a shelter, benches, or have the union organise a chess and card room, so people could gather there for leisure.

Researcher 28:30

So there were chess and card rooms run by the union?

Participant 28:32

Yes, the trade union had them, upstairs in their building.

Researcher 28:37

When did those disappear?

Participant 28:38

That I don't know.

Researcher 28:40

And now things have turned into this situation. How do you feel about it?

Participant 28:48

There's too little public space. Once the buildings went up, I don't even know if there are any vacant spaces left. In the past, our welfare was all managed by the trade union. Now that the trade union is gone, I really don't know.

Researcher 28:54

With the increased density, a lot of public space has been lost, but at the same time more commercial outlets have moved in. What do you think of that?

Participant 29:07

For ordinary people, it's certainly convenient. People like this environment. Why? Because you can buy anything nearby. Before, you had to go all the way to the Yanzhuang Market on International Avenue to get vegetables, otherwise you couldn't buy them here. Now, whether early in the morning or later in the day, you can buy vegetables locally, or buy stationery for children at a small shop nearby. Life has become much more convenient. You see, in the past, even to get a single bottle of soda, you had to go outside the compound, which was very inconvenient. Now, whatever you want to buy, it's right there. If guests come and you don't want to cook, you can just go to a nearby restaurant, or buy food and bring it home immediately. There are many options like this now, you see? This is a good thing.

Researcher 29:59

What do you think about the redevelopment project that enclosed this area, with demolitions and plans to turn it into a textile museum?

Participant 30:14

As for the textile museum, I don't really know what the ultimate purpose is, I honestly don't know.

Researcher 30:18

And what do you think about it?

Participant 30:19

I don't know, I'm puzzled. It's been almost three years now, and even after the construction is finished, I still don't know what purpose it serves. No one knows, I haven't asked, and no one has told me. Anyway, I don't agree with it. Why force people out of their homes when they were living well? Right?

They said they'd give 1.18 million, the price sounds high, but many elderly people here don't want to leave. But under pressure from their children, they had no choice but to move. People like me who stayed are very few—many have already gone. If those who didn't want to move had stayed, I could still find them downstairs or upstairs to talk to. Now, when I go out on the street, I don't even know where my contemporaries are anymore. Very few remain. To be honest, it's very hard to find them now. As for the money—1.18 million—where have those people moved to? Who knows.

Yes, I have my opinions. But of course this is just my personal view, I can't speak for the state. In my opinion, this redevelopment is useless. If you want to build something, you could have made a park, or a square. Why insist on turning it into something like this?

Researcher 31:41

Right? It seems they want to renovate the buildings and turn them into a textile museum.

Participant 31:49

Well, so they say.

Researcher 31:51

Do you think it's necessary?

Participant 31:53

What's the point, when all the machines are gone? What kind of textile museum would that be? A museum is supposed to preserve something rare for the nation, to safeguard cultural relics. But here, those things were not preserved. What's left for future generations to see? There's nothing meaningful here to put on display.

Researcher 32:15

Yes, right?

Participant 32:17

I don't think it's necessary. Take the Drum Tower, for example—that's been around for centuries, something worth preserving for people to visit. Or when relics are unearthed, those are worth looking at. But here? These houses are still inhabited or rented—what's the point of "visiting" them? I've lived here all along, and I'm still living here. I have no time or need to see it as a museum, do you see? I think it's not necessary. The state is spending a huge sum of money, and I feel it's wasted. Better to spend that money on subsidies to renovate people's own homes. For example, if the renovation costs ten yuan, the state could subsidise five yuan, and the family pays five yuan. Then you improve housing, and if visitors come, they could see what real life is like—that still has a flavour of a museum. I think that would be better. But to evict people and leave empty houses just to create a "museum"—I don't think it's necessary. That's my opinion. Personally, I don't agree with it.

Researcher 33:29

From the beginning, when the factory built the residential compound, up to today's community, through all these stages—do you have any other thoughts or comments on the changes?

Participant 33:39

Now it's more convenient, that's true. But it's less safe than before. Back then, it was secure and stable. Now—I'm not sure if I should say this—but in my building alone, three electric bikes were stolen in a single night. I told Secretary Kong about it, but nothing could be done. In the past, we didn't even have electric bikes, and thefts weren't like this. Life was more harmonious then. That atmosphere won't return—it really won't. Nowadays, yes, markets are more open, shopping is convenient, but the sense of safety is gone.

Researcher 34:29

Let me pause the recording here.

Case study interview transcript-resident 5

Participant 00:00

When the factory was built in 1953, a group of seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds came from the south. These employees are now the old staff. At that time they were all young women who came to Zhengzhou Textile Factory, and they devoted a great deal of their youth and effort to building our Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Mill. Now the youngest of them are already eighty-six or eighty-seven, and many are over ninety. Quite a number of them have already passed away, though some are still alive. But to be frank, they gave all of their youth to Zhengzhou. Coming from the south to the north, it was not easy for them — in the south people ate rice, but here in the north rice was scarce, and they had to eat wheat-based food. They offered the whole of their youth to Zhengzhou.

Researcher 00:57

So, in Zhengzhou's living quarters, what was the factory living area like at that time?

Participant 00:59

Our No.3 Cotton Mill's production and living quarters were built from the same blueprint as the mills in Shijiazhuang and Xi'an. When people came to Zhengzhou, they said, "Isn't this our factory?" because it was exactly the same design. The factory compound had supporting facilities from the very beginning in 1953 — a grain store that supplied grain with ration coupons, each of the three cotton mills had one. There was also a coal yard, because at that time we all burned crushed coal, not briquettes, which came later.

And then there was the large canteen. Our No.3 Mill's canteen was like a grand building, and it was well known across Zhengzhou and even across Henan Province. At that time, the Songshan Hotel, which received foreign guests, as well as Zhengzhou Hotel, would have their dishes cooked by chefs from our mill. Their culinary skills were very good. Our canteen was very impressive. Even Liu Shaoqi had been there, and Chairman Mao as well. Later, the ministers of the Ministry of Textiles also visited. The No.3 Mill's canteen was one of the most outstanding in the whole country.

Researcher 02:17

So the building itself was very beautiful, with staircases and greenery?

Participant 02:21

Yes, though now part of those old three-storey buildings have been demolished and replaced by new ones. Back then, leaders had different ideas, but that site was very good. When you looked from above — in aerial photos taken by planes — the layout of the No.3 Mill dormitory buildings spelled out the word “和平” (peace). Some buildings were longer, some shorter, with small bends forming the strokes. From the air you could see the two characters for “peace.” It was designed very beautifully. Even though now many buildings have been demolished, among the six mills in Zhengzhou, No.3 Mill is the best preserved.

Researcher 03:34

So, in the 1950s and 1960s, it was still very beautiful — almost like a garden-style factory.

Participant 03:41

Yes, people from outside often came to see it. The other mills were also quite good, but No.3 Mill stood out.

Researcher 03:44

What was the highlight of the No.3 Mill?

Participant 03:47

The highlight was the kindergarten.

Researcher 03:53

And the canteen — was its highlight in terms of construction or management? The kindergarten as well?

Participant 03:57

In terms of management, in all aspects really. The canteen was highly organised — you had chefs assigned to chopping vegetables, others to stir-frying, everyone had their own role. The food from our canteen was famous across Zhengzhou, and even Henan Province.

Researcher 04:15

So the quality and taste of the dishes were outstanding?

Participant 04:19

Yes, the taste was excellent. At that time wages were low — newly hired workers earned twenty-seven or twenty-eight yuan, some thirty yuan. For only five or six mao you could get a very good hot meat dish. It was extremely good. Later, in the 1990s, wages went up and the difference became greater, but even then, within the province, the No.3 Cotton Mill's canteen remained famous and beautiful.

Researcher 04:49

How much did the kindergarten cost?

Participant 04:52

Among all the textile enterprises in Zhengzhou, No.3 Cotton Mill's kindergarten was the best. When foreign visitors came to Zhengzhou, they first visited our mill. Even the main gate of No.3 Mill was the best. If you compare the gates of No.1, No.3, and No.4 mills, at first glance they looked the same, but on closer inspection ours was the finest, with small side gates that were different in design. The construction of No.3 Mill was formally evaluated by Soviet experts and domestic specialists, and it was the first mill to be built.

Researcher 05:36

During the 1950s and 1960s, in the Soviet design for the factory, how was the living environment of the residential quarters — both indoors and outdoors? Including infrastructure like bathhouses, barber shops, ration stores. What were the advantages and disadvantages at that time?

Participant 05:57

In the 1950s and 1960s, the dormitory buildings had flush toilets. In contrast, in other parts of the city, most houses were still single-storey bungalows with no flush toilets. People from outside would come and see our toilets and not even know how to use them. In the city, around 27 Square and Hongqi Building, everything was still bungalows. Apart from the Songshan Hotel, the Zhengzhou Municipal Party Committee building, and later the Henan People's Congress building, most areas were just vegetable plots. So our factory community facilities were advanced in all respects.

Researcher 07:02

So in the 1950s and 1960s, you already had flush toilets?

Participant 07:04

Yes, the buildings constructed in 1953 had flush toilets.

Researcher 07:07

Were they public toilets?

Participant 07:09

No, each household had its own.

Researcher 07:11

But in the 1950s and 1960s, didn't some of the youth dormitories have public toilets?

Participant 07:16

No, those youth dormitories were built later.

At that time, some flats had two rooms per unit, some had three rooms per unit. But no, there were no shared public toilets.

Researcher 07:28

So there were no public toilets?

Participant 07:29

All of them had communal kitchens.

Researcher 07:30

So, they were communal kitchens.

Participant 07:33

Yes, but later, when housing became tight, two rooms might be given to two families, meaning each family had one room and shared a kitchen. If it was three rooms, then three families shared the kitchen. In the early years, housing in No.3 Cotton Mill was plentiful. For example, near the roast duck shop, there were provincial offices, Guangming Market housing, all within the same building.

During the Cultural Revolution, the factories became headquarters for factions, with struggles between workers. When Liu Shaoqi visited, it was noticed that some of No.3 Mill's housing was not fully occupied. As these were all brother Danwei, some of the housing was given to other units — the Provincial Defence Bureau and others. For example, the current No.3 Mill Primary School area, turning at Wanjiayu and going east, all the way to the border with No.4 Mill, was originally No.3 Mill's land with bungalows. Married couples lived in single rooms divided by partitions. Later, in the 2000s, when new housing was built, disputes over land arose. The mill director and others became entangled in political struggles. That land, from the No.3 Mill kindergarten eastwards, including the vegetable market, was all originally No.3 Mill land, but was taken. Workers fought over it, and both sides were punished. Eventually, the provincial and municipal authorities intervened, some leaders were dismissed, and the matter was left unresolved. Later, as the factory underwent restructuring, workers were bought out, no one managed things, and much of No.3 Mill's land was taken over. From the kindergarten eastwards to the factory gate, all was originally No.3 Mill land. Ordinary people could not control such political matters.

So in the end, it was simply taken. You could say it was a case of “the cuckoo occupying the magpie's nest.” At the time of Liu Shaoqi's visit, there were empty houses, so they were handed over to other Danwei. That was the context.

Researcher 11:31

So, in your view, in the 1950s and 1960s compared with the 1980s and 1990s, when new buildings were erected and outsiders began moving in — did the outdoor environment change?

Participant 12:02

From the 1950s to the 1970s, when you entered No.3 Mill's residential area, the garden-style buildings and open spaces were very clean. At that time it was the Residents' Committee, not yet called a Community. The committee leaders would mobilise people: “Come down to clean.” Everyone was very active, not thinking of personal gain. Even after working night shifts, people would still come to clean. In the Mao era, people's thinking was different; they worked selflessly, not seeking any benefit.

Researcher 12:57

So people were united, with shared thinking.

Participant 13:00

Yes. Later, as time went on, the layout of the first floors changed — small rooms were added by the logistics department, officially under public ownership, but later transferred to private use. Now the ground floors are all different.

Researcher 13:17

So, from the 1950s–60s to the 1980s–90s, apart from this, what other changes? In terms of hygiene, public space shrinking, basic facilities, how did things differ?

Participant 13:46

In the 1950s to 1970s, the public bathhouse was free for workers, even for their families. After finishing work at 4pm, workers' wives and children would take baskets and go to the bathhouse. Even elderly family members were brought in wheelchairs, all free of charge. Later, in the late 1990s, fees were introduced — just one or two mao at first. Workers had tickets, and their families could also use them. Later, privatised bathhouses charged two yuan, with tea water, beds and so on. Now public bathhouses are gone, and a bath in the city costs at least fifteen yuan, sometimes twenty or thirty.

Researcher 15:20

So the price changes were quite dramatic.

Participant 15:24

Yes. In No.3 Cotton Mill we also had coal yards, grain stores, a kindergarten, and a barber shop. The barber shop was built right next to the residential buildings, all included in the original Soviet blueprint. Just like today's housing estates, which come with schools and nurseries. Haircuts cost one mao or one mao five, and the service was excellent. Now even the cheapest haircuts are ten yuan, usually fifteen or twenty. That's why many ordinary people still miss the Mao era — life was poor, but people's hearts were united, and services were affordable. Now wages are higher, but prices are also high, money is worth less. Back then, ten thousand yuan could buy

much more than now.

Today, the financial system is unstable, with small banks collapsing. Only the six major state-owned banks are secure. Ordinary people worry about deposits.

Researcher 18:22

So from the 1990s, prices in the community started to rise? And in the 1950s–60s, what was transportation like?

Participant 18:37

Back then, bicycles were rationed — you needed work points to buy one. Brands like Phoenix and Forever were very desirable. At that time, “three big items and one sound” — a watch, a bicycle, a sewing machine, and a radio — were the standard.

Researcher 18:53

And by the 1990s, they no longer counted as special?

Participant 18:55

By the 1980s they still did, but after the 1990s, no longer.

Researcher 18:57

In the 1980s and 1990s, compared with the 1950s and 1960s, were there more means of transport?

Participant 19:03

At that time it was mainly bicycles. At the factory gate, the sheds couldn't hold all the bikes, so even the roadside was used, but it was well organised. There were attendants specifically assigned from the Danwei to watch over the bikes, and it was free. When you went to work, you could park with confidence. If a bicycle toppled, people didn't just leave it, they would set it upright. Theft was virtually non-existent. So everyone felt secure cycling to and from work.

Researcher 19:30

So you mean by the 1980s, basically everyone was cycling?

Participant 19:33

Yes, in the 1980s everyone rode bicycles.

Researcher 19:35

And in the 1950s and 1960s, what were the main means of transport?

Participant 19:38

At that time, there was the No.1 bus route — from the railway station to 27 Square, then the department store (what is now Shanghai), past Dashiqiao and Daqiao, down Gaoyang Road, along Jianshe Road, and ending at No.6 Mill. Many people bought monthly bus passes. Bicycles were expensive — more than a hundred yuan. It wasn't until the late 1980s that they dropped to about thirty yuan. Families had to save for a year, scrimping and saving with children and elders to support, in order to afford one. And you also needed work points (gongfen) to qualify. So in the 1950s and 1960s, most people still walked or took the bus.

Within the textile mills, because the distance wasn't far, most workers walked to work. Only those living further away in the city relied on public transport.

Researcher 20:29

So did workers use factory shuttle buses, or public buses?

Participant 20:31

At the very beginning there were no factory shuttles. Those only began in the 1970s. Before that, people either walked or commuted from dormitories. In 1967, collective dormitories were built, four people to a room. If you worked the night shift, you might rest there instead of going home. Punctuality was strict — you couldn't be late for shift handover. If you were sick, you needed a proper leave slip, stamped by the foreman. Just calling in was impossible. Even if you had a fever, someone had to deliver the note to the factory gate. It wasn't like today, when you can phone in. Back then, leave was difficult to get.

Researcher 22:08

So in the early years, dormitories solved the problem for those who lived far away, since transport was limited. Then by the 1980s and 1990s, bicycles became the main form of transport. Were there any others, apart from buses?

Participant 22:29
Motorcycles didn't exist then.

Researcher 22:31
So they were still rare?

Participant 22:32
Almost nonexistent in the 1980s. Those who had them rode imported models like Honda 125 or Suzuki. Very few people could afford them. Only in the 1990s did they gradually become more common.

Researcher 22:47
So motorcycles appeared later. And in the 1950s and 1960s, did people mostly rely on buses? The factory buses weren't very common?

Participant 22:52
Yes, factory buses were used mainly by women. For early, late, and night shifts, they felt safer. For example, No.3 Mill buses stopped at Daqiao, He'er, 27 Square, the east gate of the Hongqi Building, the automobile plant, Longhai Road, Green City Square, Songshan Road... they had fixed stops along the way to and from the factory.

Researcher 23:24
And during the 1950s and 1960s, apart from transport, what kinds of collective or private activities did residents take part in? Where were the gathering points?

Participant 23:36
At that time, there weren't many cultural programmes — it was mostly voluntary labour. Production came first. If a team hadn't met its quota, others would form "shock brigades" to help finish the work. Outside work, people also joined in collective tasks — sweeping snow from Cotton Mill Road to Jianshe Road, for example. After finishing a night shift, people would still stay to clear the roads. It was tiring, but no one complained. People were healthier then — not like today, with so many illnesses. Now we see cancers we'd never heard of before, like tongue cancer, eye cancer, nasal cancer. I've helped prepare bodies for funerals for decades, and only in recent years have I seen cases like tongue cancer, with operations to remove the tongue. In the past, such things were unheard of.

Researcher 26:13
Do you mean the uncle who lived above Brothers Snack Shop?

Participant 26:17
No, he was in the same shift group as me.

Researcher 26:20
So in Building 43, you knew everyone well?

Participant 26:24
Yes, I've lived there over twenty years. Before that, I lived in the old housing for more than twenty years as well. Altogether, several decades here.

Researcher 26:35
How would you describe neighbourly relations in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 26:45
Back then, people didn't even lock their doors. If someone had to step out, they'd just ask a neighbour to keep an eye on the pot on the stove. People were straightforward and honest. Neighbours often shared food. If someone forgot to lock the door, others would watch over the house. Theft was almost unheard of. Children would be fed at neighbours' homes if their parents weren't back from work. The relationships were very harmonious, very close-knit. Now it's different — people lock their doors tightly, and often don't even know their neighbours. Back then, the sense of community was much stronger.

Researcher 28:02

When you arrived, compared with the 1980s, how had neighbourly relations changed?

Participant 28:05

By then things were no longer the same.

In the 1950s and 1960s, neighbourly relations were excellent, but by the 1980s they weren't as good. Back then, people looked after each other's doors and homes. But in the 1980s, people became wary — afraid that if they helped, it might cause trouble.

Participant 28:31

It wasn't really a public security issue, more that society was developing and changing.

Researcher 28:36

And in the 1990s?

Participant 28:37

Completely different again. By then, people had been laid off.

Researcher 28:40

Was it because people no longer worked in the same Danwei, or because outsiders had moved in?

Participant 28:43

It wasn't lay-offs yet. Lay-offs only began around 2005. In the 1990s, the main change was that theft started appearing.

Researcher 28:52

So in the 1990s petty theft began, and people started to grow distant from each other?

Participant 28:56

Yes, children stopped going to school, some hung about idly and stole chickens or dogs. Neighbours no longer trusted each other. If I asked you to watch my child, you might be afraid they'd steal something. That's how suspicion grew.

Researcher 29:08

But in the 1950s and 1960s, all children went to school. Why did some stop attending in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 29:13

In the early years, there were kindergartens and schools within the compound. But by the 1980s and 1990s, many families were migrants from the countryside. If one parent didn't work and stayed at home, the children might not attend school. Without the discipline of collective life — like in kindergarten — they grew idle and unruly. That's how some began to wander the streets, stealing. In some stairwells, just one or two such children could disturb the whole building. That's what happened in the 1990s.

Researcher 30:00

So it slowly began then.

Researcher 30:22

In your impression of the 1950s and 1960s, apart from collective cultural or political activities organised by the factory, did residents have any private leisure or social activities?

Participant 30:22

At that time, no. People didn't go to cultural centres to dance or do exercise like today. Housewives might sit at the doorway to chat while cooking, but that was all. Very few people didn't work — only those whose spouses were rural migrants without jobs. Aside from chatting, there wasn't much else.

Researcher 30:58

And in the community, was there child-minding or children playing together?

Participant 31:03

Yes, children usually stayed within the No.3 Mill compound.

Researcher 31:07

What was the courtyard like?

Participant 31:09

It was spacious, with sports courts. Children played with iron hoops, shuttlecocks, simple games like "bread triangles." Life was simple but happy. Girls played skipping games, boys rolled iron hoops. It was innocent fun — unlike today, with entertainment halls, gambling, and other things. Back then, even clothes from Shanghai or Hong Kong were rare and treasured. People envied a colourful blouse, whereas now clothes are bought and discarded casually. Times have changed, values have changed.

Researcher 32:19

So in those years, activities mainly meant chatting downstairs?

Participant 32:24

Yes, chatting. Since most adults worked, only housewives were at home, cooking or shopping.

Researcher 32:37

No group dancing or singing?

Participant 32:39

No, groceries were sold through state-run shops, not private vendors. You needed ration coupons for tofu, sprouts, cabbage, meat, eggs, fish, oil. Even raising chickens or goats privately wasn't allowed — that was labelled "speculation." My family worked in a meat shop — my mother since 1955, then my siblings and later myself in the Meat Union, slaughtering pigs. Eventually I was sent down to the countryside for four years and ten months. Everything was rationed. Yet although food was limited, it was genuine — tofu tasted of soybeans, meat wasn't injected with water. People ate healthily, and illnesses were rare. Nowadays, food is adulterated, prices rise, and people get sick more often.

Researcher 34:50

So by the 1980s and 1990s, how had residents' activities in the community changed?

Participant 35:02

In the 1980s there still weren't many activities. Wages were low. Weddings cost only 8 yuan per table for a banquet. Moutai was 8 yuan a bottle. Life was simple but satisfying.

Researcher 35:35

I mean, activities within the community. Did residents have more cultural activities then?

Participant 35:42

Yes, by the 1980s, there were cultural troupes — people danced the yangge in the basketball court where the market is now. There were some cultural events.

Researcher 36:03

And privately?

Participant 36:06

By the 1980s and 1990s, some families bought tape recorders. Whoever had a tape recorder or a colour television became a gathering point. Neighbours would crowd into one flat to listen to music or watch TV.

Researcher 36:22

So people gathered to watch television and chat together?

Researcher 36:37

And were there larger gatherings in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 36:37

Only when organised by workshops or the Residents' Committee. Mostly it was the factory — No.3 Mill was part of a militia division of more than ten thousand people. Workshops sometimes organised cultural performances or film screenings on the sports ground — perhaps once a week. Among the factories, No.3 Mill and No.4 Mill were the most active.

Researcher 37:13

And small-scale activities?

Participant 37:14

Few — just private visits between families. From the 1990s, with shops and markets opening, people went out more. Although wages were low, life still felt enjoyable. Now people focus more on health and exercise, but back then leisure was collective.

The Cultural Palace and May Day Park were built with large contributions from the textile mills, especially No.3 Mill. Workers donated money for cultural facilities. Now those places often charge or close for private events, which feels unfair, since they were built with workers' contributions.

Researcher 38:38

So after the 1980s and 1990s, gathering places shifted from the community courtyards to May Day Park, the Cultural Palace, and shopping centres. In the 1950s and 1960s, was the Residents' Committee also a gathering place?

Participant 39:01

The Residents' Committee mainly organised cleaning, not entertainment. In those days, there was no municipal sanitation service — workers and families cleaned the streets themselves. It was kept very clean. 研究者 39:30

当时的时间五六十年的时候，咱这个社区里面有没有哪些地方是人有时候会自发在这里边唠唠嗑或聚集的一些地方。

Participant 39:38

Chatting — well, you could say the main place was the big canteen of the No.3 Cotton Mill. That was famous. Sometimes several families who got on well would go there together. Better-off families might treat those less

well-off. Spending just over a yuan at the time was already a big deal, but a few yuan could buy a proper meal — with meat, vegetables, everything. Eating together, chatting, that was part of social life.

Researcher 40:08

Apart from the canteen, what about the other facilities?

Participant 40:11

There was also the club — films were shown there, sometimes with tickets distributed through the workshops, including to family members. The No.3 Mill club had its own cinema and a basketball court. It was quite a good place.

Researcher 40:31

And besides that, at the entrances of residential buildings there were grain shops, barbers, and bathhouses. Were there places where people often gathered to chat, like small squares today?

Participant 40:44

Not really. People didn't often gather to chat. If they had free time, they usually went straight home — to tidy up, to cook.

Researcher 40:54

So outside spaces were rather empty?

Participant 40:56

Yes, children were many, and families often had five or six kids. Parents were too busy watching them to socialise much.

Researcher 41:01

So compared with today, people spent less time outdoors in group activities?

Participant 41:05

Yes. Many of those who had come from the South as teenage girls in the 1950s — they are now in their eighties or nineties, some even passed 100. Their youth was devoted to the textile industry here in Zhengzhou. But after decades in the North, they found it hard to return South — too damp and humid there. They were used to the dry northern climate. Some tried going back, but couldn't adapt and returned.

Researcher 42:06

And by the 1980s and 1990s, within the courtyards of the residential areas, were there more gatherings?

Participant 42:18

By the 1980s, people started dancing — ballroom dancing. Some really liked it.

Researcher 42:28

Because of cassette players and televisions, there were more opportunities?

Participant 42:33

Yes, they began by dancing outdoors, in the sports courts, with a tape recorder playing music. By the 1990s, some went to the ballroom in the Cultural Palace, where the ticket was just one yuan. Dancing became a popular pastime.

Researcher 43:01

And in the 1980s and 1990s, where did the elderly gather? For example, near the canteen, basketball courts?

Participant 43:17

The elderly didn't go out much. In textile factories, work meant endless walking. In the workshops, only those who operated spindles or wound bobbins stood in one place; most walked back and forth all day. After years of this, their legs were worn out. So when retired, they preferred to rest at home rather than go out to parks.

Researcher 44:06

So they started sitting downstairs chatting only in the 1980s? Retiring at fifty, by then they had time to gather. Their children took over their jobs, and the retirees would sit outside with stools, chatting.

Researcher 44:31

After the transition from the Danwei system to the community system, the community was reorganised and rebuilt. What changes did you notice?

Participant 44:45

In our area we now have East and West Community branches. In West Community, for example, when it snows we organise people through the community group chat to clear paths so residents can walk safely. We also hold regular meetings, at least once a week, with the Party secretary presiding, sometimes with commendations. There are night patrols to prevent theft, fire safety campaigns, reminders about charging e-bikes safely. The community often visits elderly residents whose children are away, bringing vegetables, asking about difficulties, leaving a phone number for help. Services are much closer to the people.

Researcher 46:18

So compared with enterprise management, how do you feel community management differs?

Participant 46:27

Now the Community is directly managed by the Subdistrict Office, which assigns tasks.

Researcher 46:34

So before it was the enterprise in charge, now it is the Community. Do you feel that's different?

Participant 46:40

Yes, definitely.

Researcher 46:41

In what way?

Participant 46:43

For example, if an elderly person falls in the street, nowadays many people are afraid to help — they fear being accused. But when Community staff are present, they help immediately: call 120, send the person to hospital, contact their family, comfort them. That's a big difference.

Researcher 47:19

So life services have become more detailed?

Participant 47:21

Yes. Some children neglect their elderly parents, only taking money from them. In West Community, staff regularly check in, especially during the pandemic — delivering vegetables, providing support, even when resources were tight.

Researcher 48:07

So welfare has become more diverse compared with the enterprise days. What other changes do you see?

Participant 48:16

Well, in the Danwei days, the enterprise mainly provided basic services — heating, gas, water fees, repairs.

Researcher 48:18

Yes, I heard that under enterprise management, services were mainly limited to such basics, while under Community management it's different.

Participant 48:35

But some things are no longer under Community management. People come to the Community when their heating isn't working, or pipes burst. But those are for the factory logistics department. We pass along the contact numbers, and repairs are arranged. If it's within Community's scope, we help; if not, we coordinate but cannot take over. Some residents misunderstand and think the Community is like a nanny.

For example, at the No.6 Mill some residential blocks altered their structures illegally. When their drains got blocked, the logistics department didn't want to handle it, and residents came to our Community. But those repairs are not within our remit. Communities can coordinate, but they cannot cover the costs — that remains the responsibility of the relevant logistics units.

Researcher 50:14

Right.

Participant 50:15

The Community did help a couple of times, calling in acquaintances to clear the drains. But once residents got used to that, whenever it clogged again, they came straight to the Community. They throw all kinds of rubbish into the drains, which block up and cause flooding, then they still come to us. I told them plainly: those flats were built on land that originally belonged to No.3 Cotton Mill, and two buildings were put up without proper

arrangements. At the time there were even violent disputes — someone fired a gun, the Public Security Bureau and the Mill's Security Office got involved. In the end it was settled, but the buildings remained.

Later, when disputes arose, residents still came to the Community. But as the factory leaders said, "If there's no logistics department, and if residents don't pay property fees, why should No.3 Cotton Mill provide services for free?" Paying staff to do the work requires funds. And frankly, the behaviour of some of these residents was very poor. They would throw rubbish out of windows, even cigarette ends — which could set fire to things below. Once someone threw cloth down and it caught fire. That's dangerous. So the Community cannot take responsibility for everything, especially when residents refuse to pay fees.

Researcher 52:31

So after restructuring and redevelopment, disagreements over management and fees led to some unresolved problems?

Participant 52:45

Exactly. Those buildings were erected by another Danwei on No.3 Mill's land, but the residents refused to pay property or cleaning fees. Heating fees weren't collected properly either — No.6 Mill wouldn't take them, and No.3 Mill wouldn't accept them either. No.3 Mill insisted payments had to be done Danwei-to-Danwei, through official accounts, not individually. But No.6 Mill avoided responsibility. So residents were caught in between, and coordination failed.

One household might pay, another wouldn't. The Mill said clearly: they recognised only Danwei-to-Danwei transactions, not individual payments. But No.6 Mill didn't act, so the situation dragged on. Without clear rules, things became chaotic.

Researcher 54:32

Besides these management and responsibility issues, the physical environment also changed — old facilities were demolished, new ones built. How do you see those changes?

Participant 54:49

It has improved a lot compared with a decade ago. Back then, the courtyards were full of illegal iron sheds, especially for storing e-bikes, which cluttered everything. The government later ordered them to be torn down, and the environment became much better.

Researcher 55:19

And after restructuring, many new buildings were put up. Population density increased, some public facilities were demolished and replaced with supermarkets and markets. For example, Xiangrong Street was redeveloped. What do you think about these changes?

Participant 55:40

Well, once the illegal structures were cleared, it was better. Street vendors are managed by the Subdistrict Office. During official inspections they are told not to set up stalls. But afterwards, they sell vegetables again, cheaper than in the markets. That benefits residents, even if formal vendors lose out. As long as it doesn't block pavements, people welcome it. Compared to the past, the environment is cleaner and more orderly, with easier access and parking.

Researcher 56:50

But with increased density and loss of public facilities, how do you feel about that?

Participant 56:56

Parking is the biggest problem. Property companies charge fees, but residents don't get proper parking spaces in return. Barriers block access, or cones block areas. People pay but can't park — naturally they are unhappy. In the past fees were charged day and night; now only in the day. But without proper authorisation, companies like Jiatai Property shouldn't even be charging. Residents complain a lot, and even called the police (110) during disputes at the gates.

Parking rights are also unclear. Residents consider parking areas part of their shared ownership, linked to their flat's shared floor area. They argue the property company has no legitimate basis for exclusive control. Some tie ropes to claim spaces, preventing others from using them. It causes endless disputes.

Researcher 59:41

And with the disappearance of public spaces, how do you feel?

Participant 59:50

It undermines harmony. People want to live in peace, but instead face disputes over parking and fees. Fees are

sometimes higher than official car parks — 20 yuan a night. That feels unfair. Without scanning a QR code you can't even drive out.

Residents have complained repeatedly to Community leaders, but the problem lies between the high-rise property management and Jiatai Property. There were even cases of fraudulent car registration — reporting more vehicles than actually exist, giving privileges to acquaintances. The Community tried to mediate, but the situation remains unresolved.

At least rubbish collection fees have now become more regular, with long-term arrangements in place. In earlier years, even that wasn't properly managed.

Researcher 01:02:05

Were there street lamps?

Participant 01:02:06

Yes, there were. I often went to check them. If I found one not working, I would report it, and they would come to repair it. In the end, the inspections were basically all carried out.

Researcher 01:02:19

So would you say that after the restructuring and rebuilding, the main problems in the community are that the density has increased, and the management has become chaotic?

Participant 01:02:31

Yes. And another thing is that Jiatai Property is not legitimate, it does not have proper legal authorisation. The two high-rise sides are always in dispute, while ordinary residents just want somewhere to park. We don't know exactly what the procedures are, but the formal paperwork was never completed, so it is not compliant. Who is responsible? This is a matter for the property company to explain.

Researcher 01:02:54

How would you evaluate the changes in the community across the three periods?

Participant 01:02:58

The changes in the community have been very significant. At the beginning, we were at the old community on Xiangcheng Street. Later, when we moved to the present community, there was improvement in every respect. No matter what residents called about, the service attitude was very good. If something was not within the community's remit, the staff would explain patiently, tell you which department to contact, and even give you the phone number.

So overall, from the old community to the new community, the improvement has been considerable. Residents generally respond positively. Comparing the 1950s–60s, the 1980s–90s, and now, the changes are dramatic. In the past, families had many children, there were hardly any recreational facilities. Now, the community organises cultural performance groups, provides hairdressing services, and all kinds of support for residents. It is far better than before. Residents like to turn to the community, because the community is our home. But not everything can be handled by the community—for example, if the power goes out, the community can only give you the electricity bureau's number.

Researcher 01:04:37

Do you have anything else to add?

Participant 01:04:40

No, nothing more. By the way, what's your surname?

Researcher 01:04:41

My surname is Song, thank you uncle.

Participant 01:04:44

If there is anything I haven't explained well, please be understanding. I am very familiar with both the factory area and the residential area. I also used to be a small leader in the factory. From the establishment of the plant, through production and the living quarters, I knew things quite well. I also understood the machinery. I even installed machines together with Italians, in a Sino-Italian joint project, directly working with Italian experts.

Case study interview transcript-resident 6

Researcher 00:01

Do you still remember what the community was like in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 00:07

I came in 1958. My family was originally from Shanghai. My father came to Zhengzhou in 1953, and I followed in 1958 while I was still in school. Later, in 1964, I entered the Third Mill, since both my parents worked there, so naturally I followed them into the Danwei. My son and daughter-in-law also worked at the Third Mill. So in our family there were three generations at the mill. Without the Third Mill, we wouldn't have such deep attachment. My memories are very strong.

Researcher 00:49

So in the 1950s and 1960s, what was the living area—today's community—like?

Participant 00:54

Our community has now developed and become quite modern. Back then it wasn't as bustling, and there weren't so many people. But in terms of the basic layout, it was similar, because many of the old buildings are still standing today. The dormitory buildings looked the same then as they do now.

Researcher 01:24

What was your living environment like at the time?

Participant 01:28

In the 1950s and 1960s, the environment was fine, because people were more simple and honest. In the building where we lived, our upstairs and downstairs neighbours all got along very well. Unlike now, when in the new high-rises I've lived for more than ten years and I still don't know everyone upstairs. Back then, neighbours knew everything about each other's households. If something happened, people helped one another. That neighbourly intimacy and harmony doesn't exist today—it feels thinner somehow. Nowadays, with the new residential towers built on what used to be the production area, the neighbourly relations just aren't as warm as before, and the environment doesn't feel as good.

Researcher 02:55

In the 1950s and 1960s, in the living area there were public facilities such as barbershops, libraries, sports grounds, a club, canteens, and even communal kitchens where a few households shared. Did you feel there were advantages and disadvantages in that living environment?

Participant 03:32

The main disadvantage was that housing was cramped. For example, in my family three generations lived in a single room. My parents, myself, my spouse and children all squeezed into one room. Later we got another room, but space was always tight. In some dormitory flats, two or three households shared one kitchen. In my family, three households used a single kitchen, cooking on the same stoves. Of course that was inconvenient. But now conditions are much better—we old couple have our own two-bedroom flat. Still, back then, because we shared kitchens, everyone knew what the others were eating, and often shared food. That built very good relations.

Researcher 04:59

And during the planned economy period, what do you think were the advantages of the living area's layout?

Participant 05:10

Life was certainly not modern. To buy cloth you needed ration coupons, oil coupons for oil, grain coupons for food. Even with money you couldn't always buy things. Because of material scarcity, people learned thrift. That frugality became a lifelong habit for me. Even now I can't change. Young people waste food, but we old couple never throw leftovers away. This is the difference—our values were shaped by years of scarcity.

Researcher 06:21

And in terms of social atmosphere—between the production area and the living area—besides the mutual help and neighbourliness you mentioned, what was the cultural atmosphere like?

Participant 06:44

It was relatively lacking compared with today. There was no television, let alone the internet. A household with a radio was already remarkable—a Red Lantern radio was a prized possession. Families aspired to own the “three big items”: a bicycle, a sewing machine, and a wristwatch, plus a radio. Having those meant status. Entertainment was limited. Every Saturday the factory showed open-air films on the grounds of what is now the primary school for workers’ children. People would bring stools early to get a seat. Watching one film a week was a great joy. The factory also had a library, where we could borrow novels. At festivals the trade union organised cultural events, but overall cultural life was meagre.

Researcher 08:50

So cultural life was quite limited. In the 1950s and 1960s, besides the activities you mentioned, did residents have private leisure activities—for example singing, playing instruments, chatting, or organising children’s play?

Participant 09:22

Some people did play simple instruments—harmonicas, flutes. These were cheap, a few mao. More expensive instruments like accordions or trumpets were too costly for ordinary families. There were no training institutions; people taught each other. Singing was also limited—mostly revolutionary or propaganda songs like the “Three Main Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention”, or songs from films. There were no popular songs or folk music as now.

Researcher 11:05

What about daily after-work activities?

Participant 11:12

Playing chess, that was common.

Researcher 11:15

After dinner, what other activities were there, either with others or alone?

Participant 11:23

Mostly chess. Mahjong was banned in the 1950s and 1960s, and only revived in the late 1970s and 1980s after Reform and Opening-Up. Go was also rare—only from the late 1970s onwards. Chinese chess was more common.

Researcher 11:58

Besides recreational activities?

Participant 12:00

In summer, without air-conditioning or even fans, people gathered outside in the evenings, sitting under the buildings to catch the breeze, chatting together. Neighbours talked about family matters, everyone knew what was happening in each household. Unlike today, when people in the same building might never meet, and sometimes elderly people live alone and no one notices for days. That wouldn’t have happened back then—relations were much more harmonious.

Researcher 13:02

In the 1950s and 1960s, what means of transport did people use?

Participant 13:14

Mainly walking. Owning a bicycle was rare and a sign of wealth. At that time a bicycle cost more than 100 yuan, while a monthly wage was about 30 yuan. So bicycles were not common. We walked most of the time, even when going to meetings at the sports stadium on Renmin Road, or to the railway station. Cars were almost non-existent among residents.

Researcher 14:24

And at that time, were people’s gathering places mainly within the living area? Where did people usually gather?

Participant 14:58

Yes, mainly downstairs in the open spaces. There was also a club, but it was managed and not freely accessible—you couldn’t just go in to sing or dance as you wished.

Researcher 15:11

Yes, exactly.

Participant 15:13

Usually people just sang casually downstairs. There were no karaoke halls like now—if you liked singing, you just sang a few lines on the spot.

Researcher 15:29

May I ask in which year you retired?

Participant 15:35

I stopped working in 2002, and I formally retired in 2007.

Researcher 15:40

So during the period after Reform and Opening-Up, in the 1980s and 1990s, you were still working at the mill, right? At that time, the community also experienced changes—for example, people from other mills moved into the Third Mill's residential buildings, and after the housing reform some outsiders rented or bought flats. Many private vendors also came to open shops. Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, how did you feel about these changes in your living environment—in terms of housing, outdoor environment, and cultural atmosphere?

Participant 16:29

Well, after Reform and Opening-Up many things changed. For example, ration coupons for grain or oil were cancelled, because material conditions improved. I recall that in 2002 and 2003, flats in the Third Mill began to have property certificates issued to individuals. That was long after Reform and Opening-Up, which began in 1978–79, when the national economy started to improve. The Third Mill also gradually became more bustling. Markets were allowed, and migrant workers could come into the city and set up stalls. Before, selling even peanuts was considered “speculation and profiteering” and had to be hidden. After Reform, that problem disappeared.

In the past, all flats belonged to the mill, and residents only rented them—there was no concept of transfer or subletting. Only from the early 2000s onwards, when property certificates were issued, did renting and selling start. Along with these changes, the family area of the Third Mill became livelier—small shops and later supermarkets appeared. Before, there was only one shop in the factory, a state-owned store at the roundabout, where you could buy daily necessities. There were no other options. After Reform, more goods became available, and life became more convenient. In recent years, as conditions improved, some families with other housing moved out of the old mill flats, which were then rented or sold. This only began in these later years.

Researcher 19:39

So compared with the 1950s and 1960s, what other changes were there in the 1980s and 1990s? And in terms of cultural atmosphere, what differences do you see?

Participant 19:48

Culturally, from Reform and Opening-Up onwards, society gradually developed karaoke halls and dance halls. People's material life improved, and spiritual life also became richer. People began to go ballroom dancing, to sing karaoke, and some bought sound systems to listen to music at home. Television became universal, and later the internet too. Information spread became diverse. So both material and spiritual lives improved. The Third Mill was no exception—it followed the national trend, just like everywhere else in the country.

Researcher 20:57

And in terms of daily activities in the 1980s and 1990s—compared with the 1950s and 1960s, were there changes in what people did after work, and in where they gathered?

Participant 21:22

There were changes, though in my own case I didn't experience much outside, since my parents, my spouse and I, and later my son and daughter-in-law, all worked in the Third Mill. So we never really left the community over decades. But for other families, whose conditions were better, things were different. If a couple worked in different Danwei, they might have housing from each, so they could choose.

Researcher 22:12

You mean housing?

Participant 22:13

Yes, some families with better conditions gradually moved to better housing outside. They bought new flats elsewhere, while the older mill housing was left over, and then started to be rented out or sold. This all matched the economic changes in the country. Life became more diverse both materially and culturally.

Researcher 23:00

In the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 23:02

Yes, in the 1980s and 1990s life was still fairly similar to before, but with some improvements. Material life wasn't abundant yet, but gradually there was progress—like karaoke halls outside. In our Third Mill, for example, the bathhouse was originally just a bathhouse.

Researcher 23:32

So people's activity range began to expand beyond the community itself?

Participant 23:38

Yes, but within the community there were also improvements. For example, in the small square or the playground—where the market later stood—people gathered in the evenings for square dancing or cultural events. Sometimes these were organised by the trade union or the community, sometimes spontaneously. Cultural and sports activities diversified with social progress, and our lives improved along with it.

Researcher 24:19

Earlier you mentioned gathering places in the community, where people liked to spend time together—whether chatting, or other recreational activities. You also said that people's activity range widened, and they sometimes went to places outside the community. At that time, were retired elderly people the main users of these places? Where did they usually spend their time?

Participant 24:53

Elderly people back then also faced limitations in living conditions. Many of them had not developed hobbies when they were young, because life was difficult and material conditions were scarce. So when they grew old, few elderly people took part in activities. What impressed me most were a group of older workers in my workshop, many of them migrant workers from the south. By the 1970s and 1980s they had all retired. After retirement, since they had no hobbies and had lived through times of scarcity, they didn't develop interests. Unlike me—I liked swimming when I was young.

Researcher 25:48

You liked swimming?

Participant 25:51

Yes, so even now I still swim. Some people enjoyed chess or Go, and when conditions improved, they could pursue such hobbies. But many elderly people in the past never cultivated such interests, so after retirement they mostly just sat together in small groups, chatting.

Researcher 26:26

And of course some looked after their grandchildren.

Participant 26:28

Yes, certainly. Looking after grandchildren was common, depending on each family's situation.

Researcher 26:45

In the 1980s and 1990s, did elderly people often go to cultural centres outside the community?

Participant 26:52

The cultural centre had always been there.

Researcher 26:56

And in the 1980s and 1990s, did elderly people actively go there?

Participant 27:00

Not as actively as now, because there weren't many activity venues at the time. There were a football pitch, a basketball court, but not many recreational facilities. Today, our community has fitness equipment and other facilities, but back then there were only a few open spaces. In summer, people would gather under trees for shade, chatting to pass the time. It wasn't as rich as today.

Researcher 27:48

Do you think after entering the 1980s and 1990s, neighbourhood relations or patterns of interaction changed?

Researcher 27:57

Did the way neighbours related to one another change?

Participant 28:07

Yes, once the new buildings were constructed in the mill, neighbourly relations weren't the same. They gradually faded. Earlier, for example, three families might share one kitchen—you knew what your neighbours were eating for lunch and supper, everyone knew each other well. Now, each household closes its own door, and there is little contact.

Take my current building: I've lived here for over twenty years, but I seldom visit neighbours, and I don't even know some of the newer residents—whether they bought the flat or rented it, I don't know. Back in the old buildings, when we were young, we would even bring our bowls to eat at one another's homes. Meals were simple, and relations were very close.

Researcher 29:37

So from the 1980s and 1990s onwards, neighbourly ties grew weaker year by year, and now they're almost gone?

Participant 29:43

Yes, basically that's the case. Especially in the new buildings, people value privacy and don't really interact.

Researcher 29:57

Later, in the 2000s, when the enterprise was restructured and went bankrupt, the community undertook many redevelopment projects—for example the Textile Museum, and rebuilding basic facilities such as residential buildings, markets, and supermarkets. How did you feel about these changes under the community system? How did your living environment change?

Participant 30:38

I feel that with social progress in general, our community has also advanced and developed.

In the past, the community had very little. In the 1980s and 1990s, there was only a small vegetable stall, and sometimes it had produce, sometimes it didn't. If you didn't get there early, everything was sold out.

Now it's completely different. Shops are open from early morning until late at night. You can always buy vegetables and food, and the area is lively. There is also exercise equipment and recreational facilities, which we never had before.

Now, if you have a problem, you can go to the community Party-Mass Service Centre. Staff are warm and helpful, and they try to solve your difficulties—something we didn't have in the past. In earlier times, there was only an old lady as the head of the residents' committee, and she couldn't really solve problems for you.

Researcher 32:12

Back when the Danwei managed things, it wasn't like this, was it?

Participant 32:14

That's right. In the past the service institutions were very simple. The community now counts as a service institution for residents. In my view, it's not a leadership body, but a service body. The quality of services now can't be compared with before.

Researcher 32:29

When the enterprise managed the residential area, do you think compared with now, the range of services was narrower and could only meet basic needs? Is that what you mean?

Participant 32:42

And at that time there weren't many needs either—you didn't have much of anything. What needs could there be?

Researcher 32:48

Even if you needed something, it was useless, right?

Researcher 32:51

Now the community density has increased—higher population density, higher building density. There are more means of transport: metro, buses, bicycles, motorbikes, tricycles, e-bikes, cars, and walking. With so many modes of transport brought into the community, public space is shrinking and density is high. How do you feel about this change?

Participant 33:33

It's an inevitable part of social development. Living space is crowded—there's no way around it. Now in the community there are no longer places to play ball, like basketball or football pitches. In the past there were basketball courts, football fields—even at Wuyi Park, you could just go and play. Football was more popular among young people then, because recreational facilities were simple. Now young people hardly play; they're pampered, afraid of hardship, and spend more time on mobile phones and games. That's the social environment now, with less community space. There are e-bikes, cars, and shops, but less space for leisure.

The advantage is that households can own e-bikes, bicycles, and cars if they want, so mobility isn't lacking. Riding a bike or walking to Wuyi Park is convenient. But now Wuyi Park is very crowded, unlike in the past.

Researcher 36:14

Wuyi Park now has more facilities than in the 1980s and 1990s. Has the proportion of elderly people going there increased?

Participant 36:30

Not really. Back then, parks were quiet—you'd hardly see people. Now it's packed with people everywhere.

Researcher 36:46

Do you think after the community system was introduced, the cultural atmosphere has changed compared with the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 36:58

I don't see much change in our community—there isn't a clear cultural atmosphere.

Researcher 37:03

Do you feel the cultural atmosphere has changed?

Participant 37:11

The quality has improved, but fewer cultural activities are organised, and participation is lower, because there are now more channels. For example, those who like square dancing form a fixed group and go regularly. If the community organises an activity, people may not be enthusiastic. Attitudes have shifted. In the park you'll see groups kicking shuttlecocks, playing badminton, power walking, square dancing, chatting, or playing cards. But within the community, survival space is limited, activity space is scarce. There are some fitness machines, but not enough.

Researcher 38:41

Has higher density brought any advantages, aside from shopping convenience?

Participant 38:50

In terms of daily life, there have been big improvements, but otherwise there aren't clear benefits.

Researcher 39:02

Since the community system was introduced, have neighbourly relations changed compared with the 1950s and 1960s, in terms of interaction, closeness, or shared norms?

Participant 39:33

Of course they've changed. In the past, there was no privacy among neighbours—you knew the details of their family members and relatives.

Even what they were having for lunch. Neighbours all knew each other. Now, when the door is shut, people just walk down the corridor. At most, when you meet on the stairs, you say hello politely—that's it. Nowadays in hot weather, people close their doors, turn on the air-conditioning, and don't see each other. In the past, once the sun set, everyone from a whole building would gather in the shade under trees or wherever it was breezy, chatting together.

Now that hardly exists. Only a few elderly people, with nowhere else to go and no internet skills, sit downstairs to chat. Otherwise, there's almost no interaction. Unlike in the 1950s, 1960s, or even 1970s–1990s, when neighbourly relations were harmonious, now it's all about privacy. People think, "Why should I share my affairs with others? What if they find out something I don't want them to?" That's how it is now.

Researcher 41:14

How would you evaluate the changes across these three periods? In the 1950s–60s and 1980s–90s before restructuring, management was by the Danwei. Afterwards, with restructuring, the enterprise stepped back and the community took the front stage. Is that right?

Participant 41:39

Yes, the factory hardly manages things any more.

Researcher 41:41

And the living environment has also changed. The enterprise tried different reforms at different stages, right?

How would you evaluate the changes in community management across these three periods? And how would you evaluate the differences in living environment across them?

Participant 42:00

If you want a simple evaluation in one sentence: in the 1950s and 60s, relations between people were simple and sincere. In the 1970s and 80s, relations were still quite harmonious. But with Reform and Opening up over these last thirty-odd years, I feel people have grown more distant. Material life has improved, goods are abundant, but people's feelings and human connections have become more detached. That's my impression.

Researcher 42:51

And regarding changes in management, how would you evaluate that?

Participant 42:58

From a management perspective, the mode of governance has changed. In the past, management was relatively rough and loose. It depended on individuals being self-disciplined—keeping up with public hygiene and so on. If you didn't, nobody could really enforce it, nor did they have the capacity to. But now it's different. With the community in place, if sanitation isn't done properly, or if something else comes up, there's someone to handle it. In terms of management, it's moved in the direction of refinement. In the past it was crude, now it's developing gradually towards more fine-grained management.

Researcher 43:46

Do you have any further additions about the evolution of this area, from the factory's founding to now?

Participant 44:02

Not much to add. I feel that in terms of community management, they've put in effort and done their best. Of course, if things could be done even better—if the community could provide residents with more help and convenience in daily life—that would be ideal. That's my hope. But some issues can't be solved with just a few words, and the community might not be able to handle absolutely everything, which is understandable. Still, in some areas, improvements could certainly be made where possible.

Researcher 45:07

I'll stop the recording here.

Case study interview transcript-resident 7

Researcher 00:00

You must know this factory very well. You grew up here, right?

Participant 00:09

Yes, I've always been here. My mother was from the south, from Shanghai. She came to support the Third Cotton Mill and always worked there. She was only about ten years old when she arrived. My younger sister took over her post later. I went to the countryside and only after returning did I take over a job in the mill.

Researcher 00:34

Do you still remember what the community was like during the planned economy period, in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 00:49

Back then, when my mother was working, it wasn't called a "community" at all, it was just called the "living quarters." It wasn't like now, with specific management and staff. Originally there was no management, everyone minded their own affairs, and it worked well.

My mother worked night shifts while I went to school. She still had to cook when she came back. My father wasn't in good health, so she worked hard, and I often felt sorry for her. I would help with the cooking because she was so tired.

Researcher 01:36

What was the living environment like? Indoors, in the building, and outside?

Participant 01:46

It was quite good then. When we were children, life was collective. Everyone got along well and looked after each other.

The children would play hide-and-seek or other games at the entrance, and people helped sweep the ground together. In summer, everyone slept outside the buildings, and nobody locked their doors. It's completely different from now, when everything is locked tight.

Researcher 02:33

And what about relations with neighbours? You mostly interacted outside?

Participant 02:48

Yes. At that time, relations were very good. During festivals, the elders would lead everyone outside. On the Double Ninth Festival, for example, there would be activities—yangge dancing, other dances, entertainment. It was all very lively.

Researcher 03:22

How would you evaluate the living environment then—the cultural atmosphere, recreation, welfare, housing? What were the pros and cons?

Participant 03:35

Life was quite good. As for my mother's welfare at work, I don't know much. She was busy working, going back and forth several days a week. She didn't have many other things—just work and coming home. Sometimes there were meetings, and she would rush back afterwards.

Researcher 04:07

So what would you say were the strengths or weaknesses of the housing environment in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 04:15

It's hard to say specifically, but neighbours had excellent relationships. Everyone looked out for each other and cared for one another. Compared to today, when people are more concerned with personal interest, back then there was much less calculation—relations were closer and more genuine.

Researcher 04:41

So overall, would you say the living environment then was similar to now?

Participant 04:44

Back then, although people were poor, infrastructure was weak, and food was scarce, life still went on. Most of what we ate came from ration coupons—sweet potatoes, coarse grains, sorghum steamed buns. Life was tight, but at least stomachs were full, and children could play outside.

Researcher 05:17

And children would play in the open spaces of the living quarters?

Participant 05:22

Yes, hide-and-seek, skipping games with elastic bands, shuttlecock kicking, beanbags. Most of the toys we made ourselves—we couldn't afford to buy much. For example, if someone kept chickens, we'd make shuttlecocks with their feathers.

Researcher 05:40

So children mainly ran about and played inside the living quarters?

Participant 05:46

Yes. Families would raise chickens and make things. When I was little, the community would also organise film screenings. On those days, everyone scrambled to carry stools to watch. The community organised it well. People even came from the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Mills to watch.

Researcher 06:12

Did your family raise chickens at home?

Researcher 06:18

Did you keep chickens inside your house?

Participant 06:18

Not inside the flat, but outside. We built a small enclosure to keep chickens. At that time nobody minded. Everyone felt at ease. For example, my family lived on the ground floor, and outside we made a pen for chickens.

Researcher 06:34

Were the houses at the time equipped with shared spaces, like communal kitchens?

Participant 06:40

Yes, there were public facilities. I kept chickens in a mesh pen outside, and nobody stole them. Everyone felt secure, and things could be left outside without worry.

Researcher 06:50

What did you think of the public housing of the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 06:57

When I got married, I lived in a 13-square-metre room. Four to six people squeezed in together. It was cramped. For example, my sister and I shared bunk beds, my parents slept in a big bed, and in the stairwell a bed was built for me and my younger brother. It was really crowded.

The communal kitchen was heavily used. Three families shared one kitchen and toilet, with three gas stoves (natural gas). Cooking was rushed, and laundry was done in the toilet. But everyone looked after each other.

Researcher 08:06

So there were gas canisters already in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 08:09

Yes, there was natural gas. Our housing group all had it.

Researcher 08:16

When you were a child in the 1950s and 1960s, what was the main way people travelled?

Participant 08:35

Mainly bicycles. There were no electric bikes—everyone used bicycles. Phoenix brand bicycles were common, and considered good quality.

Researcher 08:50

So bicycles were the main form of transport?

Participant 08:54

Yes. Hardly any other vehicles. Buses were very rare. Almost everyone cycled.

Researcher 09:00

In the 1950s and 1960s, apart from officially organised events during festivals, what private activities did residents engage in?

Participant 09:17

Family activities? Mostly centred on food—steaming buns, making dumplings. My family, being from the south, didn't fry much food. We often ate hairtail fish and similar dishes. At New Year we prepared special dishes, like stir-fried celery with hairtail. My father sometimes bought sheep's head meat. During the Spring Festival, we always had some good food ready.

Researcher 09:50

So family life and activities were mainly centred around food?

Participant 09:56

Yes. My father also kept chickens and would slaughter them sometimes. Families prepared all their festival food in advance.

Researcher 10:16

Did children also help raise the chickens? Were there many people raising them in the courtyards?

Participant 10:28

On the ground floors, many kept chickens. On the second and third floors it was less common. Most kept them outside the windows, in wire cages. Some planted flowers or vegetables as well. Neighbours tolerated and supported each other.

Researcher 10:50

So neighbourly relations were harmonious, and people accepted these things?

Participant 10:52

Yes. There was a lot of visiting between upstairs and downstairs. For example, on the ground floor near us lived a poor family on the third floor. The man there was not right in the head—something like dementia, a bit simple-minded. He often came to our place. If he saw us cooking something tasty, he would want to eat.

Researcher 11:28

So neighbourly relations were very close, with frequent contact?

Participant 11:32

Yes. Whenever we had something nice, we would share it.

Researcher 11:36
Everyone would share food?

Participant 11:37
Yes. Sometimes he didn't eat, but we always invited him. No matter how poor we were, we would invite him to share.

Researcher 11:49
Apart from this, were there other forms of neighbourly interaction?

Participant 11:56
Not much else. Mostly playing at the doorway or eating together. There weren't any special places to go. People just strolled around.

Researcher 12:16
Did you walk to the Martyrs' Monument area to play?

Participant 12:23
Yes. We usually walked. Hardly anyone took buses or trams, because trams had only just begun and were scarce. I used to walk from home, along the railway, to the Martyrs' Monument.

Researcher 12:44
That was far to walk. Nowadays, people wouldn't be able to walk such a long distance anymore.

Researcher 00:00
You must be very familiar with this factory. Did you grow up here?

Participant 00:09
I've always been here. My mum was from the south, she came from Shanghai to support the Third Cotton Mill. She always worked at the Third Cotton Mill. At that time, she was just a child, around ten or twelve years old when she came here. Later, my younger sister took over her job. As for me, I went to the countryside during the rustication movement, and when I returned, I was assigned a job here.

Researcher 00:34
Good. Do you remember when you were a child, during the planned economy period, in the 1950s and 1960s, what the community was like?

Participant 00:49
Back when my mum was working, we didn't call it a "community." It was just called the living area. It wasn't like now, with formal management. Back then, no one managed it—people just looked after themselves, and it was fine. My mum worked night shifts, I was at school, and she still had to cook after work. My dad wasn't in good health, so she had to take care of everything. I used to feel sorry for her—she came home exhausted, so I sometimes cooked so she could just eat when she got home.

Researcher 01:36
What was the housing environment like then? I mean inside the house, inside the building, and outside.

Participant 01:46
It was pretty good at that time. When we were children, life was collective. People didn't think about money, they were all kind, and everyone cared for their neighbours. At the entrance, children played hide-and-seek or other games. Sometimes people helped each other sweep up. In summer, everyone slept outside the building. It was safe, nothing like today, where people lock everything tightly. Back then, doors were open and people slept outdoors.

Researcher 02:33
So you and your neighbours were outside most of the time? What do you remember about the cultural atmosphere in the living area in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 02:48
Yes, there were many activities. Even when I was young, I saw that people were very good to one another. During festivals, the older generation would gather everyone outside. For example, on Double Ninth Festival there were activities like yangge dancing, ballroom dancing, and other entertainments. It was very lively, though I don't remember everything now.

Researcher 03:22

How would you describe the living environment back then, in terms of cultural atmosphere, entertainment, welfare, and housing? What were the advantages and disadvantages?

Participant 03:35

Life was quite good then. I didn't really understand the welfare benefits at that time. All I remember is my mum being constantly worried about work. She worked shifts week after week, sometimes had meetings, and always rushed home. It was just working and coming home, back and forth.

Researcher 04:07

So in terms of housing in the 1950s and 1960s, do you think there were any strengths or weaknesses?

Participant 04:15

I can't really say clearly. But neighbours all got along well. They looked after me, cared for one another. Unlike now, where people are more concerned about interests and personal gain, back then relationships were simpler.

Researcher 04:41

So the living environment was overall similar?

Participant 04:44

Well, it was poor. The infrastructure wasn't good either. Food was scarce. In the 1950s and 1960s we mainly ate sweet potatoes, coarse grain buns, sorghum buns. Everything depended on ration coupons, so life was tight. But we still managed. Children still played outside, life was lively.

Researcher 05:17

When you played outside, was it in the open spaces inside the living area?

Participant 05:22

Yes, we played hide-and-seek, skipping with elastic bands, kicking shuttlecocks, beanbags. All homemade. We didn't buy things. If someone had a rooster, we'd use the feathers to make shuttlecocks.

Researcher 05:40

So children just ran around and played inside the living quarters?

Participant 05:46

Yes. Families raised chickens, made their own things. Back then no one restricted it. Sometimes the community also screened films—on certain days of the week we all rushed to grab stools and watch. The community organised it well. People from the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Cotton Mills also came to watch films.

Researcher 06:12

Where did you keep the chickens? At home?

Participant 06:18

No, outside. Back then no one managed it. We just built a little enclosure outside. For example, since my family lived on the ground floor, we built a small pen outside to raise chickens.

Researcher 06:34

The housing back then also had public spaces, like communal kitchens, right?

Participant 06:40

Yes, we had shared facilities. I kept a chicken pen outside, and no one ever stole anything. Everyone felt safe leaving things out.

Researcher 06:50

So in the 1950s and 1960s you lived in public housing—what did you think of it?

Participant 06:57

When I got married, we lived in a tiny room—13 square metres—for a family of four to six. It was very cramped. My sister and I had bunk beds, my parents shared a big bed, and even the stairwell was used for an extra bed where my brother and I squeezed in. It was extremely crowded. Housing was really difficult.

We shared a communal kitchen and toilet with two other families. The kitchen had three natural gas stoves. Everyone rushed to cook and left quickly. Washing clothes was done in the shared toilet. But neighbours helped each other.

Researcher 08:06

So there was natural gas already in the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 08:09

Yes, there was natural gas, and also bottled gas. At that time, it seemed we all had natural gas. My whole work group had it.

Researcher 08:16

When you were little, in the 1950s and 1960s, how did people get around in the city? What means of transport did they use?

Participant 08:35

By bicycle. Everyone rode bicycles. There were no electric vehicles, just bicycles. Phoenix, Forever, and other makes—28, 24, or 29-inch frames—those were common.

Researcher 08:50

So bicycles were the main mode of transport? Everyone used bicycles?

Participant 08:54

Yes, there was nothing else. Hardly anyone took the bus—public buses were very rare. Everyone basically rode bicycles.

Researcher 09:00

So bicycles were the main way. Do you remember in the 1950s and 1960s whether residents, apart from the official holiday activities you just mentioned, also had other private activities?

Participant 09:17

Family activities? We steamed buns. My mum always steamed buns. At our home we didn't fry much, since we were southerners. We made dumplings, fried dishes, hairtail fish. At New Year's we always prepared several dishes—stir-fried celery with hairtail, fish. My father sometimes bought sheep's head meat. At New Year's, he'd prepare that too.

Researcher 09:50

So there were many activities centred around food with the family, right?

Participant 09:56

Yes. My dad also raised chickens for us, and slaughtered them. He'd prepare good things for us to eat, especially at New Year.

Researcher 10:16

Did children help feed the chickens? Were there many people raising chickens in the courtyards?

Participant 10:28

Yes, quite a lot, especially on the ground floor. People on the second and third floors did it less. On the ground floor, people often kept chickens outside their windows, with wire mesh. Some planted flowers and vegetables instead. If someone didn't keep chickens, they fenced off a little plot to grow vegetables. Neighbours tolerated it all, the relationships were good.

Researcher 10:50

So it was harmonious, everyone accepted this.

Participant 10:52

Yes, people came and went between upstairs and downstairs. In our building, there was a poor family upstairs. One man was a bit simple-minded, almost like dementia. At that time people just said he was silly. He often came down to our flat, and if he saw we were cooking something tasty, he'd eat at ours.

Researcher 11:28

So neighbourly relations were harmonious, with plenty of interaction.

Participant 11:32

Yes, whenever there was something good to eat, people shared.

Researcher 11:36

Everyone shared food?

Participant 11:37

Yes. Even if he didn't ask, we thought of letting him eat. However poor we were, we'd still invite him to eat.

Researcher 11:49

Apart from this, were there other social activities with neighbours?

Participant 11:56

Not really. Mostly just playing at the entrance, or eating together. There weren't many places to go. We just wandered around. Sometimes I walked all the way to the Martyrs' Memorial Tower. Back then there were hardly any buses. The 104 trolleybus had just started running, very few of them. Mostly we walked. From my home, we walked along by the railway line to get to the Memorial Tower. As children, we had the energy.

Researcher 12:44

That was really far. Now people couldn't walk that distance, far too much.

Participant 12:52

Yes, now it's not possible. But back then, we often walked to the Memorial Tower. It was common.

Researcher 12:58

So mainly on foot. Apart from shortages of goods and crowded housing, what other disadvantages were there in the living environment of the 1950s and 1960s?

Participant 13:17

The environment was all much the same. There wasn't the sense of rich and poor like now. Of course, some were poor and some better off, but children all played together. There was no feeling of being looked down upon. Life was hard, yes. For example, when sweet potatoes were sold, people compared prices, and went to wherever they were cheaper.

Researcher 13:43

In the 1950s and 1960s, where did people gather? For example, for larger events or private get-togethers—you mentioned sitting outside the courtyard in the evenings.

Participant 14:02

Yes, people often gathered. At mealtimes, those from upstairs would come down, carrying their bowls, and eat together with us on the ground floor. During festivals, it was lively. On Jianshe Road, people performed yangge dances, the old men and women beating waist drums. It was crowded.

Researcher 14:28

Were there other gathering places?

Participant 14:41

Not really. There weren't many formal venues yet. There wasn't a cultural palace then. People just gathered on Jianshe Road, with elderly women beating waist drums and others doing stilt walking.

Researcher 14:51

Later, in the 1980s and 1990s, after the Reform and Opening-up, when you were living here, what changes did you notice in the living area?

Participant 15:10

New buildings were constructed. People moved into bigger places, unlike before when five, six, or even seven or eight people squeezed into one room. It was still crowded, but a bit better. I once shared a room with another family. It was split in half—one side for them, one side for us. All the men slept in the same room. Later, conditions improved slightly.

My mum always said we didn't have the means. She couldn't afford to buy a flat then. Back then housing wasn't about money, it was allocated. But we didn't get much.

Researcher 16:12

So there was a housing allocation system, right?

Participant 16:15

Yes, though space was limited, and you sometimes needed connections to get a bigger allocation.

Researcher 16:26

By the 1980s and 1990s, though, people were buying flats, right? Housing increased?

Participant 16:33

Yes, when people had money, they bought flats. That's how it was.

Researcher 16:36

And many outsiders moved into the living area, buying flats in the 1980s and 1990s, correct?

Participant 16:47

You know, the Third Mill (Sanmian) recruited a lot of workers, including contracted rural workers. Later, when their families had money, they bought flats here, got their household registration, settled down. That's how it was, like in a real market.

Researcher 17:03

So after many outsiders came in, and with lots of individual traders doing business after the Reform and Opening-up, did you feel there were other changes in the community or in your living environment—positive changes?

Participant 17:18

Yes, of course there were changes. Buying things became much easier. Unlike before, when we relied on ration coupons and couldn't buy freely, later with money you weren't restricted. There were traders, there were shops selling alcohol, groceries. For example, the co-operative shops were open again. I often went to buy things—whatever you wanted to eat, you could go and buy it.

Researcher 17:49

So living standards improved, both living conditions and the residential environment?

Participant 17:58

Yes. Hygiene was also taken care of. Sometimes when it snowed, people went out themselves to sweep the snow in front of their doors, or shopkeepers swept their storefronts. People just did it.

Researcher 18:19

In the 1980s and 1990s, did the types of residents' activities change?

Participant 18:27

They were similar to before—during festivals on Jianshe Road there were still dances, and the factory organised dancing and such.

Researcher 18:41

And in terms of residents' private social interactions and gathering activities, did those change?

Participant 18:51

Within families it was still kinship.

Researcher 18:53

I mean residents themselves, organising things with neighbours.

Participant 18:56

It was pretty much the same as before, not much difference. At New Year and festivals people visited each other—youngsters went to see my mum, I'd go see your mum. Neighbourly exchanges were the same.

Researcher 19:10

For example, private activities: children often played downstairs, but adults didn't have that much time. Did you all still eat together sometimes? Did activities like that change in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 19:26

Sometimes there were new activities. For example, one of my neighbours worked at the Textile Machinery Plant. He and his wife divorced, and he raised his daughter alone. I felt sorry for them, so on my days off I'd take my own daughter and his girl out to play. Neighbours helped each other.

Researcher 19:48

So there was still a lot of mutual visiting and helping in the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 19:51

Yes. I even became like a second mum to his daughter.

Researcher 19:57

That sounds very close. In the 1980s and 1990s, were there more collective activities, like going elsewhere

together?

Participant 20:14
Some gatherings, yes.

Researcher 20:15
Like going to the Cultural Palace, or to the cinema?

Participant 20:21
Yes, films were often shown outdoors. Until when? Even in the 1980s, there were still outdoor screenings. In the evenings, whenever I had time, I'd go and watch. Other factories also showed films. There were very few cinemas then. The Cultural Palace had one, and there was the Dongfanghong Cinema too—I went there sometimes. You sometimes needed tickets, but if someone got them, you'd go.

Researcher 21:02
Were there other spontaneous gathering activities?

Participant 21:06
Yes, in my workshop, when we had rest days, people like Chen Yanli often organised outings—to Yuntai Mountain or elsewhere.

Researcher 21:17
Were those funded as staff welfare?

Participant 21:19
Yes, they were organised by the workshop. We went on day trips—leaving in the morning, back in the evening. Chen Yanli arranged these. Sometimes the mill funded it, sometimes the workshop managed it. Our shifts did that often.

Researcher 21:34
So within your work shifts?

Participant 21:36
Yes, we had four shifts. Each shift organised separately.

Researcher 21:39
So some money came from the mill, though workshops had limited budgets?

Researcher 21:43
In the 1980s and 1990s, when workers began to retire—because in the 1950s and 1960s most were still young—what activities did retirees have then, and where did they gather?

Participant 22:16
At first, there wasn't really a "community" as such, still just called the living area. Mostly people stayed at home. My mum, for example, hardly went out. She only travelled if she went back to her hometown.

Researcher 22:38
Did she still have childcare or household responsibilities?

Participant 22:41
Not really. I wasn't married then. My mum retired in her fifties, but she still sometimes went back to cover shifts when others wanted time off. Many older workers did that—taking turns to substitute.

Researcher 23:15
Apart from substitution shifts, did retirees spend time together in the courtyards?

Participant 23:21
Yes, they often strolled around, chatted. At that time, there wasn't square dancing like now. Some people liked dancing, though. At the Cultural Palace, there were dance activities, but my mum didn't go much. Some others did.

Researcher 23:48
By the 1980s, there were already dance activities, right? In outdoor public spaces, did elderly people often gather there?

Participant 23:57

Yes, at the Cultural Palace, people danced, lots of women went. But my mum didn't—she hardly went out, she just stayed home cooking.

Researcher 24:12

So outside, in public spaces, elderly people weren't really present?

Participant 24:16

They only came out to sit for a while, or just to relax.

Researcher 24:23

In the 1980s and 1990s, how did people travel? What transport did they use?

Participant 24:31

By then there were buses and trolleybuses. Travel became convenient. The 101 and 104 trolleybus lines were already running by then.

Researcher 24:50

So it was in the 1980s and 1990s when these appeared? Compared with the 1950s and 1960s, were there changes in the transport used by young and old residents?

Participant 25:09

Basically the same—those who rode buses rode buses, but bicycles were still the main way.

Researcher 25:15

So even in the 1980s and 1990s, bicycles were still dominant. By then, with people from other factories and outside Danwei moving in, did neighbourhood relations change?

Participant 25:29

During the Cultural Revolution it was chaotic—workers from the Third Mill and the Fourth Mill couldn't visit each other. If someone from the Third Mill went to the Fourth, they'd get beaten, and vice versa. You weren't allowed to mingle. Afterwards, when things settled down, relations improved again.

Researcher 25:49

So within the Third Mill area itself, in the 1980s and 1990s, after 1978 Reform and Opening-up, did neighbourly relations change much compared with before, when many newcomers arrived?

Participant 26:06

In the 1980s many were contracted rural workers. Relationships were ordinary, just everyday interactions.

Researcher 26:16

So overall not much change, nothing dramatic? Before Reform, during the Cultural Revolution, people didn't visit other factories' living areas. Even before the Cultural Revolution, they didn't?

Participant 26:33

Yes, we didn't dare wander about.

Researcher 26:36

Why not, before the Cultural Revolution?

Participant 26:39

Because it was chaotic—the Cultural Revolution was chaos.

Researcher 26:42

So even before the Cultural Revolution, you didn't really go to other factories' areas?

Participant 26:44

I don't remember so clearly before that—I was very young. But during the Cultural Revolution I was about seven or eight, and I do remember. For example, near the public bathhouse on Mianfang Road, I recall very clearly. You couldn't even say openly that you were Hui or Han. If a Han person went to buy mutton from a Hui butcher, you might get beaten. Afterwards, in the 1980s and 1990s, that all changed—there were no such divisions. Once the Cultural Revolution ended, everyone became more united again. People visited markets, went to the cinema together.

Researcher 27:35

So interaction with people from outside the community also became more common. In the 1980s and 1990s, apart from what you've said, were there other changes outside the living area?

Participant 27:49

Not really, nothing special.

Researcher 27:55

So overall things were about the same, not much difference.

Participant 27:58

Except there were more vehicles. People often went out by bus or car.

Researcher 28:06

So by the 1980s and 1990s, people had started using private cars?

Participant 28:10

Yes, or public buses—many more buses.

Researcher 28:12

But cars didn't enter the factory compounds?

Participant 28:15

No, they stayed on the main roads.

Researcher 28:19

When was the community formally established?

Participant 28:43

Around 2006. After the Third Mill went bankrupt and was restructured, the production area was transformed into the Sanmian Community.

Researcher 28:50

So compared with the 1980s and 1990s, what changes came with the community system—in your living environment, gathering places, neighbourly relations?

Participant 28:50

Life became more active. Shops sprang up everywhere, so you didn't lack anything. Before, you had to go far to buy things. Now it's very convenient—whatever you need is nearby. And you can just make a phone call. Back then there weren't even telephones, only landlines, then pagers, then little wireless phones. Now with mobiles, you can just call to arrange anything.

Researcher 29:29

And after the community system began, with reconstruction and replanning, many public facilities were replaced by new blocks, supermarkets and markets appeared. You said life became more convenient. Compared with the 1980s and 1990s, what other changes do you notice—in services or daily life?

Participant 30:12

It's definitely much better.

Researcher 30:14

In what ways?

Participant 30:16

Well, I'm retired now and receive a pension. I don't need to work. If I want something to eat, I can just buy it. There's nothing to worry about.

Researcher 30:32

And with the higher population density after restructuring, what are your impressions of the community now?

Participant 30:43

When the community was first set up, it was quite good.

Researcher 30:45

So within the community the density has increased—there are more people, more cars, more street vendors.

Participant 30:51

Yes, and there are also more pieces of exercise equipment. Many elderly people go out to use them for fitness.

Researcher 31:02

Now the population density is higher than before, and public spaces are fewer. How do you feel about this change?

Participant 31:22

Well, now with more people, there are also more buses. But the environment isn't as good as it used to be, the air quality is worse. There are electric bikes and cars, petrol fumes. In the past, we burned coal, but it didn't feel as polluted as now.

Researcher 31:45

Do you feel that besides what you just mentioned, overcrowding affects you? Is crowding in outdoor spaces a big problem?

Participant 31:56

Yes, the environment is definitely worse than before.

Researcher 32:00

So more cars probably contribute to this. Apart from air pollution, what else does crowding affect? Are there any benefits at all from higher density?

Participant 32:27

The only benefit is transport—it's more convenient.

Researcher 32:32

So people now have more means of transport, including cars and the metro. Travelling is easier.

Participant 32:36

Yes, much more convenient.

Researcher 32:40

So higher density has both pros and cons. What do you think are the positives and negatives?

Participant 33:01

More people—some are good, some not. Some are unreasonable. For example, you didn't hit someone's car, but they fall over on purpose and accuse you. There are people with poor qualities.

Researcher 33:22

So more people means more social conflicts too. With more cars and vendors taking up space, what parts of daily life are most affected?

Participant 33:50

It causes congestion.

Researcher 33:55

Yes, although young and middle-aged people can still walk through easily, for the elderly and children it can be unsafe.

Participant 34:15

Yes, especially around food stalls. For example, at the small alley near me, I told the vendors many times not to set up there because it's too narrow. If an elderly person slips, it's dangerous.

Researcher 34:31

So there are safety risks.

Participant 34:33

Exactly, especially when stalls are right by the roadside. With cars passing, it's unsafe. I've told them many times, but some won't listen. It can be frustrating.

Researcher 34:48

So there are both good and bad sides to the changes.

Finally, how would you evaluate the changes in the community across the three periods?

Participant 34:59

Overall, things are more convenient now. Buying things is easy. For elderly people or families without children to care for them, the community arranges help and services.

Researcher 35:20

So in the 1950s and 1960s, during the planned economy, life was based on supply, with limited material conditions but a strong sense of solidarity. In the 1980s and 1990s, during Reform and Opening-up, there was greater variety in goods, more entertainment, and more residents. Later, with restructuring, the production and living areas separated, management shifted from the enterprise to the community. How do you feel about these three stages?

Participant 36:29

Back then, everything was managed by the factory. The Third Mill was good—it gave us benefits and organised lively activities. We worked hard, often overtime, but felt motivated. People weren't doing it for money, just dedication.

Now, with the community, there's also management. They ask if you have difficulties, they help. It's good.

Researcher 37:25

So life is still managed—before by the factory, now by the community.

Participant 37:27

Yes, it's fine. Both systems took care of us.

Researcher 37:35

What do you think is the biggest difference between the factory's management and the community's management?

Participant 37:43

At the factory, colleagues were very helpful. For example, I didn't know how to make children's clothes or cotton-padded jackets. Senior co-workers—whom we called “teachers”—would bring cloth and cotton, sew it for me, and give it to me. They were wonderful. Many of them are now in their seventies or eighties. Back then, neighbourly relations were very close.

Researcher 38:23

So neighbourly relations were particularly strong.

Participant 38:24

You know, it wasn't just neighbours, it was also the workers in the workshop. For example, Chen Yanli and the “teachers” who worked with me—they were all very kind. We called them “teachers” out of respect.

Researcher 38:33

So how do you feel the management of the living area by the factory compared with when it shifted to being managed by the community after the restructuring? In the early days, it wasn't yet formally a community but a factory living area. Besides the refinement of life services, what other differences do you notice?

Participant 38:56

Hard to say. Back then it was the factory; now it's the community. Both were very considerate. Whenever something came up, they would come and help. Even at your doorway, they would sweep and keep everything clean.

Researcher 39:16

Do you feel the refinement of life services—under the community now compared with when the factory was in charge—differs in its method or starting point? After all, the factory was an enterprise, so its management came partly from a production perspective, whereas the community focuses on residents' needs. From your experience, do you feel any difference?

Participant 39:59

Back then, there was property management, and they did a good job. Now, community staff also manage things very well. I don't think too much about it—both were good. You can buy whatever you want nearby, very convenient.

Researcher 40:19

So you have felt a difference. Up to now, compared with the 1980s and 1990s, have there been changes in residents' gathering places and cultural activities?

Participant 40:28

There are still activities now—meetings, classes, exercise spaces. Elderly people have places to be active. The community organises things well.

Researcher 40:46

And in terms of private socialising compared to the 1980s and 1990s?

Participant 40:59

Places have been renovated, and they're better now. Before, the community didn't have such facilities. I can't say too clearly, but now there are proper places, whereas in the past there weren't.

Researcher

So compared with before, there are more new activities, both organised and private. Has that changed?

Participant 41:33

Not really. There aren't many activity places. Sure, there's exercise equipment, and sometimes people go to the Cultural Palace or stroll about.

Researcher 41:45

So compared with the 1980s and 1990s, did people tend to stay in the community? After restructuring, do you feel people spend more time outside than before?

Participant 42:15

Now people go out much more. There are more places to go, so we go out often.

Researcher 42:21

And for you personally, compared with the 1980s and 1990s, do you spend less time inside the community?

Participant 42:36

Yes, definitely better than before.

Researcher 42:38

By "better," do you mean now you can go outside the community more often, so you spend less time inside?

Participant 42:48

Yes, but there are still activities in the community. Mostly though, we go to the Cultural Palace.

Researcher 42:54

So people gather more at the Cultural Palace. In the past, people might sit around chatting all day in the community, but now you prefer to go out instead.

Participant 43:11

Yes, I want to go out more. Maybe it's because I grew up here—I don't feel like sitting around anymore.

Researcher 43:20

So your daily activities have shifted.

Participant 43:23

Yes, I prefer to go out now. Before, people went out less.

Researcher 43:30

In terms of shopping, do you still mainly buy things within the community, or has that changed?

Participant 43:41

Now you don't even need to leave. There are shops right outside—supermarkets, vegetable stalls. You don't need to go anywhere else.

Researcher 43:52

But you also go out more, right?

Participant 43:56

Yes, I do.

Researcher 43:57

So you might shop within the community, but still go out more often. Compared with the 1980s and 1990s, do

you and your neighbours feel that your daily routines have changed?

Participant 44:37

In the past, at the Third Mill it wasn't convenient for bathing. I had to go all the way to the Water Plant to bathe—it was far. There wasn't a bathhouse at the Third Mill. The Fourth Mill had one, the First Mill had one, but not ours. It was inconvenient, so I had to go far to bathe.

Researcher 45:05

So the bathhouse at the Fourth Mill still exists, but the one at the Third Mill no longer does.

Participant 45:10

The Fourth Mill's bathhouse is gone too, only the First Mill still has one.

Researcher 45:12

So you still prefer public bathhouses. Back in the day, the Third Mill also had one, right?

Participant 45:19

Yes, in the old days it was free. Later on, they started charging a bit. It was run by the trade union of the Third Mill. There was also a bathhouse in the family residential compound, but now it's gone.

Researcher 45:29

In your memory, was the bathhouse just a place to bathe, or was it more than that?

Participant 45:38

At the Third Mill, people got used to it. After finishing work, everyone wanted to go and bathe—it became a habit.

Researcher 45:42

So it was more of a habit? Because it was also a kind of public activity—you could meet many acquaintances or even strangers. At home it was just bathing alone, but at the staff bathhouse, even though it wasn't a commercial place, people got used to going.

Participant 46:04

Exactly. At home it felt lonely. At the bathhouse, it always felt like the bath was cleaner.

Researcher 46:15

Back in the 1950s and 1960s, after bathing at the public bathhouse, did people also socialise there?

Researcher 46:22

Would people sit around chatting after their bath, or was it simply bathe and leave?

Participant 46:29

We were too tired. After bathing, we just went home to sleep.

Researcher 46:32

Right, that makes sense. From the 1980s and 1990s up to the restructuring, when the area was redeveloped, do you feel there were other changes in lifestyle?

Participant 46:51

Life definitely improved. You don't have to worry about food—shops are everywhere. And with pensions now, we have some income. Back then wages were just a few dozen yuan and things were scarce. Now, whatever you need is available.

Researcher 47:09

Apart from that, is there anything else you'd like to add?

Participant 47:56

Not really. Sometimes I just go wherever things are cheaper.

Researcher 48:01

I don't have any more questions then.

Case study interview transcript-resident 8

Researcher 1 00:01

Do you still remember what it was like during the planned economy period when you were doing your internship under the Provincial Bureau? Is that alright? Yes? I know you're busy, the community is busy too. Xiaoli has a meeting soon. So, during the planned economy period, in the 1950s and 60s when you were young—

Participant 00:22

When I was young, it was called the *living area*.

Researcher 1 00:24

Yes, you're right—this was the living area, not the production area. At that time this whole place was the living area. Do you remember what it was like here during the planned economy?

Participant 00:34

Do you mean the community itself, or the living conditions?

Researcher 1 00:39

Tell me about the environment you lived in, the living conditions in the living area here, in the 1950s and 60s, before 1978.

Participant 00:49

The sanitary conditions were poor. For example, in front of the Municipal Party Committee building they set up tables at the Cultural Palace for people to give opinions. I went several times to raise issues, saying in summer the smell of rotten watermelons was unbearable. That was in the 1950s and 60s. Nobody managed it, flies buzzing everywhere, rubbish stinking in the yard.

Researcher 1 01:17

Property management didn't take care of it back then?

Participant 01:23

Perhaps they did spray some chemicals, but mainly it depended on whether cleaning was done properly.

Researcher 1 01:33

So there was no fixed management—just the living environment itself.

Participant 01:36

Yes, the living environment. As for food, that was alright—vegetables were cheap, just a few *mao*.

Researcher 1 01:47

At that time you still used grain coupons, didn't you?

Participant 01:49

Yes, with grain coupons it was costly. But for a few fen you could buy a big bowl of bean sprouts, or five tea eggs for one mao. For twenty fen you could buy a bowl of pork ribs. At that time, with just over thirty yuan you could support a whole family. Things were cheap. Even cigarettes—some cost just three fen. Food was inexpensive.

Researcher 1 02:23

And what about the housing conditions at that time?

Participant 02:26

Housing was very poor. After marriage we lived in a *mother-and-child* building. Several people shared one room, sometimes separated only by a curtain.

Researcher 1 02:46

Were there any advantages to the living environment? Including housing, outdoor environment, cultural atmosphere?

Participant 02:58

At that time, there were no thieves. People slept with their doors open, and in summer many lay outside on the streets. Public order was very good. Even during the hardest times in the 1960s, nobody stole anything. Neighbourly relations were good.

Researcher 1 03:41

How would you evaluate neighbourly relations in the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 03:45

At that time, people got along well, they depended on each other and looked after one another. Not distant like now.

Researcher 1 04:03

So neighbourly relations in the 1950s and 60s were very close, with relatives and friends all living together in the courtyards.

Participant 04:12

Yes, life was difficult, so kinship ties were strong. Young people deferred to their elders, and relationships were intimate. Now family ties aren't as strong as they used to be.

Researcher 1 04:46

What was the main means of transport in the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 04:52

Mostly walking, sometimes rickshaws. I remember when we went to march at the Municipal Party Committee, everyone got up early and went on foot. Buying a bicycle was very difficult, buses were scarce. To get my husband a bicycle, I had to ask for help from the county Party secretary, through my teacher who was director at the Provincial Labour Bureau. In the end, the county head managed to get one. Before that, he had to walk long distances every day, back and forth, which was exhausting. Grain at that time was rationed—there was coarse grain and fine grain.

After graduation, I didn't come here straight away, I went to work at the Pingdingshan Railway Bureau, in the Mining Railway. Seven of us girls were assigned there. We even moved for work. I had heard that the climate there was mild, like spring all year round. The teachers warned us not to go, saying it was easy to get lung disease there. I said I was healthy, it was fine.

Researcher 1 07:21

After you came here, during the planned economy period, what activities did you and those around you take part in after work?

Participant 07:40

We were all educated, not from the countryside. Most were assigned to workshops. But the environment was bad, the smell was awful. We had no time to go out for leisure.

Researcher 1 08:10

So after work, you didn't go out to do activities?

Participant 08:13

Think about it—working overtime, with early, middle, and night shifts, plus an extra hour. Where was the time? Only on rest days could you go into the city to watch a film. There was 3D cinema then, with special glasses.

Researcher 1 08:34

So in the living area, after work, were there few outdoor activities?

Participant 08:39

Very few. Only sometimes, on rest days or Sundays, people went to the sports ground in the south of Zhengzhou to watch films.

Researcher 1 08:49

In the living area, during the planned economy, were there gatherings for chatting, or activities sometimes organised by the trade union or Residents' Committee?

Participant 09:08

Yes, in the living area there was singing, dancing, and other activities held on the playground in the evenings.

Researcher 1 09:25

But not on a regular basis?

Participant 09:27

Not really. Most people just slept. Meetings were frequent after shifts, especially night shifts, and nobody wanted to listen—everyone was too exhausted. The meetings were rigid and dogmatic.

Researcher 1 09:56

After Reform and Opening Up, in the 1980s and 90s, new residential buildings were constructed in the community. Other factory workers moved into Sanmian, and later, with the housing reform, houses were bought and rented out, so outsiders came in.

During this period, in the 1980s and 90s, what changes did you notice in the community's living environment? For example, in housing, transport, activities, and where activities took place?

Participant 10:32

There were many changes. New housing was built, living space was larger. For example, across from me, one unit was shared by three households—so much more spacious than before. Housing was allocated according to conditions. Medical care was convenient and free, with the three-part form for prescriptions. Medicines were genuine and effective. Nowadays, medicines are often fake, not like back then.

Researcher 1 11:33

So during the 1980s and 90s, when the factory was still in charge, workers' medical insurance continued, didn't it?

With the new housing and mixed residents from different factories, did you feel the living environment had changed?

Participant 11:57

Of course it had. At least housing was more spacious, allocated by seniority, with better conditions. The living environment improved, hygiene was better, and life was much improved.

Researcher 1 12:26

And with self-employed people moving in, did the living area change?

Participant 12:32

Yes, many self-employed people set up businesses. Management wasn't too strict—as long as they paid taxes on time, it was fine. Nobody cheated or extorted money.

Researcher 1 13:09

How did transport in the 1980s and 90s compare with the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 13:17

It was much better. Bicycles were readily available, no longer something you had to beg to buy. If you had money, you could buy one. Later, minibuses appeared, which made transport more convenient. There were more buses and also trolleybuses.

Researcher 1 13:41

Do you think in the 1980s and 90s people often took the bus?

Participant 13:45

Of course, the buses were always so full you couldn't even get on. At that time, there were few other means of transport, so buses were the main option.

Researcher 1 13:50

After transport changed, did residents' after-work activities differ compared with the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 13:59

Certainly, there were more activities. More places to go for leisure—there was exercise equipment, and places to watch opera performances.

Researcher 1 14:12

In the 1980s and 90s, more people went to the Cultural Palace. But within the living area, did people still gather to chat as before? Was there any change?

Participant 14:24

There were many activities, like playing cards. The elderly had recreation rooms, and at the Cultural Palace many people played cards. Now most of those card-playing places have disappeared. There was also opera, and people drank and chatted there—it didn't cost much.

Researcher 1 14:54

At that time, within the living area, where did people usually gather? Where did they tend to cluster?

Participant 15:11

Mostly just out front here. The elderly sat there chatting. Nowadays those old men don't come any more. Back then the open space in front was where they gathered to sit in the sun.

Researcher 1 15:29

So, more men than women gathered there? In the 1980s and 90s, many were already retired. Besides sitting in the living area, what other activities did elderly people have in the 1980s and 90s?

Participant 15:40

Nothing much—chatting, sitting in the sun, talking away happily, and sometimes playing cards, poker, or mah-jong. Those were the main forms of entertainment.

Researcher 1 16:04

Apart from gathering here to play cards and chat, did elderly people in the 1980s and 90s also go to the Cultural Palace?

Participant 16:16

Very rarely. It was mainly the young who went for activities, not the elderly.

Researcher 1 16:23

How would you evaluate neighbourly relations in the 1980s and 90s compared with the 1950s and 60s? How were relations between neighbours?

Participant 16:35

If a neighbour had some difficulty back then, people would always lend a hand. Now nobody has the time—everyone just minds their own business.

Researcher 1 16:50

So neighbourly relations in the 1980s and 90s compared with the 1950s and 60s—did they change?

Participant 16:55

I think neighbours were still quite friendly. If there was a quarrel, people usually kept it under control.

Researcher 1 17:05

After the 1980s and 90s, with people from other factories and outside Danwei moving in, and after the housing reform, do you think neighbourly relations changed much compared with the 1950s and 60s?

Participant 17:16

Not really. Outsiders generally weren't bullied, and nobody bullied others. Everyone was treated the same. There were no serious conflicts.

Researcher 1 17:31

Later, in the 1980s and 90s, many new buildings were constructed here, and open spaces decreased. What did you think of that change?

Participant 17:44

The Third Mill's environment was better than the other factories. The housing environment was good, the conditions were the best—better than the Fourth Mill or the First Mill. The atmosphere and relations among people at the Third Mill were also somewhat better.

Researcher 1 18:20

Later, after the Third Mill was restructured, the living area came under community management. Many facilities—such as the museum, basketball court, and canteen—were demolished, and new buildings and a food market were built. There was replanning and reconstruction. What changes did you see in the community? How did you view them?

Participant 18:58

There were more people, more vehicles, and more community management work to handle. For example, with traffic congestion or when someone fell ill, community staff would come out to help.

Researcher 1 19:18

So, would you say services became better and more detailed compared with the 1980s and 90s?

Participant 19:25

Indeed, it's much better now. Back then, no matter how far it was, we always walked. For example, going all the way to Houzhuang to pay visits—we walked there.

Researcher 1 19:38

Was that organised by the trade union or by the community?

Participant 19:43

By the trade union. Also, the people working shifts—after finishing work or before the next shift in the evening—would go to the countryside in the mornings to line up and help with tasks like the wheat harvest. They even brought dry rations and meals to help others with their work.

Researcher 1 20:13

And now such things no longer exist, right? Compared with the 1980s and 90s, what do you think changed in neighbourly relations after 2006?

Participant 20:25

Nowadays, neighbours hardly interact. In the past, neighbourly relations were close—people helped one another, sometimes even closer than family, because relatives often lived far away while neighbours were right there. Now, neighbourly relations have become much weaker.

Participant 20:38

Living conditions have improved greatly. In the past, food was poor, and white steamed bread was considered a luxury. Now our standard of living has improved hundreds of times. Back then, just eating a fried bread would make us feel happy. Now life is far better.

Researcher 1 21:38

Yes, living conditions have indeed improved a lot.

Participant 21:41

Transport has also become far more advanced. Now that the country is developing, rural women no longer need to do heavy labour—farming is mechanised.

Researcher 1 21:59

Do you think that since 2006, compared with the 1980s and 90s, residents' means of transport have changed a lot?

Participant 22:06

The change is tremendous, worlds apart from the past. From bicycles to electric bikes, even motorbikes have been replaced by e-bikes. The tricycles that old people push are all electric now. Buses are also much more convenient. Almost every household has a private car—my family has two or three. Compared with before, it's truly night and day.

Researcher 1 22:45

After 2006, compared with the 1980s and 90s, do you think the living environment—both outdoor and indoor—changed?

Participant 22:56

It changed a lot—the environment is much better. Now, wherever you go, there's no foul smell, whether in summer or winter. Rubbish is collected daily, so the environment is hundreds of times better. But some people still litter—I'll correct it when I see it, but sometimes you can't find out who did it.

Researcher 1 23:21

The community density also increased, with many new buildings, more people and more vehicles. What do you think of this increased density? Has it had a big impact? Is it good or bad?

Participant 23:42

Of course it's good—it makes life more convenient in every way. But some cars are parked haphazardly, without order, now filling both sides of the roads.

Researcher 1 23:52

And how do you think this affects daily life?

Participant 23:54

It's still convenient, and the impact isn't big. As long as there are places to park, whether you ride or not doesn't matter much. It's just that there are too many people—Zhengzhou is crowded to begin with. Many overpasses have been built.

Researcher 1 24:18

Since 2006, do you think residents' outdoor activities, including those of the elderly, have changed compared with the 1980s?

Participant 24:32

Yes, there are many more outdoor activities now. In the mornings people go jogging, there's lots of exercise equipment—even two sets inside the courtyards—so it's much easier for the elderly to keep active. It's also easier for young people, really much more convenient. Especially since President Xi emphasised caring for the elderly. During the pandemic, foreign governments gave money for healthcare, and here the medical insurance reform was also done well. Although the three years of the pandemic were difficult, it was managed reasonably well.

Researcher 1 25:48

Since 2006, compared with the 1980s and 90s, have the gathering places for people in the community, especially the elderly, changed?

Participant 26:06

Now there are very few gathering places. I've hardly seen elderly people gathering anywhere. Around 80% of them no longer come together. I don't even see young people sitting together anywhere.

Researcher 1 26:21

Do you think elderly people go to the Cultural Palace more now? Compared with the 1960s and 70s, how does it stand—about the same?

Participant 26:47

Young people also go to the Cultural Palace, but most of them go in the mornings to exercise. Middle-aged and elderly people go more often. Sometimes when the weather is good, the Cultural Palace is so crowded you can't even move—very lively. Many people go there for fitness and exercise.

Researcher 1 27:11

How would you evaluate the changes across these three periods, as this area shifted from a "living quarter" to a "community"?

Participant 27:25

Speaking of these three periods, today's community is much better than before. Housing used to be cramped, but now there are more places for leisure and play, and living conditions have improved. Although prices are higher, the standard of living has indeed risen. In the past, a jin of vegetables cost

only one or two mao, now the prices are high, but that's because everyone's living standards have improved. Even the farmers selling vegetables live better now, so naturally prices have gone up.

Researcher 1 28:25

Mm, all right, I don't have any further questions.

Case study interview transcript-resident 9

Researcher 00:00

You're too modest. You must know a great deal about this community, since you've always been working here, right? Yes, the real situation of the community—your knowledge is more persuasive than written words. Not that written records have no weight, but your perspective is different. Written words are flat, while your lived experience is three-dimensional. So I'd like to ask: do you still remember what this community was like during the planned economy period?

Participant 00:30

During the planned economy, it wasn't called a "community"; it was called a "living area". At that time, when people retired, this area belonged to... I forget what it was called. Back then, during the planned economy, I was still working. I only started engaging with this side of things after retiring around 2000. I have a deep impression because my spouse fell ill in 2000 with a stroke. Since then, with both of us retired, we've had to rely on the community for many everyday matters, all the trivial things of daily life.

Researcher 01:14

At different stages, management and people's lives changed. I'd like to ask: in your impression, what was the living area like in the 1950s and 60s during the planned economy?

Participant 01:41

In the 1950s and 60s, during the planned economy, I was still in school—I entered the Third Cotton Mill in 1968. From what I remember, the local police station also handled difficulties and issues for residents at the grassroots level. Now I feel that belongs under the community too, and I don't see a big difference. Because everything is well staffed, and now the work is more detailed: one person is responsible for a particular area, very finely divided. Because of my family's special situation, I've had much contact with the community, and I really feel this way.

Researcher 02:37

Let me help you hold that.

Participant 02:47

It's not sorted yet.

Researcher 02:57

And what about before?

Participant 03:01

When I was still working, we relied on the trade union—it was the workers' home, we depended on the union.

Researcher 03:06

So in the 1950s and 60s there was also the union.

Participant 03:09

Yes. After I retired, with my spouse's illness, I've had more dealings with the community, with more domestic matters to manage. Thinking back, the role of the union really comes to mind.

Researcher 03:23

Don't cry. Since after restructuring everything became community-based, compared to the 1980s and 90s when the enterprise was still in charge, in terms of life services and the living environment, do you feel there's any difference? Earlier you mentioned that the community has given you much support now, right? Back in the 1980s and 90s, when it was still enterprise-managed, did you not feel much difference?

Participant 04:04

In the 1980s and 90s, I was still working, not retired. For many living issues, we relied on the union.

Researcher 04:09

And what's the difference between the union solving problems then and the community solving them now?

Participant 04:13

I feel that the union, like the community, considered the problems of the lowest-level workers and tried to solve them. I don't think there's a big difference. Both were quite earnest and serious.

Researcher 04:31

So both were responsible. Now, compared to the 1980s and 90s, after the restructuring, old infrastructure was demolished, new plans drawn up, such as the new Textile Museum, new vegetable market, and new residential buildings. With these changes in the living environment, how do you feel compared with the 1980s and 90s?

Participant 04:53

At that time, the textile factory had a large workforce—for example, the Third Cotton Mill had over ten thousand people. The biggest pressure then was housing. In the 1980s and 90s, housing was very crowded. Later, in the 1990s, the situation improved somewhat, housing conditions improved. In recent years, I think the surrounding environment has changed a great deal. The changes have been considerable. In terms of living facilities, the municipal government has given much thought, and I'm quite satisfied.

Researcher 05:43

So compared to the 1980s and 90s, things are more convenient now.

Participant 05:47

Yes, I personally feel life is more convenient, the infrastructure has increased, and conditions have improved compared to before.

Researcher 05:53

And what about transport compared to the 1980s and 90s?

Participant 05:58

The change has been significant. People's main way of travelling has changed. For me, at my age, public transport is quite convenient. The government takes good care of the elderly. After 60, there's the elderly concession card, and all aspects are fairly well thought out.

Researcher 06:24

So compared to the elderly who retired in the 1980s and 90s, and those after the restructuring, do you think modes of transport for older people have changed?

Participant 06:35

Basically, older people take the bus more. At this age, most take the bus.

Researcher 06:41

And what about the scope of activity?

Participant 06:43

Taking the bus is free, which is convenient. In terms of quality of life, I feel things are much better than before. Personally, I can't go out often because of my spouse's illness, even though I have the concession card. But I see my colleagues—most of them often go out, travelling, going on outings, and public transport is convenient.

Researcher 07:14

Compared to the 1980s and 90s, were older people's activity ranges different? For example, in the past they may have stayed more within the community, but later gradually expanded outward. Did you notice such differences in activity places?

Participant 07:31

I feel that compared with before, horizons have broadened, there are more places for activities, and the facilities around us have also changed.

For example, May Day Labour Park is very close to us, and Bishagang Park as well—these are public facilities. There really are many elderly people there.

In any case, I feel that everything about our community is really quite good.

Participant 07:57

Why? Because I am classified as a disadvantaged household in our community. My second child has been ill for 15 years, and we have had to rely on support, relying on the community.

And the community—from the Party secretary down to the grassroots staff—all show concern and care. When you mention it, I really feel moved. This community now reminds me of the old trade union.

Researcher 08:22

In the 1980s and 90s, the trade union...

Participant 08:26

At that time it was simply a matter of the enterprise.

Researcher 08:29

Yes.

Compared with the restructuring and rebuilding of the community later, with changes in the environment, do you feel that compared with the 1980s and 90s, neighbourhood relations are different?

Participant 08:47

Speaking of neighbourhood relations—

it may be because of the living environment. Basically, each household keeps to itself.

Once the door is closed, contact is less frequent, not like before.

I feel it's related to the housing conditions.

It's not like in the countryside, where everyone would carry their bowls under a big tree to eat together.

But I feel that if something happens in a household, neighbours are still caring and warm-hearted.

No matter what happens—for example, my spouse uses a wheelchair and it's difficult to get upstairs or downstairs—any neighbour, whether upstairs or downstairs, who sees will always come over to help.

Researcher 09:32

So things are still harmonious. Compared with the 1980s and 90s and after the restructuring, within the community, in terms of residents' activities—not necessarily officially organised ones, but private gatherings, chatting, dancing, minding children, neighbours gathering—have the gathering places changed compared to the 1980s and 90s?

Participant 09:59

Conditions back then were more limited.

Now I feel that facilities have indeed increased.

Researcher 10:06

And the places where people gather, have they changed?

Participant 10:09

Basically, around you there are benches and exercise equipment. In recent years, a small square has been added, with more space. I feel the space is larger. Of course, at an older age you're limited yourself and can't go far.

Researcher 10:29

So neighbourhood relations are fairly harmonious. In these venues, are elderly people the main users? In the 1980s, where did elderly people usually go? Outdoors, whether inside the community or outside—where did you usually see them?

Participant 10:55

From my impression—in the 1980s I was still working—I felt that the older ones, those who entered the factory in the early 1950s or mid-1950s, many had several children. From my perspective, elderly people weren't as active as they are now. They were mostly at home doing housework, looking after children. I don't recall them being like elderly people now.

Firstly, facilities were not as good as they are now. Secondly, now they receive pensions, with

Appendix 4. The game card for the Workshop board game





DISCUSSION

PROCESS CARD
PRELIMINARY COMPOSITION
OF DESIGN GUIDELINES



REVIEW

PROCESS CARD
REVIEW AND ITERATION



ITERATION

PROCESS CARD
REVIEW AND ITERATION

1

1. Based on the investigation and research findings, discuss the implementation methods of the required content in the outline.

2. What resources are needed for the suggestions?

3. Can these resources be obtained?

4. What is the efficiency, implementation cycle, and return on investment ratio of these suggestions?

5. Does the suggestion take into account the background factors of the community?

6. Is the suggestion sustainable?

2

1. Discuss again to determine if the suggestion is reasonable.

2. What resources are needed for the suggestions?

3. Can these resources be obtained?

4. What is the efficiency, implementation cycle, and return on investment ratio of these suggestions?

5. Does the suggestion take into account the background factors of the community?

6. Is the suggestion sustainable?

3

1. What resources are needed for the suggestions?

2. Can these resources be obtained?

3. What is the efficiency, implementation cycle, and return on investment ratio of these suggestions?

4. Does the suggestion take into account the background factors of the community?

5. Is the suggestion sustainable?

6. After the discussion, is it necessary to modify or delete the suggestion?



POLICY

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



FUND

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATION

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



PEER SUPPORT

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



EDUCATION

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



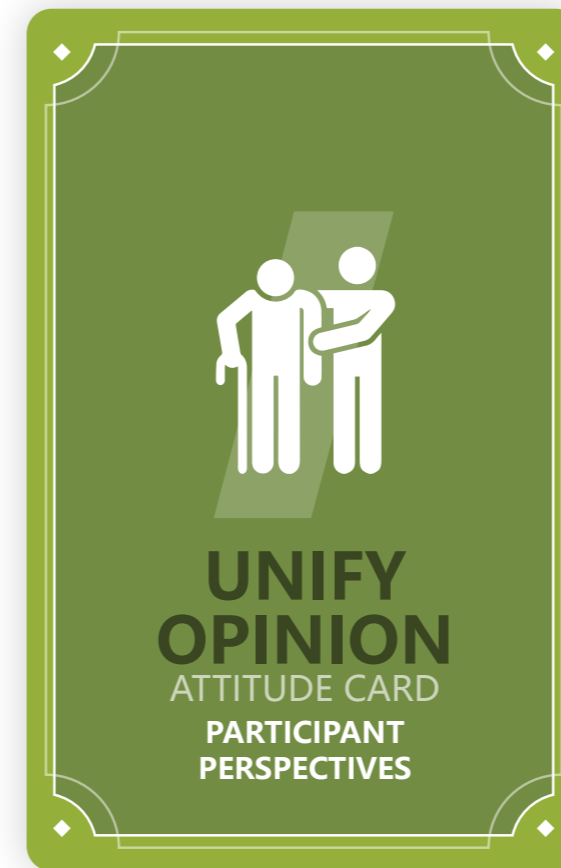
FAMILY SUPPORT

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD



SERVICE

FUNCTION CARD
METHOD





DYNAMIC MANAGEMENT

This theme focuses on changes in community management patterns and the impact of resident welfare policies on aging in place as neighbourhoods shift from a unitary to a communal system.

COST

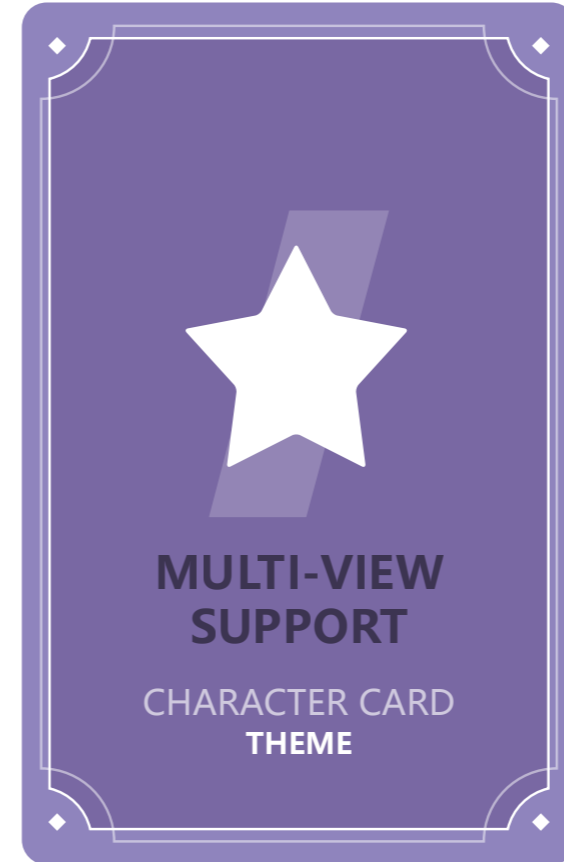
Cost, which focuses on the resources older people need to sustain their lives and access to resources.

GROUP CREATIVITY

Group Creativity, how groups support and influence older people's day-to-day decision-making in neighbourhoods and how it affects older people's relationship with public space.

SPACE ALLOCATION

Space Allocation, which looks at the distribution of spatial benefits in high-density neighbourhoods.



MULTIPURPOSE

The basic principle of allocating space resources in the community. How does the principle of allocation affect the older people and other age groups? And in the case of limited resources, ways to maximise the benefits of resource allocation practices in the community ageing environment.

DIFFERENTIATION

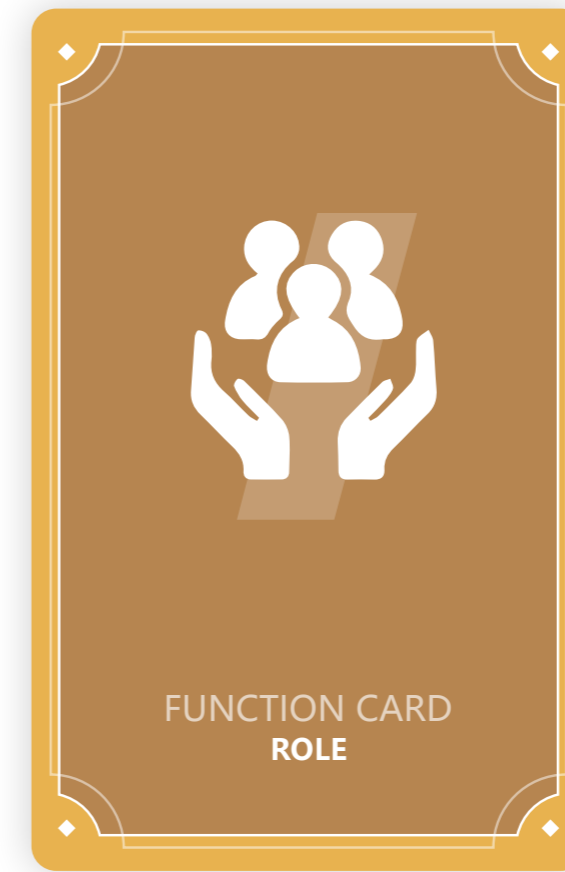
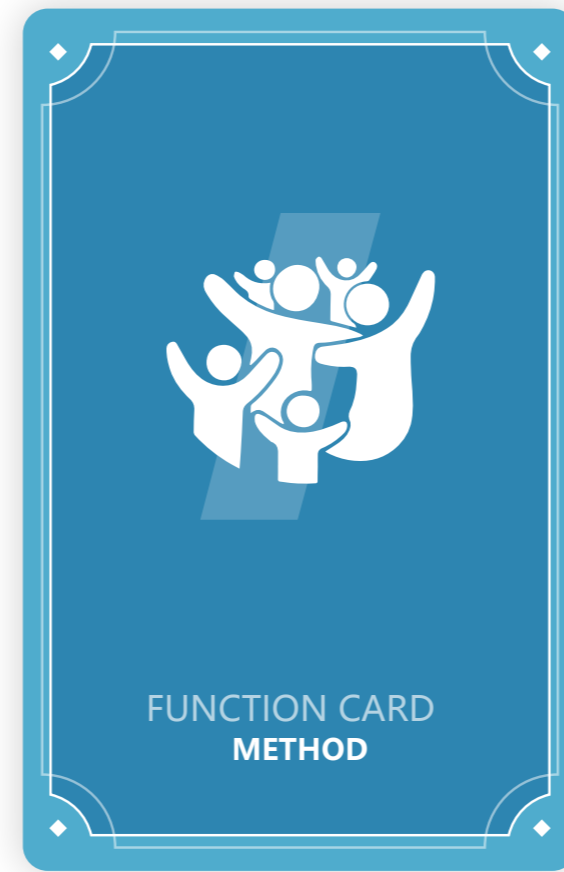
Differentiation in all aspects of community building is a characteristic of high-density age-friendly environments. Achieving differentiation within categories and giving older people enough choice is a necessary means of enhancing the experience of ageing in place. In addition, from the perspective of different age groups, a series of differences in the way space is used are reflected in the community, which is also one of the causes of a series of conflicts of interest.

MULTI-VIEW SUPPORT

The community's support for the young-old ageing in place should not only be divided into perspectives, but also focus on the level of support. And how to achieve the vision in the community when it faces new requirements as the population continues to age.

DRIVE FORWARD AS A WHOLE

The requirements for the running and management of high-density age-friendly communities. In a high-density community environment with party and government organisations at its core, how can the layout and operation of the management system, the status of project implementation, the formulation and implementation of relevant policies, and management authority create a balanced and sustainable age-friendly environment?



ATTITUDE CARD

FRAMEWORK IDEAL

OUTCOME

REMARK AREA

Safety Inspection and Ageing-Friendly Updates

Regularly inspect water, electricity, and gas facilities in homes of older people who living alone, empty-nesters, and those with disabilities.

Safety Inspection and Ageing-Friendly Updates

Upgrading of living apartment: spatial layout, floors, handrails, kitchen equipment, toilet and bathing facilities, emergency call devices, etc.

Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Rescue

Establish a community fire prevention and emergency rescue network.

Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Rescue

Encourage the installation of standalone smoke detection and alarm devices.

Green Space and Waste Classification

Strengthen the construction of the community's green space and create a hygienic and clean community environment.

Green Space and Waste Classification

Carry out waste classification knowledge and recycling activities.

Barrier-Free Facility Construction

Barrier-free upgrades of public facilities: ramps, stairs, elevators, handrails, etc.

Barrier-Free Facility Construction

Set up a clear identification system for community roads and public facilities.

Develop older peoples' volunteer groups. Systematic establishment of time banks for senior volunteer services.

Installation and retrofitting of indoor ageing-friendly facilities funded by the Government.

Renovation of the interior of residential buildings to ensure the functional integrity of all facilities in residential buildings.

In addition to the facilities required in any regular residential neighbourhood, consideration should be given to the installation of high-density residential buildings that are required to be equipped with security and service facilities.

Upgrade of interior fire protection system.

A community-led initiative to engage residents in the greening of spaces.

Make full use of small and micro spaces to create a green environment.

Organize educational activities and waste sorting campaigns to promote knowledge of waste sorting and recycling, and use the income from the recycling industry to subsidize community activities.

Consider lift equipment procurement options downgraded to ensure that suitable installation space is found and funding is affordable.

The reconstruction of the signage of the community wayfinding system, the system should be based on the primary consideration of the elderly and the disabled. Ensure that information is easy to read.

Facility and smart device assistance for travelling information.

To establish and improve the design of cultural guides and systems in the community, taking into account the history and culture of the community.



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD



REMARK AREA

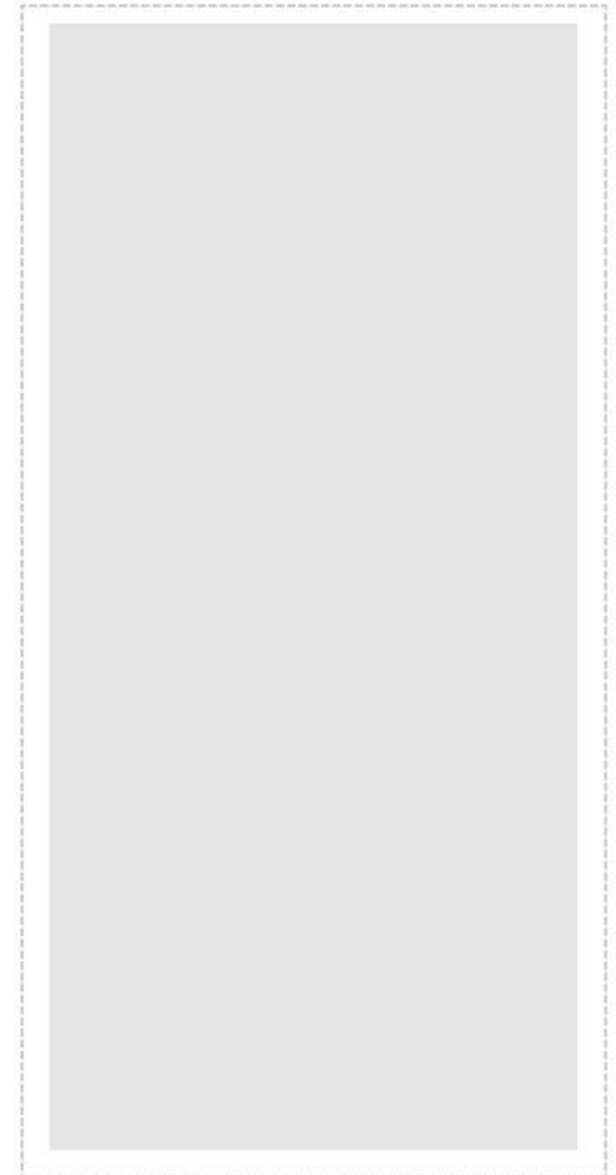


FRAMEWORK

IDEAL

<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Pedestrian paths should be safe and convenient with high connectivity.</p>	<p>The functional division of the street, the support of residents' socialising, the extension of amenities and the access function should be divided in an orderly manner.</p>
<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Design the community road system to separate pedestrians and vehicles, improve walkability of pavements.</p>	<p>The demarcation of access roads should be safeguarded to prevent encroachment and improve the flow of walking.</p>
<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Adapt public transportation for older people.</p>	<p>Comprehensive upgrading of public transport, from transport mode, supporting facilities to services, to enhance the confidence of the elderly in using public transport on their own.</p>
<p>Public Gathering Spaces Residential areas should be equipped with sufficient outdoor public spaces such as plazas and gardens to meet the leisure and entertainment needs of older people.</p>	<p>Make the most of fragmented spaces to create small but numerous outdoor spaces.</p> <p>Focus on the differentiation of public space types to enhance the interest of the environment within the community.</p>
<p>Public Gathering Spaces Supporting facilities should be concentrated in the community center or locations with convenient transportation to facilitate access by older people.</p>	<p>Respect the naturally occurring areas within the community, and new gathering spaces should be proximate and accessible.</p>
<p>Health Management and Services Grassroots medical and health institutions provide health management services.</p>	
<p>Health Management and Services Support the development of community-embedded medical and nursing integrated institutions.</p>	
<p>Elderly Care Facilities Elderly care institutions providing services such as daily care, meal assistance, and mobility assistance.</p>	<p>Co-ordination of housing stock within the community and conversion of buildings to complement elderly care facilities.</p>

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD



REMARK AREA



FRAMEWORK IDEAL

Elderly Care Facilities

Equip with rehabilitation aids and provide professional guidance.

Community Visits and Legal Services

Regularly visit elderly individuals facing special difficulties to ensure they have no obstacles in their lives.

Community Visits and Legal Services

Establish public legal service rooms to provide legal assistance.

Information Notification

Community information should be promptly notified to older people.

Information Notification

Feedback channels between older people and community managers should be smooth and timely.

Elderly Social Organizations and Activities

Establish grassroots elderly social organizations such as elderly associations.

Elderly Social Organizations and Activities

Support the widespread participation of older people in group activity.

Elderly Education and Volunteer Service

Set up elderly education learning points and carry out diversified educational activities.

Elderly Education and Volunteer Service

Establish neighborhood mutual assistance organizations or volunteer teams to provide help and support in the daily lives of older people.

Developing the size of volunteer groups for community services for the older people, with a strong focus on developing student groups as volunteers.

Promotion of mobile handling aids.

Developing multiple information notification channels, such as elderly relations networks and communication devices, to ensure timely notification of public information in the community.

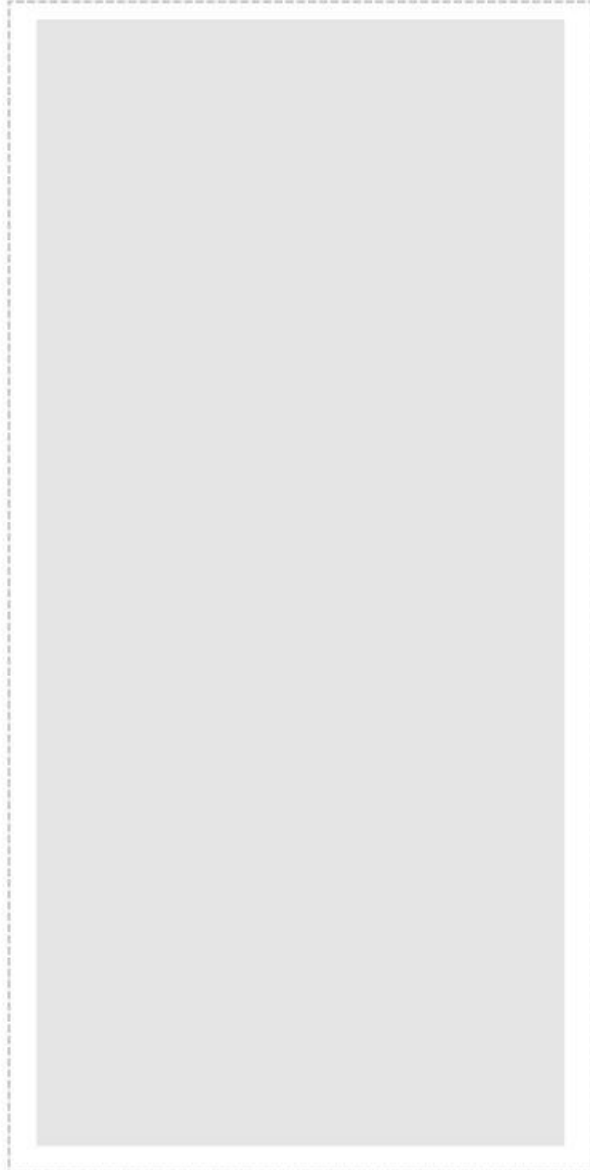
Establishing a sustainable feedback mechanism between the elderly and the management organisation. A humane and caring attitude should be adopted, and feedback from the elderly on difficulties encountered should be actively encouraged.

Strongly support the activities of social groups for older people in the community.

Diversity of public activities to meet diversified needs.

Establishment of mutual-help neighbourhood volunteer teams to increase the source of home-based elderly service providers.

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD

REMARK AREA

FRAMEWORK IDEAL

Positive View of Ageing

Conduct education on a positive view of aging for older people in the community.

Education on a Positive View of Ageing

Organize thematic educational activities on respecting, loving, and assisting older people.

Family Elderly Care

Carry out elderly care training for elderly's family and services.

Family Elderly Care

Encourage social forces to provide supportive care services for families of older people with disabilities.

Health and Elderly Care Information Platform

Utilize the communication device and elderly care information platform to connect service supply and demand information in real-time.

Smart Technology Training

Assist older people in learning the use of smart products and technologies.

Organizational Structure and Personnel Allocation

Assign a specialized position in charge of aging work among community management staff.

Organizational Structure and Personnel Allocation

Equip with full-time nursing workers to serve older people.

Developing free mental health treatment for the elderly in the community to help prevent the development of depression or negative life attitudes in old age.

Actively promoting care for the elderly and creating an atmosphere of care for older people.

Provision of home care training courses to increase the care skills of caregivers.

Expanding the sources of funding for free home-based care by actively seeking social forces, such as charitable funds, to supplement the costs required for the service, in addition to government funding.

Creation of a post dedicated to older people, with recruitment requirements rooted in interpersonal relationships with the older population of a community.

Home and care service companies should be introduced in the community, with full-time carers who can be readily employed in the community.

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD

REMARK AREA

FRAMEWORK

Funds and Policy Safeguards
Increase financial investment in elderly service facilities.

Funds and Policy Safeguards
Establish a long-term mechanism for the construction of Ageing-Friendly communities.

IDEAL

Government-led efforts to expand the quality of facilities and sources of funding for further development of the community's public environment. Increase investments of a reciprocal nature.

The voice of older people should be increased in community decision-making mechanisms, feedback mechanisms and monitoring mechanisms.

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD



REMARK AREA



FRAMEWORK IDEAL

Safety Inspection and Ageing-Friendly Updates

Regularly inspect water, electricity, and gas facilities in homes of older people who living alone, empty-nesters, and those with disabilities.

Safety Inspection and Ageing-Friendly Updates

Upgrading of living apartment: spatial layout, floors, handrails, kitchen equipment, toilet and bathing facilities, emergency call devices, etc.

Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Rescue

Establish a community fire prevention and emergency rescue network.

Community Fire Prevention and Emergency Rescue

Encourage the installation of standalone smoke detection and alarm devices.

Green Space and Waste Classification

Strengthen the construction of the community's green space and create a hygienic and clean community environment.

Green Space and Waste Classification

Carry out waste classification knowledge and recycling activities.

Barrier-Free Facility Construction

Barrier-free upgrades of public facilities: ramps, stairs, elevators, handrails, etc.

Barrier-Free Facility Construction

Set up a clear identification system for community roads and public facilities.

Intelligent home care facilities

Implementation of a monitoring system for older persons living alone.

Setting up special funds for the renovation of home support facilities for older people

Emergency call system

Refurbishment of infrastructure

The deepening of the responsibilities of property management companies and the importance of establishing third-party oversight related to property companies

Future community management system based on coordinated resource inputs

Commercial operations. Building with third parties

Customised Senior Citizen Sign System

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD



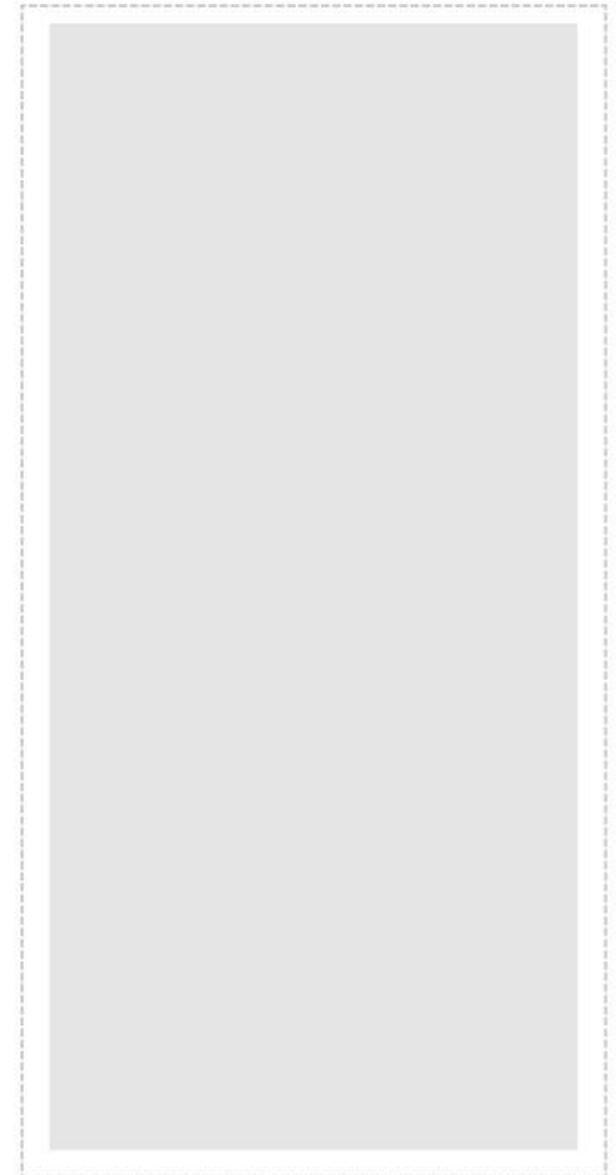
REMARK AREA



FRAMEWORK IDEAL

<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Pedestrian paths should be safe and convenient with high connectivity.</p>	
<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Design the community road system to separate pedestrians and vehicles, improve walkability of pavements.</p>	
<p>Pedestrian Paths and Transportation System Adapt public transportation for older people.</p>	
<p>Public Gathering Spaces Residential areas should be equipped with sufficient outdoor public spaces such as plazas and gardens to meet the leisure and entertainment needs of older people.</p>	<p>Guiding and regulating private shops for leisure time non-profit exchange places</p> <p>Provision of simple and safe recreational and sports facilities</p> <p>Encourage residents to donate facilities</p>
<p>Public Gathering Spaces Supporting facilities should be concentrated in the community center or locations with convenient transportation to facilitate access by older people.</p>	
<p>Health Management and Services Grassroots medical and health institutions provide health management services.</p>	
<p>Health Management and Services Support the development of community embedded medical and nursing integrated institutions.</p>	
<p>Elderly Care Facilities Elderly care institutions providing services such as daily care, meal assistance, and mobility assistance.</p>	<p>Multi-purpose care centres</p>

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD



REMARK AREA



FRAMEWORK

IDEAL

Elderly Care Facilities

Equip with rehabilitation aids and provide professional guidance.

Community Visits and Legal Services

Regularly visit elderly individuals facing special difficulties to ensure they have no obstacles in their lives.

Community Visits and Legal Services

Establish public legal service rooms to provide legal assistance.

Information Notification

Community information should be promptly notified to older people.

Information Notification

Feedback channels between older people and community managers should be smooth and timely.

Elderly Social Organizations and Activities

Establish grassroots elderly social organizations such as elderly associations.

Elderly Social Organizations and Activities

Carry out community "Silver Age Initiatives" to support the widespread participation of older people in group activity.

Elderly Education and Volunteer Service

Set up elderly education learning points and carry out diversified educational activities.

Elderly Education and Volunteer Service

Encourage the development of volunteer service mechanisms for home-based community elderly care.

Introducing inputs from social resources, which have a lot of room for improvement.

Basic medical treatment at home

Communities should pay more attention to elderly people in transition to housing, and establish comprehensive means of social protection.

Information dissemination system using elderly acquaintances

Community-led head groups for older people actively incorporate feedback mechanisms, with head groups leading to more older people

The community helps to publicize community activities, with attention to the loose nature of the activities; tightly structured elderly people don't fit in

Hobbies, Recreational Spirit, Activity Driven

Supporting activities initiated by older people themselves

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD

REMARK AREA

FRAMEWORK

IDEAL

Elderly Education and Volunteer Service
Establish neighborhood mutual assistance organizations or volunteer teams to provide help and support in the daily lives of older people.

Education on a Positive View of Ageing
Conduct education on a positive view of aging for older people in the community.

Education on a Positive View of Ageing
Organize thematic educational activities on respecting, loving, and assisting older people.

Family Elderly Care
Carry out family elderly care training and services.

Family Elderly Care
Encourage social forces to provide supportive care services for families of older people with disabilities.

Health and Elderly Care Information Platform
Utilize the communication device and elderly care information platform to connect service supply and demand information in real-time.

Smart Technology Training
Assist older people in learning the use of smart products and technologies.

Organizational Structure and Personnel Allocation
Assign a specific person in charge of aging work among community workers.

Organizational Structure and Personnel Allocation
Equip with full-time nursing workers to serve older people.

Selection of regional representatives of the older population for ideological outreach

Respect for older people begins with recognition of history

Hobby and sport-led mass events

Interaction between middle-aged and older people through the care of grandchildren

Common interests, common aspirations, community guidance

Initial expansion of social resource inputs to expand the uptake of community cotton-spinning home-based services

Qualifications are reviewed by the community, and commercial companies are partnered to provide optional full-time caregivers for seniors.

OUTCOME



CO DESIGN — BROAD GAME

ATTITUDE CARD

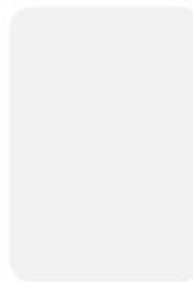
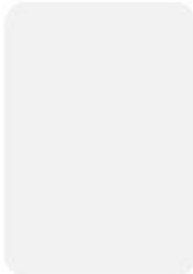
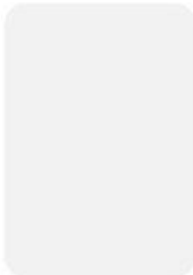


REMARK AREA



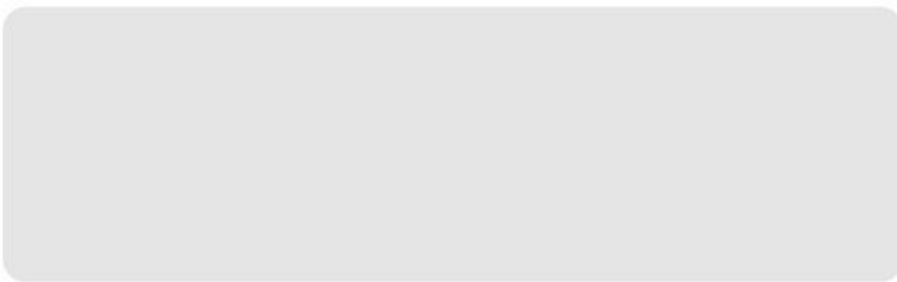
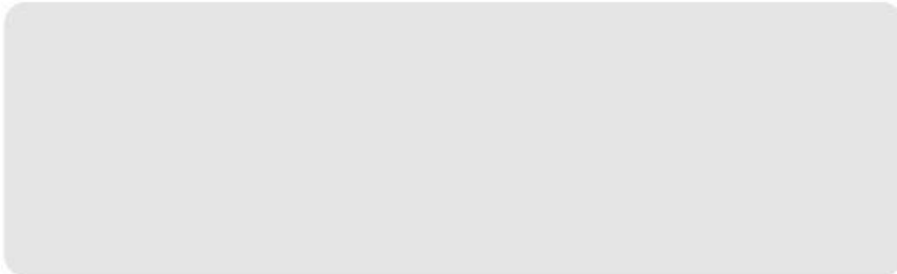
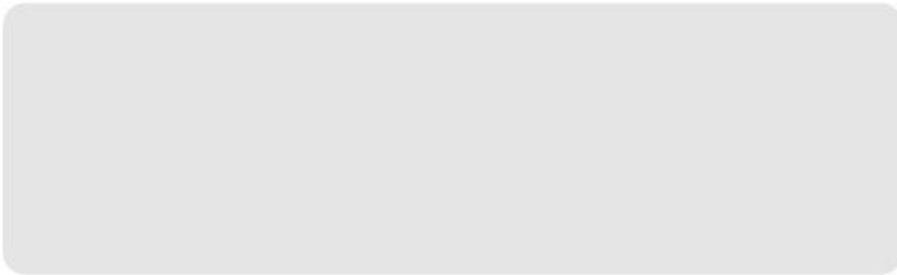
FRAMEWORK

Funds and Policy Safeguards
Increase financial investment in elderly service facilities.



IDEAL

The Government should take the lead in assessing the physical conditions of older people, and those who are still physically fit should be allowed to continue to take up some part-time jobs.



OUTCOME



Substantial Amendment Form v1.9.3 jan 2025

Substantial Amendment Form v1.9.3 jan 2025 - 2 SA



Enhancing Ageing-Friendly Environments in Post-Danwei Communities - A Case Study of Zhengzhou Cotton Factory No. 3 - Approved

Amendment Information

Please note:

This form is for making substantial amendments to applications previously approved in REAMS. All "Substantial Amendments" will go through the review process again. Please check the "Amendment Guidance" to see if you can use the "Minor Amendment" form.

Is your Research based at Lancaster University or Leipzig

- Lancaster Univerity
- Leipzig

Please number which amendment this is:

Amendment Summary

Please summarise your changes and the reasons why you are making them. Ensure that you indicate which parts of the form have been altered.

I will hold another workshop after the previously approved data collection process is completed.

The questions that I had changed my answers:

Title: Project Information-Please confirm/amend the title of this project.

Answer: Enhancing Ageing-Friendly Environments in Post-Danwei Communities - A Case Study of Zhengzhou Cotton Factory No. 3.

Title: Project Information-Estimated Project End Date

Answer: 18/04/2025.

Title: Details about the participants-What's the minimum number of participants needed for this project?

Answer: 52

Title: Details about the participants- What's the maximum number of expected participants?60

Answer: 60

Title: Details about the participants-Do you intend to do research with any young people (under 18 years old)?

Answer: No

Title: General research question- Does the funder or any organisations involved in the research have a vested interest in specific research outcomes that would affect the independence of the research?

Title: Details about the relationships with participants-Will you explain that their decision whether to participate or not will have no effect on their learning, treatment or rights?

Answer: Yes

Title: Summarise your research protocol in lay terms (indicative maximum length 150 words).

Answer: Although research on ageing-friendly neighbourhoods has been developed, they cannot be applied properly in high-density cities in China's rapid urbanization and ageing context. Based on the previous studies, this research aims to develop a guideline that can be used in China's neighbourhood to improve welfare. This project is divided into four consecutive stages of fieldwork: 1) Walking Interview will be used to understand the experience of older people in the neighbourhood (The People-Moving-Count is a backup plan for this step). 2) Three-time focus groups are for collecting the opinion of older people in their neighbourhood . 3) One workshop for co-design the guideline. 4) The semi-structured Interview to explore the development history of the neighbourhood.5) One workshop for validating the guidelines I developed resulted from the primary data I collected in 1 to 4 stages.

Title: Participant Information

Answer: Recruitment Details of the Workshop for co-design guideline

Recruitment Details of the Workshop for validating (This workshop is designed to validate the final result for my project). (8-10 people):1. The staff of relevant decision-making department from government. (2 people)The author will check the telephone on the local government website and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.2. The staff of the community management organisation. (4-6 people)The author will check the telephone on the website of community management organisation, and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.3. Designer and Planning expert (2 people)The author will check the telephone the staff on the website of Relevant Design Firms and Planning and Design Institutes, and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.

Title: What would you do if a participant chose to make use of their GDPR right "of being forgotten" or "right to erasure"? Could you remove their data/video/picture from publication? (please see help text).

Answer: For the walking interview part, I can completely delete their data if they request a withdrawal. However, for the focus group and workshop part, if participants attend, their data is part of the ongoing conversation. The data about them cannot be deleted if they decide to withdraw it. However, I will not consider their views when analyzing data from focus groups and workshops, but that is not always possible. I mentioned it in different parts of each participant's information sheet. Participants will learn their GDRP right by reading the PIS.

Will your project require NHS REC approval? (If you are not sure please read the guidance in the information button)

Yes

No

Do you need Health Research Authority (HRA) approval? (Please read the guidance in the information button)

- Yes No

Have you already obtained, or do you plan to obtain, ethical approval from another organisation outside of Lancaster University for this research?

(For example, an external institution such as: another University's Research Ethics Committee, the NHS or an institution abroad (eg an IRB in the USA)? Please select one of the following:

- No, I do not need ethical approval from an external institution.
 Yes, I have already received ethical approval from an external institution.
 Yes, I will be applying for ethical approval from an external institution after I have received confirmation of ethical approval from my Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) at Lancaster University, if the FREC grants approval.

Is this an amendment to a project previously approved by Lancaster University using the previous "paper-based" system (Pre-Jan 2022)?

- Yes No

To note: please do not change your answer to this question, as you are completing the Substantial Amendment form therefore it is apparent that this is an amendment to a previously approved Lancaster University project .

Which Faculty is the PI in?

Faculty of Arts and Social Science

Which department is the PI in?

Lancaster Institute for the Contemporary Arts

What is your role in this research?

- Academic/Research Staff
 Non Academic Staff
 Staff Undertaking a Programme of Study
 PhD or DClinPsy student or MPhil
 Undergraduate, Masters, Master by Research or other taught postgraduate programme

Will your research involve any of the following? (Multiple selections are possible, please see icon for details)

- Human Participants
- Data relating to humans (Secondary/Pre-existing data only)
- Data collection from online sources such as social media platforms, discussion forums, online chat-rooms
- Human Tissue classed as 'relevant material' by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA)
- None of the above

Project Information

Please confirm/amend the title of this project.

Enhancing Ageing-Friendly Environments in Post-Danwei Communities - A Case Study of Zhengzhou Cotton Factory No. 3

Estimated Project Start Date

20/05/2023

Amended Start Date - *If the start date hasn't changed please re-enter*

20/05/2023

Is this a funded Project?

- Yes No

Research Site(s) Information

Will you be recruiting participants from research sites outside of Lancaster University? (*E.g. Schools, workplaces, etc; please read the guidance in the information button for more information*)

- Yes No

Please provide the number, type and location of external research sites that you are using (please see help text for details).

This project is target to a neighborhood in Zhongyuan District, Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, China for the ageing workshop.

Applicant Details

Are you the named Principal Investigator at Lancaster University?

Yes

No

Please check your contact details are correct. You can update these fields via the personal details section located in the top right of the screen. Click on your name and email address in the top right to access "Personal details". For more details on how to do this, please read the guidance in the information button.

First Name

Xiaotong

Surname

Song

Department

Lancaster Institution forthe Contemporary Atrs

Faculty

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Email

x.song10@lancaster.ac.uk

Please enter a phone number that can be used in order to reach you, should an emergency arise.

07398601417

Supervisor Details

Search for your supervisor's name. *If you cannot find your supervisor in the system please contact rso-systems@lancaster.ac.uk to have them added.*

First Name

Surname

Department

Faculty

Email

Do you need to add a second supervisor to sign off on this project?

Yes

No

Additional Team Members

Other than those already added, please select which type of team members will be working on this project:

- I am not working with any other team members.
- Staff
- Student
- External

Details about the participants

As you are conducting research with Human Participants/Tissue you will need to answer the following questions before your application can be reviewed.

If you have any queries about this please contact your [Ethics Officer](#) before proceeding.

What's the minimum number of participants needed for this project?

52

What's the maximum number of expected participants?

60

Do you intend to recruit participants from online sources such as social media platforms, discussion forums, or online chat rooms?

Yes No

Will you get written consent and give a participant information sheet with a written description of your research to all potential participants?

Yes No I don't know

Will any participants be asked to take part in the study without their consent or knowledge at the time or will deception of any sort be involved?

Yes No I don't know

Do you intend to do research with any vulnerable groups? (Vulnerable group as defined by Lancaster University Guidelines)

Yes No I don't know

Do you intend to do research with any young people (under 18 years old)?

Yes No

Is your research with any young people (under 18 years old)?

- Yes No I don't know

Does your research involve discussion of personally sensitive subjects which the participant might not be willing to otherwise talk about in public (e.g. medical conditions)?

- Yes No I don't know

Is there a risk that the nature of the research topic might lead to disclosures from the participant concerning either:

- Their own or others involvement in illegal activities
- Other activities that represent a threat to themselves or others (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, or professional misconduct)?

- Yes No I don't know

Does the study involve any of the following:

- Physically intrusive procedures including touching or attaching equipment to participants
- Administration of substances
- Ultrasound or sources of non-ionising radiation (e.g. lasers)
- Sources of ionising radiation, (e.g. X-rays)
- Collection or use of samples of Human Tissue (e.g. Saliva, skin cells, blood etc.)

- Yes No I don't know

Details about the relationships with participants

Do you have a current or prior relationship with potential participants? For example, teaching or assessing students or managing or influencing staff (this list is not exhaustive).

- Yes No I don't know

Will you explain that their decision whether to participate or not will have no effect on their learning, treatment or rights?

- Yes No I don't know

If you need written permission from a senior manager in an organisation where research will take place (e.g. school, business) will you gain this in advance of undertaking your research?

- Yes No I don't know N/A

Will you be using a gatekeeper to access participants?

- Yes No I don't know if I will be using a gatekeeper

Do you agree with the following statements:

- 1) The gatekeeper will be in a position of authority or have influence over potential participants(e.g., a teacher or manager).
- 2) I will take the gatekeeper's assurance that they will stay completely impartial and they will ensure that there is no perceived pressure to participate.
- 3) I will explain to participants that their decision on whether to participate or not will have no effect on their learning, treatment or rights.

- Yes No I don't know

The gatekeeper will be able to tell who has participated?

- Yes No I don't know

Will participants be subjected to any undue incentives to participate?

- Yes No I don't know

Will you ensure that there is no perceived pressure to participate?

- Yes No I don't know

Details about participant data

Will you be using video recording or photography as part of your research or publication of results?

- Yes No

Will you be using audio recording as part of your research?

- Yes No

Will you be using audio recordings in outputs (e.g. giving a presentation in a conference, using it for teaching)?

- Yes No

Will you be using portable devices to record participants (e.g. audio, video recorders, mobile phone, etc)?

- No
 Yes, and all portable devices will be encrypted as per the Lancaster University ISS standards, in particular where they are used for recording identifiable data
 Yes, but these cannot be encrypted because they do not have encryption functionality. Therefore I confirm that any identifiable data (including audio and video recordings of participants) will be deleted from the recording device(s) as quickly as possible (e.g. when it has been transferred to a secure medium, such as a password protected and encrypted laptop or stored in OneDrive) and that the device will be stored securely in the meantime

Will you be using other portable storage devices in particular for identifiable data (e.g. laptop, USB drive, etc)? (Please read the help text)

- No
 Yes, and they will be encrypted as per the Lancaster University ISS standards in particular where they are used for recording identifiable data

Will anybody external to the research team be transcribing the research data?

- Yes No

General Queries

Does the funder or any organisations involved in the research have a vested interest in specific research outcomes that would affect the independence of the research?

- Yes No I don't know

Does any member of the research team, or their families and friends, have any links to the funder or organisations involved in the research?

- Yes No I don't know

Can the research results be freely disseminated?

- Yes No I don't know

Will you use data from potentially illicit, illegal, or unethical sources (e.g. pornography, related to terrorism, dark web, leaked information)?

- Yes No I don't know

Will you be gathering/working with any special category personal data?

- Yes No I don't know

Are there any other ethical considerations which haven't been covered?

- Yes No I don't know

REC Review Details

Based on the answers you have given so far you will need to answer some additional questions to allow reviewers to assess your application.

It is recommended that you do not proceed until you have completed **all of the previous questions**.

Please confirm that you have finished answering the previous questions and agree to proceed with the application.

- I confirm that I have answered all of the previous questions, and am happy to proceed with the application.

Questions for REC Review

Summarise your research protocol in lay terms (indicative maximum length 150 words).

Note: The summary of the protocol should concisely but clearly tell the Ethics Committee (in simple terms and in a way which would be understandable to a general audience) what you are broadly planning to do in your study. Your study will be reviewed by colleagues from different disciplines who will not be familiar with your specific field of research and it may also be reviewed by the lay members of the Research Ethics Committee; therefore avoid jargon and use simple terms. A helpful format may include a sentence or two about the background/ "problem" the research is addressing, why it is important, followed by a description of the basic design and target population. Think of it as a snapshot of your study.

Although research on ageing-friendly neighbourhoods has been developed, they cannot be applied properly in high-density cities in China's rapid urbanization and ageing context. Based on the previous studies, this research aims to develop a guideline that can be used in China's neighbourhood to improve welfare. This project is divided into four consecutive stages of fieldwork: 1) Walking Interview will be used to understand the experience of older people in the neighbourhood (The People-Moving-Count is a backup plan for this step). 2) Three-time focus groups are for collecting the opinion of older people in their neighbourhood. 3) One workshop for co-design the guideline. 4) The semi-structured Interview to explore the development history of the neighbourhood. 5) One workshop for validating the guidelines I developed resulted from the primary data I collected in 1 to 4 stages.

State the Aims and Objectives of the project in Lay persons' language.

Research question: What does an age-friendly city look like for the geographical conditions of China's central region?

AIM1: Understand the context of Chinese planning policy and the major arguments within the literature on age-friendly cities and communities.

AIM2: Explore the older people's perception of the neighbourhood and their living experience.

AIM3: Develop recommendations for planning policy to improve the mobility of older people in Zhengzhou neighbourhoods.

OBJ1: Conduct a literature review to understand the policy context in China and the principles of age-friendly cities and communities.

OBJ2: Identify requirements for developing age-friendly neighbourhood public spaces in Zhengzhou, a city located within Henan province.

OBJ3: Develop design guidelines of age-friendly neighbourhoods upgrading for plain city in China, take Zhengzhou as an example.

Participant Information

Please explain the number of participants you intend to include in your study and explain your recruitment strategy in detail (eg who will be recruited, how, where from; and expected availability of participants). If your study contains multiple parts eg interviews, focus groups, online questionnaires) please clearly explain the numbers and recruitment details for each of these cohorts (see help text).

For the Walking Interview part:

The type of interview: one-person interview.

The number of Walking interview: 12 times.

The total number of participants in this part is 12. As the study scale of this project is for young-old (60-85 years old), older people who cannot travel independently are not considered. The selection of participants is based on the following criteria:

1. Housing status: living with family (one male and one female, total of two older people), living with a spouse (one male and one female, total of two older people), living with carers (one male and one female, total of two older people), and living alone (one male and one female, total of two older people).
2. Health status: requires assistive devices to get around (one male, one female, total of two older people), can travel freely (one male, one female, total of two older people)

Recruitment Details of Walking Interview :

- A. Speak with gatekeepers in the neighbourhood, for example, Street Office staff(Neighbourhoods are managed by street offices, which are the administrative bodies of the Chinese government in the city), to ask for help in finding participants. The author will use this A method to recruit participants for this research. If this method fails to recruit enough participants, the following B and C methods will be used.
- B. Posters on advertising boards at the entrances to all blocks of residence in the neighbourhood.
- C. Snowball sampling to find participants. Find a few participants by holding posters in areas of the neighbourhood where older people often gather (e.g. parks, squares, activity centres). Ask the participants found to introduce to me more participants who meet the same recruitment requirements as they do.

For the Focus Groups part, there will be three times Focus Group.

Focus Group1: 4-5 older people (male).

Focus Group2: 4-5 older people (female).

Focus Group3: 4-5 older people (all gender).

The reason for arranging the focus group based on gender is that some research has already single proof that gender focus groups can collect more in-depth data than all gender focus groups. The selection criteria of participants are also based on the following: above 60 years old, with full independence of movement.

Recruitment Details for Focus Group :

- A. Speak with gatekeepers in the neighbourhood, for example, Street Office staff(Neighbourhoods are managed by street offices, which are the administrative bodies of the Chinese government in the city), to ask for help in finding participants. The author will use this A method to recruit participants for this research. If this method fails to recruit enough participants, the following B and C methods will be used.
- B. Posters on advertising boards at the entrances to all blocks of residence in the neighbourhood.
- C. Snowball sampling to find participants. Find a few participants by holding posters in areas of the neighbourhood where older people often gather (e.g. parks, squares, activity centres). Ask the participants found to introduce to me more participants who meet the same recruitment requirements as they do.

For the Workshop part, participants numbers will be 8-10 participants, and the Workshop will only hold once. Participants will

including older people and experts. By expert in this context, I mean:

1. someone who is well versed in or has an original opinion on the relevant content of the project and has certain qualifications. For example, the researcher whose research interests are relevant to this project (e.g. a professor or someone who has published a certain number of high-quality publications).
2. a person of high rank in the relevant profession (e.g. chief engineer, design director of a large planning organization or manager of a neighbourhood upgrading project, etc.).

The older people selection criteria are: aged 60-85 years old, all gender, and full independence of movement.

Recruitment Details of the Workshop for co-design the guideline:

1. Older people recruitment

A. Speak with gatekeepers in the neighbourhood, for example, Street Office staff(Neighbourhoods are managed by street offices, which are the administrative bodies of the Chinese government in the city), to ask for help in finding participants. The author will use this A method to recruit participants for this research. If this method fails to recruit enough participants, the following B and C methods will be used.

B. Posters on advertising boards at the entrances to all blocks of residence in the neighbourhood.

C. Snowball sampling to find participants. Find a few participants by holding posters in areas of the neighbourhood where older people often gather (e.g. parks, squares, activity centres). Ask the participants found to introduce to me more participants who meet the same recruitment requirements as they do.

2. Experts recruitment

The author will check the telephone number of experts on the local university website and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.

For the semi-structured Interview of neighbourhood history:

1.6 older people for individual interview

Recruitment Criteria: The participants were all residents of the neighbourhood living over 50 years. One man and one woman were 60-70 years old; one man and one woman were 70-80 years old; and one man and one woman were 80-90 years old.

Participant Recruitment:post recruitment advertisement on the poster boards in neighbourhood bulletin boards.

2. 2 former administrators of the research neighbourhood administration(No.3 Cotton Textile Factory) for individual interview.

Participant Criteria: Those who have worked as senior leaders of the mangement organization of the research site.

Participant Recruitment: Posters on advertising boards at the entrances to all blocks of residence in the neighbourhood.

3. 4 people of the neighbourhood mangement organization(Street Office staff) for individual interview.

Participant Criteria:The staff who have experienced a transformation of the neighbourhood management model, 2 normal staff, 2 managers.

Participant Recruitment:Post recruitment advertisement on the poster boards in their offices.

Participants can participate in any activities in this project separately and sign separate consent forms.

Recruitment Details of the Workshop for validating (This workshop is designed to validate the final result for my project). (8-10 people):

1. The staff of relevant decision-making department from government. (2 people)

The author will check the telephone on the local goverment website and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.

2. The staff of the community management organisation. (4-6 people)

The author will check the telephone on the website of community management organisation, and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.

3. Designer and Planning expert (2 people)

The author will check the telephone the staff on the website of Relevant Design Firms and Planning and Design Institutes, and ask them if they would will to intend this workshop.

Participant Data

Explain what you will video or photograph as part of your project, why it is appropriate and how it will be used.

I will be videotaping the walking experience of the walking interviews. It will only record the surroundings of the walking route and will not show any part of the participant's image in the video recording. I will then take a small video camera and wander the neighbourhood with the participants. The camera is not pointed at the participant and me but at our walking path. That will record all the places I walk with the participants and the content of our interviews. The camera is not pointed at the participant and me, so the content of the video will not feature the participant and me either. The content of the video is entirely about the outdoor spaces we walked through. The video recording allows me to take screenshots of particular places, which can then be analyzed.

How will you gain consent for the use of video/photography?

I will let participant to sign the consent form which contain those data information before the project begin.

State your video/photography storage, retention and deletion plans and the reasons why.

Because part of my research result needs those data to be supported, I will analyze the video files as soon as possible onto a secure storage device, such as an encrypted laptop, Lancaster OneDrive, to store the files because I need to keep those data to analyze my dissertation. The data will be stored for a minimum ten years since it is the requirement of the university guideline.

What would you do if a participant chose to make use of their GDPR right "of being forgotten" or "right to erasure"? Could you remove their data/video/picture from publication? (please see help text).

For the walking interview part, I can completely delete their data if they request a withdrawal. However, for the focus group and workshop part, if participants attend, their data is part of the ongoing conversation. The data about them cannot be deleted if they decide to withdraw it. However, I will not consider their views when analyzing data from focus groups and workshops, but that is not always possible. I mentioned it in different parts of each participant's information sheet. Participants will learn their GDPR right by reading the PIS.

Will you take all reasonable steps to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project?

Yes No

Explain what steps you will take to protect anonymity.

I will not show personal information in my future publication. If I need to mention names, I'll use anonymous. I will make sure that nothing filmed shows anyone involved.

Additional Information

What are your dissemination plans? E.g publishing in PhD thesis, publishing in academic journal, presenting in a conference (talk or poster).

Publishing in PhD thesis, publishing in academic journal, presenting in a conference.

Additional Information for REC Review

How long will you retain the research data?

I will keep those data until I get my degree, which will last around two years.

How long and where will you store any personal and/or sensitive data?

The personal and sensitive data will be stored until I get my degree, which will last around two years. .The data will be stored in encrypted files (that is no-one other than me, the researcher, will be able to access) and on password-protected computers, which will also be storing files on OneDrive. I will securely store hard copies of any data in locked cabinets in my office.

Please explain when and how you will anonymise data and delete any identifiable record?

Before I analysis the data I will anonymise data and delete any identifiable/ meta data record. If I need to mention a person's name in a publication I will use a pseudonym instead, and no descriptions of physical features will appear.

Document Upload

Important Notice about uploaded documents:

When your application has been reviewed if you are asked to make any changes to your uploaded documents please highlight the changes on the updated document(s) using the highlighter so that they are easy to see.

Please confirm that you have read and applied, where appropriate, the guidance on completing the Participant Information Sheet, Consent Form, and other related documents and that you followed the guidance in the help button for a quality check of these documents. For information and guidance, please use the relevant link below:

- [FST Ethics Webpage](#)
- [FHM Ethics Webpage](#)
- [FASS-LUMS Ethics Webpage](#)
- [REAMS Webpage](#)

I confirm that I have followed the guidance.

In addition to completing this form you must submit all supporting materials.

Please indicate which of the following documents are appropriate for your project:

- I have no updated documents and confirm that all relevant documents were included in previous submissions.
- Advertising materials (posters, emails)
- Research Proposal (DClinPsy)
- Letters/emails of invitation to participate
- Consent forms
- Participant information sheet(s)
- Interview question guides
- Focus group scripts
- Questionnaires, surveys, demographic sheets
- Workshop guide(s)
- Debrief sheet(s)
- Transcription (confidentiality) agreement
- Other
- None of the above.

Please upload the documents in the correct sections below:

Please ensure these are the latest version of the documents to prevent the application being returned for corrections you have already made.

Please upload a copy of all of the consent forms that you will be using:

Documents					
Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Consent Form	consent form v2	consent form v2.docx	28/02/2025	1	55.1 KB

Please upload all workshop guide templates used in this project.

Documents					
Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Workshop guide	Workshop Guide Tmplate	Workshop Guide Tmplate.docx	03/02/2025	1	16.3 KB

Please upload any other documents relevant to this project.

Documents

Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Other	highlight the change	highlight the change.pdf	05/03/2025	1	580.8 KB

Declarations and Sign off

Please Note

Research Services monitors projects entered into the online system, and may select projects for quality control.

All research at Lancaster university must comply with the LU data storage and governance guidance as well as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. ([Data Protection Guidance webpage](#))

- I confirm that I have read and will comply with the LU Data Storage and Governance guidance and that my data use and storage plans comply with the General data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018.

Have you that you have undertaken a health and safety risk assessment for your project through your departmental process? ([Health and Safety Guidance](#))

- I have undertaken a health and safety assesment for your project through my departmental process, and where required will follow the appropriate guidance for the control and management of any foreseeable risks.

When you are satisfied that this application has been completed please click "Request" below to send this application to your supervisor for approval.

Signed: This form was signed by Dr Christopher Boyko (c.boyko@lancaster.ac.uk) on 05/03/2025 17:52

Please read the terms and conditions below:

- You have read and will abide by [Lancaster University's Code of Practice](#) and will ensure that all staff and students involved in the project will also abide by it.
- If appropriate a confidentiality agreement will be used
- You will complete a data management plan with the Library if appropriate. [Guidance from Library](#).
- You will provide your contact details, as well as those of either your supervisor (for students) or an appropriate person for complaints (such as HoD) to any participants with whom you interact, so they know whom to contact in case of questions or complaints?
- That University policy will be followed for secure storage of identifiable data on all portable devices and if necessary you will seek [guidance from ISS](#)
- That you have completed the ISS Information Security training and passed the assessment
- That you will abide by Lancaster University's lone working policy for field work if appropriate
- On behalf of the institution you accept responsibility for the project in relation to promoting good research practice and the prevention of misconduct (including plagiarism and fabrication or misrepresentation of results).
- To the best of your knowledge the information you have provided is correct at the time of submission
- If anything changes in your research project you will submit an amendment

To complete and submit this application please click "Sign" below:

Signed: This form was signed by Ms Xiaotong Song (x.song10@lancaster.ac.uk) on 05/03/2025 18:11

Appendix 7 The codes book of case study

Staff interview Codes Book

Remuneration of employees	Relationship with the Older People	Outcomes of the development of a livable environment	Remuneration of employees
Referrals to business resources	Population density	Real time update	Referrals to business resources
Outcomes of the development of a livable environment	In charge of everything.	Acceptance of the new system	Scope of one's jurisdiction
Real time update	Information integration and reporting	Limitations	Appraisal from above
Acceptance of the new system	Party leadership of the community	Resident Participation	Society of acquaintances
Limitations	Misalignment between institutional requirements and the actual situation	Motivation to work	Property Management Model
Resident Participation	Harmonize neighborhood conflicts	Focus of work	Assistance from outside organizations
Motivation to work	Specificities	Rooted management	Plunge in social status
Focus of work	Employee Love	Working through residents	Applications for social funds
Basic social security under the community system	Community Volunteer Team	Functions of the community	Coverage of the welfare system
Changing roles of governing bodies	Lack of money is the key problem	Impact of the age composition of the group	Services for older people

Exploration of management models	Fill a vacancy	Standard	Visits and communications
Bridging the gap between government and community residents			

Managers' Interview Codes Book

Centralised Management	Neighbourly Bonds Under the Unit System	Local culture	Approval Processes
The evolution of business formats	The conflict between the insularity of the Danwei system and population mobility	The role of grassroots organisations in supplementing government functions	Historical contributions to the city
Changes in Transport Modes	Impact of the Danwei System	Structure of Grassroots Organisations	High Residential Density
Population Composition	Income from Danwei Institutions	Multiple Institutions Coordinating Community Operations	Functions of Residents' Committees
Relationship between Enterprises and Communities	The Role of Danwei in Neighbourhoods	Coexistence of Multiple Models	Residents' Perceptions of Neighbourhoods
Corporate Insolvency	Danwei Communities interface with Society	Community welfare system under the Danwei system	Age Groups of Residents
Housing Reform	Historical Influencing Factors	Market influences	Residents' Resistance
Party and Government Leadership	The Specificity of Post-Danwei Communities	The city's overall planning approach	Resident Self-Governance
Role of CPMSC	National Requirements	Generational divide	Resident Self-Funding
Joint Development	Geographical Constraints	Building maintenance	Marketisation
Social welfare system following liberalisation	Exploring Pathways	Impact during periods of societal transformation	Public Order
Household registration system	Government Influence on Communities	Unallocated communal spaces	Sources of Living Expenses
Housing allocation	Government Structure	Discrepancy between rights and responsibilities	Social Welfare Covered by the Danwei
Ownership reforms	Decentralisation of Government	Management models during the	Community System and Danwei

	Functions	community system era	System
Community development achievements	Achievements in Mass Mobilisation Work	Origin of community residents	Community Management Model During the Planned Economy Era
Community operational funding sources	Coverage	Nature of CPMSC work	Danwei-run social services
Complexities of community management	Commodity Supply System During the Planned Economy Period	Allocation of community housing resources	Division of Responsibilities
Communication between administrators and residents	Community Functions During the Planned Economy Period	New community planning	Wealth Gap
Funding shortages	Transitional Period Reforms	Gradual liberalisation	Collective Entry into the Ageing Period

Residence Interview Codes Book

Chill	The indifference between people	Information Notification	Travel
Flat&apartment	Population density	The Party's Influence in the Community	Allocation principles
Unwilling to pay	Population age structure	Shared Experiences	Constraints
No understanding	Impact of population mobility	Reliance on Aging Care	Life services during the Danwei era
Focused on production	Liberation from labor	Re-education	Population absorption by the Danwei system
China's generational culture	From collective activities to individual pursuits	Re-planning	Cultural legacy of the Danwei system
The chaotic period in between	Danwei as the unit	Hazards	Standardisation under the Danwei system
Busy for the family	Residential encroachment on public space	Pressure	Fixed daily routines
Habits	Come back	Participation	Local attachment
Mutual understanding	Danwei system management	Inevitable Changes Brought by Development	Places
The basis for interaction	Public spaces within a Danwei	The Trauma of Transformation	A life of frugality
City Signage	Planned allocation	Resident Autonomy	The Complexity of Service-Oriented Community Management
Urbanisation Development	Workers' Recreational Activities	Composition of Expenditure	Service Mindset

Diversity	The Role of Trade Unions	Basis for Charges	Building Upgrades Based on Demand
Boundaries between Large and Small Families	The Relationship Between Factory Profitability Changes and the Development of Public Spaces Within the Danwei	Hard Landing of Reform	Walking Experience
Mass Inflow	The Impact of Layout on Neighbourly Relations	New Community Culture	Age Differences in Activities
Recreational Activities	Easy Access to Everything	Greater Attention to Detail	Activity Funding
Isolation	Architectural Style	Motivated	Meeting Basic Living Requirements
Family Clusters	Ideological Awareness	Engaging Experience	Sense of Satisfaction
Closed-off	Short-Term Gains	Indifference	The Complexity of Service-Oriented Community Management
Small-Circle Society	Enforcement Powers	Material Living Standards	The Conflict Between Ideals and Bread
Access to Healthcare	Demolition	Material Incentives	Comprehensive Living Support
Complexity of residents' backgrounds	Overcrowding	Environmental Decline	Quality of life
Cost of living	Community care home standards	Scarce Resources	Sense of disparity
Improved living environment	Community governance transformation	Spiritual Refuge	Attraction to the outside world
Changing attitudes towards	Community boundaries	Constraints	Shift in perspective

childbearing			
Cost-saving	Welfare and institutional reform	The Era of Innocence	Facilities
Social division of labour	Leaving the neighbourhood to pursue livelihoods	Online Connections	Rich-poor gap
Social standing	Private contracting	Economic Security	Expenses
Aging within the community	Private versus public domain demarcation	The Position of Older People	Capital involvement in community development
Collective activities within the community	Immigration	The Definition of Older People	Physical limitations
Achievements of community-led redevelopment	Immigrant integration	The Older People's Responsibility	Progress is slow
Standardisation of community-based management	The hard times are a subjective feeling	Guaranteed welfare for older people	Adaptation
Community Revitalisation	Backing	Frequent separations	Selection
Community Cultural Heritage	Customs and order	Free market economy	Gradual development
Evolution of Community Business Formats	Barriers cause friction	Self-sufficiency	Neighbourly interaction
Neighbourhood Disputes	Change with the environment	Collective living	Secure employment

Appendix 8 Experience Material on the Red Brick School of Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory

How has our factory organically combined workers' extra-curricular political, technical, and cultural education? Our factory went into production in August 1955, and from that time onwards, extra-curricular cultural study was widely organised among workers. Over the past few years, under the correct leadership of the Party, workers' cultural study has achieved significant results. In particular, through the literacy campaign launched in the first half of 1958, 1,625 illiterate workers shed their "illiterate" label. The general cultural level of workers also greatly improved. Since the Rectification Movement, with the victories of the struggles against Rightists and bad elements, the proposal and implementation of the line, and the promotion of the "two participations and one certification," the socialist consciousness of the masses of workers has been raised, leading to profound changes in every aspect of the factory. A vigorous technical revolution has been carried out, and productivity has risen rapidly. This Great Leap Forward made it increasingly clear to them: the technical revolution is the guarantee of continuous progress; the cultural revolution is the prerequisite for the technical revolution; politics is the commander; and ideology is the soul. These are the three key factors ensuring uninterrupted leaps forward.

Therefore, learning politics, technology, and culture became an urgent demand of the masses of workers. In addition to the factory's extra-curricular cultural school, each workshop, according to workers' demands and the needs of high-speed production, established 18 philosophy study groups, philosophy schools, and various technical study teams. However, since political, cultural, and technical study were separated, they often competed for time and excluded one another: sometimes cultural classes overlapped, leaving no time for philosophy study; or attending philosophy study meant missing technical study. Clearly, such fragmented and single-purpose organisations could not meet the needs of the rapidly developing new situation.

Therefore, after discussion by the Party Committee, it was decided to unify the original factory-run cultural school, the 18 philosophy schools organised by the Party general branches of the workshops, and the various technical training classes organised by the administration, into a new type of "Red Brick School" combining politics, technology, and culture. Branch schools were also established in workshops and departments. However, implementation of this work was not smooth sailing; from the outset it encountered resistance from various Right-leaning conservative ideas. Some said: "Production is so tight, how can there be time to run schools?" Others said: "Even the factory-run cultural school used to have trouble with timing, let alone asking workshops to run combined schools—this is simply a joke." Still others said: "There are no teachers, no classrooms, and no proper equipment—how can a school be run?"

In response to these attitudes, the Party Committee first convened several meetings of middle-level cadres, repeatedly conveying the Central, Provincial, and Municipal Committees' instructions on educational work, and studied Comrade Lu Dingyi's article *Education Must Be Combined with Labour and Production*. This enabled cadres

to understand ideologically that only by combining politics, culture, and technology, and by running schools simultaneously through both the factory and workshops, could the Central Committee's educational policy be properly implemented. Secondly, through various meetings and broadcasts, the educational policy and the great significance of the factory-run combined schools were widely propagated among workers. Leaders also organised mass debates around three questions: "Why must we run a combined Red Brick School? On whom do we rely to run schools? Do we have the conditions to run schools?" Through these debates, the masses of workers came to realise the relationship between running a combined Red Brick School and carrying out the technical revolution, fulfilling the state plan, and accelerating socialist construction, thus dispelling muddled thinking.

Thirdly, further analysis was carried out on the favourable conditions for the combined Red Brick School, such as the strong leadership of the Party, the presence of many experienced old workers, a considerable number of college and high school graduates, engineering and technical personnel, and the urgent demand of the masses for learning. Through propaganda, thinking was unified, understanding of the combined Red Brick School was raised, and confidence in running the school well was established. The combination of politics, technology, and culture is a new form. Our preliminary experience and practice over more than a year are roughly as follows:

First, the learning content. The guiding principle of learning politics, technology, and culture is to take the study of Mao Zedong's works as the core, centre on the practice of the socialist revolution, and embody the spirit of "valuing the present more than the past, solving current work problems, and combining with systematic improvement."

Political courses are closely linked with central work, studying Party and government policies of each period and major domestic and international current affairs; at the same time, systematic study of philosophical theory enables workers gradually to grasp some basic viewpoints and methods of dialectical and historical materialism. Since 1959, we have systematically studied *On Contradiction*, *On Practice*, the Sixth Plenary Session's resolution on People's Communes, the Tibet issue, the communiqué and resolutions of the Eighth Plenary Session, Premier Zhou's report, the great achievements of the ten years since the founding of the PRC, as well as the recently self-compiled *Outline for Socialist Education (Lecture One)*, and the brilliant achievements since the Great Leap Forward.

Technical courses focus on key weak links in production. On the one hand, learning serves the purpose of "study what we do, fill what we lack"; on the other, systematic study of the theoretical knowledge of all textile trades is undertaken, closely combining the two aspects. In teaching materials, part-time teachers, based on technical study requirements and production needs and combined with the actual situation of workers, wrote teaching outlines, introducing the general mechanics of the spinning frame, the basic characteristics of Hao Jianxiu's working method, the operational methods of advanced provincial producers Zhang Guizhi and Chen Guiting, repair knowledge of operating spinning frames at high speed, and causes and prevention of various defective products. On this basis, lecture notes of various technicians were combined, and supplemented and improved by the "three-way combination" of leaders, technical

teachers, and workers, compiled into a spinning technology textbook that integrated theory and practice, and systematically taught to workers, thereby gradually improving their theoretical and practical knowledge, directly serving production.

Cultural courses systematically taught basic cultural knowledge in connection with production and daily life, and integrated ideological education. For example, the mathematics textbooks we used were specialised for the textile system, with all problem examples designed according to production situations; Chinese language textbooks, from primary to junior middle level, were written by ourselves. These teaching materials not only paid attention to systematic cultural knowledge but also closely linked with production reality, reflecting the advanced deeds of national and factory figures in the Great Leap Forward. For instance, our self-compiled Chinese language materials included texts such as *The Party's Good Daughter Xiulian*, *Determined to Be a Clever Girl*, *Zhang Xiangzhen, the Vanguard of the Textile Industry*, *Hao Jianxiu Running on the Great Road of National Development*, as well as initiatives by advanced producers, pledges by individuals and groups, and supplementary loose-leaf materials selected by the central authorities, such as *The National Workers' Book of Savings and Thrift Heroes*. These textbooks combined systematic language knowledge with political and technical content.

How to Solve the Problem of Teachers

A combined school with over 5,000 students, 185 cultural classes, 19 technical classes, and 878 political theory study groups requires many teachers. The only solution is self-reliance, mass teaching, and drawing from local resources—those who are capable become teachers. At present, we have six full-time cultural teachers, and 305 part-time teachers in politics, technology, and culture.

The political education group has 25 members, including Party branch secretaries, ministers, the factory director, the trade union chair, the Youth League secretary, general branch secretaries, and workers with progressive thinking and a certain theoretical level. Technical teachers number 92, composed of engineers, workshop directors, technicians, advanced producers, and experienced veteran craftsmen. Cultural teachers number 188, selected from workers and cadres with relatively high political consciousness and at least junior secondary-level education.

The outstanding strengths of these part-time teachers are: they possess production knowledge, are familiar with workers' lives, understand the needs of the masses, and are enthusiastic and enterprising. When lecturing, they closely combine production knowledge with real ideological issues, using plain and vivid language so that workers learn quickly and effectively. They are warmly welcomed by the masses. However, as they are themselves busy with work and lack teaching experience, problems of insufficient teaching quality also exist. To resolve this, we undertook the following measures:

Strengthening political and ideological leadership for teachers. Raising teachers' consciousness was made a regular task of the Party general branches and branches. Through mobilisation meetings, discussion meetings, individual talks, and commendations, teachers received positive education, cultivating a sense of honour

and responsibility.

Resolving their practical difficulties in teaching. Teachers were given sufficient time for lesson preparation, marking, and study. Specifically, six hours a week were reduced from other part-time duties, which they generally no longer undertook. More than 2,000 reference books and some teaching aids were purchased.

Establishing central teaching and research groups. At both factory and workshop levels, political, technical, and cultural research and teaching groups were set up, launching a variety of activities and strictly implementing the lesson-preparation system. At present, preparation is done weekly, every class has a plan; 100% of cultural classes have written teaching plans; political, technical, and cultural classes all have outlines and lecture notes.

Adopting diverse training methods. These included a combination of full-time and part-time teaching, experienced teachers mentoring new ones, collective lesson preparation, professional lectures, mobile demonstration teaching, mutual class observation and experience-sharing, model teaching, part-time and full-time training, as well as self-study and observational visits.

Launching the “Five Comparisons” campaign among teachers. These were: compare who upholds politics as the commander; who loves teaching more; who prepares lessons more carefully with rich, focused content; who marks assignments more promptly and provides thorough guidance; who participates more regularly in teaching activities; and who better integrates production and education with remarkable teaching outcomes. The evaluation method was: monthly assessments, conducted alongside the assessment of advanced producers; termly assessments with separate awards. In the first half of 1959, 85 outstanding teachers were selected.

Third: Study Time.

Each semester lasted half a year with 20 weeks of classes, and four study days a week totalling nine hours. The middle shift studied two and a half hours daily; the morning and night shifts studied two hours daily. Cultural classes were held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, political classes on Thursdays, technical classes on Saturdays, while Monday’s production meetings were flexibly arranged. During key central tasks, the principle of “merge what can be merged, combine what can be combined” was applied, subject to approval by the Party Committee, which coordinated with production activities.

Fourth: Study, Meetings, and Rest Time.

It was explicitly stipulated that if the time of the Red Brick School’s technical or cultural classes were to be occupied, it had to be approved by the Party Committee, with study rescheduled and agreed upon by the School’s Academic Affairs Office. In this way, study time was reliably guaranteed, and teaching plans for each semester could basically be followed.

Fifth: Learning Forms and Methods.

In order to closely integrate politics, technology, and culture, and to serve politics and production better, we adopted various methods suited to production and adult learners: class teaching, self-study, group instruction, “guaranteed learning” methods, observational demonstrations, using diagrams instead of texts, short-term study, participation in external part-time schools and correspondence courses. In this way, multiple approaches, teaching tailored to each student, and flexibility according to circumstances were achieved.

In terms of methods, political study was unified—politics was compulsory; cultural and technical study were divided into classes by subject. According to different work types and technical levels, classes were divided into groups. A special emphasis was placed on integrating theory with practice: reports, lectures, debates, and discussions combined with production, ideology, and central tasks; watching operations, demonstrations, and organisation; visits outside the factory; and solving production and life problems through hands-on practice and practical writing.

For example, when part-time teacher Xu Xiaogen of the electrical technology class explained the wiring principle of the automatic control of the opener machine, he first linked it to dangerous situations in the workshop where some new workers had installed fuses improperly, frequently causing malfunctions. He then systematically explained the theory, organised discussion and questions, followed by demonstrations and practical operations. Each student then practised. In this way, workers’ theoretical, technical, and operational levels were rapidly improved. Among the 18 workers in the electrical maintenance group, 10 were new workers who had entered the factory in 1958. Within only two months of such study, they proposed 42 innovations, 12 of which were major. The group collectively designed and built a motor disassembly machine, increasing work efficiency eightfold, achieving in one month the equivalent of six years’ progress.

Strengthening Party Leadership, Implementing Party-wide Schooling and Tiered Management

As political, technical, and cultural education were combined, the tasks of educational work became even more important and complex. Therefore, Party leadership had to be strengthened, politics upheld as the commander, mass movements vigorously launched, necessary systems established, and Party-wide schooling with tiered management implemented.

The measures were as follows:

Improving organisational structure. Under the unified leadership of the Party Committee, a Workers’ Education Committee was established, with the deputy secretary of the Party Committee as director, and the head of propaganda, the factory director, and the trade union chair as deputy directors. An Academic Affairs Office was set up, with one full-time director and four staff members, each responsible for political, technical, and cultural study. Each workshop’s shift group also had a deputy secretary and Party group leader in charge, with one person concurrently managing educational work. The whole factory had one Red Brick School; each workshop established branch schools, and each shift established subsidiary schools. The principals and vice-principals of the factory school, branch schools, and subsidiary schools were taken up

by the Party secretary, factory director, trade union chair, and leaders at all Party and government levels. In this way, education was organically combined with production: those who led production were also organisers of learning, incorporating workers' political, technical, and cultural education into the agendas of the Party Committee and general branches, regularly studied and promptly resolving issues arising in learning.

Strengthening publicity, launching competitions, and promoting models. In order to make the Central Committee's educational policies deeply ingrained, to maintain workers' enthusiasm for regular study, and to ensure continuous leaps forward in workers' education, we first adopted a high-profile publicity campaign, extensive and in-depth, combining intensive and regular activities. Through report meetings, discussion meetings, wall newspapers, and broadcasts, as well as opening ceremonies and workers' education meetings (such as a May meeting attended by 218 people), we vigorously publicised the significance of factory-run schooling, the importance of study, and the exemplary deeds of advanced figures, while criticising Right-leaning conservative thinking and slack attitudes. This rapidly advanced educational work. On the basis of anti-Rightist struggle and heightened morale, learning competitions were then carried out across the factory between branch schools, Party branches, groups, and individuals. Study became one of the criteria for assessing shift groups, individuals, advanced production collectives, and advanced producers. At the end of each semester, the whole factory conducted unified evaluations and awards. In the competitions, the experience of "grasp both ends, lead the middle, drive the whole class" was promoted, using bulletins and rotating red flags widely. This enabled the advanced to remain advanced, the backward to catch up, and everyone to strive for excellence, leading to wave after wave of study upsurges.

Establishing necessary teaching systems. These included wall newspaper demonstrations, regular research, regular inspections, assignment marking, teaching research, roll-call in class, leave and make-up lessons, examination systems, study regulations, teaching plans, and cadres and specialist teachers participating in labour. In this way, a complete set of institutional measures was formed, bringing the Red Brick School's work onto the right track, with study becoming regularised and institutionalised.

The Benefits of the Factory-run Red Brick School Combining Politics, Technology, and Culture

Practice has proved that the Red Brick School combining politics, technology, and culture is a very effective form of education. It resolved the past conflicts and contradictions in time allocation between political, technical, and cultural education, and met workers' needs to study politics, technology, and culture simultaneously. It more effectively implemented the Party Central Committee's policy of "education serving the proletariat and combining education with productive labour," closely linking education with the centre of production. It strongly promoted the deep development of the technical and cultural revolutions, improved labour productivity, ensured the smooth completion of the Party's tasks, facilitated continuous production advances, and raised workers' cultural levels.

By October, workers in the factory had written more than 30,000 poems, quick-verse performances, plays, novels, news reports, and special publications, of which 735 were published in national, provincial, and municipal newspapers and journals. They made 5,771 rationalisation proposals, of which 1,146 were realised. The state plan for July to October was completed eight days ahead of schedule. By then, 895 workers and nine groups had already reached the 1960 targets 65 days in advance. Owing to increased efficiency, the number of workers had decreased from 6,635 last year to 5,658 now. Despite using lower-grade cotton without damaging cloth, the quality of yarn and cloth rose sharply. At present, the rate of top-grade cotton yarn and thread has reached 100%, and the rate of top-grade finished cloth entering storage has reached 99.92%. Cotton consumption per unit of yarn dropped to 1,188.91 kilograms, and the factory won the honorary title of “National Red Flag Factory in Production.”

The participation of the masses of workers in the Red Brick School combining politics, technology, and culture is the correct path to cultivating workers’ communist thought and consciousness, enabling them rapidly to move onto the bright road. It is also an important method for actively training outstanding production and construction cadres with high political consciousness, cultural level, and technical ability.

Committee of the Communist Party of China, Zhengzhou No. 3 State-Run Cotton Textile Factory

21 November 1959

Appendix 9. The code book of the walking interview

Fill all the time slots	Central place	Mutual understanding	Historical significance
Once they move away, they lose contact	Habitual search for recognition	Being accustomed to this environment	Pedestrians and vehicles sharing space
Generally, do not leave the neighbourhood	Public welfare activities of a reciprocal nature	Impact of transportation costs on mobility range	Interest coordination
Differences in welfare across regions	Creating a place	Individual interests vs. collective interests	Welfare system under the Danwei structure
Behavioural differences among elderly people of different ages	Relying on social pension support	Staying healthy is a responsibility to one's family	Contradictions between original planning and later development
Cultural differences across eras	Proximity	Ownership of property rights	Close relationships
Indifferent to aspects that do not affect daily life	Types of public facilities	Participation in decision-making	Gradual shrinking of mobility range
Do not trouble others	Culture of social interaction	Portability	Public transportation
Disconnection from the outside community	Immediacy of information access	Maintenance of public space environments	Reduction of public spaces
Special subsidies	Per capita facilities	Housing allocation	Location

Participation in maintaining public environmental hygiene	Inevitable result of economic development	How to gain support during the development process	Number of similar neighbourhoods
Change	Accessibility	Companions	Homogeneous community
Transition toward a community-based system	The impact of business operations on residents	Personal leisure activities at fixed times	The concept of community differs between natives and migrants
Development of commerce	Fixed space	Sitting down	Based on existing conditions
The meaning/significance of going out	Dense neighbourhood relationship network	Renovation of non-compliant buildings	Service attitude toward older people
Nighttime travel	Weather factors	Number of recreational activities	The burden on children
Learning	Safety	Pets	Family loyalty
Family conflicts	Nostalgia for the past	Wayfinding	Closed social circle
Installation of residential assistive facilities	Coping with inspections from higher authorities	Transitional spaces between buildings and the outdoors	Coverage rate of building renewal projects
Building deterioration	Impact of the construction process on residents	Factors affecting project progress	Express delivery and logistics
Adjust attitudes	Psychological pressure	Volunteer	Outdoor renewal
Housing replacement	All activities are forms of exercise	The mobile phone is a bridge from	Making use of small, available

		home to the outside world	spaces
Expansion of living space	Taking on household chores	Care	Controlling living costs
Atmosphere	Disputes over charges	Disputes over charges	Sense of novelty
Public security	Convenience	Projects under construction	Accessibility facilities
Simplification of procedures	Landscape	Exercising whenever there is free time	Encouragement from friends
Fire safety	Differences in building construction periods	Walking	Priority for pedestrians / pedestrian priority
Flexible management	Discrimination	Additional costs for people with disabilities	Information dissemination within acquaintance networks
Familiarity	Service quality of property management companies	Prices	Characteristics
Quality of environmental development	Quality of life	Supported by their children	Gendered division of labour within the household
Attachment	Regulation	Changes in modes of interaction	Watching is also a form of participation
Fragmented public spaces	Social circles clustered by area	Social insurance	Grid-style management of community population

Community public activities	Community care institutions	Community medical system	Rights of the community
Operating costs of welfare programmes	Private means of transport	Allocation of space usage	Management regulations
Emotional sustenance	Try to financially supporting the family if they can	Economic barriers	Nature of the operator
Coordinated management	Integrated space	Chatting	Self-made tools
Ability for self-care	Soviet approaches to community design	Integration into the community	Dissemination of neighbourhood information
Neighbourhood public services	The neighbourhood functions as a small society	Division of management rights and responsibilities within the neighbourhood	Differences in neighbourhood architectural styles
Overall neighbourhood satisfaction	Pension	Adapting to the environment	Choice
Encroached streets	Forced relocation	Informal interactions	Territorial division
Catering	High density	Peak periods	Avoidance of conflicts
Yielding to those who are weaker	Shopping	Identity recognition	Physical limitations
History of light industrial city development	Neighbourhood prevention and epidemic sanitation	A whole youth dedicated to the community	Alignment of facility development with public well-being

	management		
Avoidance of health risks	Targeted assistance	Upward feedback of problems	Large nearby parks
Collective activities			

Appendix 10. The transcripts of the walking interview

Walking Interview-1

Researcher:

Xxx, let's go. Take your time, okay?

Participant:

I'm old. My hearing isn't very good, and I can't hear much.

Researcher:

Xxx, can you hear me? Where would you like to go for a walk? I'll go with you.

Participant:

Anywhere is fine. I'll just follow you. My hearing isn't very good. I used to work in a factory, and the machine noise was so loud that it damaged my hearing. Now I can't hear very well. If I can't hear you, please remind me.

Researcher:

Alright, I'll speak louder. Let's go for a walk and come back.

Xxx, where do you usually go shopping or take walks? Can you take me there?

Participant:

I usually choose places where there aren't many people. Because there are so many people, I'm afraid of being bumped into. Look at all the people coming and going now; it makes me nervous.

Researcher:

Xxx, so you don't want to go to places where there are many people, right? Can you tell me where it's crowded so I can keep it in mind and avoid taking you there in the future?

Participant:

For example, the street behind here has students coming and going, and people buying groceries. It's very crowded. My hearing isn't good, and with all the pushing and shoving, if someone bumps into me, I can't handle it.

Researcher:

Which route do you usually take when you go out? Can you show me the way?

Participant:

I just go out to get some exercise and stretch my legs.

Researcher:

When you go out for a walk, do you usually go alone or with family or friends?

Participant:

I go alone.

Researcher:

Do you often run into acquaintances when you go out? I heard that many of your old colleagues live in this area.

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How many times a day do you usually run into acquaintances?

Participant:

Some people greet me, like asking, 'Have you eaten yet?' Sometimes people follow me

as I take a walk.

Researcher:

When you go for a walk, do you hope to meet acquaintances and chat with them?

Participant:

I usually just chat with acquaintances for a few minutes; we don't talk about anything important. I just like walking in familiar places.

Researcher:

Do you feel happy when you meet acquaintances and chat with them?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

But you don't go out for a walk specifically to chat with people, right?

Participant:

Yes, I don't go out specifically to chat.

Researcher:

Do you often do activities in this neighbourhood?

Participant:

I don't do much, just walk around.

Researcher:

I see some older people out walking with their grandchildren. Do you often take your grandchildren out to play?

Participant:

I don't have children, and my grandchildren are all grown up. I just walk around by myself.

Researcher:

You've lived in this area for so many years, and your neighbours are all old acquaintances. Do you feel this place holds any special meaning for you? For example, are there any fond memories of spending time with family or friends here, or places where you worked when you were younger?

Participant:

I just want to stay where I am familiar. If I go to a new place, I'm old, my hearing isn't good, and I can't see well, so it's easy to get into trouble. That's why I don't want to leave here; I just want to stay here.

Researcher:

So you prefer familiar places.

Participant:

Yes, familiar places have people I know.

Researcher:

Yes, being with people you know makes things more interesting; otherwise, it's too lonely.

Participant:

Yes, it would be difficult to make new friends in a new place. For one thing, people might not hear me clearly when I speak, and sometimes the situation can be awkward, so I prefer to stay in this area.

Researcher:

You have lived in this community for so long. Do you feel that the community environment has changed significantly? Are there any changes that make you feel uncomfortable?

Participant:

There have been some changes, such as the roads being paved, but the houses haven't changed much. There are no places for older people to gather in the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory area. There used to be a sports ground, but now it's been turned into a vegetable market. The factory area is so big, but there's nowhere for older people to go.

Researcher:

Yes, and now there are so many cars, and many places are occupied, so older people can only walk on the road.

Participant:

Yes, what's the point of that?

Researcher:

It definitely needs to be improved. Xxx, if the community environment could be improved, would you accept it?

Participant:

Where is there a place for activities in the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory area? Even the original basketball court has been turned into a vegetable market, and houses have been built everywhere. There is no free space at all.

Researcher:

Yes, the population density is too high, which is indeed unsuitable. Xxx, if there were a place for activities, what kind of activities would you like to do?

Participant:

Now that I'm older, there aren't many activities I can do. What I want most is a spacious place where I can sit down and talk. For example, I can't play cards anymore because my fingers are stiff and I can't hold the cards, which slows everyone else down. So I can only sit and chat.

Researcher:

Yes, the activities need to be tailored to the needs of older people. It's good to be able to sit down and chat with friends. Complex activities are not really suitable.

Participant:

Yes, I used to love sports, like playing ball games. Now I can't do that anymore because my legs aren't as steady. I just hope there's a place where a few people can gather and chat and laugh together.

Researcher:

Yes. Xxx, are you in your 80s or 70s?

Participant:

I'm 85 years old.

Researcher:

You don't look it. I thought you were just 80.

Participant:

After turning 80, plus the pandemic, I don't go out much. I live on the 7th floor, and the stairwell is narrow. My feet are big, so my toes always dangle, making it difficult to climb the stairs. During the difficult times in the country, Liu Yuan came to inspect and built the Qinggong Building. The apartments were small, but back then, just getting one was a cause for celebration. Later, the apartments were privatised, but I couldn't afford to buy another one, so I've stayed here ever since.

Researcher:

Living on the 7th floor must be quite tough. Are there any community services for renovating old buildings that could help install an elevator or improve the living conditions?

Participant:

No.

Researcher:

It definitely needs improvement. The stairs are too narrow and steep, and the dimensions are not suitable.

Participant:

This building is called Qinggong Building. It was built after the demolition of the original mother-and-child building. I moved in when I was young. Although the house was small, I was satisfied just to have my own place. Now that the house is mine, living on the 7th floor is indeed inconvenient as I get older.

Researcher:

Yes, it would be great if the government could take the lead in improving this.

Participant:

Yes, what can we do? Installing an elevator isn't feasible either. First, the cost is too high, and second, the people on the first floor don't need an elevator. Those on the second floor can still manage to climb the stairs, but the higher you go, the more it costs. I live on the seventh floor, so it would cost a lot.

Researcher:

Yes, the cost is too high.

Participant:

None of the seven-storey buildings of the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory have lifts.

Researcher:

Are these all residential buildings?

Participant:

Some are primary schools.

Researcher:

The buildings are too tall. Isn't it inconvenient to go out?

Participant:

I rarely go out. I haven't been out much in the last few years, so my legs aren't very flexible anymore.

Researcher:

Yes, climbing up and down the 7th floor must be very tiring.

Participant:

When I go upstairs, I have to wear gloves and hold onto the stair railing to climb slowly, and I have to rest several times in between going up and down.

Researcher:

That's indeed very tiring. Have you considered using a cane, which might be more convenient?

Participant:

I don't use a cane; I just hold onto the stairs to climb.

Researcher:

You can still manage for now, but if you get older, will you need other assistive devices?

Participant:

By then, I might not be able to get down at all and would have to stay upstairs.

Researcher:

Yes, that does need to be improved.

Participant:

There's no one to complain to, so I just have to accept it. I try to stay positive and go with the flow. Having a good mindset is most important. Some people even comfort me, saying that climbing stairs every day is good exercise.

Researcher:

That's true. This is indeed a long-standing issue that hasn't been resolved.

Participant:

Yes, there's no solution. To move, you need money, but we're all retired factory workers. I've worked for 35 years, and although my salary has increased from over 400 to over 3,000, prices have also risen sharply.

Researcher:

Prices have indeed risen too quickly recently. Do you know many of your old colleagues who live here? Do they also have the same concerns as you?

Participant:

Many people are in the same situation as me.

Researcher:

If given the opportunity, would you prefer to move to a new environment or improve your living conditions here? After all, you have many familiar faces here.

Participant:

Unless the house is demolished and rebuilt, there's no way to change the environment. But changing the environment requires resources—would the government help or would we have to pay out of pocket? We don't have the means, so I don't mind. I'll just go with the flow and focus on being happy.

Researcher:

Yes, health is the most important thing.

Participant:

Right, dwelling on these things every day is useless. It's better to live happily.

Researcher:

Yes, as you get older, health and mindset are the most important things.

Participant:

Right, they're more important than anything else. Live each day happily, and this life is worth it.

Researcher:

You're in good health. Many people in their eighties aren't as energetic as you.

Participant:

It's all about having a good mindset and being able to let things go.

Researcher:

Xxx, I think you're very fortunate to be able to take care of yourself and stay so healthy.

Participant:

Yes, being able to take care of yourself, stay healthy, and be happy—that's the greatest blessing.

Researcher:

That's right. Some people today have good living conditions but poor health, spending their days in bed with a very low quality of life.

Participant:

That's so painful. Even if someone takes care of you, you're the one suffering the most.

Researcher:

Yes.

Participant:

The children are all busy with their own families and careers.

Researcher:

Yes.

Participant:

Can you make your children stop working?

Researcher:

That's not possible.

Researcher:

Xxx, I heard that you live with your children. Do you usually do the grocery shopping and other household chores, or do your children help you?

Participant:

I live on the 7th floor with my youngest son. We don't buy much, and the children usually do the shopping and bring it home for me. I can't carry heavy things, and I have to climb the stairs, so I don't buy much myself.

Researcher:

When you go out for a walk, do you ever buy anything on the way?

Participant:

Sometimes I walk to the nearby shops to buy something, but my children usually bring it up for me.

Researcher:

Where did you used to like to shop? I see there are quite a few shops around here.

Participant:

I used to love going to the supermarket because it was convenient—I had an elderly bus pass so I didn't have to pay for the bus, and things were cheaper there.

Researcher:

Yes, it was worth the trip.

Participant:

But now I can't do that anymore, and I don't buy much either. I rely on my children.

Researcher:

You've lived here for so many years. You must have a lot of memories. You worked and raised your children here.

Participant:

I've been here since 1964. It's hard to believe how many years that is.

Researcher:

You came here so early.

Participant:

Yes, I worked at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory first, and then I came here to teach at the primary school.

Researcher:

Then you must have taught many students.

Participant:

Yes, my students are all old now.

Researcher:

Haha, my mother was born after 1964.

Participant:

I retired from the factory. In 2000, the primary school was transferred to the city's administration, but I was still an employee of the factory.

Researcher:

So the primary school was transferred out after you retired.

Participant:

Yes, it was transferred out after I retired.

Researcher:

You have worked hard all your life and educated many students.

Participant:

Yes, education is different now. Many people are just in it for the money. In the past, when we tutored struggling students, we did it voluntarily and never thought of charging fees. Back then, teachers did it out of a sense of responsibility. Now, parents spend money on tutoring classes, but teachers don't care, and students' grades don't improve. Instead, they blame the parents.

Researcher:

Yes, many people today only care about benefits. The same goes for the community environment. Just fixing roads isn't enough; you have to meet residents' needs and have some sense of compassion. Just completing tasks has no meaning.

Participant:

That's right. Now, some teachers focus all their energy on tutoring outside of school and don't teach seriously in school.

Researcher:

There still needs to be some sense of community spirit.

Participant:

That's just how society is now; everyone is focused on making money.

Researcher:

It's indeed very pragmatic.

Participant:

There's nothing we can do about it.

Researcher:

Xxx, do you still visit your old workplace occasionally?

Participant:

No, I don't. I don't recognize anyone there anymore. Most of the people who worked there at the same time as me have retired, and I don't know the newer employees who joined after me. There's nothing for me to do there.

Researcher:

Yes, that's true. Is there any particular place in this area you like to stay or often go to sit?

Participant:

As long as I can go out for a walk and have a place to sit, I'm satisfied.

Researcher:

Yes, having a place to be active is indeed important.

Participant:

Yes. There used to be a large sports ground, but now it has been turned into a vegetable market, and older people from No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory can only find

places to sit nearby. If they could leave us a suitable place for activities, we would definitely go there.

Researcher:

That's true.

Participant:

Now there is no place for activities at all.

Researcher:

Yes, after the vegetable market was built, it took up the space where older people used to gather. Has your life improved?

Participant:

The vegetable market hasn't improved things at all; it's actually made vegetable prices more expensive. The rent is high, so the vendors naturally raise their prices. What's the point of that? It hasn't brought any benefits to everyone; it's just added to the burden.

Researcher:

Yes, that's indeed a major issue.

Participant:

We can only talk about this among ourselves; there's no place to voice our concerns.

Researcher:

I also think the prices at the vegetable market aren't any cheaper than at the supermarket, and sometimes they're even more expensive. When I go to the vegetable market to buy vegetables, I often end up spending more than at the supermarket.

Participant:

That's right. One reason is the high rental costs for the stalls, and another is that supermarkets have a larger scale and buy in bulk, so they can offer lower prices. Small vendors rent a vehicle to sell their goods, which increases their costs, so the prices go up.

Researcher:

Exactly. Having a place to buy groceries that's close to home and reasonably priced is what truly benefits residents.

Participant:

Look, there's no activity space here. Why not just build a supermarket instead? It would be better than the current market.

Researcher:

Yes, a supermarket would have everything and be more convenient for everyone.

Participant:

But the key question is who is contracted to do the work. They need to make a living.

Researcher:

That's true. If there were a supermarket nearby that was reasonably priced, it would be much more convenient for residents.

Participant:

Right now, we're getting nothing.

Researcher:

Yes, the land has been taken up, and vegetable prices have gone up.

Participant:

That's exactly right.

Researcher:

That's right, it's really unreasonable.

Participant:

Let's go.

Researcher:

Let's go, Xxx, take your time.

Participant:

After the vegetable market opened, there are so many students after school, so I always choose a less crowded area to walk.

Researcher:

Yes, it's indeed hard to walk with so many people, and there are also more cars on the streets now.

Participant:

Look, even though people aren't wealthy, there are more and more cars, and both sides of the road are filled with parked vehicles.

Researcher:

Yes, now pedestrians, bicycles, and cars are all mixed together on the roads, which is indeed very chaotic.

Participant:

You can't avoid walking on the road, and you have to be careful of cars when crossing the street.

Researcher:

Yes, the road conditions are indeed unsafe now.

By the way, I see that there are a lot of trees in the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory neighbourhood, more than in other neighbourhoods around here. Is that because the factory used to be very profitable?

Participant:

Yes, the factory used to be open to the public, so many people came to visit, and it was well built. Some of the houses you see now were built originally, and some were built later.

Researcher:

Are these old buildings the original ones?

Participant:

Yes, these are the earliest ones. The ones over there were built later. The houses near the road have already been demolished.

Researcher:

Why were they demolished?

Participant:

The original plan was to build a textile museum, which was arranged by the city government. After the demolition, the pandemic hit, many officials were transferred, and funding wasn't secured, so the project was halted.

Researcher:

Were the houses demolished?

Participant:

After the expropriation, they remained vacant, and the project stalled.

Researcher:

Where is that?

Participant:

Right over there.

Researcher:

Were all the houses in that area expropriated?

Participant:

Most of the houses along the road were expropriated, but those further inland were not demolished. Many areas remain vacant.

Researcher:

These houses are very old, aren't they?

Participant:

Yes, these are the earliest houses in No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. They were built before the factory was established, around 1953 or 1954.

Researcher:

They are really old houses.

Participant:

These houses were built later. I remember that the row of houses was built in 1988 or 1989, or maybe a little later, around 1989 or 1990.

Researcher:

Are there any houses on the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory side that were built after the 1990s?

Participant:

Yes, the two five-storey buildings on the north side of Xiangrong Street were built after the 1990s.

Researcher:

So most of the houses in this area were built in the 1980s or earlier.

Participant:

Yes, the ones here are from the 1950s, and the two on Xiangrong Street are from the 1990s.

Researcher:

This area definitely deserves a museum; it has significant historical value.

Participant:

That's why the area was expropriated, but the project was later halted due to various reasons.

Researcher:

Was the scale of the expropriation large?

Participant:

Yes, it was completed in just two months.

Researcher:

It was indeed collected quite quickly.

Participant:

Unfortunately, it's all abandoned now, and the project has been suspended. Funds from the central and municipal governments have not been allocated, so many things cannot be done.

Researcher:

Xxx, how are you feeling now? Do you need to rest?

Participant:

I usually just walk around the neighbourhood; I mostly stay in this area.

Researcher:

Your home is quite close to the community centre, isn't it?

Participant:

Yes, my home is on the 7th floor, right across from the community centre.

Researcher:

Since it's so close, do you usually use the services provided by the community?

Participant:

The community has its own daily tasks and activities, and they also organise some services.

Researcher:

Have you ever participated in the community's convenience services?

Participant:

No. I rarely go out, and during the pandemic a few years ago, we couldn't gather in groups, so I couldn't see anyone and stayed home.

Researcher:

Yes, the pandemic affected things for a long time, making it inconvenient for everyone to go out.

Participant:

Yes, that's exactly why.

Researcher:

Xxx, would you like to walk a bit more or go back to rest?

Participant:

I'm not leaving.

Researcher:

Alright, I won't disturb you any further. Today's interview is over. Thank you for sharing so much with me, Xxx.

Walking Interview-2

Participant:

Yeah, usually taking care of the next generation. He's got to take care of the next generation. When he retires, he takes care of the next generation.

Researcher:

You see, you are inside the community, where do you usually go for activities? Can you show me around? You're so young; do you usually participate in community activities?

Participant:

In the morning, I do more activities in the living block, and in the evening, I go to the Cultural Palace.

In the morning, it's convenient to be here, and in the evening, it's a prominent place, so I go to the Cultural Palace.

There are several squares here, including a small square at the back, a square in front of the Wanjiayu and Wanxiangguo supermarkets above, and a small activity area in front of Building 14 on the east side. It's safe for people to move around in these places, and there are fewer cars on the roads, so it's safer to move around there.

Researcher:

Do you usually drop off your grandchildren in the morning and then come over for activities? Or do you come out specifically to be active?

Participant:

Saturdays and Sundays are dedicated to coming out and being active.

Researcher:

And Monday through Friday?

Participant:

Monday to Friday is for activities with children. The kids are too young to go to kindergarten, so after my family goes to work, I push them around here.

Researcher:

Where do you push your child?

Participant:

I'll tell you about it.

Researcher:

I see a lot of people playing cards here.

Participant:

Playing cards are usually played in the afternoon and also on Saturdays. On Saturdays, the family takes the children away, and we retired ones have nothing to do, so we go and play cards.

Sometimes in the Cultural Palace, sometimes in the community.

Researcher:

Is it a fixed place to play?

Participant:

Not always at the Cultural Palace. It depends on the activity space in the neighbourhood; sometimes, there is a special place to play cards in the Palace of Culture, where there are two places. Now, the Palace of Culture is equivalent to calling one side the Palace of Culture and the other side the Sports Centre.

Researcher:

Right.

Participant:

Some people call it May Day Park, and we usually call it the Palace of Culture. Some people change the name to say one side is called the Cultural Palace and the other side is called the Sports Centre, and there are more people playing basketball and football over there. This place is very active in the morning because cars rarely come up here, making it a safe spot to bring your kids. When the sun doesn't come out, it's cooler here and more people are moving around. In the afternoon, when the sun comes out and it's sunny, people don't move around here anymore because they have to bring their kids, and it's sunny too.

Okay, I'll continue to follow on from the previous paragraph, keeping the revisions of splitting sentence by sentence, not merging, and only removing verbiage:

Researcher:

How do you feel the place is maintained? Or is there anything you're not happy with about this place?

Participant:

Basically, getting it all right, it's pretty much the same.

Researcher:

How do you feel the whole community is maintained? Or are there certain areas that are not well-maintained?

Participant:

Maintenance well, the whole community was designed with pavements. The old community was not planned with parking in mind when the details were first planned, and the design did not take into account the fact that there are so many cars now. The most important thing that needs to be adjusted now in terms of maintenance or management is parking. When cars are parked on the pavement or a non-motorised lane, it is not easy for electric vehicles and bicycles to pass.

When motor vehicles take up the lane, it is very unsafe if motorbikes are passing on both sides, or small three-wheelers ridden by older people in the middle.

Researcher:

Not very safe indeed.

Participant:

For old residential blocks, surface parking is a big problem. Many places now use mechanical three-dimensional garages, but not here.

Researcher:

It would be nice to tear down a building to build an automated car park.

Participant:

Parking planning issues exist in this neighbourhood, as we lack a parking space plan. The parking fee is \$50 per car per month. I understand that it is a fee for a parking space, not a management fee. Now, there is no one to control; people park at will. Older people often exercise when they have nothing to do. Sometimes, there are fewer people, and sometimes, as the sun rises, people don't come out. The sun is too hot in the summer, and it's not safe to move around.

Researcher:

Do you usually walk a fixed route? Or do you walk randomly?

Participant:

I take all random routes. Basically, there are two: one to the food court and one to the

Vanguard supermarket. I usually walk on these two routes.

Researcher:

Are you usually in charge of purchasing? For example, at the farmers' market.

Participant:

I mostly buy groceries.

Researcher:

Do you occasionally go to Xiang Rong Street for shopping?

Participant:

When I have to buy groceries and things, it's mainly my family that buys, so I buy less.

Researcher:

You are mainly responsible for bringing up the children.

Participant:

I am mainly responsible for bringing up the children, and the grocery shopping is done primarily by their family members.

Researcher:

I do age-friendly community enhancement on my side.

Participant:

Age-friendly community enhancement is not good.

Researcher:

I would like to see what conflicts people usually have with their lives and environment through staged interviews and discussions.

Participant:

Community ageing has been talked about a lot in the past, but very little has actually been done on the ground. None of the facilities of the elderly institutions in the community have kept up. There used to be talk about emptying a few rooms for community ageing, but I don't know if that's required now or if it's started.

Researcher:

I haven't seen it on my side.

Participant:

That's understandable.

Researcher:

I've heard that some places are doing it, but I don't know the specifics.

Participant:

We don't know how the government plans. You see the building is fenced off, I don't know what kind of projects are being done. We are not involved; these are government projects.

For instance, some places offer elderly services, such as allowing older people to go to lunch after a certain age for a small fee, which is acceptable to everyone. It's not realistic to not charge any money; you have to charge a little bit of money to operate properly.

As older people or retirees, they have a certain income, pay a little money, and the state subsidises them a little bit, which can also reduce the burden on their children. Otherwise, their children will have to think about whether the older people have eaten at work, and they will not feel at ease. This is not good for society or for the family. If community services are in place, people can work with peace of mind.

Researcher:

Do you usually go to the neighbourhood grocery store or supermarket for your groceries?

Participant:

I can walk over to the food court to buy food, and I can also go to the supermarket to purchase daily necessities. The supporting facilities are sufficient.

Participant:

For minor illnesses and pains, the hospital is nearby, which is very convenient.

Researcher:

Do you usually enjoy some of the support provided by the community?

Participant:

The community sometimes organises activities, such as safety and fire prevention lectures, hospital doctors' lectures on health care and prevention, party knowledge learning, and policy document communication. I have participated in all of them because I am a Party member.

Participant:

Last time, the community also had fire safety training and invited someone to give a special lecture.

Researcher:

When you participate in these community activities, are there any activities that help you find more interests or meet more people?

Participant:

Most of the people who attend these events are retired No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory employees and basically know each other. You can't always name them, but you are familiar with them when you meet them. We used to have more than 7,000 workers in our plant, and we used to know each other from one workshop, and people from different workshops have met each other because of one plant.

Participants:

The community also notifies the residents, for example, to install a natural gas throttling valve to prevent natural gas leaks from exploding. After these notifications are sent to the residents' homes, we all go and install them as required.

Participant:

When installing the valve, the Tianjin company came to install it and charged more than 30 yuan, which is not too expensive. This is all organised by the community, which is quite good. Overall the community does a good job, after all, the community is large and it isn't easy to cover all the details.

Participant:

Generally the community does OK. For instance, there's a square in front of the Vanguard. Sometimes, residents can't take their children into the mall when they're shopping, so they play in the square instead.

Sometimes the community also organises free haircuts and provides convenience services, which is suitable for residents.

Researcher:

Are there any places in the whole community, including the three sides, the east gate, and the west gate, that you don't usually go to? I would like to find out.

Participant:

There are some places that you wouldn't go if nothing was going on. There's nothing going on there.

Researcher:

Is it because you don't find those places interesting, or is it the environment?

Participant:

There are places that are circled and just don't go. Some places are far away and the people who live there don't know each other, there's no point in going. The community is huge, covering 170,000 square metres. You often find yourself in unfamiliar places, navigating blindly, and people find it strange. They tend to avoid places they don't know. OK, I'll continue with the output from the previous paragraph onwards, keeping the revisions of splitting sentence by sentence, not merging, and only removing verbiage:

Researcher:

I see that some residents put benches and tables downstairs themselves to make a lounge area. Do you usually use these areas?

Participant:

I don't set them up myself, and I don't use them. It's not good to randomly set up tables and chairs downstairs. It is better to communicate through the community or property, and put a few tables and chairs in the designated place after agreeing. This is convenient for residents and does not affect traffic and fire safety.

Participants:

For example, some places are fixed into a combination of tables and benches, like the Cultural Palace Sports Centre, with a side table around four fixed small benches, like a mahjong table. This is fixed, residents with convenient, but also neat and safe.

Participants:

If you want to set up activities in the community chairs, they should also be approved by the relevant departments first. Moving family chairs to the public area at random is not feasible, as it would result in chaotic placement, which is both unattractive and poses a security risk.

Researcher:

Overall, do you usually have other activities besides playing cards with your grandchildren?

Participant:

Usually if I don't take my grandchildren, I will go around the community, take a walk and do some shopping. Retirement is basically just being active in the community.

Researcher:

Do you usually have a fixed route for your walks?

Participant:

Not completely fixed. I know which places are good for exercise, so I go to those random places. Which route I take mainly depends on the day.

Researcher:

Do you take routes depending on the crowd? How many or how few people are there?

Participant:

Will look at the foot traffic. In the morning, when there are fewer people, I tend to go to places with fewer crowds. Sometimes, I also go by way of activities. Usually I go wherever I live, there are activities to the east and west.

Participants:

For example, if you want to buy salt today, then go to the activity and buy salt on the way. There is also a lot of activity equipment in the square.

Researcher:

Do you have any comments or ideas about this place?

Participant:

Overall the place is okay. The activity space is also suitable and these are pretty much the same nowadays.

Participant:

There used to be stalls in this place, but now those have moved to the west gate. Stalls should not be placed randomly in the event space, the smell is strong and affects the environment. It is better for stallholders to operate in a fixed place.

Researcher:

Apart from the smell of the stalls, are there any other smells or noises in the community that you are not happy with?

Participant:

There is no major noise overall. Sometimes there are noises from people renovating their homes, but everyone understands. The neighbourhood is an old residential block, and there are some places where there are environmental issues, but basically they are acceptable. As long as the vendors are fixed to operate in the designated places, it is fine.

Participants:

For example, those selling live poultry must be in a fixed market, not mobile trafficking. This is in line with national health regulations, avoids the spread of diseases such as avian flu, and is good for residents' health.

Participant:

It must not cause health hazards or affect everyone's normal life.

Researcher:

Overall, do you think there are any deficiencies in the management of the community? Have you considered moving out of the area in the future?

Participant:

I have no intention to move out. I hope the government will add lifts in the renovation of old neighbourhoods, as it is particularly important for older people to have access to lifts in buildings over six floors.

Participant:

In some places, such as Shanghai, lifts can be added as long as 80% of the residents agree, and those who don't agree can't block it. It's also quite good to manage the lift on a pay-per-use basis. Both the state and individuals are subsidised, and residents can accept it.

Participants:

Zhengzhou does not have many lifts installed now. In other cities, such as Beijing, there is a model where the lift company invests in the installation and the residents pay once for using it. The Zhengzhou model generally requires owners to pay most of the money themselves.

Participants:

For older residential blocks, adding lifts is crucial for older people to access the outdoors, move around, and enjoy the sunshine for their health. The government and individuals contribute a portion of the money, making the subsidy affordable to residents afterwards.

Participants:

After the retrofitting of lifts, there is also a need for post-maintenance and management. All these should be taken into account; you can't just put it up and not manage it with care.

Participant:

Old residential blocks have a lot of space for activities, and it would be better if facilities suitable for older people are added. Although new neighbourhoods have good buildings, the activity space is usually not big enough.

Researcher:

Many places that were once empty land have been developed into buildings.

Participant:

Yes, so many buildings were built in the past to solve the housing problem of the employees, who had no place to live and were not at ease with their work at that time, so many buildings were added.

Researcher:

That is indeed the case.

Participant:

So building buildings in the past was a product of contradiction. Although the buildings were built, the place itself was not small and did not affect the activities of the residents.

Researcher:

Are there any places in the community that are particularly meaningful to you, such as places where you spend a lot of time or where you have fond memories?

Participant:

I used to come to the community a lot, there is nothing special about any other place.

Researcher:

Did you live here in the past?

Participant:

Yes. It used to be a staff canteen, but now it was converted into a restaurant, and then it was built into a house.

Researcher:

I know.

Participant:

This neighbourhood used to be a basketball court, but now it's been converted into a food market. I don't know how to play basketball, but this is indeed a basketball court.

Participant:

There is less green space now than there was. It would be nice if the planning could utilise these places to benefit the people.

Researcher:

Has the community organised meetings to gather input and let residents voice their opinions?

Participant:

There are. In the past, the community or the office would organise meetings for residents to express their opinions. It was called "three certificates and one discussion", and they would send out documents or call the residents' representatives to have a meeting in a place where they could ask for opinions and disclose the status of the project.

Participants:

At that time, they would notify the building manager or the residents' representatives, and they would get together to discuss the project. I have attended such meetings.

Researcher:

You participate in many community activities and are supportive of the community.

Participant:

Yes, I have participated in many of them, and I hope that the community building is getting better and better.

Researcher:

That's all for today's interview. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Walking Interview-3

Researcher:

Is there any place in this community that you don't usually go to? I don't mean that you don't like it, I'm just asking where you don't usually go.

Participant:

I usually just walk around the neighbourhood when I have nothing to do, and I usually chat with friends in the small square.

Researcher:

So you still prefer this area?

Participant:

I rarely go out.

Researcher:

Have you ever used any community services here?

Participant:

What kind of services?

Researcher:

For example, convenient services such as someone delivering things, health check-ups, or services for older people who need support with daily living or nursing care.

Participant:

I haven't encountered such situations, nor have I ever asked for such services.

Researcher:

What do you usually do at the small square?

Participant:

I dance, exercise, and chat with friends.

Researcher:

Do you use the fitness equipment at the small square?

Participant:

Yes, the equipment is quite good.

Researcher:

Alright. Besides the small square, do you go anywhere else when you come out? Do you stay there most of the time, or do you have other leisure or daily activities?

Participant:

There's not much else. I mostly stay at the square chatting with friends, and some people go to their friends' homes to play cards.

Researcher:

I see there are many card tables outside.

Participant:

People aren't playing outside.

Researcher:

Why don't you like playing outside?

Participant:

There are fewer people.

Researcher:

Is it because there are fewer people at home?

Participant:

Yes, it's quieter.

Researcher:

When do you usually come here?

Participant:

In the morning and evening.

Researcher:

Do you come here alone or with friends?

Participant:

A few friends from the neighbourhood meet up here. We agree on a time and then come together to walk around and use the fitness equipment.

Researcher:

How long do you usually stay before going home?

Participant:

In the morning, we usually stay until around 10 o'clock, and in the evening, we come around 7 or 8 o'clock and stay until around 10 o'clock. It's usually about two hours.

Researcher:

Do you usually cook dinner after returning home?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Do you live with your family or on your own?

Participant:

I live with my mother-in-law and my spouse.

Researcher:

Do you need to pick up or drop off your grandchildren?

Participant:

No, I don't have any grandchildren yet.

Researcher:

That's good. Taking grandchildren to and from school can be quite tiring.

Participant:

Not yet.

Researcher:

If you go for a walk or chat, this area is quite large. Where do you usually go to chat? Or do you just go wherever?

Participant:

I just go wherever. I usually just stand around here.

Researcher:

You can stand anywhere here, right?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Do you prefer standing in the sun or in the shade?

Participant:

When the sun is too strong, everyone goes to the shade.

Researcher:

So the location is random. Besides this small square, where else do you go for a walk or to buy groceries?

Participant:

I don't usually go shopping for groceries; my spouse does that, and I don't buy anything.

Researcher:

Do you ever go out with your spouse?

Participant:

No.

Researcher:

Where do you usually go when you're out alone?

Participant:

I usually just chat with friends and then go home. I don't go anywhere else.

Researcher:

Do you ever go out for other reasons?

Participant:

Sometimes in the evening I'll walk around the community for a bit to get some exercise.

Researcher:

Apart from meeting up with friends, do you often run into acquaintances? Are they old acquaintances from No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant:

Yes, I don't know anyone outside, but it's fine to run into acquaintances inside No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher:

Do you run into acquaintances in other places?

Participant:

Occasionally, but not often.

Researcher:

When you run into acquaintances while out and about, do you choose that route because you want to chat with them? Or is it completely random?

Participant:

It's random. If I happen to bump into someone while taking a stroll, I'll chat for a bit.

Researcher:

It depends on your mood—you just choose whichever route looks nice.

Participant:

Right.

Researcher:

What do you think about the maintenance of the small square here? Or the maintenance of the entire community?

Participant:

It's okay.

Researcher:

Are you satisfied?

Participant:

Yes, I'm satisfied.

Researcher:

What are your thoughts on the appearance, sound, and smell?

Participant:

It's okay, no major noise.

Researcher:

Do you like a little noise?

Participant:

It doesn't matter, I'm not particular.

Researcher:

I notice a lot of cooking smells coming over here. Do you mind the smell?

Participant:

No, I don't mind.

Researcher:

Do you think this smell is always present, and does it make you feel comfortable, or not?

Participant:

Not comfortable, but I don't dislike it.

Researcher:

If the smell suddenly disappeared, how would you feel?

Participant:

It would feel like something is missing. I'm used to smelling it, so if it suddenly disappeared, it would feel strange.

Researcher:

Do you think it's sunny here? Have you lived here for many years?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

You are an older person who has lived in the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory for many years. Do you feel that the factory area has changed a lot over the years?

Participant:

Not much, but there have been changes to the buildings. The former factory canteen is gone and has been replaced by two tall buildings.

Researcher:

What do you think? Do you think the changes are good or bad?

Participant:

It doesn't matter.

Researcher:

As long as you're happy?

Participant:

As long as it doesn't affect my life, these changes don't bother me. I'm pretty laid-back; as long as it doesn't affect me, it's fine.

Researcher:

If the changes don't affect your life, do you think it's better to have changes or to keep things the same?

Participant:

I guess it's better to keep things the same. It's been decades since I was a child, and I still miss the old environment. But seeing the high-rise buildings go up also gives me a sense of novelty.

Researcher:

Yes.

Participant:

After the old buildings are demolished, I always feel like I've grown old too, like something is gone, and I can't help but feel nostalgic.

Researcher:

That's indeed quite nostalgic.

Participant:

Yes, it's quite nostalgic.

Researcher:

A lot of buildings have been demolished, but some of them have been renovated. Could you take me for a walk around your usual route?

Participant:

Sure, I walk there often.

Researcher:

Please take me with you.

Participant:

Let's go, I'll show you around.

Researcher:

I'd also like to know where people usually go for walks in the community. Is there anything you're not satisfied with here?

Participant:

It's okay, nothing major.

Researcher:

You seem like a pretty easy-going person. Some people mind crowded places. Do you mind?

Participant:

I don't mind. It's lively when there are more people.

Researcher:

What do you think when there are fewer people?

Participant:

It feels a bit quiet when there are fewer people.

Researcher:

This area feels very lively.

Participant:

I've lived here for decades.

Researcher:

You can see there's a lot of traffic on the road. Does that bother you?

Participant:

The traffic is heavy because more people are driving now, more people are buying cars, and more people are living here. You can't really say much about it.

Researcher:

Indeed, everyone's living standards have improved.

Participant:

Yes, life is better now, and there's demand. It's not realistic to stop people from buying cars.

Researcher:

Does your spouse usually shop at the nearby vegetable market, or do you go further afield?

Participant:

Usually nearby.

Researcher:

I see there are many vegetable stalls, markets, and supermarkets on that road. Which would you choose?

Participant:

There's no fixed place. We just walk around and buy vegetables wherever we see them, without going to a specific place.

Researcher:

That's good, more flexible. Do you usually go out or stay inside?

Participant:

Usually stay inside.

Researcher:

Do you feel attached to living here? Does it feel like home?

Participant:

Yes, I do. Everyone here works at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, so the neighbours are friendly and I have many friends.

Researcher:

Why did you choose to walk this way? Is there a special reason?

Participant:

No, there isn't.

Researcher:

Some people go there because the nearby restaurants smell good. What makes you choose a particular route?

Participant:

It's random, completely random.

Researcher:

Do you usually walk on this side or the opposite side?

Participant:

I usually walk on that side.

Researcher:

Why?

Participant:

It's more convenient when there are many people coming and going.

Researcher:

This is the opposite direction of traffic, right?

Participant:

It just feels natural to walk this way. I don't necessarily follow the direction. When there are many people, it's more convenient to walk that way, but this side is better.

Researcher:

Did you grow up here or move here later?

Participant:

I grew up here.

Researcher:

Does this place hold special meaning for you? Are there any memorable places here?

Participant:

Nothing special. When I was a child, I just ran around and played.

Researcher:

This building has been around for a long time. Has it changed much? What was it like before?

Participant:

There were fewer vehicles before, mostly bicycles.

Researcher:

Now it's all cars.

Participant:

Now there are more cars and electric vehicles.

Researcher:

Any other changes?

Participant:

Nothing else really.

Researcher:

What are your thoughts on the appearance, sounds, or any smells?

Participant:

I don't have any particular opinions.

Researcher:

How do you think it's maintained?

Participant:

It's maintained pretty well.

Researcher:

Is there a reason you usually walk this way?

Participant:

It's just random.

Researcher:

Completely random?

Participant:

Yes, just walking around.

Researcher:

I think you have a good personality.

Participant:

I don't mind which path I take.

Researcher:

Do you see a lot of residents engaging in activities downstairs? Do you not like to participate yourself? You mentioned earlier that you mainly chat or go to friends' homes to play cards. Do you not like activities with many people?

Participant:

There aren't many community activities.

Researcher:

I saw people playing cards and chess.

Participant:

I like to watch.

Researcher:

You like taking walks. Do you go to the nearby park?

Participant:

I haven't been there in a long time. I mainly stay in the community.

Researcher:

This community is very warm and close-knit. The management is tight, and the shops sell mostly home-cooked food, which feels very familiar.

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Have you ever considered moving out? After all, you've lived here for so many years, and you said you've been here since you were a child.

Participant:

Personally, I don't want to move. I've gotten used to it and don't want to leave.

Researcher:

Is it because you find life here convenient, or is it more about emotional attachment?

Participant:

Both—emotional attachment and convenience.

Researcher:

How do you feel about the current road planning in this area? Are there any places you're not satisfied with for taking walks or activities downstairs?

Participant:

It's much better than before. The roads used to be dirt roads, but now they've been paved with asphalt.

Researcher:

Do you remember when they were repaired?

Participant:

In the past two or three years. Before, whenever it rained, the roads would be flooded, but now they're much easier to walk on.

Researcher:

Did you often walk around here when it was a dirt road?

Participant:

Yes, I did. Now it feels much easier to walk, and the houses outside have been repainted and insulated.

Researcher:

Do you remember when the repainting and insulation work was done?

Participant:

About two or three years ago.

Researcher:

Was it organised by the community?

Participant:

It was arranged by the city government.

Researcher:

Some buildings were renovated, while others weren't, right?

Participant:

Yes, some areas weren't renovated.

Researcher:

Were these buildings all built at the same time?

Participant:

Yes, they were all built at the same time. They were all inspected by the authorities.

Researcher:

Did people with different jobs get different houses when the houses were allocated?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

So this used to be a kindergarten?

Participant:

Yes, but it was demolished and turned into a youth workers' building.

Researcher:

When was it built?

Participant:

Around 1986.

Researcher:

Did the kindergarten move after it was demolished?

Participant:

No, it moved to the front, still within the courtyard.

Researcher:

Was it still a workers' kindergarten?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Was the kindergarten relocated because there wasn't enough space in the building?

Participant:

Yes, there were many young people at the time, so several workers' dormitories were built.

Researcher:

Is the workers' dormitory across from the kindergarten?

Participant:

The kindergarten is right across the street.

Researcher:

Would you be willing to take me there to have a look?

Participant:

Sure.

Researcher:

Did you attend this kindergarten when you were a child?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Is it very different now compared to before?

Participant:

There have been changes.

Researcher:

Do you not usually come to this area?

Participant:

I don't usually come here. I don't have any friends here. I'm usually on the other side.

Researcher:

I also noticed that there are few people here.

Participant:

This place is remote, and there are more people on the other side. There's nothing to do around the kindergarten.

Participant:

There is a kindergarten and a primary school here at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher:

It's true that the facilities here are very complete.

Participant:

I used to live in this building.

Researcher:

Do you still live here?

Participant:

No, I don't live here anymore. This area has been expropriated to build a textile museum.

Researcher:

Do you have any expectations for the museum?

Participant:

Not really.

Researcher:

I heard that the community environment will improve after the museum is built.

Participant:

Yes, but I don't have any expectations. Life goes on as usual. This area has been completely vacated, and there's no construction yet.

Researcher:

Are the buildings fenced off over there going to be demolished? I see a few that are fenced off.

Participant:

No, they're just being renovated.

Researcher:

Will all these buildings be preserved, just renovated?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Do you agree with this approach, or do you think it would be better to demolish and rebuild?

Participant:

It's better not to demolish them; they have sentimental value.

Researcher:

When you go for a walk, do you usually walk on the sidewalk or the road?

Participant:

I usually walk on the road.

Researcher:

Why not the sidewalk?

Participant:

The sidewalk is inconvenient; there are people riding bikes, and it's crowded.

Researcher:

What do you find unsatisfying about the sidewalk?

Participant:

It's much better than before. It used to be a dirt road.

Researcher:

When was the road paved?

Participant:

It was paved a long time ago.

Researcher:

Is this the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory kindergarten?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

How is the kindergarten now?

Participant:

It's fine. The kindergarten is still in use.

Researcher:

Can you tell me what the kindergarten entrance used to look like?

Participant:

It was simple, just a small gate.

Researcher:

Now there are many more facilities.

Participant:

Yes, now it's fully equipped.

Researcher:

Do you usually stay around the kindergarten entrance?

Participant:

No, I don't know anyone here.

Researcher:

I see there aren't many people here.

Participant:

There's not much activity in this area.

Researcher:

Is there heavy traffic during peak pickup and drop-off times?

Participant:

Yes, there are many cars during pickup and drop-off times.

Researcher:

Do you avoid coming here during those times?

Participant:

Yes, I avoid coming here when there are many people and cars.

Researcher:

Do you think having the kindergarten mixed with residential areas affects residents' daily lives?

Participant:

Not much of an impact; everyone has gotten used to it.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the kindergarten and school facilities add value to the community?

Participant:

Yes, they make it convenient for residents to send their children to school without having to travel far.

Researcher:

How did you feel about attending kindergarten here when you were a child?

Participant:

It was quite nice back then; I enjoyed playing with my friends.

Researcher:

What facilities were there near the kindergarten at the time?

Participant:

There were factory buildings nearby, but no other facilities.

Researcher:

Has the area around the kindergarten changed much recently?

Participant:

It's changed quite a lot. Now there are fences and new buildings.

Researcher:

Do you think these changes are good for the community?

Participant:

Yes, they're beneficial. It looks tidier and safer now.

Researcher:

How do you feel about the greenery in this area?

Participant:

The area is small, and there isn't much greenery, but planting flowers would be nice.

Researcher:

If more greenery could be added, what do you think?

Participant:

That would be good; it would look more comfortable.

Researcher:

The space below is occupied by parked cars. What do you think about that?

Participant:

Sometimes it feels a bit crowded.

Researcher:

Is the crowding inconvenient for you, or does it just look messy?

Participant:

Mainly because it doesn't look very neat.

Researcher:

If the parking were reorganised, do you think the residents would cooperate?

Participant:

If it's arranged reasonably, everyone should be able to cooperate.

Researcher:

If there were more activity spaces, would you be willing to use them?

Participant:

Of course I would.

Researcher:

Compared to before, how satisfied are you with the overall environment of the neighbourhood now?

Participant:

Overall, I'm still quite satisfied.

Researcher:

What would you most like to see improved?

Participant:

I hope parking can be more regulated so that people don't park randomly and obstruct pedestrians.

Researcher:

Would you like the community to organise activities suitable for older people?

Participant:

Yes, I would definitely participate if there were activities.

Researcher:

What kind of activities?

Participant:

Health lectures and entertainment activities would be fine.

Researcher:

Has the community organised such activities before?

Participant:

Occasionally, but not very often.

Researcher:

Have you ever participated in community activities?

Participant:

Yes, sometimes there are free haircuts or health check-ups.

Researcher:

What do you think of these activities?

Participant:

They're good; they're convenient for residents.

Researcher:

Do you find the way the community notifies residents about activities convenient?

Participant:

Sometimes they use loudspeakers, sometimes they post notices, both are quite convenient.

Researcher:

What do you think of the attitude of the community staff?

Participant:

They are all quite good and proactive in helping with tasks.

Walking Interview-4

Participant 00:15

My current range of activities is minimal. Every day, I follow a routine: I live here. My range of activities is no more than 50 metres. I get up at 7:30 in the morning and go to Li Ji Hu La Tang to buy breakfast. After buying breakfast, I return home within about 10 minutes and do not go out again. In the afternoon, if I need to buy groceries, I go down from home to the local vegetable market to buy some vegetables, then return home. I am solely responsible for the heavy household chores.

Researcher 00:44

You can see there are many places selling vegetables here. Which vegetable market do you usually go to?

Participant 00:53

I just go here.

Researcher 00:54

When you walk, do you have a preference for which side of the road you walk on? Do you have a side you prefer to walk on?

Participant 01:06

I only walk on the sidewalk because the road is narrow and full of parked cars. I always walk on the sidewalk.

Researcher 01:13

Do you prefer to walk on one side more than the other?

Participant 01:16

I don't have a particular preference. I walk on one side when I go out and the other side when I come back. I'm used to walking on the right.

Researcher 01:20

Yes, everyone here is used to walking on the right. Do you just do basic shopping and go home in your community? Do you have any leisure time?

Participant 01:40

Not since my spouse fell ill. I used to be very active. My spouse has been ill for three years, since three years ago. All the older people in the neighbourhood know me. I used to go out at 7:30 every morning and come back at 9:00, staying out for two hours every day, all year round. But now my spouse is ill, and I'm not in good health myself. I used to be very healthy, but now I'm not. It's been like this for the past three years.

Researcher 02:12

xxx, how old are you this year?

Participant 02:15

Don't ask my age; we're all ordinary people. I'm 85 years old.

Researcher 02:18

You don't look 85 at all; you look in good health.

Participant 02:22

I was one of the founding members of this factory and the first generation of employees. I arrived before the factory was even completed, back in 1953—that was really early.

Researcher 02:34

You did arrive quite early. Were you from another region?

Participant 02:37

No, I'm a native of Zhengzhou with local household registration.

Researcher 02:40

Then you must be very familiar with this area.

Participant 02:44

I know all the old streets in Zhengzhou. But now that I'm older, I don't go out much, so I'm not familiar with the new streets. I know all the old streets. My family lives on Dehua Street, so if you ask me about that area, I know it well.

Researcher 03:06

You must be very familiar with this area. When you go downstairs, do you still meet people you know?

Participant 03:14

Yes, I still have many old acquaintances. In the past, all the people who lived in these houses moved away, and now it's mostly older people. These are old houses, and young people don't want to live here, so only older people like me are left. Actually, no one wants to move away. Why is that? We are old and have a small social circle. When we go out, we only see older people we know. We get together and chat for hours and have a great time. But we don't see the people who moved away. Now when I go out, I can't meet anyone I know for half a day, so I just go home.

Researcher 03:51

That's really boring.

Participant 03:53

Yes, older people need someone to talk to. We don't talk about anything serious, just things from the past, things we've all experienced. I know it's been 70 years, but we talk about when we were young.

Researcher 04:07

Grandpa, now that you can't go to the cultural centre, do you still come down to chat with people?

Participant 04:14

I can't do that now, young lady. My wife can't be left alone, and I can't leave home. It's been three years. I won't talk about that anymore. Let's talk about something else.

Researcher 04:34

Do you feel that your physical activities are greatly restricted now?

Participant 04:38

I don't have time to go out now.

Researcher 04:40

I want to ask you about going out, such as going up and down the stairs.

Participant 04:44

I go out to do important things and don't have time to wander around. Mainly, I don't feel like going out for a walk to relax. When my wife was still alive, I used to have a lot of fun with these elderly friends. I'm the second oldest among us, with one person a month older than me, and the rest are younger. There were seven or eight of us who would often go out together to eat in Kaifeng or Xi'an, and everyone had a good time. Anyway, back then I was in a good mood and had no worries.

If there were good dumplings in Xi'an, we'd drive there, stay overnight, have a meal, and then come back. But now I don't have the time for that.

Researcher 05:28

You live so close to the community. Are there any community support services that could help you in your situation?

Participant 05:35

No. My spouse is over 80 years old. How could I ask someone else to help with such tasks? If I hire a caregiver, they might feel uncomfortable doing those things, and volunteers are out of the question. Volunteers come to help willingly, and they can do things like laundry or cleaning, but I couldn't possibly ask someone else to help with such tasks. It's too much to ask.

Researcher 06:04

Indeed, it's inappropriate for strangers to do such things.

Participant 06:07

Such things shouldn't be done by others.

Researcher 06:10

Are there any other services that could help you?

Participant 06:12

We hired a caregiver.

Participant 06:15

But sometimes I have to do it myself.

Researcher 06:16

It would be much better if the caregiver could help you.

Participant 06:23

The caregiver mainly helps with toileting, cleaning up after meals, and other tasks. They can also lend a hand with other things, but the caregiver is the primary helper.

Researcher 06:30

But even after hiring a caregiver, you still can't go out on your own?

Participant 06:34

The caregiver can only stay by my side and watch me; they can't take care of her for me. Because I don't know when she'll wake up, if I go out and she wakes up and can't find me, she'll keep calling out. The longer she calls, the more scared she gets. That's basically the situation. Plus, she can't express herself clearly. Out of ten sentences, I can only understand two. Most of what she says is incomprehensible. She just keeps calling me, asking me to come sit with her. She's not really in any pain; she just feels lonely.

So I can't leave her. I don't feel like going out to have fun or eat. Going out to eat and have fun should be relaxing, but I'm always worried about her. It's like there's a heavy weight on my chest.

Researcher 07:26

Would it be possible for the caregiver to push her out for a walk?

Participant 07:29

No, we live upstairs, on the second floor.

Researcher 07:31

You live on the second floor?

Participant 07:34

Yes, the red building. The first door with red lanterns hanging outside is my home.

Researcher 07:38

This building doesn't have an elevator, does it?

Participant 07:39

No, it's an old building with no elevator at all.

Researcher 07:43

Do you find it inconvenient to live here, for example, when shopping or doing other things?

Participant 07:48

No, it's very convenient to buy groceries, go to the hospital, and go to the supermarket. Don't worry, it doesn't affect our daily life. The big hospitals are also nearby, like the city hospital and the traditional Chinese medicine hospital, so it's all very convenient.

Researcher 08:04

Indeed, the community planning here is very well done.

Participant 08:10

Yes, this area was planned so well back in 1953, and as a long-time resident, I feel it deeply.

Participant 08:14

The original No. 4 Hospital is no longer called Zhengzhou No. 4 Branch Hospital, but Zhengzhou Chinese Medicine Hospital, located in the western corner of this area. That was the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. At that time, it was called the United Hospital, and later it was changed to the United Prevention and Treatment Hospital, just like the supermarket was originally called a department store. There was also a health centre here, and everything was planned. There is also a sports ground here, which is a basketball court, and behind the basketball court is a football field. It was very well planned and had everything.

Researcher 09:00

You seem very familiar with this area. Did you grow up here?

Researcher 00:00

You've lived here for many years. Is there a particular place in the community that holds special meaning for you? For example, your memories or experiences here.

Participant 00:13

To be honest, young lady, I was very dissatisfied with the collapse of our factory later on. The factory collapsed—such a large factory that once employed ten thousand people. At that time, Premier Liu Shaoqi came to visit, and I saw him with my own eyes. Our factory was one of the units opened to foreigners by the Ministry of Textiles, and foreigners often came to visit. National leaders such as Zhu De, Liu Shaoqi, and Zhou Enlai also came. Some people say Mao Zedong also came, but I didn't see him. However, I did see the prime ministers. Back then, officials weren't as hard to see as they are now. They would walk on the streets, and you could follow them. Of course, security measures were strict, but they didn't completely prohibit you from watching.

I was very close to Liu Shaoqi. He walked right past me, and I could see him clearly. The factory was thriving at the time, a large state-owned factory, but it suddenly collapsed later on. I just couldn't accept it. As for why it collapsed, I have no idea.

Researcher 01:18

The changes were indeed too rapid.

Participant 01:19

Many people lost their jobs overnight. Not only did they lose their jobs, but for the younger ones, suddenly having no source of income, what were they supposed to do?

Researcher 01:33

Indeed, the situation was terrible.

Participant 01:35

I really had a strong connection to this factory. I started working there when I was 15 and retired in 1991. After retiring, I didn't move away and continued living here. I knew everyone, both the factory leaders and the residents in the surrounding area, because I had spent so much time at the factory and in the community.

You could say that I feel a deep sense of nostalgia for the entire factory area. Back then, this was still open land with brick kilns, and I was already here. I was on-site throughout the entire process of installing new machinery and laying the foundation.

Participant 02:31

This used to be the canteen, and this building was the canteen.

Researcher 02:39

The place you mentioned earlier was a basketball court or something like that. Did you play basketball back then?

Participant 02:46

Yes.

Researcher 02:51

You play basketball too?

Participant 02:53

I try everything, but I'm not good at anything.

Researcher 02:55

But you seem to enjoy it.

Participant 02:59

Basketball, football, volleyball, swimming, wrestling, weightlifting, long-distance running, short-distance running, cycling—I've tried them all.

Researcher 03:06

You're so talented!

Participant 03:07

I have a wide range of hobbies, but I'm not particularly skilled at any of them.

Researcher 03:11

Being able to participate in so many activities is already impressive.

Participant 03:15

To be honest, young lady, in 1954 I went to Wuhan for studies, and back then I could still swim across the Yangtze River.

Researcher 03:20

No wonder you're in such good physical condition!

Participant 03:25

Yes, if it weren't for my wife's illness over the past three years, you'd see me in a completely different state now. I used to be in great shape. Everyone knew me at the Cultural Palace.

Researcher 03:38

Your current physical condition is already much better than that of your peers.

Participant 03:43

Yes, I think compared to others my age, my health is still decent. I admit that. But over the past three years, my condition has really deteriorated. It's truly not good. The mental pressure has been too much. Young lady, I can't shirk this responsibility.

Researcher 04:00

If only Grandma could come down from the second floor on her own.

Participant 04:05

Right. Now I can't even carry her myself, and the caregiver is a woman, so she can't either. There's a corridor in our house, and it takes about eighteen or nineteen minutes to walk around it. I just walk back and forth in the corridor. The activity area is inside the building, so we can't go downstairs, right? I won't say more. This is life's necessity. We've been together for decades; you can't just abandon her, can you?

Others may not care, but I absolutely cannot. After all, we are an old couple who have lived together for decades and raised children together. Others may not have lived like this for decades. I'm not bragging, but I am definitely not an ungrateful person. When I see people in need on the street, I help them, even strangers. When I see disabled or older people, I give them some change. How can I ignore my own family when they are sick?

Researcher 05:01

That's right.

Participant 05:02

That's exactly how I feel. I'm always willing to help others when they're in trouble, and if someone close to me gets sick, I'll never give up on them. I'll do my best to endure whatever comes my way, but if I can't, there's nothing I can do. Still, I stick to this principle.

Researcher 05:14

If our community had better facilities, it would be great if Grandma could go out and socialise more.

Participant 05:21

Never mind, we shouldn't talk about things we can't have.

The corridors in this building are already good enough for us to move around. We don't have any extra demands. It's not possible to install an elevator just for your family, let alone for all the residents on the third floor. We don't have such demands. If we can enjoy what we have, we should be grateful. There's no point in making unreasonable demands.

Researcher 05:45

Old buildings are indeed a challenge.

Participant 05:48

Yes, but you can't shirk your responsibility.

Researcher 05:51

Have you considered moving to a place with an elevator?

Participant 05:55

Moving isn't something you can just decide on a whim, young lady. Where would we get the money? If you want to move, you have to buy a house. But no one wants to buy our house now. These old houses are too old; they must be sold for cash, no loans allowed. That's the reality. My hometown just sold a ground-floor house, and once a house reaches a certain age, banks won't lend money or accept it as collateral. Where would I get the money to buy a new house? So I haven't even considered moving. If I move out, I won't even be able to find a place to come back and visit.

Researcher 06:39

Yes, that's exactly right.

Participant 06:41

That's the crux of the matter. People our age are in their eighties and nineties. If you move too far away, how can you come back to visit? That's the reality. Plus, we can't leave this place. At least here, people

come to chat with us, and we all know each other. If you move to a strange place, who will come to visit you?

Researcher 06:58

Yes, moving to an unfamiliar place is really difficult.

Participant 07:02

Yes, that's just how it is. The conditions are what they are, and others wouldn't consider these things either.

Researcher 07:09

What aspects of the overall community environment do you find satisfactory or unsatisfactory at present?

Participant 07:17

The community is still okay now.

Researcher 07:23

Compared to the past, have there been significant changes?

Participant 07:25

It's almost completely different from what it used to be. You have to understand that there weren't even any houses here before. It was all open land, and the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory covered a huge area. Take my building, for example. I used to live in the woods next to the workers' canteen. At that time, there was only a cooperative and two sports grounds. There was nothing else.

Researcher 07:54

Are you satisfied with these changes? Do you think they are good or bad?

Participant 07:58

Social progress is definitely a good thing. Now there are shopping malls, supermarkets, and everything else. It's very convenient for us older people. We can buy whatever we want, right? But there are also disadvantages. What are the disadvantages?

Some of these restaurants don't have much impact and don't affect some people, but they do have some impact on us older people. But they are running a business, and they have to make a living.

Participant 08:00

There's nothing we can do about it. We can't just talk about it here and solve the problem. You can't tell them not to open their shops, can you? They need to make a living too. Why should you stop them from doing business? It doesn't affect you, but we do need some rest.

Researcher 08:29

Do they stay open very late?

Participant 08:31

Yes, I live in the Red Roof Building, and there are several restaurants across the street.

Researcher 08:38

Are there any issues with odours?

Participant 08:42

Odours aren't too much of a problem, but the noise is the main issue.

Researcher 08:45

You don't find the odours particularly bothersome either?

Participant 08:47

Yes, the smell doesn't bother me, but the noise is a problem. Especially at night, when business is slow, they stay open until 4 a.m.

Researcher 08:54

There are still people out at 4 a.m.?

Participant 08:57

There are people making noise and drinking.

Participant 00:00

I'm the same age as the restaurant owner's grandfather, and I was close with his grandfather and father. I don't feel comfortable saying anything. When I was young, I used to keep pigeons, and his grandfather and I raised them together. We were very close. His father worked in the factory workshop, and we got along well too. You see, since I have such a good relationship with his family, I can't bring myself to voice any concerns about their restaurant.

Researcher 00:26

Indeed, it's hard to bring up such matters.

Participant 00:30

Yes, girl, that's the problem. Because we're all old acquaintances, it's hard to bring it up. You know what? If it were a stranger, I could say, 'Miss, I have a sick family member who needs to rest.' But when it comes to acquaintances, it's really hard to say.

Researcher 00:46

Yes, it's indeed hard to say. You're right.

Participant 00:48

There's no way to say something like that. Think about it, they run a successful restaurant, and I don't have a job, so I should be happy for them. If I don't want them to open a restaurant because I don't like it, isn't that being difficult? So I can't say anything, I just close the window. What else can I do?

Actually, it's just this restaurant that bothers me, the others are fine. I don't mean to drive them away, don't misunderstand me.

Researcher 01:15

This is indeed a complicated issue that's hard to explain.

Participant 01:18

Yes, this kind of conflict is impossible to resolve. You say I can tolerate it, but my wife can't. If she's woken up suddenly while sleeping, she'll call out to me, and I can't sleep either, so I have to stay with her. But you can't go confront the other party.

My wife basically can't understand what I'm saying; she has cognitive issues due to a stroke.

Researcher 01:48

Indeed, it would be challenging to communicate with her.

Participant 01:50

Both issues are difficult to resolve, so we will just have to endure.

Researcher 01:53

Grandpa, you really have it tough.

Participant 01:56

It's okay, never mind. I didn't want them to move out. Their restaurant business is doing so well; they've worked hard for it, right? It's their livelihood; we can't cut off their source of income. I just wanted you to know the situation; don't take it seriously, just understand. Actually, everything else is fine.

Researcher 02:18

What are your thoughts on the overall appearance of the building?

Participant 02:24

It's just my opinion, young lady, don't take it seriously. I think old buildings like ours, especially some of the windows, really should have balconies.

Just a balcony would be fine, like the unused space facing north, or facing east or south. It seems like there were plans to add balconies, but then for some reason they stopped. I'm not sure why.

Researcher 02:47

Is it because there's no place to hang clothes?

Participant 02:52

Not entirely. To be selfish, if there were a balcony, my spouse could sit there and look outside. Plus, a balcony would be much more convenient for hanging clothes and storing things. The original plan for this building included balconies, but I don't know why they weren't built. I remember they asked for opinions at the time. If they could build a balcony facing the street, it would be very convenient. The factory did have this plan, but I don't know why it was cancelled. I'm not sure either.

Researcher 03:20

Is it convenient for you to dry your clothes now?

Participant 03:22

Sometimes I dry them inside the house, and when there's no space, I take them downstairs to dry.

Researcher 03:26

I see there are many cars parked downstairs. Does that conflict with your clothes drying?

Participant 03:30

There's a platform here, but not on that side. Luckily, there's a platform right by my house. Some people even sit there to rest for a while.

Researcher 03:37

Do you use the fitness equipment in the neighbourhood?

Participant 03:46

I used to go there every day when I went grocery shopping. Now I can't anymore because I don't have time. But the equipment is still usable, and I used to spend the whole day there.

Participant 04:04

Now I can go there occasionally to get some exercise.

Researcher 04:09

You're in great shape.

Participant 04:10

I can still play, but I don't have time now. I just go up and play a few times occasionally.

Researcher 04:21

Do you play there for a bit every time you come back?

Participant 04:23

I used to play there when I came back from buying dinner. But now it's inconvenient to carry dinner, so I just go there to buy dinner, play for a while, and then go to the market to buy groceries and dinner for my wife.

Researcher 04:34

Was the canteen at No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory built later than the one at No.4?

Participant 04:39

The market at No.3 was built earlier.

Researcher 04:43

Then why do you go to No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory to buy groceries?

Participant 04:47

I don't buy groceries, I buy meals. Because there used to be no shops around here.

Researcher 04:50

Right.

Participant 04:51

The shops here only opened in the last few months. I used to go to the market to buy meals, then come back here and play for a while.

Researcher 04:59

Do you usually go out to buy food for breakfast instead of cooking yourself?

Participant 05:02

Mainly because my wife has no teeth.

She has difficulty eating, so I have to prepare special meals for her. Her meals are timed and portioned. In the morning, she has a bowl of millet porridge with an egg, or I buy a bowl of spicy soup or bean curd soup, which she drinks in two portions: half in the morning and half in the evening. Or in the morning, it's a bowl of noodles with noodle soup, or half a bowl of millet porridge with half a bowl of bean curd soup, plus half a pound of milk. This is breakfast, with a little fried dough stick on the side. Lunch is a bowl of

millet porridge with a boiled egg, and some fried dough sticks. Dinner is also a bowl of millet porridge, sometimes with some steamed buns or fried dough sticks. This is our daily meal plan. Though it looks messy, it's all arranged according to her condition.

Researcher 06:03

Do you have any flowers on your balcony?

Participant 06:07

No, they're from next door. I don't have time to grow flowers myself. They're from the window next door.

Participant 06:14

Look, there's a platform here.

Researcher 06:18

Do you usually go up to this platform?

Participant 06:20

I live here and spend my time here. There are ropes strung up to dry clothes. When the weather is nice and it's not raining, the older people in the neighbourhood come out to sit here. A few days ago, when it wasn't raining, it was full of people, and a group of old ladies were sitting here chatting. This platform is also very safe.

There are trees to block the sun, and it's cool, so everyone likes to sit here and chat.

Researcher 06:39

Do you play cards or chat?

Participant 06:41

We just chat and gossip. There are about 70 or 80 older people in the neighbourhood who come here to sit. Look at all the stools. Some of them brought them here themselves to sit and talk. This platform is a little higher, so cars can't hit it, and it's safe for people to sit here.

Researcher 06:54

It feels quite warm and friendly.

Participant 06:58

Yes, but I don't have time to come out and sit here now. Most of the people who come here are old ladies from our neighbourhood, some from our building and some from the building next door. They are all older people who live around here. They gather here to chat.

Researcher 07:06

It's quite lively with everyone sitting together.

Participant 07:09

Yes, it's very clean and safe here. During the day when the sun is out, we sit under the trees and sunbathe. When there's no sun, we just sit here and relax.

Researcher 07:20

I think it's pretty clean here. How do you think the community hygiene is maintained? I think the hygiene is good. How do you think the overall maintenance is?

Participant 07:32

I'm not sure exactly how many people sweep the area. He said the property management only assigns one person to sweep, but I'm not sure. However, it's always been pretty clean.

Additionally, the property management sweeps, and we also sweep ourselves. Since we sit here every day, we also clean up ourselves. Before everyone sits down the next day, we sweep the area once to tidy it up. There are many benches here, and people sit here to sunbathe in the winter, often staying for the entire morning. Now that the weather is nice, we sit under the trees when the sun is out. The middle area is also usable, and this place is indeed very good. We can also hang clothes to dry here, and there's a rope over there, making it very convenient and practical.

Researcher 08:09

That's great!

Participant 08:12

I am very fond of this place. It is safe, and I have lived here for many years.

Researcher 08:17

How do you feel about the security, community environment, and outdoor maintenance here? Is the security okay?

Participant 08:22

I don't think there are any major issues now. However there are occasional thefts. Recently, three electric bike batteries were stolen in one night, which isn't surprising. The main issue is the presence of too many strangers. I also think the vehicle owners are at fault. There's a bike shed available, so why not park the bikes there? There's a blue metal-roofed bike shed where you can park for one yuan a day. If you don't put them there, who can you blame if they get stolen? You have to learn to protect your own belongings, right?

Participant 00:05

These are old houses that were originally factory housing. Like this restaurant, Brothers Snacks, which stays open until 4 a.m. every day. They set up tables right below our building, directly facing our windows. If the windows aren't soundproof, it gets really noisy.

Researcher 00:33

Does the car parked downstairs affect you in any way?

Participant 00:35

The car doesn't really affect me. There's parking here, so it's fine with me.

Researcher 00:44

The main thing is that you need to go home to take care of your spouse. Does the current road condition affect you in any way?

Participant 00:55

No, it doesn't. The road is well-maintained, so it's no problem for me.

Researcher 01:00

So overall, you are quite satisfied with the environmental maintenance?

Participant 01:02

Absolutely. People's quality has improved, and everyone is more conscious now. In the past, some people didn't clean up after their dogs, but now most people do, with only a few exceptions. When there were more dogs, there was dog poop everywhere, but now the environment is much better. Look, isn't it clean? People's quality has improved, which is a good thing. By the way, now I can go buy vegetables and chicken on my own, but sometimes the variety of vegetables is limited.

Researcher 01:40

Is the vegetable market usually open here?

Participant 01:43

It's not open today, but it's usually where they sell vegetables.

Researcher 01:47

When you buy vegetables, do you still prefer to go to places within walking distance where there are more varieties of vegetables? If you have time, would you still prefer to go to a place with more varieties of vegetables for your shopping?

Participant 02:03

I don't have time now. I don't have time to go out. If I have time to go out, I'd rather go out and do something. I wouldn't just buy things around here.

Researcher 02:14

No, I mean when you buy things, since it's closer across the street, do you pay more attention to the variety of options available when shopping?

Participant 02:20

Yes.

Researcher 02:21

So as long as it's within your time frame, you would still choose a place with more variety, right?

Participant 02:26

Of course. It mainly depends on my schedule. If a place has limited variety or the food isn't fresh, I wouldn't want to go.

Researcher 02:41

When you go to the market to buy vegetables, you have to walk a bit and encounter many acquaintances. Does this factor also influence your decision to shop at the market?

Participant 02:53

That's also a reason. After all, it's nice to see familiar faces.

Researcher 02:55

Getting to know the shop owners at the market is also a factor, right?

Participant 02:58

That's secondary. The most important thing is time management. I have very limited time to go downstairs.

Researcher 03:03

Yes, chatting with familiar faces is nice.

Participant 03:06

Exactly, seeing familiar faces and exchanging a few words makes me feel more at ease. If I don't go downstairs, it's inconvenient to handle things. What I'm most concerned about now is the pension increase. Isn't it adjusted every year? I don't know if it will increase this year, and I can't find anyone to ask. Otherwise, I'd have to check my phone, but I use an old-fashioned phone and don't know how to check it. Others have notifications on their phones, but I prefer to ask someone I know when I see them.

Researcher 03:35

Why don't you ask the community to see if they know?

Participant 03:39

I don't think the community would know either.

Researcher 03:42

Then where do you think you should ask?

Participant 03:43

I'll just try my luck and ask an old acquaintance or an older person who knows how to use a mobile phone.

Researcher 03:52

That's true. Sometimes asking someone you know or someone from the same organisation is more reliable. By the way, is this where the recycling point for our building is?

Participant 03:59

Yes, it's the rubbish bin here.

Researcher 04:00

Do you usually throw your rubbish here, or do you go elsewhere?

Participant 04:02

I don't go far, I just throw rubbish around here.

Researcher 04:06

Right.

Participant 04:07

There are rubbish bins over there too.

Researcher 04:06

When you leave home, do you ever consider turning onto that street to buy groceries? I think the distance from your house to that street is about the same as going to the market.

Participant 04:24

I usually try to take the shorter route.

Researcher 04:27

Do you think that route is shorter?

Participant 04:29

Yes, and there are more cars on that road, with heavy traffic along the way.

Researcher 04:34

Does the heavy traffic affect you at all?

Participant 04:37

Having more cars is indeed unsafe, right? Imagine there's already a parked car on the road, and then another moving car comes along—that's definitely unsafe. Overall, even though the road is well-maintained, having more cars actually reduces safety.

Participant 04:53

This area used to be densely populated, but after the houses were reclaimed, no one lives here anymore, and there are fewer people now.

Although the road has been improved, there are more cars now. Relatively speaking, roads with fewer people are safer and the distances are slightly shorter.

Researcher 05:06

That's true. What do you think about the changes on that street?

Participant 05:16

There's not much to say about that street now. Wasn't it closed down? Before the buildings were renovated, there was a vegetable market in front of them. In the afternoons, the area was filled with stalls. It was a small vegetable market with decades of history. However, it did cause inconvenience for residents, who had difficulty getting in and out, and cars had to park outside. Later, the government decided to close the market, reclaim the buildings, and the street was restored. But after no one moved in, the street became deserted again. Why is that? With no one around, people could set up stalls on the street, but no one comes to buy vegetables, so it's actually less convenient now, isn't it?

Researcher 06:06

I just walked around, and there are still quite a few vendors selling things over there.

Participant 06:09

This used to be a vegetable market with over a decade of history. Later, due to complaints about disrupting residents' travel, the government decided to shut it down. The street was restored to its current state, but with no one living here, it naturally became deserted.

I wouldn't be happy either. Why? Because before it was shut down, buying vegetables there was very cheap.

Researcher 06:31

Actually, the vegetable market isn't far from here.

Participant 06:35

Yes, but the vegetables are still quite expensive.

Researcher 06:37

Are the vegetables at the market more expensive than other places?

Participant 06:38

The vegetables at the market are indeed more expensive. Street vendors don't have rent costs, so I also think it's more cost-effective to buy from the street.

Researcher 06:44

Do you usually buy vegetables here?

Participant 06:45

I buy them here, wherever is convenient.

Researcher 06:46

So you mainly buy vegetables here, right?

Participant 06:50

Sometimes if I need to buy more, or if it's last-minute, I'll go somewhere farther away. When I need something last-minute, I'll go to the West Fourth Ring Road.

Researcher 06:58

Is the West Fourth Ring Road a supermarket?

Participant 06:59

It's a large wholesale market where vegetables are particularly cheap. Vegetable prices are roughly half of what they are elsewhere, regardless of the type—spinach, lettuce, scallions, cucumbers, eggplants—all at 99 cents per pound.

Researcher 07:19

I really should check it out.

Participant 07:19

So I have to go and be very careful with my spending, right?

You see, if I buy enough vegetables for four days, it costs the same as one day's worth of food, but I can eat for four days. I ride my electric scooter, bring a basket, go there, buy everything I need, and come back. That's enough for three to four days.

Researcher 07:38

If you leave the community now, do you usually ride a two-wheeled electric scooter or a three-wheeled one?

Participant 07:43

It's a two-wheeled electric scooter.

Researcher 07:46

Grandpa, can I take a look at your electric scooter when we go back?

Participant 07:49

Sure.

Researcher 07:53

On this street, do you usually buy things in shops or at stalls?

Participant 07:57

I buy at the stalls in the vegetable market. The vegetables are cheaper here.

It's even cheaper on the west side of the Fourth Ring Road. I'm telling you the truth. Vegetables are half the price there. For example, no matter when you buy eggs, they're always seven or eight Mao cheaper. Over there, they sell them for 6 yuan, but he only sells them for 5.3 yuan. 5.3 yuan or 4.7 yuan is still 60 to 70 cents cheaper than here, you know? So I spend two hours round-trip every time, riding my electric bike there, bringing a basket, buying everything, and then coming back.

Researcher 08:51

You're pretty agile on your electric scooter. Many people your age can't ride two-wheeled electric scooters anymore; they have to use three-wheeled ones.

Participant 00:00

Three-wheelers are slow and take up space. My two-wheeled electric scooter is compact; it's even smaller than an ordinary one. I made my own basket specifically for buying groceries.

Researcher 00:16

Do you park your electric bike in a bike shed or downstairs?

Participant 00:20

There's no bike shed here, and there's no garage downstairs either. There used to be one, but it was removed. We don't have a bike shed to park it in, so I park it in another garage.

Participant 00:48

My electric bike is parked in that garage. Several families, about four or five, share that empty garage to park our electric bikes.

Researcher 00:59

Grandpa, how often do you go out usually?

Participant 01:03

Once every four or five days.

Researcher 01:06

Do you buy enough groceries for four or five days each time you go out?

Participant 01:10

Yes, I should go out to buy groceries tomorrow.

Researcher 01:12

Do you go every Friday?

Participant 01:15

Not necessarily, it depends on the situation.

Researcher 01:17

You only go when you have time, right?

Participant 01:18

Yes, I go when I need to buy something, and I don't go when I don't need to.

This is the carport. They've all been torn down now, except for this one.

Researcher 03:00

Why didn't they tear this one down?

Participant 03:03

Some people didn't want it torn down. They're too selfish (laughs). There's no place to store things in the carport anyway.

Researcher 03:29

Can your electric bike be folded?

Participant 03:34

Yes, it can be folded. When I bought it, I didn't want to buy another type of bike; I just wanted one that could be carried upstairs. This one can be carried upstairs, but the bigger ones can't. Plus, the battery can be removed and carried upstairs separately. After the carport was built, I stopped bringing the bike back upstairs.

Researcher 03:53

Where do you usually keep your vegetable basket?

Participant 03:53

It's at home.

Researcher 03:56

Where do you usually keep it?

Participant 03:57

It's hung on the electric bike.

Researcher 03:59

Do you take it with you when you go home?

Participant 04:00

Yes, I take it with me when I go home. But now there's no place to put it; the car is too small.

Researcher 04:05

That's true; space is limited.

Participant 04:07

I usually hang the basket on the car. I have just one metal basket; this big one can hold a lot of vegetables. I made it myself.

Researcher 04:16

You made it yourself?

Participant 04:18

Yes, I used to work in a factory doing mechanical repairs. I can do anything, so I made it myself.

Researcher 04:29

Is it made of wire mesh?

Participant 04:31

It's welded together with iron, and I made two hooks to hang it up. The wire is secured with screws. I used to do mechanical repairs, so this kind of work is easy for me.

Researcher 04:56

You could sell it to others as an accessory. Many small electric vehicles are missing a basket.

Participant 05:02

Yes, but this vehicle is too small to fit a large basket; there's no space for it.

Researcher 05:08

Indeed, this type of small vehicle has very limited space.

Walking Interview-5

Researcher 00:02

Do you usually walk around and shop within your neighbourhood?

Participant 00:10

Yes, I mostly go to the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory vegetable market to buy groceries on weekends.

Researcher 00:16

When you walk from home to the market, do you prefer to walk on one side of the road?

Participant 00:21

I usually follow a fixed route. I walk straight from here to the market. Sometimes I take a detour, walking along the road in front, which is the car lane, then turn into the market, and come back. When I go for a walk, I take this longer route. Sometimes I also go to the May 1st Park.

Researcher 00:40

Auntie, do you usually choose this side because the facilities are on the left?

Participant 00:51

I mostly walk on the right side and turn from there.

Researcher 00:54

Do you also walk on this side when you come back?

Participant 00:56

Yes, this is the path I take when I return after shopping.

Researcher 00:58

Do you use the fitness equipment when you come back? Do you know how to use these machines?

Participant 01:07

No, I don't know how to use them. They're in the middle, and I don't really want to use them. Plus, there are a lot of people using them, and some are older than me. We feel a bit shy about taking them, since we're relatively younger, so we let the older folks use them first.

Researcher 01:35

You look quite young.

Participant 01:36

I'm not young anymore, I'm in my 60s.

Researcher 01:38

You don't look like what people say, though. You're over 60, which is considered older, but you don't look it at all.

Participant 01:46

But we've all got senior citizen bus passes.

Researcher 01:50

Do you live with your family?

Participant 01:55

No, it's just the two of us.

Researcher 01:57

Do you usually go out for a walk with your spouse?

Participant 01:59

No, we don't go together. He's still at work, so I go out alone.

Researcher 02:02

Why did you choose this route?

Participant 02:05

When I leave home, this route is the most convenient. It takes me straight to the vegetable market, where I can see if there's anything I need to buy. If I need something, I buy it; if not, I keep walking and head to the market, exiting through the main gate.

Actually, I don't really like going to the park. It's too crowded, and you have to walk shoulder to shoulder with people. Especially now that the pandemic has just passed and there are signs of a resurgence, I've never liked crowded places, so I prefer a quiet environment where I can walk slowly and look around.

Researcher 02:49

Do you go for a walk after buying groceries, or do you walk first and then buy groceries?

Participant 02:51

I go for a walk in the morning, then buy groceries and come back to cook lunch.

I go out again in the afternoon and again in the evening. That's my routine.

Researcher 03:03

Do you mainly go to Xiangrong Street or the farmers' market at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory to buy groceries?

Participant 03:10

I mainly go to Xiangrong Street to buy groceries. Sometimes I can walk all the way to the market, and if there's something I can't find in the shopping centre, I'll go to the market to buy it.

Researcher 03:21

Do you usually go to Xiangrong Street, or do you rarely go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory vegetable market? Do you mainly go to the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory vegetable market?

Participant 03:25

I go to the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory vegetable market more often. Think about it, I've lived here for more than 60 years, my whole life, so of course I'm used to shopping nearby and don't want to go anywhere else.

Researcher 03:37

Life here is indeed quite convenient.

I see that everyone in the community gets along well. Do you often run into familiar faces in the summer?

Participant 03:50

I often do. After all, I was born and raised here, and I've never left this courtyard.

Researcher 03:57

Do you stop to chat with familiar faces? I see that many residents spontaneously place chairs downstairs so that everyone can sit together and chat.

Participant 04:09

I never sit down, whether it's the small square or anywhere else. I don't like sitting there chatting; I think it's a waste of time. As I mentioned earlier, I'm still attending senior university, studying photography post-production. I've been learning photography for over a decade and post-production for seven or eight years—I'm quite good at it. So I have quite a few hobbies in my free time, including stamp collecting.

Researcher 04:42

You have such a wide range of hobbies.

Participant 04:44

I started collecting stamps in 1983 and have been doing it ever since.

Researcher 04:48

That's wonderful. Your life is very fulfilling.

Participant 04:51

So I have a lot on my plate and don't have time to sit around chatting with others. I never do that.

Researcher 04:58

Besides activities in the community, do you mainly participate in learning activities outside the community?

Participant 05:04

Mainly promotional activities. For example, we organise stamp exhibitions to promote the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the spirit of Lei Feng, and the spirit of space exploration. We often go out to organise activities, sometimes visiting universities and primary schools for promotional purposes. I am a member of the Henan Province Senior Cadres Philatelic Association, so I have many activities and often have to go out. Sometimes people come looking for me, but I am out.

Now things are better, but during the past three years of the pandemic, there were many fewer activities. To be honest, in the past, if someone wanted to meet me, they had to make an appointment in advance. If friends or classmates wanted to have a meal or gather together, we had to arrange it in advance and coordinate schedules.

Researcher 06:14

You really have a good retirement life.

Participant 06:17

Yes, I started learning photography after I retired, and I've learned many other things as well.

Researcher 06:24

Auntie, photography must come in handy when you go travelling, right?

Participant 06:28

I haven't travelled much in the last three years because I have older people to take care of at home.

Researcher 06:35

Do you still need to take care of older people?

Participant 06:38

Not now. He lives in the municipal administrative district, on Hongzuan Road.

Researcher 06:45

When I was a child, my maternal grandfather also lived on Hongzuan Road.

Participant 06:47

Yes, on Hongzuan Road.

Researcher 06:51

Do you have any preferred shops when you go grocery shopping around here? For example, do you usually go to specific shops?

Participant 07:09

Yes, I have a few regular shops I go to frequently. I don't go to places without a vegetable market. There's one shop in the market where I always buy vegetables, another where I buy meat, and a specific place where I buy fish.

Researcher 07:21

Is it because you like the food at these shops?

Participant 07:23

One is because I value their reputation, and the other is because the prices are reasonable and cheap, and they never shortchange you. The food is also relatively fresh. Plus, I've been buying from them for a long time, so you know how it is. We greet each other as soon as we see each other, no need to say much. I never ask about prices when I shop; I know the sellers well. I might ask once in a while, but it's just a casual question. At least they won't shortchange you, you know?

Researcher 07:58

Right.

Participant 07:59

That's the bare minimum.

Researcher 08:01

You've been shopping here for so many years. Is there also a social aspect to it? For example, because you're familiar with them and interact with them more often, you're more willing to shop here?

Participant 08:14

Actually, it's not mainly because of social reasons. The most important thing is their reputation. Think about it, for example, if there's a supermarket I go to often, I'd rather shop there, and the same goes for buying groceries.

Researcher 08:33

Auntie, what is your main mode of transportation when you go out to buy things or run errands?

Participant 08:42

I mainly take the bus, and sometimes my friends have private cars and give me a ride. Most of the time, I walk or take the bus.

Researcher 08:49

You take the bus, so you don't ride a bike?

Participant 08:52

I don't ride a bike, and I don't know how to drive.

Researcher 08:57

Should we keep going?

Participant 08:59

Do you want to walk some more? Alright, let's keep going.

Researcher 09:02

Alright. Auntie, what do you think of this community?

Participant 00:02

I think it's okay. How should I put it? This is an old neighbourhood. After all, people have been living here since before the factory was built in 1954. The residents are elderly, and the buildings and facilities are quite outdated. To be honest, the community staff have done their best. They've managed to keep the community in this condition, which is already quite good, but there are definitely areas that need improvement, right?

It's impossible to meet everyone's needs.

Researcher 00:43

Yes. Do you often participate in community events?

Participant 00:51

Yes, I do. As long as the community organises an event that suits me, I will participate.

Researcher 00:57

Besides these activities, have you enjoyed any other services provided by the community?

Participant 01:07

What kind of services are you referring to?

Researcher 01:08

For example, services like coming to your home to clean for you.

Participant 01:11

There are no such services here now. To be honest, our area can't compare to Shanghai.

We have relatives in Shanghai, and there, if you're over 65, someone comes to clean your house every month or every week. They have that service. But we don't have that here, right? You can't expect someone else to come and do it for you.

Researcher 01:43

Yes. What types of activities have you participated in that were organised by the community?

Participant 01:48

I mostly volunteer.

Researcher 01:52

Do you participate in community safety patrols?

Participant 01:55

Yes, I do patrols. For example, during the pandemic, I helped with pandemic prevention and assisted the community in fighting the virus. Actually, I've participated in most of the activities for the elderly.

Researcher 02:08

You have contributed greatly to the community.

Participant 02:10

How can I put it? At the very least, I consider myself a Party member, so when the community needs help, I take the initiative to lend a hand.

While I'm still able to do so, I'll do as much as I can.

Researcher 02:29

Are there any places along the routes you usually take that you are dissatisfied with?

Participant 02:36

There's nothing I'm dissatisfied with. I really have nothing to complain about right now.

I'm quite satisfied with the current situation. To be honest, with my retirement pension, what else could I possibly want? Besides, these things aren't up to me, right? There's really nothing I'm particularly dissatisfied with.

Researcher 03:02

What about the roads you usually walk on?

Participant 03:04

It's all fine once I turn the corner.

Researcher 03:05

Does the traffic on the road affect you?

Participant 03:07

Not really. I always take side streets, so there's not much traffic, and it doesn't bother me.

Researcher 03:13

Are there any noises or odours that make you feel uncomfortable?

Participant 03:20

No.

Researcher 03:21

What are your thoughts on these aspects?

Participant 03:23

No, I don't really have any particular thoughts.

Researcher 03:24

What are your thoughts on the overall appearance of the community?

Participant 03:27

It looks like it does now. It's an old residential block, so they're all pretty much the same. For example, there are too many electric wires. In old residential blocks, everyone used to pull one wire here and one wire there, so now it looks really messy. Sometimes, for no apparent reason, a wire is pulled right to your doorstep, right? Isn't that true? It's just like at our doorstep. One day there's a wire hanging there, and the next day there's another one. We don't know what they are, and we don't need them, but they just hang there.

Yes, sometimes the construction workers only care about making money and don't care about neatness, which is why these problems arise.

Researcher 04:06

Is there any place in the community that you don't like to go to or rarely visit?

It's okay if you don't go there. I just wanted to ask.

Participant 04:19

There's no particular place I don't like to go. Where I go depends on how I feel. I just walk along the same route every day. If I feel tired, I walk a few extra laps; if I feel tired, I walk a little less.

I usually go out that way, to the market, and then turn back on Construction Road.

Researcher 04:43

What about when you cross the road?

Participant 04:46

I usually walk along the road and don't cross it. It's mainly for safety reasons, and you really have to be careful.

Researcher 04:57

Crossing the road is indeed quite troublesome.

Participant 04:59

Yes, so I usually stick to one side, which is safer. The children aren't around, and they worry about me, constantly reminding me to be careful. We have to take care of ourselves first, right?

Researcher 05:15

Auntie, when you go for a walk alone, do you usually go out with friends, or do you go out alone?

Participant 05:27

Of course I meet up with friends. Look, when we organise activities, there are always a dozen or so of us. Sometimes it's a big event. When we go on senior study tours, even people in their 70s join in. They're all in their 70s and still go out to have fun together.

Researcher 05:43

Your group is really large.

Participant 05:47

Yes, our senior study tours are really impressive. If it weren't for some family matters these past few days, I was planning to go to Pingding Mountain tomorrow, but I can't make it.

Researcher 05:58

Does the community offer any activities that allow you to meet people with similar interests?

Participant 06:05

Our community is actually just getting started.

We are still in the exploratory stage.

Researcher 06:19

Community work is indeed quite difficult.

Participant 06:24

I didn't understand it before either. I thought, 'How can community work involve so many things?' But since I started volunteering, I've truly come to appreciate how difficult it is. People who work in community service are really hardworking, serving everyone tirelessly, yet their efforts don't always satisfy everyone, right?

That's why this work is so challenging. Especially during the pandemic, when restrictions were so strict, some community workers spent months living and working in the community without going home. Can you imagine how tough that was? It's really not easy. I think some people don't understand community workers and complain a lot. I tell them they haven't experienced it firsthand, so they don't know how difficult community work is. That's definitely true.

Researcher 07:28

Plus, community work involves a lot of tedious tasks, and sometimes you have to check the surveillance cameras in the buildings.

Participant 07:33

It's indeed very troublesome, with so many small tasks, and the high turnover of staff makes management extremely challenging.

Researcher 07:39

It's truly not easy.

Participant 07:43

Look at me—I've lived here my entire life, born here, worked here, and now I'm retiring. It's been over 60 years.

Researcher 07:52

You haven't left here in all these years. Is there anywhere here that has special meaning to you? Like a place you often go to, or where you raised your children, or where you have fond memories.

Participant 08:04

To be honest, there aren't any places with fond memories now. Because everything is so convenient now, I don't even want to leave this courtyard.

Researcher 08:20

I've been here for a while and I also think it's very convenient.

Participant 08:23

Everything is here.

Although we live on the fifth floor, sometimes we think about moving, but we don't want to leave this courtyard. Where else could we find a place that's so convenient and has everything we need? So we'll just think about it slowly.

Researcher 08:37

Are you planning to buy another house in this community with a lower floor?

Participant 08:40

We are thinking about it, but it's still in the early stages. We'll have to see if the right opportunity comes along.

Researcher 08:48

That's true, buying a house is something you have to take your time with.

Participant 08:55

Yes, on the one hand you have to take your time, and on the other hand, to be honest, older people can't just move around easily.

Researcher 09:02

That's right.

Participant 00:00

Because once you move, if it's not suitable, it will affect all aspects of your life.

Researcher 00:04

Yes, if you're not familiar with the environment, you're more likely to fall.

Participant 00:05

It's not about falling, it's about how it will affect your life in the future.

Researcher 00:10

It does need to be considered carefully. You usually go downstairs and walk around to exercise, right? When you go for a walk, do you ever feel the need to talk to someone in the courtyard?

Participant 00:35

No. I'm used to being on my own. I like independence and am quite capable of taking care of myself. Sometimes we all rely on ourselves.

Researcher 00:54

Do you think the community has changed a lot recently? What are some of the most noticeable changes?

Participant 01:09

The overall environment and the community's office environment are the first things that come to mind. The service environment and staffing are also much better than before. At least now there are more community staff. Before, the location was very remote and hard to find, and you couldn't find anyone when you needed to get things done.

In the past, I felt like the community was just a district office, not as important as it is now. Actually, community work is very important. People didn't pay much attention to it before, but now things have changed, which shows that people are starting to value community work more. You know, the Xijiang area used to be part of Xuzhou District, right?

Researcher 02:21

Do you think the neighbourhood has changed a lot?

Participant 02:24

The neighbourhood has changed quite a bit. Apart from these old houses, everything else that needed to be renovated has been renovated, and everything that needed to be refurbished has been refurbished.

Researcher 02:32

What are your thoughts on these renovations?

Participant 02:36

I don't have any particular opinions. Whether it's done well or not, opinions won't change anything. What's the point of saying anything? It doesn't make a difference.

Researcher 02:43

Do you think there are any areas that need improvement?

Participant 02:45

What's missing are facilities. For example, that corner over there—I'll take you to see it. That row of shacks was illegally built. If they could tear them down and build a fitness area or a small square, that would be great.

Researcher 03:02

I see you think there aren't enough small activity areas between the community buildings, right?

Participant 03:12

Exactly.

Researcher 03:13

How far apart do you think activity points should be?

Participant 03:19

There is currently one activity point in this area of the western district and another one in the square over there.

Yes, but when you want to hold an activity, you need more space. The current space is too small; even standing at the entrance feels cramped. The large open area in front of that building was actually considered by the community, but it was never approved by higher-ups, so it can't be developed.

Researcher 03:53

If that area were demolished and turned into the small square you mentioned, would you use it?

Participant 03:59

Definitely.

Researcher 04:01

Then why don't you go to the small square now? Is it because there are too many people?

Participant 04:14

Yes, it's too crowded, so I don't go. Even if I go, I can't use it.

Researcher 04:18

Yes, it can get noisy when there are too many people.

Participant 04:28

I've always liked quiet places and don't like crowded places.

Researcher 04:35

I see that many families in the community have placed chairs and other things downstairs and don't go to the small square to sit.

Participant 04:46

That's true.

Generally, older men sit outside more, while women rarely sit outside. Women have more things to do at home. People used to say it would be good to have a small square here because the area is quite densely populated, but now they've built a carport instead. Actually, the carport is fine because the buildings in this area are very close together. Look over there—there are five or six buildings, and each building has several households. This area is quite densely populated.

Researcher 05:33

That's true, the population density is quite high here.

Participant 05:35

Yes.

Researcher 05:40

Are there two recycling points, one on each side of our neighbourhood?

Participant 05:45

Yes, there is one here, and there is another one at the end of the road, in front of the crossroads.

Researcher 05:54

I think there is only one recycling point in the buildings on the east side.

Participant 05:56

There's one on the east side too, but there are fewer buildings and fewer residents there.

Researcher 06:01

Is the cement ground fenced off? Yes. I'd like to ask, do you have any thoughts on the use of the community open space or its overall appearance? I see a lot of clotheslines here. Are these installed by the community or by residents?

Participant 06:25

They're all installed by residents, including the metal poles.

Researcher 06:34

So have people been using these clotheslines here for a long time?

Participant 06:39

I don't know, I haven't really paid attention to these things. Usually, residents on the first floor bring their clothes outside to dry.

Researcher 06:47

Are there any services you would like the community to provide that are not currently available?

Participant 06:57

I think the community's services, such as those for the elderly, are gradually improving. I saw that the community just held an event for the elderly the other day, and there are more events planned for tomorrow. The services are gradually improving.

Researcher 07:18

Yes, these things take time to develop.

Participant 07:24

Right, these things are complicated, and funding is also tight. I don't have time to play mahjong anyway.

Researcher 07:36

Yeah, but playing cards can be fun.

Participant 07:39

Who has time for that? People could sit down and play cards when they have nothing to do, but I rarely play.

Researcher 07:46

Your life is really rich.

Participant 07:50

Look at all these shacks. They're all illegal structures. It would be great if they were torn down and replaced with a small square or exercise equipment.

Researcher 07:59

Are these houses illegal structures?

Participant 08:01

Definitely.

Researcher 08:02

Indeed, building them separately like this is quite dangerous.

Participant 08:12

Yes, although some people say these old houses should be preserved, I suggested to the community that this area be reclaimed and turned into a fitness equipment area. Look how spacious it is; it would be perfect for an activity area, wouldn't it?

Researcher 08:30

Auntie, why don't you walk around here more often?

Participant 08:35

I usually stick to a fixed route when I go out, and I don't feel like walking here sometimes. After walking the same route for a while, I get used to it and don't want to change.

Researcher 08:50

Actually, there's no particular reason.

Participant 08:52

Right, it's just more casual. I can go anywhere. During the pandemic lockdown, I couldn't go far, so I had to stick to the same route. Later, I got used to it and found walking in circles like this pretty suitable.

Walking Interview-6

Participant 00:04

We moved into this courtyard in 2007. Originally, this place was managed by the property management company, you know? We bought commercial housing in a garden community. Neither my spouse nor I work for this unit, nor do we work for No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. My spouse is in the military, and I work for another unit, but we bought commercial housing here. Later, we contacted the property management company, but they didn't care. I told them about it, but they just ignored us. The grass in the neighbourhood grew very tall, so everyone came together to pull it out. After that, everyone wanted to pave the ground, but the community didn't have the funds. The community secretary is a very kind and responsible person. Since I moved here in 2007, when the courtyard was almost unmanaged, she would often come to check on the cleanliness and mobilise everyone to clean up wherever it was dirty.

Later, everyone turned the land into vegetable gardens, thinking that once the ground was paved, they wouldn't plant vegetables anymore. But since there was no money, the community couldn't do anything. When we bought these houses, they said it was a garden community, but the property management doesn't care. If you call them, they won't come. Some people even defecate and urinate here. Later, everyone came together to clean up the area. Some people fenced off a piece of land and started growing vegetables and flowers. I planted roses in front of Building 5. They are beautiful and easy to grow, you know?

Actually, if the ground was paved, no one would grow vegetables. Paving is the right thing to do for the community. The community is much better now than it used to be.

The community leaders used to be incompetent, but now there is a new leadership team, and the secretary and director are very responsible. Look at those young people. They often come to the courtyard and deal with any problems immediately. The hygiene here used to be terrible, but now it's very clean. There's organised parking with marked spaces and a gatekeeper.

Now you need a card to enter the courtyard, so only residents' cars can park there. Before, the courtyard was very messy, and cars from outside could come in and park anywhere. The community management has been a great help, especially Xiao Dandan. She's very capable, you know?

When I first moved here, no one paid attention to me when I went to the community office. Now, the staff are very friendly and helpful.

Researcher 04:25

Have you received any other services provided by the community?

Participant 04:31

Now, every time my wife and I go to the community to do something, Xiao Dandan and the others are very enthusiastic in helping us. Whether it's the secretary, the director, or other staff members, they all have a very good attitude. Sometimes I don't bring my glasses, and they help me take care of the paperwork. Our family now lives in Fenghuo Home. It's just the two of us and our grandson, who eats at his workplace every day.

When we need to go to the community centre for errands, they always help us with everything. They're very enthusiastic and kind.

The community is now managed very well. You know, during the pandemic, other communities faced issues, but our community had almost no spread of the virus. The management was excellent.

Researcher 05:41

Are you satisfied with the current maintenance of the community?

Participant 05:44

I'm quite satisfied, really satisfied. Look, now outsiders can't just walk into the courtyard.

You have to swipe your card to get in, and there's a gate. Without access, you can't get in. Xiao Dan helped set all this up, you know? Before, our courtyard was very chaotic, with cars driving in and parking randomly.

Researcher 06:14

It was indeed very chaotic before. Now that the access control system has been installed, do you still go out for activities?

Participant 06:20

Of course I still go out. It's very convenient to go out.

Researcher 06:25

Do you go out often?

Participant 06:28

My husband and I don't go out very often.

Researcher 06:38

Do you mainly stay in the courtyard?

Participant 06:39

Yes, sometimes we just walk around the courtyard. My spouse also walks around the courtyard or goes for a stroll nearby. It's normal for people our age. My first stroke was due to poor digestion. My spouse used to be a deputy regiment commander, a political commissar, and a flight instructor. He was very intelligent and capable. He became a deputy regiment commander in 1984 and was promoted to regiment commander in 1986.

Later, he suffered two strokes and a blood clot. After moving out, his overall condition changed drastically. When I look at his old photos and compare them to now, he's like a completely different person. The illness combined with mental stress has completely drained his vitality. I also have diabetes. In the past, I loved singing and opera, and my husband enjoyed going out and being active. Back then, I was very optimistic, and even when I was sick, my mindset remained positive.

I never dwell on things because once you do, the condition only worsens. I often tell my grandson not to carry mental burdens. In August 2019, I fell on a bus and fractured the ribs in my waist. The fracture still causes daily lower back pain. Sometimes it's better, sometimes it's worse, so I rarely go to the gym—you know why? Mainly because of the back pain.

The doctor said my lumbar vertebrae are slightly protruding forward.

Researcher 09:01

Walking is indeed restricted.

Participant 09:03

But it's much better now than it was then. At that time, I was really relying on courage to keep going. You know, I'm a pretty strong person. Once I went to visit a classmate who was very ill. She recovered and called me later to say that she had almost died. You have no idea.

Once, I was just about to go see her, but when I got on the bus, my foot slipped, and I fell down. But I still insisted on going to the hospital and made it to the 8th floor. At the time, I didn't feel too much pain.

Researcher 09:50

When did the pain start?

Participant 09:53

My classmate asked me to sit on the sofa. I didn't feel anything unusual when I sat down. We chatted for ten minutes, and then I said I had to go home. I didn't tell her I had fallen because she wasn't in good health, and I didn't want to worry her. But when I got home, I couldn't get out of bed. I could only lean against the mattress and couldn't move at all.

Look at me, I'm over seventy years old now. I can't do anything anymore.

Researcher 10:41

That's true. You seem so cheerful. Why don't you go out more often? I hear that your grandfather used to go out for walks all the time.

Participant 10:49

You're right. After getting an X-ray and an MRI, the doctor said it was an old fracture. This condition is quite troublesome, but it doesn't affect my children's work, and my wife also has to work. As long as I can stand, I'm fine, but lying down is impossible. However, it's been four years now.

The doctor recommended surgery, but the success rate is only 50%. If the surgery fails and I become paralysed, not only will I suffer, but my family will also be burdened. You know, the children are all working, and the family has to support each other. My wife has to help the children with their studies every day, and she's already very busy. How could I bear to burden them further? So many people advised me not to have surgery.

Researcher 12:05

Conservative treatment is actually fine. My grandmother also has a bad back, and she's been sticking with conservative treatment.

Participant 12:11

How was she treated?

Researcher 12:13

She couldn't move, so she just rested at home and only went to the hospital when she couldn't bear it anymore. She would rather die than have surgery.

Participant 12:25

She didn't want to have surgery. How old is she?

Researcher 12:30

She's over 80 years old and will need a long time to recover.

Participant 12:34

Your mother is still young, isn't she?

Researcher 12:37

My mother was born in 1968.

Participant 12:39

1968 is still young. Your mother isn't that old. Your mother was born in 1968, right? Are you the only daughter in your family?

Researcher 12:55

I'm an only child.

Participant 12:56

You should enjoy your life, you know?

One daughter is enough. My children are all in their forties, and they're doing well on their own. I just want them to live happily as a family of three. I don't want to be a burden on them.

Researcher 13:14

Does your grandson come to visit you often? Do you need to pick him up or drop him off?

Participant 13:16

No need to pick him up or drop him off. I've never taken care of my grandson. He's 16 this year and is taking the high school entrance exam. I don't bother with him; it's all my daughter-in-law who takes care of him.

He eats at school because he is in an advanced class and must eat at school. He usually does not have time to go home for meals.

Participant 13:52

How old are you?

Researcher 13:56

29 years old.

Participant 13:57

You're already in your twenties.

Researcher 13:59

I am already pursuing a PhD.

Participant 14:05

What do you plan to do in the future?

Researcher 14:08

I might become a teacher at a school or take the civil service exam; I haven't decided yet.

Participant 14:21

Anyway, young people should strive hard. I always encourage young people to strive hard; do you understand?

Researcher 14:29

My goal is to contribute to the development of community socialisation systems.

Participant 14:36

Yes, look at me, I joined the army when I was 16 and served for 38 years. If you work hard in the army, the benefits are great—medical care is fully covered, there are various allowances, and the salary is high, you know?

The salary is high, but it's also very tough.

Researcher 15:03

Being a pilot is indeed very tough.

Participant 15:06

He was a pilot for two years, and those two years were in the Lu Army. He went to North Korea in 1958. He enlisted in 1956 and went to the final stages of the Korean War. In 1986, he also went to Vietnam. What year were you born?

Researcher 15:29

1994.

Participant 00:00

You were really young then, just a young girl. You weren't even born yet in 1984, when the war in Vietnam was still going on, and your father was flying planes there.

Researcher 00:21

That must have been very difficult.

Participant 00:23

He was also honoured as a veteran of the Korean War, even though he went during the final stages. He did indeed go to North Korea. He wasn't a veteran from before liberation; he was a veteran after liberation. You know that, right? That's why he said that as long as he can support community work, he will definitely do so.

I feel the same way, and the community has been very good to us. The community has always wanted to renovate our courtyard, but they don't have the money, you know?

Researcher 00:54

You mentioned community renovation earlier. I'd like to ask you about your thoughts on the outdoor environment in the community. Besides paving, are there any other areas you're not satisfied with?

Participant 01:07

I would like to see some cultural activity equipment added so that older people can come down and exercise. Even just placing a couple of chairs would be fine, wouldn't it?

Researcher 01:20

You mentioned that you cannot leave the courtyard. Is that due to physical reasons?

Participant 01:23

I can go out; I often do. I can walk to the electric bike repair shop at the courtyard entrance. My spouse and I go there to chat and joke around for fun. Actually, these areas should be renovated, but the Party Secretary can't do anything about it. The higher-ups aren't allocating funds, so where is she supposed to get the money? Am I right? You think I'm right, don't you? Such renovations would cost at least 200,000 yuan, you know?

Researcher 02:07

That is indeed a large sum.

Participant 02:08

Yes, 200,000 yuan is no small amount.

Researcher 02:11

Is going out to chat with old friends your main activity? Do you have any other activities?

Participant 02:21

We used to have some, but not anymore. We used to go out singing often. My husband was in the military and did propaganda work, and I was also in the propaganda team at my workplace. We would go to the workplace or other places to sing. My husband sang very well, like 'I Love the Blue Sky of My Motherland.' I sometimes sing off-key, but I can still follow along.

Participant 03:04

Before I injured my back, we weren't very settled and often went out. I liked going to Phoenix Mountain Park in Miyi County, to the big dance hall to sing Yue opera, Cantonese opera, and Qiju, always with my classmates. A few of my classmates were in that line of work.

That was in the 1980s, when I was in my thirties. I learned from them how to wear performance costumes, sing and perform on stage, and when everyone clapped, I was so happy I couldn't describe it. People should live happily, right?

After I hurt my back, I never went out to sing again.

Researcher 04:16

It would be great if these activities could be held nearby.

Participant 04:19

Right now, I can only walk around outside the gate and buy a few things on the way, like at the shops run by people from the south outside the compound. There aren't many things there.

I'm from Henan. Before I hurt my back, I could still get around, but now that my back is damaged, I can't go anywhere.

Researcher 04:57

You should focus on getting better. Once the community develops, life will be more convenient.

Participant 05:04

Actually, it would be best if the community could set up a canteen for residents.

Construction machinery factories and air force hospitals have canteens for residents, so when we don't feel like cooking, we can go there to buy something to eat, whatever we want.

Now, my wife and I sometimes don't feel like cooking for lunch, so we go out to buy some steamed dumplings, or go to Wuzhuang to order a couple of dishes and have some rice. On weekends, when our grandson comes over, we take him out to eat.

Researcher 05:47

Yes, your retirement wages are high, so it's not worth it for just the two of you to cook. Having a canteen would be more convenient.

Participant 05:58

Yes, it would be great if there were a canteen for residents in the community.

Nowadays, many older people are too lazy to cook, so it would be much more convenient if they could go to the canteen to buy something to eat at any time. Look, there aren't many restaurants around here, and more than a thousand households were relocated after the road in front of the building was renovated.

Researcher 06:41

Yes, it was moved because of construction.

Participant 06:44

Yes, it was construction at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, you know?

Actually, I also want the buildings to be demolished, but I don't want to move away from this place. Everyone else is moving, so why shouldn't I? First of all, it's close to the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory hospital, so if my old man gets sick, it's easy to take him to the hospital for treatment and medicine. In the past, the community and the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory hospital were right across the street, which was very convenient. Further down the road is the Junhui Supermarket, where it's easy to buy groceries and other things, so we don't want to move anywhere else.

Researcher 07:32

It is indeed very convenient.

Participant 07:35

The only issue is the hardened ground.

Researcher 07:38

The hardened ground.

Participant 07:39

Yes, it would be great if the Zhongyuan District could allocate some funds for that. The community doesn't have the money, you know?

Researcher 07:50

Grandma, I have one last question. You usually go for a walk near the entrance because you know people there, it's close by, and your body can handle it. Are there any other reasons? For example, do you particularly like how this road is built?

Participant 08:10

Mainly because I'm used to living here, you know, Xiao Song?

I've gotten used to it. I bought the house in 2005 and moved in in 2007. After living here for so long, it feels very warm and cosy, you know? Back then, I felt really helpless when I had to handle things here. Even going to the community office was difficult. Now, when I go to the community office, the secretary, the director, and the staff are all very friendly, you know? Whatever my husband and I need to do, we can get it done smoothly at the community office.

Researcher 08:55

That's great.

Participant 08:56

Did you know that the community can help solve any problems?

Community leaders often come to the courtyard to check on things, and if they find any hygiene issues, they organise everyone to clean up. The courtyard is much better now than it used to be.

Researcher 09:07

What do you think of the exterior of the buildings in this courtyard? What about the noise around here? I heard there's some noise nearby. What do you think about that? Does it bother you? Are you satisfied with the maintenance of the exterior?

Participant 09:22

You mean the outside environment? I think it's pretty good.

Researcher 09:26

What about the noise? Does it bother you?

Participant 09:28

No, it doesn't. Because our windows are double-panelled. When inspectors come, they seal everything off, and they even built a small house to enclose the balcony.

The balcony also has double-glazed windows. There are people running businesses downstairs, but you know, after the pandemic and the floods, it's not easy for them to do business. We should be understanding of others. Many people don't want to do business in Zhengzhou anymore and are thinking of returning to their hometowns to develop their businesses because it's hard to do business in Zhengzhou now.

So occasional minor noises are no big deal, you know? I think we should understand each other. That's what they call 'understanding is everything,' right? That's what they call 'understanding is everything.' Do you understand?

Researcher 10:26

Thank you. I've asked all my questions. I'll end the recording now.

Participant 10:29

Alright.

Walking Interview-7

Participant 00:00

Yes, that's right.

Author 00:03

What are your main activities in the community? What do you usually do?

Participant 00:08

Are you asking where I usually go?

Author 00:09

Could you show me where you usually go?

Participant 00:12

The places I usually go to... well, now that I'm retired, I mainly visit my mother. I walk this route every day to see her, at least twice a day. My mother is from the south. She came here in the 1950s to support the construction efforts, and we followed her to Zhengzhou. I later also started working here. You could say I took over my mother's job.

I was born in 1962. After graduating from high school, it was hard to find a job, so I took over her job after she retired. I was born and raised here, worked here, and then retired here.

Author 01:23

You have deep feelings for this place.

What activities do you usually participate in in the community? Do you also exercise?

Participant 01:34

The community organises several activities every month. I participate in all of them. I started out as a worker at the factory and worked my way up to a grassroots cadre, so I am very supportive of the community's work. The people in the community are all frontline workers. Their work is hard and tiring, you know?

You said you were born in 1994, which makes you younger than my daughter. My daughter was born in 1990. This community used to be the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. You may have been here before and taken pictures.

When I was a child, my family lived right at the front gate of the factory.

Author 02:43

Tell us about the activities you participated in as a child.

Participant 02:44

When we were children, our house was right at the front, so we could see our parents coming and going to work. At that time, our family lived on the first floor, and I would play with my friends downstairs. As soon as we saw our parents coming home from work, we would rush back home. We did a lot of mischievous things back then.

I remember my parents were very strict when I was little. Sometimes when they caught me being naughty, they would scold me. Kids love to play, right?

Author 03:16

Did you play at the gate when you were little? Did you run home quickly when you saw your parents coming back?

Participant 03:22

Yes, I used to play around here when I was little.

Author 03:26

Was this an empty lot before?

Participant 03:28

Yes, this whole area used to be empty land with no buildings.

This was originally empty land and gardens, and these houses were built later.

Author 03:45

So this place holds a lot of meaning for you.

Do your childhood friends still live here?

Participant 03:53

Most of my childhood friends have moved away.

Author 03:56

Are there still some old acquaintances in the community?

Participant 03:59

There are still a few, but not many. After everyone grew up, especially after getting married, we lost touch. Now, when we see each other, we just nod and say hello as old classmates. That's about it.

Author 04:18

What do you usually do in the community? For example, shopping for groceries, taking walks, chatting, exercising?

Participant 04:30

Yes, I have a fixed schedule every day in the community. That's because I have some health issues since I retired.

Author 04:42

What kind of issues?

Participant 04:43

I had a heart stent procedure, so I've been exercising regularly since I retired. I wake up every morning when it gets light, and I exercise in the morning every day except when it's windy or raining. Exercise is a daily routine. We live on the first floor of this building, and the window faces the main gate. When I was a child, I used to see my parents coming home from work while playing downstairs, and I would run home as soon as I saw them. This was our old home. These two buildings are about to be renovated.

Author 05:38

Yes, that's what they said.

Participant 05:40

Yes, these two buildings are going to be renovated. I heard that they will be turned into a museum or renovated into an activity centre. I think it would be best to turn it into a place suitable for retired older people, an activity space with a nursing home.

Author 06:20

Community nursing, yes.

Participant 06:23

Yes, that would be best.

Author 06:25

That's right.

Participant 06:27

I went to check it out specifically, and they came out to promote it two or three times. My mother moved to the western community after her house was relocated, but I don't know exactly how things are going there now. I know that many places across the country have similar models, where older people are organised and a large canteen is built where they can go to eat every day and be taken care of. Is that what you mean?

Author 07:20

Yes.

Participant 07:22

I went to check it out and saw a few people playing cards inside, but didn't see much else.

Author 07:29

I asked a few people, and it seems like no one has gone yet.

Participant 07:33

Yes, it's just starting to be promoted. They promoted it again the day before yesterday. I happened to be getting a haircut in the morning and saw them promoting it.

Author 07:51

Yes, have you participated?

Participant 07:58

I've basically attended all of them. I'm a Party member, so I always participate in community-organised activities. During the pandemic over the past two years, whenever I'm at home, I go to their activities. For example, I volunteer as a security guard. This area is the East Community, and the West Community is on Construction Road. A few of us Party members set up a group chat, and we arrange for someone to participate in volunteer activities every day. Each shift is three to four hours, and it's all voluntary.

Author 08:48

You work hard too.

Participant 08:51

I wouldn't say I work hard, but it's nice to be able to participate in community activities. I don't have anything to do during the week, so I help out with activities.

Author 00:00

Besides these activities, have you enjoyed any other services provided by the community?

Participant 00:04

Sometimes, but I don't use community services much. I'm still young and can take care of myself.

Author 00:22

You do look young.

Participant 00:25

You think I'm young? I'm 61 years old, born in 1962.

Author 00:31

Your ID card says you're an older person, but you don't look like one at all.

Participant 00:37

Community activities are mainly for the residents. The tasks organised are small but the most tedious and complicated. Community workers are always busy, starting early in the morning and sometimes even working on weekends. There are too many inspections. They sweep the streets with brooms and move stalls. They really have a tough job. I go shopping every day.

Author 01:30

Do you buy groceries nearby or go to the farmers' market?

Participant 01:33

I don't buy here. The vegetables are a bit expensive here. The farmers' market is also expensive, so I usually don't buy from either place.

I usually exercise at the Cultural Palace or May 1st Park. After exercising, I go to the small supermarket next door to buy groceries. Do you know where that is? I exercise, then buy groceries, and go home.

Author 01:59

That's indeed convenient.

Participant 02:00

Yes, it's on the way. Every day I leave at 6 a.m., exercise until 7 a.m., chat with everyone, finish around 7:30 a.m., then go shopping, and it takes about 10 minutes to get home, so I'm back by 7:50 a.m.

Author 02:19

That's a very smooth schedule.

Participant 02:21

Yes, it's the same every day. I go home, sit for a while, rest, and then go see my mother around 10 o'clock.

Author 02:30

Is that how you arrange your days?

Participant 02:34

Yes, almost every day.

This place used to be a school, and I went to school here. This place used to be the entrance to the college.

Author 02:49

Is this a community?

Participant 02:51

Would you like to be interviewed? No, we're all here on our own; no need to make an appointment.

Author 03:00

Should we all go around that time?

Participant 03:02

Yes, everyone usually goes around that time. We walk for an hour, not too fast, but a bit faster than we're talking now. After all, we're all getting older. I'm the youngest, and the others are all in their seventies, but they're still keeping up with their exercise.

Author 03:22

You can't walk too fast. There's a lot of fitness equipment in the community. Do you use it?

Participant 03:30

No, I don't. I go to the park to exercise.

Many older people here exercise nearby because of various inconveniences, but I think there's more fitness equipment in the western community and less in the eastern community. Older people really need this equipment. If you go late, you won't be able to use it, right?

Author 04:02

So you don't use it because there are too many people?

Participant 04:05

Yes, and at my age, I don't really need to use the equipment yet. This area is between No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Author 04:17

Do you usually go to the market?

Participant 04:18

Sometimes I go to the market to buy food. In the past, I mostly bought food at the market because it was cheaper than at No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory. The vegetables at No. 3 and No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factories are the most expensive.

Author 04:34

Several people have said so.

Participant 04:36

The vegetables at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory are the most expensive, probably because the stall rental fees are high. The two vegetable stalls behind are also expensive, maybe even more expensive than the ones inside. The stall rental fees are high, so they have no choice but to sell their vegetables at a higher price.

Author 04:59

This is indeed a difficult problem to solve.

Participant 05:01

Older people suggest that the community install more fitness equipment, as there are too few places to exercise. There is only one exercise area in this neighbourhood.

Author 05:17

There is another one behind there.

Participant 05:18

Is the one in the community part of the new community?

Author 05:22

Yes, there's another one further along, past the next street, near the next factory.

Participant 05:30

I haven't been that far, so I'm not sure.

Author 05:37

There are actually only two activity areas in this area.

Participant 05:40

Three locations.

Author 05:42

The old square location, and the one near the two stations.

Participant 05:46

Yes, I know that. Our activities were in that area at that time.

Author 05:51

Yes.

Participant 05:54

There weren't many people there. It wasn't in the centre, but a little off to the side, in the area you mentioned. The road was repaired there once, and a piece of land was cut away, so it's lower now and seems inconvenient.

Author 06:05

Right, that place seems like a lot of people can't remember it.

Participant 06:10

Right, I didn't think of it at first, but now that you mention it, it's actually not far, just nearby.

Author 06:15

Do you exercise on the fitness equipment in the community, or do you go to May Day Park?

Participant 06:21

I exercise at May Day Park. At my age, I don't really use the equipment in the community. I either stay at home or watch TV at home. Nowadays, I spend most of my time on my mobile phone reading the news.

Author 06:40

Do you take care of your family members?

Participant 06:42

I just got back and have to leave again soon. Next week I'm going to Shanghai. My daughter got into university there, found a job, and got married.

Author 06:52

Did you help out before?

Participant 06:56

She hired a nanny, so we just went to visit.

Author 07:01

You have lived in the community for so long. How do you feel about the community maintenance over the years?

Participant 07:07

Community maintenance is okay. After the recent renovation, the community has changed a lot. When Jiatai Property first came in, the management was not very good. Most people complained about cars being parked haphazardly, with no order at all, and it was very messy. The cars of the merchants were parked all over the place.

Author 07:48

Currently, the property management company is responsible for your neighbourhood. Are you aware of the specific services they provide?

Participant 07:54

I'm not sure, really. I only see people in green vests sweeping the streets all day, that's for sure. If they didn't sweep, this place would be a mess. These people should all be property management staff, and those in green vests are from Jiatai Property Management.

Author 02:55

Uncle, do you walk to visit your mother or go to the cultural centre? If you go elsewhere, do you have other modes of transportation?

Participant 03:04

I mainly take the bus or subway. I don't ride a bike. I bought a bicycle when I was working, but I've never ridden an electric bike or used one.

When I worked at the factory, it was quite far away, so there were shuttle buses, and we all took the shuttle buses, so we didn't need electric bikes.

So I've never used an electric bike.

Author 03:41

You are lucky not to have to commute by bike every day.

Participant 03:46

Yes, riding a bike every day is tiring, and there are safety issues. There are so many cars on the road now, so driving a car is just as dangerous.

Author 03:55

Do you find that living here is affected by any noise or smells? What do you think of the environment in the courtyard?

Participant 04:03

Noise? Do you mean loud noises?

Author 04:08

Yes, for example, are there any noises that make you feel uncomfortable or annoyed, or any noises that you like?

Participant 04:15

Actually, there are some noises that bother me, like the residents upstairs who complain about certain noises.

Author 04:24

Is it the noise from the restaurant?

Participant 04:25

Not entirely. There are issues with the restaurant, and also the air conditioning noise from the rooftop. There's a small eatery downstairs that sells pork knuckles and rice noodles. They start unloading goods around midnight, and the sound of plastic boxes being dropped on the ground is very loud. This continues from midnight until 5 a.m., with another group arriving every one or two hours, disrupting rest. The rest is okay.

The air conditioners on the roof are also very loud. Previously, we also heard the loud noise of chickens being slaughtered. Residents have reported this several times, and the community has followed up multiple times. It's improved slightly now.

Author 04:58

Is that the sound of chickens being slaughtered?

Participant 04:59

Yes, the sound of chickens being slaughtered is very loud, and the smell is also very strong. Residents and the community have reported this several times, and the situation has improved slightly now.

Author 05:24

Indeed, the sound and smell of chickens are difficult to control.

Participant 05:28

Look how nice the road is now. It's all straight. Before, you had to make a lot of turns to get to the airport and couldn't see the road clearly. It's much more convenient now that the road is fixed. After the road was repaired, the streetlights didn't work for a while, but after many people complained, they're now working.

It's much safer to walk at night now. During the renovation, it was really scary at night—no lights, and you couldn't see the road at all, plus there were few people around.

Author 05:55

So you don't go out at night anymore?

Participant 05:56

I don't go out when it's dark. Now I go out for a walk after dinner.

Author 06:03

Do you still go to the Cultural Centre after dinner? Do you have regular gatherings with your old friends?

Participant 06:08

In the evenings, I mainly go for a walk with my spouse after dinner.

Author 06:16

What are your thoughts on the appearance of the community buildings?

Participant 06:20

It would be nice if the exterior were renovated. Let's see how it will be renovated. The current plan is to build a textile museum, but I don't think it's very practical. It should be built on a reasonable scale, otherwise it will be a waste of resources. Do you know the Zhengzhou No. 2 Sand Factory? The situation there is similar to that of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. The factory buildings have been vacated and converted into a cultural park. I haven't been there yet. Have you?

The Zhengzhou No. 2 Sand Factory is also being vacated and converted into a cultural project, and No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory is planning to do the same. It will be fine if it attracts people, but if it doesn't, it will be a problem.

Participant 00:00

If it's not popular, it's a waste. It would be better to convert it into a project related to older people, as we just said. Taking care of the elderly is a more appropriate choice. Nowadays, our mothers' generation of older people still have several children who can help take care of them. For example, the four sisters in our family can take turns visiting them. But when our generation retires, we will only have one child, as we are all only children. For example, my daughter lives far away. If both of us get sick, she won't be able to take care of us, right?

So we need to think about how to make the best use of this house. Turning it into a nursing home would be most appropriate. Of course, we must preserve some of the textile museum, so that we don't completely forget this history. After all, this is the only textile industry site in Zhengzhou, and there are several factories on this street, including No. 2 National Cotton Textile Factory, and another one in the city, all facing each other.

But I don't think it's feasible to turn everything into a museum, as I think it would be too big.

From Jianshe Road all the way to Mianfang Road and the area across from the vegetable market have already been demolished. Originally, this area might have been demolished in phases, but now it's part of the second or third phase—I'm not entirely sure. The point is, that's the situation.

Author 08:30

Yes, it would be much better to transform the area outside into supporting facilities.

Participant 08:34

Yes, it would be better to transform it into supporting facilities. However, this would require a large investment. If it were to be a nursing home, it would need a lot of nursing staff, volunteers, and other personnel. It might be better to operate it privately.

Author 08:52

Public facilities are sometimes not as good as private ones. Private facilities provide better services.

Participant 08:56

Yes, private facilities have competition, which is good. I think we should move in that direction.

Participant 00:00

If it's all converted into a museum, it won't make much sense and will be a waste.

Author 00:06

It is indeed a waste. What other infrastructure do you think is lacking in the community?

Participant 00:10

In terms of infrastructure, how can I put it...

Author 00:12

In addition to nursing homes, other facilities could also be added.

Participant 00:16

Anyway, there are more older people now, so you say that both hardware and software need to be improved. If there were more young people, facilities suitable for young people could be added, but now there are more older people, so the focus should be on improving services for the elderly.

Author 00:35

Indeed, there are many older people here.

Participant 00:38

Yes, those of us who retired from the factory are considered young. People born in 1966, 1962, and 1963 have already retired, and most people have retired.

Author 00:50

So now this community is mainly older people.

Participant 00:54

Currently, the main issue is elderly care services.

Author 01:00

Indeed, both soft support and operational support need to be improved.

Participant 01:03

The appearance of those two buildings is really unsightly.

Author 01:07

Which two buildings are you referring to?

Participant 01:10

The two buildings next to the old canteen. They look very ugly.

Author 01:13

Indeed, the population density in this area is quite high.

Participant 01:17

There were more people before the relocation. Over 1,000 households were relocated at once.

Author 01:23

Did more people move to the east or the west?

Participant 01:25

Yes, more people moved from the west, while fewer moved from the east.

Author 01:33

If you go to Shanghai to take care of your daughter in the future, have you considered moving out of the community permanently?

Participant 01:40

We probably will have to move. If they have a second child, we'll need to go help them, so we'll probably have to leave then.

Author 01:50

Will you miss this place?

Participant 01:52

Of course I will miss it. I've worked here all my life and have deep feelings for this place, so of course I'll miss it.

Walking Interview-8

Researcher 00:01

Are you currently living with your family or spouse?

Participant 00:05

No, my children are in Shenzhen.

Researcher 00:11

So you don't have the pressure of helping to take care of your grandchildren now.

Participant 00:14

Not at the moment.

Researcher 00:16

I see. Where do you usually spend your time in the community? Would you mind if I followed you around?

Participant 00:26

Sure. Our community was built in the 1950s. It was one of several textile bases built by the state during the first five-year plan, one of which was Zhengzhou No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

At that time, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory was built as a general factory, but later it was divided into several textile factories. At that time, five factories were built, numbered 1, 3, 4, 5, and 5. The investment in each factory was about 30 million yuan at that time, which was quite large. It was built with the help of the Soviet Union. Look at these buildings. They were all designed in Beijing in the 1950s. The textile factories in Beijing and Shijiazhuang used the same blueprints as those in Zhengzhou. The buildings in these production blocks are typical Soviet-style architecture. Later, these areas were separated, and the government now plans to build a textile museum and a Soviet culture street here.

Researcher 01:58

So these buildings were originally used for production, not for living?

Participant 02:05

Some were used for production, and some were used for living. Let's move forward, and I'll explain in detail.

Researcher 02:10

You really know this place well. I always thought that the state-owned cotton mill was built with East German aid.

Participant 02:19

The East Germans helped build the Zhengzhou National Second Sand Making Factory.

Researcher 02:44

Where do you usually spend your time in the community?

Participant 02:49

Before I retired, I spent more time taking care of my mother, so I was often near Jin Yi. Jin Yi used to be the production block of the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, but now it has been turned into the Jin Yi commercial district.

The area behind the Wangfujing commercial district used to be a residential area, but it was rebuilt to become what it is today. Most of the former production facilities have been converted into commercial and residential buildings.

Researcher 03:40

So all the new high-rise buildings here are converted from the former production blocks?

Participant 03:46

Yes, all the new high-rise buildings here are converted from production blocks.

Researcher 03:51

Is that building over there also converted?

Participant 03:54

Which building are you talking about? Let me explain. This building was originally part of the living block of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. It was a public facility complex that included a public canteen, a library, a boiler room, and guest quarters. It was converted into its current form after the restructuring.

Researcher 04:28

I notice that the buildings inside this building vary greatly in age.

Participant 04:40

Yes, some were built in the 1950s, some in the 1960s, some in the 1970s and 1980s, and some in the 1990s.

Researcher 04:53

There aren't many from the 1990s, are there?

Participant 04:55

The buildings from the 1990s are mainly concentrated in this area, with some more on the west side. You can take a look first; I'll show you the original office building.

Researcher 05:09

Is it being converted into a museum now?

Participant 05:12

Yes.

Participant 05:15

It's being converted into a museum. During the demolition, the extended sections on both sides of the office buildings were not demolished and were preserved to serve as the main building of the museum. There is also a portion at the back planned to be converted into exhibition areas for the museum, with three or four rows of sawtooth-shaped production workshops left intact.

Researcher 05:36

Is it still under construction?

Participant 05:39

Yes, it is.

Researcher 05:42

I'm looking forward to seeing it.

Participant 05:42

The houses on this side were built in the 1990s, while those on the other side were built in the 1950s.

Researcher 05:56

The buildings here do have a historical feel to them.

Participant 06:03

This building used to be called Peace Building because the political atmosphere at the time was themed around peace. After the Korean War ended, our country heavily promoted 'peace,' so this building was named Peace Building.

Researcher 06:25

So, Peace Building is a residential building?

Participant 06:32

We can go take a look over there later. These buildings have been included in the renovation plan, and they were all built in the 1990s.

Researcher 06:43

Will these buildings be demolished as well? The scale is quite large.

Participant 06:48

Let's head this way.

Researcher 06:49

Do you ever leave the community to go elsewhere for leisure?

Participant 06:53

Occasionally, I go out with classmates and friends, but there aren't many places to go in Zhengzhou. Besides parks, there's Xiliu Lake Park, and if you want to go further, you have to take a bus.

Researcher 07:14

Indeed, there aren't many places in Zhengzhou suitable for relaxing. I've noticed that most residents here don't go out of the community much because everything is available within the community.

Participant 07:33

I see. The entire area has a primary school, a kindergarten, and later a secondary school and a vocational college were established.

Researcher 07:57

It really has everything.

Participant 07:58

Yes, at that time, it was a model where enterprises took responsibility for social welfare.

Researcher 08:03

Look how well this place is built. Look, there are even small pavilions, and the roads are well paved.

Participant 08:08

These were all built in recent years, probably after 2000. It's not bad.

Researcher 08:19

Is there anything here that you find unsatisfactory?

Participant 08:22

It's basically okay. The open space in front of this building used to be very wide, serving as a recreational area for residents, extending all the way to the roadside. Later, to widen the road, they took up that open space.

Researcher 08:39

I think it looks pretty neat now.

Participant 08:42

This road was indeed widened later.

Researcher 08:43

Do you think it's better after the road was widened?

Participant 08:46

Of course, it's more convenient for everyone to pass through.

Researcher 08:53

Do you find it inconvenient to cross the road?

Participant 08:57

I didn't find it inconvenient when I was a child because there were far fewer cars back then.

Participant 00:00

There are definitely more cars now, so safety is the top priority. However, as you can see, there are dedicated lanes in every area, so the overall design is quite good.

Researcher 00:23

You think the environment here is quite good. Do you often take walks or rest here? I see there are quite a few places to rest around here.

Participant 00:32

Sometimes I come out in the evening for a stroll, walk along this road, and then head back home.

Researcher 00:45

Do you often meet acquaintances here?

Participant 00:50

I do sometimes, after all, we all grew up in the courtyard, or are older people from the courtyard.

Researcher 01:02

Sometimes you meet them.

Participant 01:05

Yes, I do.

Researcher 01:06

Is it random, or do people tend to gather at specific places?

Participant 01:10

It's random.

Researcher 01:12

When you go out, do you feel like it's the perfect time for everyone else to be out, so you choose that specific time to go out?

Participant 01:21

Not really, we just go out when we feel like it.

Researcher 01:22

Just go out for a walk when you have nothing to do.

Participant 01:24

Yes, life is slower now. Some have retired, some have moved away, so you never know when you'll run into someone.

Researcher 01:42

That's true. After retirement, some people may have moved to other places.

Participant 01:49

Right, society is developing, and people always move to better places. That's normal.

Researcher 01:56

That's true.

Participant 01:59

The areas on both sides with Soviet-style buildings were within the government's expropriation zone three years ago, but it hasn't been fully expropriated yet. The areas on both sides along the main road heading south have been expropriated, but the inner areas haven't been yet. Still, it's enough for now.

Researcher 02:49

Right.

Participant 02:51

Our current vegetable market used to be a basketball court.

Researcher 02:58

Yes, I heard that there used to be an activity area, but it's gone now, right?

Participant 03:05

Right, this is newly built. This used to be a residential area where people would chat and hang out after work.

Researcher 03:18

The changes over the past two years have indeed been significant.

Participant 03:20

This place has been built for less than a year, so it will definitely charge fees. The building over there is a primary school.

Researcher 03:31

You mean the one behind us, right?

Participant 03:33

Yes, it used to be a primary school, but later it was converted into a workers' hospital. These buildings were all living facilities for No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory at that time, and they had the best conditions among the factories at that time.

Researcher 03:52

I heard that No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory was particularly profitable.

Participant 03:54

Yes, the leaders of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory were very concerned about the lives of their workers at that time. They fought hard for this and did a good job.

Participant 04:15

Later, Zhang Hening, the party secretary of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, was transferred to the Henan Provincial Textile Bureau to serve as director. Many people did come from these factories, but Secretary Zhang did a really good job.

Researcher 04:27

So I think the overall environment of the two communities here at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory is better than the communities next to the other two factories, and the facilities are more complete.

Participant 04:41

Yes, this was something that the workers and leaders of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory were very proud of at the time. Life here was very convenient. My parents worked three shifts, so sometimes they didn't have time to cook, so they would just go to the canteen to eat. The food was cheap and delicious, and the chefs were very good.

Researcher 05:09

The happiness index was indeed very high.

Participant 05:11

However, with the adjustment of national industrial policies and enterprise restructuring in recent years, the general public has become increasingly dissatisfied, which is normal, especially older people who are very nostalgic for the past. Many people wonder: What has happened to the wealth we worked so hard to build up back then? I know a little about this. For example, I used to work at No. 5 National Cotton Textile Factory, which paid the state profits equivalent to 13 factories of the same size before restructuring.

Participant 05:39

At that time, part of the company's profits were paid as normal taxes, and the rest had to be handed over. Moreover, for example, if you bought something for 30 yuan, it was counted as fixed assets and had to be reported. In fact, the problems that companies faced at that time were largely related to national policies, so it's not entirely the fault of the factory leaders for not doing a good job.

Researcher 06:53

Yes, at that time, the overall system was still being explored.

Participant 07:00

Yes, so later there were many arbitrary and even unreasonable statements, which were irresponsible.

Researcher 07:10

Let's take a look at this side.

Participant 07:12

This is the air defence company, which was responsible for national defence at the time. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a complete tunnel system under No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 07:28

Are these tunnels still there?

Participant 07:30

Some are still there, but others have been filled in. For example, some tunnels collapsed a few years ago and were filled in.

Participant 07:37

These air defence facilities were very necessary at the time, reflecting the ideology of preparing for war, preparing for famine, and serving the people, because this area is adjacent to Zhengzhou North Station, which was once the largest railway marshalling yard in Asia.

Researcher 08:21

Is that over there? This area does have concentrated resources.

Participant 08:32

Yes, the factories behind these areas had their own railway lines, but they have all been demolished and are now being developed for real estate.

Researcher 08:46

So the entire logistics route has been changed.

Participant 08:52

Yes, the textile factory area no longer exists, so these supporting facilities are no longer necessary.

Researcher 08:58

However, the entire community still has its own unique characteristics.

Participant 09:02

Yes, it is very distinctive.

Participant 00:00

Although it was built with Soviet aid and based on their model, our society developed and the gap with the Soviet Union widened, so this community has also been changing to adapt to social changes. For example, this used to be a bathhouse in the production block, and further inside was an apple orchard. Behind a one- or two-metre-high wall was the factory area. The club is on the other side of this road, and there is also a nursing room and a greenhouse.

Researcher 01:06

The facilities are indeed very comprehensive.

Participant 01:11

Yes, very comprehensive. To be honest, it's a pity that the factory ended up like this.

Researcher 01:24

Indeed, these buildings were well-maintained in the past. Do you know where we can find historical records or photos?

Participant 2 01:35

They should be available at the archives now.

Researcher 01:41

The archives in this district?

Participant 2 01:43

The Zhengzhou City Archives should have them. These are all records left over from the construction of Zhengzhou's western suburbs at the time. Originally, this area did not belong to the city of Zhengzhou. In the 1950s, it was all farmland and brick kilns. The state developed the cotton spinning industry here.

Researcher 02:12

It was rebuilt later, right?

Participant 2 02:16

Yes. The Cotton Spinning Road area was first home to a camera factory, a water engineering machinery factory, and the Zhongzhou Coal Machinery Factory, followed by Zhengzhou Textile, No. 5 National Cotton Textile Factory, No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, No. 1 National Cotton Textile Factory, No. 6 National Cotton Textile Factory, and Henan Textile Equipment Factory. Around the bend, there was a textile air conditioning factory, a printing and dyeing factory, and the Henan Textile Machinery Factory. Further on, there was the Zhengzhou Printing and Dyeing Factory and the Zhengzhou Second Printing and Dyeing Factory. Turning onto Huashan Road, there was the Coal Machinery Factory, Zhengzhou National Second Sand Making Factory, and the Cable Factory. This whole area was full of factories, all of which were large state-owned enterprises.

Researcher 03:28

It turns out that Zhengzhou was a city that started out with light industry.

Participant 2 03:32

Yes, for example, if Zhengzhou National Second Sand Making Factory stopped production, half of the country's machinery industry would be affected. At that time, Zhengzhou National Second Sand Making Factory was the largest grinding wheel factory in Asia and could also switch to military production. Zhengzhou Cable Factory was also a very large enterprise in Asia.

Researcher 04:06

What a pity.

Participant 2 04:20

Zhengzhou had almost no industry at the time of liberation. It was precisely because of the development of these factories that Zhengzhou established its industrial foundation. These factories were of a very high level, and many of the party secretaries and factory directors at the time were veteran Red Army soldiers and revolutionaries, with ranks of division-level or above, appointed by the Central Political Bureau. For example, the leaders of No. 5 National Cotton Textile Factory, No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory and No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory were all former Red Army soldiers, and Zhang Hening was originally the political commissar of the municipal party committee.

Researcher 05:17

According to my research, it was also during that period that concentrated development took place. Because China is a vast country, it is not enough to rely on the coastal areas alone. It is necessary to establish industrial bases in centrally located areas with convenient transportation in order to transport products.

Participant 2 05:40

Yes, for example, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory in Zhengzhou, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory in Beijing, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory in Shijiazhuang, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory in Handan, and the textile factory in Xianyang were all built according to the same blueprint. The Zhengzhou Printing and Dyeing Factory was also built at the same time as several other cities.

Researcher 06:10

At that time, the living conditions of workers were indeed very good.

Participant 2 06:11

Dyeing and printing factories were referred to as 'making money out of water' in the textile industry. The state relied on these labour-intensive enterprises and cheap labour to quickly accumulate capital for developing other industries.

Researcher 06:32

Indeed, there was a lot of room for development back then.

Participant 2 06:37

Yes, so at that time, the national policy for these factories was that they had to pay taxes and also hand over profits, and the profit amounts were huge, often reaching tens of millions.

Researcher 06:51

That was really a lot.

Researcher 07:00

Actually, there weren't many schools in Zhengzhou at the time, mainly just two, and two of them were related to these factories, right?

Participant 2 07:06

Yes, for example, the current Henan Institute of Engineering used to be called the Henan Provincial Textile Industry School.

Researcher 07:16

Now it's called Zhongyuan University of Technology.

Participant 2 07:18

Yes, Zhongyuan University of Technology was originally a technical school directly managed by the Ministry of Textiles, which was later upgraded to a junior college and then to a bachelor's degree programme. It was originally called Henan Textile Engineering College, and later renamed Zhongyuan University of Technology.

Researcher 07:45

That name doesn't seem very appropriate.

Participant 2 07:51

Yes, it has been used for many years. It was originally called Zhengzhou Henan Textile Industry School.

Researcher 01:24

Indeed, these buildings were well-constructed in the past. Do you know where we can find historical records or photos?

Participant 2 01:35

They should be available at the archives now.

Researcher 01:41

Is that the archives in this district?

Participant 2 01:43

The Zhengzhou City Archives should have them. These are records from when the western suburbs of Zhengzhou were developed. In the 1950s, this area was not part of the city proper; it was mostly farmland and brick kilns. The state established a cotton textile industry here.

Researcher 06:51

That's a lot.

Researcher 07:00

Actually, there weren't many schools in Zhengzhou at that time, mainly just two, and two of them were related to these factories, right?

Participant 2 07:06

Yes, for example, the current Henan University of Engineering was formerly known as Henan Provincial Textile Industry School.

Researcher 07:16

That's now the Central China University of Technology.

Participant 2 07:18

Yes, the Central China University of Technology was originally a technical school directly under the Ministry of Textiles, which was later upgraded to a junior college and then to a bachelor's degree programme. It was previously called Henan Textile Engineering College before being renamed Central China University of Technology.

Researcher 07:45

That name doesn't seem very appropriate.

Participant 2 07:51

Yes, it has been using this name for many years. It was originally called Zhengzhou Henan Textile Industry School.

Researcher 04:15

The chefs are still very skilled, quite skilled. I just saw that you know so much about No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, but you said you are from No. 5 National Cotton Textile Factory. How did you end up living in No. 3?

Participant 04:28

My mother worked at No. 3.

Researcher 04:31

So you grew up here and have lived here ever since?

Participant 04:34

Yes, I grew up in the compound and have lived here for 60 years.

Researcher 04:39

You must have a strong attachment to this place. After the community management was changed to a community residents' committee, how do you feel about their management? Or have you ever benefited from the services they provide?

Participant 04:56

I would say they are much more proactive and involved now compared to the previous residents' committee. With government functions now delegated to the community level, they handle many tasks that were previously handled by higher authorities. Back then, the family committee would assign tasks and then leave them unattended. My mother was still in good health at the time and would participate in community activities on a rotating basis. Now, the responsibilities have expanded significantly, and the

community committee's duties are completely different from those of the former residents' committee. The scope of work has become much more diverse, which makes the community staff work very hard. While the staff from the sub-district office also participate, the main burden falls on the community staff.

Researcher 06:20

After this structural change, are there any areas that have left a deep impression on you or where you have truly enjoyed the convenience?

Participant 06:35

For example, in the past, we had to go to the street office or the district office to get things done, but now many things can be done in the community. This has brought great convenience to everyone and is also a benefit of the decentralisation of government functions.

Researcher 07:00

Do you think there is anything that needs to be improved?

Participant 07:02

The areas that need improvement in the community are actually related to the government level.

Researcher 07:16

Do you think it should be decentralised further?

Participant 07:23

Yes. We can't rely solely on community workers; they already have too much to do and are very busy every day.

Researcher 07:33

Indeed, there is a lot of work that needs to be done by everyone together.

Participant 07:39

The government has an old saying: 'There are a thousand threads above and a single needle below.' All work ultimately has to be implemented at the community level. What do you suggest?

Researcher 07:52

That does indeed make the workload too heavy.

Participant 07:53

All work ultimately has to be implemented at the community level, but community workers are not well paid and have a heavy workload.

Researcher 08:11

Yes, this community is large, with many stairwells and streets. The renovation and upgrading itself is a massive task, and the community has limited manpower.

Participant 08:27

That's right. For example, in terms of public health, the community doesn't have the funds to do this work. Think about it: in today's market economy, how much can a few community workers and slogans accomplish?

Researcher 08:49

However, I noticed that some of the greenery in front of the buildings seems to be planted by residents, and some areas look quite nice.

Researcher 00:01

Are these flowers and plants planted by the residents?

Participant 00:03

In front of the road we just walked along, there are many places where residents have planted flowers and plants themselves.

Researcher 00:10

Yes, I see some small patches of greenery that are well-maintained. Do you participate in these activities yourself?

Participant 00:29

No, because these are public areas, we can't just occupy them.

Researcher 00:36

Look at how our living block has developed. Everyone has cars, bicycles, electric bikes and other vehicles, and they are all parked here. Is there anything about this space that you are not satisfied with?

Participant 00:59

Definitely. The open spaces used to be empty, but now they're all filled with cars, leaving less room for activities. I have to give way to the cars when I walk, which is inconvenient. Plus, the cars take up space, and the once spacious and comfortable environment is gone.

Researcher 01:27

Yes, that's indeed a major issue; otherwise, there wouldn't be enough space for parking.

Participant 01:36

This is a social issue and there's no easy solution. When the area was designed, no one anticipated the growth of car ownership and parking issues we face today. It's not the government's fault. But now that the problem exists, what should we do?

Researcher 02:08

It may take time to resolve.

Participant 02:14

Currently, they're just charging fees, but that won't solve the problem completely. People still need to park. Zhengzhou has a high population density, so there are many people and many cars.

Researcher 02:38

Do you usually go out shopping? I see there are quite a few small shops in the community.

Participant 02:38

I shop frequently, and I am responsible for purchasing items for my family.

Researcher 02:42

Do you typically go to the supermarket in your neighbourhood or to small shops along the street?

Participant 02:45

I rarely go to the supermarket.

Researcher 02:48

So, you purchase items while walking around the street?

Participant 02:50

Yes, there's a farmers' market on this street, and they have a wider selection.

Researcher 03:27

There's also a vegetable market on this street. Do you go there often? Have you gotten used to this lifestyle? Do you only go to specialty supermarkets for items that require higher quality, while everyday essentials can be purchased at these small shops?

Participant 03:33

Yes, these small shops are convenient for daily life and are a major feature of Chinese communities.

Researcher 03:42

That's true. There are almost no such neighbourhoods abroad. When I was walking around here, I noticed that many shop owners have been here for years, and the residents who come to buy things are very familiar with them and greet each other when they meet.

Participant 04:12

Yes, you naturally become familiar with them from frequent visits.

Researcher 04:17

Do you like this atmosphere where you not only buy and sell but also exchange greetings with the shop owners?

Participant 04:27

I like it.

Researcher 04:28

It is indeed very warm.

Participant 04:32

This is the humanistic society of China. If it were just cold business transactions, it could be anywhere, but normal life requires interaction between people.

Researcher 04:58

Yes, otherwise it would be too closed off.

Participant 05:02

That would be mechanical and cold. Pay, take, leave—it feels like a supermarket.

Researcher 05:16

I see many neighbours gathering here to chat and play.

Participant 05:20

Especially the elderly, because these places used to be where everyone gathered, the heart of the community. This used to be called a cooperative, with a canteen, guesthouse, library, boiler room, barbershop, and bathhouse—all state-provided amenities. There was also a basketball court, and the factory often organised basketball matches between different workshops.

Researcher 06:22

Life was quite rich back then.

Participant 06:26

The work was boring, but life was varied, and No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory did a very good job in this regard.

Researcher 06:39

It sounds like it was really good in the past.

Participant 06:45

It was quite happy, unlike what some people say. Although life was tough back then, there was still time and space to find joy in the midst of hardship.

Researcher 06:56

There's no place for that now.

Participant 06:58

Where is there much space for activities now? Some activity spaces even charge fees—that's the reality of a market economy.

Researcher 07:08

Yes.

Participant 07:10

Let's move on and take a look around.

Researcher 07:16

This street is quite long.

Participant 07:21

This road is called Xiangrong Street. It is an old road that existed when the factory and living blocks were built.

Researcher 07:36

The custom of selling things on this street only started after the reform and opening up, right?

Participant 07:44

Yes, that came later. In the past, this area was clean and tidy, with no stalls.

Researcher 07:49

That was probably after the 1980s.

Participant 07:51

Yes, that was after the 1980s.

Researcher 07:54

That was quite a long time ago.

Participant 08:01

It's been 40 years.

Researcher 08:02

When you come here to shop, do you deliberately choose times when there are fewer people?

Participant 08:12

For example, if I come in the morning and don't need anything urgent, I don't rush over here.

Researcher 08:22

Is it because it's too crowded to move around?

Participant 08:25

Yes. At first, things were more organised here, but it's gotten more chaotic over time. What can be done about the random parking along the road? The local office goes there every day to enforce the rules, but it doesn't solve the problem. People just leave and come back, so it's never resolved.

Researcher 08:44

Earlier, you mentioned that you enjoy browsing these small shops. What are your thoughts on street vendors, mobile carts, and people setting up stalls on the ground?

Participant 09:00

I think the stalls should be removed from the main road, at least to ensure smooth traffic flow. Although life is tough, they have to set up stalls to make a living, but the key is to guide them to set up stalls on the side of the road or in designated areas.

Researcher 00:22

Yes.

Participant 00:26

In the past, these areas were fenced off, but they were enclosed before the Spring Festival this year.

Researcher 00:39

It will likely take some time to complete.

Participant 00:45

And once completed, these areas will no longer be accessible to residents.

Researcher 00:50

These areas are being developed into a museum, correct?

Participant 01:00

Yes, it will be developed into a cultural district, and it will take at least three to five years to complete.

Researcher 01:07

Yes. It is indeed quite large-scale and cannot be completed in just one or two years.

Participant 01:19

This area used to be very quiet, so the residents living along the road must be affected now.

Researcher 01:33

Do you mind the noise from the canteen during the day?

Participant 01:38

I can tolerate it.

Researcher 01:40

What about the smell of cooking?

Participant 01:46

It's not too strong; it's acceptable.

Participant 01:52

It's psychological. Everyone wants convenience, but doesn't want to be disturbed.

Researcher 01:59

Not necessarily.

Participant 02:04

This is the eastern boundary of No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory. If you go forward past that iron gate, you'll be on the grounds of No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory. This whole area belongs to No.4.

Researcher 02:23

It's indeed very close.

Participant 02:31

In the past, the areas of these factories were connected. Those old buildings you can't see now were built in 1955 and 1956, and some of the wooden houses were built after 1958. The quality of the wooden houses is much worse than these buildings.

Researcher 03:01

Were the wooden houses really made of wood?

Participant 03:04

Not entirely wood. The partition walls were made of wooden planks nailed together, with rows of planks replacing brick walls, and then plastered and painted on the outside.

Researcher 2 03:16

Has this been rebuilt?

Participant 03:19

It's all been demolished and rebuilt into new buildings like this. There are still some old wooden houses with wooden floors that haven't been demolished over there by No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 2 03:35

Are these buildings now abandoned?

Participant 03:42

People still live there. The office is in front, you know? In front of the office used to be a coal yard. They used coal in the past, and later there was a garment factory called Sanfu.

Researcher 04:06

Was Sanfu also state-owned?

Participant 04:09

It should have been collective or state-run, I'm not sure. These buildings in front belonged to No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, and the ones behind belonged to No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Participant 04:28

No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory used to cover a large area. The area where the tall white cars are now was also part of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Later, when Comrade Liu Shaoqi came to inspect, Comrade Director reported that there were no houses to live in, so part of the land of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory was allocated.

Researcher 2 04:58

These were all assets of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 05:01

Yes, some things are best left unsaid.

Researcher 05:06

At that time, there really wasn't enough money for such construction projects; it was indeed quite expensive.

Participant 05:13

That's for sure.

Researcher 05:14

I have no further questions. May I stop the recording now?

Walking Interview-9

Researcher 00:00

Could you take me around the places you usually go shopping or do activities?

Participant 00:07

Sure, let's go for a walk.

Researcher 00:12

Do you live alone now?

Participant 00:14

I live with my daughter and my partner. Our home is near the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. We can walk here from home. This is a vegetable market where we can buy all the vegetables and meat we need for our family. The produce is inspected, so we can buy it with confidence. We don't usually buy from street stalls, but always from this farmers' market.

Researcher 00:46

Is this the place called White Building?

Participant 00:48

Yes, We buy vegetables at the farmers' market and simple daily necessities at the Wan

Jia Fu supermarket. If my daughter is off work, we go to the supermarket together. The shops in the community usually meet our daily needs.

Researcher 01:15

Auntie, which route do you usually take when you go out?

Participant 01:23

We usually take the road near our home, and now we take that road when we go home.

Researcher 01:29

Or we go wherever you want to go.

Participant 01:32

Then let's walk to the farmers' market and have a look around.

Researcher 01:38

Are there any places in the community that you don't like or don't want to go to? I'm just asking.

Participant 01:46

I usually come here to buy groceries, and if I want to exercise in the evening, I go to May 1st Park. Recently, due to the pandemic and the summer crowds, we just walk around the courtyard and use the fitness equipment. We mostly stay within the community and rarely go out. Occasionally, we go to the park or have meals with old colleagues. The community has a workers' hospital, which we still call the workers' hospital. Now it's called the Cotton Spinning Road Community Service Centre. We go there for medicine and such, and generally don't leave the community. If we go out for fun, we go on outings. Most of the time, we stay within the community.

Researcher 03:03

Auntie, when you participate in community activities or go to Wuyi Park, do you go by yourself or with other people?

Participant 03:10

I usually go with other people. They are all good friends and close friends who grew up together. We work at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, and our old colleagues live nearby. The buildings are relatively concentrated, so sometimes we send a message on WeChat, wait downstairs, and then go out together.

Researcher 03:37

What activities do you mainly do when you go out?

Participant 03:40

I like activities. I go to the senior citizens' university twice a week to learn singing and poetry recitation. I also volunteer when there are community activities. Additionally, I am a juror at the Zhongyuan District People's Court, and sometimes I am selected to serve as a juror. Usually, I don't have much to do. My daughter is grown up and working, so there's not much going on at home.

Researcher 04:19

Retirement life is pretty good.

Participant 04:21

Yes, this is the farmers' market we often go to. I usually buy vegetables here because the quality is good and they are inspected. I buy simple daily necessities at Wanjiayu. I don't go to other places often. Nowadays, we shop online a lot, and sometimes my daughter also buys things online, so we rarely go to the supermarket. We go to the May 1st Park, and sometimes to the farther South Ring Park or West Flow Lake Park. The farmers' market is right here.

Researcher 05:12

Do you usually enter through this gate?

Participant 05:13

Yes, we enter through this gate. My house is on the west side, so this gate is more convenient.

Researcher 05:18

When you walk, do you have a side you usually walk on?

Participant 05:24

I think I'm quite conscious of it, I'm used to walking on the right side. Usually, I just go to the delivery station at the back to pick up and send parcels. I mostly stay in the area around No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and don't go anywhere else.

Researcher 05:54

Where do you usually go in the community?

Participant 05:57

I usually go out to buy groceries, fruit, and pick up deliveries. I don't go to the small square very often because there are a lot of older people who like to sit and chat there, and we're not at that age yet. If we want to go out, we leave the factory gate and go to May First Park, or sometimes to Bishagang Park, which is within walking distance. If it's further away, we take the subway or bus.

Researcher 06:45

Don't you ride a bike or drive a car?

Participant 06:48

I don't know how to drive, so I walk or take public transport when I go out. I can ride an electric bike a little, but I don't use it very often.

Researcher 06:59

Auntie, is there anything about the road here or the community that you're not very satisfied with?

Participant 07:11

Now?

Researcher 07:13

For example, the roads to the vegetable market or the overall community environment.

Participant 07:18

It's fine now. The environment has improved a lot after the renovation of the community. I've always lived here. Actually, before the factory was restructured, our No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory was a garden-style factory. I have a lot of fond memories of the factory. The staff canteen and community facilities were very good. Back then, the community was like a small society, with everything from kindergarten to high school. Babies as young as a few months old had access to a breastfeeding room, and after a 50-60 day maternity leave, they could be left there. The entire community had over 100,000 people, with many factory workers, and life felt particularly good. I've lived here all my life, and I think it's still pretty good now. The environment is nice, and cities have to develop, after all.

Researcher 08:34

That's pretty good. Auntie, is there anything you're not satisfied with?

Participant 08:39

Not satisfied? No.

Researcher 08:43

These are all advantages.

Participant 08:46

To be honest, I feel pretty happy. I don't feel there's anything I'm not satisfied with. Really, there isn't.

Researcher 08:57

The community work is still quite good.

Participant 08:59

Yes, I think it's good. In the past, communication was not as developed, but now there is a residents' group, and any community matters are posted in the group, keeping up with the times and feeling very progressive.

Researcher 00:17

Do you often run into familiar faces when you go downstairs?

Participant 00:20

Yes, most people in this area know each other. I'm 60 years old now and grew up in this courtyard, so I know almost everyone. It's never lonely.

Researcher 00:35

Do you encounter familiar faces along the way or are there specific places where you are likely to meet them?

Participant 00:43

Mainly around my home. In the past, there were thousands of people in one workshop, and some families had lived in the community for generations, so there were many familiar faces. We would greet each other when we met. However, if you ask me to go to the small square to sit and chat now, I definitely wouldn't go.

Researcher 01:18

Auntie, is there any place here that holds special meaning for you, where you have many fond memories, or that has left a deep impression on you or undergone significant changes?

Researcher 01:18

Are there any places in the community that hold special meaning for you, where you have many fond memories, or that have left a deep impression on you or undergone significant changes?

Participant 01:27

If I had to say what places are meaningful to me, it would be the old staff canteen, kindergarten, and school. They were all very convenient. Back then, my children grew up and went to school in the community. Our parents also worked here, so it felt like a big family. The factory organised many activities, performances, and basketball games, and everyone would gather together, making it very lively. Back then, there was a strong sense of community. Although it's more convenient now, the atmosphere just isn't the same as before.

Researcher 01:58

Do you participate in community activities now?

Participant 02:01

Occasionally, I attend some events like health lectures or volunteer services organised by the community. Sometimes there are performances or cultural activities, and I'll go check them out. But now everyone is busier with their own affairs, so there are fewer activities than before.

Researcher 02:20

Do you ever use other facilities in the community, like fitness equipment or small squares?

Participant 02:25

I use the fitness equipment occasionally, but I don't go often. I don't sit in the small square often either. People of our age prefer to walk and chat with old friends, we don't like sitting there all the time.

Researcher 02:40

Is there anything you would like to improve in your community?

Participant 02:44

I think parking spaces are tight and illegal parking affects pedestrians, especially older people and children, who are unsafe when walking. It would be better if it were planned more reasonably. In addition, it would be better if there were more activity venues suitable for different age groups.

Researcher 03:06

Where do you usually go when you need to see a doctor?

Participant 03:09

For minor illnesses, I go to the community health service centre, which is close to home and convenient; for more serious illnesses, I go to a large hospital nearby, such as the hospital in Zhengzhou, which is not far away.

Researcher 03:20

Do you think the community's medical services are adequate?

Participant 03:23

They are adequate for minor illnesses, but for serious illnesses, we need to go to a large hospital. However, the community doctors are quite responsible. They offer regular health check-ups and blood pressure measurements, which is good.

Researcher 03:40

Do you have any suggestions for community renovation or future development?

Participant 03:44

I hope the renovation will take into account the practical needs of older people, such as better barrier-free facilities, smoother roads, and more cultural activity venues so that everyone has a place to socialise and entertain themselves, which will make life more convenient and comfortable. Overall, the changes are not particularly significant. In fact, we lived in this area when we were children. At that time, this place was a floodlit sports ground and a basketball court, and the tall buildings were staff canteens. When our children were young, we would usually take them to the lighted basketball court to play, and sometimes we would go to the park. Now it has been turned into a farmers' market. There used to be a fountain near the roundabout, and many children loved to play there. After work, everyone would usually gather in this area.

Researcher 03:00

With such big changes, do you feel that the living space here has been squeezed? After all, the community is very densely populated, and places like the basketball court have been demolished.

Participant 03:29

I haven't really thought about it much, and I don't feel crowded. On the contrary, I find it quite convenient. My close friends are all around the same age, so we can hang out together. Especially during the pandemic, I felt even happier. Even when we were locked down, our lives were hardly affected. We had everything we needed. We really don't

need to leave the neighbourhood. We can buy groceries and daily necessities here. There is a gate to the living block on Mianfang Road in front of us and a gate to the production block on Jianshe Road. There are security guards on both sides, so we feel very safe. It's convenient to buy groceries and do other things. Compared to living in a high-rise building with lifts, it's much more troublesome to go out and do things. We feel very happy here.

Researcher 04:51

The living facilities are indeed quite comprehensive, and they weren't affected during the pandemic lockdown.

Participant 04:57

It really wasn't affected at all. Buying groceries and everything else was convenient, really.

Researcher 05:04

I came here and also feel that this community is quite good.

Participant 05:07

You young people probably can't imagine it. We've lived here all our lives. If I had to move to a high-rise apartment building with elevators, I definitely wouldn't get used to it.

Researcher 05:24

Tall buildings also make people feel less safe.

Participant 05:26

Yes, there are too many people and we don't know each other. Here, we all know the people living upstairs and downstairs. We used to work in the same workshop or department, so we're all familiar with each other and feel quite safe.

Researcher 05:41

Has the community organised any activities to help you meet new friends?

Participant 05:49

The community sometimes organises free medical check-ups, table tennis, and badminton competitions, and I enjoy participating in them. Most of the participants are old acquaintances; we recognise each other even if we don't know each other's names. Many of us have lived here for 60 years, and my parents also worked in this factory back then.

Researcher 06:22

That's true.

Participant 06:24

I'm really an old No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory person. For several years, I took my daughter to the production block of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory before it was demolished, and I pointed to her and said, 'This is where your mother fought.' I have a lot of affection for this community.

Researcher 06:49

I find that many of the people I interview say they have a lot of affection for this place.

Participant 06:56

Yes, especially older people. If you interview young people, they may not feel this emotion. My daughter works outside the neighbourhood, but she really likes it here.

Researcher 07:12

This place has a really nice atmosphere.

Participant 07:16

Everyone knows each other and is very familiar with one another. For example, just the other day, I was cooking something on the stove and completely forgot about it. I didn't notice at all, but someone in the group chat said that there was a burning smell coming from a certain building. I rushed back and turned off the gas. The people in the community are very proactive and the service is really good.

Researcher 07:40

The service really feels very thoughtful.

Participant 07:42

They even took a photo and posted it in the group. I said I've become a cautionary example, ha ha. But it's really great.

Researcher 07:49

Are there any services in our community that you have enjoyed?

Participant 07:53

Yes, there are. For example, in the last few days, the community invited a hospital to provide free medical consultations and thyroid checks, and there were also haircuts for older people. Although I don't really participate in these activities, I think they're quite good.

Researcher 00:00

Do you think you don't need these services right now?

Participant 00:09

Yes, I don't need them right now. Haircuts are very useful for older people who have difficulty getting around. They don't care about looking good, just hygiene, but I can still go out and get a haircut myself. The community often holds free medical check-ups, such as blood pressure and blood sugar tests, but I haven't participated. However, I've seen that there are quite a lot of people there from morning to night.

Researcher 00:51

There are indeed a lot of activities.

Participant 00:55

Yes, but I'm not really into that kind of thing. However, if there's a badminton match or other sports activities, I might participate or at least go and watch. If there's a notice in the community group, I'll go and check it out if I have time.

Researcher 01:14

You seem to enjoy sports activities. Do you mainly exercise with your friends?

Participant 01:19

Not really. We like taking photos, and now some people like making TikTok videos. I don't make them myself, but they send them to me, and I save them.

Researcher 01:37

That's great. You're very talented.

Participant 01:42

Mainly because I don't have much to do now, and my children are grown up, so I take advantage of being able to get around to go out and do things.

Researcher 01:58

Your current lifestyle is really good.

Participant 02:02

As long as I'm healthy and have nothing to do, I'm quite satisfied.

Researcher 02:05

I have one last question: What are your thoughts on the sound environment around here?

For example, is there any noise, or are there any pleasant sounds you notice?

Participant 02:24

I don't notice any noise, and no one plays music through speakers. The environment is quite quiet.

Researcher 02:38

What about smells?

Participant 02:40

There's no smell, and I don't notice any odours. When there were small restaurants in the first floor of the residential building, there might have been some odours, but now that they've been demolished, they've all moved to the street area, and there are none left in the residential buildings. The environment has improved significantly.

Participant 03:00

The restaurants operate indoors, and the kitchens are strictly inspected. I enjoy participating in volunteer activities and often accompany community staff on inspections. I've seen the grease exhaust purifiers installed in the restaurants. The community enforces that businesses must install purifiers when exhausting grease fumes, and I'm familiar with these regulations.

Researcher 03:24

Management is quite strict.

Participant 03:27

Yes, it's quite strict, which is good.

Researcher 03:31

What are your thoughts on the appearance of the community?

Participant 03:34

To be honest, there's not much to say about the appearance itself. However, compared to before, there are more people now, so the environment isn't as tidy as it used to be. In the past, No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory was really a garden-style factory. All the buildings were uniform three-storey Soviet-style small buildings, which were very beautiful. Now, high-rise buildings have been built, and there are all kinds of buildings mixed together, so it doesn't look as neat and tidy as before. But I can understand that there are more people now, so the original buildings are definitely not enough to house everyone, and high-rise buildings are needed.

Researcher 04:41

How do you think the overall environment is maintained?

Participant 04:44

I think it's pretty good. I'm satisfied.

Researcher 04:50

The community work is well done.

Participant 04:52

Yes, I think the community is fine. Most of the community residents I've interacted with are very proactive, and everyone has a positive attitude. I don't like being around people who are always complaining. I prefer a positive and uplifting atmosphere.

Researcher 05:13

It seems that you are in really good shape.

Participant 05:17

I think that's how people should be. Look at me, I'm 60 years old, and I never complain about my life after retirement. I feel very content.

Researcher 05:31
Aunty, I'll wrap up the interview for now.

Walking Interview-10

Researcher 00:01

Feel free to show me around. Where do you usually go when you go out? Which route do you usually take? Can you take me there?

Participant 00:10

You've been here today, right?

Researcher 00:12

Anywhere is fine. I'll just follow you wherever you go.

Participant 00:18

Okay.

Researcher 00:19

Since everyone lives here, the paths you take are probably fixed. I just want to understand how people feel about the community.

Participant 00:35

I'm 67 years old.

Researcher 00:37

You look quite young, I didn't think you were an older person at all.

Participant 00:41

This is what older people look like, I'm 67, almost 68.

Researcher 00:46

I can't tell, I thought you were in your 50s.

Participant 00:48

Thank you.

Researcher 00:50

Do you live with your family?

Participant 00:53

Yes, I live with my family.

Researcher 00:54

With your spouse?

Participant 00:56

And my children.

Researcher 00:57

Do you take care of your grandson?

Participant 01:04

Yes, I do. Usually, I take the child to school, and his mother picks him up when she is at home. I take him in the morning, and in the afternoon, I pick him up after they go to work.

Researcher 01:25

Do you take the child on an electric bike or by car?

Participant 01:32

We walk, the primary school is very close.

Researcher 01:33

It is quite close. Do you usually walk for your daily commute as well?

Participant 01:39

Yes, we usually walk. If it's farther, like four or five stops, we take the bus, and if it's even farther, we take the subway. We don't ride bikes anymore.

Researcher 02:04

Is the bus convenient around here?

Participant 02:06

Yes, it's convenient with many routes.

Researcher 02:12

The fares are also reasonable now.

Participant 02:14

Yes, everything is good.

Researcher 02:18

Are there any places you don't like to go to, places you don't really like?

Participant 02:26

There aren't any places I don't go to, just places with a lot of people, like shopping malls and supermarkets. I usually avoid peak hours. Now with the pandemic, I rarely go to the supermarket. I usually buy groceries nearby. In the evening, I go out for a walk.

Researcher 02:58

Do you usually walk in this community?

Participant 03:01

Yes, sometimes I walk around the perimeter of the community, and sometimes I walk towards the back of Wangfujing. It's mainly just walking.

Researcher 03:15

Is there a particular reason you choose your walking routes, or do you just walk randomly?

Participant 03:22

I just choose randomly, going wherever there are fewer people.

Researcher 03:31

It mainly depends on how many people are there. If there aren't many, then go there.

Participant 03:35

Right.

Researcher 03:37

When you walk around the outer circle, do you walk around in a circle? Because I see that the road on the outer circle requires crossing the road.

Participant 03:46

Yes, you have to cross the road.

Researcher 03:47

Do you cross to the neighbourhood on the other side of the road?

Participant 03:49

No, we just walk along the road. There's an underpass on both sides, and you can walk to the back of Wangfujing or Jinyi. There's a very wide road there, and sometimes there are walking groups there, but I don't join them. We just walk on our own.

Researcher 04:14

Oh, there are walking groups there.

Participant 04:18

Yes, there are walking groups, but they are young and we older people can't keep up, so we just walk around on our own route to get some exercise.

Researcher 04:30

Do you usually go out with your spouse? Or do you go out with other friends, or just go out on your own when you feel like it?

Participant 04:36

Usually, it's just the two of us.

Researcher 04:39

Is walking your main activity?

Participant 04:42

Yes, sometimes we jog, but mostly we walk.

Researcher 04:45

Do you usually bring your granddaughter here to play?

Participant 04:49

When I have time and after they finish their homework, I take them out for a walk or to play on Sundays or in the evenings.

Researcher 04:58

Do you usually play in the community?

Participant 05:00

Sometimes we go to Wuyi Park to sit and play on the exercise equipment or jump rope.

Researcher 05:11

Where do you usually use the fitness equipment in the community?

Participant 05:14

Usually near the community, there are a few pieces of fitness equipment near the supermarket, such as the area next to the Wan Jia Fu Supermarket, where there are stretching and leg-press machines. We usually use those.

Researcher 05:38

That sounds good. Your neighbourhood has quite a lot of fitness equipment.

Participant 05:42

They said they were going to install some fitness equipment in the middle of the building, but now there are too many cars and they can't install it. There are more and more private cars.

Researcher 06:02

That's true. Is there anything you're not satisfied with in front of your building?

Participant 06:11

There's a 4 Moon Hotel in front of my building, and the space in front is too small and narrow. Once, a fire truck couldn't get through.

Researcher 06:27

Was it blocked by parked cars?

Participant 06:30

Mainly because the April Sky Hotel built a wall in front, enclosing the space.

Researcher 06:35

Would you be able to take me there to have a look?

Participant

Yes.

Researcher

Did the fire department later require them to remove it?

Participant 06:45

I went with a teacher to talk to the management of the April Sky Hotel, asking them to move the wall back a little so that fire trucks could pass. But the hotel staff refused, saying they needed the space behind for parking. This has become a safety hazard, as fire trucks cannot pass. I remember there was a fire on the 6th floor in the early 2010s, which was really scary. We have been requesting them to make changes ever since, but nothing has been done. The factory is unmanaged, and the hotel claims they have no funds for the modifications.

Researcher 07:47

This situation should be considered a fire safety violation. Is there no third-party intervention?

Participant 07:57

Yes. The factory has no funds, and the community cannot intervene in hotel matters.

Researcher 08:06

Indeed. Aside from this issue, do you think the community has changed much over the years?

Participant 08:24

It's changed quite a bit. For example, they recently added protective panels and insulation boards to the buildings. You can see the insulation on the rooftops.

Researcher 08:37

Were those added later?

Participant 08:39

Yes, they're all sunshade panels and insulation boards added later.

Researcher 08:45

Apart from the floor renovations, are there any other changes you're satisfied or dissatisfied with?

Participant 00:00

This year's changes are good. For example, there's more greenery, the roads are smoother, and they've paved them. They've also planted small trees, which are quite nice. Look, that's our building, but the space in front is a bit small.

Researcher 00:19

I haven't been here before.

Researcher 00:27

Where do you usually shop?

Participant 00:29

If I need something urgently or if someone comes over, I buy groceries nearby. Otherwise, I take the bus to the larger supermarkets on the outskirts, where things are cheaper.

Researcher 00:44

You mean supermarkets, right?

Participant 00:48

Yes, the supermarket, it's much cheaper. Look, there's a poverty alleviation cabinet over at our small square. I'll take you to see it later. Look at that building, there's a wall in front, right? They built a wall extending inward, and you can see it if you look south.

Researcher 01:10

Isn't it too narrow between these two buildings?

Participant 01:12

Yes, look how narrow the corner is. Fire trucks can't even turn here. This wall is right here, right? It's still okay now because there aren't many cars, but during rush hour, there used to be a lot of cars parked here.

Researcher 01:50

This is definitely a problem.

Participant 01:53

If a fire breaks out in one of the units inside, fire trucks won't be able to get in. This is a problem with old communities.

Researcher 02:06

Are you familiar with the 'Sanmian West Day Care Centre'?

Participant 02:12

This used to be the old Sanmian West community, but it moved over there last year.

Researcher 02:19

I see that it has been converted into a day care centre.

Participant 02:21

Yes, it's for taking care of older people.

Researcher 02:23

Do you know anyone who goes there?

Participant 02:25

Some people go, but I don't know the details.

Researcher 02:31

Do you approve of this kind of facility?

Participant 02:34

Nowadays, every neighbourhood is encouraged to have this kind of service for older people. Look, the doors are all open.

Researcher 02:47

This place is quite narrow.

Participant 02:48

Yes, this building used to be a collective dormitory. During the reform of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory in the 2000s, many migrant workers bought out their seniority and left, taking the money home or looking for other jobs. The factory also moved to the suburbs, to Xiliu Lake and Xiga.

Researcher 03:24

So these houses were all rented out later?

Participant 03:54

Yes, they were all rented out.

Researcher 03:57

That's quite a big change.

Participant 04:04

Yes.

Researcher 04:04

Are you satisfied with these changes?

Participant 04:07

It's okay, acceptable.

Researcher 04:09

Are there any aspects you're not satisfied with?

Participant 04:11

Of course there are things I'm not satisfied with. It's an old neighbourhood, so the changes are already pretty good. People should be content. It's much better than before—the roads are paved, and there are streetlights now. It used to be pitch black at night.

Researcher 04:33

Were the streetlights installed in the past few years?

Participant 04:35

Yes, they were installed in the past two years.

Researcher 04:40

Installing streetlights only two years ago is indeed a bit late.

Participant 04:49

There used to be a few scattered streetlights, and they were very dim.

Researcher 04:50

What did you do when you went out at night before?

Participant 04:54

I hardly dared to go out at night because it was so dark that I couldn't see the road. Back then, before Xiangrong Street was demolished, the road was narrow and dimly lit, and you couldn't see anything even with a little light. If someone was drunk driving or riding a bike behind you, it was easy to get hit because you couldn't see them.

Researcher 05:22

Now that the streetlights are on, you can go out safely, right?

Participant 05:24

Yes, they're all lit now, and there are streetlights at the building entrances too. The old neighbourhood has improved so much after the renovation. The roads are much better than before. Now the only issue is that some people don't clean up after their dogs, and you can't see it at night. Stepping in it is so unpleasant.

Researcher 06:05

Yes. Auntie, do you usually walk this way when you leave home?

Participant 06:08

Yes, I walk this way.

Researcher 06:11

Do you usually go to that street, the supermarket, or the vegetable market?

Participant 06:19

For a while, they didn't allow street vendors here, so we all went to the vegetable market to buy vegetables, but the vegetables there are indeed more expensive.

Researcher 06:30

Yes, the stall fees are expensive.

Participant 06:35

They pay several thousand yuan in stall fees every month, so they have to raise prices to make a profit. I rarely buy vegetables at the market; I just go there to buy tofu products, soy milk, noodles, and things like that. I usually buy a small amount of vegetables from street vendors on Xiazhong Street.

Researcher 07:13

So you mainly go out to buy things? Do you walk or take the bus?

Participant 07:20

I go to places further away, like the wholesale markets near West Third Ring Road and the High-Tech Zone.

Researcher 07:23

Is that near West Fourth Ring Road?

Participant 07:25

There's a supermarket near West Third Ring Road and the High-Tech Zone. The vegetables are cheaper there because they seem to have their own farms, so they can buy them directly and sell them at lower prices.

Researcher 07:40

Is it the kind that costs 99 cents per pound?

Participant 07:44

Yes, the vegetables that cost 99 cents are pretty good. Last week, I bought cucumbers for 99 cents per pound, and they were very fresh. Zucchini was also 99 cents, and cherry tomatoes were a little over 3 yuan, but they were 3 yuan 99 cents at his place, which is a great deal.

Researcher 08:15

That's such a big difference. I bought some fruit near the Wan Jia Fu supermarket the other day, and it was both expensive and terrible—so sour it was almost inedible.

Participant 08:24

Especially the fruit seller next to Wan Jia Fu—the prices look cheap, but the quality is terrible. I don't buy fruit from them. Many people don't know better and end up getting scammed. There's another place near the market entrance, and their fruit is decent, though a bit pricier, but the quality is good. I usually avoid buying from places I'm not familiar with.

Researcher 08:57

Yeah, I bought some fruit yesterday. It was priced at 15 yuan per pound, but at checkout, he insisted it was 16 yuan per pound. That's so dishonest.

Participant 00:00

Yeah, he just scams people who don't come often. If you're not familiar with him, you're easy to trick, and the stuff isn't good either.

Researcher 00:08

When you shop here, does your decision on where to buy things depend on your relationships with the shop owners? For example, if you're familiar with the owner, do you often go there?

Participant 00:23

Yes, the poverty alleviation vegetable shop next to the car. It was okay at first, but now it's no good.

Researcher 00:35

Why is it no good?

Participant 00:37

He sold cheaply at first, and if you saved 100 yuan, you could get free eggs, points, and discounts on vegetables. Now, saving money doesn't get you discounts, they don't give free eggs anymore, and the points are useless. Once I bought some cilantro without asking the price, and after I paid, he said it was 2.5 yuan. I looked at the price tag and it was 15 yuan per pound. I thought, 'You're using the poverty alleviation banner, and while it was cheap at first, now it's no good.'

Researcher 02:07

After gathering popularity, it's time to start reaping the rewards.

Participant 02:10

That's right. I rarely go to his shop to buy vegetables now, unless there's something particularly suitable. I only buy a little when others say it's good. It's really not working anymore.

Researcher 02:34

Auntie, do you usually buy groceries after dropping off your grandchild, or do you go out specifically to shop?

Participant 02:41

Usually, I drop the kids off at school in the morning and pick up some vegetables, noodles, and so on. A pound or two is enough for the day. If I need to buy more for storage, I go to a larger supermarket.

Researcher 03:03

After buying groceries, do you usually go to the small square in the evening?

Participant 03:12

In the evening, after dinner, I just go out for a walk.

Researcher 03:15

You go out for a walk after dinner?

Participant 03:17

Yes, there are a lot of people in the evening, and older people come out. During the day, there are fewer people because the children are at school.

Researcher 03:24

When do you usually come during the day?

Participant 03:26

During the day, I come around 10 o'clock, after the students have left for school, and play for 20 to 30 minutes.

Researcher 03:36

Do you use the fitness equipment at the small square with your spouse, or do you chat with people?

Participant 03:42

I usually just use the fitness equipment and chat a little.

Researcher 03:44

Do you chat with acquaintances when you meet them outside?

Participant 03:48

I definitely chat with them for a few minutes when I see them.

Researcher 03:50

How often do you encounter acquaintances in your daily life?

Participant 03:53

Quite often. Mostly people from the factory. We all know each other, exchange greetings, and can sit down and chat for 10 to 30 minutes if there's something to discuss.

Researcher 04:02

Where do you most often encounter acquaintances?

Participant 04:06

I encounter them along the way in the community, especially people coming out of the factory.

Researcher 04:16

Do you intentionally choose a specific time to go out in order to encounter acquaintances and chat?

Participant 04:26

Sometimes I do. I'll check on WeChat first to see if they're free. Sometimes I meet up with old colleagues or acquaintances to chat and catch up. If we run into each other, we'll say a few words and then go on our way.

Researcher 04:51

When you're out and about here, walking around, what are your thoughts on the roads?

Participant 04:59

The road is too narrow. In the morning, it's completely blocked by students going to school. There are also many small vendors on the side, and people from the surrounding suburbs drive in to sell vegetables, setting up stalls that block the road. Buses, electric scooters, cars, and tricycles all crowd together. If they could widen the road a bit or move the stalls inside, the foot traffic could be dispersed better. It's the same at the market near No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory, where they sell dried fruit and bread.

Researcher 06:03

I've been to the market at No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Participant 06:06

They sell free-range eggs at the market at No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory, and I often go there to buy them.

Researcher 06:13

Is that near the vegetable market?

Participant 06:15

Yes, walk past the vegetable market and there's a small road on the south side. The egg seller is very nice, and I always buy from him. The fish there is also cheaper than at the vegetable market, and they have live chickens and fish.

Researcher 06:54

Isn't there a chicken seller on the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory side? Do you still buy from there?

Participant 06:59

Yes, I always go there.

Researcher 07:00

Are you familiar with the owner there?

Participant 07:01

Not particularly, but I've bought things there a few times, so the owner recognises me and says, 'You're back,' which is quite friendly. I also know people at No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, but their scales aren't very accurate and their prices are higher.

Participant 07:22

There used to be no fair scales here, so I didn't dare to buy anything. Now there are fair scales.

Researcher 07:35

Auntie, do you notice any noise or pleasant sounds in the community?

Participant 07:47

There are no pleasant sounds.

Researcher 07:51

What about noise? Do you feel affected by it?

Participant 07:58

To be honest, the hotel to the south is very noisy at night. In summer, there are many people eating, drinking and chatting, and it's very loud, especially when they eat outside. The noise is particularly loud in summer.

Researcher 08:29

Have you reported it?

Participant 08:32

No, I haven't. They're just eating and chatting loudly, so I don't feel comfortable saying anything. Some people have reported it, but I don't like calling the hotline, and I don't want to bother the community.

Researcher 08:45

What about the smell of cooking oil? Does the hotel have a smoke extraction system?

Participant 08:51

Some older people have called the hotline. At first, the smell of cooking oil was very strong and blew over to our side when the wind blew. After calling the hotline many times, I guess they raised the smoke extraction pipe so that the smoke is now vented upwards. It's much better now, but the smell still comes over when the wind blows.

Researcher 00:52

It does have quite an impact.

Participant 00:55

Now I'm also thinking about moving to a flat with a lift. My flat is on a high floor, my legs aren't so good anymore, and it's too hard to climb the stairs.

Researcher 01:13

Are you thinking about moving?

Participant 01:16

Yes, the building is too high, it's inconvenient to go up and down, and I'm getting older and want to live in a flat with a lift.

Researcher

It's true that old residential blocks without lifts are inconvenient.

Participant:

Right. A few years ago, the community contacted an elevator installation company, saying they wanted to install elevators jointly, but they needed 80% to 90% of the residents on the upper floors to agree. There were two households in our building who refused, so it couldn't be done. I told them I can still manage to go up and down the stairs for now, but in a few years, I won't be able to. I went to the hospital this morning for an injection; my cervical and lumbar vertebrae are causing issues. With age, things are deteriorating, so I just have to take better care of myself.

Researcher:

Yes, we can only take it slowly.

Participant:

There are tea sellers over there, and further on are stalls selling fish and vegetables.

Researcher:

What do you think of the appearance of the community?

Participant:

The appearance is okay. It's like this now, and the overall situation is set, so there won't be any major changes.

Researcher:

Do you find it comfortable to look at?

Participant:

There are too many people, and it's a bit chaotic. I don't really like crowded places. Just like when I was in the hospital ward, someone was watching their phone with the volume turned up really loud, and there was an elderly woman resting nearby. I didn't feel comfortable reminding them.

Researcher:

That kind of situation is indeed quite common.

Participant:

Yes, some people speak very loudly in public places. If you say something, they might get upset.

Researcher:

Auntie, which side of the road do you usually walk on?

Participant:

I always walk on the right.

Researcher:

Do you think everyone keeps to the right when walking?

Participant:

Some people don't follow the rules, don't look where they're going, and blame others when they bump into them. It's quite common. When there are a lot of people, my husband and I wait until there are fewer people before we walk. We don't like crowds.

Passersby interject:

Hello, where is the clothing store near No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant:

Are you talking about the store run by the two sisters? It's in the market. The hospital is No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory Hospital. Follow the road towards the market.

Passersby:

Is it west of the school?

Participant:

Yes, walk west of the school and you'll find it.

Passersby:

There's an intersection near the school. Is it south from there?

Participant:

Yes, walk east from there, pass the place selling bread, then turn back and you'll see the road. Walk down that road and you'll see the shop run by the two sisters.

Passersby:

I haven't been there in years, I can't find it. Thank you.

Researcher:

Do you usually buy from the shop they mentioned?

Participant:

To be honest, those are all street vendor goods, handmade or processed items.

Researcher:

Yeah, there are more options elsewhere now, but here there's only one or two places, so it's not very interesting.

Participant:

In the evenings, we usually walk around Jianshe Road and Tongbai Road.

Researcher:

Isn't it inconvenient to walk on the main road?

Participant:

It's okay. The roads are much wider now, and Jianshe Road is also quite nice to walk on. I always stick to the pavement.

Researcher:

Is there any place in this community that holds special meaning for you? Like a small square or a place you often go to for activities?

Participant:

There's nothing particularly meaningful. As long as there's a place for activities now, that's enough. The old neighbourhood has been renovated to this extent, so it's more or less satisfactory.

Researcher:

What are your thoughts on the overall maintenance?

Participant:

It's hard to say if it's good or bad. Now they're demolishing and rebuilding as needed. If they could widen the roads a bit more, that would be better. There are too many cars parked on the side of the road now, and it gets crowded and unsafe when students are going to school.

Researcher:

Do you often go to the community service centre?

Participant:

They call me to participate in their activities, and I usually go. I usually have nothing to do at home, so I volunteer and help out.

Researcher:

When participating in activities, have you enjoyed the services provided by the community?

Participant:

Volunteering is about helping out voluntarily. I don't expect any services, I just want to help everyone.

Researcher:

Does the community provide services or convenience services for older people who live alone?

Participant:

Some time ago, they bought groceries for lonely older people, brought them gifts, visited their homes to ask if they needed any help, and provided other services.

Researcher:

Have you ever received such services yourself?

Participant:

No.

Researcher:

Have you ever received other community services?

Participant:

Yes, usually at the end of the year they give a small reward.

Researcher:

Is it food?

Participant:

Yes, they give some food, but I usually don't take it. It's just a gesture of goodwill. They're doing a good job now.

Researcher:

Yes, I see that they work very hard.

Participant:

The community as a whole is quite good now.

Researcher:

When participating in community activities, do you have the opportunity to meet new friends?

Participant:

No, I just want to serve them, nothing else.

Researcher:

Have you been to the Sanmian East community?

Participant:

I used to go there. At that time, I had some acquaintances in Sanmian East, so I often went there to help out. Later, the two communities were separated, so I stayed here.

Researcher:

After the separation, how do you feel about the services?

Participant:

I think it's better. Everything is good. After the separation, the services are more attentive.

Researcher:

Yes, the West Community does have more people. After the demolition in the East Community, over 1,000 households were relocated.

Participant:

That's right. Our new community has more people. There are two high-rise buildings here, each with around 400 to 500 households, including both resettled households and commercial housing units.

Researcher:

Is it 31 or 32 floors?

Participant:

I don't remember exactly, but it's around 31 or 32 floors.

Researcher:

Alright, I don't have any other questions. Let's wrap up the interview.

Walking Interview-11

Participant 00:12

Our old grain store used to only care about When our residential block was built, there used to be an old grain store and a coal yard. Between these two buildings, there was a very nice canteen for the workers of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Why? Now the entire factory no longer exists. After restructuring, it became a private enterprise, and the factory moved away. After it moved, to put it bluntly, the old buildings are now used to address some housing issues. The coal yard no longer operates, and there is no coal yard left. The grain store has long since closed down and no longer exists. But the people who used to work at the grain store told me that they now run a lamb hotpot restaurant and a noodle shop, which are doing quite well.

Researcher 01:22

You must still have a lot of feelings for this place.

Participant 01:26

I've been here for decades, over 40 years. I spent 27 years in the city, and my hometown is in the old Shanghai area, including the old households on Duling Street behind the building. Back then, behind the old Shanghai area was Duling Street, and my family was one of the old households there. Most of the people there were old residents.

Researcher 01:47

Is there any place in this community that holds special meaning for you, where you have many fond memories?

Participant 01:54

The good memories are from back then, between these two buildings. Our three staff canteens were the most beautiful. Though the wages were low, the food was prepared beautifully and tasted delicious. The main dishes were all made by the senior staff. Nowadays, there are many restaurants that can do that, but back then, if you wanted to eat that flavour, you couldn't find it. You can ask the old chefs from No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory to come and cook at an international restaurant. Just think about it, that was more than 90 years ago. Suddenly, he caught a cold, took a shower, and was sent to the hospital. He passed away today. He was a very good cook. These houses were built in 1954. The houses inside have not been confiscated, but the houses outside have been confiscated, including the two outside. The four buildings on Cotton Spinning Road were confiscated by the Zhengzhou Municipal Government. They are now considered cultural relics.

Researcher 02:58

I heard that they are not building a museum there.

Participant 03:00

The museum is right there inside the factory area.

Researcher 03:04

Now it's fenced off.

Participant 03:06

Now it's fenced off and you can't go in. They won't let you in.

Researcher 03:08

Why don't you take your granddaughter out to play for a while?

Participant 03:11

They don't let anyone in there, so he's inside now and they're still renovating.

Researcher 03:19

When you take your granddaughter out to play, does it have any impact?

Participant 03:23

When we interviewed here before, the grain store used to be here.

Researcher 03:58

Do you usually pick up your granddaughter?

Participant 04:00

No, I pick up my granddaughter. I just drop her off on an electric scooter. Others pick her up. The primary school is within the Zhongyuan District Committee area, but not near the Zhongyuan District Bureau.

Back then, every factory had a grain store and a coal yard. These were all grain store buildings. After renovation, they were converted, with just the roofs modified. This used to be a place for grassland lamb hotpot. Now it's a proper restaurant, and there are a lot of people eating here. Tonight, Wang's place is doing great business because their lamb is cheap—38 yuan per portion, so it's relatively affordable.

Researcher 05:00

Do you usually go out to buy groceries in the community?

Participant 05:04

I usually buy some vegetables, just some vegetables, and I cook for my family. He also dances at the cultural centre. This used to be the old grain store of the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Because of this land, there are now two restaurants serving chilli noodles, but they are not very good. It's better now that they have been contracted out and the tenants provide accommodation. His noodles are quite good, aren't they? This used to be No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Every factory had a grain store, and every grain store had a department store. The old grain stores used to supply the entire factory. We used to buy rice, flour and oil here with grain coupons. It was pretty good, right?

Researcher 06:47

Not where you usually go to buy groceries now.

Participant 06:50

I always go to the vegetable market inside the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. For example, the big factory behind us closed down, so we don't buy there anymore. Now we go to a farm behind the factory to buy vegetables. The vegetables there are cheaper. The vegetables in the vegetable market are usually contracted out to private contractors.

Researcher 07:20

When you go to the vegetable market, you go inside the white building, right?

Participant 07:25

That's the vegetable market. It's on Construction Road, and there's a big gate at the entrance. It's not facing the south side of the road, right? Behind the tall building is a vegetable market and a supermarket. The vegetables there are cheaper, and sometimes they raise the prices a bit but still keep them lower than elsewhere. The old workers used to live in small, flat houses. Now the roofs have been renovated—they used to be red tiles, but they've been replaced. After the renovation, the original residents no longer live there. The workers have rented out their houses, so that's the situation now.

Researcher 08:52

With such big changes, are you mostly satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall changes?

Participant 08:56

Mostly satisfied. I didn't really think about whether I was satisfied or dissatisfied, but it's definitely not bad. When the two tall buildings weren't being built in the shopping centre, things were quite cheap. Back then, we used to make Lanzhou-style pancakes. In the very early days, you could get five for one yuan, but now one yuan only gets you two. Prices have definitely gone up, but they've risen too much. Everything used to be proper. This is a building from 1954, and the old buildings were quite nice. The factory director used to live in one of the buildings behind here. After he moved out, they built bigger houses there, so he had to move again. The factory director's houses were divided into different types. The land where his house was located was part of the "Five-Row Pavilion" area, which was reserved for factory leaders. Now, the chairman's house might be there too. The chairman's house in the Five-Row Pavilion was built later than ours. His house has a basement and is quite nice.

Now, the community is providing services to our community, such as keeping people warm. If any family is in need, such as those receiving five types of government assistance, or those whose children are not at home, I go with them to visit the families and give them some things. The community secretary, Mr. Kong, is indeed quite capable. Although the community office currently lacks resources and funds, the effort and goodwill are evident. They assist the impoverished, such as visiting elderly couples at home to chat and provide necessary items, which is deeply appreciated. The government is still good. During the pandemic, we wore protective gear like doctors, starting at 5 a.m. for nucleic acid testing.

Now that restrictions have eased, the main tasks are resolving neighbourhood disputes or conducting security patrols. I follow the security team and, if there's nothing else to do, join the community leaders for patrols. For the elderly who find it difficult to shop for groceries, we help carry their purchases home. Everyone needs help sometimes. One day, I was carrying his groceries and he fell down because he was walking slowly. Many older people saw this and changed their ways in the community. Now, whenever they see him, they offer to take him home. Now, older people have to rush to the market first. Besides, good people are good people and will have a peaceful life. There's no doubt about that.

This building used to be the power distribution station of the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Before the factory was handed over, it was assigned to the power supply bureau. This building was one of the power supply bureau's buildings. The employees of the power supply bureau would come here whenever there was a power problem in the factory, so this building was assigned to them. It seems that they didn't have natural gas in their building. When I came here, there was no electricity, and the power supply department would supply electricity to people's homes. Now, he may not be connected to natural gas, but this will be resolved in the future. Now the older people have passed away, and most of the children have bought high-rise flats outside the city, so this house has been sold. This house is quite beautiful. It was designed by the Soviet Union and built by the Provincial Construction Company No. 5 in the 1950s. The walls are thick, 37 millimetres, while ours are only 27 millimetres. There used to be a chimney on the table, and the chimney in the gas stove passageway was very good. The house was built in the 1950s.

Participant 04:24

The roof of this house was taken over by the government last year. The tiles in the middle of the roadside were removed and replaced with new ones, which cost one or two million yuan. When they mentioned several million, I asked about the construction costs. I said the garden isn't cheap; a single unit costs several million. This doesn't include renovation. Once renovated, the houses along the roadside were acquired, but the ones further inland weren't. That's why it's called 'Cultural Street.' Currently, the government is delaying the renovation plans due to financial constraints. Renovation isn't cheap; basically, they're planning to demolish three buildings and build one new one.

Researcher 08:52

With such big changes, are you mostly satisfied or dissatisfied with the overall changes?

Participant 08:56

Mostly satisfied. I didn't really think about whether I was satisfied or dissatisfied, but it's definitely not bad. When the two tall buildings weren't being built in the shopping centre, things were quite cheap. Back then, we used to make Lanzhou-style pancakes. In the very early days, you could get five for one yuan, but now one yuan only gets you two. Prices have definitely gone up, but they've risen too much. Everything used to be proper. This is a building from 1954, and the old buildings were quite nice. The factory director used to live in one of the buildings behind here. After he moved out, they built bigger houses there, so he had to move again. The factory director's houses were divided into different types. The land where his house was located was part of the "Five-Row Pavilion" area, which was reserved for factory leaders. Now, the chairman's house might be there too. The chairman's house in the Five-Row Pavilion was built later than ours. His house has a basement and is quite nice.

Now, the community is providing services to our community, such as keeping people warm. If any family is in need, such as those receiving five types of government assistance, or those whose children are not at home, I go with them to visit the families and give them some things. The community secretary, Mr. Kong, is indeed quite capable. Although the community office currently lacks resources and funds, the effort and goodwill are evident. They assist the impoverished, such as visiting elderly couples at home to chat and provide necessary items, which is deeply appreciated. The government is still good. During the pandemic, we wore protective gear like doctors, starting at 5 a.m. for nucleic acid testing.

Now that restrictions have eased, the main tasks are resolving neighbourhood disputes or conducting security patrols. I follow the security team and, if there's nothing else to do, join the community leaders for patrols. For the elderly who find it difficult to shop for groceries, we help carry their purchases home. Everyone needs help sometimes. One day, I was carrying his groceries and he fell down because he was walking slowly. Many older people saw this and changed their ways in the community. Now, whenever they see him, they offer to take him home. Now, older people have to rush to the market first. Besides, good people are good people and will have a peaceful life. There's no doubt about that.

This building used to be the power distribution station of the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. Before the factory was handed over, it was assigned to the power supply bureau. This building was one of the power supply bureau's buildings. The employees of the power supply bureau would come here whenever there was a power problem in the factory, so this building was assigned to them. It seems that they didn't have natural gas in their building. When I came here, there was no electricity, and the power supply department would supply electricity to people's homes. Now, he may not be connected to natural gas, but this will be resolved in the future. Now the older people have passed away, and most of the children have bought high-rise flats outside the city, so this house

has been sold. This house is quite beautiful. It was designed by the Soviet Union and built by the Provincial Construction Company No. 5 in the 1950s. The walls are thick, 37 millimetres, while ours are only 27 millimetres. There used to be a chimney on the table, and the chimney in the gas stove passageway was very good. The house was built in the 1950s.

Participant 04:24

The roof of this house was taken over by the government last year. The tiles in the middle of the roadside were removed and replaced with new ones, which cost one or two million yuan. When they mentioned several million, I asked about the construction costs. I said the garden isn't cheap; a single unit costs several million. This doesn't include renovation. Once renovated, the houses along the roadside were acquired, but the ones further inland weren't. That's why it's called 'Cultural Street.' Currently, the government is delaying the renovation plans due to financial constraints. Renovation isn't cheap; basically, they're planning to demolish three buildings and build one new one.

Participant 04:24 Last year, the government replaced the roofs, and the tiles on the houses along the road were all replaced with new ones. Just replacing the tiles cost one or two million yuan. The construction workers said that the renovation would cost several million yuan. Now the outside of the houses has been demolished, but the inside hasn't been touched. The plan for the cultural street has been temporarily put on hold, and we'll see how the renovation proceeds. Researcher 05:24 Renovating old buildings is essentially equivalent to rebuilding them from scratch. Participant 05:28 The houses built in the 1950s were made of a mixture of grey and sand, and the walls are now hollow when you knock on them. After being reclaimed, they can only be demolished and rebuilt with new plaster and paint. The situation at the Guomian Department Store is the same. The coal yard area has also been developed into buildings, and the coal factory no longer exists. Several rows of buildings have been constructed on the site and allocated to the workers, resolving their housing issues. The former Guomian vegetable market used to be a basketball court, and various enterprises in Zhengzhou, such as several textile factories, cable factories, coal machine factories, and water factories, all held basketball games at the Zhengzhou No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory basketball court. Researcher 06:33 Did you play basketball too? Participant 06:34 I did back then. Every workshop had a basketball team. Researcher 06:40 Do you use the fitness equipment in the neighbourhood? Participant 06:45 Sometimes, just to exercise. The equipment at the Cultural Palace is better, so I often go there. It's not far from home; I live in the factory director's building. Researcher 07:09 Can you show me where you buy groceries? Participant 07:13 Sure. Cross Jianshe Road, and behind the tall buildings across the street is Sky Supermarket, which is privately owned and a little cheaper than other places. Sometimes they have special offers. There is also Junhui Supermarket on Mianfang Road, which used to be the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory bathhouse. The portions there are too large for me. I prefer to buy by weight so I don't buy too much and end up wasting food.

Researcher 08:18

Do you walk to the Junhui Supermarket too?

Participant 08:24

I don't go to Junhui, it's too far. It's closer to walk from my house to Tianshi.

Researcher 08:33

Besides walking, do you have any other means of transportation?

Participant 08:37

Sometimes I take the bus, sometimes I ride an electric bike.

Participant 00:00

I mainly help people with funeral arrangements, such as retired military officers, old revolutionaries, and veterans of the War of Resistance Against Japan. Yesterday, there was another case where someone was on their deathbed, and the family asked me for help.

Researcher 00:46

Do you still provide funeral services?

Participant 00:51

I've been retired for eight years, but I still help out when someone asks me to.

Researcher 01:00

Do you usually ride an electric scooter or take the bus when you go out to do errands?

Participant 01:07

Sometimes I take the bus, sometimes I ride an electric scooter. Sometimes I don't buy groceries here; I might go to Sanbai Store, where the old market has cheaper vegetables and meat. People's wages are what they are; they go where things are cheaper. It's just how it is—you have to eat every day, not just once or twice, so everything is planned. Money is squeezed out of every penny. Now meat costs around 14 or 15 yuan here, but over there it's just over 10 yuan.

So sometimes I take the bus there—the senior citizen card is free—buy what I need, and come back. Coming back saves a lot. With 30 or 31 days in a month, we eat every day, and everything is planned out. Wages don't increase much these days. The National People's Congress has ended this year, but wages haven't been raised yet. In the past, wages would go up after the National People's Congress, but this year nothing has been announced yet.

So ordinary people have to think carefully before buying anything. We're an elderly couple trying to make ends meet while taking care of our grandchildren. The money is tight. The person I just met was also out buying groceries. He was taking his granddaughter to a lesson—a single guzheng lesson costs over 100 yuan—and everything has to be planned out. The burden is quite heavy, and it's indeed becoming a bit of a strain.

Walking Interview-12

Participant:

Just turn it like this, look.

Researcher:

Look, just surround it like this.

Participant:

Don't tear this down. It would be better to make a small square.

Researcher:

Yes, that would be much more convenient. Look.

Participant:

This was installed by the construction company.

Researcher:

Did they install this themselves?

Participant:

Of course they did. They did it all themselves. Now, if you want to...

Researcher:

Look at this building and how it...

Participant:

Because the first floor is a shopfront, the shopfronts facing Construction Road are newly built, not renovated.

Researcher:

The building is new?

Participant:

Yes, it was built around 2004.

Researcher:

2004?

Participant:

2004 or 2005. It was part of a batch of houses built around 2003. At the time, we wanted this house because it's next to Construction Road. First, we wanted it to be lower, and second, it doesn't have a basement, you know? So we chose this side, facing the street.

Researcher:

Facing the street?

Participant:

It's on the street. Our house is in that building.

Researcher:

That building is in a much better location than this one because it's on the street.

Participant:

Definitely. We used to have a house outside, but when they built the subway, our house on Cangyun Road was right next to the subway station.

Researcher:

Auntie, do you think the greenery on the upper floors is planted by residents on their own initiative? Did you participate? Do you think it's good for the community to do this, or do you think the greenery should be standardised?

Participant:

Standardised greenery costs money. You have to pay for greenery.

Researcher:

What do you think about residents planting a little on their own initiative?

Participant:

I don't like it. Whoever has land takes it, and whoever doesn't has none. There's nothing to say. Anyway, it doesn't seem to concern me.

Researcher:

Auntie, how about garbage collection in your area? Do you find it convenient to dispose of garbage?

Participant:

It's okay. I bring it down when I go out to buy groceries. That's pretty good. Overall, it's much better than before, but the property management is terrible and doesn't do anything.

Researcher:

If the property management is not doing their job, has the community tried to coordinate?

Participant:

They must have tried, but I don't know what happened. It's unclear.

Participant:

The point is that many of these things are the property management's responsibility, but now they've been handed over to the community. Think about it, how can the community handle all of this? Right? The division of responsibilities is a bit unclear, isn't it?

Researcher:

Do you have a clear understanding of the current responsibilities between the property management and the community?

Participant:

I don't know, it's not clear. The property management came in, but no one explained it clearly. Think about it.

Researcher:

So you basically don't feel the presence of the property management?

Participant:

I haven't noticed any difference. Even if the property management company moved in, I don't think it would bring much benefit.

Researcher:

Do you pay property management fees?

Participant:

The property management fees are still collected by the factory and have not been formally separated.

Researcher:

So most of the services are actually provided by the community?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

That must put a lot of pressure on the community staff.

Participant:

Definitely, especially during the pandemic. The pressure was immense.

Researcher:

Let's continue the interview.

Participant:

This is an old residential block, built during the first five-year plan. The dormitory area of the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory is relatively old. Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai visited the site back then. At that time, the factory was relatively advanced. But from the 1950s to now, the environment of this residential block has basically remained unchanged. Because there are many people living here, including workers from the No.6 National Cotton Textile Factory and the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, as well as workers from the spinning machine factory and the printing and dyeing factory, the entire residential block is quite large.

Researcher:

Suitable for renovation.

Participant:

Yes, that's right. The situation is as I described. The only difference between the original appearance of the neighbourhood and its current appearance is that the roads have been paved. The old buildings have remained largely untouched, and their condition has not changed. The only change is the addition of two high-rise buildings. These two high-rise buildings were constructed because the old buildings were too dilapidated to be inhabited, so they were demolished and rebuilt, but the height was increased. Those are the only differences.

Researcher:

Are you satisfied with this change?

Participant:

The living facilities here have always been like this. I've lived here all my life, for over 60 years. I was born here and have lived here for over 60 years. The environment has never changed, and I've always been satisfied, from when I was a child until now.

Researcher:

You've lived here for so many years; you must have a lot of friends here, right?

Participant:

Yes. During this time, I left for a total of five years. At the time, the national policy required young people to go to the countryside, so I went to the countryside for two years, then served in the military for three years, totaling five years.

Two years in the countryside, three years in the military, totaling five years. After returning, I've never left again.

Researcher:

That's great.

Participant:

Yes, I've always lived in this neighbourhood. My parents also live here, and the houses we were allocated are all in this area, so I've never left. Overall, this neighbourhood is quite good in every aspect, whether it's the hardware facilities or the software services, and it's also excellent compared to other neighbourhoods.

Researcher:

Is that right?

Participant:

Yes. Because back then, as you can see, these houses didn't exist. They were all built during the Soviet era, like square bricks. This area used to be all sports fields.

Researcher:

Right.

Participant:

All sports fields.

Researcher:

Did you participate in these sports activities before?

Participant:

Yes, I played basketball.

Researcher:

It's no longer there.

Participant:

There's another one across the street at the Workers' Cultural Palace.

Researcher:

Do you go there?

Participant:

I go every day to exercise.

Researcher:

Where is the main public activity area in your community?

Participant:

The public activity area in the community is where the basketball court used to be.

The former vegetable market was originally a basketball court, but due to rapid changes, it became inconvenient for residents to buy vegetables, so it was converted into a vegetable market, and the basketball court was removed.

Researcher:

Could you show me where you usually walk around, buy vegetables, or sit around in the community?

Participant:

Sure, it's right around here.

Researcher

Thank you! Do you use the fitness equipment at the community entrance or at the small square?

Participant

I go to the small square too, but I often come here. However, compared to the cultural centre, this is a small square with limited space, so when there are many people, I have to come early to get a spot. The cultural centre is a sports ground with a large space and many facilities, so even if there are many people, it doesn't affect my exercise.

Researcher:

Uncle, when you go to the cultural centre, do you go alone or with others?

Participant:

I usually go alone because some people have health issues. If I make plans with others, they might not be able to keep up or walk quickly. Everyone's physical condition is different, so I prefer to go alone to avoid disturbing others.

Researcher:

I see.

Participant:

Exercising is about taking care of yourself, which is also taking care of your family.

Researcher:

Do you currently live with your family?

Participant:

My family is all together, and my parents are still alive.

Researcher:

Do you live with your parents?

Participant:

My wife, children, and I all live together. We are a four-generation family.

Researcher:

You also have grandchildren. Are you responsible for taking care of them?

Participant:

I take care of both my grandson and granddaughter, including picking them up from school and kindergarten.

Researcher:

When you take your granddaughter to school or go out yourself, besides walking, what other modes of transportation do you use?

Participant:

I ride a two-wheeled electric scooter. In Zhengzhou, three-wheeled electric vehicles are prohibited on public roads, so they can only be used within the residential complex and cannot be driven on public roads. Otherwise, the police will impound the vehicle, and we must comply with the regulations. Two-wheeled electric scooters are allowed to carry minors.

Researcher:

Do you handle grocery shopping within the neighbourhood?

Participant:

I usually do the grocery shopping. I cook, as I enjoy cooking. After buying the groceries, I cook, while my wife takes care of the younger children. I pick up the older grandchildren from school, bring them home for dinner, and after they rest, I send them back to their parents' home.

Researcher:

When you're dropping off the children in the neighbourhood, do you notice any issues on the roads?

Participant:

There are no particular issues. This is a one-way street, and the roads in the neighbourhood are relatively narrow, unlike the well-planned new neighbourhoods. However, we need to adapt to the environment, follow the rules of the road, and pay attention to safety when travelling.

Researcher:

Apart from people cutting in, are there any other issues that affect you?

Participant:

No, as long as you follow the rules of the road, drive slowly, and don't cut in, there won't be any problems. The main thing is to protect your own safety.

Researcher:

Do you take walks in the community?

Participant:

I rarely take walks in the community. I mostly go to the park, cultural centre, or sports stadium for activities.

Researcher:

Do you sit around downstairs in the community?

Participant:

Yes, there's a place downstairs where neighbours gather. We often sit together to chat, talk about family matters, or play cards.

Researcher:

Is that where you usually spend your time?

Participant:

Yes, it's the carport where we were sitting earlier. The neighbours fixed it up themselves.

Researcher:

Let's walk this way. How do you think the overall maintenance of the community is?

Participant:

There are specialised companies responsible for maintaining public facilities, and they do a decent job.

Researcher:

Are there any areas for improvement?

Participant:

There are some areas that could be better, but they are few and far between. When issues are reported, the property management company sometimes takes a while to act, but they eventually resolve them.

Researcher:

That's acceptable, right?

Participant:

The only issue is that there is a gate on the road leading to the Guomian Market in the middle of the community, and both sides want to charge fees. However, the management of the fees is unclear. For example, if a vehicle is parked in the community and gets scratched, there are no clear regulations on compensation.

Researcher:

Yes, it's not clear.

Participant:

There are no clear rules. If they charge fees, they have to take responsibility. Now, No.3, No.4 and No.5 National Cotton Textile Factories are all managed by the same property management company, which is difficult for them, but if they charge fees, they have to use the money for the community in order to achieve the real purpose.

Researcher:

You haven't enjoyed the property management services, but what about the community?

Participant:

There are many community services. For example, during the epidemic, we provided free services to the community, and the community also provided us with a lot of help.

Researcher:

Have you participated in any community-organised activities?

Participant:

I have participated in volunteer services to serve everyone, and at the same time, the community is also providing services to residents.

Researcher:

Has the community provided you with any specific services? For example, home help?

Participant:

Yes, for example, community workers come to visit my parents at home. They are both over 90 years old, and they often ask if we have any difficulties. The beautiful lady you saw just now is our Grid Leader. She often comes to our home.

Researcher:

That's good, she's the Grid Leader, right?

Participant:

Yes, she comes here often.

Researcher:

Are there any aspects of the outdoor environment in your community that you are dissatisfied with?

Participant:

As an old residential block, it can't be as perfect as a new residential area. The old community is already in pretty good shape.

Researcher:

For example, some residents have set up clotheslines and resting areas downstairs to improve the outdoor environment. What other features do you think could be improved?

Participant:

Improvements are limited by space. Many old houses are being demolished and renovated. As we get older, we can move into the renovated elderly care facilities.

Researcher:

Do you plan to stay here and age in place?

Participant:

I won't move unless the house becomes uninhabitable or I can't live there anymore. My health is still good; I'm in my 60s and not yet 70.

Participants:

As one ages, it becomes clear that by the age of 90, one can no longer continue living independently. I do not wish to burden my family or place a financial burden on the next generation. I've already told my son that if I get seriously ill in the future, I don't want to be sent to the ICU or resuscitated. Spending so much money would result in losing both life and wealth, and it would also put enormous pressure on my children's work and lives. The current job is already very difficult—this is reality. Don't let the next generation bear such hardships; they have their own children to raise. If something can be handled on one's own, it should be handled on one's own.

Researcher:

Yes, it's true that everyone is under a lot of pressure in life now.

Participant:

My parents are both in their 90s. My father can still take care of himself, but my mother is paralysed in bed due to a brain haemorrhage and cannot take care of herself.

Researcher:

So you usually take care of the two older people?

Participant:

Yes.

Researcher:

Besides taking care of your parents, when do you usually chat with your friends?

Participant:

Usually in the morning, after lunch, or in the evening when I have time.

Researcher:

Is it at a fixed time?

Participant:

Basically, we don't need to make plans. We're used to getting together naturally at that time. After eating, the older people rest, and then they come down to exercise. It's good exercise for us, and we can take better care of them.

Researcher:

Yes. When do you go to the cultural centre?

Participant:

I go to the cultural centre every morning at around 6 o'clock.

Researcher:

Do you come back to cook for the older people and then go back down?

Participant:

Yes, I rest for a while and then prepare for the day. I have to take care of my own health before I can take care of others.

Researcher:

Do you have a preferred side to walk on when you go out?

Participant:

I usually walk toward the entrance because my home is close to the entrance, making it more convenient to go out. Unless I need to buy groceries or go for a casual walk with friends.

Researcher:

Do you plan your outings with friends in advance or go spontaneously?

Participant:

Generally, it's spontaneous. If we happen to meet, we walk together. If we want to buy something, we'll plan to go shopping together.

Researcher:

In the area where you usually walk, is there any place that is meaningful or memorable to you?

Participant:

The most memorable place is the old basketball court because I often exercised there. But now the basketball court has been converted for other uses.

Researcher:

Do you think this change is good? Or do you think the basketball court should be preserved?

Participant:

Well, exercise is important for life, but I also understand everyone's needs. Before the cultural centre was renovated, the basketball court was an excellent place to exercise. At that time, there were no such facilities, but later they were added, and these things were gradually built, so they moved inside.

Researcher 08:06

I noticed the area that's fenced off over there. There's a newly built basketball court, but it doesn't seem to be open yet.

Participant 08:15

That's inside the domestic market of the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 08:17

Is that the primary school next to the primary school?

Participant 08:18

Yes, that's also fenced off inside the courtyard. It used to be a market, but now it's a primary school. Is that what you're referring to?

Researcher 08:27

Yes, there's a section of buildings fenced off next to the primary school. I can only enter from the outside because the iron gate inside is locked, and the fence is also sealed off.

Participant 08:37

You're right, that area is currently being renovated and will be converted into a nursing home.

Researcher 08:47

It's going to be converted into a nursing home. I see a day care centre for the elderly over there. Is that what you mean?

Participant 08:56

A day care centre for the elderly only provides breakfast, lunch and dinner. It's not a full-time nursing home.

Participant 00:00

For example, if you don't feel like cooking, you can go there to buy some food and take it home. That's what I mean.

Researcher 00:08

Do you know anyone who goes there to eat?

Participant 00:13

I think some people do, but I haven't been there myself. I'm just telling you what I know.

Researcher 00:22

Have you participated in any community greening activities? I noticed many residents are growing flowers outside.

Participant 00:30

Most people grow flowers, and I do too, but mine are all on the upper floor.

Researcher 00:37

Are there any residents downstairs who grow flowers or other plants?

Participant 00:40

Basically, no. I live on the fifth floor, and it's very troublesome to move the flowers up and down. Mainly, this neighbourhood is open, not a gated community, so anyone can come in and out. Sometimes, if you plant some expensive flowers, they'll be there during the day but gone by night. It's different from a gated community; there is a difference.

Researcher 01:17

If it's an open-style community, can your father still go downstairs from the fifth floor?

Participant 01:24

No, he can't. He can't go downstairs anymore.

Researcher 01:26

Is it because he's too old?

Participant 01:27

Yes, they all stay in their rooms. They're all in their nineties, and the stairs are inconvenient.

Researcher 01:36

Indeed, ninety-something is very old.

Participant 01:38

Yes, they are all elderly. My mother is also in her nineties; they are all in their nineties.

Researcher 01:42

There must be a longevity gene in your family.

Participant 01:44

This is mainly due to the good foundation laid in their youth; it has little to do with how you take care of them. If you have a strong physical foundation when you're young, you're more likely to live a long life when you're old. It's like building a house: if the foundation is weak, the house won't be sturdy, and it won't last long.

Researcher 02:04

That's true.

Participant 02:05

It also has to do with the fact that they exercised regularly when they were young.

Researcher 02:09

Right.

Participant 02:11

Right?

If you don't exercise, don't take care of your body when you're young, and always stay up late and eat poorly, your body will quickly break down.

Researcher 02:21

That's true. Are there any places in the city that you don't usually go to or don't like to go to? I'm just asking.

Participant 02:31

Actually, I often walk around this neighbourhood. During the pandemic when we weren't allowed to leave the neighbourhood, I just walked around inside because I couldn't go out, so I had to stay inside.

Researcher 02:45

You'd still go out if you could, right?

Participant 02:47

If I can go out, I usually go to the Workers' Cultural Palace, which is behind the Zhengzhou Municipal Trade Union. There's also the Henan Provincial Sports Stadium, which has a lot of facilities, including basketball, volleyball, football, badminton, baseball, table tennis, running tracks, parallel bars, horizontal bars, and sit-up benches. The facilities there are all new, well-maintained, and relatively safe. However, the place is often crowded.

Researcher 03:36

Do you not like crowded places?

Participant 03:38

No, it's just that it's always packed. Most of the people there are older than me, in their 70s and 80s. You can't expect me to compete with them, right? So many people don't believe I'm in my 60s.

That's true.

Researcher 04:01

You and your aunt are coming over this afternoon. If it weren't for the 7 o'clock appointment, this would be a typical day for older people. When you meet them on the street, you would never think they are older people.

Older people are in pretty good shape these days.

Participant 04:10

No one really thinks I'm an older person. For example, when I take the subway, the staff always ask me if I'm an older person. I say, 'Don't you believe me?' I show them my ID—the first is my military discharge certificate, and the second is my senior citizen card, with my photo on it. They still don't believe me and say they need to check the computer. I tell them to go ahead, and when they look up my information, they can't believe I'm over sixty. I'm 63 years old, the same age as Mr. Cai from earlier, and we're both born in the Year of the Rat.

Researcher 04:56

What are you thanking me for?

I really can't sleep.

When you're out and about, what do you think of the sounds and smells in the community?

Participant 05:11

What kind of sounds are you referring to?

Researcher 05:18

For example, do you find there to be noise, or are there certain sounds that you don't find annoying, but instead think the environment is quite nice.

Participant 05:26

This environment, let me tell you, as long as you're not living right next to the road, you can say you barely hear any noise. It's especially quiet at night; you can't hear much noise now either. Because our place is quite far from the road, and the sound insulation is good—that's the biggest advantage of our neighbourhood.

When can you hear loud noises? Basically never. Why do so many people who've lived here their whole lives refuse to move? It's because the environment is good and it has a nostalgic feel. This is where we grew up, it's our childhood memories. It's different from how people who moved here later feel. Some people think the neighbourhood is old and run-down, but that's because they didn't grow up here.

When we had floods when we were kids, was it 1972 or 1974? The flood in 1974 was much bigger, far larger than the ones in recent years. Back then, the streets were filled with water and watermelons, and we all played in the water and picked up watermelons. I experienced it myself. The floods now are nothing compared to that—it's a completely different concept.

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What are you thanking me for?

I really can't sleep.

When you're out and about, what do you think of the sounds and smells in the community?

Participant 05:11

What kind of sounds are you referring to?

Researcher 05:18

For example, do you find there to be noise, or are there certain sounds that you don't find annoying, but instead think the environment is quite nice.

Participant 05:26

This environment, let me tell you, as long as you're not living right next to the road, you can say you barely hear any noise. It's especially quiet at night; you can't hear much noise now either. Because our place is quite far from the road, and the sound insulation is good—that's the biggest advantage of our neighbourhood.

When can you hear loud noises? Basically never. Why do so many people who've lived here their whole lives refuse to move? It's because the environment is good and it has a nostalgic feel. This is where we

grew up, it's our childhood memories. It's different from how people who moved here later feel. Some people think the neighbourhood is old and run-down, but that's because they didn't grow up here.

When we had floods when we were kids, was it 1972 or 1974? The flood in 1974 was much bigger, far larger than the ones in recent years. Back then, the streets were filled with water and watermelons, and we all played in the water and picked up watermelons. I experienced it myself. The floods now are nothing compared to that—it's a completely different concept.

Participant 08:08

As for the appearance, it's just an old neighbourhood. It was built in the 1950s and hasn't changed much since then. Everyone is used to it now.

Actually, it's not bad. After all, we're used to it here. To be honest, new neighbourhoods definitely have better facilities. They're gated communities, whereas ours is open. It's definitely different. During the pandemic, there were only ten community workers in charge of epidemic prevention and control in this area. If it weren't for the help of so many volunteers over the past three years, they wouldn't have been able to cope.

Researcher 09:02

That's right.

Participant 00:00

Teacher Cai, we all arrived here at 6 a.m. When it was time for nucleic acid testing, we always scanned the codes in the first county and found doctors to do the tests. We ran down every staircase and shouted to everyone. Some older people couldn't get up, so we went to their homes to tell them.

Researcher 00:26

The workload is really too much.

Participant 00:28

The workload is enormous, so the 10 community staff members alone couldn't possibly handle it. We rely entirely on volunteers from the community. Retirees like us and veterans have all rushed to the front lines. Mr. Cai is an old Party member and is always at the forefront. We're not in the same grid; he's in Grid 5, and I'm in Grid 6. Grid 6 has over 800 households, so it's quite busy. We often work from six in the morning until four or five in the afternoon and can't go home, and it's like this every day, for several months straight.

Researcher 01:16

You really are working so hard.

Participant 01:18

In the first year of the nucleic acid testing, it was done at the small square in front of the community centre. Everyone was there waiting in line for testing. Many volunteers were on-site maintaining order and assisting with the testing.

Researcher 01:38

It really wasn't easy.

Participant 01:39

The hardest part was last year, when the pandemic was at its worst and restrictions hadn't been fully lifted yet. On 13 October last year, Zhengzhou was locked down, and it wasn't until 7 or 8 December that the lockdown was lifted. As soon as it was lifted, almost the entire neighbourhood was infected. After the infection, the neighbourhood was very quiet; no one went out, everyone stayed at home. I was living upstairs.

Researcher 02:16

Yes, me too.

Participant 02:20

At that time, cars were parked at the entrance, and electric bikes were parked in the bike shed.

Researcher 02:31

Do you still drive often now?

Participant 02:32

Not very often now. I used to drive frequently when I was working because I worked in Zhengdong New District, and the commute was long. After retiring, I only use the car when necessary. Otherwise, I just leave it parked there.

Researcher 02:57

Do you still ride a bike or walk now?

Participant 02:59

Now I mainly walk, as it's good for my health. However, I adjust the frequency of walking according to my physical condition. I can't always run fast, as some people's bodies can't handle it.

I often walk briskly now, as it helps increase lung capacity.

Researcher 03:26

Do you still jog?

Participant 03:26

Occasionally, but at 60-something, you can't always run fast. After all, without regular intense exercise, the heart might not be able to handle it. So it's important to adjust the amount of exercise based on your physical condition.

Additionally, diet should be controlled to maintain better health.

Researcher 03:54

Do you think there are any facilities that need to be added to the community? Things that would help with your daily exercise or life.

Participant 04:03

We definitely need to add some facilities because the factory community is expanding.

Researcher 04:08

But there's no space, and planning, such as roads or facility placement, is very limited.

Participant 04:13

The current community area is limited to what it is. Beyond the buildings and roads, there isn't much space. The windows are too low, so the use of the area is very restricted. That's why we had to do the nucleic acid testing here before.

Researcher 04:32

We often play badminton there.

Participant 04:34

The frequency of playing badminton isn't fixed.

Researcher 04:37

Basically, we play when we make plans, but there's no set time.

Participant 04:39

Most of the time, we play at the cultural centre because he came here, and the community organised a competition last time, which was also held here.

Researcher 04:59

Indeed, there are fewer people here than there.

Participant 05:01

There are relatively fewer people because this area used to be where the subway was being built, and the houses were demolished. This used to be a residential area.

Researcher 05:13

But there aren't as many trees here as there are over there. Does it feel sunny?

Participant 05:18

There are still some trees here, but things have changed since the subway was built.

Researcher 05:22

They cancelled some things. Do you still come here often?

Participant 05:26

I usually only come when it's sunny but not cold. When there's no sun, I occasionally come over to hang out.

Researcher 05:33

Do you come in the morning or afternoon?

Participant 05:35

Yes, it's mostly those two time slots. In the afternoon, I usually come after 6 PM, around 7 PM when it's still light out.

Researcher 05:44

You don't come very often, do you?

Participant 05:46

Yes, because you need a partner to play badminton. Sometimes when my partner comes, we play for a while, and if he doesn't come, I don't play. If you want to exercise on your own, you can just do your own thing. If you want to play with a partner, you have to make an appointment in advance.

Researcher 06:04

I see some people playing cards over there, right?

Participant 06:06

It's okay, you go ahead.

Researcher 06:08

You go first. Have you ever played cards?

Participant 06:11

Playing cards is also a form of entertainment, and I often play. Hello, you can chat with him too.

Researcher 06:25

Do you usually participate in community-organised activities? Which ones have you participated in? For example, badminton?

Participant 06:38

I have also participated in activities such as table tennis and tug-of-war.

Researcher 06:41

I participate in all sports activities.

Participant 06:42

I am willing to participate in any sports activities.

Researcher 06:44

Are there any opportunities in community activities where you can meet like-minded friends?

Participant 06:53

People of our age basically just say hello when they meet. Every family is different. Some families don't have older people, so they have fewer things to do. In our family, we have older people and children, so we have a lot to do and focus mainly on the family.

After retirement, life is mainly about the family, with older people above us and the next generation below us.

Researcher 07:24

That's right.

Participant 07:25

That's true. You can't expect your children to work and also manage household affairs. They already have a tough job. I really understand them. Our generation had it better during the planned economy, but after several national reforms and the privatisation of state-owned enterprises, jobs became unstable. It's really tough to make it to retirement. To be honest, if you don't have any skills, it's hard to survive.

Researcher 08:07

Yes.

Participant 08:08

If you don't have skills, you can't survive. I'm an engineer by training. I was a construction worker in the military, so I have some skills, which is why I've never worried about finding work.

As a technical expert, I'm a senior engineer, so I can work anywhere. The older generation used to say, 'A skill is never wasted.' The knowledge you gain is something no one can take away from you.

Researcher 08:49

Indeed, it is better to learn more.

Participant 08:51

Yes, knowledge can truly change a person's destiny. Without any education, it is difficult to find a way out. I used to work in a textile factory.

Participant 00:00

As long as you have skills, you don't have to worry if the factory closes down. With your qualifications, you can find work anywhere. Those without skills or qualifications are in a tough spot.

Researcher 00:17

That's just how it is.

Participant 00:19

It's not just our generation that has the phenomenon of relying on their parents. The next generation does too, including those born in the 80s and 90s, right?

Researcher 00:33

Yes, there are indeed many people who rely on their parents.

Participant 00:35

There are still many people who rely on their parents. Take yesterday's Children's Day as an example. My grandson and granddaughter asked me what they wanted to do.

Participant 00:41

They said they wanted their mother to take them to study.

Researcher 00:55

You see.

Participant 00:58

Yesterday, their mother took them out to play. This is my little granddaughter; she's so cute.

My grandson and granddaughter went out to play in the afternoon and then went to read books.

Researcher 01:28

The children are so beautiful. Look how well they celebrated Children's Day.

Participant 01:36

They mainly spend Children's Day studying and reading books.

Researcher 01:39

They are so well-behaved. Your children are like angels.

Participant 01:43

Look at those three. Their mother took them to the bookstore.

Researcher 01:49

These are the children everyone dreams of having.

Participant 01:55

They just love learning.

Researcher 01:57

Yes, and they're also good-looking.

Participant 02:01

My granddaughter and grandson are both learning English. My granddaughter is just five years old and has already started learning English.

Researcher 02:09

You're so lucky to have a son and a daughter.

Participant 02:12

When they didn't have the financial means, our family supported them wholeheartedly. I told my son that we must nurture the children, focus on their English, and also consider their interests and hobbies, such as dance, music, and various instruments. For example, my grandson likes the drums, so we let him learn, and now he plays very well.

Researcher 02:44

That's amazing, the child is so talented.

Participant 02:49

Recently, a foreign language school came to his English class for an experience, and after he graduates from primary school, he can directly enter a foreign language primary and secondary school without taking an entrance exam. He conversed with the teacher in English throughout the class, and the teacher gave him a score of 98 out of 100.

Researcher 03:20

That's amazing.

Participant 03:22

He didn't say a single word of Chinese, he spoke entirely in English.

Researcher 03:25

That's truly impressive.

Participant 03:28

I educate my son and grandchildren with the same principle: study hard. My son knows two languages, French and English.

Researcher 03:42

That's truly outstanding.

Participant 03:44

He studied the same major as me, also in engineering, and now works as an accountant. My son is currently the chief accountant at the company.

Researcher 03:55

Yes.

Participant 03:56

He works in a state-owned enterprise and is now the chief accountant, which is second only to the CEO. He deals directly with the CEO and the economic department. I never interfere in his work; I just tell him to keep the right mindset, take what he should, and not touch a single penny that isn't his.

Researcher 04:28

You are all 'divine parents.'

Participant 04:32

My son is just like that.

Researcher 04:35

He is really outstanding. Everyone in your family is amazing.

Participant 04:38

So I feel that whether it's my son or my grandchildren, they all study very diligently. Yesterday was Children's Day, so I had their mother take them to the bookstore, and both of them were eager to learn.

Researcher 04:53

They really are 'divine grandchildren.' These days, many children react to the word 'study' as if it were a death sentence.

Participant 05:01

But my grandchildren are very self-motivated; they don't need to be pushed to study, they just do it on their own. My youngest granddaughter is the class monitor, and the teacher really likes her. She often speaks English with the teacher, who also speaks English, so the two get along very well.

Researcher 05:25

Do you take your granddaughter out to play here?

Participant 05:32

Occasionally, but not often. I still focus on her studies.

Researcher 05:37

She doesn't have many opportunities to play, does she?

Participant 05:38

Yes, she doesn't have much time to play. When others are playing, she is studying hard. Once she finishes her studies and has had enough playtime, she does what she needs to do.

Researcher 05:51

This shouldn't interfere too much with playtime.

Participant 05:53

Yes, but competition is so fierce nowadays, and societal changes will accelerate even more as they grow older.

Researcher 06:01

That's right.

Participant 06:02

I've always told them that if they don't know a foreign language, they will be at a disadvantage in international exchanges in the future. The country is open, and English is the universal language, so they must learn it well.

I have also always required my children to have a plan, such as striving to be among the first to wear the red scarf in primary school, actively writing a letter of application to join the Communist Youth League in junior high school, and striving to join the Communist Party when they go to university. This is the path they must take.

The new China is ruled by the Communist Party, not by other political parties. If you don't keep up, you will be eliminated. I'm telling you the truth. Society is changing too fast, and you have to keep up.

Researcher 07:32

Alright, I don't have any other questions for now. I'll stop recording.

Researcher 00:00

Do you usually spend time downstairs in the community? Are there any things you like or dislike about that area?

Participant 00:08

I'm quite satisfied with this area. You can go and take a look yourself; it's quite spacious. After all, it's an older community, so some facilities are indeed limited. We should meet current needs based on reality and not demand too much. What can't be achieved shouldn't be forced. We should meet current needs based on the situation; excessive demands will only lead to disappointment.

Researcher 00:43

If there were opportunities for renovation, do you have any suggestions?

Participant 00:50

If renovations are possible, it would be best to improve the road surface and plant more flowers and plants.

Researcher 01:00

Do you feel that it is not aesthetically pleasing at the moment?

Participant 01:02

The area is quite hardened at the moment, but it is an old neighbourhood, so it cannot be compared to new neighbourhoods. It is already in good condition considering its age.

Researcher 01:21

Yes.

Participant 01:22

We can't expect too much; we can't force something that's not achievable.

Researcher 01:33

That's right. Alright, I've finished my questions.

Walking Interview-13

Participant 00:01

I grew up here.

Researcher 00:04

Xiao Li said that you moved here from another place?

Participant 00:06

No, my household registration is not here; it's in the development zone. I bought the house myself.

Researcher 00:13

You must be familiar with this area, then.

Participant 00:17

Not particularly. I didn't work here when I was a child. I worked at another Danwei.

Researcher 00:23

You've been living in this community for a while now. Where do you usually go?

Participant 00:27

Actually, I've only been living here for two years. Before that, I was abroad, working on a project in Africa.

Researcher 00:37

That's really far away.

Participant 00:40

I didn't have any special skills, so I went there to make a living.

Researcher 00:43

It's not easy to make money abroad.

Participant 00:46

It's not too bad.

Researcher 00:48

How have you found life here over the past two years since your return?

Participant 00:54

I only came back two years ago. Before that, I would come back once a year for a month-long holiday and then leave again. It's only in the past two years that I've truly settled in, and life has changed significantly compared to before.

Researcher 01:12

Do you participate in any community activities? Like exercise, for example?

Participant 01:20

I usually go to the cultural centre across the street to exercise. I was just about to leave, but my brother called, so I didn't go.

Researcher 01:32

When do you usually go to exercise?

Participant 01:34

I usually go in the morning and afternoon.

Researcher 01:36

Once each time?

Participant 01:37

Yes, it's close by, and I don't have anything else to do.

Researcher 01:40

Do you go by yourself or with others?

Participant 01:43

I always go by myself; I don't make plans with anyone.

Researcher 01:45

Do you exercise by yourself when you go?

Participant 01:47

Many people are exercising there, and those who go regularly all know each other.

Researcher 01:51

Do you chat with these people you met while exercising?

Participant

No, we didn't know each other before; we all met there.

Researcher

Do you usually shop in the community?

Participant 01:58

I usually buy groceries and some daily necessities.

Researcher 02:06

Do you usually go to the farmers' market or Xiangrong Street?

Participant 02:09

I usually hang out at No. 7, Green East Street.

Researcher 02:13

Is that where the supermarket is?

Participant 02:15

No, it's the building next to the police station. It's right behind the kindergarten. Our house is right next to the kindergarten.

Researcher 02:22

Where do you usually go shopping?

Participant 02:24

I usually go to the farmers' market; I don't go to Xiangrong Street.

Researcher 02:27

Why don't you go there?

Participant 02:31

It's mostly street vendors there, but I go occasionally if I have time.

Researcher 02:35

You don't really like going there?

Participant 02:38

I do go to the street vendors, but I don't buy much. Sometimes I just buy something on the way, it's very casual.

Researcher 02:49

Do you think there are any places in the community where it is inconvenient to travel or where you feel uncomfortable living?

Participant 03:00

No, this place is in a good location.

Researcher 03:03

It's in a good location, so it's convenient to go anywhere, right?

Participant 03:04

Yes, it's right next to the Line 1 and Line 2 subways, and there are many buses that pass by, such as routes 108, 104, 31, 80, and 83. There are also many cars on Jianshe Road, so transportation is very convenient. The community hospital is nearby, and larger hospitals like the Traditional Chinese Medicine Hospital and the River Medical Hospital are also not far away, making daily life very convenient.

Researcher 03:36

Do you usually use the fitness equipment in the community?

Participant 03:50

Almost never.

Researcher 03:52

Why not?

Participant 03:53

There aren't enough fitness equipment there, and there aren't many types. There are a lot of fitness equipment in gyms outside. When you get older, your back hurts, and some equipment is awkward to use, you know?

Researcher 04:08

That's true.

Participant 04:10

Sometimes it's not very convenient to use them myself.

Researcher 04:13

I see there are many convenient facilities downstairs in your neighbourhood, such as clotheslines and electric bike charging stations.

Participant 04:22

I don't use those at all.

Researcher 04:30

Why not?

Participant 04:32

I usually ride a bicycle. I used to have an electric bike, but it was stolen, and it's been gone for years.

Researcher 04:40

So you mainly rely on walking, cycling, and taking the bus for transportation now?

Participant 04:44

Yes.

Researcher 04:44

Did you used to drive? Do you still drive now?

Participant 04:48

I occasionally drive now.

Researcher 04:48

How often do you drive?

Participant 04:51

Not many. Most people take the bus, and only drive when going to distant places.

Researcher 04:57

What do you think of the facilities downstairs?

Participant 05:02

I haven't used these facilities much, I'm not very familiar with them, and I haven't paid much attention to them.

Researcher 05:13

Many people in your building pull out a rope or bring a stool or some furniture to sit and chat. Have you ever participated?

Participant 05:27

No, I don't usually participate. I don't really like sitting with older people. Most of them are in their 70s and 80s, and I'm in my 60s, so I feel like there's a generation gap and we don't have much in common to talk about.

Researcher 06:02

Are there any community activities you have participated in?

Participant 06:05

No, the community has never organised any activities.

Researcher 06:07

So you don't have any particular interest in community activities?

Participant 06:11

The community hasn't organised many activities, and I don't know much about them. Anyway, I don't know of any activities.

Researcher 06:15

Are there any services you would like to see in the community? For example, home care, health lectures, free medical consultations, etc.?

Participant 06:30

My brother is a special case, and it seems like the community has been looking out for him. I'm in good health myself, so I don't need these services at the moment.

Researcher 06:48

How do you feel about the overall maintenance of the community?

Participant 06:53

Which aspects of maintenance are you referring to?

Researcher 06:56

For example, the appearance and management.

Participant 07:01

The houses are quite old. I rent a house that was built in 1958. The plaster on the first floor has fallen off, and no one has fixed it. I tried to find someone to repair it, but no one responded. The bricks have been weathered for a long time, which affects the structure of the stairs. The rainy season is coming soon, and once it rains, it will be even more troublesome.

Researcher 07:45

That's true. How do you feel about the overall management of the community, such as hygiene and maintaining order?

Participant 07:57

I don't have any particular feelings about it. It's neither good nor bad. Maybe I don't know much about it, so I can only say what I know. I don't want to say anything wrong, so I'll just talk about what I've seen.

Researcher 08:14

Overall, it's okay.

Participant 08:17

Hygiene is okay, and there are no major issues with order. I haven't seen any fights or discovered any occupational issues. I think it's fine, after all, it's an old community, so you can't compare it to new communities.

Researcher 08:41

New communities are indeed different.

Participant 08:42

The new community has a better environment. Ours is an old community built in 1954, so I think it's not bad considering the current conditions.

Researcher 08:50

What was it like growing up here?

Participant 08:52

The environment was very good back then.

Researcher 08:54

Yes, the environment was particularly good.

Participant 08:55

Back then, there weren't any high-rise buildings like today. There were only three buildings where we lived. Everyone lived in those three buildings.

Researcher 00:00

The so-called high-rise buildings of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory were actually only three stories high. There were gardens on every floor, nothing but gardens. The market was also very simple. Now society has developed, the population has grown, more houses have been built, and the entire community has changed.

Researcher 00:20

In fact, the density of the community is increasing.

Participant 00:23

Back then, this area, Shancha, was the best residential area for workers in the entire western suburbs. The area around Normal University was also very nice.

Researcher 00:31

You know the kindergarten, right? With all the changes over the years, do you remember the places that left the deepest impression on you as a child? Are there any places that are particularly meaningful to you, either now or in the past?

Participant 00:50

It's been such a long time. People were simpler back then. The kindergarten was behind the building, not in the two-storey building next to the Dongfang Market now. That was the location of the Trade and Economy Market, and the two-storey building below was later demolished.

Researcher 01:10

The kindergarten moved away.

Participant 01:13

There weren't many children in the kindergarten back then, and they didn't interact much. Parents didn't introduce their children to each other. The kindergarten was quite good back then, but now I don't really understand how it worked. Kindergarten was very cheap at that time. My salary was only about 50 yuan, and kindergarten only cost a few yuan per semester, so it didn't cost much.

School was the same, only five or three yuan per semester. There was an elementary school near the Shandong Plant Hospital, and there was also an elementary school at Donghan University, but now they have all been turned into hospitals. The original spinning school was also an elementary school, but now No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory Elementary School has also changed.

Researcher 02:02

Yes.

Participant 02:04

Everything has changed so much that I don't recognise it anymore. I wonder what it looks like now.

Researcher 02:10

I can tell you still miss the old days.

Participant 02:13

Of course. Although life wasn't as prosperous back then, the meat was really delicious. The meat now doesn't have that flavour. Back then, we could only eat meat once a week, and the meat and eggs sold at the canteen were cheap. Fried eggs only cost a few cents. You probably wouldn't believe it.

Researcher 02:40

I believe you, but they might not.

Participant 02:43

Back then, I started working early, in 1972 and 1975. My monthly salary was 21 yuan, I saved 10 yuan, spent 10 yuan on food, and kept the remaining 1 yuan for pocket money. Back then, I didn't drink or smoke, so I could save enough to buy a watch each year. Now, salaries are higher than back then, but prices are also much more expensive. Back then, it was hard to find a job, and there weren't many people with formal jobs.

Researcher 03:20

That's true.

Participant 00:23

At that time, this area was the best workers' residential district in the entire western suburbs. The area around the Normal University was also quite nice.

Researcher 00:31

Do you remember that kindergarten? After all these years, is there any place that left a deep impression on you from your childhood?

Is there any place, now or in the past, that holds special meaning for you?

Participant 00:50

Time flies. Back then, life was simple. The kindergarten was behind the building, not in the two-storey building next to the Dongfang Market now. That area was a trade and economic market, and the two lower floors were later demolished.

Researcher 01:10

The kindergarten moved away.

Participant 01:13

There weren't many children at the kindergarten back then, and they didn't interact much with each other. Parents didn't introduce their children to each other either. The kindergarten was quite good back then, but I'm not very clear on how it operates now. The fees were very affordable. My salary was only about 50 yuan, and the kindergarten only charged a few yuan per semester, so it wasn't expensive.

The school was the same, costing only five or three yuan per semester. There was an elementary school near the Shandong Factory Hospital, and Donghan University also had an elementary school, but both have been converted into hospitals. The original spinning school was also an elementary school, but now the Third National Cotton Textile Factory Elementary School has been converted as well.

Researcher 02:02

Yes.

Participant 02:04

Everything has changed so much that I don't recognise it anymore. I wonder what it looks like now.

研究员 02:10

看得出你还是怀念过去。

参与者 02:13

当然。虽然那时候生活不如现在富裕，但肉真的很好吃。现在的肉没有那种味道。那时候我们一周只能吃一次肉，食堂卖的肉和鸡蛋都很便宜。煎鸡蛋只要几毛钱。你可能不会相信。

研究员 02:40

我相信你，但别人可能不信。

参与者 02:43

那时候我早早开始工作，1972年和1975年。我每月工资21元，存10元，花10元买食物，剩下的1元当零花钱。那时候我不喝酒也不抽烟，所以能攒够钱每年买一块手表。现在工资比以前高了，但物价也贵多了。那时候找工作很难，而且有正式工作的人也不多。

研究员 03:20

确实如此。

Participant 04:16

Basically no, they are all about the same. You have to understand that it's already very good that the old community has made it this far. Overall, it's okay, but it's definitely not as good as the original construction machinery factory community. That community is small, with fewer people and better conditions. In addition, the country is now promoting elderly care, and with the increasing number of older people, it is becoming a trend to set up canteens for the elderly. The No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory tried it for a few years, but it didn't work out. The bus factory has done it, and a family compound west of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory has also done it. If it really works, many older people won't have to cook for themselves.

Researcher 05:03

That's true.

Participant 05:04

The older people go to the canteen for breakfast, lunch and dinner, then go home to sleep. How nice.

Our community hasn't been able to do it, and I don't know why.

Researcher 05:12

This is indeed quite complicated.

Participant 05:16

It's not particularly complicated. If you want to eat, you just go, and once it's ready, the older people go. It's only 15 yuan a day at a construction site canteen, 450 yuan a month, and you don't have to worry about anything. Someone even washes the bowls after you finish eating. It's so convenient. This is promoted by the state. With the ageing of society becoming more and more serious, it is very necessary to set up canteens for the elderly. Nowadays, many older people use natural gas to cook, and if there is a gas leak, accidents can easily happen.

Actually, it would be great if the canteens for the elderly were built earlier. I don't understand why the three major communities haven't built them yet. Maybe there are too many people and it's difficult to manage. In fact, it can be divided into several locations, with each community building its own. It will be difficult at first, but it will get better slowly. It's the same with business.

Researcher 06:23

Yes. Boss, do you have a regular route when you walk around the community?

Participant 06:29

No. I don't really walk around the community much. I mainly go to the cultural centre, the park across the street, and the May Day Park.

Researcher 06:40

Is that area more fun? This side is less crowded, right?

Participant 06:43

Yes, there aren't many people I know here. Over there, there are a lot of familiar faces, and we can chat. Here, I only see neighbours. Besides my childhood friends and classmates, there's not much to talk about with others.

Researcher 07:01

You've been taking care of your brother. Does he go out often?

Participant 07:07

He occasionally goes out to buy some groceries, but he doesn't go out much otherwise. He has some mental health issues.

Researcher 07:12

So he doesn't go out much these days?

Participant 07:14

He occasionally goes out to buy groceries, but other than that, he just walks around downstairs and doesn't go far.

Researcher 07:23

Do you go out together to buy groceries, or does he go alone?

Participant 07:29

I rarely buy groceries; he does it all.

Researcher 07:30

Does he buy everything himself?

Participant 07:31

Yes, he buys groceries himself. Actually, you have to give him something to do; if you don't, he can't function. If you ask him to buy groceries, he'll buy extra for me to eat. If you don't ask him to buy, he gets anxious. It's just this little thing.

Researcher 07:47

Does he have any difficulties going out to buy groceries?

Participant 07:51

Buying groceries isn't difficult, but his legs aren't very good. He had polio as a child, so his right leg and right arm aren't very flexible. Back then, there weren't vaccines like there are now, and things like oral polio vaccine hadn't been invented yet. Many people in our age group had polio, and many developed complications from it as children. Nowadays, this situation has been largely eradicated, and children can take the oral polio vaccine right after birth.

Researcher 08:24

Yes, now children can take the polio vaccine right after birth. You mentioned you live on the first floor. Is it an old house built in 1958?

Participant 08:35

No, I live on the third floor.

Researcher 08:37

So he has no problem going up and down stairs?

Participant 08:39

He can still do it now, but it's hard to say about the future.

Researcher 08:42

Does he feel any obstacles when he goes shopping?

Participant 08:45

He doesn't have any obstacles when he goes shopping now. When people see that he is disabled, they probably won't bully him.

Researcher 08:55

Probably not. I was asking if he finds it difficult to reach his destination.

Participant 09:00

He just walks a bit slower.

Researcher 09:03

Does he mainly go out to shop?

Participant 00:00

He goes out to shop when he needs to, and on nice days he goes out to get some sun. He rarely goes out in winter and summer.

Researcher 00:10

It's too hot in summer, isn't it? Zhengzhou's weather can be quite hot and lead to heatstroke.

Participant 00:19

Yes, I don't like going out in summer either. Zhengzhou is too hot in summer.

Researcher 00:31

I don't have any other questions for now. Thank you for your time.

Walking Interview-14

Researcher 00:35

You just moved here, right? What do you think of the neighbourhood? Do you think it's well maintained?

Participant 00:41

It's okay, overall. I can't say it's bad. Are you recording right now?

Researcher 00:48

I didn't say it was bad, I just wanted to pause for a moment.

Participant 00:52

Okay.

Researcher 00:01

How do you feel about the maintenance of the neighbourhood?

Participant 00:04

I think the whole No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory area is going to be demolished. Look, all these houses are going to be torn down. Many of them are already uninhabited, and people are getting ready to move out.

Researcher 00:16

Right.

Participant 00:16

A lot of people have moved away, and the area is now empty.

Researcher 00:23

So, in your opinion, the overall maintenance is... ?

Participant 00:28

I think it will get better in the future, since the neighbourhood is going to be renovated.

Researcher 00:36

In the area where you live, is there anything you are particularly satisfied or dissatisfied with?

Participant 00:43

I haven't been here long, to be honest, I haven't lived here for very long. Actually, this neighbourhood is similar to where I used to live, so I don't think it's much better. It seems like it's going to be demolished too.

Researcher 01:02

It seems like they're going to demolish it.

Participant 01:05

I heard from my neighbour that it's going to be turned into a hotel. I asked if they could turn it into a hotel here, but they said they're going to turn it into a hotel. I'm not really sure.

Researcher 01:19

Auntie, you've only just moved here. Do you participate in any activities in the neighbourhood? I see a lot of people playing cards and walking their dogs here.

Participant 01:33

Sometimes I go to the cultural centre, which is nearby, to stroll around, walk, and take a walk.

Researcher 01:44

So you don't usually walk around this neighbourhood?

Participant

Not really.

Participant 01:47

I occasionally go to the cultural centre.

Researcher 01:49

Do you walk your dog in the neighbourhood?

Participant 01:52

No, I rarely go out to walk my dog. I'm pretty lazy, and I haven't settled in yet. I've been tidying up at home these past few days.

Researcher 02:02

I see quite a few people walking their dogs in the neighbourhood.

Participant 02:06

I don't let my dog defecate outside. Every time I take it out, I bring paper with me so it doesn't defecate anywhere. I throw the paper into the trash bin when I see one.

Researcher 02:31

You have good hygiene habits.

Participant 02:35

If you have a dog, you have to be careful not to let it relieve itself anywhere.

Researcher 02:41

Do you usually shop around here?

Participant 02:47

Yes, I usually shop at the store in front.

Researcher 02:49

Then why haven't you been around here much before?

Participant 02:54

Because I've been busy moving things these past few days. I've been bringing things back and forth, so I didn't have time to go out and look around. I took a shower when I got home today, so I didn't feel like going out. I also think it's not very convenient to come here. At noon, I bought some leeks and eggs, brought back the oil and other things, and made some vegetable buns. Seeing others not moving much is pretty pitiful. At least we can move around; we're better off than them, don't you think?

Researcher 03:36

Are you a little older than him?

Participant 03:38

Yes, I am older than him. He is only 67, and I am 69.

Researcher 03:44

Auntie, were you familiar with No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory before?

Participant 03:48

I was fairly familiar with it.

Researcher 03:50

How did you think of renting a house in No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 03:52

I mainly wanted to go to the Cultural Palace to exercise, and I thought this place was quite suitable.

Researcher 03:55

So you rented a house specifically in this neighbourhood?

Participant 04:00

Yes, I happened to find this house, it was fate.

Researcher 04:04

Besides this street, do you go anywhere else?

Participant 04:10

I mostly just stay around here; I rarely go anywhere else.

Researcher 04:13

How do you find the environment along this route?

Participant 04:20

As a residential area, the environment is okay. There are shops selling goods and food, so it's quite convenient.

Researcher 04:34

Have you been here long? Do you feel unfamiliar?

Participant 04:38

It's okay. There are also many Muslim vendors here, so there are plenty of halal foods available, making it convenient to shop.

Researcher 04:48

Did you consider these factors when choosing this place?

Participant 04:50

Yes, No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory is close to the Cultural Palace, and it's convenient to buy food and other things. You have to consider these things when it comes to living, right?

Researcher 05:07

How do you feel about the outdoor environment? The appearance, noise, smells, and so on?

Participant 05:20

It's okay. After all, it's a community residential area, so it's difficult to keep it particularly clean. It's an old residential block, not as good as a new one.

Researcher 05:36

Do you think it's okay and acceptable, but not particularly satisfied? Or are you already very satisfied? Which is it?

Participant 05:55

Anyway, I think it's quite convenient to live here now. The No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory Hospital is nearby, so it's convenient to see a doctor if I have a headache or fever. The medical insurance policy is good now, with a small monthly subsidy, so I can just go to the community hospital to see a doctor. In the past, hospitalisation was not reimbursed, but now even outpatient treatment is reimbursed. For minor illnesses such as toothache and sore throat, I can get 70% of the cost of medicine reimbursed, which is much cheaper than at pharmacies outside. The government reimburses you seven out of every ten pence you spend, which is pretty good.

Researcher 07:09

Have you been to this area before? How do you like it?

Participant 07:12

I've been out and about in this area, and I think it's okay.

Researcher 07:17

Have you made any new friends or neighbours here?

Participant

Not yet.

Researcher

Do you use these exercise equipment?

Participant 07:26

I don't really exercise here. I'm getting older and my shoulders often hurt, so it's not very convenient for me to use these equipment.

Researcher 07:32

Where do you usually exercise then?

Participant 07:34

There are exercise equipment in other places anyway, and there are plenty of them. The exercise equipment here is okay.

Researcher 07:39

Why do you often go there instead of here? I see there are quite a few people here.

Participant 07:42

I haven't exercised here much yet. Mainly because I'm the third child in my family, and my second older sibling lives here, so I'm afraid of running into them, so I haven't come out much.

Researcher 08:01

Would you like to come over and sit for a while? Let's go check it out.

Participant 08:04

No, thanks.

Researcher 08:05

What kind of activities do you usually participate in at the Cultural Centre?

Participant 08:11

I go to the Cultural Centre to exercise. They asked me to learn badminton, saying it's good for the cervical spine, but I don't know how to play and always get in the way. Everyone at the badminton factory plays pretty well, but I'm not very good.

Researcher 08:33

Do you go to the Cultural Centre with your old classmates or by yourself?

Participant 08:41

We go together. She lives near the market, and we often go together. She brings the badminton rackets, and we just play there for fun. The area around here is pretty convenient, and there's also a halal restaurant called Qingzhen Bai Ji.

Researcher 09:02

There are quite a few beef and lamb shops around here. Do you always go to the Cultural Palace with friends, or do you ever go alone?

Participant 09:14

Sometimes I go alone, but most of the time I call her to go together. I like going to the Cultural Palace; sometimes I walk around or exercise there. Before the pandemic, I often went to the Cultural Park for brisk walking, but after the pandemic, I haven't gone much. Now that everyone has had COVID-19, I feel my body isn't as good as before, and my stamina has clearly declined.

Researcher 10:02

So now you mainly rest, right? Do you still play badminton?

Participant 10:09

I don't know how to play badminton. I only tried it twice with others.

Researcher 10:12

Have you considered trying other activities?

Participant 10:17

I mainly walk, listen to others sing opera, and get some exercise. It's pretty good.

Researcher 10:25

I see there's also the May 1st Park nearby, which is nice.

Participant 10:29

Yes, the May 1st Park and the Cultural Palace are right next to each other, so it's quite convenient to go there.

Researcher 10:40

Have you been to the May 1st Park since you moved here?

Participant 10:42

I've been there with friends from the factory.

Researcher 10:46

You plan to continue going after you move, right?

Participant 10:50

Yes, I moved here to be closer to the cultural centre. It's convenient for walking, exercising, and doing other things.

Researcher 11:03

Your legs seem to be in good shape.

Participant

It's okay.

Researcher

Now that you've just moved in and settled down, do you prefer to stay in the community or go to the cultural centre?

Participant 11:16

I still prefer going to the cultural centre.

Researcher 11:18

The environment there is indeed nice.

Participant 11:20

Yes, everyone goes there to exercise.

Researcher 11:23

Mainly because there are more people and the atmosphere is better, right?

Participant 11:30

Yes, when the weather gets colder, everyone comes out to exercise again. Now sometimes you don't see anyone, but when winter comes and it gets colder, it's actually more energising because everyone walks together.

Researcher 11:43

Exercising with others is indeed quite good.

Participant 11:45

Yes, following behind others and exercising together creates a good atmosphere.

Researcher 11:53

Actually, there are quite a few people here. Do you prefer to exercise in crowded places?

Participant 12:06

It's better to go out and have fun when there are more people around.

Researcher 12:09

Some people don't like crowds. Do you mind?

Participant 12:16

I think crowds are fun. I have an outgoing personality and like lively places.

Researcher 12:23

Really, lively places are fun.

Participant 12:29

Sometimes when I'm at home with nothing to do, I listen to live streams and play on my phone. It's pretty interesting.

Researcher 12:37

Smartphones have made life much more interesting.

Participant 12:43

Yes, I often watch live streams about traditional Chinese medicine. People need to find things to do; it's no good just sitting around, don't you think?

Researcher 12:54

Yes. You're new here, so you haven't had much time to explore the neighbourhood, have you?

Participant 12:59

That's not a problem. I used to work at the market.

Researcher 13:02

I thought you said you worked for the water company.

Participant 13:06

No, I don't work for the water company. My family used to live there.

Researcher 13:09

Did you used to work at No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 13:12

You could say that. Anyway, I'm retired now. After that, I worked at the market.

Researcher 13:17

No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory isn't far from the Cultural Palace.

Participant 13:19

Yes, it's very close. This whole area is considered part of No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory. I used to work there and often bought groceries here. When my children were young, I would bring some home with me so I wouldn't have to go out again.

Researcher 13:40

There are shops on both sides of this street, as well as street stalls.

Participant 13:45

Yes, it's very convenient, really good.

Researcher 13:46

Which way do you prefer to shop?

Participant 13:48

I really like this way, it's very convenient. I used to sell things on the side of the road, but when the city management officers came, I had to run away quickly.

Researcher 14:02

I think this way is pretty good; it has a lot of local flavour.

Participant 14:04

Yeah, that's the characteristic of the community, right?

Researcher 14:08

Right, that's our unique feature. You won't find this in other places or other countries.

Participant 14:15

Yes, it's convenient for everyone—shopping and daily life are both easy. Though it's a bit of a hassle, it actually suits everyone well.

Researcher 14:20

Having stalls here means everyone comes to browse, and it feels very comfortable.

Participant 14:26

Yes, this area actually belongs to No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory. Isn't this No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory? Sometimes when I'm walking, I end up at No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory. This whole area is considered No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 14:43

This street runs all the way to No.6 National Cotton Textile Factory, and there are food stalls all along the way.

Participant 14:49

I think No.6 National Cotton Textile Factory should be over there.

Researcher 14:50

I remember when I used to go shopping, I would get off at the Shagang subway station and walk all the way back along Jianshe Road. The entire street was filled with shops. From one factory to the next, there were stalls lining the street, all selling goods. Do you know what that street is like?

Participant 15:13

Yes, where there are more vendors, there are more people. Don't think that more people mean it's harder to sell; actually, the more people, the better it sells.

Researcher 15:29

So this street is so long, with several factory areas connected together.

Researcher 00:00

Right, do you also feel that way? You go to this street to buy groceries because there's a lot to choose from and it's convenient?

Researcher 00:07

So these stalls are all formed spontaneously.

Participant 00:10

Yes, they charge a management fee anyway. I used to sell soy sauce here and paid the management fee.

Researcher 00:19

Do you know when this street started to become like this?

Participant 00:25

It's been a long time. At first, no one managed it, but then they started to manage it. This area belongs to No. 4 National Cotton Textile Factory, and that area belongs to No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 00:38

When they started to manage it, did they not allow people to set up stalls?

Participant 00:42

They used to chase us away and not let us sell, but now they don't do that much anymore. Now the school has set boundaries, so the stalls can only go up to here. If there are too many, it's hard for the kids to get out after school.

Researcher 00:58

Has this market been around for decades?

Participant 01:01

Yes, definitely.

Researcher 01:02

Approximately when did it start?

Participant 01:05

I think it's been around for a long time. It's always been like this here.

Researcher 01:10

Did you work near here when you were younger?

Participant 01:12

Yes, I worked here when I was working.

Researcher 01:14

So it existed as early as the 1980s.

Participant 01:17

Actually, my son was born in 1987, and there were already vegetable markets in this area in the 1970s, or even earlier. They were there in the 1970s and 1970s. When I was working, my children were still young, so I would buy some vegetables on my way home every day and didn't need to go out specifically to buy them. There were many vegetable sellers back then, but now they all work independently. There used to be state-owned vegetable markets. You probably didn't experience that time, did you? How old are you?

Researcher 01:59

I was born in 1994.

Participant 02:01

Born in 1994, I definitely didn't experience that. My son was born in 1987, so he's over 30 now.

Researcher 02:12

By then, the state-run vegetable market had already closed.

Participant 02:15

Right, you probably don't remember. I wouldn't expect you to.

Researcher 02:21

When did you start working?

Participant 02:23

I started working in 1971 and have been at the factory ever since. My daughter was born in 1979.

Researcher 02:41

That was quite early. No wonder you are so familiar with this area.

Participant 02:43

Yes, I am very familiar with it. I used to work in the factory, and this whole area belonged to No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. The iron gate and the area up to the roadside were all part of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory. These shops have been here for many years.

Researcher 03:35

Then you must have a lot of fond memories of this place.

Participant 03:45

Of course I have feelings for it.

Researcher 04:00

Since you are willing to move back now, you must still be quite satisfied with this place, right?

Participant 04:06

I haven't thought about it much, I just feel like I can live here for a long time. My children won't be coming back anytime soon, so I'll slowly move all my things here.

Researcher 04:34

Did you also live alone frequently before?

Participant 04:39

Most of the time I lived with my children.

Researcher 04:45

Now that your children are grown and living on their own, how do you feel?

Participant 05:02

It's okay, pretty quiet. Not much going on, right?

Researcher 05:12

Do you have more in common with people your age?

Participant 05:15

Yes, young people have their own circles, and we like being with people our age too. It's quieter.

Researcher 05:31

Last question: When you moved here and registered, did the community introduce any activities or encourage you to meet new friends?

Participant 05:45

No, this is my first time here. Plus, I just moved in.

Researcher 05:52

Alright, that's all for today. I'll wrap up the recording now.

Walking Interview-15

Researcher 00:00

I'll start asking questions. Are there any places you particularly dislike going to, or places you would never go to? I'm just asking.

Participant 00:13

I don't like places that are dirty and messy. I don't want to go there when I see them. Recently, the digital room at the factory was renovated and fenced off, so there are fewer people there now. The factory used to be quite nice. The market is a daily necessity; I have to go there frequently to buy groceries.

Researcher 00:46

Where do you usually go to buy groceries or do your shopping?

Participant 00:50

I usually go to the big supermarket or the Xiangrong Street area. It's mainly because it's close to home and most convenient.

Researcher 01:01

So, the main factor in choosing a place is proximity to home?

Participant 01:03

Yes.

Researcher 01:05

Do you usually go out with others or by yourself?

Participant 01:11

I'd like to go out with others, but I actually just moved back here last July. My family has always lived here, but I moved to my brother's place to take care of my mother for ten years. My mother passed away four years ago, and I rented out the house, but then I moved back and renovated it, and I only came back last July. I have a lot of fond memories of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory because I spent my youth there, working there from my twenties to my thirties. I hope No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory will continue to improve. I heard that it will be converted into a textile research centre or a textile museum, and I hope the renovation will start soon so that the environment can improve.

Researcher 02:39

Do you think everyone is looking forward to more public spaces after the renovation?

Participant 02:46

Yes, one is hoping for more public spaces, and the other is hoping for improved surroundings. It would be great if it could be transformed into something like Sesame Street, where old buildings are made fashionable.

Researcher 03:08

Do you find the noise in this area bothersome?

Participant 03:14

The sounds of daily life are normal, as long as the residential buildings across the street don't open restaurants, at least not bars. If there's still noise after 10 PM, it gets really annoying.

Researcher 03:36

Indeed, restaurants in residential buildings can easily disrupt daily life.

Participant 03:39

Yes, I really don't want restaurants in residential buildings.

Researcher 03:44

Would you use the fitness equipment in this area?

Participant 03:52

I would use it, but the space is a bit small. I often come here to exercise. These Soviet-style buildings are currently fenced off for renovation. They've been fenced off for a long time. I hope the renovation will be completed soon so we can have a better environment.

Researcher 04:31

Actually, the textile industry is one of the foundations of Zhengzhou's development. It's part of the city's cultural heritage.

Participant 04:39

Yes, there are five cotton mills and a dedicated railway line here. I hope things will improve in the future. Our house isn't the oldest, but it's over twenty years old. There are even houses from the 1950s here, so it's definitely time for renovation.

Researcher 05:01

Houses from the 1950s are indeed very old. I can tell you have a lot of affection for this place, having lived here for so many years. Are there any particular places that hold special meaning for you, such as memories with your family or places you frequently visited?

Participant 05:21

For example, when I was in the infrastructure department, we lived in Building 14 on Green Street in the West Community. I grew up there for decades before moving to the East Community.

Participant

I've lived here for over twenty years. The reason we moved here was because of the housing allocation back then. The textile factory was offering welfare benefits, and at the time, you could get a new house for free.

The reason we were allocated this house was because my father was a martyr, and the factory gave preferential treatment to our family. The house we originally lived in didn't have a living room, so the Construction Department used our house as an office, and then they allocated this new house to us.

Actually, housing was scarce, everyone wanted a new house, and there were limited options. Getting this house was a special favour for our family. After my father passed away, he was posthumously recognised as a martyr, so we were allocated this house under that status. The new house is larger than the old one and has an extra living room.

To be honest, I spent my youth working at the factory, so I do have a deep connection to this place. I hope it continues to improve.

Researcher 07:14

Yes, after all, we have lived here for so many years. This is a factory area.

Participant 07:18

Yes, this area has developed from an old community. Especially during the pandemic, when Jianshe Road and the main gate were closed, the entire factory area was like a small society, with a workers' hospital, schools, kindergartens, small supermarkets, and everything else you need. Life was very convenient. As an old residential block, it has basically all the necessary facilities. But compared to now, there aren't enough parking spaces. In the past, there weren't many cars, but now every family has a car, and the parking facilities can't keep up. I hope that these modern facilities will gradually improve in the future.

Researcher 08:26

Indeed, I've also noticed the situation of people and vehicles mixing in the residential area.

Participant 08:34

This situation is quite common.

Researcher 08:36

If there are many people and vehicles, does it make it inconvenient for you to travel? For example, when there are many cars and people, do you feel reluctant to go out?

Participant 08:47

Yes, for example, when everyone goes out to buy groceries around 9 or 10 in the morning, I don't want to go out. It's too crowded, so I choose to either go out earlier or later because there are indeed too many people and vehicles.

Researcher 09:09

Do you consciously avoid peak hours. When you go out during regular hours, do you ever run into acquaintances?

Researcher 09:23

Yes, I grew up here, so I often run into classmates and factory workers—we all work in the same workshop.

Researcher 09:34

Do you usually meet these acquaintances at a fixed location, or do you happen to run into them on the street?

Participant 09:41

Generally, we meet them in the factory compound when we're just hanging around.

Researcher 09:43

So you just run into them when you're out and about.

Participant 09:44

Yes, for example, when I go to buy groceries, he also goes to buy groceries, and we meet on the way.

Researcher 09:50

Do you ever make plans to do activities together?

Participant 09:54

Sometimes, for example, if I originally went to buy groceries alone, but then met a friend, we would go together, and the route would also change on the spot.

Researcher 10:05

Are there any fixed, specifically planned activities?

Participant 10:09

Sometimes we do make plans to go out together. But I was taking care of my mother for ten years and didn't live here, so I became distant from some of the old neighbours. I moved back last July and am slowly reconnecting. Some of the old neighbours have moved away, so there are fewer familiar faces, but the relationships are gradually improving because I was absent for ten years.

Researcher 10:54

Do you prefer closer neighbourly relationships or more independent ones?

Participant 11:06

I prefer a harmonious and friendly neighbourhood where everyone cares about each other. Actually, I can tolerate a quiet environment. For example, if neighbours are a bit chatty or sometimes neglect public hygiene, I can tolerate it. If the corridor is dirty or there's dog poop on the ground, I'll clean it up myself. I'm pretty tolerant—if I see something dirty, I'll clean it up.

I think the neighbourly relations are pretty good, and I get along well with my neighbours.

Researcher 11:57

You still prefer it to be a bit livelier, right?

Participant 12:02

Yes. I used to live on the first floor, and most of my neighbours were older people of my mother's generation. Many of the older people had lost their spouses, and everyone would greet each other when they came and went. The older men were sometimes careless, not as attentive as the women, and didn't pay much attention to hygiene. They didn't bother with cobwebs on the walls, but I would clean them up when I saw them. I would also clean the front door early in the morning when it was dirty. Older people can't take care of everything, but I still want the environment around me to be clean and tidy.

Researcher 12:51

Do you think the community is well maintained overall?

Participant 12:57

No, I think the hygiene is still a bit lacking. The main issue is that there are no fixed sanitation workers, so cleaning isn't done promptly. When I used to work at the factory, there were dedicated staff responsible for hygiene, and although their wages weren't high, someone was in charge. Now, it's been a long time since I saw anyone come to clean, and there are no fixed staff members. Public hygiene needs to be improved.

Additionally, iron doors were installed on the building entrances, which initially seemed quite secure, but no one maintains them. The locks have been removed, and no one bothers to fix them. I feel that the maintenance of these facilities is also lacking.

Researcher 14:20

Why don't we go check if the iron gate is still there?

Participant 14:23

You can check when you go back. Just go inside and take a look at all the iron gates. The idea of installing iron gates was good at first, to ensure everyone's safety when entering and exiting, but no one maintained them later. Although the gates were installed, they didn't last long and broke down, and no one bothered to fix them. The flower beds were supposed to be planted with grass, but they've all dried up and no one tends to them. In short, the facilities are there, but there's no one dedicated to maintaining them.

Participant

These things were invested in, but the maintenance didn't follow through. Now the maintenance really isn't keeping up.

Researcher 00:08

Indeed, if maintenance isn't kept up, the results aren't good. Besides activities at the small square, do you participate in any other activities?

Participant 00:22

I just take walks and stroll around; I don't have any other activities.

Researcher 00:28

What about square dancing?

Participant 00:30

I used to join the square dancing at the Cultural Palace's large square. But after the pandemic, gatherings were prohibited, so I haven't gone much in the past three years.

Researcher 00:45

That's a shame.

Participant 00:46

It really is a shame. After the lockdown was lifted, everyone got infected with COVID-19 again within a few weeks, and then there was the flu, so gatherings were still prohibited. Before, classmates and neighbours would call each other to arrange square dancing, but now no one gathers anymore. I was hospitalised for a while earlier, and I feel my physical condition has deteriorated significantly. Over the past three years, I've exercised very little, and my mobility has been severely restricted due to lockdowns and isolation.

I'm not the type of person who can stay disciplined at home. I can't do home workouts, and if I don't exercise, I get lazy and just play on my phone, which makes my physical condition deteriorate quickly.

Researcher 02:31

Where do you usually go for a walk?

Participant 02:43

This side looks cleaner than the other side.

Researcher 02:49

So you still prefer to walk on the cleaner side when you go for a stroll, right?

Participant 02:54

Yes, this side is more convenient for buying groceries and the environment is cleaner.

Researcher 03:05

From what you've said, you still prefer participating in outdoor activities and don't like exercising at home, correct?

Participant 03:14

Yes, I prefer outdoor activities. After the pandemic restrictions were lifted last year, in late August and early September, I went on a road trip with some classmates to Northeast China, visiting Inner Mongolia, Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning—four provinces in total.

Researcher 03:44

Were the four of you together the whole time?

Participant 03:47

Yes, we were on the road for over thirty days.

Researcher 03:48

That's truly rare. Did you just return from that trip?

Participant 03:53

Yes, but I had to go again because I fell ill this time. They went to Guangxi and Yunnan in April and just returned yesterday. I couldn't go because I was hospitalized, and I didn't want them to wait for me, so I let them go ahead. It's really a shame for me.

Researcher 04:27

That's really a shame.

Participant 04:33

It's a shame. We're a group of friends who often go out together. The year after the pandemic started, when the situation was under control and restrictions were eased, we even drove to Tibet, which is over 5,000 metres above sea level—it was incredibly high. Anyway, I love travelling and having fun with my friends. As long as we're happy, that's all that matters in life.

Going out together is also a lot of fun. Whoever's feeling silly will crack jokes, and everyone has a good time.

Researcher 05:45

That's great, being able to go on a road trip with friends.

Participant 05:49

Yes, classmates and friends often get together to have fun. Recently, because I've been sick, the doctor said it's not suitable for long-distance travel, fearing high blood pressure or needing emergency care suddenly. If the area is unfamiliar and we can't find a hospital, it could cause problems.

Researcher 06:23

During your illness, were you cared for by family members here?

Participant 06:30

No, I'm different from others. I'm still unmarried. My father passed away when I was young, and I lost him at 16. There were four children in the family—I was the second child, with a younger brother and sister, and an older sister. My sister joined the military and went to the 81st Film Studio in Beijing, so I became the main breadwinner of the family, helping my mother with household chores. After starting work, I also supported my younger brother and sister through school and helped my mother manage the household. So, by my twenties, I should have been considering marriage, but I never had the time to focus on that.

Participant

I felt that as long as I took care of my family, that was enough. At the time, I was working in a textile factory and was quite ambitious. I was the Youth League branch secretary of my class and was awarded the title of Model Youth League Cadre and Technical Expert. I frequently participated in technical competitions organised by the Textile Bureau and was a key candidate for promotion within the factory.

At the time, I was also asked to write a proposal urging young members of the Youth League to marry and start relationships later in life. I felt that I should lead by example, so I really did marry and start a relationship later in life. At the age of 22 or 23, I didn't even consider these things. I just followed my master's advice, and he was very kind to me. I didn't think about marriage until I was 28.

Later, I encountered several heartbreaking incidents at the factory, so I decided to transfer to the Oriental Grand Hotel outside the factory. The transfer approval process took three years to be approved.

After arriving at the hotel, I realised my high school education was insufficient for the job, so I decided to further my studies. I enrolled in an open university to study human resources management, but after graduating, I felt it wasn't suitable, so I switched to accounting. In the end, I completed both programmes.

Researcher 02:48

That's impressive. Earning two degrees is no easy feat.

Participant 02:51

At that time, I was working and studying at the same time, taking various exams. From the age of 28 to 33, it took me about five years to obtain two diplomas. Because I had to balance work and study, I had no time to think about personal matters like marriage. By the time I had both diplomas in hand, when I looked back and considered my own life, I felt like I was in a situation where I was neither here nor there.

Researcher 04:05

That's impressive. How many people in that era could obtain two associate degrees?

Participant 04:09

Yes, just associate degrees.

Researcher 04:11

My mother also graduated from high school and attended night school. She worked during the day and studied at night, just like you. You're very impressive.

Researcher 04:31

Indeed, few people of our generation were able to obtain two university degrees, and we all studied different subjects.

Participant 04:31

Yes, my first major was human resources management. It was a commissioned training class, and my classmates were all recruited from various enterprises and institutions in Zhengzhou City. After graduation, we were all assigned to various units in Zhengzhou City.

We also formed a professional network, and we could help each other out when needed. This was very helpful for my career and future work. Later, I worked in finance, and the skills I learned were all applicable.

Even things like transferring files or personnel between neighbours were useful. It was indeed quite practical.

Researcher 05:40

Did you stay here after you were transferred?

Participant 05:46

Yes, I've always lived here.

Researcher 05:47

Do you think the interpersonal relationships in the No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory compound were actually quite close because everyone worked for the same organisation, or was it because of the community atmosphere, or was it influenced by the times?

Participant 06:14

I think it was mainly influenced by the times. My mother was transferred here from the northeast, and many of our neighbours were transferred from the south. Everyone came from all over the country, so there was no exclusion.

There were people from Shanghai, Wuxi, Suzhou, and many from the south. The old factories supported No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory, and everyone came from different places.

Researcher 07:12

Your accent sounds like my grandmother's. My grandmother was also from the northeast, but later worked in Henan.

Participant 07:18

You sound just like my grandmother. I was born and raised in Zhengzhou, but my family is from Heilongjiang.

Researcher 07:26

My grandmother is from Jilin. She moved to Henan when she was young, and my great-grandmother was also from Northeast China, so her Mandarin is different from the local Henan accent.

Participant 07:40

Yes, I spoke Mandarin all the time when I was a child. My grandmother and great-grandmother spoke Mandarin at home, but when we were outside with the neighbours, we spoke Henan dialect. At school, we were required to speak Mandarin.

Once, when I went home and spoke Henan dialect with my grandmother, she immediately tapped me on the head and said, "You're from the northeast, not Henan. You have to speak the northeast dialect. The Henan dialect sounds so awful!" She was very angry.

Researcher 08:27

After settling in Zhengzhou, did you find the city structure or building designs very different from Northeast China? Are there any aspects you find unfamiliar or feel are significantly different from your hometown?

Participant 08:44

No, actually I've grown up here all my life, so this environment feels natural to me. Last August or September, I specifically went back to Northeast China's Heilongjiang Province for a few days. It was indeed different from Zhengzhou, but I still feel this is home. Although I have memories there, Zhengzhou is my home, and I feel more at ease here.

Researcher 09:20

Yes, I also feel that the community environment has changed a lot, especially in recent years, including these new buildings.

Participant 09:32

Yes, I can see the old building where I used to live from here.

Researcher 09:37

It has indeed changed a lot. Are most of these buildings newly constructed?

Participant 09:41

Yes, these buildings are new, and the two large buildings of No. 3 National Cotton Textile Factory are also new.

Researcher 09:48

How do you feel about the new construction? For example, the changes to the roads and buildings?

Participant 09:59

The roads are much better than before.

Researcher 10:02

Do you think there are any good or inconvenient aspects of walking around here?

Participant 10:09

It's cleaner and more spacious now. However, I'm not a big fan of high-rise residential buildings. It's okay to live here now, but in the next two or three decades, if the infrastructure like water, electricity, and gas breaks down, repairs will be a hassle. High-rise buildings aren't as comfortable as the original low-rise houses.

Researcher 10:47

Indeed, the middle roads in the low-rise areas are narrow, but it's convenient to walk on the sides. However, many new roads have very long median strips, so you have to walk all the way to the next intersection to cross.

Participant 11:13

Yes, I also find that inconvenient. You have to walk all the way to the intersection or find a way around it, which is quite troublesome.

I think there should at least be some pedestrian pathways in the middle, similar to safety islands, so people can cross halfway.

Researcher 11:35

Yes, the median strips are too long.

Participant 11:36

Yes, it's very inconvenient, especially for older people.

Researcher 11:43

Actually, even I find it troublesome, and I'm young.

Participant 11:49

Sometimes I see young people who can't get past, so they just climb over. Strictly speaking, it's against the rules, but it's a long way around, so everyone finds it troublesome. Young people just jump over to save themselves the trouble.

It's like when there were no public toilets before, there was no toilet for a long stretch of road on the Fourth Bridge, and it was really hard for older people. They could only relieve themselves under the bridge, which was a common sight.

Researcher 12:37

It's still like that when they drink too much.

Participant 12:39

Yes, he stands underneath to relieve himself. Actually, you can't blame him entirely. There are no public toilets within several kilometres of there. If there were public toilets and he didn't use them, that would be his problem, but if there's nowhere to go, there's really nothing you can do.

Participant

There are no public toilets now, but it was like this even before COVID-19. Before COVID-19, I went to Europe to see what life was like in a capitalist country. Everyone said that capitalist countries were so advanced. I went to the UK and France and saw the Eiffel Tower, which is in France, right? Then one time I went to a tourist spot, a street with an overpass, and the area under the overpass was a mess, with trash everywhere and a strong urine smell. I thought to myself, this is worse than China, just like the areas under overpasses in China twenty years ago.

Later, I went to the mountains in Switzerland, and there were actually places on the mountains without electricity. Capitalist countries won't bother to electrify areas just because there are one or two households on a mountain. But in China, no matter how high the mountain or how few people live there, they'll build roads and electrify the area. Every village has roads, every road has electricity. When I went to Tibet, I saw roads and electricity even at such high altitudes. Compared to other countries, I think it's better to stay in China and be a loyal patriot.

Researcher 15:13

Did you used to live in this building?

Participant 15:14

Yes, this is the building. There used to be no doors here; these were windows. This apartment was our home.

Researcher 15:22

Did you grow up here?

Participant 15:25

Yes, I grew up here. It's been over forty years.

Participant

Later we moved over there. This building used to be our home. The Infrastructure Department was responsible for technical construction and maintenance at the factory. After the new houses were built, they handled maintenance and utilities like water and electricity.

Researcher 00:29

Has this building been demolished yet?

Participant 00:32

No, people still live here. The buildings over there have been taken over by the government and are supposed to be turned into a textile museum. That's the Digital Building. But this building isn't included in the plan, and there are still quite a few neighbours living here, though many of them I don't recognise anymore. It's been decades, and some I still recognise.

This was our original house, but we moved over there later.

Researcher 01:15

Is that the Shamen area?

Participant 01:17

Yes, that's the one.

Researcher 01:20

You have deep feelings for this place.

Participant 01:22

Of course, I spent most of my youth here. I started working in the factory at 16 and spent over a decade in the textile mill.

Back then, I actually wanted to go to school and take the entrance exam for the workers' college, but the spots were taken by others in our workshop, which was pretty disappointing. Later, I applied for a transfer and moved to another organisation.

Researcher 02:13

You were certainly capable of getting into university; after all, you went on to earn two degrees.

Participant 02:18

Yes, I spent five years earning those two degrees.

Researcher 02:25

That's really impressive.

Participant 02:27

It was indeed quite tiring and delayed my personal affairs.

I don't really think about whether it was worth it or not now. Everyone's choices are different, and each has its own advantages.

Researcher 02:40

Back in our parents' generation, everyone got married early. Our generation went through a cycle and realized that living this way is also quite good.

Participant 02:48

Everyone understands my situation, but they don't really say much about it. I think once you reach a certain age, it's best to go with the flow. My situation is actually quite unique. At the time, I was studying and working at the same time. By the time I had the opportunity to consider marriage, all my peers had already gotten married and started families. It was like being part of a harvest—once everyone reached a certain age, they all got married, leaving those who were left either too picky, divorced, or widowed.

To be honest, even now, I'm not unmarried because I'm picky. I just haven't met the right person. I believe marriage shouldn't be settled for. I want someone I can talk to and who can support me, but I haven't found that yet. There are many people around me, but when I talk to them, I feel they don't understand much, and I'm not willing to settle.

Moreover, back then, I was working in a factory every day, surrounded by cotton and textiles, so my horizons were limited. If I were to marry someone from the factory, we'd both be stuck in that environment, and our perspectives would remain narrow. The environment imposes many limitations, and even if we moved to a different environment, we might not adapt. I want to find someone who can influence and grow with me, but I haven't found that person yet, so I've stopped considering it.

When I was healthy and could move around on my own, I really didn't want to find someone. But after falling ill this time, I realized there was no one around to even bring me tea or medicine, so I had no choice but to hire a caregiver. At the time, I had issues with my blood vessels and was dizzy. The doctor said I couldn't move for seven to ten days. With no other options, the nurse in charge eventually introduced me to a caregiver.

The caregiver charged 200 yuan a day with meals included, or 220 yuan without meals. I thought I couldn't even take care of myself, so I chose the option without meals. Although hiring a caregiver was expensive, when you're sick, you have no choice but to rely on others. The caregiver stayed with me for over ten days. Once I could get out of bed, she had to go home to prepare for her son's wedding, so she left. We still keep in touch, and the caregiver was very kind.

Researcher 07:53

Did you consider using community services when you were ill?

Participant 07:59

I heard from my classmate that in the No.6 National Cotton Textile Factory and Qinling Road area, there is a one-hour nursing service every day for people over 60, which can help with some housework. My classmate's family started receiving this service in February or March. When I came back, I asked our

community staff, and they said they could register me, but the service isn't available yet. Last July when I was renovating my house, the community staff were very busy and often worked overtime until midnight.

At the time, I told them that once I was done with my work, I'd be willing to volunteer to help, and they were all very happy. I heard that at 60 years old, there is one hour of service, at 65 years old, two hours, and at 70 years old, three hours. All of this is funded by the government, with caregivers coming to the home, and it's free for us. In my case, I qualify as a 'five-guarantee household,' so I should be eligible for this service. However, the community said it hasn't been resumed yet, but they registered me and will notify me once it's available.

During the pandemic, everyone was busy, and I didn't feel right asking for help. I hadn't planned to bother the community, but when I ended up in the hospital and couldn't take care of myself, I realised I really needed it. Things like climbing ladders or cleaning windows are just too much for me now.

I went to the community centre to ask, and they said I could register. They looked into my situation, but it's been over half a month, and I haven't heard anything yet. However, some friends on Qinling Road are already receiving this service.

Researcher 11:03

I guess we'll have to wait a little longer. It will take time for the service to become more widespread.

Participant 11:05

Yes, the community has already registered me, but the service hasn't been rolled out to this area yet. I have a friend there who lost his only son and later divorced. He now lives alone. In February and March, the community arranged nursing care for him. I really think this service is very important for us. Physically, I just can't do it anymore. It's not laziness; I genuinely can't do it. For example, I can't even move large flower pots. I love gardening, but the pots are too big, so I had to get rid of them. Cleaning windows is the same. Even though I live on the first floor, I'm too scared to use a ladder. I have a brain aneurysm, so climbing is dangerous.

Researcher 12:32

Yes, that's true.

Participant 12:33

I'm also afraid; I really dare not climb up. It's not that I'm lazy; I'm willing to do anything I can manage on my own.

Researcher 12:44

When you engage in outdoor activities, does the current environment make it difficult for you to get around? As you get older, are there any aspects that affect your daily life or that you find unsatisfying?

Participant 12:58

The main issue is random parking. For example, some three-wheeled vehicles and cargo vans used for business are parked randomly at the hospital entrance, blocking the road. It's really annoying.

These people aren't factory employees. Factory workers usually find a place to park and park properly. Business owners just park randomly and don't follow the rules.

Researcher 13:44

There are indeed a lot of shops here.

Participant 13:48

Yes, cars are parked haphazardly. The roads are already narrow, and old residential blocks are even narrower. When they park like that, there's no room to walk. There used to be an exit next to the door of our building, but it was blocked off and is now closed. We used to be able to hang our quilts out to dry, but it rained a few days ago and the first floor was damp, so we had nowhere to dry them.

Researcher 14:24

We can only dry the blankets on the ground floor.

Participant 14:26

We used to be able to walk from the other side of the building and tie the ropes to the trees to dry the blankets. Now the door is welded shut, so we can't get through. The community installed two metal racks in the courtyard, but there are too many people and not enough racks, so by the time we get there, there's no space left.

Researcher 14:58

Besides drying the blankets, do you have any other needs regarding the environment downstairs in the community? Are there any other similar needs that can't be met?

Participant 15:11

Drying the blankets is actually a small matter. What I really hope for now is that, like the government hires caregivers, someone could come for an hour every day, or even once or twice a week, to help me with some chores. After falling ill, I really feel this service is essential and hope the community can implement it soon. Even though we're both in Zhengzhou, the area near Qinling Road already has this service, but we haven't started here yet. I don't know why—can policies really differ within the same city? I truly hope it can be implemented sooner.

Researcher

Aunty, I've asked everything I wanted to know. I'll stop recording here.

Walking Interview-16

Participant 00:02

I am 71 years old and I live by myself.

Researcher 00:05

Have you been living in this community for a long time?

Participant 00:10

I've always been downtown and I'm a local.

Researcher 00:13

Having lived here for so long, how do you feel about the overall maintenance of our community?

Participant 00:19

It's well maintained, very satisfied, everyone is satisfied.

Researcher 00:23

How do you feel the community handles specific areas and things that come up?

Participant 00:26

Whenever something comes up, just talk to them and they respond quickly and help

with it as well.

Researcher 00:32

What do you think about the outdoor environment?

Participant 00:37

It's pretty good now, and it's nice outside my house.

Researcher 00:42

Can you be more specific?

Participant 00:43

For example, in terms of hygiene, now even though we don't have a special person to clean it, we take the initiative to clean it ourselves, and the walls and stuff are pretty well done, and everyone is happy with it.

Researcher 00:57

So it's all self-initiated cleaning by you guys?

Participant 00:59

Yes, we clean on our own initiative.

Researcher 01:01

Doesn't the property care?

Participant 01:02

They do, but now there are too few people to do it, so we do it ourselves.

Researcher 01:12

Do you know how many times a week the property is visited?

Participant 01:17

They used to come every week, sometimes even every day. Now that there are so few people, they don't come as often. There are only a few people in a neighbourhood and they can't keep up with all the work, so if we just rely on them to sweep, we're sure to have a dirty entrance.

Researcher 01:38

Do you know the responsibilities of property owners? What are their main responsibilities?

Participant 01:49

I don't know exactly, but I often go to them when I need them, but I don't really know how they divide up the work.

Researcher 01:58

Where do you usually go in the community and what are your activities, such as shopping?

Participant 02:05

I usually just go grocery shopping at the front and back, it's very convenient.

Researcher 02:11

Is that on Xiangrong Street?

Participant 02:12

No, I usually go to the Li Tongbai Road overpass side, or the opposite side of Kam Yee City side, there are food markets.

Sometimes I go a little bit further away, it's not a big deal.

Researcher 02:26

Do you usually come here often?

Participant 02:30

Yes, a few people come together. Sometimes I do some grocery shopping or other

things. I also participate in community activities and ask people to come when there is something going on in front of the house. Sometimes the community says not to come, but I still come by myself to participate in more activities.

Researcher 02:54

Do you usually go to Xiangcheng Street or the farmer's market when you and your friends come to the community to buy things?

Participant 03:04

I usually buy groceries right in front of my house, I rarely come here to buy.

It's only when I have something to do here, such as a community meeting or an event, that I come round. Sometimes I get up in the morning when I don't have anything else to do.

Researcher 03:16

Which neighbourhood do you usually live in?

Participant 03:19

Everywhere, sometimes over there, sometimes over here, anywhere.

Researcher 03:24

Where do you mean over there?

Participant 03:27

It's the area around Gold Creek City and the Twin Star Junction. Didn't they build two more roads later on? Sometimes I just go over there.

Researcher 03:36

Do you come here mainly because of any community events, or do you meet up with your friends at the Palace of Culture?

Participant 03:44

Mainly the Palace of Culture.

Researcher 03:47

Do you meet up with friends to come this way?

Participant 03:52

Sometimes, when there are no more food sellers in front of us, we come this way.

Researcher 03:58

Come this way to shop?

Participant 04:00

Yeah, bought it and went back. There's not much activity over here right now. I have another group by myself in the evening, dancing in the square in front of Wangfujing, not in the Palace of Culture.

Researcher 04:18

The square in front of Wangfujing is quite busy.

Participant 04:21

It's quite lively and you don't have to cross the street. We have a footbridge over there, so it's just a short walk.

Researcher 04:29

Are there any places that you don't usually go to or don't like to go to when you live near your community?

Participant 04:43

There are some places that I don't like to go too, like No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and No.6 National Cotton Textile Factory, I usually don't go there for nothing.

Researcher 04:53

What about the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory side?

Participant 04:55

No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory sometimes, basically I go there every day.

Researcher 05:02

Where do you mainly go in the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory community?

Participant 05:04

Just go to the food market.

Researcher 05:08

Do you go there every day?

Participant 05:08

Almost, I come every day. I went to Sichuan for physiotherapy and I will come here after that.

Researcher 05:17

It's just like stopping by on the way.

Did you encounter any difficulties in the process or on the way? For example, the stairs are not easy to go up, there are a lot of people and I'm afraid of being bumped into, or other safety hazards.

Participant 05:34

Sometimes the cycling ones are particularly fast and a bit scary when walking. It's a little bit better over at the food market, riding a little bit slower. Mainly when I cross the road, I'm a bit scared.

Researcher 05:47

Do you travel at regular times? For example, when you go to physiotherapy or spinning, do you purposely avoid crowded times?

Participant 05:52

It's all random, not purposely avoiding peak times. I don't usually go out at peak times.

Researcher 06:02

Is it because of the crowds or just your personal habits?

Participant 06:05

It's mostly personal scheduling.

Researcher 06:08

So you don't just don't go out at all because of the crowds, do you?

Participant 06:12

I don't go out at all if it's really crowded. When it's crowded, in the morning those people are in a hurry like they're catching the underground, so what are you going to do? They won't let you squeeze in. Usually seven or eight o'clock is the peak of the work, you have to go and people can not squeeze in. When it's nine o'clock and everyone has left for work, I'll come out for a spin.

I don't know how to ride a bike.

Researcher 06:40

Do you take public transport then?

Participant 06:42

Yes, by bus.

Researcher 06:42

I just heard you say that you walk in a bit of a hurry. Do you go out at other times specifically because of the crowds?

Participant 06:53

Yeah, I usually avoid the crowded times. I don't even come out at 6 or 7 in the morning, I wait until the sun comes out at 9 or so. Usually don't get out much most of the time.

Researcher 07:07

Do you usually come out with friends and do you make appointments in advance?

Participant 07:12

Mostly in advance, rarely out by myself.

Researcher 07:16

Are there any activities or services offered in the community that would allow you to develop hobbies or meet more people?

Participant 07:28

Not a lot of community development activities.

Researcher 07:30

Are there any new activities organised where people can try different things or meet new people?

Participant 07:35

Now that I'm older, I don't have much heart. It used to be OK, but now my legs aren't as flexible as they used to be, and they still hurt occasionally.

Researcher 07:48

And does your leg pain affect your activities in the community?

Participant 07:54

It's okay, it just hurts when I walk for a long time. I try to participate in any activities in the community.

Researcher 08:04

Do you find a place to rest if your legs hurt? Isn't there a lot of resting facilities in the community, do you use them?

Participant 08:13

I don't use them on purpose, I usually just rest on the side of the road or somewhere else. When I am really tired, I take the bus home.

Researcher 08:20

Occasionally I will take a break when my legs hurt.

Participant 08:23

Usually don't sit down to chat and don't have many friends here. It's okay if you have acquaintances and old friends to talk to. Everyone is getting older now.

Researcher 08:38

Is there any part of the community that you feel is particularly meaningful to you?

Participant 08:50

Downtown are pretty meaningful.

Researcher 08:52

Are there any places where you grew up as a child or have particularly fond memories?

Participant 08:56

I've pretty much forgotten. I didn't live here when I was a kid, I lived over on Jingbaji Road. I moved here in 1998 after I started working. After I retired, I was considered to be officially managed by the community, and I participated in all the activities in the community.

Researcher 09:23

That's all. Have you enjoyed some of the services that the community has to offer?

Participant 09:27

Enjoyed it.

Researcher 09:27

Like which ones?

Participant 09:29

When I was sick with uterine cancer at that time, the community gave me old age insurance and some food relief. Every year at the end of the year if the community gives out something for the poor, they also give out something.

Researcher 09:49

Are there any services that you are currently using that you would like the community to provide but are not currently available?

Participant 10:00

I can't think of anything off the top of my head, I can't say.

Researcher 10:03

There is no particular need in your life at the moment is there?

Participant 10:05

Right.

Researcher 10:08

Do you walk in your neighbourhood and have many chances of bumping into people you know?

Participant 10:18

A lot. There are a lot of old colleagues and these are the station managers.

Researcher 10:21

Where do you usually run into acquaintances on a regular basis?

Participant 10:25

Just in the circle around No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, whenever I bumped into them on the road over here, I would say hello, say a few words, and then go on my way.

Researcher 10:34

Do you usually have a regular walking route?

Participant 10:36

I don't have a fixed route, it's completely random, nothing regular.

Researcher 10:43

And are there any factors that influence your choice? Like a lot of cars, a lot of children or something like that?

Participant 10:50

No. I don't usually go out into the road, I don't cross the road.

Researcher 11:01

Are there any factors that would influence you to go one way today and change to another way tomorrow?

Participant 11:05

No, it's just a matter of going wherever I feel like going, and talking it through with a few friends, and not particularly thinking about any other factors.

Researcher 11:14

Do you and your friends do physiotherapy together, apart from dancing, walking and shopping? Are there any other activities?

Participant 11:26

There are no other activities.

Researcher 11:30

We see a lot of people sitting and playing cards inside the community, do you participate?

Participant 11:34

I don't play cards, I have a bad cervical spine for that.

Researcher 11:41

Do you usually use the fitness equipment?

Participant 11:42

I don't use fitness equipment, I just like to dance, I go dancing in the evening, but other than that I don't use anything else, I just walk.

Researcher 11:50

Do you usually walk on the left or the right?

Participant 11:55

I follow the crowd, I follow the pavement, I go wherever people go, I don't have a particular habit.

Researcher 12:03

For example, do you usually walk on the right? When you walk along the footpath, do you choose to walk on the pavement, in the motorway, or in the motorway? Do you prefer to walk on the steps of the pavement?

Participant 12:15

I always walk on the pavement, I don't walk underneath the road, I just go with the flow of people, I walk wherever they go.

Researcher 12:31

Do you have any difficulties now when travelling?

Participant 12:45

No, it's very happy, I think Kagome.

Researcher 12:50

So you are not planning to move in the future either?

Participant 12:53

It depends on whether the building I live in is going to be razed or not, if the building is going to be torn down you have to move, it's impossible not to. If it's not demolished, I'll stay here. Our side of the construction of overpasses, both sides of the North Cotton Spinning Road, my building is also through, depending on the future planning how to say.

Researcher 13:16

Would you still consider buying a house in this neighbourhood if it is demolished in the future?

Participant 13:22

There are not many houses to buy here. If there is no suitable house, I will have to move out.

Researcher 13:28

Do you have any attachment to this neighbourhood?

Participant 13:28

Yes, I do.

Researcher 13:32

What do you think is the best thing about this community?

Participant 13:36

I think the people in the community are very nice, and when you say something,

everyone is eager to help.

Researcher 13:48

Do you have any thoughts on the smells and sounds of the community?

Participant 13:57

There's not much smell, it's pretty clean. The sounds are nothing special either.

Researcher 14:16

It's just that sometimes there are a couple of dogs barking in the back, and the community has gone to the owners of the dogs. In fact, the main thing is that no one cares, the community also went to care, but the owner of the dog is not a member of the community, so there is nothing that can be done.

Researcher 14:40

So do you think the environment in this area is okay?

Participant 14:43

Yes, it's fine now.

Researcher 14:45

So when it comes to shopping, do you have any comments about the placement of stalls around the area and the convenience of buying food? Is there anything that you find inconvenient or uncomfortable?

Participant 15:20

Not at all. I do very little grocery shopping at the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory Farmer's Market, basically I don't shop here, I only come here once in a while to buy some meat, and I usually come very rarely.

Researcher 15:29

So on Xiangrong Street it's really just to do a little bit of buying and selling and a little bit of shopping on the side.

Participant 15:32

Come back at lunchtime and have a stroll.

Researcher 15:34

One lap is just to see people and take a walk.

Participant 15:40

It's quite nice to see people and come home and cook and eat.

Researcher 15:44

Any difficulty getting up and down the stairs?

Participant 15:48

No.

Researcher 15:49

The overall feeling is still pretty good?

Participant 15:52

It was okay anyway.

Researcher 15:54

Taking care of yourself in general?

Participant 15:58

What if you don't look after yourself? I only have one child now, and he's busy at work, both of them work and have to take care of the kids, so it wouldn't be appropriate for you to cause them any more trouble, so take care of yourself if you can.

Researcher 16:08

Indeed it is. In the community I see that there are some physiotherapy and clinic

services provided, have you participated in any of them?

Participant 16:20

Whenever there are activities, I always go there. I participate in medical check-ups and voluntary clinics.

Researcher 16:28

Do you have medical facilities in the community?

Participant 16:33

There is no medical point in the community itself, the hospital is next to it.

Researcher 16:37

Do you go to the hospital to see a doctor?

Participant 16:40

Yes, visits to the hospital are over here at the hospital.

Researcher 16:42

I see that the road is quite wide on your side, do you use the underpass when you go out to the hospital?

Participant 16:53

There is no underpass here.

Researcher 16:55

How do you cross the road?

Participant 16:58

Just go straight through the zebra crossing, just cross the road at the traffic light, you don't need an underpass. You can cross the road directly at the traffic lights like in Jincheng and Wangfujing.

Researcher 17:25

When you cross the intersection, you don't have any problem except worrying that the car behind you is driving fast and will hit you, right? Do you get scared?

Participant 17:31

Don't worry about it, just go through the traffic lights and zebra crossings and you'll be fine.

Researcher 17:33

You don't worry about cars coming from behind you?

Participant 17:42

Don't worry, as long as you follow the rules and walk on the zebra crossing, if you really get hit, it's their responsibility. As long as they don't run the red light, older people don't have the guts to run the red light.

Researcher 18:12

Are you and your friend both from the same institution?

Participant 18:17

I am from the same institution.

Researcher 18:18

Do you usually come out together? Because I see a lot of older people over there carry benches and come out to talk, do you have activities like that?

Participant 18:27

Yes, often. In front of my house, whoever doesn't want the bench is moved down, they all put it there, and we all concentrate on five or six or seven or eight people, and sit together and spray the air (chatting).

Researcher 18:39

Do you usually have a fixed time for spraying? Is it the same time every day?

Participant 18:46

Pretty much, it's always around 5:00pm, 6:00pm, when the sun is about to go down, so everyone just sits there and talks for a while. Around 8 or 9 or 10 in the morning it's time to cook, and after that we take a break for lunch.

Researcher 19:05

Okay, I'll end the interview if there are any questions.

Walking Interview-17

Researcher00:02

Where do you go shopping and where do you usually walk on a regular basis?

Participant 00:06

I go to Wanjiafu, Caicha and Xiangrong Street for shopping, all these places sell things.

Researcher 00:11

Are you usually active?

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Participant 00:14

I usually go round the market in the morning with my teacher upstairs and call back from the township. I go round in the morning and then in the afternoon I sleep until what time and then I come out and come and sit here and watch them play cards.

Researcher00:31

Do you also play cards?

Participant 00:33

I can play, but this hand fell and I can't hold the cards anymore. Now just sit there and watch, just watch and not play.

Researcher00:44

Do you usually exercise by circling around?

Participant 00:48

Just going to the market, walking to the market and back. When I went to the dental clinic in April or May, I had a full mouth of teeth put in, and I walked to the market by the way, and I walked to Cotton Spinning Road and the Fourth Ring Road as well.

Researcher01:08

Grandma, do you usually use the fitness equipment in the small square?

Participant 01:15

Also passing by, I pass by the small square every day, but I don't sit there. I like to carry my stool to the door to sit, and in the afternoon I carry my stool and watch them play cards.

Researcher01:26

Why don't you go to the small square? It's pretty crowded over there.

Participant 01:29

Some of them are not familiar with each other, or upstairs my teacher and them, these people who play cards are familiar with each other, we are all together.

Researcher 01:40

What time do you usually come out to shop in the morning?

Participant 01:44

About 8 o'clock and then I go out and buy whatever I see, whatever I need.

Researcher 01:53

Does having students running back and forth around 8am affect your walking?

Participant 01:58

No, I live there and it doesn't affect me.

Researcher02:01

Not purposely avoiding the crowds, no problem?

Participant 02:06

No, any time of the day.

Researcher02:07

Is there anything that you don't like about these areas of the current event?

Participant 02:19

It's Xiangrong Street in the morning, the people upstairs sometimes call the community, there are a lot of people buying food, it's noisy, it affects the rest. The road is also noisy, and the vegetable farm kills chickens and makes breakfast early in the morning, so it does affect a little bit.

Researcher02:41

Grandma are you ready to go home now?

Participant 02:44

No, I'm just going to sit here and watch them play cards. They called me and I came over and walked round anyway.

Researcher02:51

Where do you usually sit downstairs?

Participant 02:54

I carry my own bench and sit down at the card game and watch them.

Researcher 02:59

Why don't we take a break here, are you a bit tired?

Participant 03:08

It's okay, if you want to go to my Vanguard and see what's going on there.

Researcher03:11

I've seen that place.

Participant 03:12

Take a look at the Xiangrong Street end as well.

Researcher03:14

Are you tired of walking? If you're not tired let's go for a spin, if you're tired take a break.

Participant 03:18

I'm just like this, my legs are not strong, my waist is not strong, I can't break my waist, and my legs are weak after itching for a while.

Researcher03:26

Yes, if you want to walk for a while, let's walk for a while, I'm afraid you won't be strong.

Participant 03:30

I can walk, but I can walk slowly, but I can't stand for a long time.

Researcher 03:37

If you want to walk slowly, you can walk slowly, if you don't, you can't. Do you usually walk that way, is there a side you're more used to walking on?

Participant 03:46

I just like to walk, I always go to Wanjiayu to buy things, buy some food in the food court, and turn around in Ha Long Street, it's crowded, I understand in the morning.

Researcher 03:58

Do you walk generally on the right or on the left?

Participant 04:00

Both to the right.

Researcher04:04

Do you have any difficulty going downstairs or doing anything right now?

Participant 04:09

Since I fell, I am quite grateful to all levels of government. My community installed a handrail for me at the bottom of the stairs, so I can hold on to the railing when I go up and down the stairs. The toilet was installed for me by the district women's federation, the community office reported it, and the district women's federation came to my house to install a toilet and shower handle for me, quite caring, I can be grateful to them.

Researcher04:39

Do you live alone?

Participant 04:41

During the day, my children come to visit me, but at night I am home alone.

Researcher04:47

Grandma, if you feel uncomfortable standing, please sit down for a while. Is there anything that you find unsatisfactory or particularly satisfactory about the place where you are sitting downstairs and the place where you are playing cards now?

Participant 05:09

There is nothing, this is all the people spontaneous, idle recreational activities, they can. The community sometimes let people wear masks during epidemics, don't bunch up.

Researcher05:24

It's not that I dislike it, it's fine at that time.

Participant 05:27

They didn't allow piling up during the epidemic that time, and they didn't allow piling up when they played cards.

Researcher 05:35

Did you participate in any community activities?

Participant 05:41

I didn't participate in anything, I just came to see the symposiums and seminars.

Researcher 05:50

What kind of services do you think are available in the community, other than people coming to visit you and giving you things, do you enjoy any other services?

Participant 06:03

Not the handrails that they put in for me, they go and do all the little jobs around the house for me, it's quite comprehensive. They are very good to me. The secretary of my neighbourhood is in charge of that area, and when there was a fire in Fangdaawa, the secretary personally went to Fangdaawa to put out the fire for the residents, so it wasn't easy. I was in charge of my neighbourhood at the time, and he climbed up to look inside, and there was black smoke.

Researcher06:45

Is there any part of your community life that is more meaningful to you? You have a good relationship with your neighbours I see today, you talk to your neighbours downstairs every day, don't you go home for dinner?

Participant 07:08

Yes, my community to the residents of the staff, the attitude of the residents can be good, there are any difficulties they can be solved, in addition to some do not belong to the scope of their authority, such as the building lights and so on, not them, is the head of the plant property on.

Researcher07:37

What do you think of the current maintenance of the community, the overall environmental maintenance?

Participant 07:46

It's pretty good, everyone's out in the afternoon and it's the same in the morning. Once the epidemic passed, now that it's liberalised, all can earn money, all can earn money if they can work hard. Now the stalls are full in the evening and it's working quite well.

Researcher08:22

Are there any odours or road maintenance in the community as a whole that affects you?

Participant 08:45

I have a lot of people here in the afternoon and a lot of transients that come to me to buy things. The yard play is pretty instinctive.

Researcher00:57

Do you think the outdoor environment in the yard is maintained much?

Participant 01:02

Law and order are relatively good and hygiene is quite good. Policing is good. There are no facilities missing, life is not affected.

Researcher 01:44

Are there any places that you still have a bit of difficulty getting to? Are there any places that you don't really like to go to when you go around the community?

Participant 01:52

No difficulties, it's all fine. Anyway, after I fell, the people in the community cared about me to the point of being at home. Leaders at all levels, in the Spring Festival, when the Party celebrated its 100th year, leaders from the city came to see me, and I was satisfied. I believe in the Communist Party, I suffered before the liberation, after the liberation, I followed the Communist Party all the way to the present, life is secure, I can be satisfied.

Researcher02:22

Yes, I am. Grandma, you say.

Participant 02:28

Some people still curse and swear when they get paid, I say they have never suffered in the old society and don't know what it was like in the old days. In the past, there was no such thing as now, no worries about food and clothing.

Researcher02:42

That's grandma, have you come across some of them if you live in the community.

Participant 02:53

Difficulties? I was not, and those that were there might have been.

Researcher03:16

Grandma, do you usually have a regular place to shop? Like is it I'm in this place I buy this one. It is prescribed there.

Researcher03:27

No, I said do you have a fixed place, for example I have several food stalls inside this farmer's market but I have to buy from this one.

Participant 03:35

I generally you see me after this fall, I buy food rarely, are my children to buy food, I just eat I do not know how to cook, then with my teacher to turn round to Xiang Rong's. This time I bought tomatoes, but I do not know how to cook. I bought a tomato this morning, and I bought two potatoes, but I can't move them, so I'll buy less, and I'll have to cook for my kids.

Researcher03:54

So now you usually come out mainly to move around a little bit.

Participant 03:57

I just come out and do activities. Actually I don't buy much now, I don't buy anything.

Researcher04:05

Do you come out in this community, do you come out in this area because you are familiar with this area and then also because we are far away and we can't walk too much, are those the only two reasons?

Participant 04:21

In addition to the activity is limited, this time my old community is limited, which called me activity dislike point.

Researcher04:29

These you use this side to build equipment.

Participant 04:33

This is the activity location.

Researcher04:37

Do you normally use this fitness equipment?

Participant 04:39

Use it, community drive. What activity is here?

Researcher 04:44

Is this the only place you use this fitness equipment?

Participant 04:48

Who do you know do you use it, I don't.

Researcher04:53

Why don't you like to use this?

Participant 04:55

It's not that I'm not used to it, you see I'm falling and I can't move my legs, so I'm just going to walk over here and sit on this counter. Look and smell.

Researcher05:03

You like to come out and see people, where did you fall on your hand?

Participant 05:10

I said that's the first year of the epidemic, I came down to buy a grocery, the result of the epidemic, the first time a little bit, the epidemic does not know what happened. Look at all to me this stairs stepped on the air, fell down from the stairs fell. Arm to now more than three years, to these two in the first two bones fell kicked, or thoracic vertebrae two fracture. Hospitalised, he told me to put aside the cement like to give me an eye, minimally invasive. At that time did not step on, not slippery road is not step on, not slippery, is not it? No, I stepped out of the way, maybe I thought I was stepping out of the way.

Researcher07:05

Are you usually out there all day, are you out there all day except for the time you eat?

Participant 07:14

I'm not in for meals, meals are put on hold at home.

Researcher 07:17

Yes, I'd say is it true that you usually kill a time of day to eat and eat and sleep.

Participant 07:23

People wash the home is also work, just personal things, hygiene also have to wash. That's what I ate I gave him, my sister that's all dunked soup.

Researcher07:27

You are playing outside in addition to eating, sleeping and resting to wash? What time do you go back at night?

Participant 08:05

I spin and play.

Researcher00:29

Grandma do you still come out in the summer?

Participant 00:39

Come out in the summer too.

Researcher00:41

Also out all day?

Participant 00:44

I go to the bottom of the building and sit and talk, no, come and sit and watch them play cards, sit here with a lot of people, go back and forth across people in the doorway with less people.

Researcher 00:55

That's that granny I don't have anything else to ask, I'll finish the interview.

Walking Interview-18

Researcher 00:01

xxx I'm starting to record, I xxx would like to ask you when you usually go out, your mode

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of transport is mainly a small car at the door.

Participant 00:09

It's not a doorstep E-tricycle.

Researcher 00:13

You small tricycle where do you usually? On the E-tricycle, what part of the community do you usually move around?

Participant 00:21

I am usually in the cultural palace, I eat I eat breakfast I start the cultural palace, the cultural palace gained or about one o'clock, more than 12 o'clock I come back, I come back, come back I just get something to eat.

Researcher 00:36

You buy groceries.

Participant 00:38

Grocery shopping I go on my E-tricycle's.

Researcher 00:39

The little tricycle one is.

Participant 00:42

Just take the little E-tricycle in front of my door.

Researcher 00:43

You a little while you look at Cai, I said which block you go to buy food.

Participant 00:46

This towards the cloud street in this space.

Researcher 00:48

Sometimes the vegetable shop goes there to buy, you don't go to that vegetable market?

Participant 00:53

We have Caidian here and there.

Researcher 00:57

No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory has been built. You don't go to the farmers' market, do you?

Participant 01:03

No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, I don't go to the farmer's market, No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory, I go to the No.4 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 01:15

You usually go out to eat, right?

Participant 01:18

In the morning, if I don't have any leftovers compared to what I have today, I go and have a green bean soup, a fried bun, an egg, that's what I usually have in the morning.

Researcher 01:30

After you ride over on the E-tricycle, you have to make the main turn after you get off.

Participant 01:34

Yeah get off the bike and turn in.

Researcher 01:36

xxx you buy food to go to the Xiangrong Street side of the words, because you that place,

because I see him Xiangcheng Street is a street, you ride the bike in fact also good to go also stop, you are not a farmer's market because it is not very good to go inside? Or is it because of the price?

Participant 01:55

Not sometimes it is mainly inside still have to enter the inside sometimes to rain, get what to go to that place you set aside outside the main convenience of what, you see that vegetable good set aside inside you can not see, this high that shelf, he gave you to take out is what, is this.

Researcher 02:11

Do you buy your groceries from the supermarket?

Participant 02:15

Generally the supermarket here, Wanjiafu Wanjiafu, we go there to buy, like shampoo and so on, I can't get on the stage on my bike, so I just call the waiter and ask him to bring it down for me, whatever I want you to bring it down for me.

Researcher 02:30

This Wanjiafu supermarket service is quite good.

Participant 02:32

They can we this service is okay, when you call him, he brings it down for you.

Researcher 02:37

Yes, xxx do you have any block which places in our community? You don't usually go.

Participant 02:47

What parts of the community do you not go to? No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, generally speaking, you have activity equipment like in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, fitness equipment for the children, they have a lot of time, and I have no place to play when they are standing there, and the children can't move around when they are standing there.

No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory that fitness equipment in front of this supermarket I usually do not put, I usually ride to the Palace of Culture.

Researcher 03:09

It's because there's a child over there and you're afraid he's going to hit you, right?

Participant 03:12

You are not afraid that he hit you, in case you ride a car and hit, the child if what, he ran how you in case the car what is not good, I am mainly another I also coaxed you to touch someone else, you if you touch someone else, you say you are old again, you give people to listen to what is not, people say that you two sentences you are also difficult to listen to, it is not that I don't call me generally I this person is I don't want to call people to say what you want me to things strange not good to do, I am all by myself! Fushun, I this floor that I mopping I am a hand hold this, a hand sweep and then mopping, holding a mop swing, I generally speaking is my self-care, you see the bath to get what, I'm this clothes I wash this day to wash not finished I will wash again tomorrow, anyway, I generally this list of what, my child he is living far away, he has a family of this list of coverings I asked him to take his home to make the washing machine for me to wash, I also have a washing machine, but I will not move I have a washing machine too, but I won't move it, he's dead.

Researcher 04:07

It's this xxx if you live at home alone, are there any home help activities in the community to help with these chores and stuff?

Participant 04:19

This is not an epidemic time, you community, you just small leaves they may come to me to send food, sent two times the food, but also that is not called out, not to send me two times the food, but also to send 1 ~ 10 kg of rice 10 kg of flour, send that a box of vegetables are what have, messy garlic cloves, anyway, send can be full.

I think the community or can, I do not like them to say that some of you like there will be a time I went out to buy buns, there is not called over, that is not the epidemic time, this Xiaoli saw her get what you get what, I said I went to buy pancakes, pancakes are able to put it? I can put four or five days, I stay home I do not go out, this epidemic this serious not called out.

I said you buy me 5 burritos, I have eaten four or five days, he said you don't go, take the money I went to buy you that one time, I called him he I didn't give him the money, I finally what the epidemic open, I just went to send him the money, I called him, he sent me to send electric buns.

Researcher 05:27

They're still doing a good job, it's still okay.

Participant 05:32

I didn't say night child community I think it's the community, these are still quite caring for the old.

I didn't say that sometimes Xiaoyu said you have any difficulties, I always think that you think about him is busy with his work, I call him again to help me, I usually don't call him, it's not too much of a score, I usually don't call.

Researcher 05:55

Are there some sort of targeted services in the men's community.

Participant 06:00

And then.

Researcher 06:02

Have you ever enjoyed, not that you called him for help, but some of the services that they would have provided. Have you enjoyed it? I haven't enjoyed it, that is, have you had the knowledge that he had that service right there?

Participant 06:16

Anyway, I'm not good to inquire, he did not know to give people services not services, anyway, this aspect is to say, there is no epidemic time, I do not call, he said to send me a few years to get what to care about me, this has a moment what they send individuals he said the community said to call a week to come, I said you do not come to see me once a week, I said I have this year's phone number, I said I have what is happening, I will call this year, this year's busy with the I said, "Don't come to see me," I said, "I came to see me," and I said, "Let's talk about what's going on, and I'll tell you the truth.

Researcher 06:54

Are you satisfied with his work in general?

Participant 06:58

He that work there for a while, anyway, that one time in the past few years moved away, the window opened, darkened the roof rattling, I said this who went again I went to the community, called the community, I said if you do not call me I will go to call the police station 110.

I said that if the murderer ran away today and stayed here, I was afraid that someone would come to kill me. Although I'm so old, I'm also afraid of death, I said this in case I

called someone to kill, no one here, they said you first do not report over the police station, they came what secretary, they have come three or four people, this take that ladder up to see, go up to see, he said here head and no curtains, I said originally no curtains, I pull a curtain, you do not want him to pull the window curtains to get what I said he did not have what, you see him this door! I'm all against one on the first floor, one on the next this exactly the same room, he went to see what he called his door dead, he came to see. Anyway, it didn't rattle again. It didn't ring anymore. It was dark, I also gave the police station a phone call, he asked me what help, I said no. I said you wait until dark, you have no help. I said you wait for dark you come to patrol twice. He said that in the middle of that I was enough to make a phone call to the police station, I'm a person I also get anything can be careful can be responsible. I'm not saying, the community to help me to buy food I'll give the wallet to their employees, but there is no money in the wallet, anyway, I don't know, I'll hand over to the community.

Whoever finds it to go and buy things puts it here with me. I went back to him and said, I said this time to see my door at night in front of the door what things ah. I said what all moved to my door, I said that you go to see, you want to see what there is nothing, he said you do not care, he said no one wants it, want you want to get in the way you give him we finally do not know where it all got. I don't know, maybe I went out, and no one who did not want it ran away. He said you don't care about him, I said I don't care, I said I was talking to you, you don't get to the end of the day, I said you see how this I don't know.

I said, I give you a hello to tell you. I have some what happened, I also good to go to the community to say.

Researcher 09:21

There is still a closer engagement with the CPMSC.

Participant 09:24

Right. It's just that it's like what do I give to the community or not. Or which, I just give whatever I have to the community people and he's met them and he's also polite.

Researcher 09:40

I see the community doing a lot of work still.

Participant 09:43

Anyway, is my personal experience I'm not saying to the community who that family, I don't twist is to go to do something, what he, also all buy water that one time.

My niece's family his child to join the party, put aside the school to join the party, also called the community to write a certificate, she said aunt you lead me to, I said in I led her to go, I led to go, I said, his child I said to join the party, people write a certificate, he said the kind of look, I said that this is to do good things for the community anyway, I said to the community of the power of the next generation class, I said the class of what, not the next generation, I said that this is a good thing for the country, I said that what? I said what Nim gave him open open him a while he also gave him open.

Researcher 10:36

I'm still very responsible for coming to work.

Participant 10:38

I said what matter, anyway, he did not say, did not say what, really we will not say unreasonable to make those things, not so. The general just do anything, they did not hit, you like this, we Zhongyuan District, a section chief and peace, he called peace, he came to people say call is also said to say that said that moving with this house they

came here to do work, he what he said aunt why you do not go to do a what disability certificate?

I said I will not go to do, I said I do that get what, I said I do not go to go buy what on where to get what convenient, I said I just so all in, he said to do a colour pen certificate, some care to get what, I said he said I said I will not go mix him, I said I will not mix, he looked at my old corner, and then lost the snap there to paste a little heavy, he sent me another, I am grateful all day thank you.

Researcher 11:43

The community gave it away.

Participant 11:46

This is the Central Plains District District Nana came to get the house, he looked at my crutches upside down a little heavy, he said I said this you go back to buy me, she said I'm not buying. The original he said I put aside that unit to do this unit, he said put aside that hosting work, he said I know, he said it is not worth it, he has gone there this is not more than a week, almost half a month he sent me, he said that I heart can be grateful. You don't care how much money, just this hundred and ten dollars, no matter what people's hearts are thinking of you is that I have been grateful, I said that day I called him, he said auntie what difficulties, you can I give you some guidance to say to help you. I said I don't have any difficulties, I said I have difficulties, I'll call you. That day also said you haven't moved, I said I haven't found a suitable place, I said I'm going to move, I said I'll invite you to have a wedding drink, but also shelved joking.

Researcher 12:40

The staff are quite welcoming now.

Participant 12:43

You say this is a section chief of this Zhongyuan district, he is a section peace, I still have his on my mobile phone his name is peace, where is he from?

It is Zhumadian is where, I do not now forget where he is, he Nim here to me, I said thank you look, he said you and my mother's age are about the same, but also put there.

Researcher 13:06

Yes, see you now staff now are more will stand in the public's point of view to go to think about people's difficulties.

Participant 13:14

You said that this began he came to the whole of this house to help, this is not to get this house, that day came home to me to talk, this said said he said you this crutch is too heavy, walking inconvenient, I said behind the door, he said I will get you a, I said where you get me, he said I originally is to rent a crutch this factory.

Researcher 13:37

Brought it to me and that's what I can appreciate.

Participant 13:44

I think people's leadership are good to me, I think you want to others, I do not know because of what, I did not catch them to go, who shelved that wives say cucumber to me no, I do not know how they, do not know, anyway, to me, I am quite satisfied, the leadership of what is quite good.

Researcher 14:06

You also sent you this abduction words, you go out with abduction when you go? I said me.

Participant 14:11

You see I ride the resident car, you put the back of this room a close to say to this year after this can be folded up.

Researcher 14:17

You don't fold it up how do you put it, I thought you had two crutches.

Participant 14:21

No, as soon as you fold it up, fold it at both ends and put it at the back.

Researcher 14:27

This is very convenient, you now go to the Palace of Culture, if you take the crutches you go over there, are you playing there by yourself or with a friend Kodo? Not the Palace of Culture.

Participant 14:39

It's a place for the elderly.

All the older people are in that area, because why I do not go in the morning, I am waiting for no one time, you see the general 11:30 to go, a also to 12:00 or 1:00 back, that time people go home to get dinner, dinner you old you go to them, and then one they are young-old standing leading the child very said occupy the seat he did not move, you chuyu also embarrassed, you said that I am waiting for the time to go to, they do not play I then go to save the time. They do not play I go again to save them friction.

Researcher 15:15

That is, he xxx do you still know any old acquaintances or something, will a piece of about to go to the Palace of Culture? Or do you usually go there more by yourself, by yourself.

Participant 15:24

I'm not a very easy-going person, and I tend to speak directly. I don't mean to offend anyone, but I won't sit there and chat with people. I just don't do that. I've always been a loner, even when I was younger. I never hung out with other people because when I'm with others, I have to greet them and call out to them, and then they call out to me, and I find that troublesome. Researcher 15:52

Participant 16:00

I've been young, never I myself, I buy what I do not regret, as long as I three phase in, I buy is not good, Mom I again from we do not want I do not regret this person, compared to you a moment to people say, which says you like this mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relationship, I said you face I do not say behind the back, I said behind the back of the anxious about what things you do not know. I don't know what's going on. If you don't hit it, you'll say that's the way your face is.

I don't care about you, I said I don't care if you can't stand it, anyway, I'm this thing, you just get it wrong.

I am talking about you is that I am shouting over you in my heel I say you.

Researcher 16:42

It's something that still has to be communicated positively.

Participant 16:44

You see the Spring Festival this is not this cold no heating, I put aside the daughter-in-law went twice, probably lived for a month, the winter old cold, get the heater, but only this house warm that house sleeping is not warm, he wants to call me to go to him that day to my children they are angry, put aside that I sit at a table to eat, my children they do not fight the mouth of the children, hold the crooked into the mouth of the children,

annoyed wrestled the chopsticks, at that time I did not pay attention to him, and when he was done with what I say this year! You come over to him to do what something not see you, not a house he stayed there I stayed here I called him I said where did you learn to do this, I said who did you learn it from?

I said you will drop the dish big bowl drop who, you a is to drop me, I said I did not eat your, I did not live in your house is I bought, I came to pay you 10,000 yuan, I said I eat you drop who, I listen to why not drop me. I said which people you have to be able to, or call you that house things to wrestle me, I said only count you have the ability to, I said I only admit that you have the ability to, I said he held his breath did not say anything, if the pit I will not rely on him, he did not say anything, you quarrel again I do not say the words, but I said reasonable, I am asking you to live a good handsome what handsome. Yes, I am Yin over, I'm not saying that with that woman like towards three over, are not called both of them over, good.

You so this is a kind of Lai animal how, once angry also do not fight, do not let the chic Liangren whole to wrestle things, you say you do which discipline is learned from who this discipline?

Researcher 18:15

The bad thing I say.

Participant 18:19

I do not say, I say this behind me how, you say he resisted what things he will know to change, you this I say you face I say you have the ability to Jinxia your house bike I only admit that you have the ability to you grow into a colour, I say you really hit.

I think I speak can also be difficult to hear.

Researcher 18:35

I'm not saying that neither, sometimes this people get along with each other, you have to communicate positively.

Participant 18:41

I'm telling you to get over it, not that you're coming over.

Researcher 18:44

If you don't make it clear in your dialogue, I'm going to have a conflict later on.

Participant 18:48

I sometimes I said, he pouted my mouth what, I said this year to say you right? You lie there by yourself to talk about the ground, I said people still don't say you, I said I have gas people call me warm heart, why should I out of this gas, but also cause you to be impatient, I said yes I am like this, I this is this person.

So you think.

Researcher 19:07

Think yes or should be educated properly.

Participant 19:11

But now I'm here to tell you, I'm this brain now instead of the old fast, the original my brain I say nothing brain, on the contrary can be fast, we have what to say. You see in the past I also I retired, I went into business, business to get what I 6065 what I bought to run a long-distance car, I 65 before getting off.

Researcher 19:35

You again take can save.

Participant 19:36

I put on the car to jump around, you want to not make, two knees in the film wipe

finished will not go, you sit down she does not hurt at all, but you do not walk a walk her bones wipe the nerve pain, you want to sit and lie down do not hurt, but you do not walk, which you say is the main two knees to make it, yes, in the middle of the cartilage wear finished, how to cure it can not be cured, are resting and resting, and now do not do anything, not dry, can not do it on the crab Thank you, I can not do anything, I can not do anything, I can not do nothing, I can not do it. I can't do it anymore, I can't do anything, I can't do anything now.

Anyway, you like me this generally speaking than I generally big are almost gone gone, some also I said I know enough people always happy, anyway, no matter what can still take care of themselves, I don't need to other people I bathe to get what I washroom to put a stool I sit there to wash, the stand up and hold the crutches stood up to wash wash rinse, I'm not to other people's wives to get the Alba miscellaneous a little bit, all the time do not take a shower do not wash their hair, I myself also on the The night, I big grandson small grandson is not Saturday, all came, that raining called that house inserted called will be only my house sweep, I said a while, I said the night to it drag drag. Researcher 20:59

xxx I see that your house is clean.

Participant 21:02

I said this bed sheets a few pieces, have to use a chicken feather duster a flutter, I this morning I told me to change down and lay a duster.

Researcher 21:15

Yeah, it's actually been pretty awesome because you're tidying up alone already cursing, yeah.

Participant 21:21

There will be a while this there will be also lazy, mainly lazy, now this leg is not allowed, are lazy, do not want to move. It's still a little bit better to exercise, or not to exercise.

Researcher 21:34

Yes not exercise not in, a workout a do not exercise words are very fast, the body can not function, it will be opened up very quickly.

Participant 21:43

Because of what? He can be on the old can be fast, because of what? People's wives she sparse has not given me to seven or eight years older than her, it is crooked a little bit will be fractured, you say eat crooked a little bit will be fractured, the bone is osteoporosis to that, that is I ride a few years, which, three or four years I fell, my arm fell off. The doctor gave me another joint, check is also all right. They said that because I was wearing a hat and the wind was strong, I started out with one hand on the hat. In the end, the hat fell off, we both hands loose driving steering wheel, just remember to take the hat forgot the steering wheel of the car.

Researcher 22:23

I fell off, where did you fall off?

Participant 22:27

I construction road culture palace exercise finished back when, has not fracture is also good, he said this is very hurt quite serious Nim you still be careful, now I can also be careful.

Researcher 22:40

You bring one with a string, the hat will not be blown away.

Participant 22:42

It's not summer.

Researcher 22:44

It's all this summer there's one of those hats, it's not one of those thin hats that you wear in the summer?

It had a string, the kind of plastic just kind of leather straps that you could tie this started that had leather straps on it as well, remember that day.

Participant 22:59

Didn't remember the rope on that hat, but people windy out of a windy, a start to scrape. I make a hand to fish hat and a wind, he almost scraped the hat off, cycling when the hand out, just like this. People doctor see me so old, told me to go to do cardiac ultrasound, he was afraid of fracture, a press on a press inside to fracture, he said can not get, check two days no fracture. I was relieved, said I was dislocated.

Researcher 23:43

dislocated, this is not now still good, you have to be careful, now do not dare.

Participant 23:50

Now I think in my mind this hat scrape lose I will not go to help, but also a lesson.

Researcher 24:00

Now that you are older, how do you feel about the overall maintenance of the community environment?

Do you encounter any difficulties when you go out? Because I see and hear you say that you're also more worried about safety when you go out, is that do you ever feel maintained?

Participant 24:20

Community, he is mainly now in the courtyard on I have two left behind all are doing business lease. The night before last, they quarrelled, most of the countryside is the country are ten 12:00 10:30, he is still shelved in the evil call quarrel, I got up and scolded him. I said what is that woman doing?

I said sleep not sleep, I said this is not sleep this go outside to quarrel this don't affect the people, said he a not quarrel, where do I go to find go?

Researcher 24:58

It can't be helped.

Participant 25:00

You can't do anything about it, but behind him are all the small businesses in this area, cooking, grinding tofu, and so on, and so on, and so on.

Researcher 25:07

Did they have any odour or any effect on you at times?

Participant 25:11

The odour didn't really affect me, not originally, but they were choking on the wood burning in the block where they were making the tofu. I didn't want to, I told him to look for the community, and he left after about a week. You think he did not go far, the wind blowing smoke through all my house, I said I can not stand, I said he got rid of, what is the matter, I will be back to let them, yes.

I'll give it to them.

Researcher 25:45

xxx What do you think of the overall maintenance of the exterior? Is there any rubbish, or a lot of places that are broken that don't have any way of those things.

Participant 25:55

And then what to say is that the original rubbish is resting there, crossroads this over here not far away, a summer in the rubbish in the watermelon rinds and flies gas are bombarded, dirty death. Finally said a few times, said a few times they changed, told to get rid of, now the bins pulled to the door of the community, you come and see.

The main neighbourhood business, you like me this yard are no one, you think I will have how much rubbish. I'm all about egg shells and whatnot, I'm all about getting a small plastic bag to hold it, that is, then throw the two bags in the rubbish. I go to throw to the box, actually now moved to the outside to throw all the rubbish is the back of the business messy people. It's dirty, you think about the flies that are in that doorway right now from the heat the other day.

Researcher 26:47

The doorway you throw rubbish inside, you still get off? Or just throw one at a time.

Participant 26:53

I'm a little bit of a bag, I don't get off the bike, I just ride there and I throw it.

I have a small bag of rubbish that I threw in there in the past day or two, and I don't really have any rubbish. Sometimes I pick vegetables and I put them outside and I pick them, and I kind of pick a handful of vegetables and I don't kill the rubbish.

Researcher 27:12

That is, you ride the whole body, you go out is to go out, as long as the car can want to go to the place is basically all can go? All of them?

Participant 27:23

Sometimes I run far away, now I don't run this far away, originally I run Xili Lake, that area I am also happy good incense burning, Buddha's Light Temple, what I go and run together to go all ride the car.

Researcher 27:40

Now you do not go because the knee does not take point.

Participant 27:43

Not now do not go, now a far away, a far away those old men to burn incense are gone, all original are into a group, now they can not find, I can not see them.

Researcher 27:59

They've moved away haven't they?

Participant 28:00

The other day I asked him some of them have gone, you do not know are old, some of them have gone, some of them are saying that some of them are also inconvenient, are not able to go.

Look at my old sister here, she has moved to another place. She moved to the back of the house where the supply room used to be, and then she moved to the house across the street from me. I'm not sure where the farmer's market is, but before she moved there, she came here to buy some buns, and I ran into her, and the two of us had a fight, and they moved far away, so I don't know what's going on.

Researcher 28:54

Do you usually have any other activities that you wish you could be involved in?

Participant 29:06

Now I can't get involved, now I can't get involved. This leg just focus on treating the leg, started to hurt, said it hurts it hurts for a while, I went to the grocery store in the morning, here is also Xiangrong Street to buy food, bought meat I line down the stairs will not walk. I can't walk down the stairs, I can't move, I can't even move. I sat there for a while, and

then I went to call my family to bring back the food. Later, my legs stopped working and I couldn't walk.

The original is the leg treatment is almost, anyway, can not be with the present, but also can walk can move this a while running, originally, and on the countryside, take the car to go, are shelved in my yard those two or three older people to go. Other activities, I can't what to jump, young to put aside the factory to live, I tell you on the shift to sleep time young will dance to get a what I can't sing not what, you see like my generation of people don't, I have no what will dance in that part of the world, sing and play all play what. I'm not sure if you're going to be able to find the best way to do this, but I'm sure you'll be able to find the best way to do it.

Researcher 30:49

Yes yes, xxx you now go out to the Palace of Culture then, is the noon that will go to you to buy food then, eat to buy food then is by the way, so you go out of the time are at noon when there are fewer people.

Participant 31:07

This is the time I go out, which falls to 11 o'clock is so only go out to avoid the crowd, I go out by myself I ride my own bike to get what also no one, eat that is to eat some rice what also no one.

I generally eat things can be nutritious, sometimes also get a carrot, get a little leek, soak a few mushrooms, eat a vegetarian dumplings, I can well cook and eat. Some people are not good at cooking, and it is not good for them to cook and eat by themselves. I'm a lovely cook, people say I'm a foodie. You see, I'm better than many older people who don't know how to cook anything, not even pancakes or steamed buns. I always say that I steam buns for those who can't cook, so I send two or three buns to them. When I didn't move out, it was getting worse every year. I still steam my own buns and make congee. I'll just give some buns to my neighbour, she doesn't know how to make them, she doesn't know how to do anything.

Researcher 32:44

Then you make really delicious.

Participant 32:47

I love to cook, I love to cook in general. Nothing they cook tastes good anyway. My daughter-in-law and the girls don't know how to cook either. My grandchildren love my cooking. Now I don't want to cook for her. That day my eldest grandson came back and said, "Grandma, why don't you cook me another chicken for dinner? I said that chicken is a lot of work. You have to marinate it and then you have to fry it, and I said you have to make the noodles. I said, "I'm not going to do it. I have to deep-fry it twice," and I said, "I'm not going to do it now.

My grandson says my chicken is better than Texaco's, and he says I'm on TV. I said how old am I, and I'm on TV, I usually cook, and what I make is better than what they make, I don't know how I do it.

Researcher 33:26

You've got a talent for that.

Participant 33:28

There's a talent, frying anything potato big is better than my daughter-in-law's frying. She can't fry carrots, she can't fry potatoes, she can't fry cabbage. My grandson always said, asked me to fry a hot and sour cabbage, I said now not in, I can forget how to fry.

Walking Interview-19

Researcher 00:11

Look at it this way uncle you where you are slipping in the last two days I will go slipping with you.

Participant 00:16

I'm at this point, there is a small square I'm on Wanjiafu, it's not a Wanjiafu in front of a small square, you this side is not a small square, over there but there are households, you have to be a little louder, people may hear it, in the small square is that is to say yes, that side of the house expropriation. This moment should be a little less people, line should be a little less.

Researcher 00:38

Just the little square that you usually go to or is it okay to go out and about?

Participant 00:43

I think this is all acquaintances, sometimes in the privacy of you can understand that there are called people hear is not good, right? I can understand you, I can understand you. You're like other people so bad, there are what there are you say or not okay let people laugh, right? Yes, because what I do not know what you want to ask, ask what things.

Researcher 01:01

We are just walking around to see what you think of this community, grandpa you're over here in the small square is usually picking and buying right?

Participant 01:09

He small square is to say that some exercise older people walk, some with him to sit down, a few older people to communicate, nothing to do point to talk about this is the meaning of killing time is mainly to kill time.

Researcher 01:24

Grandpa, do you usually come out by yourself or do you meet up with your friends?

Participant 01:29

Sometimes you just don't see the friend leave when you come, just the person you just interviewed at the bottom, there's a guy I'm close to.

Researcher 01:41

Often we go out together.

Participant 01:42

I don't really ask him to come out, he always calls me because he's in the inside that door he has to go out of this courtyard and then pass through my door, pass through my door this call me out and then I said something, that's mainly it.

Researcher 01:53

It's quite a good person, some of them are paired up.

Participant 01:57

Can much old ladies play cards young, like my age almost, anyway, I this what kind of age group of people can almost all can contact, are more to the temperament anyway pretend a little bit more.

Researcher 02:13

It's just that you're quite talkative when I look at you.

Participant 02:15

I'm a general person, I'm a general person. It's just that little square.

Researcher 02:19

It's quite crowded.

Participant 02:24

It's usually less crowded at this time of year, probably after 12 o'clock.

Researcher 02:29

It's starting to get sunburnt. What time do you usually come here?

Participant 02:36

I usually get this place in the morning when I'm having breakfast, and then I have some acquaintances who spray here. Sometimes I go to the place where you just sat, sometimes they all gather there after they come back from shopping and spray again, and then they have to cook, and then I go back, and at noon I have the habit of sleeping, I have the habit of sleeping since I was in school.

Researcher 03:01

To take a midday nap every day, yeah.

Participant 03:02

I must have stuck to that for decades.

Researcher 03:05

You just play cards over here.

Participant 03:08

Right where you just saw me sitting, next to the fruit vendor.

Researcher 03:15

There's a regular place, yeah, because it's all.

Participant 03:18

One of our yards, it's all our yards, basically we don't mix with outsiders because the people in the yards can also play more cards, and some of them don't play he just sits there and watches, and it's quite enjoyable.

Researcher 03:30

It's better to be around people you know.

Participant 03:33

You again a handful of raw materials, you say sometimes you do not understand the temperament character, right? I don't dare to talk nonsense, sometimes you don't understand what you are talking about people are not happy and not energetic, generally I speak very little, or speak with special caution, I'm not willing to offend people, don't like this person on this point, it's not a little bit of open space, right? It's easier to talk.

Researcher 03:58

You the environment.

Participant 03:58

Unrestricted, yeah.

Researcher 03:58

Grandpa do you normally use these instruments here?

Participant 04:02

I don't use them much after I had this foot pain. I used to use it a lot less.

I like I have to say that time I like cycling, walking, swimming, beside sometimes playing badminton, I used to have quite a lot of hobbies, maybe with age may be a bit lazy, you may not experience now young, older people used to say to me I do not understand, I have what you should like you can not, the force is not able to do, really not able to do. After you reach this age, you can say that you feel that you have to do something, and you feel particularly tired. It's not like when you were young and you could get through the night, you can't do it at this age, you can't do it when you're older, if you're tired, you can't even get through the week, even if it's three or two days or a little bit more.

Researcher 04:54

It's true that it's more important that we keep protecting our bodies.

Participant 04:57

You don't see me thin, I basically don't have any major diseases, I have a little bit of minor diseases, my intestinal tract is not very good, I can't have good diarrhoea, just now the community notified me, I happen to have diarrhoea in my house, I went out with my sister yesterday, I ate the steamed dumplings, I grew up so much, I don't usually eat meat, and finally I had diarrhoea, and I was embarrassed, and I went to the community, I said excuse me for you to knock on the door.

Researcher 05:20

It just so happened that I was in the bathroom and he was fine.

Participant 05:25

Let's go somewhere cooler, you're not sunburnt like that okay?

Researcher 05:27

I'm fine grandad. Are you feeling better now.

Participant 05:30

Can I go over there or over here now.

Researcher 05:36

Anything, Grandpa you need to sit down and rest.

Participant 05:38

This piece can wait a little while.

Researcher 05:40

Yes, Grandpa, where do you usually sit when you're talking to people here?

Participant 05:45

I don't usually sit sometimes.

Researcher 05:48

That's right.

Participant 05:48

Generally in to really a little bit tired then, because I'm an individual, you have to rely on yourself for everything, I'm quite strong, you don't care what to buy a thing, what daily necessities or eat a meal, or I don't use people in general, I just have to open my mouth that's no way, that is to say that it must really be a little bit or it's called overwhelmed or it's true that you just can't move, but this kind of situation is not there right now, and sometimes I say that it's feeling Sometimes I feel a little tired, I am also in the spirit, that is, in the dinner or how to or buy things, you do not buy how to do? If you don't solve it yourself, no one will help you, right? You might understand what I'm saying.

Researcher 06:33

That's.

Participant 06:35

You have to just rely on other people, and I don't like that either, because what? You have to rely on difficulties and always rely on thoughts and you get it reflected over time right? So I do everything very carefully and very cautious, I also do not want others what to me what perception, or this person is particularly lazy or what, so special invitation to everyone to say your whole mouth what small things to help you, no, I can not raise this habit now, I just do not good to rely on people, I can do it by myself I do it by myself. Another say a bad word, now you have to say light rely on people is not so easy, really not so easy, not that everyone listens to you, you probably should understand, you think you help me a little and long, what others think you do not know right? People I do not owe you all day long you give me as a nanny, right? What kind of person are you looking at? The main thing is to look at what people, because not to say a bad word, you are not Jiang's people, I do not have to I basically the same to so big did not beg, because I am single for decades.

About marriage this thing how to say, that is to say also a little my mother at that time to me delayed, my mother is that belongs to the kind of how to speak, that is to say a little feudal a person, that is to say that I say count I do not care if you like not like, I say can be on can, my mother that person is a sinew, how you do not make sense.

So the main reason is that, so that I have not been a family no way, my mother to delay me to my almost 50, the most valuable time lost, so that I later I completely dead heart, no longer looking for, no meaning, and now I would like to open up, the family is light and how, you like my plant is now levied on the house, right?

Researcher 08:29

This house.

Participant 08:31

Yes, this pile can be more, Zhengzhou City can be more know, is levied by unit, can be all know. The levy actually does not matter, you see the levy is now regardless of the parents of the children, that is, the children how to say, that is, unlike the light to come and go, that is, there is no affection too much, basically this is the case. There is no very little kind of that is to say that everyone share a little or no, all want to monopolise, you think of the most expensive share of up to 1.34 million, too much, this thing I want to give you an example, can give a lot of examples of.

Researcher 09:19

When it's levied will it be distributed to the whole community?

Participant 09:23

No, because what? It's their property and it has nothing to do with the community, it's my property, why should I give it to the community? I'm sure you understand what I'm saying, right?

Researcher 09:32

Right.

Participant 09:34

Because of what? Your private property and the community and the public buildings are not connected, that's not connected that's why you think the highest you can get is over 1.3 million, almost half a million for a room, that's a lot of money.

Researcher 09:55

I project anyway looking at this is going on.

Participant 09:59

No, it's been fenced off for more than two years, and there's no construction going on now, so I don't know what's going on. Some I heard gossip that this house is like a follow-up how to say, some say is now again to get this, some say get, some say now the funds can't keep up, the funds a little bit can't keep up, so that's just because we unit these things it's not valuable, the key to this land is worth money.

Researcher 10:34

Indeed this location is quite good for living.

Participant 10:37

Yes, my place belongs to the first ring road.

Researcher 10:43

I think it's very compact and there are a lot of things to sell, so it's convenient for you if you're living on your own.

Participant 10:54

Yes, a you see they have to other places to buy things merchants, in our factory to sell things than in other places to sell things more expensive, and still easy to sell, because what? Outside of the various units he can be more are like to run to here to sell things, you have to pay attention to words, you have to pay attention to words, you see, including fruits, including you buy other dishes, other relatively speaking will be used, outside to expensive, there is also a main reason is that their front room is also too expensive, front room is too expensive.

Researcher 11:29

Would you buy around here?

Participant 11:31

I don't buy, I buy and eat.

Researcher 11:33

And again you usually eat is go to a restaurant.

Participant 11:37

I go to the restaurant to eat, I'm a person also you say cooking is not cost-effective, busy half a day, I ate a meal in a few minutes are finished, because I've been in the army to eat fast, then when the army, you don't get into the habit of that is to say that you're late for a while meals are not available, so to say to get into the habit of this.

Researcher 11:56

Coming out is really a little bit more convenient, yeah.

Participant 11:59

Whichever hospital shop for groceries can be kinda nice.

Researcher 12:05

You don't have to clean up the kitchen when you're done. It's really convenient.

Participant 12:09

Anyway, it's everything this has one advantage and one disadvantage right? It's a bit expensive for you to buy and eat, but you save money. You say if you want to save money, you can go through a little bit of trouble, not to say that you can do whatever your heart desires.

Researcher 12:23

Impossible thing indeed. It is grandpa you choose this restaurant, you are more concerned about the location of this thing or taste? We want to eat this flavour today we will walk there.

Participant 12:33

I these two I go to the middle to say, because my intestines are not very good, I like to eat anything, you see I usually like to eat noodles, eggs, noodles, set meal is what set meal? You may have seen, a plate, give you some rice, to one two three kind of vegetables that kind of, or eat some vegetarian dumplings, almost I mainly eat these things.

Basically, I don't eat meat. I don't eat meat basically. I basically don't touch meat, I basically don't touch meat. A little bit of meat is also my family, you're like my sister they do, New Year's festivals call me to go to dinner, I give him or buy things to give him money, now usually give money, give them money, after a New Year's Eve. Outside the door I myself came out again, I don't want to trouble him, because you trouble more than not, you like my sister, they are older than me, right? The body is not too good, but also not my pension trouble is not strong, so that after two years later, like a first eight or so, outside the restaurant opened the door to live are out, they said that you continue to eat here, I do not think so, do not disturb you.

I said I'm not particularly picky, as long as there is food, as long as I can eat.

Researcher 13:48

I see that you're still in pretty good health, Grandpa, do you usually go a little bit farther to eat and go shopping and so on.

Participant 13:53

If I had strong legs, I would probably go farther, but now I don't have strong legs, so I eat around here. You see like generally sometimes this place to eat a lo mein, sometimes order a dish a dish is not with meat kind of, eat rice, and then in the rice, sometimes want to eat a noodle run to eat noodles over there is that side of the right.

Researcher 14:19

This is indeed a bad foot, this does need to be rested.

Participant 14:23

What's the matter I just want a few days, I want to take a bath in the industrial bathhouse when I take clippers to stir it to repair, and then stick stick corns sticker, now with the medicine does not work, it is more and more powerful. One more thing is that I may be particularly hard on my back now, you can't get it yourself at home, you have to pull the foot over. Of course, you can not easily snatch, but not generally and then turned over, so to the AWu himself to repair like the street kind of repair feeling I am a little bit uneasy, I am a little bit uneasy.

Researcher 15:00

It does still have to be somewhere with a high standard of hygiene.

Participant 15:05

I also often look at some medical books, listen to Chinese medicine doctor lectures, anyway, this thing you like what, you just see blood after, especially like this knife ribs or what to move small surgery kind of, like you want to touch the bleeding, to have an infectious disease or hepatitis in front of you, the price will give you, you're out of luck.

Researcher 15:26

It really is.

Participant 15:27

Infectious, you say to for I think to.

Participant 00:00

Right.

Researcher 00:01

Then it's better to get it slowly, the big thing is to get active over here first.

Participant 00:04

A little bit of pain is a little bit of pain, I'd just take my time. Don't rush it. Afraid to spend money I'm also retired, you say ask people to fix it, you want to in case something happens, you say to you annoyed also can't do anything about it, you infected with the disease to the body what do you do? Yes, your analogy is like Hepatitis B you really got it, you want to remove it is not easy?

Researcher 00:24

Then it's better to be active over here now so that you can turn here later.

Participant 00:28

I have the opportunity or how it is, or whoever helps me is okay, then I buy him a meal, or give him some money to my people right?

Or I can do it myself, sometimes I'm all groping just buy a corns patch, put it on myself for two days and three days, and then it's soft I'll strangle a little bit more and tear it off, put it on two more times back because you're freezing the iron, and it might consume a month or so and not work, and it grows back, and that's not working again.

Researcher 00:56

This does grandpa you either sit here and rest, your feet don't hurt.

Participant

No it's okay.

Researcher

This grandpa you usually stand there if you usually like to stand under the tree? It's not a good idea to leave it for others.

Participant 01:07

I sometimes you have to really sun place to have sun place, that spring evening summer he said he anyway if he is like this, just give him a moment to say, everyone has can walk finished I also go, some can not finish I want to go I'll go.

It does not matter, because to see all day long does not matter, yes, is to see your personal interest, if you are willing to spray a little bit more on a little bit more, who is not who is not forced to do so, right? It's you meeting up anyway to spray a little bit more if you can.

Researcher 01:35

We meet mainly for friends to chat, the place is not important, yes, the place is never a

preference.

Participant 01:44

Yeah, it doesn't really matter.

Researcher 01:46

If you look at this area, do you think you're happy with this kind of space? I've seen a lot of older people who don't like to use this, do you have any satisfaction or dissatisfaction with it.

Researcher 01:57

I this also does not matter, I this is to say turn to which place interested? In no interest, a little eye-catching place, I will look at that, not eye-catching, then walk again is so, anyway, walk around the scenery, say a sentence or who argued, or another small accident to get together to see a little.

But I will not see the top of the you have to go again, anyway, is how to say, you said you can not retire later to kill time prevail.

Researcher 02:25

Right in this place on a bit indeed is not we a bit no merit, right? I don't think it's particularly good, but I think it's okay.

Participant

I think it's okay.

Researcher

I've been living here all my life, and I'm quite attached to it. I see that this side is full of old workers who retired from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Do you think there is any place in this place that you feel is very meaningful to you? For example, he may be a place where you are always with your friends, or a place where you often come to relax, and you feel that this place is a favourite place for you, yes.

Participant 02:57

And it's not talkable, because what? You think you, let's say the small square, you don't say all day long this is the place that impresses you, no, that is to say that sometimes you see no one you have to go, or you think when my feet are better, I'm going to go somewhere else, not in one place, this is a place that's very much in this place for decades.

You have to say in this unit, then the country from Shanghai transferred over, that has been in this unit, you say to be in this unit is also a little good impression, but also a little bit of feelings, in addition to after all, in this life for decades.

Researcher 03:33

Yes, have you considered moving out? Or do you think you still like this place?

Participant 03:42

I don't really care because the point is if you're going to move out you have to buy a house because I've just retired not two years ago and I'm not financially up to it, and I'd actually like to move to a new environment. I want to move to a new environment because I've been living here for a long time. I can't help it, the economy can't reach, the economy can't reach you can't get out, then you can only end up here. Because I said you can understand, a person he is after all economic limited, if you want to rely on this kind of salary and retirement salary, you want to buy a suite, I'm afraid there is still a little difficult.

Researcher 04:25

Yes.

Participant 04:27

You must also know that now buy a suite is not talk, I buy a catty of vegetables I buy, open my mouth I buy fruit, you again expensive I buy a few catty can afford, that house is the big head, not a sentence two words, in fact, I've long had this idea, want to also want to change to a new environment, can not, I was working even more poorly, that time work 1 month only a few hundred dollars, my mother want to living expenses but also the high, I At most every month at most can keep a hundred and ten dollars, I can not save money, so that you buy a house is not possible on the retirement salary is a little higher, a little higher before retiring a few years, right? There's no way you can afford to buy a house.

Researcher 05:09

I just see that you are more open to trying new things, just see that you have a very outgoing personality. Yeah, still trying not to be in this place not so much to stay right?

Participant 05:21

Staying is not that call people have you see just like my unit's have people left, for older people also died several, is to stay in the environment. He went out to book a room though and came to see in the poplar, not much time to die. Several people died, that is too attached to this kind of environment.

I don't care, I can accept new and old things, another is to say that I don't care what I do, I don't look at money, I'm a person from childhood is not to look at money so seriously, casually have money I'll spend a little bit more, don't have money to count down, I won't go how to borrow a little bit of money, or all the day long I don't have money to cry poor or how to worry about my life, I've never been like this, have it on the spending not to be counted, I'm just this kind of habit.

Researcher 06:11

I've never been like that, I just spend what I have and what I don't have, that's all. You have to have a good relationship with your friends, you have to have a good relationship with your friends, you have to have a good relationship with your friends, you have to have a good relationship with your friends.

Participants 06:19

You can't get it together if you like the west, yeah, people can't all be what you want them to be, can they?

Researcher 06:25

You have to find the kind of poker partner that we have a good rapport with.

Participant 06:29

I don't like the kind of good temper good complaining, itself, you want to play cards this thing is originally happy, you say just ask others to count down you can't be fun, you have to say that you again a mouth he will be angry, so playing cards he wants to chatter on chatter on chatter I complained about me, that's the way it is. I'm not going to be able to do that, but I'm going to be able to do that.

But some people character he can not, he seems to be a little strong, always how you, he did not say how he, so that you often play in a piece, you understand the temperament, you feel wrong, the temper I look at not, not to play.

But you have to stand to the side to see two play two I do not play, I see not suitable I do not play, I circle around, almost I come back, right?

Just like you just said temperament to the edge, a look at almost that sit there to play a

while to play a while, I recently began to play cards, these years I have not played cards, I do not want to I do not want to be angry, there is no point, I think that this person you say are outsiders or friends and neighbours, in order to what a small matter of what to get angry is not cost-effective, really not cost-effective.

Researcher 07:51

This is not cost-effective, we are still not a round and come back. You said it was supposed to be fun and active.

Participant 07:56

You again bet a gas, think it's too bad, it's really not happy this again make a gas like.

Researcher 08:02

It's not fun, or after the circle we can move our muscles again, and then come back.

Participant 08:09

I'm not angry, I'm happy.

Researcher 08:10

Grandpa, if you want to do a spin, where do you usually do it?

Participant 08:15

I usually just you see me sitting at that place, and then next to the fruit stand across the street in the afternoon to play cards, in the afternoon to start to play cards, play cards in the afternoon, and then I think just at this point I will eat, sometimes I will choose a little bit of the restaurant, sometimes eat in this one, and sometimes a little bit run to this side a little bit, just a little bit farther away, and around a little bit towards that side, and a little bit of the restaurant, and I will eat around here.

Say I have a friend called me, let's say you or he just a little bit farther away from the restaurant to go and eat a fried a fried a few dishes, eat a little bit of rice and then give me, because I myself I don't drink, that's it.

Researcher 09:00

Grandpa you have to go that way, on the road then, let's say you go towards the restaurant, let's say you walk the circle, on this road do you have a bias towards the road choice?

For example, you might have people who think that the road is too crowded and they don't want to go, or they think it's too sunny or something, do you have any criteria for choosing that, or do we just go wherever we go today.

Participant 09:23

I randomly random, I generally said to save time prevail, you take the analogy I go this way, you see itself buy food can be many people, right? I try to avoid them, I have to walk by the side, you if people crowded, I will wait for a while to see a needle in the eye, this group of people do not move much, or you should buy food to buy food I will hurry over, no one when I walk slowly, that's the way.

I will not deliberately say that this is the point let's say I want to go from here, to go to a place, this place is close to let's say I will not specially round another circle, I will not.

I'm just going to go with the flow, I'm just going to go wherever I want to go, this place is not too good, I'm going to go from here, I don't care, I don't care about anything, I'm not that kind of picky, I'm not that kind of indifferent.

Researcher 10:12

It's the mindset anyway, you've got a good very good mindset on this one.

Participant 10:14

The casual kind.

Researcher 10:16

It's a more peaceful life this way, yeah.

Participant 10:17

And you're not as stressed out, right? Yeah, otherwise it's too demanding, really.

You're really too tired to live if you're too demanding in every way. Maybe you're young and really promising now, and when you slowly enter the society, I don't even need to say that, you'll have more and more social experience as you grow older. At that time you may be able to understand more. Young people are highly educated now, but they may not be particularly socially experienced.

Researcher 10:54

Indeed, haven't heard people say that.

Participant 10:55

One has to live and learn, and there are things in society that you can't learn in this lifetime, you really can't learn them all.

There's no end to things in society and book knowledge and scientific knowledge and all of that, but there's even more between people.

Researcher 11:11

It's true, society is really too complex.

Participant 11:16

Nowadays, society is different in terms of how people relate to each other. I don't know if you've ever experienced, like in the old days, everyone was poorer, but the relationship between people was particularly good. It's different now. After the installation of security doors, basically, I don't go to your house and you don't come to my house, so we just chat outside and seldom visit each other.

In fact, it is inconvenient to visit your home, especially in summer, when everyone is busy with their own business. If you always go to other people's houses, they may feel uncomfortable, and it's not easy to do anything. If you keep going to other people's houses, they will feel uncomfortable, so it's good if you don't go.

That's why I think we should be more conscious of what we do.

If you meet an acquaintance outside, you should say a few words, but if you don't, just forget about it. If I see someone I know, I'll say a few words, but if there's no one to talk to, I'll just sit by myself for a while, or go home and rest for a while, or look at something, whatever.

There are many ways to pass the time, others may find it boring or unbelievable, but you can't help it. Look like it's not you interviewing me now, I'm like that myself, you can't go and force someone to come over, can you?

If you want to stand, you can stand, if you want to sit and take a break, you can take a break, if you don't find it interesting or if there's no one left, you can go home if you want to go home. I just do what I want. I eat when I need to eat and sleep when I need to sleep. If I meet someone, I talk to them, if I don't, I don't, it's just the way it is.

Researcher 13:07

Row Row, I think you are very calm. Yes, you have a really good personality.

Participant 13:12

Bottom line is that I don't compete with the world.

And I don't envy others because they are particularly rich, I rely on myself.

I do as much as I can with as much money as I have, just live for myself.

Sometimes we chat, I will also say, other people have money is other people's business,

jealousy is useless, that is self-deception. If you have a low salary, you should resign yourself to your fate, and if you have a high salary, you should be happy. As long as the money is fair and square, your own money, no stealing, no robbing.

I'm retired, I'll spend as much money as I have. If the salary is low, just a few hundred a month, can only admit it.

More will spend more, less will spend less. Other people eat meat, we eat steamed bread, not on the line.

Researcher 14:01

Right?

Participant 14:02

I've always had a very positive mindset. I don't just talk about it, I really do it, and I don't compare myself with others. Really, I used to live over there and everyone including my family recognised my character. My sister also said that I'm not cheap and generous with my hands and feet.

I'm not cheap, I'm generous, and I'm a good person.

Researcher 14:23

I see that you have a good relationship with everyone, yes.

Participant 14:27

Actually, some people here can be at odds with each other, that's normal.

Researcher 14:36

Grandpa, I see you just mentioned that people were on better terms during the Mao period, do you aspire to that kind of closer neighbourhood?

Participant 14:45

I really like that kind of neighbourhood, but I can't go back now. I am particularly envious of and long for that kind of closeness in the past, whether it was family or neighbourhood, it was very sincere.

It's not possible anymore, it really isn't.

Researcher 15:01

This door of ours is now closed to everyone and they don't come out, so there is no way to exchange feelings.

Participant 15:06

Nowadays it's generally said that if you enter the door, you don't leave the door, unless the two families are still on good terms or the neighbours need to help each other or ask for something, then they will knock on the door. Usually don't just drop by the door. If you say I'm going to bring a meal to your house to eat, this kind of thing is almost never. I'm not the only one, it's pretty much like that in our area.

Participant 00:01

I've also heard from others that they generally don't knock on doors these days. We only talk when we meet outside, and if we don't, we just forget about it. It's rare that you'll purposely go to someone's house to chat, or make an appointment to go to someone's house to chat. Unless there is something to go to see someone, usually do not want to go, think disturbing others is not polite.

Researcher 00:21

It's true that inside the home is not as nice as outside where there is this space where everyone is open to move around.

Participant 00:27

Like I said earlier, for example, in the summer, it's not convenient for people to sit and

talk at home even when they're wearing less clothes. You're always going to people's houses for three days, and it's not convenient for them to talk about things.

Researcher 00:43

Do you often meet people you know in this area when you're out and about? Is there a gathering place for acquaintances here?

Participant 00:50

There are much fewer acquaintances now than before. After the epidemic, a lot of older people moved away, so the chances of meeting acquaintances are not as good as before. In the past, you could meet someone you knew almost every minute. Now sometimes you sit here for half a day and you don't necessarily meet someone you know. We all have our own routines, like coming out at eight in the morning and sitting there until nine-thirty or ten o'clock, then we go home and cook. In the afternoon, we can still meet acquaintances and get together to talk, or sit there and play cards. In the evening, they basically watch TV and eat at home, and very few people come out anymore.

Researcher 01:47

If you meet outside, do you usually meet in a small square or where you just played cards?

Participant 01:52

It depends on personalities. Some people like to drink and three or five people will meet at a restaurant. Sometimes you notice that in the morning or in the morning here there will be a group of men discussing fishing. Everyone has different hobbies, so they gather at different times.

Researcher 02:17

Where and when do you usually get together?

Participant 02:23

Like I said earlier, I'm usually here and the place where you just saw me sitting. In the afternoons I play cards there or just in the yard, inside the community yard.

Researcher 02:36

The community yard side?

Participant 02:38

Yeah, there's a friend in the yard that I'm very close to and he just likes to talk in that place, he doesn't like crowds. He just drags me to talk to him, and once in a while he meets someone he knows and just says hello and leaves after a few words.

So this thing still depends on the kind of people you meet. Some people like to talk in the courtyard, but he just sat there for a while and then left, not willing to sit with everyone.

He likes to ask me to go to the courtyard, but I don't mind. The kind of people you saw just now are more popular, they all have the same temperament, they are all acquaintances, so there are benches in that place, and they sit there in the afternoon to play cards and watch people come and go.

It's no fun to be in the same place all the time, so you'll change places and see people, buy things, and get together when you're handing out stuff. I usually just hang around and eat.

As I said earlier, eating depends on which restaurant. Because I often buy food outside, I have an image in my head of what I want to eat, and if I want to eat noodles I go straight to the restaurant, so I don't have to hesitate about which one to choose because I know what all the restaurants in this area sell, so I just go straight to whatever I want to eat.

Researcher

Grandpa, you are very opinionated.

Participant

There's really nothing you can do about it, after all, you're living alone.

You have to take control of your own things, you can't rely on others. A family can still help each other, but I have to make up my own mind about everything. For example, if a bottle of oil falls over and you don't help it, it just keeps falling to the ground because there's no one to help you. That's the way it is with one person, there's no way around it.

Researcher 04:56

Grandpa, do you seek help from the community if you are in trouble?

Participant 05:00

I've just been telling you that it's actually small things that come up, it's not really a big difficulty, it comes up every once in a while, and it's not worth bothering others. Since I was a kid, I basically never begged, and I don't like to beg or borrow money. When I was in trouble and didn't have any money, I got through it on my own. So my goal for myself is to be strong and try not to bother others. I also don't want to get into the habit of relying on others, which I'm sure you can understand. Because you're highly educated, you should understand that dependency is hard to change once it's developed. I simply don't have that idea in my head that when I encounter a small matter, I go to others for help or my family for help. As long as I can get through it on my own, I'll find a way to get through it on my own.

For example, once I only had five dollars left in my pocket, and at that time, my salary was low, so I had to make it until noon the next day before I got paid. I thought I would just make do with what I had at lunch and get through it. For example, five yuan to buy a steamed bun and a salted duck egg, eat a meal, and then in the afternoon to make do with what I had, and hold out until tomorrow. That's the kind of person I am.

Researcher 06:24

I see you're in pretty good health now.

Participant 06:27

Maybe it's because I've been a vegetarian for a long time, but also because I'm more optimistic. But how can there be no difficulties, no angry things in life? It's not realistic. I usually get angry when I'm wronged, and I'm really angry. But after I'm angry, it's useless to be persuaded by others, so I end up persuading myself. There is no point in getting angry, it's not worth it. It's not worth it. Whether you cry, don't want to live, or even bang your head against the wall, it's useless. You can't do anything if you are wrongly accused and other people don't recognise it.

So I advise myself to let it go, turn a blind eye and get over it. Society is so big, there are all kinds of people.

Some things don't go your way, and there are too many of them, so there's nothing you can do about it.

Researcher 07:24

You just don't take it to heart.

Participant 07:26

Yes, but sometimes it's true that you can't do it in the moment without taking it to heart. You talk about being angry at injustice, angry at other things, not being realistic and not caring at all. I like people who are realistic, and to give you an example, I was once walking on the side of the road, and the car behind me bumped into me, and I didn't

even turn around, and I didn't even say anything. And he said, "How did you get away?"
It's a crying shame, don't you think?

Researcher 07:56

Yes, the road is really crowded.

Participant 08:00

I thought to myself you're asking me how to walk? You're behind me, and I haven't said anything, but you're telling me how to go, and even saying some nasty things. Can you say you are not angry? Definitely. But after that, I just forget about it, I feel like I can't talk to uneducated people.

Researcher 08:19

It's pointless to talk to such people, I can't communicate with them.

Participant 08:21

Yes, I am angry for a day and a half at most. Because I have experienced too many things over the years, if I really get angry at the slightest thing and take it to heart, then I will become a balloon, to put it more seriously, I would have died of anger, and I wouldn't be able to live up to now.

So I think it's better to be a little more relaxed and open-minded.

Researcher 08:51

A smile is ten years less. By the way, how old are you? I see you are quite young.

Participant 08:57

How old do you think I am? It doesn't really matter to me. You see I'm actually about the same now compared to 11 years ago.

Researcher 09:02

I feel like you are in your early seventies.

Participant 09:04

A lot of people look at me and say I'm old too, probably because I'm thin and my face shows it. I'm actually only 65. Thin people tend to look old. Besides, after the 60s and after , they don't dress up as much as they did when they were young, sometimes they just do what they want and don't care much about what they wear. If you really cleaned up, you could probably still look younger.

Researcher 09:40

I just think you have a great body.

Participant 09:43

I'm actually a little embarrassed that you just called me grandpa.

Researcher 09:46

Uncle, I'm sorry. I'm fine because everyone in the community is called grandparents.

Participant 09:53

You don't really need to call these, don't worry about it too much.

Researcher 09:58

You are indeed Uncle's age.

Participant 10:02

I'm actually about your age, and by the looks of your face you should be about the same age as your parents.

Researcher 10:08

Right.

Participant 10:10

That's why I don't care what I'm called, I don't care what anyone calls me, I don't care. I

don't care too much, I can't get through anything. If I'm asking for directions, if I'm asking for anything, I'm usually there to help. I'm willing to take people there even though sometimes the place is a long way round. If people ask me, it's okay for me to take them for a walk.

Researcher

You are very enthusiastic.

Participant

It's okay, I don't turn people down. If you ask, if I can do it, I'll help, and I'll try to help to the satisfaction of the person. If I can't help, I'll just say so.

Researcher

Know what I mean? One is not capable of doing so, and the other may not be able to get away with something. If I'm standing here and you ask me something, I'll take you there straight away if I understand what you're asking. If I really can't get away, I'll make it clear to you that I can't get away right now. If you still can't find it, you can go to the next place and ask again. I'll tell you exactly where to go and where to turn, and you can ask again.

Researcher 11:43

Yes, I think you're very enthusiastic. Are you usually willing to participate in community organised activities?

Participant 11:49

I go whenever the community informs me. I will attend any activities. For example, if a social worker comes and organises crafts and flower making, I will go whenever I am notified. They also have my phone number and notify me, like what time to be on the first floor of the community in the afternoon, and I will go there. I mean, whether it's the community, my colleagues or relatives, if you ask, I won't make things difficult for you or not give you face. As long as I can do it, for example, if you ask me to help you buy something, I will definitely go when I have time. If you ask me to help, but I really don't have the ability or the time, then it won't work. I will seriously help if I can, but if I can't I'll just say so.

Researcher 13:05

Uncle you are so supportive of community work.

Participant 13:12

It's not much, it's mainly because of the proximity of the home. I live in the courtyard.

Researcher 13:19

You're right in the back of the community in the courtyard?

Participant 13:20

You come in through the first gate of the community, and I live right there at the first gate. Mr Lee, who you just interviewed, is the door on the inside, and he's in the building next to me.

Researcher 13:36

When you were that close, did you use any of the convenience services that the community provided? For example, the community will provide some services, have you used them?

Participant 13:48

Can you give me an example?

Researcher 13:50

Let's say they have some handyman services.

Participant 13:53

What do you mean by handy services?

Researcher 13:55

I see that in other cities there are districts where older people are very old, in their 80s and 90s, and they don't have children around, and the community will sign an agreement with the older people to help them, for example, to help with meal delivery and medical check-ups.

Participant 14:12

The community talked to me and said there are services like this, like volunteering, like helping older people clean every week, or you can ask them for help with anything. I said I can still do it on my own now and don't need help, thank you. If I can't do it later, then we'll talk about it, I don't need it now. They also told me that no matter what they encountered, they could ask for help, and they would help as long as they could. As I said just now, I generally don't need help and I don't like to be indebted to others. Whether it's a worker or a neighbour, I don't like to owe money. If you help me, I'll pay back the favour, I can't sleep at night if I don't.

Researcher 15:03

Yes, I see you have a lot of friends and good health, and you can do a lot of things by yourself, so it's really okay.

Participant 15:10

Not that it's like one of those extraordinarily strong people. You see some of the film stars, like Zhao Mingshun and Yu Han, looked very fit and passed away during the epidemic. There are also a few water ambulance staff in the organisation who were also affected by the epidemic. Some people who looked very healthy actually passed away. In fact, I think it is just like what Chinese medicine says, there is a quantity of vital energy and true energy in a person, and it has to be used evenly. You use it up too much when you're young, and once you get sick when you're older, your body can easily collapse. You are like spending money, a thousand dollars a month, you use it too fast in the first half of the month, and in the second half of the month you become poor. You have to be careful with money, and the same is true with your body. When you are young, you use up too much physical energy, and when you get older, your body will fail all of a sudden. There are some people in the unit who look particularly healthy on the outside, and then they are gone. It is that kind of real qi consumption too fast, when old, all of a sudden can not.

Researcher 01:25

Yes.

Participant 01:26

You should still pay attention to what you can. You should work hard when you go to work, but you shouldn't overdo the physical exertion. Most people actually don't pay much attention to that.

Researcher 01:48

It's true, people are starting to pay attention to their health after going through the epidemic.

Participant 01:55

Some people couldn't pay attention even if they wanted to, it's gone.

Researcher 01:58

Grandpa, did the epidemic affect your life in general?

Participant 02:04

I don't have any particular opinion. I should come out or come out. If the community says don't go out, I don't go out. It's not against me alone, they warn whenever someone comes out. So I haven't been hit either. The worst time was when it was all closed outside and I couldn't get anything, so I went to my sister's house for dinner and that saved me a lot of trouble.

Researcher 02:31

Didn't consider ordering takeaway?

Participant 02:34

I don't use a smartphone, I want to protect my eyes. I find that a lot of people around me play with their smartphones, and as a result, their eyes are also bad, and people become unable to take care of themselves, which is scary. I think it's better for me to keep my body good and protect my eyes. You say later on when you live by yourself and your eyes are bad and your body collapses, you suffer yourself and you can't always count on others.

Researcher 03:07

That's.

Participant 03:08

It's not always reliable to get a nanny nowadays. Some nannies are just looking for money and they don't treat people very well, and there are too many actual examples. So I don't think you need to be in good health, as long as you don't have any serious illnesses. In fact, life is all about peace and quiet, not being fussy and not pursuing anything. I wasn't picky when I was young, and I'll be even less picky when I retire. I look at many things very lightly, people live happily, one day at a time. I don't always think about what to do in the future, what to do in case of illness, or what to do in difficult situations. I never think about these things. I just want to live a good life every day, do whatever I have to do, buy whatever I want to buy, do the laundry whenever I want to do it. I'm especially happy when I'm done with my chores and have nothing to do, just like a child. You say it's almost impossible to make me angry.

Researcher 04:42

I've found that in this community, there's nothing I particularly hate or like, it feels peaceful and it doesn't matter.

Participant 04:48

When you run into someone you know, you say something, right? It's nothing. If you run into someone you know, you talk to them, if you have nothing to do after dinner, you talk to them. Whoever has something to do, they do what they have to do. I keep telling them, if you have something to do, go about your business, if you need to go, go.

In fact, it's only when they have nothing to do that they talk. You can't say you have something to do and you have to chat with them. If anyone is tired or doesn't want to talk, go back to the house and rest, or go to bed if you want to sleep.

That's it, so be cheerful. Otherwise, like playing cards, I don't play, and they don't force me. We just talk about whatever we can, and I don't argue with others.

Some people think I'm a good talker. If you say something to them, they think it's nothing. If there's something wrong, I'll point it out and we'll talk to each other. It's not fun to argue or get angry, it's not fun to get into a fight and it's not fun, it's really not fun.

Researcher 05:54

Indeed.

Right, Grandpa, I have one last question for you.

Participant.

It's okay, feel free to ask.

Researcher.

Is there anywhere that you particularly don't like to go to and basically would never go that way?

Participant 06:15

Places with too many people I don't like. Like the Cultural Palace, you know? Now the May Day Park, it's very crowded, there are all kinds of people there. You can't even get a word in at a place like that, and you can't control other people. I used to like the theatre, but now I'm not interested. Some people are cursing and swearing, it's not interesting, they are all strangers, there is nothing to say. Sometimes years will not go to a trip, occasionally go round, just casually look around, round and back. I don't usually go to crowded places.

Researcher 07:07

When you are on good feet, which way do you usually go when you walk farther?

Participant 07:10

When I was younger, I rode my bike around for as long as I was interested. Sometimes I rode to the medical school, sometimes I rode to the West Fourth Ring Road. I usually kept going, but when I got tired, I would sit down for a while and then come back.

Researcher

Do you go by yourself or do you have a companion?

Participant

Sometimes with a companion, and occasionally by myself. For example, when I meet the right person, we all ride around together. If I don't have a companion, I go by myself. Basically, I don't have any special purpose for going out, I don't think about where to go in advance. I just go wherever I feel like, and go home when I don't feel like it.

Researcher 08:03

I still go wherever is interesting haha.

Participant 08:04

Yes, it's just an impromptu decision. Sometimes I play cards with my colleagues and have a chat. Like I said earlier, I don't usually turn people down, I know what it's like to be rejected. I can understand when people come to me for something, so I try to say yes whenever I can. For example, if someone asks me to play cards or have dinner, it's always my treat. Since I was a kid, I've never let anyone treat me to a meal, and basically, I always pay for it. I also don't like to take advantage of others, and I really haven't since I was a kid.

Researcher 09:05

Yes, you do value independence and are particularly focused on doing things on your own.

Participant 09:08

Yeah, one is independence, and then I also don't like to get into the habit of being dependent. I don't think it's a good habit because once you get into it, you can't help but open your mouth and always want to get some of the credit.

And once this habit becomes natural, you always let people buy you dinner, and it slowly becomes a matter of course. The next time you want someone to buy you dinner, in the end they will say, "Why should I always buy you dinner?" That's not a long-term solution.

That's why I don't want to be like that either, and I never take advantage of other people in that regard.

Some people feel that when two people have been together for a long time, they will meet for dinner and say, "Let's go, I'll treat you to dinner". Some time will feel can occasionally rub you a meal, but the general public is embarrassed to always so rub. If you really want to go to a restaurant together, you can go wherever you want. He wants to drink, I said then I will buy you wine, you can drink if you want, but do not drink too much. Non-drinkers are better because I don't drink either, that's all.

Researcher 10:19

Thank you so much, Grandad. I'm going to pause the recording for a moment, it's been almost an hour of conversation.

Participant.

OK.

Walking Interview-20

Participant 00:03

I'm all about the E-tricycle now. I've broken my leg several times on the way home once. I didn't have to use crutches before, but now I have to use them. In fact, I have two legs, one lighter and one heavier, and I still have a steel plate here and there.

It's all thanks to this car. This is the second one. The first one was bigger than this one, but my son gave me a smaller one, saying it would be more convenient.

I'll tell you what, let's go to May Day Park and sit and talk, okay? I'll take you, I'll finish the car and take you to May Day Park.

Researcher 01:07

You don't usually shop over here either do you?

Participant 01:13

I do my grocery shopping here, I put it in the front basket.

Researcher 01:18

You sit on it, I'll ride the bike.

Participant 01:23

I'll ride, you sit in the back, I'll sit in the front. I'll take you and we'll go to the park and we'll find a place close by and we'll talk, isn't that nice?

Researcher 01:44

Is it inconvenient for you to go downstairs to buy things in the neighbourhood?

Participant 01:51

Yes, I live on the first floor. Basically, when I go downstairs, no matter what I do, I ride my bike and I rely on my car for everything. For example, I don't even dare to buy too many eggs, I buy eggs online. The eggs are packed well and I put them in my pocket. When I go up the stairs, I hold the stairs with one hand and lean on my crutches with the other, and they are all broken.

Researcher 02:18

Do you live on your own?

Participant 02:22

Right now I live alone with the love of my life. Both of our sons have started their own families and our granddaughter is in school now, so they've all moved away, they've all moved to the Hi-Tech Zone.

Researcher 02:42

The environment there is really quite good.

Participant 02:45

The houses in the high-tech zone are over there.

Researcher 02:51

When you go out on your bike, you usually just go over to May Day Park and don't do much in the neighbourhood?

Participant 03:00

What community ah, I usually seldom go downstairs, except when I go out to buy steamed buns and vegetables, I usually don't go out.

Just now I came from my mum's place. My mum is 90 years old this year, and the four of us sisters take turns to look after her. My brother is on duty today. Yesterday I was on duty for two days, and today it's my brother's turn.

Researcher 03:33

You guys are really working hard.

Participant 03:37

Now when you look at older people, she's in the dementia category. You really can't leave people. Luckily my mum can walk on her own now, at least she can go to the toilet, she just doesn't know where the door is. If you tell her something, she'll forget it. She can't remember anything. She won't listen to anything you ask her to do. It's very tiring.

Researcher 04:23

You guys really work too hard.

Participant 04:27

Those of us who are disabled, like my age are 63. My generation, born in the fifties and sixties especially got polio. At that time, like the new crown now, it was a viral infection, polio destroyed the nerves, it didn't hurt or itch, just no energy. Let's go now two first. I don't dare to go up the steps even when I go out to buy things, it's too high for me.

Researcher 05:51

The steps are too high for older people or those who are a little sick.

Participant 05:59

I tell you, when I was young, I fell down, turned over and got up. Now I can't. When I fall, my bones will have problems, and when I fall, I'm prone to accidents.

Participant 06:18

Let's go find a closer place to sit.

Researcher 06:24

Okay.

Participant 06:26

He started singing again over there. I don't participate, but sometimes when the head of our disabled group has a bad leg, I will follow her to participate in the activities. We are in the Love Flies Dance Group, and there are wheelchair dancers in the group.

I mainly participate in that activity.

Researcher 06:50

Are the activities organised in the community?

Participant 06:52

That's organised by us disabled people ourselves, it's not run by the community. The community takes care of us and if there is anything we need, the Disabled Persons' Federation sends out something, but there are not many activities for the Disabled Persons' Federation in Central Plains, there are no big activities in Central Plains.

Researcher

Slower.

Participant

Let's just sit here, it's fine. You don't need to hold the stick, it's easier to sit here and talk.
Have you graduated yet?

Researcher 07:56

I'm still working on my PhD.

Participant 07:59

That's nice.

Participant 08:06

You can ask whatever you want, it's fine, whatever's convenient for you.

Participant 08:20

I don't think it's polite to talk to you with a mask on.

Researcher 08:23

It's okay, Auntie, you can wear it if you want, feel free.

Participant 08:33

For older people, it's better for the community to have disabled access, wheelchair access, green access, so it's friendly to both older people and people with disabilities. Nowadays, a lot of daily necessities can be purchased online, so it is much more convenient to buy things, and the courier can be delivered to your home. Sometimes, when an express is delivered to a RB Post, the staff will take the initiative to bring it to me and say, "Auntie, you don't have to move, I'll bring it here for you".

I think society is really warm now. Society is warm and the services are good, for example, banks and hospitals now have disabled access, so it's quite convenient to do things.

However, these conditions in our community have not yet been built, and the conditions are still a bit poor. The community needs money to build everything, the community may not be able to meet the conditions now, and it's hard to change everything at once because the funding is not easy to solve.

Researcher 10:16

A lot of things are also very expensive to build nowadays. In fact, you can use simpler materials to make some facilities, the cost is lower, but I am afraid of accidents, what if something happens with cheap materials.

Participant 10:34

Yes, these facilities must be sturdy. Older people and disabled people use them with all their body weight on them and their legs don't work, look at my legs, they are like limp noodles, they are soft from top to bottom. I have a very thin leg, it's full of surgical incisions, and I've broken it here and there, and I still have a steel plate.

Researcher 11:17

Is the steel plate still in there?

Participant 11:19

Yes, the plate is still there. When I went home and went up the stairs, I once opened the door and crossed the threshold, and it was just a high step, and I'm usually very careful, and I was holding something in my hand and I was holding a stick that day, and I tripped over the doorframe on my toes, and I fell straight down, and I broke my leg again.

I was rolling on the ground, it was so dangerous, it happens all the time. I've broken my arm, I've broken my leg many times. Three times in big falls, often in small ones. Sometimes the falls are not so bad that they are ignored.

I've been walking all my life, and I fell a lot from primary schools to high school. My family was in the neighbourhood and I went to the party school, so I had to walk a long

way to school every day, and I had to fall three or four times on the way. Sometimes I fell, but when I was young and light, I would get up and keep walking, and at that time the ground was full of dirt, so I could stop the bleeding by grabbing a handful of dirt. This place was often broken, and when I did, I would just grab some dirt to cover it up and go on my way.

I met a lot of good teachers and classmates when I went to school. I was free to move around in gym class, and when it rained or snowed, my teacher carried me on her back. When I was in the fourth grade, teacher Li Xuitang took special care of me, and I was carried by teachers or classmates when I went to the Cultural Palace and the cinema. My classmates competed to carry me, picked me up from my house, and pushed me on their bicycles. When I was a child, I was really warm, my parents and sisters at home, needless to say, I always remembered the good teachers and classmates I met at school, and I can never forget them in my heart.

Researcher 14:06

When we first came to the community, we found that here in the Sanmen community, like the school and other things are in the factory, we are particularly close to the neighbourhood, and help each other with anything.

Participant 14:22

I live on the first floor now. My legs are not very convenient, so I have to hold the stairs when I go up and I have to use crutches on one hand. Intelligence is fine now, but some people have particular mobility problems as they get older.

Researcher 14:45

That's indeed the case.

Participant 14:47

It's really hard to be disabled for the rest of your life. It's really hard to do anything when you can't move your legs, and it's really deep. Even so, it's still a life. Those of us who are disabled basically try not to bother others and try to do everything ourselves.

Researcher 15:17

In fact, if the community was built better, you wouldn't have to suffer so much, it would be much more convenient. Who doesn't have a headache.

Participant 15:31

No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory was originally a textile factory, and the houses were all built very close to the road, basically no consideration was given to the design of accessibility as it is now. Now it's pretty good, the roads are all well-groomed and it's really much better than it was.

Researcher 15:59

Indeed, are there any accessible services that the community has provided to you now?

Participant 16:08

Yes, like before I fell and had difficulty moving around, the community provided me with a folding commode chair, which was very convenient. The community has registered this information. Now we use the green card to take the metro and buses in China for free. The community staff like Lili and Wang will help me extend the expiry date, and they will also scan the health code for me, so I don't even have to go and do the errands myself, they take care of it for me. The community workers are really enthusiastic. If you want to talk about the hardware, there is nothing they can do, they have to rely on funding as well.

Where does the revenue come from? If the state approves it, and every community

builds the green lanes and fitness facilities that people with disabilities and older people need, then surely they will all do well. Now the biggest problem is the lack of money, they are helpless.

May Day Park is also not far from home, I often go there by bike. Cars rarely drive. I used to take my granddaughter there in the morning after dinner when I was with her, but then when she went to kindergarten, I only brought her there in the evening when her parents were still at work. May Day Park is quite nice. There is also a stadium over there, and this side is a garden type, now it is very well reconstructed, much better than before, and there are more people, basically grandparents with their children, and very few young people, they all go to work.

Researcher

When you bring your granddaughter to play, or when you come to play by yourself, do you think there is anything inside the park that you are not too satisfied with?

Participant

I think the park as a whole is really nice, the bathrooms have disabled access, wheelchair accessible, and there are potty chairs, which are all pretty nice. Is there anything you particularly like? The environment is very nice now, and a lot of new facilities have been repaired down there, such as steps with handrails and cups to put them on, all of which have been newly added in recent years and are much better than before. In the past, there was almost no place to take a rest, but now that May Day Park has been renovated for many years, the environment is really good. May 1st Park has changed quite a lot in the past two years, the environment is very good in all aspects, there is a big square inside, many people dance there. If you are interested, I can take you to see it later. On the whole, this place is basically not bad. If there is something that needs to be improved, it's that it's not very convenient for me personally, and there are some places with steps that I can't go up. The community is not convenient for me if I go to buy something or something and there are steps. It's inconvenient for us even if it's just small steps. Like the supermarket in front of the community, there are only two steps, and I can't go up or down without crutches. The steps are made too high. We usually buy daily necessities, food, oil, salt, vinegar and other things, basically in the community supermarket. Every time I go there, I park my car at the door, slowly go up with my car, and then come down with my car after buying.

If every community can set up barrier-free green lanes, our lives will definitely be much easier, and we won't have to worry about the inconvenience of buying things anymore. Many times now, when I see inconvenience, I don't buy anything and just walk away. Most of the daily necessities I now buy online, because I seldom go to the nearby supermarkets such as Dennis, and I haven't been in for many years because there is no home delivery service.

Online shopping is really convenient now, including my shoes. Online shopping saves a lot of work as you don't have to haggle or go round the shop. It's also a big problem when we go out to put the car away, which was especially noticeable seven or eight years ago. At that time, I was retired, and when I rode my bike out, no matter where I went to the park or where I left my bike, I had to pay. Other people charged 20 cents, but we disabled people charged 50 cents, saying that our cars took up space.

It used to be free for the disabled to leave their bikes and wheelchairs. Now, basically every place has a fee, including our Wuyi Park, Bishagang Park, Songshan Road, it's much better now, the car can go in directly, do not have to pay. In the past, when you

couldn't go in, you had to store your car there, and you had to pay for it. Including supermarkets, Youai Road, that big supermarket, also have to charge. In fact, when we go there to spend money, we are bringing them business, and then they have to charge us. Although I think it's unreasonable, but I can't say anything, I can only give it to them. Now the biggest problem is still the steps, especially the kind of steps in front of the supermarket, I can't go up without help, I haven't been in for many years. If you really want to say it's inconvenient, it's these buildings that need to be improved. If there is a barrier-free access for older people and people with disabilities, no matter whether it is a shop or a supermarket, even if the steps are high, there should still be a barrier-free access.

This would make it convenient for us to go out and spend money. Now, because there is none, many people simply do not go out and spend money. In fact, for those of us with disabilities, there are many things we don't want to do, but we just can't do them.

Researcher

When you usually come out to visit the park, do you come more by yourself or with friends?

Participant

I sometimes come with my family and friends. Basically, all of our friends with disabilities have cars, so we can only come if we have a car, but we can't come without a car. We usually just sit and chat here. I have quite a lot of disabled friends, some of them are two years older than me, some of them are two years younger than me, all of them were born in the 50s and 60s, and we all hang out together.

Researcher

Are all these friends from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant

Some of them are from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, some of them were originally from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, but now they all have families and moved away. Our disabled friends are basically friends who introduced friends to friends, and there are neighbourhood friends, but most of them have moved away. I grew up in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, and my sister and the love of my life are also from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, so I didn't move away. Everyone moved far away after they got married, and I'm the only one who's still here.

Researcher

Your lover is also from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant

Yes, but there is a difference of more than ten years in age between the two of us, and he is over seventy years old. We don't get along well. He often beats me, speaks badly, and calls me "lame". We haven't eaten together for four years, and he has a very bad temper, and he's been hitting me since we got married until my granddaughter is four years old.

Researcher

Is the community involved in this matter?

Participant

There was no intervention. Now the two of us have not lived together for four years, he has a room and I have a room, and we don't eat together. He eats his, I eat mine. I have a job and an income, he is also from No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and his income is higher than mine. After my son started a family and got married, my

granddaughter grew up with me until she was seven years old. At that time we still live together, often quarrel, he also often hit me, but I have always put up with it. I wanted to be together as a family, and he also bought groceries and cooked, all for the sake of the family, so I put up with it. But my granddaughter is four years old, and he still hits me. Once it was just because of a remark, he was playing with his mobile phone at home. I had just finished showering and wiped the house clean, so I asked him to help me charge the electric car, and he went to do it. He moved his stool to the bathroom and sat there looking at his phone. I said can you move the stool when you're done reading, he took his phone and went to move the stool, turned around and slammed the door, it was a glass door. I said, I knew you would do that, not paying attention. He's in his seventies and he's still so playful.

As soon as he heard me talking about him, he slammed the stool hard into the living room and slid all the way into the bedroom, hitting the bed before he stopped. He then started cursing me, his mouth full of profanity. He said, I've charged you and you're still talking about me. I said, "I'm just asking you to do me a favour, can't I just give you a reminder? He cursed me, and his curses were particularly nasty. When I said something back to him, he rushed over and choked me, almost strangling me to death.

From that day on, I made up my mind to divorce him. Later, my son came back, saw the strangulation marks on my neck and said he wanted to help me get a divorce. My son grew up watching him beat me, I certainly can't beat him, he hit me a little, I can only endure. That time was in the bathroom, he choked me, I came out, and then he hit me with a shoe, I never really hit him, just threw it at him. He then hit me in the arms with the shoe and hit me on the head, knocking me out. I didn't let my son see this.

Later my son came back and saw my injuries and said you hit my mum again and said he would help me get a divorce. In fact, my son was just bluffing. Can I really get a divorce? He kept remembering my son and said my son hit him. After a few days, he started picking fights again and treated me the same way.

One time he even hit my son. My son is taller than him and handsome, but he couldn't fight back. After he hit my son, he wanted to go into the kitchen. I was worried that he was going to get a knife, so I rushed to stop him. My son did not fight back, but later he pressed my son to the ground and kicked him, and my daughter-in-law pulled him away. I let my son into the house, and he sat down on the floor and said, "Are you happy?" I said, "Happy about what? You've been acting like a scoundrel all day. You think that makes me happy? You've been hitting us, not us. If my son had really fought back, you'd have been knocked out long ago.

After that, we moved out for six months, renting a house to stay with our daughter-in-law and granddaughter, leaving him alone in the original house. At that time, my heart was in complete despair, and I really couldn't go on living. Three days and two days to scold and beat people, even granddaughter in front of me to beat me, the child was scared to tears.

In the past four years he apologised to me and said he wanted to make up, but I said it was impossible. I think it's time to just go our separate ways and leave no one's life alone. He eats his, I eat mine. I have my own pension, although not much, but three thousand dollars a month is enough for me to spend on myself. I haven't eaten a penny of his money, and I haven't spent any of his money. He still buys things sometimes now, but we've gone our separate ways and I'm adamant I'm not with him. He apologises to me and I don't accept it.

I have a sister who I grew up with and is my son's godmother, a few years younger than me. He said in front of my sister that he would apologise to me, and my sister said that she also wanted us to make up, but only if he could change his temper and stop hitting. I said it was already too late, in my heart I have long been divorced from him, just did not do the formalities. We are now living separately, he apologised to me I no longer care, the heart has died.

We have lived a total of thirty-eight years, these four years aside, if the first thirty-four years almost no year without hitting. You say two people live, more intimate than anything else, but he opened his mouth to curse, really can not bear. I tried to reason with him at first, telling him that you can't scold people, and that he has older people, and his parents have raised him. When you scold me, think about how good my mother was to you, cooking for you for decades, treating you like her own son, but you're still like this.

Participant

When he scolded me, I never said anything back, but he never changed. I told him, "If you scold me again, the last three or four times, I'll talk back. Then whenever he scolded me, and when I talked back, he hit me. That's how it's been for decades. My son can't help it, witnessed him beating me, once knocked me out, he then pinched my middle to wake me up.

I didn't talk to the community either. There used to be no community either, when it was still a family council. I think it's a shame to talk about the quarrel between two families. We didn't live in a suite then, it was just a corridor, several families shared a corridor, and the bathroom was outside. No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory houses were like that, not a suite. Now I live in a set, two rooms and a hall.

He's a person with an abnormal personality, I think he has too little mental self-control and is short-tempered. When he scolds you, you can't talk back. He is thirteen years older than me, twelve years older by years. I was born in January 1960 and he was born at the end of October 1957. We are exactly one round apart. He usually looks honest, and he doesn't speak with a clear bite and a bit of a big tongue. He is actually not a very sound person, and he is very gloomy.

At that time, my mother thought that he was a Muslim and I was also a Muslim, so she let me look for him, thinking that we could eat a pot of rice. In fact, if my mother had not pushed us, we really could not have made it. I don't have much to say to him at all. When we first met, the introducer said that he was seven years older than me, and when we talked about it, we found out that he was nine years older than me, and when we went to get a marriage certificate, we found out that he was eleven years older than me. He was then a collective account, living in the collective dormitory, in the mountains. Later transferred to No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, we talked for half a year, at most once a week to see, sometimes once a fortnight. In the middle I also mentioned to him to separate, really feel and he can not say a piece.

My mother advised me, said you have a bad leg, he is No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory workers, stable income, and is a Hui people, you can eat a pot of rice, the conditions down a little bit does not matter. He has never been married, my mother said he "green head silk", I also asked what is called "green head silk", that is, never been married.

However, after we really got together, we found that we had no common language and could not talk to each other. I was pregnant with my son in the third year after we started

our family, and he started to beat me. The first time he hit me I did not tell my family, he later apologised, I thought forget it. In fact, people say that as long as there is a first beating, if you do not divorce, you will be beaten for the rest of your life. This I really experience, more than thirty years, 38 years of marriage, the first 34 years of life together, this 4 years apart, he has been grumpy, swearing and hitting, to his son also hit. He can throw chopsticks at his son when he is eating and watching TV.

I have been hit by him too many times. His temper is too bad. Now the two of us come out and live our own lives, don't talk, eat our own food, and I'm in a much better mood. When we used to live together, we used to fight a lot, and there was not a day that we didn't mix up. He is very calculating, as small as buying a cleaning ball a dollar, he has to compare prices, said I bought expensive, he bought cheap. The family's living expenses he did not give me, retired before so, his wages, subsidies, not a penny to me. He never gave me any money for my son's wedding, and I wasn't mad at him. I've always thought that as long as he buys food and foodstuffs, the rest of the money he spends as he likes, I don't care, I don't need his money either.

But every time we quarrelled, he opened his mouth to scold me, scolding particularly unpleasant, and always said that I was "eating his drink his". In fact, after marriage, the old couple's money are not all used together? I tolerate, as long as you do not hit, I can forgive. But the granddaughter are brought to four years old, he still beat me, that year I completely desperate, think no longer can live like this.

We separated these years, he gave me an apology, the first four years and three years when the performance is particularly bad. After my son, daughter-in-law, and granddaughter moved out, he even scolded me and cursed me even worse. I pay all the utilities and he still counts those. I told him, "If you think it's unfair, go to court and sue me, and say that I used your water, electricity and gas, and the court will rule that I'm not allowed to use them, and I definitely won't." He called me "shameless" and said, "I'm not allowed to use them. He called me "shameless", but I told him that he was shameless, and that I had a part to play in this family. If you think you can't do it, then get a divorce.

Once, my sister also advised us, he said in front of my sister that he apologised, but I said there is no room for reconciliation.

In November last year, it was time to pay the heating bill, he said I paid all the utilities, you go pay the heating. I said, "Good thinking, I'm just not going to pay it. If you want me to pay, then get a divorce. I'll only pay if you divorce me, but I won't pay if you don't divorce me. Then he said he was just playing with me. I told him, we never joke, I now figured out, who can live without anyone.

In the end, he apologised to me and said he would promise to be good to me in the future and would change. I said it's not possible, let's just leave each other alone. You think you can live so, can not live on the divorce. In fact, I'm really desperate, my heart can't go back.

Researcher

Auntie, have you considered asking the community or the Women's Federation to intervene? He chokes people, it's really too scary.

Participant

My current thinking is, as long as he doesn't hit me, we two will be fine on our own, you don't care about me and I don't care about you. If he does it again now like he did before, I'll call 911 right away, and I'll also tell the community about it. In the past, I actually

wanted to say something, but I felt ashamed. I talked to the film police in our jurisdiction, and the film police came to my house. Once, a neighbour heard a noise, and then the police officer came to my house and talked to me for a long time.

The film police told me that if he does that again in the future, he must call him first. I also added the police officer's WeChat and have contact information. Our downstairs neighbours also know that I'm on the first floor and he's downstairs, it's Xiao Xue. I told Xiao Xue about these things, and Xiao Xue and the film police also said. That time the film police went to my house just as I had just come back from my mother's house, and the two of us sat down and talked for a long time. I told him all about the situation at home.

Later, the film police officer said that if anything happened again in the future, he would definitely help. Now he doesn't dare to, and I try not to see him either. He goes over to the Cultural Palace every day to play cards and is seldom at home. The two of us hardly talk, and I ignore him when we meet. When he comes home for dinner, I finish cooking in advance, close the door and unlock it inside. He came back to watch TV, I want to go to the bathroom, try to avoid him, face also twisted over. He told my sister, now he walks past in the house, I do not even look at him. I said, "What do you have to look at? You disgust me. I am really completely desperate and don't want to live with him anymore. In my heart, I actually want to separate. But where will we go if we separate? Although my son's family has a house, but at my age, I don't want to cause trouble for my son and daughter-in-law. Although I have a salary and can still work, I still want to live on my own. I told my son, "I won't go to your house if you're on the morning shift, but I can help out if you're on the midday shift. I'll go over there when I have a few days off, and I'll help pick up my granddaughter from school, and I'll ride my bike to pick her up. As long as I can help, I'll help them.

But I really don't want to go and cause trouble for my son or live with them. I have always felt that as long as I can take care of myself, I will live on my own. My daughter-in-law is very nice, and my son and daughter-in-law are very filial, but I also want to be free. I don't have to look at anyone's face, I can do whatever I want, I can come out and turn around whenever I want, and I want to sit and chat with my friends with disabilities without anyone laughing at anyone, and that's it.

I want to be free on my own for a few more years. I told my son, "When my mother really can't take care of herself one day, just like your grandma who has dementia, then you don't have to wait on me, just send me to a nursing home. My son said, "Mum, don't say that." I really mean it. When I don't know anything anymore, what will you do for me? The four of us take turns taking care of one older people. How can you take care of me? You have to go to work and make a living. I said I'd send him to a nursing home, where he'd live until the end of his days, and then he'd be gone, it didn't matter.

I told my son, and he said, "Mum, don't say that. Nowadays, we advocate ageing in place, and we need to have a quality of life".

Researcher

Quality.

Participant

My mum is 91 years old, she is just eating, we cook for her, we take care of her, we wash her, we shampoo her, but she really doesn't know anything. I've seen it with my own eyes. We sisters have been taking care of my mum for more than ten years. Since my mum was 79 years old, all three of us retired and we've been taking turns to take care

of her. In the beginning, she was fine, but now she's getting worse and worse. She really doesn't know anything, but she can still walk. You cook her a meal and she immediately asks you, "When did you get here? Who are you?" I said, "I'm your little girl," and she said, "When did you get here? I've cooked you a meal and you've eaten it all." She says she cooks for me, but I cook for her. Yesterday I put down ravioli for her, and she ate it and said, "I'm your mother, I don't want to eat it, so I'll let you eat it." Actually, it's the daughter who doesn't want to eat it and lets her mum eat it all, she said the opposite.
Researcher.

That's because of Alzheimer's, the thinking may be confused.

Participant

People like my generation know how to be mindful of older people. One day she calls me, and the next day she calls me "little sister" and says, "You are my little sister. I say, "I am your daughter, the daughter you gave birth to". She can't remember, she really doesn't know anything. Sometimes she knows who you are, but in the morning she knows for a while, you tell her "I am your daughter, my name is Xiaoxi", and then she forgets it, and then she calls you and then she forgets it, and then she forgets it again, and then she forgets to do whatever she wants to do.

Researcher

You still know that you are family.

Participant

She knows.

Researcher

But can't tell the difference.

Participant

Couldn't tell the difference. Every night she doesn't sleep, and at night she makes a fuss about going back home, she says it's not her home. She says she wants to go back to her childhood home. I said, "Look, this is your home, your bed is right here". When she looked at the bed, she felt familiar with it and said, "I'm not leaving, this is my home". But after a while, she wanted to leave again and pressed the door to open it. The door was unlocked, but if it wasn't, she would open it. She dares to go downstairs even from the ninth floor, but she can't take the lift herself, so she walks down the stairs one at a time every day. It's so tiring.

Researcher

It's not easy for you. Taking care of older people is really tiring.

Participants

At our age, we have an old man and a young man. There's no one to pick up my granddaughter from school, and the kids are all at work, so I'll go pick up my granddaughter, ride my bike to pick her up, pick her up and cook for her. If I can do it, I can do it, but if I can't, I can do it.

Researcher

I see that you are in good health and have the will to live on your own. Is there any employment opportunities in the community for this kind of work? Isn't it now being promoted that older people in their 60s can also participate in employment? Are there any suitable positions?

Participant

Actually, on our street, the one with the primary school, there was talk of building a canteen for the elderly earlier. There are steps on that street, but it is also possible to

push a wheelchair. But now all No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory is going to be remodelled, and a lot of old houses are going to be demolished. Now the project is stopped, and I don't know how the state is going to arrange it, it's not confirmed yet, no notice has come out. The staff in our community is actually quite good. A while ago to do nucleic acid, our building is a separate building on the side of the primary school, the last building are to our hospital. Like Lili, they were shouting with a loudspeaker, asking people to come downstairs to do the nucleic acid, driving the car to the courtyard, and the staff came to our courtyard to do the nucleic acid, which was very convenient. There is also a mobile car, driving to Cotton Spinning Road, as long as someone wants to do nucleic acid car stopped, very convenient. We have several nucleic acid sites in our community, which is really good.

Researcher.

Have you considered getting involved in some of the employment opportunities in your community's residential living area?

Participant.

Now like we're older. If we were younger, of course it would be nice to have positions in the community especially for people with disabilities to participate. First of all, it is very good to be close to home and convenient to eat, live and travel. In fact, there used to be a sewing group in the street, called the Sewing Club, which made clothes a long time ago. When I was a kid, I even worked in a sewing club for a while, helping to lock buttonholes. There were a few disabled people in there. Later on, these units were transferred to the control of the Bureau of the Second Office.

It's true, there are very few such positions now. Like me, I then went into the service company of No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and worked there until I retired. It was a collective labourer, and the salary was a bit lower than that of a regular worker, but it was close to home. We couldn't afford a car at that time. My dad died when he was 46, and my mum became a widow when she was 45. My dad died just six months after I graduated from high school. As fate would have it, my health was not good, my dad went early, and then I went in for an operation, and it was very difficult to walk, I needed to hold my leg with my hand in order to walk, and I couldn't straighten my back.

After the operation, I was able to straighten my back, and I didn't need to hold my legs with my hands. Later, I joined the service company of No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory. At that time, the service company provided a lot of jobs for disabled people in the factory. We couldn't go into the workshop, but there were many jobs outside the service company, such as making ice-cream, pressing noodles, the cafeteria restaurant, the store department, the workshop that produced shoulder pads for shirts, and the dry cleaners. These were all run by the service company.

I had been working in the guest house, my first post was collecting tickets in the canteen, then I went to the guest house to do the invoicing, then I was transferred to the Jiandong store department, the store department of my own factory, as a material accountant, and I continued to do that until later, when the service company took over and turned it into a guest house, and then I worked in the guest house until I retired, and I was still in charge of the invoicing.

Researcher

Let me ask you, where was the original location of your retirement company? Was it next to your house?

Participant

It was near my home, and I worked in the office building of the April Sky Community on Cotton Spinning Road.

Researcher

Did you ride this bike to work as well?

Participant

I didn't have a car when I was working, and I bought a car after I retired. At that time, I walked to work, and then when my office was converted into a hotel, I sometimes got off work at 12 o'clock in the middle of the night and walked home by myself. When I go to work, I walk by myself no matter what the wind or rain is doing.

In fact, I seldom let him pick me up, let him send an umbrella he was not willing, but also angry with me. Finally, I decided to buy a car after I retired. He didn't support me, so I borrowed money from my mum. I didn't have that much money. The E-tricycle cost 2,400 yuan at that time, and my own salary from my internal retirement was only three to four hundred yuan, so I had only saved a thousand or so. I bought the E-tricycle because I was going to the staff college to take computer courses. I like to learn and go to computer classes. The university is free of charge for disabled people. It's a national policy, and it's opposite the Cultural Palace, so I've been going there for three years.

Over the years, I have always walked to my classes, but then a fellow disabled person said to me, "Why don't you buy a car when it's cold and everyone else has one? I said I didn't have the money, and my lover didn't support me in buying one. When my sister heard about it, she said, "Sister, you're too stupid, you ride a bike how convenient, he did not let you buy you do not buy?" I said that I am a relatively honest person, he did not allow me to buy I did not buy.

I'm also a good worker at home, I clean the floor, he mopped it twice, I mopped it eight times, and I did all the glass and floors, and I've never thought of myself as a disabled person. I just thought I could do everything myself, and he even beat me.

Later, I was moved to buy a car. When I told my elder sister, her husband said, "Let's go and see the car." I also borrowed money from my mother and said I would pay you back when I had it. My mother said I didn't have to pay it back, but I insisted that I must pay it back because I bought it myself.

Later I bought an electric bike with a basket, and now I ride this bike which my son later replaced for me, both of which have been ridden for many years, and are especially loved and cherished. After I got a car, I felt like I had wings. Although I rode slowly, it was much more comfortable than walking.

Having a car makes travelling much easier. I can go anywhere, and it's also convenient for me to go to the computer school. It used to be a long walk from home to the Staff College, but with a car it is much more convenient. I can go to work and learn computer by myself. The university is free of charge for people with disabilities, so I don't have to spend any money. I also learnt how to make handmade snacks, flowers and stir-fry dishes, all free of charge.

In fact, having a car has really brought me a lot of convenience and more freedom to travel.

Researcher 14:54

I think it's still the ease of transport that's most important.

Participant 14:57

Yes, transport is important. Like when I go out shopping, if I come across a place with steps, like a supermarket or a shop, if there are steps I don't go there, I just walk straight

away, I can't go up at all.

Researcher 15:16

Is grocery shopping now also largely dependent on takeaways or courier deliveries?

Participant 15:18

Nowadays you basically order online and set a time to pick it up. As long as there are no steps at that place it's very convenient. I park my bike at the roadside, like there's a Ruth's Patisserie over by the market which is very convenient. It's especially convenient when they hand it to me directly and I don't even have to get off the bike to buy groceries. Nowadays it's easy to shop online, and also I shop at places that don't have steps so that my shopping doesn't suffer.

Researcher 16:08

Okay, thank you, it's about time for the day, so I'm going to pause the recording for now.

Walking Interview-21

Researcher 00:02

xxx, do you usually go downstairs?

Participant 00:10

Yes, I go downstairs mainly to buy groceries or to pick up a delivery.

Researcher 00:14

Can't you get a delivery delivered to your home now?

Participant 00:16

Some couriers don't deliver to the house, they have to deliver to the property or take it to a post station. Most deliveries can still be delivered to your home.

Researcher 00:31

Is it easy for you to walk up and down the stairs?

Participant 00:32

I can go up and down the stairs slowly, holding the stairs.

Researcher 00:40

Are there any similar support services in the community?

Participant 00:47

I don't usually go out much, and I haven't asked specifically. In fact, I would like to go out more often, people can't stay at home all the time, the more they don't move, the worse it is.

Researcher 01:01

Researcher 01:01 Have you used any services provided by the community?

Participant 01:08

Yes, for high blood pressure they would come and visit me at home and ask if there is anything wrong. I said there's nothing wrong.

Researcher 01:16

Have you used any other services?

Participant 01:18

No other ones. The stairs downstairs are cleaned and the sanitation is clean. The community cleans up the yard pretty well and there's nothing to pick on, the place is clean.

Researcher 01:41

You go downstairs mainly to buy groceries and rarely walk right?

Participant 01:47

Just going around downstairs and moving around a little bit, not much walking.

Researcher 01:52

When you go round downstairs, do you do any activities with your acquaintances, such as chatting, playing cards, mahjong?

Participant 02:00

No, I don't dare to stay outside for too long, I just go out for a while and then hurry home, I don't dare to stay outside for a long time.

Researcher 02:09

Do you usually interact with your neighbours?

Participant 02:13

Not much. The people upstairs go to work during the day and I hardly see them. The family across the street goes out to sell vegetables during the day and doesn't come back until after 10pm, so we rarely see each other.

Researcher 02:32

And where do you usually go to buy food?

Participant 02:40

Right in front of the house.

Researcher 02:42

Right next to the neighbourhood at the food market? Is it because of proximity or something else?

Participant 02:50

The nearest one. There used to be a vegetable seller downstairs and I used to go to him all the time, but he's moved away now and he can't sell it and he's gone.

Researcher 03:00

So now I have to go to the food market, is it difficult to get there?

Participant 03:04

It's still a bit difficult, it's quite hard to walk, but you have to exercise and be more active.

Researcher 03:08

Yes.

Participant 03:10

If you're always inactive, you're going to be even less likely to walk in the future, it's a pain in the arse.

Researcher 03:14

Are there any other obstacles on your way to the food market other than feeling tired?

Participant 03:24

There were no obstacles, it still went well, it was all fine.

Researcher 03:29

When you walk to the market, which side do you usually take? For example, if there are two sides to this road, which side would you fixate on? Or are there different routes you can take?

Participant 03:49

I usually walk on the right side. If there's someone behind me, I'll get out of the way and let them pass first. I can't get in the way of other people, I walk slower.

Researcher 04:01

Do you have a more regular route?

Participant 04:08

Basically a fixed route, go out that way, go to that building and then turn around.

Researcher 04:10

Your principle is to pick the closest route, right? I see that there is no separation of people and vehicles in the courtyard, does that bother you?

Participant 04:21

Nothing, just be careful when you walk. If you have mobility problems, you have to give

way to others and let them pass first.

Researcher 04:33

When you go out, do you run into people you know?

Participant 04:40

I hardly ever run into people I know, but when I do, I just say hello and that's it.

Researcher 04:45

Very rarely. Are you an employee of No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 04:51

I grew up in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory when I was a child, and I left No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory for almost 40 years before I came back.

Researcher 04:58

You have not worked at No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory?

Participant 05:00

I didn't work at No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory.

Researcher 05:01

Did you know many people in the institution?

Participant 05:04

Not many, like I haven't seen many acquaintances in this house.

Researcher 05:09

When you go out, are there any activities organised by the community that you can participate in?

Participant 05:18

I can't participate in those activities, I don't know how and I'm a bit scared. I don't know how to do it and I'm a bit scared. When there's a lot of people, if they're happy and they bump into me, they can knock me down and that would be a problem, so I can't participate in those activities.

Researcher 05:30

Yes.

Participant 05:32

I try to stay as far away from people as possible, as far away from people as possible.

Researcher 05:35

XXX, how old are you now?

Participant 05:37

I am 66 weeks old. I'm not in good health myself and I'm afraid of giving people trouble by going to those events. You think everyone is happy, talking and dancing, if someone accidentally knocks you down and you fall, won't that cause trouble for the community? So it's better to stay away, take care of yourself, and not cause trouble for others.

I don't want to cause trouble for my kids either, and I don't talk to them about anything.

Researcher 06:26

You've always lived on your own, have you had any difficulties in going out? Because I can see that you are quite independent.

Participant 06:43

I don't have any difficulties, I just have to be careful when it comes to anything, I don't have any difficulties.

Researcher 06:52

You're still pretty good at what you do.

Participant 07:03

Because I'm on crutches when I go out, people outside will let me go, they won't try to steal the road from me, you know?

Researcher 07:13

That's true.

Participant 07:16

So basically it's safe. When I see kids running around, I'll stand and wait for them to pass first. Kids don't know any better than to steal the road from them.

Researcher 07:27

You usually say you grew up in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory as a child, do you think it has changed much over the years?

Participant 07:43

I don't remember much, it's changed so much now, it's completely different.

Researcher 07:50

Do you still remember it?

Participant 07:51

When I was a kid I remember this area was all big open space, from the back of the door this way to that way, nothing, just a few trees. Now it's full of buildings, so I don't remember it at all. There used to be a scrap yard here, I don't even know where it is now, it was the state-run scrap yard.

Researcher 08:13

Is there any part of the area that is particularly meaningful to you?

Participant 08:26

After I came back in the last six or seven years, I've been going out pretty much the same, pretty much any time I go out, and I don't think there's any place that's particularly meaningful.

Researcher 08:38

When you were a child, did you have a place over here where you played a lot?

Participant 08:41

It seemed to be in this area.

Researcher 08:43

Just in the open space?

Participant 08:46

I remember living upstairs when I was a kid.

Researcher 08:50

The one behind the blue building?

Participant 08:52

Yeah, I remember living there as a kid.

Researcher 08:57

You still have some memories of this place.

Participant 09:00

That's the only thing I remember, I don't remember anything else. When I have to run an errand to find the place, I have to search for half a day to find it.

Researcher 09:09

And do you find it difficult to live now after coming to live here?

Participant 09:13

I don't have any difficulties, I just go and do things, and I can ask for help when I have a goal. Besides, the people in the community are very nice. For example, when I had my

nucleic acid done, the staff drove their car to my doorstep and I could do my nucleic acid right downstairs, which was very convenient.

Researcher 09:36

I think the community workers are very enthusiastic. What do you think of the overall appearance of the community when you are walking around? Did you hear any sounds or smell anything outside? What do you think about the environment of the neighbourhood, is there any noise or any bad smells?

Participant 10:08

I've lived here for many years, and I haven't encountered any unpleasant things, so I think it's quite good. The director of the community, Mr Fu, is very nice. We live quite close to each other, and he is in the same building, so I have seen him before, although I don't know which unit he lives in. Anyway, I greet him when I see him, and I can call him if I need anything, but I don't usually have much to do.

Researcher 10:41

How do you feel the neighbourhood is maintained?

Participant 10:51

It's pretty good, you can see how clean it is just by looking outside. Everywhere I've been is clean, much better than my old house. There used to be a lot of rubbish in the family home, but now it's much better. The neighbourhood is really clean now, much cleaner than my old house. The environment of our old house was so bad that it was impossible to compare. That house is gone now. It's all been stripped down, and it's right behind the original White Pigeon Hotel. Didn't the White Pigeon Hotel move? It's in the neighbourhood of the White Pigeon Hotel.

Researcher 11:42

So this house was later divided among you or how did it come about?

Participant 11:46

This is my other rental.

Researcher 11:47

Will you be given two suites?

Participant 11:50

It's my rented apartment, it's not subdivided.

Researcher 11:53

Why did you want to come back to No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory to rent an apartment? Do you miss it?

Participant 12:03

Mostly because of the convenience and familiarity. My parents are in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory and my younger siblings are also in No.3 National Cotton Textile Factory, so I can take care of them.

Researcher 12:15

I see that our community life is also quite convenient, and there are many things to buy. So it's better to come back closer to your family and stay with them before renting a house. I see you just said that you go out and go to the food market in front of the door to buy things, and there is a supermarket next to it, you don't go there?

Participant 12:40

The steps are too high over there. I used to be able to go there without crutches, but now I'm on crutches and I can't go anywhere far away, it's too tiring. When I buy groceries, I have to turn the corner and carry some groceries in my hand, but I can't carry anything

on my crutches.

Researcher 13:01

Are you able to cook and do other things on your own?

Participant 13:04

I do all the cooking myself.

Researcher 13:06

You're really good at it.

Participant 13:10

It's not a skill, it's just that if you live, you have to move. If you don't move and just sit and wait and wait for others to serve you, you won't be able to live for two years.

Researcher 13:23

It's true that you don't move.

Participant 13:25

The more you don't move, the less you will move, you have to do everything yourself. If you don't do it, you're going to starve, and if you're starving, you're going to have to get up and do it. So you can't be lazy, you have to try to do everything yourself.

Researcher 13:43

Have you considered going out and buying a mobility scooter?

Participant 13:54

I have a car, but I live upstairs and it's so high that it's a pain to move it up and down. I had a moving company move my car up, but I couldn't get it down when I was using it. If I don't move it up, I'm afraid I'll lose the battery. There is also a three-wheeled electric car downstairs.

Researcher 14:13

Would you normally consider riding that bike?

Participant 14:15

If I have to go to the flat, I will ride it. Because it's too much of a hassle, you have to call someone to help you carry the battery downstairs. Otherwise the battery will be stolen as soon as I come back.

Researcher 14:28

Is the battery still stolen when I leave it downstairs?

Participant 14:32

Generally speaking, if you ride it every day, it's fine. No one would dare to move it. If you leave it downstairs for eight or ten days, someone will definitely want to touch it.

Researcher 14:47

How is the law and order in our hospital now?

Participant 14:49

The security is pretty good.

Researcher 14:52

Then why are they still stealing batteries?

Participant 14:55

If you ride it every day, no one will touch it, but if you leave it unused for 10 or 8 days, people will see that no one is using it, and then it may be stolen. If you don't ride it for 10 days or 8 days, it may be stolen. No one cares about you when the battery is dead, but when the time comes, it will be stolen and you can't do anything about it.

Usually everyone knows someone rides it every day and no one moves. I usually only ride it once every ten days and half a month, sometimes once every month and two

months at the longest. Sometimes I go to a meeting once every two months. Problems can happen when the bike is left untouched for long periods of time, the weather is fine, but mainly it's just easy to not have to use it.

Researcher 15:48

I see that the downstairs is open and unlocked, some neighbourhoods are gated.

Participant 15:58

You can still get in even if you have a gate installed.

Participant 16:04

Anyway, the whole environment is quite nice, no one usually comes in, and no one thinks about these things.

If you want to say that I've left my bike unriden for ten days, half a month or even a month, it's not unusual for someone to keep an eye on it.

Researcher 16:26

Then there's still a gang.

Participant 16:29

Yeah, there are still people who specialise in stealing batteries, didn't they strip the place where I live?

Once I was cooking in the kitchen, heard a click outside, I lay down on the window to look out, just in time to see someone carrying a battery on a bike and ran away. I was slow and it was no use coming out, they were all gone, and by the time I got out they had turned the corner and ran away.

Researcher 17:14

xxx Do you usually have to ask your next door neighbour to help you carry the battery down when you want to ride it?

Participant 17:22

Sometimes I can carry it myself, moving it down one at a time, holding the handrail, and with crutches, step by step, down the steps, then lifting it up to change direction, one at a time.

Researcher 17:33

It would take quite a while to move it down.

Participant 17:34

It does take quite a long time. I go out to do an errand and it doesn't take me as long to go back and forth as it takes to do it at the flat. It takes me a few minutes to get there and back on a normal ride, and it takes me an hour to move the battery up and down the steps.

Researcher 18:02

Wouldn't you consider renting a ground floor flat?

Participant 18:08

This house belongs to my ex-wife, and people who rent other people's houses won't rent to me, they are afraid that something will happen to me, and they are worried that something will happen to me in their house.

Then later, this is not I have two grandchildren, she is not married, I am not married, can still talk. It was for the sake of my grandchildren that I came to her to rent a room.

In fact, I wanted to rent a house on the ground floor, and I made a few trips to rent it, but I couldn't find the right one.

Researcher 18:47

People still have concerns, I actually think you're in pretty good health.

Participant 18:53

I'm only in my sixties, but my legs are failing. You're saying that if you're young again, there's nothing you can do if your legs are going to fail.

Researcher 19:00

You're still young.

Participant 19:03

Actually, if it wasn't for this disease, no one would be able to tell if I was sitting and talking. If you're not sick, you're fine, you don't know.

Researcher 19:13

I see you are still in good spirits.

Participant 19:15

I have a statue of Mao Zedong and the Goddess of Mercy in my house, and I worship them every day to ask them to bless me.

Researcher 19:34

The music you play seems to be Buddhist scriptures. Do you worship them every day? Are there similar activities in the community?

Participant 19:42

I haven't heard of such activities in the community, and I don't participate, I just worship at home by myself.

Chairman Mao is the founder of our new China, it was he who led us to overthrow the three great mountains, he has always been very prestigious in our hearts, and this generation can never forget his kindness.

Appendix 12. The transcripts of the focus group

Focus group discussion transcript-1

Researcher 00:26

Alright, thank you all for participating. Let's start simply: could you briefly introduce the places where you usually like to go in the Sanmian community or nearby—whether for shopping, exercise, or socialising?

Participant 1 00:54

Usually in the morning I go to the cultural palace opposite. There's a space for activities there. Yes, May Day Park is spacious, but if you want to find somewhere else with space, it's nearly impossible, too small. There used to be a sports ground, but it was turned into a vegetable market, all commercialised.

Participant 4

Yes, that's why we go to May Day Park.

Participant 5

Yes, May Day Park.

Participant 2 01:24

We live farther away from May Day Park, so mostly we stay with neighbours. In our little courtyard everyone gets along well, chatting together happily. But that's just around downstairs nearby, inside the family courtyard. Like those little corners at the front and back downstairs. My residence is in a rather special place—one building with 78 households. It's right above the Tongbai Road underpass, two buildings stood there by Lijiang Bridge, now only one remains. Actually, our courtyard is quite comfortable. Upstairs to the side gets no direct sun, it's shaded and cool, many people sit downstairs. But it's relatively uniform—mainly older people. Still, we have heating and everything else.

Participant 3 02:18

Yes, their courtyard is very nice.

Participant 3 02:19

As for me, why don't I often do activities? Because in August 2019, I injured my back badly. Three vertebrae fractured, it's been four years now and it still hurts, so I can't do much. My range of movement is small. I fell on a bus, right when boarding, didn't even start moving. So now I can't go far. It's been four years and still not healed. Now I can only move around downstairs. Occasionally I walk a little by the Junhui supermarket downstairs, buy some groceries, wander around a bit. Apart from that, I mostly lie in bed because of my back.

Researcher 05:14

Within your current activity spaces, do you have any favourite places?

Participant 1 05:26

I like the parks everywhere.

Participant 2 05:29

We like coming to the CSCMP, because we can sing together.

Participant 4 05:33

Yes. Our teacher teaches us singing, and we are really happy together.

Participant 5 05:41

We enjoy singing together. Our teacher teaches us music and singing.

Participant 3 05:48

I also enjoy this, being with everyone feels really good.

Participant 2 05:52

Indeed, the Association for Science and Technology just finished the last class of the term on the 21st, so we really enjoy these gatherings.

Participant 1 06:03

There is an activity room where the Association for Science and Technology organises cultural activities in the Sanmian community—covering diet and health, medical care, and even psychological wellbeing sessions.

Participant 4 06:22

Also, because our Sanmian community is small, in Gongcheng community there is a senior dining hall. The restaurant is quite large, when you're older you can go there and order whatever you like.

Participant 5 06:33

At present, our Sanmian community doesn't have this. Mainly no space. But in other communities, such as Cable community where I attend classes, they do have one.

Participant 4 06:44

Yes, a big dining hall. For older people, if you don't want to cook at home, you can go there. They offer many dishes, you just choose what you want. It's really good when the CSCMP sets it up.

Participant 3 07:01

You can even go and check it out. If you need information you can also visit during their lunch hours.

Participant 1 07:08

The Thermal Power Plant has an even larger dining hall. Inside the Textile Hall as well. If you are over 70, you can eat there for 10 yuan per meal, sometimes 5 or 7 yuan.

Participant 1 07:30

The old Textile Hall family compound has it too. You can still go there and check. Many such facilities now serve multiple purposes. I also went to see—the lunch is available daily. You can go to Gongcheng Street Elderly Care as well, not far. At the intersection of Jianshe Road and Tongbai Road, cross to the west side. Just keep walking straight past the crossing and you'll find it. The sign is right above.

Participant 3 08:00

If you walk ahead, there is the Jihua Road community, the CSCMP is right at the entrance. You can just go in and ask.

Participant 3 08:08

Go into Jihua Road community, ask the guard at the entrance where the dining hall is.

Participant 1 08:12

That one is still an advanced community in the city.

Participant 3 08:16

Yes, you can see how they handle this.

Participant 4 08:18

Home-based care for older people, yes, that's certainly part of your project. Every week I'm at May Day Park. Teacher Deng teaches there. I think the place is quite well managed, the environment is nice. Mainly, here in the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory there isn't much space left. It's too small, so it's hard to carry out these activities.

Participant 4 08:42

In all aspects their dining hall is quite large. As older people grow older, don't you think? Cooking at home, buying groceries—it's monotonous. If you cook more, you can't finish it; if you cook less, then nutrition is insufficient. With a canteen like this, you can pay 5 or 10 yuan, and at least nutrition is sufficient, and you don't need to put in so much effort to shop and cook. Eating ready-made meals—I think this is a good way forward for older people. Many people say that as long as they can still move, they come to eat there. Because there's variety, a shared place, proper nutrition, and also a real sense of community. Once you can't move anymore, that's another matter. But I hear them say that this kind of service should really be developed more—the prospects are very promising. It's just here in our place, there's really no space.

Researcher 09:47

Let me ask you: just now you didn't share—which type of public space do you prefer?

Participant 1 09:57

I always go to the cultural palace in the morning.

Participant 2 10:00

I prefer spacious places.

Participant 3 10:04

Bigger spaces.

Participant 2 10:05

Yes, all bigger spaces, that's the main thing. I see people's needs are not exactly the same. For grandmother, for example, it has to be accessible.

Participant 3 10:12

Before my injury, I could walk ten li in Bishagang Park before returning. We used to go to the cultural palace and buy liangfen noodles. I'd ask my husband to buy some flatbread, and we'd eat happily. But after I got sick—these four or five years, with diabetes, asthma, pulmonary heart disease, hereditary asthma and pulmonary heart disease, taking insulin, then the back injury—I can't go anywhere now.

Participant 1 10:46

Same for me. Every day I go at least three times to the park, the air is good, the living conditions are nice, and the acoustics are perfect for singing. Each week in the Sanmian community, Teacher Deng teaches singing in the activity room, and I really enjoy it, it makes me lively. Having a good mindset is important—if you don't, even your children will find it inconvenient. So you must keep your body fit, go to the park, take in more oxygen—it's good for your health, I remember that.

Participant 4 11:29

I remember in those two buildings of yours there was a woman who sang beautifully.

Participant 1 11:33

Yes, and usually someone invites people to sing. Teacher Zheng invites us to sing and dance, we all enjoy it a lot.

Participant 2 11:39

It's a gathering, I think.

Participant 5 11:42

In my building, there's a woman upstairs who also sings—not professional, but she's very active, also dancing. When we gather for meals, we often go to the park together. It's always the park for us.

Participant 1 12:05

She can teach dancing. Some are good at dancing, some good at singing.

Researcher 12:19

In the places you usually like to go, do you think there are any safety hazards? Because you mentioned a few kinds of places—inside the CSCMP, in the Sanmian community building, May Day Park, the cultural palace, or just downstairs—do you currently see any safety risks?

Participant 2 12:48

Facilities-wise, yes. Whether it's the facilities themselves or just how you feel mentally—sometimes the facilities are indeed unsafe, sometimes it's only that they appear unsafe. But honestly, at my age, I have to be extra careful whenever I go out.

Participant 1 13:06

Yes, because young people on electric scooters ride so fast—especially food delivery riders. One of our neighbours, he is 75 this year, and he fell and got injured.

He went with his wife to his son's place, on Tongbai Road, to take a bus and see their granddaughter. When he reached the bus stop, a young woman, maybe in her twenties, rode an electric scooter and hit him. His foot was fractured, he twisted and fell, injuring his left side as well. He was hospitalised for half a month. The girl had to cover his medical expenses, so he didn't dare to stay longer—only two weeks. In spring, people wondered why they hadn't seen him, thinking he had moved in with his daughter. Actually, that was what happened.

After being discharged, he couldn't manage stairs at his old place. There was no lift in the building, which made life extremely hard. With a fracture and unable to move, living there was unbearable. I told you before, that building over there—cars clutter the space, the entrances are blocked. Even walking requires caution, some doors are broken.

Participant 5

Also, at the entrance of the three-storey building, the main gate is no longer usable. There's no open space. In the middle is the car entrance and exit, with barriers. On both sides there are small gates, but cars and electric scooters squeeze in. Whenever I pass, I have to check carefully—if an electric scooter comes, it could hit me. And some streetlights don't work. Parents rush to drop off children at school, riding quickly, not caring about pedestrians. That's the second issue. Honestly, every time I walk there I have to be very cautious. With all the cars and electric scooters, it feels unsafe. No sense of safety at all. In Sanmian community especially, cars are everywhere. You have to look ahead and behind constantly.

Researcher 15:32

Sorry to interrupt. Let's try to speak one at a time, so that everyone's opinions can be heard clearly. Thank you.

Participant 1 16:09

Roughly speaking, now there are too many cars, so we don't feel safe. Everywhere you go, you must be careful. On the road, I check around for vehicles. When I see a food delivery rider, I quickly dodge. They also have a hard job, rushing to deliver meals on time or else face penalties.

But this makes us feel less safe. Before, Sanmian had open spaces. Now, both sides of the road are lined with parked cars. Pedestrians can't use the pavements, cars force us to step aside. If you don't dodge in time and get hit, both sides suffer.

Participant 3 17:02

Yes.

Participant 1 17:03

Safety is really an issue.

Participant 4 17:05

It doesn't feel right.

Participant 5 17:07

In West community as well, the whole underground area is filled with cars. Everywhere there are cars. If someone rides an electric scooter, you can't avoid them.

Participant 4 17:19

The space is limited. Children have grown up, bought cars. One car isn't enough—families now have two.

Now there's no proper parking space. They can't park inside their homes, so they occupy public areas. That's why the space feels so small—because people are concentrated together. Life has improved, indeed, and families can now afford cars, which was unthinkable before. Now it's not just one car, sometimes two.

Participant 3

I'm saying the same—cars are parked on pavements, so pedestrians can't walk. If people walk on the road and an accident happens, who takes responsibility?

Participant 4 18:13

No one takes responsibility. To put it simply: there are too many cars and fewer people walking, which makes walking difficult. The other day, I had to squeeze sideways past a van parked at the roundabout, blocking the way north. I barely managed. But these problems can't be solved. First, there are no car parks. To be fair, the CSCMP staff here—secretary, director, workers—have made efforts and want us to live better.

Participant 3 19:07

But the space is just too small, that's it.

Participant 4 19:09

It's not like other communities with large grounds, where you can put anything.

Participant 3 19:17

Yes, because Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory is an old compound, renovation is very difficult, and the situation is quite unique.

Participant 1 19:26

Another issue is dogs.

Participant 3 19:29

Yes.

Participant 1 19:30

Some residents keep dogs.

Participant 3 19:33

I dislike them. Some love dogs, so they raise them.

Participant 1 19:40

But those big dogs—they're frightening. Even if leashed, I feel uneasy. What if something happens?

Participant 4 19:50

They even call the dog "grandpa". When it sees my husband, it wags its tail and insists on being held.

Participant 1 20:00

Yes, when "Grandpa Zhang" comes, the dog greets him.

Participant 4 20:03

The dog recognises my husband and wags its tail happily, asking for a hug.

Participant 1 20:07

It even licks his face. But small dogs are alright. Many people keep cats too, which stay indoors. Dogs, on the other hand, are often walked without discipline.

Participant 2 20:33

In my courtyard, this has caused conflicts.

Participant 3 20:36

Yes, in reality, whether it's the Sanmian community or the CSCMP leaders, or civil servants, they all want residents to live better. For our courtyard, they wanted to pave it, install some exercise equipment, set up benches so that everyone could sit. I live in Junhui building, upstairs in the Junhui courtyard. You know, when we bought it, it was called a "garden estate", but the property management is so poor. It technically falls under property management, but in design they don't take responsibility. They never look after it—grass grows tall, people just pull it out and plant vegetables instead. The plot is wide, from here to there. Do you know? The CSCMP leaders do

want us to live well, but they can't hard-surface the yard, they can't provide facilities. Our courtyard is large, and half of it is used for growing vegetables. If not vegetables, then weeds grow wild. Both people and dogs relieve themselves there. The key issue is that the community leadership also feel helpless—if they had money, they would have fixed it long ago. But there is no money.

Researcher 21:59

This is a nationwide issue. Since you've already pointed out safety hazards earlier, let me ask: aside from those, in the public spaces you usually go to, what are the things you're not satisfied with? Either things you've mentioned, or new ones that just came to mind. What improvements would you hope for? Of course, as you all said, many problems come down to lack of space or money. But based on current conditions, since the site is fixed, please share your ideas. What is essential to change?

Participant 1 23:06

We need more fitness equipment.

Participant 3 23:08

So what's most in need of change? The CSCMP secretary and director both know that our courtyard really should be paved, made better. Now we do have an electronic gate at the courtyard entrance.

Participant 3 23:29

Only residents can enter. Non-residents can't. Same for cars—you need to input a code. Residents' cars can enter, outsiders can't. But inside it's still filthy and messy. The CSCMP knows this. I've told them many times, but they say there's no money. Paving would cost at least 200,000 yuan.

Participant 2 24:02

This is really a property management issue. Poor property management, lack of funds. Property management has collapsed across the country. So we can't rely on it.

Participant 1 24:16

Yes, when the iron gate broke, no one repaired it.

Participant 3 24:23

Even if you want to fix it, there's no money. Where would the money come from? If residents don't contribute, then what?

Participant 1 24:30

Yes, we need more fitness equipment. But where to put it? There's no space. Even if you manage to insert one or two pieces here and there, it's limited. The place is too small. In May Day Park, it's different—there's wide space, like a big garden. You can go there, exercise, enjoy the air. At home, in front of my building, there are trees—good for the eyes. But there's no equipment, nothing organised. People want to sleep near their windows, so there's no room to set up facilities.

Researcher 25:27

Do you have any other opinions?

Participant 2 25:30

Well, our old residential block was renovated, but poorly. When it rains, the ground can't drain properly. During the renovation, they just put some sand, then laid bricks. I moved into my house in 2000. When they paved the bricks, I saw with my own eyes that the outside was higher than my doorway. So when it rains heavily, water rushes straight into my home. At the time, I pointed it out, but no one cared. Now when it pours, it still floods. No one manages it.

Participant 2 26:53

The renovation was sloppy, just to get it done.

Participant 5 26:59

It's wasteful. I always think, when the country improves financially, things will gradually get better. But right now, even at a national level, resources are tight. Leaders also don't have money to allocate. Everyone is stuck in this difficult circle—from ordinary people to officials. Leaders also want to do something, to show their superiors that they're achieving something. But the reality is, people want larger homes, more money in their hands, bigger spaces. For now, these wishes can't be realised.

Researcher

Yes, funding is indeed the problem, especially after the pandemic.

Participant 1 27:53

Yes, for example, this year's allowances haven't been issued yet—last year's were just distributed.

Participant 4 27:58

Now the state says not to demolish too many residential houses. But once one block is demolished, they move on to the next. Even Xigang's structures have been torn down.

Researcher 28:10

Please, write your suggestions concisely. Thank you all for your support.

Participant 2 28:17

We keep raising these opinions.

Participant 4 28:19

But I always feel the Sanmian community really does want us to live better—it's just that the space is too small.

Participant 1 28:27

Each place has its own funding. The CSCMP here has no designers or planners to consult.

Participant 4 28:34

Yes, the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory compound is just too small.

Participant 4 28:59

If only we could have a dining hall for older people, that would be best. Once you get older, you don't want to cook anymore.

Participant 1 29:10

But there's no space, unlike in West community and some other older communities.

Participant 3 29:13

It has already been renovated. I think if you could set up something around ageing, that would actually be a very relevant and timely matter now.

Researcher 29:24

Let me ask another question: when you cross an intersection, do you feel it is smooth, or do you encounter things that make you uneasy or that you see as obstacles?

Participant 1 29:57

Sometimes at the crossings, when the traffic light is red, cars still rush through. Though things are better now, sometimes drivers stop, sometimes they don't.

Participant 4 30:15

When I take the bus near Sanmian, on this side of Hang Road, it's okay.

Participant 1 30:21

Buses are generally good. They stop at zebra crossings. But private cars often don't stop, they speed through. Crossing from here to Mianfang Road, usually buses stop, some taxis too, but many private cars won't.

Participant 4 30:43

If I wave at them, buses usually stop.

Participant 1 30:45

Yes, it's almost always private cars that don't stop, but buses and taxis generally do.

Participant 4 30:54

You know, bus drivers are good. As soon as they see someone, especially an older person at the zebra crossing, they stop and let you pass. On the bus too, they remind people to give up seats. That's why I say buses are pretty good.

Participant 2 31:15

It's really just private cars—drivers only care about their own way.

Participant 3 31:23

I walk slowly, and only a few private cars will stop for pedestrians. Very few. But buses must stop—it's their rule. At crossings, they always stop.

Researcher 31:38

Madam, what do you think?

Participant 3 31:44

For me, the key issue is ageing. I once submitted a proposal about home-based care. Because going to a care home is not realistic: they don't have enough places, the fees are too high compared to our pensions. You also can't see family often. And in care homes, the management doesn't want responsibility, so they confine older people, limiting movement. If you fall, it becomes a problem. Families may not want to visit. And they charge differently—self-care ability has one price, if you cannot care for yourself, the price is higher. For older people with declining abilities, the fees are a burden. Children have to contribute, but they too feel strained. Without them, you can't afford it.

Participant 3 32:45

So I support home-based care very much. At home, you feel relaxed. If the community can help—deliver meals for a fee when you can't cook, for example—that's practical. Whereas moving into a care home, eating and living collectively, it doesn't feel free or comfortable.

Researcher 33:30

Yes, our project focuses on "ageing in place". Relying on care homes alone cannot solve China's ageing issue—too many people, high costs, poor facilities. For older people to age in place, the environment outside is crucial. Safe, smooth travel encourages them to go out, stay active, maintain their health. If people stop moving, they quickly lose mobility. That's why I want to understand what kind of environment allows older people more autonomy. Only if they can go out comfortably will they buy groceries, access services, socialise, and stay healthy. That's the aim. For example, crossings—whether they feel safe or not—are directly linked to this.

Participant 4 34:50

Crossing roads is unsafe too, because cars park on pavements.

Participant 3 34:56

Yes. What we need is buses designed for older people—slower, more spacious, with ramps or lifts. Those with weak legs could still get on. They could take us shopping, to markets, anywhere. Everyone pays a little, according to ability. Otherwise, it's hard to board ordinary buses. Some people give up seats, some don't. If we had dedicated buses for older people, not every 5 minutes but on a reasonable schedule, it would make life much easier. Ageing shouldn't mean staying indoors, confined to your doorway—that's too sad.

Researcher 35:58

Yes, public transport's accessibility features are indeed inadequate at present.

Participant 1 36:08

You see, there's nothing at all. I think nowadays finding work is difficult—many young people can't find jobs. Why not let the government set up training programmes for them to learn nursing skills? That way it solves their employment problem, and also helps older people. They could accompany us to the park, look after us. The government could provide proper carers, trained young people.

Researcher 36:39

Older people could contribute part of the cost. I think that's a very good point. Let's note it down—we'll leave some time at the end to discuss this issue in detail. For now, let's continue with the flow. What do you think about crossing the road?

Participant 3 37:51

Most of the time I don't feel safe. You need someone to support you. I can still manage, but if you're a bit older, it becomes difficult. Cars from left and right don't make it easy. Sometimes you need a younger person to help you across.

Researcher 38:10

So what you mean is, cars generally follow the traffic lights, but the real fear is that electric scooters dash out suddenly?

Participant 3 38:20

Yes. They speed along. The problem is when you're older and slower, sometimes you can't cross within the green-light time. That makes people anxious. Buses usually stop and wait, but once the red light changes, they can't wait any longer.

Researcher 38:36

So your feeling of insecurity mainly comes from two things: sudden electric scooters, and not being able to cross before the lights change. Right, I've noted that. Madam, what about you?

Participant 3 38:56

Yes, it's basically the same.

Participant 4 38:58

Sometimes when I cross with the green light, electric scooters still rush through.

Participant 1 39:04

Yes, my neighbour, Old Zhang, he's been hit several times. He crossed on the green, but riders just sped through. He's about my age, got knocked down three times. Luckily, he's short and slim, so nothing too serious happened. But really, electric scooters are too chaotic—people don't follow the rules.

Participant 1 39:34

They don't pay attention. They hit someone, then run off. Often it's during rush hour, they're in a hurry to get to work.

Participant 1 39:45

It all happens at busy times, when everyone is rushing.

Participant 4 39:50

I saw posts on social media. During rush hour, around 5pm, in places outside Zhengzhou—like Zhongmou and Kaifeng—vendors are still selling watermelons. But in Zhengzhou, the city management is very strict. Many young people feel the pressure—sometimes they'd rather let fruit rot than risk selling and being fined.

Participant 3 40:32

They should be allowed to sell. After all, they plant acres of crops—how else do they make a living?

Participant 4 40:34

Yes, but some things the city management must control.

Participant 3 40:40

Yes, but still, farmers need an income.

Participant 2 40:47

How do you usually travel? On foot, by bus, by car, or do your children drive you?

Participant 1 41:01

If it's not far, I ride my electric scooter. If it's farther, I take the bus.

Participant 2

I always take the bus. Buses feel safer. My children have cars, but I don't like relying on them. I still prefer buses.

Researcher 41:30

Let's talk about frequency. How often do you usually take public transport?

Participant 1 41:46

About two days a week. On rainy days I prefer the bus—it feels safer. I don't like riding in the rain.

Researcher 42:05

So bus travel is a main mode, especially as an alternative when it rains.

Participant 4 42:25

I used to take buses, but not anymore. Now if I go far, my children drive me.

Researcher 42:36

How satisfied are you with public transport and related facilities?

Participant 1 42:47

Buses are okay.

Participant 4 42:51

I can't walk far, so I rely on buses.

Participant 1 42:54

The metro is also convenient now.

Participant 3 42:57

Yes, the metro is good.

Participant 1 42:58

In our area, transport is very convenient—many bus routes, Metro Lines 1 and 5.

Researcher 43:14

Apart from buses, there are some obstacles with getting on and off, especially for those with mobility problems. Any other opinions?

Participant 1 43:24

High floors are troublesome. When you get older, you can't manage stairs. Installing lifts is a problem. High-floor residents want them, but those on the first and second floors don't.

Participant 4 43:48

Yes, that's why it's hard to achieve in Sanmian.

Participant 1 43:59

I heard of a case where a woman on the first floor threatened to block the work if they installed a lift. She said, "I'll lie down here and stop it."

Participant 4 44:12

Yes, because lifts block sunlight for the lower floors.

Participant 1 44:23

Yes, they say it blocks the sun, and also the noise—doors opening and closing.

Participant 2 44:40

And some older residential buildings are wooden-structured, unsuitable for lifts.

Participant 4 44:52

In my place, it's only six floors, and even there it's tight. No space to add a lift.

Participant 1 45:16

And in parks too—so many people smoke. I like the park, but sitting on benches surrounded by smoke is unpleasant.

Participant 4 45:42

Yes, smoking and drinking can't be controlled.

Researcher 45:47

When you take public transport, while waiting at bus stops, what do you usually do?

Participant 3 45:53

Just wait.

Participant 1 45:55

Stand and wait. If you have a phone, you look at it.

Researcher 45:58

And around bus stops, do you ever use nearby facilities?

Participant 3 46:07

No, usually there's nothing.

Participant 1 46:09

Mostly just wait. Some stops sell cigarettes and alcohol.

Participant 2 46:16

Drinks, yes, but not very good.

Researcher 46:23

Would you find it convenient if there were more facilities at bus stops?

Participant 1 46:23

It doesn't matter to me. Young people would use them more. What we need is proper shelters—like the old adverts that gave shade and cover from rain. Somewhere to sit and rest would be good.

Participant 5 46:48

Near my bus stop, stalls selling drinks or snacks don't matter much. For us older people, safety is the priority. When the bus comes, you have to focus and get on quickly.

Participant 4 47:23

Smoking and drinking—people can't be controlled. Even young women do it now.

Participant 2 47:46

Yes, women smoke too. No one can stop it.

Researcher 47:50

So, would more facilities around bus stops—like resting areas, entertainment, or small shops—make life more convenient?

Participant 5 48:13

Sometimes there are small stalls near stops, selling drinks. Mostly for young people though, not older ones.

Researcher 48:30

Would vending machines or similar make things more convenient?

Participant 3 48:41

It's an option, but we usually bring our own water.

Participant 1 48:58

Yes, it's more for young people. For us, not really needed.

Researcher 49:07

Alright, let's move to the next mode of travel—walking. In your daily lives, how much does walking within the Sanmian community account for your activities and outings?

Participant 1 49:25

I don't feel safe walking. Cars drive onto pavements, that's what makes it unsafe.

Participant 2 49:34

If you walk more, then fine. But I don't walk much, so...

Participant 4 49:40

When walking with others, I always say, "You go ahead, I can't keep up." Because if you've no problem with your back or legs, you walk fast. Like Teacher Meng, she walks ahead quickly. I just go round the roundabout to do some shopping.

Researcher 49:56

Madam, how much of your daily travel is walking?

Participant 1 50:03

Not much. I prefer riding my electric scooter. I don't like walking even to the main gate, I'd rather take the scooter.

Participant 2 50:10

Right, more convenient. But Madam, do you usually walk more?

Participant 3 50:14

Yes, I walk quite a lot. Apart from taking the bus, I walk to do nearby things.

Participant 2 50:18

So walking is your main travel method, yes. For me too, especially to the park.

Participant 1 50:28

I walk for singing, strolling, but for going out longer distances it doesn't work for me. I don't dare because of cars, afraid of falling.

Participant 1 50:44

If it's far, then I take the bus or metro. Sometimes I'm in a hurry—going to the cultural palace, buying vegetables, dancing or kicking the shuttlecock.

Researcher 50:57

That's good exercise. So what are the main reasons you choose walking?

Participant 1 51:08

I used to cycle, but now there are too many electric scooters, I don't dare. Now I mostly walk. It feels safer. Roads are narrow, full of cars.

Researcher 51:45

And you? Why do you choose walking as your main form of travel?

Participant 4 51:59

My legs are still okay, so I walk for exercise. If it's far, I take the bus.

Participant 3 52:10

I walk.

Researcher 52:13

Why do you walk?

Participant 3 52:16

I can't cycle, can't ride an electric scooter. Since my injury, I walk slowly. I can't go far without resting. I don't like walking, cars make it harder. I've been like this for four years, my back and legs still hurt.

Participant 1 52:47

But cycling is quick. I love riding, I ride fast. But really, as long as people are in good health, most still like walking. Only this lady doesn't.

Researcher

So for most of you, walking is the main way, as long as health allows. Do you think there are improvements needed on your usual walking routes? Madam, do you have any suggestions?

Participant 1 53:28

I'll say this: once you're in your eighties, you just want to sit. I'm not there yet. Now I still use exercise equipment, sit down sometimes. Later, older people just sit chatting.

Participant 3 53:50

Yes, that's how it goes.

Researcher 53:53

Do you feel that a lack of resting places makes walking harder? Because if you could stop, sit, play cards, then continue, you might walk further. So it's a lack of benches, right? Apart from resting spots, are there other barriers?

Crowds, heavy traffic, like we said before.

Participant 3 54:27

Yes, after all we're older now. When I was just over 60, I could walk to Wulongkou. Now I've been unwell for years, so I don't walk much. My grandson says I'm lazy, but I tell him I'm not the same person I was. These days it's just me and my husband eating simple meals at home.

Participant 1 55:10

Yes, people are lazier now.

Participant 3 55:12

I admit I'm not strong anymore. I used to brood about it, but now with smartphones, I remind myself that life goes on whether you're happy or not. Everyone experiences ups and downs, some are healthy, some are not.

Researcher 55:45

That's very true. Any other obstacles when walking?

Participant 5 55:12

Not really. For me, walking is fine. If it's not too far, I just go.

Researcher 56:11

When you ride your electric scooter, do you face obstacles, such as visibility?

Participant 3 56:23

It's okay for those in good health. But for me, not so much.

Participant 5 56:30

Let me add something: sometimes electric scooters are parked all over the place. In the morning, when there are fewer people, it's okay. But by the time we come back, electric scooters are blocking everywhere.

Participant 4 56:47

Yes, especially near the market opposite the high-rise buildings.

Participant 1 56:51

Exactly, electric scooters block the way. Though now cars park more regularly on the roads,

scooters are still a problem. At least cars and scooters now tend to line up in designated spots. Before, like outside the cultural palace, vehicles were parked randomly along the road. But after the enforcement officers came, that stopped. In our living blocks, especially where people sell vegetables, cars are still squeezed in.

Participant 3 57:38

Yes, this problem of chaotic parking—I always complain about it.

Participant 4 57:47

We say what needs to be said, sing what we want to sing.

Participant 5 57:50

Yes, live however you want. If you want to sing Yu opera, sing Yu opera. If you want to sing songs, just sing. Be happy. Don't overthink. I eat little these days, and I always think I may not live much longer.

Researcher 58:04

In your daily life, do you usually interact with people of different age groups? For example, do you meet younger people in the park or elsewhere and make friends across generations?

Participant 1 58:39

Yes, I do. With Teacher Deng we sing and dance together. It's fun. Sometimes you don't know someone, but after meeting a few times through activities, you get acquainted. Dancing together, singing together, you get to know each other.

Participant 3 59:00

I haven't seen much of you in recent years.

Participant 4 59:01

Yes, sometimes I visit my brother's place.

Participant 1 59:05

Without cars or scooters it felt safer and the air was better. I used to like going to Beishan Park. But here in the Sanmian community, with so many cars and scooters, walking doesn't feel safe anymore.

Participant 3 59:21

I once served as a judge for Director Li Yuan. No barriers then, it felt relaxing to join group activities—like spinal health exercises. Now, sometimes the Chinese Medicine Hospital doctors recommend daily exercises, and they check on us through the computer system.

Participant 1 59:40

Yes, you mustn't let yourself think negatively. At our age, life is not easy. But we should try to live well every day.

Participant 4 59:54

If I hadn't injured my back and legs, I might still be out practising kung fu with others.

Researcher 01:00:36

Do you have other experiences of interacting with people of different ages?

Participant 5 01:00:41

Not much with younger ones—they're busy with study or work.

Participant 1 01:00:46

Mostly we are in groups of people in their sixties and seventies. Those in their eighties often don't want to join in. Younger ones are at work. I'm older than you now, and I just try to live happily each day.

Participant 2 01:01:00

Yes, I take my grandchildren out to play.

Participant 3 01:01:02

I used to take my grandchildren out, but they've grown up now.

Participant 2 01:01:06

Yes, now they're at school. We only see them at weekends.

Participant 1 01:01:13

I don't really have younger friends anymore. I'm 60, nearly 61. Among us here, I'm the youngest.

Researcher 01:01:27

In this area, where do you usually make new friends of different ages? Apart from May Day Park, the cultural palace, and the CSCMP, are there other places?

Participant 1 01:01:43

It depends on shared interests. If people don't share interests, you won't spend time together. Activities bring people together—classes, singing, volunteering. You meet strangers, and over time relationships build.

Participant 1 01:02:03

During the pandemic, with masks, many didn't recognise me. But later, through volunteering, many more people got to know me.

Participant 5 01:02:12

I remember there was a woman in our area who sang very well.

Participant 1 01:02:16

Yes, through volunteering I met many people.

Researcher 01:02:20

Have you ever had conflicts with different age groups in public spaces? For example, older people singing while children want to play ball, or cultural misunderstandings?

Participant 5 01:02:42

Generally not, at least in the Sanmian community.

Participant 1 01:02:45

Older people usually give way to the young. But young people also sometimes give way to us.

Participant 4 01:02:52

Yes, we all get along.

Participant 5 01:02:59

Yes, we chat happily. I'm most satisfied in the parks—the flowers are fragrant, the trees are beautiful. Good for the eyes. Younger people are glued to their phones, but I go outside.

Researcher 01:03:19

So even when activities clash, like dancing and basketball, you don't really have conflicts? Do you think it's because many of you are retired workers of Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory, so there's a strong sense of belonging and cohesion? Out of care for the younger generation, you don't compete with them for space.

Participant 5 01:03:54

Yes, we all know each other. Parents, children, neighbours. I wasn't a worker at Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory, but I've lived here many years. We are all neighbours.

Participant 3 01:04:08

I wasn't from the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory. Neither was my husband.

Participant 01:04:10

Me neither. But the point is, we've lived in the Sanmian community for a long time. I bought my flat here, and the neighbourhood relations are good. That makes everything easier. For example, if we organise an activity, and invite Granny Meng, everyone joins in willingly.

Participant 3 01:04:37

Yes, it's all about mutual tolerance and harmony.

Participant 4 01:04:44

Exactly, I've lived here for a long time. It feels like home.

Researcher 01:04:50

Right, let's move on to neighbourhood services. Are there services you need but haven't yet received? Earlier you mentioned a dining hall, but there's no space. What else do you need?

Participant 3 01:05:14

Home-based care. There's no such support at present.

Researcher 01:05:17

Apart from those two, are there any other services you would like?

Participant 4 01:05:22

You can look for home-care help through domestic service companies. They'll introduce you.

Participant 3 01:05:30

As we age, even making lunch or dinner can become difficult. How much would it cost to hire help for just one meal?

Participant 2 01:05:39

Yes, like hourly workers.

Participant 1 01:05:40

I think the state should provide training for unemployed young people—even high school or university graduates, or women—to give them professional skills.

Participant 2 01:05:52

Yes, there's even a home economics programme now. I think there's a school in Mazhai.

Participant 5 01:06:01

If the community could organise services for older people, that would help. But if young people go to work in someone's home, they complain about low pay, because they have families to support. They can't survive on just a few yuan an hour. If the state gave them some subsidies, that would be better. Young people do have filial feelings too.

Participant 5 01:06:35

But most people doing home visits now are middle-aged.

Participant 3 01:06:40

Yes, people in their twenties don't know how to do this work.

Participant 4 01:06:45

And young people are under a lot of pressure nowadays.

Participant 2 01:06:48

Once you're over 50, it's difficult to find work.

Participant 1 01:06:54

Especially those aged 40–50, it's hard to get hired for care work.

Participant 5 01:06:58

That's true.

Participant 3 01:07:00

You can't expect thirty-somethings to do care work. They don't know how.

Participant 2 01:07:10

When I'm older, I'll just go to a care home.

Participant 3 01:07:14

There are volunteer training programmes now, I think run by the city.

Participant 1 01:07:23

Yes. For example, my younger sister worked at Zhengzhou No.6 Cotton Textile Factory. They've already set up services where CSCMP staff accompany older people at home, offering care, sometimes massage. Some are sent to residential homes. I'm still self-sufficient, so I won't go. Some say care homes are like cages, but many offer singing and activities.

Participant 5 01:08:08

Some are good, some not.

Participant 4 01:08:11

It depends on the heart behind it. I've seen care centres in Zhengzhou that are quite famous for organising exercises and activities for older people.

Researcher 01:08:24

Have you taken part in outdoor clean-up or renovation? For example, removing vegetable patches from courtyards, or sorting rubbish?

Participant 5 01:08:38

Yes, we used to sort rubbish. But now classification has been cancelled. It wasn't done well. In small flats, where can you keep several bins?

Participant 1 01:08:50

Exactly, homes are small. There's no space for multiple bins.

Researcher 01:08:56

Do you think older people could be given chances to contribute? After all, everyone here is still capable. Could the CSCMP offer opportunities for work—helping with employment, and also giving you something meaningful to do?

Participant 3 01:09:34

We'd like to, but once you're past a certain age, nobody wants you. Even for travel, if you're over 65, they won't take you.

Researcher 01:09:45

If opportunities were available, would you be willing?

Participant 1 01:09:48

Of course. During the pandemic, Aunt Deng and others volunteered to sort rubbish, and the state supported it. Older people can do small things, like waste sorting.

Participant 5 01:10:47

But mostly, nobody hires older people. And sometimes, older people simply lack the strength.

Researcher 01:10:51

Are there jobs you'd be willing and able to do? Not technical or demanding ones, but lighter work—like supermarket cashiers, for example?

Participant 1 01:11:20

But when people get ill or frail, they can't. Many families prefer to stay at home.

Participant 4 01:11:27

Yes, once you're over 50, employers don't want you. But if there were suitable jobs within our ability, we'd be willing.

Participant 2 01:11:41

The problem is age restrictions.

Participant 3 01:11:43

Yes, as soon as they see your age, they won't hire you.

Participant 1 01:11:46

Basically, only the young are hired.

Researcher 01:11:48

Let's discuss the activities that happen in front of and behind your residential buildings. Earlier many of you mentioned that you often spend time there. Are the facilities you use in these spaces provided as public facilities by the Sanmian community, or are they things you've moved there yourselves, like in the photo we saw just now?

Participant 3 01:12:18

Usually there's nothing in front of the buildings, and behind them the vegetable plots block the way. There's no proper fitness equipment or anything.

Researcher

You said earlier that when you're in front of your building you might sit on a bench or stool, right?

Participant 2 01:12:38

Yes, we move our own little stools out.

Participant 3

I do the same. I sit in the vegetable plot on a stool. I've closed off the stairwell to park electric scooters there. I also rented out a garage in the courtyard. People put stools there as well.

Participant 1 01:13:03

We just take something out and sit. Before there were no benches under my block, so everyone brought their own. Even if it wasn't a proper stool, we managed.

Participant 4 01:13:14

Even if the community gave us benches, there's no place to put them.

Participant 3 01:13:19

That's why we ended up with vegetable plots. Really, the ground should be paved.

Participant 2 01:13:28

Yes, none of the benches we use are officially provided.

Participant 3 01:13:33

Some are. I've seen stone slabs placed at entrances, long benches where people sit on the slope, under the tall buildings. But often it's just messy—grass overgrown, people relieving themselves there. Near the little supermarket opposite, the sanitation cooperative keeps a broom. Other places, the benches are just discarded furniture, old delivery stools left behind.

Participant 4 01:14:07

Yes, mostly self-organised benches. Maybe one or two provided by the CSCMP.

Participant 1 01:14:12

Yes, there is one long bench now, but in the past it was all our own. Old people in their eighties who can't walk far just sit in the courtyard chatting. In my block, many sit near the vegetable plots, talking while they pick vegetables.

Participant 2 01:14:39

So really, most of the seats are self-provided. Only a few are official.

Researcher

Madam, what about you? When you rest downstairs, are the benches yours or public?

Participant 1 01:14:53

Now we have benches provided by the community.

Researcher 01:14:57

Do you still bring your own?

Participant 1 01:15:00

In the past, yes. If we had an old stool at home, we'd leave it in the stairwell and carry it out to sit. But now with the community-provided benches, we don't need to.

Participant 4 01:15:16

Yes, the CSCMP provided benches. But in our courtyard, we still can't place many.

Participant 1 01:15:19

By the market, though, there are good benches. People just sit there after buying fruit or vegetables.

Researcher 01:15:31

So most of the benches downstairs are ones you've moved yourselves, either because there were no public benches or because the public ones were uncomfortable, is that right?

Participant 3 01:15:46

Yes, before we always brought our own. Now there are some stone benches.

Participant 1 01:15:51

Some are stone slabs, some provided by the community. In our yard, they even placed a long bench like in the photo.

Participant 4 01:16:00

But still, there are too few. So in most cases, people bring their own.

Participant 3 01:16:06

Yes, if there were more, we wouldn't need to. In Junhui courtyard, people still bring their own. On Dongcheng North Road, there are nine old blocks with hardly any benches. In another yard on the west side, there's a glass house, and another three-storey glass building. I bought a commercial flat there with full payment at the time. Many old houses had no property certificate.

Researcher 01:16:47

Let me summarise what we've discussed. First, space construction is a key issue. The most popular spaces are still May Day Park and the cultural palace, because they're enclosed, safe, and lively. Compared to the CSCMP, they're more engaging. But for those with health issues like Madam Meng, sitting downstairs is more practical.

Participant 4 01:17:32

Yes, in front of the building, or at the roundabout while shopping.

Participant 2 01:17:38

Exactly. But the key issue is poor property management. Public facilities are lacking. You have to bring your own benches, which is inconvenient. There should be more proper facilities.

Participant 3 01:18:06

The issue of paving and hardening the ground has never been solved, it always comes down to a lack of funding. It's really a property management problem. The same applies to transport.

Participant 5 01:18:18

Yes, I've seen the big open spaces elsewhere, but in our block even the stairways are cramped.

Participant 3 01:18:27

For example, with transport, I only realised when we had to do mass Covid testing how difficult it was around some of the blocks.

Participant 2 01:18:36

Yes, with transport the real issue is the conflict between cars and pedestrians. Electric scooters don't follow the traffic rules, which creates big safety risks. And in terms of public transport, the design of buses makes it very difficult for older people to get on and off—there's no proper accessibility.

Participant 3 01:19:01

Exactly. If there were buses designed specifically for older people, that would be much better.

Researcher 01:19:06

Yes, right. And also, most people here don't drive. Some, like Madam Meng, rely on buses, while others, being younger and healthier, don't use e-bikes either.

What I've gathered is that in the Sanmian community there aren't conflicts between different age groups. The neighbourhood atmosphere is harmonious, people are willing to make space for others. Older people are caring towards the younger ones, so there aren't the clashes you might see elsewhere.

Neighbourhood services, however, face two big issues: lack of funding and lack of staff. That's why you don't have a canteen or home care. These two are the biggest gaps.

Participant 4 01:20:13

Now the community is ageing, and older couples are everywhere.

Participant 3 01:20:16

Yes, in every old residential block it's mostly older people.

Participant 2 01:20:21

And there are no real opportunities for employment either.

Participant 3 01:20:27

Yes, work is reserved for younger people.

Participant 1 01:20:32

In the West Sanmian community, where there are old single-storey houses, they've started building something new.

Participant 3 01:20:39

Yes, an older people's day-care and activity centre.

Participant 1 01:20:42

They've even set up a canteen there. It's not fully operational yet.

It's in the old West Sanmian community. At first they only had a few tables for mah-jong. The canteen hasn't really got going yet, but it shows they're preparing to develop in this direction.

Participant 4 01:21:19

Yes, what we really need is an older people's canteen run by the CSCMP.

Participant 2 01:21:24

And fitness facilities are lacking too.

Participant 3 01:21:33

For those who can't walk far, they just stay at home.

Participant (unclear) 01:21:38

Yes, those who can manage will still go further.

Researcher

Alright, I think that covers most of the issues. Are there any last things you'd like to add?

Participant 3 01:21:51

No, nothing more really.

Researcher 01:21:54

Earlier we mentioned that care support is not available at present. Besides this, are there any other services you'd like to see?

Participant 4 01:22:15

Well, household services are important. If you want someone to cook one meal, two meals, or clean, there's a price for each.

Participant 3 01:22:27

Because the CSCMP doesn't participate, the prices stay high. Only if the community takes part in providing home support will the costs come down.

Participant 4 01:22:38

But it'll never work through the CSCMP. You always have to rely on household service companies.

Participant 2 01:22:45

Do you have any other ideas for building an ageing-friendly community that I haven't asked about?

Participant 3 01:22:58

It's not that we don't have ideas, it's just that without money, nothing can be done.

Researcher 01:23:03

Let's not think about money for a moment. Imagine funding and space weren't an issue—what are your needs? Space is flexible: a block's footprint is small, but you can build upwards. Money can always be raised.

Participant 4 01:23:49

But still, I have to say, the community always wants to do more, but there's no money.

Participant 2 01:23:54

Yes, but if we had the money and the space, what would you want?

Participant 3 01:24:00

We'd still prefer home-based care, organised by the CSCMP. That would be cheaper than the market.

Researcher 2 01:24:09

But there's already a day-care centre in East Sanmian. In my previous interviews, I found that hardly anyone goes.

Participant 3 01:24:21

Yes, Chengkai community has one too. And I know the Cable community has another.

Participant 1 01:24:30

Yes, the Cable community's is quite good.

Participant 3 01:24:32

Yes, they've already put it into practice.

Researcher 01:24:34

So in Sanmian we don't have a canteen yet, but there is a day-care centre. Why don't people go?

Participant 4 01:24:46

Because an older people's restaurant is what we really need.

Participant 3 01:24:50

Yes, people just don't want to cook anymore. The Cable Factory community was chosen as a pilot project, with government backing, so they managed it. Without that, no single CSCMP could do it on their own.

Participant 5, 01:25:18

Over in East Sanmian the space is quite large, but I'm not very familiar with it. I've never thought of going there, you see? At present there aren't that many older people there, so it hasn't become a real trend yet. Most can still look after themselves. When that time hasn't come, how can they open it properly? They've just converted the building to meet the requirements, and it's been sitting there for over half a year. They only talk about providing meals, but who will pay for it? Who will cover the costs? Without financial support, it won't work. The state at the very least should invest money to establish a canteen.

Participant 1, 01:25:57

Yes, maybe in the future. What we hope for in a new community is to have such facilities. When you're older, what matters is being able to go there to buy some food. But without funding, it's not possible, even if many residents could afford it themselves.

Participant 2, 01:26:22

Alright, I'll stop here. Thank you so much for coming all this way in this hot weather.

Focus group discussion transcript-2

Participant 2 02:18

In our Sanmian community, there are two main aspects to consider. In terms of medical treatment, it is relatively convenient. Although the technology is still at the basic level, for common illnesses among residents living in the compound, it is fairly accessible. The hospital here is convenient compared to other factories' areas, which may not have such facilities. The original clinic of the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory has now been upgraded into a community health service centre, which is an improvement.

As for the environment, whether in East Sanmian community or West Sanmian community, there are relatively few places for exercise. The overall planning of the compound was fixed long ago, so now it's a matter of making use of the gaps in between buildings to create spaces for activities. For example, in the eastern residential area, in front of Building No.43, the square is fairly well designed and safe for people to gather and exercise. A small activity area was also set up near the car-wash area after the relocation of residents from the new community, but the space is still very limited. There are not many pieces of exercise equipment installed, and since the population in the community is large, it's not convenient for everyone to go to the Cultural Palace. Some older

people are not physically able to travel that far. In future development and planning, spaces such as the front of bicycle sheds should be considered as potential activity areas.

Another point is that the design and construction of these facilities are not matters within our control. Neither the residents nor even the community workers have the authority or funds to make these decisions. What we hope is that, through channels like your research, the voices of the people can be conveyed upwards to the government or the management committee. If the government could allocate funds for old compounds, then it would be possible to improve the infrastructure. Ideally, this should be part of a unified plan, with designated funding.

A third issue is the lack of lifts in old residential buildings. Most of us are retired workers from the factory. When the high-rise buildings were constructed in later years, they were already equipped with lifts. But in the older compounds, buildings above four storeys did not have them. During renovation projects, if lifts could be installed in these older blocks, it would greatly improve accessibility. Many residents strongly demand this. Retired workers now have pensions, and lifts are not extremely expensive. If the government could provide some funding, the CSCMP could subsidise a portion, and residents themselves contributed a share, then it would be manageable. For older people living on the second or third floor, especially when they fall ill, going up and down stairs becomes extremely difficult.

Population ageing is increasing, and the demand for such facilities will grow. Other districts in Zhengzhou, such as Jinshui or Zhongyuan, have already installed lifts in old compounds. We hope the same policies can be extended here, which would be a real benefit for residents.

Another issue relates to care services. Some compounds have already established 托老所 (day-care centres for older people). These are like nurseries but for older people, offering day-time meals and rest. For example, some communities provide lunch services at low cost — about 8–10 yuan depending on age. This saves older people from the burden of cooking and provides social interaction. Some centres also provide simple resting spaces, similar to a care home but not quite the same. These community-based ageing services are essential and should be promoted more widely.

Participant 3 04:08

Yes, the space there is large.

Participant 2 04:09

Exactly, in those larger spaces more exercise equipment could be added. And it's not only Sanmian factory workers who live there now — also people from Zhengzhou No.6 Cotton Textile Factory and other Danwei. For example, in Shenghuojie, another small activity site has been built, which makes it easier for residents to gather and exercise. That's my view about activity spaces.

As for planning and implementation, we ordinary residents cannot decide these things. Only the government can allocate funding. If you could communicate these needs to the authorities, perhaps more could be done.

And finally, with ageing in mind, these community-based ageing service centres are increasingly important. They are different from nursing homes. Older people can go there for meals, rest for a while, and then return home. This provides support without requiring full-time institutionalisation. I know that the Fangzhenting compound has already established such a centre.

Participant 4 08:38

But that one was built by a nursing home.

Participant 2 08:46

Yes, but the idea is worth expanding.

Researcher 08:48

Do you have any other suggestions?

Participant 4 08:52

From my personal perspective, the most urgent need is to get an old-age canteen running as soon as possible. Older people spend too much time shopping for food and cooking, and with declining health and mobility, this becomes difficult. For instance, my blood pressure is high — I don't usually take medicine, but it can suddenly rise. If there were a canteen, it would relieve a great burden.

Participant 5 09:34

Yes, what we need is integrated medical and care services. Some older people also suffer from depression. If we had proper community health checks, it would help. I once had my blood pressure tested at over 220, though I didn't feel unwell at all until I went to hospital. Health conditions can change suddenly, and it is important to have care and monitoring in place.

Participant 4 10:19

Yes, medical-care integration is necessary.

Researcher 10:21

When you feel unwell, do you face difficulties in travelling to hospital?

Participant 4 10:38

At the moment I can still manage, but in future it will be a problem. For those living alone, without family to rely on, it is a real concern. We can only depend on ourselves.

Currently, according to the Civil Affairs Bureau of Zhongyuan District, there was once a policy of providing older people with certain service hours in care institutions depending on age. For instance, those aged 60–70 received one hour of care service per day, those 70–80 received two hours, and those over 80 received three hours. But due to the pandemic and lack of funding, this scheme has been suspended. It has caused inconvenience. For me personally, what I need most is help with basic housework, such as cleaning tables and tidying up.

Participant 3 12:10

Domestic services.

Participant 4 12:12

It's not just domestic services. This was a team specifically organised under government funding, set up to provide care. At first, it focused on solitary older people, and later the scope expanded when there was more funding. Now it seems to have been suspended, but I still think it was a very good scheme. It really addressed practical issues for older people.

Researcher 12:54

In the Sanmian community, I've seen many situations where residents solve these issues themselves. For example, in East Sanmian community, I saw one building where residents had put up a sign: "Emergency passage for older people, please do not block with your e-bikes." As one of you mentioned earlier, furniture or vehicles blocking the way not only affects mobility but also prevents timely medical access. Increasingly, residents are starting to self-organise and make adjustments. Since national funding is not always guaranteed, how do you think the community should step in to support older people's daily lives? What form of support would be most appropriate?

Participant 6 14:00

Let me share an idea. I once heard about a system where younger older people help the older ones. For example, when you're in your 60s and still fit, you can volunteer and earn points on a service card. Later, when you're older and need care yourself, you can redeem those points. This way, voluntary work becomes a kind of savings plan. Of course, the volunteers must eventually become beneficiaries, otherwise people will feel exploited. For example, four hours of voluntary service might translate into eight hours of care when you're older. This kind of scheme should be organised by a proper body.

Participant 4 15:07

Yes, it needs to be organised.

Participant 6 15:09

Exactly, an organisation must oversee it.

Participant 4 15:12

There is such an organisation, but we don't have direct access to it, so we don't know much.

Participant 6 15:18

I heard that Shanghai piloted this kind of volunteer service card scheme.

Researcher 15:30

Yes, other places have tried it, but it hasn't been introduced here yet.

Participant 6 15:35

Another problem is that our compound lacks proper publicity.

Participant 4 15:38

Yes, the lack of publicity. Many people don't even know these things exist.

Participant 6 15:42

Also, there isn't enough greenery in the compound. When you step outside, you hardly see any green spaces.

Participant 4 15:49

That's typical of old compounds—always lacking green.

Participant 6 15:52

I've visited other compounds with much better environments — high levels of greenery, trees, shrubs, lawns. In our area, they started with a few small landscape features, even built a pavilion, which was nice. But then it was abandoned. These small features improve the sense of liveability. Instead, what we see now is rows of iron sheet fences around the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory blocks, which feel oppressive and unpleasant.

Participant 3 16:38

That's part of old housing renovation.

Participant 6 16:39

Yes, but the renovation takes too long. They put up iron sheet barriers, and nobody knows when the work will be finished. Walking past endless rows of green iron sheets feels depressing, especially after the pandemic when these barriers were everywhere. If they insist on putting them up, at least they could be decorated. For example, on No.6 Factory Street they turned the barriers into an art wall, which looked much better.

Participant 3 17:31

Yes.

Participant 6 17:33

Exactly, that's much better. If they painted flowers or blossoms on them, it would feel more cheerful, like springtime. A splash of colour can change the mood, instead of staring at a monotonous wall of metal.

Researcher 18:00

Speaking of this, have you ever taken part in outdoor space improvement projects? For instance, planting, building small rest areas, or maintaining green spaces?

Participant 6 18:19

Yes, many residents set up little flower racks outside their windows. But sometimes when the flowers bloom nicely, someone takes the pots away.

Participant 3 18:27

Yes, I've seen that too — people planting flowers, then neighbours take them.

Participant 6 18:32

Some residents plant flowers on rooftops, which look beautiful.

Participant 3 18:33

Yes, like on the top floor.

Participant 6 18:36

One family even planted roses on the second floor of a high-rise — it looked wonderful.

Researcher 18:47

If conditions allowed, since you are all quite independent and active, would you be interested in taking part in community projects? For example, maintaining landscapes or assisting with minor upkeep?

Participant 6 19:27

When I first retired, I really wanted to do that. I even thought about volunteering in Bishagang Park to tend flowerbeds. But then I realised they might not want me — worried about liability if I got hurt.

Participant 3 19:45

Yes, that's the problem. Whether it's the CSCMP or elsewhere, they don't want to engage older people for fear of accidents and responsibility.

Participant 6 19:56

Exactly. Once you're over 60, they don't want to involve you.

Researcher 20:01

Yes, that's a real issue.

Participant 3 20:04

I once visited Nanjie village — their security system was excellent. Older men and women wore red armbands and patrolled the streets as volunteers. If a stranger arrived, they would politely ask who you were visiting and even escort you there. Their service attitude was outstanding.

Participant 5 20:32

Yes.

Participant 3 20:34

That's an example worth learning from.

Researcher 20:37

Yes, that's something we could draw inspiration from.

Participant 4 20:39

But remember, Nanjie village is wealthy. Each resident receives a substantial annual payment.

Participant 5 20:43

Yes, with money, everything is easier to manage.

Participant 4 20:48

Exactly, economic foundation is key.

Participant 3 20:52

They still operate under the old system. In Nanjie village, medical care, food, and housing are all free, thanks to the Danwei System.

Participant 2 21:05

Yes, they still maintain socialist practices.

Participant 4 21:07

That's why their environment is so clean and orderly.

Participant 3 21:13

And their older people don't even really retire.

Participant 4 21:18

So, pensions aren't even an issue.

Participant 3 21:20

Everyone is looked after.

Participant 6 21:22

Pensions.

Participant 4 21:23

Yes, they even get more than us. Those prosperous rural villages with strong collective economies have been running their pension schemes for nearly 20 years. I went to Nanjie Village once with my work unit when we were promoting instant noodles. They really did things well there. People's overall qualities were high too, because with money, education and manners also improve, you know?

Participant 6 21:55

Yes, the economy really is the foundation.

Researcher 21:56

Absolutely, it all comes down to the economy.

Participant 4 21:59

Yes, you must have money. Without money you can't get anything done. In China, without money, communities simply can't carry out activities.

Participant 5 22:06

Exactly, without money how can you manage? And people's behaviour also matters. For example, some residents just throw rubbish down the stairwell — bottles, cigarette packs, even worse things. You clean it one day and the next day it's filthy again. That shows poor civic quality.

Researcher 22:28

As many of you mentioned earlier, some tasks are not suitable for older people, partly because of the risk of falling or injury. But the deeper issue is that the built environment itself is not age-friendly. For example, certain paving patterns or steps are trip hazards. In design, outdoor stairways should have at least three steps; if they're shorter, people often can't see them clearly and trip. This shows that the environment is not designed with older residents in mind.

So let me ask: when you cross roads in the community, do you encounter unsafe factors or obstacles? Because safety concerns also stop older residents from going out.

Participant 3 23:29

Buses are fine — they stop for pedestrians at zebra crossings, which is good. Most drivers obey the rule of giving way. But some taxi drivers don't; they just speed through to make more money, which is dangerous.

Researcher 23:52

Yes, private cars are the bigger issue, the traffic flow is too heavy, especially with small cars.

Participant 3 23:56

Yes, taxis and similar vehicles are the ones that cause trouble.

Researcher 24:03

What do you think?

Participant 5 24:08

Nothing to add, what they said is right.

Researcher 24:10

So it's the same for you — cars are the problem?

Participant 6 24:19

Yes, and another question: what vehicles are older people actually allowed to use now? Many places ban motorbikes.

Participant 3 24:26

That's right. For older people who struggle to walk, they ride slow vehicles — twenty kilometres an hour at most, like tricycles. But sometimes the traffic police stop them. Even now helmets are compulsory for tricycles, but in hot weather some forget, and that counts as breaking the law.

Participant 5 24:58

Yes, exactly.

Participant 3 25:01

And with age, dementia also becomes an issue.

Researcher 25:05

What about you? Do you feel unsafe when crossing the road?

Participant 4 25:15

I do. There are far more cars than before — big and small — and especially e-bikes. Riders go too fast and don't care if you're crossing. At the entrance of the No.3 Cotton Factory, I've had some near misses myself.

Participant 3 25:44

The accident rate is high.

Participant 4 25:47

Yes, a car passing so close — if it actually hit you, half your life would be gone.

Researcher 25:56

That's true.

Participant 3 25:58

And e-bikes often use the main vehicle lanes.

Participant 4 25:59

They just drive, nothing else. I don't have much more to add.

Researcher 26:06

I've noticed at the Mianfang Road junction, once the lights change, private cars, non-motor vehicles, and pedestrians all move at the same time. Non-motor vehicles often swerve into pedestrian crossings. It does look quite unsafe.

Participant 3 26:30

That doesn't happen on Jianshe Road, only these smaller roads, like around Mianfang.

Participant 6 26:35

Yes, the junction of Mianfang Road and Tongbai Road is the worst, total chaos.

Researcher 26:39

Right, because it's too wide, and the traffic lights are all jumbled together.

Participant 3 26:45

Inside the residential compounds there aren't even traffic lights. For example, inside the No.3

Cotton Factory, there are no signals. Cars just drive north to south, south to north. That's what makes it dangerous — if there were traffic lights, cars would at least have to stop.

Participant 6 26:57

Another issue is how confusing the building numbers are. If someone from outside comes to find a resident, it's very hard. There's no logical sequence to the numbering.

Participant 4 27:20

Yes, no one seems to manage it. The agencies responsible for numbering don't know the local situation properly.

Participant 6 27:33

In one estate you can have dozens of buildings.

Participant 4 27:37

Yes, and one actual block can be divided into three numbers, when in fact it's just one building.

Participant 6 27:47

Even the entrances are labelled strangely. One stairwell is treated as if it's a separate block.

Participant 4 27:50

And the street names aren't always clear. For example, when they planned the area, north-south roads were named differently from east-west ones. The east-west ones are named after rivers — Yinhe Road, Huaihe Road, Luohe Road. That system was started back when Wang Hui was mayor, forty or fifty years ago.

Participant 6 28:35

And the stairwell entrances don't have any signage.

Participant 3 28:39

Yes, especially in the larger compounds.

Participant 6 28:41

Many older buildings have no markings. Outsiders can't find addresses.

Participant 4 28:45

Even the residents sometimes struggle, let alone visitors.

Participant 6 28:51

Yes, without proper signs on entrances, it's confusing.

Researcher 28:53

That definitely makes it harder for relatives or friends to visit.

Participant 2 28:59

Or for ambulances trying to locate someone.

Researcher 29:04

Exactly.

Participant 6 29:04

It's actually an easy issue to solve — just add signage.

Researcher 29:08

Yes, this really needs to be resolved.

Participant 4 29:10

The West Sanmian community has already done it — they've put up proper signs at the entrances. The East Sanmian community hasn't.

Participant 2 29:17

The East community used to have them too.

Participant 5 29:19

Yes, but later they were removed.

Participant 3 29:23

They used to paste up temporary labels, but those disappeared too.

Participant 2 29:29

At one point even the iron fencing had red numbers on it. Many places had them.

Participant 3 29:32

Yes, at different times they've tried.

Participant 2 29:34

Now the local police station has started putting up official labels, like "West Road, Building such-and-such," and sticking them up on stairwells.

Participant 5 29:42

But before those were added, it was chaos.

Participant 2 29:47

Yes, chaotic. Let me explain: people sometimes confuse the external street names, like Yinhe Road, with our internal system here in the No.3 Factory compound. The numbering system here is a bit different. For example, starting from the main gate, from the central middle street, the numbering begins from the east. The building directly opposite the kindergarten is called East Road No.1. That's where the numbering begins.

Participant 3 30:27

Not Jianxi Road.

Participant 2 30:29

Building No.1 East, let me explain to you, in the past the numbering of the buildings started from the main gate, the middle, and Building No.1 East began with those three-storey blocks.

Participant 6 30:37

Those have now been demolished.

Participant 2 30:39

Yes, they have now been requisitioned. In the past, the numbering of the buildings was quite regular. That was called Building No.1.

Then from Building No.1 it turned and continued 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, reaching the kindergarten side. That was Building No.8, that's how it turned around, right? The numbering was very regular, 1 through 8. But there was one issue. A building should be called Building No.1 with Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3, and that would be it. But that wasn't how it was done. From Building No.1 East, they numbered them as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 East. In fact, those eight numbers didn't necessarily correspond to eight buildings, it might have been only three buildings, wasn't it? That part was not very appropriate. But this was decided back then.

This was in 1954. Think about how many years ago that was. Back in 1954, when these blocks were built, the number of residents was not so large. The police station assigned the building numbers. Your ID card, your household registration booklet, these are fixed; they cannot be changed. The police station had already registered your household as being in, say, Building No.7 East Centre. So your ID card would say the same, and your household registration would say the same. That's how it was.

On the west side, from Building No.61 West, it was numbered in order from there. Later, the numbering became chaotic.

To solve the housing shortage for staff, for example, near the kindergarten entrance, in around 1984, they directly added another building along Qinggong Road. The numbering could no longer follow the old logic, so they created new ones like Building No.7 East New, No.8 East New, No.9 East New, and so on.

That's how it came about. Because the earlier building numbers had already been fixed in the household registration system, and your household registration booklet was binding, the public security bureau had to give new numbers. Back then we didn't even have ID cards yet, only household booklets. When you reported your residence, they would check it, and that was your address.

That's how it was done. Originally it was straightforward, but later, this side became numbers like Building No.34 East, 25, 27, 20, 80. On the other side, such as the 24th Factory's side, it started

from Building No.26 East, then 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and so on. Then from 31 to 34, that's how it continued. Do you understand?

That was housing built in the 1970s, those were the so-called "rebel buildings." In the 1970s. By the 1980s, after I started working, more buildings were added. That's why they became "East New." Because East 7 and 8 had already been used, the new buildings had to be numbered East New 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7. Wasn't it? This block here, for instance, is East New. East New Building No.1 should be here, right?

So generally it went like this: East New No.1, East New Road, East New No.2, and so on, continuing 1 through 7 or 8, like that. This is how it came to be. Originally, the old numbers were already fixed, so when new blocks were built, they couldn't use the same numbers. Then on the other side, the numbering continued as Building No.34 East, then 35, 36, 37, 38.

But there was one issue: for example, East Centre Building No.7 should just be called Building No.7, with Units 1, 2, 3, and that would be fine. But that wasn't how it was done. They numbered it East Centre 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7. In total there were only two and a half buildings, but they gave them seven door numbers. In reality it was just two and a half blocks. That's how it was. This wasn't something we had control over. I've explained it clearly to you today, right? It's not really chaotic. If you investigate it carefully, it's very clear. You just don't deal with this, so you don't know, right?

Participant 3 34:10

That's just a few people.

Participant 2 34:11

Not many. You don't deal with this, so you don't know. But the police station had already fixed the numbering. For example, East 8 was already there, and everyone knew that 1 through 8 was arranged in that way.

Participant 5 34:25

But I don't even know where Building No.8 is.

Participant 2 34:26

I'll tell you, the family that opened a restaurant, that's Building No.8. That whole stretch, Buildings 1 through 8 East, was numbered in that loop. Wasn't it near the dumpling restaurant? No, it was the "霸王对" private kitchen. From Building No.1, directly to the west gate of the kindergarten, then continuing to Building No.8. That's how it was numbered. The same for the western side. Was it chaotic?

Back then it wasn't chaotic, but later, as I said, to solve the housing problem for staff, they squeezed in extra buildings. Then numbering like "East No.14 Second Building" came into being. For example, in a photo I showed, there's a building labelled East 14, and that's how it came about.

Participant 5 35:07

I don't even know which number my building is.

Participant 2 35:08

East No.14, that's the "television building," that's what it was called.

Participant 6 35:14

Even people living in the courtyard don't know.

Participant 2 35:16

That building was East No.14. The police station called it East New 12, 13.

Participant 3 35:23

But back then East wasn't called that.

Participant 2 35:25

It was East, but East Centre was No.23. And then later, behind that, near each factory's housing blocks, they numbered them East New 15, 16, continuing like that.

Researcher 35:32

Does this kind of issue cause you trouble in your daily life?

Participant 2 35:35

For outsiders, definitely they wouldn't understand.

Does it cause you trouble? For me, not really.

Participant 5 35:41

If he were in charge, he could make it permanent, but I don't know about him.

Participant 2 35:45

In the factory he didn't worry about these things. He didn't care, he just knew everything was settled there. But now there is one issue, and I agree with the point others raised: even though the new numbering of the buildings was done, the signage should have kept up and been installed properly. Actually, that would solve the problem, right?

The plaques should be fixed in place promptly. Once you see it outside, you'd know exactly where it is.

Participant 6 36:09

Like when they deliver home appliances to you.

Participant 2 36:10

Or the 120 ambulance.

Participant 6 36:12

Or when a vehicle comes, if this isn't in place it delays things.

Participant 5 36:15

Maybe they'd be looking for East Centre 14 – where is it?

Participant 2 36:20

That's called East No.14 or East New No.14.

Participant 6 36:24

It's over there. For the old blocks they just added one extra word, calling it East New.

Participant 3 36:28

Yes, just add another word like East New.

Participant 2 36:32

At the time of numbering, when they went to the police station for approval, if the number was already used, they had no choice but to add "East Centre." That's how it came about. That's my understanding, though I can't be entirely sure.

Researcher 36:48

This actually involves the issue of community participation. With issues like this, generally speaking, nobody ever comes to ask residents for their opinions, is that right?

Participant 2 37:01

No, not when it came to numbering the buildings.

Researcher 37:03

But it's not only about numbering. From what I've heard, the biggest problem is not just the confusing numbers, but also the lack of guidance. People can't find their way. Even if the numbers are odd, as long as there's a map or clear signage, it doesn't matter if one building is No.4 and the one next to it is No.50, as long as the directions are clear.

Participant 2 37:25

No problem, we used to have signage on every building.

Participant 5 37:31

Street signs.

Participant 2 37:33

Yes, at the entrance of each block. They were very clear when the buildings were first built.

Participant 5 37:44

Later when people renovated their flats.

Participant 2 37:46

Yes, after home renovations or when they painted the walls, the numbers were sometimes painted over. Later they were replaced with plaques, but when walls were repainted, sometimes the plaques disappeared again. For example, the buildings we live in now along Jianshe Road.

In the past, that area was all three-storey housing, you know that, right? Three-storey blocks by the main gate.

After those three-storey houses were demolished, new buildings were constructed, and the names changed, becoming Jianshe West Road.

Participant 5 38:20

Like Nos.49 and 50.

Participant 2 38:23

Exactly. Our building is now Jianshe West Road Nos.47 and 48. In the past, they were three-storey houses.

Participant 5 38:29

I know, that's how it came about.

Researcher 38:31

With so many new blocks built, and as several of you said, the current community space has become very squeezed.

As one of you mentioned earlier, because there aren't enough rest spaces, and people can't walk too far, many residents have started to set up makeshift resting spots in front of their buildings. These can pose safety risks. I'd like to ask: do you often use the space in front of your buildings? And if so, what facilities do you use – for example, do you bring out your own stools, or are there fixed seats?

Participant 6 39:13

Others might, but I don't. I don't use them and don't care whether they're good or not.

If I want to go somewhere, I used to like going to Bishagang Park. The environment was good. I never liked going to the Cultural Palace, even though it's close, because the environment inside is too messy.

Researcher 39:34

Do you still go now?

Participant 6 39:35

Sometimes. I take Bus 31 to Sculpture Park or Xiliu Lake Park. Sculpture Park is further away, but with the senior card it's free. I just get off the bus and walk a few steps into the park. Inside the

park there are benches. I take a cup of water. I like the environment because there are trees and water. Where there's water, there's life. In our courtyard you can hardly find a pond.

Participant 3 40:01

Didn't there used to be a fountain at the roundabout?

Participant 2 40:06

You live in West Community.

Participant 6 40:06

No, I live in East Community.

Participant 2 40:08

Oh, I see. Have you been to the Xishui area?

Participant 5 40:13

I haven't, no.

Participant 2 40:15

I've put up the plaques on Xiangrong Street, Nos.53 to 55.

Participant 3 40:19

And this area?

Participant 5 40:20

We didn't put them up. The police station handled this.

Participant 2 40:25

Yes, they should be put up properly. That way it's easier to find places.

Participant 5 40:30

It's fine.

Participant 2 40:32

It's fine, but they should be installed promptly.

Researcher 40:34

Do any of you use the spaces downstairs in front of your buildings?

Participant 5 40:40

Downstairs? Sitting downstairs, you mean.

Researcher 40:42

Yes, I've seen many people sitting downstairs chatting.

Participant 2 40:45

Yes, especially older residents who don't want to walk far. In the past, about five or six years ago, many residents built little sheds by the entrances of buildings to park their electric bikes.

Participant 6 41:04

Yes, but they were demolished before the pandemic.

Participant 2 41:06

Yes, they were removed in a unified effort. Before that it was very messy. At every entrance people had built little 2–3 square metre sheds to park their electric bikes.

Participant 3 41:19

Small ones.

Participant 2 41:19

Yes, self-built. Then they were demolished. By now, most of East District has had them removed.

Participant 3 41:23

They were worried about theft back then.

Participant 2 41:27

Yes, but now they've all been removed. Things are better organised now than before.

For example, someone built a little garage at the entrance of a block.

Researcher 41:39

Yes, I saw that in Sanmian West – only one remained standing.

Participant 2 41:43

Yes, the rest were demolished before the pandemic. They were a safety hazard. Some residents charged batteries inside, or piled up junk. If a fire broke out, it would have been disastrous.

Researcher 41:58

Do you feel the spaces in front of the buildings still need improvements?

Participant 3 42:05

Yes, greening is important.

Researcher 42:11

Yes.

Participant 3 42:11

A good environment comes from greening.

Participant 4 42:14

It's different now. In the past, the ground wasn't paved, but now everything has been concreted over.

Participant 6 42:31

I feel the problem now is that there's too much concrete and paving. There's hardly any exposed soil. Ideally, like in an orchard or with lawns, you'd have small paving stones with gaps where grass could grow. But that hasn't been done.

The biggest problem now is unregulated parking. Cars and electric bikes are parked randomly, without any planning for parking spaces. As long as there's a spot, people just leave their vehicles there.

Researcher 43:23

Yes, parking is indeed a problem.

Participant 6 43:26

Behind the kindergarten, since it was requisitioned, the space has been completely taken up by parked cars.

Researcher 43:30

Yes, many people mentioned that. Both the front and the back of the blocks are filled with cars. This is a real resource shortage.

Participant 5 43:38

Yes, resources are insufficient, and space is lacking.

Participant 2 43:40

Yes, it all comes down to money.

Participant 6 43:43

They could build multi-storey parking – up to eight levels.

Participant 2 43:45

Even ten levels, but resources are lacking. And this involves two issues: first, the shortage of resources, which is the biggest one; second, residents are unwilling to pay the fees, aren't they? Many just don't want to contribute. If everyone were more willing, it would be easier.

In the past in Beijing, Vanke once designed such a project – they wanted to dig an underground car park. But then they realised it wouldn't work, because underneath there are many air-raid shelters. That's not easy to handle. In our area, it's all air-raid shelters underground. If you wanted to use them for car parks, you'd have to pay fees for such a project, and many residents weren't willing. Not everyone, but some. So they preferred parking on the surface.

As they say, right now it costs about 60 yuan a month, or 50 with a discount. I've heard people say that. But even then there's no management, no circulation, no compensation. You just occupy the space, and that's it. So people park wherever there's a spot. And there are more and more cars now, even though the older population isn't large.

Participant 5 44:46

At night, when you come back, there's nowhere to park.

Participant 2 44:48

Yes, when you come back late.

Participant 3 44:49

Another two or three cars squeezed in.

Participant 6 44:52

And remember, they've already requisitioned land over the past 20 years.

Participant 2 44:55

Yes, the requisitions have been huge.

Researcher 44:56

So if—

Participant 2 44:58

If resources were sufficient, things would be fine. For example, if there were an underground car park, then you'd just drive down there. And surface parking would be banned. But right now the facilities are inadequate.

Participant 6 45:09

Yes, it can't keep up. Cars have grown too quickly.

Participant 2 45:11

Even if you build a decent mechanical car park – the kind with lifts – you'd still have to pay fees. And people don't want to pay. Funding is insufficient.

So the issue of parking, the residential environment, resources, costs, and residents' sense of responsibility – all these things are interconnected. It's not just about parking. For instance, people originally designed underground car parks, but if residents refuse to use them, what can you do?

To put it simply, let's talk about electric bike parking.

Participant 5 45:56

Yes, that's another common issue.

Researcher 45:57

Providing parking also creates opportunities for consumption and employment.

Participant 2 46:01

Exactly. For example, for electric bikes, I think it's about 30 yuan a month, isn't it?

Participant 3 46:06

In the old community, yes.

Participant 2 46:08

But some residents refuse to use the designated sheds. They say: "I'll just park outside, it's free." If everyone parked inside, the issue would disappear. For instance, in front of East Nos.30 and 31, there's an electric bike shed. I don't know how long you've lived here, but many people don't even know it's there. It's right next to the row of flats that used to house the veteran workers. But still, some residents refuse to use it.

Participant 6 46:38

There's no shed – I heard that from 1 July onwards...

Participant 2 46:42

Well, some don't use it, so gradually it stops operating.

Participant 6 46:47

Exactly.

Participant 2 46:49

If there's not enough income, they can't run it. If someone's managing it, they need wages. In the past, when the Danwei still existed, parking was fine – staff didn't have to pay.

Participant 3 47:01

Yes.

Participant 2 47:03

But now there are no enterprises left. Parking is managed by the community. You have to pay fees. Even just 30 yuan a month – at least your electric bike won't get stolen. Otherwise, they won't continue. Some residents still refuse to park in the sheds, leaving them half empty.

Participant 5 47:23

In our courtyard too.

Participant 2 47:25

Yes, some residents don't want to park inside. Without proper management, it doesn't work. That's why I say both electric bike parking and car parking are complex issues. They can't be solved by just one measure.

It's not easy.

Researcher 47:36

Apart from vehicles occupying space, do you think the space in front of the buildings has other issues?

Participant 3 47:43

What else?

Participant 4 47:44

Personally, I don't worry much about it. To be honest, I don't use those facilities, so whether it's occupied or not doesn't really matter to me.

Participant 5 48:02

Yes, we don't think much about it. But of course, it's a contradiction.

Participant 4 48:07

Right, if it doesn't concern you, you won't bother.

Participant 2 48:10

We'll see in the future.

Participant 3 48:12

And to occupy spaces, people even—

Participant 2 48:14

Yes, now cars are parked everywhere.

Participant 3 48:16

"This is my spot." But actually, no one owns it. Land is gone now – those 40 mu of land are gone. Once construction starts, people can't just claim spaces. It becomes a case of "first come, first served." Some even say, "I insist on keeping this space."

Participant 4 48:43

Yes, many workers' families – I see them parking at the roadside when they go shopping.

Participant 6 48:52

Speaking of something else: this is about the Third Cotton Mill Textile Museum. It was supposed to open on 20 December 2021. But now two years have passed.

Researcher 49:05

I heard there's no funding.

Participant 3 49:06

But construction has already started.

Participant 2 49:07

Yes, it has just begun. But the rumour is that funding is insufficient.

Participant 3 49:14

Far from it, this is not renovation.

Participant 2 49:19

It's just started construction.

Participant 6 49:20

Now, for example, whether it's the Sanmian community or not, it could still be handled.

Participant 2 49:23

Don't start construction blindly, you won't even know what's being built.

Participant 3 49:26

Since you made the promise...

Participant 2 49:27

What on earth are you building? I just asked, but no one explained.

Participant 6 49:30

Even if it cannot be delivered, they should at least explain the reason. Yet no one comes forward to say why.

Participant 2 49:34

Just left us dangling.

Researcher 49:36

Returning to the matter of the Sanmian community—

Participant 3 49:38

Some people say it's like Sesame Street, all outside appearance.

Researcher 49:43

Right, since we're on the topic of community management, have there been any promised services from the CSCMP, or perhaps services you expected but have not yet been provided?

Because, as you can see, the entire Sanmian community is so large, and the CSCMP is just one governing body. There's also the property management, right? And then the Zhengzhou No.3 Cotton Textile Factory has not completely withdrawn; even the kindergarten is still under their control. From your perspective as residents of the block, what services do you feel are still needed? These don't necessarily have to be provided by the CSCMP—it's simply about what you feel is required.

Participant 3 50:28

As we get older, now with the one-child generation, the children are all working. At the moment, they don't need to take care of us, but when we truly cannot take care of ourselves, what will happen? Won't it be? In future, a residential home for older people around here would be suitable.

Participant 2 50:52

I only know there is some construction work, but when I blindly walk past, I don't know what exactly is being built.

Participant 3 50:58

What does "providing for the old" mean if not "having someone to rely on in old age"? Isn't that right? This is just empty talk. For our CSCMP, in reality, this is an issue for the future.

Participant 4 51:10

This is not something the CSCMP manages. The government has already pushed this responsibility elsewhere. Especially care homes—ordinary people cannot afford to live there.

Participant 5 51:20

Yes, far too expensive.

Participant 4 51:24

Look around here, we don't have one. Let me say this, since I've had more contact with this matter. I know more about care homes. In the surrounding area, which ones exist? From what I know, the larger ones are actually contracted by the government, so those are more reliable, aren't they? Care homes—there are commercial ones too, small-scale ones, but those are not good.

Participant 5 52:03

You can't even register for those.

Participant 4 52:04

Right, I'm talking about the larger ones.

At those, whether attached to a school or elsewhere, they have a hundred people, or maybe just a few dozen, but they are proper institutions with three thousand residents. I'm speaking of those with three thousand. In Zhongyuan District, they have ones like this, large institutions. Those are the ones the government tenders out. They bid: "I'm willing to pay this amount, will you take on the care work?" They invite bids. The smaller companies don't have the capacity; they simply cannot handle it. Only the larger organisations bid, and there's competition. Actually, elderly care is something many companies are eager to get involved in—it's a business with demand.

You see, I've already been using these services for nearly eight years. In Sanmian alone, three providers have come and gone, one after another. Even from other districts, like Erqi District, companies came to compete. Last time, one from Erqi came. I remember it was called Aixin Care Home, on Changjiang Road.

Participant 3 53:22

That's too far.

Participant 4 53:23

They just do it for money.

Participant 3 53:27

There isn't a care home nearby in Zhongyuan District.

Participant 5 53:29

There are smaller ones.

Participant 4 53:32

Those are not really suitable. Would you rather go to a large care home or a small one?

Researcher 53:50

So do you all prefer to stay at home for care, or would you consider moving into a nearby care home if there was one?

Participant 4 53:58

Some would move in. Although the fees are high, from my perspective—

Participant 3 54:03

If you can still live independently with your pension, then fine. But if you cannot care for yourself anymore, your pension will never cover the cost.

Researcher 54:14

Yes, indeed. So if, in the future, as you grow older, you continue to stay at home, besides the hour-long home care service some of you mentioned before, what other kinds of support do you think you would need? It doesn't necessarily have to come from the CSCMP, because its role is limited. Some may come from other institutions—it doesn't matter which—but what else do you feel would be necessary, beyond care services?

Participant 4 54:53

The government has actually already started this. The government allocates funds, the Civil Affairs Bureau then uses this to purchase services on behalf of residents. That's how it works. There is a procedure. It's not just a matter of throwing money around; there are steps—who organises it, who provides the service—there are processes in place.

Researcher 55:19

Yes, exactly.

So, let's ask about modes of travel. What forms of transport do you currently use? Walking, buses, the metro?

Participant 3 55:34

Driving, cycling, or using a tricycle, an electric bike—yes, and sometimes cars.

Researcher 55:39

Let's start with walking. If walking is your main mode of travel, we'll discuss it now. If it isn't, we'll come back to it later.

When you are walking, have you encountered any obstacles?

Participant 4 56:16

If there are obstacles, we simply don't go that way.

Researcher 56:20

So when you're walking there aren't any particular problems? If you avoid certain areas, which places are those?

Participant 4 56:27

Generally speaking, when we go out for activities, we walk along the roadside. Usually there aren't many issues, no major problems. Maybe just a little—for example, on Mianfang Road, near the old underpass exit where there are more cars, you just take a slight detour and it's fine.

Researcher 56:50

What about taking buses? At present, how do you feel about public transport facilities—metro stations, trains, buses, and the vehicles themselves?

Participant 5 57:12

They're fine, the buses are fine.

Participant 3 57:19

Yes, the buses are much better than before, a lot better than before.

Researcher 57:23

And when using buses, how do you feel about the facilities, such as the stations?

Participant 3 57:32

The buses themselves are fine, and at the metro stations there are also lifts. Some bus and metro exits are very convenient, the connections are good. When I took buses in Beijing, I found that ours here are even better than there.

Participant 5 57:43

Beijing just has too many people. Yes.

Participant 2 57:46

To be fair, there are some places where the metro only has stairs.

Participant 5 57:51

Yes, many only have stairs, no escalators.

Participant 3 57:53

Some do have lifts.

Participant 6 57:56

Travelling by bus or metro is actually very convenient, no obstacles really.

Researcher 58:01

So generally there aren't major obstacles.

Participant 4 58:04

I hardly take buses. In a month, I don't even use up the 80 free rides.

Participant 5 58:11

For me, if I take the bus 10 times in a year, that's already a lot.

Researcher 58:14

So for you two, buses aren't your main form of travel.

Participant 4 58:18

Yes, different people have different travel habits.

Participant 5 58:19

Exactly, it depends on personal habits.

Researcher 58:23

Does anyone here drive?

Participant 6 58:24

I don't have a licence. I don't even cycle anymore, haven't had a bicycle for years.

Participant 4 58:31

Once you're past 50, you usually don't bother learning to drive. At this age, we don't concern ourselves with that anymore.

Researcher 58:36

How about cycling?

Participant 3 58:37

I ride a tricycle.

Participant 5 58:39

Yes, sometimes you can ride one to make things easier for daily errands.

Researcher 58:43

Do you still ride now?

Participant 5 58:45

Occasionally, not very often.

Researcher 58:48

When you're riding, do you encounter obstacles?

Participant 3 58:51

You do worry about the traffic police. One time I rode my electric tricycle with my wife along Jinshui Road, near Dashiqiao. I was nervous the whole way, with traffic police in front and behind. It was summer and I hadn't worn a helmet because it was too hot. The police were only focused on fines, not education. They stopped me just because I hadn't worn a helmet.

Participant 2 59:27

That's already a regulation, traffic management isn't up to us, it's the Public Security Bureau's responsibility.

Participant 3 59:32

At first I was riding an e-bike.

Participant 2 59:34

If you want me to explain about riding an e-bike, I can.

For example, I know that before 1st May it was the education stage—if you didn't comply, they just educated you. After 1st July, the new policy came into effect. During the education period, if you didn't wear a helmet, they just reminded you. After 1st July, the rule was enforcement: first time 20 yuan fine, wasn't it? If it's written down, then it should be enforced. Why wouldn't you wear one? It's the same as being told not to arrive late at work—you still go late. That's knowingly breaking the rule, isn't it? You can't blame the traffic police, it's set by Public Security, just like with car windows.

Participant 3 1:00:32

Yes, same principle, same principle.

Participant 2 1:00:35

So there's no real argument there.

Some Danwei were strict, but Public Security later gave a three-month grace period. For about three months it was the education stage: criticism, warnings, but no fines. I also know that sometimes the punishment was making you stand at a crossroads holding a red flag for an hour, wasn't it? Then after that stage came the fines. If you've been told twice and still deliberately break the rule, then that's a matter of personal quality.

Participant 3 1:01:08

Right.

Participant 2 1:01:09

You could even keep the helmet strapped to the bike, so when you see police you put it on quickly. These rules are for the public good, so people should follow them consciously. If people ignore them, society falls into chaos, right?

That's how I see it. Same with other issues—for example, rubbish. In our block there aren't many of us, so it's manageable. If there are 10 households, and someone dumps rubbish in the stairwell, you should tell them off: "You've no quality, you should carry it down." Leaving it at the door is wrong—it blocks the stairs for everyone. That's a matter of personal quality.

Participant 2 1:01:59

Yes, and if you're even urinating there, that's unacceptable.

Participant 5 1:02:02

In the old buildings, there are such cases—we can't say there aren't.

Researcher 1:02:07

Yes. Aside from these issues, do you have any other problems or suggestions about the current age-friendly improvements in the community?

Participant 2 1:02:17

That comes down to management. If the community asks you to remove clutter from the stairwell, you should remove it. If you don't, that's wrong. It's public space, shared by 10 or 12 households, so you can't occupy it. If you're elderly and can't move it, the community may help you, but if you still refuse, then you're in the wrong. Things should be improved that way.

Participant 3 1:03:02

But the community has no law enforcement power, that's the difficulty.

Participant 2 1:03:06

Exactly, it's too difficult. If they had enforcement powers, it would be different.

I've seen community workers try to reason with residents, even help them move stuff, but some people still resist and argue back. That's not right. If something happens in the stairwell, it'll be too late.

For example, I saw on TV a liquefied gas tank explosion in another city. Now our community is checking this issue too. If something happens, you can't escape. Isn't that right?

And remember, houses are meant for living, not for renting out or running businesses. If you want to run a restaurant, it shouldn't be allowed. That causes so many safety risks.

Participant 6 1:04:00

Yes, that's changing the intended use.

Participant 2 1:04:04

Exactly.

Participant 3 1:04:06

In the past, lots of people ran businesses from their flats.

That's why government has to issue unified licences. Residential housing is for living, not business. If people run businesses, it creates safety hazards—installing fans, chimneys, all kinds of things.

Participant 5 1:04:23

Yes, exactly.

Participant 2 1:04:25

If a gas tank exploded, imagine the damage—like that tragedy in Yinchuan. It's a matter of public safety.

This is all part of social governance—it's complicated.

Participant 3 1:04:48

But it's not directly related to us.

Participant 2 1:04:49

Yes, I'm just giving examples.

It comes down to the overall quality of residents. If neighbours all know each other, they can remind each other, keep things cleaner. But if some people have poor habits, then the problems continue.

Researcher 1:05:06

Any other opinions?

Participant 5 1:05:08

No, that's it.

Researcher 1:05:10

Alright, we'll stop here for today. Thank you.

Focus group discussion transcript-3

Researcher 01:18

Thank you all for coming to take part in this activity. Let me give a short introduction.

My name is Xiao Song, I'm a doctoral student in my second year. My research focuses on age-friendly community outdoor environments. The reason I've come today is to hear your thoughts about the future of the community, to listen to existing problems, conflicts, or ideas you may have. Please feel free to share whatever comes to mind. I also understand that many issues cannot be solved directly—things like management systems or funding. But even if something seems unsolvable, it's still worth raising, right?

Because the more people talk about an issue, the more attention it gets. That shows it is important. Then later when I analyse the material, I will have something to write about. But if people feel an issue is hard to fix and so they don't mention it, then of course it can never be solved.

In the end, my output will be a community design guideline. So please, speak freely about anything. If at any point you feel uncomfortable, let me know. The session won't be too long—I'll try to keep it under control. I also want everyone to have a chance to answer each question in turn. At the end, I'll leave some time for anything we didn't cover—new questions or new opinions. That way, we can manage the time properly and not take up too much of your day, while also respecting each participant. When someone else is speaking, please try not to interrupt, alright?

Thank you, everyone.

Let's start with the first topic. From the perspective of spatial construction quality, could you briefly introduce the places you usually like to go for outdoor activities—whether for leisure, shopping, or anything else?

Participant 5 03:53

I still prefer somewhere clean and tidy.

Participant 2 04:01

Not particularly big supermarkets.

Participant 5 04:03

And with a full range of goods, because you don't always know what you want to buy. When you get there, you just look around, and sometimes you see something by chance that you feel you need, then you buy it.

As for leisure, mostly it's chatting, that's the most common. Another one is a bit of singing or fitness exercises.

Researcher 04:37

So where are these places? Do you usually take the bus to the big supermarkets?

Participant 5 04:43

Yes.

Researcher 04:45

And the activities—are they within the Sanmian community or in the CSCMP?

Participant 5 04:48

We all go to the Cultural Palace, or Wushu Park. No, the Sanmian community itself doesn't have such large spaces.

Researcher 04:53

Where do you usually go for outdoor activities, which places do you prefer?

Participant 2 05:04

Now in the old Sanmian community there's nowhere really to sit or play, no place, so we just wander in circles—from the mountain to the market, then back to the supermarket frontage, that's about it. Some people sit on the stage in pairs. Generally, people just sit under their buildings, at the entrance to the CSCMP.

Participant 5 05:26

Yes, in the old community.

Participant 6 05:27

There's hardly any space, it's really small.

Participant 4 05:30

Three months ago the community came to my home to talk about something, and since then I've heard nothing. What does that mean?

They said for those over 80 years old—

Those living alone—they'd install a camera or some kind of device at the doorway, to check whether you're at home or not. But since then, no news. I don't know what it means. They came to my house, but for three months there's been no movement. Supposed to be a good policy, but nothing has happened. They only talked about it—for people over 80 living alone, add one or two such installations.

Participant 2 06:10

Now no one manages it, you're left on your own.

Participant 4 06:12

I've been living alone for three years now, my partner passed away three years ago.

I live alone, and they said they'd install something at the doorway to see whether I'm at home or not, just a kind of device.

I thought that was good, in case I went out or something happened, they'd know, the Sanmian community would know through the network. At least, that's what I understood.

But so far, nothing has happened. No idea what it means.

Researcher 06:40

Maybe the funding isn't in place yet, such things need a process.

Participant 4 06:44

Yes, this requires investment, it needs proper funding, and yet they keep coming to survey.

Researcher 06:54

Yes. So, since you're living alone now, do you often go out?

Participant 6 07:00

Within the Sanmian community.

Participant 4 07:02

Mainly we're talking about understanding the situation of older people living alone.

Participant 2 07:08

Caring for those living alone is a good thing.

Researcher 07:12

Yes. Since you're living alone here in the Sanmian community, do you often take a stroll, or meet friends and do activities here? For example, sitting outside. I've seen many older people go to Wuyi Park, some stay in the Sanmian community. Do you like such activities?

Participant 4 07:34

There's no such activity, nothing much at all.

Researcher 07:36

So you don't usually go out much?

Participant 4 07:41

Most of the time I stay at home doing calligraphy, sometimes playing the erhu. I do cultural activities, but I hardly go outdoors. Very rarely. Especially since the pandemic only recently ended, I still don't dare relax.

In my family there are 12 people, and this year 10 of them caught the virus. In the past it was called “second round infection”. Now the state doesn’t manage it anymore. If you’re sick, you’re just sick. They say go see a doctor, but it’s no longer about epidemic control. So, in my family 10 out of 12 caught it, including the older ones. I didn’t get it last year, but this year I don’t even know if I had it. My son moved, he’s on the work team, but couldn’t handle it either. The whole area was affected.

Researcher 08:50

Grandad, do you often take part in activities within the Sanmian community?

Participant 1 08:55

What do you mean by “in the community”?

Looking at our Sanmian community as it is now, compared to the past, with the development of the times, the overall work of the community is not bad. It’s better than before. Nowadays there is a tiered structure, and this organisation often comes down to interview and visit, which is quite good. But overall, it still lags behind social development.

You see, this Sanmian community is huge. Over the past three decades there have always been tens of thousands of people here. Even now, there are still several tens of thousands, and a significant proportion, a few thousand people, are retirees—most of them over 70. The youngest are about 65 and up. The problem now is:

There isn’t a proper activity venue. Where do older people go? If you tell them to just stay at home, they can’t go out, they have no place to go. If they want to go to the Cultural Palace, or to Greentown, or to Wuyi Park, they have to cross roads, which is inconvenient. Crossing the road—sometimes no one is even watching out, no one to help, it’s risky.

Participant 4 09:57

Exactly, no one dares to help. That’s the first issue.

The second one, at their age, where can they really go?

Participant 1 10:02

They only sit in the building entrances, chatting idly. They’ve nowhere else to go.

Participant 4 10:07

At most, they stroll along the roads between the Danwei compounds, between the Third Factory and Fourth Factory.

Participant 1 10:13

Yes, and then back again. They can’t really get as far as the market. I myself can’t get from here to there. There’s no proper facility. You see, though we have the East CSCMP and the West CSCMP, the residents don’t really feel they’ve got somewhere meaningful to go, something they can actually take part in. Why? Because there’s no venue.

Suppose someone wants to play guitar, or erhu, or just practise a little music—well, the CSCMP should provide a small space. In summer, a cool place to go, where they can gather, make friends, play together. Instead, they sit alone at home, playing in isolation.

That's the point. The community has many things it simply can't achieve. Perhaps it's a funding problem, maybe there are obstacles, limitations.

But with social development, this should be gradually improved. Take, for example, the reading room—who ever goes? Probably no one.

Participant 4 11:13

It's locked up. Who would go if it's locked? I've never been, not once for activities. Who runs it? Who is it for?

They say it's open, but it's not.

Researcher 11:22

I only found that out last time.

Participant 1 11:24

Yes. I mean, since you're doing research, some of these issues aren't things you can solve, but in writing your papers, you're capturing a general social problem. Our country is moving into an ageing society, nearly 200 million older people. Not long ago, President Xi even talked about combining healthcare and support for older people. The principle is: the state covers the poorest households, individuals contribute something, the community contributes something, the government contributes something, society contributes something, and the state is the ultimate safety net.

But this can't all be achieved at once. It takes time, step by step. You can't say it will be done today or tomorrow. It will take ten years, maybe more, before it's fully in place. It's very difficult.

It's a long process. Hopefully, when your generation is managing these issues, you'll be able to improve it.

Look at our Sanmian community, including Fourth Cotton and Fifth Cotton—there isn't even a single activity ground, not a single sports pitch.

Participant 6 12:16

Where can anyone play ball?

Participant 1 12:20

The pitches have been turned into markets or car sheds. There's no place left for the people to enjoy themselves.

Another point—now, with all this talk of redevelopment, cultural districts, old city renewal, “West Suburb Memory”—all these names, but where’s the money? Houses were demolished one or two years ago.

Participant 2 12:41

More like three or four years ago.

Participant 1 12:42

Yes, several years ago. Over a thousand households were moved out. Those old houses still sit there, but nothing has been seen for the residents—nothing in terms of cultural or spiritual facilities.

Participant 4 12:54

Yes, nothing at all. I spent four years in Hainan. In their new residential estates—

Participant 1 13:01

They have to provide facilities.

Participant 4 13:04

In their new communities, even though they’re newer, they take older residents’ needs seriously.

Participant 1 13:10

Yes. Yesterday I saw on Beijing TV about old neighbourhood renewal. The homeowners, community leaders, lawyers, media, and government officials were all communicating together. They discussed how to redevelop, who would invest, how the money would be used. The renovation was done very well. It’s not that there’s no space here at the Third Factory—we have space. But instead, they’ve turned it into commercial facilities. Who benefits? Developers making money. They’ve taken away the space that should have been for residents’ facilities.

Researcher 13:40

Excuse me, sir, do you also rarely go outdoors these days, much like this year?

Participant 1 13:45

Let me tell you, I might be the youngest here, but I’m already 70. I still go to the Cultural Palace.

Participant 4 13:52

I’d like to go out too. I go to the Cultural Palace to play ball. My health is still alright.

Participant 1 13:55

I dribble a ball and go to the Cultural Palace to play. But for many of them, it’s too difficult now—there’s really nowhere suitable to go.

Researcher 14:01

Other than the Cultural Palace, do you usually go anywhere else?

Participant 1 14:03

Not often. The Cultural Palace is shared by four or five factories, so it's chaotic inside.

Participant 2 14:12

Yes, there's singing inside. I've been before—it's not really for older people. They say we're not allowed to gather. A while ago, there was an order not to gather in groups, so older folks don't really want to go to the Cultural Palace.

Participant 1 14:26

That's true.

Participant 4 14:27

It's messy and noisy there. It's not like Bishagang Park. Bishagang Park is quiet. They don't allow loud singing or dancing, there's no organised activity, but it's peaceful—you can just rest. That's what a park is for, to let you rest.

Participant 1 14:41

In Chengdu, for example, there's a rule that sound systems in public spaces can't exceed a certain decibel level. That kind of regulation makes sense. But here, they've stopped even small-scale activities. Within the compounds, it's not allowed anymore.

Participant 2 14:52

Yes, it's too chaotic here.

Participant 4 14:55

When foreigners come, you won't find such disorganised spaces like our Cultural Palace.

Participant 2 14:58

Yes, the Cultural Palace has become a mess.

Participant 4 15:00

What we need is designated activity spaces with proper rules, places for organised activities. We don't have that here.

Participant 6 15:05

Exactly, we need proper venues for activities.

Participant 4 15:06

It's the same situation in Zhangzhuang.

Participant 6 15:07

They should set up something like a dining hall for older people. I live alone, many of us do. A community dining hall would be useful.

Participant 1 15:15

Yes, exactly. Combining healthcare and catering services for older residents is important. Imagine a dining hall where you can eat a decent meal at noon, affordable and nutritious.

Participant 6 15:25

But we don't have that here. Compared to elsewhere, we're far behind. It always comes down to money—there's not enough. In some counties they've managed it well, but here we don't see it.

Participant 4 15:38

In Luohe's Nanjiecun, for example, they have it well organised. You eat, return your tray, pay a set amount each day—simple.

Participant 1 15:41

Yes, you just pay a fixed daily fee. It works fine elsewhere.

Participant 2 15:46

For those of us at an advanced age, it would be far better than cooking alone every day.

Participant 1 15:51

But here's the problem: this doesn't count as "political achievement" for officials. They don't see it as something to show off, so they don't want to push it.

The CSCMP would like to, I believe. Our CSCMP wants to do a good job.

Participant 5 16:05

But it's a major undertaking.

Participant 1 16:07

Yes, something they alone can't resolve.

Researcher 16:08

Sorry to interrupt. Let's move on to the next question. I've heard from each of you, and I'd like us to focus on the next issue. Earlier, many of you mentioned that in the community's public spaces, the areas are too small, there's nowhere to pursue hobbies with like-minded people, no real gathering place, and no space at all. You also pointed out that cars and other clutter take up space, creating safety hazards, and that the environment is not clean or tidy.

Apart from these, are there other safety risks in community public spaces, or things you dislike?

Participant 5 16:54

I think about the corridors—people dump old furniture near the stairwells or at the entrance of the building.

Participant 4 17:00

Yes, the corridors are dirty and neglected, especially in the blocks awaiting demolition.

Participant 5 17:02
The other day it was filthy.

Participant 2 17:06
Cobwebs everywhere. We each chipped in ten yuan to pay someone to clean.

Participant 5 17:11
Old furniture, if you don't want it, take it further away. But instead, people leave it in the corridor or at the building entrance, blocking the way. It's a tripping hazard.

Participant 4 17:23
If there's an accident, who's responsible?

Participant 5 17:26
And another thing—some people charge their electric scooters in the stairwells.

Researcher 17:35
Right, yes, charging electric scooters indoors is another problem.

Participant 5 17:38
Now no one cleans. For example, if the ground floor of our block gets dirty, I'll sweep when I see it, but otherwise, nothing.

Researcher 17:49
Does anyone else have anything to add? Opinions about public spaces—such as clutter?

Participant 5 17:56
Yes, clutter in the corridors. You'll see it everywhere.

Researcher 18:00
Yes, indeed.

Participant 2 18:01
That's the problem with clutter. With no designated space, people just pile things up in the open. Doors get blocked, and cobwebs collect. Some people will just pay ten yuan to hire someone to clean. Is there anything else?

Researcher 18:18
Originally...

Participant 2 18:19
There used to be people cleaning the stairwells, but not anymore. Now no one comes.

Participant 1 18:25
They only sweep where people pay for it.

Participant 2 18:26

Now it's all about money.

Participant 1 18:28

Yes, and if the property management company comes, without money, they won't do it either.

Researcher 18:31

Let's move on to the next question. How would you like these spaces to be improved? Do you have any suggestions?

Participant 2 18:39

What do you mean, how to improve?

Participant 6 18:42

Improve? There's no space to begin with—how can you improve it?

Researcher 18:46

Does anyone have any ideas at all, or none at all?

Participant 6 18:51

Ideas, yes—improve the greenery, set up a cultural hall, an older people's club, even a community canteen for older people. These would all work.

Participant 5 19:03

Actually, there is space, but it's all been rented out for profit.

Researcher 19:09

Which spaces do you think could be redeveloped?

Participant 5 19:13

Look over there—the low houses near the Bund. The area around the school could be redeveloped as an activity centre for older people.

Researcher 19:20

These are single-storey houses? Not apartment blocks?

Participant 5 19:25

Yes, just ordinary low houses, small in scale. People mainly buy vegetables there.

Participant 4 19:30

You see, some rural areas even have reading rooms. But here we don't even have access to those kinds of resources. Nobody dares to go into those offices.

Participant 5 19:42

Yes, and people have already walked away.

Participant 2 19:46

It used to be the retired cadres' activity room.

Participant 2 19:50

It was handed over to the Sanmian community, originally on the third floor.

Researcher 19:57

So it was used for meetings, but not accessible anymore?

Participant 4 19:57

Yes, the reading room could have been a good environment for reading, but now it lacks both a proper environment and resources.

Researcher 20:09

Yes, and being on the second floor makes it less visible too.

Participant 5 20:12

If he hadn't mentioned it, I wouldn't even have known it was there.

Participant 2 20:16

Yes, it was the retired cadres' activity room, but now there are hardly any retired cadres left who can still come out.

Participant 4 20:25

Improving people's qualities—that's the point. You need resources to read and learn. Without resources, you can't improve.

Participant 2 20:31

In the past there were books, but now, who reads them?

Participant 5 20:35

On the phone, we can't see clearly either. Exactly.

Researcher 20:39

So do you have any suggestions?

Participant 1 20:42

The older comrade just said it.

Participant 6 20:44

Many things can't be realised overnight. These are just expectations, that's all.

Researcher 20:49

But if they could be realised, what would you envision?

Participant 1 20:53

The best would be to set up a community canteen for older people.

Researcher 20:56

Where do you think such a canteen would be most convenient?

Participant 1 20:59

It should be at the centre, somewhere central. For example, near the market—this area could work for a canteen for older people. Families could go there to eat.

Participant 5 21:10

What's it called?

Participant 1 21:11

In general, people could go there just to have a meal.

Participant 2 21:13

Recently in the new community, there was a foot massage place, wasn't there?

Participant 5 21:19

That place could work. You know that 18-storey building? Only the first floor is in use. Downstairs they sell fruit, and next to it is the space I mean.

Researcher 21:28

I noticed the small square near Wanjiafu Supermarket. That supermarket is at a crossroads, and just across the road there are two buildings surrounded by green space. The area is already fenced off. It's actually very convenient in terms of transport.

Participant 1 21:44

Is that so?

Participant 5 21:45

Yes, but now they've put something else there. Still, that would actually be the most convenient place. The area is quite large and could definitely house a community canteen for older people.

Researcher 21:57

So is that property owned by the community or is it private?

Participant 4 22:01

That building has been contracted out—it's now run privately, used as a carport.

Participant 5 22:05

Yes, downstairs has been rented out for a fitness business.

Participant 1 22:09

But it's still state-owned property.

Participant 4 22:12

Yes, but with economic pressures, everything has been leased out.

Participant 5 22:15

Look at the market—some stalls are sitting empty. When I asked why, they said the rent was too high. Meanwhile, people selling fruit take over the pavements. They put their cars there, blocking the way, because they don't want to rent a stall inside.

Participant 2 22:38

That shouldn't be allowed.

Participant 5 22:40

Exactly. The stalls inside are left empty, but outside the road is blocked. Fruit vendors should be made to move into the market. The rent could be lowered a bit so they can afford it.

Researcher 23:03

Yes, this is an issue of management.

Participant 5 23:07

It's about coordination. Now one family has several cars, and they've taken over a whole stretch of space. They are making money from it, but it causes real inconvenience.

For example, ambulances going to the hospital can't get through easily, nor can vehicles delivering medicine. Older people going to see the doctor find it hard as well. It's really not appropriate. Many stalls inside the market are empty.

Participant 2 23:42

Because no one wants to pay the rent.

Participant 5 23:43

Exactly. For fruit vendors, rent inside the market costs several thousand yuan a month.

Researcher 23:51

Yes, that's a real issue. Let's move on.

Participant 5 23:56

Now they even use their vehicles as storage. They load the fruit into the cars at night, and during the day take it out to sell by the roadside.

I'm not criticising them for selling fruit, but this way of doing it is unreasonable. They should be operating inside the market, not occupying public space.

Researcher 24:27

Yes, that's definitely not right. It's a case of illegally occupying space. Let's move on to the next question: when you cross the main junction, do you feel it's safe and smooth, or do you feel uneasy or face obstacles?

Participant 6 24:46

Crossing the junction—at the main gate, there are traffic lights, right? Sometimes when the light is red, people still cross.

Researcher 25:03

So they're running red lights? Is it pedestrians or electric bikes?

Participant 6 25:08

Both. People and electric bikes ignore the lights.

Participant 2 25:11

Yes, at the crossroads by the main gate, on the way to the market.

Participant 6 25:16

They don't wait for the green light.

Participant 2 25:22

We walk slowly, so by the time we cross, the light has changed.

Participant 6 25:24

Exactly, some people just don't follow the traffic rules.

Participant 1 25:30

Inside the Sanmian compound it's one thing, but outside it's part of wider society.

Participant 2 25:35

Anyway, you just have to wait for the green light.

Participant 1 25:39

Yes, nothing else about traffic lights.

Researcher 25:41

So the main issue is violations by electric bikes.

Participant 5 25:47

Yes, they often rush through. Mostly it's young people riding them, always in a hurry.

Researcher 25:56

Yes, especially during the morning rush, with all the food delivery traffic. Do you have any thoughts on this?

Participant 6 26:06

About crossing the road?

Participant 4 26:08

To be honest, at our age we don't want to get involved in all that. You're talking about organising things like bands—that's impossible. Everything nowadays requires money. Without financial or technical support, nothing can be done. If no one invests, no matter how hard you try, it won't work.

Participant 6 26:28

Exactly.

Participant 4 26:28

As was said earlier, it would be good to have a community canteen for those over 80, so they'd have less to worry about. As it is, we still need to shop and cook for ourselves. Children live far away because of work. So, we have to take care of ourselves. If something happens—like a fall—it can bring bad luck on the whole family.

Researcher 26:56

Yes, so for you, crossing the road feels very unsafe.

Participant 4 27:02

Exactly. The road surface is another issue. On both sides, the pavements are fenced off, and the surface itself is very uneven. You're afraid of tripping, but nobody is maintaining it.

Researcher 27:19

Do you face obstacles when crossing?

Participant 2 27:24

I don't think about it much. I just walk to the main gate, turn towards the market, and back again.

Researcher 27:31

Is that because you feel it's too tiring to go further?

Participant 2 27:36

Crossing the road feels unsafe. That's why my wife often comes with me.

Participant 4 27:38

Yes, sometimes my wife accompanies me.

Participant 2 27:40

She always comes with me.

Participant 4 27:43

But she can't always do that, and walking is already difficult for her.

Participant 2 27:45

Yes, walking itself is uncomfortable, so we don't dare cross.

Researcher 27:54

And you, Madam? Do you feel there are obstacles when crossing?

Participant 5 27:56

As was just said, within the compound there are now blockages. So you end up detouring to a pedestrian path.

Participant 4 28:07

You'd rather not rush about—it's worrying.

Participant 5 28:15

Yes, the ground is uneven, and at crossings you worry about tripping.

Participant 4 28:22

Exactly, especially at that point.

Participant 5 28:22

But on the road itself, drivers generally watch out, so I feel it's manageable.

Participant 2 28:24

Yes, the drivers usually see us.

Participant 5 28:27

At the main junction, as long as you follow the traffic rules, it should be fine.

Participant 2 28:32

A few years ago, when I was hospitalised, my children insisted on picking me up because it wasn't safe to walk home, even though it was nearby.

Participant 4 28:50

Every family is different. And with the pandemic, things got even more complicated. Now that it's over, everyone has their own issues. You can't always count on others.

Researcher 29:17

Let's move on to the next topic: modes of transport. What are your usual ways of getting around—walking, public transport, cycling, driving?

Participant 4 29:24

For people over 80, the community should arrange regular home visits. That in itself is a comfort.

Participant 6 29:35

Yes, absolutely.

Participant 4 29:36

Even just visits for reassurance would help. But now nobody checks in. As long as you can still cook for yourself, you just manage alone.

Researcher 29:48

Yes, and as you've said, when children are far away, care and support isn't readily available. That makes community visits even more important—they act as a form of public guardianship. Without that, it's unsafe for someone living alone for a long time.

So, back to the question of transport: what are your usual means of travel—walking, bus, cycling, driving?

Participant 6 30:29

What do I use?

Participant 5 30:30

The most common are walking and buses. Walking first, buses second.

Researcher 30:40

So, walking and buses. What about you, Madam Xu?

Participant 2 30:43

I don't take buses anymore. I haven't renewed my senior card for years. I don't ride at all. I don't have the strength to keep up, and I don't dare go out alone.

Researcher 30:59

So buses aren't really an option for you?

Participant 2 31:02

Yes, it depends on each person's situation.

Participant 6 31:03

Exactly—different for each individual.

Researcher 31:06

And you, Grandpa Ye? How do you usually get around when you go out?

Participant 4 31:21

Mostly I take the bus—like when I visit my daughter. Maybe once or twice a month I'll go by bus.

Researcher 31:34

And walking?

Participant 2 31:35

Where do you live?

Participant 4 31:37

Near the Cable Factory community, at Qifu Garden. My granddaughter lives near the West Fourth Ring, by the Light Industry Institute. To go there, I take the bus and then the metro. I don't cycle.

Researcher 31:59

So you don't ride bikes or drive?

Participant 1 32:03

No, I don't drive or ride.

Participant 2 32:06

Same for me—just bus and metro.

Researcher 32:17

And you, do you drive?

Participant 1 32:19

I used to, sometimes. Now it's either the bus or metro, or just walking.

Participant 6 32:26

At that time it was almost the same for everyone, mostly public transport. I used the underground and rode a bicycle. In the mornings I'd cycle to the park to play ball, sometimes I'd take the bus.

Researcher 32:46

And also cycling, taxis... I'm dividing them into different modes of travel. If one is not used regularly, we'll move to the next question, because travel modes are one group. If it's about walking: within the Sanmian community, when you usually walk, what's the farthest distance you go?

Participant 5 33:19

Nearby it's just the neighbouring factory compound. The farthest is Bishagang Park.

Researcher 33:22

How long do you usually walk each week?

Participant 2 33:32

I just walk within the 3rd or 4th factory compounds, half an hour or so.

Researcher 33:39

And you, sir?

Participant 2 33:44

You mean me?

Researcher 33:45

Where do you usually stroll?

Participant 4 33:48

Mainly around the compounds of the No.3, No.4, or No.5 Cotton Textile Factories. The farthest would be Bishagang, but crossing roads is troublesome so I don't go further.

Participant 2 33:58

If I walk too far now, I get lost.

Participant 4 34:01

Now there are so many electric bikes, and they go so fast. Some even ride while watching TV on their phones, rushing past pedestrians. It's dangerous.

Participant 5 34:17

Yes, often electric bikes speed past while we're walking on the pavement. It's frightening.

Participant 6 34:26

Sometimes, yes.

Researcher 34:27

Uncle, within Sanmian community, how far do you usually walk?

Participant 1 34:31

After meals I usually go as far as Xiliuhu.

Researcher 34:34

So if you're walking, within the community, what's the farthest?

Participant 1 34:40

Usually I walk in the mornings and evenings. If I go far, I'll circle out to Songshan Road, Zhongyuan Road, Baihua Road, then back.

Researcher 34:45

That must take about an hour.

Participant 6 34:58

Yes, I just do one loop.

Participant 2 35:02

He rides a bike.

Participant 6 35:04

Yes, sometimes I cycle into the city for a loop, not much walking.

Researcher 35:16

In a week, what proportion of your travel is walking compared with other modes? For example, half walking, 30% bus, 20% car, etc. Roughly, how is it?

Participant 5 35:38

Most of it, more than half, is walking.

Researcher 35:44

And you, madam?

Participant 2 35:45

I only go out in the mornings. I don't go out in the afternoons.

Participant 1 35:49

Her travel is all walking. I myself walk about 2,000 metres a day.

Participant 2 35:52

I do one loop in the morning.

Researcher 35:54

Last time you said, Uncle Jing, that you rarely go out.

Participant 4 35:57

Yes, I seldom go out. At most I visit one or two neighbours, like Old Xu. Otherwise, I stay home.

Participant 2 36:13

Now that it's hot, nobody goes out in the afternoons.

Participant 4 36:15

Exactly. I just stay home playing the erhu.

Participant 1 36:24

I'd say 95% of my travel is walking around and returning home.

Participant 6 36:30

Mainly cycling for me.

Participant 4 36:32

My son doesn't allow me to go out too much. He worries I might get into trouble. If something happens, it's too much bother.

Participant 6 36:46

That's right.

Participant 2 36:48

Yes, now there are too many people and too many vehicles.

Participant 1 36:51

We can only rely on ourselves to adjust.

Researcher 36:54

So what are your main reasons for choosing walking? For exercise, or convenience?

Participant 1 37:01

Yes, walking is good exercise and helps maintain health.

Participant 4 37:03

It's for exercise, but still not safe, so I'm cautious.

Participant 5 37:06

Mainly for my mood. Walking every day for at least half an hour is a way of exercising. The main reasons are exercise and convenience. You don't need to ask anyone for help, it's simple.

Researcher 37:24

On your walking routes, are there obstacles apart from uneven pavements and electric bikes, as you mentioned?

Participant 6 37:36

No, mainly those.

Participant 4 37:40

Yes, we don't dare ride electric bikes anymore.

Participant 6 37:42

That's right.

Participant 5 37:43

The problem is electric bikes using the pavements. They go so fast, it's scary.

Researcher 37:51

In the future, will you continue to rely on walking as a mode of travel? And along your regular walking routes, are there areas you think could be improved?

Participant 5 38:04

It's mainly the electric bikes. They ride on the pavements. That's the key issue we're talking about.

Participant 1 38:13

Yes, that's the main problem.

Participant 5 38:14

They should be using the cycle lanes, not the pavements.

Participant 6 38:18

Exactly.

Researcher 38:20

Next, about public transport: how often do you usually take it, and what proportion of your journeys does it account for?

Participant 6 38:35

Well...

Participant 2 38:37

I don't take it at all.

Participant 5 38:39

It depends.

Participant 6 38:41

Yes, depending on...

Participant 5 38:43

...your own needs.

Participant 6 38:44

In hot weather I don't go out at all, so basically it doesn't count for much.

Participant 5 38:54

Only if needed.

Researcher 38:56

So no fixed answer, it depends, since it's not the main choice.

Participant 1 39:02

Yes, depending on the situation.

Participant 5 39:05

If meeting classmates or something, if it's nearby I take the bus, if it's far I take the underground.

Participant 6 39:12

Yes, that's right.

Researcher 39:14

When using public transport, how do you feel about the related facilities? For example, buses—

just now Madam Xu mentioned it's hard for her to get on. Or things like the bus stop layout, the guidance signs on the way to the stop. As for the underground, you have to go down stairs and then up again. Overall, how satisfied are you with the facilities? For example, in terms of comfort.

Participant 4 39:48

That's fine. When I take the bus now, I notice about 80% of the passengers are older people. Young people don't take the bus much anymore.

Participant 5 40:02

Yes, young people usually drive or ride electric bikes.

Participant 4 40:10

About 70–80% of bus passengers are grandparents taking their grandchildren to and from school.

Participant 5 40:19

The best improvement would be at bus stops—add more seats. That way, when the weather is hot, older people can sit down while waiting.

Researcher 40:27

Madam Xu, your main difficulty is that you can't get onto the bus easily—you feel unsteady?

Participant 2 40:34

Yes, not much strength. In the morning after breakfast I just walk from the compound to the market, then back via Xiangyang Street. In the afternoons, when it's hot, I don't go out.

Participant 5 40:44

Yes, bus stops should have more seating.

Researcher 40:50

Currently there aren't many seats available.

Participant 5 40:52

Yes, especially for older people waiting for buses, they should have more places to sit.

Participant 2 40:57

Yes, otherwise you're left standing there, trying to keep your balance.

Researcher 40:59

How satisfied are you with it?

Participant 6 41:04

It's alright.

Participant 4 41:05

The community itself is fine, but the environment can't really be changed.

Participant 6 41:10

Yes, and the bus stop arrangements aren't something the community can control.

Participant 2 41:15

That's true.

Participant 6 41:17

Yes, sometimes there are so many people waiting.

Participant 2 41:21

You get off and it's just crowded everywhere.

Participant 6 41:25

Yes, too many people.

Participant 2 41:27

Everyone's busy.

Participant 4 41:28

Outside our entrance we had two benches, but later someone dumped an old sofa there and it just became messy. The community cleared it out. I said, better to install proper iron benches instead.

Participant 6 41:42

No investment though—there's no money.

Participant 4 41:48

Yes, you'd like to have more seating outside, but instead it's just messy there.

Participant 6 41:56

Yes, not enough.

Researcher 41:59

When you're waiting for a bus, what do you usually do? Do you chat with people, use your phone, relax, read, play cards, or maybe do a bit of shopping?

Participant 2 42:19

Shopping.

Participant 1 42:20

Play cards? But really, when you're standing by the road waiting for a bus or the underground, what can you do? You just stand there and wait.

Researcher 42:28

Right, just wait.

Participant 4 42:30

Sometimes I look at my phone.

Participant 5 42:32

I rarely use my phone then, since the wait is short.

Participant 1 42:38

The underground comes every couple of minutes, so you don't really have time to do much.

Participant 2 42:43

Though sometimes I can't even get on.

Researcher 42:45

And for buses?

Participant 4 42:46

Buses are about the same. 80% of the time there's hardly anyone on them, not much going on. I look out and see very few people waiting.

Participant 5 42:58

Except during rush hour—then it's packed, people rushing and squeezing.

Researcher 43:02

Yes, during the morning rush it's still busy.

Participant 5 43:06

Yes, both morning and evening rush hours are no good.

Researcher 43:10

Do you think at public transport stops—bus or underground—there are any facilities that could be added to make life more convenient? For example, shops or other services? I notice many stops only have things like off-licences.

Participant 2 43:40

Somewhere nearby to buy groceries would be useful. Though sometimes we just order little things online.

Researcher 43:51

So overall, you're satisfied with the shops and facilities near the transport stops in Zhengzhou, nothing in particular you feel is missing?

Participant 1 44:02

I think it's fine.

Participant 2 44:06

Yes, buying things is convenient enough.

Participant 5 44:08

I don't think we need to add too much. After all, when people get off the bus or train, they just want to move along quickly. No need to clutter it up with more shops.

Participant 6 44:20

That's right.

Researcher 44:21

Now let's move on to the topic of driving. I understand only one of you still drives?

Participant 6 44:31

Yes, but I drive much less now.

Researcher 44:33

When you do drive, where do you usually go, and for what reasons? Is it for socialising, family errands, or something else?

Participant 1 44:44

I don't have a car anymore. Back when I had one, I'd drive out for leisure.

Researcher 44:49

When you were driving, did you feel there were any obstacles on the roads, such as blind spots or other issues?

Participant 1 44:58

Parking was the real problem. As for blind spots, not really—it depends on your driving habits. If you pay attention, it's fine. If you don't, then that's when problems happen.

Participant 6 45:08

Yes, parking really is a big issue.

Participant 2 45:10

When you drive out, the worry is always about parking.

Researcher 45:16

That's true.

Participant 2 45:23

You can't even leave the car for a bit—when you come back, it might be gone or you'll have a ticket slapped on it, fined 200 yuan.

Researcher 45:31

Yes.

Participant 4 45:32

They should warn you first or try to contact you, instead of immediately issuing a ticket.

Participant 2 45:38

Yes, parking is really an issue.

Participant 4 45:39

There just aren't enough car parks.

Researcher 45:43

Yes, indeed—parking spaces are far from sufficient. And when you cycle, how much does that account for in your travel? Is it mainly cars, or do you rely more on cycling? When cycling, do you encounter any problems?

Participant 6 46:02

I haven't come across any problems.

Researcher 46:08

So no issues like uneven road surfaces—it's all smooth?

Participant 6 46:12

Generally yes, especially when I ride to Bishagang Park, the roads are in good condition.

Researcher 46:17

So in future, as long as your health allows, will you continue to use the car as one of your ways of getting around?

Participant 6 46:24

Yes, because it's convenient for going out.

Researcher 46:30

So choosing this way is mainly for fitness, but within the community?

Participant 6 46:39

I don't really cycle within the community—it's not suitable here.

Participant 1 46:46

Yes, on the streets nearby it's not convenient to cycle, especially when you're carrying things. No need for a car either.

Participant 6 46:51

Yes, everything's close by, so no need.

Participant 1 46:54

You step out and the market's right there. No real use for a car.

Researcher 46:58

Let's move on to the next question.

When it comes to interactions or conflicts between different generations, do you usually engage in activities with younger people within the community—not outside, but here?

Participant 4 47:25

Not really. Hardly any communication. They don't mix with us, and we don't mix with them.

Participant 5 47:32

The topics of conversation are different.

Participant 4 47:34

They don't talk to you unless you start the conversation. But even then, they're quick to brush it off.

Researcher 47:41

Are there any places or activities in the community where people of different ages can meet and interact?

Participant 6 47:50

No, not really—no activities like that.

Participant 1 47:55

It depends on the people, but mostly not.

Participant 2 47:56

Once you're older, there's no such interaction anymore.

Participant 4 47:57

Upstairs, let me tell you, in the past six months the Sanmian community organised a trip, but they asked you to pay a fee.

Participant 5 48:07

My classmate took her daughter along, we went together, so we chatted on the way. But really, our conversation didn't connect.

Researcher 48:15

Like those housing promotion activities where they invite you to go?

Participant 6 48:19

Yes, but in reality older people hardly meet anyone through the community, because there are virtually no activities.

Researcher 48:25

Alright, let's move on. In the community, have you ever had any conflicts in public with people of other age groups? For example, competing for space, or cultural differences making you feel uncomfortable?

Participant 1 48:41

Not really. The younger ones leave early for work in the morning.

Participant 2 48:45

Yes, younger people are at work, while some older ones can't even get out.

Researcher 48:54

Then the next question: have you usually taken part in outdoor maintenance projects? For example, planting vegetables in the yard, or joining volunteer activities organised by the CSCMP? If yes, which type?

Participant 5 49:18

Epidemic prevention.

Researcher 49:21

That was during the pandemic, right? Volunteer work. Did anyone else join? No? How did you feel about it?

Participant 5 49:33

I felt that during epidemic prevention, the most basic things like disinfectant were provided, but disposable gloves and masks were not. We had to use our own.

Researcher 49:47

So not enough support was given?

Participant 5 49:49

Exactly, those things should have been provided. They asked me to guard the gate for several days, but apart from disinfectant, there was nothing else.

And another thing: when positive patients were taken away, they were sent to the Fangcang shelter hospital. After the patient was gone, based on the policy at the time, they should have disinfected the area, but they didn't. The person passed right by my doorway, only two metres away, and I wasn't even told until afterwards that they were positive.

The problem was, many people were wearing white hazmat suits – officials, police, and those escorting patients – so you couldn't tell who was who. You only realised when they had already

walked past you. At that time, the Sub-district Office ordered the gate to be opened, the person went through, but afterwards no disinfection was done. We volunteers didn't have disposable masks or gloves, only a bottle of disinfectant. What could we do? I even sprayed it on my own head out of fear.

Researcher 51:27

Would you join community volunteer activities again next time?

Participant 5 51:31

Sure, why not? If you see community staff so busy, sometimes even working until midnight, you feel you should help when you're free.

Participant 6 51:40

Yes, it's out of care for the Sanmian community, right?

Participant 5 51:44

It's not about passion really, more about seeing how overwhelmed they were. If you're idle at home, you help.

Participant 4 51:49

Let me give some feedback. The old community indeed has issues, but now the environment is also a problem. Why?

Because those collecting recyclables use loudspeakers, and repairmen shout everywhere. Even those selling medicine, fixing doors, plumbing, all blasting loud recordings. It's disruptive. On top of that, electrical boxes are left unattended. This should be controlled. It's not that they can't shout at all, but at least there should be limits. We're supposed to rest at home, but the noise is constant.

Participant 4 52:40

In these old neighbourhoods, I don't think they can control it anymore. Nobody manages it.

Researcher 52:52

This is indeed a problem. Do you have the willingness to join community management activities, like during epidemic prevention, or to help regulate issues like noise? There are many kinds of volunteer work—would you like to take part?

Participant 4 53:17

Honestly, most of us already struggle with our own lives. At this age, it's tiring. You want to contribute, but you don't have the energy, and you're afraid you might end up creating more trouble instead of helping.

Researcher 53:35

So you mean you're willing, but unable in practice?

Participant 6 53:42

Sometimes I might join, depending on the weather and my time. But honestly, I prefer staying at home reading or doing something quiet.

Researcher 53:54

So you don't like lively environments?

Participant 6 53:56

Not exactly. It's just that I'm retired and prefer peace.

Participant 1 53:59

I don't live here long-term. Each year I only stay here for a short time, two months at most. The rest of the time I'm in another city. This year I happened to stay longer.

Researcher 54:13

Alright, let's move to the next question. In your view, do older people here have opportunities to take on part-time work?

Participant 6 54:25

Like supervisor roles? Deputy manager? Not really.

Researcher 54:30

So no such examples?

Participant 5 54:34

Only very casual work, like helping in a dumpling shop or doing odd jobs in a restaurant.

Researcher 54:43

So you feel there aren't many opportunities?

Participant 6 54:46

Yes, these are very rare, maybe one or two in a hundred. In my building there isn't even one.

Participant 5 54:52

Most people are retired.

Participant 1 54:53

Some still work outside, even past seventy, earning money just to secure their own living.

Participant 4 54:58

Now even people over sixty...

Researcher 55:00

Over sixty as well?

Participant 4 55:00

Yes, they're still working. Money is never enough. If you don't have a pension, you need a second income, especially in summer.

Participant 5 55:10

Some retired in their fifties and then worked as hourly workers or nannies. I know of someone.

That woman was in her fifties.

Participant 1 55:20

Yes, in her fifties, now over sixty.

Participant 5 55:21

But as age increases, it gets harder.

Participant 4 55:25

Once you're past sixty-one, Danwei generally don't want to hire you anymore.

Participant 5 55:31

Yes, those who retired at fifty, with nothing to do at home, still had strength and could work until seventy. My mother did hourly jobs after she retired at fifty-something.

Participant 4 55:44

And worked on small construction tasks, chopping firewood and such.

Researcher 55:46

Next question: do you often spend time in front of your residential building for leisure activities? For example, chatting outside?

Participant 4 55:59

Yes, we sit in the courtyard, chatting. There's nowhere else to go.

Participant 5 56:06

Yes, many sit at their doorways chatting. It's common.

Researcher 56:09

And you, sir, do you usually do this? Since you said you don't often go out.

Participant 4 56:13

Sometimes I'll chat at the entrance, just talking there.

Researcher 56:17

Is that every day?

Participant 4 56:19

Not every day. I don't like joining in too much. When people gossip, conflicts sometimes happen.

Participant 6 56:27

I don't join in either. I hardly spend time downstairs.

Researcher 56:33

So you also don't participate much.

Participant 4 56:37

Yes, I don't feel comfortable with it.

Researcher 56:46

When you use the space in front of your building, besides chatting, what activities do you usually do? I noticed some of these spaces in front of buildings are part of the community.

Participant 4 57:02

Like playing chess, but there's no proper place for it.

Participant 5 57:10

Yes, no proper place. People just sit with nothing to do.

Researcher 57:13

So sometimes...

Participant 1 57:16

Sometimes we bring our own stools, set up a small table, play cards or chat. That's it.

There's no facility, nowhere else to go.

Researcher 57:25

So the facilities used in front of buildings are all things residents bring themselves?

Participant 1 57:32

Yes, like that.

Participant 4 57:33

The community doesn't provide anything. People bring their own stools.

Participant 1 57:37

Yes, everyone brings their own stool, plays a bit, and then takes it back home.

Researcher 57:40

If you could improve the space in front of your building, what would you add or remove?

Participant 1 57:48

The community should set up tables with benches at the entrance of each building.

Participant 4 57:52

Yes, with some shade so people can sit comfortably and chat.

Participant 1 57:57

If every household had these facilities, it would be nice. But again, it's a question of money.

Participant 2 58:01

Even just stone benches.

Participant 1 58:04

Yes, even simple stone seats, or welded ones. At each housing compound entrance, depending on its size, place a few of them, maybe even a small pavilion for older people to sit and talk. But it's all about money.

Participant 2 58:16

Right now there's no space, not even enough for parking, so how can they set that up?

Participant 1 58:24

Parking has already taken over the space where people used to gather. If the cars were moved and replaced with small pavilions, it would be cooler and better for sitting together. But once cars are parked there, it becomes about profit.

Parking earns money—60 yuan a month per car. That's income. So naturally, the space where we used to play or sit has been turned into parking. If you ask the community secretary, they'll say the same: without money, nothing can be done.

There are too many issues tied to this.

Participant 4 59:10

Yes, too many cars. They park everywhere, even on the roads. And it's not just about the number of cars—it's about interests. If a fire breaks out, it would be dangerous. People raise complaints, but nobody deals with them.

Participant 1 59:24

This is a complex issue. It's not something simple. It involves many aspects and requires the government and different departments to coordinate.

Participant 2 59:33

I need to go get my medicine before the pharmacy closes.

Researcher 59:38

Do you have any last comments?

Participant 2 59:47

No, just that I received a box of toothpaste.

Researcher 59:50

Thank you for coming.

Participant 1 59:53

Take your time on the way, walk slowly. I'll help you downstairs.

Participant 2 59:57

No need, I'll manage slowly on my own.

Participant 1 01:00:03

The stair handrails are helpful, right? Climbing stairs is really difficult. It's not just him; others in our building also struggle with knee problems.

Participant 6 01:00:16

Yes, especially around ten in the morning.

Participant 1 01:00:19

That's right. Anyway, I'll help him with shopping or other errands when needed.

Participant 1 01:00:33

Some issues are very...

Participant 4 01:00:35

...fundamental, but difficult to solve. They're tied to financial problems. Whether it's setting up a canteen or other facilities, it all needs money.

Participant 5 01:00:46

Exactly, and even if there's a policy, implementation takes time.

And the key issue is: who will pay? It's not easy. But at least there is hope. Things take time; it's not something achieved overnight. We just have to wait.

Participant 4 01:01:10

Now it's better to avoid trouble if you can. The fewer matters you get involved in, the better.

Participant 6 01:01:27

Yes, especially when it comes to activities.

Participant 4 01:01:29

At our age, why worry about so much?

Participant 1 01:01:31

There's nothing much anymore, right? I used to come here often, but after it was turned into an activity space managed by the community, I rarely came back. When I return now, I just take a look.

All those shares have become shares for "shareholders".

Participant 6 01:01:45

That's right.

Participant 1 01:01:48

And they even threw away the books from the old library in Third Mill. All gone. There were so many books in the Third Mill library. I know because I stayed there for two years.

Participant 4 01:02:02

I used to sit and read there whenever I wasn't eating or on duty at night. I stayed there for two or three years. Those books were invaluable.

Participant 6 01:02:16

But they all got cleared out.

Researcher 01:02:22

It's out of our hands now. Sorry to keep you waiting. Does anyone still have any comments or suggestions?

Participant 6 01:02:31

Just that I hope the authorities can set up a canteen—an old-age canteen. I'd prefer not to cook for myself.

Participant 1 01:02:40

Yes, for older people, cooking and buying kitchenware is a challenge.

Participant 6 01:02:42

Exactly.

Participant 5 01:02:45

As you get older, sometimes you can't even lift the frying pan.

Participant 1 01:02:50

This problem will become more common, and it's the most strongly voiced demand.

Once when I got home, I smelled burning. I thought something had happened, so I checked around the building. I found that one neighbour's kitchen was full of smoke. I knocked on the door for ages before he opened—he'd fallen asleep, and the food in the pot had boiled dry. The fire nearly burned the whole pot.

Participant 4 01:03:12

Yes, it almost caused a fire. I had to wake him up.

Participant 1 01:03:15

I called out to him until he finally woke.

Participant 4 01:03:16

He was really frightened. Older people's memory and alertness fade.

Participant 1 01:03:22

Exactly. With age, people become forgetful. That's why I think an old-age canteen would encourage participation. Personally, I'm younger than many here, and I use an induction cooker. Even if I forget, it switches off automatically.

Participant 4 01:03:31

Yes, but others forget things just walking from one room to another.

Participant 1 01:03:34

True. That's why a canteen supported by the state would be good. For example, if one meal cost 25 yuan, with several dishes included, older people wouldn't need to cook. They'd just eat, leave the dishes, and someone else would clean up.

The community could provide some staff, maybe supported by volunteers. Hospitals could also link it with integrated medical and care services. The second or third floor of a building could be converted. Meals will become a real issue for older people who can no longer cook.

Participant 5 01:04:06

Yes, frying pans are too heavy to lift. Older people can't manage it.

Participant 1 01:04:10

The central government also supports these initiatives. With 200 million older people nationwide, ageing is a major social issue. Setting up canteens wouldn't necessarily lose money.

Participant 4 01:04:24

No, they wouldn't lose money.

Participant 1 01:04:27

Older people don't eat much. A meal box with just a little rice is often more than enough. It saves a lot of trouble. It depends on the government's wisdom—whether they can organise it properly and ensure food hygiene.

There are many obstacles: financial management, procurement, regulations. Many departments don't want to take responsibility.

Participant 5 01:04:49

It's not the venue that's the problem. There are plenty of empty spaces on the third and fourth floors.

Participant 6 01:05:01

Yes, they could easily be used to set up a canteen.

Participant 1 01:05:04

But another issue is that some spaces belong to different authorities. For example, Third Mill, south of the road, is state-owned property under the National Development and Reform Commission. The community can't touch it.

Participant 6 01:05:21

So it can't be managed locally.

Participant 1 01:05:23

Exactly. Even the land under the housing compounds is state-owned. Any changes must go through the sub-district office, then the Zhongyuan District, and then the municipal Civil Affairs Bureau. It's a long chain.

Participant 5 01:05:39

So in the end it comes down to state support.

Participant 1 01:05:41

Yes, but for now, we just need to take care of ourselves—stay safe, avoid accidents and falls.

Participant 5 01:05:48

Over at Sixth Mill, they've already set up something like this.

Participant 4 01:05:55

Between 80 and 83, just over a month ago.

Participant 1 01:05:59

You're still in good health. Being over 80 and still in good condition is not easy.

Participant 4 01:06:02

He's not the same age as me—he's a couple of years older.

Researcher 01:06:06

Do you usually eat at the small restaurants in the community or cook at home?

Participant 5 01:06:10

Yes, I've also said before—it'd be good to set one up.

Participant 4 01:06:13

A small restaurant, but whether people come or not, that's another issue.

Participant 5 01:06:17

Some are there, but small.

Participant 1 01:06:19

That's why it's not as simple as just saying it.

Participant 5 01:06:21

Most of them are run by migrant workers who've come into the city.

Participant 4 01:06:25

Given today's economy and society, I hope it can be done.

Participant 1 01:06:29

To make a clear suggestion takes time—an hour's discussion still wouldn't cover everything.

Participant 6 01:06:32

There are plenty of buildings—like in West Community, they turned two basement rooms into use, and in East Community it's similar.

Participant 4 01:06:42

But I worry about organisation and responsibility.

Participant 1 01:06:46

Yes, it all comes back to responsibility.

Participant 5 01:06:47

And safety—there are many issues tied up with that.

Participant 4 01:06:50

Exactly. As you get older, it's more of a concern.

Participant 1 01:06:54

That's why it's better to avoid unnecessary trouble. If we can live peacefully through these years, that's good enough. A government only has one term—it can only do so much.

Researcher 01:07:02

I'd like to ask everyone: just now Auntie Wang said she usually doesn't eat in the small community restaurants because of hygiene.

Secondly, she mentioned that if there were a community canteen for older people, she could spend time with acquaintances and chat, offering a sense of companionship. So, would you say

that the main reason for calling for an old-age canteen, rather than eating at small community restaurants, is hygiene and companionship? Are there any other reasons?

Participant 1 01:07:32

Convenience. A canteen within the community would be more convenient.

Researcher 01:07:34

So small restaurants are not really convenient?

Participant 5 01:07:37

Restaurants aren't hygienic—they're dirty day after day.

Participant 6 01:07:41

Yes.

Participant 5 01:07:42

And they serve the same few dishes every day.

Participant 4 01:07:44

The key thing is to keep it orderly, with fair prices and everything managed properly.

Participant 5 01:07:49

Exactly.

Participant 1 01:07:51

A community canteen wouldn't be profit-driven. It would be better regulated, with food safety inspections, daily management, and hygiene checks.

If a community canteen were established, even if not thousands, three or four hundred residents coming to eat daily would already be significant. Such a place would need someone to ensure safety, food testing, cleanliness, and supervision every day. Private small restaurants don't have that kind of oversight.

Participant 4 01:08:15

When you go to eat, sometimes if older people bump into each other, that can cause problems.

Participant 1 01:08:20

Yes, and these problems aren't just one or two—they can be quite complicated, not something easily solved by just saying so.

Participant 4 01:08:25

Exactly, it becomes troublesome. Going out to eat, if someone stumbles or calls out, it all turns into an issue. Many problems can arise.

Participant 5 01:08:31

Yes, those are accidents.

Participant 4 01:08:33

That's why proper responsibility must be in place.

Researcher 01:08:37

Does anyone else have opinions or suggestions to add?

Participant 1 01:08:42

No, nothing more.

Researcher 01:08:43

Alright, then I'll stop here for today. Thank you all.