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**Contested Homes in the Age of the Cloud: The Changing
Socio-Spatial Dynamics of Family Living and Care for Older
People in the 21st Century
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Abstract

Over the past two decades two fundamental changes have occurred, affecting the identity, meaning, practice and experience of the home: the changing demographics of our societies with substantial increase of ageing population; and the encroachment of technologies in the way home functions on daily basis. Between 16th March and 1st June 2020, the United Kingdom was subject to a Nation-wide lockdown as a preventive measure to limit the spread of COVID-19 Pandemic and its impact.

Older people were told not contact non-resident siblings, locked into the confines of their homes and self-isolated from social contacts for ten weeks in an instant and ultimate test to the remote operational capacity of homes, information and assistive technologies and e-infrastructures of the domestic space. Data-driven systems of work and care maintained an uninterrupted flow of information, personal data and communications from the home to both workplaces and care-givers. Barriers fallen; new links established. This paper investigates the intersection of those two fundamental phenomenological changes of contemporary homes.

It analyses the increasing role of technologies in the care of old people and its impact on changing social-spatial patterns and family interaction as an effective alternative to the conventional means of engagement through two European research projects that looked at assistive technologies for older people between 2010-2020, prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, that offer good insights on the readiness of European Societies to help and support older people living independently at home.

*Full paper

See book [‘The Home in the Digital Age’](#)