

Domus

Good quality housing for very
vulnerable people



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CAW Antwerpen

- | Non profit organisation (ngo)
- | Mission:
 - | Help people who are the most in need of help, in their own context, as soon as possible, with quality
 - | Strengthen people and their network
 - | Start from what clients want
 - | Aim the realization of the clients rights
 - | Influence policy makers and social developments



CAW Antwerpen

Vision for combating homelessness:

3 movements:

- towards housing solutions
- towards prevention
- towards a network focused support



The origins of Domus

Private family with an idea and great solidarity with the homeless, wanted to invest private capital in people with the highest needs.

CAW: one of the shelters had to leave the building rentend from local authorities because of renovation needs.

But we wanted to change the concept.



The origins of Domus

Two ways of working on the problem of homelessness:
shelter – support at home

Brought together two teams, two approaches

People who don't succeed in living alone, even with support: need other type of housing: formula of group housing, support nearby.



Purposes: housing people with dignity and quality

- | provide adapted housing for very vulnerable people
- | offer the necessary support
- | collaboration with other support: home care and home nursing
- | Self-esteem
- | develop skills and strength to manage as soon as possible without support
- | contact with family, children as soon as possible



| Realisation of Domus

- | Mix of 28 different types of apartments and studios
- | for singles, couples and families
 - | 3 studios wheelchair accessible
 - | 2 studio's for less mobile persons
 - | 2 normal studios
 - | 12 apartments 1 bedroom
 - | 8 apartments 2 bedrooms
 - | 1 apartment 3 bedrooms



| Realisation of Domus



2011-2012



| Realisation of Domus





King Baudouin Foundation – Domus Fund

- | private capital: ½ cost acquisition and renovation building
- | activation project
- | housing cost of 4 people with precarious residence status



Public funds

- | Region of Flanders: ½ cost acquisition and renovation building
- | Local government: support team



| **Group housing**

- | Mix of people, adapted studio's/apartments
- | Common parts: meeting room with kitchen, garden, washing machines
- | Attention for group dynamics: stimulate care for each other
- | Open discussion about behavior, use of alcohol and drugs, and self-care: ensure the quality of life and the safety in the complex.



Support

Financial, administrative, social, psychological support.

Residents with extra care needs: care coördination

e.g. medical care: doctors, nurses, volunteers, family



Residents

38 adults,
average age 48 years, youngest: 24, oldest: 72 years.
4 are couples with children, 7 are single parents

21 children
average age 8,6 years, youngest 7 months, oldest 20
years



New residents

Via care initiatives that reach the homeless:

- | local team northern Antwerp
- | Outreach-team
- | easily accessible services
- | voluntary organisation Kamiano
- | residential care

! capacity of the support team

! quality of life in the complex



Special attention

- | chronic homeless
- | 2 units for people with precarious residence status
- | people who especially benefit from the group
- | no violence, willingness to take account of others, honestly discuss behavior



Housing security

Depends on the possibilities:

- ▮ Residents who can with time move to regular social housing (65%)
- ▮ Residents with permanent need of housing support stay long term, it is better to maintain stability (35% but growing group)
- ▮ People with need of more specialised care move to residential or elderly care, ...
- ▮ 2015: 7 people/families moved



District team northern Antwerp

- | Collaboration of volunteers and professional social workers from different organisations, with different specialisations
- | People from the district can come by with questions and problems
- | When alerted, social workers go towards people in trouble (or causing trouble)
- | 'go for it'
- | Prevention of eviction by mediation when tenant and owner (social or private) agree



| **Community building**

- | Link with activities and organisations in the neighborhood: the community means something to the Domus residents ... and vice versa
- | Create and strengthen contacts between residents and networks; restore contact with families and children



Activation

- | Focus not only on care: reciprocity; self-esteem can be developed as people discover their own abilities
- | Participants are part of the team: clients become colleagues
- | Activities: help other residents repairing and moving; bike repair; garden; chicken project; open door workshops; group holiday; bbq

Questions ?

