



Election program 2026 – 2030



Participate, vote VSP!

1. Introduction

The citizens of the municipality of Venlo are aging rapidly. Over the next 20 years, the number of senior citizens is expected to grow by approximately 10,000.

The Venlose Senioren Partij is deeply committed to realizing a city in which our elderly citizens feel heard, seen and supported.

Our goal for the upcoming election is to mobilize voters and strengthen our position within the city council. Not through empty promises, but through realistic plans for livable neighborhoods, appropriate care, and good housing—with and for our seniors.

We're committed to improving the housing market, providing accessible healthcare, and ensuring safety in our neighborhoods. Seniors are no second class citizens or a burden to society. They deserve a municipality and local government that actively considers their needs.

In an increasingly complex society, it's more important than ever that seniors are visible, heard, and valued. The Venlo Seniors Party stands up for the interests of our older residents – not as an electorate, but as full-fledged citizens who contribute to and participate in decision-making. Because the municipality of Venlo belongs to all of us: young and old. Our commitment is focused on a society in which solidarity, safety, and respect are paramount. In recent years, we've taken important steps, such as the construction of new care homes and the expansion of support for informal caregivers. But our work is far from over!

2. Key points

2.1 Housing

Housing is life. It's feeling at home. It's the place where you relax, where children grow up, where neighbors greet and help each other. Housing is connection, safety, and dignity.

A home isn't a product, but a basic right. And a neighborhood is more than just a row of postal codes—it's a community. That's why the Venlo Seniors Party doesn't just want to build houses, but also invest in livable neighborhoods with space for socializing, trees and parks, care, and perspective. Every Venlo resident deserves a suitable, affordable, and safe place that feels like home.

The Venlose Seniors Partij advocates not only for new construction and lifelong housing options, but also for mobility: seniors who want to move to suitable housing should be able to do so easily. This also promotes mobility for young families and frees up space for young people and students. After all, they too have a right to affordable and suitable housing in their own city.

That's why we're committed not only to senior housing but also to expanding living space for young people and students. We want flexible and affordable housing options, such as student studios, youth housing, tiny houses, and co-living concepts. Studying, working, and staying in Venlo must be attractive and feasible.

We're already in serious consultation with housing associations to make this possible. Everyone deserves to grow old in their own neighborhood, and young people deserve to build their future there as well. We advocate for a diverse housing supply in all neighborhoods and villages, with a focus on both small-scale (mixed) housing and informal care homes, as well as large-scale housing options such as retirement homes 2.0. These will be adapted to the times: attractive to live in and to move to.

We're continuing what has proven successful: projects still to be completed at the former Marianum, Manresapark, and the "Den Leijgrave" residential care complex in Belfeld, following on from projects already completed, such as the Sint Josephkerk in Tegelen, 't Klosterhoaf in Arcen, and the Baumgaerd in Velden. These initiatives demonstrate that collaboration with partners—such

as housing associations, educational institutions, and healthcare providers—really works.

2.2 Accessible healthcare and nursing, nearby and human

We want every resident of the municipality of Venlo to have access to care and support, nearby and simple. Care shouldn't be a distant, complicated affair, but something available in your own street, village, or neighborhood.

That's why we stand for accessible, personalized care in your neighborhood. No endless forms or referrals, but direct involvement and genuine attention. Care providers who know you, understand your needs, and can act quickly.

Every senior citizen – and every young person in need of support – in Venlo should be able to count on a neighborhood team that offers fast, personalized, and expert support. These teams are visibly present in neighborhoods and villages, working together with residents, informal caregivers, and other professionals. This way, we ensure trust, continuity, and a proper safety net for everyone who needs it.

In other words: Bring healthcare to the people instead of people to healthcare!

2.3 Safe and connected in the neighborhood

Seniors often feel unsafe, especially at night. For many seniors, safety equates to freedom. That's why we're strongly committed to creating a safe living environment. More community police officers and municipal enforcement officers (known as BOAs) are not a luxury, but a necessity. We want to increase our efforts to combat scams, senior abuse, and digital fraud. Together with residents, we promote neighborhood watch, proper street lighting, and safe crossings. We advocate for expanding fireworks-free zones around healthcare facilities and vulnerable neighborhoods. We support meeting places where seniors can come together—both physically and digitally.

Safety is not just a matter of enforcement, but also of trust: knowing that society has your back.

2.4 Accessibility: mobile and independent

Seniors often rely on good public transport and accessible public spaces. We want every village and neighborhood in Venlo to remain accessible by bus – without long detours or transfers. For those who cannot use regular public transport, we advocate for suitable, customized transport. Cars also remain important: caregivers should be able to park where needed without hassle, and people with disabilities must be assured of accessible parking. Cycle paths and pedestrian paths must be safe and well-maintained, guided by the **STOP principle**: Stappen - Trappen - Openbaar vervoer - Privévervoer. Which translates to: Pedestrians first, then the cyclist and other light vehicles, then public transportation, and private transportation (mostly cars) come last.

This way our city and villages will be safe and comfortable for all road users.

2.5 Wellbeing and loneliness: staying connected

Loneliness is a silent pandemic. The Venlose Senioren Partij (Venlo Seniors Party) wants to strengthen community centers, promote meeting places, and actively involve senior citizens in local initiatives. Coffee meetings in the morning, exercise clubs, and neighborhood meals are more than just "socializing"—they are crucial for physical and mental well-being. We are committed to maintaining daytime activities in the neighborhood and supporting volunteers and informal caregivers. They deserve recognition, support, and the space to catch their breath. The informal caregiver allowance must be increased, and temporary care or support for long-term informal caregivers must be provided, so that the informal caregiver can take a break sometimes. This should be financed structurally by the municipality of Venlo.

2.6 Income and subsistence security

Seniors should be able to count on a fair pension, but also on a municipality that focuses on maintaining purchasing power. Minimum income schemes must be easily accessible, and there should be no waiting lists for debt counseling. The cost-sharing standard (= reducing social assistance benefits if someone lives with other adults, because they are expected to share housing costs) must never lead to poverty or loss of independence. The Venlose

Senioren Partij stands for a municipality that is a reliable partner for all Venlo residents, especially those on low incomes, and proactively works to combat poverty and financial stress.

2.7 Economy

In the coming years, Venlo will continue to grow as a strong and sustainable city. Key sectors include agriculture and food, manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, and the leisure sector. The national government provides support with regulations and funding, but the difference is made in Venlo itself. We invest in knowledge, innovation, and a climate-resilient future.

The Venlose Senioren Partij is clear: progress must never come at the expense of people. Seniors are not a burden, but a source of strength. Their experience and dedication keep our society strong. That's why we want seniors to remain actively involved: through work, coaching, or volunteering in healthcare, education, and culture.

We encourage companies to make workplaces senior-friendly, with flexible hours and opportunities for support. We also support initiatives where seniors collaborate to develop services, such as neighborhood assistance or energy projects. With a dedicated alderman for Senior Policy, we ensure that growth and vitality go hand in hand – so no one is left behind.

2.8 Multicultural society & care

The Venlose Senioren Partij sees diversity as a strength. Together we are Venlo – regardless of background, language, or religion. Respect and solidarity are paramount.

For seniors, this means care that reflects their background. Therefore, we want to investigate whether Venlo also has room for a multicultural nursing home, similar to the Wereldhuis in Boxtel (www.Wereldhuis - Zorggroep Elde Maasduinen). Seniors receive care and nursing there in their own language and culture, with recognition and security.

This is how we build a society in which everyone counts.

2.9 Education

In the coming years, the Venlose Senioren Partij wants to strengthen education in Venlo. Everyone should have good opportunities, whether you're a child in primary school, a secondary school student, or a student in vocational education, higher professional education, or university. It's crucial that schools improve collaboration with businesses and institutions in Venlo. This way, young people learn not only from books but also through practical experience. This will help them find jobs in sectors like healthcare, technology, logistics, and agri-food.

The national government provides the basics: teachers, exams, training, and funding. But in Venlo itself, we make the difference. The municipality must provide good buildings, extra support for those facing challenges, and a strong connection between education and employment.

We're involving our seniors in this process. Every neighborhood will have a Language and Learning Center: an accessible place, both physical and digital, where young and old learn together. Seniors use their experience as learning coaches, so generations can strengthen each other. We're investing in a "lifelong learning budget" for seniors, so they can continue to actively learn and maintain their independence.

With modern facilities and future-proof education, we are building a Venlo where everyone has opportunities – regardless of age or background.

2.10 Culture

Venlo has a rich culture with folklore, history, dialect, and traditions that we love to pass on. That's why we want seniors to act as cultural ambassadors. They can talk about our heritage at schools and in the neighborhoods and keep our regional language alive. The Venlose Senioren Partij reserves a cultural budget for cultural activities. This allows for workshops, small performances in the neighborhood, exhibitions, and joint cultural projects.

Together with local cultural coaches, we ensure that culture is accessible and understandable to everyone, young and old.

We also want to better support our clubs. This means providing good rehearsal spaces and places to store items. In this way, together with seniors and clubs, we are building a Venlo that continues to thrive with culture.

2.11 Sustainable living in a green environment

Seniors are often the first to notice the effects of pollution, heat stress, and noise pollution. That's why we advocate for more well-maintained green spaces in the city: trees, flowers, and tranquility. We support initiatives for urban agriculture, community gardens, and greening paved squares. At the same time, we want sustainability to be socially just: no obligation to switch from gas if people can't afford it, and subsidy rules that are understandable to everyone. Sustainability and social justice go hand in hand.

2.12 Participation: from participating in discussions to participating in decision-making

The Venlose Senioren Partij believes in a democracy that works. Not just voting every four years, but also being heard in the interim. We want citizen panels, neighborhood budgets, and the right to local referendums. Municipal information must be clear and understandable – digitally and, if necessary, on paper. We want every resident's voice to count.

3. Moving forward together

The Venlo Seniors Party has demonstrated that we're achieving results. We spearheaded new housing initiatives, put safety on the agenda, and improved the position of informal caregivers and volunteers. But we're not there yet. In the coming years, we want to do more, together with the residents of Venlo.

Vote for the Venlose Seniors Party, for seniors of today and tomorrow!

For a reliable Venlo municipality that listens. For seniors who matter.



How are we going to achieve this?

1. Policy anchoring

We translate ambitions into concrete policy plans:

- **Initiate legislation & motions** : submit our own proposals for, for example, more care homes, expanded public transport, or better support for informal caregivers.
- **Influencing the budgeting** : ensuring that our priorities are reflected in the multi-year budget.
- **Participate in policy frameworks** : contribute to the development of a housing vision, care structure, mobility plan, etc. from the onset.
- **Monitoring progress** : ensuring measurable targets in policy documents (e.g. number of new homes, neighbourhood safety index).

2. Financing and coverage

Our plans cost money, so we provide a realistic financial justification:

- **Reprioritization** in the budget: if necessary, fewer prestige projects, such as the new bridge between the Kazerne site and Venlo-Centrum, acceleration of procedures, Less hiring of external consultancy firms and

staff, and faster project execution. More funding for healthcare, housing, and safety.

- **Using existing funds :**
 - Provincial and national subsidies (e.g. Housing Fund, SPUK Promising Neighborhood 2026-2028, Mobility Fund, extension of the Lifestyle Agreement),
 - EU funds for social cohesion or green projects.
- **Smart collaboration** with housing associations, welfare organizations, and healthcare partners: shared investment.
- **Leveraging citizen initiatives** through neighborhood budgets and resident initiatives (more value, lower costs).

3. Coalition and negotiation

The Venlose Seniors Party knows that cooperation pays off:

- **The starting point is college participation.**
- **Negotiating on key issues** : record priorities in the coalition agreement for each council period (e.g. building care homes, strengthening community centres, improving public transport).
- **Network politics** : collaboration with local organizations, the county of Limburg, national government and interest groups such as the SOB Venlo Foundation, KBO, ANBO-PCOB, Zorgbelang and senior citizen networks.
- In opposition: **constructive cooperation** with other parties to support Venlose Senioren Partij proposals.

4. Citizen participation and support

We achieve goals together with the people involved:

- **neighborhood discussions and district councils** in design, traffic, greenery, and safety.
- Encourage **caregivers and volunteers to actively participate in policies that affect them.**
- **senior citizen panels** or citizen juries in important decisions (e.g., location of care homes, design of village squares).

- Communication in **plain language, digitally and on paper** — so that no one is left out.

5. Organization and implementation

Finally, we ensure that the municipal organization can implement it:

- Advocate for **permanent contact points** in the city office for senior affairs and citizen participation.
- Appointing an **Alderman for Senior Citizens Policy**, as portfolio holder with a coordinating role.
- Aim for **rapid implementation** through pilots, temporary arrangements or temporary housing where necessary.
- reporting (via council information and dashboards).

One sentence summary:

We realize our plans by influencing policy frameworks, releasing funding, collaborating in the council and with residents, and ensuring that the administrative organization implements them.