

# Hostel Boschdijk - The Netherlands

## Introduction

Hostel Boschdijk is located in a residential area, Oud-Woensel, in Eindhoven, a city in the southern Netherlands. This housing facility is known for its unique target group, providing supported living for individuals experiencing long-term addiction and (formerly) homelessness. The hostel follows a policy of tolerance, aiming not to stop substance use, but to allow it to take place in a controlled manner. Residents are permitted to use substances in their own rooms and can receive methadone at a methadone clinic in the neighborhood. Additionally, clean needles and other supplies are provided for safe usage. Hostel Boschdijk offers accommodation to a group that has few alternative housing options, often leading to homelessness.

Hostel Boschdijk opened in 2014 in response to the report "From Supported Living to a Protected Home" by the Danneberg Commission and is managed by Novadic Kentron. This organization is the expert in addiction care and addiction medicine in Brabant, with locations throughout the province and a person-centered approach. Novadic Kentron offers prevention, short-term or specialized treatment, and intensive care and guidance, with loyal, professional, and dedicated staff. Their mission is "Creating new opportunities together".

## Scale

Hostel Boschdijk has capacity for 34 residents, of which five are reserved for individuals with a forensic status. The remaining spots are available for residents who are staying voluntarily, as it is a protected living facility. The capacity just exceeds the limit of 30 residents needed to be classified as a small-scale facility. Hostel Boschdijk has a waiting list, so it may take some time before a place becomes available.

### RESCALED-principles in practice:

- Small-scale
- Differentiated
- Community-integrated

## Differentiation

### *Target group:*

Hostel Boschdijk focuses on adults who are homeless and struggling with chronic addiction and psychiatric issues, with a primary emphasis on chronic addiction. The facility has space for five individuals with a forensic status (placed through the justice system). These residents often have short sentences for moderate offenses and may come directly from a correctional facility or be serving a conditional sentence.

Although there are forensic clients, the majority reside voluntarily in the hostel due to their homelessness and addiction. Each resident follows the same program, with additional attention given to forensic clients to help them manage their substance use and prevent recidivism. After their forensic status ends, these clients often retain a forensic profile. Many clients under long-term care or social support also have a criminal background.

The average length of stay typically extends to a minimum of two years, although this can vary based on individual circumstances. Some residents, however, have been at Hostel Boschdijk for up to ten years. Due to long waiting lists, the facility aims to place more emphasis on facilitating exits.

### *Forms of security:*



Since the majority of residents live voluntarily at Hostel Boschdijk, security measures are primarily focused on incidents that may arise from chronic drug use. While relational security is not explicitly mentioned, it is a key priority, and the facility aims to provide a safe environment by promoting respectful interactions. Staff members are available to guide and support residents rather than dictating what is and isn't allowed, 24 hours a day. Incidents are addressed through conversations rather than static security measures.

Given the policy of tolerance and residents' drug use, some static security measures, such as cameras, are still necessary. However, these are perceived as reassuring by both residents and staff. Due to the unusual layout of the building, it is otherwise very difficult for staff to maintain an overview of the entire facility. In the staff room, there is a screen displaying the camera footage. Access to and from the building is monitored, but this is primarily to know who is inside or outside, rather than to restrict freedom of

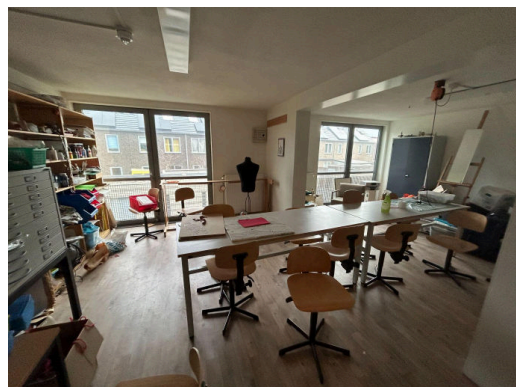
movement. There are also locks on common areas, but residents can request the keys to these spaces if they wish to use them. Residents do have their own keys to their rooms.

Procedural security refers to the house rules within the facility. However, Hostel Boschdijk has few strict rules, although there are agreements regarding matters such as medication. For example, residents are not allowed to cook independently. Smoking and drug use are only permitted in their own rooms. Residents have the freedom to move within the facility and the community as they wish.

### *Activities:*

At Hostel Boschdijk, residents enjoy a high degree of autonomy, despite some rules that are primarily established due to active substance use among residents. Although some individuals have been living in the hostel for a long time, the facility aims for residents to eventually move on, focusing primarily on controlled use or even complete abstinence, depending on individual progress and needs in other areas of life. Exit options include Housing First, nursing homes (despite the challenges related to addiction issues), and supported living arrangements such as Doorpakkers.

The facility provides support for mental and physical health care, daily living, and problem-solving assistance, resulting in improved self-care and reduced public disturbances. There is no specific activity program within the facility, but there are spaces for creative and recreational activities where residents are free to pursue their interests. Outside the facility, residents are supported in day activities, and essentially anything is possible. In practice, this mainly involves daytime activities, such as volunteering or picking up methadone. Hostel Boschdijk uses a points system where residents earn points by, for example, working in the garden, which they can redeem for activities or items they desire.



Daily meals are provided by hostesses, and residents can participate in cooking but are not allowed to cook independently.

## Community-integration

### *Location and architecture:*

Hostel Boschdijk is located in Oud-Woensel, a neighborhood in Eindhoven known for its diverse care facilities, including a homeless shelter and drop-in centers. Eindhoven is the fifth-largest city in the Netherlands and is home to several tech companies and research institutions, making it an attractive location for startups and entrepreneurs. The facility is situated in a residential area and is easily accessible by public transport, primarily by bus. This allows residents to easily participate in activities and utilize services within the community.



Hostel Boschdijk, a former student house, is a large building consisting of five blocks. Due to its illogical layout, which makes it difficult to move from one block to another, the building is scheduled for renovation soon. While the common areas such as hallways, living room, and kitchen may feel cold and uninviting, the individual rooms are very homely, featuring personal decorations from residents who have lived there for more than five years. Residents share bathrooms, toilets, living rooms, and kitchens, but each has their own bedroom.

The building includes various communal spaces, such as a creative room, recreational room, living room, dining room, medication room, staff room, storage, bicycle storage, and outdoor space. The recreational room provides relaxation options with a pool table, table tennis, and foosball.

### *Interaction with the community:*

Hostel Boschdijk maintains close contact with the local community in Oud-Woensel, a neighborhood in Eindhoven that hosts many care facilities. The concentration of these facilities in the area has led to tensions and complaints about disturbances, although this is often not caused by the residents of Hostel Boschdijk themselves, but by non-eligible homeless individuals.

Despite this, Hostel Boschdijk has a good relationship with the neighborhood, regularly engaging in contact and participating in community activities. This connection with the community is essential,

#### **Hostel Boschdijk**

Founded: 2014

Capacity: 34

Security level: Low

Nearest city/town:

Eindhoven (the Netherlands)

Nature of interaction:

Visited by RJN

(26/01/2024)

as residents often find their entire daily activities outside the facility, for example, when picking up methadone.

Collaboration with local authorities, such as the municipality, police, and addiction probation services, is crucial. Management groups are also organized, both with the neighborhood and with other care facilities, to ensure everything runs smoothly and to create a sense of safety for local residents. However, this can sometimes create a false sense of security among the immediate community. Issues may shift outside the immediate area when certain activities are no longer allowed to take place within the local "circle." Additionally, the facility offers a needle exchange program as a service to the community.

### **Publicity/ read more**

- About Hostel Boschdijk on the official website of Novadic-Kentron:

Woonvoorzieningen - Novadic-Kentron. (2022, September 13). *Novadic-Kentron*. Retrieved 16th of May, 2024 from <https://novadic-kentron.nl/hulp-en-advies/woonvoorzieningen/>