

# Reflection report Hannah Griffioen P4

What is the relation between your graduation project topic, your master track (Ar, Ur, BT, LA, MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

My graduation project topic is to design for young retirees. What kind of house do they want and how can we include social components into the building as well. The interesting thing about this project is the mix between designing houses, but also a social component and how these two different topics can work together without interfering.

How did your research influence your design/recommendations and how did the design/recommendations influence your research?

My research asked the question: How to create architectural spaces that would benefit the interaction between young retirees and motivate them to move? Through this research I came to understand who the young retirees are and what they need. This is important, because they entered a new stage of life where they do not have to work anymore and their lives have become very different. By understanding what the young retirees want out of life, the brief of the building became more specific. There are several practical things that the young retirees want, the main point is that they like an apartment where they can grow old in. But there are also fewer concrete things that can be done for the young retirees to make the building more interesting to come and live in. These are related to what the young retirees want to do with their newly found time after retirement. Most people have the ambition to spend more time on their hobbies and others want to do more in the social work. There are three elements the young retirees want from life: autonomy, social contacts and a purpose. The autonomy is to be found in having their own apartment. The sense of purpose is an element that is harder to help the people with, but what can help is the organization of several events for the community. The social contacts can be provided in different ways. It can be done in having common spaces throughout the building, but it can also happen in a more personal setting. In the research I have looked at two case studies

(vindmollebakken (Stavanger, Norway) and OCMW Nevele (Nevele, Belgium)) where the potential to come in social contact with others starts already right outside of the door, see image to the right. In this situation the apartment can be opened and the hallway can be incorporated in the living room. In these case studies the hallway is not a place that people shy away from. It is not just a space that is used to get somewhere. The hallway becomes a social space outside on the doorstep of the home.

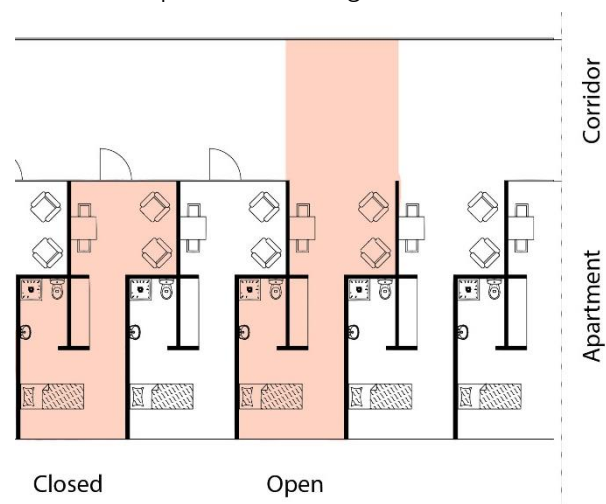


Figure 1 Apartments OCMW Nevele

In my building I want to facilitate the people with several options to connect with others.

I have done this by looking at the different types of people that will be using my building and what kind of spaces would be interesting for them to meet each other in. The center piece of my building is a multi-religious space where everyone is welcome. This came out of research

we were tasked to do for an assignment where we needed to document the place where most different types of people met. This to me was my church and it gave me the idea to implement a similar space in the building. Furthermore, there is also a common space that can be used during all times of the day. People can throw parties here or different types of clubs can utilize the space. But I also wanted to include a social space next to the apartments, like the examples shown in the case studies. This is the first step for people to start mixing in the social fabric of a building. I implemented this by pulling the wall between the hallway and the apartment for a small part into the apartment. This way, adjacent to the hallway, personal spaces occurred. These spaces can be decorated by the residents in the way that they want to and what personally fits them. To also use the hallway more and not have it just be an access route, there are windows in the apartment that lookout in to the hallway to keep an eye on the space there.

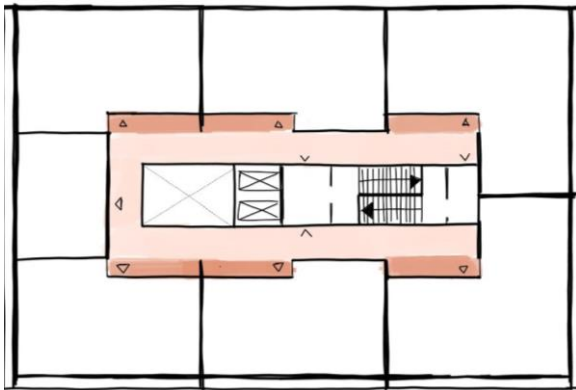


Figure 3 hallway and adjacent private space

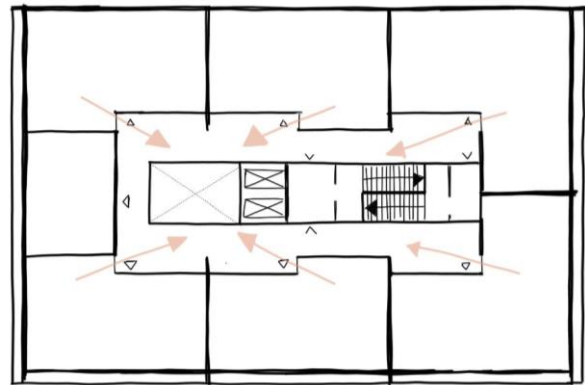


Figure 2 Sightlines from the apartments into the hallway

### How do you assess the value of your way of working (your approach, your used methods, used methodology)?

In my research I used literature, interviews and case studies to gather my information. The case studies were a highly valuable source of information on how the ideologies and concept of a project have been incorporated in a building. I found that the interviews were very interesting and insightful to understand the thought process of these people. It made clear and real what people are thinking about. With only two interviews the question had come up how relevant and trustworthy these reports are, but with the results having a lot of overlap it was interesting to put them next to the results of the literature and test them.

The way that I used these three types of sources for my research allowed me to find a concept in different papers and then test these concepts against the case studies and the interviews. This helped deepen the understanding of the concepts of the literature. The interviews and case studies in addition also gave more inspiration for looking at other types of literature and in that way deepening the research even more. This way the outcome of the research was more valuable.

### How do you assess the academic and societal value, scope and implication of your graduation project, including ethical aspects?

My graduation project brings attention to a target group who is currently feeling underrepresented in the building society. The young retirees are very willing to move, but the lack of appropriate housing makes that they are staying in their homes longer. With this

graduation project I want to try and make a start for these people, to understand why they do not move and what would make them motivated to move. The stop of the natural flow of houses in the Netherlands is a big problem and with this target group there is possibility for change in this situation. I hope to show with this project as well that there are more elements that are contributing factors in the lives of people. The social elements that are incorporated in the design and the way that the building interacts with its surroundings is also an important value.

### **How do you assess the value of the transferability of your project results?**

The transferability of my project is big in the sense that the concept of building for the young retirees is a gap in the market. Not many buildings are currently designed with the community elements that this building has incorporated, whilst these elements are very important for the overall community. I have been designing houses for people that want to grow old in them, but without the stigma of living in a retirement home. Also, the importance of quality green and sustainability is an element that is easily transferable to others.