

St. Josef Retirement Home, Germany
Cool white courtyard cluster with impeccable details and proportions



Waechter

Architect
Waechter + Waechter

Client
Caritas Verband Frankfurt

Deck type
Projecting

No. of homes
35

Dwelling mix
24 one-bedroom apartments
10 two-bedroom apartments
1 four-bedroom apartment

Tenure
100% private

Density
260 homes per hectare

Construction cost
€4.35 million

Completion
2015

Location
Kniebisstraße 31, Frankfurt

This Third Age courtyard housing development provides 35 homes and basement car parking in three buildings – south-, east- and west-facing – linked by an arcade of deck access galleries. Three key design decisions helped to give shape to the architect’s vision of a dignified architecture that enables residents to lead independent lives.

These include grouping the homes around a green courtyard to foster a sense of wellbeing and encourage residents to mingle; using a deck access system to ensure every home has its own front door that opens to the elements (as opposed to entering homes from internal corridors) and, through the use of projections and recesses in apartment walls, creating a genuine sense of place at the threshold of every dwelling.

The development, which occupies a corner plot in a compact Frankfurt suburb, also engages with the immediate townscape, varying the height of its blocks (from three to five storeys above ground) and improving local pedestrian connections – a new semi-public path slots in between it and an existing nursing home to the east.

