

Take the second street left into the **Drapenierstraat**, and then turn immediately right into the **Vlamingstraat**. At the end of this street, you come to the **Van Loo almshouses (11)**. Unfortunately you cannot visit this court, but you do have a beautiful view of the garden.

In 1489, 13 'rooms with erfs' were bequeathed to the men of Elisabeth's Gasthuis, a hospital. It was stipulated that only priests or the impoverished were permitted to live here. The court originally consisted of a square of houses, however, as the Barvoetesteeg had to be widened, one row was demolished so that you are now able to view this almshouse court through a gate. The house diagonally across from the entrance to the right is the regents' room. The room was never used because the regents had their own quarters in the Elisabeth's Gasthuis. With the almshouses behind you, turn left, back towards the **Botermarkt**.

Walk along V&D towards the traffic lights on the **Grote Houtstraat**. Cross over and turn right into the **Gedempte Oude Gracht**. Take the second street left, the **Schagchelstraat**.



Cross the **Anegang** into the **Warmoesstraat**. The **In den Groenen Tuyn almshouses (12)** are located at number 23 to your right (open between 10.00 and 12.00 hours, after ringing the bell). At the end of the **Warmoesstraat**, go right across the **Oude Groenmarkt**. Walk straight into the **Damstraat**. Take the first street left. Walk along the **Nauwe Appelaarsteeg** passing the back of Teylers Museum (right) and De Appelaar courts of justice and De Philharmonie (left). After De Philharmonie, turn left into the **Wijde Appelaarsteeg**.

On your right, you will find the **Van Bakenes almshouses (13)** at number 11. This is the oldest existing court of almshouses in the Netherlands, established in 1395. The official name of this court is 'De Bakenesserkamer', a reference to its rooms of residence. Before you enter, take note of the inscription above the gate, which translates as: 'Dirck van Bakenes for women eight and twice six'. This refers to the number of women 8 + (2x6), thus a total of 20, who lived here with a minimum age of (8+2) x 6, thus 60 years. Having closed the gate, walk along a narrow path to the actual almshouse court. The houses as they now appear date back to the 17th century. In the garden, note the water pump with its wooden baldachin.



Walk through the court along the garden to the neighbouring almshouse court. The newest in Haarlem, the **Johannes Enschedé almshouses (14)** were completed in 2007. This court of almshouses, named after the famous Haarlem printer, was designed by Haarlem cartoonist Joost Swarte and architect Henk Döll. This duo collaborated previously on the design of Haarlem's Toneelschuur. Joost Swarte's signature is clearly recognisable in the large stained-glass window in the complex.



Leave the almshouse court via the large grey door and turn left into the **Korte Begijnestraat**. At the end of this street, turn left into the **Lange Begijnestraat**. You will now arrive at the Toneelschuur and De Philharmonie concert hall. Go right across the **Riviervischmarkt** and continue straight in the direction of the statue of Laurens Jansz. Coster.

You are back at the starting point of your walk: the **Grote Markt**.

Colophon

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HIDDEN GREEN OASES



HAARLEM ALMHOUSES WALK



HAARLEM

The 'Hidden Green Oases' walk takes you along concealed retreats in the city. Behind heavy doors and concealed entrances, you will find the almshouse communities of Haarlem (Haarlemse hofjes) with their quaint little houses and pretty gardens.

Haarlem's wealth of beautiful almshouses serves as a reminder of bygone days. Wealthy citizens established almshouses as sheltered accommodation for the aged and elderly women in need. They were accommodated in small homes arranged around an inner courtyard garden. Entry to these residential communities was usually through a gateway from the street.

This tour starts at the Grote Markt and takes about 1,5 hours.

There have, traditionally, been three types of almshouses: beguinages, corporation almshouses and guild almshouses. The first almshouses (for beguines) date back to the 12th century. Later, church councils established almshouses, because they considered it their religious duty to provide a form of housing for the needy.

In the 17th and 18th century, the more wealthy families established almshouses to ensure the family name lived on in the name of the almshouses. These almshouses were often managed by a corporation set up for that purpose. Almshouses were also founded by guilds, types of professional associations. The Brouwers almshouses are an example of this, established for impoverished women who needed somewhere to live after years of service in the breweries.

Experience learned that men were unable to cope with running a house-hold on their own, so the almshouses were especially allocated to widows and destitute, unmarried women aged over 60 years. The men were accommodated in 'old men's homes', such as the building that now houses the Frans Hals museum. Even today, it is still the modern day regents who determine who may live in the former almshouses.

In principle, the almshouses are open from Monday to Friday from 10.00 to 17.00 hours; some almshouses are closed on Saturday. There is no access to the almshouses on Sundays and public holidays. Please respect the privacy of residents while visiting the almshouses!



The **Grote Markt** is the starting point for the walk. With the city hall behind you, turn into the street on your left, the **Barteljorisstraat**. At the end of the street, the Van Oorschot almshouses are to your left. (We regret that these almshouses are not open to the public on Saturdays, however they are clearly visible through the large steel gate at the front.)

The **Van Oorschot almshouses (1)** were built in 1769 from the inheritance of Wouterus van Oorschot. The court consists of a main building with two wings. In the main building, there is a poem about the generosity of the founder, Wouterus van Oorschot, bringing comfort to the poor and setting an example to the rich. Wouterus van Oorschot also stipulated that the last ordained Reformed minister and the last appointed notary of Haarlem would act as regents.

After your visit to these almshouses, turn right out of the gate and immediately right again into the **Krocht**. Walk along the side of the Van Oorschot almshouses and continue straight into the **Ursulastraat**. The door at number 16 leads to the Remonstrantse almshouses. The Ursuline convent used to stand here. This almshouse court is not freely accessible. Continue straight, cross the **Nassaulaan** diagonally and enter the **Magdalenastraat** on the other side. Take the first street left, the **Witte Herenstraat**.

Adjacent to the Lutheran church, you will see the **Lutheran almshouses (2)** on your right from numbers 16 a to i. The Lutheran almshouses were built by the Lutheran community around 1648 and have always been closely associated with the Lutheran church. The church and almshouses were built on the grounds of the former Norber tine monastery. These monks wore white scapulars and were referred to as 'Witte Heren' (White Canons), which explains the name of the street. The four houses adjoining the church are the oldest. The five houses to the right were built later. At the back of the complex, at the regents' room, there is an 'outdoor pulpit', from which the regents and minister would address the residents.



Leave the almshouse court and turn right. There you will see the **Frans Loenen almshouses (3)** at number 24. Frans Loenen was a merchant from Amsterdam who spent the final part of his life in Haarlem. He bequeathed his fortune to Haarlem's poor. Construction of eleven almshouses commenced in 1607. A few years later, five more houses were added. The caretaker's house adjoins the church, while the regents' room is in the extension. The regents' room has gold leather wallpaper! During restoration, the number of houses was reduced to

ten. To be eligible for a house, one had to be at least 50 years of age and born in Haarlem, or have resided in Haarlem for at least 6 years. A meeting space was built in the garden a few years ago.



On leaving this almshouse court, go right once again. Beside number 30, a gateway is reminiscent of a third court of almshouses that used to be located in this street: the **Coomans almshouses (4)**, which were closed down in 1871 (these former almshouses are not open for viewing, please do not ring). At the end, turn left into the **Zijlstraat**. Cross the **Gedempte Oude Gracht** and continue straight. Take the second street right and enter 't **Pand** through the archway. You are now walking along the back of the city hall and will arrive at the **Prinsenhof**.

The **Prinsenhof (5)** is actually the old herb garden of a former monastery where the city hall is now located. One of the most beautiful trees of Haarlem, the weeping beech, stands in the herb garden. At the back of the garden, there is a small temple of peace, built in 1648 following the Peace of Münster. There is also an image of Laurens Jansz. Coster who, according to the residents of Haarlem, was the inventor of the art of typography. The Stedelijk Gymnasium grammar school is housed in a number of buildings around the Prinsenhof. The Gymnasium pupils refer to the garden as the 'hortus'.

Turn left into the **Jacobijnestraat** and at the T-junction, turn right into the **Koningstraat**. At number 20, take a quick look at the hall inside the **Huis van Schagen (6)**, a particularly beautifully restored building. If the door is open, take a look at the (closed off) courtyard garden at the back. Turn right into the **Stoofsteeg** and cross the **Gedempte Oude Gracht** at the end. Then turn left. You will soon see the **Botermarkt** on your right. Keep to the right of the square until you reach a well-concealed passage to the Bruinings almshouses at number 9.

Most almshouses were founded by wealthy childless people. The founder of the **Bruiningshofje almshouses (7)**, Jan Bruinink Gerritsz, had seven! During his life, Bruinink purchased houses near his own home. The almshouses originated out of these in 1610. The Bruiningshofje has no regents' room, probably because it was a 'family affair' and people simply gathered at home. Members of the Baptist community currently serve as regents. The court is small, there are only four homes.

On leaving the almshouses, cross the **Botermarkt** diagonally right and turn into the **Tuchthuisstraat**. The Brouwers almshouses are at number 8.

The **Brouwers almshouses (8)** were established in 1472 by Jacob Huyge Roeperszn. and his sister. They bequeathed their possessions to the Haarlem Brouwersgilde (Brewers Guild). About 100 breweries were located in Haarlem during this time. Impoverished women who could no longer work in the breweries were housed in this court of almshouses. In 1576, a large urban fire in Haarlem destroyed 449 houses, including the Brouwers almshouses. In 1586, the almshouses were rebuilt. This court of almshouses is different in appearance to others in Haarlem; there is only a single row of houses with the gate in the centre. It looks as if there are eight houses, but in reality, there are only four.

Leave the court and turn right, then take the first street left. You are now in the **Breestraat**. Take the first street right, the **Gierstraat**. Here you will find the exceptional Okhuysen wine shop. There is an old wine cellar beneath the

shop. Take the first street right, the Korte Gierstraat. Turn left into the Lange Annastraat and at number 40, you will see the **Guurtje de Waal almshouses (9)**.

Guerte de Wael was a wealthy woman. During her life, she determined that part of her wealth should be used to build almshouses for widows, single or married women, with or without children. Before her death, this changed to 'widows or elderly spinsters who were members of the Reformed (now Protestant) community'. The almshouses were founded in 1616. The house to the left of the gate is the caretaker's residence.

Turn right out of the court and you come to the **Nieuwe Kerksplein**, open the green door at number 11 r. Walk along the passageway to the **Proveniers almshouses (10)**.



The St. Michael nunnery used to be here. After the Reformation, the building was given to the St. Joris Militia. The nunnery was demolished in 1591 and replaced by a new militia-building. The former nunnery was used as a shooting range. After the departure of the militia, the building served briefly as an inn.

In 1706, the building was converted into a kind of care home for the elderly. Unlike other almshouses, the Proveniershof was not for the needy. What is unusual about these almshouses is that people paid money to live in them, hence the name Proveniershof. A provenier was someone who paid to live in a house. There are 67 homes in total, of which 38 are located around the garden. The remaining houses are situated in neighbouring streets. Married couples were also permitted to live here. In summer, fresh coffee and pastries are served from the window on the terrace of the congenial 'Hofje zonder Zorgen' lunchroom.

Walk through the court and leave by the large gate and you reach the best-known shopping street in Haarlem, the **Grote Houtstraat**. Turn right and take the second street right, the **Korte Houtstraat**. This is one of the greenest streets of Haarlem. Continue straight along the Nieuwe Kerk (1613, Lieven de Key), pass the church, turn right and then continue straight along the **Lange Raamstraat**. You will reach the place to which this area attributes its name: a little square where 5 streets meet, hence the name 'Vijfhoek' meaning pentagon.