Factors in social interaction in cohousing communities

Jantine Bouma
Technical University Delft, Hanze University of applied research

Liek Voorbij
Technical University Delft
Cohousing Communities

- Living independently
- Staying socially active
Opportunities for social interactions in a cohousing community

- Personal factors
- Social factors
  - Informal
  - Formal
- Physical design factors
The interaction between design, personal and social factors in a cohousing community and its impact on social interaction (Williams, 2005)
Goal

- To presents an interaction model about the influential factors on an individual level and the relation towards physical characteristics
Method & materials

- Literature on cohousing
- 12 community members interviewed (semi-structured)
- 5 communities:
  - community A has 26 apartments and started 15 years ago;
  - community B has 24 apartments and started 12 years ago;
  - community C has 49 apartments and started 5 years ago;
  - community D has 21 apartments and started 22 years ago;
  - community E has 65 apartments and started 8 years ago.
Cohousing communities: an impression....
Individual factors of a dweller
Life experience Physical and mental health

Value
Goal
Behavior

Individual factors of a dweller
Life experience Physical and mental health

Value
Goal
Behavior

Physical Design Factors
density, division of space, quality accessibility of communal spaces

available home technology

Bouma & Voorbij, 2009
Discussion and conclusion

Results are in line with the literature found on cohousing.

- Social interactions are influenced by the physical characteristics of cohousing communities.
- Differences between individual values, goals and behaviours are helpful for a better understanding of social interactions.
- The relation of future technologies that are context-aware, networked and pro-active (Vastenburg, 2007) with social interactions should be considered because of the dynamic adaptation of this technology on individual needs.
Thank you