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**IMPLEMENTATION OF HOUSING STOCK
POLICY: AN ACTOR-NETWORK
PERSPECTIVE**

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Implementation of housing stock policy: an Actor-Network perspective.

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Abstract: Due to change in regulations in the mid 1990's Dutch social landlords have become much more independent from government policies. As a result they have to formulate their own strategic goals on how they want to deal with their properties. At the moment not much is known about how these goals are implemented in organisations of social landlords in The Netherlands. In the paper I will explore some theoretical viewpoints derived from Actor-Network Theory (ANT) that can help to understand processes of strategy implementation. Actor-Network Theory has been developed by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law. The existence of interaction between humans and non-humans is the central assumption on which it is based. Through interaction networks are built. Strategies begin as rather small networks (e.g. an idea of one of the participants in a meeting). They then try to become bigger and stronger networks. For example by being attached to a specific budget. The more relations there are the stronger the network is. As Actor-Network Theory states, making a reconstruction of the process can shed some more light on the substance of these relations. In the paper I will also give some first results about such a reconstruction of the implementation processes in two cases at a small social housing company in The Netherlands.

1. Introduction, aim and central question

Due to change in regulations in the mid 1990's Dutch social housing associations have become much more independent from government policies. Since then they are not subsidized by the national government anymore. However, housing associations still have the possibility to get low-interest loans. In exchange, they are not totally free to do what they want. As the special law on housing states: social housing companies have to invest their capital into the social housing market. However, that mission can be carried out in different ways. Therefore, since the change of regulations, housing associations have to formulate their own housing stock policy. Several models have been proposed to set up such strategies. At this time a huge number of social housing associations has developed a long-term strategy for their housing stock. From past research it appears that housing stock policy is now one of the most important policy themes for the social housing company (Heeger and Nieboer 2003). This policy is the most important input for financial forecasts, long-range plans and technical management. Social housing associations do pay a lot of attention to their housing stock policy. As Vijverberg (2005:16) found in a survey on housing stock policy, 71% of all social

housing associations claim to have such policy available. Of them, 91% claims to have written out their mission statement and quantified policy goals. Of all housing associations that claim to have a topical policy, 80% specified it into concrete instructions for rents policy, maintenance, investments etc. At the same time, other research states that the practices of housing stock policy are not as sophisticated as the policies in industrial planning (Gruis and Nieboer, 2004).

At the moment not much is known about how policy goals are implemented in organisations of social landlords in The Netherlands. Some elementary research has been done by the OTB Research Institute. Nieboer (2003) found that only few housing associations have explicitly formulated lines of policy that make a relation between the character of the housing stock and the goals of the housing company at the one hand and the concrete measurements for specific buildings on the other hand. Decisions on the development of the housing stock seem to be established through negotiation and/or based on implicit considerations that people make 'in their mind' (Nieboer 2003:49). In this paper I will present the first results of a PhD research that will zoom in on the implementation of housing stock policy. During the study I am on a search for traceable connections between policy documents and the buildings that are mentioned in it. Negotiations leave traces, and so do implicit considerations made 'in the mind'. Somewhere there must be some input and output. By making a reconstruction of this process it can become clear which road policy documents follow, and to where measurements at the level of the building can be traced back at. Actor-Network Theory is a theory on how such reconstruction can be made. In this paper I want to explore the usability of this theory for describing how implementation processes really work. I will do this at hand of a concrete example from my study.

In the following section I will, however, first go into some essential starting points of the research at the hand of the Popper - Kuhn debate. After setting this outline, I will elaborate on Actor-Network Theory as a method of data gathering and describing in paragraph 3. Then some first results about a case of the implementation of housing stock policy at a small social housing company in The Netherlands will be presented. In paragraph 5 I will get into the concepts of action- and anti-program. Finally, the paper will be concluded by establishing some first conclusions on the usability of Actor-Network Theory, and by setting the scene for further research.

2. The Popper - Kuhn debate

Although it may be a bit unusual, I will start this paper by outlining some philosophical principles I will follow in the research. The reason for doing so is that there are some fundamental standpoints in mainstream science that do not fit the research approach presented in this paper.

When we look at the scientific community we can roughly divide the community in two groups. The first group is very much focused on the 'scientific method.' This is now the mainstream focus in science. Karl Popper is an exponent of this group. Popper wanted to show that in essence all scientific knowledge shuts out other (theoretical) possibilities (Koenis 2002). However, that can only be true as long as these other theoretical possibilities do not appear in practice. Popper believes that scientists should formulate hypothesis on the subjects their working on, and then try to falsify this hypothesis. There is the famous example of the white and black swans to point this out. We could formulate a hypothesis that only white

swans do exist. The right scientific approach would then be to search for swans of other colours. As long as we don't find them we can hold our hypothesis. However, as soon as we find at least one black swan we have to reject the hypothesis. As Popper believes, only by following this method we can produce scientific knowledge.

The second group in the current scientific community is focused on practices, rather than on the methods for studying them. Scientists in this group therefore are more open for all kinds of sources of information. For these scientists the question whether the method is 'scientific' or not is not so important. They think that it is better to focus on the adequateness of the information gathered by any method that is available. This goes back on Kuhn (1970), who has showed that different paradigms are followed up by each other. As Kuhn states, paradigms are not about absolute truth, but about relative truth that is constructed by individuals and therefore can change from time to time. As Lakatos argues, paradigms can only be examined in one way. That is by asking the question which paradigm can best make us understand practice (Van den Bersselaar 2003).

There are two reasons for me to position myself in the second group. Most important is that my research is about practices. Albeit I am doing scientific research, doing this through a specific method is not the most important aim of the research. The first goal of the research is to find out what is really happening in concrete practices. To look after what is really happening in policy practices it's better to focus on adequate information rather than on method. Secondly my research cannot easily be reduced to a few hypotheses. Then, I would only focus on a few aspects that are included in the hypothesis. Thus a lot of important 'context' would be left out. It would be wrong to leave out what the actors in the field might recognize as very important for their daily work.

3. The study of concrete practices

Implementation is something that cannot be pointed at. The same is true for policy goals. However, they can be practiced. Implementation can be done. Policy goals can be written down or spoken out aloud. Without these practices implementation and policy goals would not exist at all. They are *made* in concrete practices. Therefore they are changing consequently. It is thus impossible to lay the concepts of implementation and policy goals under a microscope to study them. However, it is possible to carefully study the practices through which the implementation of policy goals is made. Therefore we need a kind of ethnographic or ethnomethodologist approach. Actor-Network Theory is such a theory. It has been developed by Bruno Latour, Michel Callon and John Law. The theory emphasizes to 'follow the actors' (Latour 2005). They will have to tell me what they are doing. As Latour (1996:10) puts it: they do the analysis for me. I only have to question them and make them proof their statements. In that sense two notions are very important: triangulation and the saturation of information.

Triangulation is used in the research to make sure that the data, on which the research is built, is correct. Data from a single source needs to be checked double. Triangulation is used in this study in three different forms. There is a differentiation in data, method and researcher. Data will be gathered from different sources. I will use letters, e-mails, minutes of internal meetings at the housing company, minutes of meetings with third parties, annual reports, articles from the local newspapers, information made available by third parties, the memory of the people involved inside and outside the housing company and more. It does not need

further explanation that it may happen that minutes of internal meetings turn out to state something slightly different than the annual report does. By comparing the different sources of data they can prove each other to be adequate or not. The second possibility of triangulation is using different methods. As my research is historical, the available methods are limited. Still I can do both document analysis and interviews. Sometimes things are written down more polite than would be logical from the feelings of the people involved. On the other hand it is also possible that the people's memory is not always as accurate as the original minutes on a certain meeting. The third form of triangulation addresses the researcher. At some points in the research the researcher is used as an instrument for the gathering and the sorting of primary data. Taking decision is unavoidable during the research. Triangulation can confront the researcher with different options. Unfortunately it is not possible to have more than one researcher on the research. However, it is possible to discuss the decisions I take with others. I can let them read the texts I produce take profit from their comments. That's exactly what I will do. Secondly it is important to know where the research will stop. By following the actors we may end up by describing the whole world. However, that is not possible since I have only four years to complete a thesis that should not be too lengthy. Ethnographers sometimes claim that they stop doing research when they do not find new things anymore. They call this the saturation of information. However, in principle it is always possible to find new information somehow. The point is that on a certain moment the new information doesn't really relate too much on the research subject anymore. In that sense the right moment is always subject of discussion.

Actor-Network Theory

To draw a study upon the Actor-Network Theory (ANT), in the first place it is important to do extensive empirical research. For that reason I got into some merely ethnographic methods above. Latour (2005:42) believes that: "social scientists have transformed the world in various ways; the point, however, is to interpret it." This is of course not only a reference to the famous phrase of Karl Marx, but also to the sociologists that were influenced by him. At the moment we begin to interpret the empirical data that we gathered we are doing ANT. In this section I will go into how we can interpret by using ANT.

Doing the analysis in an ANT-proof way, I will look very carefully at the connections that are established between different sites. For example: I am going to look how a floorplan, the making of a specific law some years ago, and the outcome of a specific meeting can be all connected to a decision that is taken on the request for planning permission to build a certain building. From ANT we derive that we have to look for traceable connections. That means that only if we find some material proof, we can say that there is a connection. To see how this works, we need to get back to the beginning of the ANT argument. For ANT, not much can be said before we have been doing research. Some fundamental preconceptions taken by classic sociology are being rejected by ANT. As Latour states, groups do not exist on themselves. You cannot point at groups in the same way you can point at chairs, cats and individual humans. There is only group-formation. "For ANT, if you stop making and remaking groups, you stop having groups" (Latour 2005:35). Therefore every time again we have to wonder how groups have been formed by the actors involved. ANT does not differ much from other sociologies when it states that actors have the power to change other actors. This power is called agency (Latour 2005:52; Law 2004:31-34). When we act we always interact with others. As Law (1992:2) states: "interaction is all that there is." During these interactions we change other actors. At the same time, however, we are being changed by other actors. Latour points out that not only humans, but also non-humans have agency. Non-

human entities are influencing us constantly. Some people 'have to' watch when a television screen in their surrounding is turned on, and a computer that crashes from time to time can make you really desperate. The humans and non-humans that have agency can also be called actor-networks. "An actor-network is what is made to act by (...) mediators flowing in and out of it. It is made to exist by its many ties: attachments are first, actors are second." (Latour 2005:217). Following ANT, it is thus more interesting to focus on the 'many ties' that construct actor-networks than to look at the actors themselves. The reason for that is that actor-networks do not exist automatically. They only exist when there is interaction. And they are also formed by the many ties of interaction. Interaction is like a flow: something flows from one actor-network to another. When we are able to trace these flows, the research is on the right ANT-track. To let something flow from one actor-network to another, it has to put into a form. An example of this can be information. When we want to flow information from the desk of a researcher to the meeting of the management team at a company where important decision are made, we have to put the information into a form that can be understand by the managers. Usually scientists do so by writing a popular version of their reports. In that case, the report would function as an 'immutable mobile' as it is able to let the information flow from one actor-network to another.

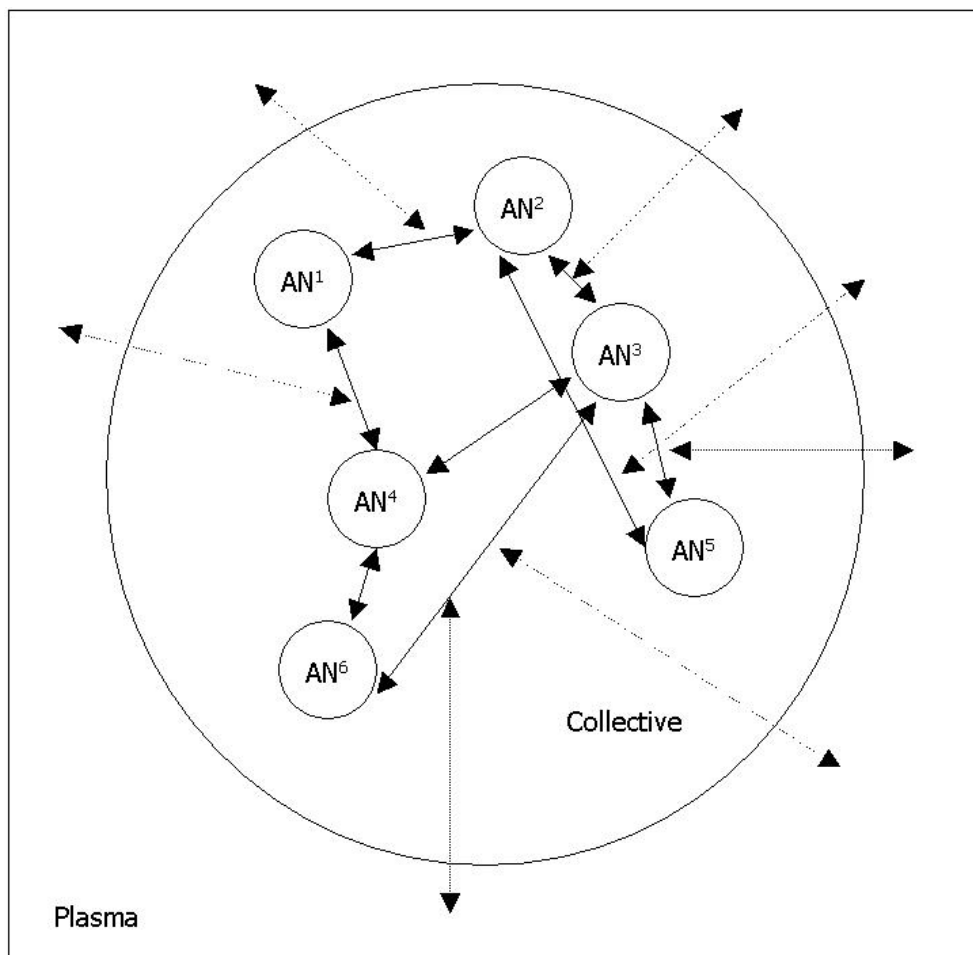


Figure 1: ANT in a nutshell.

In figure 1, ANT has been summarized. We see that there is a lot of interaction (indicated by arrows). Immutable mobiles are the vehicles on which things can travel from the one end of the arrow to the other end. In real practices this may look even more complex than in this simplified scheme. Through the interaction, different actor-networks (indicated by AN) are

created. This interaction and the actor-networks make up the collective. The collective is the alternative of ANT for the classical 'social world'. The collective, in other words, is everything we can trace through material ties. However, it is not always possible to trace why interactions are being established. For example, the relation between the actions of Saddam Hussein and the war in Iraq can be well traced by following the material ties through newspapers, documents from the intelligence agencies, meetings of the United Nations, etc. However, this interaction is not necessarily caused by Saddam's actions. Bush and Blair could have decided otherwise. In their decision a lot of different aspects may have played a role. Some of these aspects are not traceable through material ties. As Latour (2005:241) states, such aspects pop in from the 'plasma' (in figure 1 this is assigned by the dotted arrows). This does not mean that these aspects are not traceable at all. They are just not traceable by us, humans. In my research I will focus on the aspects that are traceable. However, we have to keep in mind that by following this approach we can only describe a lot of the implementation process, but definitively not everything.

A nice feature of ANT is the way in which it distinguishes action-programs and anti-programs. As we saw already, actor-networks do influence each other. While doing so, actor-networks tend to have different 'programs'. Sometimes these programs do not fit together without a kind of mediation. For example when a social housing association wants to have a permission to build a six-storied flat, their action-program is something like: 'government give the planning permission'. However, the local zoning plan (in Dutch: 'bestemmingsplan') can practise an anti-program like 'do not construct buildings higher than 10 meters'. As Latour (1996:292) argues, the housing association in this example can now do two things. The easiest option is to change the action-program, for example by designing another plan. The second option is to try to neutralize the anti-program. In most cases the second option is of course favoured. In The Netherlands in this example the anti-program of the zoning plan can be neutralized by following a specific legal procedure that can rule out the influence of the zoning plan for a specific building. This legal procedure then functions as a mediator that makes it possible for the action-program to be practised. In a situation where neither the action-program nor the anti-program is changed, nothing will move. This was for example the case for ARAMIS, a guided transport system intended for Paris. As nobody moved, finally the project was abandoned completely (see Latour 1996). In the study on the implementation of housing stock policy we can use this ANT feature of action-programs and anti-programs to gain more insight in the moments where mediators are needed to be able to carry out action-programs.

4. The case of the Beukelaer building

Slagduin WoonBedrijf (SWB) is a small social housing company. The SWB owns about 2000 houses, most of them situated in the village of Slagduin, in the western part of the Netherlands. In 1999 the SWB first produced a report in which they wrote about their housing stock policy. In 2007 some concrete projects that (partly) found their origin in the 1999 report are being delivered. For this reason, from a practical research perspective, it is a very suitable project to conduct my research. In this paragraph I will elaborate on the policy making of the SWB. To point out the realisation of the policy I will focus on one particular project: the renovation of a building with 47 apartments. The results I present here are still under construction. The data comes from documents. However, interviews have not been conducted yet. Therefore some adjustments and further elaboration may have to be added during further research.

1996 - 2000: trail and error

The story starts on the 28th of May, 1996. At that day a concept version of a policy document for the management team of the SWB mentions the demographic changes in Slagduin. In the document it is concluded that the housing assets owned by the SWB are not suitable to future demographic changes. In the long term elderly houses have to be build. It is also mentioned that this can be best done in the form of new houses as a substitution for houses build in the first decennia of the last century. In 1998 it first becomes clear from the documents that one of the buildings of the SWB, the so called Beukelaer-building, has to be restructured. In July 1998, in a memo on the basic principles for the 1999 estimate, it is mentioned that after the renovation of 173 estates in Duivenvoorde, there is the possibility that the Beukelaer-building has to be renovated in 1999/2000. The costs for this are set at €1,5 million. Important is that it is also mentioned that the tenantability of the building has been declining, and that for that reason all aspects of the building are going to be analysed. In 1999, in the first SWB report that is exclusively devoted to housing stock policy it is stated again that there is a need for more elderly housing. It now seems to be more urgent than in 1996, as the 'long term' has disappeared from the text. At the same time the demographic changes are not mentioned either. In the 1999 report the emphasis is on the realisation of more people moving up the housing ladder. As there are a lot of single-family dwellings that are rented by only one or two older people this can best be done by the building of both private property and old people's houses. From the report we can also derive that there are no locations available for the building of new houses in Slagduin, and that within the housing stock of the SWB there are not much possibilities either for the realisation of elderly housing. However, a ray of hope mentioned in the report is that in the Beukelaer-building there may be a chance for realising these houses. This is something that is part of the analysis of the building during the first months of 1999. In January 1999 there is a first meeting of representatives of the SWB and KP architects. From the minutes it becomes clear that SWB wants to add elevators to the three blocks of the Beukelaer-building, and that the 47 existing apartments have to be updated. Furthermore the walkways have to be renovated completely. For reasons of affordability of the whole project there has to be added a second floor to the building with extra apartments that are available for leasing. In the spring of 1999 the tenants of the existing 47 apartments are asked for their opinion through a survey. About 50% of the respondents are in favour of the plan proposed by SWB. From a letter from the SWB to the local municipality on the 1st of July, 1999 it becomes clear that almost all tenants do agree on the necessity of a large-scale renovation. This letter was sent to ask the local municipality for its willingness to cooperate with the project. On the 10th of November 1999 the municipality responds by letter: before the request of the SWB can be examined, they have to pay fees. On the 11th of January, 2000 from another letter it becomes clear that the municipality of Slagduin is willing to cooperate on the Beukelaer-project.

2000-2004 A lot of waiting

In the first months of 2000 the SWB, KP architects and constructor Van der Steen are working on the renovation plan for the Beukelaer-building. It seems that everything is now going according to schedule. A tenants' association committee is starting up, the architect is busy with producing temporary floor plans and financial limitations are worked out. In June 2000 the temporary floor plan is ready. In a meeting with representatives of SWB, KP architects and the municipality of Slagduin it becomes clear that the legal procedures can start in September 2000. In September 2000, suddenly the project is delayed on different fields.

The calculation of the financial limitations takes longer than expected. The social plan for the tenants that have to leave the building is also delayed, and the SWB did not hear anything from the municipality at that time. A special meeting to inform the tenants and other people living in the neighbourhood is being postponed. In the autumn of 2000 and the beginning of 2001, the delays turn into problems. It seems that the costs for the project are so high, that SWB believes that the municipality should be willing to support the project also financially. The negotiations with the tenant association committee about the social plan advance with difficulty. In December 2000, the municipal fire department, states that the plan does not meet the fire safety regulations. From the following discussion, between the SWB, the architect and their advisors at one side and the local municipality and the fire department at the other, it appears that there is disagreement on the question what regulations should be applied. For the SWB the reconstruction of the 47 existing apartments should only meet the regulations for existing buildings. However, the local municipality believes that the reconstruction is so sizeable that it should meet the rules for new buildings. It is not difficult to guess which rules are easier to meet. Another delay is caused by the fact that the local municipality wants to let the SWB pay for possible compensation claims from people living in the neighbourhood of the Beukelaer building. The SWB, however, is not willing to take the risk. At the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001 there are not only setbacks. A positive development is the cooperation with a local care agency, and the SWB joining the regular meetings with partners from the social service sector. There is also more pressure from the Ministry of Housing to focus more on care. From the annual report of 2000, it becomes clear that because of concrete initiatives of the SWB, the local municipality becomes more willing to create more possibilities to work on this theme. It also is stated again that the SWB wants to play a role in the field of housing and care for the elderly and disabled. The spring of 2001 is not a very fruitful time for the Beukelaer project. The problems on the fire safety regulations are at the agenda of different meetings with the (representatives of) SWB and the local municipality, but no solutions were presented at that time. The summer of 2001 seems to be an important moment for the go/no go decision on the project. The negotiations with the tenants' association committee are not leading anywhere. The SWB even threatens to cancel the whole project when the tenants are not willing to accept the offer SWB made them in the form of a social plan. At this time it also becomes clear that the floorplans have to be remade to be able to meet the requirements on fire safety as asked by the local municipality. The architect feels the need to ask SWB explicitly whether they think that they are able to come over all the setbacks or not. In the autumn of 2001, the Beukelaer project is given less priority by the management team of the SWB. This is because they feel that other projects are running much easier than Beukelaer. However, the discussion on the fire safety continues. The architect, representing the SWB, and the local municipality do most of the work at this theme. At the policy level, a document on housing and care is being worked on by the SWB in the autumn of 2001 and the beginning of 2002. In May 2002 this document is finished. It underlines the importance of housing and care. In this policy document different possibilities for the realisation of facilities in the rural district of Slagduin are mentioned. This document is also used by the SWB to underline their argument in the discussion with the municipality on the need to create opportunities to build houses for the elderly. Beukelaer is also mentioned in the report. It is also in May 2002 that the municipality finally responds to the floorplan that had been established in September 2001. The municipality still does not agree on the measurements taken to fulfil the fire safety requirements. The municipality now makes their own suggestions on how to solve the issue. As KP architects believes, by incorporating these suggestions into the floorplan of the Beukelaer building, the problems should be solved. The new start is underlined by the fact that there is a new head of the supervision department of the municipality, and a new project manager at the SWB. The talks on the legal procedure for

the planning permission and the social plan for the tenants are being restarted. During the late summer of 2002 also the care gets more and more into the plans for the Beukelaer building. In consultation with the local care agency a medical aid station is added to the floorplan. In November 2002 suddenly it is mentioned in the minutes of a meeting of the management team that Beukelaer has no priority. In January 2003 it is mentioned that the delay on the project is accepted. From the documents it remains unclear why this is. However, it could well be that the forth going discussion on fire-safety has something to do with it. In February 2003 again a 'definitive' floorplan is sent to the municipality as a last check before the legal procedures will start. Again, the municipality has some additional questions and remarks. Again there is a discussion on who has to take the risk of possible compensation claims from the people living in the neighbourhood of the Beukelaer building. In September 2003 the application for a 'first phase' planning permission is being handed in by the SWB. However, in November, the municipality asks to redo the application, as there are still some elements that do not meet the criteria set by the local municipality. In December 2003 the municipality let de SWB know that the legal procedure for the 'first phase' planning permission can only be started when SWB is willing to take the risk for possible compensation claims. As a response to this threat, the SWB stands the loss. It costs two months before the possible risks for compensation claims have been analysed. In March 2004 the legal procedure for the 'first phase' planning permission finally starts. One month later the building is designated as 'action space', which means that the tenants of the Beukelaer building get priority when they want to move. On the first of July there is a public hearing for people that do not agree on the Beukelaer plan to underline their statements. In response to those objections the floorplan has to change again, but only a little bit this time. In November 2004 the municipality states that unless some objections to the initial plan, there is no reason for not giving the 'first phase' planning permission. Earlier, in September, the municipality already agreed on a special loan for the project. As this is a low-interest loan, it helps to make the project financially possible. The negotiations with the tenants' association committee are being restarted again at this time.

2004-2005 The Beukelaer-building is going to be build, but how?

In December 2004 the first phase planning permission is given to the SWB by the local municipality. The loan that had been agreed on in September is now approved by the local council. The application for the second phase planning permission is being handed in by the SWB. This second phase procedure is only necessary for the new apartments of the building. In January 2005 a subsidy of €32.000,- is given to project by the regional government. However, from the minutes of the local council meeting, it appears that neighbours of the Beukelaer building believe that this subsidy is against EU-rules, and that they want the municipality to cancel the project. Although a group of neighbours wants to fight the project legally, this does not seem to be a threat for the project anymore. From a policy document on housing and care, it even appears that Beukelaer is seen as a best-practice on how this theme can be made concrete in real projects. However, this does not mean that all problems are gone. In February 2005 there is an updated estimate for the project made by Van der Steen. The price for the project seems to be much higher than the SWB could have known from the estimate that had been made one year earlier. Tough negotiations between SWB and Van der Steen lead eventually to lower costs for the SWB. Besides these negotiations, also some savings on the material to be used for the reconstruction are made.

2005 – 2007: Beukelaer is more than only a building

In the summer of 2005 the municipality gives SWB the second phase planning permission for the Beukelaer building. On the 10th of October the reconstruction of the building starts. During this process there are some setbacks due to problems with the outer wall. However, in the first months of 2007 the building is being delivered. From the minutes of a meeting of representatives of the SWB and SSZ in January 2007 it appears that Beukelaer will be more than only a building. Beukelaer will be an example of how housing and care can be tied together in the districts of Slagduin. SWB and SSZ will use Beukelaer as an argument to move on on the road they have taken together: the road of interweaving housing with care.

5. Mediators

In this paragraph I will get into the nice ANT feature, I presented earlier in paragraph 3. Through the concepts of action-program and anti-programs, ANT makes it possible to find out on what moments mediators are necessary to neutralize anti-programs. In this paragraph I will take three examples from the Beukelaer case.

During the first phase of the project we can see that there have been practiced different action-programs that turned out to be not strong enough to make it. At the beginning of the project the SWB wanted to build elderly housing at new locations. From 1996 to 1998 it seems that this standpoint has not been put into practice already. Nothing seems to happen in the field. However, in 1999 the standpoint "municipality, make elderly housing possible!" is carried out more precise. The argument that supports it is different from the one used 1996. It is stretched that the realization of elderly housing will lead to more possibilities for people to move up the housing ladder. For financial reasons the choice for a 3-story building had been made by SWB. For such a building they need of course a planning permission. The four things mentioned: the housing stock policy, the housing ladder, the 3 stories and the planning permission are the actor-networks that together form the action-program (see figure 2). The local municipality, however, is practicing an anti-program, which means that they do not allow building higher than two stories on new locations. It is not that they are against elderly housing, but because of this anti-program that there seems to be a problem. The SWB had two options at that time. Either they had to neutralize the anti-program or they had to change the action-program. From the data it is not clear whether they tried to change the action-program or the anti-program. Further research has to make clear whether it, for example, would be possible to realize elderly housing through lower buildings. In the Beukelaer case, the SWB had to look in the end for a different standpoint. That much is already clear from the data.

Standpoint of the SWB: "municipality, make elderly housing possible."	
Action-program	→ ←
Anti-program	
I Housing stock policy, housing ladder, planning permission, 3 stories elderly housing	No planning permission for building of more than 2 stories on new locations.

Figure 2: action-program and anti-program (see also Latour 1997:22).

In figure 3 the new standpoint of the SWB is presented: "realise elderly housing by using own properties." This standpoint seems to be simpler then the first one. However, it is still not as easy as you may have hoped for. The action program of the SWB is now to realize elderly housing by using their existing properties. However, the single-family dwellings practice an anti-program, because of the difficulties that arise when a single-family dwelling should be transformed into a home for the elderly. Other dwellings that already fulfil a task in housing the elderly do practice an anti-program in the sense that these dwellings are not able to

accommodate more elderly than they already do. However, SWB now slightly changes the action-program as it brings the Beukelaer building in the discussion. The mediator that was used here, was a small research on the state of this building. It appeared that the houses on the first stock of this building, were not really rented by people of 55 years and older. Based on this conclusion, we can say that the Beukelaer building can make a contribution to the policy goal of realizing more elderly housing. However, different aspects of the building play an anti-program in the sense that they do not permit elderly housing. For example: there is no elevator, the size of the houses does not meet contemporary demands. In the third version of the action-program these anti-programs are neutralized by a reconstruction plan that takes the problems into account. During further research this action-program will

Standpoint of the SWB: "realise elderly housing by using own properties."	
Action-program	→ ← Anti-program
1 Housing stock policy, housing ladder, planning permission, own properties	→ ← Single-family dwelling, houses already for elderly
2 Housing stock policy, housing ladder, planning permission, Beukelaer	→ ← No elevator, size of houses
3 Housing stock policy, housing ladder, planning permission, Beukelaer reconstruction plan	→ ←

Figure 3: action-program and anti-program (see also Latour 1997:22).

The third example of how the concept of action- and anti-programs can work out, is given by the discussion on possible compensation claims. We are now going to stretch the standpoint of the municipality. The standpoint of the municipality is "SWB, take the risk for compensation claims." However, the SWB practices an anti-program by pointing out that from the law it is clear that the municipality is responsible for this. In the second version of the action-program, the municipality makes a link between the compensation claims and the start of the legal procedure for the planning permission. The municipality does not want to start the procedure, before SWB is willing to take the risk of compensations claims. After this move, SWB finally takes the risk.

Standpoint of the municipality: "SWB, take the risk for compensation claims."	
Action-program	→ ← Anti-program
1 SWB takes the risk	→ ← Pointing at law: municipality responsible
2 SWB takes the risk, procedure for planning permission can only start if SWB takes the risk	→ ←

Figure 4: action-program and anti-program (see also Latour 1997:22).

6. Conclusion

As we have seen in the last paragraph even one project at one small housing association is the result of a very complex concerted action of different actor-networks. The results I presented in this paper are the preliminary results for which I only used the document analysis. As you may have noticed there are still some difficult questions open. Not all connections between different sites have been traced already. In the next phase of my research this data will be

enriched by doing interviews with key-persons and maybe by looking at even more documents. Surely this will make the whole thing even more complex. However, as ANT states, that is how the world is. It seems that it is neither possible nor useful to try to search for a few concepts from which everything happening in the world can be explained. ANT will not tell us what is most important to think about when implementing a housing stock policy. However, it is very useable as a tool in analyzing a specific situation.

For small parts of the implementation process we can use ANT in making an analysis of the situation by framing the events through the concept of action- and anti-programs. In the last paragraph we have seen some examples of that. At the moment we talk about an action-program, however, we have to choose an actor-network to which glasses we are looking. Different actor-networks have different action-programs. Only by telling the story from all points of view, it can be said to be a complete story (Latour 1997:26). However, from the point of view of a social housing association, their own action-program is of course of most importance. To be able to carry out these action-programs, anti-programs have to be neutralized. With ANT we can indicate the moments where mediators were needed to neutralize the anti-programs. In the Beukelaer case we have also seen that on certain moments these mediators did not appear, and that the housing association had to propose another action-program. This is the point where ANT leaves us alone again. ANT does not pretend that it is able to solve the problems that housing associations face when mediators are not present. This might make you feel sad. However, is this not exactly what is happening in reality? Innovations come from everywhere. Scientists have no patent on it. Interpreting the world is one thing, changing it is something completely different. Do not mix it up.

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