

Emmaus Haarzuilens - The Netherlands

Introduction



Emmaus Haarzuilens is a residential work community that provides a home for people with diverse needs. The community generates income through thrift stores, to which every resident of Emmaus contributes, along with numerous volunteers. Located in Haarzuilens, a suburb of Utrecht in the Netherlands, Emmaus Haarzuilens is an integral part of the international

Emmaus movement, founded in 1966. It is the Emmaus Movement's first living-working community in the Netherlands, and in the years since, several more have been added. Founded in France, in the early 1950s, the Emmaus Movement aims to unite people who have faced exclusion or adversity. Together, they strive to address injustice. Across the globe, these communities share a united dedication to promoting social and environmental justice, creating an ethical and supportive economy, and championing the cause of universal citizenship.

Scale

Emmaus Haarzuilens can accommodate fourteen individuals, classifying it as a small-scale facility.

RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

Differentiation

Target group:

Emmaus Haarzuilens focuses primarily on people who have experienced exclusion. The residential group welcomes people with a variety of requests for help, especially those related to homelessness. The target group includes not only people who are or were formerly incarcerated. At Emmaus Haarzuilens, it is possible to take in people who are incarcerated, on parole or participating in a penitentiary program (ISD), even though the facility is not specifically designed for this purpose. The decision to take in these people depends on the capacity of the community and the person's willingness and ability to live with others.

There are also people who choose to live in an Emmaus house because they believe and follow the values of the Emmaus movement.

Emmaus Haarzuilens offers these people the opportunity to rest and work on their future. On average, residents stay for about three years. However, people with ongoing substance use disorders or serious problems that could hinder their participation are not admitted.

Admission to Emmaus Haarzuilens is carefully evaluated and discussed. The decision to admit someone who is in detention or has been previously detained depends on the composition of the community and the person's background. Eventually, the site coordinator, together with the existing community members, decides whether someone can join and commit to the community.

Forms of security:

Emmaus Haarzuilens is not described as a secure facility. For that reason, it is less applicable to talk about security measures here. The facility consists of housing rules that the community and the site coordinator use to regulate the community. Community members consult on compliance with these housing rules, and there is a paid coordinator who is responsible for the intake and departure of community members. Everything here is about the well-being of community members. The only visible static security is the video cameras at the thrift store that prevent theft from the outside.



Activities:

Emmaus Haarzuilens is all about housing and a collective lifestyle. Residents receive both housing and a weekly allowance of 50 euros in return for their contributions to the thrift store and various aspects of daily life. Work schedules, tailored to individual competencies, guide community activities, including cleaning, cooking and responsibilities for the thrift store. Each member is actively involved in internal activities, enhancing the overall functionality of the store. Outside working hours, residents are free to engage in personal activities. Volunteers play an important role in supporting all community activities. Meals are a communal affair, further promoting a sense of belonging.

Community-integration

Location and architecture:



Emmaus Haarzuilens resides in the village of Haarzuilens, a part of the Utrecht municipality. Haarzuilens is located approximately twelve kilometers to the west of Utrecht's city center. Haarzuilens has about 500 inhabitants (2018).¹ The community is in the middle of the village adjacent to an estate (castle) and nature reserve. One of the community members is planting a food forest.

Each resident has their own 16-square-meter bedroom in the community building, while shared living rooms, kitchens and bathrooms foster a communal living experience. Adjacent to the residence is one of the largest thrift stores in the Netherlands, run by community members and volunteers.

Interaction with the community:

Even though the residents work at the Emmaus Foundation thrift store or are involved in community activities within the facility, they maintain a strong connection to the community. They actively interact with each other, not only within the immediate surrounding area but also throughout the larger city and regional areas. The presence of one of the largest thrift stores in the Netherlands further extends this reach. Although open only on Wednesdays, the store attracts hundreds of visitors and is a vibrant hub for the community. The store is of great importance to the neighbourhood and embodies a vibrant and popular community place. Volunteers from the village and surrounding areas actively participate, making Emmaus Haarzuilens' thrift store one of the most sought-after and beloved in the country. The intense connection and cooperation with the local and regional community truly define the essence of Emmaus Haarzuilens. Emmaus, in partnership with Emmaus Parkwijk and local volunteers, manages three other thrift stores in Utrecht, further enriching their involvement in the city.

Emmaus Haarzuilens

Founded: 1966

Capacity: 14

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town:

Utrecht

Nature of interaction:

Visited and reported by

RJN (16/08/2023)

¹Utrecht (Municipality, Utrecht, Netherlands) - Population statistics, charts, map and location. (2023). *City Population*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from https://www.citypopulation.de/en/netherlands/admin/utrecht/0344__utrecht/

Publicity/ read more

- About Emmaus The Netherlands at the official website of Emmaus:

Emmaus Nederland. (September 22, 2023). *Emmaus Nederland*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmaus.nl/>

- Document about Emmaus The Netherlands and how they work (in dutch):

Emmaus Nederland. (May 2023). *Kernbeschrijving Emmaus Werkwijze*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmaus.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Emmaus-Nederland-Werkwijze-Mei-2023.pdf>

- About Emmaus Haarzuilens at the official website of Emmaus Haarzuilens:

Emmaus Utrecht. (n.d.). *Wonen bij Emmaus – Emmaus Haarzuilens*. Retrieved November 9th, 2023, from <https://emmaus-utrecht.nl/wonen-bij-emmaus/>