Social housing from an empathic point of view

Background
The improved healthcare and hygiene is one of the reasons people grow older over time, this leads to new societal challenges. Common diseases are not as frequently lethal anymore, they turn into chronic conditions with which people can live for longer periods of time [1]. In Limburg the percentage of people age 65 and up is 22%. It is expected that this will increase to 40% in 2040 [2]. Even though there is an ageing population, the amount of people living in an institution has decreased since the ‘80s. This is both a result of the policy of the government, [3] and the fact that people prefer to live (independently) in their own homes [3.4.5]. Prof. dr. ir. Maso Mohammad is responsive to this societal challenge with the empathic home, a home which takes care of its resident. Woningstichting Domus is interested in this concept and wants to know whether this concept can be implemented in social housing, more specifically in one of their existing assisted living facilities.

Goal
The aim of the project is to define design principles for future oriented homes which stimulate an active and independent life for seniors with a low social economical background.

Methods
The empathic home needs a holistic approach and requires understanding of three principles: the target group, spatial impact, and empowering (smart technology (figure 1). The methods which will be used to define the design principles are literature studies, focus groups, interviews and analyses of best practices.

Design solution
This study will result in a handbook which contains design principles for the empathic home for Woningstichting Domus.