

SENIOR COHOUSING IN CROSS-CUTTING RESEARCH

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Abstract

This paper concerns the issues of senior cohousing with a particular emphasis on the residents' gender. Senior cohousing is an alternative way of living for older people in the 21st century. It is referred to as a community or cooperative, which is created by people aged 50+, who have already retired and those professionally active, who, for various reasons, want to live with people with similar views and co-decide about what their living environment looks like. Literature review shows the slight scope of the conducted studies on senior cohousing, in particular with regard to gender. The research methodology in this paper is based on the literature analysis, review of the current literature and own experiences from the participation in a workshops about cohousing, as well as experiences from the study visits in cohousing groups in the US and UK. The author of this paper has used the historical-interpretative method in the conducted studies, what resulted in the identification of the gender and age "lens" over the years in senior cohousing. This knowledge can be used in the future as the base to carry out the empirical research on concrete examples of the cohousing building.

Streszczenie

Artykuł dotyczy problematyki cohousingu senioralnego ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem płci mieszkańców. Cohousing senioralny, to alternatywny sposób zamieszkania dla osób starszych w XXI wieku. Nazywany także wspólnotą lub kooperatywą, tworzą go osoby w wieku 50+, które przeszły na emeryturę, ale także aktywne zawodowo, które z różnych przyczyn chcą zamieszkać z osobami o podobnych poglądach i współdecydować o tym jak będzie wyglądało ich środowisko życia. Przegląd literatury wskazuje niewielki zakres prowadzonych badań na temat cohousingu senioralnego, w szczególności z uwzględnieniem kryterium płci. Metodyka badań oparta została o analizę literaturową, przegląd aktualnego piśmiennictwa oraz własne doświadczenia z udziału w cyklu warsztatów nt. cohousingu oraz z wizyt studyjnych w grupach cohousingowych w Stanach Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii. Autorka niniejszego artykułu posłużyła się metodą historyczno-interpretacyjną, których rezultatem jest zidentyfikowanie "soczewek" płci i wieku na przestrzeni lat w cohousingu senioralnym. Wiedza ta może posłużyć w przyszłości jako podłoże do przeprowadzenia badań empirycznych na konkretnych przykładach zabudowy cohousingowej.

Keywords: Ageing lens; Cross-cutting; Development process; Feminisation of ageing; Gender lens; History of cohousing; Senior cohousing.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of demographic changes and ageing of the population we can observe trends which have shown that women live longer than men. A significant proportion of the world's population is made up by older women and their population is growing, that is why it is possible for us to discuss the "feminization of

ageing". The GUS report in Poland has shown that already approximately 1 million of people older than 65 years of age and more lives alone, forming a single household (which is approx. 30% households in this age group), 80% of which are women – widows. However, in the solitude of living up to 66% people aged venerable (80 years and older). This trend will deepen. With the current age structure of the popula-



Figure 1.
Glacier Circle in Davis, California. Source: Agnieszka Labus, November 2015



Figure 2.
Dining room in common house in Glacier Circle in Davis, California. Source: Agnieszka Labus, November 2015

tion the phenomenon will worsen in 20 years – the number of elderly people living alone will increase. We can observe that many seniors (men and women), not only in Poland but in many European countries, are mis-housed, ill-housed, or even simply homeless because they lack or feel they lack, the appropriate housing options [1]. The huge generational difference in culture, experience and expectations is also a vital aspect in the context of the today's and future generation of older people. The home environment needs to replace the domestic space, because it incorporates more fully age- and ablement-sensitive readings of the spaces constitutive of the domestic space. This trend showed to be strongly needed (more than ever) in order to create a new kind of communities and the type of housing development. The response of these trends could involve the co-operative housing solutions, like senior cohousing which is an alternative way of living for older people who would like to keep their own home, live in a group setting which is run by themselves and who also want company and security. As it has been suggested by many authors [2; 3] the contemporary cohousing can be characterized as a pragmatic response to demographic change and a new lifestyle.

Cohousing, understood as an alternative type of the residential development, is relatively weak understood in research in the field of academic considerations. From a “user” perspective, both the young and the older can contribute to the solution of many problems of everyday life and have a positive impact on one of the main challenges of the twenty-first century – namely, the struggle with loneliness. Cohousing can be intergenerational or just for the elderly. The term of senior cohousing is used for a community or cooperative, which is made up of persons aged 50+, not just people who have already retired, but also those who are economically active, but for various reasons (moving out of children's house, widowhood, lonely life, etc.) They want to live with people who think alike and co-decide at the beginning of the development process about how their living environment will look like (choice of plot, cooperation with the architect, deciding on the final result of the project at every stage of its development, the management of the existing structure, the use of common spaces and taking care not to exchange the domestic activities, if they have any desires and needs, etc.). Currently, this type of residential development is a niche of the housing market. In many European countries (Denmark, Sweden, Finland, UK) there is a growing interest in senior cohousing

from the active members of the baby boom generation, who seek an alternative to living alone but who reject the conventional forms of housing for the elderly as paternalistic and institutional [4].

2. METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this paper is the description and interpretation of the historical development of cohousing taking into account the age and gender lens. The studies were carried out based on the literature analysis, review of the current literature and own experiences from the participation in a series of workshops “Collaborative housing and community resilience” funded under ESRC in Great Britain. The author of this paper had the opportunity to participate in a series of workshops (4 and 5) entitled Collaborative Housing and Community Resilience 14.09.2015 entitled Collaborative Housing, Mutual Support and Specialist Care at the University of Nottingham and 28-29.01.2016 at workshops entitled Sharing in the future: how collaboration influences ecological behaviour at the University in Sheffield. The experts, scientists and representatives of government organisations, not only from Europe, but also the USA, participated in the workshops.

Also the access to library resources during the 3-month internship at the university of Westminster in London (UK) and the 2-month internship at the University of California in Berkeley (USA) proved to be an invaluable asset for this research, which the author of this paper had the opportunity to do last year. The internships have enabled the author to visit and conduct interviews with the residents of several cohousing communities in the USA and the UK, including the first senior cohousing in the USA in Davis called the Glacier Circle (Fig. 1, 2, 3). The collected material from the conducted studies constitutes the element for empirical studies, which the author intends to carry out in the future.

The opportunity to participate in the workshops and study visits in cohousing communities, as well as the establishment of contacts with the scientists undertaking similar issues in the world, enabled the author to obtain the first-hand information.

The author of this paper used the historical-interpretative method in the conducted studies, the effect of which led to the identification of the gender and age lens over the years in cohousing. This knowledge can be the basis and contribution to take the age and gender criteria into account while designing the residen-



Figure 3. View of the bedroom and anti-bedsore bed in unit in Glacier Circle in Davis, California. Source: Agnieszka Labus, November 2015

tial buildings, and in the context of society aging it can contribute to designing “more sensitive” places of residence for seniors and female seniors in contrast to the paternalistic and institutional homes for the elderly.

The first stage of the conducted research was to look for data, authors, publications on cohousing problems including the analysis of age, and then according to the internally fixed logic, taking into account gender and both criteria: age and gender. The next stages of the research was the assessment of the materials value and the explanation and interpretation of the obtained information, through the description of events and the socio-cultural ground in the given period of time, which affected the formation of senior cohousing. Measures of the interpretative nature aimed to understand the issues of the senior cohousing, as well as its developmental trends over separate periods in order to define the age and gender lens in cohousing.

3. STATE OF THE ART – AGEING&GENDER IN COHOUSING

Valuable research has been carried out in the field of cohousing interlinked with ageing and gender by only a few authors. McCamant&Durrett [5] conducted research in the social content and physical design of cohousing by working out a collaborative design model. Meltzer [6] has made a valuable contribution by sorting out the environmental benefits of the cohousing design, mainly in the US context. She has also analysed the differences between ecovillages and cohousing (2010). Caldenby&Wallden [7] analysed the way design on collective housing in Soviet Union and Sweden was based on the modernist ideas about a far-reaching division of labour between residents and service staff and desire to reduce housework as much as it was possible. Palm Lindén [8] in her PhD thesis has analysed the comprehensive studies of cohousing design principles in 24 Swedish and one Danish cohousing according to: the residential building type, type of communication (stairs, corridors and loggias, location of communal spaces in the building. Williams [9] has reviewed the literature on design factors that encourages social integration in housing.

He states that [9]:

(...) research suggested that there was a positive link between social contact design principles and levels social interaction. However, none of the research provided a detailed assessment of the link.

The crucial design factors, which influence the social interaction in cohousing development, included: density (proximity) and layout, the division of public and private space and the quality, type and functionality of communal spaces. Labit [10] focused the most on cohousing in the context of an ageing population in Europe. She has argued that cohousing is a good solution from an economic point of view: it allows a reduction in the public expenditure necessitated by the demands of and the ageing population, not to mention the social costs. She described 5 case studies in intergenerational cohousing project in Germany, Sweden and England.

3.1. Ageing in cohousing

Cohousing in the ageing perspective findings has mainly been published over the past 15 years. Literature on the subject has become so wide ranging and it comes in a variety of languages: mainly English, Danish, Dutch, German, Swedish, etc. And it reflects the diverse countries in which cohousing was developed. Cohousing for older people can be divided into two areas of questions [10]:

Is cohousing a good solution for older people?

In which countries is cohousing the most developed – considering the political and cultural context?

The methodologies used by researchers in cohousing in an ageing perspective are diverse, and both quantitative and qualitative.

Cohousing is the main area analysed by Charles Durett, who is the author of the handbook entitled *A Community Approach to Independent Living. Senior Cohousing* [1], he is a practitioner, whose main contributions consist of bringing the Danish experience to an international audience, especially in the USA. His contribution to research is to determine the 6 components, which characterise senior cohousing. Maria Brenton [11, 12], a member of OWCH (Cohousing for Older Women Group), has written a number of publications on senior cohousing, which makes her one of the UK's leading authors on the subject. It is worth noting that she is an author of factsheet [13] about how the local authorities in the UK are able to work with the public and private sector partners to develop a cohousing approach

towards the outcomes sought from the government's national strategy on housing for an ageing society, and a later paper by Brenton [14], in which the author examines the notion of cohousing, draws an example of cohousing from outside the UK and assesses the potential for cohousing in the UK. The research on economy aspects of cohousing and older people, the nature of supply and risk were based on the case in London. There are also several reports concerning senior cohousing, like: Forbes [15] *The application of age-integrated cohousing for older people* funded from Churchill Fellowship 2002; Kramp [16] *Senior cohousing: an optimal alternative for aging in place* and Killock [17] "Is cohousing is suitable housing typology for an ageing population within the UK?" with support of Boyd Auger Scholarship, donated to the RIBA in memory of the architect and civil engineer Boyd Auger. Forbes (2002) research was conducted on intergenerational cohousing in Denmark, Australia and Canada. He stated the issues, such as: slow progress, financial implication of participants from the planning stage onwards, elaboration of decision-making processes which can be conflicting, the right age mix to ensure mutual assistance, appropriate solutions for managing the dependence of ageing members.

Senior cohousing is analysed especially in Nordic countries, the USA and the UK. There are a few papers in Korean and Sweden Journals about the study of life and physical environment of senior cohousing and how the residents manage their life in senior cohousing projects in Scandinavian countries [18, 19]. Senior cohousing in the Swedish approach analysis by Motevasel [20], the Dutch approach by Fromm&de Jong [21] and Bamford [22], and the design solution in senior cohousing in Finland by Helamaa [23]. Glass and Skinner [24] identified criteria related to the housing units, boundaries, services and leisure amenities, age restrictions, voluntary relocation and shared spaces analysis. The process of community building and the benefits of living in senior cohousing has been described by Glass [25]. Her research has also been amongst the first cohousing projects for the elderly in the United States (2009, 2012). She has proven how beneficial this kind of lifestyle is to ageing people and that some criteria are important, like: the size of the group, professional and status diversity, design and management of communal spaces and activities. Labit [10] has looked at the challenge of demographic change from the perspective of ageing populations. Comparing strategies in France, Germany and

Sweden. A lot of research has shown evidence proving that cohousing is a good solution for the elderly, because cohousing influences the connectedness and social participation, which contribute to a happier and healthier old age [15] than in the traditional living arrangements [10].

3.2 Gender in cohousing

However, Dolores Hayden [26] shows expansion within cohousing from the gender perspective in several countries and impact on the New Everyday Life-approach in her famous book “The Grand Domestic Revolution”, which has attacked both the physical separation of the household space from the public space and the economic separation of the domestic economy from the political economy. She created visions for the feminists, in which she cites that the split between the domestic and public life of the industrial capitalism had been overcome. The gender issues in cohousing are also linked with the everyday life perspective in research by a geographer Helen Jarvis (2010), in which she critically examines the infrastructure of the daily life, which evolves from, and ease, collective activity and the shared occupation of space. She observed eight communities in the UK and the USA. Wankiewicz [27] relates cohousing to another challenge that the planners currently face, and namely maintaining the infrastructure for everyday life (gender planning) in areas with a shrinking population. She has described more recent projects of cohousing in rural Austria. Valuable research in this topic was conducted by Vestbro and Horelli [28], who identify and discuss the differences between cohousing models, driving forces and design. Their research presents the history of cohousing in the chronological order, at first presenting the utopian ideas about the ideal habitat, followed by the material feminist in the USA, the central kitchen and the early collective housing, the New Everyday Life and finally the development of the Swedish self-work model. As the authors quote [2] that the residents of cohousing also tend to use a variety of alternative temporalities that interact with spaces and places, which in turn affect their gender identities.

Cohousing is also explored in some group types, such as women, gay men, lesbians [29] and in particular the ethnic groups. Fromm&de Jong [21] researched the ethnic senior cohousing community. They claimed that American cohousing is homogeneous, a much wider diversity of residents lives in cohousing in a country like the Netherlands. In Amsterdam, there is a rich mix of cultures with more than a third resi-

dents who are the first or second generation immigrants. So in the Netherlands this has led to the idea of cohousing projects designed specifically for the ageing immigrants. Rental cohousing developer by non-profit organizations, has presented a viable alternative to standard senior housing, in principle the elders can live together and support each other and could live longer without professional care.

Some various studies have considered the differences in the quality of housing in the context of, e.g., older women and men [30] about the criteria to design housing for older women or explored differences in the quality of housing units for older women and men, but only a few in cohousing. One of them is the form of the Scandinavian perspective *Differences between Male and Female in Moving Motivation and Life Satisfaction of Senior Cohousing Residents in Scandinavia* by Choi and Cho [31] in Journal of Korean Home Management Association (but only in Korean Language) and a paper by Brenton [11] about *Co-operative Living Arrangements among Older Women on the example of three studies from Arizona, Toronto and Netherlands*. One of the important books in gender and ageing issues in the context of housing is *Designing Housing for Older Women* by Sue Cavanagh and Julia Dwyer [30] published by Women’s Design Service (WDS). This book was a pioneering piece of research on a neglected, yet numerically significant and growing section of the population, and was remembered by many interviewees as typical of the forward-looking work of WDS; it was awarded a RIBA research grant and included case-studies, academically informed analysis and recommendations.

The literature review demonstrates that while there is a wide-range approach to research in cohousing from an ageing perspective and much less from a gender perspective, there is almost no research into the intersecting issues: cohousing & ageing and gender, with the exception of Fromm&de Jong’s [21] research about the ethnic minority senior cohousing community.

Bearing in mind that cohousing is a type of residential building open to a diverse society, in theory and practice taking the issue in such a cross-cutting approach seems appropriate. Cohousing is connected with an ageing perspective in senior cohousing, for which the design criteria have been explored for 30 years. However, today we can observe trends to create senior cohousing focused on one of the categories of older people, like older women (e.g. Paris (France), High Barnet (the UK)), so it seems rea-

sonable to take into account the “gender lens” into the development process in senior cohousing, which can contribute to the creation of more sensitive living arrangements for an ageing society.

4. HISTORY OF SENIOR COHOUSING – IN SEARCH OF THE AGEING&GENDER LENSES

Concept of cohousing has its roots in the utopian, feminist and communitarian movements of the 19th and 20th century, but its roots go back even earlier to the utopian ideas about the ideal habitat like “**Utopia**” by **Thomas More** who described the society in the perfect order, with equal education for men and women and without private property, and “**Phalansteres**” of the ideal city with the communal dining hall, school, kindergarten, libraries, lecture hall, a theatre and other collective facilities for everyone by **Charles Fourier**, who was an utopian socialist. He suggested that women should have good education, not only in terms of the traditional female chores, but also at work outside their homes. Housework was to be rationalized through machines and communal kitchen [28]. Then, the European utopians had to migrate to the USA to implement their ideas. Hayden (1977) analysed the US communitarian settlements from 1790 to 1930, which were based on the wish to establish self-sufficient settlements that incorporate both industry and agriculture. She shows that principles of equality between men and women were important driving forces behind most of the analysed communities. As Vestbro&Horelli [28] suggested, the strategy of the feminist was, above all, to invent new forms of organizations in the neighbourhoods that could make the hidden domestic work visible. The elderly have been started to be visible in architecture in this period of time in some cities, e.g., the workhouse concept was developed as a solution to house paupers, the unemployed, unsupported children, the ill or infirm and the elderly. The workhouse was not designed to be pleasant and was often seen as a last resort. Inmates, including the able elderly, were required to work in exchange for basic food and lodgings [17].

The next group who has influence on the evaluation of cohousing included the **material feminists** who wanted to create home with socialized housework and child care in order to become equal members of the society. At the time in Denmark, where senior cohousing has its roots, **housing for low-income seniors** was first addressed, when an old monastery

was converted into housing for the elderly in 1900s [1].

Material feminists also have had an influence on the construction of the central kitchen and collective housing in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century. One of the idea was to “collectivise the maid” by producing urban residential complexes where the meal production could be shared by many households. It created **one-kitchen housing projects** (the first one was built in Stockholm in 1905–1907). The purpose was not to facilitate women to work outside the home, but to save costs by employing fewer servants [28]. The central kitchen and the bakery were placed in the basement. Three meals a day could be ordered. These were sent to the flats through food lifts in each side of the staircases. After the meal, china and cutlery were sent back to the basement for cleaning. In Denmark in 1933 legislation was passed that allowed old workhouses to be converted into senior homes in which facilities were very substandard [1].

After World War II **private nursing homes** were built. **Programs to help seniors** stay in their own homes were established, beginning in the late 1950, but these programs didn’t solve the problem of loneliness and isolation [1]. Modernism was the next period, which introduced **collective houses**. The idea was developed by architect Sven Markelius and the social reformer Alva Myrdal. This idea was a tool to enable women to combine housework and paid employment, but also to provide a socially desirable environment for children in a situation when families became smaller and more isolated. The intention was to facilitate everyday life for a modern family with equal roles for men and women. The idea of the flats was in accordance with the minimum requirements. The tenants were to be served by the employed staff, even in the case of laundry and room cleaning, so the collective housing became “special solution for privileged people” as Vestbro&Horelli [28] claimed. In 1970s new groups of people moved into collective house Hasselby Family Hotel, which before had attracted rather wealthy inhabitants, and than it was been transformed into a new model. Young families with roots in the feminist and alternative living movement started to protest against increases in rent and meal price. This contributed to solidarity between the tenants and they started cooking on their own in the restaurant kitchen. As it is cited by Durrett [1]:

(...) cohousing is a grassroots movement that grows directly out of people’s dissatisfaction with existing housing choices.

In 1976–1979 Danes put nursing homes and senior housing under one agency in their **social security system**. Seniors who moved into state-supported residences lost their pension and were granted only a small monthly allowance, they lived with little or no privacy and virtually no independence in the institution. The next step was to form the advisor group of the **National Senior Committee** by government to improve the country's overall approach to senior issues. Senior Councils sprang up spontaneously in some cities and they advised local officials on senior matters [1]. In this period of time the **self-work model** was created by a group of women called BIG, Bo and Gemenskap. A new type of cohousing has 10% of the normal apartment space, because each household foregoes this space, the collective would get a substantial amount of communal facilities without increasing the costs. The end of the 1970s was the time of a new model of cohousing in practice, because it was a good time for municipal housing companies, which implemented most of the new experiments. Senior cohousing has its roots later in 1982, when two Danish women started to campaign for independence-oriented housing for seniors. They touted a successful model that was already in place: cohousing. But they ran into many roadblocks. A critical issue was whether the governmental would sponsor non-profit cohousing. Finally, the women succeeded in finding a developer – Lejerbo a non-profit housing developer who was willing to attempt the project. In 1987 **the first senior cohousing** was created and a specific model developed to allow the involvement of partner organizations alongside the ageing residents, who retain the leading role in a project's development [10].

Vestbro&Horelli [28] claimed that cohousing was a:

(...) new structure in neighbourhoods that should comprise environmentally friendly housing, services, employment and other activities, which may support the residents irrespective of age and gender.

The intermediary level, as a mediating structure between individual households as well as the public and private sectors, bringing to the neighbourhood some of the daily tasks normally located in different sectors and places, what is especially important in case of older people who have mobility and health problems. Care of older people would be delivered in the neighbourhood and not in the centralised institutions of the public sector.

The gender-aware neighbourhood was created in Germany, Spain, Austria, Italy and Finland [32]. The program for the development of various models of

cohousing was supported by several political parties and women's organizations. After the period of stagnation in the 1990s a new wave of cohousing has been implemented, the majority of them of the 'second half of life' type (+40 without children at home). Nowadays, cohousing was evaluated, as Wankiewicz [27] quoting Labit [10]:

(...) the age structure of recent projects has shifted from young families and single parents to residents above the age of 50, and this means that the care needs and everyday infrastructures are shifting from childcare to care for all generations.

In 1995 another significant event took place in history of senior cohousing. Henry Nielsen developed a comprehensive model for the creation of senior cohousing communities. Nielsen's model is based on the participatory process and it neatly incorporates issues of co-care, design considerations, community size, and the group formation processes, among many other things. The Danes began to use Nielsen's method, the quantity and quality of senior cohousing communities increased significantly and successfully adopted also in the US [1]. This model consist of 2 phases and 3 study groups [1]:

Feasibility phase

Information phase

Study group I – ageing in place

Study group II – the participatory design and development process

Study group III – policy

Today, the elderly could choose the place they want to live in, regarding the intergenerational or senior cohousing. Around 1% of the Danes over 50 live in the cohousing environment [10]. Currently, senior cohousing is a niche because there are many difficulties in the development process, e.g., the high price of land, local authorities usually don't understand what cohousing means, the housing for young people usually is a priority in strategy documents than housing for older people.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to describe and interpret the historical development of cohousing taking into account the age and gender lens. The historical-interpretative research, including the literature analysis and the critique of the literature showed poor understanding of the cohousing issue in the perspective of the residents' gender, and a much better one in the perspective of the residents' age.

Moreover, senior cohousing is a much younger solution than multigenerational cohousing. For now, in many European countries (except for Denmark, Sweden and Norway) it constitutes a niche in the real estate market, but as it is predicted by the researchers, in the future it can fulfil an important segment of the market and the housing policy. Hence, it is very vital to undertake this subject in terms of academic considerations, especially in countries such as Poland, where this type of alternative housing for the elderly (and not only) begins to be noticeable. In Poland, the first intergenerational cohousing is planned in Wroclaw, within a large investment project in the district of New WUWA2 Żerniki. It should be noted that cohousing is a little-known concept in Poland, incomprehensible for the average inhabitant, and for the generation of baby boomers (who show an interest in other European countries) it is difficult to accept because of the pejorative

connotations of “communalism” with the times of communism. There are some cultural and economical dilemmas in the context of arrange senior cohousing in Poland, especially because of lack of knowledge and awareness of what cohousing is and how it can resolve many problems, such as social (lonliness, support), economic (cheaper costs of living because of shared facilities) and spatial (shared spaces, better quality of life because we have access to e.g. gym spaces and many other facilities, etc.). Senior cohousing can be the new perspective in Polish housing policy, as a one of the elements (alternative living arrangements for older people) which contribute to activation in social policy and new services for older people.

The interpretation of the relations between cohousing and the events from the past is presented in Table 1:

Table 1.
Ageing&gender in cohousing at different period of times.

	PERIOD OF TIME	
	GENDER LENS	AGEING LENS
19 th century	Women work in production but the division of tasks is done according to gender. Production and reproduction spatially integrated out of cities.	Workhouse concept for the unemployed, unsupported children, the ill or infirm and the elderly. The workhouse was not designed to be pleasant and was often seen as a last resort.
19 th /20 th century	Production coops in the neighbourhood liberating women but work not done by men. Neighbourhood with kitchenless houses, public kitchen and laundry, diner clubs, etc.	The Danes first addressed housing for low-income seniors – old monastery into housing for the elderly
1900s-1930s	No ideas of gender equality-an aid to housewives, provider of paid services. Bourgeois apartments without kitchen, food lift and central kitchen.	1933 – Danish legislation, allowed old workhouses to be converted into senior homes. Facilities was very substandard.
1940s –1960s	Allowing women to participate in labour force. Low valuation of house work, because of the employed staff. Apartments with small kitchens, central kitchen and other services.	Private nursing homes were built in Denmark. In the late 1950s programs to help seniors remain in their own homes were establishes – didn’t solve the problem of loneliness and isolation.
1970s –1980s	Domestic work visible (New Everyday Life Perspective), sharable with men. Neighbourhoods with local production, care and culture. Combination of bungalows and apartments with the community house and other shared spaces.	1976 – Danes put nursing homes and senior housing under one agency in their social security system. 1979 - government formed an advisor group the National Senior Committee to improve the country’s overall approach to senior issues. 1982 – two Danish women started to campaign for independence-oriented housing for seniors - cohousing. 1987 – first seniors cohousing was created and a specific model developed to allow the involvement of partner organizations alongside the ageing residents, who retain the lead role in a project’s development [10].
1990s	Cohousing has shifted from young families and single parents to residents above the age of 50, and this means that the care needs and everyday infrastructures are shifting from childcare to care for all generations – senior cohousing 1995 – Nielsen’s model is based on the participatory process and incorporates issues of co-care, design considerations, community size, and the group formation processes, among many other things in senior cohousing	
2000s	Today elderly could choose where they want to live, regarding to intergenerational or senior cohousing.	

Source: own author’s

The literature research, including the correlations between the historical and social facts, has proven the need to develop the empirical research including specific examples. The author in the near future plans to publish an article concerning the case study, of the first experimental example of senior cohousing in Great Britain (OWCH – Older Women Cohousing in High Barnet in London). The study was conducted with the in situ method (interviews, meetings with experts, photographic and graphic documentation) from April to July 2016 during the research training at the University of Westminster under the direction of Prof. Marion Roberts funded from the COST network within the Short Term Scientific Mission in the STE gender project (<http://www.genderste.eu/index.php>). These will be the ex ante study (study in design), because the completion of the construction of senior cohousing in London is planned for May 2016.

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