

Freedom for everyone, but nobody left behind

Election Manifest Municipal Elections 2022





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What do we need to enjoy living in Veldhoven? Suitable and affordable housing of course. But also an attractive living environment where nature is close by, just like thriving cultural facilities that extend a warm welcome. A Municipality that sees the need for ambitious climate goals, which it implements together with its residents and enterprises. Furthermore, for more and more residents, to enjoy living in Veldhoven also means: to be seen and heard by the authorities. Attention for ideas, answers to questions and low-threshold contact with officers, administrators and local politicians. Based on mutual respect and trust.

That is why our election manifest centres on those issues. The manifest is not exhaustive. We opt for a compact, outline manifesto that serves as a benchmark for our viewpoints in the next term of office. The central themes are housing, environment and government transparency. As far as we are concerned, we will do this together: with the inhabitants, organizations and other political parties that, just like D66 Veldhoven, strive to combine ambition with a sense of reality.



1 . The housing crisis requires ambition, initiative and creativity

The housing market is at a standstill. In the coming years, there is a need for at least 60,000 additional houses in the region. This requires ambition and dedication on the part of the government (state, province and municipality). But also on the part of housing associations, property developers and the residents themselves. It is up to the Municipality to protect the housing market and encourage house building. Every possible effort must be made, because the time of sitting back and doing nothing is long gone. The housing crisis requires ambition, initiative and creativity.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Encouraging development of affordable housing:
- by offering room for innovative types of housing, such as shared housing, co-living projects for the elderly, tiny houses, flexible housing solutions, informal care accommodations, etc.;
- Leasehold (this is the postponed sale of the ground) for new building plots intended for both rented and owner-occupied social housing, which will result in lower initial costs;
- Granting building permits for lifetime-compatible and zero-energy housing, if the requirement for the acquirer to live in the house is met.
- Encouraging public/private initiatives such as Joint Project Commissioning (JPC);
- Protecting existing houses from being bought up by private investors by introducing an owner-occupation duty up to a purchase price of €355,000;
- Conversion of larger houses and business accommodations into smaller housing units.



2. A cultural hotspot at Meiveld square for a livelier city centre

When referring to a pleasant living environment, D66 Veldhoven more often than not also refers to culture. Cultural organizations play an important role within our municipality. People visit them to enjoy culture or to participate in cultural activities. For instance, think of the theatrical and music societies of Veldhoven. They form the basis for creative developments, social initiatives, educational activities, thus contributing to innovative developments in the Brainport Area. That is why D66 will always fight for support to the cultural sector of Veldhoven.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Cultural organizations without the obligation to cut spending;
- The cultural hotspot that the library, De Schalm and 't Oude Slot envision in the City Centre. Bring the library, a part of the museum and the theatre together on the ground floor at Meiveld, as per their proposal, using a part of the space of the town hall. This would solve the accommodation problem of the library and allow for synergy between the three organizations. It would also give an enormous boost to the City Centre in terms of liveliness.



3. Addressing climate change at a regional and local level

Under the Regional Energy Strategy (RES), there is still a lot of work to be done in our region. Even though the residents will see the consequences of this strategy in the Brainport Area in the not-too-distant future, many residents are not completely aware of the RES. The heating transition will demand more of their attention first. The plan is to ensure that Veldhoven will be energy-neutral by 2045. If everything proceeds according to plan, that's the year in which districts will be disconnected from the gas. This requires sustainable developments at a local level.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Reducing the gas consumption not with 20% but 30% by 2030;
- Subsidizing solar panels on houses;
- Providing loans to homeowners under favourable conditions for the insulation of their home;
- Building energy-neutral buildings only;
- Stimulating emission-free driving (electric or hydrogen-powered cars);
- Installing more charging points and testing with alternatives, for instance in the form of lampposts;
- Encouraging investments in sustainable companies by facilitating business plans and permits and by focusing on the enforcement of the obligation to make sustainable investments with a payback period of five years.



4. Goodbye paving, hello green and from grass to a sea of flowers

The need to approach the green areas in our municipality differently is directly linked to general climate measures. Heat stress, flooding, decreasing biodiversity...we can most certainly do something about it in Veldhoven. But the Municipality cannot do it alone. Residents will have to remove paving slabs from their garden in favour of greenery, allowing water to drain naturally and giving insects a better chance. The Municipality, in turn, can also contribute. The large, boring and monotonous grass spaces in our city must be planted differently. Hence, more trees, shrubs, native flowers and lower plants. Even when in some cases this is more expensive than easily maintained grass.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Stimulating biodiversity and consequently the living environment; flower fields and thickets contribute more towards a positive living environment;
- Reversing the cost-cutting on biodiverse greenery;
- Stopping with the creation of boring, monotonous grass spaces;
- No asphalt for a cycle track through the recently redesigned Vogelzang Park;
- Stimulating and facilitating safe use of bicycles.



5. Good riddance to litter: polluters will be fined

Many residents are annoyed by the filthiness in their direct living environment. A lot of rubbish is inconsiderately thrown away on the streets and sometimes litter piles up next to underground and other garbage containers. It is often thought: "it will be removed anyway". It is not, and sometimes it will be there for days, providing food for vermin.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Tackling litter by:
- Supporting initiatives such as the volunteer organization Go-Clean;
- Tracking down and fining people who litter time and again;
- Providing underground containers with a small lid for litter, so that it is easier to clean up.



6. Districts are important and deserve proper amenities

The lay-out of residential areas with a diversity of housing and amenities contributes to a harmonious community. Shopping centres and local amenities such as community centres and parks hold an important position in the districts. This means that they must be safely accessible to everybody: also to the elderly and the physically challenged. When developing new districts, D66 wants to ensure the presence of sufficient and proper sporting facilities and social amenities, accessible and attractive to all residents but with special attention for the young and the elderly. District councils and other organizational forms in a district that can prove a certain degree of representativeness, are important discussion partners for the Municipality.

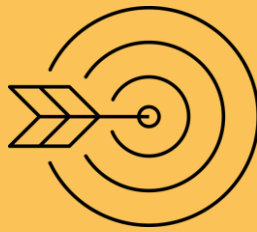


7. Continuous involvement of residents in current developments

Several social developments, such as polarization on more and more topics, cause the distance between residents, authorities and politics to grow. It is increasingly difficult to get broader groups of people to go along with new developments. Many times, those opposed to developments take the lead and completely dominate the discussion. This paves the way for populism in politics and threatens the public interest to lose out because the voice of the silent majority is simply not heard. D66 feels that confidence in politics, including local politics, needs a positive boost. How can we increase the involvement of residents in the decision-making process of the Municipal Council? The answer to that question is not a simple one. Consultation regarding large-scale projects is and continues to be a point that requires the attention of the Municipal Council and the Municipal Executive. Organizing structural meetings on current topics for the residents involved and supporting citizens' initiatives may contribute to a solution. The results of these meetings may provide input for the discussion in the Municipal Council.

D66 Veldhoven focuses on:

- Experiments with a citizen's panel, asking a random group of residents for their opinion on an important topic.
- Involvement of residents when formulating the frameworks for the construction in the event of large projects.
- Presentation of two realistic divergent proposals by the property developer of building projects, whether large or not, giving the residents living nearby the opportunity to express their preference.
- A transparent and approachable Council that engages the district platforms in forming an opinion regarding the implementation of policies in the district.
- Better equipping district platforms for an active role in the district developments.
- Researching the possibility of a Youth Council in addition to the existing Council of Elders;
- A council-wide outline agreement with which the Municipal Executive will get to work instead of a watertight coalition agreement that sidelines the entire opposition for the duration of the council's term of office.



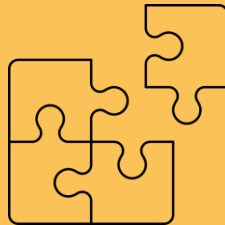
Alignment with the five guiding principles of D66

The purpose of an outline programme is to give a clear picture of the main points for D66. Furthermore, we ask attention for issues with a broader perspective.

To do so, D66 has five guiding principles.

1. Work towards a sustainable and harmonious society.
2. Reward performance and share wealth.
3. Trust in people's own power.
4. Think and act internationally.
5. Cherish our civil rights and shared values.

We interpret these five principles at a local level as well.



A. Work towards a sustainable and harmonious society.

Interior climate in schools

The need for proper ventilation has always been a topical subject, but since the pandemic it is a pure necessity. To protect pupils and teachers, measures must be taken to improve ventilation.

- Addressing the interior climate at schools at an accelerated rate;

Cultural activities of pupils

Education and society go hand in hand. The Municipality must proactively respond with well-organized activities within important issues that may be of interest to the youth.

- Facilitating taster days and other school activities that require an additional stimulus on the part of the Municipality.



Social domain

The Municipality puts the human dimension centre stage within the social domain. An integrated policy according to which single persons, persons in distress, youth and the elderly receive the help and protection that is necessary or desired. In short: everybody in danger of running into trouble or already in trouble.

The Municipality focuses on equipping home care organizations so that they can provide the desired support and care to everybody entitled to it under a care needs assessment. The Municipality also supports and encourages informal caregivers.

Attention is given to the elderly who do not yet receive professional care and strongly depend on informal caregivers. Many times, this group is at risk of not being seen.

- The Municipality supports an integrated care needs and well-being assessment (care under the Social Support Act 2015, community nursing and practice nurses of the general practitioners) with a single point of contact.

All this should be based on a positive approach towards health that contributes to the ability to cope with physical, emotional and social challenges in life. This can be achieved by providing information and space for social contacts (such as community centres, sports facilities), taking into account all age groups and all sorts of impairments as much as possible.



B. Reward performance and share wealth.

In connection with the demographic developments, which show that the average age will increase, it is important that the Municipality makes every effort to support the residents in continuing to participate in the labour market. Many people who reach the state pension age indicate that they want to continue to participate in society by performing paid or volunteer work. This increases their well-being and, as a result, also their health.

- The Municipality focuses on further support to SWOVE and Cordaad and listening to the recommendations of the Council of the Elderly.

Investing in health and staying healthy, skills, and engagement contribute to a long, productive and happy working life. D66 believes that participating in partnerships in this area is a useful investment in the future that requires manpower and financial resources.

Within the municipality of Veldhoven, steps regarding digitalization must soon be taken. At present, the infrastructure and technology are often not in line with the requirements set by society and other governments. Special attention is given to residents who have difficulties understanding and keeping up with digitalization and its consequences.



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C. Trust in people's own power.

The third guiding principle of D66 consists of various starting points that D66 Veldhoven uses as moral compass to set its course.

- The power of the residents must always be respected. This applies for instance with regard to the Personal Data Protection Act, care provided under the Social Support Act and the Participation Act.
 - Respect for everyone and any ideological beliefs, religion, orientation in any phase of life is the starting point of our policies.
 - The Municipality provides support and assistance so that people can function independently as long as is desirable and possible, the starting point being the need for help, information and privacy. In this respect, the laws and regulations should be a guideline, not an obstacle.
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- The Municipality supports initiatives in the area of sports, arts, culture, education aimed at the development and fulfilment of all residents and special target groups, such as the youth, elderly and people with a disability.



D. Think and act internationally.

No matter how much we like Veldhoven, we also like to go beyond the municipal boundaries. We form a part of a larger entity, the Brainport Area, and use the facilities of other municipalities. Just like many people from the area and beyond come to Veldhoven to live, recreate, shop, or work here. Expats who form a part of our community for a short or longer period, but also asylum permit holders who take up residence here to build a new life.

In our society, networks have not only become increasingly important, but they also change more and more depending on the subject. This requires flexibility of local authorities. Cooperating within the area, seeking a link with others when it is in all our interests, ensures that we can preserve our independence. The starting point is always "What is good for the area, is good for Veldhoven. And the other way around!".

D66 wants Veldhoven to be a reliable, competent, and stable partner in the area. In this context, we are always looking for the most workable structure. This means that we also accept that structures may change in the course of time. After all, we cooperate not only with other municipalities, but also with other authorities, civic organizations and knowledge institutes. D66 sees the need to provide municipal administrators with enough room to put this into effect. Naturally, they will have to account for their actions to the Municipal Council. We believe that freedom and responsibility are two sides of the same coin.

Veldhoven must actively participate in several regional collaboration groups to further strengthen our position and create employment and well-being for as many residents of Veldhoven as possible.

The Brainport Area has an excellent business climate, and we can keep it that way by accommodating the correct enterprises at the most suitable locations. The driving force of our economy is the presence of these enterprises. In this respect, sufficient administrative power is a necessary condition.



E. Cherish our civil rights and shared values.

The central values of our society are freedom and equality for everyone, regardless of belief, religion, sexual orientation, political views, or ethnicity. Physical safety, non-violent solutions to conflicts of interest and the respectful exercise of freedom of expression, as well as good governance and the rule of law, form our core values. We defend fundamental rights, both at home and abroad.

Appreciation for the liberal ideology, eye for the human dimension.

D66 uses the slogan "Freedom for everyone, but nobody left behind". The active members in Veldhoven use this slogan as a guideline in their daily activities in local politics. With appreciation for the liberal ideology, but also with an eye for the human dimension, we develop policies for an increasingly better Veldhoven, together with as many residents, organizations and other political parties as possible.