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Cohousing: A Suitable Strategy for Ageing in Place?
Lessons Learnt from Bonn, Germany.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"We should be concerned about whether older people stay put or move from their current dwellings because of overwhelming evidence that the quality of their residential and care environments influence whether they will age successfully or optimally, that is, have healthy, autonomous, engaged and happy lives. As I have argued elsewhere, it is more enjoyable, easier and less costly to grow old in some places than in others." (Golant 2018: 190)

1.1 Background

As people get older, their homes become increasingly important. During adulthood, the daily life of most people takes place both at home and in the workplace. After retirement, however, life increasingly takes place in and around the home (Kricheldorff 2004). For instance, more than half of those aged 65 and above spend less than four hours a day outside their own home (Küster 1998; Cornwell et al. 2008). Elderly people thus significantly rely on their immediate living environment, even more if their physical and mental capabilities dwindle as they grow older (Lawton 1990). The way in which, where and with whom elderly people live therefore has a decisive influence on their quality of life, happiness and physical as well as psychological well-being (Lipman et al. 2010).

Although living in old age is often associated with special purpose residential arrangements such as retirement homes, nursing homes or assisted living, this hardly reflects the actual housing situation of the majority of elderly people. In Germany, living in old age for most elderly people means a continuation of their previous way of living (Krämer 2005). Around 97 percent of people aged 65 and above live in their own household, much like their younger counterparts (Gerostat 2017a). Although the likelihood that one has to move to a special purpose home increases as the person grows older, at only three percent, the share of elderly people in Germany living in such a residential arrangement is comparatively low (Gerostat 2017b). On the one hand, this is due to the fact that elderly people, as a result of rising life expectancy, tend to require nursing care only at a comparatively high age (Hoffmann et al. 2017). While only three percent of those aged 65 to 70 require nursing care, this number rises significantly once above the age of 80. Among those aged 80 to 85, the proportion of people in need of care is already above 20 percent. Beyond the age of 90, this share increases to more than 66 percent (DESTATIS 2017). Another reason for the relatively low proportion of elderly people living in nursing homes is that the need for nursing care does nowadays not necessarily imply the necessity to move into a retirement or nursing home. Only a quarter of those in need of care receive stationary care, while the overwhelming majority receive care in their own home (Hoffmann et al. 2017). At 94 percent, domestic care is mostly provided by predominantly female family members, while only around six percent is provided by ambulant care services (BMG 2019). Domestic care provided by family members thus plays a key role in enabling elderly people to age in place, which is to "remain living in the community, with some level of independence rather than in residential care (Davey et al. 2004).

The majority of elderly people as well as policy makers consider ageing in place as highly desirable (Wiles et al. 2011). For most elderly people, the preference for ageing in place is linked to the desire to remain independent, preserve autonomy and maintain social relationships with family, friends and neighbors (Cutchin 2004; Golant 2015). Ensuring that elderly people can stay in their homes within their communities for as long as possible also has economic benefits, as institutional care is much more expensive than domestic care (Chapell et al. 2004). This makes ageing in place a particularly attractive housing strategy for policy makers to deal with an ageing demographic (Kaye et al. 2009). It is therefore not surprising that in recent decades the geriatric policies of many western countries such as Germany have placed a strong emphasis on the expansion of ambulant care infrastructure and the development of alternative housing options for the elderly; adhering to the principle "ambulatory before stationary" ("ambulant vor stationär") (Golant 2015; Hoffmann et al. 2017).

1.2 Problem statement

The social, psychological and economic benefits of ageing in place have already been extensively documented in numerous studies (e.g. Buffel et al. 2012; Rowles 1983, 1993). In recent years, however, an increasing number of studies argue that staying put may not yield the desired benefits for all elderly people equally and might even reduce their quality of life (e.g. Sixsmith et al. 2008; Thomas & Blanchard 2009; Scharlach & Moore 2016). For example, (Golant 2015) argues, that for some elderly people ageing in place might lead to social isolation and loneliness. Furthermore, there are concerns that the dissolution of traditional family support structures might lead to a decline in domestic care provided by family members (Hoffmann et al. 2017). Moreover, there has also been a growing differentiation in housing preferences within the elderly population, particularly among the baby boomer generation (Dörner 2010). With the baby boomers, a large cohort will be entering retirement between 2020 and 2035, and whose expectations of living in old age are significantly different from those of their parents (Höpflinger 2009). The traditional housing strategies of "staying at home" and "moving to a retirement home" are increasingly considered inadequate by many baby boomers (Fedrowitz 2013). Moreover, this cohort shows a growing acceptance of community-based forms of living and an increasing willingness to relocate after retirement (DESTATIS 2018b).

As a response to these changing requirements and expectations, an increasing number of community-based housing options for elderly people have been developed in Germany since the late 1980s, including assisted living, senior flat-sharing as well as senior- and intergenerational cohousing (Schader Stiftung 2006). Among these new forms of elderly living, cohousing in particular has experienced increasing popularity among elderly people in Germany since the early 2000s (Fedrowitz 2013). Cohousing is both a housing and living concept developed in Denmark during the 1970s in which people of the same age (senior cohousing) or from different generations (intergenerational cohousing) consciously group together to live in a community of mutual support, while simultaneously maintaining their independence (Bamford 2005; Mensch 2011). As such, cohousing follows the principle of "living together privately" (Durret 2011). Cohousing projects usually consist of several private

apartments or houses, which are complemented by extensive community facilities and community areas. In most cases, the project is planned and managed jointly by the residents (Durret 2009). During the residential phase, joint activities, self-administration tasks and a community-building architecture promote interaction among the residents and thus facilitate the formation of long-term social networks (Williams 2005).

According to estimates, there are about 2,000 to 3,000 cohousing projects in Germany at the moment, with an upward trend (Fedrowitz 2016). Nevertheless, given its comparatively small proportion, cohousing enjoys considerable interest among citizens, municipalities and the media, as it is often hailed as a promising strategy for promoting self-determination and independence in old age (ageing in place) (Labit 2015). However, despite strong public interest and a steadily increasing number of scientific studies, empirical research on cohousing projects in Germany is still in its infancy. In particular, there is a lack of empirical evidence of how elderly people experience the process of ageing in a cohousing community. This may be due to the fact that in Germany a major proportion of cohousing projects have only been developed in the past 10 to 15 years, which has limited the possibility to investigate the process of growing older in a cohousing project over an extended period of time. However, this situation has now changed. Currently, numerous cohousing projects can be found that have existed for more than ten years and whose elderly residents have gained profound insights into the advantages and disadvantages of using cohousing as a strategy for ageing in place. Now is the time to tap into these residents' knowledge to unravel what contribution cohousing projects can realistically make to promote self-determined and independent living in old age.

1.3 Research design

The aim of the following study is to examine what solutions cohousing as a social innovation can offer in response to the changing housing preferences and needs of an increasingly ageing population. For this purpose, a ten-years later study was carried out using the example of the cohousing community Heerstraße of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. The main purpose of this study is to examine the lessons that can be learned from the elderly residents' ten years of cohousing experiences about the suitability of the cohousing concept as a strategy to promote ageing in place. For this purpose, the study pursues several objectives: First, the motivations behind relocation to a cohousing community will be investigated. Secondly, the study examines how the various expectations, wishes and concerns of future residents influenced the conceptual design of the cohousing project and what challenges they encountered while transforming these conceptual ideas into a concrete residential project. Thirdly, it investigates how the residents experienced ageing in the community during their ten years of residence. Fourthly, it examines the challenges that residents see today and in the future in maintaining the community. The scope of this study thus does not restrict itself to the residential phase but covers the whole ageing in place process starting from the residents' decision to change their housing situation and join a cohousing community, followed by the joint planning and development process, all the way to the residential phase and the experiences

made while ageing in the community. Building on these objectives, the following main research question was formulated:

MQ: What can cohousing contribute as a strategy to promote ageing in place?

In order to answer the research question, a qualitative case-study approach has been applied. The empirical research was carried out in a multi-stage procedure using various instruments. First, exploratory open interviews were conducted with several elderly residents of the cohousing project Heerstraße. Secondly, in the same cohousing project, semi-structured interviews were conducted in combination with non-structured participant observations. These interviews were supplemented by two group interviews with elderly residents of two other existing (Duisdorf and Plittersdorf) - and one currently planned - cohousing projects (Schuhmannhöhe) belonging to the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V..

1.4 Outline
The following study is structured as follows: Having given a brief overview of the background and objectives of this thesis in Chapter 1, the thematic foundation of this work is presented in Chapter 2. For this purpose, an introduction the concept of ageing in place will be provided followed by an explanation of the shifting housing needs of elderly people in Germany in the context of demographic and social change. Based on this, the cohousing concept will be presented as an alternative housing strategy for the elderly. After outlining the specific characteristics of the cohousing concept, the current state of research regarding the suitability of cohousing as a strategy to promote ageing in place will be presented and existing knowledge gaps will be identified.

Based on these identified gaps, the research design for this work is set out in Chapter 3. For this purpose, research questions will be formulated and the methods used to collect and analyze the empirical data will be introduced. Subsequently, a brief description of the implemented quality improvement measures is provided. Finally, measures which have been used to improve the quality of the research are described.

Chapter 4 analyzes the results of the empirical research. The ageing in place experiences of the elderly cohousing residents are presented in chronological order starting from the decision to move into a cohousing project, continuing with the planning and development phase and ending with the residential phase.

Following the analysis, the most important results are summarized in Chapter 5 and subsequently discussed against the background of the initial research question and the lessons that can be learned from the case study. Furthermore, the research design will be critically discussed in retrospect with regard to its suitability for answering the research question. Finally, a conclusion of this study is drawn in Chapter 6.

2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEMATIC EMBEDDING

The following chapter lays the thematic and theoretical foundation of this study. For this purpose the chapter is divided into four sections: Chapter 2.1 provides an introduction to the concept of old age and gives an overview of how our understanding of what it means to age successfully has changed over the past decades. Chapter 2.2 introduces the concept of 'ageing in place', which emerged from this new understanding of ageing successfully during the 1980s and has since then had a major influence on the provision of elderly housing in many Western countries. Based on this conceptual foundation, chapter 2.3 illustrates how increasing demographic and social changes have urged the development of alternative residential models in Germany to promote ageing in place. The cohousing concept as one of these new residential models will be presented in more detail in chapter 2.4.

2.1 Growing old 'successfully'

Housing, and thus also living in old age, has always been a reflection of social conditions (Philippsen 2014). In the course of its historical development, every society has developed different forms of housing, housing conditions and housing styles (Schmals 2000). Our current understanding of living in old age has essentially been driven by a major shift in our understanding of what it means to age successfully and how this can be achieved. This development will be presented in the following.

2.1.1 The meaning of old age

Old age describes the last stage of human life. From a biological perspective, ageing can be understood as an inevitable and irreversible development process characterized by a progressive decline of physical functionality as a result of cellular and organ failures (Westendorf & Kirkwood 2007). As such the ageing process is a steady companion along all phases of life from growth and maturation to decline and death (Kirkwood & Austard 2000). Even though the ageing process is inherent to all human beings, the speed in which biological ageing is taking place depends upon a number of endogenous factors such as genetics and habits as well as exogenous factors such the environment (Grundy 1991). However, what constitutes old age also depends on how the biological ageing process is socially interpreted. For example, the concept of chronological age has been used as a construct to structure the lifetime[1] of humans as a monodirectional trajectory from birth till death into several phases, by using it as a measurement scale of how many years one has lived (Giele & Elder 1998). Furthermore it allows us to attribute specific socially defined roles and characteristics for each of these phases as well as events that announce the transition from one phase to the next, such as the entry into working life or retirement (Setterstend & Meyer 1997).

In western societies the transition to old age is often incidental with reaching the age of retirement, which is usually around the age of 65 years (Golant 2015). However, while this

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[1] The terms life cycle, life span, life trajectory or life course are often used interchangeably to refer to the conceptualization of human life as a monodirectional trajectory (Giele & Elder 1998).

threshold appears to be relatively stable over time, life expectancy has been constantly increasing (World Bank 2016). As a consequence the post retirement period has enlarged tremendously compared to that of preceding generations. Moreover, the period between retirement and death has not only been quantitatively extended but also qualitatively improved (Smith 2002). Today, elderly people often reach an advanced age without experiencing any serious physical or cognitive impairments (Peace et al. 2007). Old age is thus increasingly becoming a phase in life which can still be actively shaped into an advanced age (Smith 2002). This has led to a debate, as to whether it would not be more appropriate to differentiate old age not as one but multiple life phases characterized by different qualities (Setterstend & Meyer 1997). As a result, different approaches were developed to differentiate old age into different stages, such as young-old, old, and the oldest old (e.g. Neugarten 1974; Suzman et al 1992) or third age and fourth age (e.g. Baltes 1996; Baltes & Mayer 1999; Laslett 1991). The basic idea behind these differentiations[2] is that old age can be divided into a phase in which individuals enjoy relatively good health, are active and socially integrated (third age) and a phase characterized by decline in physical and mental capabilities and inactivity (fourth age) (Neugarten 1974). The expansion of the third age has also had a substantial impact on our current understanding of what it means to grow old successfully and what needs to be done to accomplish it. This shift will now be presented in the following.

2.1.2 Perspectives on ageing successfully: From disengagement to positive ageing

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the discourse on old age and what constitutes successful ageing was strongly driven by an image of old age as a phase essentially characterized by inactivity and dependency (Peace et al. 2007). The rise of the European welfare state after world war two and the implementation of a public pension scheme led to a shift in the perceived role of elderly people in society (Walker 1993). While on the one hand, the renegotiation of the intergenerational contract which regulates the transfer of public funds from one generation to another guaranteed a fixed income after retirement, it simultaneously caused the economic dependency of pensioners on the state (Binstock 2010; Walker 2008). As the provision of pensions based on an intergenerational contract presupposes a proper balance between the percentage of the working population and pensioners, the increasing number of pensioners combined with a decline in the working population caused by demographic change led to concerns regarding the sustainability of the system (Riera 2005). Moreover, it contributed to an image of elderly people as economically unproductive and excessive consumers of public funds and thus a social burden (Riera 2005; Walker 2009). The image of old age as a phase characterized by dependency and inactivity paved the floor for alarmist discourses which framed demographic change as a global economic burden, using metaphors such as "silver tsunami" (O'Neill 2009) or "elderly avalanche" (Russel 1990), referring to the arrival of the

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[2] Even though the distinction between these two phases of old age are diffuse and may vary depending of the different physical and mental constitutions of elderly people, the differentiation of old age into different phases on the basis of health status, social participation and daily living needs is commonly accepted (Smith 2002).

baby-boomers into retirement (Perez-Diaz 2005). This negative perspective of old age was further supported by the development of several scientific theories on ageing.

Disengagement Theory

The first theory that tried to explain what constitutes "successful" or "satisfactory" ageing from a social scientific perspective was the Disengagement Theory formulated by Cummin and Henry in 1961. The theory frames the ageing process as an "(...) inevitable, mutual withdrawal or disengagement[3], resulting in decreased interaction between the aging person and others in the social system he belongs to" (Cumming & Henry 1961: 227). In this sense the withdrawal or disengagement from society after retirement is understood as a voluntary and natural process in which the elderly person transfers his/her power and social role to the younger generation, thus leading to mutual benefits for both parties. Despite of the criticism of the Disengagement Theory for its universal and unidirectional understanding of ageing (Bengtson & Putney 2009), the theory still has a strong historical significance in gerontology and for a long time served as the theoretical foundation for the implementation of several public policies in both Western Europe and North America that fostered a separation of elderly people from broader society (Estes 2001).

Activity Theory

In 1963, Havighurst proposed the Activity Theory as a response to the Disengagement Theory. He argued that if gerontology as a science wants to provide good advice, it needs to be based on a theory of successful ageing that is able to describe the conditions necessary to promote maximum life satisfaction and happiness in old age (Havighurst 1961). The theory is based on the idea that successful or satisfactory ageing cannot be achieved by withdrawing and disengaging from society, as proposed in the Disengagement Theory, but rather by actively maintaining social relationships and activities (Bengtson & Putney 2009). This can be achieved by seeking ways to replace the roles lost in by retirement with similar ones such as volunteering, community services or other activities (Schulz 2006). As such, the Activity Theory was the first theory on ageing that proposed the idea of a positive relationship between maintaining an active later life and life satisfaction (Loue & Sajatovic 2008). However, the theory has also been criticized for neglecting that differences in health and economic status may hinder older people's abilities to engage in such activities or possibly not want to at all (Bengtson & Putney 2009; Victor 2005). Nonetheless, policies based on this theory had a much more positive understanding of old age compared to those based on the Disengagement Theory, as they recognized the need to keep elderly people socially integrated to encourage a successful ageing experience (Victor 2005).

Continuity Theory

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[3] The idea of old age as a phase of withdrawing and disengagement from society, was in a similar way already presented by Carl Jung during the 1920s and 1930s, who framed later life as a process of psychological turning inwards (Jung 1933).

Based on the idea of the Activity Theory, Atchley (1989) developed the Continuity Theory of normal ageing, which states that throughout the ageing process elderly people try to maintain the activities, behaviors, preferences and relationships they acquired in previous life phases for as long as possible, by actively adapting to new circumstances through the application of familiar knowledge, skills and strategies (Atchley 1989). As such, the ageing process is seen as a dynamic and evolutionary developmental process in which people grow, adapt, and change (Loue & Sajatovic 2008). In contrast to the other two theories on ageing, the Continuity Theory is based on an entirely different understanding of the role of the elderly person within the ageing process, as there is no pre-established pattern on how to achieve successful ageing but rather the individual has the power to decide which role or activity he or she wants to maintain or reject while getting older (Fernandez 2013). The Continuity Theory has too been criticized for not considering elderly people with chronic health conditions in their definition of 'normal ageing'. Furthermore, even though both Activity Theory and Continuity Theory indicated the development of a new perspective on ageing, the prevailing understanding on what it meant to age successfully was still largely dominated by positions based on Disengagement Theory (Golant 2015). As a result, classical gerontological theories have long been used as a theoretical foundation for interventionist measures in geriatric practice and social policy, despite their limited significance in scientific research (Sajatovic 2009).

Successful ageing

As a reaction to these widely negative images of old age during the second half of the twentieth century and the increasing discreditation of Disengagement Theory, increasing efforts have been made for new theoretical developments and the reversal of existing negative stereotypes by recognizing and emphasizing the positive aspects of ageing (Achemaum 2000). The development of this new positive ageing paradigm, also known as 'new gerontology', was closely linked to the efforts made by the MacArthur Foundation for developing a new theoretical and methodological basis to better understand what determines successful ageing (Bülow & Söderqvist 2014). The MacArthur successful-ageing study reviewed hundreds of scientific studies to understand the genetic, biomedical, social and behavioral factors that influence the physical and mental constitution of elderly people, which led to almost one hundred scientific publications and the formulation of the 'Successful Ageing concept' (Bülow & Söderqvist 2014). The introduction of the Successful Ageing concept by Rowe and Kahn in 1997 played a key role in contemporary research and public discourse on ageing and led the development of other related concepts such as Healthy Ageing, Positive Ageing, Optimal Ageing and Active Ageing (Bülow & Söderqvist 2013). The basic idea behind the development of the concept was that ageing is not a process that is inevitably related with the 4 D's: dependency, disease, disability and depression, but can also take place without or with only minimal loss of physical and cognitive functions, if the individuals follow three basic principles to age successfully, which they defined as avoiding disease and disability, maintaining a high of mental and physical functioning and keeping actively engaged in life (Bülow & Söderqvist 2013; Golant 2015; Rowe and Kahn in 1997). As such this outcome-based concept aimed at

reversing the negative meaning of old age by arguing that old age can also be a phase of individual conquest if the gains and losses an individual may experience while getting older are kept in balance (Fernandez 2013).

However, the Successful Ageing concept has received some strong criticism from several scholars throughout the years. For example, Strawbridge et al. (2002) argues that the anti-ageing message of the Positive Ageing paradigm encouraged the formation of an unrealistic positive stereotype of how elderly people should look like and behave. Another point of criticism is that the concept only offers a static snapshot of the individual in old age, while failing to capture developmental processes of change and continuity over time (Stowe & Cooney 2014). The Successful Ageing concept has further been criticized for using mainly individual indicators, including factors such as income, ethnicity and age, functional abilities physical health, cognitive functioning or sensory skills for predicting physical and mental wellbeing and focusing on attributing successful ageing to explanatory variable such as being in good health, being married, higher levels of education or having a healthy diet (Pruchno et al 2010). Golant (2015: 8) argues that "focusing predominantly on individual-based remedies is an incomplete recipe for aging successfully" and that "the prescription for successful ageing offered by the New Gerontology paradigm erroneously assumes that elderly people grow old in some situational, contextual, or environmental vacuum" and thus neglects the tremendous role that both the built, social and psychological environment plays for elderly people to have a positive ageing experience, feel good about themselves and being able to live an independent and healthy lifestyle.

In summary it can be said that although the Successful Ageing concept was introduced over 30 years ago and despite wide criticism, it remains still influential and widely cited in the academic discourse on ageing (Bülow & Söderqvist 2013). Moreover, the concept solidified a turning point in the prior thinking on ageing which focused on disease and disability and provided ample opportunities for the implementation of public policies and funding programs in both the United States and Europe, that regarded elderly people as valuable members of the society who benefit from active and engaging lives, and emphasized solutions based on individual responsibility rather than responsibility of the state (Bülow & Söderqvist 2014; Golant 2015; Rowe & Kahn 1997; Stowe & Cooney 2014).

2.2 Ageing in place: A new policy direction for growing old successfully

With the introduction of ageing in place policies in the United States and many European countries, the new understanding of successful ageing also had an impact on the provision of housing for elderly people (Rowles & Bernard, 2013). Ageing in place emerged during the late 1980s as housing and health care policy increasingly shifted from a model based on institutionally provided care to a model in which elderly people received care at home (Lee 2003). Simultaneously, ageing in place became increasingly present as a concept in age-related scientific literature, covering a wide range of topics such as housing, community and social services, assistive devices and health care technologies (Byrnes et al. 2009). Since ageing in

place is both a scientific concept and a social policy, both perspectives will be addressed in the following. Chapter 2.2.1 examines the meaning of ageing in place. Chapter 2.2.2 focuses on the influence of the home and residential environment on the ability of elderly people to successfully age in place. Chapter 2.2.3 addresses the objectives of ageing in place policies and the expected benefits associated with them. Finally, the concept of ageing in place will be critically discussed in Chapter 2.2.4.

2.2.1 The meaning of ageing in place

"Aging in place" is not a new concept but has been around in the academic literature and public debates for the last 30 years (Rowles & Bernard, 2013). Despite or maybe because of its lengthy presence, there is still no universal definition of what constitutes ageing in place. As McFadden & Bradt (1991) point out, "ageing in place means many things to many people". In its original use, ageing in place simply referred to elderly people staying put in their homes (Rowles & Bernard, 2013). However, during the 1980s the interpretation of ageing in place was broadened to elderly people staying in their own homes, even if they experienced major life-changing events such as retirement, the loss of a spouse or physical and cognitive impairments (Pynoos et al. 2009). During the 1990s the definition of ageing in place did not only include elderly people keep staying in their own home but also those living in any kind of non-institutional residential arrangement such as independent living communities or assisted living communities (Golant 2015). Since then ageing in place not only referred to a certain demographic group remaining in their homes after retirement, but rather became a catch-all phrase that embodies the strong desire of elderly people to live independently and avoid moving into a retirement or nursing home (Rowles & Bernard, 2013). However, some authors argue that ageing in place should not only be understood as the mere attachment of elderly people to their home and residential environment but rather as a process in which the elderly person "is continually integrating with places and renegotiating meanings and identity in the face of dynamic landscapes of social, political, cultural, and personal change" (Andrews et al. 2007). In order to integrate this processual character of ageing in place, it should therefore be defined as "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level (CDC 2013). This definition is perceived as particularly suitable, as it focuses on the ability to age in place while not defining the 'place' in question. As such the 'place' does not have to be the home in which the ageing person has lived for many years, as is usually assumed in many definitions of ageing in place (Golant 2015). Therefore, 'place' can also be a home within a community of care, or any other environment that feels like a home and in which the elderly person wants to age for as long as possible.

2.2.2 Ageing and environment: the dimensions of ageing in place

Although the public and scientific discussion on ageing in place focuses mostly on the home, studies from the field of environmental gerontology are increasingly pointing out that the ability of an elderly person to successfully age in place does not only depend on the home itself but also on the characteristics of the immediate residential environment, the community or the

neighborhood (Oswald et al. 2010). The unique role that the living environment plays in the ageing process has already been investigated in numerous studies (e.g. Diez Roux 2002; Fenton 2011; Lawton & Nahemow, 1973). The home and the surrounding environment affects the lives of elderly people in numerous ways, which is why housing is also referred to as a 'key determinant of ageing' (Weltzien 2004: 31). In contrast to adults, for whom the home is a place of retreat into the private sphere, the elderly increasingly regard it as the center of their lives (Clemens & Naegele 2004). As people get older, they usually tend to spend an increasingly large part of their time and activities in and around their houses, apartments and neighborhoods, making the immediate environment the key reference space in which they organize and perform their day-to-day activities (Burns et al. 2011). Given that elderly people tend to spend most[4] of their day in their homes, housing becomes a very important aspect in dealing with age-related challenges (Küster 1998). According to Hellgardt (2013) the process of ageing in place is linked to several interconnected environmental dimensions, namely to spatial, psychological and social dimensions.

Spatial dimension

The spatial dimension of the housing environment comprises both the dwelling itself and the residential environment, whereby the residential environment may include the immediate surroundings of the house, the neighborhood, the residential quarter or the entire district (Saup & Reichert 1999). It therefore encompasses both the housing facilities and the structural composition of the residential environment itself. Depending on the features, the spatial dimension can have a significant influence on the person's ability to operate in this environment (Clemens & Naegele 2004). According to Bronfenbrenner (1981), the spatial dimension can be divided into three levels: First, the micro-level, which comprises the dwelling and its direct surroundings. Second, the meso-level, which comprises the immediate residential environment such as the neighborhood or the apartment block. Third, the macro level, which covers the extended residential environment, the neighborhood or the urban district. While the micro level is particularly important with regard to accessibility, the meso and macro levels play a key role when it comes to local supply, transport infrastructure and medical care (Bronfenbrenner 1981). All spatial levels are interconnected and have different requirements as well as options for action. As such, depending on the characteristics of the various levels, these can either promote or significantly impair independence and competence in old age and thus elderly residents' ability to age in place (Kaiser 2000). A properly equipped dwelling located in a stimulating and barrier-free residential environment can thus have a positive influence on the activity of the elderly person, while barriers in the residential environment can limit the elderly persons' range of action (Golant 2015). Likewise, the availability of urban infrastructure and supply facilities play an important role for elderly people when it comes to living independently (Golant 2012). The availability of relevant infrastructure becomes particularly important when physical or cognitive limitations require special care, such as domestic assistance or nursing care. Only if

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[4] More than half of those aged 65 and above spend less than four hours a day outside their own home (Küster 1998; Cornwell et al. 2008).

the residential environment provides such services, is the elderly person able to make up for the loss of competences (Lawton 1980).

Psychological dimension
In addition to the spatial dimension, ageing in place also has a psychological dimension. This is particularly evident given that the assessment of the suitability of the home and the residential environment can vary greatly from person to person (Golant 2012). Although the subjective residential experience and residential satisfaction may correspond with the objective situation, they do not have to (Golant 2015). This is because the interactions between the environment and the ageing person are shaped not only by activities but also by various subjective meanings. Housing is thus characterized by a process of physical, social and psychological exchanges between the individual and the living environment (Flade 1987). As such, the home represents a place of intimacy and privacy in which physical and emotional needs are being expressed (Golant 2012). In this context, it must be considered that the need for privacy is not only dependent on socio-cultural norms but also on age. As Lüdtke (1999) states, the desire for privacy in one's own home increases with age. According to Lang (2012), this increasing desire for privacy is due to the fact that the elderly person's living environment enables him or her to lead his or her own private life in an individually designed environment charged with emotional meanings and identity. Furthermore, the home has an important function in the spatial and temporal organization of the resident's life (Metzler & Rauscher 2004). As such the home helps to satisfy the need for stability and familiarity and thus helps to maintain continuity in life (Flade 1987). This desire for privacy and continuity also explains to some degree why elderly people are comparatively less willing to relocate than their younger counterparts (Golant 2015). This is also due to the fact that the loss of the familiar environment is accompanied by a loss of orientation, and a feeling of insecurity (Flade 1987). As a result, for some elderly people a relocation may lead to emotional stress, loneliness, depression as well as adjustment difficulties (Chapin & Dobbs-Kepper 2001). Against this background, it is not surprising that the vast majority of elderly people wishe to remain as long as possible in their familiar surroundings (Hoffmann et al. 2017). Even if the residential environment is objectively no longer suitable, for a large number of elderly people moving is not an option (Rüßler 2007).

Social dimension
The desire to remain in one's own home for as long as possible is also rooted in the social dimension of ageing in place. In old age the home and the residential environment becomes an important place for social interaction (Golant 2012). For many elderly people, the place where they live is often the place where they have lived for many years and where many social contacts exist (Lawton 1980). In some cases these social contacts form an important support network for the aging person which allows him or her to maintain a certain degree of independence (Golant 2015). It is now well known that functional social networks contribute demonstrably to increased well-being in old age by strengthening the sense of belonging and promoting an active lifestyle (Bär 2008). Furthermore, social networks can also function as support networks when

needed and thus provide a feeling of security and relief (Golant 2012). However, the ability to build social networks is also directly linked to the spatial dimension of ageing in place. For example, a lack of options for participation and joint activities or an unsafe environment may hinder the development of neighborly ties (Golant 2015; Hellgardt 2013). Consequently, to assist ageing in place attention needs to be given to all dimensions of the housing environment instead of just focusing on one dimension such as enabling the accessibility of the apartment while neglecting the accessibility of the dwelling or the neighborhood. However, given the different ways in which residential environments may perform along these three dimensions, in some places more than others, elderly people are better able to cope with physical and mental impairments, keep their independence longer, and stay actively engaged (Kawachi & Berkman 2003).

2.2.3 The objectives of ageing in place policies

As clarified in the previous section, many elderly people wish to remain living in their home for as long as possible (Golant 2009). Ageing in place policies aim at helping elderly people to fulfill this wish by implementing measures that promote independent living within the preferred residential environment rather than moving to a retirement home (Rowles & Bernard, 2013). These measures may include financial support for the barrier-free modification of dwellings, the expansion of ambulatory care services, the development of alternative residential solutions for the elderly or the development of an age-appropriate urban infrastructure, just to name a few (Golant 2015). In this context, independence is to be understood as having both abilities and possibilities to sustain an independent lifestyle (Backes 1997). However, independence does not mean that the elderly person has to do everything on his or her own, but that he or she can also be assisted by other people (e.g. ambulatory care services) or assistive devices (e.g. stair lifts) (Kruse 2005). In this sense, the World Health Organization (WHO) defines 'independence' as "the ability to perform functions related to daily living - i.e. the capacity of living in the community with no or little help from others" (WHO 2002: 13). The support should therefore be structured in such a way that the elderly residents can continue to live their lives to the best of their ability, despite existing physical and cognitive impairments (Sowarka 2002). Ageing in place therefore goes hand in hand with the need for the aging person to take responsibility for himself/herself and to acquire competence in self-sufficiency, household management, as well as in civic life (Stamm 2007: 5). Policies usually proclaim ageing in place as a win-win situation for both the elderly as well as for society as a whole (Golant 2015). While on one hand, enabling elderly people to maintain independence as well as social support structures, including friends and family, is in line with the desire of the majority of elderly people to stay for as long as possible in their community of choice, it also avoids costly institutional care (Lawton 1990; Pynoos et al. 2009). Given the increasing number of elderly people as a result of demographic change, ageing in place policies also seek to prevent excessive strain on public funds (Hoffmann et al. 2017). According to Perring-Chiello and Dubach (2012), the benefits of ageing in place can be summarized as follows:

"(Ageing in place) should be aspired to from a social-psychological point of view, from a social-sociological and finally from an microeconomic and macroeconomic perspective. Not only does it promote independence and self-determination, it also counteracts social segregation, saves economic costs in the healthcare system and potentially reduces the need for supplementary care for elderly people in disadvantaged financial situations" (Perrig-Chiello & Dubach 2012: 53).

2.2.4 Ageing in (the right) place?

Over the last three decades researchers and public policies have placed a strong emphasis on conceptualizing staying in your own home as a desirable and worthwhile goal for living in later life based on the assumption that this might lead to a higher quality of life and better well-being (Vasunalishorn et al. 2012). However, the idea of staying put as a gold standard for ageing in place has been increasingly criticized among scholars (e.g. Fried, 2000; Golant, 2015; Thomas & Blanchard, 2009). Golant (2015) argues, that failing to question 'staying put' as the ultimate strategy for ageing in place, implies a static, non-changing conception of human development, leading to the false assumption that once the residential environment fits the elderly persons needs during earlier years, it will do the same throughout the rest of that persons live. This bears the risk of overlooking the situation that not all elderly people may reap the benefits of ageing in place by staying in their old homes equally and that in some cases this may actually do harm, reduce the elderly persons quality of life and may even be received as a burden (Sixsmith et al. 2008; Thomas & Blanchard 2009; Scharlach & Moore 2016).

In reality, there is a growing number of academic studies that show that there is an increasing number of elderly people who report feeling lonely, socially isolated, have difficulties walking their neighborhood or even feel unsafe doing so on their own, have trouble conducting their activities of daily living independently or have difficulties paying for their housing costs (Golant & Lagreca 1994; Lipman et al. 2010). Given this situation, it seems necessary to pay closer attention to the diverse housing needs, requirements and wishes of elderly people by gaining a deeper understanding of how, where and with whom they want to live and thus finding strategies that allow them not just to age in place but to age in the right place (Golant 2015; Sixsmith & Sixsmith 2008).

2.3 Ageing in place in Germany: Trends and challenges

In Germany, ageing in place has been actively promoted for several decades (Hämel 2012). For 97% of the elderly population aged 65 and above living in old age means staying in their old home (Gerostat 2017a). However, due to demographic and social change, the country faces increasing challenges in maintaining such a high proportion of elderly people living in their own households (BMFSFJ 2006). As a reaction to these new requirements for living in old age, a number of alternative housing options for the elderly have developed in recent decades in addition to the classic housing options "staying at home" and "moving into a retirement home" (Schader Stiftung 2006). Cohousing in particular has enjoyed increasing popularity as a residential option for the elderly since the early 2000s and is seen by both the public, policy makers and practitioners as a promising strategy to promote ageing in place (Fedrowitz 2013). The following section will therefore discuss the development of these new forms of elderly

living in Germany. For this purpose, Chapter 2.3.1 examines which measures have so far been applied in Germany to promote ageing in place. In chapter 2.3.2 the new requirements and expectations posed by demographic and social change to living in old age will be discussed. Finally, Chapter 2.3.3 describes how the development of new housing options for the elderly attempts to meet these new requirements for living in old age.

2.3.1 Ageing in place in Germany

Until the end of the 1950s, elderly living in Germany and many other European countries was characterized by institutionalization (Baumgartl 1997). In the following decades, the model of institutionalizing elderly people became increasingly criticized, as it did not correspond to their desire for independence and quality of life (Hämel 2012). As a result, elderly living became progressively deinstitutionalized (Baumgartl 1997). The avoidance of institutionalization was not only in line with the wishes of the elderly but was also intended to reduce the high costs associated with institutional care (Chappell et al. 2004; Kaye et al. 2009). As part of the deinstitutionalization process, a number of measures were implemented to support elderly people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible (age in place). For this purpose, the legal norm of 'ambulatory before stationary' (ambulant vor stationär) was fixed in various social laws, which should ensure that in case of a need for care, domestic care always has priority over stationary care (Gersch et al. 2010). To achieve this, domestic care for the elderly should not only be provided by professional nursing services but also by relatives (Backens & Clemens 2013). As a result of this policy, between the early 1970s and mid-2000s, the average age at which people entered the nursing home was raised from 72 to 80.5 years (Voges and Zinke 2010: 307). Another measure to promote ageing in place was the Federal Model Programme "Self-determined Living in Old Age" (BMFSFJ 1998-2001), in which political measures were taken to promote self-help and self-initiative among older generations. Under this programme, 35 projects for improving domestic care were funded until 2014, for which the federal government provided a total of four million Euros (Weltzien 2004). However, as a result of demographic and societal change the requirements and expectations for living in old age have increasingly changed (Hoffmann et al. 2017). As a result, it is likely that considerable efforts will be required in the future to maintain the current proportion of elderly people cared for at home (BMFSFJ 2006).

2.3.2 Changing requirements and expectations for living in old age

Increasing number of elderly people

Probably one of the most significant challenges is the demographic ageing of the population. Demographic ageing is characterized by a decline in the total population due to declining birth rates and increasing life expectancy, with a simultaneous increase in the proportion of people over 65 (Hoffmann et al. 2017). While today about one in every fifth person in Germany is over 65 years old, this will be about every third person by the year 2060 (DESTATIS 2017). Particularly strong growth will be experienced by the group of very old people aged 80 and

above, which today makes up about 5% of the total population and whose share will rise to about 12% by 2060 (DESTATIS 2017).

Increasing number of elderly people living alone

The increasing ageing of the population will also lead to a rise in the number of elderly people living alone. This applies in particular to very old women who are almost twice as likely as men to live alone due to their higher life expectancy (Hoffmann et al. 2017). Today, about one third of those over 65 now live alone in a single-person household, slightly less than two thirds live in a partnership and form a two-person household, whereas only a small proportion of 5% live together with other relatives or non-family members in a multi-person household (DESTATIS 2018a). As a result of the increase in the elderly population living alone, it can be assumed that there will be an increase in the total number of households in the future despite a decline in the overall size of the population (Voigtländer et al. 2015). It can be expected that the increasing number of elderly people and the ongoing singularization of households will cause a significant growth in the demand for age-appropriate one- and two-person apartments (BBSR 2013a). At present, this demand cannot be met by the available housing stock, which is still largely designed to meet the housing needs of a family-based society (IFB 2014). Furthermore, there are also considerable deficits in terms of accessibility. It is estimated that out of the 41 million housing units available in Germany, less than 2 percent are built to be 'accessible'. As a result, there will be an additional demand for 2.9 million barrier-free or low-barrier housing units by 2030 (IFB 2014).

Increasing demand for care

Nowadays, elderly people are healthier than ever before (Dörner 2010). With increasing age, however, the risk of requiring care increases significantly. While only about three percent of those aged 65 to 70 require nursing care, this number rises significantly above the age of 80. Among those aged 80 to 85, the proportion of people in need of care is already above 20 percent. Beyond the age of 90, this share increases to more than 66 percent (DESTATIS 2017). As a result of the predicted increase in the number of very old people, it can be assumed that the need for long-term care will increase significantly in the future (Hoffmann et al. 2017).

Decline of family based support structures

Given the increasing need for nursing care, there is the question of who should provide it? Today, around 73% of elderly people in need of care are cared for at home. Only one third of receive care from professional ambulatory care providers while two thirds of care support is provided by primarily female family members (Hoffmann et al. 2017). Due to the increase in single-person households, the decline in family support structures and the increasing number of fully employed women, it can be assumed that the provision of domestic care by family members will become increasingly difficult in the future and needs to be compensated by professional help or non-family based support networks (Dörner 2010). The increase in the

number of very old people thus places considerable demands on elderly care, both in terms financing professional ambulatory care and in terms of recruiting a sufficient number of nursing staff (Dörner 2010).

However, it is not only the overall social conditions that have changed, but also the expectations of the elderly population regarding living in old age. The baby boomers - the generation born in Germany between the mid-50s and the late 60s - constitute a particularly large cohort who will reach retirement age between 2020 and 2035 and who were shaped by significantly different social processes compared to their parents, such as the pluralization of values, the expansion of education and the emancipation of women (Höpflinger 2009). Moreover, this generation is much better off in terms of health, socio-economic status and education Haber 2009). Furthermore, this generation was old enough to experience the considerable social changes that took place during the 1970s, which is why many of them express different wishes and expectations of how they would like to live in later live (Bruns et al. 2007).

Increasing differentiation of old age
One factor that has significantly influenced the expectations of this generation is the increasing differentiation of age (Bond et al. 2007). Under the current pension system, the increasing life expectancy has resulted in an expansion of the retirement phase and the differentiation of old age into third and fourth age (Bülow & Söderqvist 2014). As already explained in chapter 2.1 third age describes the phase from retirement to the fourth age, which is increasingly characterized by functional impairment and multimorbidity. In contrast to the fourth age, however, the third age is characterized by a high degree of personal well-being, health and activity (Kirkwood & Austard 2000). As a result, the previous understanding of retirement as a time of passivity and loneliness is widely rejected by the baby boomer, whose ambitions for living in old age is rather characterized by activity, participation and community (Thomas & Blanchard 2009).

Living independently for as long as possible (ageing in place)
Like previous generations, baby boomers also wish to live independently and in a self-determined way in their old age for long as possible, in a self-chosen living environment, even if they require help or care at some point (Pynoos et al. 2009). In addition, the acceptance of institutional forms of housing is considerably lower in this cohort than in the former ones (BBSR 2013b).

Increasing willingness to move and diversification of housing preferences
Although research shows that most elderly people want to stay in their old homes for as long as possible, there is a growing number who are willing to relocate and try something new as they get older (Voigtländer et al. 2015). The increased willingness to move is also reflected in the diverse housing preferences of this generation. According to a 2018 survey of the Federal Statistical Office on the housing preferences of the 50+ generation, more than two-thirds still

want to live in their own homes with the option of external help, while only 15 percent could imagine living in an old people's home or nursing home at the age of 70 years. The survey also showed, that there is an increasing desire for housing options beyond the classic options of "staying at home" and "moving to a retirement home". As the survey reveals, around one fifth of those interviewed expressed the wish to live in assisted living with or without care, while around one third would like to live in a multi-generational housing project. However, only 15 percent can imagine living with children or relatives (DESTATIS 2018b). Mester (2007) also sees a slight increase in the acceptance of community-based housing options in this cohort. Krämer (2008) shares this view, but assumes that, despite the observed diversification of housing preferences, staying put will still be the dominant housing strategy in the future.

2.3.3 The emergence of new forms of elderly living

As we can see, in the future living in old age will be confronted with a new set of challenges. The growing number of elderly people - especially those in need of support - will face off against a declining number of younger people. Traditional intra-family support and care will no longer be possible to the same extent, particularly in view of growing mobility. Lifestyles will also continue to differentiate and the different wishes and demands for living in old age will become even more complex. It is therefore necessary to develop a wide range of housing options that will make it possible to make use of appropriate care and assistance when needed. The existing housing stock is not able to cope with these challenges in many aspects and will have to be adapted to the changing needs in the coming years. It can be assumed that the development of new forms of living will play a decisive to support ageing in place in the context of these changing circumstances.

As a reaction to these new housing needs and expectations among elderly people, alternative housing options have increasingly been developed in recent years, which are often summarized under the generic term "new forms of living" (Fedrowitz, M. 2013). These new residential options can be located along a broad spectrum between the traditional elderly housing options of "staying put" on the one hand and "moving into a retirement home" on the other (Krämer 2005). According to Kremer-Preiß and Stolarz (2003), today's housing options for the elderly can be divided into three types. The first type comprises housing options for elderly people who wish to stay in their own home rather than move. These include barrier-free housing, assisted living in one's own home with support either from family members or service providers and neighborhood-related housing and care concepts. The second type of housing option is for elderly people who would like to change their housing situation themselves and are willing to move. These include self-organized, cohousing projects as well as assisted living, service housing and senior residences and senior flat sharing. The third type of housing option, on the other hand, is intended for people who have to change their housing situation because they cannot do otherwise. These include both traditional retirement and nursing homes as well as assisted living for dementia patients.

The residential options referred to in type 2 can be attributed to the new forms of living. Something that all these new forms of living have in common is that they usually require a

relocation and that the living takes place in the community (Krämer 2005). In this way, they respond both to the desire of many elderly people to live in a community and to the need to compensate for the lack of support networks (Dörner 2010). Among these new residential options, cohousing in particular has experienced increasing popularity among elderly people as well as policymakers and practitioners in Germany since the early 2000s, as it is increasingly sees as a promising strategy to support ageing in place (Fedrowitz 2013). What cohousing is and which advantages it offers for living in old age will be explained in the following section.

2.4 Cohousing: A suitable strategy ageing in place?

In recent years, cohousing has increasingly gained a foothold in the public debate about senior living (Fedrowitz 2013). This may come as a surprise, since it is assumed that in Germany only less than one percent of elderly people aged 65 years and older live in such a residential arrangement (Fedrowitz & Gailing 2003). However, given the increasingly changing demographic and social conditions, cohousing is increasingly considered as a promising housing strategy to promote ageing in place (Jarvis 2011; Labit 2015; Tummers 2012). But what exactly are cohousing projects? Where did they come from? What distinguishes them from conventional forms of housing and what advantages do they offer as an alternative form of living in old age? All these questions will be dealt with in the following chapter.

2.4.1 The history of cohousing

Co-housing[5], collective housing, collaborative housing, co-living or cooperative housing are all terms used to describe a community based approach to independent living that has gained increased attention in recent years among citizens, public authorities and scholars (Jakobsen & Larsen, 2018). Although cohousing is often labelled as an 'innovative form of housing', it is by no means a new concept. For centuries, human living has always meant living in a community. However, during the course of industrialization the communal elements in human living were increasingly pushed back, whereby the interpretation of neighborhood and community as a structural element was largely lost (Fedrowitz & Gailing 2003). In response to this development, the first cohousing project 'Sættedammen' was initiated in 1972 on the outskirts of Copenhagen in Denmark (Bamford 2005). The 27 families who initiated the project together with the Danish architect Jan Gudmand-Hoyer were increasingly dissatisfied with the low intensity of social interaction they experienced while living in the suburbs and set out to develop a housing concept that aimed to encourage social interaction among neighbors by sharing common spaces and resources, whilst not sacrificing their individual privacy and personal integrity (Durret & McCanant, 2011). Since then, cohousing has evolved in Denmark during the last five decides into a well-established alternative to the traditional housing model and is widely perceived as a worldwide gold standard for cohousing development (Durret & McCanant, 2011). Although it remains questionable to what extent the Danish cohousing model

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[5] The term 'cohousing' was coined by the American architects Charles Durret and Kathryn McCamant in 1984 as an alternative for the Danish term 'bofællesskab' (literally meaning living community).

truly serves as a gold standard, it can certainly be claimed that it has had a significant influence on the further spread of the cohousing concept to other countries, including Australia, Canada, Holland, Italy Germany, France, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and New Zealand (Sargisson 2010: 2).

Given that in most cases cohousing projects constitute radical do-it-yourself housing solutions that aim at solving the needs and aspirations of the respective residents, it is not surprising that since the development of the first project in 1972 a nearly unlimited variety of projects based on a wide range of concepts and living philosophies has emerged over the past five decades, from women-only, family-only, multigenerational and elderly-only cohousing projects all the way to projects that are particularly concerned with ecological sustainability or spirituality (Tummer 2000). Although since 1972 the number of cohousing projects has increased steadily in many countries, it has always remained a fringe phenomenon (with the exception of Denmark) until the end of the last century and thus only attracted little attention (Jarvis 2011). However, since the early 2000s, there has been a re-emergence of the cohousing concept in many European countries due to a rapidly growing number of project initiatives, leading to widespread attention and high expectations across public authorities, practitioners, scholars and the general public, of its ability to solve urban challenges concerning issues of sustainability, social cohesion and most importantly from the perspective of this study: population ageing (Jarvis 2011; Tummers 2012).

2.4.2 The development of cohousing projects for the elderly in Germany

In Germany, the first cohousing projects for elderly people date back to the late 1970s, when, in addition to the communes movement and the emergence of student flat-sharing communities, the first projects for elderly people emerged (Fedrowitz 2013). In accordance with the motto "not lonely and not in a retirement home" ("nicht allein und nicht ins Heim"), many elderly people then tried to find a third option between the retirement home, which was perceived as increasingly unsuitable, and remaining in one's home, which was perceived as isolating, by developing self-determined community-oriented housing projects (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004). The first initiatives resulted mainly in age-homogeneous senior cohousing projects, which at that time were still perceived as exotic and had considerable problems during implementation, as there was no experience with the development of such projects, they were hardly networked and there was hardly any acceptance on the part of the housing industry and municipalities (MAGS 2006). Over the course of the 1980s, these housing groups finally became increasingly professionalized through the founding of associations and organizations such as the "Forum Gemeinschaftliches Wohnen" (Becker 2009). During the 1990s, ageing in the community became increasingly established in public (Tjaden Years 2004). Since the end of the 1990s and especially at the beginning of the 2000s, the trend has increasingly shifted towards multi-generational living (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004). This development results, on the one hand, from the desire of many elderly people to live not only with peers but also with younger generations and, on the other hand, from the political efforts to counteract the reduced family support potential as well as the increasing isolation of elderly people living alone (BMBF 2012; MBV 2008).

Estimates assume that there are between 2,000 to 3,000 cohousing projects in Germany at the moment, with an upward tendency Fedrowitz (2016). Despite, their comparatively small proportion, cohousing projects enjoy considerable interest among citizens, municipalities and the media, as it is often hailed as a promising strategy for promoting self-determination and independence in old age (ageing in place) (Labit 2015).

2.4.3 The meaning of cohousing

As the previous section as well as the headline of this subchapter already reveals, cohousing projects are a community approach to independent living (Durret, 2009). Using the terms "community" and "independence" in one sentence may sound contradictory at first sight. On closer examination, however, it quickly becomes apparent that these are by no means two mutually exclusive categories. Unfortunately, there is presently no universally accepted definition of the term "cohousing" (Spellenberg 2018; Vestbro 2010). As a result of the enormous conceptual variety of community-oriented housing models and the different academic disciplines engaged in their investigation such as geography, sociology, urban planning and architecture, a wide range of labels and definitions have emerged, including building groups, shared housing, multigenerational housing, eco-villages, intentional communities or communes (Jakobsen & Larsen, 2018).

Particularly in the German context, the label 'community-oriented housing' (gemeinschaftsorientierte Wohnformen) can be a source of confusion, as it is often used as a generic term to describe two different types of community-oriented housing approaches, namely 'building groups' (Baugruppen or Baugemeinschaften) and cohousing (Wohngemeinschaften or gemeinschaftliches Wohnen). While in building groups the formation of a community usually serves the goal of facilitating the realization of personalized and cost-effective housing, cohousing groups strive for the development of long-lasting social networks that are based on neighborliness and mutual support (Durrent 2009; Spellerberg 2018). In other words, while the first approach focuses on building in a community, the second approach focuses on living in a community, whereby the development of the housing project usually also takes place as a community. In this work, the basic interpretation of cohousing corresponds to this second type, in which cohousing is understood as a "permanent union of people who voluntarily and consciously share certain areas of their lives spatially and temporally" (Stiftung trias 2008: 13).

According to Kuthe et al. (1991) a core objective of cohousing is the mutual exchange of ideas, interests, skills and resources among the residents. However, in cohousing projects community life usually goes far beyond such communicative interaction as it usually also includes joint activities and mutual support among the residents (Durrent 2009). At this point one might wonder about what the difference is between living in a cohousing project and living in a traditional neighborhood in which an intensive community atmosphere including mutual support networks can also develop? Vierecke (1972) sees two essential factor that differentiates community life in a cohousing project from that in a traditional neighborhood: First, while neither the residents nor the spatial scope of a neighborhood can be clearly demarcated,

cohousing projects constitute a clearly definable unit made up of residents and residential buildings. Second, although the spatial proximity of residents living within the same neighborhood generally provides an opportunity to develop interpersonal relationships, it does not guarantee it will actually happen. In cohousing projects, however, the development and maintenance of social relationships is of central importance, as without them, participation in the process of group formation, planning and realization, as well as in the administration of the community and the everyday organization of community life would not be possible. For the purpose of this study cohousing will be defined in accordance to Mensch 2011 and Williams 2005 as:

> *"A housing strategy in which the residents consciously opt for a community way of living based on neighbourliness and mutual support through the development and maintenance of a non-family based self-organized and non-hierarchical social network. By combining private residential units with communal spaces cohousing aims at maximising community life while preserving the autonomy of its residence. While the participatory development phase encourages the formation of long lasting social networks, it is the community promoting architecture in combination with the self management activities carried out by the community members that supports the maintenance of these networks."* (Own definition based on Mensch 2011 and Williams 2005)

2.4.4 Common features of cohousing projects

Due to the varying social and architectural approaches that can be found in cohousing projects and the lack of a universal definition, it is not easy to determine which features are typical of this concept and which are not. While several attempts have been made to develop a comprehensive overview of the common features that can be found across the whole spectrum of different project conceptualization, only few authors have managed to do so with a satisfactory level of generalization. One of them is Charles Durrett, one of the leading cohousing experts, who managed in his 2009 'Senior Cohousing Handbook' to boil the different features of cohousing down to six that differentiate cohousing projects from other residential arrangements:

Participatory development process:

The first main feature of cohousing projects Durret (2009) states in his book is the participatory nature of the planning process in which the future residents actively engage in designing both the community and the physical environment based on their needs and expectations (Bamford 2004). The desire to live in a community is usually the main driving force to initiate a cohousing project (Meltzer 2005). The development process often starts with the formulation of a joint vision statement and is further developed during an oftentimes long process of regular planning meetings and decision making (Meijering 2006). The degree to which the future residents will be able to participate and steer the design of their future residential community, both architectural and socially depends to a large extent on whether the project has been initiated by the residents themselves or by external parties such as residential investors or developers (Durrett, 2010; Sargisson, 2012).

Deliberate Neighbourhood design

According to Durret (2009) another important feature of cohousing projects is that the physical residential environment is usually designed in such a way that it encourages a strong neighborhood atmosphere and stimulates social interaction among the residents. For this purpose, private residences are oftentimes clustered around a shared open space such as a garden with buildings facing each other. Furthermore additional gathering spaces may be implemented for encouraging social interaction among the residents (Williams 2005). The physical design is of critical importance as it helps to sustain and foster the sense of community established during the participatory development phase into the residential phase (Williams 2005).

Extensive common facilities

Cohousing projects are usually made up of several private apartments. Depending on the financing strategy, apartments may be purchased by individuals, rented or, in the case of cooperatives, owned by the community (Durret 2009). As the apartments tend to be smaller than traditional ones, cohousing projects offer spacious community spaces that supplement the private apartment and usually consist of workshops, guest rooms, laundry rooms and so on. These facilities are often incorporated into a community apartment; in some bigger cohousing projects even into a community house (Williams 2005). The community spaces represent the heart of any cohousing project and have both a social and a practical role. While on the one hand the community facilities foster social interaction among the residents by providing a space to share experiences, and activities and thus contribute to community building, they also allow the residents to reduce the sizes of their apartments by sharing spaces such as laundry rooms and workshops. Durret (2009) further explains that the size and use of the communal spaces usually differs from one community to the other and their use is likely to change over time as a result of changing community needs. In some project the communal spaces are also opened from time to time to the surrounding neighborhood and can be used for meetings, classes and cultural activities.

Resident management

Another unique feature of cohousing projects Durret (2009) describes in his book is that most communities do not only develop their projects by themselves but also take over the responsibilities for managing the community throughout the subsequent residential phase. For this purpose each resident takes responsibility for one or more tasks consistent with his or her skills, abilities and interests. The tasks that are usually assigned either to individual residents or to entire working groups may include gardening, cleaning the community spaces, organizing events, waste disposal or preparing common meals. Community meetings that are often held once a month provide a forum to discuss current issues and allocate the tasks to the residents (Williams 2005). Even though in some cases cohousing communities decide to outsource parts of these tasks to an external service provider, Choi (2004) argues, that this is rarely the case, as resident management is not only a way to reduce utility costs but also fosters social cohesion.

Non-hierarchical structures

The fifth common feature of cohousing projects is a non-hierarchical group structure. In most cases, the residential community nominates an executive board that acts as a focal point for collecting and representing the interests of the community. Internally, however, the decision making process is either based on democratic voting principles or through consensus (Meltzer 2005). Although leadership roles do naturally exist in cohousing communities, the decisions made as well as the community-building process is usually not dominated by a single person (Lietaert 2010).

Separate income sources

The last common feature to be found in cohousing communities is, that there is no shared community effort for income generation. This distinguishes such projects significantly from communes, with which they are often confused (Meltzer 2005). However, as Durret (2009) explains, in cohousing projects each household constitutes a single private economic entity, which makes the economics of cohousing communities the same as in other traditional residential models. However, while income sharing is no part of community life in cohousing projects, by sharing responsibilities such as gardening, cooking and home maintenance cohousing communities help reducing both chores and maintenance costs (Williams 2005).

2.4.5 Distinguishing features of cohousing projects

As we can see, cohousing residents try to merge their desire for community life while maintaining their privacy and independence Brech (1995). Thus cohousing projects have the overall goal to develop a physical design that fosters social interaction among the community members without sacrificing the individual privacy of its residents (Garciano 2011). As already indicated in the introduction of this section, a growing number of cohousing projects have been developed throughout the last decades, which has led to a great diversity of different projects. While the six common features mentioned above can be found in pretty much every cohousing project there are also some aspects in which cohousing projects in Germany differ from one another. In order to provide a more complete picture of the diversity of this form of living, following section will brief description will be given of the aspects in which cohousing projects in Germany mainly differ from one another.

Location

Probably the most visible factor in which cohousing projects differ from each other is their location. According to Ache & Fedrowitz (2012) cohousing projects can be found mainly in urban areas, although they exist across all other regions. It is assumed that this can be attributed to the higher number of potential participants in urban areas. This makes it much easier for cohousing groups to acquire a critical mass for realizing their project in urban compared to rural areas (MBV 2008).

Group size

Another important factor in which cohousing projects differ is their size, i.e. the number of residents living in the project. In Germany, sizes range from 11 to sometimes more than 60 households, with sizes of 11 to 20 households being the most common (BBSR 2012b). A number of studies on cohousing indicate that the group size plays a significant role in community life and must therefore be carefully considered during planning (Durret 2009; McCamant & Durret 2011). While large groups are more socially diverse than small groups, excessively large residential groups bear the risks of anonymity, lack of intimacy and difficulties in grassroots decision-making. In contrast, if a project is too small, community activities may become more difficult to organize. Some authors assume that a group size of 20 to 50 people represents an optimal size for such projects (McCamant & Durret 2011).

Initiation approach

Cohousing projects also differ in how they have been initiated. Overall, a distinction can be made between the categories "bottom-up" and "top-down" (Fedrowitz & Gailing 2003). In the bottom-up approach, the first idea for the project originates from a group of future residents, whereas in the top-down approach the future residents are not the initiators of the project. In such a case, the project is usually initiated by an external stakeholder such as a municipality or a housing company (MBV 2008). Overall, it can be said that in the top-down approach the residents' ability to steer the planning process is usually more limited, as the external initiator determines when and to what extent the residents can participate during the planning process. In a bottom-up approach, residents usually have more options to implement their own ideas. However, a bottom-up approach also requires a high degree of self-initiative on the part of the group. A top-down approach can therefore be particularly interesting for people with a lack of time or health problems (MAGS 2006).

Legal structure and financing model

Cohousing projects can also differ significantly in terms of their legal structure and financing model, with both generally being mutually dependent. In Germany, the most common legal structures are associations, cooperatives and, to a lesser extent, partnerships under civil law (GbR) (MAGS 2006). While some cohousing projects require residents to join the association, the foundation of the association is usually inevitable for planning reasons in order to ensure that the group remains operational throughout the planning process (Stiftung Trias 2012). With regard to the financing model, a distinction can be made between a cooperative model and an investor model. The choice of the financing model has significant consequences for the rest of the project, as it is bound up with different funding options. In Germany, investor models are often used when apartments are to be developed for rent or for purchase, when there is insufficient equity capital for financing the project, or when the group does not have the confidence to carry out the entire project development process on its own (MAGS 2006). Cooperative models, on the other hand, are used when joint rather than individual ownership is intended. The cooperative principle also guarantees the residents a high degree of autonomy in

the planning process and allows them to take over self-administration during the residential phase (MBV 2008). For this reason, the cooperative model is regarded by some authors as particularly suitable for the realization of cohousing projects (BMVBW 2004; Karhoff & Kiehle 2005).

Structural realization

There are also significant differences with regard to structural realization. Cohousing projects are developed in different architectural designs, both in new builds and through conversions (Philippsen 2014). However, given the lack of data, it is not possible to predict accurately what the different shares are for Germany. Philippsen (2014) as well as studies by the BBSR (2012) show that in North Rhine-Westphalia there is a clear predominance of new builds, especially among multi-generation cohousing projects. The BBSR (2012) assumes that this situation is largely caused by a lack of development potential in the existing building stock.

Social structure

A last and particularly important distinguishing feature lies in the social structure of cohousing projects. Here the most diverse constellations can be found regarding age, gender, but also philosophical views (Philippsen 2014). Particularly well represented are multi-generation projects, whose number has increased significantly since the early 2000s (BBSR 2012). However, there are also a number of women's projects to be found in Germany, as well as projects for single parents with children (LBS 2001). In addition, projects for elderly people are increasingly being developed (MAGS 2006). Also, some of the projects focus on people in need of care or people with disabilities (Brech 1999). Given the focus of this work, senior cohousing projects and multi-generation projects are of particular interest. However, a clear distinction is often difficult to draw as the demographic composition of the project may change over time. This might lead, for example, to a project planned for multiple generations turning into a senior cohousing project if there are no younger people who want to move in (Philippsen 2014). Regarding the question of which of the two options is most suitable for older people, there is no clear answer as this will depend on the individual wishes of the residents. While some older residents prefer to live among their peers, others may consider the exchange with younger people enriching (Mcamant&Durret 2011).

Some authors claim that the social structure of cohousing projects tends to be very homogeneous, especially in terms of personal values and political views (Brech 1999; Williams 2005). Voesgen (1989), observes, on the other hand, that a homogenization of the group is often the result of the planning process, which also functions as a selection process. To a certain extent, this contradicts the frequently expressed wish of project groups to live in a socially diverse community (Williams 2005). Some authors furthermore hold the view that cohousing projects tend to be requested mostly by people with higher incomes (LBS 2001). Fedrowitz & Gailing (2013), however, point out that the demand for cohousing projects is not only limited to high and middle income groups, but that the wish to live in a cohousing project is now to be found across a wide range of social classes.

2.4.6 The development process of cohousing projects

The development of cohousing projects differs to some extent from ordinary housing developments, which is why a short overview of a typical planning process for a self-initiated cohousing project will be presented. Usually, the development process can be divided into four phases, including the project initiation phase, planning phase, construction phase and residential phase (Hieber et al. 2005). Particularly in bottom-up projects, this development process can last up to several years (Szypulski 2008).

Phase 1: Project initiation phase

For bottom-up projects, the initiation phase usually includes the first exchange of interested parties, the identification of residential preferences and the recruitment of further participants for the formation of a planning group (Brenton 1999). During this phase the group usually consists of a loose and casual circle of interested people, which is why there is often a high turnover, particularly during the early phase of group formation (Hieber et al. 2005).

Phase 2: Planning phase

The transition to the planning phase comes with the development of a community concept, in which the group identifies key guidelines of their future coexistence (Philippsen 2014). According to Hieber et al (2005), such a concept represents the heart of any cohousing project, as it clarifies all the important characteristics that will shape the future project. The concept usually includes specifications regarding the legal structure, size of the group, age structure, structural realization, location of the property, accessibility, etc. The special characteristic of cohousing projects, however, is that not only structural aspects are conceptualized during planning, but also social aspects. This includes how conflicts should be resolved, how responsibilities should be distributed amongst the members of the project, what forms of mutual help and support are expected and how group decisions will be made (Hieber et. al 2005). Besides the development of a project concept, the planning phase also includes the identification of a suitable property and, depending on the financing model, the search for an investor. The required and in some cases highly complicated planning steps include, among others, negotiations with the municipality, application for subsidies, drafting of cooperation agreements and the collaboration with architects (Hücking 2008). At this stage, the group has to formalize itself and set up an association or other legal entity to facilitate communication with external partners and apply for funding (Fedrowitz 2003). According to Hücking (2008), a formalization can also increase the commitment within the group, for example, by charging a membership fee. However, during the planning phase, the groups may encounter numerous difficulties, which in some cases may even lead to the failure of the whole project. According to BBSR (2012) one of the most common reasons why cohousing projects fail during the planning phase is that they are unable to secure suitable property. The BBSR assumes that this is to a large extent due to the fact that the municipal property allocation process is rarely geared to the needs of cohousing groups. As a result, project groups often have a disadvantage

compared to other interested parties such as property investors because of the relatively long decision making process. Fedrowitz & Gailing (2003) point out that a well-regulated sale of municipal land to cohousing groups would significantly facilitate the realization of these projects.

Phase 3: Construction phase

Similar to the planning phase, the future residents are usually also involved throughout the construction phase (Philippsen 2014). In most cases, the group is supported by an external consultant who is familiar with the structural development of cohousing project (MAGS 2006). At the same time it can often be observed that group members take the initiative and acquire technical expertise in order to gain a deeper understanding of how the structural realization of their project works (LBS 2001).

Phase 4: Residential Phase

The residential phase follows immediately after the completion of the cohousing project. This phase is characterized by a change from a mainly formal interaction in the planning process to an informal interaction of the residents (Philippsen 2014). What often remains a formality, however, is that the various tasks involved in the management and maintenance of the property are distributed among the residents (Hieber et al. 2005). As Gephart (2013) shows in detail, conflicts between residents are not uncommon during the residential phase. He believes that these occur particularly often when the various needs, wishes and concerns of the residents have not been sufficiently addressed during the planning process.

2.4.7 Cohousing: A suitable strategy for ageing in place?

As we can see, cohousing groups aim at actively realizing their personal housing aspirations as well as their desire to live in community and neighborly relationships while keeping their independence (Brech 1995). Depending on the wishes and expectations of the residents, the conceptual design of cohousing projects can vary greatly, as the do it-yourself approach allows for a much higher flexibility than conventional housing concepts. Another advantage that cohousing promises over conventional housing is that it offers a flexible community approach to solve a wide range of residential challenges. As such, cohousing is increasingly seen as an opportunity to respond to changing societal needs, one of which being an ageing population combined with the simultaneous decrease in family-based support networks and the increasing number of socially isolated elderly people (Fedrowitz 2013).

Evidently, there are numerous expectations associated with cohousing and its capacity to promote ageing in place. Elderly people regard moving into a cohousing project as an opportunity to live self-determined lives in their own household for as long as possible and thus have control over their own lives (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004). Another expected advantage of cohousing is that it promises to prevent loneliness and isolation in old age (Brenton 2001). At the same time, cohousing makes it possible to live in a community without limiting the individuality and autonomy of the residents (Henckmann 1999). Furthermore, living in a

community requires elderly people to be actively involved in the group, take on tasks and thereby prevent inactivity (KDA 2000). These activities can thus fill the gap created by the withdrawal from work and the moving out of children (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004). In addition, for some elderly people, cohousing can be a kind of family substitute and thus create a sense of belonging (Hieber et al. 2005). Living in a community also enables the development of a support network of close residents who can provide help when needed (Garciano 2011). Some authors assume that in this way it is possible to avoid or delay unwanted institutionalization without having to resort to the support of the children (Helbig 2004; Hieber 2005). As a result, cohousing is attributed a preventive feature (MBV 2006). A further advantage is seen in the fact that the participative planning and realization of a cohousing project offers the possibility of directly influencing the design of one's own home and living environment (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004). Furthermore, it is assumed that building in the group can be cheaper (Fedrowitz & Gailing 2003). Household costs can also be reduced by sharing the garden, washing machines or guest rooms. In addition, living in the community offers the advantage that services and assistance are often offered more cheaply if they are used by several people in the house (Tjaden-Jöhren 2004).

However, despite strong public interest and a steadily increasing number of scientific studies, empirical research on cohousing projects is still in its infancy. While there are numerous studies that cover the development of cohousing projects from a planning or architectural perspective (e.g. Allheit 2007; Bouma and Voorbij 2009), there is a lack of empirical evidence on how cohousing affects the ability of elderly people to successfully age in place, particularly for cohousing projects in Germany. Although there are numerous publications on ageing in cohousing projects in Germany, most of them are in the form of booklets by municipalities, ministries (LBS 2001; MAGS 2006; MBV 2006; MBV 2008) or books based on the personal experience of cohousing residents (e.g. Janz 2009; Osterland 2000; Scherf 2007). In particular, there is a lack of studies that investigate the ageing in place experiences of older cohousing residents over a longer period of time (e.g. ten years later studies). Given the relatively new nature of the cohousing phenomenon in Germany, this is not surprising. However, today an increasing number of cohousing projects have existed for more than ten years which makes it much easier to investigate the lived experiences of elderly residents with ageing in a cohousing project over a longer period of time.

The following thesis seeks to address this knowledge gap by investigating what contribution cohousing can make as a strategy to promote ageing in place from the perspective of elderly cohousing residents within the scope of a 10 years later study. The main purpose is to examine the lessons that can be learned from the elderly residents' ten years of cohousing experiences about the suitability of the cohousing concept as a strategy to promote ageing in place. For this purpose, the study pursues several objectives: First, the motivations behind the relocation to a cohousing community will be investigated. Secondly, the study examines how the various expectations, wishes and concerns of future residents influenced the conceptual design of the cohousing project and what challenges they encountered while transforming these conceptual

ideas into a concrete residential project. Thirdly, how the residents experienced ageing in the community during their ten years of residence will be investigated. Fourthly, it examines the challenges that residents see in maintaining the community today and in the future. How these research objectives have been approached methodically will be explained in the following chapter.

3. METHODOLOGY

The following chapter presents the research design applied in this study. First of all, the research questions to be answered in this thesis will be presented in chapter 3.1. Chapter 3.2 justifies the choice of the research approach against the background of the previously formulated research questions. The selection of the case study is justified in chapter 3.3. Fieldwork procedures as well as the instruments applied for collecting and analysing the empirical data will be presented in chapter 3.4. Chapter 3.5 explains how ethical issues have been addressed whilst issues regarding the trustworthiness and limitations of the study are presented in chapter 3.6, followed by a concluding summary (chapter 3.7).

3.1 Research questions

Based on the identified gaps in the scientific literature and the exploratory research findings, the study aims to answer the following main research (MQ) question and subquestions (SQ):

> *MQ:* *What can cohousing contribute as a strategy to promote ageing in place?*
> *SQ1:* *What motivated the elderly residents to develop a cohousing project?*
> *SQ2:* *What challenges did the residents face when incorporating their various expectations, wishes and concerns into the conceptual design of the cohousing project?*
> *SQ3:* *How did the conceptual design of the cohousing project affect the ageing-in-place experience of the elderly residents?*
> *SQ4:* *What challenges need to be addressed to ensure the continuity of the cohousing project in the future?*

3.2 Rationale for research approach

As already noted in chapter 2, the quality of the residential environments occupied by elderly people has so far been studied using two methodological perspectives: one that focuses on an objective anatomy of places by using indicators to conceptualize and measure the quality of residential environments, and one that focuses on the emotional anatomy of places by investigating the subjective and idiosyncratic perspective of elderly people (Golant 2015; Wachs 1999). Applying a qualitative approach to address the research questions formulated in chapter 3.1 was considered appropriate for the following reasons: First, the research aims at investigating the lived experience of people with a certain phenomenon through collecting participant stories. As such a research approach is needed that puts the subjective experiences of the research subjects at the center of investigation and thus allows for a deep understanding of the residents' subjective feelings and experiences. Second, although the question regarding the suitability of the cohousing concept as a strategy to support ageing in place has already been discussed in detail by practitioners, the topic has of yet received very little attention in academia, which makes this study to a certain extent exploratory. As such an overly structured and inflexible approach would not adequately answer the research questions. A qualitative approach, however, provides the required flexibility and openness, both in terms of the methods

used and the sequence of the research procedure. Third, the low degree of structuring helps to minimize the loss of information during data acquisition. As a result, complex social phenomena such as the experiences with ageing in a cohousing community can be captured and reproduced at a high level of detail. Fourth, the high degree of openness and flexibility makes the approach more processual, which allows for interim comparisons and evaluations during the entire research process. It also lends the capacity to question the different aspects of the research process itself as well as the results derived from this process and to constantly adjust the research design based on these findings in an iterative manner.

3.3 Rationale for case study approach & selection

Now that the rationale for the choice of the research approach has been established, the following section justifies why a case study approach was used to address the research questions, focusing on the city of Bonn and in particular on the project Heerstraße by the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. A case study approach constitutes a comprehensive, in-depth analysis of one or multiple cases, in which both qualitative and quantitative methods can be used to investigate social phenomena (Gerring 2007). Due to the often limited number of cases, the approach does not seek to generalize or justify a certain sample, but rather aims at 'within-sample validity' (Gerring 2007: 43). Applying a case study approach to answer the research question is considered particularly appropriate due to the following reasons: First, municipalities exert a considerable influence on residential development and thus also on cohousing developments. In order to answer the research question, it is therefore necessary to thoroughly understand the local factors influencing the development of such projects and the constellations of actors associated with them. Due to the limited scope of this work, it was therefore considered useful to adopt a case study approach dealing only with cohousing developments within a single city. Second, cohousing projects differ from each other in many ways by their conceptualization, as was already noted in Chapter 2. In order to be able to make adequate statements about the influence of the individual conceptualizations on the ageing in place experience of the elderly residents, it seemed reasonable to focus only on one single project, while investigating the whole process from developing the project, moving in and ageing in the community.

To understand the selection of the case to be studied, it is essential to go back to the point where the idea for this research project came about. In July 2018, shortly after a heat wave, the author conducted a first exploratory research study in the city of Bonn, where he investigated the implications of extreme heat events on the ability of elderly people living alone to independently manage their daily lives. During this research phase, the author also conducted interviews with some of the elderly residents of the cohousing project Heerstraße, where for the first time he became aware of the potential benefits living in the community may have for elderly people in coping with their day-to-day challenges. This prompted the author to dismiss his earlier research question and to refocus his research on the cohousing concept and what it might offer to promote ageing in place.

As we can see, the initial research idea did not emerge from the identification of a research gap in the scientific literature but rather from the observation made by the author during everyday life. Consequently, the selection process for the case study did not follow a theory-driven sampling procedure, but rather emerged from an exploratory research phase. Nevertheless, the cohousing project Heerstraße is regarded as a particularly suitable example for answering the research question for the following reasons: Firstly, for a multi-generation cohousing project, 'Heerstraße' has a particularly high proportion of elderly residents (23 out of 43 residents are over 65 years old) and therefore a high number of potential interview partners. Secondly, the housing project is not only the first project of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. but also one of the first cohousing projects developed in Bonn. Since many of the elderly residents have already been living in the project for the past ten years, it can be assumed that they have gained adequate experience with the process of ageing in such a residential environment and thus can contribute appropriately to accomplish the goals of the research project. Thirdly, any comparison across dissimilar cohousing projects would be very difficult to realize due to the sometimes very heterogeneous conceptualization implemented in these projects. Fourthly, with three completed and four upcoming projects, the association is the largest existing non-profit initiator and developer of cohousing projects in Bonn and thus is likely to have a considerable influence on the future development of Bonn's cohousing landscape.

3.4 Applied methods for data collection and analysis

The empirical research was conducted over a period of ten weeks, between mid-August and October 2018. The instruments used during this period for data collection and analysis will be discussed in more detail below. It should be noted that although the order of the data collection instruments corresponds in a certain way to the sequence of the empirical field research, the application of the different instruments did not take place in separation, but in an alternating way based on a mutually influencing dialog throughout the whole phase of data collection and analysis.

3.4.1 Non-structured exploratory interviews

The field research started with a short exploratory research phase based on open interviews with elderly residents (above 65 years) living in the cohousing project Heerstraße. The interviews were intended to provide an initial insight into the internal structure and functioning of the cohousing community and to identify potential themes for later investigation. The participants were selected randomly in collaboration with a resident, with whom contact had already been established through a previous research project. A total of five elderly residents between 69 and 88 participated in the interviews. All interviews were conducted either in the private apartments of the participants or in the community apartment and took on average between one and two hours. Further information is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant sample for exploratory interviews (Heerstraße)

Name	Community	Age	Sex	Duration
Mrs. B	Heerstraße	88	female	02:01:00
Mrs. D	Heerstraße	71	female	02:00:00
Mrs. E	Heerstraße	71	female	00:58:00
Mrs. H	Heerstraße	69	female	00:46:00
Mr. A	Heerstraße	74	male	00:49:00

All recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim using MAXQDA software and analyzed using an open coding procedure. Together with the literature review, the outcomes of the exploratory interviews contributed to the specification of the research questions and the development of an interview guide for the subsequent semi-structured in-depth interviews.

3.4.2 Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Following the exploratory research phase, a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the elderly residents of the cohousing community Heerstraße. The aim of the interviews was to capture the elderly residents' experiences with developing and ageing in a cohousing community. Applying semi-structured in-depth interviews was considered particularly suitable for this purpose, as the use of open questions appeared to be a right approach to reconstruct the residents' complex stock of knowledge (Flick 2009).

All participants were selected on the basis of two criteria: age and duration of residency. A threshold value of 65 years was set to ensure that the participants had already gathered some experience with the process of ageing in the community. Furthermore, to ensure that the participants had experienced the entire process from initiation, planning and developing the project, up to the residential phase, only those residents above the age of 65 who also participated in the project development phase prior to moving in were considered. Household statistics provided by the cohousing community were used to identify eligible residents for the interview. Each of the eligible residents received an interview request specifying in detail the purpose, scope and length of the interview. Altogether nine residents between the age of 69 and 88 were willing to participate in the interviews. Table 2 provides further information of the sample.

Table 2: Participant sample for semi-structured in-depth interviews (Heerstraße)

ID	Community	Age	Sex	Duration
Mrs. A	Heerstraße	77	female	03:40:00
Mrs. B	Heerstraße	88	female	02:19:00
Mrs. C	Heerstraße	78	female	01:41:00
Mrs. D	Heerstraße	71	female	02:22:00
Mrs. E	Heerstraße	71	female	01:26:00
Mrs. F	Heerstraße	74	female	01:33:00
Mrs. G	Heerstraße	76	female	01:00:00
Mrs. H	Heerstraße	69	female	01:02:00
Mr. A	Heerstraße	74	male	

The interviews all took place in the private apartments of the participants and lasted between one and two hours on average. One interview with a key resident was conducted in two sessions due to an extraordinary length of more than three and a half hours. Prior to the interview, participants were asked to complete a short survey on socio demographic background information. The interview guide was divided into four sections. Section one dealt with the motivation for moving into the cohousing project and the associated wishes and expectations (SQ1). Section two focused on the project development phase. Here the aim was to examine the challenges the residents experienced while implementing the various expectations, wishes and concerns into the conceptual design of the cohousing project (SQ2). Section three, on the other hand, looked into the residential phase, to be more precise on how the project conception affected the participants' ageing in place experience (SQ3). Finally, section four covered the challenges the residents felt needed to be addressed in order to ensure the continuity of the community in the future (SQ4). Furthermore, each section comprised a series of subsections made up of first and second-order questions. First-order questions had a particularly high relevance and therefore always needed to be addressed. Second-order questions were also of interest, but only asked to lead participants back to the actual topic or to stimulate the conversation. Using both first and second-order questions allowed for a certain degree of openness and flexibility during the conversation, while at the same time offering sufficient levers to steer the conversation without falling into a question-answer pattern (Bernard 2006). Similar to the exploratory interviews, all semi-structured interviews were recorded using an audio recording device and then transcribed verbatim using MAXQDA. Following Dresing & Pehl (2011), a simplified transcription system was developed to ensure consistency during this process (Appendix D5). The transcribed interviews were then subjected to a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2008). In this context it should be noted that data collection and analysis were not carried out separate to one another, but rather in a reciprocal manner. Transcribing and analyzing the interviews right after they were conducted meant the findings

could further specify the sub research question and to adjust the interview guide for upcoming interviews. This iterative process was repeated until a theoretical saturation was reached. For the semi-structured interviews with the elderly cohousing residents saturation was reached after about eight interviews, which lies within the threshold for achieving theoretical saturation discussed in the methodological literature. Boyd (2001), for example, regards two to ten research subjects as sufficient to reach saturation, while Creswell (2013) recommends interviews with up to ten people.

3.4.3 Non-systematic participant observation

In addition to the semi-structured interviews with the elderly residents, non-systematic participant observations were conducted during the interviews and throughout the time spent at the cohousing project while participating in informal conversations with the residents. All observations were documented in a research journal and served the following purposes: Firstly, the observations should help to draw a more comprehensive picture of the residents' actual living situations by investigating how they interact with other residents and make use of their residential environment. Secondly, the observations aimed at identifying issues in the everyday life of the residents that were neither considered by the author, nor addressed by the residents during the interviews. Thirdly, in addition to fine-tuning the overall research design, the observations also served the purpose of validating the statements made by the residents during the interviews and thus improved the overall quality of the findings[6].

3.4.4 Group interviews

While the semi-structured interviews together with the non-systematic participant observations provided a promising combination to gain deep insight into the residential experience of the elderly residents of Heerstraße, it did not allow to draw conclusions as to whether the cohousing concept developed by the association yielded similar results in other projects or if this was just the case for the Heerstraße project. In order to minimize this blind spot, it was decided that the experience of the elderly residents living in the other two projects of the association (Duisdorf and Plittersdorf) should also be integrated into the research design. This approach was considered beneficial for the following reasons: Firstly, as the conception of the first cohousing project at Heerstraße was also applied to the two subsequent projects, Duisdorf and Plittersdorf, integrating the experience of the residents from the other two projects would allow for comparisons of whether their elderly residents made similar experiences while ageing in their communities (SQ1, SQ3). Secondly, it should help to examine whether the challenges identified by the residents of the Heerstraße project are also found in the other projects, as well as any solutions developed to solve them (SQ2, SQ4).

Data collection was carried out on the basis of a group interview. A group interview is an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic (Patton 2002). Group interviews should not be confused with a problem-solving or decision-making instrument, or with a group discussion, in which a small group of people discuss a particular topic given by the mediator.

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[6] Chapter 3.5 Deals in more detail with the various strategies applied to ensure the quality of the research results.

Although direct interaction among the participants gives rise to discussion-like situations, they are first and foremost interviews (Patton 2002: 385-386).

Applying a group interview was considered particularly beneficial for the following reasons: First, the group situation should help to develop an environment in which the participants stimulate each other with ideas, support each other in remembering events and thus produce answers that go beyond those of an ordinary face-to-face interview. Secondly, integrating group interviews should allow to check the quality of the collected data by enabling the participants to respond to each other's statements, confirm or revise them, and thus provide an efficient system of checks and balances. Thirdly, the group situation offered an opportunity to validate the statements given by the residents from the Heerstraße project during the semi-structured in-depth interviews carried out before. Finally, using a group interview enabled sufficient insights to be gained into the living situation of the elderly people in the two other cohousing communities without the need to conduct a large number of time-consuming semi-structured in-depth interviews with several residents from both projects.

The interview group consisted of six women between the age of 74 and 83, two from each community (Table 3). The participants were not selected by the author himself but were elected representatives of the cohousing communities (representation of house communities). These representatives meet on a regular basis to discuss organizational issues between the respective housing communities and to exchange information. Due to their function, they are in regular contact with their residents, so it could be assumed that they are able to make adequate statements on behalf of their community.

Table 3: Participant sample for group interview (Heerstraßef)

ID	Community	Age	Sex	Duration
Mrs. I	Heerstraße	76	female	
Mrs. J	Heerstraße	74	female	
Mrs. K	Duisdorf	74	female	00:56:00
Mrs. L	Duisdorf	82	female	
Mrs. M	Plittersdorf	83	female	
Mrs. N	Plittersdorf	74	female	

The group interview took place in the community apartment of the cohousing project Duisdorf and took a little less than one hour. For the group interview the same interview guide was used as for the semi-structured in-depth interviews. However, due to time constraints, only the most important first-order questions were addressed during the interview. During the interview the author asked the group a question, which was then answered by all participants from their point of view. In doing so, care was taken to leave enough room for the participants to address topics outside the interview guide and thus to identify potential new topics.

In addition to the group interview with the residents of the existing cohousing projects, another group interview with two association members who are currently implementing a new project was conducted. The decision to also integrate the perspectives of a newly planned cohousing project into the research design was, on one hand, to ensure that current challenges concerning the development of such projects are being considered (SQ3), and on the other hand, to examine whether the cohousing concept of the association has been developed further in new projects (SQ2).

The interview took place together with two representatives of the project group Schuhmannhöhe (Endenich) and lasted about one and a half hours (Table 4). A slightly modified version of the interview guide created for the semi-structured in-depth interviews was used. Since the project is still in planning and therefore does not yet have any experience concerning the residential phase, only the questions concerning the motivation for the development of the project (SQ1), the course of the project development (SQ2), and existing challenges (SQ4) were addressed. The interviews were subsequently transcribed and subjected to a content analysis.

Table 4: Participant sample for group interview (Schuhmannhöhe)

ID	Community	Age	Sex	Duration
Mrs. O	Endenich	66	female	01:29:00
Mrs. J	Endenich	71	male	

3.5 Ethical considerations

When conducting social research it is necessary to reflect on the legal and ethical appropriateness of the study before and during execution (Holloway & Wheeler 2003). In order to ensure that the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of the participants were guaranteed at all times, a number of precautions were taken: First, to ensure the participants' right of autonomy, each participant received thorough information about the purpose and scope of the research project, interview topics and procedure as well as the handling of personal information. Furthermore, it was emphasized that the participants have the option to withdraw their participation at any time.

Second, non-anonymized dissemination of the opinions and judgements articulated during the interviews may put the participants, both public officials as well as cohousing residents, in an unfavourable situation. This is particularly true for the residents of the cohousing projects, as their statements could cause internal tensions among the residents. Therefore, anonymity of the participants was ensured throughout the entire research process through a careful handling of personal data. At the beginning of each interview, a personal identification code was assigned to every participant. This code was subsequently used for referencing the interview transcripts and field notes. In order to track the assignment of the personal identification code to the corresponding participants, a list containing the participants' personal information such as name, age, gender, address and contact details, as well as the assigned personal identification

code, was compiled and stored separately from the interview transcripts and field notes. To ensure data security, the anonymized version of the interview transcripts together with digital copies of the field notes were stored on a password-protected, portable USB device.

Third, interviews with the residents included questions related to the personal experiences of the participant with the process of getting older, including issues of dealing with physical limitations, decreasing independence and loneliness, bearing the risk of causing unpleasant feelings and temporary discomfort. In order to assure the participants' well-being and reduce the risk of evoking bad feelings, a number measures were implemented. Questions on sensitive topics were only asked during the latter part of the interview. On the one hand, this allowed the participant to get comfortable with the situation and to establish mutual trust. On the other hand, it allowed the researcher to assess the personal constitution of the participant, identify topics that could be inappropriate to discuss and thus make more informed decisions regarding the suitability of discussing certain sensitive issues during the interview. Furthermore, to reduce the risk of participants leaving the interview with a sad or uncomfortable feeling, each interview concluded with neutral questions and some small talk.

3.6 Trustworthiness & limitations

Qualitative research does not only include the interplay between the researcher and the object of investigation but also between the researcher and his or her potential audience, i.e. the reader for whom the results are being presented (Hammersley 2000). This ultimately leads to the last question which is to be dealt with in this chapter, namely that of the trustworthiness of the findings to be presented. For this reason, the following section presents the measures taken to achieve the highest possible quality of research findings and addresses possible weaknesses in the research design.

According to Lincon & Guba (1985) ensuring credibility is one of the most important steps in establishing trustworthiness. In this study, the following provisions have been made to ensure that the research findings consist of plausible information drawn from the original data and that the views of the participants have been interpreted correctly: First, only well-established qualitative research methods such as open, semi-structured and group interviews as well as non-structured participant observations have been used to address the research questions. Most of these methods have already successfully been applied in similar studies (e.g. Glass 2012, 2013; Golant 1984, 1986; Wiseman 1980). Second, prolonged engagement has been secured through long lasting engagement with the participants in the field. Through regular visits to the community, together with long lasting interviews as well as participation in community meetings and casual interaction, both the author as well as the participants became familiar with each other, built mutual trust and produced rich data. Third, even though the sample of the residents took place under certain restrictions given the applied threshold for minimum age and duration of residency, the sample was taken randomly. Applying a random sample strategy ensured that any unknown influences are evenly distributed throughout the sample (Preece 1994). Fourth, method triangulation was used to increase the credibility of the findings by

applying semi-structured interviews in combination with participant observation and group interviews. Furthermore, site triangulation was applied by using a wide range of information from residents of different cohousing projects. According to Dervin's concept of 'circling reality', findings that emerge from similar results in different sites have a greater credibility as obtaining information from a wide spectrum of perspectives provides a more stable view of reality (Dervin 1983). Fifth, the honesty of the participants was encouraged by providing them the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any given time.

Despite the best efforts to collect and interpret the research results as accurately as possible, there are still limitations. Although it was planned, a participant check in whereby the results are presented to the participant for validation was not feasible due to time restrictions of the author. Thus, it remains a possibility that individual statements of the participants were not interpreted precisely. Furthermore, there is a possibility of misinterpretation of the data due to the translation of the interviews from German into English. As the author is not a native English speaker he cannot guarantee that the translations are sufficiently accurate. For the reader to verify the accuracy, Appendix B lists all quotations used within the findings section together with the corresponding German source text.

To enable the reader to assess whether the author's findings are transferable to other settings, rich description was provided in this chapter by providing thorough information of the research strategy, including choice of research approach, sample and the procedure of data collection and analysis, including interview guides (Appendix C). Furthermore, care was also taken to provide rich descriptions while presenting the findings in chapter 4, by providing deep insights into the local residential context of the residents, their socio demographic background and their social networks. However, it should be noted that due to the limited scope of the thesis, a trade off was sought between providing thick descriptions and keeping the thesis to a reasonable length. To allow the reader to get more in-depth information about the statements of the residents or experts on certain topics, quotations not presented in the findings were added to Appendix B.

However, the extent to which the results of this study can be expected in other cohousing projects or other cities is not foreseeable. By putting the focus on one single cohousing project with a limited number of participants, the case study approach clearly limits the wider transferability of its results. Consequently, the reader is advised to carefully examine the extent to which the presented case study corresponds to or differs from his or her specific case and to interpret the results against the background that using the same research design in other cohousing communities or other cities is likely to produce different outcomes.

Finally, it needs to be noted that the author is neither an objective nor a neutral observer who acts detached from his own presupposition (Hammersley 2000). Therefore, the author's biases may have intruded the development of the research design, as well as during the process of collecting, analyzing, presenting and discussing the data. In order to minimize the impact of these biases, the entire research process, from the development of the research design to the discussion of the results, was accompanied by a constant process of self-reflection of the author concerning his role as a researcher. Nevertheless, it is absolutely crucial to address the fact that

despite all self-reflection and precautionary measures, the subjective influence of the researcher can never be completely removed from the research process and thus the contrary should not be claimed.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, the research design of this study was presented. A qualitative case study approach based on semi-structured interviews in combination with non-structured participant observations as well as group interviews was applied to adequately address the proposed research questions. The cohousing project Heerstraße of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. was chosen as the primary case study. In order to reduce the disadvantage of a single case for the overall explanatory value of the study, the perspective of residents from three other cohousing communities developed by the same association have been included into the research design. The empirical research produced more than 24 hours of interview data, resulting in around 500 pages of transcripts that were later used for analysis. The results of this analysis will now be presented in the following chapter.

4. ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA

The following chapter presents the empirical findings of this study. For this purpose, the chapter is divided into six sections. Chapter 4.1 provides a brief overview of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. and the cohousing project Heerstraße. In chapter 4.2 to 4.5 the empirical findings are then presented analogous to the sub-research questions formulated in the beginning of the previous chapter (SQ1 to SQ4). Finally, a short summary is provided in chapter 4.6.

4.1 Ageing in community: The cohousing project Heerstraße

In April 2005, a small group of men and women founded the non-profit association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. with the goal to promote intergenerational, income-independent forms of living based on solidarity and neighborliness, develop cohousing concepts, create stimuli for living in intentional communities, and to support the realization of such communities by providing a platform to initiate cohousing projects in Bonn[7]. Alongside with the cooperative 'Amaryllis', the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. was at that time one of the first initiatives in Bonn involved in initiating, planning and developing cohousing projects. Since then, the cohousing landscape of the former German capital city has changed substantially. By now there are around eleven completed cohousing projects in Bonn and a handful of projects are currently being planned (Trias Stiftung 2019). With its many projects, the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. has made a significant contribution to this development. Since its foundation, the association, which now counts 340 members, has successfully realized three[8] cohousing projects with around 150 residents in various districts of Bonn and has four[9] further project initiatives in the pipeline; for which all received building permits in 2018 (Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. 2017a; 2018).

The cohousing community Heerstraße was the first project initiated by the association and was developed in close cooperation with the Bonn-based residential developer RheinHaus-GmbH and the city of Bonn. The project is located in Bonn's Macke district, opposite the old cemetery and thus in the immediate vicinity of Bonn's city center. The property consists of two multi-storey apartment buildings that are separated by a communal garden (see Figure 1). The front-house facing the street comprises 23 rental units, seven of which are publicly subsidized, while the courtyard house comprises 11 condominiums. The individual apartments have different layouts and sizes (one to three rooms), are either barrier-free or low-barrier, and are built in an energy-efficient manner. Furthermore, all apartments have a south-facing balcony or terrace. The heart of the project is the community apartment situated on the ground floor of the front-house. It comprises a kitchen, a large multifunctional room for community meetings, casual

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[7] The Federal City of Bonn is an independent city in the administrative district of Cologne in the south of North Rhine-Westphalia. With 330,224 inhabitants (as of 1. January 2019), Bonn is one of the twenty largest cities in Germany (Federal City of Bonn 2019).

[8] The three realized cohousing projects are: Heerstraße (completed in 2008), Plittersdorf (completed in 2011) and Duisdorf (completed in 2012) (Trias Stiftung 2019).

[9] The four planned project initiatives are: Bonn-Röttgen, Schuhmanns Höhe, Wahlverwandtschaften-Genossenschaft Endenich and Bonn-Beuel Ledenhof (Trias Stiftung 2019).

gatherings and events, a room for accommodating guests and a fully equipped bathroom. Arcades that can be found on all floors of the front-house provide additional space that can be used for socializing and recreational activities.

Figure 1: Cohousing community Heerstraße (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Today, 43 residents (11 men and 32 women) between the ages of 10 and 88 live in this intergenerational cohousing project. In 2018, the residents of the project Heerstraße celebrated their tenth anniversary as a cohousing community. However, this tenth anniversary is much more than just a festive occasion, as it also provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the years past and to take stock whether the decision to develop a cohousing constituted a suitable strategy to age in place for the elderly residents. For this, however, it is not enough to just pay attention to the ten-year residential phase. Rather, it is necessary to approach this stocktaking from a holistic perspective starting from the elderly residents' motivations to develop a cohousing project (chapter 4.2), how their expectations, wishes and concerns shaped the conceptualization of the cohousing project, including the challenges they experienced during planning and development (chapter 4.3), how this conceptualization affected their ageing in place experience (chapter 4.4), all the way to the challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the future continuity of the community (chapter 4.5). All of this will be presented in the following.

4.2 Looking for community: Motivation, initial ideals and group formation

The cohousing project Heerstraße has its origin in the early 2000s, where Mrs. A (77), the founder of what later became the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. developed the idea to start a cohousing project for women in Bonn. Her motivation to actively pursue the realization of this idea was based both on socio-political and personal reasons. On the one hand, Mrs. A regarded the development of a cohousing project as an opportunity to address the social challenges brought about by the decline of the classical nuclear family along with changes in family and support structures. On the other hand, there were also personal circumstances that motivated Mrs. A to look for alternative forms of living arrangements apart from the traditional nuclear family, as she explains:

> "And then it happened that my personal relationship crumbled, our daughter moved away and my husband moved out. Then I got this feeling of isolation and loneliness. And these were all reasons why I said "mmh,

isn't there a different form of community or a different social context to live in a collaborative way?".” (Mrs. A, 77)

Besides her feelings of loneliness, thoughts of getting older also played an important role for Mrs. A to look for alternative forms of living. By developing a cohousing project, she not only aspired to create an attractive living environment for herself in later life, but particularly to relieve her daughter of her obligations to support her as she grows older:

> "In addition, there is one more aspect, also a very personal one: I was the only child, as is our daughter. And it also happened to me as a woman, daughter and daughter-in-law in a certain time from 1990 or 1989 to 1995, to accompany my mother, my aunts, my parents-in-law when they died. And after that I saw so many dead people that I said "how can a person survive that?" and I didn't want to impose that on our daughter. Do you understand? That, like me, she must accompany so many dying people conscientiously." (Mrs. A, 77)

Mrs. A realized that the residential options offered on the free housing market no longer met the changing housing needs of many elderly people like her. Mrs. A was hopeful that the development of a cohousing project that aimed to create a community based on mutual support could make a positive contribution to closing this gap. In order to push her initial idea further towards reality, Mrs. A started to look for like-minded people to form a planning group:

> "It became more and more obvious how our environment, our fellow man are suffering from social, climatic and political changes. My idea was "perhaps we could use such cohousing projects to create opportunities to set an example for a different kind of behavior, for a different kind of human coexistence." (Mrs. A, 77)

One of the first pioneers who joined the group was the now 71 year old Mrs. D. Unlike Mrs. A, Mrs. D already had experiences with community-based housing as a young single mother. It was during this time, where Mrs. D first experienced the benefits of living in an intentional community. Mrs. D also shared her personal community living experiences during her work as a lecturer, where she increasingly realized that the stimulation and relief potentials of intentional communities may not only be valuable for single parents, but also for the elderly.

> "(...) I have always said in lessons with home directors, with nurses, with old people's nurses, with station managers, in other words all this terrible geriatric work that has become dehumanized, I have always said "living alone is not good. We need alternative schemes and we need to find solutions". And that was my motivation to be so strongly involved here." (Mrs. D, 71)

With all her personal and professional experience, Mrs. D moved to Bonn due to occupational changes, where she lived together with her ex-partner. During this time, she realized that she was missing out on community life and mutual exchange. Despite having a partnership and numerous relationships with neighbors, Mrs. D experienced a feeling of loneliness and realized that she had to change her housing situation and started looking for cohousing projects in Bonn:

> "I came (...) out of a partnership where I became lonely. The people there couldn't understand my art, they couldn't understand me. And my partner (...) wanted me all to himself. And that depressed me (...). (...) I noticed that it was not working; I was not in the right place. Then it all became clear to me "I don't want to live like that." (Mrs. D, 71)

Much like Mrs. D, Mrs. F, who is now 74 years old, also had some previous experiences with living in a non-family-based community. After the divorce from her husband and when her children moved out, Mrs. F spent ten years living alone in a single apartment. As with Mrs. D, it was a feeling of loneliness that led her to change her housing situation and to look for other residential strategies to satisfy her longing for community. As she explains, it was highly important for her to be in constant contact with other people, even in old age, and not to isolate herself in her own apartment as she gets older:

> "Well I moved in here because I missed the way I was sitting on the terrace with my friends (...) drinking a coffee and my friend comes around the corner "oh there you are. I've been looking for you already". (...) Or you meet in the laundry room "Shall we have a coffee?" and "Yes, come, we'll have a coffee". These casual interactions, for which one otherwise (...) has to call "do you have time? Yes, I have time tomorrow or the day after tomorrow". Or you may feel a bit bad you then really have your caregiver right next door. That was my greatest wish. I totally missed that when I (...) lived in my beautiful (...) apartment. It didn't work. It did not make me happy." (Mrs. F, 74)

Likewise for the 71 year old and unmarried Mrs. E, her decision to age in a cohousing project was influenced by her previous housing experiences, where according to her reports, she lived in a variety of non-communal and communal housing arrangements. Her decision to return to a communal residential arrangement was less motivated by thoughts of growing older but rather by her desire for regular unorganized contact with other residents. As Mrs. E reports, the time of her approaching retirement played an important role in her decision. Here she had the unorganized contact she was looking for on an everyday basis with her colleagues. However, her approaching retirement meant that this contact seemed likely to break off. In order to close the emerging gap of her daily social interactions Mrs. E finally decided to join the planning group of the cohousing project:

> "And I think it was crucial that my retirement time was approaching and I knew it was time to retire. Well and within a job you simply have a non-organized contact in a work context. And I am single and there was already for me the point "where do I find contacts, without constantly arranging concrete appointments". That was actually the decisive point. Because I knew about that from the other residential arrangements in which I lived. And that's why I would say that I believe the non-organized contact and the (...) exchange with completely different (...) types of people was important. That was the most important thing." (Mrs. E, 71)

Unlike other residents such as Mrs. D, F and E, the now 78-year-old Mrs. C never had any experience with living in a non-family-based residential setting, as she spent most of her adult life living together with her child and partner. Similar to Mrs. A and Mrs. D, it was the moving out of the children combined with a separation from her long-time partner that motivated Mrs. C, who was already over 60 years old at that time, to reconsider her housing situation and start looking for alternatives. While looking for housing alternatives, she attended various information events, including one on intergenerational living. Here the group around Mrs. A presented their idea for the development of a cohousing project in Bonn. Convinced by the group's idea, Ms. C joined the group the same night:

"It was pure coincidence. There was an information evening about intergenerational living. At that time there was only the idea. And there was an association which was established shortly before. And I was so captivated by the idea that I declared my membership in the association on the same evening. And yes, that proved to be just right. I never regretted that move, quite the opposite, I knew I had met the right people at the right moment." (Mrs. C, 78)

As was the case with many of the other female interviewees, Mrs. G's break-up with her husband led to profound shifts in her housing situation and ultimately in her social network. For 20 years she lived together with her husband in a house on the outskirts of Bonn, where she had a stable group of friends and was involved in a variety of cultural activities. After her break-up, she spent seven years living alone in downtown Bonn. As she got older, Mrs. G realized that living alone was hardly enough for her and that she had to change something about it, as she explains in the following:

"And indeed, when I got a little older, I think it was around 65, or even earlier, I started to think what I was actually doing in my apartment(...), how it should look like when I get older? Somehow I thought "that's not enough for me". Well, from time to time you meet good friends, make an appointment and that's all very nice and very good. But I somehow had the feeling that I wanted to do something else." (Mrs. G, 76)

For Mrs. G it was of utmost importance that she could continue to live a self-determined life as she grew older. In her search for a suitable housing solution, she finally attended an information event on the subject of "Living in old age", where besides various housing options, the planning group of the latter cohousing project Wahlverwandtschaften was mentioned. As Mrs. G reports, what convinced her to attend the meeting of the planning group was that the cohousing concept of "living together privately" corresponded fairly well with her expectations of a self-determined lifestyle in old age, where she always has the opportunity to enjoy her time with others but could also withdraw into her private apartment if she wanted to. Persuaded by the group's idea Mrs. G attended one of the planning meetings and finally decided to join the group:

"What really convinced me about the project was that you can live in a self-determined way. That was the most important thing for me, that I have my own apartment (...), but I can also have closer contact to like-minded people, but I do not have to. That was very important for me. And then I went there and I have to say, the people who were meeting there, they appealed to me because we were on the same level. They wanted to live together somehow in old age but each one for themselves and that was going in my direction. And then I became a member right after (...) the second meeting or so. It was no obligation to become a member but I thought "let's see where this is going." (Mrs. G, 76)

Mrs. H and Mr. A are one of the three couples who joined the single-women dominated planning group. This happened at a later stage of the group-finding process, after the group decided to develop an intergenerational instead of an elderly women cohousing project. Like some of the other interviewed residents both of them had previous experiences with non-family-based forms of communal living. With respect to getting older, the couple saw the advantage of moving into a cohousing project in the possibility of creating mutual support and encouragement structures that go beyond the nuclear family and thus provide a certain feeling of security. Like Mrs. A the couple also wished that by ageing in a cohousing community they

could relieve their children of their responsibility to take care of them when they need a little more support:

> "Then we made the decision for this housing project, for this community and from the very beginning we were involved in the development and planning of this community and so on. We have two kids, but they do not live in our neighborhood (...). And the idea was "we can't assume that they move here and there just because we are old and frail (but) we need a social community". And that was the main reason to move here (...) to have such a sheltered environment." (Mrs. H, 69)

As with many of the other residents, another key motivation for the couple to develop a cohousing project was their shared wish to have the opportunity for non-organized, spontaneous social interactions while getting older:

> "So, for me (...) there was also this thought of spontaneous social get-togethers, something I experienced in the past when I grew up, that somebody just passed by, my mother was doing the laundry and she continued the laundry and the person drank a cup of coffee and chatted. Just for a quarter of an hour "do you want to drink a coffee?" and then you have an exchange, you have talked to someone, and you have probably experienced well-being and affection. I think the same. I do not have to make an appointment and check the calendar weeks before if I have time. That works spontaneously." (Mrs. H, 69)

Unlike most of the other interviewed residents Mrs. B's decision to join the cohousing project was not motivated by a strong desire for community living. Actually, she was very pleased with living alone in her own flat, as she had numerous friends living in close proximity and thus did not experience any feeling of loneliness. However, due to her advanced age and a hip condition, it became increasingly difficult for Mrs. B to walk up the stairs to her apartment and thus perform her daily tasks such as shopping:

> "There you can see, that at that time this community idea was not the most important aspect for me. I have never bothered with alternative forms of living before. I had so many contacts in the city and so on. (...). That was not the most important aspect for me. (...) It just started as I noticed it was no longer possible to walk. I couldn't carry my groceries upstairs anymore. The most important thing for me was an elevator and affordability." (Mrs. B, 88)

While looking for a new apartment, Ms. B developed an interest in a senior housing project that was planned at that time to be built on the site of the Ermekail Kaserne, a former Federal Armed Forces compound. Unfortunately, it quickly turned out that the project would not be realized soon. By coincidence Mrs. B's contact person at the municipal urban planning department was informed that the Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. were still looking for further candidates for their cohousing project and suggested her contacting Mrs. A, who was the chairperson of the association at that time. This finally led Mrs. B to join the planning group:

> "And then he said "have you ever heard of the Wahlverwandtschaften in Bonn? I said "no, I don't know. What is that? "Well, then I'll give you the phone number of Mrs. A., who is the chairperson. Talk to her, they have a project that is to be built soon. Maybe that would be something for you". Then I called Mrs. A and she said "Come and have a look. We meet every fourteen days (...), we are meeting in the city and then you can see what we have in mind". And that's how it started." (Mrs. B, 88)

4.3 Developing community: Conceptualizing expectations, wishes and concerns

"The mere undertaking of choosing a house together, furnishing it and developing it into a 'home', where one really feels 'at home' because, among other things, one appreciates the work and time invested in it, and because, as a visible testimony to a joint project that has been realized together, it continually provides new common satisfaction, it is a product of affective cohesion and in turn strengthens this affective cohesion."
(Bordieu 1998: 28)

Once around a dozen of the potential residents had been recruited for the planning meetings, the group realized that they needed to specify their initials ideas about how the future cohousing project should look like. This required developing criteria for both the structural architecture such as the site selection and the structural design of the residential buildings as well as the social architecture with respect to the composition of the future community and what the community should strive for in terms of community life. A highly participatory character of the planning meetings was to ensure that the various expectations, wishes and concerns of the future residents were sufficiently taken into account. To make sure that the decisions would be supported by all members, the group decided at an early point to use a consensus mechanism instead of voting as the key decision mechanism. Mrs. B presents her personal opinion on the benefits of the consensus mechanism in the following:

"This (the consensus mechanism) was used pretty much from the beginning. This was the work of Mrs. A, who got to know the consensus mechanism at her former job. In the beginning I thought "my God, now we've got to talk about everything a hundred times". However, when you say "I don't want it, I don't want it at all, I don't think it's good", you are taken seriously. And if I notice that I am the only one and I am asked "how is that?" then I start to think about it and usually I can live with it. (...) Otherwise if we would vote, I (...) then I would have the feeling of "everybody against me"." (Mrs. B, 88)

4.3.1 Developing fundamental principles of community life

Based on their different expectations and wishes, the group developed three fundamental principles that not only provided the conceptual foundation for the development of the association's first cohousing project at Heerstraße, but also for other projects to follow. The first major challenge was to clarify who should be allowed to become part of the later community and to develop specific criteria for further selection, as one resident explained:

"For a certain time, we accepted everyone who wanted to participate in our cohousing community. At some point we noticed "we have to establish criteria as not everyone is suitable". And I thought that was a very interesting and exciting moment, because then we established a framework and held a so-called palaver, as we worked very early on with the consensus procedure because we said "we don't work with voting. There will always be people who fall behind". (Mrs. H, 69)

Reaching a consensus on the composition of the future community turned out to be a challenging exercise. As the size of the group increased, conflicting attitudes emerged towards the initiators' plan to develop a project only for elderly women. Most of the members rather preferred an intergenerational concept, as they wanted the cohousing project to be a reflection of larger society. As Mrs. F explained, this situation finally caused the group to split up into two planning groups:

"The group split up because all of a sudden, after we had 35 or 40 people, we realized that the committee of Weiberwirtschaft only wanted women. Then we realized "only women, there is no such thing. We don't want that. That is not life. There are children, there are couples, single men, women, no matter what, with children or without children". And then we split up, called ourselves Wahlverwandtschaften and started looking for young people, couples and men. That's why there are actually 30 old women, who were initially interested in these things, or even planned to make it happen. And we searched for a long time." (Mrs. F, 74)

After the group split up, the newly established association Wahlverwandtschaften adopted the goal of developing an intergenerational community as the first of three shared principles upon which they wanted to develop their cohousing community

> **Principle 1: The community should be intergenerational**
>
> "We want our communities and housing project initiatives to be open to all ages, and for different people to come together to promote diversity and goodwill. It would be desirable for each person to find a partner within this diversity. We want our home communities and housing project initiatives to be open to all ages, and for different people to come together to promote diversity and goodwill. It would be desirable for each person to find a partner within this diversity." (Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V., 2017c: 1)

A further aspect that needed to be clarified during the conceptualization process was the question regarding the right scope and intensity of the foreseen community life. While the group shared the vision that community living should be based on neighborly interaction and mutual support, some residents were concerned about the intensity in which these interactions should take place. One of these residents was Mrs. G, who, as she explained, had concerns about losing her privacy:

"My biggest concern was that I wouldn't have my privacy here. Because I am very sociable, but I also need my time to rest. And then I was afraid of being contacted all the time. But that didn't prove to be true, I feel very happy." (Mrs. G, 76)

Ms. C believes that the concern of some residents with regard to the loss of privacy was partly due to the fact that they had no previous experience with living in an intentional community. However, Mrs. C admits that she personally also experienced the first conceptual ideas that were drafted by some of the community members as way too fundamentalist and missionary. She assumes that this vision of a very intensive social life may have frightened off some of the group members:

"I can't say it exactly anymore but from my point of view it was very missionary and fundamentalist at the beginning, before we moved in together (...). Maybe it scared people off and even I thought "for God's sake". That's too much for me". And at some point it became obvious to us that the balance between proximity and distance is very important. It is always a very important matter, also for people who don't have such experiences with groups or experiences with different forms of living." (Mrs. C, 78)

In order to also adequately integrate the wishes of those people who expected a less intensive way of community life, the group decided that it was necessary to constantly keep community life in a balance between proximity and distance. However, they also agreed that community

life should be sufficiently intense to ensure the formation of social networks. Furthermore, the group realized that their vision of a supportive and solidary community life could only be achieved if every resident contributes to the community through active participation in community work and joint activities. All these wishes and expectations led to the formulation of the second principle:

Principle 2: The community should be based on neighborliness and solidarity

"The formation of internal social networks facilitates the common everyday life, the connection with external networks enriches by new ideas. Solidarity, tolerant behavior and the appreciation of others are just as important as the willingness to participate actively, according to one's own abilities and the available time, in communal tasks within small groups and to contribute to the community life of the cohousing communities through community-building participatory processes. The aim is active participation. "Our experience is that living together in a diverse community requires a high level of social competence and communicative ability among the people involved. Since personal responsibility is always necessary, there is a constant process of balancing proximity and distance. Community spirit takes precedence over self-interest." (Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V., 2017c).

After the general guidelines for later community living were set, the group had to discuss another very important issue, namely: who should be able to afford living in the cohousing project? The residents quickly decided that they wanted to develop a project in which people could live independently of their income. The interviews with the residents showed that they did not want to establish an exclusive society for certain income groups, but that, just as with their demographic composition, also their socio-economic composition should reflect broader society in a certain way. This was also due to the fact that at this time the group already consisted of members from different income groups and thus needed to find a way to enable these members to afford living in the cohousing project. One resident justified the choice of an income-independent model as follows:

> "Well, it shouldn't be an exclusive society. I mean that's how our society is. It starts with education, continues with career choice and income, with or without children. Therefore it should be simply diverse." (Mrs. C, 78)

The extent to which the affordability of the later project would be feasible depended to a large extent on the group's ability to find a suitable financing model. Due to the complexity of the issue, the group sought professional advice from the Wohnbund-Beratung NRW, a consultancy specialized in advising cohousing projects. For some time, the group leaned towards the application of a cooperative model which, due to the solidarity-based approach, would have fitted well with the idea of mutual support anchored in the second principle of community life. However, the group noticed that the cooperative model had the decisive disadvantage of requiring a comparatively high equity share from the future residents in order to establish a cooperative. As some of the interviewees describe, this raised concerns among the lower-income members as to whether they would be able to afford such a financing model:

> "First of all, we are not a cooperative, like Amaryllis, we had consultants at that time and considered very carefully in the planning phase "do we want a GmbH, do we want an association, do we want a cooperative,

what do we actually want?" If we had become a cooperative, where I would have had to pay 400 euros per square meter, then I would not have been able to do so. I didn't have the money." (Mrs. D, 71)

Since a cooperative model was out of the question, the group decided to develop the project in cooperation with an investor. It was particularly important to the group that the later property not only offered condominiums but also freely financed rental apartments as well as a certain proportion of state-subsidized rental apartments for people with lower incomes. Based on these wishes and expectations, the group finally formulated their third principle of community living:

Principle 3: The community should be income-independent

"In our cohousing projects, we want apartments to be built for different income groups: Apartments for free rental and subsidized rented flats for residents who are entitled to a subsidized housing permit as well as condominiums. However, we do not have a dogmatic view on the composition and proportion, but rather on the need to adapt it to the location conditions. The composition and proportion should be determined and negotiated in a cooperative planning process with investors, architects and those interested in the apartments, so that a distribution of apartments - also in terms of size and layout - that corresponds to the ideas of the group is achieved." (Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V., 2017c).

4.3.2 Developing criteria for site selection

After the group had agreed on how and with whom they would like to live together, they now had to decide where they would like to live. For this purpose, the members developed location criteria, that later would serve as a guideline for the subsequent location acquisition process, as Mrs. A explained:

> "We developed location criteria at that time. The important aspects were that a garden is possible and there is infrastructure of all kinds, i.e. educational institutions, but also offices, administration, post office (...). This was very important to us with regard to these location criteria." (Mrs. A, 77)

While the residents largely agreed that the future location needed good infrastructure, opinions differed as to where the project should be located. As the interviews showed, there were smaller groups within the planning group who wanted to realize the project in certain districts. As no agreement could be made in the group with regard to the choice of location, the group split again into three planning groups that wanted to realize their projects in the preferred locations, including Plittersdorf, Duisdorf and the group that later became the project Heerstraße. For the planning group Heerstraße it was evident from the beginning that they wanted to live in the city center. The interviews showed that the residents' expectations of a location close to the city center were quite similar. They wanted good infrastructure, as well as a wide range of services and cultural facilities within walking distance of their new home, as Mrs. E explained:

> "I think infrastructure has been a very important issue. (...) I need a cinema, I need music around the corner, I need a theatre, I need culture around the corner and of course I also need the opportunity to shop around the corner and if possible the doctor or (a pharmacy). I can still remember my old physician as a child, as a teenager. He always said "When I get older, I want the pub and the market and the church around the corner". (Mrs. E, 71).

The residents expected that this would allow them to participate in public life and to carry out their daily tasks even in old age without relying on a car. Furthermore, some residents considered the city center as particularly convenient for elderly people due to the high availability of senior service providers and care facilities upon which they could rely on if necessary. In the following statement Mrs. D confirms the shared wish of the group to move back to the city:

> "We did not want to live on the outskirts of the city. As I told you, we wanted to "go back to the city". Our idea was to walk with the rollator across the old cemetery in seven minutes to the city, by foot, without a car. And that's how this came about." (Mrs. D, 71)

4.3.3 Finding a property and an investor

With their goal to move "back to the city" and their numerous conceptual ideas on how the later cohousing project should look like, the group set out to find a suitable property and an investor willing to finance the project. For the group and in particular Mrs. A, who in her role as the initiator, started negotiations with potential investors and landowners, it quickly turned out that this would become an enormous challenge. At that time, as today, there was a shortage of suitable inner-city properties, making it nearly impossible for the group to secure an option for an adequate plot of land. Furthermore, most investors were highly suspicious about the group's plan to develop an intergenerational cohousing project as only very few had experiences with developing such residential projects. The following quote shows how Mrs. A experienced this situation:

> "Well, that was really very difficult. I felt like a beggar. I honestly have to tell you that. Good, the idea was new and the developers and investors still had little experience about how it works." (Mrs. A, 77)

While searching, Mrs. A and the other members had to deal with numerous setbacks, as there was little interest amongst investors in financing such a project. The group had particularly strong hopes of convincing the Wohnungsgenossenschaft Bonn, as they had a large portfolio of inner-city properties. However, during the meeting it quickly turned out that they had no interest in financing a cohousing project, as the idea of developing an intentional, non-family based social network for mutual support was not considered feasible by the former director. Mrs. A reports her personal impressions from the conversation as follows:

> "I first spoke to the Wohnungsgenossenschaft Bonn. At that time there was the director (...) who was previously also the social referent in the municipal administration. And yes, he basically told me that (...) such a thing could not work. The only thing he said that works is the family association. And he simply thought my idea was bizarre and couldn't even familiarize himself with it. Besides, I have to say that I have only been angry two times. The first time was with him as I said: "You know, you count on your family, your wife and your children to accompany you when you no longer have the ability to do so, and when you die, but the other people who don't have that need something like cohousing". And then I left. It was a great pity because that was our great hope." (Mrs. A, 77)

After searching for a long time, the group finally had success. At the Bonn Market of Opportunities (Bonner Markt der Möglichkeiten), the group presented their project idea at a pavilion where Mrs. A approached the former mayor of Bonn to show her the cohousing concept the group had developed. As some of the interviewed residents reported, the former mayor was highly interested in the idea and invited the group to discuss the project details. Ultimately, the appointment resulted in the former mayor instructing the Urban Planning Department to support the group in the realization of the Cohousing project.

As most of the interviewed residents reported, the support of the Urban Planning Department was an important factor that ultimately led to the realization of the project. In order to support the group, the Department assigned an employee to meet with the group once a month and present them options for potential sites. However, the decisive contribution made by the department was to establish a contact between the planning group and the Bonn-based housing company RheinHaus GmbH, out of which, as it turned out later, a long-standing partnership emerged resulting in the development of three cohousing projects. Although the former managing director of RheinHaus was initially skeptical about the idea of developing such a project he was also very interested in trying something new and agreed to set up a cooperation agreement out of which the first cohousing project "Heerstraße" emerged, as Mrs. A reported:

> "The old senior boss (...) then said "we already have the usual so much, let's do something different. Let's see how it goes". And then it went really fantastic. I really have to say that." (Mrs. A, 77)

4.3.4 Participatory planning phase

After the group managed to find an investor willing to cooperate with the association, the next step was to jointly develop the project together with RheinHaus. Since none of the partners had gained any previous experience with the development of cohousing projects, it was a completely new experience for everyone involved. In order to meet the group's desire for an inner city residential location, RheinHaus offered the group a property in Heerstraße, for which a preliminary building design already existed. In order to ensure that this design would nevertheless meet the requirements of the future residents, the investor gave the group the opportunity to review the design together with an architect during their weekly planning meetings and, if necessary, make adjustments. The challenge for the group was to adapt the existing plans in such a way that they align with the previously developed principles of community living.

Implementation of principle 1: The community should be intergenerational
To ensure that the design also corresponded to the principle of intergenerational community living, it was very important to the group that the structural implementation of the project met the needs of all ages. As a result, accessibility played a particularly important role, as Mrs. H explained:

"Inside the apartment I found it very important that we have wide doors and that it is accessible. I liked the elevator, the fact that we don't have to carry shopping bags or the water boxes. It was also the thought that if something happened, the shower would be level with the floor. I found that very important, because at our age this comes quickly and surprisingly (...)". (Mrs. H, 69)

Although the existing plans provided a high degree of accessibility, some residents felt that they did not sufficiently consider the needs of elderly people. As a result, the residents asked the architect to change the interior design of some of the apartments to suit the wishes of the elderly residents. This included, for instance, higher toilets and sinks, different lighting and in some cases even different heights of kitchen counters. However, as Mrs. D stated, the group had to invest a lot of energy to get these special requests integrated into the existing planning:

"We had to come to terms with the existing designs of an architect who didn't consider the elderly (...) very well in his architecture (...). Accessibility was largely guaranteed. If you are downstairs in the basement rooms, in the shared flat, everything is very disability-friendly and to a large extent wheelchair-accessible. For me, what is also part of accessibility is definitely higher toilets in the bathroom. In other words, according to DIN standards. We struggled to get it right and then we all retrofitted it for an extra charge, so to speak. (...) Elevated washbasin, a mirror where you can see yourself even when you are old and sitting in a wheelchair or on the toilet chair, decent lighting. We had to struggle for all this and retrofitted it, so to speak." (Mrs. D, 71)

Another request of the group was to change the planned size of the apartments. The residents had some concerns that the apartments, which were mainly designed for one and two-person households, would be too small to accommodate families. Unfortunately, the residents were not able to exert much influence on changing the sizes of the apartments, as a change in the floor plans would mean that the architect would have had to replan the entire building. As a result, it was decided to keep the planned apartment sizes despite the existing concerns of the group.

Implementation of principle 2: The community should be based on neighborliness and solidarity
Unlike the size of the apartments, the residents were able to influence the design of the open spaces and in some cases even the layout of the apartments to ensure that they were built with a sense of a community-promoting architecture. For the apartments, the group asked the architect to merge kitchen and living in order to create a space that allows the residents to have social interaction while cooking. For Mrs. D, this was particularly important for the following reason:

"We all have open kitchens, that is kitchens as a social space, so that you can sit at the table but also work a little together. Or that the one who cooks is not cut off. We had this trend in the 70s with the small kitchens, where the housewife was cut off. Socially that was really bad." (Mrs. D, 71)

Furthermore, the group suggested that the apartment entrances in the street house should be connected via an arcade instead of a direct access point through the stairway in order to create additional spaces for social interaction (see Figure 2). As Mrs. C reports, the investor was not particularly keen on this idea, but finally decided to grant this wish to the group:

"A group that was also a bit knowledgeable in construction placed great emphasis on the fact that this building should have arcades as an access for the individual apartments on all floors. (...) We found such a layout very desirable, because this is something like a public area for all floors and also among each other of course. The developer was not enthusiastic about it, the architect liked it. As I said before, the plans were revised again and again, and our wishes flowed in. And so also this one." (Mrs. C, 78)

Figure 2 Arcade linking staircase and apartment entrance (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Another aspect that the group absolutely wanted to have changed was the planned landscaping of the garden. The architect planned to separate the courtyard house with the condominiums from the front house with the rental apartments using a hedge in the communal garden. The group did not want any spatial separation that would make the appearance of a two-class society, as this was not in line with the community's principles of neighborliness, solidarity and income independence. The group expected the garden to be a connecting element that stimulates the residents to interact with each other instead of separating them. In the following Mrs. D describes how the community reacted to the architect's idea of separating both houses:

"This culminated, so to speak, in the landscape architects separating the house with the condominiums with hedges and fences from us "infantry". We've put that down. We said "there is no separation between owner and tenant". And we changed the whole plan so that everything was open and accessible. That is also important. Common space and growing old and moving through the garden with the walker or on the walking stick or whatever." (Mrs. D, 71)

Implementation of principle 3: The community should be income-independent
In order to realize the idea of an income-independent cohousing project, the group deemed it unavoidable to integrate state-subsidized apartments into the project. As some residents report, this idea was not considered feasible by both the city and the investor at that time and was only approved after long and intense negotiations with both parties. In the following Mrs. A describes her conversation with the former director of Rheinhaus on the proportion of state-subsidized apartments:

"Well, I have to say, that really cost me a lot of energy. Especially because back then they said "that wouldn't work" and "no way about social housing" and "what I was thinking about" and "illusion" and what he told me. And (...) there I became quite clear again and said "I will tell you something, once falsely in love and then perhaps even married and divorced, do you know what that means? For women this usually means that when they grow older they will be poor. I wish it would happen neither to you nor to your wife, but exactly these women and also two or three men are the ones who would like to live with us and are eligible for a residence entitlement certificate". And do you know what he said then? "How many of the flats should become social housing? I said "30 percent". "That's too much" he said. "Ok" I said "I can come towards you: 26 percent". "Yes" he said, "ok"." (Mrs. A, 77)

However, the group not only succeeded in getting about a quarter of their apartments state-subsidized, but also in obtaining the right of occupancy, which is usually reserved for the municipality, since Mrs. A was able to convince the administrators that the development and maintenance of an intentional community can only succeed if only the community can decide who is allowed to move into the project and who isn't, as she describes from her meeting with the head of the social affairs department:

"And what we have fortunately achieved, something that went differently in Cologne and other cities and has already led to some disasters, the city actually has a right to allocate the publicly subsidized apartments. They don't actually have that, they do. And in this case the head of the social affairs department has realized that the allocation cannot be enforced. If the project is to succeed, then it will need people who fit in very well. And there has to be a change for innovative forms of living. The allocations must be discussed with the associations or with the cooperative. Otherwise this will not work at all. But I think there is in the meantime also (...) thus in Bonn it is so. In North Rhine-Westphalia we are envied for it, that we submit a list with those who should move into the publicly subsidized flats, the municipality checks the formalities with the housing entitlement certificate and then the people who we have suggested will move in. That's a very important thing." (Mrs. A, 77)

With the approval of the state-subsidized apartments, the group had not yet overcome all the obstacles on its way to realizing an income-independent cohousing community. Similar to the issue with the separated garden, the architect had also qualitatively separated the freely rental apartments from the state-subsidized rental apartments in his plans. While the freely rented apartments had their balcony facing the garden, the balcony of the state-subsidized apartments were facing the street. Here, too, the residents advocated that there should be no qualitative differences between the different types of apartments and that instead all apartments should have a balcony facing the garden (see Figure 3). As Mrs. F confirms, this wish was finally accepted by the architect and subsequently adjusted:

"Well, those who have a little more money have the better and those who have less have the street. And there we said "we don't want that. No, they're not second-class people. Either you make that everyone to the street and to the garden (has an opening) or we leave it". And they really took notice of our needs and that's great, of course. It was actually already planned and then they changed it that way." (Mrs. F, 74)

Soon the next challenge appeared. The planned sizes of the state-subsidized apartments slightly exceeded the legally permitted maximum size. In order to make the apartments eligible, the architect had to downscale all rented apartments that were to be subsidized to the maximum

eligible size. However, the downscaling of the apartment also affected the overall layout of the apartments. This meant that the kitchen had to be moved from the window side to the inside of the apartment. For Mrs. B, this news was particularly discouraging as she did not want to have an apartment without a kitchen window and for some time even considered looking for another apartment, as she explains:

"And then, and then (...) the city came and said " no, no, no, no, we're not subsidizing that, it's too big for one person." The subsidized flats (...) were not allowed to have more than 47 square meters. The architect had to rebuild everything again, in (...) all his plans and of course had to make everything smaller. And so the kitchen window disappeared. Well, I wondered if I would still do that, because I knew that it would be difficult for me (without a kitchen window). But then there were many other advantages. I had meanwhile befriended the people who were moving in here and I found them all very nice and thought "well, you can't change it. I'll do it". And I am thankful that I can live here and that I decided to move in here." (Mrs. B, 88)

Figure 3: Balconies facing the communal garden (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Despite the numerous challenges, the group experienced the cooperation with the city of Bonn and in particular with the investor RheinHaus as very positive, as they were able to integrate numerous wishes into the existing design despite the difficult circumstances. The revised plans were then submitted to the city and the group waited curiously for their approval. Finally, in September 2007, RheinHaus started the construction of the cohousing project (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Construction phase starting in 2007 (pictures by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

4.4 Living and ageing in community: Stimulating, supporting, relieving

"However, I think your question is spot on.
Getting old, falling ill, dying is always an issue in such projects." (Mrs. D, 71)

Now that the findings on the first two subquestions have been analyzed, the third section will be devoted to the third subquestion (SQ3-RES). The following chapter will therefore shed light on how the implemented project conceptualization affected the residents ageing in place experience throughout the last ten years. The analysis of the interviews revealed that the ageing in place experiences of residents can be assigned to three thematic fields, namely stimulating experiences, supporting experiences, and relieving experiences. The results will therefore be presented in this section along these three thematic fields.

4.4.1 Stimulating residential experiences

Participation in self-administration and working groups

One reason why the elderly residents experience ageing in the community as particularly stimulating is that each resident contributes to the self-administration of the project. In order to comply with the principle of self-administration established during the early planning phase, the community developed various organizational structures that allowed them to manage both the residential property and community life. A key organizational structure was the monthly community meetings, in which all residents are asked to participate. This is where all matters concerning the community are discussed and all tasks that need to be done in the community are distributed among individual residents or entire working groups on a regular basis. These tasks range from general housekeeping activities such as gardening (see **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**) and cleaning to participation in association work such as the supervision of members, public relations and internal communication between the various cohouse communities, as Mrs. E. explained:

"There are a number of fixed structures. There is for example the compulsory monthly residents meeting. There is also the division of the tasks to be done here in the community. Because we have taken over the property management ourselves or also the garden work and so on and the cleaning work. This often happens in smaller teams or like the garden day, for example, where everyone is asked to cooperate." (Mrs. E, 71)

Figure 5: Residents working together in the garden (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

The self-organization by the residents does not only reduce costs but primarily aims at involving all residents in community life, keeping older residents engaged and thereby strengthening the overall community spirit. The regular reassignment of tasks is therefore always performed according to the residents' interests and abilities. This is to ensure that all residents, regardless of time, physical or mental limitations, can contribute to the community, as Mrs. A pointed out:

> "That way a lot of people get involved with all their abilities and interests. And that is not just to reduce costs or simply enjoy a nice activity, but it is also to involve all members with their competences, their abilities and their social engagement." (Mrs. A, 77)

However, the majority interviewees reported that it is mostly the elderly residents of the first generation who are involved in self-administration and working groups, as the younger residents often cannot devote as much time to this due to their work and family responsibilities. This situation is largely met with understanding by the elderly residents. During the interviews the interviewees repeatedly emphasized that although the younger residents are less involved, they are always there to help if needed. As Mrs. G argues, this has the advantage that the elderly residents still get enough work to do and thus are able to pursue regular and meaningful activity:

> "And of course it needs to be said that they are not equally committed to performance here in the community. Which I can understand very well, and which I can also support. Because when you come home from work you are tired and then you want to do something for yourself and for your own group of friends. And there is no time left. But what I still like about the whole thing is that we just need to write "we old people can't do this anymore and need help", and then they are right up there. You cannot expect much more. I think that's great. And we, the old people, also need something meaningful in our lives. That is good, if we are able to do this and that and do that as long as we can. Why do the young people have to take part? That's stupid if they don't have time. If they do it and come to help when it is no longer possible for us, then that is great." (Mrs. G, 76)

Mrs. D considers the regular performance of housekeeping tasks to be a key factor in keeping the elderly residents active and in good shape. She thinks that it is also the responsibility of the community to identify when a person has difficulties in performing a given task and to provide them with a more appropriate task:

> "Motivate them, involve them, give them tasks. If someone has a tremor and doesn't get the smallest screws in a picture frame, then that person will get other tasks. This is something you will notice. Well, many things you just won't notice and then you get scared, then you need to revise it. But in the community, you can do it." (Mrs. D, 71)

Mrs. G agreed that this stimulation strategy has worked very well over the last ten years. At the time of the interview, she identified only two people who, due to mobility and sensory impairments, had a limited capacity to physically participate in community work. However, both residents found alternative ways to keep themselves involved. For example, one of the residents suggested that instead of doing physical work, she could also manage the washing tokens for the community washing machines. As she explains, this resident not only found a

way to participate in the community despite being physically impaired, but also created a situation in which she maintains regular social interaction with all the other residents:

"This was her idea. From the very beginning she said, "I can't do much. I will then be responsible for the washing tokens". That means everyone who needs some visits her, and that means she has contact. Great idea, great idea." (Mrs. G, 76)

However, as Ms. C reported from her personal experiences with her role as a chairperson, that taking on a job outside of one's own abilities and comfort zone can also be an opportunity to grow personally. Having the chance to learn and try out new things is something she experiences as a highly enriching aspect of ageing in a cohousing project:

"I was never in a situation where I had to speak freely in front of many people. And in the beginning, I couldn't do that without notes and wet hands, even here in our community. I'm really glad that I managed to overcome this hurdle in my later years. Well, this can be dealt with openly here. Personally, I think I have learned a lot in these years." (Mrs. C, 78)

Spontaneous interpersonal exchange

Another aspect that was repeatedly mentioned in the interviews as a stimulating ageing in place experience is having the opportunity for spontaneous interpersonal interaction due to the architecture of the residential property, i.e. characterized by various communal spaces such as the communal apartment, communal garden, garden-facing balconies, arcades, as well as staircases (see Figure 6). One resident explained what she found particularly beneficial about living in the cohousing project in terms of social interactions:

"(...) With some people you have more contact, with others less contact, which practically means that you always have someone to talk to. You only have to walk around the house to meet someone. And either you stop and have a talk about what's going on or you say "good day", depending on how you feel or whatever. And I think that's beautiful, that's really pleasurable (...). Well such a thing (spontaneous meetings) will not happen if you live alone, because then you have to call and give an invitation. But if I do an invitation I have to think about it. Well, it's a different approach. Here it comes faster." (Mrs. G, 76)

Figure 6: Residents having a spontaneous conversation in the garden (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Mrs. F further explained that the manifold opportunities for spontaneous meetings and making appointments at short notice provides an important tool for reducing the risk of social isolation and loneliness among the elderly residents:

> "The most important thing is that there are always people there who listen (and) help (...). I think this is the most essential thing. And just, as I said before, it keeps you from being alone in your apartment from dawn till dusk, particularly when you're retired. If you are employed, then it is not so bad then you are glad that you have the chance to keep your mouth shut in the evening. And that's great." (Mrs. F, 74)

Ms. B also considers the possibility to have numerous contacts in the cohousing project at any time as a huge benefit, particularly as she can't walk very well and therefore finds it difficult to visit other people elsewhere. In the following she explains what she particularly likes about living in the cohousing project:

> "Well, helping each other. Mutual help, not being alone, not being isolated, having contacts in the house. I can have lots of social contacts here although I can hardly walk." (Mrs. B, 88)

However, it is not only the architecture of the residential property but also the social architecture of the community that the residents regarded as particularly stimulating. Mrs. E, for example, reported that the community's composition, i.e. made up of people of different ages and biographical backgrounds, keeps her mentally young, as it constantly confronts her with different topics and opinions, thereby causing her to constantly question her own views:

> "This is a very important aspect for me, because I notice or feel or think that this type of housing keeps me personally young. So, I am in a disorganized exchange with different topics, with different life plans, with different approaches of social considerations. This keeps me young, it keeps me still questioning and sometimes I question myself." (Mrs. E, 71)

Mrs. H, too, experiences the intergenerational residential setting as rejuvenating and refreshing because, in contrast to the elderly residents, the younger residents tend to have a higher fluctuation rate, which means that new aspects and views are constantly introduced into the community, thus keeping it vibrant:

> "(...) We have experienced a rejuvenation in this house, although the small children have left, but the main tenants always introduce different aspects. I consider this to be lively and interesting. I don't just want to live with old people at my age." (Mrs. H, 69)

On-site activities

Another point that Mrs. C finds particularly stimulating about living in her community and which at the same time was a central motivation to move into the cohousing project is that the unorganized contacts and spontaneous conversations, of which she reports that she has numerous in the house, regularly leads to joint activities:

> "Well, for me that means that I open the front door of my apartment whenever I have a question, whenever I want company: "tonight there's an interesting film on. Will you join me for the movies?" These are situations I know from my work (...). People knew each other and then sometimes arranged to have a beer in the evening

or to go to the cinema or to invite each other home, without having any hassle. I imagine I would (...) somehow live in a rural area and not as central as here, then I think I would have to make calls (...). Here it can be done pretty simple: If Mrs. H has no time then Mrs. F has time, or I run into Mr. A. I think that's very uncomplicated and pleasant." (Mrs. C, 78)

Beyond the ordinary activities that emerge from day-to-day interaction, the community also hosts numerous self-organized regularly held events and activities ranging from sports, reading circles, discussions, movie nights, sewing (see Figure 7), art exhibitions and different festivities, in which all the residents can participate, as Mrs. E reported in detail:

"Monday morning is a gymnastics class under my direction, Tuesday evening is also a sports class, but there comes an external trainer. What else do we have? On Thursday mornings interested people meet to do sewing or have a chat. And when there are festivities, virtually everyone attends them. And these are always get-togethers that invite to exchange and thus also (...) invite to socialize and also to share." (Mrs. E, 74)

Figure 7: Elderly residents sewing in the garden (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Due to the fact that the residents initiate and organize the events and activities themselves, everyone has the opportunity to share their interests and abilities with the community. As an artist, Mrs. D finds it particularly stimulating when the other residents encourage her to create art for community events such as exhibitions. As she explained, this is an important opportunity for her to stay active while getting older:

"When the (other residents) saw that this project with the small pictures had become a huge thing, they said "we want to exhibit it". Or when they see me working with marble and soapstone and alabaster "do a sculpture exhibition as well". It motivates you, the so-called "kick in the butt". I don't know... I (...) can't imagine what I would do if I wouldn't live here." (Mrs. D, 71)

Furthermore, the community setting encourages her to exchange ideas with other like-minded art enthusiasts, to animate each other for creative activities or even to realize bigger projects together. Mrs. D is convinced that she would not be able to do such projects if she would live alone, as she explained in the following:

"I think it's so enriching. Mr. A, who had the same studies as me, we had the same teachers in art at the university, we also have the same artistic style, and we exchange ideas, we motivate each other. Even to the

point that we had a big exhibition in the factory 45 with three of us. I think there were between 300 and 350 people and "aha, the three Wahlverwandten, look, those living in Heerstrasse". And you literally cannot do that alone. It is only thanks to this community, through this diversity, that we have the strength to do this." (Mrs. D, 71)

However, participating in community activities is by no means compulsory. Instead, everyone has the opportunity to choose from a selection of different activities that suit him or her most. Having this freedom to decide for oneself whether and in which activities one would like to participate is perceived by most interviewees as very beneficial. As Mrs. B explained, this aspect is particularly important for her, as she often has other interests than the younger residents given her advanced age:

"Well, I don't need that (seminars on mediation). I haven't needed it in my whole life. But thank God I am now so wise that I always say "you can't take your attitudes for granted. You are ten years older than everyone else here and about 50 years older or even older than the younger ones. It is clear that they have completely different viewpoints and different needs." Therefore I can't always say "but I want it to be like this". That is very clear to me, it is not obligatory, I don't have to participate. If they want to do that then they should go ahead and do it. However, I do a lot because I like it. Once a month there is a cinema. And cinema is done here, we bought such a projector and a screen. And then we had a singing project. There came a choirmaster and then we sang together for a while. Then a photographer gave a lecture or the devil knows what, everything. And Mrs. B always attends when there's something she likes and when she doesn't like it she just doesn't." (Mrs. B, 88)

Another advantage that some residents see in the many activities on offer is that it keeps them fit despite their advanced age. Mrs. D explains that she was able to observe this effect with Mrs. B, who still participates in such activities despite her physical limitations and old age:

"She always complains about living in a socially deprived area. But that dissolves when you see how she is welcomed by the community in her old age and with her mobility impairments (...). In her (old) apartment, all by herself she would have been a bit more exhausted. Here she stays fitter, just by the many events we have here." (Mrs. D, 71)

This observation was also confirmed by Mrs. B personally. Although she never felt the need to live in an intentional community in her old age, the manifold opportunities to participate in various activities and events have led her to appreciate community life much more than she did ten years ago. What she experiences as particularly enriching is that in order to participate in the activities she does not have to undertake an exhausting journey into town, but can enjoy it in her own house and thus remain an active community member despite her mobility impairments, as she explained:

"I have learned that it is much more enjoyable, much more stimulating to live in such a type of housing than in an elderly residence. (...) I learned to appreciate a lot that I hadn't thought about before (...). As I said, I was satisfied with the elevator and everything, but it's nice when you have the opportunity to go to an art event and when it is finished, and you don't have a long way home from it, when you think every step hurts or you have to take a cab. Oh God, what I've already spent on driving, it beggars description. Anyway, I'm consciously looking forward to that and think "you're now walking the 30, 40 steps from the common room

to the elevator, you can do that perfectly (and) then you take the elevator". Then for me this evening is a pleasure." (Mrs. B, 88)

However, the analysis of the interviews showed that the community activities do not only contribute to the elderly residents staying active but also play a very important role in fostering a sense of community and in strengthening interpersonal relationships among the residents (see Figure 8). Mr. A and Mrs. H illustrated the importance of community activities for the social cohesion of the community in the following example:

Mr. A, 74: "Birthdays are also very important. We have a birthday list and the people are always blown away, because in the morning they come out of their door and then there is everything such as flowers and little gifts and things, a card, a balloon or something else. And every time they're excited "never in my life..."

Ms. H, 69: "That means, cultivating relationships. This will not work without it. And you can do that for a long time (when you get old). You are able to do that."

Mr. A, 74: "And that also transports something. If I do that with you and die sometime then you know how good that is and you will carry that on."

Figure 8: Elderly residents having a joint dinner (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Off-site activities

As the interviews show, the activities and events of the cohousing community are not limited to the community itself. From the beginning, it was important for the group not to isolate themselves and to get actively involved in the neighborhood. As a result, many residents are actively engaged in numerous local initiatives or associations and are strongly represented in the August-Macke district. Mrs. A believes that this has given the residents numerous opportunities to get involved outside the cohousing project and to remain active:

"We have said from the beginning that if we isolate ourselves here then it will be more difficult to solve many things". The fear was that it will make our community life even more difficult. But we stepped outside. In the beginning we held street parties twice, where the whole street celebrated with us. We met the people here in the other houses and some of us got involved from the beginning with "Bonn im Wandel" or with the

"Ärmelkeil Initiative" including all their events. And this expansion into the neighborhood gave everyone interested in participating a chance to get involved. I think that was a very rewarding process for many of us." (Mrs. A, 77)

As the interviews show, most of the interviewees are very pleased that the community has not closed itself off and regularly invites it neighbors to participate in festivities and weekly events such as gymnastics, pilates and the like (see Figure 9). This allows the residents to easily make new contacts and thus extend their social network beyond the boundaries of their cohousing community. However, as Mrs. C pointed out, compared to the early days, off-site activities have decreased as a result of residents getting older and are increasingly reduced to activities within the cohousing project:

"All in all, I think there's been a decrease in off-site activities. I attribute this to the fact that the residents have grown older. However, somebody once said: "We who live in intergenerational communities also have to die, but later and happier." (Mrs. C, 78)

Figure 9: Residents and neighbors celebrating in the garden (picture by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

4.4.2 Supportive residential experiences

According to the residents, the regular community activities and interactions have essentially contributed to the formation of numerous friendships among the residents. As the residents reported, over the past ten years, these friendships have not only contributed to the residents' feelings of motivation and integration but have also resulted in the emergence of powerful support and relief structures that serve as a key resource for dealing with a wide range of ageing and non-ageing related challenges. For the interviewed residents, this form of community support has gradually become a cornerstone of community life over the past years, as Mrs. D's statement illustrates:

"And I think the issue of support (...) just entered my focus through living together (...). Of course, this has become a positive aspect of communal living as a result of me getting older or thinking about it and exchanging ideas about it. Let's say that it has become very significant. Actually, I have already experienced it myself (...). I was sick and then they asked me "do you have to go to the doctor?" or "what can I buy for you?" or "there is a chicken soup in front of the door" and so on. (...)" (Mrs. D, 71)

As the analysis of the interviews shows, the mutual support structure is based on a multi-layered social network consisting of relationships involving different numbers of residents and levels of intensity. The smallest and at the same time most cohesive social unit of this network consists of two residents who act as persons of trust for each other. The maxim that each inhabitant should have a person of trust is an integral part of the cohousing concept developed during the planning phase and is also a key aspect of the groups' cohousing philosophy. The respective pairings of the residents are not determined externally but are typically the result of regular social interactions. This is why a single resident may have two persons of trust. The underlying rationale behind this godparent system is that each resident should have a particularly intensive exchange with at least one person they trust, so that there are always at least two people who know about each other's personal situation in detail, such as if the other person is ill, if he or she is on holiday or alike, as Mrs. A explains:

> "For some time now we have been using a godparent system in our community, because you can't always keep track on everything. Of course I know if the friendly nurse is on duty or not. I see her on weekends sometimes. But she has a contact person who knows more about her. My contact person lives up there. And she knows exactly when I (go on vacation) or how I feel and so on. She also scolds me that I should reduce all the stress and all such things. And she knows it from me. And when I open the blinds in the morning I have a look "alright, upstairs everything ok. Fine." A lot of people do that but it also works very well for us." (Mrs. A, 77)

The second layer of the support network consists of smaller groups of three to seven people. These are also voluntary clusters that have been emerged during the residential phase. The groups are usually more or less fixed groups of friends, which in some cases mirror the composition of the residents on each floor. As Ms. F describes, the size of the community plays an important role in the formation of such groups. In her opinion, a community with a little more than 40 people is a good size to favor the formation of such groups:

> "Everyone has friends in this place. I read that before, the ideal size is about 30. We're 45, that's just fine. The other (communities) are bigger, I think that's too much. And thus, everyone has a group around without the others being upset. I would also say I have a group of five, six, seven people on whom I can rely and some others where I can ask, but the (five, six, seven people) belong to the closer ones. That's okay, because in a big group fits a small group. And that's why I think (...) nobody is left alone in here. There are several seriously sick people in here, who don't have to be cared for but of course also get encouragement. And that is also done (within these groups) and gladly done and of course done." (Mrs. F, 74)

Many of the residents have experienced that in the course of the last ten years the composition of these groups became more and more fixed, as the social interactions of the residents became less and less diffuse and concentrated rather on a small group of people. Mrs. H explained her personal experiences with this system in the following:

> "Well, what has changed for me is that the grouping has become clearer. I have developed friendships and strong affection for single people and some people that I ignore. Actually I'm open to them but I don't look for contact or anything. They are not in my focus. But a few people are very close to my attention. Almost

every day I'm looking where they are, how they are doing, if they're all ok, and contact them. That has changed a lot. Therefore leaving this place would be very difficult for me." (Mrs. H, 69)

Although most of the residents report that the contact outside their inner circle to the other residents is much less frequent, there are still various contacts of different intensity to other residents, causing intersections among the groups. These intersections form the third layer of the support network, where interpersonal relations are much more platonic than at the first and second level. As a result, the first and second levels play the most important role in the personal support network of the inhabitants.

As the interviews show, the size of the community not only allows all residents to be integrated into an existing support network but also has the decisive advantage the support activities can be distributed among several people. As Mrs. H explained, this prevents the responsibility for support not only being borne by a few individuals but by several people. Furthermore, it ensures that support can still be provided even if single group members are absent or unable to provide support due to other reasons, as she explained:

"So far we never needed emotional support, mutual support, physical support. We (she and her husband) can do it all by ourselves. But we support others. And this is also due to the large number of people living together, so that we can also say "I don't have time. See if someone else can". It makes me really feel like "I try to make this possible but if I can't (...), but I know there are others who care". And I think that is beautiful." (Mrs. H, 69).

Support for household work
One common area in which the residents support each other is day-to-day housework. Someone who regularly receives support with housework is Mrs. B, who, due to her limited mobility and her old age, is no longer able to carry out all of her housework independently without feeling discomfort. Although she has hired an assistant to help her cope with some household tasks such as cleaning her apartment, she is supported in many other activities by her friends and neighbors that live in the community. As she reports, the support she receives from the community plays an important role for her in her daily routine:

"Shopping is a very important thing for me. Everyone who goes shopping will ask you. I usually get on calls like "I go shopping, do you have anything to bring? Very kind, very kind. Over there, Mr. A, he doesn't have a car himself, deliberately because of environmental considerations. (...) He borrows (...) a car from others to take me shopping. Isn't that heart-warming? Sometimes I just hand out my shopping lists. (...) I mean it would be much more fun for me to do it myself but that is not the case." (Mrs. B, 88)

Ms. B further explained that she does not only receive support for her shopping, but also for repair work in her apartment, for which she in turn used to take care of the children:

"I can't hammer a nail into the wall. That goes wrong. And then someone will come and do it. Or if I have to replace a bulb somewhere where I can't reach it, then I say, "Oh, would you, could you? Then I can call "yes, I'd love to come and change a bulb". Things like that. And earlier, when the children were still around, the kids were looked after and stuff like that." (Mrs. B, 88)

Mrs. D, who maintains a close neighborly relationship to Mrs. B, is convinced that these support structures are a key factor that allow Mrs. B to age in place successfully and stay in the cohousing project even at an advanced age and with physical restrictions:

> "Of course, this is only a hypothesis, but I am convinced that (she) wouldn't live like this anymore, that fit, if she wouldn't have these people here to help her out, to shop, (to help) if something is broken etc.." (Mrs. D, 71)

Mrs. B confirmed this assumption. She also believed that without the support of the community she would have great problems coping with her everyday life on her own and would most likely have to live in a retirement home, something she does not want under any circumstances:

> "This type of housing can achieve a great deal, a great deal. Well, I can certainly confirm that, as I am the biggest beneficiary of it. At least for me this is the best way to live. If I imagine I would have to sit with my broken hips in a real retirement home, where a lot of people are mentally absent, who just sit in their wheelchairs and so on, oh God, I think I would die." (Mrs. B, 88)

The analysis shows, that up to now, none of the interviewed residents apart from Mrs. B requires frequent support with day-to-day housework. Therefore, the other residents see themselves rather as supporters and have already gathered a variety of experiences in this role over the past years, as Mrs. G illustrates:

> "Here on the floor I have one who has become a good friend to me, she has a serious heart condition, which she herself does not want to admit. But it's just so self-evident that I say "Should I bring you something?", it's no project but it just grows somehow. Or "I'm going there, do you want to go?" something like that." (Mrs. G, 76)

Most interviewees state that the residents usually offer their support by themselves by asking if there is a need. However, Mrs. B, who regularly receives support by herself, is convinced that one should not wait passively for someone to offer help but rather actively take charge by asking the other residents, as they may not always know if there is a need for help:

> "More support? No, no, I can ask for any support. Of course you have to say what you need. They cannot guess. I think that is also the wrong attitude to sit there and wait and say "someone has to come and ask what do you need, what would you like? You have to help yourself. You must ask "do you have time" or "are you going shopping" or something." (Mrs. B, 88)

Despite the strong trust that has developed over the years between individual residents and the various forms of mutual support, it is important for residents to constantly find a balance between proximity and distance. This principle, which is also defined in the housing philosophy, is of utmost importance for the residents in order to prevent them from interfering too much in the privacy of their housemates, as Mrs. D reported from her experiences:

> "Well, there is great trust, (...) but with the greatest respect. For example, no one would simply enter someone else's apartment (without the person knowing). In other words, the intimate, private sphere is highly honoured

and protected. It always happens by mutual agreement. And from my experience, it works excellently. I think it runs with so much respect here." (Mrs. D, 71)

Support in case of illnesses

The mutual support of the community does not stop with providing support in day-to-day household work but also includes support in the case of illness. While day-to-day support is usually only received by a small group of elderly residents, a large proportion of the interviewed residents have already relied on community support while being ill. As Mrs. B reports, the community strives to be there for each other even outside of everyday circumstances. However, the type of mutual support provided can vary depending on time and physical capacities of those who provide the support, as she illustrated in a recent incident:

> "We just had a lady who's been in surgery again. She is now out of the hospital and in rehab. We all take care of her. Those who can walk go visit her. I often call her and write her some cards." (Mrs. B, 88)

However, mutual support does not only take place outside the cohousing project in the form of patient visits and recovery wishes, but also after hospital stays when the respective person has already returned back home. Mrs. F, for example, was unable to do any household work on her own after a shoulder surgery. As she reports, the community supported her during this time by inviting her for dinner every evening as she was not able to cook by herself:

> "I fell on my shoulder once. It needed surgery and everything. So I had a box under my arm. And then I was invited all over the building for dinner because I was not able to cook. Something like that, little things like that, that made me really happy. Even someone who never cooks, who doesn't cook for herself, invited me for dinner and she cooked. Of course, that's great." (Mrs. F, 74)

Based on her experience in recent years, Mrs. C is convinced that community support in the event of illness not only helps the affected person to feel emotionally comfortable but may also shorten the time spent in the hospital or rehab:

> "Right now, we have such a case. A neighbor and friend on my floor had a hip surgery three weeks ago. She was visited by other neighbors regularly in the hospital. We took laundry home with us and fulfilled small wishes. Now she is in rehab and on the weekend, she was here to visit us. And then she stayed a day and a half in her apartment. She came on Saturday at noon and on Saturday evening she sat with me here at the dining table and I invited two other friends from the house. Then we spent a nice evening here. And she said "Guys, it's wonderful to be home again"." (Mrs. C, 78)

However, it is not only because of this single example that Mrs. C is convinced that community support can have a positive influence on the length of hospital and rehab stays, but also because she experienced it personally. She believes that without the support of the community she would not have been able to leave the hospital early after her foot surgery:

> "I myself had an unpleasant foot surgery four years ago and, if my neighbors had not supported me, I would probably have had to spend at least a week in hospital. But I didn't have to. My son and daughter-in-law picked me up and (...) then I was back here again." (Mrs. C, 78)

Support in case of short-term care needs

In some cases, mutual support in the case of illness extends far beyond sick visits and household support and may even include simple medical assistance, as Mrs. E experienced first-hand:

> "(...) I had a wound at my back that needed to be cleaned every day. And I couldn't do it myself and it had to be taken care of. I would have needed to go to the doctor every day. And luckily there were one or two people in the house who were confident of doing that and whom I trusted to do it. (...) And that is of course also a very practical support or a very practical partnership." (Mrs. E, 71)

As Mrs. E mentioned, such small medical care is already a very intimate affair in which there must be great mutual trust on both sides. Usually such short-term forms of care are the utmost that many residents are willing and confident to provide. So far, the community has not made any concrete experiences with residents who have become care-dependent while ageing in the community. However, the analysis of the interviews shows that the vast majority of the interviewees believe that long-term care cannot be provided by the community and therefore belongs in professional hands. The following quote from Mrs. G supports this position:

> "That's has been clarified from the beginning. That is what you are told when you want to move in here. If someone has a flu or a cold and lies in bed for three, four, five or maybe seven days, then the neighbors, these smaller units on the floors, always show up. They coordinate themselves and bring soup or food (and) supply them. But everything that lasts longer than a week is not nursed. We can't do that here, we can't. Then it has to be taken care of either by an ambulant nursing service or by moving into a nursing home." (Mrs. G, 76)

4.4.3 Relieving residential experiences

Although long-term care cannot be provided by the community, many of the interviewed residents have taken it upon themselves to provide at least relief in an emotional way for those who have to struggle with all sorts of personal tragedies, as Mrs. B stated:

> "The community is really doing a fantastic job, I must say. There are people who have lost their partners here, who have lost children, who have (...). And all these people have received a lot of relief and empathy during these hard times they had to go through. And they also know that, and say that too." (Mrs. B)

The case of dementia in one resident is just one example of the many personal tragedies the community has had to deal with over the past ten years. As two residents reported, a small group of residents supported the spouse of the dementia patient during this time emotionally by trying to relieve the woman of her daily worries. Also, after her partner had to move permanently to a nursing home, the community helped her to deal with this situation. As Mrs. D reported in detail, this situation proved to her that even in difficult situations the community is able to take care of its members:

> "There has been someone here who suffered from dementia. And they have already moved in as a couple, he had dementia, she was still in good shape. And since he had an aggressive form of Alzheimer's, it got worse and worse. (...) And there was a tremendous effort been made, also for his wife, who had to carry the burden (...). And then he went to a daycare center. He got picked up in the morning and brought back in the afternoon so that his wife could take a break. At that time they had two close friends (in the community) or even more, so that she was not alone. But the progression of the disease became more and more aggressive, so that he

(had to) stay in the nursing home (...). And then his dear wife, so to speak, who I like very much, almost collapsed psychologically...). And being able to see and experience this, to be part of the group was an enormous privilege. Therefore I believe that nobody will fall through the grid in here during such extreme and stressful situations. I think this is an excellent example that nobody is left alone." (Mrs. D, 71)

Some residents reported that these experiences are what make them certain that if they ever face a similar incident they will receive the same support from the community. Knowing that there is a sort of backup family that you can rely on even in very difficult times gives the residents a fundamental sense of security and relief, as Mrs. E explained:

"And then of course it is also for me that I feel safe here (...). I am not alone with certain questions and crises. That is also a bit of a family. And thus it is (...) to be lifted, to be safe and this certainty, that if something happens there will be (help)." (Mrs. E, 71)

Dealing with death

While the community lacks any experience in dealing with residents in need of long-term care, it has already had extensive experience in dealing with the death of community members. For many of the elderly residents, the goal from the very beginning was to be able to live in the community until their death, or as they call it, "they want to leave with their feet first". In order to achieve this, some of the residents began very early to develop a system that should allow them to better cope with the challenges associated with dying residents. Based on these initial ideas, some of the elderly residents decided to organize and maintain a community grave on the old cemetery, that borders the property of the cohousing community. The residents also defined structures and responsibilities for informing relatives, planning the funeral and holding the internal funeral service. As Mrs. A tells, the first death occurred immediately after the approval of the community grave was given by the city authorities:

"We've already witnessed three deaths. The first one was very ill with rheumatism and was simply lying dead in bed on a Sunday morning. I still have the feeling that she wanted it that way. Because at that time we were just about to have this communal grave on the old cemetery, indeed one of the most beautiful graves, with such a great woman standing there with a book in her hand. And she asked me two days before "Mrs. A, have you finally finished this contract for the grave"? Which was quite atypical for her, because she was such a friendly, mild woman. And then I said "yes, I did. It arrived yesterday". I've never experienced that from her before that with this severity "have you finally? And then she was lying dead in her bed on Sunday morning." (Mrs. A, 77)

As some of the interviewed residents report, the way the community dealt with this situation gave them certainty that even in the event of death no one is left alone. Mrs. D finds it particularly relieving that the community, due to the developed social control mechanisms, immediately noticed that the woman was dead, although she was only rarely able to leave her apartment due to her rheumatic illness:

"(...) I only consider this social control positive. For example, if the blinds stay down for two days, it will be noticed immediately. The first person who died here and who is still cared for in our community grave today

was lying dead in bed. And of course this has been immediately noticed by the community and the whole process that we agreed upon in our housing philosophy started." (Mrs. D, 71)

The desire to have settled as much as possible before dying and to relieve the relatives as much as possible prompted some residents after having witnessed the first death to issue living wills for their person of trust, that in case of a decision about the continuation of life-support measures the whole responsibility would not only rest on the relatives but would be distributed over several shoulders. The experiences with the second death of a residents showed that this strategy proved to be very useful, as Mrs. A explains:

"And the other woman, full of life and ideas, had a stroke. But then she didn't want any life-prolonging measures. She had also included me in her living will. And there I realized that it makes sense that not only family members should be involved. Sometimes the doctors want to ask someone who does not belong to the family when it comes to this difficult decision "switch off the machines or not". I must say that (...) I was stunned how much they accepted it, that I said "no, as long as she was fully conscious she always confirmed that to me. She doesn't want that at all"." (Mrs. A, 77)

Based on the experiences with the second death, the residents developed their concept further in order to be able to react to unforeseeable situations such as a sudden stroke or a situation that results in the question of whether life-support measures should be maintained or not. For this purpose, the residents decided that all residents should prepare a folder to store the information on who should be contacted in the case of an emergency, as well as a list of regularly taken drugs, pre-existing conditions and, if available, the living will. Furthermore, the residents decided that these documents should be stored by all residents in the same place in the apartment so that in an emergency everyone knows where to find them. The interviews show that the majority of the residents consider it very relieving that such a system has been developed, not only for them personally but in particular for their family members, as Mrs. D described:

"We've got some experience with that. The other one (who died), who was quite old in the 80s and still did martial arts. Mrs. A took care of everything as her person of trust and realized that nothing was organized, no list of medications at an agreed place. And there we immediately went on, out of this experience "what can I do, what can I do in the case of cases?" And then we have working groups that come together to discuss things, make lists and where everyone will write down "who is your contact person? What medicines do you need? Where is your living will, etc.". Such things are simply organized with regard to such situations. And I can tell you that is very relaxing. If I collapse, then everything is organized. Because my daughter and my relatives are in Hamburg. And that takes the strain off my closest family. And that's a beautiful, liberating, relaxed way of life." (Mrs. D, 71)

The third death once again confronted the community with a completely new situation. In contrast to the first two deaths, which were very sudden and unexpected, the third case took a relatively long time. Also, in this case a network of residents was formed who looked after the woman, visited her regularly in hospital and thus accompanied her through the entire process of dying. Two of the residents describe their personal experiences with this situation as follows:

Mrs. H, 69: "When the worst comes to the worst, there is always a network. About us the woman died last year. This has been such a long farewell process. And there was also a partner, but he wasn't with her for long

and two daughters living further away but there was a network. She was (...) cared for by many, many people again and again, received help, support, visits in hospital and so on. That was very good for her. It didn't weigh only on one shoulder."

Mr. A, 74: "Yes, it was great. We were also in the hospital during her dying phase and so on."

This experience has also motivated the community to continue developing its strategy for dealing with fatalities. As several of the interview participants report, a joint working group was formed to discuss what else can be done to enable the residents not only to live but also to die in the community as pleasantly as possible. This also included obtaining advice from experts such as doctors or hospices and to receive training on how to support dying people. By the time of the interviews, two residents had already completed their training as hospice attendants.

As the findings show, the conceptualization of the cohousing community that was designed by the residents during the planning phase and continuously refined during the residential phase, has allowed the formation of a functional social networks able to respond flexibly to different challenges, to learn from them and to adapt constantly to new challenges, ranging from everyday problems, to dealing with short-term illnesses and short-term care, all the way to dealing with the death of fellow residents. As Mrs. D explained, this is by no means a finished process but requires continuous work and a high adaptability of the residents to newly emerging situations. However, she is convinced that also in the future the community will be able to deal with newly arising challenges with the same efficiency as they have been doing for the last ten years:

"But so far this has often been done intuitively and we should take it to the next level. So, in this respect it is not a completed process, not even after ten years. We were able to shape and experience many things very well. And I think it was a very impressive and also very sad but positive experience how we managed it in dignity and respect for all. And I think this is a kind of knowledge within the community, which we can activate when necessary. I think that something has really been learnt and then becomes present again when the worst comes to the worst." (Mrs. A, 77)

4.5 Maintaining community: Challenges and opportunities

"Let's say the key issue is that this does not fall apart." (Mrs. D, 71)

As the last section dealt with the residents' ageing in place experiences over the past ten years, the following chapter will now highlight the current and future challenges the residents see for maintaining their community. Overall, the analysis of the interviews identified six major challenges that, in the opinion of the interview participants, need to be addressed in order to safeguard the continuity of their community.

4.5.1 Maintaining an intergenerational community structure

As many residents reported, the biggest challenge comes from the demographic structure of the community. Today, 24 of the 43 residents are over 60 years old. By contrast, the group of 30 to 59 year olds comprises only 15 residents, while the group of 0 to 29 year olds is made up of

only 4. Although there are still residents from three generations living in the project, the figures in Table 5 clearly show a dominance of the older generation.

Table 5: Demographic composition of the community Heerstraße (source: Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

Age group	Number of residents by age group	Generation	Number of residents by generation
0 to 9 years	0	I	4
10 to 19 years	2		
20 to 29 years	2		
30 to 39 years	3	II	15
40 to 49 years	8		
50 to 59 years	4		
60 to 69 years	3	III	24
70 to 79 years	16		
80 to 89 years	5		

According to the residents, this situation is not only caused by the natural ageing process of the community but in particular by the fact that the project has difficulties in keeping younger residents, whereas there is no significant fluctuation among elderly residents. The small apartment sizes are seen as the main reason why the community struggles to keep its younger people in the cohousing community, as Mrs. D explained:

> "However, we say it very clearly, since we have used the existing plans of the architect, our apartments are not suitable for young families. There were so many great young people with children living here but it is too small. And that is a bit of a deficit for intergenerational living." (Mrs. D, 71)

The increasing demographic ageing of the community has prompted the group to take countermeasures in order to maintain the principle of intergenerational living. However, as there is no option to change the sizes of the apartments, the only option available to the community was to impose an entry stop for people over 60 years of age on re-letting, in order to counteract the continuous ageing of the community, as Mrs. E pointed out:

> "If we have a re-letting or re-occupation within our community then we say we currently don't need people over 60 in this place. This needs to be thought about in a sustainable way. And when it comes to maintaining the intergenerational community, we must consider other generations." (Mrs. E, 71)

It remains to be seen whether this strategy is suitable for rebalancing the unequal proportions of the different generations in the long run. However, it can already be seen today that the experiences of the community Heerstraße served as an important lesson for the development of the subsequent projects, Duisdorf and Plittersdorf, where from the very beginning special attention has been paid to building apartments of adequate size for families. Furthermore, one resident of the cohousing project Duisdorf reported they also started to keep a contingent of apartments available for families with children, because the experience of the Heerstraße

project showed that families often decide to move in only immediately before the project is completed:

> "Yes, definitely. This is also reflected in the newly developed cohousing communities, that flats are kept free for families with children, i.e. larger flats. Also because we have the experience that such people often only join later, when perhaps the walls are already visible and you can move in in six months. This is because the life plan of families with children is not one in which they can commit two years in advance to such a project. And that's the way it's already being considered. And also the larger apartments are developed." (Mrs. L, 82)

Mrs. O, who is currently involved in planning of one of the four new cohousing projects of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. thinks that maybe it would be better for the association to rethink whether it is the right way to carry on with the intergenerational approach in the future. She described her main concerns regarding the suitability of the intergenerational model for such projects as follows:

> "The question is, is it the right approach the "intergeneration project"? Those who are interested in projects of the Wahlverwandtschaften, let's do it in a neutral way, those are the people who are about to retire and say "oops, what do we do now". And that's the problem. My main job now is to interview people who might be eligible for us. And a lady asked me, and I found that very remarkable "do the young people want to live with us at all?" That was also a lady with grey hair. So, the problem is to find a group that meets the different expectations of the already existing group members. That means, when I look for people for "intergenerational living" and people come to us and say " great, intergenerational living I want to do this" and then they come to us saying "there are only old people sitting here and I am only 45" then we stand there with our short shirt. That's why I think that's the problem." (Mrs. O, 66)

A further aspect that, from Mrs. M's viewpoint, complicates the integration of young families with children into the cohousing project is that the planning process is often far too long for this target group and that they often have little opportunity to participate in the participatory development process of the project due to their professional and family commitments:

> "However, one must say that you will rarely find young families for the rental apartment anyway. Why should they want to rent an apartment, which will be finished in two years? That's too long-term for them. We have three families and a single mother who want to move in in two years. But those are the ones who don't show up because they have a cough or whatever." (Mrs. O, 69)

Mrs. E agreed with Mrs. O's observation that a large part of the inquiries to the association are coming from elderly people. However, as far as the existing cohousing communities are concerned, she does not see any possibility of converting them into a senior cohousing structure, as this would not be compatible with the residents' desire for intergenerational living. Though she thinks that ageing in place should be an important aspect of intergenerational living, she emphasizes that it should not be forgotten that these projects also house younger people whose needs have to be respected as well. As a result, Mrs. E and the majority of the other interviewees agreed that when deciding to move into a cohousing project, the desire to live in the community should always come first, whereas the desire for support should follow later:

"So (...) the goal or the title is "intergenerational living". And therefore, in my opinion, this should by no means be the primary starting point for moving into a cohousing project. Because if we only have this perspective then we forget or overlook the (younger) people (...). So why do younger people move into such a form of housing? What is an aspect for younger people to participate or also for families to participate here? I mean, you have to look at it the same way and I think the association would resist the idea if (...) this should be the primary motivation for living together. It can be one aspect of many, but basically, I have to keep myself open for the exchange and keep it alive between the generations. Personally, I wouldn't like that. However, for many of those who contact us here, it's definitely the case." (Mrs. E, 71)

4.5.2 Maintaining self-administration structures

This demographic situation is directly linked to another challenge, namely to maintain the self-administration capacity of the community. As the findings in subchapter 4.3 have already indicated, the majority of the self-administration tasks are carried out by the elderly residents of the community, including hard physical work such as gardening and the garbage service. As some of the elderly residents pointed out, as they get older, it becomes more difficult for some of them to continue performing these physically demanding tasks. In order to relieve the elderly residents of these tasks, an attempt was made to motivate the younger residents to take over this task. However, as it turned out, there was no one among the younger residents willing to take over these duties. Several of the elderly residents interviewed found this situation incomprehensible, as they had relieved the younger residents considerably of their household tasks in recent years and were now in need of their support, as Mrs. C explained:

"The people who signed up for the garbage service are all over 70, and we're fit 70-year-olds. But these paper containers are these huge parts, they really weigh tons. None of the young people wanted to do that. They all know how old we are, and everyone throws their garbage in there. So, if I lived here as a young man and knew that they have been doing this for years and are not getting any younger (...) So I personally couldn't stand it at all." (Mrs. C, 71)

However, the interviews also showed clearly that it is not always the case that the younger residents are not willing to help in general, but their help is mostly limited to occasional assistance if being asked. Mrs. E thinks that this reluctance to take over some of the tasks is not only due to the fact that the younger residents have less time than the older ones but that they are deterred from taking over these tasks in a mandatory way for a longer period of time:

"This is not just a time issue, but the obligation to do certain things at some time. For example, the waste bins, they simply have to be taken out on certain days. The obligation, the mandatory obligation is also a factor, I suppose." (Mrs. E, 71)

Although the group has managed to find a remedy for the garbage service among the younger residents, the question remains how the situation will develop if at some point the number of older residents increases who would like to hand over their tasks to younger residents due to their age. One thing that is already certain for Mrs. E today is that if the group wants to maintain the self-management of the project in the future, it will be necessary to constantly address the issue of taking over responsibility within the community:

"However, if we want to maintain our current (self-administration) policy in such a way that we want to reduce our ancillary costs and if the community sees this as a shared task, then we have to constantly bring these issues up for discussion." (Mrs. E, 71)

4.5.3 Maintaining mutual support structures

Some of the interviewed residents see the overaging of the community not only as a challenge for maintaining self-administration but also for maintaining mutual support structures. The majority of the interviewees expect that the increasing age of the residents will lead to an additional need for support. Many assume that this additional need can for some time be covered by the community due to the different ageing processes of the residents. However, some also note that due to the comparatively high number of people over 70 compared to a significantly lower number of the younger elderly people, there is a risk that in the future the demand for support will exceed the community's capacity, as Mrs. A reported:

"And I think (...) since we all age differently, this (mutual support) will increase. The people who can will do more and eventually at some point this won't work anymore." (Mrs. A, 77)

This is by no means only a future prediction, as the community has recently been confronted with a case where an elderly resident had to withdraw his long-term support of a resident. As Mrs. G reported, no replacement has yet been found for this resident. For her personally it is certain that she won't be able to take over the support due to her advanced age. Moreover, she holds the opinion that if at any time the case should occur that individual residents can no longer be supported within the community, they have to move into a retirement and nursing home:

"I've just heard that one of the residents doesn't want to drive anymore and (therefore) does not drive a one woman to shopping anymore, who is very severely handicapped. So I do not know who will do that. I won't do it because it's too exhausting for me. I can't do that anymore as well. So we have to look "what is possible, what is not possible" and so on. And I don't know. I don't know what will happen then. So I think first of all it will be work out for some time. And if then nobody can help from our people then we just have to see how it goes. Then you might have to go to a nursing home. There is no other way. Or move near the children or whatever. After all, we knew from the very beginning that there was no support here until death." (Mrs. G, 76)

Mrs. F, however, believes that before a resident has to move into an institutional residential arrangement, the community must take the next step and try to compensate for the support it can no longer provide by organizing external support. Here she sees the household support offered by Quartiersmanagement Macke for people with care level zero[10] as an excellent opportunity to deal with the additional support needs of the aging residents:

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[10] Care level 0 was set up for people who suffer from a verifiably limited competency in everyday life. This can be caused, for example, by dementia or mental disability. Nursing care insurance services within nursing care level 0 focus mainly on care and supervision, rather than on providing medical care. Level 0 caregivers are dependent on a minimum level of care but need little or no support within their physical care needs. It is also important to note that the term care level 0 is currently only used informally and is not a generic term within care levels (Sanubi 2019).

"I'm now thinking of this neighborhood office we have. They also offer support for people who have care level zero. Until recently, I didn't know that this existed. So that means shopping and small handouts in the house. And if you say that there would be three or four people who would be at this level and you would get a person who could help out, that would be a great thing. So, I think there's going to be something happening in the community." (Mrs. F, 74)

4.5.4 Dealing with long-term care needs

A further challenge which almost all residents see in the future is the increasing chance of residents requiring nursing care in the community. In the past ten years the community has not had any experiences with residents in need of care. Due to the high number of residents over 70 years some of the inhabitants assume, however, that in the coming years the community can expect this and must therefore engage with the question of how to deal with it, as Mrs. A explained:

"My experience is that most of us here are really fit by the time we reach 80. Sure, if you didn't have an accident. But as I have noticed from the ageing process (of other residents), the 80th birthday is a turning point. And after that many people here or those who were already 80, there aren't that many, started to slow down like that and their bones were crunching and some of them even started to forget things, maybe even dementia. Yes, and then the question is" What are we going to do when that happens?" (Mrs. A, 77)

Although the community did not have a common strategy at the time of the interviews on how to deal with future nursing needs, the residents all agreed on one point, which is that need for support which can no longer be met by the support networks of the community must be covered by professional help from outside, as Mrs. A mentioned:

"For some time we can absorb this on a personal level or within the community, but then it won't work out anymore. Then we have to say "we can keep the person here and we can still provide some of this social care, reading the newspaper, shopping and so on, but care must be provided by professionals." (Mrs. A, 77)

Nevertheless, some of the interviewees report that they could imagine providing more intensive support to their close friends, which goes beyond general day-to-day support. However, as Mrs. H further states, this support would not replace the professional support provided by nursing staff and besides would only be feasible if not more than one friend at a time would be in need of care:

"So, with those who have become so close to me, I can imagine what one would do in the family. If it is one, I could do it. So, if somebody would be in need of care and the care service comes and does this medical thing and the washing or something but I can imagine to give the affection like with a family member. But only if it was one of them. It cannot be (several) at the same time." (Mrs. H, 69)

The possibility that many of the elderly residents might simultaneously require nursing is something Mrs. D is particularly worried about. In her opinion such a case would far exceed the support capacities of the community, which is why she thinks it is crucial that the community deals with this topic professionally early on:

"We often think about what will happen if this third of the elderly residents suddenly need care. That would be a tremendous challenge. And we simply can't expect that (support) from our young people who work all day. So we need to professionalize it. And we hope that this does not occur as a package all together, but we hope that it will happen one after another." (Mrs. D, 71)

In order to tackle the topic of ageing, care and death more intensively, not only was a cross-project working group set up within the association, but also thematically relevant seminars and further training courses were organized. For Mrs. D the motivation to deal with such issues comes from her strong desire to stay in the cohousing community until her death. She thinks, that the wish to both age and die in the community is shared among most of the elderly residents:

"We talk about this and (...) we also had seminars and further training on this topic at this place, all together, young and old. It's not like we're splitting or repressing something. We want to focus on life until the end. (...) Many of us want to be carried out with our feet first, many of us. And I don't know anyone who doesn't want that. Personally, I don't know anybody, not even from the potential candidates who may end up in the cosmos." (Mrs. D, 71)

One of these residents is Mrs. B. For her it is certain that if at some point she should no longer be able to carry out her household tasks on her own or in the worst case even be confined to her bed, she would first get professional help from outside. For her, moving to a nursing home would only be a viable option if there are no other alternatives left:

"Well, if I can't cook for myself anymore (...) then I'd order food on wheels or something. And if I were to become confined to bed, I would try to get a mobile nursing service before moving into a nursing home. (...) I will stay here as long as I can, and if things get worse then I will do it with some care services and then sometime I will say goodbye. I don't want to go to an nursing home, I just don't want that." (Mrs. B, 88)

Like Mrs. B and most of the residents interviewed, both in the Heerstraße project and in the Duisdorf and Plittersdorf projects, they are convinced that residents with a low care level can still remain in the community without any problems if they are provided with external help. In contrast to the Heerstraße community, the Duisdorf community has already gained some experience with supporting a care dependent resident in the community. In the following Mrs. K describes how the community dealt with this case:

"We have a woman with us who has suddenly become mentally deficient. She still lives with us, and is in day care. Everyone pays attention to her. When there is an event in our common room, she always joins us and sits down. She has different domestic services during the day, dressing in the morning and stuff like that. The children also take care of her. You can live with us for a long time, if you are supported from one side or the other. She is mobile and it's nice to see how happy and satisfied she is." (Mrs. K, 74)

Given the case that day care and domestic services are no longer sufficient and a more intensive round-the-clock care is necessary, the community of Duisdorf has already considered a small apartment for the accommodation of nursing staff during the planning phase. In the community Heerstraße such an apartment does not exist, but several residents reported that at times it was considered that one of the regular apartments could be temporarily kept free for nursing staff in case a resident moves out. However, as Mrs. E explained, this was only ever an idea. Concrete

internal preventative measures for such a case have not yet been taken, which is why some of the elderly residents have already pre-registered themselves in a nursing home:

"And there are also some groups that think about things like "ok, let's open up an apartment sometime and put a nurse in it", but it hasn't happened yet that we would really get down to it properly. Well, some have already registered at the nursing home." (Mrs. E, 78)

In the event that moving to a nursing home becomes unavoidable, a cross-project working group has already taken care of making this transition as easy as possible. For this purpose, the group contacted nearby nursing homes, visited them and wrote reports about the visits, which were then presented to the residents during the plenary session in which all residents from all three projects took part. In addition, a small group of elderly residents has considered visiting and supporting the affected persons for as long as possible as Mrs. L described:

"If really nothing works anymore and we finally have to move into a nursing home, we have recently considered in a small group (...) that we should accompany these residents by visiting them (...), because we can still provide that if it is not too far away. I think that's a good thing too, that's a relief." (Mrs. L, 74)

In the new project Schumannshöhe in Endenich, the subject of care has already been taken further. In addition to the residential buildings for the association Wahlverwandtschaften, a unit for day care and long-term care is being built on the site. As Mrs. A reported, she is very happy that the issue of care was addressed early on in this new project by the city of Bonn:

"What I am very pleased about Endenich is that, in addition to the residential building for the electoral relatives, a building will also be erected where daycare is accommodated and there will also be a small care unit on the first floor, i.e. ambulatory care and stationary care. And I find that very comforting for us Wahlgeschwister, too, that I do not have to move in one of these nursing facilities for the next six months, but rather to the Wahlgeschwister in Endenich into the nursing home. I think that is a very good solution, I must say that." (Mrs. A, 77)

4.5.5 Maintaining community spirit

Another challenge the community is facing is how it can manage to maintain the current community spirit in the future. As some interview participants reported, due to the joint project development phase, the founding generation has a unique identification with the cohousing project. Some of the residents assume that this atmosphere might increasingly erode in the future with the passing of the first generation of residents. Mrs. G thinks that this development can already be observed among some of the new residents. She feels that mutual support is not as important for many of the new residents as it was for the first generation:

"I think it's because in the end everyone knows that they are dependent on each other and that our group here was the first to say, "despite this poor neighborhood, we're doing this because we really want to push this idea". In other words, the first residents were very strongly influenced by this idea of (mutual) support. I also think I sometimes notice that the people who join us do not necessarily to the same extent. So, there are certainly some people who just wanted to have an apartment in the city center. It's not that they do not like the idea, but they don't show this commitment from the start." (Mrs. G, 76)

Mrs. C, on the other hand, thinks that the majority of new members integrate themselves adequately into the community and take on responsibility. However, she also feels that the passing away of the founding generation could lead to a certain loss of the pioneer spirit, and that instead a more consumer-oriented attitude may emerge in which the residents hope that others will take care of maintaining the community. This is why she considers it essential to think about the management of this generation change well in advance, if the underlying philosophy of the founding generation should be preserved:

> "Well, I guess a lot of women are not gonna be with us anymore. I don't know. I always had the impression that those people who join us, also old people, they also feel responsible, they participate (...). However, it is quite possible that this will change at some point, that this will turn into a consumer attitude "I take it. If it's good, I stay and if it's not good, I don't care and leave". Thinking about these aspects (...) is essential if we want to keep it working." (Mrs. D, 78)

Most of the residents interviewed agreed that the transfer on of the community spirit of the founding generation can best be achieved through day-to-day interaction with the new members. According to the interview participants, the godparent system and joint activities play a central role in the integration of new members. As Mrs. F reports, this has worked well in most cases so far. Nevertheless, in the Heerstraße community, but also in the two other cohousing projects, there have repeatedly been single residents who isolated themselves from the group and refused to participate in community activities:

> "That is why everyone who moves in gets a person of trust who can be contacted at any time and who assists. That is basically what we can do. And of course, we can also involve them, talk to them and so on. Needless to say, they must also be genuinely open. Not that they become such a small group in the big one. We have already experienced that. Such a couple, that totally isolated itself. That happens of course, but it is very, very rare. Actually, those who get involved here see what's going on and are also willing to open up and take part." (Mrs. F, 74)

However, Mrs. G believes that although the proactive integration of new residents by the community plays an important role in communicating the community spirit to new members, this does not guarantee that the residents will accept it. In her opinion, this can only be realized if the new resident is willing to integrate into the community, which is why she thinks that special attention must be paid to the selection of new residents in order to ensure that they are truly capable of living in a cohousing community:

> "Well, how far this will work, we'll see. We are doing our best to integrate them. And that usually works quite well. Of course, it also takes some time to get to know each other and so on, but (...) both sides must dedicate themselves to it. And that's what's important when you look at these new residents, that you place special value on what they have to say about communal living and about such a communal project. Not that they say something like "so I could do a handicraft course and stuff", that's not so important but what they have to say about their ability to live together." (Mrs. G, 76)

Despite the efforts to communicate the community spirit of the founding generation to the next generations of residents, the majority of the interview partners agreed that the feeling and

identification that the founding generation associates with the housing project is difficult to transfer. Mrs. E thinks it is very likely that despite all the efforts of the pioneers the intensity of community life will change in the future. It remains to be seen whether and to what extent this will reduce the interaction and mutual support among the residents. However, Mrs. E is convinced that in the future social interaction within the community will probably focus more on everyday activities and individual relationships:

> "Well, I just wanted to say that the feeling that we as pioneers had and still have as pioneers (...), the feeling or the emotion or the feeling of the pioneers, cannot be transported, cannot be repeated. That's what we old people have to realize. (...) We may mourn a little bit or we might be a little sad but there will be something new and perhaps it (community life) will be reduced, reduced without it being an evaluation now but this is of of course to some degree an evaluation as I am one of these pioneers. It will perhaps be reduced to really necessary everyday activities and to different connections, relationships, individual ones. That's what I think, that's what I think it will be, yes." (Mrs. E, 71)

4.5.6 Maintaining an income-independent community structure

The last challenge identified by the elderly residents is to maintain an income-independent community structure. Due to the current increases in rental prices in Bonn, some of the elderly residents living in the free rental apartments are increasingly wondering whether they will still be able to afford their rent in the future. While for most residents current rental prices are still not a problem, Mrs. F already observed that there are already some residents who increasingly struggle to pay their rents with their pension:

> "No, (we have) an index rent. For two years we haven't had an increase and now we've had an increase again. I spend between one-third and one-half of (my monthly pension) on my rent. That's a lot. As you know, we have property and state-subsidized and free rental apartments. So those who have free rental apartments are those who are really, as you say "on the last leg". There is nothing more they can do. They have a pension that's just above it, which isn't that generous. So with me it's not very much more but I get along well, it works." (Mrs. F, 74)

Mrs. H agrees that the current development of rental prices might become a challenge for the community at some point. However, she also thinks that the company RheinHaus has gained very positive experiences with the association and is aware of the advantages that a functioning community offers in terms of maintaining the property and the resulting financial savings. She hopes that RheinHaus will therefore continue to maintain the index rent in the future and avoid excessive rent increases:

> "Well, obviously, if the rents start taking off, this may become a huge challenge. I have hope because the investor has had such a positive experience (with us). At Rhein-Haus they say "they are our favorite tenants. We don't have to worry about the rubbish heaps. Everything runs smoothly, and the property is maintained." (I hope) that they take this into account, because that is of course worth money and therefore renounce one or the other rent increase. That is my hope for the future." (Mrs. H, 69)

Although Mrs. D shares the opinion that the current development of rental prices could eventually become problematic for some residents, she thinks that the housing project is still

able to accommodate residents from a wide range of income levels. She sees the relatively high number of state-subsidized apartments as a major advantage in terms of the overall affordability of the project:

> "I believe that everyone is aware that he lives here more and more expensive, but that he would not have the possibilities on the free housing market. Please also bear in mind that we have seven publicly subsidized flats here, as for Mrs. B, with a small pension. And we are proud of it." (Mrs. D, 71)

However, it should be noted that, though indirectly, the residents in state-subsidized flats are also affected by rent increases as they too have to pay a proportion of the rent for the community apartment of around 20 Euros per month. While this may not sound much, some of the interviewed residents reported, that there are a handful of elderly residents who receive only a very small pension and for whom the additional financial burden of the community apartment already poses a financial challenge. As Mrs. F explained, the new projects have learnt from their experience and have managed to get their communal apartments subsidized by the state as well, which has significantly reduced the additional expenses of the residents:

> "We received some kind of start-up support. Mrs. A must have told you that with 3000 Euro for the communal apartment. The other two (projects) made it more clever. They got them state-subsidized. They have to pay only half and we have to pay it all. 20 Euro every month, that is a lot, not with me but for people who are really at the limit it's a lot of money." (Mrs. F, 74)

Nevertheless, even the more recent projects face the challenge of increasing housing prices. This can be seen in the case of the community of Plittersdorf. While they learned from the experiences of the project Heerstraße and developed bigger apartments for families, the high prices make apartments of this size hardly affordable for young families with children, as one resident from the community Plittersdorf explained during a group interview:

> "Have you ever been to Plittersdorf? They have (...) several large apartments, but they have difficulties to occupy them. These are big apartments for families, but they are expensive and young families usually do not earn that much." (Mrs. L 74)

As the group interview with the representatives of the newly planned project Schuhmanns Höhe in Endenich showed, providing affordable apartments for mid- and low-income households is also a huge challenge for the new projects of the association. Already during the planning phase, it became apparent that the offered large owner-occupied and rented flats are hardly in demand by young families but mainly by childless double earners, many of them civil servants in ministries and public administration. As Mrs. O explains, the group has not yet found a way to reconcile the high prices with the necessary apartment sizes required by small families:

> "Well, we are currently experiencing problems in reconciling the relatively high purchase price for condominiums with an adequate apartment size for young families. We have a four-room condominium. This four-room condo is 120 square meters and costs over half a million and is not the hottest condo in terms of its size and location. And this is why we have had some cancellations in this segment, even though we had interested parties from a suitable clientele, i.e. dual-earner from ministries. And the other three-room

apartments with 90 square meters, they also cost a lot of money, over 400,000. Those are too small when someone arrives and says "but we want to have two children". In the tenant segment, the whole thing looks so similar." (Mrs. O, 66)

The issue of affordability has led to discussions at the association level whether the goal of the association to develop income-independent projects can still be realized with the previously used investor-based financing approach by mixing condominiums, free rental and state-subsidized apartments. Although at the time of the interview no decisions had been made regarding a reorientation of the association, the chairpersons of the association indicated in a group interview that a cooperative model could possibly be applied in the future:

"What we are currently thinking about is a reorientation of the association as to how we want to approach new housing projects and whether we should always stick to this combination of "freehold flats/rental flats". On our homepage we then call this "income independent" but rented apartments can now only be afforded by a family earning good money as double earners or by a single worker earning very good money. There are other approaches. I have already indicated that we have contacted a cooperative." (Mr. B, 71)

4.6 Summary

As the findings show, for most of the elderly residents, the decision to develop and live in a cohousing project was motivated by a deep desire to age in a community of mutual support. For many of the residents, this desire was driven by profound changes in their social environment, such as the loss of a partner or the relocation of children or friends. As such, the cohousing community was intended to replace these missing social relationships and prevent social isolation and loneliness in old age.

Moreover, the findings show that the residents had to deal with considerable challenges and regular setbacks while developing the cohousing project. On the one hand, a major challenge was to develop a project conception that was in line with the residents' different expectations, wishes and concerns. On the other hand, a further difficulty was to realize the conceptual ideas during the subsequent development phase. The findings clearly showed, that the support of the City of Bonn and the willingness of RheinHaus to cooperate with the residents contributed considerably to the successful realization of the Heerstraße project.

The ageing-in-place experience was consistently judged very positively by the residents. In doing so, the residents described their experience of getting older in the cohousing community as stimulating, supportive and relieving. In this context, the residents mentioned the community activities, the mutual support and the confidence of knowing that there will always be someone to help out if needed as the main reasons for why they think cohousing constitutes a suitable strategy to promote ageing in place.

Nevertheless, the findings also demonstrate that the cohousing community faces several challenges in sustaining the continuity of their project in the future. In particular, the disproportionately high number of elderly residents poses major challenges for maintaining the intergenerational structure, mutual support networks and finding ways to deal with an increasing number of elderly residents in need of long-term care. Furthermore, the findings show that affordability might become a problem for some of the elderly residents in the future.

Both the Heerstraße community and the other projects of the association are already actively discussing possible solutions to these challenges, some of which have already been implemented in the newly planned cohousing projects. It can be assumed that the mutual exchange of ideas and lessons learnt amongst the associations' different cohousing projects might play an important role in solving these challenges in the future.

5. DISCUSSION OF LESSONS LEARNT

The following chapter synthesizes and discusses the findings in light of the research questions outlined in chapter 3. For this purpose, the chapter is structured into four sections: in chapter 5.1, the most important empirical findings are first synthesized along the four subquestions (SQ1-SQ4). In chapter 5.2, the main research question (MG) is then answered and discussed in terms of the lessons that can be learned from the case study. In chapter 5.3 a retrospective discussion is provided as to how far the chosen research design has been suitable for answering the research questions and where its boundaries have been reached. Finally, Chapter 5.4 presents a series of recommendations for practitioners and policy makers active in the field of urban development, housing and senior living.

5.1 Synthesis and discussion of main research findings

The following chapter aims at synthesizing the main research findings from chapter 4. This will be carried out analogously to the order of the sub-research questions that were formulated in chapter 3. To this end, Chapter 5.1.1 will address what motivated the older residents to develop a cohousing project. In Chapter 5.1.2, the challenges the residents faced while developing and implementing their joint cohousing concept will be dealt with, whilst chapter 5.1.3 shows how the conceptualization of the project affected the elderly residents' ageing in place experience. Finally, chapter 5.1.4 deals with the challenges of maintaining the cohousing community in the future.

5.1.1 Looking for community: Motivations for developing a cohousing project

As the findings show, for most of the elderly residents, the decision to develop and live in a cohousing project was motivated by an increasing dissatisfaction with their own living situation. As the analysis reveals, the origin of this increasing dissatisfaction can be traced back to profound changes in their life situation, such as retirement, the loss of a partner or the relocation of children or friends. All these changes had one thing in common, namely that they led to significant alterations in the residents' social networks. As a result, many residents were worried that they would have to live alone in old age and thus become socially isolated. As such, by developing a cohousing community they intended to replace these missing social relationships and thus reduce the risk of social isolation in old age.

The findings further indicate that although nearly all residents were motivated by a strong desire to live in a community, the expectations of what the community should provide were quite different. Some wished that living in the community would make it easier to have uncomplicated and unplanned regular social contact, similar to what they experienced during their work time with colleagues. Others, however, expected the cohousing community to serve as some kind of family substitute, with close intimate relationships. Still others hoped that the cohousing community would serve as a support network which would enable them to live independently for as long as possible and provide a feeling of security. Furthermore, some residents expected that by developing a non-family based support network it would relieve their family member of their responsibility to care for them if needed. The desire for a substitute

family to rely on in difficult times is not surprising given the fact that mainly elderly single women took part in the interviews. However, despite the strong desire for community and mutual support, the findings also showed that the residents expressed the wish keep living an independent and self-determined life. For many this has been a key factor in deciding to join the cohousing project, as the cohousing concept of "living together privately" offered the opportunity to live in a community while maintaining a high degree of independence and privacy.

5.1.2 Developing community: Challenges in realizing a joint cohousing concept

As the findings reveal, the residents had to deal with considerable challenges and regular setbacks while developing the cohousing project. These challenges can be divided into two groups: on the one hand the challenges that arose in the developing stages of the project that considered the different expectations, wishes and concerns of the future residents, and on the other hand the challenges that emerged during the realization of the cohousing project.

At the beginning of the planning phase, the group had great difficulties integrating the various expectations, wishes and concerns into a single cohousing concept. The findings indicate that this was due to the fact that the personal expectations and wishes of the group members varied considerably at this stage. This became apparent, for example, in the question of whether the housing project should exclusively be designed for elderly people or for multiple generations. The different opinions ultimately led to a division of the group into two planning groups, one of which intended to develop a senior cohousing project and the other an intergenerational cohousing project. A similar situation arose with regard to the question of where the later project should be developed. Here the group split again, as the location preferences among some of the group members differed substantially. As the findings reveal, the initial planning group was divided into four different planning groups due to internal differences.

The findings clearly emphasize the important role of the planning process in the development of cohousing projects. As the case of Heerstraße shows, the regular planning meetings, which took place over a period of three years, had two central functions: firstly, the active planning of the cohousing project, and secondly the group formation. Both processes ran simultaneously and were mutually dependent. During group formation, the planning meetings functioned as a filtering process that ensured that only those people who were in line with the basic views of the majority of the group members participated in the planning meetings in the long term. As a result the group became more homogenous. In this context, it must be said that in the case of the Heerstraße, the homogenization process was not based on socio-economic status, as the principle of income independence shows, but rather on common values and shared lifestyles.

Also, during the implementation of the cohousing concept, the group had to deal with a number of challenges. As the findings demonstrate, the biggest challenge was to find a property and an investor. While the lack of land posed a challenge both then and now, the search for an investor was particularly difficult at that time as the cohousing concept was largely unknown to most investors and therefore there was little interest in cooperating with the association. The fact that the group could only find an investor for their project through a brokerage by the city of Bonn

underlines the particular importance of collaborations for the development of cohousing projects. Furthermore, this shows that the development of cohousing projects can be a risky undertaking, since it cannot be guaranteed that the project will actually be realized.

The findings also point to the fact that during the participatory planning phase the group had considerable problems in implementing its desired conceptualization. This was partly due to the fact that the group entered into an already existing design and therefore only a few changes could be made. Although the investor granted the planning group the opportunity to make numerous changes to the plans, the architect at the time had little understanding of participatory planning processes and the structural requirements of cohousing projects. As the findings made clear, this phase therefore required a great deal of initiative on the part of the residents themselves to engage in planning and construction matters and to acquire basic expertise.

Another main challenge consisted in making the project affordable for as many income groups as possible. The group encountered strong opposition from the municipality and the investor when it came to granting publicly subsidized housing for their project. The fact that the group finally managed to realize its goal of an income-independent community through a mix of condominiums, publicly subsidized rental apartments and freehold apartments shows that cohousing projects do not have to be elitist projects as some authors claim. However, the findings also indicate that this can only be achieved if the planning group, local authorities and the investor cooperate closely.

5.1.3 Ageing in community: Stimulating, supporting, relieving

As the findings demonstrate, the cohousing concept developed by the residents had a very positive impact on their ageing in place experience. In this context, it was repeatedly emphasized that ageing in the cohousing community was experienced as stimulating, supportive and relieving.

Something perceived by the residents as particularly stimulating and enriching is the regular participation in working groups that have been established as part of the self-administration of the project. It proved to be particularly advantageous that the tasks were distributed in such a way that everyone was able to carry out what they felt to be the most suitable work. This allowed everyone to participate in community work regardless of time constraints and physical impairments.

The opportunity to have a regular personal exchange with other residents also had a very positive influence on the ageing in place experience of the residents. It proved to be especially advantageous that social interactions could take place spontaneously within the community and without need to make a special appointment or leave the cohousing property. Especially for residents with physical disabilities, this offers the benefit of being able to maintain frequent social contact without having to take exhausting trips. Furthermore, due to the intergenerational composition of the community, the elderly residents had the opportunity to regularly deal with new opinions and perspectives and thus keep themselves mentally young.

Another reason why living in the cohousing community is perceived as stimulating is that there are numerous opportunities to participate in common activities. As many activities are offered within the housing project, there is a low barrier to participate in them. This encourages the residents to stay active and participate regularly in different activities. Furthermore, it also allows residents with physical impairments to take part in the activities and thus helps them to stay active and fit. In addition to the internal activities of the community, regular festivals are organized to which the neighborhood is invited. This gives the residents the opportunity to extent their social network into the neighborhood.

In addition to regular joint contact and activities, community life is also characterized by mutual support. As the findings of the study show, regular contact between the residents has led to the formation of close relationships over time. Within these relationships, the residents support each other in everyday life, which is perceived by many as particularly advantageous as they grow older. For example, residents can fall back on the help of other residents in case they have difficulties with domestic duties such as shopping or cooking. Furthermore, mutual support also takes place in case of illness and includes hospital visits, food preparation and emotional support. As the findings show, knowing that in an emergency there will be support by the community is perceived as particularly relieving, not only for the residents but also for their relatives.

5.1.4 Maintaining community: Challenges and future outlook

The previous section demonstrated that the cohousing community enabled the residents to respond flexibly to age-related challenges during the ten-year residential phase. However, the community also faced a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to maintain the continuity of the Heerstraße community in the future.

Arguably the greatest challenge for the community derives from its exceptionally large proportion of elderly residents, with more than half of the residents currently 65 years or older. Given the fact that Heerstraße was initially intended as a cohousing project for elderly women and only later was the decision made to make it accessible to all generations, the current demographic situation is by no means surprising. However, over the past ten years the number of elderly people in the project has increased further. The ageing of the project is not only due to the natural ageing process of the residents, but also due to the fact that the community struggles to attract younger residents, particularly families with children. On the one hand, this may be due to the fact that younger people move more frequently as a result of professional and private changes. On the other hand, it appears that the apartments are only suitable for families with children as they offer only enough space for a maximum of two to three people. As a result, the birth of the second child in the past has usually led to families having to move out of the cohousing project. In addition, the vacated apartments were rented mainly to elderly people due to a lack of demand from younger generations, which further increased and consolidated the proportion of elderly people in the project.

As the project has matured, first difficulties are already being encountered in maintaining the mutual support structures and self-administration, which have so far been carried out mainly by

the elderly. Due to the advancing age of the elderly residents, there is concern that in the future they will be incapable of doing any physical work in the project. Whether it will be possible to transfer these tasks to the younger generations is questionable. This shows that adults with families in particular are not very interested in taking on tasks that are mandatory for a longer period of time or providing regular support to elderly residents as they often only have very little spare time as a result of their work and family responsibilities. In order to manage the high proportion of elderly residents, the community has introduced a temporary halt to the admission of elderly people to new rentals. However, to what extent this strategy will be successful remains to be seen.

As the results show, both follow-up projects Duisdorf and Plittersdorf have learnt from the experiences of the Heerstraße project and taken care during the planning phase that affordable apartments of sufficient size are being developed to ensure that families with children can also join the project. Also, in the newly planned project Schumann Höhe, care was taken to provide sufficient housing for young families with children. In contrast to the Duisdorf and Plittersdorf projects, however, the new project has considerable difficulties in finding young families with children for these apartments. This is partly due to the fact that the apartments are not affordable for many young families with children because of the very high prices. Ensuring an intergenerational structure thus poses a considerable challenge in the new project of the Wahlverwandtschaften, for which no solution has yet been found.

Both the problem of affordability and that of ensuring an intergenerational community have meanwhile become an important topic of discussion within the association. Within the scope of these discussions first suggestions for a reorientation of the association have already been expressed. On the one hand there have been suggestions to develop the projects not only on the basis of an intergenerational model but also to realize senior cohousing projects. In order to ensure the future affordability of the projects, it was proposed to finance future projects based on a cooperative model instead of an investor-based model. Already today there are plans for the development of the first cooperative project of the association. However, it remains to be seen to what extent the association will adapt its traditional cohousing concept based on the principles of "income-independence, intergenerational living and neighborly solidarity" to these new challenges in the future.

5.2 Lessons learnt

Now that the key findings have been synthesized, the following chapter aims at answering the main research question: *What can cohousing contribute as a strategy to promote ageing in place?* The research question will be answered and discussed along with the lessons that can be learned from the case study.

Lesson 1: Cohousing can help to prevent social isolation and inactivity in old age

A major point of criticism in ageing in place strategies that encourage people to remain in their own homes is that this can lead to loneliness and social isolation and thus negatively affect the quality of life in old age. Given the increasing number of elderly people living alone in the

future, it is necessary that the prevention of social isolation and inactivity is given a key importance in promoting ageing in place.

As the findings of this study confirm, cohousing projects can contribute significantly towards this goal. Cohousing enables elderly people to integrate into self-sustaining social networks that go beyond the scope of traditional neighborhood networks. While initial relationships are established in the planning phase, a network of differently intensive relationships evolves during the residential phase as a result of the joint activities and community-oriented architecture, promoting mutual interaction among the residents. In particular, the spatial proximity allows regular unplanned contact among the residents and thus allows a steady exchange. In addition, joint activities contribute significantly to the prevention of social isolation which reduces the risk of individual group members withdrawing and isolating themselves from the community. Furthermore, the joint activities and self-management of the cohousing project encourages the residents not to become inactive as they get older. Due to the fact that joint activities also take place in the cohousing project, it is also possible for residents with physical disabilities to participate in these activities. In addition, it can be assumed that peer pressure makes it more difficult to withdraw from activities. However, whether living in a cohousing project really results in elderly people staying active longer cannot be proven. Although the data indicates that most of the residents live a very active life despite their advanced age, this cannot be causally attributed to living in the cohousing project. Another possible explanation for this could be that the elderly residents in the cohousing project generally lead an exceptionally active lifestyle and seek to maintain this behavior even in old age.

Despite all these positive attributions, a cohousing project cannot guarantee that the residents will not become lonely. For example, residents may withdraw from the group if the cohousing project does not fulfill their original expectations or they feel disappointed with their new housing situation. Furthermore, residents might not get along with the personalities of other group members or disagree with cooperatively shared practices and behaviors. Unresolved conflicts can also have negative effects on the group fabric and contribute to individual residents feeling excluded from the group. It can be assumed that especially in smaller groups there is a risk that individual members will be excluded. This is because small groups usually do not allow the development of sub groups that could act as alternative retreats in case of conflict.

Lesson 2: Cohousing can help to compensate the loss of family support structures

In view of the increasing erosion of traditional family support structures, non-family networks and informal support structures are becoming increasingly important for promoting ageing in place. The findings demonstrate that cohousing can help to build long-term social networks that help to compensate for this loss of family support structures.

The development of social networks is a central aspect of the cohousing concept and plays a major role prior to moving in. As soon as the planning and realization phase, the first relationships among the residents are formed. In this context, the findings indicate that the joint experience of developing a cohousing project while dealing with numerous challenges might

play a significant role in fostering social cohesion and the identification of the residents with the community. The process of community building thus runs parallel to the planning and development phase of the project. However, the community building process by no means ends with moving into the finished cohousing community but proceeds as part of everyday live.

During the residential phase, regular interactions in the form of joint discussions and group activities ensure that the social networks are further cultivated and strengthened. This helps to form groups of residents who are in close contact with each other. Mutual support takes place mainly within these groups and ranges from small favors, help with household chores such as shopping to patient visits, cooking meals and in some cases even minor medical care. These support structures can thus make a major contribution to ensuring that elderly people maintain their independence in old age even if they have difficulties with everyday tasks.

The existence of a social support network can also contribute to the elderly residents feeling safer and more secure. For example, as a result of the spatial proximity cohousing residents might identify early signs of someone experiencing declining health or mobility impairments and who needs assistance. Knowing that someone is there to help in an emergency can be a great relief for both the elderly residents and their relatives.

Although mutual support is a core component of cohousing, unlike assisted living, it cannot be claimed by the residents. This is because all mutual support is normally provided on a voluntary basis. Therefore, only the residents decide if, how much and to whom they want to support. As the findings make clear, the ability of residents to secure support depends on their capacity to build and maintain a personal social support network. Like in any human relationship, this requires regular engagement. However, this presupposes that the resident is able to sustain his relationship. This raises the question to what extent mutual support will still be provided even if a resident is no longer able to actively maintain his or her relationships, such as in the case of illness? Another question that needs to be addressed in this context is how well the mutual support structures work if the majority of the cohousing residents reach an advanced age and become collectively so impaired that they cannot securely support each other any longer? This question applies not only to senior cohousing projects but also to intergenerational cohousing projects. Although one could assume that the younger residents would be willing to step in with support the case study shows that at least for the Heerstraße project this is hardly imaginable. This is partly due to the fact that the mutual support networks of the elderly residents of Heerstraße mostly consists of people of similar ages, while younger residents are not very involved in providing mutual support. On the other hand, it is questionable whether younger residents, especially working adults with children, want to spend their time on supporting an elderly housemate. The findings also highlight that within the younger generations the ideal of mutual support plays a much smaller role than among the older generations. This raises the question of whether the ideal of mutual support can be maintained over time or whether it disappears with a new generation.

Lesson 3: Mutual support networks cannot compensate for professional care

The main objective of ageing in place is to support elderly people to live as long as possible in a place of their choice, even when they need care. The findings clearly demonstrated that long-term care goes beyond what can and wants to be achieved in cohousing projects in terms of support. Since care is very intimate, it conflicts with the principle of maintaining a balance between proximity and distance, which is a central aspect of living in a cohousing project. In addition, the residents usually do not have the necessary training to provide care services in the required quality. Although it is possible to try to delay the time of the need for care by supporting the residents, at a certain point, however, support provided by the community may no longer be sufficient. At this point it is necessary to seek professional support.

In the event that a cohousing resident is in need of care, however, there are various possibilities to continue living in the community. On the one hand, as in normal private apartments, there is the possibility to get an ambulant nursing service or to enter day care. Furthermore, in principle, it is also possible to accommodate nursing staff in one of the apartments. This can be particularly useful if several people in the project are in need of care. Only if these possibilities are no longer sufficient is it necessary for the person in need to move into an assisted living facility or a nursing home. Furthermore, as in the case of the Endenich project, it is possible to plan cohousing projects together with day care facilities or even care stations. However, the way a cohousing community deals with care needs and the extent to which residents will be able to live and be cared for in the community will vary from project to project.

Lesson 4: Cohousing is not a suitable housing strategy for everyone

As the previous section clearly demonstrated, the cohousing concept is not suitable for everyone and particularly not for every life situation. This is because living in a cohousing project requires certain characteristics from its inhabitants which are by no means universal.

A key aspect of living in a cohousing community is taking on community tasks and participating in community activities. As the findings of this study reveal, active participation in community life plays an important role in the group building process and the formation of support networks. Active participation in the self-organization of the residential property is also essential in order to save costs. This presupposes, however, that the residents are physically as well as mentally able to participate actively in the community. While physically handicapped people still have various possibilities to participate in the community, this seems to be much more difficult in case of severe mental limitations.

It can also be seen that active participation during the planning phase is of paramount importance for group building and personal identification with the cohousing project. The planning meetings, which often take place over a period of several years, demand a high level of commitment from the future residents. Especially for people who are at the end of their working life this additional burden can be too much and cause them either to attend meetings irregularly or to decide not to join the cohousing project at all. Furthermore, the development of the cohousing project as well as the subsequent maintenance of the community requires a high degree of social competence and empathy from the residents.

Moreover, it should be considered that not all elderly people wish for such an intensive community life as is the case in cohousing projects. In fact, for many elderly people, the desire for privacy increases as they grow older. This is also reflected in the situation that 97% of elderly people do not live in a community but in a private household, either alone or with a partner. Although the cohousing approach of "living together privately" offers a trade-off, this does not seem to meet the strong desire for privacy among many elderly people.

Lesson 5: Cohousing is only one building block in the development of age-friendly residential environments

From the previous lessons it can be concluded that the cohousing cannot be a universal strategy to promote ageing in place. While the cohousing concept, through its do-it-yourself approach, allows flexible responses to different housing needs and desires, it is, as Lesson 4 clearly demonstrates, limited in this ability and therefore cannot address the full range of housing needs in old age. As a result, cohousing projects can only be one of many necessary building blocks in developing age-friendly residential environments. In order to promote ageing in place, it is necessary that the various housing desires and needs of the elderly population are sufficiently taken into account when developing future residential environments. In addition to the various residential options that are already available for the elderly, cohousing offers an important addition due to its niche function. It can be assumed that in the future further residential options will have to be developed to meet the very heterogeneous needs of the elderly. Special consideration should be given to people who are not able to live in cohousing projects due to their physical and mental condition but still wish to lead an independent life. Another important target group are those who do not want to live alone but for whom the community aspect of cohousing projects is too intense. Approaches to neighborly living might provide an alternative for these people. However, it is important that no matter what form of housing is developed, complementary, supportive services are being integrated. This includes both adequate infrastructural provision as well as supplementary decentralized care services.

Lesson 6: Promoting ageing in place is a shared responsibility

Lesson 5 shows that promoting ageing in place cannot be the responsibility of a single stakeholder. The proactive do-it-yourself approach of cohousing groups, based on civic engagement and self-initiative, should not be used as a justification for transferring the overall responsibility for providing housing for elderly people to citizens. The municipalities have an important role to play, particularly in providing social infrastructure and services of public interest. This alone gives municipalities a major responsibility to develop elderly friendly residential environments. Cohousing groups offer municipalities the opportunity to work together in a cooperative relationship to develop new forms of housing that meets the needs of an ageing population. As the findings of this study show, municipalities can offer important support in the development of cohousing projects. However, this requires that the stakeholders involved are aware of their respective responsibilities. In this context, neither the public nor the municipalities carry sole responsibility. However, it is in their own economic interest that the

municipalities understand elderly housing as a promising future sector, since the development of age-appropriate residential environments outside the traditional residential options of "staying at home" and "moving into a retirement home" can open up increasing savings potential if they succeed in anticipating the need for help and care on the part of the elderly and prolonging the provision of domestic care.

5.3 Research design: Usefulness and limitations

Following the attempt in the last two chapters to answer the research questions, the aim now is to reflect retrospectively on the research design presented in detail in chapter 3 with regard to its usefulness and limitations for answering the research questions.

Usefulness of a qualitative case-study approach

Answering the research questions required a research approach that allowed exploration of the experiences of elderly cohousing residents with developing and ageing in a cohousing community from different perspectives. In retrospect, the application of a qualitative case-study approach proved to be of great value and, in some instances, even indispensable. Given the small body of scientific literature dealing with the suitability of the cohousing concept as a strategy to promote ageing in place, particularly in a German context, it was of key importance to apply an explorative approach at the very beginning of the research project in order to identify first relevant thematic areas and to develop suitable research questions for the subsequent investigations. The explorative approach suited this purpose very well, as it allowed the researcher to gain first insights into the everyday life of the residents, to identify social networks within the housing project and at the same time to establish first contacts in the community, which later turned out to be of central importance for the success of the subsequent empirical field research. The interviews carried out with the residents at this stage provided an important source of information for the development of the research questions and hence made a significant contribution to the further development of this research project.

The semi-structured interviews used to examine the perspective of the elderly residents turned out to be a very effective tool to gain profound and complex insight into the residents' lived experiences. Given an average length of one to two and a half hours, the interviews provided enough time to capture the residents' stories in great detail while simultaneously covering a long time frame between ten to fourteen years. Alternative approaches, such as a quantitative household survey, would not have allowed such a broad thematic and temporal coverage, or only with a considerable loss of information.

By combining semi-structured interviews with unstructured participative observations the research design further enabled validation of the statements made by the residents during the interviews by observing their everyday behavior. Furthermore, the observations provided the opportunity to identify new thematic areas and integrate them into the research process. Above all, it provided an opportunity to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how the social support networks operate.

The group interviews also proved to be a useful extension to the semi-structured interviews and the participant observations. For example, it was possible to determine which lessons the other projects had learnt from the challenges experienced by the first project at Heerstraße and what measures were taken to address them. In particular, the group interview with the project managers of a recent project allowed the identification of current challenges in the development of cohousing projects.

The iterative research process also proved to be a major benefit throughout. By regularly evaluating the research findings, it was possible to adapt and refine the research design flexibly to new developments and emerging topics. Given the lack of a suitable theoretical foundation, this opportunity for continuous improvement turned out to be indispensable for the overall research process, as it produced meaningful findings despite the sometimes unfavorable circumstances.

Limitations of the qualitative case-study approach

Despite the careful development and implementation, the research design also showed some limitations. Chapter 4.6 has already referred to some possible weaknesses in the research design. The following section will now discuss in retrospect where the applied research design has reached its limits for answering the research questions.

A main aspect that must always be taken into account in qualitative case studies is the extent to which the findings can be generalized (Patton 2002). Although this approach has proved to be very helpful in gaining a detailed understanding of the residents' experiences, the limited scope of this work meant that only one cohousing project could be studied intensively. This raises the legitimate question of the extent to which the findings can be generalized and transferred to other cohousing projects. Although this problem was addressed by including residents from other projects in the sample, these projects were also carried out by the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. and thus follow a very similar conceptual approach. Although this allowed a certain underpinning of the findings from the Heerstraße project, it does not guarantee any further generalizability for other cohousing projects, which may differ significantly in their conceptual approach.

Another aspect that needs to be challenged in this context is the selection of interview participants from the Heerstraße project. Although the selection of participants had the desired outcome that all were founding members, during the investigations it quickly turned out that these participants shared a very distinct identification with the project as a result of their shared vision and jointly experienced development phase. Consequently, it is possible that the positive residential experiences may have been emphasized compared to the negative ones. Given the very positive representations of the residents with respect to their ageing in place experience in the cohousing project, this needs to be considered.

Since this study only included elderly residents that still live in a cohousing project, but not those who may have had to move out, there is a risk that the findings may be affected by a survival bias. A survival bias is a logical bias that occurs if the sample selection only considers people who have managed to pass a certain selection process and ignores those who did not. At

this point, however, it must be mentioned that there was no possibility to reduce this bias, since none of the elderly residents in the Heerstraße community have moved out so far. Nevertheless, this is a critical issue that must be taken into account in future studies.

5.4 Practical implications

Based on the discussion of the empirical findings, a series of recommendations for policy makers and practitioners working in the field of urban development and housing will be formulated below:

(1) The findings of this study as well as the corresponding literature indicate that the development of cohousing projects is to be understood as a reaction to a qualitatively inadequate housing supply. In growing cities such as Bonn, the housing challenges posed by an ageing population have so far largely been approached from a quantitative perspective. Although the new requirements for elderly housing caused by demographic and social change also have quantitative implications (increasing demand for single and two-person apartments), it is necessary that not only the right number of units is provided, but also that the quality of the existing and newly constructed units meets the changing needs of an ageing population.

(2) Furthermore, the increasing number of elderly people who are already living in cohousing projects or who can imagine moving into such a project in the future indicates an increasing demand towards a more differentiated and adaptable residential supply. In order to be able to react to this changing demand, local authorities as well as the housing industry have to think about elderly housing outside the classical housing options "staying at home" and "moving to a retirement home" and develop suitable solutions. However, this requires a new way of thinking on the part of planners, politicians and the industry, because those who create living environments, i.e. plan, develop and manage them, have to gain a detailed understanding of what wishes, expectations and needs are to be satisfied right from the very beginning. This is essential to prevent future 'mal developments' and to ensure that the goal of the elderly to lead a self-determined and independent life in a familiar environment can be achieved.

(3) The case of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. shows that cohousing projects offer an opportunity to react flexibly to changing housing needs. In order to exploit this potential, however, municipalities and the private sector will need to take an open but also critical stance towards the development of cohousing projects, even if they have an experimental character.

(4) The findings also clearly emphasize that the responsibility for the successful development of cohousing projects lies not only with the future residents. The municipalities are also part of the process and thus share responsibility for the success or failure of the development of cohousing projects. It therefore requires an understanding on the part of the municipalities that they are also responsible for promoting civic engagement, supporting the formation of social networks and contributing to the development of innovative support systems.

(5) The findings of these studies as well as the literature show that the development of cohousing projects is a very knowledge-intensive matter, which usually requires external consulting. Municipalities with an interest in the development of cohousing projects should provide a focal consultancy service for project groups similar to that already provided in many cities. At best, such advice should include topics such as property search, project management, financing, legal matters and funding opportunities. However, the implementation of such a service only makes sense if it is adequately staffed and can satisfactorily respond to the concerns of the cohousing groups.

(6) A further key challenge in developing cohousing projects is to secure land due to the lengthy planning times and decision-making processes commonly found among cohousing groups. While a privileged allocation of land for cohousing projects seems neither desirable nor plausible, municipalities can reduce the disadvantages that cohousing projects have in securing land, for example by establishing urban development contracts in which land can be reserved for cohousing groups for a certain period of time.

(7) One further aspect that the findings show is that inflexible regulations can make the development of cohousing projects more difficult or even impossible. In the case of the Heerstraße project, a minor overstep of the legally permitted apartment sizes resulted in the state subsidy for the apartments not being approved. As a result, the entire floor plans of the building had to be redesigned, which ultimately led to a significant delay in the construction phase and thus to additional costs. Furthermore, no subsidy was granted for the community apartment, as it exceeded the legally prescribed maximum size. These experiences show that innovative forms of living also require innovative regulations. A greater flexibility of regulations, however, should under no circumstances only apply to cohousing projects, but must then apply to all types of housing.

(8) In the case of state-subsidized housing, it is also evident that the municipality must make its right of occupancy more flexible for cohousing projects. The allocation of public housing subsidies for a cohousing project should not be linked to the condition that the municipality is allowed to select the residents for this apartments, as this would constitute a substantial intervention in the social structure of the project. The cohousing residents must be able to decide for themselves who is allowed to live with them and who is not. Only then can it be guaranteed that the social networks within the project can be maintained.

(9) Overall, the findings and the literature indicate a change in the constellations of actors in housing development. Due to the increasing number of cohousing projects, not only the traditional actors active in housing construction, such as municipalities and the private sector, but also citizens are increasingly taking part. Thus, cohousing projects are also an expression of a changing planning culture, which requires new forms of communication and cooperation among the actors involved. As the case of the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. shows, this can result in interesting cooperation opportunities for municipalities to jointly develop housing for elderly people. For this,

however, there must be a willingness to acknowledge this new actor as an equal partner when it comes to developing housing.

6. CONCLUSION

The research presented in this thesis has been motivated by the observation that despite a growing interest among German citizens, policy makers and practitioners in cohousing as an innovative housing solution to address the challenges of an ageing society, there has been little empirical evidence on the suitability of the cohousing concept as a strategy to support an independent and self-determined living in old age.

The aim of this thesis was to address this knowledge gap by investigating what contribution cohousing can make as a strategy to promote ageing in place from the perspective of elderly cohousing residents. For this purpose, the study addressed four main objectives: First, it contributed in advancing the knowledge on what motivates elderly people to develop a cohousing project. Second, it provided a deeper understanding of the challenges cohousing groups face while developing and transforming their conceptual ideas into a residential project. Third, it gave insights on how the residents experienced ageing in the community during their residency. Fourth, it allowed for a better understanding of the challenges cohousing groups may face in sustaining their community.

All objectives have been addressed within the scope of a ten years later study using a qualitative case-study approach. The cohousing association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. served as a case study. Empirical research focused on the associations first project Heerstraße using a combination of exploratory and semi-structured interviews as well as participant observations. These interviews were supplemented by two group interviews with elderly residents of two other existing (Duisdorf and Plittersdorf) - and one currently planned - cohousing projects (Schuhmannhöhe), all belonging to the association Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V..

The findings showed, that the wish of the elderly residents to develop a cohousing community was motivated by a deep desire to age in a community of mutual support. This desire was mainly driven by profound changes in the elderly residents social environment, such as the loss of a partner or the relocation of children or friends. With the development of a cohousing project, the residents aimed at compensating for this loss by developing a social network and thus preventing loneliness and social isolation. The results demonstrated that cohousing projects can contribute significantly to the development of functioning, self-sustaining social networks. Cohousing projects promote social interaction among residents and thus help to reduce the risk of social isolation. Regular community activities not only contribute to group building but also keep the residents active as they age. Cohousing projects also facilitate the formation of support networks to which residents can turn if necessary. This support ranges from assistance in everyday life such as shopping or housework to support in case of illness as well as emotional support in case of personal hardships. This not only makes it easier for the residents to deal better with physical and mental limitations but also fosters a feeling of relief and security.

As the findings reveal, cohousing can certainly make a positive contribution to promoting ageing in place. However, the findings also underline that cohousing projects are not a suitable housing strategy for everybody. Living in a cohousing project requires a certain amount of empathy and social skills. Furthermore, there is a need for regular involvement in the community. For people with physical and mental limitations, this can already exceed the limits

of what they can contribute. Finally, it needs to be considered that not all elderly people wish for such an intensive community life as it is the case in cohousing projects.

The results indicate that although cohousing projects are able to build long-term non-family based social networks and thereby help to reduce social isolation, loneliness and inactivity, they cannot be a universal strategy to promote ageing in place. However, they represent an important building block for age-appropriate housing development by offering an alternative between "staying at home" and "moving into a retirement home". In order to promote ageing in place, it is necessary that the various housing desires and needs of the elderly population are sufficiently taken into account when developing future residential environments. In the years to come it will be particularly important to find housing solutions for all those who want to age in a community but for whom the community aspect of cohousing projects is perceived as too intense. Neighbourly living approaches might provide an alternative for these people, if complementary, supportive services are being integrated. Future studies may explore the potential of such neighbourly approaches of community living to promote ageing in place within this target group.

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APPENDIX

(A) DOCUMENTS WAHLVERWANDTSCHAFTEN BONN E.V

(B) TRANSLATIONS AND INTERVIEW EXTRACTS

(C) PICTURES OF RESEARCH SITE

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(A) DOCUMENTS WAHLVERWANDTSCHAFTEN BONN E.V

A1 Principles

Grundsätze der Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.

Einleitung:

Gesellschaftliche Veränderungen in den letzten Jahren haben die Entwicklung bestärkt, in Gemeinschaften wohnen und leben zu wollen, die ihren Mitgliedern die Möglichkeit bieten, sinnstiftende Aufgaben zu übernehmen und ein selbständiges Leben zusammen mit Gleichgesinnten zu führen.

Unsere Erfahrung hat gezeigt, dass vornehmlich Menschen, die sich im Übergang von der Familien- und Erwerbstätigkeitsphase in einen neuen Lebensabschnitt befinden, diese Entwicklung hin zu gemeinschaftlichen Wohnprojekten in urbanen Zentren vorantreiben.

Der Verein möchte vor allem auch jüngere Menschen und Familien mit Kindern ermutigen, sich mit Interesse und Ideen einzubringen, um so die Vielfalt zu fördern. Es werden keine Vorschriften hinsichtlich der zahlenmäßigen Zusammensetzung der verschiedenen Altersgruppen in den einzelnen Hausgemeinschaften und Wohnprojektinitiativen gemacht. Unter Berücksichtigung des Bedarfs sowie der Nachfrage von Mitgliedern und Interessierten sollte aber eine gute Mischung erreicht werden.

Ziel ist es, intern soziale Netzwerke zu bilden.

Generationen-verbindend – einkommens-unabhängig – solidarisch-nachbarschaftlich

Alle Mitglieder im Verein Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn akzeptieren folgende Grundsätze.

Was verstehen wir unter den drei Grundsätzen und mit welchen Verfahren möchten wir sie verwirklichen?

1. Generationen-verbindend

Wir wollen, dass unsere Hausgemeinschaften und Wohnprojektinitiativen für alle Generationen offen sind und dass sich unterschiedliche Menschen zusammenfinden, um die Vielfalt zu fördern und ein gutes Miteinander zu erreichen. Es wäre wünschenswert, wenn innerhalb dieser Vielfalt jede Person ein partnerschaftliches Gegenüber fände.

Das Prinzip des generationenverbindenden Wohnens soll gewahrt bleiben, was bedeuten kann, dass einige Wohnungen zumindest zeitweilig und bis zu einem vorher festzulegenden Zeitpunkt für bestimmte Altersgruppen und Familien freigehalten werden, was allen Interessierten bekannt gegeben wird.

Wir führen in den Hausgemeinschaften und den Wohnprojektinitiativen ein für alle einheitliches **Aufnahmeverfahren** durch, das durch eine konsensbildende Meinungsfindung gekennzeichnet ist, um einmütige, von allen akzeptierte Ergebnisse zu erreichen.

Das **Aufnahmeverfahren** wird gesondert erläutert und soll für Interessierte in einem überschaubaren Zeitraum durchgeführt werden.

Ziel ist der **Konsens**.

2. Einkommens-unabhängig

Wir wollen, dass Wohnungen für unterschiedliche Einkommensgruppen in unseren Wohnprojekten erstellt werden: Wohnungen zur freien Miete und öffentlich geförderte Mietwohnungen für Bewohner/innen, die Anspruch auf einen Wohnberechtigungsschein haben sowie auch Eigentumswohnungen.

Die Mischung und zahlenmäßigen Anteile, die wir allerdings nicht dogmatisch sehen, sondern die den Standortgegebenheiten anzupassen sind, sollten im kooperativen **Planungsverfahren** mit Investor, Architekten und Wohnungs-Interessierten ermittelt und ausgehandelt werden, so dass sich eine den Vorstellungen der Gruppe entsprechende Wohnungsverteilung – auch hinsichtlich Größe und Gestaltung – ergibt.

Ziel ist ein akzeptierbarer **Kompromiss**.

3. Solidarisch-nachbarschaftlich

Wir machen die Erfahrung, dass gemeinschaftliches Wohnen in einer durch Vielfalt gekennzeichneten Gruppe bei den beteiligten Menschen hohe soziale Kompetenz und kommunikative Fähigkeit voraussetzt. Da immer auch die Eigenverantwortung notwendig ist, ergibt sich ein ständiger Prozess des Ausgleichens zwischen Nähe und Distanz.

Gemeinschaftssinn geht vor Eigennutz. Die Bildung interner sozialer Netzwerke erleichtert den gemeinsamen Alltag, die Verknüpfung mit externen Netzwerken bereichert durch neue Ideen.

Solidarität, tolerante Umgangsformen und die Wertschätzung der Anderen sind ebenso notwendig wie die Bereitschaft, sich aktiv, den eigenen Fähigkeiten und dem möglichen Zeitaufwand entsprechend an gemeinsamen Aufgaben in Kleingruppen zu beteiligen und sich in gemeinschaftsbildenden **Beteiligungsverfahren** in das Zusammenleben der Hausgemeinschaften einzubringen.

Ziel ist die aktive **Mitwirkung**.

In Hausgemeinschaften der geplanten Größe werden Meinungsverschiedenheiten und Grenzüberschreitungen nicht ausbleiben. Zur Bewältigung von Konflikten wurden Lösungen sowohl auf Hausgemeinschaftsebene - als auch auf Vereinsebene entwickelt, die einen respektvollen Umgang der beteiligten Personen und ein achtsames miteinander Leben immer wieder neu erarbeiten und garantieren.

Schlussbemerkung:

Die hier beschriebenen Grundsätze sind Ergebnis der klärenden Diskussion im Verein. Sie unterliegen einem lebendigen Prozess und können verändert sowie fortgeschrieben werden.

A2 Guiding concepts

Wahl-
Verwandtschaften Bonn e.V.

Leitgedanken unseres Zusammenlebens

In den Hausgemeinschaften des Vereins Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. leben wir mit Menschen unterschiedlichen Alters zusammen und knüpfen ein Netzwerk, auf das wir uns beziehen können, das lebendig bleibt und in dem jede/jeder eine Bedeutung hat.

	Wir wollen
Anerkennung	bereit sein zu gegenseitigem Respekt in Geduld und Toleranz und diese Haltung auch zum Ausdruck zu bringen
Achtsamkeit	uns bemühen, den anderen und sich selbst gegenüber eine grundsätzlich wohlwollende, zugewandte und freundliche Haltung einnehmen,
	generationsverbindende, bereichernde Erfahrungen machen und zulassen,
Austausch	uns um einen offenen, ehrlichen Dialog bemühen, in dem auch Konflikte beim Namen genannt werden,
Reflexion	die eigenen Grenzen erkennen und akzeptieren lernen.

Um dies zu ermöglichen, ist es erforderlich, dass die beteiligten Menschen für die Hausgemeinschaft Verantwortung übernehmen.

	Das heißt:
Verpflichtung	verbindlich und aktiv an Besprechungen und den Arbeitsgruppen der Hausgemeinschaft teilnehmen,
	anteilig die Kosten für Gemeinschaftseinrichtungen übernehmen,
	sich an gemeinschaftlichen Arbeiten im Rahmen der persönlichen Möglichkeiten beteiligen,
Einmütigkeit	Konsensbildung als eine Methode unserer Entscheidungsfindung anerkennen.

Wir bemühen uns um eine ökologisch und sozial nachhaltige Lebensweise.

	Wir wollen:
Ressourcenteilung	uns auf Formen solidarischer Nutzung einlassen, verantwortungsbewusster mit Rohstoffen und Energie umgehen,
Balance	ein Gleichgewicht zwischen Nähe und Distanz sowie zwischen Geben und Nehmen herstellen,
	einander im Rahmen unserer Möglichkeiten begleiten, helfen und unterstützen,
Veränderungen	offen bleiben dafür, Krisen und Konflikte ehrlich zu benennen, Hilfen zur Lösung zu suchen und bei Bedarf externe Unterstützung in Anspruch zu nehmen.

A3 Statutes

Ziele des Vereins

Der Verein Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V. will
* generationen-verbindende und einkommens-unabhängige und solidarisch-nachbarschaftliche Wohnformen bekannt machen
* Konzepte für das gemeinschaftliche Zusammenleben von Menschen im urbanen Umfeld entwickeln sowie Impulse für wahlverwandtschaftliches Leben schaffen
* die Realisierung durch gemeinschaftliche Wohnprojekte in Bonn initiieren und unterstützen

Der Verein ist offen für Menschen unterschiedlichen Alters und in verschiedenen Lebenslagen. Willkommen sind Junge und Ältere, Paare und Alleinstehende, Familien mit Kindern und Alleinerziehende, Menschen mit Handicaps und Personen in unterschiedlichen partnerschaftlichen Beziehungen sowie beruflichen Bereichen.
Der Verein ist darüber hinaus Kontaktstelle für alle diejenigen, die (noch) nicht in einer Hausgemeinschaft leben möchten, sich aber den Menschen und der Idee des Gemeinschaftlichen Wohnens verbunden fühlen.

Wir sind konfessionell, parteipolitisch und weltanschaulich nicht gebunden.
Wir haben Kontakt zu anderen Projekten und Institutionen in der Region und in NRW.

Struktur des Vereins

Gegründet am 25.04.2005 hat der Verein im Herbst 2017 bereits 310 Mitglieder.
Der Vorstand besteht aus 9 Mitgliedern und ist für 2 Jahre gewählt.
Die Vereinsmitglieder treffen sich regelmäßig zu sogenannten Plenen, bei denen Information und Diskussion im Vordergrund stehen. Zu ausgesuchten Themen bilden wir Arbeitskreise und veranstalten Seminartage. Darüber hinaus treffen wir uns zu gemeinsamen sozialen und kulturellen Aktivitäten. Ein Stammtisch für Mitglieder besteht ebenfalls.

Interessierten Personen bieten wir in den bestehenden Hausgemeinschaften mindestens zweimal im Jahr ausführliche Informationen über die Vereinsarbeit, über wahlverwandtschaftliches Leben und über aktuelle Wohnprojektinitiativen des Vereins.

Wohnprojekte

In den vom Verein initiierten Wohnprojekten sollen die intern entwickelten Konzepte für gemeinschaftliches Wohnen und solidarisches Leben verwirklicht werden. Jedes Vereinsmitglied verpflichtet sich, unsere Grundsätze anzuerkennen. Durch eigenverantwortliches Wohnen und solidarisches, gemeinschaftliches Leben kann allen die Gestaltung des täglichen Lebens erleichtert werden.

Es wird erwartet, dass sich alle an den internen Mitwirkungs- und Meinungsbildungs-prozessen beteiligen. Unabhängig von der gewählten Wohnungsart (Miete oder Kauf) gilt gleiches Mitspracherecht, gelten gleiche Rechte und Pflichten.

Jede Person sollte - bei Wahrung ihrer Individualität und Selbständigkeit - ihre persönlichen Fähigkeiten und Vorstellungen in die Gemeinschaft einbringen und sich engagiert beteiligen, wozu Gemeinschaftssinn, kommunikative und soziale Kompetenz Voraussetzung sind.

Lage

Gewünscht wird, dass die Wohnprojekte in der Innenstadt oder in der Nähe eines urbanen Zentrums der Stadt Bonn liegen. Dabei ist an Grundstücke gedacht, die die Schaffung einer Grünanlage ermöglichen, sei es als gärtnerisch gestalteter Innenhof oder als außenliegende Fläche.
Es muss sich nicht unbedingt um einen Neubau handeln. Auch ein geeignetes Gebäude, das renoviert und umgebaut wird, ist vorstellbar. Geschäfte und Einrichtungen zur Deckung des täglichen Bedarfs sollen möglichst zu Fuß erreichbar sein. Gewünscht werden Kultur-, Service- und Sozialeinrichtungen im angrenzenden Wohnumfeld. Eine günstige Anbindung an den öffentlichen Personennahverkehr (ÖPNV) ist unverzichtbar. Ein guter Kontakt zur umliegenden Nachbarschaft wird angestrebt.

Architektur

Art und Ausführung der Wohnprojekte sollte sich an den Interessen und finanziellen Möglichkeiten der Bewohnerinnen und Bewohner und an den zur Verfügung stehenden Fördermitteln orientieren. Angestrebt werden innovative Bauprojekte auf der Grundlage der gesetzlichen Normen und Richtlinien. Kriterien der Nachhaltigkeit wie Energie sparende und baubiologische Anforderungen in Material und Bauausführung müssen möglichst erfüllt werden. Außerdem sollte die Architektur in ihrer Ausführung kommunikations- und gemeinschaftsfördernde Aspekte aufweisen.

Die Hausgemeinschaften können bis zu 54 Wohneinheiten umfassen. Eine Gemeinschaftseinrichtung, mit einem Multifunktionsraum und mit möglichst einem Gäste-/Besuchszimmer ist unverzichtbar. Wünschenswert sind darüber hinaus Serviceräume (Wasch-/Trocken-, Medien- und Werkraum) sowie Fahrradunterstände.

Vorgesehen sind Wohnungen unterschiedlicher Größe. Alle Wohnungen sollen barrierefrei, einige möglichst auch behindertengerecht gestaltet sein. Aufzugsanlagen sind selbstverständlich, Balkone/Loggien oder Terrassen für alle Wohnungen erwünscht. Die vorgeschriebene Anzahl an Parkplätzen können je nach Mobilitätskonzept reduziert werden.

Rechtsform, Finanzierungsmodell und Zeitplanung

Unsere drei fertigen Wohnprojekte wurden in einer Mischung von Wohneigentum, frei finanzierten sowie öffentlich geförderten Mietwohnungen durch einen Investor der lokalen Wohnungswirtschaft realisiert. Für die Gemeinschaftseinrichtungen haben wir öffentliche Zuschüsse erhalten. Andere Rechtsformen wie z.B. die Gründung einer Genossenschaft sind ebenfalls möglich.

Stand September 2017

A4 Statistics demography residents Heerstraße

Table 6: Statistic demography residents Heerstraße

Nr.	Name	Sex	Age	Generation
1	Mrs. B	w	88	60-90 years
2	N.A.	w	84	
3	N.A.	w	83	
4	N.A.	w	82	
5	N.A.	w	81	
6	N.A.	m	78	
7	Mrs. C	w	78	
8	Mrs. A	w	77	
9	N.A.	w	77	
10	N.A.	w	76	
11	Mrs. G	w	76	
12	N.A.	w	75	
13	N.A.	w	74	
14	N.A.	w	74	
15	N.A.	w	74	
16	Mrs. F	w	74	
17	N.A.	w	74	
18	Mr. A	m	74	
19	N.A.	w	74	
20	Mrs. D	w	71	
21	Mrs. E	w	71	
22	N.A.	w	69	
23	Mrs. H	w	69	
24	N.A.	w	60	
25	N.A.	w	57	30-60 years
26	N.A.	m	55	
27	N.A.	w	51	
28	N.A.	w	50	
29	N.A.	w	49	
30	N.A.	w	45	
31	N.A.	m	44	
32	N.A.	w	44	
33	N.A.	m	43	
34	N.A.	w	41	
35	N.A.	w	40	
36	N.A.	m	40	
37	N.A.	m	38	
38	N.A.	w	38	
39	N.A.	m	34	
40	N.A.	m	24	0-30 years
41	N.A.	m	22	
42	N.A.	w	17	
43	N.A.	m	10	

(B) TRANSLATIONS AND INTERVIEW EXTRACTS

B1 Chapter 4.2

Quote translated (ENG)	Quote original (GER)	R.
"And then it happened that my personal relationship crumbled, our daughter moved away and my husband moved out. Then I got this feeling of isolation and loneliness And these were all reasons why I said "mmh, isn't there a different form of community or a different social context to live in a collaborative way?"	"Und dann kam es auch noch so, dass meine persönliche Beziehung in die Brüche ging, unsere Tochter zog weg und mein Mann zog aus. Da kam dieses Gefühl für mich persönlich der Vereinzelung und des alleine-seins. Und das waren alles so Gründe das ich so sagte "mmh gibt es nicht eine andere Gesellschaftsform oder einen anderen sozialen Zusammenhang, um das Leben gemeinschaftlich zu gestalten?"	Mrs. A, 77
"In addition, there is one more aspect, also a very personal one: I was the only child, as is our daughter. And it also happened to me as a woman, daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law in a certain time from 1990 or 1989 to 1995, to accompany my mother, my aunts, my parents-in-law when they died. And after that I saw so many dead people that I said "how can a person survive that?" and I didn't want to impose that on our daughter. Do you understand? That, like me, she must accompany so many dying people conscientiously. "	"Bleibt noch ein Aspekt, auch ganz persönlicher Art: ich bin Einzelkind gewesen, unsere Tochter ist das auch. Und mir ist das dann auch als Frau und Schwiegertochter, Tochter zugefallen in einer bestimmten Zeit von 1990 oder 1989 bis 1995, alle Menschen also meine Mutter, meine Tanten, meine Schwiegereltern beim Sterben zu begleiten. Und danach hatte ich so viel Tote hinter mir, dass ich sagte "wie soll das ein Mensch überstehen?". Und ich wollte unserer Tochter das nicht aufhalsen. Verstehen Sie? Das Sie wie ich so viele sterbende verantwortlich begleiten muss."	Mrs. A, 77
"It became more and more obvious how our environment, our fellow man are suffering from social, climatic and political changes. My idea was "perhaps we could use such cohousing projects to create opportunities to set an example for a different kind of behaviour, for a different kind of human coexistence."	"Das war ja dann immer offensichtlicher wie unsere Umwelt, unsere Mitmenschen dann leiden unter den Veränderungen gesellschaftlicher, klimatischer, gesamt politischer Art. Und da war das so meine Idee "vielleicht schaffen wir mit solchen gemeinschaftlichen Wohnprojekten auch Möglichkeiten um Zeichen zu setzen für anderes Verhalten, für anderes mitmenschliches Zusammenleben."	Mrs. A, 77
"(...) I have always said in lessons with home directors, with nurses, with old people's nurses, with station managers, in other words all this terrible geriatric work that has become dehumanised, I have always said "living alone is not good. We need alternative schemes and we need to find solutions". And that was my motivation to be so strongly involved here."	"(...) ich habe immer gesagt im Unterricht bei Heimleitern, bei Krankenschwestern, bei Altenpflegern, Stationsleitern, also diese ganze schreckliche Altenarbeit, die menschenunwürdig geworden ist, ich habe immer gesagt "alleine leben ist nicht gut. Wir brauchen alternative Modelle und wir müssen Lösungen finden". Und das war meine Motivation ich hier so stark einzubringen."	Mrs. D, 71
"I came (...) out of a partnership where I became lonely. The people there couldn't understand my art, they couldn't understand me. And my partner (...) wanted me all to himself. And that depressed me (...). (...) I noticed that it was not working, I was not in the right place. Then it all became clear to me "I don't want to live like that."	"Ich kam (...) aus einer Partnerschaft, in der ich vereinsamte. Die Leute dort konnten meine Kunst nicht verstehen, die konnten mich nicht verstehen. Und mein Partner (...) wollte mich so ganz für sich. Und das hat mich (…) was hat mich das - Bedrückt. (...) ich merkte das trägt sich nicht, ich bin da nicht am richtigen Ort. Da ist mir klar geworden "so will ich nicht leben."	Mrs. D, 71
"There you can see, that at that time this community idea was not the most important aspect for me. I had so many contacts in the city and so on. So I thought "people can come	"Da können Sie mal sehen, dass bei mir da zu dem Zeitpunkt dieser Gemeinschaftsgedanke gar nicht der wichtigste war. Ich hatte so viele Kontakte in der Stadt und so. Da habe eben	Mrs. B, 88

and visit me". And it was like that. Basically it is still like that today. That wasn't not the most important aspect for me. The most important thing for me was an elevator and affordability."	gedacht "die Leute können mich ja besuchen kommen". War ja dann auch so. Im Grunde ist es heute auch noch so. Das war nicht für mich nicht das wichtigste. Das wichtigste war für mich ein Aufzug und bezahlbar."	
"And then he said "have you ever heard of the elective affinities in Bonn? I said "no, I don't know. What is that? " Well, then I'll give you the phone number of Mrs. A., who is the chairperson. Talk to her, they have a project that is to be built soon. Maybe that would be something for you". Then I called Mrs.A and she said "Come and have a look. We meet every fourteen days (...), we are meeting in the city and then you can see what we have in mind". And that's how it started."	"Und dann hat der gesagt "haben Sie schon mal was von den Wahlverwandtschaften in Bonn gehört?". "Nee" habe ich gesagt "keine Ahnung. Was ist das denn?". "Ja, dann gebe ich Ihnen mal eine Telefonnummer von der Frau A. , die ist die Vorsitzende davon. Sprechen Sie doch mal mit der. Die haben ein Projekt, das jetzt gebaut werden soll bald. Vielleicht wäre das was für Sie". Dann habe ich die Frau A angerufen und die hat gesagt "ja dann kommen Sie doch mal. Wir treffen uns alle vierzehn Tage (…), treffen wir uns in der Stadt und dann können Sie mal gucken was wir da vorhaben". Und so ist das in Gang gekommen."	Mrs. B, 88
"Well I moved in here because I missed the way I was sitting on the terrace with my friends (...) drinking a coffee and my friend comes around the corner "oh there you are. I've been looking for you already". (...) Or you meet in the laundry room "Shall we have a coffee?" and then "Yes, come, we'll have a coffee". These self-evident meetings, for which one otherwise (...) has to call "do you have time? "yes, I have time tomorrow or the day after tomorrow" (...). Or you may feel a bit bad you then really have your caregiver right next door. That was my greatest wish. I totally missed that when I (...) lived in my beautiful (...) apartment. But it didn't work. It did not make me happy."	"Also ich bin hierher gezogen, weil ich das vermisst habe, wie ich mit meinen Freunden(...) so sitze auf der Terrasse und trinken einen Kaffee und meine Freundin kommt um die Ecke "ach, da bist du ja. Ich habe dich ja schon gesucht". (...) Oder man trifft sich in der Waschküche "sollen wir einen Kaffee trinken?" und dann "Ja komm, wir gehen einen Kaffee trinken". Diese selbstverständlichen Treffen, für die man sonst (...) anrufen muss "hast du Zeit?" "ja, ich habe morgen Zeit oder übermorgen" (...). Oder es geht einem mal schlecht, das man dann so wirklich seine Bezugsperson direkt nebenan hat. Das war so mein größter Wunsch. Das habe ich total vermisst als ich (...) in meiner wunderschönen (...) Wohnung gewohnt habe. Aber die hat es nicht gebracht. Das war nichts was mich glücklich gemacht hat."	Mrs. F, 74
"And I think it was crucial that my retirement time was approaching and I knew it was time to retire. Well and within a job you simply have a non-organized contact in a work context. And I am single and there was already for me the point "where do I find contacts, without constantly arranging concrete appointments". That was actually the decisive point. Because I knew about that from the other residential arrangements in which I lived. And that's why I would say that I believe the non-organized contact and the (...) exchange with completely different (...) types of people was important. That was the most important thing."	"Und ich glaube da war erstmal entscheidend das meine Rentenzeit sich näherte und ich wusste es geht auf die Rente zu. Naja und innerhalb einer Arbeit hat man halt einen nicht organisierten Kontakt in Arbeitszusammenhängen. Und ich bin Single und da war schon für mich der Punkte "wo finde ich, ohne mich dauernd konkret zu verabreden halt Kontakte". Das war eigentlich so der entscheidende Punkt. Weil das kannte ich halt aus den anderen Wohnformen, in denen ich gelebt habe. Und von daher würde ich mal sagen war glaube ich der unorganisierte Kontakt und der (…) der Austausch mit ganz unterschiedlichen (…) ja, Facetten von Menschen wichtig. Das war das wichtigste."	Mrs. E, 71
"And indeed, when I got a little older, I think it was around 65, or even earlier, I started to think what I was actually doing in my apartment(...), how it should look like when I get older? Somehow I thought "that's not enough for me". Well, from time to time you meet good friends,	"Und ja, als ich etwas älter wurde dann so 65 war das glaube ich oder noch früher, da habe ich mir gedacht was ich nun eigentlich so in meiner Wohnung(…) ja, wie das so aussehen soll wenn ich so älter werden. Und da habe ich mit irgendwie gedacht "das ist mir zu wenig".	Mrs. G, 76

make an appointment and that's all very nice and very good. But I somehow had the feeling that I wanted to do something else."	Also gute Freunde trifft man ab und zu, verabredet sich und das ist alles ganz schön und ganz gut. Aber ich hatte irgendwie das Gefühl ich wollte noch was anderes machen."	
"Then we made the decision for this housing project, for this community and from the very beginning we were involved in the development and planning of this community and so on. We have two kids but they do not live in our neighborhood (...). And the idea was "we can't assume that they move here and there just because we are old and frail (but) we need a social community". And that was the main reason to move here (...) to have such a sheltered environment."	"Dann haben wir uns für diese Wohnprojekt entschieden, für diese Hausgemeinschaft und sind auch von Anfang an in dieser Hausgemeinschaft dabei in der Entwicklung und Planung und so weiter. Weil wir zwei Kinder haben aber die wohnen nicht in unserer Nachbarschaft (...). Und der Gedanke war "wir können nicht davon ausgehen, dass die von da und da hierher ziehen bloß weil wir alt und gebrechlich sind (sondern) Wir brauchen eine soziale Gemeinschaft". Und das war ebenso der Hauptbeweggrund hierher zu ziehen, (...) um so eine geborgene Situation zu haben."	Mrs. H, 69

B2 Chapter 4.3

Quote translated (ENG)	Quote original (GER)	R.
"(The consensus method was used) pretty much from the beginning. This was the effort of Mrs A, who got to know the consensus method in her job. In the beginning I thought "my God, now we've got to talk about everything a hundred times". However, when I say "I don't want it, I don't want it at all, I don't think it's good", you are taken seriously. And if I notice that I am the only one and I am asked "how is that?" then I start to think about it and usually I can live with it. (...) Otherwise if we would vote, I (...) then I would have the feeling of "everybody against me."	"(Genutzt wurde das Konsensverfahren) ziemlich von Anfang an. Das war die Leistung von Frau A, die das Konsensverfahren in ihrem Job kennengelernt hat. Am Anfang habe ich gedacht "mein Gott, da müssen wir ja über alles hundert Mal bereden". Aber dafür wird man ernst genommen wenn ich sage "ich will das nicht, ich will das auf gar keinen Fall, ich finde das nicht gut". Und wenn ich merke ich bin die Einzige und ich werde gefragt "wie ist es denn" dann überlege ich und eigentlich in der Regel ist es so, dass ich dann damit leben kann. (...) Aber sonst wenn abgestimmt würde, da wäre ich (...) dann hätte ich so das Gefühl "alle gegen mich."	Mrs. B, 88
"For a certain time, we accepted everyone who wanted to participate in our cohousing community. At some point we noticed "we have to establish criteria as not everyone is suitable". And I thought that was a very interesting and exciting moment, because then we established a framework and held a so-called palaver, as we worked very early on with the consensus procedure because we said "we don't work with voting. There will always be people who fall behind."	"So eine Zeit lange haben wir jeden aufgenommen, der mitmachen wollte in unsere Wohngemeinschaft. Von dem Prozess spreche ich, dass wir irgendwann gemerkt haben "wir müssen Kriterien erarbeiten, weil es passt nicht jeder". Und das fand ich ein sehr interessanten, spannenden Moment, weil wir dann ein Regularium gefunden haben und dann haben wir eine sogenanntes Palaver gehalten, weil wir sehr früh mit dem Konsensverfahren gearbeitet haben und gesagt haben "wir arbeiten nicht mit Abstimmung. Da gibt es immer Verlierer."	Mrs. H, 69
"The group split up because all of a sudden, after we had 35 or 40 people, we realized that the committee of Weiberwirtschaft only wanted women. Then we realized "only women, there is no such thing. We don't want that. That is not life. There are children, there are couples, single men, women, no matter what, with children or without children". And then we split up, called ourselves Wahlverwandtschaften and started looking for young people, couples a men. That's why there are actually 30 old women, who were initially interested in these things, or even planned to make it happen. And we searched for a long time."	"Die Gruppe hat sich geteilt, weil wir auf einmal merkten nachdem wir schon 35, 40 Leute waren, das der Vorstand von Weiberwirtschaft wirklich nur Frauen haben wollte. Dann wurde uns das erst bewusst "nur Frauen, das gibt es doch gar nicht. Das wollen wir nicht. Das ist nicht das Leben. Es gehören Kinder dazu, es gehören Paare dazu, einzelne Männer, Frauen, zusammen, egal was, mit Kindern oder ohne Kinder". Und dann haben wir uns getrennt und haben uns Wahlverwandtschaften genannt und sind dann auf Suche nach jungen Leuten, Paaren, Männer, gegangen. Deswegen sind eigentlich 30 alte Frauen, die das praktisch zu Anfang erstmal, ja geplant oder waren Interessenten. Und wir haben lange gesucht."	Mrs. F, 74
"I can't say it exactly anymore but from my point of view it was very missionary and fundamentalist at the beginning, before we moved in together (...). Maybe it scared people off and even I thought "for God's sake". That's too much for me". And at some point it became obvious to us that the balance between proximity and distance is very important. It is always a very important matter, also for people who don't have such experiences with groups or experiences with different forms of living."	"Ich kann es nicht mehr genau sagen aber vom meinen Empfinden her war das sehr missionarisch und fundamentalistisch fast am Anfang, also bevor wir überhaupt hier zusammen gezogen sind und das (...) Menschen vielleicht auch abgeschreckt hat und wo ich auch manchmal dachte "um Gottes Willen. Das ist mir zu viel", wo uns dann irgendwann auch wirklich deutlich wurde es geht schon um die Balance zwischen Nähe und Distanz. Das ist immer ein ganz wichtiges Thema, das auch Menschen, die	Mrs. C, 78

English	German	Speaker
	jetzt nicht so Erfahrungen haben mit Gruppen oder Erfahrungen mit unterschiedlichen Wohnformen, das die auch eine Möglichkeit oder Chancen bekommen auch zu sprechen oder auch das auszusprechen, was ihnen halt schwer fällt oder was die sich vorstellen."	
"First of all, we are not a cooperative, like Amaryllis, we had consultants at that time and considered very carefully in the planning phase "do we want a GmbH, do we want an association, do we want a cooperative, what do we actually want?" If we had become a cooperative, where I would have had to pay 400 euros per square metre, then I would not have been able to do so. I didn't have the money."	"Wir sind erstens keine Genossenschaft, so wie Amaryllis, wir haben damals Referenten gehabt und haben sehr genau in der Planungsphase überlegt "wollen wir eine GmbH, wollen wir einen Verein, wollen wir eine Genossenschaft, was wollen wir denn eigentlich? Wären wir eine Genossenschaft geworden, wo ich 400 Euro pro Quadratmeter hätte einzahlen müssen dann hätte ich nicht einzahlen können. Ich hatte das Geld nicht."	Mrs. D, 71
"Well, it shouldn't be an exclusive society. I mean that' s how our society is. It starts with education, continues with career choice and income, with or without children. Therefore it should be simply diverse."	Also es sollte keine Exklusiv Gesellschaft hier entstehen. Ich meine so ist ja auch unsere Gesellschaft. Es gibt angefangen von der Bildung über Berufswahl und Einkommen und mit oder ohne Kinder. Also es sollte einfach bunt sein."	Mrs. C, 78
"We developed location criteria at that time. The important aspects were that a garden is possible and there is infrastructure of all kinds, i.e. educational institutions, but also offices, administration, post office (...). This was very important to us with regard to these location criteria."	"Also wir haben ja so Standortkriterien erarbeitet damals. Und da waren schon wichtige Aspekte, das ein Garten möglich ist und eben Infrastruktur aller Art, also Bildungseinrichtung aber eben auch Ämter, Verwaltung, Post(...). Das war uns schon sehr wichtig bei diesen Standortkriterien."	Mrs. A, 77
"Well, that was really very difficult. I felt like a beggar. I honestly have to tell you that. Good, the idea was new and the developers and investors still had little experience about how it works."	"Ja, also das war wirklich sehr schwer. Da kam ich mir vor wie eine Bettlerin. Das muss ich Ihnen ehrlich sagen. Gut, die Idee war ja auch neu noch. Und es gab auch wahrscheinlich bei den Bauherren und Investoren noch wenig Erfahrung darüber, wie das so läuft."	Mrs. A, 77
"I first spoke to the Wohnungsgenossenschaft Bonn. At that time there was the director (...) who was previously also the social referent in the municipal administration. And yes, he basically told me that (...) such a thing could not work. The only thing he said that works is the family association. And he simply thought my idea was bizarre and couldn't even familiarize himself with it. Besides, I have to say that I have only been angry two times. The first time was with (him) as I said: "You know, you count on your family, your wife and your children to accompany you when you no longer have the ability to do so, and when you die, but the other people who don't have that need something like cohousing". And then I left. It was a great pity because that was our great hope."	"Ich habe zunächst vorgesprochen bei der Bonner Wohnungsgenossenschaft. Damals war da der Vorsitzende (...) der vorher auch Sozialreferent in der Stadtverwaltung war. Und ja, der hat mir praktisch signalisiert, dass (…) sowas nicht klappen kann. Das einzige was funktioniert hat er gesagt ist der Familienverband. Und meine Idee fand er eben einfach abwegig und konnte sich gar nicht damit vertraut machen. Und ich meine nur so nebenbei aber ich bin nur zwei Mal, wie soll man sagen, ausfallen geworden oder ärgerlich. Das eine mal bei (ihm), als ich sagte: "Wissen Sie, Sie verlassen sich darauf, dass Ihre Familie, Ihre Frau und Ihre Kinder Sie begleiten, wenn Sie nicht mehr können und sterben aber die anderen Menschen, die das nicht haben die brauchen sowas wie gemeinschaftliches Wohnen". Und dann bin ich gegangen. Es war sehr schade, denn das war unsere große Hoffnung."	Mrs. A, 77
"The old senior boss (...) then said "we already have the usual so much, let's do something different. Let's see how it goes". And then it went really fantastic, I really have to say that."	"Die alte Seniorchefin (...) die sagte dann zu ihrem Schwiegersohn "das übliche haben wir schon so viel, machen wir mal was anderes. Gucken wir mal wie es läuft". Und dann ist es	Mrs. A, 77

	wirklich fantastisch gelaufen, das muss ich wirklich sagen."	
"Inside the apartment I found it very important that we have wide doors and that it is accessible. I liked the elevator, the fact that we don't have to carry shopping bags or the water boxes. It was also the thought that if something happened, the shower would be level with the floor. I found that very relieving that it is simply there. Because at our age this comes quickly and surprisingly (...)".	"Innerhalb der Wohnung fand ich sehr wichtig, dass wir hier breite Türen haben und das es barrierefrei ist, ist schon sehr wichtig. Der Aufzug, Einkaufstaschen nicht schleppen müssen oder Wasserkästen fand ich sehr angenehm. Auch der Gedanke wenn mal was ist, das die Dusche dann bodengleich ist. Das fand ich sehr entlastend, dass das einfach da ist. Denn das kommt in unserem Alter schnell und überraschend (…)."	Mrs. H, 69
"We had to come to terms with the existing designs of an architect who didn't consider the elderly (...) very well in his architecture (...). Accessibility was largely guaranteed. If you are downstairs in the basement rooms, in the shared flat, everything is very disability-friendly and to a large extent wheelchair-accessible. For me, what is also part of accessibility is definitely higher toilets in the bathroom. In other words, according to DIN standards. We struggled to get it right and then we all retrofitted it for an extra charge, so to speak. (...) Elevated washbasin, a mirror where you can see yourself even when you are old and sitting in a wheelchair or on the toilet chair, decent lighting. We had to struggle for all this and retrofitted it, so to speak."	"Wir mussten uns mit den bestehenden Entwürfen von einem Architekten, der nicht sehr gut alte Menschen (...) in seiner Architektur berücksichtigt hat (...) arrangieren. Barrierefreiheit war weitgehend gewährleistet. Wenn man unten in den Kellerräumen ist, in der Gemeinschaftswohnung, das ist ja alles sehr behindertengerecht, also weitgehend barrierefrei. Was für mich zur Barrierefreiheit auch dazu gehört ist unbedingt im Badezimmer höhere Toiletten. Also nach den DIN Normen. Wir haben erstritten und dann haben wir alle nachgerüstet gegen Aufpreis sozusagen. (...) höheres Waschbecken, Spiegel wo man sich betrachten kann auch wenn man alt ist und im Rollstuhl oder auf dem Toilettenstuhl sitzt, anständige Beleuchtung. Alles das haben wir hier erkämpfen müssen und haben das sozusagen nachgerüstet."	Mrs. D, 71
"We all have open kitchens, that is kitchens as a social space, so that you can sit at the table but also work a little together. Or that the one who cooks is not cut off. We had this trend in the 70s with the small kitchens, where the housewife was cut off. Socially that was really bad."	"Was auch ein Kriterium für uns war und das betrifft hier alle Wohnungen, das haben Sie ja selber bei den Interviews gesehen, wir haben alle offene Küchen, also Küchen als Sozialraum damit man sowohl am Tisch sitzen kann aber auch zusammen ein bisschen werkeln. Oder das der, der kocht und macht nicht abgeschnitten ist. Wir hatten ja den Trend in den 70er Jahren mit den kleinen Küchen, wo die Hausfrau dann abgeschnitten war. Das war ja Sozial ganz schlimm."	Mrs. D, 71

"A group that was also a bit knowledgeable in construction placed great emphasis on the fact that this building should have pergolas as an access for the individual apartments on all floors. (...) We found such a layout very desirable, because this is something like a public area for all floors and also among each other of course. The developer was not enthusiastic about it, the architect liked it. As I said before, the plans were revised again and again and our wishes flowed in. And so also this one."	"Eine Gruppe, die sich auch ein bisschen baulich auskannte hat großen Wert darauf gelegt, da dieses Gebäude, was ja eine Baulückenschließung ist, das dieses Gebäude, um in die einzelnen Wohnungen zu gelangen einen Laubengang hat. Das haben Sie ja gesehen, Haben wir hier auf allen Etagen. Der sollte ursprünglich von der Planung her gar nicht irgendwie begrenzt sein durch das Treppenhaus. Der sollte durchgehend, die ganze Straßenfront durch. So waren die ersten Pläne. Und wir fanden das einfach erstrebenswert, weil das ist einfach so öffentlicher Bereich für alle Etagen und auch untereinander natürlich. Der Bauträger war davon gar nicht angetan, der Architekt schon eher. Ich sagte ja schon, dass die Pläne immer wieder überarbeitet wurden und unsere Wünsche sind eingeflossen. Und so auch dieser."	Mrs. C, 78
"This culminated, so to speak, in the landscape architects separating the house with the condominiums with hedges and fences from us " Fußvolk". We put that down. We said "there is no separation between owner and tenant". And we changed the whole plan so that everything was open and accessible. That is also important. Common space and growing old and moving through the garden with the walker or on the walking stick or whatever."	"Das gipfelte sozusagen darin, dass die Landschaftsarchitekten das Haus mit den Eigentumswohnungen mit Hecken und Zäunen von uns "Fußvolk" abgrenzen wollten. Das haben wir niedergeschmettert. Wir haben gesagt "hier gibt es keine Trennung zwischen Eigentümer und Mieter". Und wir haben den ganzen Plan so verändert damit alles offen und zugänglich ist. Das ist auch wichtig. Gemeinschaftlicher Raum und alt werden und sich durch den Garten mit Rollator zu bewegen oder am Krückstock oder wie auch immer."	Mrs. D, 71
"Well, I have to say, that really cost me a lot of energy. Especially because back then they said "that wouldn't work" and "no way about social housing" and "what I was thinking about" and "illusion" and what he told me. And (...) there I became quite clear again and said "I will tell you something, once falsely in love and then perhaps even married and divorced, do you know what that means? For women this usually means that when they grow older they will be poor. I wish it would happen neither to you nor to your wife, but exactly these women and also two or three men are the ones who would like to live with us and are eligible for a residence entitlement certificate". And do you know what he said then? "How many of the flats should become social housing? I said "30 percent". "That's too much" he said. "Ok" I said "I can come towards you: 26 percent". "Yes" he said, "ok"."	"Also da muss ich sagen, das hat mich viel Energie gekostet. Insbesondere weil man damals sagte "das ginge nicht" und "Sozialwohnungen auf keinen Fall" und "was ich mir so vorstelle" und "Illusion" und was er mir alles erzählt hat. Und (...) da bin ich da auch nochmal ganz deutlich geworden und habe gesagt "ich werde Ihnen was sagen: einmal falsch verliebt und dann vielleicht sogar verheiratet und geschieden. Wissen Sie was das heißt? Für Frauen heißt das in der Regel, dass sie dann beim älter werden und im Alter arm sind. Ich wünsche es passiert weder Ihnen noch Ihrer Frau aber genau diese Frauen und auch zwei, drei Männer sind es die bei uns wohnen möchten und einen Anspruch auf einen Wohnberechtigungsschein haben". Und wissen Sie was er dann gesagt hat? "Wie viele der Wohnungen sollen Sozialwohnungen werden?". "30 Prozent" habe ich gesagt. "Das ist zu viel" hat er gesagt. "Ok" habe ich gesagt "ich komme Ihnen entgegen: 26 Prozent". "Ja" sagte er, "ok."	Mrs. A, 77

"And what we have fortunately achieved, something that went differently in Cologne and other cities and has already led to some disasters, the city actually has a right to allocate the publicly subsidized apartments. They don't actually have that, they do. And in this case the head of the social affairs department has realized that the allocation cannot be enforced. If the project is to succeed then it will need people who fit in very well. And there has to be a change for innovative forms of living. The allocations must be discussed with the associations or with the cooperative. Otherwise this will not work at all. But I think there is in the meantime also (...) thus in Bonn it is so. In North Rhine-Westphalia we are envied for it, that we submit a list with those who should move into the publicly subsidized flats, the municipality checks the formalities with the housing entitlement certificate and then the people who we have suggested will move in. That's a very important thing."	"Und was wir glücklicherweise haben hier, was in Köln und in anderen Städten anders gelaufen ist und teils schon in Desaster geführt hat, die Stadt hat eigentlich ein Belegungsrecht für die öffentlich geförderten Wohnungen. Die hat das nicht eigentlich, die hat das. Und hier hat der Leiter vom Sozialamt eingesehen, dass er da diese Zuweisung ja gar nicht durchsetzen kann. Wenn das Projekt gelingen soll dann müssen das auch Menschen sein die zu uns passen. Und da muss es auch eine Änderung für innovative Wohnformen geben. Die Zuweisungen müssen abgesprochen werden mit den Vereinen oder mit der Genossenschaft. Sonst geht das gar nicht. Aber ich denke da ist inzwischen auch (…) also in Bonn ist es so. Da werden wir drum beneidet in NRW, auf und ab, das wir eine Liste vorlegen mit denjenigen, die in die öffentlich geförderten Wohnungen einziehen solle, die Stadt prüft die Formalitäten mit dem Wohnberechtigungsschein und dann weisen die die Leute ein die wir vorgeschlagen haben. Also das ist schon eine ganz wichtige Sache."	Mrs. A, 77
"Well, those who have a little more money have the better and those who have less have the street. And there we said "we don't want that. No, they're not second-class people. Either you make that everyone to the street and to the garden (has an opening) or we leave it". And they really took notice of our needs and that's great, of course. It was actually already planned and then they changed it that way."	"Ja, die die noch ein bisschen mehr Geld haben das bessere und die die weniger haben die zur Straße. Und da haben wir gesagt "das wollen wir nicht. nee, das sind nicht Menschen zweiter Klasse. Entweder machen Sie das jeder zur Straße und zum Garten oder wir lassen es". Und die sind wirklich auf uns eingegangen und das ist natürlich toll. Das war eigentlich schon fertig geplant und dann haben die das so geändert."	Mrs. F, 74
"And then, and then (...) the city came and said " no, no, no, no, we're not subsidizing that, it's too big for one person." The subsidized flats (...) were not allowed to have more than 47 square meters. The architect had to rebuild everything again, in (...) all his plans and of course had to make everything smaller. And so the kitchen window disappeared. Well, I wondered if I would still do that, because I knew that it would be difficult for me (without a kitchen window). But then there were many other advantages. I had meanwhile befriended the people who were moving in here and I found them all very nice and thought "well, you can't bake it. I' ll do it". And I am thankful that I can live here and that I decided to move in here."	"So und dann (…) kam die Stadt und sagte "ne, ne, ne, ne, das subventionieren wir nicht, Das ist zu groß für eine Person". Die WBS-Wohnungen (…) dürfe die nicht mehr wie 47 Quadratmeter (haben). Da musste der Architekt wieder alles umbauen, in (…) seinen ganzen Plänen und musste natürlich alles kleiner machen. Und somit fiel das Küchenfenster weg. So und da haben ich überlegt ob ich das mache. Weil ich wusste, dass das schwierig wird für mich. Aber dann hat das viele andere Vorteile. Ich hatte inzwischen die Menschen kennen gelernt, die hier einziehen und die fand ich alle furchtbar nett und habe gedacht "naja, backen lassen kannst du es dir nicht. Dann mache ich es". Und ich bin dankbar, dass ich hier wohnen darf und das ich mich doch entschieden habe hier einzuziehen."	Mrs. B, 88

B3 Chapter 4.4

Quote translated (ENG)	Quote original (GER)	R.
"There are a number of fixed structures. This is for example the monthly residents' meeting. There is also the division of the tasks to be done here in the community. Because we have taken over the property management ourselves or also the garden work and so on and the cleaning work. This often happens in smaller teams or like the garden day, for example, where everyone is asked to cooperate."	Es gibt verschiedene festgesetzte Strukturen. Das ist zum Beispiel die monatliche Bewohnerversammlung. Und es gibt halt die Aufteilung der hier in der Hausgemeinschaft zu erledigenden Aufgaben. Dadurch das wir halt die Hausverwaltung selbst übernommen haben oder auch die Gartenarbeiten und so weiter und die Putzarbeiten. Das passiert oft in kleineren Teams oder wie der Gartentag zum Beispiel, wo dann alle aufgefordert werden mitzuarbeiten."	Mrs. E, 71
"That way a lot of people get involved with all their abilities and interests. And that is not just to reduce costs or simply enjoy a nice activity, but it is also to involve all members with their competences, their abilities and their social engagement."	"Und dadurch werden auch viele Leute beteiligt mit den Fähigkeiten und Interessen, die Sie haben. Und das ist nicht nur eine Reduzierung von Nebenkosten und eine schöne Aktion, sondern das ist eben auch immer eine Einbindung aller Beteiligten mit Ihren Kompetenzen ihren Fähigkeiten und auch im sozialen Engagement."	Mrs. A, 77
And of course it needs to be said that they are not equally committed to performance here in the company. Which I can understand very well, and which I can also support. Because when you come home from work you are tired and then you want to do something for yourself and for your own group of friends. And there is no time left. But what I still like about the whole thing is that we just need to write we old people can't do this anymore and need help", and then they are right up there. You cannot expect much more. I think that's great. And we, the old people, also need something meaningful in our lives. That is good, if we are able to do this and that and do that as long as we can. Why do the young people have to take part? That's stupid if they don't have time. If they do it and come to help when it is no longer possible for us then that is great. Now we have said, for example, "these heavy paper bins that we can't get out anymore". That's what the young people are doing now."	"Und man muss natürlich auch sagen, die sind in Leistungen hier im Haus nicht in gleicher Weise engagiert. Was ich auch gut verstehen kann, was ich aber auch gutheißen kann. Weil wenn man von der Arbeit kommt ist man müde und dann möchte mal auch was für sich tun und für seinen eigenen Freundeskreis. Und mehr Zeit bleibt ja nicht. Aber, was ich positiv an der ganzen Sache trotzdem finde, wir brauchen bloß zu schreiben "wir Alten können das nicht mehr und brauchen Hilfe". Da stehen sie auf der Matte. Also viel mehr kann man nicht erwarten. Ich finde das toll. Und wir, die alten Leute, brauchen ja auch was Sinnstiftendes in unsere Leben. Das ist gut, wenn wir das und das machen können und das machen solange wir können. Warum müssen denn unbedingt die jungen mitmachen? Das ist doch Blödsinn wenn sie keine Zeit haben. Wenn sie das machen und zu Hilfe kommen wenn es nicht mehr geht dann ist das doch toll. Jetzt haben wir gesagt zum Beispiel "diese schweren Papiercontainer, die schaffen wir nicht mehr raus zu schaffen". Das machen jetzt die jungen Leute."	Mrs. G, 76
"Motivate them, involve them, give them tasks. If someone has a tremor and doesn't get the smallest screws in a picture frame then that person will get other tasks. This is something you will notice. Well, many things you just won't notice and then you get scared, then you need to revise it. But in the community you can do it."	"Sie motivieren, sie einbeziehen, ihnen Aufgaben geben. Wenn jemand einen Tremor hat und nicht mehr kleinste Schräubchen in einen Bilderrahmen kriegt dann kriegt der andere Aufgaben. Das kriegt man ja mit. Gut, man kriegt ja auch vieles nicht mit und ist dann erschrocken, dann muss man das nacharbeiten. Aber in der Gemeinschaft funktioniert das."	Mrs. D, 71
"This was her idea. From the very beginning she said, "I can't do much. I will then be responsible for the washing tokens". That means everyone	Das war ihre Idee. Sie hat von Anfang an gesagt "ich kann ja nichts machen. Ich bin dann für die Waschmarken verantwortlich".	Mrs. G, 76

who needs some visits her, and that means she has contact. Great idea, great idea."	Das heißt jeder der welche braucht kommt zu ihr, das heißt sie hat Kontakt. Tolle Lösung, tolle Lösung."	
"Well, helping each other. Mutual help, not being alone, not being isolated, having contacts in the house. I can have lots of social contacts here although I can hardly walk."	"Ja, das gegenseitige helfen. Gegenseitige Hilfe, nicht alleine sein, nicht vereinsamen, Kontakte haben im Haus. Ich kann ja hier jede Menge Kontakte haben auch wenn ich so schlecht laufen kann."	Mrs. B, 88
"I was never in a situation where I had to speak freely in front of many people. And in the beginning I couldn't do that without notes and wet hands, even here in our community. I'm really glad that I managed to overcome this hurdle in my later years. Well, this can be dealt with openly here. Personally, I think I have learned a lot in these years."	"Ich war nie in der Situation, dass ich vor mehreren Menschen frei sprechen musste. Und anfangs konnte ich das immer nur mit Zettel und mit nassen Händen, auch hier in unserer Hausgemeinschaft. Da bin ich wirklich froh, dass ich diese Hürde im Alter noch geschafft, habe. Also das kann hier offen behandelt werden. Also ich denke ich habe persönlich wirklich sehr viel gelernt in diesen Jahren."	Mrs. C, 78
(...) With some people you have more contact, with others less contact, which practically means that you always have someone to talk to. You only have to walk around the house to meet someone. And either you stop and have a talk about what's going on or you say good day", depending on how you feel or whatever. And I think that's beautiful, that's really pleasurable (...). Well such a thing (spontaneous meetings) will not happen if you live alone, because then you have to call and give an invitation. But if I do an invitation I have to think about it. Well, it's a different approach. Here it comes faster."	"(...) Man hat mit einigen Leuten mehr Kontakt, mit anderen Leuten weniger Kontakt, sodass man praktisch immer jemanden als Ansprechpartner hat. Man braucht nur einmal durchs Haus zu gehen und dann trifft man jemanden. Und entweder bleibt man stehen und unterhält sich über dies und das was gerade abgeht oder man wünscht sich einen guten Tag, je nachdem auch wie man selbst drauf ist oder wie auch immer. Und das finde ich eigentlich schön, das ist wirklich angenehm (...). Also sowas (spontane Treffen) kommt nicht zustande wenn man alleine wohnt, weil dann muss man anrufen und eine Einladung machen. Wenn ich aber so eine richtige Einladung mache muss ich mir dafür was überlegen. Also es ist ein andere Angehen. Es ergibt sich schneller hier."	Mrs. G, 76
"The most important thing is that there are always people there who listen (and) help (...). I think this is the most essential thing. And just, as I said before, it keeps you from being alone in your apartment from dawn till dusk, particularly when you're retired. If you are employed then it is not so bad then you are glad that you have the chance to keep your mouth shut in the evening. And that's great."	"Das wichtigste ist, dass es immer Leute da gibt, die einem zuhören (und) die helfen (...). Also das ist glaube ich so das allerwichtigste. Und eben, das sagte ich ja schon, hilft es das man dieses alleine sein in seiner Wohnung von morgens bis abends nicht hat, gerade wenn man Rentner ist. Wenn man berufstätiger ist dann ist es ja nicht so schlimm dann ist man ja froh wenn man abends den Mund zu machen kann. Und das ist schon toll."	Mrs. F, 74
"This is a very important aspect for me, because I notice or feel or think that this type of housing keeps me personally young. So I am in a disorganized exchange with different topics, with different life plans, with different approaches of social considerations. This keeps me young, it keeps me still questioning and sometimes I question myself".	"Das ist ein ganz wichtiger Aspekt für mich, weil ich merke oder spüre oder denke, dass diese Wohnform mich persönlich auch jung hält. Also ich bin in einem unorganisierten Austausch mit verschiedensten Themen, mit verschiedensten Lebensentwürfen, mit unterschiedlichen Ansätzen von gesellschaftlichen Betrachtungen. Das hält mich jung, das hält mich manchmal noch immer im Fragen oder ich stelle mich da in Frage."	Mrs. E, 71
"(...) We have experienced a rejuvenation in this house, although the small children have left, but	"(...) wir haben ja im Laufe des hier Wohnens eine Verjüngung erlebt, obwohl die kleinen	Mrs. H, 69

the main tenants always introduce different aspects. I consider this to be lively and interesting. I don't just want to live with old people at my age."	Kinder hier weg gegangen sind aber die Hauptmieter, die bringen hier immer andere Aspekte ein. Das finde ich lebendig und das interessiert mich auch. Ich möchte nicht nur mit Alten wohnen in meinem Alter. "	
"Well, for me that means that I open the front door of my apartment whenever I have a question, whenever I want company: "tonight there's an interesting film on. Will you join me for the movies?" These are situations I know from my work (...). People knew each other and then sometimes arranged to have a beer in the evening or to go to the cinema or to invite each other home, without having any hassle. I imagine I would (...) somehow live in a rural area and not as central as here, then I think I would have to make calls (...). Here it can be done pretty simple: If Mrs. H has no time then Mrs. F has time or I run into Mr. A. I think that's very uncomplicated and pleasant."	"Ja, das bedeutet für mich, das ich meine Wohnungstür aufmachen und wenn ich eine Frage habe, wenn ich Gesellschaft möchte: "heute Abend läuft ein interessanter Film. Kommst du mit ins Kino?". Das sind so Situationen, die ich aus meinem Beruf kenne (...). Man kannte sich untereinander und hat sich dann mal auf ein Bier abends verabredet oder ins Kino oder auch mal gegenseitig nach Hause eingeladen, ohne viele Umstände. Wenn ich mir vorstelle ich würde (...) irgendwie ländlich wohnen und nicht so zentral wie hier, dann stelle ich mir vor dann muss ich dann anrufen (…). Hier geht das ganz einfach. Wenn Frau H keine Zeit hat dann hat Frau F Zeit oder dann läuft mir Herr A über den Weg. Das finde ich einfach unkompliziert und nett."	Mrs. C, 78
"Monday morning is a gymnastics class under my direction, Tuesday evening is also a sports class, but there comes an external trainer. What else do we have? On Thursday mornings interested people meet to do sewing or have a chat. And when there are festivities, virtually everyone attends them. And these are always get-togethers, that invite to exchange and thus also (...) invite to socialize and also to share. "	"Montagmorgens ist ein Gymnastikangebot unter meiner Leitung, Dienstagabend ist auch ein Sportangebot im Haus, da kommt eine externe Trainerin. Was haben wir noch? Donnerstagvormittag treffen sich interessierte zum Nähen oder zum Plaudern. Und wenn gefeiert wird dann sind fast alle immer da. Und das sind ja immer Zusammenkünfte, die zum Austausch einladen und auch (…) also zur Begegnung und auch zum Austausch einladen."	Mrs. C, 78
"When the (other residents) saw that this project with the small collages had become a huge thing, they said "we want to exhibit it". Or when they see me working with marble and soapstone and alabaster " do a sculpture exhibition as well". It motivates you, the so-called "kick in the butt". I don't know... I (...) can't imagine what I would do if I wouldn't live here."	"Als die Wahlverwandten sahen, das hier aus diesem Projekt mit den kleinen Kollagen ein riesen Ding wurde, haben die gesagt "wir wollen das Ausstellen". Oder aber wenn die sehen, das ich mit Marmor und in Speckstein und Alabaster arbeite "dann mach auch noch gleichzeitig eine Skulpturenausstellung". Also man wird motiviert, der sogenannte "Tritt in den Hintern". Ich weiß nicht… ich kann mir (...) überhaupt nicht vorstellen was ich täte, wenn ich hier nicht leben würde."	Mrs. D, 71
I think it's so enriching. Mr. A, who had the same studies as me, we had the same teachers in art at the university, we also have the same artistic style, and we exchange ideas, we motivate each other. Even to the point that we had a big exhibition in the factory 45 with three of us. I think there were between 300 and 350 people and "aha, the three Wahlverwandten, look, those living in Heerstrasse". And you literally cannot do that alone. It is only thanks to this community, through this diversity, that we have the strength to do this."	Ich finde das bereichert so sehr. Herr A, der ja das gleiche Studium hatte wie ich, wir hatten die gleichen Lehrer im Fach Kunst an der Hochschule, wir haben auch den gleichen künstlerischen Duktus sage ich mal, wir tauschen uns aus, wir motivieren uns gegenseitig. Bis hin, dass wir ja in der Fabrik 45 zu dritt die große Ausstellung hatten. Es waren glaube ich zwischen 300 und 350 Leute und "aha, die drei Wahlverwandten, guck mal, die Heersträßler". Und da kann man alleine nicht stemmen. Das trägt alleine die Kraft durch diese Gemeinschaft, durch diese Vielfalt."	Mrs. D, 71

"Well, I don't need that (seminars on mediation). I haven't needed it in my whole life. But thank God I am now so wise that I always say "you can't take your attitudes for granted. You are ten years older than everyone else here and about 50 years older or even older than the younger ones. It is clear that they have completely different viewpoints and different needs." Therefore I can't always say "but I want it to be like this". That is very clear to me, it is not obligatory, I don't have to participate. If they want to do that then they should go ahead and do it. However, I do a lot because I like it. Once a month there is a cinema. And cinema is done here, we bought such a projector and a screen. And then we had a singing project. There came a choirmaster and then we sang together for a while. Then a photographer gave a lecture or the devil knows what, everything. And Mrs. B always attends when there's something she likes and when she doesn't like it she just doesn't."	"Also ich brauche sowas (Seminare über Mediation) nicht. Habe ich in meinem ganzen Leben nicht gebraucht. Aber ich bin Gott sei Dank so weise inzwischen, das ich immer sage "du darfst hier nicht von deinen Befindlichkeiten hier ausgehen. Du bist zehn Jahre älter als alle anderen hier und 50 Jahre älter oder noch älter als die jüngeren. Das die völlig andere Sichtweisen haben und andere Bedürfnisse ist doch klar." Also ich kann nicht immer sagen "ich möchte es aber so haben". Das ist mir schon klar, das muss auch nicht, ich muss ja da nicht mitmachen. Wenn die das machen wollen dann sollen die das doch machen. Aber ganz viel mache ich mir weil es mir eben auch Spaß macht. Dann ist eben einmal Kino im Monat. Und Kino wird hier gemacht, da haben wir so ein Vorführgerät und eine Leinwand gekauft. Dann haben wir mal ein Singprojekt gehabt. Da kam ein Chorleiter und dann haben wir mal eine Zeit lang gesungen gemeinsam. Dann macht einer einen Lichtbilder Vortrag oder weiß der Teufel was, alles Mögliche. Und Frau B geht dann immer hin, wenn es was gibt das ihr gefällt und wenn es ihr nicht gefällt geht sie nicht hin."	Mrs. B, 88
"She always complains about living in a socially deprived area. But that dissolves when you see how she is welcomed by the community in her old age and with her mobility impairments (...). In her (old) apartment, all by herself she would have been a bit more exhausted. Here she stays fitter, just by the many events we have here." (	"Sie schimpft ja immer hier über den sozialen Brennpunkt. Das löst sich wieder auf, wenn man sieht wie sie hier in der Gemeinschaft in ihren Alter und ich sage mal mit ihrer Einschränkung vom Laufen her aufgefangen wird (...). Die wäre jetzt alleine in ihrer (alten Wohnung) schon ein bisschen abgebauter. Hier bleibt sie fitter, Schon alleine durch die vielen Veranstaltungen, die wir hier haben."	Mrs. D, 71
Mr. A (74): "Birthdays are also very important. We have a birthday list and the people are always blown away, because in the morning they come out of their door and then there is everything such as flowers and little gifts and things, a card, a balloon or something else. And every time they're excited "never in my life...".” Ms. H (69): "That means, cultivating relationships. This will not work without it. And you can do that for a long time (when you get old). You are able to do that." Mr A (74): "And that also transports something. If I do that with you and die sometime then you know how good that is and you will carry that on.”	Herr A (74): Und die Geburtstage sind auch was ganz wichtiges. Also wir haben eine Geburtstagsliste und die Leute sind immer hin und weg, weil morgens kommen die dann aus ihrer Tür und dann ist da alles Mögliche wie Blumen und kleine Geschenke und Gedanken, eine Karte, ein Luftballon oder sonst was. Und jedes Mal freuen die sich "noch nie in meinem Leben". Frau H (69): "Ja, also Beziehungspflege. Das geht nicht ohne. Und das kannst du auch noch ganz lange machen (wenn du alt wirst). Dazu bist du in der Lage." Herr A (74): "Und das transportiert auch was. Wenn ich das bei dir tue und sterbe irgendwann dann weißt du wie gut das ist und wirst das dann auch weiter führen."	Mr. A, 74 Mrs. H, 69

"We have said from the beginning that if we isolate ourselves here then it will be more difficult to solve many things". The fear was that it will make our community life even more difficult. But we stepped outside. In the beginning we held street parties twice, where the whole street celebrated with us. We met the people here in the other houses and some of us got involved from the beginning with "Bonn im Wandel" or with the "Ärmelkeil Initiative" including all their events. And I think that was very good, as some people like Inge Dahm, Ulla Sterzenbach and Gisa and all those others with such strong competence and energy wanted to get involved. And this expansion into the neighbourhood gave everyone interested in participating a chance to get involved. I think that was a very rewarding process for many of us.	"Wir haben von Anfang an gesagt, dass wenn wir uns hier abschotten dann wird es schwieriger vieles zu lösen". Die Befürchtung war "dann wird unser Zusammenleben noch schwieriger". Aber da sind wir raus gegangen. Wir haben anfangs Straßenfeste gemacht zwei Mal, wo die ganze Straße dann mitgefeiert hat. Da haben wir die Leute kennen gelernt hier in den anderen Häusern. Und einige von uns haben sich von Anfang an bei "Bonn im Wandel " engagiert oder in der "Ärmelkeil Initiative" mit den ganzen Veranstaltungen da. Und ich glaube das war auch insofern sehr gut, weil ja einige Leute ja drüben so Inge Dahm und Ulla Sterzenbach und Gisa und wie sie alle so heißen auch eine ganz starke Kompetenz und Energie haben, sich einbringen wollen und dann hat das mit dieser Erweiterung in das Quartier für jeden und alle die da so ein Interesse hatten eine Möglichkeit gegeben da mitzugestalten, sich einzubinden. Ich glaube das war ein sehr positiver Prozess für viele von uns."	Mrs. A, 77
"All in all, I think there's been a decrease in off-site activities. I attribute this to the fact that the residents have grown older. However, somebody once said: "We who live in multi-generational communities also have to die, but later and happier".	"Also insgesamt glaube ich sind so außerhäusliche Aktivitäten weniger geworden. Das führe ich eben auch darauf zurück, dass die Bewohner älter geworden sind. Ja aber irgendjemand hat mal den Spruch geprägt "wir bei Mehrgenerationenwohnen müssen auch mal sterben. Aber später und glücklicher."	Mrs. C, 78
"And I think the issue of support (...) just entered my focus through living together (...). Of course, this has become a positive aspect of communal living as a result of me getting older or thinking about it and exchanging ideas about it. Let's say that it has become very significant. Actually, I have already experienced it myself (...). I was sick and then they asked me "do you have to go to the doctor?" or "what can I buy for you?" or "there is a chicken soup in front of the door" and so on. (...)"	"Und ich denke mal der Punkt Unterstützung (…) also für mich jetzt in den Fokus rein gekommen ist das erst durch das zusammen Wohnen (…). Ja, das ist natürlich auch durch mein älter werden oder durch das Nachdenken darüber und den Austausch darüber zu einem positiven Facette des gemeinschaftlichen Wohnens geworden und auch bedeutend geworden sage ich jetzt mal. Also ich habe das ja selbst auch schon erlebt oder halt mitbekommen, (…). Ich war krank und dann wird man halt gefragt "musst du zum Arzt gefahren werden?" oder "was kann ich für dich einkaufen?" oder "es steht da eine Hühnersuppe vor der Tür" etc. (…)."	Mrs D, 71
"For some time now we have been using a godparent system in our community, because you can't always keep track on everything. Of course I know if the friendly nurse is on duty or not. I see her on weekends sometimes. But she has a contact person who knows more about her. My contact person lives up there. And she knows exactly when I (go on vacation) or how I feel and so on. She also scolds me that I should reduce all the stress and all such things. And she knows it from me. And when I open the blinds in the morning I have a look " alright, upstairs everything ok. Fine". A lot of people do that but it also works very well for us."	"Und wir haben auch schon seit einiger Zeit so ein Patensystem im Haus, weil man ja nicht immer alles so im Blick behalten kann. Da weiß ich wo die nette Krankenschwester im Dienst ist oder so. Ich sehe die mal am Wochenende oder was. Aber die hat natürlich eine Kontaktperson, die dann besser Bescheid weiß. Also meine Kontaktperson wohnt da oben. Und die weiß dann ganz genau wenn ich (in Urlaub fahre) oder wie es mir geht und so, schimpft dann auch mit mir das ich den Stress reduzieren soll und all solche Sachen. Und sie weiß es von mir. Und wenn ich dann morgens die Jalousie aufmache gucke ich "aha, oben alles ok. In Ordnung". Das	Mrs. A, 77

	machine ja auch viele Leute aber es klappt auch bei uns sehr gut."	
"Well, what has changed for me is that the grouping has become clearer. I have developed friendships and strong affection for single people and some people that I ignore. Actually I'm open to them but I don't look for contact or anything. They are not in my focus. But a few people are very close to my attention. Almost every day I'm looking where they are, how they are doing, if they're all ok, and contact them. That has changed a lot. Therefore leaving this place would be very difficult for me."	"Also für mich hat sich verändert, dass die Gruppenbildung eindeutiger ist. Also ich habe hier Freundschaften und starke Zuneigung zu einzelnen entwickelt und andere Leute die ich ausblende. Also denen bin ich zugewandt aber da suche ich den Kontakt nicht oder so. Die sind nicht in meinem Fokus. Aber ein paar Leute sind ganz eng in meinem Fokus. Da bin ich eigentlich beinahe täglich im Gucken, wie geht es denen, ist alles in Ordnung, ist alles Ok, Kontaktaufnahme. Da hat sich viel verändert. Also hier weggehen das wäre für mich ganz schwer."	Mrs. H, 69
"So far we never needed emotional support, mutual support, physical support. We (she and her husband) can do it all by ourselves. But we support others. And this is also due to the large number of people living together, so that we can also say "I don't have time. See if someone else can". It makes me really feel like "I try to make this possible but if I can't (...), but I know there are others who care". And I think that is beautiful."	"Also emotionale Unterstützung, gegenseitige Unterstützung, körperlicher Art brauchten wir bisher noch nicht. Das können wir alles selber. Aber wir unterstützen andere. Und das ist eben auch durch die Vielzahl der zusammen wohnenden so, dass wir auch sagen können "ich habe keine Zeit. Guck ob jemand anderes kann". Das habe ich wirklich das Gefühl "ich versuche das möglich zu machen aber wenn ich nicht kann (...) dann weiß ich da sind andere die sich kümmern". Und das finde ich auch schön. "	Mrs. H, 69
"Shopping is a very important thing for me. Everyone who goes shopping will ask you. I usually get on calls like "I go shopping, do you have anything to bring? Very kind, very kind. Over there, Mr. A, he doesn't have a car himself, deliberately because of environmental considerations. (...) He borrows (...) a car from others to take me shopping. Isn't that heart-warming? Sometimes I just hand out my shopping lists. (...) I mean it would be much more fun for me to do it myself but that is not the case."	"Einkaufen, das ist eine ganz wichtige Sache für mich. Jeder der hier einkaufen geht fragt nach. Ich bin dann des Öfteren am Telefon "ich gehe einkaufen, hast du was mitzubringen?" und so. Ganz lieb, ganz lieb. Drüben Herr A, der hat selber kein Auto, bewusst kein Auto aus umwelttechnischen Gründen. (...) Der borgt sich (...) hier bei anderen die ein Auto haben ein Auto, um mit mir einkaufen zu fahren. Ist das nicht rührend? Ich verteile dann meine Einkaufswünsche. (...) Ich meine mit würde das viel mehr Spaß machen mir das selber zu machen oder so aber das ist nicht."	Mrs. B, 88

"I can't hammer a nail into the wall. That goes wrong. And then someone will come and do it. Or if I have to replace a bulb somewhere where I can't reach it, then I say, "Oh, would you, could you? Then I can call "yes, I'd love to come and change a bulb". Things like that. And earlier, when the children were still around, the kids were looked after and stuff like that."	"Ich kann keinen Nagel in die Wand schlagen. Das geht schief bei mir. Dann kommt einer und macht das. Oder wenn ich irgendwo eine Birne auswechseln muss, wo ich nicht dran komme dann sage ich "ach, würdest du, könntest du mal". Dann kann ich anrufen "ja, gerne komme ich und Wechsel eine Birne aus". Also solche Sachen. Und früher als die Kinder noch da waren hat man noch auf die Kinder aufgepasst und so."	Mrs. B, 88
"Of course, this is only a hypothesis, but I am convinced that (she) wouldn't live like this anymore, that fit, if she wouldn't have these people here to help her out, to shop, (to help) if something is broken etc.."	"Ich bin davon überzeugt, das ist natürlich nur eine Hypothese, das (sie) so nicht mehr leben würde, fit, wenn sie hier nicht diese Ansprechpartner hätte, die ihr zuarbeiten, einkaufen, (helfen) wenn was kaputt ist und und und und."	Mrs. D, 71
"This type of housing can achieve a great deal, great deal. Well, I can certainly confirm that, as I am the biggest beneficiary of it. At least for me this is the best way to live. If I imagine I would have to sit with my broken hips in a real retirement home, where a lot of people are mentally absent, who just sit in their wheelchairs and so on, oh God, I think I would die."	"Diese Wohnform kann sehr viel leiste, sehr viel. Also ich sehe das, ich bin ja auch der größte Nutznießer hiervon. Also zumindest für mich ist das de Wohnform. Wenn ich mir vorstelle ich müsste mit meiner Kaputten Hüfte jetzt in so einem richtigen Altenheim sitzen, wo dann auch sehr viele Leute sin die nicht mehr geistig so da sind, die nur so im Rollstuhl vor sich hinsitzen und so, Oh Gott, ich glaube ich würde eingehen."	Mrs. B, 88
More support? No, no, I can ask for any support. Of course you have to say what you need. They cannot guess. I think that is also the wrong attitude to sit there and wait and say "someone has to come and ask what do you need, what would you like? You have to help yourself. You must ask "do you have time" or "are you going shopping" or something. "	"Noch mehr Unterstützung? Nein, nein, ich kann jegliche Unterstützung erbitten. Man muss natürlich sagen was man braucht. Die können es ja nicht ahnen. Also das ist auch die verkehrte Haltung da zu sitzen und zu warten "da muss jetzt einer kommen und fragen was brauchst du denn, was hättest du gerne?". Da muss man sich schon mal helfen. Da muss man dann schon mal sagen "hast du schon Zeit" oder "gehst du mal einkaufen" oder so."	Mrs. B, 88
"We just had a lady who's been in surgery again. She is now out of the hospital and in rehab. We all take care of her. Those who can walk go visit her. I often call her and write her some cards."	"Wir haben gerade wieder eine Dame, die operiert worden ist. Die ist jetzt aus dem Krankenhaus Gott Sei Dank raus und in der Reha. Da kümmern wir uns alle darum. Die die laufen können gehen sie besuchen, ich rufe die öfters an und schreibe ihr eine Karte."	Mrs. B, 88
"Right now, we have such a case. A neighbour and friend on my floor had a hip surgery three weeks ago. She was visited by another neighbour and more regularly in the hospital. We took laundry home with us and fulfilled small wishes. Now she is in rehab. And on the weekend, she was here to visit us. And then she stayed a day and a half in her apartment. She came on Saturday at noon and on Saturday evening she sat with me here at the dining table and I invited two other friends from the house. Then we spent a nice evening here. And she said " Guys, it's wonderful to be home again (...)."	"Im Moment haben wir einen aktuellen Fall. Ein Nachbar/Freundin aus meiner Etage hat vor drei Wochen eine Hüft OP gehabt. Sie wurde von noch einer weiteren Nachbarin und mehr regelmäßig im Krankenhaus besucht. Der Aufenthalt war aber nicht sehr lange. Wir haben dann Wäsche mit nach Hause genommen und kleine Wünsche erfüllt. Jetzt ist sie in der Reha. Und zum Wochenende war sie hier zu besuch. Und dann hat sie sich dann eineinhalb Tage in ihrer Wohnung Aufenthalten. Sie kam am Samstagmittag und am Samstagabend saß sie dann bei mir hier am Esstisch und zwei weitere Freundinnen hier aus dem Haus habe ich dazu eingeladen. Dann haben wir hier einen schönen Abend verbracht. Und sie hat	Mrs. C, 78

	gesagt "Leute, es ist doch wunderbar mal wieder zuhause zu sein (...)."	
"I myself had an unpleasant foot surgery four years ago and, if my neighbors had not supported me, I would probably have had to spend at least a week in hospital. But I didn't have to. My son and daughter-in-law picked me up and (...) then I was back here again."	"Ich selber habe vor vier Jahren eine unangenehme Fuß OP gehabt und hätte, wenn meine Nachbarinnen mich nicht unterstützt hätten auch wahrscheinlich eine Woche im Krankenhaus sein müssen. Das musste ich dann nicht. Mein Sohn und meine Schwiegertochter haben mich dann abgeholt und (...) dann war ich wieder hier."	Mrs. C, 78
"That's has been clarified from the beginning. That is what you are told when you want to move in here. If someone has a flu or a cold and lies in bed for three, four, five or maybe seven days, then the neighbours, these smaller units on the floors, always show up. They coordinate themselves and bring soup or food (and) supply them. But everything that lasts longer than a week is not nursed. We can't do that here, we can't. Then it has to be taken care of either through nursing stuffy sending them to a nursing home."	"Das ist von vornherein geklärt. Also das bekommt man schon gesagt, wenn man hier einziehen will. Wenn einer mal eine Grippe hat oder Erkältung und liegt mal drei, vier, fünf vielleicht auch sieben Tage im Bett dann kommt immer der Nachbar und deren Nachbar, die kleineren Einheiten auf den Etagen. Die sprechen sich dann auch noch mehr ab und der bringt dann eine Suppe oder bringt essen. Die kochen dann ja alle für sich. Dann wird der versorgt. Aber so alles was länger als eine Woche geht, da wird nicht gepflegt. Das können wir hier nicht leisten, das geht nicht. Dann muss dafür gesorgt werden, das eine Pflege kommt oder das derjenige dann eben in ein Heim kommt."	Mrs. G, 76
"Everyone has friends in this place. I read that before, the ideal size is about 30. We're 45, that's just fine. The other (communities) are bigger, I think that's too much. And thus everyone has a group around without the others being upset. I would also say I have a group of five, six, seven people on whom I can rely and some others where I can ask, but the (five, six, seven people) belong to the closer ones. That's okay, because in a big group fits a small group. And that's why I think (...) nobody is left alone in here. There are several seriously sick people in here, who don't have to be cared for but of course also get encouragement. And that is also done and gladly done and of course done."	"Es hat ja hier auch jeder jemanden. Und das hatte ich vorher auch schon gelesen, die ideale Größe ist so um die 30. Wir sind 45, das geht gerade noch. Die anderen (Gemeinschaften) die sind größer, das finde ich zu viel. Und so hat jeder ohne das die anderen gekränkt sind so eine Gruppe um sich. Ich würde auch sagen ich habe so eine Gruppe von fünf, sechs, sieben Leuten, auf die ich mich verlassen kann und andere, wo ich anfragen kann aber die (fünf, sechs, sieben Leute gehören) zu den engeren. Das ist in Ordnung, weil in eine großen Gruppe geht eine kleine Gruppe. Und deswegen denke ich (...) wird keiner hier alleine gelassen. Es sind mehrere schwer krank hier, die zwar nicht gepflegt werden müssen aber die natürlich auch Zuspruch bekommen. Und das wird auch geleistet und gerne geleistet und selbstverständlich geleistet."	Mrs. F, 74

"The community is really doing a fantastic job, I must say. There are people who have lost their partners here, who have lost children, who have (...). And all these people have received a lot of relief and empathy during these hard times they had to go through. And they also know that, and say that too"	"Da geht die Gemeinschaft eigentlich fantastisch mit um muss ich sagen. Es gibt Leute, die haben ihre Partner verloren hier, die haben Kinder verloren, die haben (…). Und diese Menschen haben alle in den schweren Zeiten durch die sie durch mussten sehr viel Hilfe und sehr viel Empathie empfangen hier. Und die wissen das auch., sagen das auch"	Mrs. B, 88
"There has been someone here who suffered from dementia. And they have already moved in as a couple, he had dementia, she was still in good shape. And since he had an aggressive form of Alzheimer's, it got worse and worse. (...) And there was a tremendous effort been made, also for his wife, who had to carry the burden (...). And then he went to a daycare center. He got picked up in the morning and brought back in the afternoon so that his wife could take a break. At that time they had two close friends (in the community) or even more, so that she was not alone. But the progression of the disease became more and more aggressive, so that he (had to) stay in the nursing home (...). And then his dear wife, so to speak, who I like very much, almost collapsed psychologically...). And being able to see and experience this, to be part of the group was an enormous privilege. Therefore I believe that nobody will fall through the grid in here during such extreme and stressful situations. I think this is an excellent example that nobody is left alone." (Mrs. D, 71)	"Es hat hier jemanden gegeben, der ist dement geworden. Und die sind da schon als Paar, er dement, sie noch fit, hier eingezogen. Und weil er eine aggressive Form von Alzheimer hatte, wurde das immer schlimmer. (...) Und es ist ganz, ganz viel gemacht und getragen worden, auch für seine Ehefrau, die ja die Last zu tragen hatte (...). Und dann ging er in eine Tagesklinik, wurde morgens abgeholt und nachmittags gebracht, sodass seine Ehefrau auch mal wieder Luft holen konnte. Dann hatten sie zwei Bezugspersonen oder sogar noch mehr, sodass Sie nicht alleine war. Aber die Verlaufsform wurde immer aggressiver, sodass er dann ganz ins Heim (musste) (...). Und da ist sozusagen seine liebe Ehefrau, die ich sehr mag fast zusammen gebrochen psychisch. Und dieses aufgefangen werden, hier in der Gruppe, zu sehen und mitzuerleben oder daran teilhaben zu dürfen, es ist ja auch ein unheimliches Privileg. Also ich denke, das hier niemand durch den Rost fällt. In solchen extreme, belastenden Situationen. Ich denke so ein Beispiel ist hervorragend, das niemand alleine gelassen wird(...)".	Mrs. D, 71
"And then of course it is also for me that I feel safe here (...). I am not alone with certain questions and crises. That is also a bit of a family. And thus it is (...) to be lifted, to be safe and this certainty, that if something happens there will be (help)".	"Und dann ist es natürlich auch für mich ich sage mal ich fühle mich hier geborgen (...). Ich stehe mit bestimmten Fragestellungen und Krisen so nicht alleine. Das ist auch ein Stück weit Familie. Und das ist also (…) dieses aufgehoben sein, dieses geborgen sein und dieses Wissen, also wenn irgendwie was ist das jemand (hilft)".	Mrs. E, 71

We' ve already witnessed three deaths. The first one was very ill with rheumatism and was simply lying dead in bed on a Sunday morning. I still have the feeling that she wanted it that way. Because at that time we were just about to have this communal grave on the old cemetery, indeed one of the most beautiful graves, with such a great woman standing there with a book in her hand. And she asked me two days before Mrs. A, have you finally finished this contract for the grave"? Which was quite atypical for her, because she was such a friendly, mild woman. And then I said "yes, I did. It arrived yesterday". I've never experienced that from her before that with this severity "have you finally? And then she was lying dead in her bed on Sunday morning."	"Also wir hatten hier schon drei Sterbefälle. Die erste war sehr Rheumakrank und lag einfach Anfang November morgens sonntags Tod im Bett. Wobei ich nach wie vor das Gefühl habe, dass sie es auch so gewollt hat sage ich mal. Denn damals waren wir gerade dabei, das ich dieses Gemeinschaftsgrab auf dem alten Friedhof, ja eines der schönsten Gräber habe, mit so einer tollen Frau die da steht mit dem Buch in der Hand. Und da hat sie mich zwei Tage vorher gefragt "Frau A, hast du nun endlich diesen Patenschaftsvertrag für das Grab fertig"? Was ganz untypisch für sie war, weil sie so eine freundliche, milde Frau war. Und da habe ich gesagt "ja, habe ich. Ist gestern von der Stadt zurückgekommen". Das habe ich noch nie von ihr erlebt das sie mit dieser Strenge "hast du nun endlich?". Und dann lag sie nun eben Sonntag morgens tot im Bett."	Mrs. A, 77
"(...) I only consider this social control positive. For example, if the blinds stay down for two days, it will be noticed immediately. The first person who died here and who is still cared for in our community grave today was lying dead in bed. And of course this has been immediately noticed by the community and the whole process that we agreed upon in our housing philosophy started" (Mrs. D, 71)	"(...) Ich empfinde diese soziale Kontrolle nur positiv. Exemplarisches Beispiel: wenn hier beispielsweise zwei Tage lang die Rollladen unten bleibt, wird hier sofort nachgeschaut. Der erste Mensch, der hier verstorben ist und in unserem Gemeinschaftsgrab bis heute betreut wird auf dem alten Friedhof, die lag tot im Bett. Und das wird hier natürlich sofort wahrgenommen. Und sofort ging der ganze Apparat im Gange, wie das in unserer Alltagsphilosophie verabredet und vereinbart ist, uns geregelt ist."	Mrs. D, 71
"And the other woman, full of life and ideas, had a stroke. But then she didn't want any life-prolonging measures. She had also included me in her living will. And there I realized that it makes sense that not only family members should be involved. Sometimes the doctors want to ask someone who does not belong to the family when it comes to this difficult decision "switch off the machines or not". I must say that (...) I was stunned how much they accepted it, that I said "no, as long as she was fully conscious she always confirmed that to me. She doesn't want that at all"."	"Und die andere Frau total lebendig und ideenreich hatte einen Schlaganfall. Ja und wollte aber auch keine lebensverlängernden Maßnahmen dann mehr. Und das finde ich auch sehr gut. Also die hatte dann mich auch in ihrer Patientenverfügung eingesetzt. Und da haben ich festgestellt das es ganz sinnvoll ist nicht nur Familienangehörige da einzusetzen. Manchmal möchten die Ärzte dann, wenn es zu dieser schweren Entscheidung kommt "Geräte abstellen oder nicht" auch nochmal jemanden fragen der nicht zur Familie gehört. Also das muss ich sagen (…) ich war erstaunt wie sehr die das akzeptiert haben, das ich sagte "nein, solange sie bei vollem Bewusstsein war hat Sie mir das immer wieder bestätigt. Sie will das auf gar keinen Fall".	Mrs. A, 77

"We've got some experience with that. The other one (who died), who was quite old in the 80s and still did martial arts. Mrs. A took care of everything as her person of trust and realized that nothing was organized, no list of medications at an agreed place. And there we immediately went on, out of this experience "what can I do, what can I do in the case of cases"? And then we have working groups that come together to discuss things, make lists and where everyone will write down "who is your contact person? What medicines do you need? Where is your living will, etc.". Such things are simply organized with regard to such situations. And I can tell you that is very relaxing. If I collapse then everything is organised. Because my daughter and my relatives are in Hamburg. And that takes the strain off my closest family. And that's a beautiful, liberating, relaxed way of life."	"Also haben wir da ein bisschen Erfahrung. Oder die andere, die auch schon recht alt war, in den 80ern und die so ganz jugendlich noch Kampfsport machte und und und, die verstarb auch. Frau A kümmerte sich, als Vertrauensperson dann um alles und sah, das nichts geregelt war, keine Medikamentenliste an verabredeter Stelle. Und da haben wir sofort uns weiter, aus dieser Erfahrung heraus "was tu ich, was mache ich im Fall der Fälle?". Und dann gibt es hier immer Arbeitsgruppen, die hier zusammenkommen beraten, Listen machen und wo dann jeder unterschreibt "wer ist dein Ansprechpartner? Welche Medikamente brauchst du? Wo ist deine Patientenverfügung, usw.". Solche Sachen sind einfach im Hinblick auf solche Situationen geregelt. Und das entspannt sage ich Ihnen. Wenn ich da oben umkippe dann ist es geregelt. Denn meine Tochter und meine Leute sind in Hamburg. Und dadurch ist meine engste Familie entlastet. Und das ist eine schöne, freiheitliche, entspannte Lebenssituation."	Mrs. D, 71
Mrs. H (69): "When the worst comes to the worst, there is always a network. About us the woman died last year. This has been such a long farewell process. And there was also a partner but he wasn't with her for long and two daughters living further away but there was a network. She was (...) cared for by many, many people again and again, received help, support, visits in hospital and so on. That was very good for her. It didn't weigh only on one shoulder." Mr. A, 74: "Yes, it was great. We were also in the hospital during her dying phase and so on."	Mrs. H (69): „Also wenn der schlimmste Fall eintritt ist immer ein Netzwerk da. Über uns die Frau ist letztes Jahr gestorben. Das ist dann ja so ein langer Abschiedsprozess. Und da war zwar auch ein Partner aber der war noch nicht lange mit ihr zusammen und zwei Töchter die weiter weg wohnen aber da war ein Netzwerk da. Sie wurde (...) von ganz, ganz vielen immer wieder betreut, hat Hilfe erhalten, Unterstützung, im Krankenhaus besucht und so. Das war sehr gut bei ihr. Das hat nicht auf einer Schulter gelastet." Mr. A, 74: „Ja, ganz toll. Da waren wir auch beim Sterbeprozess mit im Krankenhaus und so."	Mrs. H, 69 Mr. A, 74
"But so far this has often been done intuitively and we should take it to the next level. So in this respect it is not a completed process, not even after ten years. We were able to shape and experience many things very well. And I think it was a very impressive and also very sad but positive experience how we managed it in dignity and respect for all. And I think this is a kind of knowledge within the community, which we can activate when necessary. I think that something has really been learnt and then becomes present again when the worst comes to the worst."	"Aber bisher ist das oft intuitiv gelaufen und das müssten wir auf diese weitere Eben heben. Also insofern ist das kein abgeschlossener Prozess. Auch nach zehn Jahren nicht. Manches haben wir wirklich gut auch gestalten können und miterleben können. Und ich finde das war schon eine sehr eindrucksvolle und auch sehr traurige aber positive Erfahrung wie wir das eben doch in Würde und Respekt für alle geschafft haben. Und das ist so ein Wissen denke ich in der Hausgemeinschaft, was wir dann auch aktivieren können wenn nötig. Also da ist es auch so meine ich, dass da wirklich was gelernt wurde und dann im Fall dann wieder präsent wird."	Mrs. A, 77

B4 Chapter 4.5

Quote translated (ENG)	Quote original (GER)	R.
"However, we say it very clearly, since we have used the existing plans of the architect, our apartments are not suitable for young families. There were so many great young people with children living here but it is too small. And that is a bit of a deficit for multi-generation living. While Duisdorf, who have newly planned and learned from our experiences."	"Wobei wir klipp und klar sagen, weil wir hier in die bestehenden Pläne von dem Architekten, dem das hier gehörte eingestiegen sind, waren unsere Wohnungen nicht ideal für junge Familien. Hier waren so viele tolle junge Leute mit Kindern und dafür ist es zu klein. Die Wohnungen sind nicht Familientauglich. Und das ist von Mehrgenerationenwohnen ein bisschen ein Defizit. Während Duisdorf, die neu geplant haben und aus unseren Erfahrungen gelernt haben."	Mrs. D, 71
"If we have a re-letting or re-occupation within our community then we say we currently don't need people over 60 in this place. This needs to be thought about in a sustainable way. And when it comes to maintaining the multi-generation community, we must consider other generations."	"Wenn wir (…) ich meine das ist ja auch klar. Wenn wir innerhalb unserer Gemeinschaft eine Nachvermietung oder Nachbesetzung haben die erforderlich ist dann sagen wir, wir können im Moment halt keine Menschen ab 60 mehr hier drin gebrauchen. Also was heißt gebrauchen aber es muss nachhaltig gedacht werden. Und wenn es darum geht halt wirklich die Mehrgenerationen Hausgemeinschaft aufrecht zu erhalten dann müssen wir an andere Altersstufen denken."	Mrs. E, 71
"Yes, definitely. This is also reflected in the newly developed cohousing communities, that flats are kept free for families with children, i.e. larger flats. Also because we have the experience that such people often only join later, when perhaps the walls are already visible and you can move in in six months. This is because the life plan of families with children is not one in which they can commit two years in advance to such a project. And that's the way it's already being considered. And also the larger apartments are developed."	"Ja. Auf jeden Fall. Das ist auch an den neu gestalteten Hausgemeinschaften oder die jetzt halt gebaut werden, das bestimmt Wohnungen frei gehalten werden für Familien mit Kindern, also größere Wohnungen. Auch weil man die Erfahrungen hat, das solche Menschen oft auch erst später dazu stoßen, wenn schon vielleicht die Mauern zu sehen sind und man in sechs Monaten das beziehen kann. Weil der Lebensentwurf der Familien mit Kindern ist halt nicht so, dass sie sich zwei Jahre im Vorhinein für so ein Projekt schon engagieren können. Und das ist schon so, dass das mit überlegt wird. Und auch das halt größere Wohnungen geschaffen werden grundsätzlich oder das man hat modulartig überlegt."	Mrs. E, 71
"The question is, is it the right approach the "multi-generation project"? Those who are interested in projects of the Wahlverwandtschaften, let's do it in a neutral way, those are the people who are about to retire and say "oops, what do we do now". And that's the problem. My main job now is to interview people who might be eligible for us. And a lady asked me and I found that very remarkable "do the young people want to live with us at all?" That was also a lady with grey hair. So the problem is to find a group that meets the different expectations of the already existing group members. That means, when I look for people "multi-generation living" and people come to us and say " great, multi-generation living I want to do this" and then they come to us saying "there are only old people sitting here and I am only 45" then we	"Die Frage ist, ist es der richtige Ansatz das "Mehrgenerationen Projekt". Die, die sich interessieren für Projekte der Wahlverwandten, machen wir es mal ganz neutral, das sind die Leute, die kurz vor der Rente stehen und sagen "ups, was machen wir denn jetzt". Und das ist das Problem. Eine Dame hat mich jetzt bei einem Interview… also meine Hauptbeschäftigung ist es jetzt Leute zu interviewen, die vielleicht für uns in Frage kommen könnten. Und eine Dame hat mich gefragt und das fand ich sehr bemerkenswert "wollen die jungen überhaupt mit uns zusammen wohnen". Das war auch eine Dame mit grauen Haaren. Also das Problem ist eine Gruppe zu finden, die verschiedenen Vorstellungen der bereits vorhandenen Gruppenmitglieder gerecht wird. Das heißt, wenn ich Leute suche "Mehrgenerationenwohnen" und bei uns	Frau M, 66

stand there with our short shirt. That's why I think that's the problem."	kommen Leute an und sagen "super, Mehrgenerationenwohnen möchte ich machen" und dann kommen die an uns sagen "da sitzen ja nur alte und ich bin doch aber erst 45" dann stehen wir da mit unserem kurzen Hemd. Deswegen, das ist denke ich mal das Problem."	
"However, one must say that you will rarely find young families for the rental apartment anyway. Why should they want to rent an apartment, which will be finished in two years. That's too long-term for them. We have three families and a single mother who want to move in in two years. But those are the ones who don't show up because they have a cough or whatever."	Wobei man im Mieterbereich eindeutig sagen muss das kriegen sie eh keine jungen Familien hin, weil warum sollen die eine junge Mietwohnung haben wollen, die in zwei Jahren fertig wird. Das ist für die zu langfristig. Wir haben zwar drei Familien und eine allein erziehende Mutter, die da einziehen wollen in zwei Jahren. Aber das sind die, die sich dann nicht blicken lassen weil es Kind hustet oder so."	Mrs. M, 69
"So (...) the goal or the title is "multi-generational living". And therefore, in my opinion, this should by no means be the primary starting point for moving into a cohousing project. Because if we only have this perspective then we forget or overlook the (younger) people (...). So why do younger people move into such a form of housing? What is an aspect for younger people to participate or also for families to participate here? I mean, you have to look at it the same way and I think the association would resist the idea if (...) this should be the primary motivation for living together. It can be one aspect of many, but basically I have to keep myself open for the exchange and keep it alive between the generations. Personally I wouldn't like that. However, for many of those who contact us here, it's definitely the case."	"Also (...) das Ziel ist ja oder die Überschrift ist ja "Mehrgenerationen Wohnen". Und von daher sollte das meines Erachtens auf keinen Fall der primäre Ausgangspunkt sein in ein gemeinschaftliches Wohnprojekt einzuziehen. Weil wenn wir nur diesen Blick haben dann vergessen wir ja auch oder übersehen die (jüngeren) Menschen (...). Also warum ziehen jüngere Menschen in so eine Wohnform? Was ist ein Aspekt für jüngere Menschen hier rein zu ziehen oder auch für Familien hier rein zu ziehen? Ich meine das muss man ja genauso betrachten und ich glaube der Verein würde sich da ein Stück gegen wehren, wenn das (...) der primäre Ausgangspunkt für das gemeinsame Wohnen ist. Das darf es auch und sollte es auch nicht sein. (...) Es kann ein Aspekt von verschiedenen sein aber grundsätzlich muss ich mich offen halten für den Austausch und das zwischen den Generationen halt lebendig zu halten Das würde ich persönlich nicht so (…) gut finden, wenn das halt der Ausgangspunkt da ist. Es ist bei vielen die hier bei uns anfragen im Verein auf jeden Fall so."	Mrs. E, 71
"Well, obviously, if the rents start taking off, this may become a huge challenge. I have hope because the investor has had such a positive experience (with us). At Rhein-Haus they say "they are our favourite tenants. We don't have to worry about the rubbish heaps. Everything runs smoothly and the property is maintained." (I hope) that they take this into account, because that is of course worth money and therefore renounce one or the other rent increase. That is my hope for the future."	"Also das ist natürlich eine große Herausforderung, dass da irgendwann die Mieten abhauen. Wobei ich da die Hoffnung habe, das der Investor durch die so positive Erfahrung, also die sage da bei Rhein-Haus "die sind uns die liebsten Mieter. Wir müssen uns nicht um die Müllhaufen kümmern. Da läuft ja alles und das Objekt wird gepflegt". Also das die diesen Vorteil zunehmend auch in die Waagschale leben. Weil das ist ja auch Geld Wert. Und dadurch auf die ein oder andere Mieterhöhung verzichten. Also das ist meine Hoffnung für die Zukunft."	Mrs. H, 69
"I believe that everyone is aware that he lives here more and more expensive, but that he would not have the possibilities on the free housing market. Please also bear in mind that we have seven publicly subsidised flats here, as for Mrs B, with a small pension. And we are proud of it."	"Ich glaube, dass es jedem bewusst ist, dass er hier zwar teuer und immer teurer werdender wohnt aber das er die Möglichkeiten auf dem freien Wohnungsmarkt nicht hätte. Denken Sie auch bitte daran, dass wir hier sieben öffentlich geförderter Wohnung haben wie für Frau B,	Mrs. D, 71

	mit einer kleinen Rente. Und da sind wir stolz drauf."	
"We received some kind of start-up support. Mrs A must have told you that with 3000 Euro for the communal apartment. The other two (projects) made it more clever. They got them state-subsidised. They have to pay only half and we have to pay it all. 20 Euro every month, that is a lot, not with me but for people who are really at the limit it's a lot of money."	"Wir hatten ja so eine Anschub Unterstützung bekommen. Das muss Ihnen aber die Frau A erzählt haben mit 3000 Euro für die Gemeinschaftswohnung. Die anderen zwei (Projekte), die haben es geschickter gemacht. Die haben das als WBS Wohnung anerkannt bekommen und wir zahlen die volle Miete. Wir müssen das ja dann zahlen und die haben nur die Hälfte zu zahlen und wir müssen das voll zahlen. Das stößt auch manche ab 20 Euro jeden Monat mehr. Das ist ein Batzen auch, gell. Also bei mir nicht aber für Leute die wirklich so am Limit sind ist das schon Geld."	Frau F, 74
"Have you ever been to Plittersdorf? They have (...) several large apartments, but they have difficulties to occupy them. These are big apartments for families but they are expensive and young families usually do not earn that much."	"Auf jeden Fall nicht zu viele (…) waren Sie auch schon mal in Plittersdorf? Die haben nämlich (…) die haben mehrere große Wohnungen. Die haben Schwierigkeiten die Wohnungen unter zu kriegen. Die sind zwar groß aber wenn die hier mit kleinen Kindern einziehen verdienen die Leute noch nicht so viel und das sind keine billig Wohnungen."	Frau F, 74
"Well, we are currently experiencing problems in reconciling the relatively high purchase price for condominiums with an adequate apartment size for young families. We have a four-room condominium. This four-room condo is 120 square meters and costs over half a million and is not the hottest condo in terms of its size and location. And this is why we have had some cancellations in this segment, even though we had interested parties from a suitable clientele, i.e. dual-earner from ministries. And the other three-room apartments with 90 square meters, they also cost a lot of money, over 400,000. Those are too small when someone arrives and says "but we want to have two children". In the tenant segment, the whole thing looks so similar."	"Also wir haben bei uns jetzt im Projekt ganz aktuell Probleme den relativ hohen Kaufpreis für Eigentumswohnungen mit einer ausreichenden Wohnungsgröße für junge Familien in Einklang zu bringen. Wir haben eine vier-Zimmer Eigentumswohnung. Diese vier-Zimmer Eigentumswohnung ist 120 Quadratmeter groß und kostet über eine halbe Millionen und ist nicht der Brüller von Schnitt und Lage her. Und dadurch haben wir da in dem Bereich einige Absagen gehabt, obwohl wir Interessenten hatten von entsprechendem Klientel, also Doppelverdiener Ministerien, da sind wir dran. Und die anderen drei-Zimmer Wohnungen mit 90 Quadratmeter, die kosten auch noch ordentlich Geld, also über 400.000. Die sind dann zu klein wenn jemand ankommt und sagt "wir wollen aber zwei Kinder haben". Im Mieterbereich sieht das ganze so ähnlich aus."	Mrs. M, 66
"What we are currently thinking about is a reorientation of the association as to how we want to approach new housing projects and whether we should always stick to this combination of "freehold flats/rental flats". On our homepage we then call this " income independent" but rented apartments can now only be afforded by a family earning good money as double earners or by a single worker earning very good money. There are other approaches. I have already indicated that we have contacted a cooperative."	"Worüber wir gerade nachdenken ist eine Neuorientierung des Vereins wie wir neue Wohnprojekte angehen wollen und ob man immer an dieser Kombination "Eigentumswohnungen/Mietwohnungen" bleibe. Wir nennen das dann auf unserer Homepage dann "Einkommensübergreifend" (aber) naja, Mietwohnungen kann man ja auch nur noch als Familie als gut verdienende Doppelverdiener oder sehr gut verdienende Einzel Erwerbstätige leisten. Es gibt eben andere Ansätze. Ich hatte schon mal angedeutet dass wir mit einer Genossenschaft Kontakt aufgenommen haben. Also mit einer bestehenden damit man nicht die ersten zwei Generationen rein buddelt."	Mr. B, 71

"This is not just a time issue, but the obligation to do certain things at some time. For example, the waste bins, they simply have to be taken out on certain days. The obligation, the mandatory obligation is also a factor, I suppose."	"Das ist nicht nur ein zeitliches Problem sondern sich verbindlich für was zu erklären. Zum Beispiel die Mülltonnen, die müssen einfach an bestimmten Tagen raus. Die Festlegung, die verbindliche Festlegung glaube ich ist auch ein Punkt."	Mrs. E, 71
"And I think that in this way, since we all age differently, this (mutual support) will increase. The people who can will do more (support) and eventually at some point this won't work anymore. "	"Und ich denke in dieser Weise wird das unter uns, da wir ja auch alle unterschiedlich altern, wird das zunehmen, sowas. Die Leute, die noch mehr können (leisten die Unterstützung) und irgendwann geht das nicht mehr. "	Mrs. A, 77
"I've just heard that one of the residents doesn't want to drive anymore and (therefore) does not drive a one woman to shopping anymore, who is very severely handicapped. So I do not know who will do that. I won't do it because it's too exhausting for me. I can't do that anymore as well. So we have to look "what is possible, what is not possible" and so on. And I don't know. I don't know what will happen then. So I think first of all it will be work out for some time. And if then nobody can help from our people then we just have to see how it goes. Then you might have to go to a nursing home. There is no other way. Or move near the children or whatever. After all, we knew from the very beginning that there was no support here until death."	"Ich habe jetzt gerade gehört, dass der Herr A nicht mehr Auto fahren will und auch die Frau B nicht mehr zu Einkäufen fährt, die sehr schwer behindert ist. Also da weiß ich nicht, wer das dann übernimmt. Also ich übernehme es nicht, weil das ist mir zu anstrengend. Das kann ich auch nicht mehr. Man muss also gucken "was geht, was geht nicht?" und so weiter. Und da weiß ich es nicht. Ich weiß nicht was dann wird. Also ich denke erstmal es wird eine ganze Zeit so gut gehen. Und wenn dann keine Hilfe kommen kann von Leuten hier dann muss es eben sehen wie es geht. Dann muss man in ein Heim gehen. Das geht dann nun nicht anders. Oder in die Nähe der Kinder ziehen oder was weiß ich. Also das haben wir ja von vornherein gewusst, dass es hier keine Betreuung bis zum Tod gib."	Mrs. G, 78
"I'm now thinking of this neighborhood office we have. They also offer support for people who have care level zero. Until recently, I didn't know that this existed. So that means shopping and small handouts in the house. And if you say that there would be three or four people who would be at this level and you would get a person who could help out, that would be a great thing. So I think there's going to be something happening in the community."	"Da denke ich jetzt gerade an dieses Quartiersbüro bei uns. Die bieten ja auch eine Unterstützung an für Leute, die Pflegestufe null haben. Da habe ich bis vor kurzem auch nicht gewusst, dass es das gibt. Also das bedeutet Einkäufe und so kleine Handreichungen im Haus. Und wenn man das dann sagen wir mal es gäbe drei, vier Leute, die auf diesem Level wären und man würde dann dafür, das müsste man dann mit den Krankenkassen und so absprechen, eine Person bekommen, die da Hilfe leisten könnte, das wäre eine tolle Sache. Also ich denke da wird sich auch was entwickeln in der Gesellschaft. Und dieses Quartiersbüro im Macke-Viertel das ist sehr rege. Und viele Leute sind da auch aktiv und ich glaube da könnte was kommen. "	Mrs. G, 78
"My experience is that most of us here are really fit by the time we reach 80. Sure, if you didn't have an accident. But as I have noticed from the ageing process (of other residents), the 80th birthday is a turning point. And after that many people here or those who were already 80, there aren't that many, started to slow down like that and their bones were crunching and some of them even started to forget things, maybe even dementia. Yes, and then the question is "What are we going to do when that happens?"	"Also meine Erfahrung ist bis 80 sind hier bei uns die meisten richtig fit. Klar, wenn man einen Unfall hatte dann nicht. Aber so im Alterungsprozess habe ich hier festgestellt ist so der 80. Geburtstag ein Wendepunkt. Und danach setzte bei vielen hier oder bei denen die dann 80 waren, so viele sind es ja noch nicht, solche Verlangsamungen ein und die Knochen knirschten und einige dann auch eben mit großer Vergesslichkeit, vielleicht sogar Demenz. Ja und dann ist die Frage "wie verhalten wir uns dann?"	Mrs. A, 77
"For some time we can absorb this on a personal level or within the community, but then it won't work out anymore. Then we have	"Eine gewisse Zeit können wir das so auf persönlicher Ebene oder auch innerhalb der Hausgemeinschaft abfangen aber dann wird das	Mrs. A, 77

to say "we can keep the person here and we can still provide some of this social care, reading the newspaper, shopping and so on, but the care must be provided by professionals."	nicht mehr gehen. Dann muss man eben sagen "können wir den Menschen hier behalten und einen Teil von diesen sozialen Betreuungen können wir noch leisten". Also damit meine ich Zeitung vorlesen, einkaufen und so weiter. Aber die Pflege muss dann in professionelle Hand gegeben werden. "	
"So with those who have become so close to me, I can imagine what one would do in the family. If it is one, I could do it. So if somebody would be in need of care and the care service comes and does this medical thing and the washing or something but I can imagine to give the affection like with a family member. But only if it was one of them. It cannot be (several) at the same time."	"Also bei denen, die mir so nahe geworden sind da kann ich mir vorstellen auch so was man in der Familie geleistet hätte. Wenn es eine ist könnte ich das packen. Also wenn einer pflegebedürftig würde und der Pflegdienst kommt und diese medizinische Sache macht und meinetwegen das Duschen oder sowas aber da kann ich mir vorstellen die Zuwendung zu bringen wie bei einem Familienmitglied. Aber nur wenn es einer wäre. Es dürfen nicht (mehrere) gleichzeitig sein sondern die sollen sich mal schön verteilen."	Mrs, H, 69
"We often think about what will happen if this third of the elderly residents suddenly need care. That would be a tremendous challenge. And we simply can't expect that (support) from our young people who work all day. So we need to professionalize it. And we hope that this does not occur as a package all together, but we hope that it will happen one after another."	"Und wir stellen uns ganz oft vor, wenn dieses Drittel an Menschen, die hier leben und miteinander wohnen, alle auf einen Schlag jetzt pflegebedürftig werden sollten. Um mal den Oberbegriff zu nennen. Dann ist das ja schon eine Herausforderung. Und das können wir unseren jungen Menschen ja gar nicht zumuten, die den ganzen Tag arbeiten. Also müssen wir das professionalisieren. Und wir hoffen dass das nicht als Paket gemeinsam auftritt, sondern wir hoffen dass das so peu a peu."	Mrs. D, 71
"We talk about this and (...) we also had seminars and further training on this topic at this place, all together, young and old. It's not like we're splitting or repressing something. We want to focus on life until the end. (...) Many of us want to be carried out with our feet first, many of us. And I don't know anyone who doesn't want that. Personally, I don't know anybody, not even from the potential candidates who may end up in the cosmos."	"Wir sprechen darüber und (...) wir hatten hier auch Seminare und Fortbildungen zu diesem Thema. Hier, alle miteinander, Jung und Alt. Es ist ja nicht so, als würden wir was abspalten oder verdrängen. Wir wollen hier das Leben bis zum Schluss im Fokus haben. (..) Viele von uns möchten mit den Füßen zuerst raus getragen werden, viele von uns. Und ich kenne niemanden, der das nicht möchte. Ich persönlich kenne niemanden, auch nicht von den potenziellen Kandidaten, die im Kosmos landen (bald sterben könnten)."	Mrs. D, 71
"Well, if I can't cook for myself anymore (...) then I'd order food on wheels or something. And if I were to become confined to bed, I would try to get a mobile nursing service before moving into a nursing home. (...) I will stay here as long as I can, and if things get worse then I will do it with some care services and then sometime I will say goodbye. I don't want to go to an nursing home, I just don't want that."	"Ja, sowas (Pflegefälle) hatten wir noch gar nicht, (...) in all diesen zehn Jahren nicht. Also ich habe mir schon gedacht, dass wenn ich nicht mehr für mich kochen kann (...) dann würde ich mir Essen auf Rädern bestellen oder so. Und ich habe mir gedacht, wenn ich bettlägerig werden würde, würde ich zunächst mal versuchen bevor ich in ein Heim gehe, das versuchen über mobile Pflegedienste machen zu lassen. (...) Ich bleibe hier solange es irgendwie geht, mache das so weiter und wenn es noch schlechter wird dann mit ein bisschen Hilfsdiensten und dann irgendwann verabschiede ich mich dann. Ich will nicht in ein Altenheim, das will ich nicht."	Mrs. B, 88
"We have a woman with us who has suddenly become mentally deficient. She still lives with us, and is in day care. Everyone pays attention to her. When there is an event in our common	"Bei uns ist eine Frau, die hat plötzlich geistig so abgebaut. Die lebt weiterhin bei uns, ist in einer Tagespflege. Alle achten auf sie. Wenn bei uns irgendwie eine Veranstaltung im	Mrs. I, 74

room, she always joins us and sits down. She has different domestic services during the day, dressing in the morning and stuff like that. The children also take care of her. You can live with us for a long time, if you are supported from one side or the other. She is mobile and it's nice to see how happy and satisfied she is."	Gemeinschaftsraum ist kommt sie immer dazu und setzt sich hin. Sie hat verschiedene häusliche Dienste tagsüber, also Tabletten geben was gibt es so? Morgens anziehen und sowas. Auch die Kinder kümmern sich. Also man kann bei uns auch lange noch leben, wenn man von irgendeiner Seite versorgt ist. Sie ist mobil und das ist ganz schön zu sehen, wie ganz zufrieden und glücklich sie ist."	
"And there are also some groups that think about things like "ok, let's open up an apartment sometime and put a nurse in it", but it hasn't happened yet that we would really get down to it properly. Well, some have already registered at the nursing home."	"Und es gibt auch so ein paar Gruppierungen die dann halt so darüber so überlegen "ok, machen wir irgendwann mal eine Wohnung frei und setze da halt eine Pflegerin rein". Aber so richtig, das man das richtig anpacken oder richtig angehen würde, das ist bisher noch nicht passiert. Gut, einige haben sich im Pflegeheim schon angemeldet."	Mrs. E, 78
"If really nothing works anymore and we finally have to move into a nursing home, we have recently considered in a small group (...) that we should accompany these residents by visiting them (...), because we can still provide that if it is not too far away. I think that's a good thing too, that's a relief."	"Mit wem Pflegeheim, wenn wirklich nichts mehr geht und wir ins Pflegeheim kommen, haben wir unlängst in einer kleinen Runde überlegt, (...) das wir mal diese Besuchen und (...) diesen Menschen doch noch begleiten, da wir das auch noch leisten können, wenn es nicht zu weit weg ist. Das finde ich auch noch eine gute Sache, das ist ein Trost. "	Mrs. E, 74
"Well, I guess a lot of women are not gonna be with us anymore. I don't know. I always had the impression that those people who join us, also old people, they also feel responsible, they participate (...). However, it is quite possible that this will change at some point, that this will turn into a consumer attitude "I take it. If it's good, I stay and if it's not good, I don't care and leave". Thinking about these aspects (...) is essential if we want to keep it working."	"Also da werden schon sehr viele Leute weg sein, also viele Frauen von uns weg sein. Das weiß ich nicht. Also jetzt hatte ich immer so den Eindruck die die kommen, die jetzt dazu kommen, ja gut da sind ja auch Alte dabei, die übernehmen das auch so, die fühlen sich auch verantwortlich, die machen mit, die machen manchmal mehr mit als die Alten in Anführungsstrichelchen. Aber das kann schon sein, dass das sich irgendwann ändert, dass das wirklich so eine Konsumentenhaltung wird "ich nehme es. Wenn es gut ist bleibe ich und wenn nicht mache ich mir keine Gedanken und gehe weg". Diese Gedanken zu machen oder diese innerliche Arbeit zu leisten gehört einfach dazu, wenn es weiterhin funktionieren soll."	Mrs. D, 78
"That is why everyone who moves in gets a godparent who can be contacted at any time and who assists. That is basically what we can do. And of course we can also involve them, talk to them and so on. Needless to say, they must also be genuinely open. Not that they become such a small group in the big one. We have already experienced that. Such a couple, that totally isolated itself. That happens of course, but it is very, very rare. Actually, those who get involved here see what's going on and are also willing to open up and take part."	"Dafür wird gemacht, das jeder der hier neu hinzieht bekommt einen Paten, der jederzeit ansprechbar ist, der auch hilft, der auch andere Hilfe dazu holt. Das ist eigentlich das was wir machen können. Und natürlich auch einbinden, mit denen reden und so weiter. Die müssen natürlich auch offen sein. Nicht das die dann so eine Kleinzelle in der großen werden. Das haben wir auch schon erlebt. So ein Paar, das sich dann wirklich so ein bisschen einigelt. Das ist dann natürlich… aber gut, das ist sehr, sehr selten. Eigentlich, wer hier reinzieht, der sieht ja was hier los ist und der ist auch bereit sich zu öffnen und Anteil zu nehmen. Aber es ist eben auch bei paar offensichtlich ist es möglich da die sich ein bisschen abkapseln. Aber wir haben auch das gut überstanden oder gut angenommen. Wie gesagt, es gehört Grund	Mrs. F, 74

	Gelassenheit und Großzügigkeit zu der Form des Lebens.“	
"Well, how far this will work, we'll see. We are doing our best to integrate them. And that usually works quite well. Of course, it also takes some time to get to know each other and so on, but (...) both sides must dedicate themselves to it. And that's what's important when you look at these new residents, that you place special value on what they have to say about communal living and about such a communal project. Not that they say something like "so I could do a handicraft course and stuff", that's not so important but what they have to say about their ability to live together."	“Ja, inwiefern das möglich ist, das wird sich erweisen. Also wir tun unser Möglichstes die einzubringen. Und da klappt im Grunde ganz gut. Es dauert natürlich auch was, bis man sich gegenseitig kennen lernt und so. Aber (...) da ist von beiden Seiten Zuwendung erforderlich. Und das ist eben das wichtige, wenn man diese Nachmieter sich anguckt, das man da besonderen Wert darauf legt was sie zu sagen haben bezüglich des gemeinschaftlichen Wohnens und bezüglich so eines Gemeinschaftlichen Projektes. Nicht etwa das sie so sehr sagen “also ich könnte da einen Bastelkurs machen und so”. Das ist nicht so wichtig sondern was sie zu sagen haben bezüglich ihrer Gemeinschaftsfähigkeit.“	Mrs. G, 76
"Well, I just wanted to say that the feeling that we as pioneers had and still have as pioneers (...), the feeling or the emotion or the feeling of the pioneers, cannot be transported, cannot be repeated. That's what we old people have to realize. (...) We may mourn a little bit or we might be a little sad but there will be something new and perhaps it (community life) will be reduced, reduced without it being an evaluation now but this is of of course to some degree an evaluation as I am one of these pioneers. It will perhaps be reduced to really necessary everyday activities and to different connections, relationships, individual ones. That's what I think, that's what I think it will be, yes."	“Also ich wollte gerade sagen, dass das Empfinden, was wir als Pioniere sage ich jetzt mal, als Pioniere hatten und Teilbereichen noch haben (…), das Gefühl oder die Emotion oder das Empfinden der Pioniere, das kann man nicht transportieren, das kann man auch nicht wiederholen. Das müssen wir Alte uns auch sage ich mal deutlich machen. (...) Wir trauern dem vielleicht ein bisschen nach oder wir hängen dem noch ein bisschen nach aber es wird was neues geben und es wird sich vielleicht reduzieren, reduzieren ohne dass das jetzt eine Bewertung ist aber es ist natürlich ein Stück weit eine Bewertung drin als Pionierin. Es wird sich vielleicht reduzieren auf wirklich so erforderliche Alltagsaktivitäten und auf verschiedene Verbindungen, Beziehungen, so einzelne. Das glaube, das glaube ich dass das so ein wird, ja.”	Mrs. E, 71

(C) PICTURES OF RESEARCH SITE

C1 Buildings cohousing community Heerstraße

Figure 10: Buildings cohousing community Heerstraße (pictures by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

C2 Communal areas cohousing community Heerstraße

Figure 11: Communal areas cohousing community Heerstraße (pictures by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)

C3 Community activities cohousing community Heerstraße

Figure 12: Community activities cohousing community Heerstraße (pictures by Wahlverwandtschaften Bonn e.V.)