



# See through their eyes

A guide to inclusive design for independent living



**GRADUS**  
A Gerflor company

# About us



**Steve Watt**  
Managing Director

We're passionate about promoting independent living and ensuring that people continue to live independent and fulfilling lives for as long as possible. Understanding the requirements of the end user as well as working alongside evolving building standards and guidance to produce complementary products has been a key part of our success.

Using over 50 years of knowledge and experience we have designed and manufactured a wide range of products that promote independent living – from handrails that provide vital support and guidance to stair edgings that provide critical safety underfoot.

It has always been clear to us that we would need to work with an organisation at the forefront of inclusive design research.

We therefore teamed up with the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC) at the University of Stirling, an international organisation with more than 25 years' experience in improving the lives of people with dementia through the development of research-led design principles.

As a result of this work, the DSDC has certified an extensive range of our products as suitable for use in buildings used by people living with dementia. This includes Carezone carpet, which was rated 1a by the centre, a wide range of our flooring accessories, and our Wall Protection products.

In addition, a selection of Gerflor flooring products have also been rated as suitable for use, helping to complete a unique package of products which when combined help provide a safe and comfortable environment.

By working in conjunction with Stirling University I am confident through their support and expertise that we can help Architects and Specifiers select the most suitable products and apply them to their complete designs in a way that promotes independent lives for those living with dementia.

# We are passionate about what we do



**Gerflor**<sup>®</sup>  
theflooringroup

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# Fundamentals

## A fresh approach

We believe passionately in providing the customer with the very best in terms of service. Through our combined team we can offer expert advice to help designers and building owners create interior spaces which are suitable for independent living and those living with dementia. With the added support of extensive UK stock we can then ensure that the complete package is delivered to the required timescales.

## A fusion of products & values

Gradus and Gerflor offer products which are ideal for use in a wide variety of applications, including residential care. Products can be combined to provide a complete package that balances performance, aesthetics and cost alongside environmentally responsible manufacturing processes.



[View the video...](#)

# Introduction



**Lynsey Hutchinson**  
Senior Interior Designer  
at the Dementia Services  
Development Centre,  
University of Stirling

As Senior Interior Designer at the Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC), it's my job to help specifiers and designers to consider design and its impact on the person living with dementia.

Dementia is a disease of the brain that has varied symptoms and effects, with no two people experiencing it the same way. However, it is vital that architects and designers always consider the needs of people with dementia when making their plans for care homes and indeed public buildings. In conjunction with the University Of Stirling, DSDC have led research and provide guidelines to help designers make better informed decisions and as a result help create more inclusive buildings.

We have been working alongside Gradus since 2014, and have evaluated and assessed their products to ensure that they are suitable for use in dementia-inclusive environments, such as care homes. We're always delighted to form this kind of relationship with leading manufacturers, because it creates a real link between evidence based research and industry. Manufacturers enable the bridge to form between concept and design, as it makes it easier for designers to select the right products for their application.

Being a multi-product interior specialist, the design tool that Gradus has created (in-line with our guidance and support) will hopefully make it easier for specifiers to comply with key design guidelines when designing for people with dementia and to aid independent living.



## Designing for independent living



# Why is designing for independent living important

**The ONS in 2018 highlighted that the UK has an aging population.**

Age UK estimate that:

- There are currently 12 million people aged 65 and over
- 5.5 million aged 75+
- 1.6 million aged 85+
- By 2030 it is anticipated that over 21% of the population will be over 65

The number of years of life expected to be spent without a disability or in good health is commonly referred to as disability-free life expectancy or healthy life expectancy (ONS, 2018).

The likelihood of being disabled and / or experiencing multiple chronic and complex health conditions increases with age (ONS, 2018).

In general, a person living with dementia tends to be older, age is the biggest risk factor for developing a disease that causes dementia.

It is important therefore that designers consider the needs of the older generation and start to plan design for independent living for today, tomorrow and the future.



# We deliver infinite solutions

**We will continue to ensure that we offer solutions that embrace inclusive design and support independent living:**

- Reduce trips, slips and falls
- Offer support and guidance
- Support sight loss by offering products that aid with navigation safely around a building

**Stirling University are at the forefront of research in dementia design and understand the needs of an aging population. We have therefore worked with them and assessed the following product for independent living.**

- Stair Edgings and Floor Trims
- Flooring – including carpets, and vinyl.
- Wall Protection
- Barrier Matting
- Skirting, Capping Strips & Accessories



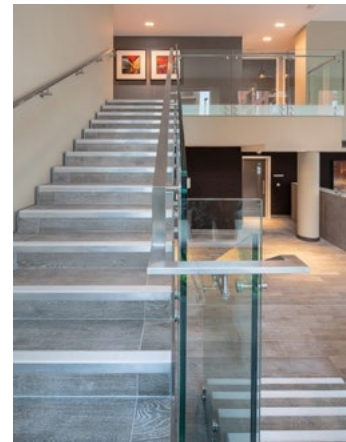
# Inclusive design principles

We pride ourselves on our ability to help create inclusive designed buildings that incorporate features that enable everybody to live in safe accessible surroundings.

People with dementia see the world differently. What may look 'normal' to us could potentially disorientate them, causing distress or even injury.

As a result, the buildings they use must be designed with a deep understanding of the ways in which those with dementia will experience them – from the types of materials used to the interplay of different colours.

This means understanding both the unique viewpoints of those with the condition – and also of everyone in the supply chain, from architects and specifiers, contractors and installers to carers and care home owners.



# See through their eyes

**In addition, people with dementia may suffer from normal age-related visual impairments, such as:**

- Dry-eye syndrome, causing a gritty feeling and a sensation of tiredness in the eyes
- Thickening lenses, causing hazier vision
- Diminished ability to discriminate between colours and sensitivity to glare
- Short- or long-sightedness



Glaucoma - Loss of peripheral vision



Macular degeneration - Loss of central vision



Cataracts - Meaning opacification of the lens



Hemianopia - See one half-side only



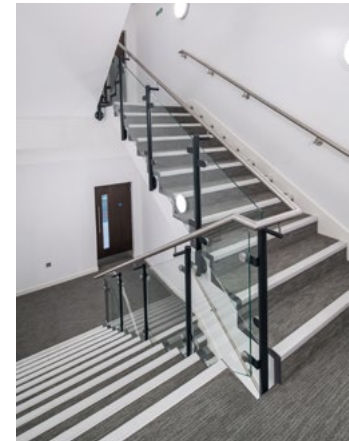
# Why work with Gradus

As knowledge leaders we have a responsibility to help inform specifications to ensure a safe and inclusive environment. We therefore ensure that our products help to promote independent living by following key industry guidance.

- Compliance with Disability and Discrimination Act
- Compliance with Project Rainbow\*
- Products tested to BS 8493:2018+A1:2010 (LRV compliance)
- BS 8300-2:2018 - Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment: Building code of practice
- Building Regulations 2010: Approved Document M
- HBN 00-04 Guidance on the design of circulation and communication spaces in hospitals and other health care buildings
- HBN 00-10 - Part B: Walls and Ceilings. The performance requirement for building elements used in healthcare facilities

This knowledge has enabled us to become the 'authoritative voice' within the industry. The natural step for Gradus was to work closely with key bodies like Age UK and Stirling University who have the knowledge and expertise in Dementia inclusive design and independent living.

\* A research project carried out by Reading University conjunction with the Royal National institute of blind people (RNIB)



# Interviews with the experts



**Lynsey Hutchinson**  
Dementia Services



**Robert Needham**  
Age UK Tameside



**Dawn Linnie**  
Age UK, Tameside



**Brontie Bennett**  
Gradus

# A fusion of products



## Carezone Carpet

A modern design in a choice of contemporary colours that can be used to create attractive interior design schemes. The range is available in both textured loop and cut pile providing a solution for care homes and care facilities.



## Wall Protection

We've been manufacturing, supplying and fitting wall protection systems to the UK and international markets for nearly two decades and provide one of the most extensive systems available today. Our range includes wall cladding, handrails, dual rail, combination rail, wall guards, corner guards, bed protectors and door protection.



## Flooring Accessories and Matting

We are the UK market-leader in contract flooring accessories and offer the widest choice in product solutions for stairs, floors and entrances. All our accessories and entrance matting is designed to meet the safety, performance and aesthetic requirements of architects, specifiers and contractors across the world.

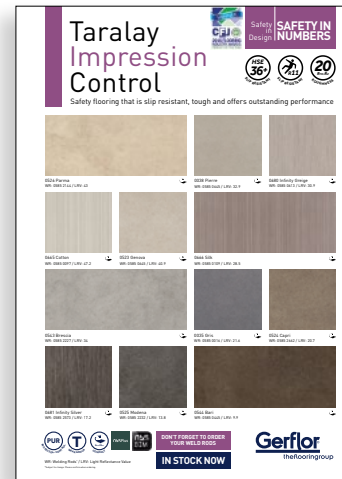
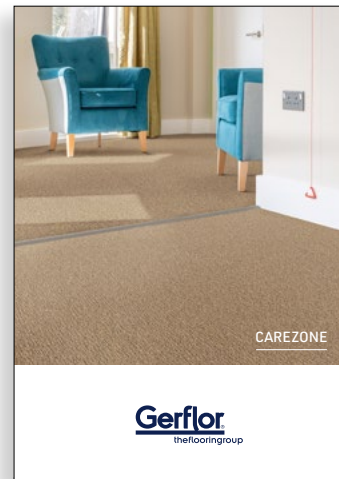
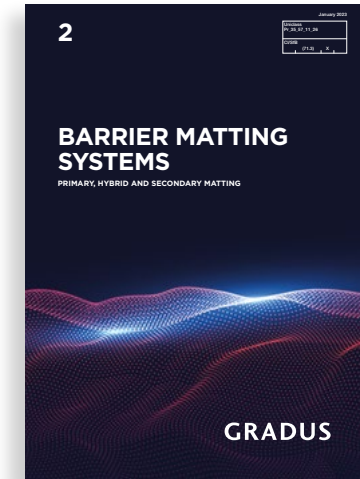
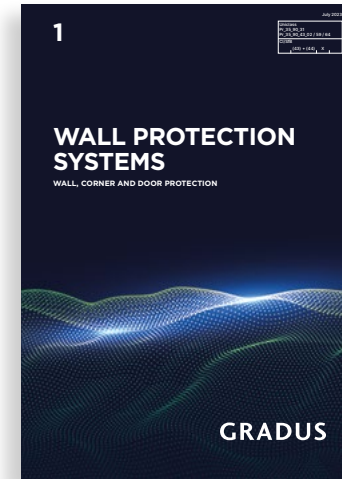


## Safety Flooring

The Taralay Impression Control range offers both slip resistance and outstanding performance for any care environment. Its offers a hygienic solution thanks to a revolutionary UV cured ProtecSol® Control surface treatment for easy cleaning and maintenance.

# Brochures

The guide and design tool should be used in conjunction with the Gradus and Gerflor brochures, click on a brochure to download a copy.



# Key figures

We spoke to some key figures in the chain that creates a dementia inclusive environment, each of whom gave their unique perspective on designing for dementia. Read what they had to say here.



The Interior Designer



The Community Centre Chair



The Dementia Support Worker



The Product Manager



# Book a design session

One to one with our specialist team.

Tel: 08081965640 or [www.gradus.com](http://www.gradus.com)