

# **Caring for the Living Environment**

The VAC Hengelo work on quality housing design (1957-2017)

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## Abstract

In today's society, women are still not positioned as equals to men. This is no different in the field of architecture. When designing the built environment, the white man is still the norm and within the work field, the man still fills the majority of the higher positions in architectural firms. However, women have a different, more care-centric view of the environment than men, which enables them to look at buildings with a broader perspective and to enhance them substantially with other qualities. The feminist theory "ethics of care" explores the issue of how historically the primary responsibility of women has been taking care of others. This research connects the theory of ethics of care to the history of feminised domestic work and uses the historical progression of the women's advisory committee to examine the role of this theory within housing. In the Dutch housing sector, Vrouwenadviescommissies (Women's Advisory Committees, VAC) of voluntary women have been set up since 1946 to assess the quality of use of dwellings and the living environment from the point of view of the residents, using their situated knowledge as housewives. The VAC Hengelo was founded in 1957 to provide housing quality advice within the major reconstruction task of this city, which was bombed in 1944, and was the first VAC in the region of Twente. This thesis aims to expose the difference between the male and female views on housing by giving examples of the female perspective through the case study of the VAC Hengelo during the years 1957 to 2017. Primary data collection has been done by interviewing former members of the VAC Hengelo and the housing association Welbions, and through archival research at the Municipality Hengelo. This secondary data was collected by doing literature research, with Carol Gilligan and her theory of the ethics of care, and Silvia Federici, with her theory of reproductive labour, being the leading sources. The case study of the VAC Hengelo is used to fill the research gap of the theoretical framework with the role that housewives have played in housing design through the Women's Advisory Committee. Background information on the origin of the VAC in general, the history of Hengelo during this period and the VAC Hengelo is provided to establish historical insight. The case study of the VAC Hengelo reveals, by examples, how the feminist concept of ethics of care could perfectly work as a background explanation of how women, through history, made choices in the design of housing in a different, broadening and more inclusive perspective than men.

**Keywords:** care, women's advisory committee, gender, labour, Hengelo



Figure 1: Hanne Rotgans, *VAC Hengelo on excursion*, in Loes Geerdink, "VAC moet zichzelf al 50 jaar herhalen," *De Twentsche Courant Tubantia*, October 3, 2007.

## Introduction

In today's society, women are still not positioned as equals to men. This is no different in the field of architecture. When designing the built environment, the white man is still the norm and within the work field, the man still fills the majority of the higher positions in architectural firms. However, women have a different, more care-centric view on the environment than men, which enables them to look at buildings with a broader perspective and to enhance them substantially with other qualities. This care-centric view of women is described in the feminist theory "ethics of care", a feminist philosophical perspective that uses a relational and context-bound approach toward morality and decision making.<sup>1</sup> The care ethics theory was introduced by Carol Gilligan in 1982 in the book *In a different voice. Psychological theory and women's development*.<sup>2</sup> Gilligan discovered that female development was deeply rooted in relationships and feelings of obligation towards caring for others, being responsible for others and nurturing others. This female morality of responsibility and care can ensure that when women as well as men take on leading roles in architectural design, the built environment can be designed in a more inclusive way. Design will then not only be done from both male and female perspectives, but also with generations or minorities in need of care in mind, such as children, the elderly or people with disabilities.

Integrating the value of female qualities in architectural design therefore seems logical. Although the role of the architect has changed throughout history due to trends in innovation and technology and as commissions have grown in size and actors, sociological developments, such as inclusiveness and emancipation, remain behind. It is strange that although this world has been so innovative, women in general still occupy fewer key positions on the hierarchical ladder in many fields of the labour system. In this history thesis, this gendered division of labour and the related history of reproductive labour is described, in order to provide a theoretical framework together with the theory of "ethics of care".

Housewives are historically the largest daily users of the home and therefore possess most practical knowledge of a home, while historically the design has usually come from a man. In the Netherlands, from 1946 onwards, *Vrouwenadviescommissies* (Women's Advisory Committees, VAC) were set up, in which women could give advice based on their gender role with more situated knowledge, to improve housing quality. A case study of the VAC Hengelo is used to fill the research gap of the theoretical framework with the role that housewives have played in housing construction through the Women's Advisory Committee. However, limiting the scope by focusing on the VAC Hengelo may mean that too little information can be found in the archives and that former committee members are deceased or untraceable or can provide little specific knowledge.

To answer the main question, the first chapter asks "What is the role of the ethics of care in architecture and what is the historical background of women in the household?" Through history, the conceptualization of the "ethics of care" has established a feminist approach to ethics that emphasizes the importance of empathy, relatedness, and responsiveness over reason, law and justice toward morality and decision-making.<sup>3</sup> By describing the ethics of care through Gilligan, Noddings and Tronto towards architecture, the role of the housewife and the emergence of reproductive labour are brought to

1. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Ethics of care" Chicago: Britannica, 2013, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ethics-of-care> (accessed April 8, 2022).

2. Carol Gilligan, *In a different voice: psychological theory and women's development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

3. *Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE publications, 2008), s.v. "Ethics of care."

light. In order to connect the ethics of care to the work of the VAC Hengelo in the last chapter, to give an insight into how the female perception of the environment influenced advice, the second answers the question “What is the history of the Women's Advisory Committee in the municipality of Hengelo?” In the final chapter, an answer to the main question is sought through women's environmental perceptions using the VAC Hengelo as a framework. The information gained through interviews with VAC members and archive research at the Hengelo Municipal Archive is divided into three topics: being a woman, care and facing the future. By giving examples, the perspectives of VAC women on their voluntary work and the built environment field are illustrated.

In this history thesis, data will be collected in different ways. Primary data will be collected by doing archival research at the Municipal Archives in Hengelo, interviews with former VAC members and members of the Welbions housing association, and secondary data will be collected by doing literature research. The main secondary resources to outline the theoretical framework are Carol Gilligan with influential research in the book *In a different voice. Psychological theory and women's development*, published in 1982 and Silvia Federici's chapter "The reproduction of labour power in the global economy and the unfinished feminist revolution" in *Workers and labour in a globalised capitalism: contemporary themes and theoretical issues*, edited by Maurizio Atzeni in 2014.<sup>4</sup>

This research explores the gendered role of women as housing advisors through the history of the VAC Hengelo. The expected result is that the case study of the VAC Hengelo will reveal, by examples, how the feminist concept of ethics of care can work as a background explanation of how women, through history, made choices in the design of housing.

4. Gilligan, *In a different voice*; Silvia Federici, “The reproduction of labour power in the global economy and the unfinished feminist revolution,” in *Workers and labour in a globalised capitalism: contemporary themes and theoretical issues*, ed. Maurizio Atzeni (Londen: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 85-107.

# 1. Care ethics framing of architecture through history

5. *Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE publications, 2008), s.v. "Ethics of care."

6. Andra Mendea and Maya Balakirsky Katz, "Carol Gilligan," *The Shalvi/Hyman Encyclopedia of Jewish Women*, June 23, 2021, <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/gilligan-carol>.

7. Gilligan, *In a different voice*.

Through history, the conceptualization of the "ethics of care" has established a feminist approach to ethics that emphasizes the importance of empathy, relatedness, and responsiveness over reason, law and justice toward morality and decision-making.<sup>5</sup> It is a response to traditional male-centric moral theories. The ethics of care is a result of Carol Gilligan's studies on moral development using girls as test subjects. Gilligan was born in 1936 in New York and earned her PhD in social psychology at Harvard University in 1964. She worked as a professor at Harvard University and New York University.<sup>6</sup> During her time at Harvard, Gilligan worked with two esteemed developmental psychologists: Erik Erikson and Lawrence Kohlberg. Gilligan noticed that Kohlberg's studies were incredibly gender-biased and that he only used boys as the subjects when researching moral development in children. Gilligan also addressed the fact that girls are often socialized differently than males. This inspired Gilligan to conduct her own studies on moral development using girls as test subjects. She published this influential research in the book *In a different voice. Psychological theory and women's development in 1982* (figure 2).<sup>7</sup>

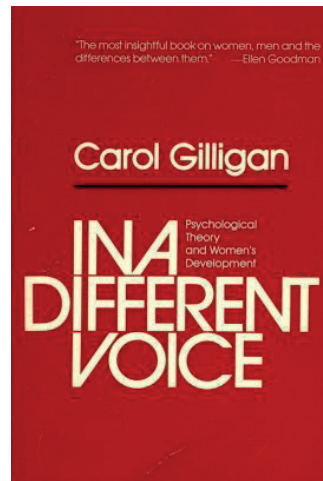


Figure 2: Gilligan, *In a different voice*.

8. Gilligan, *In a different voice*.

9. Nel Noddings, *Caring: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

10. Mark K. Smith, "Nel Noddings, the ethics of care and education," *The encyclopedia of pedagogy and informal education*, March 9, 2020, <https://infed.org/mobi/nel-noddings-the-ethics-of-care-and-education/>.

In this research, Gilligan documented how young females exhibited developmental tendencies that differed from those of the young male subjects based on how they were raised differently. She discovered that female development was deeply rooted in relationships and feelings of obligation towards caring for others, being responsible for others and nurturing others. Women were more likely to make choices based on how those choices will affect others. This is an influence Kohlberg did not address in his theory. This inhibited women from reaching Kohlberg theorized higher reasoning levels in his stages of moral development, making women seem inferior.

Gilligan argued that women's moral development was much more characterized by a morality of responsibility and care.<sup>8</sup> This moral development already begins with the self who is connected to the others, and whose moral goals are to maintain such connectedness. In 1986, feminist theorist Nel Noddings, argued that ethical theories were too male-centered by focusing on reason, law, and justice, which were thought to be inherently male values, and not enough on feminine values, such as empathy, relatedness, and responsiveness.<sup>9</sup> Nel Noddings, born in 1929, is an American philosopher and educator, most known for implementing the ethics of caring philosophy into education theory.<sup>10</sup>

Through time, this topic has been of interest for feminist scholars from the the fields of psychology, philosophy and political sciene. In 1993, with an addition in 2013 for the fifth ethical quality, another feminist theorist Joan C. Tronto states five ethical qualities of care: caring about, caring for, caregiving, care receiving, and caring with.<sup>11</sup> Tronto, born in 1952, is an American professor emerita of political science at the University of Minnesota and the City University of New York. She is most known for exploring the intersections of care ethics, feminist theory, and political science.<sup>12</sup> Tronto, in collaboration with Bernice Fisher, defines care as: “a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web”.<sup>13</sup>

Although maintaining the household is often seen as a caring task, there are other underlying events in history that have reinforced the separation between men and women and thereby the role of women in the household. An example of this is when, in the 20th century, families could afford to have only one worker, which was nearly invariably the man. Before that, the woman always played a role in earning a living. At first, the farmer's wife also had a task in her husband's business. From the Industrial Revolution onwards, women from working-class families, just like men and children, had to earn a meagre living in factories. It was only after this period, since the beginning of the 20th century that the housewife could stay at home to do domestic work.<sup>14</sup>

Noddings' distinction between masculine and feminine values may explain the gendered division of labour between men in the factories and women in the household. Tough masculine tasks were seen as male tasks, whereas caring tasks in the household were seen as feminine. The fact that gender differences permeated the occupational division is called “the gendered division of labour”. From an early age, girls are associated with cute and boys with tough. However, if we look at the gendered division of labour, we see that the distinction between feminine and masculine tasks can also be distinguished within a certain field of work. For example, in the healthcare sector, we tend to associate a nurse with a woman, while we tend to see a man in the image of a doctor. It is notable that the supporting task often lies with the woman, and the leading task with the man. Not only is the gender segregation in the labour market high, it is fueled by gendered and discriminatory practices and assumptions too.<sup>15</sup>

The division of labour began with the Industrial Revolution, when labour in the factory began to be divided up and specified into certain tasks, thus increasing efficiency.<sup>16</sup> The problem with Marx's analysis of capitalism, however, is that it focuses on nothing but value-producing work other than in the form of commodity production.<sup>17</sup> In the chapter "The reproduction of labour power in the global economy and the unfinished feminist revolution", Silvia Federici argues that there is a consistent blindness to the significance of 'unpaid' work such as reproductive labour. Silvia Federici, born in 1942, is an Italian and American feminist activist and a renowned political theorist of reproductive labour, known for her focus on the struggle against capitalist globalization.<sup>18</sup> She argues that Marx ignored the existence of women's reproductive work, by incorporating in his scheme of labour power only commodity production and the market as factors that influence it. The importance of reproductive labour to make this possible, such as preparing

11. Joan C. Tronto, *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument For An Ethic Of Care* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Joan C. Tronto, *Caring democracy: markets, equality and justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).

12. “Joan Tronto,” Care Ethics Research Consortium, accessed April 7, 2022, <https://care-ethics.com/tag/joan-tronto/>.

13. Joan C. Tronto and Berenice Fisher, “Toward a feminist theory of caring,” in *Circles of Care*, eds. Emily K. Abel and Margaret K. Nelson (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990).

14. Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Capital Accumulation on a World Scale, Women in the International Division of Labour* (London, New York: Zed Books, 1998).

15. Philip N. Cohen, “The gender division of labour: ‘Keeping House’ and occupational segregation in the United States,” in *Gender and Society* 18, no. 2 (April 2004), 239-252.

16. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. “Industrial Revolution,” Chicago: Britannica, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution> (accessed April 6, 2022).

17. Silvia Federici, “The reproduction of labour power in the global economy and the unfinished feminist revolution,” in *Workers and labour in a globalised capitalism: contemporary themes and theoretical issues*, ed. Maurizio Atzeni (Londen: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 85-107.

18. "Silvia Federici: The Globalization of Women's Work and New Forms of Violence Against Women," Institute for Cultural Inquiry Berlin, accessed April 7, 2022, <https://www.ici-berlin.org/events/silvia-federici/>.

19. Helen Hester and Nick Srnicek, "The crisis of social reproduction and the end of work," in *The age of perplexity: rethinking the world we knew*, ed. Francisco González (New York: Penguin Random House, 2018), 335-351.

20. Hester and Srnicek, "The crisis of social reproduction and the end of work."

Figure 3: Anefo, *Vrouwen demonstreren op Binnenhof*, Nationaal-archief, September 20, 1972, <https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/fotocollectie/abf6a9ce-d0b4-102d-bcf8-003048976d84>.

The sign says: "Women and men must fight together for their rights."

21. "Gender Equality Index," European Institute for Gender Equality, accessed April 7, 2022. <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2021/domain/time/NL>

22. Atlanta. *Feminisme? Tisdag?* (Utrecht: Atalanta, 2003)

23. Atlanta. *Feminisme?*

24. Atlanta. *Feminisme?*

goods that the workers consume or to restore physically and emotionally their capacity to work, is ignored.

Reproductive labour describes the set of tasks that together maintain and reproduce life, both daily and generationally. These are the activities that nurture future workers, regenerate the current workforce, and maintain those who cannot work.<sup>19</sup> By maintaining and producing workers, reproductive labour demands to be seen as the foundation of global capitalism.<sup>20</sup> However, reproductive labour is not as easily expressed in monetary terms as productive labour. In a capitalist society that revolves around money, this means that labour that cannot be expressed in monetary value is less easily measured and thus valued. This perpetuates the difference between men and women.

Today, despite improvements, we still see a difference between men and women in the division of roles in the household.<sup>21</sup> This is despite the fact that we have begun to give more recognition to reproductive labour and technology has made domestic work easier. The rise of feminism has given women equal rights, however, this does not mean that any country in the world has reached equality. Through the rise of feminism in the Netherlands, the two feminist waves have changed many things for Dutch women (figure 3).



The first wave, with Aletta Jacobs as the Dutch flag bearer, revolved around issues such as education and suffrage and lasted from around 1840 until the 1920s. A milestone was the right of Dutch women to vote in 1919.<sup>22</sup> The second wave started in the Netherlands in 1967 with the publication of the essay "Het onbehagen bij de vrouw" by Joke Smit, and the establishment of *Man Vrouw Maatschappij* in 1968 and *Dolle Mina* in 1969.<sup>23</sup> In the 1980s, other social inequalities such as racism, ethnocentrism and sexual lifestyle became important topics within feminism. Previously, white heterosexual dominance had been the image that was presented about the feminist movement.<sup>24</sup> In 1994, the *Wet Gelijke Behandeling* (Equal Treatment Act) came into force, prescribing that no difference may be made on the basis of gender in, for example, job advertisements, application procedures and



access to training courses.<sup>25</sup> This equal treatment is not only for gender, but also for nationality, religion, descent, political affiliation or marital status.

In the Netherlands, the law requires equal treatment, but there is still no equality. Feminism has contributed to improvements, but not all improvements can be claimed under the guise of feminism. In addition, there are many women who contribute to emancipation, but do not embrace the term feminism or being a feminist. For example, the VAC was the first advancement towards equality in the built environment and recognition for embodied knowledge for housewives, but is not known as a feminist body in the built environment.

25. Atlanta.  
*Feminisme?*

## 2. Historical influence of care in architecture: a case study of the VAC Hengelo

### Women's Advisory Committees in the Netherlands

A Women's Advisory Committee in the Netherlands consists of volunteers who, in a certain municipality, assess the quality of use of dwellings and the living environment from the point of view of the residents. In particular, they assess whether a house and its surroundings are suitable for carrying out all daily activities.<sup>26</sup> The aim was to raise the user-quality of new dwellings. History has shown that the design of housing often does not match its use. As a result of the division of labour, at least until the last decades of the 20th century, the male designer is the one who designs the dwellings, while the practical knowledge of the household, for historical reasons, is held by the often female housekeeper. This mismatch in knowledge leads to inconveniences in domestic use within a home, such as a socket in a strange place. The fact that the woman has to dive under the tablecloth to plug in her electrical appliance shows how inconvenient it is when practical knowledge is lacking (figure 4). For this reason, Women's Advisory Committees were set up to assess the quality of use of dwellings and the living environment from the point of view of the residents, using their situated knowledge as housewives.

26. Harkolien C. Meinsma, *Bouwen aan Kwaliteit: een kwestie van volhouden*, (Utrecht: Landelijk Contact van de VAC's, 1990).

27. Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad: toonbeeld van de wederopbouw* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2016).

Figure 4: Unknown, *Impracticalities in the household*, in Schot, Johan, H.W. Lintsen, Arie Rip and Adri A. Albert de la Bruheze. *Techniek in Nederland in de twintigste eeuw. Deel 6. Stad, bouw, industriële productie*, (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1998), 173.



28. "Duitse en Geallieerde bombardementen op Nederland (cijfers)," NIOD Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies, accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www.niod.nl/nl/veelgestelde-vragen/duitse-en-geallieerde-bombardementen-op-nederland-cijfers>

29. "Bombardement op Hengelo," Oorlogsbronnen, accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www.oorlogsbronnen.nl/thema/Bombardement%20op%20Hengelo>

In the Netherlands, housing was urgently needed after the Second World War. Between 1945 and 1965, there was a huge task to rebuild the country. Many rural areas, built-up areas and infrastructure had been heavily damaged, were flooded or lay in ruins. During this reconstruction period, the Netherlands went through an unprecedented transformation, both spatially and economically as well as socially.<sup>27</sup> The centre of Rotterdam was bombed on 14 May 1940, leading to the surrender of the Netherlands to Germany on 15 May 1940.<sup>28</sup> The centre of Hengelo was bombed by the Allies on 6 October 1944, while the actual aim was to bomb the railway yard and the Stork and Holland Signal factories.<sup>29</sup> In cities with a bombed-out

city centre, such as Rotterdam and Hengelo, the importance of rebuilding the city only increased. A lot of housing was needed, but women felt that knowledge from domestic practice was lacking in the design. Therefore, the first women's advisory committee was established in Rotterdam in 1946.<sup>30</sup> Hengelo followed in 1957, as the first women's advisory committee in the region and as the second in the province of Overijssel.<sup>31</sup> At the time of the establishment of the VAC Hengelo, VACs had been established in 25 places in the Netherlands. In 1989, the number of women's advisory committees in the Netherlands increased to 241.<sup>32</sup> The VAC Hengelo was therefore early on, however, little research has been done on this topic at this location.

## Hengelo

Hengelo is a city of 80,000 inhabitants located in the eastern part of the Netherlands in the region of Twente. It is a former industrial town, initially, since 1854, a textile town and later, since 1868, mainly known as a metal industrial town.<sup>33</sup> Although the region of Twente is more densely populated than other provincial regions at the edges of the Netherlands, the city is located in a less densely populated region than the Randstad, which means that it can be seen as less progressive.<sup>34</sup> This confirms that it was extraordinary that the VAC Hengelo was already formed in 1957 as the first in the region.

The village of Hengelo began to grow faster and faster in the 19th century due to industrialisation. In the second half of that century Hengelo grew from a village to an industrial town. The first large factory was the *Koninklijke Weefgoederenfabriek* (KWF) of Stork and Ekker, which settled in Hengelo in 1854 to produce weaving goods. In 1868 C.T. Stork started his machine factory in Hengelo. Other metal companies like Dijkers, Heemaf and Hazemeijer followed, resulting in Hengelo developing into a metal town with its own character. In 1890 a new church was built that suited the urban allure of the city that Hengelo was becoming: the Sint Lambertusbasiliek. During the Second World War, the inner city of Hengelo endured a great deal of damage. The Lambertusbasiliek was spared, but the rest of the centre was almost completely destroyed. The bombardment of the centre of Hengelo changed the city forever.<sup>35</sup> The material damage of the bombardment consisted of 485 destroyed, 373 heavily damaged and over three thousand slightly damaged buildings. Also the railway and a large part of the industry were lost (figure 5).<sup>36</sup>

30. Meinsma, *Bouwen aan Kwaliteit*.

31. In fact, it was in Deventer in 1955.

32. Meinsma, *Bouwen aan Kwaliteit*.

33. "Geschiedenis van Hengelo," Municipal Hengelo, accessed March 17, 2022, <https://www.hengelo.nl/Ontdek-Hengelo/Geschiedenis-van-Hengelo.html>

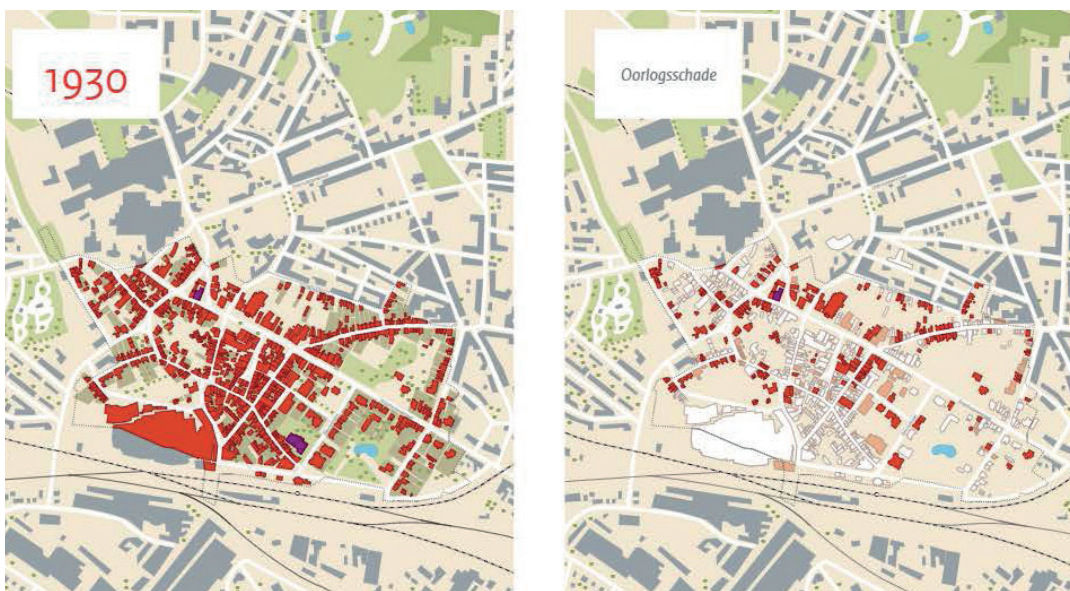


Figure 5: MUST, *Hengelo in 1930 and in 1946 after the war damage, mapped*, in Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad: toonbeeld van de wederopbouw* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2016).

37. Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad*.

38. I. Th. van Rosse, "Hengelo's Wederopbouw," *Bouwbedrijf en openbare werken; 14-daags tijdschrift voor bouwen* 24, no. 25 (11 December 1947): 267-303.

39. Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad*.

Figure 6: Unknown, *Car as a sign of prosperity*, in Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad: toonbeeld van de wederopbouw* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2016).

Hengelo's market square, De Brink, shows that the car played a central role in the design.

40. Monumentencommissie Hengelo, *Wederopbouwarchitectuur 1945-1965* (Hengelo: Gemeente Hengelo, 2007).

41. Monumentencommissie Hengelo, *Wederopbouwarchitectuur 1945-1965*.

42. S.J. Joustra, "De woningbouw in Hengelo, sedert de bevrijding," *Bouwbedrijf en Openbare Werken* 25, (1947): 287-296; "Pouderoyen, C.," *Huis van de Nijmeegse Geschiedenis*, accessed April 9, 2022, [https://www.huisvande-nijmeegsegeschiedenis.nl/info/Pouderoyen,\\_C.](https://www.huisvande-nijmeegsegeschiedenis.nl/info/Pouderoyen,_C.)

The reconstruction plan had to be more than a repair of war damage. It offered the opportunity to carry out long-cherished urban renewal. Hengelo had to get a representative and modern city centre that corresponded to its intended status as an ever-growing industrial town. The assignment consisted of a thorough modification of the town plan, the provision of good traffic connections between the centre and the suburbs and space for sufficient shops and offices.<sup>37</sup>

In 1945, Hengelo was one of the first towns to submit a reconstruction plan for approval by the ministry in The Hague.<sup>38</sup> The optimism and progress thinking that Hengelo brought about was reflected in the model of reconstruction architecture with wide avenues, spacious squares and the use of new and modern materials such as concrete, brick, steel, glass and tiles. The city was spaciouly laid out to emphasise the regained prosperity and to make way for the paragon of that prosperity of the time: the car (figure 6).<sup>39</sup>



In addition to the reconstruction plan for the town centre, a plan for the general expansion of Hengelo in 1949 also came about on the basis of the positively tinted future scenario.<sup>40</sup> Due to a rapidly growing population and a five-year housing stagnation, the housing shortage in Hengelo, with a shortage of 2,300 houses by the end of 1945, was already very high.<sup>41</sup> The urge to draw up an expansion plan in addition to the reconstruction plan is therefore not surprising. Broadly speaking, the expansion plan consisted of radially locating a number of residential or industrial districts around the densely built-up centre. The expansion plan was supervised by Cornelis Pouderoyen, Dutch architect and key member of the *Bossche School* architectural movement, while coordination was in the hands of S.J. Joustra, city architect of Hengelo (figure 7).<sup>42</sup>



Figure 7: W.R. van Crouwelaar and C. Pouderoyen, *Final design for the reconstruction of Hengelo*, 1946, in Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad: toonbeeld van de wederopbouw* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2016).

The most famous residential area within the 1949 expansion plan was Klein Driene, built from 1951 to 1956, designed by the renowned Rotterdam architectural firm J.H. van den Broek and J.B. Bakema.<sup>43</sup>

In spite of the rapid plans of the municipality of Hengelo, it turned out that the economy after the Second World War and therefore also the building production got off to a very slow start in the Netherlands. In the 1940s and 1950s, far fewer residential areas were built nationwide than originally intended. It was not until 1957 that production really got going and many neighbourhoods were rapidly built. It is therefore not surprising that the Hengelo trade was founded at that time: because there was a great need to build many houses, the mismatch between design and use came to light. Looking at the history of Hengelo, a city that was at the forefront of a reconstruction plan, it appears logical that the VAC Hengelo was also the first VAC in the region. Next to this, Hengelo as an industrial city, was more progressive than the surrounding towns.<sup>44</sup>

Although the plans were already in full swing, in 1957 the city was not yet fully built up and consisted of much derelict land. This is visible in aerial photographs of the centre from this period. Large reconstruction buildings, such as the Telgenflat, have already been built here, but it is also visible that the inner city still has a lot of undeveloped land (figure 8).

Hengelo, although with great plans, was anything but finished when the VAC was founded.

43. Hans Ibelings, *Van den Broek en Bakema 1948-1988. Architectuur en stedenbouw: De functie van vorm* (Rotterdam: NAI publishers, 2000).

44. Antoinet de Boer, interview by author, Hengelo, April 6, 2022.



Figure 8: HCO, *Hengelo with a partly built-up city*, around 1960, in Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, *Hengelo binnenstad: toonbeeld van de wederopbouw* (Den Haag: Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap, 2016).

The Telgflat is visible in the front.

45. De Boer, interview.

46. Letters of notification installation committee, 14 January and 5 February 1957, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

47. Letter of foundation, 11 February 1957, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

Figure 9: VAC Hengelo, *Founding letter digitised*, 14 January 1957, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

Figure 10: VAC Hengelo, *Original founding letter*, 14 January 1957, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

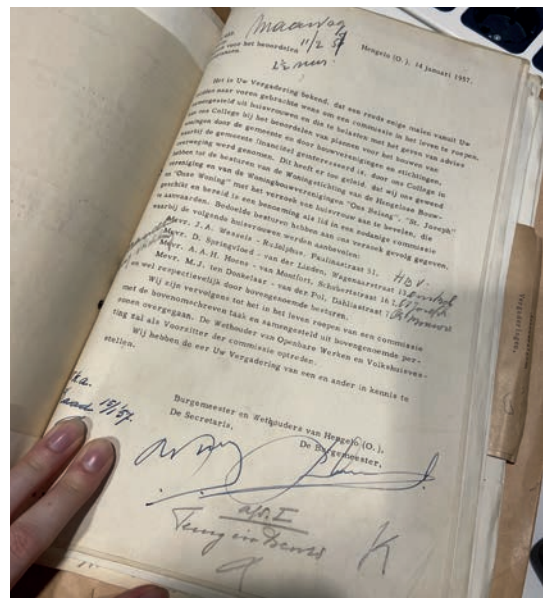
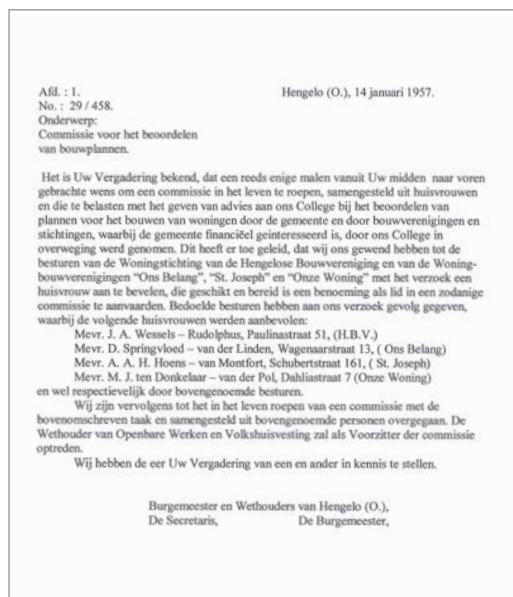
48. Letters of notification installation, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967.

49. Translated from Dutch by the author from the original quote: "Wij vragen ons eerlijk af, heeft de commissie nog wel zin? Wij willen wel, maar niet op deze manier. Wij willen een werkelijke partnet zijn in een bouwteam, wij willen werkelijke inspraak bij bouwplannen en erkenning bij de bouwverenigingen."

Letter to the Alderman G. ter Horst, 21 October 1969, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

## Women's Advisory Committee in Hengelo

The women's advisory committee of Hengelo was established in 1957 on the initiative of the municipality, after a demand for it had arisen from the council. The alderman of Public Works and Housing, G.A.J. ter Horst, had expressed an interest in setting up a VAC due to his own progressive political outlook.<sup>45</sup> The council itself made contact with various housing associations in the municipality, asking them to nominate a representative. The four housing associations, *Hengelose Bouwvereniging* and *Ons Belang*, *Onze Woning* and *St. Joseph*, provided a representative. The alderman of Public Works and Housing, G.A.J. ter Horst, chaired the committee. According to the municipality, the purpose of the committee was "to give advice to our board in the assessment of plans for building houses by the municipality and by building societies and foundations in which the municipality has a financial interest".<sup>46</sup> The commission was installed on 11 February 1957 (figures 9 and 10).<sup>47</sup> The committee was in the beginning seen as part of the municipal body and received yearly subsidy.



Mr. G.A.J. ter Horst - Alderman of Public Works and Housing as chairman

Mrs. J.A. Wessels-Rudolphus - representative of *Hengelose Bouwvereniging*

Mrs. D. Springvloed-van der Linden - representative of *Ons Belang*

Mrs. A.A.H. Hoens-van Montfort - representative of *St. Joseph*

Mrs. M.J. ten Donkelaar-van der Pol - representative of *Onze Woning*<sup>48</sup>

Archive research showed, that the collaboration with the housing cooperations did not happen without a hitch. In a letter dated 21 October 1969, the VAC wrote to the Alderman of Public Works that the cooperation with the housing associations was difficult and that housewives did not feel that they were being taken seriously.

We honestly ask ourselves, does the committee still make sense? We want to, but not in this way. We want to be a real partner in a building team, we want real participation in building plans and recognition in the building associations.<sup>49</sup>

After this, new guidelines were drawn up to improve contact and action

between the organisations. It is a good example of how women had to fight to earn their opinion fairly. Today, all these housing associations have merged into a single large housing association, Welbions.<sup>50</sup>

The VAC Hengelo held two different meetings: general meetings and meetings to review and advise on a specific housing project. For a meeting to issue a housing quality recommendation, each member read up on the project in advance. Afterwards, the group came together to discuss and form the advice, which was then worked out by one of the members.<sup>51</sup>

Although the VAC Hengelo was an initiative of the council, the early years were not without their ups and downs. In the archive material from the following years, there are still occasional struggles between the VAC, the council and the housing corporations, but a mutual respect is also growing. Meanwhile, in 1987 the VAC's role as a municipal body was relinquished and it became more of an independent body, which the VAC itself did not mind.<sup>52</sup> From now on, one of the ladies on the committee, rather than the alderman, is the chairman. In addition, members are no longer nominated solely by the housing associations, but come from the *Hengelose Vrouwenraad* (Hengelo Women's Council) and the *Vereniging van Huisvrouwen* (Housewives' Association).<sup>53</sup>

Although in 1957 an advisory committee set up by the Council was chosen, which meant that the members were appointed by the executive committee of the municipality, it should be noted that over the years the VAC has taken on a more independent role. In recent years, the composition of the VAC has been regulated by itself. We think this is a good development. The VAC must be able to function completely independently. The municipality should limit itself to a policy of condition-setting and support.<sup>54</sup>

In 2006 the VAC Hengelo became a foundation. From then on, the abbreviation VAC no longer stands for *Vrouwen Advies Commissie* (Women's Advisory Committee) but for *Volkshuisvesting Advies Commissie* (Public Housing Advisory Committee) to make it possible for men to join. In 2012 the first man, name, joined and in total 3 men sat in the VAC until it was terminated. This change was due to the development of men doing more domestic work and taking on the role of househusband, which naturally led to the question of whether the VAC should not better reflect on all domestic workers and therefore also allow men. This was a point arising from the *Landelijk Contact* (national agency) of the VAC that was implemented by the VAC Hengelo. This change did not only allow men, but also stimulated the VAC to consist of a more diverse group of women. A VAC woman was in fact often from the middle or upper class and was highly educated.<sup>55</sup> In 2006, two women with a Moroccan background joined the VAC Hengelo. This was sworn in by the Minister of Public Housing, Sybillia Dekker (figure 11).

50. Erik Markvoort, interview by author, Hengelo, March 8, 2022.

51. Hanne Rotgans, interview by author, Hengelo, April 8 and April 12, 2022.

52. Translated from Dutch by the author from the original quote: "Hoewel in 1957 gekozen werd voor een door de Raad ingestelde adviescommissie waardoor de benoeming van leden door het dagelijks bestuur van de gemeente geschiedde, moet worden gekonstateerd dat in de loop der jaren de VAC zich een meer zelfstandige rol heeft toebedacht. De laatste jaren wordt de samenstelling van de VAC zelf geregeld. Dit vinden wij een goede ontwikkeling. De VAC moet geheel zelfstandig en onafhankelijk kunnen functioneren. De gemeente dient zich te beperken tot een voorwaardescheppend en ondersteunend beleid."

Written speech on the occasion of VAC Hengelo's 30th anniversary, 1987, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

53. Timeline of VAC Hengelo, Hanne Rotgans, 2022, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

54. Written speech, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996.

55. De Boer, interview.

Figure 11: Hanne Rotgans, Minister of Housing, Sybillia Dekker at the first installation of VAC women with non-native backgrounds, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

Fatiha A. Tazi and Fatima Sellek, the women from the VAC Hengelo, are on the outermost sides.



56. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Financial crisis of 2007-2008," Chicago: Britannica, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/financial-crisis-of-2007-2008> (accessed April 6, 2022).

In 2010, the VAC found itself in dire straits. The economic crisis that had arisen from the bank crash in 2008 was also felt by the municipality of Hengelo, as a result of which the VAC was in danger of losing its subsidy funds.<sup>56</sup> The Welbions housing association, which considered the VAC Hengelo to be of high value, took on half of the subsidy amount from 2010, on condition that the municipality continued to subsidise the VAC too. However, from that moment on, the municipality and the housing corporations wanted to receive one joint recommendation. This *Integrale Wooncommissie* (integral housing committee) was deployed at times when, alongside the VAC, another party gave advice. This happened for example in the case of a care home for a disabled person, when not only the VAC but also the *Gehandicaptenraad* (Council for the disabled) served as advisory bodies. For this reason, the VAC Hengelo joined the *Integrale Wooncommissie* together with the *Gehandicaptenraad*, the *Ouderenraad van de Centraal Orgaan Samenwerkende Bonden van Ouderen* (Council of the Elderly of the Central Organisation of Cooperating Federations of Elderly People, COSBO), the housing corporations *Ons Belang* and *St. Joseph* (later Welbions) and the department *Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning* (Social Support Act, WMO) of Hengelo municipality. The *Integrale Wooncommissie* was officially established in 2012 and consists of a large and small committee. The large committee determines the frameworks, such as the necessary IT requirements for a building plan, while the small committee provides advice. These are 3 combined advices from the VAC, the *Gehandicaptenraad* and the WMO. The VAC continued to form their own advice in the same way as before, but the next step was to discuss this advice in order to arrive at a joint advice. According to Rotgans, the role of the VAC was undiminished, and in addition it was interesting to see how the other advisory councils gave advice from a different point of view (e.g. disability care). The arrival of this committee also provided new opportunities, because the VAC no longer only gave advice for housing construction, but also for utility buildings, such as the hospital and swimming pool.


The collaboration of the *Integrale Wooncommissie* in Hengelo revealed a gap on the consumer side of housing improvement. As a result, *Lang zult u wonen* was established in 2013. This is an organisation whereby homeowners aged 65+ can receive a subsidy for adapting their home, whereby VAC members are deployed as housing consultants to assess the adaptability of the home to housing for the elderly. The VAC gave advice to



the resident and the WMO.

In 2016, subsidies from the municipality of Hengelo for various voluntary organisations, including the VAC, ceased. Welbions, which set the condition for their contribution that the municipality needed to subsidise too, therefore also pulled the plug on its funding. The VAC Hengelo continued to operate for one more year with other funds, but after that the money had run out, which meant that the voluntary work could no longer be continued. VACs throughout the Netherlands experienced subsidy problems, including the *Landelijk Contact*. Founded in 1957, VAC Hengelo, in its 60 years of existence, dissolved itself on 31 December 2017 (figure 12).<sup>57</sup>

57. Letter of determination to end VAC Hengelo as of 31 December 2017, 25 September 2017, VAC Hengelo, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.



### Besluit tot ontbinding Stichting VolkshuisvestingsAdviesCommissie Hengelo

De voltallige bestuursvergadering van de Stichting VolkshuisvestingsAdviesCommissie te Hengelo (hierna aangeduid met VAC Hengelo), is rechtsgeldig opgeroepen en daarna in vergadering bijeen geweest op maandag 25 september 2017,

in aanmerking nemende dat:

- VAC Hengelo is opgericht als vereniging in 1957 met de toenmalige wethouder van Wonen als voorzitter; op 9 juni 2006 officieel is opgegaan in een stichting;
- Als tweeledig doel heeft het behartigen van de belangen van de woonconsument vanuit de visie van de gebruiker en het bevorderen van woonkwaliteit van woningen en woonomgeving;
- VAC Hengelo voor het uitvoeren van deze doelen inkomsten uit subsidies ontvangt, die na 2016 niet meer zijn verstrekt;
- VAC Hengelo voor het uitvoeren van deze doelen tekeningen van bouwplannen beoordeelt, waarvan opdrachtgevers steeds minder geneigd zijn deze (al dan niet via gemeente Hengelo) aan VAC Hengelo ter beschikking te stellen;
- Dientengevolge de vorige twee punten VAC Hengelo in 2017 geen activiteiten heeft verricht en ook in 2018 en volgende jaren verwacht geen activiteiten meer te gaan verrichten;
- Het bestuur van VAC Hengelo op grond van art. 15 lid 1 van de statuten bevoegd is om tot ontbinding te besluiten.

Besluit dat:

- VAC Hengelo met ingang van 31 december 2017 wordt ontbonden;
- Dhr. H. van Ooijen (voormalig penningmeester) wordt benoemd tot vereffenaar in de zin van art. 16 lid 1;
- Het eventueel batig liquidatiesaldo volgens lid 4 van art. 16 als volgt toegekend wordt: dat deel van het liquidatiesaldo dat volgens het evenredigheidsprincipe gedacht kan worden te zijn ontstaan uit door van gemeente Hengelo ontvangen subsidiebedragen, zal geretourneerd worden aan gemeente Hengelo; het eventueel resterend batig liquidatiesaldo zal worden bestemd voor een doel hetwelk het doel van VAC Hengelo zoveel mogelijk nabij komt; zoals daar is de landelijke organisatie VACpunt Wonen te Utrecht;
- Mevr. J.H.H. Rotgans-Huizinga (voormalig secretaris) wordt benoemd tot archiveris om boeken, bescheiden en overige gegevensdragers van de ontbonden VAC Hengelo gedurende de wettelijke termijn van zeven jaren te bewaren – met dien verstande dat gemeente Hengelo gevraagd zal worden of ze het werkarchief, zijnde: ontvangen bouwplanbescheiden en daarop uitgebrachte adviezen die gedurende ca. 40 jaar bijeen zijn gebracht, in bewaring wil nemen.

Hengelo, 25 september 2017.

Aldus ondertekend op 7 november 2017:



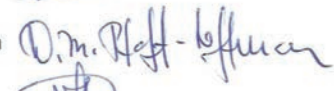


Vicevoorzitter	Mevr. M.M. Brinkers	
Secretaris	Mevr. J.H.H. Rotgans-Huizinga	
Penningmeester	Dhr. H.P. van Ooijen	
Bestuurslid	Mevr. D. M. Pfaff-Hoffmann	
Bestuurslid	Mevr. J. Janssen-Bouwhuis	

Figure 12: VAC Hengelo, Letter of determination as of 31 December 2017, 25 September 2017, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

### 3. Women's environmental perceptions: a case study of the VAC Hengelo

The Women's Advisory Committee of Hengelo is used to give a framework of how women in VACs use their situated knowledge, based on their gender role to give advice and improve buildings quality design. The work of the VAC Hengelo was connected to the “ethics of care”, to give an insight into how a women's environmental perception has been built and constructed through time and what it did imply to housing design. The ethics of care teach us that women look at their surroundings with much more attention to people other than things, which because of the VAC led to the productive encounter between care work and home design since 1946.

This chapter is divided into three topics that emerged from the research: being a woman, care and facing the future. By means of interviews with VAC Hengelo members, archive material of the VAC Hengelo members and archive material of the municipality of Hengelo, this chapter will provide a portrait of the female role in these committees. However, material that could be found in the archive in Hengelo may also extend beyond the local VAC, as they were in contact with a provincial and national VAC and participated in various course days and such. As a result, not only material from the local VAC has been archived here, but also some publications. However, useful material that gives the same insight into the female perspective has been used here, given the limited information.

The Hengelo Municipal Archives are the only publicly accessible place where historical information about VAC Hengelo can be found, and they only have two folders of information. One from the period 1957-1967 and one from the period 1980-1996. Within these folders, no minutes and only very brief annual reports have been preserved. Welbions, the housing association into which all previous housing associations that had contact with the VAC merged, has no written documentation, and interviews brought little broadening of information. Information from the period 1967-1980 could not be obtained, as this generation of VAC members is no longer alive or able to provide sharp information.

Interviews with former VAC members ended up providing many new insights, the most valuable interview that took place being the interview with Hanne Rotgans-Huizinga (figure 13). She was a member of the VAC Hengelo for 29 years and during this time she wrote most of the advice on building plans. In addition to being an advisor, she has also been secretary for 11 years and chairman for 7 years. At the time of termination in 2017, Rotgans was chairman. Born in 1956, Rotgans joined VAC Hengelo at the age of 32 at the end of 1988, following the advice of her mother, Lia Huizinga, who joined the VAC earlier in 1988. Rotgans studied building sciences at the *Hogere Technische School (HTS)* in Hengelo.



Figure 13: VAC Hengelo, Photograph of Hanne Rotgans during an excursion to the construction site, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

Her VAC colleague Suze Eysink (figure 14) served on the VAC from 1990 to 2009, during which time she was secretary. She was able to provide general knowledge, but had been part of the VAC for less time and also had less archive material than Rotgans. Antoinet de Boer worked for Welbions and was involved with the VAC Borne, the village next to Hengelo, from 2000 to 2007. She provided information about the cooperation between Welbions and the VACs and the difference between the forward-looking VAC Hengelo and the village VAC Borne.



Figure 14: Reinier van Willigen, VAC Hengelo in 2007, in Loes Geerdink, "VAC moet zichzelf al 50 jaar herhalen," De Twentsche Courant Tubantia, October 3, 2007.

Standing from left to right Annie Ruiter, Kirstin Zilvold, Rita Hilberink, sitting from left to right Hanne Rotgans, Riet Engels, Aleike Hoekstra and Suze Eysink. Missing: Daniela Pfaff, Fatiha A. Tazi and Fatima Sellek.

### Being a woman

Women are still not treated equally to men. In the opening speech of the congress *Buiten gewoon veilig*, organised by the Stichting Vrouwen bouwen & wonen, which was attended by many VAC members, Annemarie Jorritsma, chairwoman of the day, touched on a quote by Simone de Beauvoir in 1949: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman."<sup>58</sup> Simone de Beauvoir is a philosopher, feminist theorist and writer of *The Second Sex*, in which she advocates the economic independence of women.<sup>59</sup> Jorritsma then put De Beauvoirs quote into her own perspective with examples in 1987.

You are made into a woman:

- because as a girl you weren't allowed to come home as late as your brother;
- when you were at a party and it was starting to get fun, you were picked up by your father;
- because you were warned ad nauseam about the dangers of quiet or dark places and parks, even though there are often no alternative routes;
- because as a girl you were not allowed (and the boys were) to hitchhike alone;
- in short, because your freedom of movement was less than that of your brothers and your friends.<sup>60</sup>

58. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989).

59. Debra Bergoffen and Megan Burke, "Simone de Beauvoir", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2021 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/beauvoir/>

60. Opening speech by Annemarie Jorritsma of congress *Buiten gewoon veilig* at Jaarbeurs Utrecht, Stichting Vrouwen bouwen & wonen, January 29, 1987, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

Being a woman in the traditionally male world of architecture means having to earn your place, as Rotgans explains in the interview about the VAC Hengelo. This not only happened during her studies at the HTS, or during her internship at Thomasson Dura, but also during her voluntary work for the VAC. When Rotgans, as a VAC member, had to deal with a new party, it happened often enough that her professionalism was questioned. This was really because she was a woman, she says.

61. Rotgans, interview.

It happened to me often enough that at the beginning of the meeting my coat was not accepted for hanging on the coat rack. I just threw it over the chair. At the end of the meeting, when I had proven my competence, also as a woman, the coat was handed to me. Then they held it open at the back so that I could stick my arms into the sleeves.<sup>61</sup>

Although Rotgans thinks that women should not have to provide this proof in order to do their job - in this case giving advice on housing plans - being a woman is no reason for her to join the VAC. Her motive to join the VAC has more to do with her need to improve the quality of life and enjoyment for residents.

62. Rotgans, interview.

As far as feminism is concerned, we just wanted to be accepted in the twentieth century male world of construction. We wanted to get our respect, even if we had to 'earn' it first. We didn't want to be emphasised on being women. So when, two years after graduating, I was approached to help set up a group called *Vrouwelijke Ingenieurs* (Female Engineers), I said no.<sup>62</sup>

Feminism was not so much embraced or claimed by the VAC members, but we can still state that VAC women were striving for a more emancipated society, since the work of the VAC acknowledges gender differences but wants to use embodied knowledge of women within housing design to reduce differences. Rotgans did not want to join the *Vrouwelijke Ingenieurs*, because she did not want to emphasise being a woman. Within the field of the built environment, this difference was also recently pointed out by female architects. In *Mevrouw de Architect*, a magazine in which Merel Pit portrayed female Dutch architects, this issue recurs. Female architects want to keep calling themselves 'architect' and not 'architecte', because with 'architecte' you emphasise the female aspect and therefore the difference between the two terms.<sup>63</sup> This while emancipation should be about equality and not about highlighting gender differences.

63. Merel Pit, *Mevr. De Architect* (Den Haag: A-ZINE, 2020).

Rotgans mentions that in her committee in Hengelo there was initially nobody with a main feminist focus in the VAC. De Boer, however, says that in her committee, the one in Borne, there was an outspoken feminist.

64. De Boer, interview.

I wasn't so much a feminist, but there was a feminist in my committee, a real redneck. I can't think of her name, but she was a GP. She always pointed out that we needed to stop distinguishing so clearly between the surname and maiden name, since we also don't use a term like 'boys name'. She kept me on my toes about that. Now I say 'my own name is ...' or 'I am married to ...' and I never use the term maiden name anymore.<sup>64</sup>

Although women's advisory committees were only accessible to women, and therefore not emancipated from that point of view, this remained the case for a long time. In the Hengelo Municipal Archives, an interview with L. van Nuffelen in 1987, was found in *Woningraad*, entitled "Als wij het niet zeggen, niemand zegt het." Van Nuffelen was the chairman of the *Landelijk Contact* in 1987.

And why not remain being a woman as the starting point of the VACs? They do not have to be mutually exclusive. Women with caring tasks at home have a wealth of knowledge and experience. Women pay attention to things that escape a man. That is an advantage and you simply have to make use of it."<sup>65</sup>

Nevertheless, from 2006 it became possible for men to enter the VAC in Hengelo. Rotgans explains that this is because of the change in times, society is more emancipated after all, and it is increasingly common for men to run the household.

### Care

The VAC reviewed housing plans for their degree of practicality and provided advice based on its findings. Common mistakes were the misplacement of wall sockets, incorrect rotation direction and radius of doors, lack of sight lines in the house and the possibility to look outside, and too little light (figure 15).<sup>66</sup>



But in addition, the feelings of obligation towards caring for others, being responsible for others and nurturing others, described by Gilligan, played a role in the advice given by the VAC. This analysis can be distinguished into topics of safety, social cohesion and caring for others, in terms of generations of for the disabled.

Social safety is different for men than for women, because the chance of an unwanted incident is greater for women than for men and because, in addition, women are taught from an early age to behave more carefully, as the examples given by Van Nuffelen show.<sup>67</sup> In her opening speech for the *Buiten gewoon veilig* congress, Jorritsma pointed out that the awareness of social safety has only come to light since the 1980s.

As I walked to my flat late last night through dark The Hague, I realised for the umpteenth time that it is actually extremely strange that the feeling of insecurity and also genuine social insecurity have only recently become the focus of attention. While I, and I assume many of

65. Mirjam Zoet, "Als wij niet zeggen, zegt niemand het," *Woningraad: Maandblad van de Nationale woningraad* 87, no.4, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

66. De Boer, interview.

Figure 15: Jan Huizinga, *Illustrations of impracticalities by the VAC Hengelo*, drawn by Rotgans' father, VAC Hengelo, Hanne Rotgans personal archive, Hengelo.

67. Opening speech, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996.

68. Opening speech, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996.

you here in this room, have been afraid of this for years and dark spots in the built environment do not date from 1980.<sup>68</sup>

For the VAC, this social safety also played a role in the assessment of floor plans. Certain aspects were tested in terms of the possibility of safety and the risks of nuisance, vandalism and intrusion into the homes. An example emerged in the annual report of 2006 of the VAC Hengelo.

69. Annual Report 2006 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 9, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

Another point of concern is the vague transition from public to semi-public space. Because the hall downstairs is not closed off, unauthorised people can use the space to congregate and take shelter from the climate, with all the risks of nuisance, vandalism and intrusion into the homes. Future residents may feel (socially) uncomfortable as a result [...].<sup>69</sup>

Safety is also associated with the feeling of social cohesion. Having neighbours, but also the visible possibility to have contact with them, can strengthen the feeling of safety, as seen in the annual report of 2003 of the VAC Hengelo.

70. Annual Report 2003 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 5, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

Doesn't seem like a pleasant idea to know that you live on the highest floor, without neighbours you can knock on in case of an emergency.<sup>70</sup>

Sometimes it also depends on the target group which design choices are better. For example, a large window may make social contact with neighbours easier, but for an elderly or disabled person a different design choice with more practical benefits may be better, as shown in the VAC Hengelo annual report of 2003.

71. Annual Report 2003 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 3, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

Also when deciding on the height of the window frame, we recommend taking into account cleaning aspects (seen from the point of view of the elderly and disabled): for social contact, placing a countertop in front of a window is fine, but cleaning remains difficult.<sup>71</sup>

72. Rotgans, interview.

The VAC Hengelo included members from various work backgrounds. A number of those members practised care professions, as they worked in home care or care for the disabled.<sup>72</sup> Their practical knowledge of healthcare served as a useful tool for the VAC to provide helpful care-supportive advice. In addition, many VAC women were also mothers, which enabled them to use the demanding tasks of childcare as embodied knowledge in their VAC work.

### **Facing the future**

In the years that the VAC has existed, the living quality of many homes has improved as a result of the advice it has given. Although many VACs have been terminated, the importance of housing quality has not diminished. De Boer explains that they had hoped that over the years they would learn from certain mistakes in houses, that perhaps the process would be improved in advance so that in time the VAC would no longer be necessary, but that nothing could be further from the truth.<sup>73</sup> Now that the VAC Hengelo has terminated, a new way of integrating quality of use into housing must be found. Rotgans hopes that the education system together with the new generation of architects will focus more on the uses rather than the

73. De Boer, interview.

technological and economic aspects. According to her, the emphasis is now too much on the costs and technical requirements of the Bouwbesluit, and not on the human aspect of housing quality.<sup>74</sup>

74. Rotgans, interview.

When it comes to the future of emancipation in the building sector, former VAC members are in agreement. Rotgans indicates that the role of emancipation in Dutch society has caused the viewpoint within the VACs to change as well. That is why the VAC became the Volkshuisvesting Advies Commissie in 2006, to make it possible for men to join. Two women of Moroccan background joined the VAC Hengelo in 2006 and from 2012 onwards three men were active, as the VAC Hengelo wanted to be a better reflection of the housing user community. Rotgan's wish is that companies in the built environment will all recognise that this reflection of society contributes to the delivery of quality results.<sup>75</sup>

75. Rotgans, interview.

## Conclusion

This thesis aims to expose the difference between the male and female views on housing by giving examples of the female perspective through the case study of the VAC Hengelo during the years 1957 to 2017. However, doing research on the VAC Hengelo proved to be limited, because the Hengelo Municipal Archives are the only publicly accessible place where historical information on the VAC Hengelo can be found, and they only preserved a small part of their documents. This concerns just 2 folders for the periods 1957-1967 and 1980-1996, presumably because the VAC women did not feel they were doing important work that needed to be documented. Thus, oral history has been key to document its history. The major part of the information has been collected through interviews with former VAC members, among them: Hanne Rotgans, (1988-2017, has held the positions of advisor, secretary and chairman) Suze Eysink (1990-2009, secretary) and Antoinet de Boer (2000-2007, member of VAC Borne). Particularly, Hanne Rotgans has provided a major amount of data and further archival documentation gathered in her personal archive.

Thus, in order to understand the role of women as domestic workers and the relevance of this work, traditionally hidden, devaluated and unpaid, the first chapter explores the role of the ethics of care in architecture by using the theoretical approaches of feminist scholars Gilligan, Noddings and Tronto. Next to this, the chapter explores the historical background of traditional feminised domestic work by using Federici's theoretical approach to reproductive labour to establish the research framework. In order to connect the concept of ethics of care to the voluntary work performed by the VAC Hengelo, to give an insight into how the female situated experience of the environment influenced their advice at that historical moment, the second chapter explains a historical framework of the VAC Hengelo and the city of Hengelo.

The final chapter explores through women's environmental perceptions using the VAC Hengelo as a framework during the years 1957 to 2017. Through the analysis of the information gathered from interviews with former VAC members, combined with written speeches of events and interviews in magazines or newspapers, three topics emerge: what meant being a woman by them, care within the household and the vision on the future now the VAC Hengelo terminated. While understanding what "Being a woman" was, it emerges how women are treated differently, because as a girl you weren't allowed to come home as late as your brother for example, and are therefore made to be women. In addition, it turned out that VAC members did not see themselves as feminists, but as housing quality advisors. They wanted to improve housing design from the point of view of caring for others, without really questioning their role as caregivers. In "Care", topics like safety or social cohesion which emphasise care within the household are addressed with examples to show the vision of VAC women. Here it becomes clear that the obligation to care for others, being responsible for others and nurturing others, described by Gilligan, played a key role in the advice given by the VAC, reinforcing the traditional gender role of women. In "Facing the future", the interviews with former VAC members are used to share their views on the future now the VAC Hengelo terminated. Two women of Moroccan background joined the VAC Hengelo



in 2006 and from 2012 onwards three men were active, as the VAC Hengelo wanted to be a better reflection of the housing user community, moving forward the strict division historically imposed by gender roles.

This research explores the gendered role of women as housing advisors through the history of the VAC Hengelo. In the process, it has become clear that the historically primary responsibility of women has been taking care of others and that they are more likely to make choices based on how those choices will affect others, including the needs of children, the elderly or people with a disease. Within the assessment of housing advice, it is visible that women are thinking about social well-being and caring themes such as social safety, social cohesion and care for others like children, the elderly or the disabled. VAC members were not declared feminists, it could be argued that unconsciously some feminist issues were on their agenda. The fact that VAC members such as Rotgans, Eysink and De Boer did not see themselves as feminists but their primary goal was to improve housing quality, once again confirms the "ethics of care" theory: they were not part of the VAC not only for their own sake but to improve housing for other traditionally marginalized people. The case study of the VAC Hengelo thus reveals, by examples, how the feminist concept of ethics of care could perfectly work as a background explanation of how women, through history, made choices in the design of housing in a different, broadening and more inclusive perspective than men.

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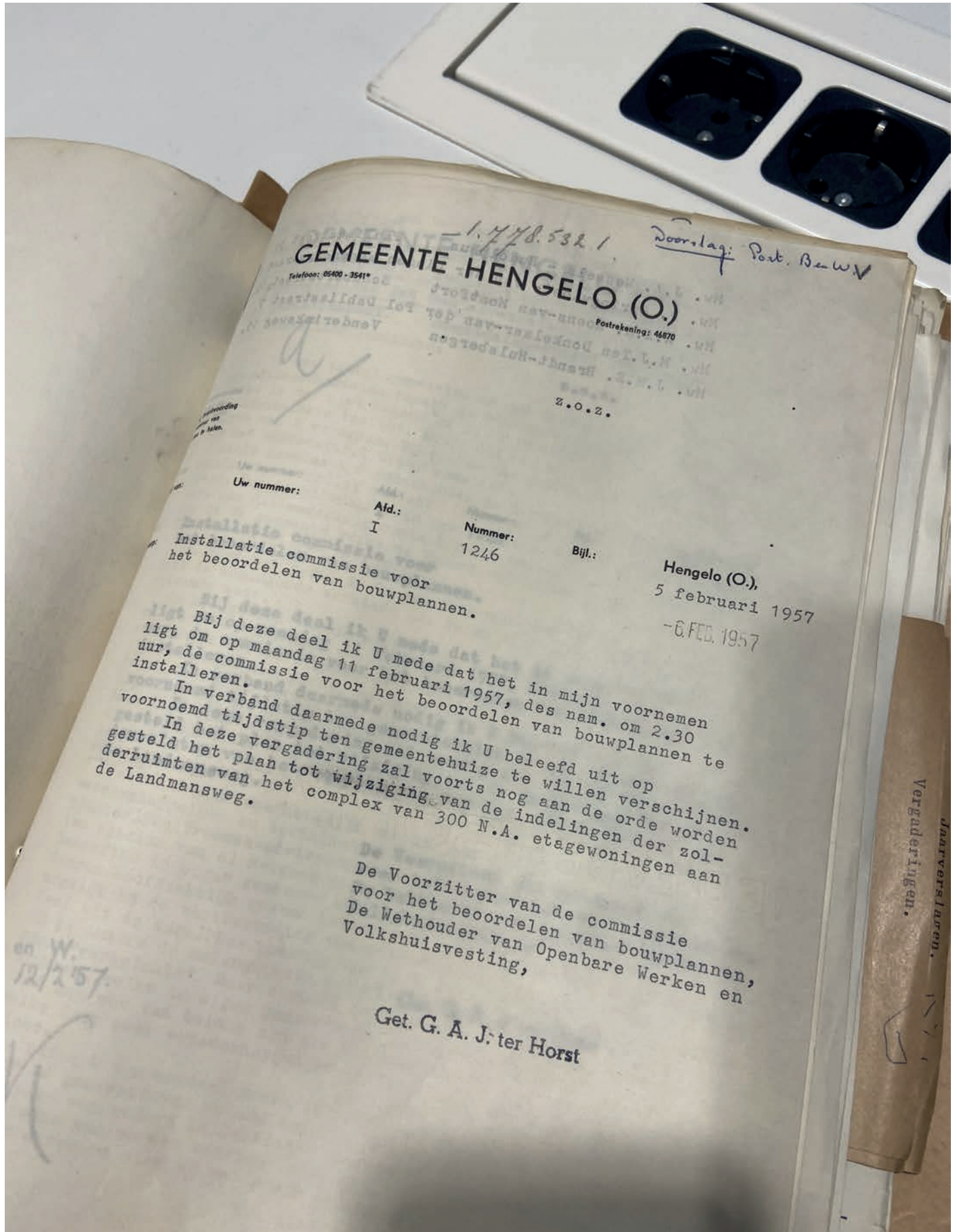
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# Appendix

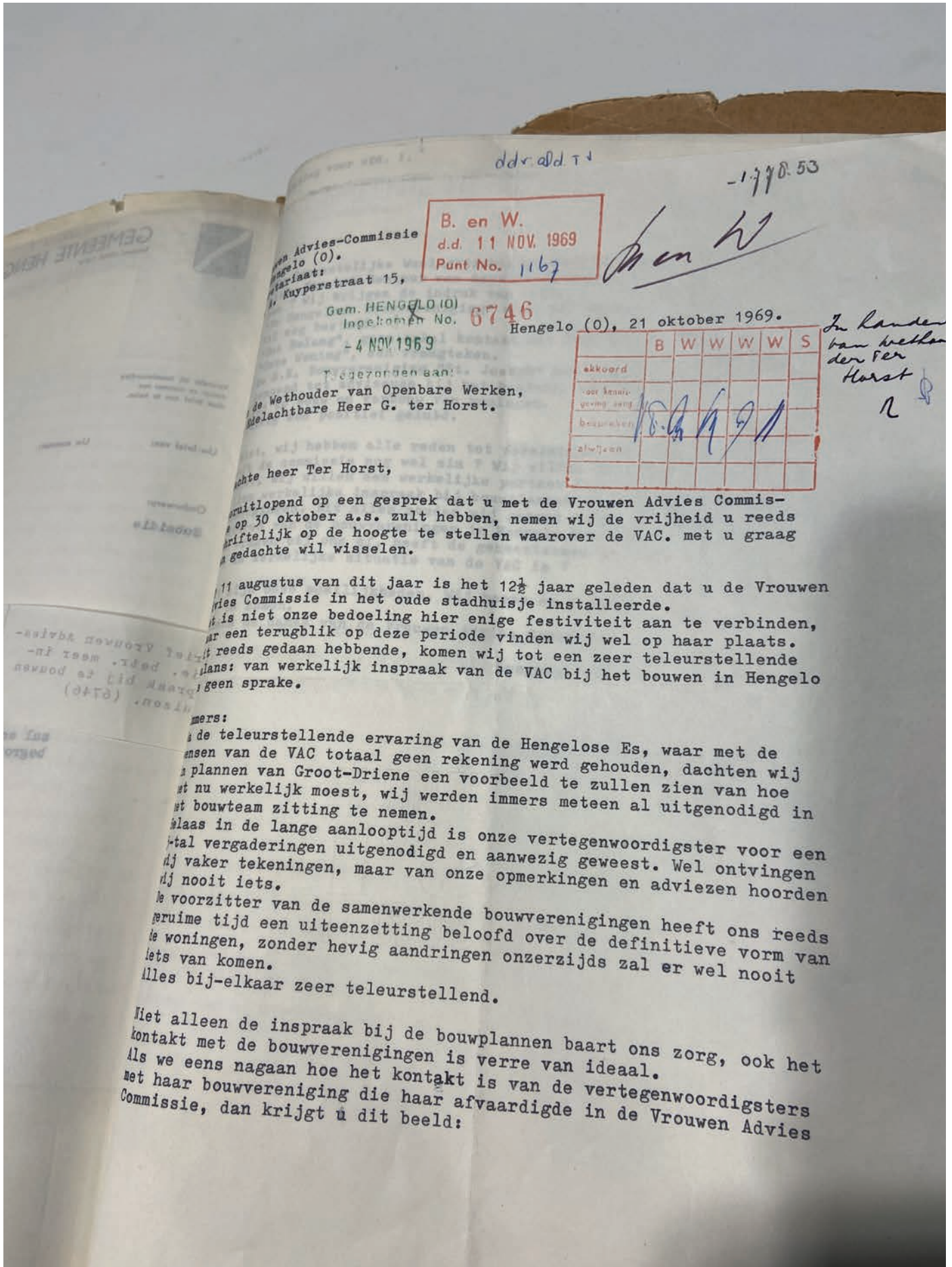
**Source:** Letters of notification installation committee, 14 January and 5 February 1957, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Muncpal Archive, Hengelo.

Note: figures 9 and 10 show the other letter of 14 January.



Source: Letter to the Alderman G. ter Horst, 21 October 1969, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

part 1/2



ddr. d.d. T. J.

-1770.53

B. en W.  
d.d. 11 NOV. 1969  
Punt No. 1167

*B. en W.*

Vrouwen Advies-Commissie  
Hengelo (0).  
Postadres:  
Kuyperstraat 15,

Gem. HENGELO (0)

Ingekomen No. 6746

Hengelo (0), 21 oktober 1969.

- 4 NOV 1969

Tegevoerd aan:  
de Wethouder van Openbare Werken,  
Aanvaardbare Heer G. ter Horst.

	B	W	W	W	W	S
akkoord						
voor kennis- geving omtrent						
bespreken						
afwijzen						

*In Landen  
van West-  
den Ter  
Horst*

achte heer Ter Horst,

uitlopend op een gesprek dat u met de Vrouwen Advies Commis-  
sion op 30 oktober a.s. zult hebben, nemen wij de vrijheid u reeds  
schriftelijk op de hoogte te stellen waarover de VAC. met u graag  
in gedachte wil wisselen.

Op 11 augustus van dit jaar is het 12½ jaar geleden dat u de Vrouwen  
Advies Commissie in het oude stadhuisje installeerde.  
Het is niet onze bedoeling hier enige festiviteit aan te verbinden,  
maar een terugblik op deze periode vinden wij wel op haar plaats.  
Wat reeds gedaan hebbende, komen wij tot een zeer teleurstellende  
conclusie: van werkelijk inspraak van de VAC bij het bouwen in Hengelo  
is er geen sprake.

meers:

De teleurstellende ervaring van de Hengelose Es, waar met de  
aanbevelingen van de VAC totaal geen rekening werd gehouden, dachten wij  
dat de plannen van Groot-Driene een voorbeeld te zullen zien van hoe  
het nu werkelijk moest, wij werden immers meteen al uitgenodigd in  
het bouwteam zitting te nemen.  
Ondanks in de lange aanlooptijd is onze vertegenwoordigster voor een  
aantal vergaderingen uitgenodigd en aanwezig geweest. Wel ontvingen  
wij vaker tekeningen, maar van onze opmerkingen en adviezen hoorden  
wij nooit iets.  
De voorzitter van de samenwerkende bouwverenigingen heeft ons reeds  
in ruime tijd een uiteenzetting beloofd over de definitieve vorm van  
de woningen, zonder hevig aandringen onzerzijds zal er wel nooit  
iets van komen.  
Dit alles bij-elkaar zeer teleurstellend.

Niet alleen de inspraak bij de bouwplannen baart ons zorg, ook het  
gebrek aan contact met de bouwverenigingen is verre van ideaal.  
Als we eens nagaan hoe het contact is van de vertegenwoordigsters  
met haar bouwvereniging die haar afvaardigde in de Vrouwen Advies  
Commissie, dan krijgt u dit beeld:

Source: Letter to the Alderman G. ter Horst, 21 October 1969, VAC Hengelo 1957-1967, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

part 2/2

ddr. afd. I<sup>1</sup>  
- 1178.53  
- 2 -

1. "De Gemeentelijke Woningstichting" kent haar vertegenwoordigster niet. Zou het Bestuur van deze Stichting eigenlijk wel de VAC kennen? Wij krijgen de indruk van niet.

2. "De Hengelose Bouwvereniging" wist tot voor kort niet eens, dat de VAC nog bestond.

3. "Ons Belang", geen enkel contact met haar afgevaardigde.

4. "Onze Woning", een vraagteken.

5. De R.K. Bouwvereniging "St. Joseph" heeft haar vertegenwoordigster benoemd tot adviseuse bij het bestuur, met de opdracht te adviseren bij de bouw en verbouw van woningen.

gelukkig één positief geluid.

U ziet, wij hebben alle reden tot pessimisme. Wij vragen ons eerlijk af, heeft de commissie nog wel zin? Wij willen wel, maar niet op deze manier. Wij willen een werkelijke partner zijn in een bouwteam, wij willen werkelijke inspraak bij bouwplannen en erkenning bij de bouwverenigingen. Dit alles zouden wij gaarne onder de aandacht van de besturen van de bouwverenigingen in Hengelo brengen.

Ook vragen wij ons af, heeft de gemeenteraad niet het recht te weten hoe de werkelijke situatie van de VAC is?

Dit zijn onze moeilijkheden. Wij hopen er samen met u, onze voorzitter, uit te komen.

Namens de dames van de Vrouwen Advies Commissie,

hoogachtend,

*A. J. Jansen - w. H. J. Jansen*  
Schaapman

**Source:** Written speech on the occasion of VAC Hengelo's 30th anniversary, 1987, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Muncipal Archive, Hengelo.

part 1/2

Toespraak ter gelegenheid van 30-jarig jubileum V.A.C. Hengelo Ov.

- Welkom

- Bereidheid gemeente om medewerking te verlenen aan tentoonstelling en studiemiddag.

Het onderstreept het belang dat het gemeentebestuur hecht aan de V.A.C.

HISTORIE

Op 5 februari 1957 vond de installatie plaats van de Commissie voor het beoordelen van bouwplannen.

De commissie stond destijds onder voorzitterschap van de wethouder van Openbare Werken en Volkshuisvesting: De heer G.A.J. ter Horst (is mogelijk aanwezig).

Het sekretariaat was eveneens ondergebracht op het gemeentehuis, hetgeen eveneens iets zegt over de invloed en de rol die de gemeente destijds had.

De commissie kwam in de beginjaren regelmatig bijeen om nieuwbouwplannen voor met name woningwetwoningen te beoordelen.

Hengelo groeide toen nog snel zodat er volop werk aan de woonwinkel was.. Een aantal van de in de loop der jaren beoordeelde plannen kunt u op de tentoonstelling vinden.

Hoewel de activiteiten van de V.A.C. in de afgelopen jaren een golfbeweging vertonen zijn wij verheugd over het feit dat uit het enthousiasme en de inzet waarmee aan dit jubileum is gewerkt, mag worden gekonkludeerd dat de V.A.C. nog springlevend is en gezien de opmerkingen c.q. aanbevelingen die recentelijk gemaakt zijn over nog te realiseren bouwplannen, nog steeds noodzakelijk is.



**Source:** Written speech on the occasion of VAC Hengelo's 30th anniversary, 1987, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Muncipal Archive, Hengelo.

part 2/2

Hoewel in 1957 gekozen werd voor een door de Raad ingestelde adviescommissie, waardoor de benoeming van leden door het dagelijks bestuur van de gemeente geschiedde, moet worden gekonstateerd dat in de loop der jaren de V.A.C. zich een meer zelfstandige rol heeft toebedacht.

De laatste jaren wordt de samenstelling van de V.A.C. zelf geregeld. Dit vinden wij een goede ontwikkeling.

De V.A.C. moet geheel zelfstandig en onafhankelijk kunnen functioneren.

De gemeente dient zich te beperken tot een voorwaardescheppend en ondersteunend beleid.

#### DE ROL VAN DE V.A.C.

Als we de archiefstukken doorlopen dan moeten we konstateren dat de V.A.C.-Hengelo in de afgelopen jaren veel werk heeft verzet maar ook hoe moeizaam het kan zijn om tijdig te worden ingeschakeld.

In jaarverslagen en publikaties van de V.A.C. wordt als voornaamste taak gezien het namens en met de bewoners gesprekspartners te zijn van gemeente, woningbouwverenigingen en architect bij de voorbereiding en realisering van bouwplannen en ontwikkeling van bestemmingsplannen. Bij de beoordeling wordt vooral gelet op de praktische bewoonbaarheid, waarbij ook de woonomgeving in de gaten wordt gehouden.

Het gemeentebestuur van Hengelo onderschrijft deze rol.

Ik heb echter de indruk dat de V.A.C. bij de beoordeling van bouwplannen tot nu toe aardig in beeld is geweest maar dat de beoordeling van bestemmingsplannen en woonomgeving geïntensiveerd kan worden.

De gemeente ziet hierin eveneens een taak weggelegd.

In de vastgestelde beleidsnotitie m.b.t. de "sociale veiligheid" zijn hiertoe aanknopingspunten te vinden.

Source: Zoet, Mirjam. "Als wij niet zeggen, zegt niemand het." *Woningraad: Maandblad van de Nationale woningraad* 87, no.4, VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

### Original (Dutch) quote:

Het vrouwzijn blijft het uitgangspunt van de VAC's. "En waarom ook niet," vindt de voorzitter. "Dat hoeft elkaar niet te bijten. Vrouwen met verzorgende taken thuis beschikken over een schat aan kennis en ervaring. Vrouwen letten op zaken die een man ontgaan. Dat is een pré en daarvan moet je simpelweg gebruik maken."

### Translation:

Being a woman remains the starting point of the VACs. "And why not," says the chairman. "They do not have to be mutually exclusive. Women with caring tasks at home have a wealth of knowledge and experience. Women pay attention to things that escape a man. That is an advantage and you simply have to make use of it."



*De vrouwenadviescommissies hebben gaandeweg meer invloed gekregen. Nu de mondigheid van de burger toeneemt en de rol van de gemeenten steeds belangrijker wordt, wordt de taak van de VAC verzaagd.*

jonge vrouwen bij, omdat die een frisse wind kunnen laten waaien. Aan de andere kant hebben die vaak de belasting van een jong gezin of raken we ze aan een baan kwijt."

#### VAC-man

Maar ondanks alle vooruitgang die de vrouwenbeweging boekt, ook binnen de lokale VAC's, blijft het vrouwzijn het uitgangspunt van de VAC's. "En waarom ook niet", vindt de voorzitter. "Dat hoeft elkaar niet te bijten. Vrouwen met verzorgende taken thuis beschikken over een schat aan kennis en ervaring. Vrouwen letten op zaken die een man ontgaan. Dat is een pré en daarvan moet je simpelweg gebruik maken."

Dat lijkt een achterhaalde zaak aan het worden nu de rolverdeling niet meer zo strikt is als voorheen. Mevr. L. van Nuffelen meldt enigszins zinnig het toetreden van welgeteld één "VAC-man". Dit lijkt het eerste schaap dat over de bekende dam is, maar volgens de landelijk voorzitter is er geen reden om de vrouwenadviescommissie meteen maar om te dopen. Een stormloop van huismannen verwacht ze niet en zou ze overigens ook niet met vreugde begroeten. "De bouwwereld is een mannenwereld, dat is onze bestaansreden. De kijk van een vrouw is dan van belang als tegenhanger. Daar gaat het om.

En deze ene meneer lijkt zich heel goed te schikken in onze vergadercultuur, iets dat ook niet alle mannen gegeven zal zijn."

#### Verstandhouding

Ondanks de zwaarte van het werk en de moeite die het kost kennis en kunde voor de VAC's te behouden, vindt de voorzitter dat VAC-werk vrijwilligerswerk moet blijven. Omwille van de onafhankelijkheid streven de VAC's ernaar om vanuit de gemeente gesubsidieerd te worden. "Ook al omdat de financiering dan deel uitmaakt van het gemeentelijk emancipatiebeleid. Tegenwoordig is subsidiering vrij gangbaar, maar voorheen voorzagen ook wel woningcorporaties in de kastekorten. Dat gaf een ongewenste verstrengeling van belangen.

En juist tegenover de corporaties willen de vrouwenadviescommissies zich zo onafhankelijk mogelijk kunnen opstellen. "In feite, al gaat het er allemaal netjes en vriendelijk aan toe, ageren wij altijd tegen die instellingen. Dan moet je er ook geen financiële betrekkingen mee hebben."

In het algemeen zien de corporaties de vrouwenadviescommissies als noodzakelijke gesprekspartners. Volgens mevrouw Van Nuffelen komt het steeds meer voor dat corporaties de plaatselijke VAC meteen bij de ontwerpfase betrekken. "Maar helaas zijn er ook die VAC-leden in het bestuur willen inkapselen. Ze vinden het dan niet meer nodig om de VAC er apart bij te halen. Overigens zullen de VAC's er altijd naar streven leden in de besturen van de plaatselijke corporaties te krijgen. Dat lukt niet altijd, maar ik kan wel zeggen dat in elke plaats waar een VAC werkt, toch wel

*De woningcorporaties zijn de belangrijkste tegenspelers van de vrouwenadviescommissies. Om goed te kunnen functioneren, is het van belang dat de verstandhouding tussen VAC en corporatie goed is. Over het algemeen is dat ook zo.*

**Source:** Opening speech by Annemarie Jorritsma of the congress Buiten gewoon veilig at Jaarbeurs Utrecht. Stichting Vrouwen bouwen & wonen, January 29, 1987. VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

### Original (Dutch) quote:

“Toen ik gisteravond laat door donker Den Haag naar mijn flat liep, realiseerde ik me voor de zoveelste keer dat het eigenlijk buitengewoon vreemd is dat het gevoel van onveiligheid en ook echte sociale onveiligheid pas zo recent in de belangstelling is gekomen. Terwijl ik, en ik neem aan dat dat voor velen onder u hier in de zaal ook geldt, die angst toch al jaren heb en donkere plekken in de bebouwde omgeving ook niet vanaf 1980 dateren.”

### Translation:

“As I walked to my flat late last night through dark The Hague, I realised for the umpteenth time that it is actually extremely strange that the feeling of insecurity and also genuine social insecurity have only recently become the focus of attention. While I, and I assume many of you here in this room, have been afraid of this for years and dark spots in the built environment do not date from 1980.”

een gewest...  
fen. U komt uit alle sectoren en  
diverse functies. Daarmee lijkt een  
belangrijke doelstelling van dit

Voordat ik...  
aan de dagvoorzitster, Annemarie

## Opening Kongres Buiten Gewoon Veilig

ANNEMARIE JORRITISMA


Toen ik gisteravond laat door donker Den Haag naar mijn flat liep, realiseerde ik me voor de zoveelste keer dat het eigenlijk buitengewoon vreemd is dat het gevoel van onveiligheid en ook echte sociale onveiligheid pas zo recent in de belangstelling is gekomen.

Terwijl ik, en ik neem aan dat dat voor velen onder u hier in de zaal ook geldt, die angst toch al jaren heb en donkere plekken in de bebouwde omgeving ook niet vanaf 1980 dateren.

Wat ik me bovendien afvroeg is, waarom juist vrouwen hier actie hebben ondernomen. Ja zeker, vrouwen hebben het meest last van seksueel geweld, maar ik ken talloze mannen, die ook niet echt graag op de fiets door een donker park gaan. Schijnbaar hoor je daar niet over te praten als man en dat is de reden, denk ik, waarom wij hier nu ook zijn. Waar je niet over praat, is geen probleem en dus denk je er niet aan bij bijvoorbeeld de invulling van de bebouwde omgeving. Ook de politiek heeft het er lang bij laten zitten. Eigenlijk is pas door Andrée van Es, die in 1984 haar motie indiende, het besef ook bij de Rijksoverheid gegroeid dat daar een - zij het bescheiden - taak ligt. Op zijn minst in het stimuleren van andere overheden en burgers in het denken aan sociale veiligheid.

Het is, en dat heeft de Stichting Vrouwen Bouwen & Wonen heel goed begrepen en opgepakt, de allerhoogste tijd dat iedereen wakker geschud wordt en het als normaal gaat beschouwen dat bij de inrichting en herinrichting van steden en dorpen er met deze veiligheidsaspecten automatisch rekening gehouden gaat worden. Dat dat nog steeds niet altijd gebeurt kan ik aan de hand van een voor mij zeer praktisch voorbeeld aangeven. De Tweede Kamer heeft een deel van de parkeergarage aan het Plein in Den Haag in gebruik, nu nog uitsluitend voor personeel. Iedereen in ons gebouw weet dat met name het vrouwelijk personeel 's avonds eigenlijk niet alleen naar die garage durft. Toch gebeurt er niets. Sterker nog, er is, geloof ik, nog nooit over gepraat. En nog erger wordt het, als we weten dat bij de nieuwbouw van de Tweede Kamer iedereen in die parkeergarage moet gaan staan. Ik moet er, eerlijk gezegd, niet aan denken 's avonds laat in het donker naar die garage te moeten gaan. Welnu, inmiddels ben ik bewust geworden en ga ik proberen er wat aan te doen. We zullen samen met het Kamerbreed Vrouwen Overleg proberen de heren van de BouwBegeleidingsCommissie (want ja, daar zitten helaas alleen heren in) over de sociale veiligheid van het toekomstige gebouw te rapporteren. Ik ben benieuwd.

Overigens spreken we tot nu toe, en dat doen we vandaag ook, bijna uitsluitend over het stedelijk gebied, terwijl ook op het platteland het probleem bestaat. Daar is bijna geen onderzoek naar verricht. Ik hoop dat mensen hier in de zaal en daarbuiten zich geïnspireerd zullen voelen om daar eens onderzoek naar te doen. Het is echt een braakliggend terrein.



DE DAGVOORZITSTER:  
ANNEMARIE JORRITISMA

Foto: Mieke Schlaman

Wat gaan wij vandaag doen. Het doel is uitermate praktisch, zo zijn wij vrouwen.

We beginnen met het zichtbaar maken van het probleem en proberen daarna de volgende vragen te beantwoorden. Ik hoop dat we aan het eind van de dag inderdaad een aantal antwoorden op een rijtje zullen hebben staan, namelijk:

- 1) Hoe kun je het oplossen en 2) Welke strategieën heb je daarvoor nodig.

Anders gezegd: hoe krijg je het werkelijk voor elkaar. Als we aan het eind van de dag over die drie aspecten meer duidelijkheid hebben, is het een buitengewoon nuttig kongres geweest, waardoor het wellicht snel Buiten Gewoon Veilig wordt.

Ik wens u allen een heel goede dag toe en verklaar het kongres hierbij voor geopend.

4

**Source:** Opening speech by Annemarie Jorritsma of the congress Buiten gewoon veilig at Jaarbeurs Utrecht. Stichting Vrouwen bouwen & wonen, January 29, 1987. VAC Hengelo 1980-1996, Hengelo Municipal Archive, Hengelo.

### Original (Dutch) quote:

Van Simone de Beauvoir is de uitspraak: "Je wordt niet als vrouw geboren, je wordt tot vrouw gemaakt."

Je wordt tot vrouw gemaakt:

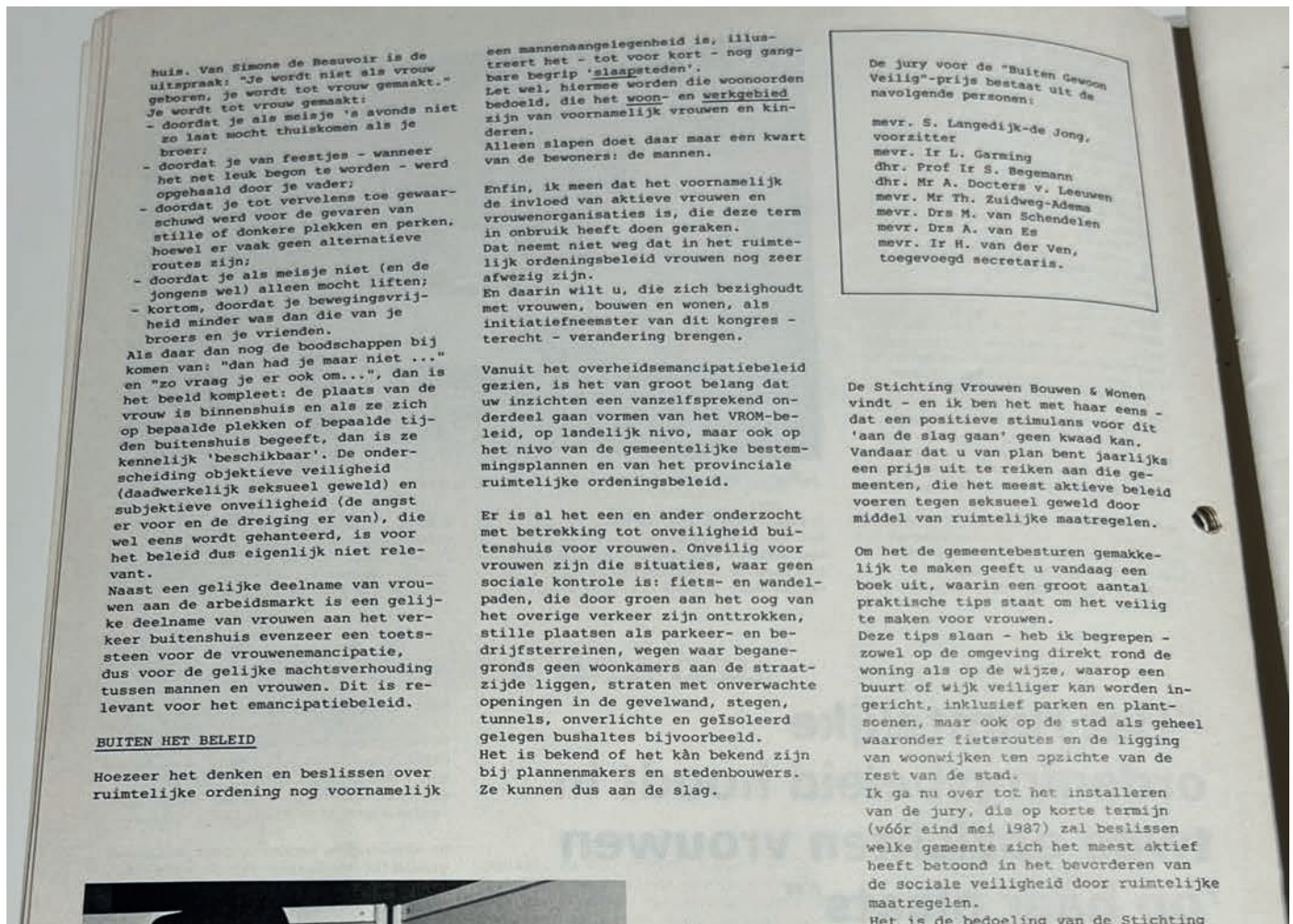
- doordat je als meisje 's avonds niet zo laat mocht thuiskomen als je broer;
- doordat je van feestjes - wanneer het net leuk begon te worden - werd opgehaald door je vader;
- doordat je tot vervelens toe gewaardschuwd werd voor de gevaren van stille of donkere plekken en perken, hoewel er vaak geen alternatieve routes zijn;
- doordat je als meisje niet (en de jongens wel) alleen mocht liften;
- kortom, doordat je bewegingsvrijheid minder was dan die van je broers en je vrienden.

### Translation:

Simone de Beauvoir once said: "You are not born a woman, you are made into a woman.

You are made into a woman:

- because as a girl you weren't allowed to come home as late as your brother;
- when you were at a party and it was starting to get fun, you were picked up by your father;
- because you were warned about the dangers of quiet or dark places and parks, even though there are often no alternative routes;
- because as a girl you were not allowed (and the boys were) to hitchhike alone;
- in short, because your freedom of movement was less than that of your brothers and your friends.



Source: Annual Report 2003 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 3, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

**Original (Dutch) quote:**


“Ook bij het bepalen van de hoogte van het raamkozijn adviseren we rekening te houden met schoonmaakaspecten (gezien vanuit ouderen en minder validen): voor sociaal contact is een aanrecht voor een raam plaatsen prima, maar het schoonmaken blijft lastig.”

**Translation:**

“Also when deciding on the height of the window frame, we recommend taking into account cleaning aspects (seen from the point of view of the elderly and disabled): for social contact, placing a countertop in front of a window is fine, but cleaning remains difficult.”

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 7552 GN HENGELO  
 Tel. 074 – 2781464 ('s avonds)

VROUWEN  
 ADVIES  
 COMMISSIE  
 VOOR DE  
 WONINGBOUW



Hengelo, nov./dec. 2003

**BEOORDELING (Bijlage van brief wzctd-SJ.BRF)** pag. 3 van 7

PLAN : WoZoCo Oelerweg PROJECTNR. : H0019  
 OPDRACHTG.: WBS St. Joseph Onze Woning PLANFASE : Voorlopig Ontwerp  
 ARCHITECT : Leijh, Kappelhoff, Seckel, v.d.Dobbelsteen TYPE WONING : wozoco's

Plaats	Opmerking of advies	Reactie
<p>Vervolg <b>WONINGEN</b> ELK TYPE, Entree/Hal</p>	<p>Bij de voordeur is genoeg ruimte voor manoeuvreren met rolstoel, scootmobiel, brandcard; we zijn verheugd ook hier de opstelruimte voor de scootmobiel naast de meterkast tegen te komen.                      We vragen het licht in de hal te voorzien van 2 schakelaars, nl. 1 bij de voordeur en 1 direct naast de deur hal/woonkamer.                      Als Domatica wordt toegepast, vragen we de huisnummers 'plichtend' uit te voeren: hulpdiensten kunnen bij alarm snel zien waar ze moeten zijn. Ook is het handig de voordeur vanaf een alarmcentrale (met verificatieprotocol voor bevoegde zorgverleners) automatisch openend uit te voeren (evt. via loze leidingen voorbereiden).                      I.v.m. lichtinval in de hal vragen we de voordeur te voorzien van een doorkijkopening en/of zijlicht; het zijlicht naast de deur van hal/ woonkamer vragen we uit (doorvalveilig) glas te maken.</p>	
Toilet	<p>De toegangsdeuren van alle typen zodanig plaatsen en afhangen dat de slotzijde zich aan de woonkamer-kant bevindt: mensen in een rolstoel kunnen gebruik maken van het toilet in badkamer en inkijk vanaf de voordeur wordt zo voorkomen.</p>	
Woonkamer	<p>Hoewel dit van invloed is op het ontwerp, vragen we met klem horizontale kozijndelen of (val)beugels tussen 750 en 1950 mm hoogte boven de vloer te laten vervallen i.v.m. een vrij uitzicht.</p>	
Keuken	<p>I.v.m. een evenwichtiger lichtverdeling vragen we het raamkozijn (galerij) in het midden van de ruimte te plaatsen, als de indeling van het aanrecht dit toelaat. In elk geval raden we aan het raam zodanig uit de hoek te plaatsen dat bv. een koffiezetapparaat voor een wandgedeelte te plaatsen is (beter schoon te houden).                      Ook bij het bepalen van de hoogte van het raamkozijn adviseren we rekening te houden met schoonmaakaspecten (gezien vanuit ouderen en minder validen): voor sociaal contact is een aanrecht voor een raam plaatsen prima, maar het schoonmaken blijft lastig.                      Bij het bepalen van de hoogte van de onderkant van het raamkozijn vragen we rekening te houden met evt. verhoogde aanrechten.                      We adviseren een opstelplek voor een hoge koelkast en een evt. vaatwasser te reserveren, incl. installatiewerk.</p>	
Hobbykame r	<p>We adviseren de ventilatie uit te rekenen als was dit een slaapkamer; de kans bestaat dat bewoners deze ruimte toch als tijdelijke slaapruijnte gaan gebruiken. Bovendien zijn mensen vaak voor</p>	

Source: Annual Report 2003 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 5, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

**Original (Dutch) quote:**

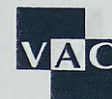
“Lijkt ons geen prettig idee te weten dat je op de hoogste verdieping woont, zonder burens waar je in geval van nood kunt aankloppen.”

**Translation:**

“Doesn't seem like a pleasant idea to know that you live on the highest floor, without neighbours you can knock on in case of an emergency.”

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COMMISSIE  
 VOOR DE  
 WONINGBOUW



Hengelo, nov./dec. 2003

BEOORDELING (Bijlage van brief wzctd-SJ.BRF)

pag. 5 van 7

PLAN : WoZoCo Oelerweg PROJECTNR. : H0019  
 OPDRACHTG.: WBS St. Joseph Onze Woning PLANFASE : Voorlopig Ontwerp  
 ARCHITECT : Leijh, Kappelhoff, Seckel, v.d.Dobbelsteen TYPE WONING : wozoco's

Plaats	Opmerking of advies	Reactie
Vervolg WON W1G-1 Woonkamer	Het effect van een ruime woonkamer wordt deels tenietgedaan door het penant tussen kook/eetgedeelte en zitgedeelte. Als deze wand geplaatst wordt tegen aan de andere zijde van de bergingdeur het eetgedeelte aan, 500 mm naast de, geeft dit een ruimtelijker effect, en is het zicht op het aanrecht ook beter afgeschermd.	
WON. W2 Badkamer	Om bewoners meer hulpverleningsmogelijkheden naast het sanitair te geven, adviseren we de optionele opstelplek voor wm en droger te laten vervallen en de indeling en ook afmetingen te wijzigen, zie voorstelschets. Ook raden we aan het toilet tegen de woonkamer-wand in rubbers op te hangen om geluidsoverlast te voorkomen.	
Woonkamer	Om zicht uit het zitgedeelte op het aanrecht te vermijden, raden we aan een 1.20 m hoge wand voor de kop van het aanrecht te zetten.	
WON. W3 Woonk. / keuken	We adviseren om aan de achterkant en kopse kant van het aanrecht een 1.20 m hoog wandje te plaatsen, om zicht vanaf het zitgedeelte te voorkomen en het keukengedeelte enigszins af te scheiden van de doorloop naar het woongedeelte. Ook vragen we aandacht voor extra ventilatie van het kookgedeelte omdat het in het woongedeelte steekt, en luchtjes en vetaanslag daar voorkomen moeten worden. Wellicht een idee om een 'geurdrempel' aan het plafond te maken; dit geeft tevens een visuele maar toch ruimtelijke afscheiding tussen keuken en woonkamer.	
Berging	Door de lengte in combinatie met de ondiepe breedte, zijn de gebruiksmogelijkheden beperkt.	
Badkamer / Toiletruimte	Voor de indeling verwijzen we naar bijgevoegde schets voor Won. W1 t/m W1G-1. Nadeel hier is dat er eigenlijk geen andere plek voorhanden is voor de wasmachine en droger.	
W3, 7 <sup>e</sup> verd.	Jammer dat hier een apart toilet ontbreekt.	
5 <sup>e</sup> – 7 <sup>e</sup> verd.	Lijkt ons geen prettig idee te weten dat je op de hoogste verdieping woont, zonder burens waar je in geval van nood kunt aankloppen. Naast de voordeur is op de galerij een spiltrap getekend, met	

**Source:** Annual Report 2006 VAC Hengelo, appendix 1, page 9, VAC Hengelo, 2006, Suze Eysink personal archive, Hengelo.

**Original (Dutch) quote:**

“Een ander punt van aandacht is de vage overgang van openbare naar semi-openbare ruimte. Omdat de hal beneden niet is afgesloten kunnen onbevoegden de ruimte gaan benutten voor samenscholing en schuilen tegen het klimaat; met alle risico's van overlast, vandalisme en binnendringing inde woningen. Toekomstige bewoners kunnen zich hierdoor (sociaal) onveilig voelen [...]”

**Translation:**

“Another point of concern is the vague transition from public to semi-public space. Because the hall downstairs is not closed off, unauthorised people can use the space to congregate and take shelter from the climate, with all the risks of nuisance, vandalism and intrusion into the homes. Future residents may feel (socially) uncomfortable as a result [...]”.

❖ Woningstichting Ons Belang

architect: Van Wylick Architecten

fase: Voorlopig Ontwerp

plaats: woontoren Esperanto, hart uitbreidingswijk Slangenbeek

type/aantal: 25 appartementen voor 50+-ers

De woningen zijn op zich redelijk ruim, goed bruikbaar en ook redelijk goed ingedeeld; er zijn diverse typen en grootten van appartementen. Ze zijn gunstig gelegen nabij voorzieningen en winkels.

Om deze beoogde doelgroep ook in de toekomst gebruiksvriendelijk te laten wonen is een levensloopbestendige uitvoering van de woningen en het woongebouw zeer na te streven. O.i. is het verdedigbaar in dit geval de kleinste lift te laten vervallen, als daarmee net genoeg ruimte extra ontstaat om de opstelruimte naast (voor)deuren te creëren en in de hal van de woningen een draaicirkelmogelijkheid te realiseren. Ten aanzien van mogelijke zorgverlening in de badkamer is vervanging van het ligbad door een douche zeer gewenst; het ligbad kan als optie worden aangeboden.

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*Dit advies is doorgegeven aan de projectontwikkelaar. Gezien de geringe invloed op de planvorming van dit project is e.e.a. niet besproken met de WBS. VAC Hengelo heeft geen inzicht hoeveel van haar advies is overgenomen in het vervolgtraject.*

❖ Woningstichting Ons Belang

architect: Peters en Lammerink Architecten

fase: Voorlopig Ontwerp

plaats: uitbreidingswijk 't Broek

type: 35 gekoppelde gezins- en enkele seniorenwoningen

Het zijn behoorlijk ruime woningen met een verfrissend gevarieerd uiterlijk en met diverse typen voor verschillende doelgroepen, wat de leefbaarheid binnen de wijk bevordert. Interessant is dat de hoekwoningen bedoeld zijn voor senioren.

In principe zijn de woningen goed bruikbaar. Wel is bij de gezinswoningen een lichte aanpassing nodig om een goede toegankelijkheid van de entree en de zoekbaarheid van de toiletruimte te realiseren. Bij de seniorenwoningen is voor