



Living differently with Alzheimer's disease



A WORD FROM

Xavier Fortinon

*President of the Landes
Departmental Council*



One million people in France suffer from Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Faced with this situation, the Village Landais Henri Emmanuelli is an innovative response that offers great hope. It was with patients and families in mind that the former Member of Parliament and President of the Departmental Council set this project in motion, and we have continued his work.

Supported by the Landes Departmental Council, the construction of this unique facility in France has been an exemplary human adventure, a relentless team effort in which everyone has contributed to the design of this new place, offering patients the possibility of «living like at home», thus breaking with the usual care practices.

Designers, engineering firms, Alzheimer's specialists, associations close to the disease... everyone has put their experience and expertise to work for the future Villagers.

A strong requirement has guided every step of this unifying project: to give residents the opportunity to evolve freely in a secure environment, and to develop to their full potential.

Today, as we open a new page in the life of the Village, I'd like to thank all those who have worked so hard: our institutional partners (the French Ministry of Health, the Regional Health Agency of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Region, the agglomeration and town of Dax), the associative sector (structures specializing in Alzheimer's disease and local associations involved with their volunteers), the Landes Mutualité Française, as well as the doctors and researchers on the ethical and scientific committees. Many thanks to them for their support.

Designing an innovative facility requires energy and emulation: architects, ergonomists, colorists and contractors all made their contribution. I would also like to pay tribute to the Department's staff, whose commitment and skills enabled us to launch this project and make it a success.

After 20 months on site, the construction companies have handed over the reins to the facility's teams, residents and their families, volunteers and researchers.

The partners of the Landes Departmental social action center (CDAS), alongside the Regional Health Agency, can now embark on 5 years of medical and social experimentation, which will provide valuable lessons for improving the quality of life of patients, their families and professionals in this sector. The Covid 19 crisis has profoundly changed our lives, making it more necessary than ever to ensure that everyone finds their rightful place in our society, starting with the most vulnerable.

The Village will, I hope, contribute to real advances in public health in the field of Alzheimer's care and support, and in society's perception of the disease as a whole.

These advances will benefit all structures specializing in dependency care in France. But also in others Landes' nursing homes that we support as part of our «Ageing well in the Landes» plan.

A WORD FROM

Benoît Elleboode

*Chief Executive Officer,
Health Regional Agency
of Nouvelle-Aquitaine*



Re-examining our practices and the responses we provide: at Village Landais, care for the 120 residents suffering from Alzheimer's disease is based first and foremost on personalized support for those called here «the villagers». The care provided by health professionals favors a non-medicinal approach, while respecting each person's tastes and pace of life.

One person in three suffers from Alzheimer's after the age of 90, and today 53% of people cared for in institutions for the elderly are affected. Memory loss, difficulty performing familiar tasks, language problems, disorientation in space and time, misplaced objects, changes in mood or behavior... sometimes, these vulnerabilities make it impossible to remain at home.

To meet this challenge, the Health Regional Agency, the Landes Departmental Council, the Nouvelle-Aquitaine Regional Council, local authorities and all local partners have joined forces to invent a new model and invest in this fully inclusive care facility, integrated into the community, with a commitment to maintaining a familiar living environment.

A joint initiative of the Landes Departmental Council and the Regional Health Agency, the Village Landais Alzheimer places the elderly person in an environment where interactions and events have all the hallmarks of an «ordinary environment», a place where they live as usual, «just like at home», erasing the notion of a nursing home-type establishment and devoting itself to the notion of support within a Village, with its neighborhoods, central square, park, local shops and services, which are open to all the inhabitants of Dax and create a natural activity.

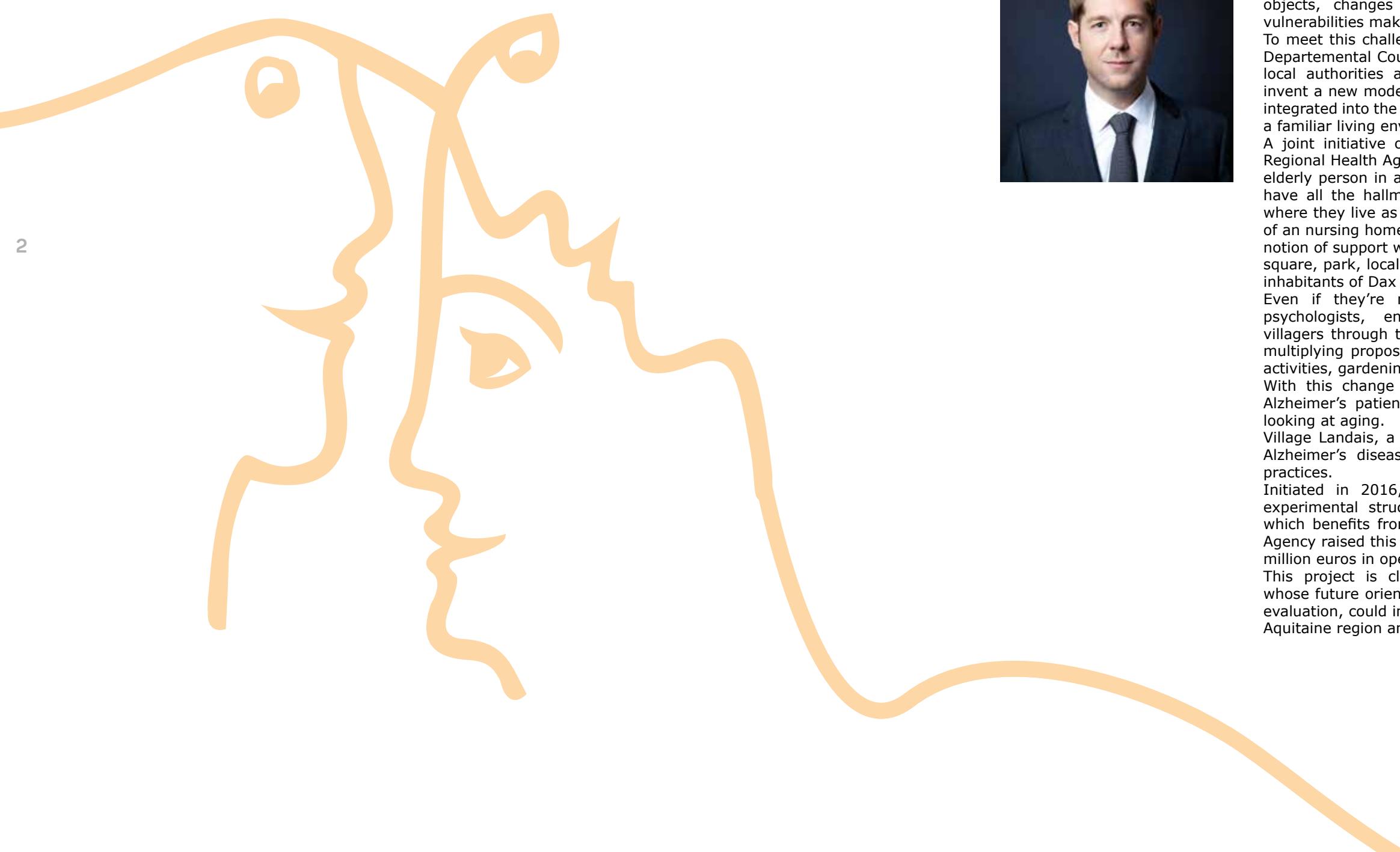
Even if they're not wearing white coats, doctors, nurses, psychologists, entertainers and gerontologists accompany villagers through their day. Volunteers play an essential role in multiplying proposals for physical, cultural, artistic and creative activities, gardening, or simple convivial exchanges.

With this change in understanding of aging and the care of Alzheimer's patients, the Village Landais offers a new way of looking at aging.

Village Landais, a new way of looking at people suffering from Alzheimer's disease, and an opening onto other professional practices.

Initiated in 2016, the Village Landais Alzheimer is still an experimental structure, a laboratory for innovative practices, which benefits from a financial effort from the Health Regional Agency raised this year to 3.9 million euros per year out of the 7 million euros in operating costs.

This project is closely monitored by a scientific committee, whose future orientations, as well as the results of the five-year evaluation, could inspire other sites and players, in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region and throughout France.



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FOREWORD



Originally named Village Landais Alzheimer, the facility is now called Village Landais Alzheimer «Henri Emmanuelli».

From «Village Landais Alzheimer» to «Village Landais Alzheimer Henri Emmanuelli

It was while reading an article on the Dutch model from De Hogeweyk to Weesp in the newspaper Le Monde on November 15, 2013, that the former president of the Departmental Council had the idea of transposing it to the Landes. Less than two years later, French President François Hollande made the Landes project a «national project», providing state funding for this unusual experiment that could be a turning point in the care of the aging. In tribute to the visionary former Socialist MP, who died on March 21, 2017 without seeing the first stone laid for this major project, the innovative Village Landais Alzheimer, still supported by the Departmental Council, has therefore taken the name of Henri Emmanuelli, a fervent defender of human values.

The key dates

Launch of the project
by Henri Emmanuelli,
then President of the
Landes Departmental
Council and Landes MP.

**November
2013**



On an official visit to
the Landes, Laurence
Rossignol, Minister of
Health, validates the
experiment with the
ARS.

**September
2015**

**Planning
permission**

**April
2017**



**Foundation
stone laid**

**June 4th
2018**



**Arrival of
120 Village
professionals**

**> May 11th
2020**

**June
2014**

The departmental assembly
votes to carry out a feasibility
study with a view to creating
an experimental facility.

2016

The Departmental Council
responds to **the call for
medico-social projects
for the creation of
an experimental and
innovative structure.**

**April
2018**

Start of construction

**September
2019**

**Professional
recruitment
launched**



**Arrival
of volunteers**

**June 23rd
2020**



**Official inauguration
in the presence
of former French
President François
Hollande**

**May 20th
2022**

Unveiling of the first
results of INSERM
research

**December 11th
2023**

**June 11th
2020**

**Arrival of
the first 32
residents**



**May
2021**

**Opening of
the day care**

**Juin 10th
2023**

Opening of the Village's
first cultural season
with the first all-
audience concert at the
Auditorium

**February 15th
2024**

Opening of
the media library
to the public





The Village's approach is one of person-centered support, with an emphasis on non-medicinal interventions.

A project never before seen in France

The establishment seeks to support the autonomy and quality of life of the villagers by preserving their assets and guaranteeing their freedom of life. It develops a comprehensive response to users' needs by adapting its reception arrangements within the framework of a flexible organization.

To achieve this, all professionals are involved in the day-to-day activities of the Villagers, beyond their areas of competence and strict professional qualifications. The hostess, in charge of the household for 12 hours, cooks, accompanies the guests on walks, helps with personal hygiene... The result is a personalized, adapted and unique approach to care. The project is based on the versatility and involvement of our staff.

The individualized support and care project, drawn up by a multidisciplinary team in the presence of the Villager and their family, aims to:

- respecting the individual's rhythm of life: for example, there are no set times for getting up or going to bed, or for showering,
- listen to the person: the Villager is always questioned, not coerced,
- preserving dignity, intimacy and privacy: we don't enter a Villager's room without their permission.

The aim is to create a «living community» within the household. Housekeepers (care assistants, medical-psychological assistants or home helpers) take care of all activities relating to care, dependency, daily life and entertainment, making the best use of the skills of each Villager.

The idea is to design a world as close to normal life as possible, in a safe environment for the villagers.

THREE MAIN OBJECTIVES

The establishment's project aims to enable Villagers to :

- maintain their functional autonomy
- preserve their quality of life
- maintain their self-esteem and sense of identity, thanks to a calm and secure environment and social and therapeutic activities.

Just like home

Residents live in houses with seven or eight bedrooms, with shared rooms (dining room, living room, small living room, kitchen and laundry), so that life can be organized «like at home». The living habits of residents are collected from families, relatives and villagers on admission, so that they can be respected throughout life in the establishment.

The Village's multidisciplinary team provides support at the end of life. If necessary, specific medical or paramedical expertise may be sought.

Favouring non-medical interventions

Multidisciplinary care is offered to meet the needs, desires and abilities of each individual, at every stage of their journey. The indoor and outdoor environment is designed to resemble a real village. Professionals work without uniforms.



Above :
View of one of the districts

Opposite from top to bottom:

Each household has a living room where people can spend time together.

Villagers are free to help with household chores if they wish.

Each household has been designed without any of the usual medical codes

TO EACH HIS OWN RHYTHM

Waking up and getting up are essential moments in life. The habits and rituals of the villagers must be respected and a special attention is paid to them.

Toileting should be synonymous with well-being and relaxation, and not a constraint. Villagers are encouraged to do everything they can themselves. The grooming process ends with a pleasant moment, such as the application of a moisturizing cream, hairstyling, make-up, perfume, etc., while respecting tastes and lifestyle habits.

Dressing: the choice of clothes is made according to each person's wishes, habits and need for comfort. The aim is to let people choose without putting them off, if necessary by making simple suggestions.

Meals: Meals are fun and convivial, but they are also an opportunity to develop the residents' independence. Residents take part in shopping, cooking and laying the table. It is also possible, when a relative visits, to have lunch in the house or at the Village brasserie. The end of the day: in the late afternoon, signs of anguish and anxiety are common. Calming or therapeutic activities can help to calm and reassure residents. Caregivers must be on hand at all times.

Going to bed at the right time ensures a more peaceful night's sleep. Rhythm, habits and rituals must be respected. As with all aspects of daily life, involving the resident is essential: closing the shutters, switching on the bedside lamp, opening the bed, taking out the pyjamas or nightdress, etc. Older people sleep less soundly at night. The night is a source of anxiety and sometimes of increased difficulties such as loss of bearings or disorientation. It's possible to wander around, talk and have a snack before going back to bed.





INTERVIEW WITH CÉCILE BERTET

Director of the Village



The Village Landais Alzheimer project places the social link at the heart of support and care for people living with Alzheimer's or related diseases, through the values it conveys: commitment, concern, a person-centered approach and the quest for freedom. The whole point of this experiment is to find a model made possible by the unique setting in which it is based and the constant adaptation of the professionals and volunteers who work there.

My role is part of this process, leading all those involved (professionals, volunteers, families and villagers) to reflect on this model and to unite around this project, while respecting shared values.

My role also involves integrating the Village into its local area as a medico-social structure, but also by opening up its cultural spaces to the outside world.

This project is a chance and an opportunity for everyone involved. We're determined that, thanks to this experiment, other Alzheimer's Villages will be able to develop in France.



A village open to the outside world

The Village has a sympathetic architectural structure reminiscent of a traditional Landes village. It is largely open to the outside world, with shops and services (auditorium, media library, hairdressing salon, brasserie, health center) open to the general public.

80 volunteers, complementing the professionals, are an integral part of the project, bringing local life to the heart of the Village. Members of cultural or sports associations, former professionals from the medical-social sector or people personally close to the disease, all the volunteers have benefited from a day of Alzheimer's disease awareness training provided by the structure's professionals and the Ligue de l'Enseignement.

A place for experimentation

The Village is a place for experimenting with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. A resource center for scientific research and accommodation for researchers and trainees are also available on site.

A public medical-social establishment

Le Village est un Ehpad public
The Village is a public public medical-social establishment that can accommodate 120 residents, either alone or as a couple:

- 105 permanent accommodation places,
- 7 temporary accommodation places,
- 8 day care places.

The only compulsory criterion for admission is an official diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or a related condition, with associated medical imaging, whatever the stage of the disease. However, a certain degree of autonomy is required to benefit from the care offered by the Village.

The daily charge is in line with the average for public Ehpad in the Landes region: €62.88 for accommodation, plus €7.42 for dependency care.

All of these costs are eligible for departmental assistance, leaving a monthly outlay of €223 for the most modest households.



The architectural design work benefited from extensive consultation with the Village's various partners.

An architectural project specially designed for people with Alzheimer's disease



All the Landes in one village

Designed by the team of architects Grégoire & Champagnat (Landes) and Nord Architects (Denmark), the Village extends over 5 hectares of landscaped grounds in the heart of which the villagers are completely free to develop. Away from the Bastide, where shops and services are located, there are 4 residential areas, each comprising 4 houses of 300 m². Each Villager has an individual bedroom with en-suite shower room. This is a personal space where privacy must be respected. When they move in, Villagers can install their own furniture (excluding beds) in this space.

At the heart of the site is a wooded area and three ponds. The Village also has a vegetable garden, created with the help of the association Les Jardins Reconnaissants, and a mini-farm where the donkeys Jasmine, Voltaire and Junon are kept. All the technical and logistical services (laundry, storage rooms, workshop, kitchen) are located next to the Village so as not to disturb the atmosphere of the site.

SPECIFIC ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES LINKED TO THE DISEASE

France Alzheimer Landes Association contributed ideas based on its experience of working with patients and carers.

What is seen / What is hidden

It was decided that all the technical rooms, although present throughout the site, should be architecturally integrated so as not to attract the attention of the villagers. By using wood cladding on all the doors that are off-limits to them, it is possible for these reserved accesses to blend into the background. It was therefore not necessary to put up any «Staff only» signs in the building. This successful integration allows the Village to retain its optimal non-hospital character.

Light and shadow

Dark corners create anxiety for people with cognitive disorders. To avoid these anxiety-provoking situations, the living areas of the houses are entirely lined with picture windows.

The toilets

To make life easier for residents, they don't have to look for the toilet when they need it: they have to find it. On the advice of France Alzheimer Landes, the architects adopted a principle: the toilets are systematically located in the centre of the communal areas, whether in the houses, the restaurant or the media library.

FOCUS ON...

- **The forms** : Villagers can walk alone or accompanied. Getting around is made easier without creating a traffic loop. The buildings encourage simple architecture and urban forms.
- **Colors** : the play of colors guides residents through the building. Depending on the color, certain spaces and/or entrances can be attractive or repellent.
- **Light** : light is a temporal reference point; it promotes the Villager's sense of security.

(left)
With its games and boules pitch, the Bastide is a meeting place for all generations.

(top right)
The arches in La Bastide provide shelter from the sun and rain.

(bottom right)
Shaded, the heart of the district is also a place to live.



INTERVIEW WITH FRANÇOISE DIRIS

President of France
Alzheimer Landes



What did the partnership between the Village and your association achieve?

Right from the start of the project, we were involved at an architectural level. With our psychologist Nathalie Bonnet - now employed by the Village - we offered training to the architects to help them better understand the disease and the needs of the residents. For example, they had to play with shadows and manage not to light places where the residents shouldn't be. As for the pathways, initially they imagined different colors for each area, but we recommended that they should all be the same color so that they could venture out everywhere. On our advice, we also decided that the toilets should always be in the center of the common rooms, so that you never have to look for them. Sideboards with exposed crockery also encourage independence. But no mirrors in the bedrooms, for example, as they are very disruptive.

What happens next?

As the association is part of the Ethics Committee, we will continue to keep a family eye, a lambda eye, on life at the Village. We can also act as a go-between for families who, over the months, have questions or things that are bothering them.

We can also set up discussion groups where families can express themselves freely within the Village or at our association if the need arises. We could also organize volunteer meetings - which we help to train - to help them relax. It's not always easy to stand up to the suffering of others.



Security and openness to the outside world: a fundamental commitment

The architectural proposal combines two principles that might seem contradictory: the need to secure the Village and the desire to open it up to the outside world.

Village and the desire to open it up to the outside world. For example, the fences and security features are concealed by landscaping, so that residents do not feel they are being shut in. However, security is an essential element of the facility.

The principles adopted are:

- «soft» security for the Village enclosure. The Village is entirely enclosed by architectural elements (buildings, pediments, etc.) and landscaping (hedges, meadows).

- All entrances are via the reception gate;

- general access control: this involves access control for all premises using magnetic doors and badges;

- the use of home automation: security for electric roller

shutters, fall detection thanks to a light system on either side of the bed, automatic light when leaving the room and, only if necessary, an anti-errance device such as a passive detection cell in shoes or slippers.

Making it easier for family and friends to visit

The aim is to create a friendly, pleasant environment, so that after many months as a carer, loved ones can once again become 'carers/lovers'. The location of the Village has also been chosen to make it easier for families to come here: it is easily accessible thanks to the TGV station and the bus stop created to serve it. Studios are also available so that families from far away can share in the daily life of their loved one when they come to visit.



The staged train, an invitation to travel

In the center of the media library, a train carriage. It's not there by chance. Villagers who so wish, accompanied by a professional, can «get on the train and get off at the next station». The idea is to help people who are walking a long way to express their desire to escape, ease their anxieties and reduce the need to take medication. People with Alzheimer's disease, who are prone to wandering, often feel the need to walk aimlessly. This can be due to anxiety, but also to prolonged use of medication. They may walk up to 10km a day.

This 'travel therapy' was devised by Ivo Cilsesi, a doctor in cognitive psychology and head of non-medication therapies at a retirement home in Bergamo, Lombardy. As its name suggests, it involves miming a train journey. Of course, this is an imaginary journey that allows the villagers to escape for a few minutes along the route taken by the little train at the Marquèze Ecomuseum.





INTERVIEW WITH NATHALIE LAGAÜZÈRE

Hairdresser at L'Évidence
salon in the heart of La
Bastide



I've been cutting hair in old people's homes for ten years or so, alongside my salon in Mont-de-Marsan: hairdressing isn't just about touching hair, it's about developing the senses and promoting well-being. Villagers come in every day to have their hair combed, their blow-dry put back in place, or to enjoy a massage. There's not a day goes by when they don't come to listen to the music. It's the kind of place I wanted it to be. In the Village, we share magical moments, sometimes very powerful ones, there's such serenity. After spending several mornings with a lady who was a bit out of time and refused to be shampooed, I managed to do her nails and then a bun. It was a very emotional moment, she smiled when she saw herself and took my hands. To awaken people's past, I put all my heart into this salon, which also welcomes people from outside the Village: old fashion prints, second-hand furniture, period records, the smell of Armenian paper. Staff, volunteers... we work as a team, and we all share the same human dimension of giving and sharing.



The atmosphere in the living room and in the homes is a far cry from that of a hospital. Here, many of the elements have been collected. Everything is unique and familiar.





People are at the heart of the project. Each Villager is unique and benefits from tailor-made support, as close as possible to their needs.



Personalized support

Carers/lovers

The carers are an integral part of the support: they are involved in formalizing the individualized life plan, in particular by sharing the resident's tastes and lifestyle habits. Together, they will prepare the arrival at the Village, the personal belongings to bring and the furniture for the room. The notion of continuity is fundamental: we need to avoid the feeling of disruption that often comes with moving into an institution.

Caregivers are freely admitted to the facility, but are encouraged to maintain close links with the Villager by taking part in:

- in daily life, in the life of the home,
- activities,
- in the life of the Village, in the life of the neighborhood.

For some, these are very difficult times. The Village team is on hand to answer their questions and respond to their wishes; care is explained to them and they can get involved if they wish.

A discussion group run by the Village psychologist has also been set up. The aim is to provide a time for listening and sharing, and to give everyone a place in the establishment.

Volunteers

80 volunteers to «surround» the villagers and respond to their needs and desires. Some come from sports, cultural or senior citizens' associations in Dax, while others are retired professionals from the medico-social sector or individuals who have had to deal with the illness of a loved one.

Supervised by the establishment's coordinator, they share in the daily life of the Villageois and take part in activities. Through their actions, they help to maintain social links within the Village, and contribute their knowledge and expertise to the residents. They are at the heart of the establishment's major events, such as the Village festival, shows in the auditorium or in the courtyard of the Bastide, etc.

To be a volunteer with the residents, you need to be a good communicator, a good listener and a dynamic person, while avoiding any intrusions or setbacks. Their role goes even further: they pass on their observations to the Village team. They must, of course, respect the obligation of confidentiality and medical secrecy.

Professional staff

131.5 people (full-time equivalent) make up the Village team :

- Multidisciplinary, multi-skilled medical and social professionals: doctors, nurses, gerontological care assistants, psychologists, occupational therapists, psychomotor therapists, activity leaders, etc. ;
- Administrative staff : management, accounting, etc. ;
- General services: catering, maintenance, etc.

Entertainers

Proposing activities to structure the day, finding one's bearings in time, preventing agitation or anxiety... these are the missions of the three activity coordinators and the volunteer activity coordinator, who are joined by the other professionals on a daily basis.

The activity project ensures that everyone can find their place according to their particularities, needs and desires, and their life history. The aim is also to maintain residents' physical and intellectual independence and encourage them to take part in the social life of the Village.

There's something to do in the activity room, in the park for a stroll, in the brasserie for a coffee or in the houses for a moment of relaxation. All the places where you'll find entertainment in the Village.



INTERVIEW WITH FLORENCE LAUDOJAR

Volunteering, entertainment and culture coordinator



What's your role?

I'm responsible for organizing the reception of volunteers and their schedule of activities. The volunteers have taken over the grocery shop, the brasserie and the media library, as a first step towards getting into the rhythm of the villagers, before expanding the places where they are supported. Induction and awareness days are organized for all new volunteers with a psychologist and the Ligue de l'Enseignement. 129 people have already attended and 90 more are registered. Even if people only come once, it's still a good thing for the Village and the perception of the disease. I also coordinate the activities team and liaise with the multidisciplinary team.

You're very involved with the volunteers... *We have daily debriefings to find out how they felt. I spend a lot of my time with them. For some of them, their presence here brings things to the surface, and we talk about them if they want. I like to use these words from the Ligue de l'Enseignement: meaning, usefulness and pleasure. Does it make sense for them? Did they feel useful? Did they enjoy themselves? If not, we look again at why it didn't work, and try to come up with something else, in an interactive spirit.*

What kind of cultural events does the Village offer ? *The cultural season is open to the general public, with events in the media library focusing on public reading and concerts in the Bastide or the Auditorium. But whatever their form, these events must be meaningful for the Village. For example, the plays on offer are often the subject of artists' residencies that include local residents and professionals in the creative process.*



Possible activities

- Sport and well-being
- Cultural activities
- Reading the newspaper, storytelling
- Board games
- Music, group or individual
- Participation in events for the general public (Taste Special Week, Christmas market, etc.)
- Intergenerational projects (e.g. with schoolchildren from Dax) in the farm and vegetable garden
- Visits to the media library
- Shows or cinema sessions at the Auditorium



OUR VALUES

> COMMITMENT

Being involved, authentic and attentive to others in the present moment

> SOLLICITUDE

The ability to listen, to allow oneself to be touched by others in a way that is good for and with others

> A PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH that respects the individual's pace and abilities

> SEEKING FREEDOM of movement, choice and autonomy in a suitable environment

The medical project

The main principles

The Village's medical project is based on maintaining the remaining capacities (cognitive, functional and emotional) to be maintained by:

- encouraging a rich, diversified and supportive social environment,
- preventing psycho-behavioural disorders by the early detection of symptoms of discomfort and malaise,
- individualising the care project for each Villager by a detailed knowledge of their wishes, habits and life history. On arrival, Villagers are not expected to stop their medical treatment.

However, as part of the prevention of iatrogenia, any drug treatment that can be replaced by a non-drug means will be done so: from dietary supplements to walking, as well as specific therapeutic workshops such as psychomotor therapy, occupational therapy, art therapy or music therapy. The medical approach is centred on the Villager, in the integrity and respect for their choices, wishes and priorities. Even those with major cognitive problems remain at the center of our concerns, with the aim of providing the best possible support in their living environment, minimising displacement of their reference points and treating any intercurrent pathologies.



KEY NOTIONS

«Unmarked» professional civilian clothing

Respect for individual rhythm

Maintenance of remaining capacities

Consent or assent to care that is otherwise postponed

Appeal to emotional memory and meaningful activities

A calm and appropriate environment

The objectives of medical care

- Preventing psycho-behavioral problems,
- Slowing cognitive decline,
- Improving mood, self-esteem, and quality of life,
- Preventing geriatric risks,
- Support until the end of life,
- On-site medical care whenever possible.

INTERVIEW WITH DR GAËLLE MARIE-BAILLEUL

Psychogeriatric doctor
and Village coordinator



In the Village, the general idea is to focus on the abilities that the Villager still has and that can make him or her a player in their own life, and to ensure that this does not cause behavioral problems. This means deconstructing pre-established patterns, taking a different perspective, not being anxious in anticipation but listening to the present moment. The aim is to support the Villagers as much as possible and avoid hospital admissions, which are often too frequent in conventional facilities due to a lack of resources.

Philosophy of care

We don't have a consultation office here, we go straight into people's homes. We're going to try to reduce the number of drug therapies. However, we won't be able to reduce all treatments, as most villagers have multiple pathologies (diabetes, hypertension, etc.). Space, the ability to come and go, is very beneficial, particularly for young patients.

Caring for others through caring support

Alzheimer's disease cannot be cured, but it can be supported by focusing on the positive, maintaining the connection and being fully involved in all aspects of daily life.



A multidisciplinary team

- doctors
- psychologist
- occupational therapist
- psychomotrician
- physiotherapist
- art therapist
- health executive and a nurse coordinator
- nurses
- care assistants (AS), medical-psychological assistants (AMP), educational and social assistants (AES) or gerontological care assistants (ASG) and home helpers

The 2.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) medical staff is divided between 1 psychogeriatric doctor and 2 general practitioners, the latter being designated as the residents' treating physicians

A facility integrated into the local health system

The Village Landais Alzheimer is part of the local and regional health network - hospital services, home care structures and the Centre Mémoire Recherche et Ressources. The presence of a health center gives villagers access to other care (dentist, ENT specialist, hearing aid specialist).



Housemistresses and Housemistresses adapt their practice to the needs and abilities of each individual.

Between the medical project and research, the scientific and ethics committees have their rightful place.



Scientific and ethics committees

Interview with their chairmen

PR JEAN-FRANÇOIS DARTIGUES

Professor emeritus at the University of Bordeaux, this neurologist and practitioner at Bordeaux University Hospital is chairman of the Village's scientific committee



What is a scientific committee ?

It is not a scientific council in the strict sense of the word, but a scientific committee responsible for monitoring this experiment and overseeing the research to ensure that everything runs smoothly. The idea is to involve, alongside doctors and researchers, representatives of associations such as France Alzheimer, and all those who work in the Village, for a scientific exchange. Our meetings - two or three times a year and on request as needed - are held jointly with those of the ethics committee. Imagine that a new treatment is developed for Alzheimer's disease, perhaps we will have to ask ourselves whether it is effective in more serious cases. Research is inseparable from ethics.

More than just consultancy

We are here to encourage new research in all areas of ageing and Alzheimer's disease. We're not there to hand out money, but to say «this research deserves to be done here because it will contribute something to scientific knowledge and is ethically acceptable». Our role is also to look to the future and see what improvements we can suggest for the way the Village operates. Usually, a care unit is rarely a research unit: here, we're lucky enough to have researchers living in the Village, which is essential when we're looking to improve. Finally, we're working to spread this experiment throughout the region if it proves beneficial. That's the key to the Village's success: demonstrating that this project is exemplary.



PR BERNARD BIOULAC

Professor Emeritus at the University of Bordeaux and member of the French National Academy of Medicine. This former director of the Bordeaux Neuroscience Institute is chairman of the Village ethics committee.



What does the ethics committee do ?

As a first step, we are training staff, in particular with the help of geriatrician Geneviève Pinganaud from the Bordeaux University Hospital, to adopt a local ethic in day-to-day operations: how to respect people, how to talk to them, how to give them medication, etc. We are doing everything we can to make them feel that they are still a subject and not an object, to value the human being whose part of themselves has been affected. The brain is not a knee, a liver or a foot, it's much more than an organ. The debate is not over about what it means to be a person who has lost their cognitive functions. But when you start saying that a person is no longer a person, it has always ended badly. We have to be uncompromising about this.

How does he work ?

There are a dozen of us: doctors, carers, legal experts, philosophers, association leaders, etc. Jean-François Dartigues and I have decided to work together with the scientific committee, particularly on what might give rise to research: if it proves that this structure, where people come closer to normal life, is more effective, it would be «unethical» not to share it with others.

On a day-to-day basis, cases are referred to us and we are asked for our opinion on this or that issue raised by the team. Crisis, aggressive behavior by a person or a group of people, hypersexuality, severe depression... what is the best way to approach the problem? Experienced teams generally know how to deal with these issues, but they can sometimes be overwhelmed. Families can also come to us directly with a question of injustice or misunderstanding... Ethics are like the devil, they're everywhere, all the time.



If research shows that this structure, which brings us closer to normal life, is more effective, it would be «unethical» not to allow others to benefit from it.



The strength of the project lies in the fact that it is backed up by a major research and evaluation program.



Research

The Village has a resource and research centre where the experiment is being conducted under the joint supervision of the Landes Departmental Council and the Regional Health Agency of Nouvelle-Aquitaine. The aim is to scientifically demonstrate the validity of the care provided to people suffering from Alzheimer's and related diseases and their families, and to make the model developed by the Village replicable on a national and even international scale.

To this end, a number of lines of research are being pursued, including a study of the quality of work for professionals and the quality of life for Village residents, carers and volunteers; changes in the social perception of the disease among the general public and general practitioners; and a socio-economic analysis of the model.

External researchers from France and abroad may also submit their research projects to the Scientific Committee. If their study is deemed relevant to the disease and adapted to the Village's care model, they can benefit from the resource centre for the duration of their study.

Initial findings from the research

Hélène Amieva, director of the INSERM research team, unveiled some initial trends on 11 December 2023.

In terms of social representations, the results of the survey show a positive change in the representations associated with Alzheimer's disease in the cities that were heavily exposed to media coverage of the project (whereas there was no change in the control region), suggesting that the image of the disease conveyed by the Village to the general public is less negative than that commonly reported in various surveys around the world (e.g. Ngatcha-Ribert, 2004).

In terms of the health indicators collected from the villagers, there has been a gradual decline in functional abilities. This result was to be expected, given the institutional environment in which the housekeepers assist people with activities of daily living (washing, meals, etc.). On the other hand, the results do not show any deterioration at clinical level in the 12 months following entry to the Village. Whether we are talking about indicators of cognitive function, anxiety, depression, behavioural problems or quality of life, the results show remarkable stability. These results contrast sharply with the numerous international publications reporting an accelerated decline in cognitive function (Wilson et al., 2007; Gonzalez-Colaço et al., 2014); a deterioration in quality of life (Villeneuve et

al., 2020; Scocco et al., 2006; Mjorud et al., 2014; Olsen et al., 2016; Hoe et al., 2009, Castro-Monteiro et al., 2014); and an increase in mortality (Aneshensel et al., 2000).

Among carers, we found no deterioration in quality of life, anxiety and depression markers, and a reduction in the use of antidepressants or anxiolytics (as early as 6 months). A substantial reduction in feelings of burden was also observed. These results contrast with those reported in the literature. Indeed, with the placement of a relative in an institution, various studies report a burden on the carer who is 'relieved' of daily tasks that no longer have to be carried out by them, but at the same time, a burden 'weighed down' by new burdens and responsibilities (relations with professionals, emotional and social support), a feeling of abandonment and guilt, an increase in anxiety and the use of anxiolytics, etc. (e.g. Aneshensel et al: Aneshensel et al, 1995; Schulz et al 2002; Tornatore & Grant, 2002).

INTERVIEW WITH PR HÉLÈNE AMIEVA

Professor at the University of Bordeaux
Specialized in psychogerontology and epidemiology, and
director of the Inserm team.



What does your research involve here ?

Firstly, thanks to Inserm staff working on site, the villagers are interviewed every six months for four years, on cognitive functions, state of health, social participation and so on. The same goes for the Village's professionals, who are asked about suffering at work, the meaning of their work, staff turnover, etc. Another aspect of this overall program is the volunteers, whose large presence is one of the special features of the establishment. What are their reasons for taking part in this project? Finally, the general public. We're trying to find out whether a project like this, which gives a very different image of accommodation and the end of life, can help to change the way people think about old age and illness.

What method was used ?

We carried out a survey of the general population before the opening, among the residents of Dax, and at the same time in Villeneuve-sur-Lot, an equivalent commune in demographic and socio-economic terms, with no equivalent project. After a second survey in these two towns, we can see that representations have changed in Dax, and we may be able to attribute these changes to this project.

When will the conclusions be published ?

By 2027, because the Village is backed up by a large-scale evaluation program, it will be possible to draw lessons from it so that it can be replicated. We all need to know whether there are alternative models to the current way of treating neurodegenerative diseases. In Holland, not having research associated with the project has always been a weakness. We're sticking to common sense and good intentions, but we need more than that when it comes to investing heavily in new structures across the country.



We are going to find out whether a project like this, which gives a very different image of accommodation and the end of life, can help to change the way people think about old age and illness.





Governance

The **steering committee** is co-chaired by the Landes Departmental Council and the Regional Health Agency of Nouvelle-Aquitaine.



The **Centre départemental d'action sociale des Landes (CDAS)**, created in June 2023, has been responsible for the medical and social authorization of the facility since 1 January 2024. It brings together the Landes Departmental Council, the cities of Dax and Saint-Paul-lès-Dax, the Communauté d'agglomération du Grand Dax, the Mutualité française Landes and the associations France Alzheimer Landes, France Parkinson Landes, Générations Mouvement Landes and the Union départementale Associations familiales des Landes.



Construction costs :

Construction : €28.8M (€20.4m paid by the Landes Departmental Council)

Grants : €10,3M

(€2m from the French government, €2m from the Region of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, €1.875m from the Landes Departmental Council, €336,000 from the Communauté d'agglomération du Grand Dax, €33,600 from the city of Dax and €700,000 from the Mutualité Française Landes)

VAT compensation fund : €3,7M (estimate)

Loan taken out by the Landes Departmental Council : €14,8M

Operating costs : €8M par an

Year Daily charge for residents : €62,88 + €7,42

Dependency allowance from the Landes County Council : €1,2M

Health allowance from the ARS : €3,9M.

Funding partners of the «Henri Emmanuelli» Landes Alzheimer's Village



Map of the Village

BAS ARMAGNAC NEIGHBORHOOD

CHALOSSE NEIGHBORHOOD

CHALOSSE NEIGHBORHOOD

These three areas are entirely dedicated to permanent accommodation.

HAUTE LANDE NEIGHBORHOOD

Day care (House Number 1)

Day care enables people suffering from Alzheimer's and related diseases living at home to maintain and preserve their motor, physical and intellectual independence. For carers, it is a way of freeing up time during the day, exchanging ideas with professionals, not being left alone with their questions and concerns, and regaining a social life.

Temporary accommodation (House Number 3)

Temporary accommodation is a one-off, flexible solution that allows people to benefit from a suitable care environment and to familiarize themselves with life in an institution.

LA BASTIDE

LA BRASSERIE

Professionals, volunteers, residents and their families can eat there if they register in advance. Breakfast and snacks for residents are provided by the housekeepers in each household. Beforehand, residents go shopping at the grocery shop (butter, rusks, chocolate, coffee, jam, sugar, etc.). For meals (lunches and dinners), there are two possibilities:

- Meals are prepared in the households by their occupants (housekeepers, villagers - depending on their autonomy - and volunteers).
- The Village cooks prepare the meals in the central kitchen. These are distributed to the households where they are reheated.

THE GROCERY SHOP

Shopping is an essential part of everyday life, so a small grocery shop has been set up in the Bastide. Every day, villagers, accompanied or not, come to do a little shopping without exchanging money: the day's newspaper, bread, a few extras to prepare a snack. There are several areas: haberdashery, newspapers with old newspapers, postcards, dry groceries (sugar, flour, rice, pasta, etc.), some fresh produce (fruit and vegetables). The mini-market is managed by the Village and run by volunteers for the exclusive use of the villagers.

THE MEDIA LIBRARY

The media library, part of the departmental network in conjunction with the library of the town Dax, is a place for villagers to develop their cultural skills, and a new facility for the city and its inhabitants.

This open media library has been specifically designed, with the help of the Landes Departmental Media Library, for people with cognitive disabilities, with collections adapted to their needs: themes chosen according to the degree of difficulty, a preference for the visual and «sensory» resources (music, photography, images, etc.).

THE AUDITORIUM

This facility, accessible to outside visitors, can be used by the Villagers professionals as well as volunteers and associations. With its retractable bleachers seating 40 (100 standing when the bleachers are folded down) and its technical control room, the auditorium is suitable for rehearsals, shows (music, theatre, etc.) or physical activities (tai chi, etc.).

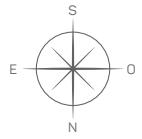
THE HAIRDRESSING SALON

Called L'Évidence, it is open to all: Villagers and the general public. Everything is designed to awaken the senses.

THE HEALTH CENTRE

A health centre of the Mutualité Française Landes is located in the Bastide. Open to people from outside the village, villagers can, if they wish, go there for complementary care to that provided in the village: dental care, speech therapy, etc.

Plan de situation



- Reception
- Media Library
- Hairdressing salon
- Grocery shop
- Brasserie
- Health centre
- Auditorium







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